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Addison Trail students earn Automotive Service Excellence entry-level certifications

The 10 Addison Trail students listed below recently earned Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) Entry-Level Certifications. All are seniors.

- Michael Godenius: suspension and steering, engine repair, brake electrical, maintenance and light repair, heating and air conditioning;
- Daniel Zielinski: suspension and steering, engine repair, brake maintenance and light repair, engine performance, automotive service technology, manual drive train and axles, electrical, heating and air conditioning, automatic transmission/transaxle;
- Morri Bernardo: maintenance and light repair, heating and air conditioning;
- John Taci: suspension and steering, engine repair, brakes, engine performance, heating and air conditioning;
- Artemio Mejia: engine repair;
- Joshua Gloms: engine repair, heating and air conditioning;
- Angel Reyes: engine repair, heating and air conditioning, brakes;
- Alejandro Martinez: engine repair;
- Jonathan Campos: engine repair, heating and air conditioning;
- Christopher Gibson Jr.: engine performance.

AVID students collect for area church

Community service is a cornerstone of pride at District 88 and Addison Trail students in the school's AVID 9 (Advancement Via Individual Determination) Program (pictured here) recently demonstrated that commitment to giving back and helping others. Each year, the pupils work together to come up with a project for the class. This year, they hosted a holiday drive to collect new and used toys and winter clothing. The group donated eight boxes of items to R Church in Elgin.

Coming events

Wednesday, Jan. 5 Talking politics

Starting at 7 p.m. at the Large Meeting Room of the Addison Public Library, get out of your echo chamber and discuss the biggest political stories of the month with your neighbors. Info: addisonlibrary.org or call 630-543-3617.

Thursday, Jan. 6 Drawing with Mark Anderson (teens)

Starting at 3:15 p.m. at the Addison Public Library, professional illustrator and cartoonist Mark Anderson brings your drawings to life! All skill levels are welcome. Info: addisonlibrary.org or call 630-543-3617.

Friday, Jan. 7 and Friday, Jan. 21 Craft time for littles

From 10-10:45 a.m. at the Addison Public Library, craft time for littles is geared toward ages 2-5, but open to all ages. Info: addisonlibrary.org or call 630-543-3617.

Saturday, Jan. 8 Vaccine clinic

From 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Large Meeting Room of the Addison Public Library, the Illinois Department of Public Health is bringing a vaccine clinic to the library for people 12 years of age and older. Walk-ins are welcome. Anyone under the age of 18 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. IDPH Hotline: 833-621-1284.

Monday, Jan. 10-31 Story time on Zoom

From 10-10:30 a.m. at the Addison Public Library, stories, songs and more. Geared toward ages 2-5, but all ages are welcome. Info: addisonlibrary.org or call 630-543-3617.

library.org or call 630-543-3617.

Monday, Jan. 10 Start the new year with meditation

Starting at 7 p.m. on Zoom via the Addison Public Library, Nirav Sheth has been inspiring audiences to practice a simple meditation technique. Bring joy, peace, positivity, and relaxation into your daily life. Info: addisonlibrary.org or call 630-543-3617.

Tuesday, Jan. 11 How to master the phone and video interview

From 10-11 a.m. at the Large Meeting Room of the Addison Public Library, the People's Resource Center will help attendees learn about the unique challenges of phone and video interviews as well as strategies to be successful. Info: addisonlibrary.org or call 630-543-3617.

Book discussion: Before We Were Yours by Lisa Wingate

Starting at 7 p.m. at the Adult Program Room of the Addison Public Library, based on one of America's most notorious real-life scandals, this riveting, wrenching, and ultimately uplifting tale reminds us how, even though the paths we take can lead to many places, the heart never forgets where we belong. Info: addisonlibrary.org or call 630-543-3617.

Wednesday, Jan. 12 Polar Bear story time

Polar Bear story time will be held from 10-10:30 a.m. at the Addison Public Library. Info: addisonlibrary.org or call 630-543-3617.

Virtual lunch and learn: Circular economy 101

Starting at 11 a.m. on Zoom via

the Addison Public Library, work together to propose ideas for people to minimize waste, increase efficiency, and close resource and energy loops. We'll make designing circular systems real! Plant Chicago was established in 2011 as the anchor for the project known as The Plant, a collaborative community of food businesses on the southwest side of Chicago. Info: addisonlibrary.org or call 630-543-3617.

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At the Joffrey

Montini Catholic senior Varshika Karthi, who is an Addison resident, is pictured here at the Civic Opera House in Chicago in front of a poster of "The Nutcracker," as performed by the Joffrey Ballet. Karthi was able to take part in two Joffrey performances of the production on Sunday, Dec. 19. See story on page 4.



The 10U Addison Cowboys are pictured here celebrating after they won the Pop Warner State Championship by defeating the Elmhurst Bears to advance to play in the Mid America Regional Championship. On Nov. 28, they also won the Pop Warner Mid America Championship by a convincing margin of 39-6 over the Indiana State Champion Southlake Red Devils. The boys are comprised of 4th and 5th grade student athletes.

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•Cowboys

(Continued from front page)

The team is led by the following: Head Coach Rob Mertz, offensive coordinator Joe Renc, defensive coordinator Hector Pena, and assistant coaches Chris Anest, Eddie Morales, Carlos Soria, Dean Karras, Gus Tzamouranis and Anthony O'Donnell.

The 2021 10U Addison Cowboys roster includes (listed by jersey number):

- #1- Giovanni Garcia
- #2- Dominick Mastrino
- #3- Matthew Thomas Jr
- #4- Devonte Willis
- #7- Ke'ion Dennis
- #8- Matteo Morrone
- #9- Tyler Houston
- #10- Alexander Yahuaca
- #11- Nicolas Mertz
- #12- Christian Tzamouranis
- #15- Brandon Shuey
- #17- Liam Spivey
- #19- Oscar Smykowski
- #21- Noah Soria
- #22- Marco O'Donnell
- #24- Amare Hines
- #26- Cain Ocampo
- #29- Noah Ramirez
- #33- Damian Milewski
- #34- Julian Rodriguez
- #41- Angelo Morales
- #42- Noah Dragovic
- #44- Alfonso Hurtado
- #50- Giovanni Alvarez
- #54- David Salazar
- #55- Damian Zuniga
- #56- Nikolas Anest
- #66- Jacob Riera
- #74- Enrique Sansone
- #75- Sammy Karras
- #88- Sebastian Acono



The Addison 10U Cowboys are pictured here in the huddle at one of their recent games. What makes this team special is the fact that many of the boys on the roster are first year players and many were a year younger and played up to compete at the 10U level.

Addison Trail hosts annual Guitar Fest

By Alexander Martinez
ADDISON TRAIL SENIOR

Through the years, Addison Trail has maintained a tradition of excellence in academics and extracurricular activities, and the music department is no exception.

The department hosted its annual Guitar Fest on Thursday, Dec. 2, and the holiday-themed event featured classics such as "Silent Night" and "Deck the Halls," which filled the room with cheer and the spirit of the season.

Learning to play a new instrument is extremely technical and requires a lot of practice. Students in the Beginning Guitar class might feel a little anxious at first, but as they progress, they are able to look back and see how much they have learned.

"I was really excited to join and do

something with my hands after being stuck in quarantine," said senior Max Ojeda, a member of Beginning Guitar. "It was a nice change of pace after so much e-learning."

Ojeda added he's very happy with how much he has learned and was excited to show that progress during the Guitar Fest.

Senior Daniel Guerrero has been part of the guitar program at Addison Trail for four years.

"It is sad that I have to leave (Addison Trail), but I am able to look back over the years and see how much everyone has improved and grown as people," Guerrero said. "It is something that I am very proud of and will look back at for the rest of my life."

Guerrero said he will always remember the bonds he created along the way in Guitar

Ensemble, and all of the performances and challenges taught him skills he will use in the future. He added he would like to thank Orchestra Director Alex Stombres for supporting the program and pushing everyone to do his/her best.

Guerrero said one thing Stombres shared that really resonated with him was, "There are so many parts in guitar, from the beginners to the seniors. They both sound good when they are playing by themselves, but when all the parts come together to make the whole, that is when you get the ensemble that makes something really worth listening to."

For more information about Addison Trail's guitar program, go to <https://www.dupage88.net/site/page/133>.

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E-mail:

Advertising Department:

ads1@rvpublishing.com

News Department:

independent@rvpublishing.com

Classified Department:

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Administration:

Dee Longfellow

News Coordinator

Debra Hamilton

Advertising Director

Pete Cruger

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Woman sentenced to 10 years for pouring boiling water on sleeping boyfriend

DuPage County State's Attorney Robert Berlin has announced that a Roselle woman accused of pouring boiling water on her boyfriend as he slept on the couch has been sentenced to 10 years in the Illinois Department of Corrections.

Alexis Sykes, 23, appeared in court in front of Judge Ann Celine O'Hallaren Walsh, who handed down the sentence.

Following the incident, Sykes went missing. On Jan. 8, a \$250,000



Alexis Sykes

arrest warrant was issued for Sykes. She was located in Oklaheba County, Miss., on Jan. 19 and extradited back to DuPage County to face the charges against her. On Feb. 2, she appeared in bond court where bond was set at \$500,000 with 10 percent to apply. She has remained in custody at the DuPage County Jail since that time. Sykes entered an agreed plea to one count of aggravated battery by caustic substance, a Class X felony.

This sentencing is the result of allegations that in the early morning hours of Jan. 2, Sykes poured a pot of boiling water on her boyfriend while he slept on the couch in the apartment they shared in Roselle.

An investigation into the matter found that Sykes recorded herself committing this act and posted the video to Snapchat with the following caption, "I kinda feel bad now because he got second- and third-degree burns from face to waist and they rush him to burn center but oh well (shrugging shoulder emoji) BITCH (emoji blowing kiss) a still cried and beg me to drive him to hospital."

The investigation also found that after dousing her victim with the boiling water, Sykes hid the victim's car keys from him as the victim described watching his skin fall off his arms. The victim was finally able to get his keys and drove himself to a

local hospital where shortly thereafter, he was transported to Loyola University Medical Center Burn Unit where he spent nearly two weeks and underwent skin graft surgery to treat his burns.

"The cruelty displayed by Ms. Sykes as she doused her sleeping boyfriend with a pot of boiling water is extremely disturbing," Berlin said. "Considering her complete disregard for the amount of pain and suffering she caused her victim, one can only come to the conclusion that she has most certainly earned every year of her 10-year sentence."

Sykes will be required to serve 85 percent of her sentence before being eligible for parole.

Bond set at \$500,000 for West Chicago man accused of suffocating mother with a pillow

DuPage County State's Attorney Robert B. Berlin and West Chicago Chief of Police Colin Fleury have announced that bond has been set for a West Chicago man charged with attempting to suffocate his mother to death with a pillow while she slept. Bryan Jones, 39, appeared at a bond hearing in front of Judge Michael Reidy, who set bond at \$500,000 with 10 percent to apply.

Jones has been charged with one count of attempted first-degree murder (Class X felony), one count of aggravated domestic battery (Class 2 felony) and one count of aggravated battery (Class 3 felony).



Bryan Jones

On Dec. 22, officers with the West Chicago Police Department responded to a medical assistance call on Arbor Avenue. Upon their arrival, officers found Jones and his mother at the residence.

It is alleged that at approximately 3:22 a.m., Jones entered his mother's bedroom while she was sleeping, placed a large pillow over her face and held it there. The victim was able to free herself and called police. Jones was taken into custody at this time.

"The allegations against Mr. Jones are very disturbing," Berlin said. "We are all grateful that the victim in this case was able to free herself and contact authorities before it was too late."

Jones' next court appearance is scheduled Jan. 6 for arraignment in front of Judge Reidy.

Addison resident performs in 'The Nutcracker' with the Joffrey Ballet

Montini Catholic senior Varshika Karthi, who is an Addison resident, started her Christmas week on a "high note" after experiencing a magical day performing with the Joffrey Ballet in "The Nutcracker" on Sunday, Dec. 19. The talented artist is a member of Anima (pronounced Ahima/AH-Nee-Mah and is the Latin word for Breath, Life, Soul Spirit).

Varshika and her choir were given what she termed as "an amazing opportunity to sing at the Civic Opera House in Chicago," along with the Joffrey Ballet in their production of "The Nutcracker." The group sang for both the 1 p.m. and 6 p.m. shows.

"We sang at the end of Act 1 for 'The Waltz of the Snowflakes' dance from near the Orchestra pit," said Varshika. "We also sang well-known Christmas carols such as 'Noel,' 'We Three Kings,' 'O' Come all Ye Faithful,' and many others in the lobby before the show began and during intermission to the patrons."

Varshika was also thrilled to have been introduced to the conductor of the

Lyric Symphony Orchestra, Mr. Scott Speck.

"I also had the opportunity to meet the Joffrey principal dancers as well as their youth dancers including a visit to the entire backstage of the Civic Opera House," she said. "It was a marvelous experience!"

The opportunity marked the first Anima outing since 2018 (due to COVID-19 regulations) which took away a major portion of the singing group's season in 2020. Varshika and Anima typically perform in two major concerts during the year and six to ten additional performances throughout the season.

"What an amazing opportunity for Varshika," said Montini Catholic president Jim Segredo. "She is a very involved student who just helped us wrap up our annual 'Season of Giving' as a member of our Peer Ministry and Student Government teams. I am so impressed to hear about her opportunity to sing in 'The Nutcracker' — not many people get to do this — I'm sure it was an experience she will never forget."



SUBMITTED PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing

Students head to state theatre festival

Addison Trail seniors Maria Martinez (left) and Cindy Nakhmouane were selected to participate in the 2022 Illinois High School Theatre Festival (IHSTF) All-State production of "Cabaret." Cindy will be part of the crew, while Maria will play tenor saxophone and clarinet in the band. The IHSTF All-State cast, crew and pit orchestra are comprised of top student performers, technicians and musicians from throughout Illinois. Performances will take place on Thursday and Friday, Jan. 7 and 8, at Illinois State University. The event is for participants of the IHSTF and is not open to the public.

• Shooting (Continued from front page)

injured by ricochet gunfire from the two shooters. Kruger reported that two of the injured women in their 40s and had received gunshot wounds in their thighs, while another woman in her 20s was shot in the foot. He also reported that a woman in her 20s had injured her ankle while trying to flee the area. The gunshot victims were treated at Advocate Good Samaritan Hospital in Downers Grove.

The wounded suspect who was taken into custody at the scene underwent surgery to treat four gunshot wounds to his back, calf and thighs, according to the Chicago Sun-Times.

The shopping center reopened Friday, Dec. 24 with increased police presence.

At press time, the second suspect

was still at large. Anyone who witnessed the shooting or attempted to alert police officers or security guards about the suspects as they fled is asked to email authorities at Police1Line@oak-brook.org.

On Saturday, Dec. 25, DuPage County State's Attorney Bob Berlin's office issued a call for witnesses. The suspect is described as a black man with long, dark dreadlocks, a medium build and height, in his 30s. He was wearing a blue jacket at the time of the incident.

Anyone who has seen the man or has any information is asked to call 630-368-8746.

Charges may be forthcoming but at press time, no names were released and no charges were announced.

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THURSDAY, DEC. 23, 2021

Student accused of posting threatening messages on Instagram directed at Willowbrook High School

DuPage County State's Attorney Robert Berlin and Villa Park Chief of Police Michael Rivas announced that a Willowbrook High School student has been accused of posting threatening messages on social media directed at the school.

The juvenile, a 15-year-old male who lives in Villa Park, appeared at a detention hearing where Judge Anthony Coco ordered that he be released to the custody of his mother.

He has been charged with one count of disorderly conduct, a Class 4 felony.

On Dec. 14, the Villa Park Police Department received a call from the Willowbrook High School liaison

officer regarding a threat of violence directed at the school. The alleged threat was brought to the attention of school authorities by students at the school.

An investigation into the matter

alleges that the juvenile made an Instagram post that read "Friday this bitch gonna sound like a party." It is alleged that the juvenile made an ad-

See STUDENT, Page 4



SUBMITTED PHOTOS Addison Independent

Montini still amid season of giving

Students at Montini Catholic wrapped up this year's 25th Anniversary Golden Gobbler Food Drive on Friday, Dec. 3 by helping to load up vehicles with food destined for the food pantry at Christ the King Parish. "The students, alum, and staff worked extremely hard to make this year's Golden Gobbler great," said Alexxis

Johnson, Montini's student government director. "We collected over 4,000 food donations and over \$3,000 in gift cards and cash donations." Pictured are (from left): Andrew Stokes, Reeghan Boyer, Maria Florio, Megan Canty and Estevan Moreno. Story and more photos inside.

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The goods are ready to pass along to Christ the King Parish's food pantry. The items were collected by Montini Catholic students as the second part of the school's annual Golden Gobbler Food Drive. Pictured are: Mrs. and Mr. Mike Blanchette (Campus Minister) (front row, from left); Assistant Campus Minister Katie Miller, senior Mia Paoletta, freshman Hailey Donda, freshman Gabriella Janis, freshman Delaney Spontak; (back row, from left): Campus Minister Mike Blanchette, Junior Jaevion Hooks, Junior Joe Anderson, Junior Lawrence Barrett, Junior Tyson McKelvy, Junior Brett Pickering. The people pictured on the right are members of Christ the King Parish Food Pantry.

Montini Catholic continues the giving season with Golden Gobbler Part 2 *Christ the King Food Pantry receives collection*

Students of Montini Catholic wrapped up this year's 25th Anniversary Golden Gobbler Food Drive on Friday, December 3rd by helping to load up vehicles with food destined for the food pantry at Christ the King Parish. "The students, alum, and staff worked extremely hard to make this year's Golden Gobbler great," said Alexis Johnson, Montini's Student Government Director. "We collected over 4,000 food donations and over \$3000 in gift cards and cash donations which will all go towards our 'adopted'

families this year."

"Now that Gobbler has come to a close, which we consider 'part 1' of our Season of Giving, our Adopt-a-Family, 'part 2,' is just getting started," said Campus Minister Mike Blanchette. "Some of the food collected during Gobbler is allocated for families that are 'adopted' by Montini Catholic during the Christmas season." Homerooms have already been busy shopping, donating, sorting and wrapping loads of Christmas cheer for area families.

Montini's traditional 'Catholic

Charities Adopt a Family' service program enables students to donate toys and gifts to families facing hardship during the holiday season or throughout the year. During the beginning of December, students donate money through their homerooms - with each homeroom receiving a family to shop for. The students receive wish lists informing them of the number of family members, their gender, ages, and sizes.

"Most of the wish lists include simple items many of us take for granted like gloves, boots, and

warm hats," said Blanchette. "Our students really make a difference by lifting the spirits of families in need at the holiday time. Each year Golden Gobbler and Adopt-a-Family remind us of what is important in life and there's no better time than the holidays to reflect on and share our many blessings."

Johnson and the entire Bronco student body agreed.

"We are so happy to be able to provide these families and food pantries with the supplies that they need to create joyful holidays this year."

Villa Park man sentenced to 10 years for gunrunning

DuPage County State's Attorney Robert B. Berlin has announced that a Villa Park man accused of illegally selling multiple guns on four separate occasions to undercover police officers has been sentenced to 10

years in the Illinois Department of Corrections.

Bruce Berrier, 22, appeared in court in front of Judge Jeffrey MacKay, who handed down the sentence.

• Student (Continued from front page)

ditional post that read "I'm shooting up the school" with an emoji of the number 100. An investigation into the posts led authorities to the juvenile who was taken into custody later that day.

"For the second time this week (referring to last week), a juvenile appeared before a judge charged with making a threat to a school," Berlin said. "These threats are not harmless jokes or an excuse to blow off steam. They have a chilling effect not just on students, teachers and staff, but also on parents, siblings and the community as a whole."

"I cannot stress this enough: my office takes any threat of violence aimed at a school very seriously and anyone suspected of making such a threat will be investigated

and charged accordingly. First and foremost, I commend the students at Willowbrook High School for alerting authorities to the alleged posts. I thank authorities at Willowbrook High School for contacting law enforcement as well as the Villa Park Police Department for their quick response in this case."

"We will continue to take any and all threats concerning our schools seriously and hold those accountable for stoking fear in our community," Rivas said. "I want to thank Willowbrook High School for their continued dedication to student safety and for our great working relationship. I also want to thank our detectives, officers and the DuPage County State's Attorney's Office for bringing this incident to a quick peaceful resolution."

On July 2, Berrier entered a plea of guilty to one count of gunrunning, a Class 1 felony. On Dec. 4, 2020, Berrier appeared in bond court where bond was set at \$300,000 with 10 percent to apply. He has remained in custody at the DuPage County Jail since that time.

Through the course of an ongoing investigation conducted by the North Central Narcotics Task Force into illegal activities, Berrier was identified as a suspect in the illegal selling of guns in DuPage County.

On Sept. 28, 2020, an undercover officer contacted Berrier through Snapchat about purchasing a gun from him.

The agent subsequently met with Berrier and purchased a .22 caliber firearm and multiple rounds of ammunition from him. On three more occasions, the final being on Nov. 24, 2020, the agent purchased three additional firearms and ammunition



Bruce Berrier

from Berrier.

The illegal sales of the firearms took place in Roselle and Hanover Park. On Dec. 3, 2020, authorities executed a search warrant at Berrier's home. He was taken into custody at this time.

"Armed violence continues to plague our communities causing citizens to live in fear of becoming the next victim of a violent crime," Berlin said. "More often than not, the guns used in these crimes are illegally obtained from people such as Mr. Berrier, who seek to line their own pockets at the expense of our communities' safety. Thankfully, the weapons Mr. Berrier sold did not make it into the hands of those who would use them to commit violent crimes."

"I commend the ongoing, proactive work of the North Central Narcotics Task Force into illegal gun sales. While we will never know for sure, their work on this case may have prevented a tragedy from occurring."

Berrier will be required to serve 75 percent of his sentence before being eligible for parole.

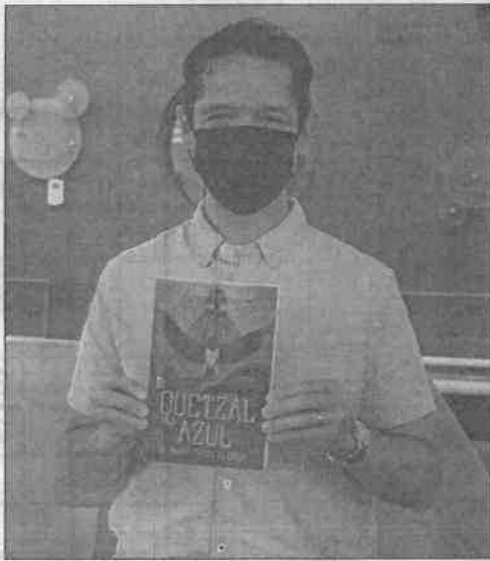
Addison resident takes second in Spanish language author competition

Between completing the 2019 Chicago marathon, releasing his first book, *The Blue Q: The World As I See It*, in October of 2020, translating his published novel into Spanish, and seeing both the English on the Spanish versions of his story on shelf at his local library, Addison resident Dennis Avelar has accomplished a lot in just a few years.

But his latest accomplishment is perhaps the one he is proudest of to date: *El Quetzal Azul: El Mundo Desde El Cielo*, Avelar's Spanish translation of his book, won second place in this year's inaugural *De la Página a la Fama* author competition, which is a contest for Illinois authors whose books are written in Spanish.

"Writing [The Blue Q] was my first dive into creative writing. I didn't have any formal training in writing. I didn't know what to do aside from reading books from my favorite authors," said Avelar. "I used the library as a reference location, exploring how different authors structure their stories."

After reading several library books to pass the time on his commute, Avelar turned to writing and produced a short story, about 100 handwritten pages. It wasn't until much later that he realized he would like to write a book one day. Avelar's storytelling skills learned from film school certainly helped him on his writing journey but writing



SUBMITTED PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing

Dennis Avelar

a book "is a completely different beast," he said. He challenged himself to keep going.

"It wasn't supposed to be a long story, maybe just ten pages," he said. "Then ten pages turned into twenty, and twenty turned into fifty, and at that point I figured I'd better just finish it, and the story developed into over 500 pages."

About the story

The Blue Q: The World As I See It tells the story of teenage orphan Dionisio Sedano, who wants to experience every adventure the world has to offer. But the natural balance of the world is in peril, and all that flies between the Earth's success and failure is a resplendent bird: a quetzal.

"My parents are from Guatemala and the quetzal, the bird, is a really important symbol in Guatemala. It represents the people in terms of this freedom, this liberty, this natural beauty that the bird has," said Avelar. "It's widely known that the quetzal cannot survive in captivity. It would rather choose death than a lack of freedom."

The quetzal found in nature has stunning green feathers and a red chest, but Avelar had an idea when creating his own film production company: he would represent his company with a logo featuring blue quetzal instead, to set it apart.

"I told my aunt in Guatemala about my idea. She does paintings and specializes in birds. When I asked her to draw a quetzal for me, but in blue, she said, 'Dennis, that's got to be the most ridiculous thing I've ever heard,' but she did it," said Avelar.

Avelar later realized the blue quetzal was not only the perfect representation for his company, but also was the perfect symbol for his book as well.

About his own background

"I grew up with a Guatemalan

background from my parents, but I grew up in the United States, so there are two parts to me. I wanted to see how I could incorporate that concept into the story as well as with the characters and their languages and their priorities," said Avelar. "The birds [in the book] are specialists at certain things, but they're really united, and can travel to other parts of the world and recognize each other. They all have this purpose and they understand it and work together."

The Blue Q was initially released in October 2020. By November 2020, Avelar began asking local libraries if he could donate a copy of his book for the collection. The Addison Public Library was the first to accept his publication, and the library is so far the only library that has Avelar's book both in English and in Spanish. But his home library is not the only one with a copy of his work.

"One of the libraries I went to, the Gail Borden Public Library in Elgin, said yes and I got to meet one of the librarians. She asked me what I was going to do with the book, and I said I wanted to get more people to read it and that I also wanted to translate it," said Avelar. "She told me there was a competition that was launching in Spanish for the first time, and if my book was ready I could enter it in the contest. I was excited about it but wasn't sure it would amount to much."

An effort to support literacy

Avelar's plans to translate his novel originally came from a social media graphic he spotted that showed levels of illiteracy around the globe. In and around the Americas, Haiti was shown as having the highest levels of illiteracy. The country with the next highest levels of illiteracy was Guatemala.

"When I saw there was a high level of illiteracy in Guatemala, I wanted to see what I could do to help. That became my motivating factor. I needed to do something for the people of Guatemala, in a voice and in a way that they could understand. I wanted to help motivate people to read more, even if it wasn't my book," said Avelar.

"That's when we established the mission of *The Blue Q*, to help kids around the world. A percentage of sales from the book goes towards helping build schools and libraries and hopefully one day, it'll be a bigger thing. But the point of it is that I'll do whatever I can to help increase that level of literacy."

The translation of Avelar's book was completed in 2021. Afterwards, he donated a Spanish copy to the Addison Public Library and submitted his work into the first-ever *De la Página a la Fama* competition. In September 2021, the list of semi-finalists was released, and Avelar was thrilled to see *El Quetzal Azul: El Mundo Desde* had made the list.

"When the list was released, I checked out the competition, and it was so intimidating! These were well-respected professors, people working in theatre, award-winning writers, and then there's this guy with a book about a bird who came

out of nowhere," said Avelar. "But you have to shut down that voice, that self-doubt. I was so glad to make it on the list."

Among three finalists

When the list of three finalists was released a month later, Avelar was floored to find he was included yet again. He started looking into the award and its history to learn more about the people behind the contest. *De la Página a la Fama* is part of the *Soon to be Famous Illinois Author Project*, which has hosted an annual contest for Illinois authors who write in English since 2014 and is run by a committee of library workers across the state.

"It meant a lot to me that librarians were the ones to read the stories, to get to know these authors and their characters so intimately," said Avelar. "To be placed in the top three by people who are surrounded by books all day every day, who see and know about good authors, was an incredible honor."

Placing second...

On Monday, Nov. 15, *De la Página a la Fama* named its winner and runner-up. Pascuala Herrera's *No Siempre es un Valle de Lagrimas* took first place. Avelar's *El Quetzal Azul: El Mundo Desde El Cielo* took second.

"I see it as a tremendous accomplishment. If this were the Olympics, I'd proudly wear that silver medal and show everybody what we were able to do," said Avelar. "You never expect someone to read your book. You invest so much time and effort into what you're doing, and you hope that someone will at least recognize it. It's an exhilarating feeling."

To Avelar, being involved in *De la Página a la Fama* is more than just an accomplishment as an author; it's an accomplishment as a member of the Latino community as well.

"[The competition] shows that there is a lot of creativity in our Spanish-speaking, Latino community," he said. "I recently visited Lincoln Elementary School in Addison to talk with the kids about my book and tell them the story. They spoke Spanish as well. It was so much fun to show them there was a Latino who was just like them, who grew up in a similar environment, who could accomplish this. If I can do it, they can do it, too."

Between running and writing, Avelar's unwavering determination to carry on hasn't always come easily, but he knows from experience what good can come from pushing through when the going gets tough.

"The hardest thing is to get started," he said. "There will be certain times where you think it's not for you, or you'll find an excuse. But you get this feeling when you run on the ice, or when you listen to someone laughing as they're reading from your book, and it's something you have to experience."

"If you want something bad enough, please just get over the feeling of doubt and do it. The worst that can happen is you have a feeling of accomplishment, and for that alone it's worth it."



CHRIS FOX PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing

Blazers beat the Rams

The Addison Trail girls basketball team improved its overall season record to 8-5 with Saturday's 35-21 non-conference win over Glenbard East in Addison. The Blazers and Rams were tied at 10-10 at the end of the first quarter. Addison Trail outscored Glenbard East 6-0 in the second quarter to take a 16-10 halftime lead. The Blazers built their lead to 27-12 by the end of the third quarter. Senior Mary Velez scored a team-leading 14 points for Addison Trail. Senior Julliana Nasti provided six points, while seniors Quiana Birmingham and Jasmine Cozlo contributed five and four points, respectively. Junior Elena Papanicolaou (No. 1) provided three points by sinking a 3-point shot during the second quarter. The Blazers will play four games at next week's holiday tournament at Lisle High School.

District 88 remembers the life of Dr. Scott J. Helton, one year later

Jean Barbanente, Ed.D., Superintendent of School District 88 issued the following statement in memory of District 88's Superintendent, the late Dr. Scott Helton (Aug. 13, 1962 – Dec. 10, 2020).

"It is hard to believe that Dec. 10 marked one year since the passing of District 88's beloved Superintendent, the late Dr. Scott Helton.

"It has been a challenging year, filled with obstacles, adversities and trying to understand situations we never imagined we would face. But through it all, one thing remains certain and clear – our desire and passion to continue Scott's legacy. Scott was larger than life, and it is difficult to summarize his impact. When envisioning the characteristics of an ideal Superintendent, the following attributes come to mind: Someone who will advocate for all students – even when what's right might not be what's popular; someone who connects with stakeholders; and someone who champions moving education and student success forward. Scott embodied all of those qualities – and more.

"Scott had more than 33 years of experience in education and served in a variety of capacities, including as Principal of Addison Trail for 11 years and as Superintendent of District 88 since 2012. He was incredibly ingrained in the District 88 community and helped build positive futures for countless students through his contributions to public education and coaching football, wrestling and track. He was laser focused on making sure we connected with and cared for each child and family in the district and took the time to build trust and genuine relationships. Scott could always be found at community events, athletic competitions, theatre and music performances and student recognition ceremonies – anywhere where he could celebrate our pupils.

"Scott also was relentless in his pursuit to make sure everyone had a voice and a seat at



Dr. Scott J. Helton
D88
Superintendent
Aug. 13, 1962 –
Dec. 10, 2020

"He was incredibly ingrained in the District 88 community and helped build positive futures for countless students through his contributions to public education and coaching football, wrestling and track. He was laser focused on making sure we connected with and cared for each child and family in the district and took the time to build trust and genuine relationships."

—Jean Barbanente, Ed.D.

the table and felt welcome and valued. He had an uncanny ability to build bridges and authentic connections with all stakeholders to accomplish our mission of working for the continuous improvement of student achievement. He worked closely with local legislators, village leaders, colleges, universities and business owners to provide academic and workplace opportunities to help students reach their goals through multiple pathways.

"Having worked alongside Scott for nearly 20 years, I know he would be extremely proud of how our staff, students, parents, guardians, community members and Board of Education members have come together and continue to support one another. At the heart of every decision I make is Scott's student-centered mindset and I am honored and privileged to maintain and build upon his legacy of passionate, caring, courageous leadership and service to District 88 and beyond.

"The tremendous mark Scott left on the education community at the local, state and national levels will be felt for years to come and will live on in every student and educator whose

life he touched. Scott will forever be missed and will always be remembered.

"Thank you for your support of District 88."

* To view events in honor of the late District 88 Superintendent Dr. Scott Helton, go to www.dupage88.net/ScottHelton. This link

includes a virtual memorial, a virtual fun & candlelight vigil, concerts and a scholar fund in Dr. Helton's name.

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Warriors close out rough week with a close loss at Morton

Saturday's conference loss sends Warriors to 3-5 overall and 1-1 in the WSGC

FF REPORT

The Willowbrook boys basketball team suffered three losses last week, including Saturday's narrow 64-66 West Suburban Gold Conference loss at Morton. Through Saturday, the Warriors held an overall record of 3-5 and a conference record of 1-1.

Willowbrook began the week with an 87-63 non-conference loss at Naperville Central on Dec. 10. The Warriors dropped a 74-55 non-conference decision at Lake Park on Friday night.

Senior Marquel Saleek scored a team-high 23 points for the Warriors in the loss to Naperville Central. Senior Noah Campbell, who made three 3-point shots in the game, added 13 points.

Senior Ryan Pegler drained a pair of 3-point shots to provide six points.

Naperville Central, which scored points in each of the game's first three quarters, held a 20-17 lead after one quarter and a 40-28 edge at halftime. The Redhawks extended their lead to 60-43 by the end of the third quarter.

Friday's loss to Lake Park was much closer than the final score indicates. The Warriors trailed the Lancers 47-43 in the closing seconds of the third quarter. Willowbrook missed a 3-point shot with few seconds left in the period. Lake Park rushed the ball down the court and made a 3-point shot at the buzzer to take a 50-43 lead with eight minutes to play.

The Lancers made 13 free-throw attempts during the fourth quarter.

"It was a lot closer than the final score shows," said Willowbrook coach Chris Perkins after Friday's loss to Lake Park at the Lancers' east campus in Roselle. "They tried running their offense as a set. It forced us to go into a trap. Fortunately, we committed a lot of fouls, and they got to the free-throw line. I thought we competed. When the momentum swung at the end of the third quarter and the start of the fourth, we didn't get back on our side."

Saleek, who made all nine of his free-throw attempts during Friday's game, scored 22 points. Campbell,



who made eight shots, including a pair of 3-point attempts, added 18 points. Senior Terrell Walker

scored five points. Pegler contributed four points, while juniors Isaac Sobieszczyk and Joey Tumilty both



CHRIS FOX PHOTOS Rock Valley Publishing

Willowbrook's boys basketball team played Lake Park in Friday's non-conference game at the Lancers' west campus in Roselle. Lake Park defeated the Warriors 74-55. Willowbrook trailed the Lancers 50-43 at the end of the third quarter. Senior Marquel Saleek (above left - No. 3) scored a team-leading 22 points for Willowbrook. Saleek made all nine of his attempts from the free-throw line. Senior Noah Campbell (above right - No. 25) provided 18 points for the Warriors. Another photo from Friday's game shows Willowbrook senior Ryan Pegler (left - No. 23), who contributed four points. The Warriors fell to 3-5 overall and 1-1 in the West Suburban Gold Conference following Saturday's 66-64 loss at Morton. Saleek, who sank all 12 of his free throws against the Mustangs, scored 24 points in Saturday's contest.

scored three points.

Saleek provided a highlight at the end of the first half when he sank a shot from well behind the half-court line as the buzzer sounded. Saleek's long-range 3-pointer left Lake Park with a 33-27 halftime lead.

The Warriors fell to 3-5 overall and 1-1 in the conference following Saturday's loss to Morton. The Warriors led the Mustangs 32-23 at halftime and 44-37 after three quarters.

Morton outscored Willowbrook 29-20 in the game's final eight minutes.

utes.

Saleek, who converted all 12 of his attempts from the free-throw line, scored 24 points. Senior Alex Simmons, who made both of his 3-point attempts and all four of his free throws, added 12 points.

Walker scored 11 points, while Campbell contributed seven points.

The Warriors made 21 of 23 free-throw attempts during Saturday's game.

Willowbrook will play one game this week—this Friday's non-conference home game against Hinsdale Central.

Indefeated Warriors girls basketball team moves to 10-0

Willowbrook's week includes decisive conference wins over Leyden and Hinsdale South

FF REPORT

The Willowbrook girls basketball team improved to 10-0 overall and 4-0 in the West Suburban Gold Conference following three consecutive victories last week.

The Warriors began their week pounding Leyden 77-20 in a conference game in Villa Park. One night later, Willowbrook won a 53-32 non-conference win over Maine West. The Warriors ended their successful week with day's 51-20 conference win at Hinsdale South.

Twelve Willowbrook players scored during last week's win over Leyden. The Warriors held a 23-4 lead at the end of the first quarter. The lead grew to 42-9 by halftime.

Senior Sophie Sullivan scored a team-high 14 points for the Warriors in their victory over the Eagles. Freshman Hannah Kenny added 13 points. Sophomore Elle Bruschuk provided 10 points and 10 rebounds. Junior Rimmon Kari scored nine points, while juniors Angie Lizasuain and Sara Stout

both supplied eight points.

The Warriors led Maine West 15-6 after one quarter and 24-16 at halftime. Willowbrook's lead stood at 36-25 with eight minutes remaining. The Warriors delivered a 17-7 surge in the fourth quarter.

Sullivan, who made seven of 17 field-goal attempts, scored a team-high 15 points in Willowbrook's win at Maine West. Sophomore Calli Kenny scored 10 points, while her sister Hannah added nine points. Bruschuk and Stout both

scored eight points. Stout also recorded a team-leading 10 rebounds. Junior Nina Nytko added three points by making three of four free-throw attempts.

The Warriors led Hinsdale South 12-5 through one quarter of Friday's conference game. Willowbrook raised its lead to 29-9 by halftime.

Sullivan and Calli Kenny both scored 13 points in Friday's win over the Hornets. Sullivan made three of seven attempts from

3-point range. Kenny made one 3-point shot and sank both of her attempts from the free-throw line.

Bruschuk contributed eight points and seven rebounds in Friday's victory. Hannah Kenny scored seven points, while Kari delivered five points.

Willowbrook's schedule this week includes a conference home game against Morton. The Warriors will open play at Wheaton North's Falcon Holiday Classic on Dec. 22. See photos on page 14.



We just had the most delightful experience! The doorbell rang and we answered to see three lovely young ladies with happy smiles burst into a rousing chorus of "Frosty the Snowman." I haven't seen Christmas carolers in ages and this was truly enjoyable and uplifting. Thank you for spreading your cheerful song during this holiday season. We really loved it!

Democrats are divisive and use any means possible to accomplish their socialist agenda. The next big push will be to send everyone, including illegal citizens, a ballot to put in the ballot box by the next election. If you can't win the game, change the rules.

Now that Jussie Smollett has been found guilty of falsely reporting a hate crime, I was hoping we would be spared hearing about this narcissist for a while. Oh, but no. He's going to appeal.

According to the U.S. Labor Department Inspector General, about \$872 billion (billion with a b!) was allocated to unemployment benefits in the last year. About 10 percent of that money was estimated to be paid "improperly, with a significant por-

tion attributable to fraud." Something like \$87 billion in money intended for unemployment benefits during a pandemic was lost to fraud in the last year? That's crazy. How many well-paid people work in government? A lot, yet they can't keep track of tens of billions lost to fraud? What a disgrace. I wonder if our governments (federal and state) do as good of a job tabulating votes.

Two weeks to slow the spread. Stay home, save lives. We've been fed a lot of nonsense and misinformation since the pandemic began. Joe "I'm going to shut down the virus" Biden is one of the worst offenders. He hasn't shut down the virus. His claim was always a joke. There have been more COVID-19 deaths under Biden than under Trump, and that's with vaccines. What happened to the media's running death counts?

On Sunday, Dec. 5, Trump admitted in public that he fired James Comey because he would not have survived as president of our great country. There were investigations under way that would have proved his treason and he would have been removed from office. Finally, Trump has told something true! There will

be more "truths" revealed as the investigation continues into his "new" Trump organization. We know he won't be able to be president in 2024, so it really doesn't matter. It's just nice to be able to prove that he lied to all of us for four years.

I like how the Chicago Department of Public Health issues these weekly COVID-19 travel advisories. The advisory now stands at 40 states. I'd like to issue a travel advisory to Chicago, and not because of COVID. It's because of the increased risks of getting shot, assaulted or robbed, and because no one should give one penny to support a city run by an incompetent mayor like Lori Lightweighth.

I read about how Pfizer and BioNTech are working on a vaccine for the Omicron variant that they hope to have available by March. By that time, I'm sure we'll have the next new bogeyman variant and need a new vaccine for that one. How many vaccines and booster shots are we supposed to get?

Dine-in and fast-food restaurants closed to interior dining last year when the pandemic hit. Understandable at the time because it was done out of "an abundance of caution" from so-called experts. But it is a sad state of affairs that a little over a year later, many of these same places are closed to eat in because now they are stating a lack of staff. I have encountered many fast-food places and at least one restaurant that is too short-staffed to keep the doors open. And many of these places are hiring, so don't tell me that if anyone really wants a job they can't find one. And on a side note, think of the pollution caused by the throngs of cars waiting in long lines at the drive-through.

It's interesting how our government can suddenly close air travel from certain countries, but do nothing about securing our southern border. It's also interesting how Democrats whined that Trump was a racist and a xenophobe for banning travel-

ers from certain countries. But the same thing. Where's the sting now? And everyone who went into the country must be tested COVID-19, but that testing apply to people who simply across our border with Mexico others have said, it makes no to double-lock your front door your back door is wide open.

President Biden has been in 11 months and Trump isn't president anymore. Now is the time comrades on the left to elaborate how much better things are in wasting time practicing their bashing. They sound like a record as they have for the past six years. Go for it, com. Tell me good things about socialism. Speak Out is waiting.

Hey Trump worshippers, your hero's chief of staff, Steve Bannon, is now a House select committee investigating January 6 and Nancy Pelosi. Looks like he has something to just like Steve Bannon.

College news

Special honors

• Uvaldo Trujillo of Villa Park has been named to Southern New Hampshire University's summer 2021 President's List. Eligibility for the President's List requires a GPA of 3.7-4.0.

Dean's List

• The students named to the Dean's List at Millikin University for the spring 2021 semester included John DeAngelo of Villa Park.

• The following Villa Park students have been named to the Knox College Dean's List of distinguished students for the 2021 Spring Term: Michal Pavlik of Oakbrook Terrace, majoring in History; and Maureen Schmid from Villa Park, majoring in Biochemistry.

Graduations

• Wheaton College congratulates May 2021 graduate Courtney Lynn Baer, of Villa Park, who graduated summa cum laude with a B.A. in Political Science and Philosophy.

Enrollments

• The University of Iowa class of 2025 is composed of 4,521 students, which includes the following local residents: From Oakbrook Terrace, Katelyn Kramme, Psychology. From Villa Park, Jessica Valois, Business Direct Admission.

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CHRIS FOX PHOTOS Rock Valley Public

Willowbrook girls basketball team 10-4

Willowbrook's girls basketball team improved its overall record to 10-4 with three victories in week. The Warriors began the week with a 77-home win over Leyden on Dec. 7. Senior Sophi Sullivan (top left - No. 1) scored a team-lead 14 points in the West Suburban Gold Conference win over the Eagles. Freshman Hannah Ken (above - No. 10) made three shots from 3-point range and scored 13 points. She is pictured here firing a successful 3-point shot during the quarter. Another picture from Willowbrook's win over Leyden shows junior Angie Lizasualin (1 - No. 14), who scored eight points. One night, after beating Leyden, Willowbrook earned a 53-non-conference win at Maine West. The Warriors completed the week with Friday's 51-20 conference win at Hinsdale South. Willowbrook improved its conference record to 4-0 with Friday's victory over the Hornets.



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THURSDAY, DEC. 23, 2021



Christmas Kick

CHRIS FOX PHOTO Villa Park Review

For more than 20 years, the Willowbrook High School dance team has performed its Christmas kick routine during halftime of a December home boys basketball game. The 2021-22 dance team continued that tradition at Friday's game against Hinsdale Central. Members of the dance team are pictured during the halftime rou-

tine, which was performed to Mariah Carey's "All I Want for Christmas Is You." Willowbrook's boys basketball team defeated Hinsdale Central 59-49 in Friday's game to improve its overall season record to 4-5. For more about the Warriors' victory, see page 12.

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Warriors hang on to beat Hinsdale Central

Willowbrook withstands Red Devils' fourth-quarter run

STAFF REPORT

Willowbrook's boys basketball team ended a four-game losing streak by beating Hinsdale Central 59-49

in Friday's non-conference game in Villa Park.

The Warriors improved their overall season record to 4-5 with the

victory over the Red Devils. Willowbrook will play four games in the 16-team Hinsdale Central Holiday Classic, which begins this week and ends on Dec. 29.

"Hinsdale Central is a pretty good team, so we knew we had our work cut out for us," said Willowbrook coach Chris Perkins after Friday's win. "We started slowly, but then we cleaned that up and got going. We were able to keep our composure. That's the growth we were looking for."

Hinsdale Central, which dropped to 5-4 after Friday's loss, led the Warriors 17-14 at the end of the first quarter. Willowbrook unleashed an 11-2 run at the start of the second quarter. A driving layup by senior Alex Simmons completed the run, which gave the Warriors a 25-19 lead with 5:13 left in the first half.

Senior Noah Campbell drained a 3-point shot to give the Warriors a 33-23 lead with less than two minutes to play in the opening half. The Red Devils scored the last four points of the half to trim Willowbrook's halftime lead to 33-27.

Campbell sank a 3-point shot in the opening minute of the second half to give the Warriors a 36-27 lead. Senior Terrell Walker's three-point play raised Willowbrook's lead to 41-29 with 6:06 left in the third quarter. Seconds later, Walker scored an inside basket to move the Warriors' lead to 43-29 and lead Hinsdale Central to call a timeout.

The Red Devils cut the Warriors' lead to 45-36 by the end of the third quarter. Hinsdale Central then scored five straight points during the first minute of the fourth quarter to cut Willowbrook's lead to 45-41. The Red Devils added another basket to cut the Warriors' lead to 45-43. Senior Marquel Saleek scored Willowbrook's first points of the fourth

quarter on a driving shot to the basket. Saleek's field goal gave the Warriors a 47-43 lead with about 3:50 to play.

Shortly after the Red Devils made a free throw to reduce the Warriors' lead to 47-44, senior Evan Stubblefield delivered two straight baskets. His reverse layup pushed Willowbrook's lead to 51-44 with 2:25 remaining.

Saleek's jump shot extended the lead to 53-44 with less than two minutes to play.

Campbell, who made three of six attempts from 3-point range, scored a team-high 17 points for Willowbrook in Friday's win. Saleek supplied 15 points. Stubblefield, who made all four of his field-goal attempts, added eight points. Stubblefield scored the game's final points on a layup with about 12 seconds remaining.

Simmons scored seven points, while Walker provided five points. Juniors Isaac Sobieszczyk and Joey Tumilty scored four and three points, respectively.



CHRIS FOX PHOTOS Rock Valley Publishing

Willowbrook's boys basketball team earned a 59-49 non-conference win over Hinsdale Central on Friday night in Villa Park. The Warriors ended a four-game losing streak and improved their overall season record to 4-5. Willowbrook led the Red Devils 43-36 at the end of the third quarter. Hinsdale Central then scored seven straight points to cut the Warriors' lead to 45-43. Senior Marquel Saleek (above - No. 3) scored a basket midway through the fourth quarter to give Willowbrook a 47-43 lead. Two straight baskets from senior Evan Stubblefield (top right - No. 1) gave the Warriors a 51-44 advantage. Stubblefield is pictured while making a reverse layup that pushed Willowbrook's lead to 51-44. The Warriors will play four games at the Hinsdale Central Holiday Classic, which begins this week and ends on Dec. 29. Willowbrook will play its next home game on Jan. 8, when it will battle Lake Zurich in a non-conference contest.



• Warriors (Continued from page 4)

Sophomore Lillian Panegasser supplied five points, while junior Angie Lizasuan scored four points.

The Warriors are playing in Wheaton North's Falcon Holiday Classic, which begins this week. Willowbrook will play two games in

the 16-team tournament this week, followed by two more games next week. The championship game takes place on Dec. 28. The Warriors are the tournament's top-seeded team. Downers Grove North is the event's No. 2 seed.



CHRIS FOX PHOTOS Rock Valley Publishing

Willowbrook's girls basketball team moved to 11-0 overall and 5-0 in the West Suburban Gold Conference following last week's 66-35 home win over Morton. Senior Sophie Sullivan (above - No. 1) scored a team-leading 17 points for the Warriors in their Dec. 14 victory. Sophomore Calli Kenny (right - No. 15) contributed 15 points. Sullivan scored her final points of the game when she made a 3-point shot in the last minute of the third quarter. (Left:) That shot gave her 1,000 points in her high school career. Sullivan played for Montini Catholic High School as a freshman and sophomore before transferring to Willowbrook. The Warriors will play four games at Wheaton North's 16-team Falcon Classic, which begins this week and ends on Dec. 28. Willowbrook is the tournament's No. 1 seed.





Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi seems pretty level-headed for a liberal, but I think someone needs to tell him there is no "I" in team. His columns in the paper are flooded with "I" statements, and while his column is informative, it doesn't need to be all about him. In other words, don't break your arm patting yourself on the back.

Thank you for your coverage of the \$1.7 trillion Jobs Act. It is also newsworthy that there was very little GOP support for it. The act was created to help all Americans.

I noticed New York and California have reinstated indoor mask mandates. These two states are even more backward and leftist than Illinois (if that's possible), but even they are going to reevaluate these mandates by Jan. 15. I heard Pritzker on the news say he was going to keep the mask mandate in place and won't provide a specific date when it will be reevaluated. He kept on referring to following the science and countless studies that prove masks work. I've never once heard him or Dr. Eziqe provide specific science and data that unequivocally prove masks work. Whenever he does, he might want to share all that with those of us who have to live under this mandate and the 42 other states that don't have indoor mask mandates.

Bravo to the House January 6 committee. They recommended Mark Meadows be held in contempt. I love seeing people like him and Steve Bannon squirm. Hopefully the committee will subpoena even more of these arrogant Trump yes-men and whoever else organized and led this terrible insurrection. I'm sure Trump is loving all this because it keeps him in the news and feeds his ego.

Christianity and Islam have been the two largest religions in the world, but now, climate change and COVID-19 have replaced them. I'm sure there will be even more converts to the religions of climate change and COVID with the tornadoes and high winds we've experienced, and the new bogeyman variant called Omicron.

I called a couple of weeks ago when I saw photos in the paper of high school basketball players wearing their masks under their chins. I looked at this week's paper and saw the same thing. I personally think these players should not have to wear masks at all. Obviously, the officials aren't enforcing this stupid mandate, anyway. Good for them!

Whether you like Trump or not, the fact is he got things done. If he hadn't pushed the COVID-19 vaccine, I'm sure Biden would still be talking about it and we'd be wearing hazmat suits.

The Biden administration either ignores any problem or they lie about them and hope they go away. Crime increase, the Southern border, China, Russia, North Korea are all ignored. It will be interesting if Biden can handle the tornado damage off the teleprompter, which seems to call all the shots.

Hello bargain shoppers. Take note. The Dollar Tree is now the Dollar and a Quarter Tree.

Democrats, I want to know if you are buying an electric car to please Joe and make him sound good. He is a really good guy, isn't he? He is going to build 200 stations for you to charge your battery. But when your battery goes dead, you're going to pay through the nose. The Democrats have their own motto: We take what we can and we give nothing back.

Hats, you say? Great idea. We'll wear our Biden won hat and you can wear your "Trump is a loser" hats. Merry Christmas.

It's interesting how complacent and tolerant the American public is to let the present administration bring this country down so much. The only thing the general public notices is the gas prices and soaring price of food. Illegal immigrants, lawlessness, smash-and-grab haven't hit home yet.

The liberal news media doesn't even report a lot about President Biden, who hides behind a teleprompter, that he squints to read. Facts are facts.



CHRIS FOX PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing

Festive attire

Willowbrook's student supporters dressed in Christmas clothing for Friday's boys basketball game against Hinsdale Central. The Warriors earned a 59-49 win over the visiting Red Devils in Villa Park. Willowbrook's boys basketball team will play its next home contest on Jan. 8.



CHRIS FOX PHOTO Villa Park F

A holiday tradition at Willowbrook

Willowbrook High School's dance team performed its Christmas kick routine during halftime of Friday's boys basketball game against Hinsdale Central. The dance team performed its routine to "All I Want for Christmas Is You" by Mariah Carey. The Willowbrook dance team has performed its Christmas kick routine to Carey's holiday hit during a home basketball game in December for more than 20 years. Pictured left to right shortly after Friday's performance are: (front row) senior Katie Corsini, freshman Kelly Kramme, senior Sabrina Corso, senior Nelly Irion, junior Gianna Wiesel and freshman Gianna Ampaoli; (back row) senior Olivia Ehrhardt, senior Coco Bernardi, sophomore Tabitha Bernardi, senior Ava Cappitelli, sophomore Francesca Cico and sophomore Kira Gamble.

GREETINGS OF
JOY & GOODWILL