

**THE INDEPENDENT**

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# Poirier, Taylor, Stout elected to District 88 School Board

## School District 88 tight race to the finish

By Dee Longfellow  
FOR THE ADDISON INDEPENDENT  
District 88 expressed appreciation in its newsletter last week to all of the candidates who ran for election to the Board of Education during the April 6 Consolidated Election.

There were six candidates vying for three full (four-year) terms, including Christine Poirier, Andrew Edmier, Al Manzo, Diana Stout, Jean Taylor and Blanca Jessen. Poirier, Taylor and Stout were ultimately elected. The vote breakdown was as follows:  
Christine Poirier\* (3,765)  
Jean Taylor\* (3,031)  
Diana Stout\* (2,895)  
Andrew Edmier (2,522)  
Al Manzo (2,477)  
Blanca Jessen (2,389)  
(\* indicates projected winner. Re-

sults not yet official.)  
They will join current Board President Donna Craft Cain and fellow Board members Amy Finnegan, Lisa Knauf and Dan Olson. The new Board members will be seated during a special meeting at 6 p.m. on Thursday, April 29 and they also will be sworn in during the Village of Addison Community Inauguration Ceremony at 7 p.m. that same evening.

District 88 also would like to thank outgoing Board members Jay Irvin, Tommy Edmier and Blanca Jessen for their years of service. They will be recognized and honored during the Special Board of Education meeting on April 29.  
**Tight races in District 4**  
In Addison School District #4, eight candidates were running for four available seats. The vote broke

down as follows:  
Jeremiah Lange\* (1,272)  
Rudy Arands (1,004)  
Zack Frangidakis\* (1,132)  
Taso Triantafillos\* (1,252)  
Eduardo Castillo Perez (943)  
Daniel Alexander Medina (1,119)  
Ellen M. Finizio (961)  
Christen Bollig\* (1,356)  
(\* indicates projected winner. Results not yet official.)

# Bolingbrook man accused of arson at martial arts studio

On Wednesday, April 7, DuPage County State's Attorney Robert B. Berlin and Naperville Chief of Police Robert Marshall announced today that bond has been set for a Bolingbrook man accused of setting fire to a Naperville martial arts studio last month. Andrew Wagner, 28, of Bolingbrook, appeared at a hearing where Judge Alex McGimpsey set bond at \$400,000.

Wagner has been charged with one count of Aggravated Arson (Class X Felony), one count of Arson (Class 2 Felony). He also faces a Misdemeanor count of Criminal Damage to Property for allegedly throwing a brick several times at the passenger window of a parked vehicle owned by a former classmate.

On Friday, March 26, at approximately 9:42 p.m., Naperville police officers responded to a call of an alarm activation at the United Martial Arts studio located at 1260 Chicago Avenue. Upon their arrival, officers found the Naperville Fire Department already on scene with the business in flames and smoke emanating from the building. The business was left uninhabitable as a result of the fire.

An investigation into the fire found forced entry into the establishment as well as accelerant within the business. Through the course of their investigation, Naperville police officers identified Wagner, a former student of the studio, as the individual who allegedly started the fire. On

Tuesday, April 6, Wagner voluntarily went to the Naperville Police Department, where he was taken into custody without incident.

"It is alleged that on March 26, Mr. Wagner intentionally set fire to the United Martial Arts studio," Berlin said. "Thankfully, no one was present at the studio when he allegedly started the fire and no patrons in any of the adjacent businesses were injured."

Wagner's next court appearance is scheduled for May 5, 2021, for arraignment in front of Judge McGimpsey.

Members of the public are reminded that this complaint contains only charges and is not proof of the defendant's guilt.

## Veenstra stomps opponent, remains at the helm

*Ruffolo, Clementi win Park Board seats*

By Dee Longfellow  
FOR THE ADDISON INDEPENDENT  
There was much to celebrate on the evening of Tuesday, April 5, when supporters of Mayor Richard Veenstra watched the results of the Consolidated Election come in, deeming him the victor in the race for Addison's top seat. Veenstra ran away with a landslide 77% of the vote over opponent Maria Sinkule and was handily elected Mayor of the Village of Addison by a vote of 1,907-573 (results were unofficial at press time).

In uncontested races, Village Clerk Lucille Zucchero will remain in her seat as well Trustees Catherine L. Kluczny, Sam Nasti and Jay DeRosario.

In the race for Addison Park District Commissioner, four candidates vied for two seats. The top vote-getters were Stacey M. Ruffolo (1,131) and Michael James Clementi (1,115). Behind them were Michael Biondo (994) and Adriana Mena (873).

Also running uncontested was Addison Fire Protection District No. 1 Fire Trustee Michael J. Super.

# Aurora man charged with firing a gun into his girlfriend's car

On Wednesday, April 7, DuPage County State's Attorney Robert Berlin and Aurora Chief of Police Kristen Ziman announced that bond has been set for an Aurora man accused of firing a gun into the back of his girlfriend's unoccupied vehicle.

Elyas Taha, 29, of Aurora, appeared before Judge Brian Telander who set bond at \$500,000. Taha has been charged with one count of Armed Violence (Class X Felony), one count of Aggravated Discharge of a Firearm (Class X Felony) and one count of Aggravated Domestic Battery - Strangulation (Class 2 Felony).

On March 25, at approximately

9:09 a.m., Aurora police responded to a call of shots fired on the 2600 block of Country Oaks Court. Following an investigation into the matter, it is alleged that Taha and his girlfriend engaged in a verbal altercation that turned physical at which time Taha hit his victim several times and choked her for approximately 15 seconds. It is further alleged that after releasing his girlfriend, Taha fired two shots into the driver's side taillight of her car and one into the driver's side of the back bumper while she was standing next to the driver's side of the car. It is alleged that after shooting the car, Taha fled the scene on foot. Approximately

20 minutes after arriving at the scene, Aurora police found Taha still in the neighborhood and took him into custody.

"It is alleged that after physically assaulting his girlfriend, Mr. Taha fired a Glock 19 semiautomatic handgun into her vehicle before fleeing the scene," Berlin said. "Thankfully, no one was struck by a ricocheting bullet and injured or killed."

Taha's next court appearance is scheduled for May 13 for arraignment.

Members of the public are reminded that this complaint contains only charges and is not proof of the defendant's guilt.

# College of DuPage hosts STEMCON for students K-12

Students in the local area are invited to "Get Your Geek On - Virtually" at Virtual STEMCON 2021 being held Friday, April 23 to Sunday, April 25 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day.

STEMCON is a public outreach event designed to inspire and educate K-12 students in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. This family-friendly event encourages scientific discovery through hands-on activities and demonstrations while providing the opportunity to learn about scientific careers from actual researchers, industry representatives and STEM educators.

The schedule includes classes and

activities like fruit DNA extraction, a Sumo-bot Battle each day (requires pre-registration), a Honeybee Hive Tour, gravitational waves explained, Bokashi composting, candy science and more.

### Keynote address

The Keynote address for STEMCON 2021, Why Science is Dope, presented by Justin Shaifer, is a LIVE webinar that will take place on Saturday, April 24 at 10 a.m.

Boring lectures and uninspiring teachers often ruin students' perceptions of STEM. This adventurous talk informs students about real life experiences of modern STEM professionals, and the prospects of

STEM careers. Students will leave this talk well-aware of their potential career and scholarship opportunities in STEM. A Q&A will take place following the webinar presentation.

Because this is a live event, it is not part of the scavenger hunt.

### On demand

Unable to attend live? All of the exhibits including those on our schedule will be available On Demand, starting Friday, April 23. From virtual tours to demonstrations to do-it-yourself (DIY) STEM, get ready to Get Your Geek On - on your own time. To find the On Demand section,

See STEMCON, Page 5

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SUBURBAN LIFE  
April 15-16, 2021  
mysuburbanlife.com

FOOTBALL: YORK 25, WILLOWBROOK 23

# York prevails over previously unbeaten Willowbrook

By BOB NARANG  
editorial@mysuburbanlife.com



Erica Benson for Shaw Media  
York's Max Assaad passes the ball during the game against Willowbrook on April 9.

ELMHURST – York senior quarterback Max Assaad welcomed a shift in the offensive game plan last week.

After the Dukes were shut out in consecutive games against Glenbard West and Hinsdale Central, Assaad said he dived into preparation for the April 9 home game against Willowbrook.

Assaad said he played just six snaps in the previous week's loss to Hinsdale Central.

"[The previous] week was tough because I came into the game and just made a bad decision, with their defense picking it off," he said. "But [last] week, I made it my most focused week of practice. I had to be sharp. I was watching film every night, twice as much as I normally do. [The previous] week, it was a run game. ... With Mike Bojesen, he's a terrific runner, and with the two running threats in the backfield with him and Patrick Kastner, it gave us more of a chance for success."

Assaad showed off a live arm and pinpoint passing April 9, throwing for 226 yards and a touchdown to lift the Dukes to an emotional 25-23 victory over the previously unbeaten Warriors in a West Suburban Conference crossover game in Elmhurst.

The 5-foot-10, 175-pound Assaad started slow with just 44 yards passing in his first 12 attempts before heating up

to spark the Dukes (2-2) to a thrilling comeback win. Assaad completed seven passes for at least 10 yards, with senior wide receiver Luke Malaga catching 15 passes for 118 yards. The Dukes' offensive line protected Assaad by not allowing a sack. Kastner had 29 carries for 85 yards and two touchdowns. Senior wide receiver Sami Ayash caught five passes for 86 yards, including a 42-yard TD.

"It was great to win and a lot of fun," Assaad said. "There's no better feeling than seeing the coaches calling for passes. We were getting more and more

excited. The offensive line blocked hard every play. It was great to see the team's hard work pay off."

Malaga was at the forefront of nearly every drive for the Dukes. York moved him around on the line of scrimmage, and many times Assaad completed passes to Malaga on consecutive plays.

"It was a bounce-back week for Max," Malaga said. "I'm so proud of him. We knew we had to be aggressive, and Max did everything we asked. We really opened it up tonight, and they tried to give me the ball. The field just looked

wide open. We felt we could throw on these guys.

"The last two weeks, going up against big schools like Glenbard West and Hinsdale Central, it's tough to pass and we had to ground and pound. But tonight, we knew we had to tap into our passing game, and it worked out. This is a great win, and great momentum for us."

The Warriors (3-1) hurt themselves with a few costly miscues. They lost a fumble in the first quarter, trailed by eight points to start the fourth quarter, came up short on a two-point conversion that would have tied the game at 25-25 and lost 4 yards on a pivotal red-zone play in the final minute.

Despite all those mistakes, Willowbrook star running back Josh Brown nearly saved the day by rushing for a game-high 295 yards and three touchdowns.

Trailing 25-23 with 5:33 left, the Warriors marched down the field, but fell victim to a bad snap. Two plays later, the Warriors missed a potential-winning field goal with 31 seconds left. York senior defensive back Jalon Jones had a game-saving tackle on the 11th play of Willowbrook's final drive, chasing down Brown to stop a potential 48-yard touchdown run.

"That wasn't our intent to go down and kick the field goal, but when we snapped the ball to the ground and lost those 4 or 5 yards [that hurt us]," Willowbrook coach Nick Hildreth said.

FOOTBALL: WHEATON WARRENVILLE SOUTH 30, BATAVIA 7

# Danny Healy, WW South's defense dominate with 6 turnovers

By JACOB BARTELSON  
jbartelson@shawmedia.com

BATAVIA – Wheaton Warrenville South's loss to Wheaton North in Week 3 left a sizable dent on the Tigers heading into practice.

A week of renewed focus and energy apparently made all the difference.

The visiting Tigers forced six Batavia turnovers and shut out the Bulldogs until the final seven seconds of the game in a stunning 30-7 DuKane Conference victory April 9.

"We needed to show how good these kids can be," WW South coach Ron Muhitch said. "To their credit, they responded well [and] rebounded."

"To Batavia's credit, they're playing without their starting quarterback [Kyle Oroni]. It was a shame to see that kid [on crutches] on the coin toss. That makes a difference in who they are," Muhitch continued. "But our kids came to play today."

On Batavia's second possession, Tigers senior cornerback Max Wilson intercepted Bulldogs quarterback Trey Urwiler. After a punt, Urwiler was intercepted again, this time by junior Danny Healy. On a 17-play drive, the Tigers got in the end zone on a 3-yard touchdown by Eddie Robinson for a 7-0 lead with 7:21 remaining in the first quarter.

"I think we had a different type of mentality [at practice]," said Healy, who had his first interception on the season. "We were coming out to get back into the conference race. ... We came out, practiced as hard as we could every single day and it was awesome to be in there with my guys. We all have the same goal."

On the ensuing possession, Urwiler improvised on a punt, which the Tigers (3-1, 3-1) stuffed. That gave WW South excellent field position, and quarterback Parker Brown threw a 16-yard touchdown pass to tight end Tyler

Fawcett for a 14-0 advantage.

Batavia (3-1, 3-1) began to generate momentum, but an Urwiler completion to Jack LaCasse was fumbled and recovered by Tigers senior outside linebacker Max Draus for Batavia's third turnover of the half.

"This defense is so special. ... Putting hats to the football. Everyone getting to the ball [and] making plays," Healy said.

Tigers backup kicker Ben Berkley connected for a 30-yard field goal and a 17-0 lead at the half.

Bulldogs running back AJ Sanders fumbled on Batavia's opening drive of the second half. The turnover was recovered by Healy. The Tigers were forced to punt but then stopped Batavia on fourth-and-5 at the 50-yard line. Brown then found Kaleb Clousing for a 20-yard touchdown and a 23-0 lead.

With 7:29 left in the fourth quarter, Batavia was approaching the red zone, but Phillips fumbled and the Tigers' DJ

Almada returned it deep into Bulldogs territory. Robinson then barged into the end zone for a 30-0 lead.

Urwiler fumbled on a run on the ensuing possession.

The Tigers' Brown finished 13 of 17 for 137 yards and two touchdowns. Robinson had 72 yards and two touchdowns.

Batavia's lone score came with seven seconds left on Urwiler's 23-yard touchdown pass to LaCasse.

The Bulldogs' rushing attack, which averaged 227 yards the previous three weeks, had 200 yards rushing against the Tigers' starting defense, but the turnovers were costly.

Urwiler was 3-of-10 passing for 18 yards. He had 30 yards rushing, two interceptions and a fumble.

For Batavia, it was the fewest points scored in a game since a 7-0 victory over St. Charles East in 2017. The Bulldogs scored seven in a 28-7 loss to the Saints in the 2016.

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District No. 1 Fire Trustee  
Michael J. Super.

to careers from actual researchers, industry representatives and STEM educators. The schedule includes classes and

ceptions of STEM. This adventurous talk informs students about real life experiences of modern STEM professionals, and the prospects of

to Get Your Geck On – on your own time. To find the On Demand section, See STEMCOM, Page 5

## A message from Edward-Elmhurst Health

# Variants vs. vaccines – who will win the race?

One year after the spring 2020 COVID-19 wave came through the community leading to the first surge of COVID-19 hospitalizations, there is another potential wave of COVID-19 hospitalizations.

Each time SARS-CoV2 (the virus that causes COVID-19) replicates, it can mutate.

With the rapid pace of viral spread worldwide, the many opportunities to mutate has led to a natural selection for variants that are more fit, that can out-compete and become dominant.

At the same time, three highly effective COVID-19 vaccines are now available and are slowly but steadily protecting the population.

It's a race between the variants and the vaccine.

Early in the pandemic, the D614G variant emerged and quickly became the dominant strain by March 2020. In November 2020, England reported the B.1.17 variant.

This variant has several mutations on the spike protein, most notably the N501Y mutation, which is thought to allow better attachment to the ACE-2 receptor.

In South Africa the B.1.351 variant, and in South America the P.1 variant, also carry the N501Y mutation as well as the E484K mutation, which make it less able for antibodies

to attach to and neutralize the virus. In California the B.1.427 and B.1.429 variants have emerged and may also be more transmissible.

Antibodies generated from COVID-19 immunizations neutralize the B.1.17 variant nearly as well as the D614G variant, but not as well against the B.1.351 and P.1 variants. The Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech vaccines were found to be 94-95% efficacious in preventing symptomatic infection and 95-100% against severe infection, but were not trialed at a time or in countries with circulating variants.

Antibodies from people who received Moderna or Pfizer vaccines were still able to neutralize the B.1.351 and P.1 variants, though at a diminished level. The Janssen (Johnson & Johnson) vaccine was trialed in South Africa (where the B.1.351 variant predominates), and though it was found to have a lower efficacy compared to the U.S., it was still highly effective in preventing severe infection, with no hospitalizations or COVID-19 deaths in vaccine participants.

While the efficacy of the three COVID-19 vaccines has been proven across adults of all age groups and medical conditions, experts still don't know the level of protection for those who are immunosuppressed.

In the U.S., the variants that are less responsive to vaccines are rare: the B.1.351 variant accounted for 0.3% of cases and the P.1 variant 0.1% of cases through March 13. However, the more transmissible B.1.17 variant is slowly becoming more prevalent in the U.S., rising from 0.5% of cases in January to 9.5% by March 13. The more prevalent it becomes, the greater potential it has to spread more quickly, accelerating another surge. This threat can be stalled by getting more people vaccinated more quickly. It is literally a race between

the vaccine and the variants.

The spring 2021 wave is unique in that it is affecting a new vulnerable population — those who haven't been immunized. The spring wave of hospitalization is predominantly middle-age and younger adults, who have not yet had their turn to be vaccinated.

As of Sunday, March 28, 28.2% of the U.S. population had received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine and 15.5% have been fully vaccinated. Soon everyone age 16 and older will have the chance to be vaccinated.

Now is the time for unvaccinated people to diligently avoid getting

infected until they are fully immunized. Immunity from vaccines lowers people to clear the virus quickly if infected and protects them from severe infection, while masks, social distancing and hand-washing help prevent infection.

For more information, visit [health.org/coronavirus](http://health.org/coronavirus).

## Judge declines to dismiss lawsuit over indoor dining ban

By Sarah Mansur  
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

A Kane County restaurant's legal challenge to Gov. JB Pritzker's ban on indoor dining can continue, a Sangamon County judge ruled last week.

Attorneys for Pritzker tried to have the lawsuit dismissed, but Sangamon County Judge Raylene Grischow declined to do so. While Grischow decided not to dismiss the case, she did not reach a decision on the merits of their argument.

The lawsuit from FoxFire restaurant in Geneva argues that Pritzker's executive order requiring bars and restaurants to close indoor service, which first went into effect last October, should not be allowed because it is arbitrary and unreasonable.

Pritzker's attorneys claimed that the governor had authority to issue his October 2020 executive order under the state Emergency Management Act.

The governor's lawyers also argued that Illinois residents who seek to challenge Pritzker's order as beyond the limits of his power can take action at the ballot box, not through the court system.

Grischow disagreed with this claim about the court's role to intervene in cases where the constitutional limits of the governor's authority are questioned.

"[I]t is this court that must ensure the governor does not circumvent the constitutional confines of his authority," Grischow wrote in her five-page opinion. "This court can inquire as to whether the means utilized in the execution of a power granted are forbidden by the constitution."

Grischow wrote that her court has

the responsibility to determine whether the governor's "implementation of the business shutdowns and/or restrictions were arbitrary and unreasonable."

Her opinion also recognized that the restaurant "bears a heavy burden to establish that (the governor's) actions were clearly arbitrary and unreasonable."

Pritzker said he has "confidence that we have followed the rules and followed the law," in response to a reporter's question about Grischow's decision at a news conference.

"The legal challenge that you're referring to, as you know, there have been a number of right-wing organizations that have stoked some of these lawsuits and they continue to try to poke and prod to find something, anything. They've lost at every turn. You know, this is just another one of those cases," Pritzker said at an event in suburban Cook County. "Nearly every court, you know, has confirmed that and where they haven't, they've been overturned."

Kevin Nelson, one of FoxFire's attorneys, said in an email his client is not "some 'right wing' organization as the governor claims but a family-owned small business, which, was almost put out of business by his unconstitutional and unprecedented actions."

Nelson criticized Pritzker for leaving small businesses, like FoxFire, "out in the cold this winter."

"The citizens of this state need to be made aware that their governor argues in Court that he can shut down small businesses indefinitely during an emergency," Nelson said in the email. "Last week Pritzker's lawyers went further and argued to Judge Grischow that

there is nothing the citizenry, nor even the court system, can do about it other than 'vote him out of office.' Thankfully, yet another Illinois judge disagrees with him. If FoxFire represents a 'conspiracy,' we live in a scary reality. FoxFire's specialty is fine dining, not vote. FoxFire will stick to fine dining and leave the mismanagement of our state to Mr. Pritzker."

Grischow's decision issued Wednesday is the latest development in the legal challenge to the governor's executive order raised by FoxFire, which has remained open to indoor service while its lawsuit is pending.

The restaurant won an early victory in October when a Kane County judge granted the restaurant's request for a temporary restraining order that allowed FoxFire to ignore the new indoor dining restrictions contained in the executive order.

The 2nd District Appellate Court overruled the Kane County judge's decision in November, rejecting FoxFire's arguments that Pritzker is limited, under state law, to issue one 30-day disaster proclamation, and also does not have the power to order businesses closed.

Following that appellate court decision, the FoxFire case was consolidated in Sangamon County court with several other cases challenging the indoor dining ban. Currently, FoxFire is the last of these cases opposing the indoor dining ban remaining in Sangamon County.

FoxFire's attorneys have also filed an appeal directly with the Illinois Supreme Court, which has not yet weighed in on this case.

The next hearing in this case is scheduled for April 28.

## Conroy helps pass substance use disorder legislation in House Mental Health Committee

Taking a stand for those encountering substance use disorders, state Rep. Deb Conroy, D-Villa Park, recently helped pass sweeping legislation in the House Mental Health Committee which expands coverage to critical access to care.

"We cannot afford to stand idly by while the victims of substance use disorders continue to struggle simply because coverage to resources they desperately need is inadequate," said Conroy, chair of the House Mental Health Committee. "As an advocate for mental health and those confronting substance use, I'm acutely

aware of inequities that exist in our system that do not go far enough to help the most vulnerable. That is why I'm sponsoring a bill which demands more from insurers providers, establishes access to grant dollars, and expands access to prescription drugs."

Conroy's House Bill 2589 amends the Substance Use Disorder Act by expanding commercial insurance coverage to addiction treatment medication while also opening the door to grant funds that will enable victims to receive better access to treatment. Conroy's legislation would help in-

crease distribution of opioid antagonists, expand access to peer recovery specialists, provide housing public health fairs, promote harm reduction activities and provide connections to community partners.

"There are countless victims whose livelihoods would drastically improve if this bill is signed into law," said Conroy. "It is critically important that we meet this moment in order to continue forging a path forward for those most in need."

**Editor's note:** This was submitted by the office of State Rep. Deb Conroy.



SUBMITTED PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing  
Matt Crandall

### Addison Trail alum earns 'Midwest Conference Position Player of the Week'

Alumnus Matt Crandall (Addison Trail class of 2018) has been named the Midwest Conference Position Player of the Week for his performance in a pair of Buccaneer wins on Saturday, April 3 in Ripon.

The Beloit College junior outfielder had a career day at the plate to lead Beloit offensively. Crandall went 3-5 at the plate with all three hits going for extra bases, including a triple and two homers in the opening game of the doubleheader. His seven runs batted in in the contest tied the program record for RBI in a game, a mark last hit in 2007. Crandall added three runs scored in the win. In game two, Crandall tallied a hit and a run scored, helping the Bucs to the sweep of the Red Hawks.

### STEMCON

(Continued from page 4)

go to [cod.edu](http://cod.edu). Search STEMCON, and click on "On Demand."

#### Scavenger Hunt

Each type of video (speaker, demonstration, virtual tour, DIY STEM) includes a hidden code word that when put together, forms a catch phrase. Can you figure out what it is? Submit your guess to be entered to win one of our STEMCON prize packages. The Scavenger Hunt will be available from Friday, April 23 until Friday, April 30.

#### Events requiring pre-registration

Most of our videos will be available On Demand beginning Friday, April 23. The Keynote Speaker event and the Sumo-Bot Battle each day have a limited capacity and therefore, require pre-registration. These events are expected to fill so reserve a spot early!

For more information, go to [COD.edu](http://COD.edu) and search STEMCON.

• BASEBALL

Continued from page 16

Nazareth

Coach: Lee Milano (22nd season)
2019 record: 29-9, 8-5 East Suburban Catholic Conference, fifth place

Top returners: Anthony Milano, sr., 1B; Joseph Milano, sr., P; Wylder Guido, sr., IF; Ryan Smith, sr., P/IF; Justin Gutierrez, sr., IF; Jack Ryan, sr., C; Mark Maschio, sr., IF; Lucas Smith, so., OF

Key newcomers: Luke Brabham, jr., IF/P; Sebastian Gutierrez, jr., IF/P; Joey Hawkins, so., P/IF; Cooper Malamazan, fr., IF; Bobby Kutt, fr., IF; Nick Drtina, fr., P/IF; Luca Fiore, fr., P/OF; David Cox, fr., P/IF; John Hughes, fr., P/IF

Worth noting: The Roadrunners, who took third place in Class 3A in 2018 and reached a sectional final in Class 4A in 2019, boast plenty of talented players both seasoned and young. The Milano twins, Anthony and Joseph, are both committed to play at Morton Junior College. Guido, headed for Wisconsin-Eau Claire, played varsity as a sophomore, as did Ryan Smith, who holds Division I offers. Gutierrez is committed to Loras. Ryan is committed to St. Norbert. Luca Smith would have started as a freshman last year on varsity. Coach Milano is 20 wins away from 500 for his career.

St. Francis

Coach: Tom Ciombor (second season)
2019 record: 22-6, first place in conference

Top returners: Daniel Maller, sr., OF; Max McCallum, sr., OF; Tim Lilly, sr., OF; Tyler Duzansky, sr., IF; Jeffery Clark, sr., P; Noah Kuchler, sr., C

Key newcomers: TJ McMillen, so., 1B; Rocco Tenuta, so., IF; Adam Wiborg, jr., P; Vince Polizzi, jr., IF

Worth noting: This is Ciombor's second season as coach, but first in the dugout after the 2020 season was canceled. He said St. Francis should be competitive from one through nine in the order, and the top of the pitching rotation should be solid. Clark is a four-year varsity starter. Maller is a Dubuque College recruit, and McCallum is a Loras College commit. Ciombor is looking for pitching contributions from juniors Will Ricamato, Bennett Wordekemper, Kyle Ston and Tyler Bishop, all getting their first taste of varsity baseball. He's also expecting varsity contributions from Will Gilroy in the outfield. There is speed in the lineup with Nick Ciombor.

Timothy Christian

Coach: Brian Whartnaby (third season)
2019 record: 6-21, 2-7 Metro Suburban Red

Top returners: Ben Jones, sr., SS/P;

Stephen Kwasigroch, sr., OF; CJ James, sr., OF/P; Fletcher Roemmich, jr., IF

Key newcomers: Donald Tober, so., C/P; Ethan Munk, so., IF; Casey Folkerts, fr., IF/P; Jake Armstrong, fr., IF/P

Worth noting: The Trojans have only three seniors this season with Jones, Kwasigroch and James, but they all started on varsity as sophomores. Whartnaby said they have been setting the tone in practice in leading by example. Timothy Christian will be young, but from what Whartnaby has seen, the Trojans have more talent than in recent years. Whartnaby said there are more arms on the mound than two years ago and more power at the plate.

"We have a talented group of underclassmen. I'm excited to see how they grow as a team this season, and I think this group will put themselves in a good position to be successful," Whartnaby said. "We are looking for a turnaround season in 2021 and something to build upon."

Westmont

Coach: D.J. Cocks (10th season)
2019 record: 21-13, 6-7 Interstate 8 North, second place

Top returners: Spencer Anton, sr., P/3B/1B; Caleb Kleinz, jr., P/SS/2B; Jason Czaplewski, jr., C; James Postawa, jr., P/2B/SS/3B

Key newcomers: Lucas Hicks, fr., P/SS/CF; Noah Valentin, fr., P/2B/SS; Austin Lipasek, fr., P/3B; Jack Gedralts, so., P/2B, OF

Worth noting: The Sentinels have switched leagues and are now in the Metro Suburban Red. That's not all that's new. Westmont is in a complete rebuild, with just two players back with varsity experience from the team that lost to Aurora Christian in the 2019 regional final. A young team with one senior and one sophomore will rely on a strong junior class to pave the way for talented freshmen. The Sentinels boast two strong pitchers in Elmhurst College commit Anton, who posted a 2.33 ERA in six innings in 2019, and Hicks. Cocks called Hicks "an outstanding talent who is already making big noise in practice." Cocks said the Sentinels have good team speed.

"We are excited about being back to playing baseball," Cocks said. "This has been the worst of times in the Sentinels' baseball program while dealing with this world's issues. We truly cannot wait to build up this season and get better."

Wheaton North

Coach: Dan Schoessling (22nd season)
2019 record: 23-10, 16-5 DuKane Conference, second place

Top returners: Aaron Holland, jr., C; Trevor Blum, sr., OF; Leo Widtmann, sr., OF; Mason Shroff, sr., 3B

Key newcomers: Will Fletcher, jr., P; Sam Cary, jr., P; Sam Reczek, P/OF;

Quinn Flanagan, P/IF; Tyler O'Connor, P/OF; Jackson Moore, P/IF; Fred Elftmann, P/OF

Worth noting: The Falcons have a ton of unknowns. Wheaton North is a year removed from coming off back-to-back 23-win seasons. Schoessling said the Falcons will be young and inexperienced on the mound. He said the lineup should be able to score runs, but the defense is still a question mark.

Willowbrook

Coach: Vic Wisner (10th season)
2019 record: 25-7, 17-1 West Suburban Gold, first place

Top returners: Hayden Kingsbury, sr., CF; David Rojo, sr., P; Bennett Fleming, jr., C; Max Viasvila, jr., P

Key newcomers: Drew Flaskamp, sr., RF; Issac Sobieszczyk, so., IF; Alex Chaitin, so., IF

Worth noting: The Warriors have been a model of consistency the past decade, with seven seasons of 20 or more wins, three regional titles and a dominant run in the West Suburban Gold in 2019. Wisner thinks this group could be pretty good. Kingsbury is a St. Ambrose commit. Willowbrook's top guys have played over their age levels in travel ball and posted good numbers. Wisner said Chaitin and Sobieszczyk, who would have started last year as freshmen, are legit Division I caliber players. Flaskamp, who will start in right field, has made great strides during the pandemic.

"We will have very young but good pitching. Hitting has looked good as well," Wisner said. "These guys compete in practice extremely hard, so, to me, I think we will be in the conversation for the conference championship."

York

Coach: Dave Kalal (12th season)
2019 record: 21-11-1, 13-5 West Suburban Silver, second place

Top returners: Tyler Arista, sr., C/IF; Luke Barber, sr., IF/P; Charlie Cmiel, sr., P/1B; Tyler Procajlo, sr., IF/P; Trent Lawrence, sr., IF

Key newcomers: Ryan Pickell, sr., P; Patrick Kastner, sr., IF; Matt Pinkowski, sr., OF; Max Hansmann, jr., IF/P; Ethan Cancel, jr., 1B/DH

Worth noting: Kalal said a senior-dominated lineup will rely on pitching and defense to be successful in the always tough West Suburban Silver. Starters returning from what would have been the 2020 team include Calvin College commit Arista, Carroll recruit Barber, Blackhawk Community College commit Cmiel, Millikin commit Procajlo and Lawrence, who will play at Morton Community College. College of DuPage commit Pickell is among the new faces to watch.

"Fundamentals and situational execution will allow this year's Dukes to continue the tradition of winning they have become accustomed to," Kalal said.

• SOFTBALL

Continued from page 15

Adamek would have started at second base in 2020 and is now playing shortstop. Pawlak said pitching will keep the Tigers in games and they'll have to mesh as a team and learn strengths and weaknesses on the fly.

Willowbrook

Coach: Rachel Karos
2019 record: 20-10

Top returners: Caroline Dooley, sr., P/CF; Annemarie Knudtson, sr., C/2B; Caitlyn Kulczynski, jr., P/OF/2B; Kayla Neff, jr., P/1B; Madelyn Hayes, sr., 1B/DP; Grace Hayes, jr., 3B; Grace Chambers, sr., OF

Key newcomers: Calli Kenny, fr., SS; Kayleigh Dennison, so., 2B/SS; Gwen Halik, sr., OF; Natalie Krichbaum, sr., OF; Katelyn Cox, so., OF; Stephanie Dasbach, sr., 1B

Worth noting: Karos is excited about this season with a strong pitching staff, great defense behind it and an offense capable of putting up big runs. Dooley, committed to play at Briar Cliff University, hit .449 with two triples, two homers, 17 RBIs and 20 runs scored in 2019. Kulczynski hit .512 with 12 doubles, three triples, 27 RBIs and 30 runs scored. Knudtson hit .461 with eight homers, 33 RBIs and 37 runs scored. Neff, a fourth returning starter, had 25 RBIs and 13 runs scored as a sophomore. Kenny also is a standout in basketball and volleyball. Dasbach is a Winona State recruit for basketball.

York

Coach: Brendan Holb (second season)
2019 record: 17-14

Top returners: Lauren Derkowski, sr., P/1B; Rena Sotos, sr., C/1F; Molly Loch, sr., OF/IF; Lindsey Bingham, jr., IF; Emily Fujiwara, jr., IF; Kara Jensen, jr., IF/P

Key newcomers: Mariann Blass, so., IF; Maddi Tran, so., IF/OF/P

Worth noting: The Dukes are not a young team on paper, but they are a young group in terms of varsity softball experience. It helps to have Derkowski in the circle. The Michigan recruit is a preseason All-American who struck out 241 in 124 innings as a sophomore with a 2.196 ERA. She hit .286 with four homers and two doubles at the plate and led York to state as a freshman. Sotos hit .264 with a double and nine RBIs after being called up to varsity midway through the 2019 season. Loch, Bingham, Fujiwara and Jensen would have been starters in 2020. Blass is a two-sport varsity athlete with great instincts in the middle of the field and a mature approach at the plate. Tran is a mature, versatile player who can hit the ball hard to all fields.

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it-yourself (DIY) STEM, get ready to Get Your Geck On - on your own time. To find the On Demand section,

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Adriana Mena (873). Also running uncontested was Addison Fire Protection District No. 1 Fire Trustee Michael J. Super.

demonstrations while providing the opportunity to learn about scientific careers from actual researchers, industry representatives and STEM educators. The schedule includes classes and

during lectures and participating teachers often ruin students' perceptions of STEM. This adventurous talk informs students about real life experiences of modern STEM professionals, and the prospects of

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