

VILLA PARK REVIEW

Your Hometown Newspaper

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Mary Smith of Willowbrook High School's Class of 2026 was her school's recipient of the 88's Best award for the month of April. Smith (right) is pictured with Willowbrook Principal Dan Krause (left) on April 27. (Submitted photo)

Smith honored with 88's Best award

Mary Smith of Willowbrook High School's Class of 2026 was honored as her school's recipient of the 88's Best award for the month of April. Smith, who is a Lombard resident, received the award during the District 88 Board of Education's April 27 meeting.

The board recognizes nine Willowbrook students and nine Addison Trail students with the 88's Best honor each school year. Smith was Willowbrook's ninth and final honoree during the 2025-26 school year. She and her fellow members of the school's Class of 2026 celebrated their commencement on May 17.

Willowbrook Principal Dan Krause spoke during the April 27 board meeting and read comments from several of Smith's teachers, who praised her as a kind, thoughtful, dedicated and hard-working student. Those teachers also complimented Smith for her integrity, discipline and positive attitude.

Smith completed several Advanced Placement (AP)/college-level courses during her four years at Willowbrook. She was named to the school's Distinction

Honor Roll in each semester of her time in high school.

Smith is an inductee of the National Honor Society, the National English Honor Society, the World Language Honor Society, and Willowbrook's social studies honor society—Civitas. She was a member of the Student Council and the Varsity Club. She also served as a Student Ambassador to assist students who transferred to Willowbrook. Additionally, Smith was active in the New Beginnings program, which assists freshmen with the transition to high school. Smith was the founder and president of the school's Pen Pal program, which allowed current Willowbrook students to connect with eighth-graders and talk to them about what to prepare for before beginning high school.

Smith participated in multiple sports at Willowbrook. She was a member of the Warriors' girls golf, girls volleyball, girls basketball and badminton programs.

Smith, who plans to become a special education teacher, will continue her education at the College of DuPage.

Villa Park Police advise residents about solicitors

The Villa Park Police Department reminds residents that solicitors may be present in the community throughout the year.

All solicitors conducting door-to-door sales or solicitation within the Village of Villa Park are required to possess a valid Village of Villa Park Solicitation Permit and must present it upon request.

If someone comes to your door offering goods or services:

- Ask to see their Village of Villa Park Solicitation Permit.
- Request identification and verify the company they represent.
- Never feel pressured to make an immediate decision or purchase.
- Do not provide personal, financial, or banking information to anyone you do not know.

• Verify the legitimacy of any company before signing contracts or making payments.

Residents who wish to avoid door-to-door solicitation may obtain a "No Solicitors" sticker from Village Hall. Solicitors issued a valid permit are instructed not to contact residences displaying a "No Solicitors" sticker.

If a solicitor cannot produce a valid permit, ignores a "No Solicitors" sticker, refuses to identify themselves, or is acting suspiciously, contact the Villa Park Police Department via 911 so officers can respond and investigate.

As always, if you feel threatened or believe a crime is occurring, call 911 immediately.

"Stay vigilant and help us keep Villa Park a safe community for everyone," stated the police department at the end of its message to residents.

Police issue statement on incident at fitness club on North Avenue

On Wednesday, June 17, at approximately 9 a.m., the Villa Park Police Department subsequently cleared the scene."

One year ago, in June 2025, Villa Park Chief of Police Todd Kubish issued a statement that noted that the Villa Park Police Department does not participate in immigration enforcement.

"Officers follow the Illinois Trust Act and do not ask about immigration status," added Kubish in last year's statement. He concluded that statement by advising anyone in need of help from police to call 911.

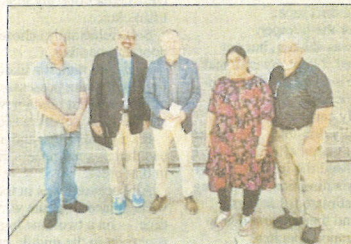
"If you need help, please call 911, no matter your status," stated Kubish.

Earlier this year, on Jan. 12, the Villa Park Village Board approved an ordinance amending the village's municipal code regarding the restricted use of village property for civil immigration enforcement activities. The ordinance approved during the Jan. 12 meeting prohibits the use of village property 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." According to the police department's statement, officers responded to ensure public safety and maintain scene security.

"After a brief period on scene, the federal agency concluded its operations and departed the area without taking the individual into custody," stated the department. "No arrests were made, no injuries were reported, and there was, and continues to be, no threat to public safety. The Villa Park Police

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U.S. Rep. Sean Casten recently visited the Villa Park Public Works Department. Pictured left to right are: Village Engineer Kevin Mantels, Village Manager Mike Rivas, Casten, Village Trustee Deepa Kumar, and Public Works Director Rich Salerno. (Submitted photo)

Casten visits Villa Park

U.S. Rep. Sean Casten of the 6th Congressional District recently visited the Villa Park Public Works Department to deliver some good news for the village.

According to the village, Casten is working to secure \$750,000 in federal funding for Villa Park's Twin Lakes Water Main Improvement Project.

"This project will replace an existing failed eight-inch water main in the Princeton Avenue public right-of-way between Wildfire Drive and Belden Avenue," noted the village in a statement expressing its thanks to Casten.

"This project will help restore water supply capacity, reliability, and fire protection in the project service area."

Crocker named to 4A All-State team; Edison earns honorable mention



LEFT: Willowbrook's Jory Crocker, who will continue his career at the University of Arizona, was named to the IHSBCA Class 4A All-State team. RIGHT: Willowbrook's Noah Edison was an honorable mention selection. (Photo by Chris Fox)

The Illinois High School Baseball Coaches Association (IHSBCA) announced its 2026 All-State Teams last week. Willowbrook senior Jory Crocker was named to the Class 4A All-State Team. Senior Noah Edison of Willowbrook earned Class 4A honorable mention recognition.

Crocker and Edison led the Warriors to a special 2026 season. After beginning the season with a 1-4 record, Willowbrook won 27 straight games before finishing its regular season with two straight losses.

The Warriors posted an overall season record of 29-7. Willowbrook won the West Suburban Gold Conference championship with a perfect 18-0 record.

Crocker, who was recently named the West Suburban Gold Conference's 2026 Player of the Year, will continue his academic and baseball careers at the University of Arizona. Edison, who was named the West Suburban Gold Conference's 2026 Pitcher of the Year, will continue his academic and baseball careers at Olivet Nazarene University.

•Lawsuit (From page 7)

that led her to tell her doctor she "didn't want to live anymore."

In that instance, her mother obtained power of attorney and could make medical decisions for Payne when she was unable to. Under the law, doctors are not required to notify family of the patient's decision and there is no appeals process. But patients must be of sound mind and have a prognosis of less than six months to make an eligible request. Nobody else, even with power of attorney, would be able to make the decision for them.

"Many, many people who can't or don't have these opportunities to speak up for themselves ... hopefully I do a well enough job to help their voice be heard, especially in situations like this," Payne said.

Oral requests for aid in dying must be accompanied by a written report signed by two witnesses, at least one of which is not an employee of the health facility or a relative or estate beneficiary of the patient. But if a doctor believes the patient has less than five days to live, they can approve an emergency prescription.

A lawsuit was also filed in New York, joining three previous cases in California, Colorado and Delaware. Currently, 13 states and the

District of Columbia have laws permitting aid in dying. Illinois is the first Midwestern state to legalize the practice.

Illinois' law is similar to other states, with the basics being copied from Oregon, the first state to legalize the practice.

Discrimination claims: The lawsuit is centered around the claim that EOLA discriminates against people with disabilities by singling out disabled people for aid in dying and not providing them with sufficient protections against abuse of the practice.

"The perception that Ebony is suffering every day, that she is better off dead, is discrimination," attorney Michael Bien said. "The idea that we can categorize people and say certain people should be eligible for suicide and other people are not is discrimination."

Doctors must weigh coercion and mental status before they prescribe the medication. And the law says no person is considered a qualified patient solely because of age, disability or mental health condition. But with federal healthcare cuts putting more people under pressure, Bien questioned if this is an environment in which the law should go into effect.

During debates last spring, advocates from other states, including Oregon, said there has been no evidence of discriminatory use of the procedure.



Illinois' EOLA Act was passed in October 2025 and signed into law by the governor in December. (Adobe Stock Image)

"Each law authorizing medical aid in dying states clearly and unequivocally that disability alone does not automatically qualify or disqualify someone for access to this healthcare option," Veronica Darling, director of litigation with healthcare advocacy group Compassion & Choices, said in a statement. "These laws are not about discrimination, they are about compassion, dignity, and respecting the healthcare choices of terminally ill adults when it matters most."

Oversight and safeguards: In addition to singling out people with disabilities, the lawsuit claims that they are at extra risk be-

cause of "toothless" guidelines and lack of independent oversight, taking "the power of death from the sovereign state and (giving) it to private actors."

After a request and before writing a prescription, the physician must evaluate the patient's diagnosis, mental capacity and potential coercion and refer to a consulting physician for approval. A full mental health examination is only required if the attending doctor believes the patient isn't stable.

Once written, the prescription can be filled and taken at any time the patient chooses.

"What if you become mentally unstable? ... There's nothing at all involved with the actual moment," Bien said.

The doctor must provide the patient with sufficient information regarding "all appropriate end-of-life care options," and the risks and benefits of each, so the patient can make a "voluntary and affirmative decision" regarding their end-of-life care.

The lawsuit also claims the law overrides the interests of doctors to govern the ethical practices of their own profession, though EOLA does give physicians the right to choose whether to participate in aid-in-dying without consequence. Doctors are also exempt from civil or criminal liability and professional consequences for prescribing medication or not doing so.

Police plan increased enforcement for July 4 holiday

As residents and visitors prepare to celebrate Independence Day, the Lombard Police Department is reminding motorists to make safety a priority both on and off the road.

From June 19 through July 6, officers will participate in a statewide traffic safety campaign focused on reducing impaired driving and increasing seat belt use during one of the busiest travel periods of the summer.

"We want everyone to enjoy the holiday and get home safely," said Lt. Tom Balstis. "If your plans include alcohol, cannabis or any other impairing substance, make a plan before you head out. Choose a sober ride and always wear your seat belt."

The Lombard Police Department

will join the Illinois State Police and more than 200 local police and sheriff's departments for this statewide enforcement effort.

Driving under the influence puts drivers, passengers and everyone on the road at risk. A DUI can also bring serious financial, legal and personal consequences. Planning ahead for a sober ride is a simple step that can prevent a tragedy.

To celebrate safely, the Lombard Police Department reminds motorists to:

- Designate a sober driver before going out.
- Give your designated driver your keys before the celebration begins.
- If you are impaired by alcohol, cannabis or any other drug, call a taxi,

use public transportation or a ride-share service, or contact a sober friend or family member.

- If you see a suspected impaired driver, pull over safely and call 911.
- Make sure everyone in your vehicle wears a seat belt. It is the law and one of the best protections in a crash.

The Illinois Independence Day enforcement campaign is funded with federal highway safety dollars administered by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) and supported by the Illinois State Police and local law enforcement agencies across the state. It's reinforced with IDOT's "It's Not a Game" media campaign, which shares real stories of Illinois residents lost in fatal crashes.

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