



# Willowbrook presents its winter play next week

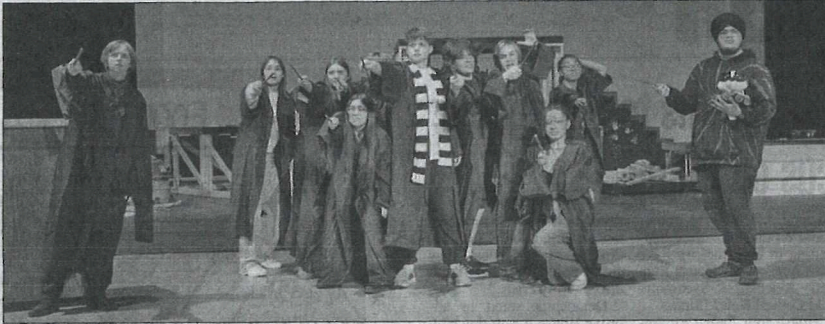
**First performance takes place on Feb. 5**

Willowbrook High School's theater department will present its winter play, *Puffs, or: Seven Increasingly Eventful Years at a Certain School of Magic and Magic (Two-Act for Young Wizards)*, by Matt Cox, next week.

Performances will begin at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 5, Friday, Feb. 6, and Saturday, Feb. 7, in the school's Doris E. White Auditorium.

According to [www.puffs-theplay.com](http://www.puffs-theplay.com), "For seven years, a certain boy wizard went to a certain Wizard School and conquered evil. This, however, is not his story. This is the story of the Puffs ... who just happened to be there, too. [This is] a tale for anyone who has never been destined to save the world."

While a famous "chosen one" is busy saving the world, this fast-paced, hilarious show focuses on a group of well-meaning underdogs.



SUBMITTED PHOTO: Rock Valley Publishing

Willowbrook High School will present its winter play, *Puffs, or: Seven Increasingly Eventful Years at a Certain School of Magic and Magic (Two-Act for Young Wizards)*, next week. Several cast members are pictured during a recent rehearsal. The play is appropriate for all ages. Performances will take place on Feb. 5, Feb. 6, and Feb. 7, in the school's Doris E. White Auditorium. Each performance begins at 7 p.m. Tickets are available for purchase online. Tickets will also be on sale at the box office before each presentation.

These "other students" are just trying to learn magic, build friendships and stay alive—all while battling snakes, dragons, soul-sucking security guards and "He-Who-Should-Never-Be-Named."

*Puffs* is appropriate for all ages. Tickets cost \$10 for adults (13 and older) and \$5 for children (12 and younger). Admission is free for those with a District 88 student ID or a

District 88 Senior Gold Card. Family passes will be accepted.

Tickets for all three performances can be ordered online at <https://willowbrooktheatre.ludus.com/index.php>. Tickets

will also be available to buy at the box office (45 minutes before each performance).

For more information, email Willowbrook Theatre Director Terri Woebel at [twoebel@dupage88.net](mailto:twoebel@dupage88.net).

## Villa Park firefighters extinguish fire in a detached garage of a home on Yale Avenue

**Residents evacuated before firefighters arrived; no injuries reported**

On Sunday, Jan. 18, at approximately 7:53 a.m., the Villa Park Fire Department responded to a reported structure fire at 109 N. Yale Ave. According to the fire department,

Villa Park Engine 82 and Engine 81 were the first units to arrive on the scene, and found a single-story, detached garage heavily involved in fire.

"Firefighters from Villa Park quickly deployed a hose line and initiated an aggressive fire attack, knocking down the bulk of the fire within the first few minutes of the

incident. Mutual aid companies assisted by checking the interior of the residence for fire extension caused by radiant heat from the garage fire," related a statement from the Villa Park Fire Department.

The fire was brought under control and remained confined to the garage, with minor damage to a small portion of the home's exterior siding. At the time of the incident, multiple family members were inside the residence, but were able to safely self-evac-

uate prior to the fire department's arrival. All occupants and pets were accounted for, and no injuries were reported.

The Villa Park Fire Department was assisted by firefighters from neighboring municipalities, including Lombard, Elmhurst, Addison, and York Center. The Villa Park Police Department also provided assistance.

The Villa Park Fire Department's Fire Investigation Unit (FIU) conducted the origin and cause investigation.

## Willowbrook student earns Eagle Scout status

SUBMITTED PHOTO: Rock Valley Publishing

Willowbrook High School junior Shea Downer recently earned Eagle Scout status (in October 2025)—the highest rank attainable in Scouting America. Those who receive that rank earn a total of 21 merit badges; demonstrate Scout Oath and Scout Law in their daily life; and plan, develop and give leadership to others in a service project. Downer, who is a Villa Park resident, is pictured (left) at Villa Park Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 2801 with Post Commander Jim Blankshain (right). Downer is a member of Troop 9117 in Elmhurst. She joined Scouting America as a Webelo in 2018. She said her older brother inspired her to sign up. "My brother, Pierce, became an Eagle Scout before I joined," Downer said. "I have always looked up to my brother, and—as a little sister of a scout—I often attended his troop meetings and would be present for some Eagle Scout projects from other scouts in his troop. When I was presented with the opportunity to join Scouting America, I immediately said yes." For her Eagle Scout project, Downer made squirrel nesting boxes at Willowbrook Wildlife Center in Glen Ellyn. Downer said the project involved contacting the center and implementing a plan to allow younger scouts to participate and help. She created kits with pre-cut wood, so scouts younger than 16 years old could contribute. Downer herself was younger than 16 at the time, so her father cut the pieces after she measured them. It took about six hours to assemble the boxes, and she then delivered them to the center. Downer plans to stay involved with Scouting America moving forward. She is a Senior Patrol Leader for an organization called National Youth Leadership Training (NYLT) with Three Fires Council. She has been volunteering with that group for four years and plans to continue as an adult. In the future, Downer plans to attend college to major in sonography and become an ultrasound technician.



## District 88 announces Board of Education vacancy

**Vacant seat is open through the election in April 2027**

District 88 recently announced a vacancy on its Board of Education.

Due to a board member resignation, a seat on the District 88 Board of Education is open through the next election in April 2027. To apply for the position, complete the application at [www.dupage88.net/BoardVacancy2026](http://www.dupage88.net/BoardVacancy2026) by Feb. 13.

Selected candidates will be interviewed by the Board of Education on Feb. 17.

For questions or more information, contact District 88 Superintendent Jean Barbanente at [jbarbanente@dupage88.net](mailto:jbarbanente@dupage88.net), or at 630-530-3980.

District 88 thanks Gail Galivan for her years of service to the Board of Education. Galivan has been a board member since April 2023.

"Ms. Galivan has been a tremendous asset to our Board of Education and school community," Barbanente said. "Her passion, perspectives, and support of our students and families have been invaluable. She truly believes in our mission to prepare students to be college and career ready in a diverse society, and her efforts will be reflected in the successes of our students for years to come. We wish Ms. Galivan all the best in her future endeavors."



Gail Galivan

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473035

# Local singer awarded Handel Week Festival Choral Scholarship

Isabel Weaver, an 18-year-old soprano and senior at Willowbrook High School, has been named the recipient of the Suzanne and Charles Wells Choral Scholarship for the 27th annual Handel Week Festival.

A resident of Lombard, Weaver was selected in recognition of her musical achievement, dedication to choral singing, and promise as a young performer.

The youngest of four children in a musical family, Weaver discovered her love of singing through her school's choral program, jazz ensembles and musical theater productions. She has been selected three times for the ILMEA Vocal Jazz Ensemble and twice for the ILMEA Honors Choir, including a featured soloist role at the 2025 district concert.

An avid actress, she has also appeared in Willowbrook's Vocal Jazz group and performed in two leading roles in school musicals.

Weaver has studied voice with Stephani Springer since her freshman year. The scholarship will allow her to continue private voice study and participate in the university choirs while she pursues a nursing degree at Elmhurst



SUBMITTED PHOTO: Rock Valley Publishing

**Isabel Weaver, a senior at Willowbrook High School, was recently awarded the Suzanne and Charles Wells Choral Scholarship for the Handel Week Festival. She is a Lombard resident.**

University. "This scholarship means so much to me as it gives me the opportunity to sing advanced works by Handel with other performers and share the beauty of this music with others," Weaver said. Weaver said she is excited to perform with the Handel Week Festival's acclaimed chorus, orchestra, and soloists, and hopes her experience will inspire other young singers to continue pursuing their musical goals.

## Obituary

### JOAN M. FORTE, 85

Joan M. Forte, age 85, longtime Lombardian passed away January 21, 2026.



Joan was the beloved wife of Richard Forte, whom she met at a church social function in New York. They were married on September 11, 1960. She was the dear mom of Debbie (Lorne) Shaw, Nancy Forte, Karen Forte and the late Scott Forte; grandma of Priscilla Forte and Josiah Shaw; sister of Paul (Candy) Grant and Fred (Renee) Grant. She was preceded in death by her siblings, the late Charles (the late Carol) Grant, the late Jimmy (the late Dee) Grant, the late David Grant and the late Jerry (Lynn) Grant.

Joan grew up in Pennsylvania and met her husband in New York. They moved to Lombard in 1968.

Joan loved living in the "Lilac Village," Lombard, Illinois. She could talk to anyone and loved meeting people and made many dear friends through the years. She enjoyed picnics with family and friends. She had the desire to tell individuals about the love and joy of knowing the Lord, Jesus Christ.

Joan was a longtime member of Grace Bible Church in Elmhurst, where she served as church hostess for a number of years. She also worked hard to study Gods Word at the Moody Bible Institute and was a graduate.

Funeral Service Thursday, January 29, 2026, at Brust Funeral Home. Interment followed at Oakridge-Glen Oak Cemetery, Hillside. In lieu of flowers, do-

nations in Joan's memory may be made to Focus on the Family, 8605 Explorer Drive, Colorado Springs, CO 80920 or Moody Bible Institute.

Info: [www.brustfuneralhome.com](http://www.brustfuneralhome.com) or 888-629-0094.

### RENATO MARSICO

Renato Marsico of Lombard, formerly of Italy, Castiglione Cosentino province of Cosenza, passed away on January 21, 2026, at Elmhurst Memorial Hospital, surrounded by his family.

Renato was the beloved husband of the late Rita Marsico; loving father of Morena Marsico-Anderson, Miranda (Nicholas) Kiotis, and Marrico (Elizabeth) Marsico; Nonno of Will Anderson, Heather (Kris) Gasca, Rosanna Marsico, Adam (Aubrey) Anderson, Marrico (Ashley) Marsico Jr.,

Christina (Mike) Formella and Alexandra Kiotis; great grandpa of Alaina Anderson, Axel Anderson and Marrico Anthony Marsico III, brother of Florindo (Renata) Marsico, Lucia (Ettore) Sergio, the late Michele (the late Giulia) Marsico, the late Clementina (the late Stano) Cairo, the late Armando (the late Anna) Marsico, the late Giacomino (the late Amelia) Marsico, the late Maria (the late Luigi) Perri and the late Ettore (Rita) Marsico; and son of the late Luigi and the late Rosina Marsico.

Funeral Services were held on Monday, January 26, 2026, at Brust Funeral Home, 135 S. Main St., Lombard. Entombment followed at All Saints Cemetery, Des Plaines.

Memorial donations in Renato's name may be directed to his family. Info: [www.brustfuneralhome.com](http://www.brustfuneralhome.com) or 888-629-0094.

## Coming events

### Versiti blood drive Feb. 3

The Lombard Park District is hosting a blood drive Tuesday, Feb. 3, from 2:30-6:30 p.m. at the Community Building, 433 E. St. Charles Road, Lombard. Appointments are appreciated but walk-ins are welcome. Bring a photo ID. Visit [Versiti.org/IL](http://Versiti.org/IL) or call 800-TTO-GIVE to make an appointment.

### Chef Fest Feb. 5

The Elmhurst Memorial Hospital Foundation's 26th annual Chef Fest will be held Thursday, Feb. 5, 6 p.m. at the Drury Lane Theatre & Conference Center, 100 Drury Lane in Oakbrook Terrace. The event includes a variety of signature menu items produced by chefs from prominent local restaurants, bakeries and caterers, who donate their time and talent. Tickets are \$150 per person. Tables of 10 can be purchased. Sponsorship opportunities are available.

To purchase tickets and for more information, visit [www.endeavorhealth.org/chef-fest](http://www.endeavorhealth.org/chef-fest) or call the EMH Foundation at (331) 221-4483. Proceeds from Chef Fest support The Centennial Campaign for Elmhurst Hospital and our main campus expansion, increasing our ability to care for patients within cancer, surgery and family birthing.

### Plum Library programs

**Love Stories from History: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly** Wednesday, Feb. 4, at 7 p.m. The course of historical love never did run smooth. Award-winning romantic comedy filmmaker Lorrissa Julianus shares true love stories from history to delight and entertain. Register at [helenplum.org](http://helenplum.org) or by calling (630) 627-0316.

**Historical Highlights of the Chicago Auto Show (Rescheduled)** Friday, Feb. 6, at 1 p.m. Experience the auto

debut, exotic imports, concept vehicles, and more from Chicago Auto Show history. Attendees have the chance to win tickets to the 2026 auto show, Turtle Wax products, and the book *First to One Hundred: The History of First 100 Chicago Auto Shows*. Register at [helenplum.org](http://helenplum.org) or by calling (630) 627-0316.

### Online fraud protection program Feb. 6

Diane Blair-Sherlock's Senior Advisory Council Presents Online Fraud Protection and Advocacy for Seniors at York Senior Center, 1502 S. Meyers, Lombard, on Friday, Feb. 6, at 1 p.m. Join the Office of the Illinois Attorney General for a presentation for seniors to learn how to prevent being victims of consumer fraud and identity theft scams. Topics to be discussed are:

- Understand how to recognize potential fraud attempts
  - Learn how to be ready to stop the scams
  - Reach out to the Attorney General's Senior Help line
- Questions? Call our office at 630-415-3520 or email [Carol.District46@gmail.com](mailto:Carol.District46@gmail.com).

### Single Mothers Support Group to meet Feb. 8

SHE Single Mothers Support Group on Sunday, Feb. 8, 12:15 p.m. at Elmhurst Christian Reformed Church, 149 W. Brush Hill Road, Elmhurst. Join other single mothers for a complimentary lunch, free child care (ages 0-12), inspiring speakers and support from other single mothers. RSVP to [elmhurstcsc.org/she](http://elmhurstcsc.org/she).

### Versiti blood drive at Plum Library Feb. 11

Helen Plum Library, 411 S. Main St., Lombard, is hosting a Versiti blood Drive Wednesday, Feb. 11, from 2:30-7 p.m. Appointments are appreciated but walk-ins are welcome. Bring a photo ID. Visit [Versiti.org/IL](http://Versiti.org/IL) or call 800-TTO-GIVE to make an appointment.

### 'Sip and Shop' with service league Feb. 5

Just in time for Valentine's Day the members of Lombard Service League are hosting a "Sip and Shop" fundraiser at Kendra Scott Jewelry in Oak Brook Shopping Mall on Feb. 5. Shopping while sipping Champagne will occur between the hours of 5-7 p.m. It is the perfect time to shop for Valentine's Day or for yourself. The members of Lombard Service League will provide snacks, and Kendra Scott will provide Champagne and sweets. Twenty percent of the proceeds of all items purchased that evening will be donated back to the club. Money raised between 5-7 p.m. will go toward local philanthropies in the Lombard area. Join us for a fun evening of shopping. Lombard Service League is a member of the General Federation of Women's Clubs and the Illinois Federation of Women's Clubs. The club is celebrating its 75<sup>th</sup> year of serving the Lombard area, statewide initiatives and international projects. For more information about the event or the club, call or text 630-988-0625.

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# Sports

## Rams notch ninth straight win by crushing Willowbrook

Nee scores 24 first-half points in 78-52 victory in Villa Park; Glenbard East moves to 21-2 following win over Warriors

The Glenbard East boys basketball team earned its ninth straight victory and improved its overall season record to 21-2 by pounding Willowbrook 78-52 on Saturday afternoon in Villa Park.

Glenbard East senior Michael Nee poured in all of his team-leading 24 points during the first half of the battle between area schools. Nee scored the Rams' first 11 points of the game by draining four shots, including three attempts from 3-point range. Glenbard East led the Warriors 20-12 at the end of the first quarter.

The Rams piled on 32 points during the second quarter to take a 52-21 half-time lead. Nee made six field goals, including one shot from 3-point territory, during the second quarter. Glenbard East senior Danny Snyder added two 3-point baskets in the second quarter.

The Rams led the Warriors 75-40 at the end of the third quarter. The lead of at least 30 points triggered a running clock throughout the fourth quarter.

Senior Jacob Marynowski provided 15 points for Glenbard East in Saturday's triumph over Willowbrook. Senior Sam Walton contributed 10 points. Snyder supplied eight points. Senior Norman Loechel, who sank two 3-point shots during the third quarter, also scored eight points. Senior Keenan House tacked on five points, while seniors Muhammad Musleh and Cameron Bonner scored three points each. Freshman Adam Schwarz added two points.

"This is a neighborhood rivalry game," said Glenbard East coach Eric Kelly after the win at Willowbrook. "When these two teams play, you've got to play with a little bit of extra juice, and a little extra energy. You saw that with Mike [Nee]. He knew how important this is. That's why he came out the way he came out."

Two days before beating Willowbrook, Glenbard East improved its Upstate Eight Conference East Division record to 8-0 with a 49-15 victory at West Chicago. Nee sup-

plied 12 points in the Rams' Jan. 22 win over the Wildcats, while Marynowski scored nine points.

"It was a very slow game," said Kelly of last week's win at West Chicago. "They [the Wildcats] came out and held the ball for minutes at a time. We were able to figure it out and make some shots."

Earlier this week, the Rams played a non-division game at Yorkville Christian. Glenbard East will play a division home game against Fenton this Friday, Jan. 30.

### Warriors' week begins with two narrow losses at Wheaton Warrenville South's Martin Luther King event

Senior Otis Powell scored a team-leading 23 points for Willowbrook in Saturday's loss to the Rams. Senior Jaylen Griffin provided nine points for the Warriors, whose overall season record dropped to 9-14 with the loss.

Willowbrook opened last week with two close losses at Wheaton Warrenville South's Martin Luther King tournament on Jan. 19. In their first game of the day, the Warriors lost 81-77 to Rockford East. Later on the same day, Willowbrook suffered an 89-85 overtime loss to Jefferson.

Griffin scored 27 points in the Warriors' loss to Rockford East. Powell supplied 25 points in the game, while senior Zach Boynton and junior JJ Miulli scored seven points each. Senior Jory Crocker added six points.

Powell scored 32 points in Willowbrook's overtime loss to Jefferson. Junior Michael Garner contributed 14 points, while Boynton and Griffin provided 13 points each. Crocker tacked on 10 points.

The Warriors' West Suburban Gold Conference record dropped to 2-3 following their 55-38 loss at Morton in Cicero on Jan. 20.

Willowbrook's schedule this week includes two road games this Saturday, Jan. 31. After playing an afternoon conference contest at Hinsdale South, the Warriors will face Plainfield East in an evening matchup at East Aurora High School.



CHRIS FOX PHOTOS/Rock Valley Publishing

Senior Michael Nee (No. 4) of Glenbard East's boys basketball team scored a team-leading 24 points in Saturday's 78-52 victory over Willowbrook in Villa Park. Nee scored the Rams' first 11 points of the game by making four first-quarter baskets, including three shots from 3-point range. He scored his other 13 points during the second quarter, when he drained six shots, including one 3-point attempt. The Rams led Willowbrook 20-12 after one quarter, and 52-21 at halftime. Glenbard East senior Sam Walton (No. 24) scored 10 points in Saturday's win, which raised the Rams' overall season record to 21-2. Senior Otis Powell (No. 2) scored a team-high 23 points for the Warriors in Saturday's loss. Senior Jaylen Griffin (No. 1) added nine points for Willowbrook. The Warriors' overall season record dropped to 9-14 after Saturday's loss to the Rams.

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# Broncos secure first division win of the season by edging Fenwick 50-47

Two days after defeating Friars, Montini moves to 8-14 with home win over Amundsen

The Montini Catholic girls basketball team earned its first Girls Catholic Athletic Conference (GCAC) Red Division victory of the season last week when it beat Fenwick 50-47 in Lombard on Jan. 22.

The Broncos moved to 1-6 in GCAC Red Division play following their narrow victory over the visiting Friars. Montini raised its overall season record to 8-14 with Saturday's 60-21 non-division home win over Amundsen.

The Broncos and Fenwick were tied at 19-19 after one

quarter. Montini led the Friars 30-26 at halftime. The Broncos extended their lead to 42-33 by the end of the third quarter.

Fenwick cut Montini's lead to 45-42 with about five minutes left in the game. A basket by freshman Nathalia Richardson gave the Broncos a 47-42 advantage with about three minutes to play. The Friars reduced the Broncos' lead to 47-45 with less than one minute remaining.

Richardson sank two free throws with 20.8 seconds left

in the game to give Montini a 49-45 lead. Fenwick made a pair of free throws with 15.7 seconds to play to drop the Broncos' lead to 49-47.

Senior Mia Quaranta made one of two free throws with 2.7 seconds on the clock to give Montini its 50-47 lead. After Quaranta made the second of two free throws, Fenwick inbounded the ball, advanced it down the floor, and attempted a 3-point shot that could have sent the game into overtime. The shot caromed off the rim as the buzzer sounded.

Freshman Paige Pittman scored a team-leading 15 points for the Broncos in their victory over Fenwick. Quaranta provided 14 points, while sophomore Kaelyn Zumdahl supplied nine points. Richardson added seven points. Sophomore Peggy Pacelli connected on a 3-point attempt in the second quarter to provide three points. Sophomore Julia

Matulevicius made a pair of free throws during the second quarter to contribute two points.

Montini built a 25-6 lead after one quarter of Saturday's contest against Amundsen. The Broncos' lead swelled to 40-11 by halftime.

Pittman scored 11 points in Saturday's victory. Richardson and Quaranta supplied 10 and eight points, respectively. Senior Ava Lombardi scored six points. Zumdahl tacked on five points, while Matulevicius scored four points. Juniors Cedona Barrett and Brooke D'Amico contributed four points each. Four Broncos—senior Juliana Neustadt, Pacelli, sophomore Avery Herold, and sophomore Anne Paciga—scored two points each.

Montini's schedule this week includes a non-division home game against Glenbrook South this Saturday, Jan. 31.



CHRIS FOX PHOTOS Rock Valley Publishing

Freshman Paige Pittman (No. 55) of Montini Catholic's girls basketball team scored a team-leading 15 points in last week's 50-47 victory over Fenwick in Lombard. Senior Mia Quaranta (No. 4) added 14 points for the Broncos. Quaranta made one of two free throws with 2.7 seconds to play to account for the Jan. 22 game's final point. Fenwick missed a 3-point shot at the buzzer. Sophomore Kaelyn Zumdahl (No. 5) contributed nine points for Montini. Two days after beating Fenwick, the Broncos raised their overall season record to 8-14 with Saturday's 60-21 home win over Amundsen.



CHRIS FOX PHOTOS Rock Valley Publishing

## Warriors beat Morton

Willowbrook's girls basketball team defeated Morton 48-28 in Saturday evening's West Suburban Gold Conference game in Villa Park. The Warriors improved to 7-15 overall and 4-6 in conference play with the victory. Willowbrook led the visiting Mustangs 11-8 after one quarter. The Warriors led Morton 25-17 at halftime and 36-21 at the end of the third quarter. Willowbrook freshman Claire Edison (No. 4) scored 14 of her team-leading 16 points during the second half. Senior Joely Maciejewski and junior Jada Langston provided eight points each for the Warriors. Sophomore Leah Piper (No. 23) and freshman Kennedy Rieger supplied six points each. Freshman Jessica Tortorello added three points by connecting on a 3-point attempt during the second quarter. Junior Mia Grochowski tacked on one point by making a free throw in the fourth quarter. Two days before beating Morton, Willowbrook suffered a 52-48 non-conference loss at Willows Academy in Des Plaines. The Eagles of Willows Academy led the Warriors 12-11 after one quarter. Piper drained three shots from 3-point range during the second quarter. The Eagles led Willowbrook 22-16 late in the second quarter, but Piper sank two 3-point bombs, including one as the quarter ended, to even the score at 22-22 at halftime. Willows Academy held a 39-32 lead after three quarters. Edison scored 11 points in the Jan. 22 loss to the Eagles. Tortorello, who made two 3-point shots in the fourth quarter, added 10 points. Langston and Piper provided nine points each. Rieger supplied four points. Sophomore Charlotte Baker and Maciejewski scored three and two points, respectively. The Warriors are playing three non-conference home games this week. Willowbrook will face Glenbard East this Saturday, Jan. 31, in Villa Park.

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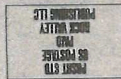


## Senior cheer at Willowbrook

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CHRIS FOX PHOTO Villa Park Review  
Willowbrook High School honored its senior cheerleaders before the start of Friday night's boys basketball game against Addison Trail. The Warriors' four senior cheerleaders, pictured left to right after the game, are Mylie Benson, Lily Conboy, Avery Fitzgerald and Allah Ramirez.

# Villa Park Village Board members approve ordinance

## Board members vote unanimously to waive first reading and enact ordinance

Villa Park Village Board members voted unanimously during their Jan. 12 special meeting to approve an ordinance amending the village's municipal code regarding the restricted use of village property for civil immigration enforcement activities.

Several people spoke in support of the ordinance during the meeting's segment for public comments on agenda items. Board members voted 6-0 later in the meeting to approve the ordinance, and to waive the first reading.

Villa Park Village President Kevin Patrick, who frequently does not cast votes during board meetings, joined trustees Cari Alfano, Jorge Cordova, Tina Konstatos, Jack Kozar and Khalid Sabri in voting to approve the ordinance. Trustee Deepa Kumar was absent from the meeting.

It's not clear if the village's amended ordinance will have any impact on federal government operations to enforce the nation's immigration laws in Villa Park, which has about 22,000 residents.

**Village President Patrick refers to the fatal Jan. 7 shooting in Minnesota**

Before board members discussed the ordinance, Patrick made a statement.

"The recent news out of Minneapolis has shaken communities across the country and reminded us all of the very real consequences that occur when trust breaks down between law enforcement and the people they serve," said Patrick,

referring to the Jan. 7 incident in Minnesota in which an Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agent shot and killed Renee Good as Good drove forward in a Honda Pilot. "As village president, my responsibility is first and foremost, to every resident of this community," added Patrick. "That responsibility includes keeping people safe, ensuring our laws are applied fairly, and protecting the dignity and the rights of every person, regardless of background."

Patrick, who delivered his statement after the segment for public comments on agenda items, stated that his support of the ordinance being discussed did not reflect a stand against the nation's immigration laws.

"This is not about taking sides in a federal policy debate," Patrick said. "It is about strengthening transparency, accountability and community confidence and how enforcement actions intersect with our local values."

**Ordinance states federal agents must have a signed judicial warrant; it's not clear how the village would enforce its ordinance**

According to information provided in the agenda packet for the Jan. 12 board meeting, the ordinance that was approved during that meeting clarifies and strengthens the intent of a resolution the board adopted unanimously in September 2025 "to affirm the village's refusal to allow any expenditure of village resource-

es to assist in civil immigration enforcement operations."

The ordinance approved during the Jan. 12 meeting prohibits the use of village prop-

erty for "planning, staging, assembling, mobilizing, deploying, or otherwise supporting civil immigration enforcement operations." According to the

ordinance, those operations "are only allowed on village property upon the presentation

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## Smrz receives 88's Best award for January

SUBMITTED PHOTO/CHRIS FOX FILE

PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing

Willowbrook High School senior Marli Smrz

was recently honored as her school's recipient of the 88's Best award for the month of January.

Smrz, who is a resident of Villa Park, was recognized during the District 88 Board of Education's Jan. 12 meeting. She is pictured (left) at that meeting with Willowbrook Principal Dan Krause (right). Krause spoke during the meeting and read comments from several school staff members, who praised Smrz for her enthusiasm, positive attitude, and leadership. The staff members' comments also recognized Smrz as dedicated, hard-working, and kind. Smrz enjoyed four spectacular seasons with Willowbrook's flag football team. The school formed its flag football program just as Smrz arrived at the school as a freshman in 2022. The Chicago Public League and the Chicago Bears joined together to host state championship events at the Bears' Halas Hall facility in 2022 and 2023. As a freshman, Smrz was a key member of the Willowbrook team that won the 2022 state title and posted a record of 9-0 during its inaugural season. The Warriors won the third-place trophy at the 2023 state tournament at Halas Hall. In 2024, the Warriors advanced to the quarterfinal round of the inaugural Illinois High School Association (IHSAA) flag football state event. As a senior, Smrz led the Warriors to the third-place trophy in the 2025 IHSAA state tournament, which took place last October at the Warriors' stadium in Villa Park. Willowbrook completed its 2025 season with a 23-1 record. Smrz, who was the Warriors' quarterback, earned All-State recognition during her senior season, when she fired 72 touchdown passes and rushed for an additional six touchdowns. Smrz also excelled on defense and made 28 interceptions during her senior season. Smrz, who has been named to Willowbrook's Distinction Honor Roll in each semester of her time in high school, is planning to study political science, along with a minor, or a double major, in psychology. She is considering what school she will attend, and may head to Western Michigan University. She intends to practice law in the future.



## Village provides update on construction at The Union Villa Park development site

The Village of Villa Park provided an update last week on construction activity related to The Union Villa Park development near the Villa Park Recreation Center. The recreation center is located at 320 E. Wildwood Ave.

"Demolition and site work near the Villa Park Recreation Center [VPRC] is expected to begin later this month," stated the update. "Construction fencing is now in place along Wildwood Avenue, reducing street width, and temporary 'No Parking' signs have been installed to help traffic flow. The village is working to make this a permanent no-parking zone for easier access to the VPRC."

The recent announcement stated that public parking is still available in the vicinity of the VPRC. The former municipal parking lot on South Villa Avenue, next to the Great Western Trail, closed in

December 2025.

"Residents should expect ongoing construction activity and occasional disruptions as construction begins," added the village's message to residents. "Thank you for your patience and understanding as this project moves forward."

The Marquette Companies is developing the site near South Villa Avenue and the Great Western Trail into "The Union." According to the Naperville-based Marquette Companies, the development will feature a seven-story building comprised of 238 luxury apartments, 7,500 square feet of commercial space, reserved indoor parking for residents, and a 94-space indoor public parking deck.

Residents with further questions regarding the development can contact Marquette Companies at theunionvillapark@marqnet.com.

## AAUW Elmhurst Area Branch is accepting applications for three \$3,500 scholarships

The deadline to apply is April 3; residents of Villa Park and Oakbrook Terrace can apply

The AAUW (American Association of University Women) Elmhurst Area Branch is now accepting applications for three \$3,500 scholarships for women in need of financial assistance to continue their education at the undergraduate or graduate level.

The deadline to apply is April 3. AAUW's mission is to advance gender equity through research, education, and advocacy.

To be eligible, women must be 23 or older and residents of Elmhurst, Addison, Bensenville, Berkeley, Northlake, Oak Brook, Oakbrook Terrace or Villa Park. Applicants must have already completed 12 credit hours at an accredited community or undergraduate college or university. Applicants may be full or part time students.

For an application and/or more information, visit

<https://elmhurstarea-il.aauw.net/scholarship/apply>. Call 630-207-4851 after your application is submitted to confirm receipt.

The AAUW Elmhurst Area Branch is a not-for-profit 501(c)3 organization. Funds from the Elmhurst Branch's annual used book sale are used to support the local scholarships, national AAUW research and programs for women and girls.

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# Rams post a pair of home victories to move to 14-6

Murphy pours in 22 points in a win over West Chicago; Nee supplies 17 points in a triumph over South Elgin

The Glenbard East girls basketball team earned a pair of home victories last week to improve its overall season record to 14-6.

The Rams defeated West Chicago 56-43 in an Upstate Eight Conference East Division game in Lombard on Jan. 13. Glenbard East moved its division record to 7-1 with that win. Two days later, the Rams edged South Elgin 35-31 in a non-division contest.

Glenbard East led West Chicago 19-4 after one quarter of last week's division meeting. The Rams led the Wildcats 29-16 at halftime. West Chicago trimmed Glenbard East's lead to 43-32 by the end of the third quarter. Junior Teagan Murphy made four 3-point shots in the second half and scored a team-leading 22 points for the Rams in last week's win over West Chicago. Sophomore Olivia Nee, who made three 3-point attempts during the opening quarter, added 12 points for Glenbard East. Sophomore Mae Hoffman provided six points for the Rams, while senior Nora Opila supplied five points. Senior Haley Greenfield contributed four points for Glenbard East. Senior Sarah Crocker made a 3-point shot during the third quarter to deliver three points. Senior Kathleen Nevels and sophomore Lorelai May scored two



Junior Teagan Murphy (No. 14) of Glenbard East's girls basketball team scored 22 points to lead the Rams to a 56-43 victory over West Chicago in Lombard on Jan. 13. Murphy made four 3-point shots during the game's second half. After sinking a pair of 3-point baskets in the third quarter, she added two more 3-point field goals in the fourth quarter. Sophomore Olivia Nee (No. 20) provided 12 points for the Rams. Another photo from Glenbard East's win over the Wildcats shows senior Sarah Crocker (No. 13) being congratulated by some of her teammates shortly after she sank a 3-point shot during the third quarter. Two days after beating West Chicago, the Rams defeated South Elgin 35-31 in Lombard. Nee scored 17 points in that victory, which raised Glenbard East's overall season record to 14-6.

CHRIS FOX PHOTOS Rock Valley Publishing

points each. The Rams trailed South Elgin 6-0 early in last week's meeting in Lombard. The visiting Storm held a 14-9 lead at the end of the first quarter.

The two teams were tied at 16-16 at halftime. Glenbard East held a 24-23 lead at the end of the third quarter. Nee, who scored nine points during the fourth quarter,

provided a team-high 17 points in the Rams' victory over South Elgin. She scored a basket to give Glenbard East a 33-28 lead with 1:15 left in the game. Nee scored

a layup on a pass from Hoffman to push the Rams' lead to 35-28 with about 50 seconds to play. Murphy scored eight points in Glenbard East's win

over the Storm. Opila provided six points, while Hoffman scored four points. The Rams' season continues with this Friday's division game at Fenton.

# Warriors pull away from the Blazers in the second half

Willowbrook defeats District 88 rival Addison Trail 80-67; the game was tied at 45-45 during the third quarter

The Willowbrook boys basketball team improved to 9-10 overall and 2-2 in the West Suburban Gold Conference following Friday's 80-67 home victory over Addison Trail in a spirited battle in Villa Park.

Addison Trail senior Marcello Saraceno made five shots from 3-point range during the first quarter to lift his team to a 26-20 lead by the end of the quarter. The visiting Blazers led the Warriors 39-37 at halftime.

The two teams were tied at 45-45 in the third quarter. Willowbrook junior Dylan Borkowski scored a basket to break the tie and give his team a 47-45 lead. Senior Jaylen Griffin added a basket to push the Warriors' lead to 49-45. Willowbrook senior Otis Powell then scored two straight baskets to extend the Warriors' lead to 53-45. Willowbrook led Addison Trail 57-50 at the end of the third quarter.

Senior Camren Salerno of the Blazers delivered a 3-point play that cut the Warriors' lead to 63-59 with 5:11 remaining in the game. Seconds later, Powell provided a 3-point play to boost

Willowbrook's lead to 66-59. After Addison Trail reduced the Warriors' lead to 66-62, senior Jory Crocker scored to push Willowbrook's lead to 68-62. Borkowski then supplied two straight baskets to raise the lead to 72-62.

Powell scored a team-leading 21 points for the Warriors in Friday's game. Griffin and Borkowski contributed 14 points each, while Crocker supplied 10 points. Junior JJ Miulli added eight points, while senior Antwain Walker and senior Evan Kase scored four and three points, respectively.

Saraceno made six 3-point shots and scored a team-high 18 points for Addison Trail in Friday's loss to the Warriors. After making five 3-point shots in the first quarter, Saraceno added one more basket from 3-point range in the fourth quarter.

Senior Manuel Roque provided 17 points for the Blazers. Junior Ian Ramos added 10 points, while senior Vince Blonda and Salerno supplied nine and eight points, respectively. Junior Alex Burbank

contributed five points. Addison Trail dropped to 7-10 overall and 1-3 in conference play following Friday's loss to the Warriors.

Willowbrook, which played

at Wheaton Warrenville South's Martin Luther King Jr. tournament earlier this week,

will play area rival Glenbard East this Saturday, Jan. 24, in Villa Park.



CHRIS FOX PHOTOS Rock Valley Publishing

Senior Jaylen Griffin (No. 1) of Willowbrook's boys basketball team is pictured while launching and making a shot early in the fourth quarter of Friday's game against Addison Trail. The Warriors defeated the visiting Blazers 80-67 in Villa Park. Another photo from the game shows Willowbrook junior Dylan Borkowski (No. 22) in front of Addison Trail senior Vince Blonda during a Blazers' free-throw attempt. Griffin and Borkowski scored 14 points each for the Warriors in Friday's victory. Senior Otis Powell scored a team-leading 21 points for Willowbrook. Addison Trail senior Marcello Saraceno (No. 3) made six shots from 3-point range to provide a team-leading 18 points. Saraceno drained five of his 3-point field goals during the first quarter. Senior Manuel Roque contributed 17 points for the Blazers.



# Warriors play three home games in a five-day span

## Willowbrook's week ends with a narrow conference loss to Hinsdale South

Willowbrook's girls basketball team played three home games in a five-day span last week. The Warriors lost 57-38 to Downers Grove South in a West Suburban Gold Conference contest in Villa Park on Jan. 13. One day later, IC Catholic Prep defeated Willowbrook 55-41 in a non-conference game. The Warriors completed their week with Saturday evening's 53-48 conference loss to Hinsdale South.

Saturday's loss to the Hornets left Willowbrook with an overall season record of 6-14, and a conference mark of 3-6.

The Warriors led Downers Grove South 10-6 after one quarter of last week's conference matchup. The visiting Mustangs owned a 25-23 halftime lead. Downers Grove South extended its lead to 43-26 by the end of the third quarter.

Freshman Claire Edison scored a team-leading 16 points for Willowbrook in last week's loss to Downers Grove South. Senior Joely Maciejewski provided seven points for the Warriors, while sophomore Charlotte Baker supplied five points. Junior Mia Grochowski and freshman Savanna Bauman added four points each, while senior Rachel Vish scored two points.

The Knights of IC Catholic Prep led Willowbrook 9-6 after one quarter of last week's non-conference matchup. The Warriors led the visiting Knights 18-15 at halftime. IC Catholic Prep

held a 35-32 lead at the end of the third quarter.

Edison scored 15 points for the Warriors in their loss to the Knights. Maciejewski contributed 10 points. Baker and freshman Jessica Tortorello added seven points each. Junior Jada Langston scored two points.

Hinsdale South took an early 11-1 lead over the Warriors in Saturday's conference game in Villa Park. The Hornets led Willowbrook 15-10 at the end of the first quarter, and 22-20 at halftime. Hinsdale South held a 41-26 lead late in the third quarter, but the Warriors closed the quarter with an 8-0 run to reduce the Hornets' lead to 41-34 with eight minutes to play.

Hinsdale South held a narrow lead throughout the fourth quarter. Edison made two free throws with less than 20 seconds to play to trim the lead to 50-48. The Hornets then made three free throws in the closing seconds.

Tortorello made a pair of 3-point shots and scored a team-leading 16 points for the Warriors in Saturday's loss. Edison provided 14 points, while Langston supplied 13 points. Maciejewski added four points, while Grochowski contributed one point with a second-quarter free throw.

The Warriors' schedule this week includes a non-conference contest against Willows Academy, along with this Saturday's conference home game against Morton.



CHRIS FOX PHOTOS/Rock Valley Publishing

Freshmen Claire Edison (No. 4) and Jessica Tortorello (No. 11) of Willowbrook's girls basketball team are pictured during last week's game against IC Catholic Prep. The visiting Knights beat the Warriors 55-41 in the Jan. 14 contest in Villa Park. Edison scored a team-leading 15 points in the game. Tortorello provided seven points. Tortorello made two 3-point shots and scored a team-leading 16 points in the Warriors' next game—Saturday's 53-48 home loss to Hinsdale South. Edison added 14 points in Saturday's contest.

## Broncos come back from a 22-point deficit to beat St. Francis

### Zumdahl scores 22 points for the Broncos, who trailed the Spartans 39-17 in the third quarter

The Montini Catholic girls basketball team rallied from a 22-point second-half deficit to beat St. Francis 53-49 on Saturday afternoon in Wheaton.

The Broncos, who raised their overall season record to 6-14 with Saturday's win, trailed the Spartans 14-13 after one quarter. St. Francis owned a 32-17 halftime lead. The Spartans scored the first seven points of the third quarter to expand their lead to 39-17, but the Broncos fought back to reduce the St. Francis

lead to 43-35 by the end of the third quarter. Montini sophomore Kaelyn Zumdahl made a 3-point shot with about 50 seconds left in the third quarter to cut the Spartans' lead to 43-35.

Montini delivered a 10-0 run to start the fourth quarter. Zumdahl completed that run by swishing a 3-point shot to give the Broncos a 45-43 lead with five minutes to play.

Montini freshman Nathalia Richardson made two free throws with 19.9 seconds left in the game to give the Broncos their 53-49 lead and close out the scoring.

Zumdahl scored a team-leading 22 points for the Broncos in Saturday's victory. Senior Mia Quaranta provided 10 points. Freshmen Paige

Pitman supplied seven points, while Richardson contributed six points. Junior Brooke D'Amico and sophomore Margaret Pacelli scored five

and three points, respectively. Montini's schedule this week includes home games against Fenwick and Amundsen.

## • Ramders (Continued from page 14)

a six-game score of 1,346. Clayton started the event with a 227 in his first game, and proceeded to roll a 231 in his second game, followed by a 248 in his third game. Clayton completed the regional with scores of 220, 206, and 214.

Glenbard South sophomore Zachary Kregor provided the Ramders with a six-game regional total of 1,241. Kregor began the event with a 213 and added scores of 202, 171, 214, 209, and 232.

Glenbard East senior Justin Kay contributed to the Ramders' regional victory with his six-game score of 1,235. Kay delivered scores of 183, 209, 234, 167, 225, and 217 in Streamwood.

Sophomore Henry Anderson of Glenbard East bowled a six-game total of 1,190 at the regional. Anderson turned in scores of 173, 211, and 232 in his first three games. He finished the regional with scores of 204, 191, and 179 in his next three games.

## Bowlers from Willowbrook and Addison Trail qualify for sectional as individuals

The regional's top 10 individual scorers who weren't members of sectional-qualifying teams advanced to the

Naperville Central Sectional as individuals. The bowlers who will compete at the sectional include Willowbrook freshman Nick Lupo, who rolled a six-game regional total of 1,261. Lupo, who placed second among the group of 10 individual sectional qualifiers in Streamwood, opened the regional with a 181. After bowling a 205 in his second game and a 194 in his third game, Lupo caught fire in his fourth game, when he rolled a 265. Lupo rolled scores of 201 and 215 in his next two games.

Two Addison Trail bowlers—senior Cameron Garcia and junior Cameron Do—earned individual berths in the Naperville Central Sectional with their performances in Streamwood. Garcia fired a six-game regional total of 1,185 that featured scores of 161, 216, 202, 191, and 180 in his first five games. Garcia rolled his best game of the day—a 235—in his sixth game.

After beginning the regional with a 205, Do proceeded to earn scores of 220, 208, 214, 146 and 187 in his next five games.

Addison Trail finished ninth in the regional's team standings. Willowbrook earned an 11<sup>th</sup>-place finish in Streamwood.

## Answers

PUZZLE 1

6	8	9	4	3	7	5	2	1
7	5	1	6	9	2	3	8	4
2	3	4	1	8	5	9	6	7
4	6	7	5	2	3	8	1	9
3	9	2	7	1	8	6	4	5
5	1	8	9	6	4	7	3	2
8	7	5	3	4	1	2	9	6
9	4	3	2	5	6	1	7	8
1	2	6	8	7	9	4	5	3

PUZZLE 2

2	4	3	7	6	1	9	8	5
8	7	9	3	4	5	1	6	2
1	5	6	2	8	9	7	4	3
7	3	5	1	9	6	8	2	4
4	2	8	5	7	3	6	9	1
9	6	1	8	2	4	3	5	7
3	8	4	9	5	7	2	1	6
5	9	7	6	1	2	4	3	8
6	1	2	4	3	8	5	7	9

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SATI	IRA
AMBO	ELATE
AGXIN	OPERATES
PACA	REASSEMB
TSK	SCHEIN

## • DuPage

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### Saturday, March 21 Breakfast with the Easter Bunny

**Addison**  
From 9-10:30 a.m. at the Community Recreation Center, enjoy a delicious breakfast, meet the Easter Bunny and take photos to capture the special moment. Children will enjoy spring-themed craft and games. Each family will have a keepsake photo to take home. This event will lead into the free outdoor community egg hunt. Children 24 months and younger are free. For more information, visit [addisonparks.org](http://addisonparks.org)

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