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THURSDAY, NOV. 25, 2021

District 4 Schools announce new superintendent

The Addison School District 4 Board of Education has announced its approval of an Agreement with a new Superintendent of Schools effective July 1, 2022. The current Superintendent, John



Langton, will retire at the end of this 2021-22 school year after serving the school district for 26 years. After considering more than 60 applicants, the ASD4 Board of Education has introduced Dr. Nick Sutton as their Superintendent for the 2022-23 school year. Dr. Sutton has worked extensively in the field of education for his entire career.

Graduating from Western Illinois

University with a Bachelor of Science in elementary education, he began his education career in the classroom as a 7th grade Language Arts teacher. Dr. Sutton continued to develop through a graduate degree in Education Leadership from Western Illinois University. He also completed a Doctorate in Educational Leadership from Western Illinois University and then completed the Chief School Business Official

Endorsement from the University of Illinois. Dr. Sutton was a middle school principal of two different schools, served as Superintendent of the Stark County School District 100, and most recently is the Superintendent of the Sandridge School District 172 in Chicago Heights. The district looks forward to Dr. Sutton sharing his experiences in our Addison community!

When asked about his thoughts of

the community and Addison School District 4, Dr. Sutton shared, "Addison School District 4 has an outstanding reputation as a school district and community," Dr. Sutton said. "I am honored and humbled to become a part of it. It will be my primary goal to sustain and build on all of the wonderful things already happening, and to ensure all staff and stakeholders always know how happy I am to be a part of this team."

SUBMITTED PHOTO Addison Independent

Golf scholarships given in memory of Wayne Page

On Nov. 16, four Addison Trail student-athletes from the boys and girls golf teams were presented with \$2,500 scholarships provided by a group of siblings of longtime Addison resident Wayne Page, who passed away in 2016 after battling colon cancer. Pictured are (from left): Leslie Page, boys golf team head coach Eric Norberg, seniors Anthony Scali, Elijah Aulino, Jazmin Martinez, Madison Domek, girls golf team head coach Stacey Puccini and Tom Page. See story inside.



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Addison Art Guild hosts award reception for Frida Kahlo exhibition

The Addison Art Guild held the reception for their annual members' exhibit at The Addison Center for the Arts gallery on the evening of Thursday, Nov. 11. The artists and their friends, neighbors and family enjoyed light refreshments and conversation while viewing the show. This year's guest judge Lisa Dziurisko, curator of Marmion Academy in Aurora, awarded several prizes for the art works on exhibit.

This year the Guild celebrated the memory of Mexican artist Frida Kahlo with a special exhibit devoted to her art and life. John Keeley of Bloomingdale won a special Frida Kahlo award for his oil painting, "Frida at Home."

Lisa Lucaccioni of Addison took the First Place ribbon for "Titus and Brutus," a charming oil painting of father and son male lions from the Brookfield Zoo. Another First Place ribbon went to Irma Pocius for an alcohol ink abstract painting called "Fascination."

The Best in Show ribbon was awarded to Julie Mars of Roselle for "Honeymoon Panopticon." Second Place ribbons went to Tania Blanco of Naperville and Elke Simmons of

Addison. Janice Duntzman and Annette Leiber of Addison received Honorable Mentions ribbons.

The Addison Art Guild is welcoming new artists and makers to join. Call Julie Mars at the Addison Center for the Arts 630-458-4500 for more information on how to join the Addison Art Guild. The Guild usually meets once a month with a demonstration of different artistic techniques. In addition to monthly meetings, the AAG has two exhibitions per year. Every fall there is an exhibit at the Addison Center for the Arts and in the spring, it is traditional to have a watercolor exhibit in the Addison Village Hall rotunda. Currently, the spring 2022 show in the rotunda is tentative due to public health policies, but will be announced at another venue, if necessary.

The Addison Art Guild's 2021 Members' Show continues at the Addison Center for the Arts Gallery through Saturday, Dec. 18. The ACA gallery is open Wednesday through Saturday from 1 to 4 p.m., except for Thanksgiving Day. Free admission. Call 630-458-4500 for more information.



SUBMITTED PHOTOS Addison Independent

Artist John Keeley is shown here with two oil paintings of Frida Kahlo and the ribbon he received as a special Frida Kahlo award for his oil painting, "Frida at Home."

Golfers earn scholarships in honor of Wayne Page

On Nov. 16, four Addison Trail student-athletes who are members of the boys and girls golf teams at the school were presented with \$2,500 scholarships provided by a group of siblings who graduated from Addison Trail. The recipients were seniors Madison Domek, Jazmin Martinez, Elijah Aquino and Anthony Scali.

The generous gift was donated by the family of longtime Addison resident Wayne Page. Wayne and his seven siblings grew up in Addison, attending St. Joseph Catholic

School and Addison Trail. Wayne served in the U.S. Marines and was employed by United Airlines for 30 years. He loved children and spent years officiating youth basketball and working with kids to teach them teamwork and improve their skills.

Wayne passed away in 2016 after battling colon cancer. Since that time, his family has hosted the Wayne's Pond Golf Memorial Tournament each year to honor and celebrate his life. All proceeds from the event are distributed to local children's organizations or groups.

*AT students receive Automotive Service Excellence certification

The following Addison Trail seniors have earned their Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) Refrigerant Recovery and Recycling Program certification. They are: Jonathan Campos, Christopher Gibson Jr., Joshua Gloms, Alejandro Martinez, William Morales, Angel Reyes

and Marco Salazar.

Successful completion of this EPA-authorized Section 609 program means these students are certified to service motor vehicle air conditioning systems. For more information about ASE, go to <https://www.ase.com>.



Lisa Lucaccioni, an Addison resident, took the First-Place ribbon for "Titus and Brutus," a charming oil painting of father and son male lions from the Brookfield Zoo, pictured here.

We want to print your news!
What's going on at your club or organization?
Seeking new member? Hosting a fundraiser?
Send details to independent@rvpublishing.com

Addison Trail names November recipient of 88's Best recognition

Mateo Gomez (pictured above, at right, with Addison Trail Principal Jack Andrews) has been named as Addison Trail's November recipient of 88's Best recognition for his highly improved performance. Gomez, a senior, was recognized during the Nov. 15 District 88 Board of Education meeting. To watch his 88's Best presentation, click on the video above.

Gomez came to the U.S. three and a half years ago, knowing no English and having to adjust to a new language and culture. Today, he is taking the most difficult and challenging Advanced Placement (AP)/college-level courses at Addison Trail. Gomez emigrated from Colombia with his family at the beginning of what should have been his eighth-grade year. But a translation mistake with his transcript led to him being enrolled at Addison Trail instead, at the age of 13. Gomez said his first goal was to learn English, as he knew that would be step one on his pathway to success, and he worked toward that goal relentlessly. Gomez added his EL teachers inspired him and saw potential that he didn't see in himself. He also reminds students that in the end, it's up to them to succeed.

Academic achievements:

- Earned a grade of A in every course he has taken
- Earned the Literacy Department's Achievement Award his second semester at Addison Trail
- Exited Addison Trail's EL program by the end of his sophomore year
- Enrolled in several AP courses his junior year
- Involvement at Addison Trail:
 - Vice President of National Honor Society (NHS)
 - Vice President of Student Council
 - Lieutenant Governor of Key Club
 - Host of Blazer News (Addison Trail's student-run news channel)
 - Member of Italian Club
 - Member of Theatre
 - Member of Addison Trail's Youth Equity Stewardship (YES!) program, which strives to prepare students to recognize and learn from the diversity around them
 - Honorary member of ATtribute (Addison Trail's yearbook)
 - Co-captain of the Boys Soccer Team
- Future plans:
 - Gomez looks forward to continuing a challenging path. He plans to attend college and pursue a major in international business administration.

Staff members offered the following comments:

"This speed to move through EL levels is unheard of – but Gomez was that motivated and hard working. He was nominated to be a part of our YES! program by all of his teachers as a sophomore – and once he realized he could be a valuable part of something bigger, he was off and running. It makes me smile every time I see his name show up as a participant and officer in so many activities – including the Blazer

News, and now the musical! Never have I seen a former ESL kid be so confident and all-around amazing. I'm sure most people have no idea he was an ESL newcomer at one point. I'm very proud to have been a small part of his journey."

- Megan Salgado, AT EL teacher

"Gomez is a remarkable student-athlete. His passion and motivational drive are second to none. Gomez has taken every advantage possible by being a part of so many clubs, activities and sports at Addison Trail. I have had the privilege to coach Gomez for the past two years in soccer. He has been a great example of hard work, dedication and leadership for our whole soccer program. He was one of our team captains this season, and I cannot think of a more deserving student than Gomez and all he has accomplished."

- Ryan Dini, AT boys soccer team head coach

"Gomez is the unofficial Mayor of Addison Trail High School. He does a little bit of everything and does it very well. It might be cliché, but what would we do without him?"

- Shane Cole, AT guidance counselor

"Gomez was recommended for our English 12 Collegiate Credit course by his junior-year English teacher. When I met with him to discuss the course expectations and determine his level of interest in challenging himself with a college-level course during his senior year, Gomez was over the moon! He didn't even hesitate. I've never seen a student more excited to take a class than he was. He left at the chance and thanked me profusely for the opportunity. From what I hear, he is doing an impressive job in the course. I received an e-mail just last week from Gomez requesting I review his college application essay and provide feedback. Again, I've never had Gomez in class, so the fact he sought me out for additional feedback on his writing speaks to his desire to improve. His essay was already quite good, yet he eagerly accepted feedback and encouraged me to point out his errors. His humility and desire to "be the best he can be" will serve him quite well as he moves into a post-secondary setting!"

- Amy Ferraro, AT English department head

"Gomez began with me as a freshman in Sheltered Algebra. From the beginning, he was a true leader in the classroom. He always challenged himself academically and also showed a profound interest in helping his classmates succeed. Gomez truly has a selfless nature that will not only help him become a leader, but a compassionate one! I will miss him next year, but I am sure I will hear about all the wonderful things he accomplishes in the future."

- Julie Rana, AT math teacher

"Gomez came into my AP Italian class late. We moved him from Italian 3 Honors into AP, and I'm so happy we did! He's an AMAZING Italian student. I find him fasci-

nating, because he pursues a great interest in a foreign language other than his native Spanish. Italian is a hurdle, which he conquers without

a flaw. He is definitely gifted in a foreign language. He shows a great interest in Italian, and his appreciation and respect for diverse cultures

is quite evident. A student like him is one in a million."

- Judie Vittritti-Lynch, AT world language teacher



Mateo Gomez right, pictured here with Principal Jack Andrews, has been named as Addison Trail's November recipient of 88's Best recognition for his highly improved performance. Gomez, a senior, was recognized during the Nov. 15 District 88 Board of Education meeting.

AT alumnus has record-setting football season at University of Chicago

Addison Trail alumnus Nick D'Ambrose (class of 2018) had a standout season at The University of Chicago, where he is a running back on the men's football team. D'Ambrose is a senior, but is eligible to compete for one more season because of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

D'Ambrose set the following team records this year:

- Single game touchdown record (five)
- Single season rushing record (1,714 yards)
- Total touchdowns in one season (20)
- Single season rushing

touchdowns (20)

- Season yards per carry record (7.4)
- Career yards per carry record (6.7)

D'Ambrose also achieved the following national results for Division III football:

- 1st place in rushing yards
 - 5th place in rushing touchdowns and yards per carry in a season
 - 9th place in total touchdowns
- D'Ambrose also was named to the All-District Academic Team. He is pursuing a pre-med track at The University of Chicago and has a cumulative GPA of 3.7.



Willowbrook's Penelope DelValle receives 88's Best award for October

Willowbrook High School senior Penelope DelValle was recently named her school's recipient of the 88's Best award for the month of October. DelValle was honored at the District 88 Board of Education's Oct. 18 meeting.

The 88's Best honor recognizes students for their achievements in and out of the classroom. The award is presented to nine students at each of District 88's two schools—Willowbrook and Addison Trail—each school year.

As a student, DelValle has consistently pursued the most rigorous courses available at Willowbrook. She actually began her high school career when she was still in middle school; she completed math and world language courses at Willowbrook while she was in seventh and eighth grades.

DelValle, who has been named to Willowbrook's Distinction Honor Roll in each semester of her high school career, is an inductee of the National Honor Society. She is a co-founder and cohost of Willowbrook's student news channel—The Brook Channel—which was formed in the summer of 2020.

Additionally, DelValle is a member of Willowbrook's Youth Equity Stewardship (YES!) program, which strives to prepare students to recognize and learn from the diversity around them.

DelValle is a leader in the New

Beginnings program, a program in which upper-class students mentor freshmen and assist them in adjusting to high school. She's also a member of the Willowbrook Student Council, and a member of the school's girls

tennis team. DelValle played in the No. 1 singles position for the Warriors during their recently concluded fall season. She also served as a team captain.

DelValle is considering where

she will continue her education. The schools under consideration include DePaul University and Northwestern

University. She intends to major in economics or accounting, with a pre-law focus.



SUBMITTED PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing

Willowbrook High School senior Penelope DelValle was recently named her school's recipient of the 88's Best award for the month of October. DelValle was honored during the District 88 Board of Education's Oct. 18 meeting. She is pictured at the meeting with Willowbrook Principal Dan Krause. DelValle is an accomplished student who has been named to Willowbrook's Distinction Honor Roll in each semester of her high school career. She is a co-founder and cohost of Willowbrook's student news channel—The Brook Channel—which was formed during the summer of 2020.

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Addison Trail students named 'AT's Best'

On Nov. 10, a group of Addison Trail students was named as AT's Best.

The AT's Best award honors students who have achieved a "personal best." The following categories have been used to recognize recipients: service, Blazer Pride, cooperation, dependability, initiative, leadership, humanitarian spirit or unique contributions. Students receive a pin or a T-shirt for their efforts.

AT's Best recipients are:

- senior Yana Patel was nominated by social studies teacher Mark Olson;

- senior Carly Zaprzal was nominated by Guidance Counselor Sofia Daly;

- senior Antonio Bruno, junior Megan Sowa, senior Ruben Ramirez, sophomore Barbara Martinez, sophomore Josephine Ficarra, sophomore Anna Stavropoulos and senior John Pinns were nominated by English teacher and Theatre Director Anna McSweeney;

- seniors Daniel Zuniga, Jr., Emma Wallis, Nancy Perez and David Peters were nominated by English teacher Patricia Subers;

- freshmen Zuzanna Czyzyska, Ashley Rivera, Damarion Baker, Damarion Baker, Josue Digo, Camila Esparza, Mohammed Ahmed and Vanessa De La Cruz were nominated by science teacher Laura Garcia, English teacher Sabrina Miller, social studies teacher Alex Serrano and special education teacher Anna Grice;

- freshmen Katelyn Ford, Cinthya Robles, Alison Haag, Itzel

Gamboa, McKenzie Perry, Santino Dill, Olivia Boksa, Grace Cannizzo, Jacqueline Bugante, Krishna Mistry, Gabriela Carpenter and

Alexa Bonilla were nominated by science teacher Aileen Sullivan, English teacher Katie Inzinga and social studies teacher Mark Olson;

- sophomore Dominic Mazon was nominated by science teacher Aileen Sullivan; and,
- senior Giovanna Mosely was

nominated by Career and Technical Education (CTE) Department Head Jenny Kowalski and special education teacher Joanna Simousek.



SUBMITTED PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing

On Wednesday, Nov. 10, this group of Addison Trail students was named as AT's Best. Students received a pin or a T-shirt for their efforts.

• President (Continued from page 4)

Under Segredo's leadership, Montini's Campus Ministry and technology programs flourished with the hiring of Mike Blanchette and Pete Farina. Maryann O'Neill was appointed assistant principal and Mike Bukovsky was moved to the admissions office to work with Kim (Caffarelli) Richmond, growing Montini's enrollment significantly in the process (almost 20 percent in four years). Mike Kisicki was also brought on board as a member of the faculty.

While principal, Segredo also facilitated the opening of Montini's 300 Wing and the Field House.

"There have been so many great memories as principal over the years that it's hard to choose," Segredo said. "It was great announcing a free day for the student body in celebration of our first IHSA state championship (wrestling, 2000). I also got to experience our first football championship in 2004; the school spirit and enthusiasm was truly unforgettable.

"After we won, the 'Montini Nation' took over the hospitality tent area at the University of Illinois—there was a sea of maroon and gold everywhere—all super excited for Montini and Coach A."

Segredo was also witness to Montini's first baseball team going to state (finishing third) under head coach Bill Leeborg.

"Another great memory for me is going to cheer on our Broncoettes at state and handing out chocolate roses to the team. It's a tradition I began when I was principal and I haven't missed a year since," Segredo said.

Segredo is honored to have been a part of Montini's first graduation ceremony in the Field House as well. He will also never forget the day Student Council President Mac Brandt and Class of 1998 peers Mike Allegretti, Brian Dobry and Mike Modjeski brought a live turkey (in a cage) to school to turn it for the Golden Gobbler Food Drive.

"The turkey bit Allegretti on the finger when they were bringing it to the auditorium," he said.

"A 'not so great' memory that quickly comes to mind is when the engines in the power plant would shut down," he continued. "When I became principal, I wondered why all the teachers had flashlights in their rooms, the first time the engines shut down, I knew why. That was something the committee forgot to mention in the principal interview." (The engines have since been replaced.)

"Leading the school on 9/11 was a very emotional day, and one I'll never forget," he added. "We all did our best to keep everyone calm and to reach out and help those students who may have had parents traveling

on a plane that day. Our faculty and staff did a great job. I remember getting on the PA and letting the students know what was happening and how we prayed together."

In 2004, with the resignation of Brother Thomas, Segredo became Montini's second president, and named Maryann O'Neill as principal.

As president he has successfully led three Capital campaigns during this 18-year span. The "Celebrate Our Future Building on Success Campaign" propelled Montini into the future with the addition of the Academic & Administrative Center, the renovation of the Campus Ministry Center, art studios, Student Services Center, cafeteria and auditorium.

Segredo also oversaw the renovation of Duffy Memorial Stadium and the baseball field. With the 50th anniversary campaign in 2016 came the renovation of classrooms, locker rooms, the Ed and Pam Mack LRC (Learning Resource Center) as well as the creation of the Kazma Innovation Center and the Blessed Mother Prayer garden.

From leading the first Habitat for Humanity Service trip, to celebrating the lights at Duffy Stadium in 2010 (thus ushering in Friday night light football), to performing with the Treble Makers

onstage at the Christmas concert, Segredo has seen and done it all over his last 25 years at Montini Catholic.

He has celebrated many highs including the school's 50th anniversary year-long celebrations (2015-16), but also has experienced devastating lows, mourning the passing of students and colleagues (Johnny Weiger in 2012 and Taylor Williams in 2016).

The sudden death of boys varsity basketball coach Daryl Thomas in 2018 was also a time of great sorrow throughout the Montini Catholic community.

"These tragedies have been difficult to navigate, but have brought us together and made us stronger over the years—being there for each other," he says.

Segredo says he will also never forget these past two years of managing a high school throughout the stress of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"I am so proud of—and will never forget—our last two senior classes and how they handled the adversity," he said.

"Our students are still dealing with the impact. I am continuously in awe of their strength and resilience."

"Jim has several mantras that we have learned over the years, like 'we teach bell to bell,' 'the student

is the subject,' and he added the Lasallian motto 'touching hearts' to his repertoire," said Maryann O'Neill. "I know him to be a man who is passionate about helping children, a visionary who wants the best for his students and a superb role model for the entire school, faculty, staff and students."

"Jim is a big idea person, he has the ability to forecast and plan and execute expansions to the building as well as his spectacular special events. Who else do you know that would bring a truckload of hay into a school building for a parent social in October?"

"The desire to always put the students first is who Jim Segredo is as an educator," added current Principal Kevin Beirne. "His tireless work fundraising for our school community always has one aim: to create the best school community possible."

"I can honestly say, without a doubt, that Jim works harder in that endeavor than anyone I've ever worked with. He truly sets the standard for dedication to his vocation as a Lasallian educator. He often encourages the rest of us to touch the hearts of our students. Not only does he preach this Lasallian tenet, he lives it day in and day out, touching not only the hearts of students, but of the rest of us as well."

Warriors' playoff run ends with a loss to Wheaton North

Falcons hang on for a 10-3 quarterfinal victory; Willowbrook completes its season with an 8-4 record

STAFF REPORT

The Willowbrook football team's season ended with Friday night's 10-3 loss to Wheaton North in an IHSA Class 7A quarterfinal playoff game in Villa Park.

The Warriors finished the season with an overall record of 8-4. Wheaton North, which improved to 11-1, advanced to this week's semifinal round. The Falcons will face Brother Rice in one Class 7A semifinal. The winner will meet either St. Rita or Prospect in the state championship game, which will be played at Northern Illinois University's Huskie Stadium on Nov. 27.

"It hurts," said Willowbrook coach Nick Hildreth after Friday's game, which was played in chilly and occasionally rainy conditions. "All of a sudden, we don't have practice tomorrow. We normally have our team meeting after school on Monday. Those things don't exist anymore. That's hard, and it's tough to take. It's abrupt."

The Warriors have advanced to at least the quarterfinal round in each of the last five full seasons. Willowbrook won a pair of post-season games to advance to the IHSA quarterfinals in 2016 (in the 7A level), 2017 (6A) and 2018 (7A). Willowbrook won three playoff games in 2019 to earn a berth in the semifinal round of the Class 7A playoffs. The 2020 season was postponed because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The state's IHSA football teams played a shortened six-game season, with no playoffs, in the spring of 2021.

The Falcons and Warriors scored all 13 of the game's points during

the first half. Wheaton North scored the first points of the night shortly after breaking a punt return of about 40 yards to begin an offensive drive near Willowbrook's 15-yard line. Moments later, the Falcons kicked a 26-yard field goal to take a 3-0 lead with 5:54 left in the first quarter.

Willowbrook evened the score at 3-3 when junior Adrian Guerrero booted a 37-yard field goal with 8:40 remaining in the second quarter. The Warriors delivered a short kickoff on the ensuing kick. The Falcons recovered the kick and began their next drive at midfield.

That drive ended with Wheaton North's 1-yard touchdown run on a fourth-and-goal play with 3:41 to play in the first half. The Falcons added the extra-point kick to take a 10-3 lead.

Willowbrook moved the ball into Wheaton North territory during a third-quarter drive that featured a fourth-down completion from sophomore quarterback A.J. Palicki to junior Joey Tumilty. The pass play gained 15 yards and gave the Warriors a first down at the Falcons' 22-yard line.

A few plays later, Wheaton North intercepted a pass near the goal line to end the Warriors' drive.

"We gave them [the Falcons] a short field on their two scores," said Hildreth. "We could not really solidify any flow to anything that we were doing offensively. We had opportunities and we didn't capitalize."

Willowbrook began an offensive drive at its own 18-yard line with 8:33 left in the fourth quarter. The Warriors drove the ball to near mid-



CHRIS FOX PHOTOS Rock Valley Publishing

The Willowbrook football team completed its season with Friday's 10-3 loss to Wheaton North in an IHSA Class 7A quarterfinal playoff game in Villa Park. The Warriors finished the season with an overall record of 8-4. One photo from Friday's game shows senior Cristlan Lager (above - No. 9) pursuing Wheaton North's quarterback. Another photo shows senior Jaylon White (below - No. 4) carrying the ball, with senior Max Manning (No. 53) preparing to make a block. One more photo shows sophomore quarterback A.J. Palicki (below left - No. 2) firing a pass. The Warriors have advanced to at least the quarterfinal round in each of their last five post-season appearances.

field before punting the ball away. Wheaton North took possession at its own 31-yard line with 4:31 remaining.

The Falcons proceeded to drive for four first downs on their way to running out the clock and sealing their victory.

Hildreth stressed that while he was disappointed with the loss, he was pleased with the effort the Warriors had given all season.

"It's been a tough couple of years,

academically and athletically," he said. "The way they've bounced back, and how they've approached every day, I couldn't be more proud of this group."

The Warriors opened the season with a pair of non-conference road losses at Providence Catholic and Downers Grove North. Willowbrook then reeled off five straight West Suburban Gold Conference wins before losing a non-conference game to York. The Warriors closed out their

regular season with a conference win at Morton. Willowbrook posted a perfect 6-0 conference record this season. The Warriors haven't lost a conference game since the final week of the 2016 regular season.

Willowbrook opened the 2021 playoffs with a 44-0 win against Whitney Young in Chicago on Oct. 29. The Warriors advanced to the quarterfinals by defeating Moline 30-26 in a second-round battle in Villa Park on Nov. 5.





With this extremely warm weather the leaves are not falling. I was wondering, are they going to extend leaf pick up past Dec. 3? Because we really need it. Thank you.

Editor's note: Since you did not indicate which village you are referring to, the Village of Villa Park has free leaf pickup through Dec. 2, and in the Village of Lombard, through Dec. 10.

I heard Governor Billionaire went to Scotland for that climate change conference. You know, the conference where all the hypocrites flew on either commercial or private jets to get there and put more pollutants into the atmosphere. They could have used Zoom for their conference, but I digress. A radio program I was listening to brought up an interesting point: Did our billionaire governor use his own money, or taxpayer dollars, to fly over there and wine and dine with all the climate change

alarmists? I still haven't heard anything either way.

Maybe you Trump worshippers who call Speak Out all the time can answer this question for me. If your orange-haired messiah doesn't have anything to hide about the Jan. 6 insurrection, why is he running to the courts claiming executive privilege regarding the release of key White House records from his presidency to the House select committee investigating the attack on the Capitol? Seems like a fair question to me.

I listened to some of the Incoherent in Chief's remarks at Arlington National Cemetery on Veterans Day. He said to veterans, "You are the very spine of America." Too bad the Incoherent in Chief didn't have a spine when it came to Afghanistan. Don't you find it interesting that we never hear about Afghanistan anymore?

What is Pritzker doing? None of the states neighboring Illinois have a mask mandate. Masks are useless in stopping the spread of an airborne virus. When is he going to give it up?

Have a Happy Thanksgiving. I hope you enjoy paying more for everything since this train wreck administration in office has let inflation run wild. But hey, no more mean tweets and looking out for actual Americans.

I agree with the caller who talked about dogs hanging out the window and/or sitting in the driver's lap. This is dangerous for both the driver and the dog. Crack the window so it can sniff the air, sure, but don't let your dog hang its head out any window because it could get hit with flying debris or get something in its eye. Would you hang your head out the window? I don't think so.

There have supposedly been more COVID-19 deaths in the U.S. in 2021—during Biden's presidency—than there were in 2020, when Trump was president. More COVID-19 deaths in 2021, when we've had a vaccine, than in 2020, when there was no vaccine. That doesn't make sense. People seemed eager to blame Trump for the coronavirus. I question how many people really died of COVID-19, both in 2020 and 2021. It seems like the numbers have been inflated, for a variety of reasons.

First, I don't think the governor's race in Virginia has anything to do

with forecasting the results of next year's elections. It was Republicans voting for their state official, and that is fine, but they voted for Biden in the general election because there is no way they could put up with the former, disgraced, twice impeached president. Next, the good news is that the former, disgraced, twice impeached president will not be able to run in 2024! Why? Because by then he will not only have been indicted (for various crimes), but he will have been convicted of at least one of them, and a convicted criminal cannot run for president. Thank God!

Look over your Comcast bill as they seem to charge for Netflix whether you signed up or not. And when you call, they cannot remove and send you to Netflix to cancel an account you never signed up for or know any information on. Class action lawsuit written all over it.

It's interesting that many people in the media are lashing out at Aaron Rodgers for not getting a COVID-19 vaccine. It doesn't seem like they've been as vocal in condemning NFL players who have been accused of actual crimes. Was Aaron Rodgers even sick? I don't believe so. He had to sit out one game because of the NFL policy, but he was back for his team's next game. And if the vaccine works, why should anyone worry about someone else's vaccination status?

Hey Trump supporters. I noticed one of your heroes, Steve Bannon, is finally going to turn himself in and

appear in court. It only took two indictments on two counts of contempt of Congress before he finally agreed. What is Bannon hiding about the insurrection on Jan. 6?

Democrats are sleepwalking. Biden on the way to socialism, who breeds communism. It's obvious most people poor President Biden is being manipulated, reading a prompter and blamed for everything.

Someone else pointed this out. I believe it's true. Zealots who spewing their "climate change" sense are causing anxiety and decision among children. It's shameful that so many politicians, journalists and celebrities keep pushing doom and gloom to kids. These zealots have peddled so much garbage these years. It's pretty pathetic they are scaring kids into thinking our planet is in grave danger.

Several people in the media have stated that Kyle Rittenberg shouldn't have been in Kenosha during last year's unrest. Do you know who else shouldn't have been there? The rioters, including the ones who were shot. Those people were there to engage in a peaceful protest. They were violent people who were there to loot and burn.

After reading last week's Speak Out, one thing I'm certain of: Biden has lowered the IQ by points or better for half this nation. He did it in just under 10 months unbelievable.

To those households around here that have Black Lives Matter signs posted in their front windows. Do them every day driving to and from work. The leaders of New York Black Lives Matter movement threatened, in their words, "fire and bloodshed" if Eric Adams, mayor-elect, reinstates the NYPD anti-crime units. Think about this: you continue to display those Black Lives Matter signs in your window. By the way, Adams isn't some wacko right-wing Republican. He's Black and is a Democrat.

Ellie Hassler ★ swims three races at the IHSA state meet

Willowbrook senior Ellie Hassler of Villa Park participated in the IHSA girls state swimming and diving meet, which took place Friday and Saturday at FMC Natatorium in Westmont. Hassler, who is a member of the Willowbrook/Addison girls co-op team, competed in three individual events in the state meet: 100-yard freestyle, 200-yard freestyle and 100-yard breaststroke.

Hassler swam to a second-place finish in the state meet's 500-yard freestyle event. She completed the race in 39.74 seconds. Hassler tied for a third-place showing in the 100-yard freestyle, which she finished in 1 minute, 30.28 seconds. Hassler completed the state meet 100-yard breaststroke event in a second-place time of 2:11.34.



CHRIS FOX PHOTOS Rock Valley Publishing

Villa Park resident contributes to Montini's state title

Villa Park resident Izzie Evenson (above right - No. 10) helped the Montini Catholic girls volleyball team win the IHSA Class 2A state championship. The Broncos defeated Pleasant Plains 25-16, 25-17 in Saturday afternoon's state final at Redbird Arena in Normal. Montini, which completed its season with 35 straight wins, posted an overall season record of 40-1. One photo (above left) shows Evenson (center) and some of her teammates celebrating after the Broncos won the final point of Saturday's championship match. Evenson is a freshman at Montini. Before going to high school, she attended St. Plus X School in Lombard.

Timothy Christian

Coach: Jill Groenewold (third season)

Last season's record: 14-2 overall; 10-2 in conference

Top returning players: Maddie Drye, jr. (G, 5-9); Grace Roland, jr. (C, 6-1); Tegan Gunn, sr. (G, 5-4); Ella Vander Molen, sr. (G, 5-6); Cailey Schuurman sr. (F, 6-1)

Top new players: Sami Drye, fr. (G, 5-6); Mili Martens jr. (G, 5-5)

Worth noting: "All my 6-footers are gone," Groenewold said with a laugh. That includes Greta Hoogstra, who is playing volleyball at Colgate, and Hannah Schuringa, who averaged 20 ppg last year and is playing at Trinity Christian College in Palos Heights. Maddie Drye said the example those players provided are already paying dividends. "They were just good all-around people," she said. "Me and some of the other girls were able to see their example of how hard they played and use that and have another great season."

Westmont

Coach: Thomas White (second season)

Last season's record: 0-13 overall, 0-11 in conference

Top returning players: Jordan Karesh, sr. (F, 5-7); Dieiliza Dalipi, jr. (C, 5-10); Jillian Mackinnon, jr. (G, 5-5)

Top new players: Payeton Pickens, fr. (G, 5-5); Dasha Savchuk, fr. (F, 5-6); Evalise Papish, so. (G, 5-6); Danielle Hoover, fr. (F-C, 5-8)

Worth noting: It was a tough go of it in White's first season. Not only was there the COVID-19 pandemic to contend with, the team only had seven players. But things are looking up. First and foremost, he said, "we're excited to have 14 players which allows us to scrimmage and have subs and play an energetic style." Karesh is a four-year player who has played every position for the Sentinels. Expect to see her at all five again this season, but start at small forward. Papish transferred in from Morton.

Wheaton North

Coach: Dave Eaton

Last season's record: 13-3

Top returning players: Claire Hyde, sr. (G, 5-5); Caroline Gaither, sr. (G, 5-7); Lindsey Shanahan, sr. (G, 5-6)

Top newcomers: Sara Abdul, fr. (G, 5-7); Zoey Bohmer, so. (F, 5-11); Eden Pearson, jr. (G, 5-8)

Worth noting: The Falcons graduated a group of seniors that went 72-26 over their four-year careers. Wheaton North will look to contend behind returning four-year varsity starters Hyde and Gaither. Hyde and Gaither have been top players in the DuKane Conference throughout their career and it's expected they'll help usher in the newest era of Falcons. Hyde, last year's DuKane Conference Player of the Year, is a four-year varsity starter who averaged 20.1 points as a junior

and made 54 3-pointers at a 38.5% rate.

Wheaton Warrenville South

Coach: Rob Kroehnke

Last season's record: 9-8

Top returning players: Lily Huntzinger, sr. (G, 5-9); Hannah Struebing, so. (F, 5-10)

Top new players: Ellie Farrell, sr. (F, 5-7); Megan Economos, sr. (F, 5-7)

Worth noting: WW South will be looking to build upon a steady season with a team headlined by DePauw recruit Huntzinger. Struebing, Campbell Bastian, Farrell and Economos will be key contributors for a team looking to make a splash in conference play. "[We have] good experience returning and promising newcomers," Kroehnke said.

Willowbrook

Coach: Terry Harrell (13th season)

Last season's record: 14-2, 6-0 WSG (champions)

Top returning players: Sophie Sullivan, sr. (G, 5-7); Cali Kenny, so. (G, 5-10); Elle Bruschk, so. (G, 5-11); Sara Stout, jr. (F, 5-10)

Top new player: Hannah Kenny, fr. (G, 5-8)

Worth noting: With two conference championships in the past three years, Willowbrook is clearly a program on the rise. Leading the way is Sullivan, who averaged 15.6 ppg last season after transferring in from Montini. Cali Kenny burst onto the scene as a freshman and finished with a 22-point performance in the WSC championship win over Lyons and now her younger sister Hannah joins the team. Bruschk will step into a starting role after being a key contributor off the bench. "We are a very skilled and quick team," Harrell said. "If we are able to compete on the glass consistently, we will be successful this year."

York

Coach: Brandon Collings (fifth season)

Last season's record: 12-2, 5-1 WSS (co-champions)

Top returning players: Mariann Blass, jr. (G, 5-8); Lizzie Baldridge, jr. (G, 5-9); Stella Kohl, so. (G, 5-10); Erin Powers, sr. (G, 5-8)

Top new players: Katie Sosa, jr. (G, 6-0); Hannah Meyers, so. (G, 5-6); Angelina Downer, so. (F, 6-1)

Worth noting: York looks to continue its run of success under Collings, which has included an overall record of 75-33 and consecutive conference titles in his four years as coach. The team returns only four players with varsity experience but one important one is Blass, who averaged 11.5 points while shooting over 40% from the 3-point arc last year. Point guard Baldridge will step into an expanded role after totaling 5.1 ppg as a sophomore as will Kohl (3.5 ppg) and Powers.

NOTICE OF PROPOSED PROPERTY TAX INCREASE FOR LEMONT PARK DISTRICT, COOK, DUPAGE AND WILL COUNTIES, ILLINOIS.

- I. A public hearing to approve a proposed property tax levy increase for Lemont Park District for 2021 (payable in 2022) will be held on Wednesday, December 1st, 2021, at 6:30 p.m. at Lemont Park District Centennial Building at 16028 W. 127th, Lemont, IL 60439.

Any person desiring to appear at the public hearing and present testimony to the taxing district may contact Louise Z. Egofski, Executive Director, Lemont Park District 16028 W. 127th St., Lemont, IL 60439, 630-257-6787.

- II. The corporate and special purpose property taxes extended or abated for 2020 (payable in 2021) were \$2,806,033.

The proposed corporate and special purpose property taxes to be levied for 2021 (payable in 2022) are \$2,964,936. This represents a 5.66% increase over the previous year.

- III. The property taxes extended for debt service and public building commission leases for 2020 (payable in 2021) were \$2,088,926.

The estimated property taxes to be levied for debt service and public building commission leases for 2021 (payable in 2022) are \$2,001,504. This represents a 4.19% decrease over the previous year.

- IV. The total property taxes extended or abated for 2020 (payable in 2021) were \$4,894,959.

- V. The estimated total property taxes to be levied for 2021 (payable in 2022) are \$4,966,440. This represents a 1.46% increase over the previous year.

Wheaton North grinds out win against Willowbrook

Falcons move into semifinals for first time since 2002

By JOSHUA WELGE
jwelge@shawmedia.com

VILLA PARK — Tyler O'Connor and the Wheaton North defense are not immune to allowing yards or the occasional first down or two.

Giving up points, though, is another story.

"We have that bend but don't break attitude," said O'Connor, Wheaton North's junior defensive back. "We go off offense wins games, defense wins championships."

That philosophy has served the Falcons well as the least scored upon defense left in the Class 7A bracket. It enabled them to grind out a tough 10-3 win at Willowbrook in a Class 7A state quarterfinal Nov. 12, sending Wheaton North into the semifinals for the first time since 2002.

It's the ninth time in 12 games that Wheaton North (11-1), which advanced to host Brother Rice (10-2) at 4 p.m. Nov. 20, has allowed eight points or fewer to an opponent. The Falcons moved on despite being out-gained 221-161.

"We gave up a lot of underneath passes. [Joe] Tumilty is a great football player. Even though we were keying on him, he still made plays." Wheaton North coach Joe Wardynski said. "We didn't give up anything over the top, which kept them to three points."

O'Connor, who kicked a 26-yard field goal in the first quarter for an early 3-0 Wheaton North lead, made the play of the game defensively late in the third quarter.

On Willowbrook's longest drive of the game, Tumilty converted a fourth down with a 15-yard reception to sophomore quarterback AJ Palicki that put the Warriors near the red zone.

Two plays later, O'Connor picked off Palicki in the end zone, preserving Wheaton North's 10-3 lead.

"I just knew that I had to get an interception there," O'Connor said. "I saw our other safety Jackson Moore come over the top, he tipped the ball up, I was just waiting for it. Because it was wet out, I was just waiting for the ball to slip out of their hands."

The game, played at times in a cold mist on a frigid evening, featured 10 punts, seven in the first half. Wheaton North scored all of its points off short fields.

Seth Kortenhoeven's 45-yard punt return set up O'Connor's field goal with 5:54 left in the first quarter.

Adrian Guerrero's 37-yard field goal for Willowbrook tied it 3-3 with 8:40 left in the second quarter.



Wheaton North's Luke Beedle runs up the middle during the Class 7A state quarterfinal game against Willowbrook on Nov. 12.

Photos by Gary E. Duncan Sr. for Shaw Media



Willowbrook's Joseph Tumilty is tackled by Wheaton North's Ross Dansill.

Wheaton North then fell on the ensuing onside kick attempt.

The Falcons made the decision pay. Mark Forcucci's 1-yard touchdown plunge on fourth-and-goal capped a 10-play, 49-yard drive for a 10-3 lead with 3:41 before the half.

"The reality is we gave them a short field on that touchdown and we gave them a long return on that field goal," Willowbrook coach Nick Hildreth said.

"That's two scores, and at the same time, we didn't capitalize and left points out there. We couldn't sustain any-

thing, and penalties hurt us. We had opportunities and didn't capitalize."

Sophomore Walker Owens, who has teamed up with junior Luke Beedle to carry the load in the Wheaton North backfield since third-year starting running back Brayton Maske went down with a torn MCL in Week 6, had five carries on the touchdown drive.

Owens had four more carries on Wheaton North's final drive that ran out the clock. Beedle had the last two.

"It was tough running, but it felt good," said Owens, who ran for 53

yards on nine carries. "At the end, we were grinding out first downs, running out the clock and that's all we really needed to do."

Forcucci, the DuKane Conference Offensive Player of the Year, struggled at times in the poor conditions, missing on six of his first seven passes. But he completed his last five with clutch throws to Ross Dansill and Kortenhoeven on the final possession.

"Credit to Mark, credit to the O-line for giving him time to get those balls off," Wardynski said. "We struggled a little bit getting down the field. Tonight, we were a little deficient in the passing game. We have to get that going if we're going to have a chance [this week]."

Willowbrook (8-4), in the quarterfinals for the fifth straight time, had gotten there by rallying from a nine-point halftime deficit in the second round against Moline.

The Warriors had a chance to do it again on their last possession, getting to the Wheaton North 40 on two Tumilty catches. But two holding penalties backed Willowbrook up and it never got the ball back after punting with just less than five minutes left.

Palicki was 11 for 23 for 123 yards. Tumilty caught five of the passes.

"We were just super choppy offensively," Hildreth said. "We just could not solidify any flow and continue to move the chains. Big plays are great, but as teams get better it's not going to be just big plays, you're going to have to get chunks and move the chains and at no point could we do that."

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THURSDAY, NOV. 25, 2021



Long-range success
Willowbrook's girls basketball team opened its 2021-22 season with three straight victories last week. The Warriors began their season with a 65-29 home victory over Bartlett on Nov. 16. On Friday, the Warriors played their first game in their own five-team, round-robin Thanksgiving Invitational. Willowbrook beat Montini 64-55 in Friday's battle between area schools. Sophomore Elle Bruschk (No. 33) of the Warriors is pictured while firing and making a 3-point shot early in the fourth quarter. Bruschk's basket gave Willowbrook a 57-45 lead. In addition to scoring four points during Friday's win, Bruschk provided a team-leading 12 rebounds. The Warriors moved to 3-0 overall and 2-0 in the invitational following Saturday's 70-54 win over Plainfield East. Bruschk and some of her teammates on the Warriors' girls basketball team played on the Willowbrook girls volleyball team, which recently finished its 2021 fall season with a 37-2 record. The Warriors won the West Suburban Gold Conference title during the regular season. They went on to win four post-season matches, claiming the program's first regional and sectional titles before losing an IHSA Class 4A super-sectional battle against Mother McAuley.

CHRIS FOX PHOTO/Villa Park Review

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Bond set for four Chicago residents charged with Oak Brook burglary and retail theft

DuPage County State's Attorney Robert Berlin and Oak Brook Chief of Police James Kruger announced that bond has been set for four of six individuals, all of whom are from Chicago, accused of stealing nearly \$15,000 worth of merchandise from an Ulta Beauty store in the 2100 block of W. 22nd, Oak Brook.

Peaches P. Johnson, 29; Kamal J. Hoskins, 25; Roy Crane, 21; and Darnell Profit, 19, appeared in bond court where Judge Robert Miller set bond at \$175,000 with 10% to apply for Johnson and \$100,000 with 10 percent to apply for Hoskins, Crane and Profit. The two remaining individuals, both juveniles, appeared at a detention hearing. All six defendants have been charged

with one count of burglary (Class 2 felony) and one count of retail theft (Class 3 felony).

On Nov. 12 at approximately 5:44 p.m., the Oak Brook Police Department received information from the Chicago Police Department that a vehicle suspected of being involved in illegal activity in Norridge earlier that day was in front of the Ulta Beauty store. Officers immediately responded but by the time officers arrived, the vehicle had fled the scene.

It is alleged that five male subjects, all wearing hoodies and ski masks, ran into the store. It is alleged that at least three of the individuals pulled out garbage bags and that all five subjects worked in unison, clearing out the shelves of

cologne into the garbage bags. It is further alleged that the subjects then fled the scene.

Through the course of their investigation into the burglary, the vehicle was located driving southbound on I-294 at which time the Hinsdale Police Department shut down the highway and took the suspects into custody. In all, it is alleged that the individuals stole 153 bottles of cologne worth nearly \$15,000.

"In DuPage County, we do not tolerate the type of violent forcible felony that these men are accused of," Berlin said. "The allegations that these six individuals traveled to DuPage County to commit this crime at the onset of the holiday season will not be taken lightly and will be prosecuted to the fullest

extent of the law. I commend the Chicago, Oak Brook and Hinsdale Police Departments for their truly outstanding collaborative efforts that resulted in the quick apprehension of the defendants in this case."

"These criminal incidents that have been proliferating across the region must stop," Kruger said. "The Oak Brook Police Department is committed to keeping our community safe and with the great partnership we have with our state's attorney, offenders will understand there is a consequence for their actions."

The cases against all four men are assigned to Judge Daniel Guerin. Their next court appearance is scheduled Dec. 13 for arraignment.

Joyful Traditions in Villa Park making a comeback in 2021

Large crowds expected for the Dec. 4 event

Villa Park's annual Joyful Traditions celebration will take place Saturday, Dec. 4, from 4 to 8 p.m. The event, which is co-sponsored by the Village of Villa Park and the Villa Park Chamber of Commerce, will be held near the Ruggard Gazebo along the Illinois Prairie Path, just west of Ardmore Avenue.

The regular Joyful Traditions gathering did not take place last year because of the COVID-19 pandemic. This year's in-person event will offer the usual attractions, including a visit from Santa and Mrs. Claus. Children and their families will be able to meet Santa and Mrs. Claus and pose for photos under the gazebo.

This year's Joyful Traditions attractions also include trolley rides, a petting zoo, a S'more station, food sales and caroling from members of the Willowbrook High School Concert Choir.



SUBMITTED PHOTO: Rock Valley Publishing

Students receive scholarships

Willowbrook High School's Music Booster Club recently awarded 12 separate \$200 scholarships to student-musicians for private lessons. The scholarship recipients performed for club members, family and friends at a Nov. 2 recital. The 12 students who each received a \$200 scholarship from the Willowbrook Music Booster Club (pictured left to right) included: sophomore Lillian Caron, freshman Gillian Falco, sophomore Thomas Reddy, freshman Margaret Brennan, freshman Ryan Guilfoyle, junior Caitlin O'Connor, senior Thomas Guilfoyle, senior Katie Corsini, sophomore Raymond Gajardo, sophomore Sean O'Brochta, senior Damian Rocha and junior Amelia Tortorici.

College news

Dean's List

• More than 900 Elmhurst University students were named to the Spring 2021 Dean's List. The following students from Villa Park made the list: Lester Golinski, Huda Khan, Stephanie Quaiver, Laura Santucci, Rachael Mason, Selina Zeiss, Helen Curtin, Khalilah Brooks, Sarah Aviles, Keely Keenan, Samantha Diaz, Andrew Ciesla, Brianna Kusmierz, Joscelyn McCoy, Jennifer Solis, Jessica Soto, Mikayla Tomaszewski. From Oakbrook Terrace: Aasiyah Wasif.

• Augustana College announced more than 1,100 students were named to the Dean's List for the 2020-21 spring semester. Among them were the following Villa Park residents: Amy Bussa majoring in Communication Sciences and Disorders; Erika Dahlstrand majoring in Teaching French; Austin Floistad majoring in Political Science; Richard Keehner, whose major is undecided; Sydney

Kechner majoring in English Education; and Kelli McNeice, majoring in Bus Adm-Marketing.

• The following students from Villa Park received Dean's List honors at Wheaton College: Courtney Baer and Elizabeth Romero.

• Miami University students who are ranked in the top three percent of undergraduate students within each division for second semester 2020-21 have been named to the President's list recognizing academic excellence. Among them is Villa Park resident Kate Gargano, who is earning an A.B. in International Studies, a Bachelor of Arts degree in International Studies and Strategic Communication.

Graduations

• Jacob Roy of Villa Park graduated with a BS in Management and Leadership Human Resource Management from Bradley University in May.

Villa Park library events

Editor's note: Unless otherwise indicated, information on each of the following events and programs can be found by visiting the library's website at vppl.info or by calling 630-834-1164.

Thursday, Dec. 22

Library hosting holiday matinee

The Villa Park Public Library will hold a holiday matinee for children of all ages at 1 p.m. Registration is not required. Face masks are required to enter the library by all individuals over age 2 who can medically tolerate it, regardless of vaccination status.

Ongoing programs

Library holding Teen Writing Contest

The Villa Park Public Library is holding a Teen Writing Contest: Short Stories! in honor of NaNoWriMo (National Novel Writing Month). All students in grades 6 through 12 are invited to participate by submitting an original short story. The theme is: LIGHT. Participants are encour-

aged to interpret this in any way they wish. This is a wonderful opportunity for young writers to be creative and express their ideas! Winners will be announced in December. For official contest details and rules, visit the library's website at vppl.info or call 630-834-1164.

Storytime at Oakbrook Terrace Park District Dec. 13

The Villa Park Public Library will hold Rhythm & Rhyme Community Storytimes outdoors at the Oakbrook Terrace Park District, located at 1S325 Ardmore Ave. in Oakbrook Terrace. This drop-in program is for young children of all ages, accompanied by an adult. Upcoming sessions will be held Monday, Dec. 13 from 11:30 a.m.-noon. Storytimes will take place indoors in the event of inclement weather. The Oakbrook Terrace Park District requires masks while indoors regardless of vaccination status. Registration is not required.

Happy Thanksgiving

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This is Villa Park calling—a senior citizen, a very senior citizen. Last month, my Nicor bill was \$50. This month it's \$200. Somebody help me.

Editor's note: Nicor Gas has payment and budget plan options, and DuPage County has a senior citizen services division that might be able to help you with applying

for energy assistance. Their number is 630-407-6500 or 800-942-9412.

Many congratulations to Willowbrook High School for a great presentation of "You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown." What great talent—and teachers—we are lucky to have!

The incompetent Joe Biden not only has an incompetent vice president at his side, but also an incompetent cabinet. One incompetent cabinet member who comes to mind for me is Merrick Garland, the attorney general. Do you remember hearing about how Mr. Garland wanted to mobilize the FBI to work with local and state law enforcement to address the rise of Antifa, Black Lives Matter or other groups and individuals that looted businesses last year, set fire to buildings, threw bricks and bottles at police, or set up CHAZ zones like they did in Seattle? Fat chance! All I can say is thank God Merrick Garland isn't on the Supreme Court.

Kyle Rittenhouse has been on trial, but I think the so-called mainstream media deserves to be on trial. In my

opinion, the mainstream media does nothing but toe the line for the Democratic Party and the regressive left. There used to be a time when both sides of a story would be presented in the media. Not anymore. Everything has to fit a narrative, and for many of these shills on CNN and MSNBC, the narrative always seems to be about race. The mainstream media have no shame.

Here we are, 18 months into COVID-19, and I still see people around town who still wear masks while driving alone, or wear a mask outside, yet there's nobody within 100 yards of them. Dr. Fauci would be proud! You are true Fauci-ite robots!

I was listening to a radio program the other day, and one of the hosts mentioned that Lyons Township High School has a director of equity and belonging who's making \$155,000 a year. I couldn't believe it, so I looked it up. Sure enough, it's all true. If this is an example of how tax dollars are being spent in schools these days, I can see why parents are starting to become more vocal at school board meetings.

It's one thing to celebrate Kyle Rittenhouse being acquitted, but making him out to be some type of hero, like some on Fox News have been doing, is wrong. Kyle Rittenhouse is no hero.

I vote mostly on issues but lean toward Republicans because they are the more fiscally conservative of the parties, and I was much better off when Trump was in office (think lower gas prices, for one), even if I didn't like him. With that said, I think Jim Nowlan's column in the Nov. 11 *Lombardian* was spot on. He essentially writes that the Republicans need a Trump-like Republican Party—just without Donald Trump. Question for the Democrats: With President Biden's approval rating at 38 percent and Vice President Kamala Harris' rating at 28 percent (Nov. 7 *USA Today*), are you sorry yet? I will take Trump's mean tweets over Harris' ninnying laugh any day.

Why on Earth would you call Speak Out because your real estate tax checks have not been cashed? The phone number for the DuPage Coup-

ty collector is 630-407-5900. Try using that number.

President Biden has said a lot of foolish things. Here's one of his recent gems: "When you buy an electric vehicle, you can go all the way across America on a single tank of gas, figuratively speaking. It's not gas. You plug it in." The average electric car can travel about 300 miles on a single charge. The country is significantly more than 300 miles wide. Does Biden think re-charging an electric vehicle is as simple as getting a tank of gas? Does he know that filling up a car's gas tank takes a few minutes, while re-charging an electric vehicle can take several hours? By the way, remember when Barack Obama promised to buy a Chevy Volt when he left office? Obama's been out of office for nearly five years. Has anyone seen him driving around in a Chevy Volt?

One of the Chicago-based food pantries made a good point that while they have donations of food coming in for Thanksgiving to help feed the hungry, they are often in need for the next few days that follow, for those who didn't or couldn't get a holiday meal. In that light, I encourage us as Villa Park and Lombard residents to donate what you can to our local food pantries so that those less fortunate can

It's a sad state of affairs when the police who are paid to protect and serve can't do their job because of politicians. It takes a 17-year-old to protect people and property from rioters who are burning and destroying buildings, along with livelihoods. Then when he protects himself, they try to put him in jail. Wake up Americans. This is America!

This is to the caller who said he or she mailed to real estate tax payments to the DuPage County collector. They were never cashed and never returned. The DuPage County collector has this marvelous system called online payments. With just a few keystrokes on your computer, your funds are transferred from your bank to the DuPage County collector. I've been doing this for years. I've never lost a payment. The collector always gets them on time. You might want to come into the 21st century and give it a try.

Willowbrook's Tri-M Honor Society welcomes new members

The 24 Willowbrook High School students who were recently inducted into the school's Tri-M (Modern Music Masters) Honor Society are: Matthew Baumann, Lillian Caron, Anaelie Cavazos, Annabelle Deany, Lucia DiTerlizzi, Raymond Gajardo, Theresa Goodman, Olivia Gzamou-ranis, Keith Harris, Lillian Hendrickson, Patrick Kozbial, Amelia Kuban,

Lillian Larkin, Katy Latham, Rowan Magierski, Michalanne Martens, Sean O'Brochta, Thomas Reddy, Damian Rocha, Samantha Tantilla, Annabelle Thompson, Amelia Tortorici, Grace Van Dyke and Jesse Vasel.

The 23 Willowbrook students who were reaffirmed into the Tri-M Honor Society on Oct. 28 included: Ingrid Bantugan, Mary Brennan, Ash-

ley Bylsma, Katie Corsini, Hudson De La Rosa, Alexander Dean, Bobby Ernst, Nate Falco, Haley Ferguson, Yavilin Garcia-Gutierrez, Thomas Guilfoyle, Henry Jarrett, Abram Kamm, Sarah Kosanda, Neeraja Kumar, Emily Maher, Caitlin O'Connor, Emma Rattana, Kalli Reeves-Kohutsek, Anna Seelbach, Eric Veal, Imani Ward and Katie Wentworth.



SUBMITTED PHOTOS Villa Park Review

On Oct. 28, 24 Willowbrook High School students were inducted into the school's Tri-M (Modern Music Masters) Honor Society, while 23 students (top photo) were reaffirmed. During the induction ceremony, students were welcomed and congratulated by Willowbrook Music Department Chair Karyn Wolcott. Each inductee received a pin, a certificate and a membership card. Members also performed a student recital (pictured from left to right during the recital are sophomore Sean O'Brochta, senior Matthew Baumann and senior Keith Harris). To be inducted into the Tri-M Honor Society, students must have a 3.0 grade-point average, be a performer in the top band, choir or orchestra at Willowbrook and have at least a "B" average in their music classes. Tri-M is a national organization that connects music students in high schools throughout the U.S. By becoming a member, students have access to scholarships and other information through the National Association for Music Education. Tri-M Honor Society members are leaders in their respective performing ensembles and will help at concerts, perform community and Willowbrook Music Department service, organize music meetings and host Music in Our Schools Month, a national event, in March.

Villa Park library events

In-person Marvelous Mornings story times return to Library

Marvelous Mornings story times are back in-person at the Villa Park Public Library. Young children of all ages and their adults are invited to enjoy stories, songs, and activities, including a "make and take" project to enjoy together. Upcoming sessions will be held on Saturdays, Dec. 4, and Dec. 18, at 11 a.m. Sessions will be held in person at the library. Masks are required. Registration is also required.

Weekly In-house story times at the Library

The Villa Park Public Library's Youth Services Department is pleased to welcome youngsters

back for weekly in-house story times. *Toddler Time* is being held on Mondays or Thursdays from 10:30 to 11 a.m. Walkers up to age 3 and their adults will enjoy stories, musical activities, rhyming games, and playtime. *Babies and Books* are being held on Tuesdays or Thursdays from 9:30 to 10 a.m. Pre-walkers and their adults will get introduced to the world of language and books through music and singing, stories and rhymes. *Preschool Storytime* is being held on Wednesdays at 10 a.m. Designed for children ages 3 to 5 to attend independently, this is a lively program of imaginative stories and musical fun. All story times are being held in-person at the library. Masks are required.

Warriors tip off season with three victories

Willowbrook begins its own invite with a win over Montini

STAFF REPORT

The Willowbrook girls basketball team opened its 2021-22 season with three straight home wins, including a pair of victories at its own Thanksgiving invitational.

In its first game of its own invitational, Willowbrook earned an impressive 64-55 win over Montini on Friday night. The battle between nearby teams took place in front of spirited student sections from both schools.

The Warriors began their season with a 65-29 win over Bartlett on Nov. 16. Willowbrook held a 20-7 lead at the end of the first quarter. The lead expanded to 43-18 by halftime.

Senior Sophie Sullivan of the Warriors scored 15 of her team-leading 17 points during the first half of the season opener against Bartlett. Freshman Hannah Kenny contributed 11 points in her first game as a member of the Willowbrook girls basketball program. Junior Angie Lizasuain and sophomore Calli Kenny both provided 10 points. Sophomore Elle Bruschuk added eight points, while junior Sara Stout scored six points.

Montini held a 17-16 lead over Willowbrook through one quarter of Friday's game. The Warriors seized a 33-27 advantage by halftime. Willowbrook maintained a 51-45 lead at the end of the third quarter.

Hannah Kenny drained a 3-point shot in the opening seconds of the fourth quarter to give the Warriors a 54-45 lead. Moments later, Bruschuk

sank a 3-pointer to push Willowbrook's lead to 57-45.

"That was a tough hurdle for them [the Broncos] to get over," said Willowbrook coach Terry Harrell in referring to the 3-point shots from Hannah Kenny and Bruschuk at the start of the fourth quarter.

The Warriors led the Broncos 59-49 later in the fourth quarter, but Montini made two straight 3-point shots to trim Willowbrook's lead to 59-55 with about 2:35 left in the game.

Hannah Kenny's driving layup raised the Warriors' lead to 61-55 with 1:35 to play. Sullivan made three of four free-throw attempts during the final 30 seconds to help Willowbrook seal its victory.

"We played with good energy the whole game," said Harrell after the win over Montini.

Sullivan, who attended and played for Montini during her freshman and sophomore years before transferring to Willowbrook, scored a team-leading 21 points for the Warriors in their triumph over the Broncos. Hannah Kenny added 15 points, seven of which came during the fourth quarter. Lizasuain and Calli Kenny both provided nine points. Bruschuk scored four points and pulled down a team-high 12 rebounds.

The Warriors opened play in their own five-team, round-robin invite with Friday's win over Montini. The invite's four other teams began the invite on Thursday, Nov. 18. The Broncos started the event with a 76-31 victory over East Aurora.

The Warriors improved their overall record to 3-0 with Saturday's 70-54 win over Plainfield East. Sullivan poured in 22 points for the Warriors, who held a 26-17 lead after one quarter and a 43-29 edge at halftime. Willowbrook outscored the Bengals 19-6 in the third quarter to take a 62-35 lead with eight minutes to play.

Hannah Kenny, who made four 3-point shots, scored 18 points in Saturday's win. She also grabbed nine rebounds. Bruschuk and Stout added nine and eight points, respectively.

The Warriors completed their Thanksgiving invite with this week's games against Lockport and East Aurora.

Willowbrook is coming off an excellent 13-2 season earlier this year. The Warriors won their last nine games of the abbreviated season, which started in February and ended in March. The start of the season was delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Willowbrook finished the shortened season by winning the West Suburban Conference Tournament in Berwyn. The Warriors beat York 56-50 in a semifinal battle at the tournament on March 13. Later that same day, Willowbrook finished its season by beating Lyons Township 52-46 in the tournament's championship game. The Warriors avenged both of their regular-season losses on the final day of the season. Those two losses came in the season opener at York on Feb. 12, and in a Feb. 24 home contest against Lyons Township.



CHRIS FOX PHOTOS Villa Park Rav

The Willowbrook girls basketball team won its first three games of the 2021-22 season, which began last week. The Warriors began their season with a 65-29 victory over Bartlett on Nov. 16 in Villa Park. Three nights later, Willowbrook played its first game at its own five-team, round-robin Thanksgiving invitational. The Warriors defeated Montini 64-55 in Friday's contest. Pictured above, senior Sophie Sullivan (No. 1) scored a team-leading 21 points for Willowbrook in the victory over Montini. Sullivan is pictured while driving for a basket against her former team. Sullivan played for Montini during her freshman and sophomore seasons before transferring to Willowbrook. Above

right, freshman Hannah Kenny added 15 points for the Warriors in their win over the Broncos. Kenny (No. 10) is pictured during Willowbrook's season-opening win against Bartlett. The Warriors improved to 3-0 overall and 2-0 in their invitational following Saturday's 70-54 victory over Plainfield East. Sullivan scored a team-leading 22 points Saturday's win. Kenny, who made four shots from 3-point range, added 18 points. On more photo, from Willowbrook's win over Montini shows junior Angie Lizasuain (No. 14), who scored nine points in the game. The Warriors completed their own invitation with this week's games against Lockport and East Aurora.

Suburban Life

ATHLETE OF THE WEEK

SOPHIE SULLIVAN

Willowbrook, senior, basketball

Why Sullivan was selected: Sullivan scored 21 points in a win over her former team Montini and 22 points in a win over Plainfield East. Sullivan was voted by readers as the Suburban Life Athlete of the Week.



Here is her interview with Sports Editor Joshua Welge.

Welge: How did you control your emotions facing your old team for the first time?

Sullivan: I kind of expected the chants, all the noise from the crowd before the game started. I was excited. I know all the old people there. I wasn't going to take it personally. In big games, I zone all the stuff out. But I'm not going to lie, I was up all night thinking about the game afterward.

Welge: Was it extra fun playing them, or did you just treat it like any other game?

Sullivan: It didn't feel like a playoff game but the environment, and for who we were playing, it was the biggest win for me. Obviously getting a chance to play against my old team and winning on our home court in front of a huge crowd was fun. I don't think Willowbrook has ever beaten Montini, so the fact that we made history the second game of the season is pretty cool.

Welge: You had a very successful season in your first year at Willowbrook. How is this team looking?

Sullivan: I think we have a lot of potential. We are not the tallest team but the speed and skill is there.

Welge: You committed to SIU-Edwardsville. What made you choose that school?

Sullivan: The campus was beautiful. It had such a home feeling to it. Coach [Samantha] Quigley, I've known her since I was younger. She always came to open gyms at Montini when she was coaching at Lewis. She was a point guard in college, so I felt I could learn a lot.

Welge: If you could pick four pro players to join you on a starting five, who would they be?

Sullivan: Derrick Rose, Michael Jordan, Blake Griffin and Lonzo Ball.

Welge: Is there a favorite meal a family member makes?

Sullivan: My mom makes a really good lasagna.



Gary C. Duncan Sr. for Shaw Media

Willowbrook's Sophie Sullivan shoots a jumper against Montini on Nov. 19.

NOTICE OF PROPOSED PROPERTY TAX INCREASE FOR WESTMONT SPEC SERV 2

- I. A public hearing to approve a proposed property tax levy increase for the Westmont SPEC SERV 2 for 2021 will be held December 2, 2021 at 6:00 PM at the Westmont Village Hall, 31 W. Quincy St., Westmont, Illinois.

Any person desiring to appear at the public hearing and present testimony to the taxing district may contact Spencer Parker, Assistant Village Manager, 31 W. Quincy St., Westmont, Illinois 60559, (630) 981-6234.

- II. The corporate and special purpose property taxes extended for 2020 were \$88,124.20.

The proposed corporate and special purpose property taxes to be levied for 2021 are \$95,187.00. This represents a 8.01 % increase over the previous year.

- III. The property taxes extended for debt service and public building commission leases for 2020 were \$0.

The estimated property taxes to be levied for debt service and public building commission leases for 2021 are \$0. This represents no increase from the previous year.

- IV. The total property taxes extended for 2020 were \$88,124.20

The proposed total property taxes to be levied for 2021 are \$95,187.00. This represents a 8.01% increase over the previous year.

Suburban Life All-Area girls volleyball team

Sam Buckley, Benet, senior, setter: Committed to Washington University. All conference and all-tournament at the Wheaton Classic, Buckley led Benet in assists with the eighth-most in program history. She also led team in aces and was second in digs.

Darby Harris, Wheaton Warrenville South, senior, setter: Duane Conference Player of the Year and all-tournament at the Wheaton Classic, Autumnfest and Grimsen Classic, Harris led Tigers to sectional final after team took second in state in 2019. Harris, a Rice recruit, had 665 assists, 201 digs, 174 kills, 45 aces and 40 blocks. Holds program career record for digs. "Darby is the most selfless player I have ever coached," VAW South coach Bill Schreier said.

Katie Hurta, Nazareth, senior, outside hitter/setter: Suburban Life Player of the Year. Four-year varsity starter, East Suburban Catholic Conference Player of the Year and Indiana recruit led Nazareth to first-ever state title. Versatile talent had 415 kills at a .450 hitting percentage, fourth-best in the state, with 350 assists and 2.2 serve receive rating. Hurta finished her career with more than 1,000 kills.

Calli Kenney, Willowbrook, sopho-

more, outside hitter/opposite/setter: Two-time all-conference pick led Warriors to historic season - a 37-2 record and first-ever regional and sectional titles. Kenney led Willowbrook in kills (321) and aces (70) and was second in digs (232).

Paige Pickering, Montini, senior, outside hitter: GCAC Player of the Year and Cincinnati recruit was the centerpiece of program's offense since she was a freshman and led Lady Broncos to Class 2A state title this season. Pickering, who finished her career with more than 1,000 kills, had 357 kills, 203 digs, 35 assists, 34 aces and 39 blocks this season. All-tournament at Wheaton North, Latin and Quincy Notre Dame. "Paige has contagious positive energy that the team feeds off of in every match," Montini coach Trish Samolinski said. "Her ability to hit, serve, serve-receive and defend consistently keeps us in every match. She is fearless on the court and is our go-to when we need a big play."

Adrianna Vassek, Lyons, senior, outside hitter: Four-year varsity player and three-year starter, the six-rotation outside led Lions to 30-4 record, West Suburban Silver title and regional championship. Vassek had 236 kills, 210 digs, 18 aces and

17 blocks. All-conference and all-tournament at Rich East.

Gwen Wilkowiak, Downers Grove North, senior, outside hitter: Four-year starter was part of Downers Grove North's state runner-up team as a freshman. This season Wilkowiak, who will play in college at Campbell, tallied 481 kills, 48% of the Trojans' total, with 48 aces. She led her team in serve-receiving percentage with 2.25 and total receptions with 407. She added 266 digs and team-high 42 blocks. "I am not sure I saw a more complete player in the state than Gwen given that we played a highly competitive schedule," Trojans coach Mark Wasik said.

Honorable mention

Caelin Abramo, Benet, senior, outside hitter; Aleesa Andresen, Downers Grove South, senior, libero; Rebecca Bellows, WW South, sophomore, outside hitter; Lauren Borhani, Hinsdale Central, senior, outside hitter; Reeghan Boyer, Montini, senior, libero; Audrey Brcka, Wheaton North, junior, outside hitter; Ella Brend, Wheaton North, senior, libero; Sandy Brindl, Downers Grove North, senior, setter; Elizabeth Bruschuk, Willowbrook, senior; Kayden Dempsey, Downers Grove South, senior, outside

hitter; Annie Eschenbach, Benet, junior, middle hitter; Ava Falduto, IC Catholic Prep, sophomore, outside hitter/libero; Gillian Gimes, Nazareth, senior, libero; Jordan Heatherly, Montini, junior, setter/opposite; Addy Horner, St. Francis, freshman, right side/setter; Caitlin Johnson, Wheaton North, senior, middle; Martin Johnson, Glenbard West, sophomore, outside hitter; Maddie Kasallis, Montini, senior, middle/right side; Hannah Kenney, Willowbrook, freshman; Lily King, WW South, junior, oppositor; Tia Kostic, Lyons, senior, middle; Ella Lawton, York, senior, outside hitter; Kamryn Lee-Caracci, Lyons, junior, outside hitter; Katie Linnig, Willowbrook, senior; Abby Marlowick, Lyons, sophomore, setter; Ava Novak, Benet, sophomore, outside hitter; Taylor Olsen, WW South, senior, libero; Emeli Romo, Riverside-Brookfield, senior, setter; Kitty Sandt, Nazareth, junior, setter/right side hitter; Ivy Schoditsch, Nazareth, senior, middle; Abby VanderWal, Timothy Christian, freshman, outside hitter; Claire Wagner, IC Catholic Prep, senior, outside hitter; Aniya Warren, Benet, freshman, libero; Makayla Webber, Glenbard West, senior, middle; Dekalyn White, St. Francis, senior, libero.

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IT'S UP TO YOU TO VOTE FOR NOVEMBER'S CUTEST PET

Many precious pets have been entered in the November Cutest Pet contest, and now, it's time for you to choose the winner! You may vote once per day from November 23-29. The votes will be counted, one pet will be chosen as the winner, be published in Suburban Life Media newspapers and receive a prize!

VOTE NOW!



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