

TCD honor roll...

THE WILLOWBROOK HIGH SCHOOL students who have been named to Technology Center of DuPage's A-Team Honor Roll for the first semester of the 2015-16 school year include (left to right) senior Kailey Wright, senior Calvin Milas, junior Miguel Mora, senior Carter Witt, senior Meghan Koterba and senior Alexis Hernandez. Eight other Willowbrook students (pictured on the following page) were also named to the same honor roll. To earn a place on the A-Team Honor Roll, students must receive an A grade in their respective Technology Center of DuPage (TCD) program electives. The recognition represents excellence in both occupational skills and the program's applied academics. A-Team members from Willowbrook and other area schools were recognized during a Feb. 5 ceremony in their honor at TCD, which is located at 301 S. Swift Road in Addison. TCD provides high school juniors and seniors in the DuPage County area with career and technical education programs (CTE) as part of their high school curriculum. In addition to earning high school credit, TCD students may concurrently earn free college credit by enrolling with College of DuPage during the designated time period. For more information about TCD, visit its Web site at www.tcdupage.org.



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VILLA PARK REVIEW

NEWS AND VIEWS OF OUR TOWN

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Warrior wrestlers look to win state titles in Champaign

A pair of Willowbrook High School wrestlers have high hopes as they head to Champaign this week for the IHSA Class 3A individual state meet.

Senior Matt Rowland and sophomore Jack Jessen both earned second-place honors in their respective weight classes at last season's state meet. Rowland was the runner-up in the 152-pound division, while Jessen placed second in the 170-pound level.

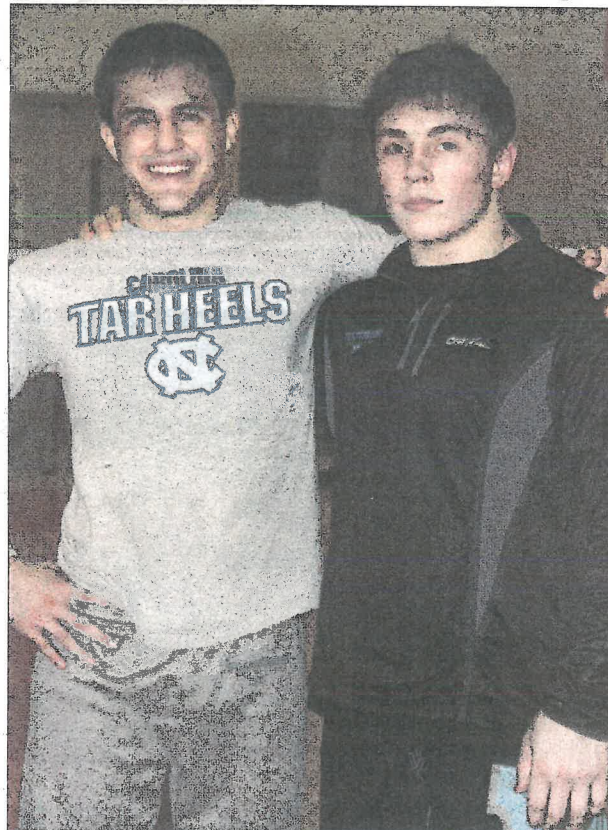
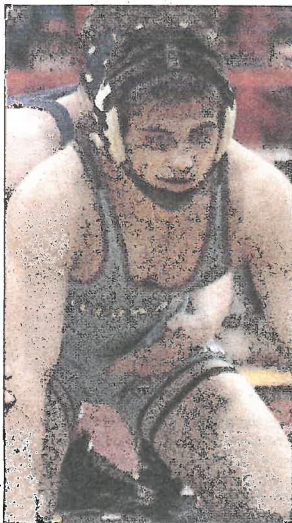
The two Warriors earned their berths in this season's state meet with their performances in the Class 3A Batavia Sectional. Rowland won the 170-pound championship on Saturday afternoon. Jessen competed in the next match—the 182-pound final. He lost a 6-4

decision.

The top four finishers in each of the sectional's weight levels qualified for the state meet. There were four statewide sectionals, so there will be 16 competitors in each weight division at the state meet, which begins Thursday at the State Farm Center.

Rowland, who has accepted a scholarship to wrestle at the University of North Carolina, enters the state meet with an overall season record of 48-1. Jessen heads to the state meet with a 47-2 record.

The last Willowbrook wrestler to win an IHSA individual state title was Steve Congenie, who captured two consecutive Class 3A championships in 2010 and 2011.



On their way to the big meet...

Photos by Chris Fox

WILLOWBROOK HIGH SCHOOL WRESTLERS Matt Rowland and Jack Jessen will compete in this week's IHSA Class 3A individual state meet in Champaign. The above right photo shows (l. to r.) Rowland and Jessen at the conclusion of Saturday's IHSA individual sectional at Batavia High School. Rowland, a senior, won the 170-pound championship at the sectional. Jessen, a sophomore placed second in the 182-pound weight class. The far left photo shows Rowland during the title match at the sectional. The photo to the right shows Jessen competing in the 182-pound final. All wrestlers who earned a top-four finish in their respective weight classes at the sectional qualified for the state meet. Rowland will make his third appearance at the state meet. As a sophomore, he wrestled to a fifth-place finish at the 152-pound weight class. His brother Dan, who graduated from Willowbrook three years ago, was the runner-up in the 170-pound weight class at the 2013 Class 3A state meet. For more wrestling news, see Page 11.

Villa Park Fire Department responds to two residential fires

Two recent fires at single-family homes in Villa Park remain under investigation.

One of the fires took place Feb. 2 at a one-story ranch home at 496 N. Villa Ave. The initial call came in at about 5:30 p.m. According to Villa Park Fire Chief Ron Rakosnik, the brunt of the fire was just outside of the home near a breezeway leading to a detached garage. Some of the fire spread inside the kitchen.

"Our guys made a quick hit on it from the outside," said Rakosnik, who added that firefighters had the fire under control about 15 minutes after arriving at the scene. "The kitchen was pretty well damaged, and there was a little damage to the garage."

Rakosnik said no one was at home at the time of the fire, which was reported by a passerby. Total damage to the home was estimated at \$75,000.

Fire departments from Addison, Elmhurst, Lombard, Oakbrook Terrace, Wood Dale and York Center provided assistance. No firefighters were injured.

The other recent fire in Villa Park took place Jan. 29 at a two-story home at 614 W. Sunset Drive. The call for that fire came in at about 4:48 p.m. According to Rakosnik, there were four people inside the home. One

of the people who smelled smoke went upstairs and did not observe any fire. She then proceeded to the basement, where she saw a fire at the opposite wall in the area of a treadmill.

Rakosnik said that firefighters from Villa Park and Addison arrived at the scene at the same time and observed smoke coming out of the basement. Firefighters broke some windows to ventilate the basement. They then used hose lines to direct water through the broken windows.

"When a fire builds up it starves for oxygen," said Rakosnik. "You could have a backdraft or smoke explosion if you don't ventilate properly."

Firefighters entered the home and observed that the fire had worked its way up a back wall and into the attic. The chief said they made a quick hit to extinguish the fire in the attic.

All of the occupants who were inside the home escaped without injury. No firefighters were injured. Damage to the home and its contents was estimated at \$150,000.

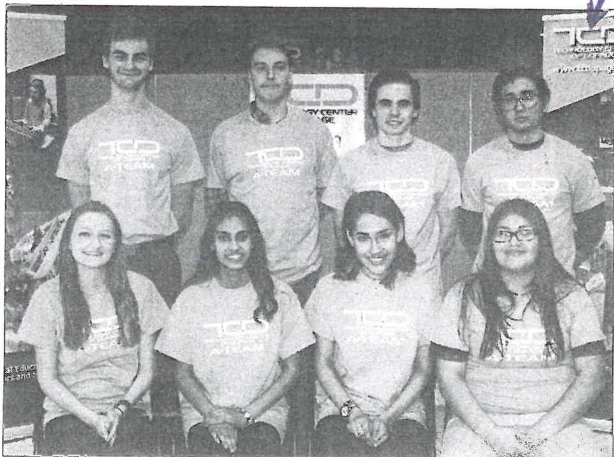
Departments from Addison, Elmhurst, Lombard, Northlake, Oakbrook Terrace and York Center assisted Villa Park during the Jan. 29 fire.



New business opens...

Photo by Steve Spoden

THE VILLAGE OF VILLA PARK welcomed Bob's Discount Furniture during last week's grand opening of the business at 102 W. Roosevelt Road. The Villa Park store is one of five Chicago area Bob's Discount Furniture locations to open this month. The above photo shows (left to right) Villa Park Trustee Robert Wagner, Villa Park Village President Deborah Bullwinkel, Villa Park Economic Development Director Jan Fiola, Villa Park Chamber of Commerce President Jon Zaley and store manager Michael Alpert. Zaley is pictured presenting Alpert with a plaque welcoming Bob's to the Villa Park Chamber of Commerce. For more about the grand opening of Bob's Discount Furniture, see Page 6.



Named to the A-Team...

EIGHT OF THE 14 WILLOWBROOK HIGH SCHOOL students recently named to Technology Center of DuPage's A-Team Honor Roll for the first semester of the 2015-16 school year include (front row, left to right) senior Shelby Wayne, senior Shilpa Satsangi, senior Stephanie Ortega-Reyes and senior Clarissa Flores; (back row, l. to r.) senior Joseph Egan, senior Benjamin Gruchalski, senior David Naughton and senior Joshua Santiago. Technology Center of DuPage (TCD), which is located at 301 S. Swift Road in Addison, provides high school juniors and seniors with career and technical education programs (CTE) as part of their high school curriculum. In order to earn a place on the A-Team Honor Roll, students must receive an A grade in their respective TCD program electives. The A-Team members from Willowbrook and other area schools were recognized during a Feb. 5 ceremony at TCD.

Free CUB clinic at the library on Thursday; registration required

The Citizens Utility Board (CUB) will analyze area residents' utility bills at a free clinic at the Villa Park Public Library on Thursday, Feb. 18. The event will take place from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the library, located at 305 S. Ardmore Ave. Registration is required. To register, call the library at 630-834-1164, or visit www.vppil.info.

Consumers should bring their gas, electric and phone bills for a free, one-on-one consultation with a CUB expert, who will search for ways to lower their utility costs. A news release from CUB states the expert's advice could potentially save a resident hundreds of dollars a year.

Some of the subjects that will be addressed at the utility-bill clinic include:

- How to spot unnecessary charges on natural gas, electric and phone bills;
- Information about energy-efficiency programs and rebates that can help people cut their utility bills;
- Advice about utility rates and making the right choices in the electric and gas markets;

• An explanation of smart grid-enabled programs like Peak Time Savings and Hourly Pricing;

"CUB is Illinois' leading nonprofit utility watchdog," stated the CUB release that announced the Feb. 18 clinic. "Created by the Illinois Legislature, CUB opened its doors in 1984 to represent the interests of residential and small-business utility customers. Since then, it has saved consumers more than \$20 billion by helping to block rate hikes and secure refunds."

The CUB energy saver Web site, located at www.CUBEnergySaver.com, is a free online tool that provides recommendations that could help residents cut their utility bills. The service offered through the Web site, which requires registration, tracks real savings and rewards participants who reduce electricity usage. The rewards include shopping and restaurant gift cards.

For more information, call CUB's consumer hotline at 800-669-5556, or visit www.CitizensUtilityBoard.org.

Villa Park Warriors holding 2016 registration on Saturday

The Villa Park Warriors Youth Football and Cheer organization will hold registration for the 2016 season on Saturday, Feb. 20. The upcoming registration session will take place from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Willowbrook High School, 1250 S. Ardmore Ave. Registration will take place in the lower level, near the weight room.

Registration is open to boys and girls ages 5-14 (kindergarten through eighth grade). Tackle football is available for ages 7-14 and flag football is available to children ages 5-7. Competitive cheerleading is available for students in fourth, fifth and sixth grade. Non-competitive cheerleading

is offered for children in kindergarten through fourth grade.

The early registration fee for tackle football and competition cheer is \$225 per child, with a minimum \$25 non-refundable deposit due at registration. After the early registration, the fee is \$250. The fee for flag football and non-competitive cheer is \$100.

New participants must bring two copies of their birth certificate. For more information, visit the Warriors' Web site at www.villaparkwarriors.com, or contact Sheri Lyons at 630-290-5474 for football and Jean Taylor at 630-542-8452 for cheerleading.

Tickets available for annual fundraiser on Feb. 28 at Drury Lane

The District 88 Foundation invites members of the community to take part in the Partnership for Inspired Education (PIE) Foundation's 2016 fundraiser. The Feb. 28 event, which will begin at 2 p.m., will take place at Drury Lane in Oakbrook Terrace and will include a performance of "Bye Bye Birdie." The fundraiser will also feature dinner, raffles and an auction of items including sports memorabilia, tickets to events, weekend getaway packages and jewelry.

Tickets for the event are \$68 each and can be purchased through the PIE Foundation's

Web site at www.piefoundation.org. For more information, contact Dani Brink, the district's director of community relations, at 630-530-3989, or at dbrink@dupage88.net.

The District 88 Foundation is a member of the PIE Foundation, a 501(c)(3) charitable organization that serves public school students in District 88, Addison Elementary School District 4, School District 45 and Salt Creek School District 48. Founded in 2009, the PIE Foundation is designed to be the foundation that supports a long-term partnership with the community, businesses and schools.



Making a contribution...

A DESTINATION IMAGINATION TEAM from Lombard's Westmore School presented a check for \$380 to the Lombard Police Department on Feb. 5. The police department partners with the Lombard Citizens Police Academy Alumni Association (LCPAAA) each year to hold Shop with a Cop. The students on the Destination Imagination (DI) team conducted an outreach project to help the community. The team held an event in December at Jefferson Middle School in Villa Park to honor the Lombard and Villa Park fire departments, as well as the York Center Fire Protection District. The event, which featured face painting, games, live music and visits with Santa Claus, raised about \$1,400. Pictured in the lobby of the police department on Feb. 5 are: (front row, l. to r.) Elizabeth and Christina Pettinger, Gianna Wiegell, Mia Barrington and Celina Wiegell, team manager. Back row, l. to r. are Keeley Pettinger, team manager Mickey Rodgers and Marv Schulgen, representing the LCPAAA; Margaret Bucholz, LCPAAA president; Lombard police officers Paula Rojas, Alex Rojas, Andy Stern and Lombard Police Sgt. William Marks, LCPAAA liaison. Not pictured are Charlie and Thomas Hayes and Emma Foley.

Sports

**LOMBARDIAN
VILLA PARK REVIEW**

Willowbrook tandem heads back to Champaign

Willowbrook senior Matt Rowland earned another trip to the IHSA Class 3A individual state wrestling meet when he won the 170-pound title at the Batavia Sectional on Saturday. Rowland, who won three matches at the sectional, rallied to beat Sandburg senior Brian Krasowski 7-5 in the championship match.

The IHSA individual state meet begins later this week at the State Farm Center in Champaign. Rowland will make his third straight appearance in the Class 3A state meet. As a sophomore, he claimed fifth-place honors in the 152-pound weight class. Rowland was the runner-up in the same weight level in last year's state meet. He lost 9-3 to

Oak Park/River Forest's Walter White in the state championship match. Rowland finished the 2014-15 season with a 47-3 record. All three of his losses came against White in three post-season meetings (championship battles in the regional, sectional and state meets).

Rowland, who has accepted a scholarship to continue his education and wrestling career at the University of North Carolina, enters this year's state meet with an overall season record of 48-1. He's one of 16 wrestlers who will compete in the Class 3A state meet's 170-pound level in Champaign.

In addition to winning the sectional title on Saturday, Rowland

closed in on winning some family bragging rights over his older brother Dan, who won 49 matches for Willowbrook during the 2012-13 season. Dan completed that season with a second-place finish in the Class 3A individual state meet's 170-pound division. Dan finished the 2012-13 season with an overall record of 49-1. If Matt wins his first match in Champaign, he will temporarily match his brother's record of three years ago.

"State title or bust," said Rowland of his objective for his upcoming trip to Champaign. "I've just got to attack and wrestle my match."

Rowland trailed Krasowski 4-2 late in the second period before leveling the score at 4-4 by the end of the period. He took the lead early in the final two-minute period.

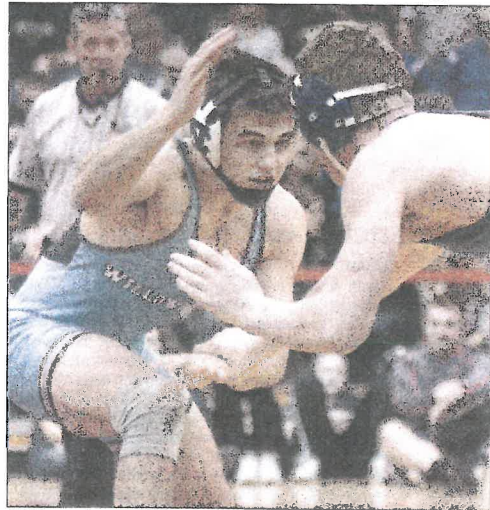
"I knew if I could get a takedown in the second period and tie it up, I'd have a good shot of winning in the third," said Rowland, who generated an escape and a takedown to take the lead in the third period.

Willowbrook sophomore Jack Jessen, who was the runner-up in the Class 3A state meet's 170-pound level as a freshman, secured his second straight trip to Champaign with a second-place showing in the Batavia Sectional's 182-pound division. Marmion senior Nathan Traxler beat Jessen 6-4 in the title match. The loss sent Jessen's season record to 47-2.

Jessen fell awkwardly and injured his left knee with a few seconds left in the match. He eventually rose to his feet and continued for the final seven seconds of the three-period battle. Jessen said after the match that he will definitely be ready for the state meet.

"These are the matches I look forward to," said Jessen when asked about the high level of post-season competition. "You get those matches that challenge you, and you feel that accomplishment of winning."

Jessen, who advanced to the sectional final with a 4-3 victory in



Winning Warrior...

Photos by Chris Fox

WILLOWBROOK SENIOR Matt Rowland (above) tangles with Sandburg senior Brian Krasowski in the 170-pound championship match of the IHSA Class 3A individual wrestling sectional in Batavia. Rowland defeated Krasowski 7-5 in Saturday's match. The win gave Rowland a season record of 48-1. Two years ago, Rowland earned a fifth-place finish in the individual state meet. He claimed runner-up honors last season. Rowland will compete in this week's individual state meet in Champaign. The top four finishers in each sectional's weight level qualified for the state meet.

the semifinal round, had never faced Traxler before Saturday's title match. Jessen said he's expecting a rematch with Traxler in Champaign.

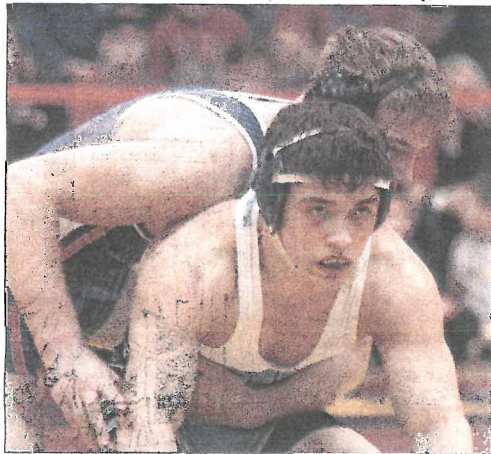
"I'll just be training hard and watching film—trying to figure out ways to beat my opponents," said Jessen of how he'll spend the days leading up to the state meet.

Three Montini wrestlers won individual titles at the Batavia Sectional. Sophomore Joey Melendez captured the championship in the event's 106-pound division. He beat Brother Rice sophomore Hassan

Johnson 2-0 in the first-place match. Sophomore Real Woods, who won an individual state title for the Broncos at the 2A level as a freshman, won the 113-pound sectional title at Batavia on Saturday. Woods beat Sandburg senior Louie Hayes 5-2 in the championship match to extend his unbeaten season. The victory over Hayes gave Woods an overall season record of 37-0.

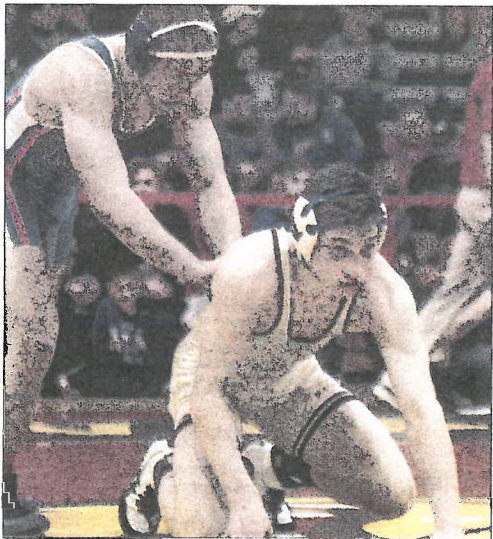
Sophomore Will Lewan of the Broncos won the 138-pound sectional championship in Batavia. He defeated

(Continued on the next page)



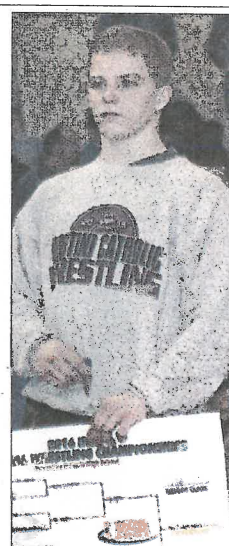
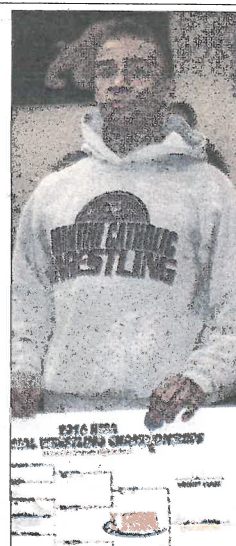
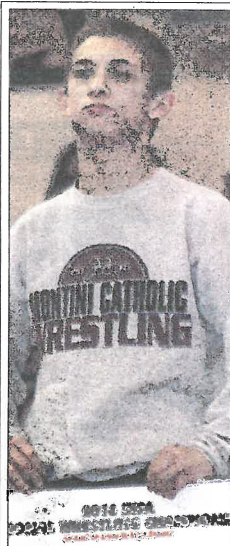
Another trip to Champaign...

WILLOWBROOK SOPHOMORE Jack Jessen (above) battles Marmion's Nathan Traxler in Saturday's 182-pound championship match at the IHSA Class 3A individual wrestling sectional at Batavia High School. Traxler defeated Jessen 6-4. The top four finishers in each sectional weight division earned berths in the individual state meet, which begins later this week in Champaign. Jessen, who placed second in the 170-pound weight class as a freshman, will enter this week's state meet with a season record of 47-2.



Headed to the state meet...

MONTINI FRESHMAN Matt Ortiz (above) secured a berth in the IHSA Class 3A individual state wrestling meet with a second-place finish in the 152-pound division of the Batavia Sectional. Ortiz advanced to Saturday's sectional final, where he suffered a 10-4 loss to Marmion senior Trace Carello. The top four finishers in each sectional weight level earned trips to this week's individual state meet. Ortiz advanced to the sectional championship match with a 5-3 victory in the quarterfinal round and a 3-2 win in his semifinal match. His season record stood at 26-14 at the end of the sectional.



Montini's trio of sectional champions...

THREE MONTINI WRESTLERS won titles at the IHSA Class 3A individual sectional at Batavia High School. The Broncos' three sectional winners, who are pictured on the awards stand on Saturday, are (left to right) sophomore Joey Melendez, sophomore Real Woods and sophomore Will Lewan. Melendez won the sectional title at the 106-pound level. Woods claimed the 113-pound title, while Lewan captured the championship in the 138-pound division. Each of the three Broncos won three consecutive matches in Batavia to claim their sectional titles. Woods completed the sectional with perfect 37-0 season record. As a freshman, Woods won an individual state title at the Class 2A level. Montini competed in the 2A level for several seasons before moving up to the Class 3A division this season.



Good news, bad news...

THE GLENBARD EAST boys basketball team's up-and-down week began with a 57-41 victory over Upstate Eight Valley Conference rival West Chicago on Feb. 9 in Lombard. The two teams entered the game tied for first place in the conference standings with 5-1 records. Junior Michael Finley scored 18 points for the Rams, who led the Wildcats 34-23 at halftime and 45-36 after three quarters. Senior Zach Walsh added 10 points, while senior Carlos Meyers added nine points on three 3-point shots—one in each of the first three quarters. Senior Terrence Lakes (above, left) contributed six points, while senior Jack Grigat (right) provided five points by sinking five of six free-throw attempts in the fourth quarter. The win over West Chicago gave the Rams the upper hand in the race for the conference title, but Friday's 55-45 loss at Bartlett dropped the Rams to 6-2 in the conference and 15-11 overall. West Chicago beat West Aurora on Friday to move its conference mark to 6-2. The Rams will close the conference season with this Friday's game at West Aurora and a Feb. 24 contest at East Aurora.

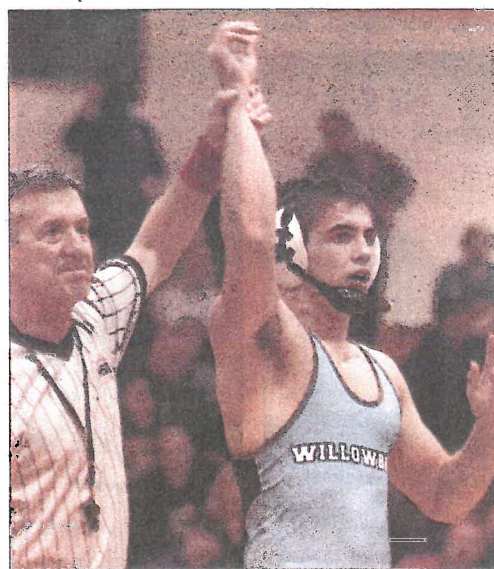
Wrestling...

(Continued from the previous page)

Marmion senior A.J. Jaffe 8-3 in the title match.

Four other Montini wrestlers will join Melendez, Woods and Lewan in Champaign. Those Broncos earned their state-meet spots with top-four placements at the sectional. The top four finishers in each sectional weight level secured trips to the state meet. Senior Jimmy Pawelski placed second in the 126-pound weight class, while senior Dylan Duncan finished third in the 132-pound division. Senior Caleb Fortuna placed third in the 145-pound level. Freshman Matt Ortiz turned in a second-place finish in the 152-pound division.

Glenbard East junior Nick Donovan wound up one victory short of a state-meet berth in the 106-pound weight class. Donovan won his first match in Batavia before losing in the quarterfinal round. He won two matches in the back draw and needed one more win to finish among the top four in his level, but his season ended with an 8-6 loss. Donovan completed the 2015-16 campaign with a 41-7 record. Senior Nolan Vincent of the Rams also fell one win short of a trip to Champaign. Vincent, who competed in the 120-pound division in Batavia, lost in the quarterfinal round but won twice in the back draw before losing his next match. Vincent closed the season with an overall record of 34-6.



A hard-fought win...

WILLOWBROOK SENIOR Matt Rowland has his arm raised in victory after he won the 170-pound title at the IHSA Class 3A individual wrestling sectional in Batavia. The above photo shows Rowland moments after his 7-5 victory over Sandburg's Brian Krasowski in Saturday's sectional final. Rowland and Krasowski will join 14 other wrestlers in the 170-pound field of the Class 3A individual state meet, which begins Thursday in Champaign. Rowland, who placed second in the 152-pound division of last season's state meet, enters this week's event with a season record of 48-1.



Rams win regular-season finale...

Photos by Chris Fox

GLENBARD EAST SENIOR Amanda Chlebek (above, far left) scored seven points in her team's 45-39 win over East Aurora in Thursday's Upstate Eight Valley Conference girls basketball game in Lombard. The above right photo shows senior Meghan Ryan (No. 40) shooting a free throw during the fourth quarter. Ryan, who made a pair of fourth-quarter free throws, provided four points. The Rams completed their regular season with Thursday's conference win over the Tomcats. The victory moved the Rams to 18-10 overall and 7-3 in the conference. Glenbard East finished second to Bartlett in the Upstate Eight Valley standings.

Rams wrap up an 18-10 regular season with a senior night victory

Glenbard East's girls basketball team closed out its regular season with Thursday's 45-39 senior night win over East Aurora. The Upstate Eight Valley Conference victory in Lombard gave the Rams an overall record of 18-10 and a conference mark of 7-3. Bartlett won the Upstate Eight Valley title. The Rams finished second in the conference standings.

"This group of seniors has basically turned the program around," said Glenbard East coach Don Finnie, who noted the varsity won just three games when the current group of seniors were freshmen. The Rams won eight

games during the 2013-14 season and posted a 16-15 record in the 2014-15 season.

Senior Brasia Solid poured in a team-leading 22 points for the Rams by making seven field goals and eight free throws. Solid scored 12 points during the first quarter to help Glenbard East to a 16-8 lead after eight minutes. The Rams led 24-16 at halftime and 34-26 after three quarters.

Senior Amanda Chlebek added seven points, while senior Amber Llorens scored five points. Seniors Ashley Brown and Meghan Ryan both scored four points. Junior Dana Plotke provided her only points of

the night on a key 3-point shot that helped to shut down an East Aurora rally in the fourth quarter.

Solid and Brown were three-year varsity starters for the Rams. The other senior members of this season's team include: Sam Caruso, Chlebek, Llorens, Grace Ludwig, Brittany Paganucci, Ryan and Kacey Taylor.

The Rams began post-season play with this week's game against Lake Park at the IHSA Class 4A Elk Grove Village Regional. A win over Lake Park would propel Glenbard East to this week's regional final, which would likely be a matchup with Montini.

LOMBARD JUNIOR FOOTBALL LEAGUE

LOMBARD FALCONS

REGISTRATION

Visit Us Online at www.lombardfalcons.net To Register Now!



Youth Football & Cheer

Tackle for Youth Boys Ages 7-14
Cheer for Youth Girls 7-14

JOIN NOW TO RECEIVE THE REDUCED RATE OF \$200.00 tackle AFTER JULY 1ST FEES INCREASE TO \$250.00 A \$50.00 deposit due at time of registration. Balance due at equipment pick-up, no exceptions. If new to the league, you MUST provide two copies of your child's birth certificate.

Please contact us for more information:
Lombard Junior Football League Secretary at
secretary@lombardfalcons.net

Flag Football & Cheer

Flag for Youth Boys Ages 5-7
Cheer for Youth Girls 5-6

JOIN NOW TO RECEIVE THE REDUCED RATE OF \$125.00 AFTER JULY 1ST FEES INCREASE TO \$175.00 A \$50.00 deposit due at time of registration. Balance due at equipment pick-up, no exceptions. If new to the league, you MUST provide two copies of your child's birth certificate.

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Glendale Heights-Carol Stream
Hanover Park-Bartlett-Glen Ellyn Hinsdale-
South Elgin-Wheaton-West Chicago
Lyons Township-Lemont-Palmdale
Arlington Heights-Elk Grove Village

The Lombard Falcons is a franchisee of the Bill George Youth Football League. The Falcons are a volunteer, not-for-profit organization funded by participation fees, fundraisers, donations and sponsorships. The league offers boys and girls,

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED! Parents, we need your assistance. Help support your child by becoming a Lombard Falcons volunteer. Opportunities are available for football, cheer, field, spirit wear, and concessions.
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Four Willowbrook baseball players sign college letters of intent

By Mike Miazga
Correspondent

The Willowbrook baseball program was well represented on the list of 11 recent student-athletes at the school who signed national letters of intent to continue their athletic careers at the college level. That list included baseball players Matt Garbacz, Joe Strem, Matt Pizur and TJ Geritano. Recently The Independent caught up with Garbacz, Strem and Pizur and got their thoughts on their baseball and academic futures.

Matt Garbacz
Garbacz will continue his career at Roosevelt University in Chicago.



courtesy photos
MIKE GARBACZ
ROOSEVELT UNIVERSITY

"It's a baseball program on the rise," he said. "They started the baseball program about 10 years ago and they still are



JOE STREM
MCHENNY COUNTY
JUNIOR COLLEGE

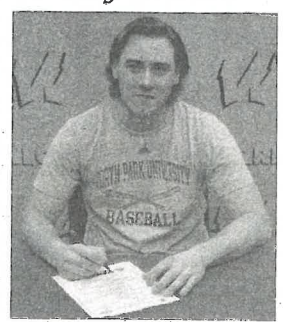
building it. I wanted to be part of something like that."

Garbacz said he got on Roosevelt's radar through showcase events and summer tournaments.

"This means everything to me," he said. "Since I was in middle school my dream was to sign and play college baseball. It's one of the biggest goals I've had."

Garbacz noted the work he's done with Willowbrook pitching coach Curtis Hudson has paid big dividends in recent times.

"Coach Hudson has worked with me on my confidence and he's helped me develop three pitches," said Garbacz who plays in the summer with the T's Training Academy team out of Lombard. "I've had some great coaching with (Willowbrook) coach (Vic) Wisner,



MATT PIZUR
NORTH PARK UNIVERSITY

coach Hudson and Teno Geritano, my travel coach. That's how I've gotten to where I am."

Garbacz is looking forward to the upcoming Willowbrook season. "We have a lot of returning starters from last year and deep pitching and we have good chemistry," he said.

Joe Strem

Strem is heading north to Crystal Lake where he will play for McHenry County Junior College.

"I was looking around and they talked to me," said Strem of the recruiting process. "Going into this past season I talked to them pretty heavily. I felt McHenry County College was the best opportunity for me. It's a good fit and I like the school a lot. I like the way they develop pitchers. I had two knee surgeries sophomore and junior year and didn't get to develop as I would have liked."

Strem said he's throwing in the 85-86 mile-per-hour range right now.

"I just like the way they develop pitchers and how they send people on to other schools after the two years," he said. "Coach (Jared) Wacker is a good guy. When I went on my visit he was an upfront guy and told me what he thought I could be. I grew a relationship with him. I really like him."

Strem said he feels his biggest progress has come in how he views himself as a pitcher.

"Growing up I always threw the ball hard," he said. "When I got to the high-school level, some starts you would be lights out and in some starts guys hit you. I've improved on the craft of being a pitcher. I'm not just throwing the ball. You have to set things up and work to get outs with different types of pitches. I've worked on the craft of pitching. It's a pretty vital craft to have."

Looking back, Strem said his knee injuries took him down a different path at Willow-

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LETTERS

Continued from page 4

brook—one he's thankful for.

"I fell in love with football and loved the sport and then I blew out my knee twice," he said. "It put a fork in the road. Sometimes sports challenge you. With baseball now I really soak in every game and every practice. And I soak in playing with my teammates at Willowbrook and with my travel team (T's Training Academy). And now I get to play in college. It means the world to me."

But Strem has one more season at Willowbrook to look forward to.

"We can't wait," he said. "It's a special group of kids. We have so much chemistry

between all us. It's unreal. We feed off each other. It's a special feeling around the team. We want to make a deep run in the playoffs this year. It's our goal. We bust our butts every day and so do our coaches, who work as hard as we do. It's a special time to be part of the baseball team at Willowbrook."

Matt Pizur

Pizur will continue his baseball career at North Park University in Chicago. "I was looking at a bunch of different colleges and felt North Park was the right fit," he said. "It has the right culture and has a good vibe. I went on a bunch of different college visits in Illinois and Wisconsin and this

one was right for me. It's somewhat close to home and near downtown Chicago."

Pizur also was taken with the academics North Park offers. "What impressed me was they are really on you about academics," he said. "They want you to figure out and know what you want to do after college. I want to get into business and being close to downtown there are many internships available. Everything is right there. I also enjoyed the coaching staff and they have the same philosophy as I have. They want to get as much out of you as possible with academics and baseball. With them if you work hard you are going to succeed."

Pizur, like his teammates who have signed to play in col-

lege, gets to cross a major goal off his list.

"This means everything to me because it's been my goal since I started playing baseball," he said. "Now I have the opportunity to play at the next level and I owe that to a lot of coaches who helped get me to where I am."

Pizur will be part of a Willowbrook baseball team that returns numerous starters this spring.

"We have a lot of seniors coming back," he said. "These guys are committed to baseball and we all want to go as far as we can."

Geritano will continue his career at Trinity Christian College in south-suburban Palos Heights.



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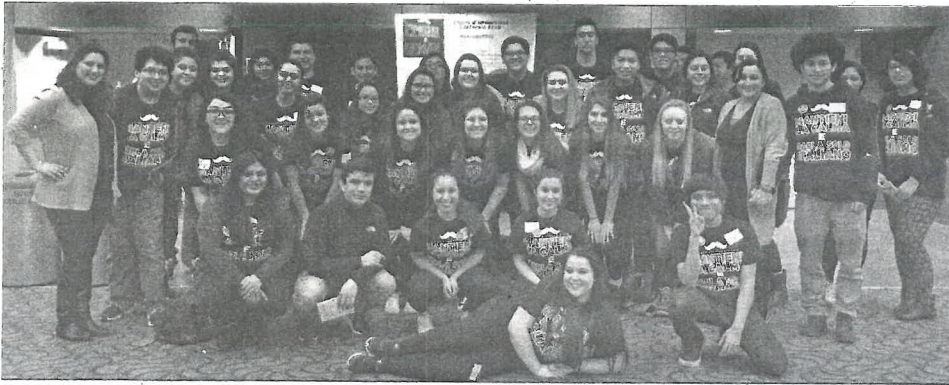
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On Feb. 2, Addison Trail students participated in the first-ever Italian Immersion Day at College of DuPage (COD). The event allowed students to learn more about the Italian language and culture through fun, educational activities.

Addison Trail attends Italian Immersion Day at COD

ADDISON — On Feb. 2, 40 Addison Trail students participated in the first Italian Immersion Day at College of DuPage (COD).

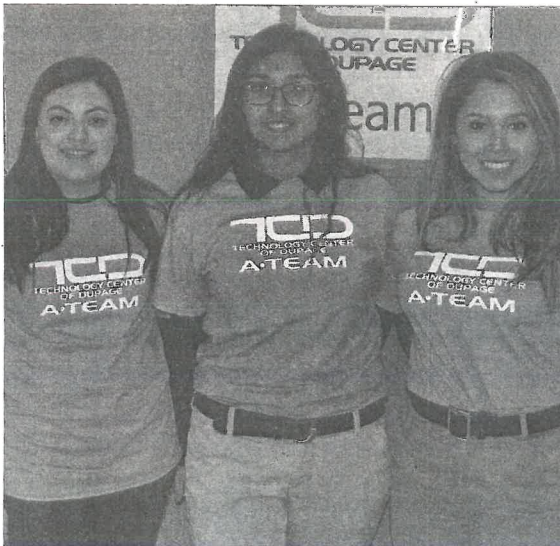
Those students are enrolled in Italian 3 Honors, Italian 4 Honors or Advanced Placement (AP)/college-level Italian Language and Culture. They were accompanied by Addison Trail world languages teachers Judie Vitiritti-Lynch and Laura Calo.

The Italian Immersion Day was sponsored by COD, Northern Illinois University and the Midwest Chapter of the American Association of Teachers of Italian. Seven high schools attended the event, and students spoke only Italian throughout the day. They participated in four sessions that enhanced their understanding of the Italian language and culture through fun, educational activities.



courtesy photos

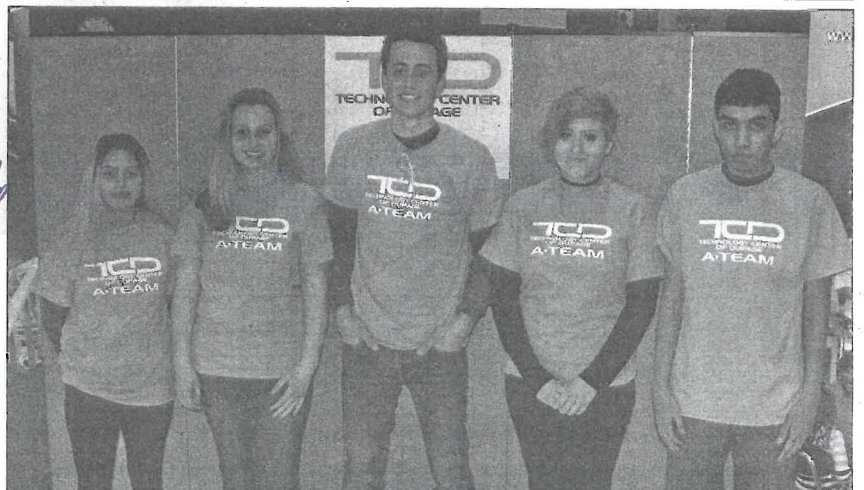
These Addison Trail students work on a giant map of Italy by cutting, labeling and putting together the various regions of the country. It was all part of Italian Immersion Day for honor students at College of DuPage.



courtesy photos

Addison Trail students named to TCD's A-Team Honor Roll

Pictured are ten Addison Trail students who have been named to Technology Center of DuPage's A-Team Honor Roll for the first semester of the 2015-16 school year. They are (above) senior Cecilia Benitez, senior Kayla Paz and senior Bianca Reyes. (right- from left) junior Guadalupe Herrera, junior Sydney Dunbrack, junior Kevin Tucker, junior Jiana Hernandez, senior Juan Cristobal Rodriguez-Garcia. Not pictured are senior Kristen Freke and senior Stephanie Corona. To earn a place on the A-Team Honor Roll, students must receive an "A" grade in their respective TCD program electives.



SPORTS

FEBRUARY 18, 2016 • 18

Addison Trail boys basketball team defeats Proviso East in overtime

Win believed to be first against Proviso since it entered the conference

By Mike Miazga
Correspondent

As far as wins go, this one was huge for the Addison Trail boys basketball team.

The Blazers recorded a recent 67-64 overtime win in Maywood against Proviso East in West Suburban Conference Gold Division play.

"Proviso was in a tie for first

with Downers Grove South," said Addison Trail coach Brendan Lyons.

Lyons said it is believed to be the first time Addison Trail defeated Proviso East since the Maywood high school entered the conference in the late 1980s.

"This was a huge win for us," said Lyons. "We played two really good quarters and did enough in the overtime to get the win."

Addison Trail was down by five points at halftime and led by four at the end of three quarters. Addison Trail led by as many as 10 points with three minutes to play in regulation.

"We had some key turnovers and missed some free throws in the last minute," Lyons noted. "They scored basically at the buzzer to send it into overtime."

Proviso East then scored the first three points of overtime to take a 64-61 lead, but Willowbrook scored the last six points to pull out the win.

"I was proud of the fact we were able to bounce back," said Lyons. "When we played well we rebounded well and took care of the basketball. And when we weren't doing those things we didn't play well. The guys kept their composure out there, which was impressive.

Proviso makes runs and they do it in a hurry. We weathered the storm and kept our composure. That was the key message for us."

Eric Grygo led the Blazers with 27 points and 11 rebounds. Jack Kalbas added 21 points.

In other action, Addison Trail downed Leyden 53-37 in another WSC Gold game. Kalbas led the Blazers with 17 points. Grygo had 12 points and 10 rebounds, while Michael Williams had 10 points and 15 rebounds.

"It was good seeing two kids with double-doubles," said Lyons of Grygo's and Williams' efforts. "With Eric, he

probably has nine or 10 double-doubles this season."

The two wins moved the Blazers to 13-12 overall and 4-6 in WSC Gold action.

"This is the time of the year where you want to play well," said Lyons. "We were a little down after losing to Morton, but the guys responded well. We have a few weeks to go here and it's nice to see the guys getting on a roll heading into the state tournament."

Addison Trail was slated to play Morton earlier this week in a rematch and will host Hinsdale South on senior night Friday to close out WSC Gold play.

Addison Trail girls basketball team playing well down the stretch

By Mike Miazga
Correspondent

The Addison Trail girls basketball team wrapped up the regular season on a high note.

The Blazers recently scored a non-conference victory over Streamwood to move to 9-17 overall heading into this week's postseason.

"We had some good even scoring against Streamwood," said Addison Trail coach Rob Schader.

Maria Koulogeorgas led the Blazers with 11 points, while Diamond Pikulyk added nine points and Nicole Pudlo had six points.

In other recent action, Addison Trail defeated District 88 neighbor Willowbrook 42-38. Schader noted it was the first time in four years Addison Trail defeated Willowbrook.

Koulogeorgas led the Blazers with 13 points in the win, while Pikulyk had 11 points. "We played very well against Willowbrook," said Schader.

The Blazers also dropped a West Suburban Conference Gold Division game to Proviso East.

"We only trailed them 20-13 with four minutes left in the first half," said Schader. "They are too fast and athletic. We couldn't hang with them for the whole game."

Additionally, Addison Trail recorded a 45-35 WSC Gold win over Leyden. The Blazers finished the conference season with a 3-9 mark.

Schader said the team's recent improved play is attributable to several factors. "We've mixed our defenses up a bunch and we are rebounding much better than the first half of the year," he said.

Schader added Addison Trail still has a youthful roster. "We have five juniors and one sophomore playing for us," he said. "There's still a learning curve there. Going from the sophomore level to the varsity level takes time to get used to. We have nine wins right now and that's what we had combined the last two years. We'll have six kids coming back. We are moving in the right direction. Our sophomores did well. They won 11 or 12 games and this is our best freshmen group. They were 16-8 and that's with two freshmen up on the sophomore team. We usually don't have kids up, but they helped that sophomore team win games. We expect big things from these kids in the future. I think we'll keep that team intact as sophomores and see what they can do the next few years here. We're continuing to rise as a program."

Schader had high praise for the recent play of Koulogeorgas, Pikulyk, Alyssa Pham and Nicolette Scorza.

"Maria all year and especially the last month-and-a-half has turned it up on offense and defense," said Schader. "She's done a great job. Diamond is a great kid who is averaging about six or seven points and five rebounds a game. She's been doing great and so has Alyssa Pham. Nicci Scorza is a sophomore with us. When she plays well she plays very well."

Schader also lauded the contributions of Marie Baumgartner. "She was hurt the first couple weeks of the season," he said. "She didn't come back until Christmas. She works hard and plays hard. She's doing much better. I'm happy for Marie."

Addison Trail opened Class 4A regional play earlier this week at Batavia against Hoffman Estates.

Addison Trail-Willowbrook boys swimming team takes third in conference

Wallace places second in two events; Freshman Zimmerman second in backstroke

By Mike Miazga
Correspondent

The Addison Trail-Willowbrook boys swimming team recently tied for third at the West Suburban Conference Gold Division meet hosted by Downers Grove South.

AT-Willowbrook and Leyden both tied with 197 points. Hinsdale South edged Downers Grove South by six points for the conference title.

AT-Willowbrook placed fourth in the medley relay with a time of 1:56.43. That team included Evan Zimmerman, a freshman, Lucas Walsh, a sophomore, Jake Roucka and freshman Jack Burns.

Mike Strycharz took fifth in the 200 with a time of 2:01.89. Zimmerman was fifth in the IM with a time of 2:19.87, while Burns was sixth with a time of 2:22.54.

Ethan Wallace placed second in the 50 with a time of 22:81. Roucka was seventh in the butterfly with a time

of 1:05.67. Wallace was second in the 100 with a time of 51.61, while Strycharz was sixth at 54.44.

Jacob Grygo, a sophomore, was third in the 500 with a time of 5:30.18. Freshman Mateusz Sawicki was seventh with a time of 5:48.40 (his seed time was 5:55.93).

AT-Willowbrook placed third in the 200 relay with a time of 1:36.88. That group included Strycharz, Zimmerman, Grygo and Wallace.

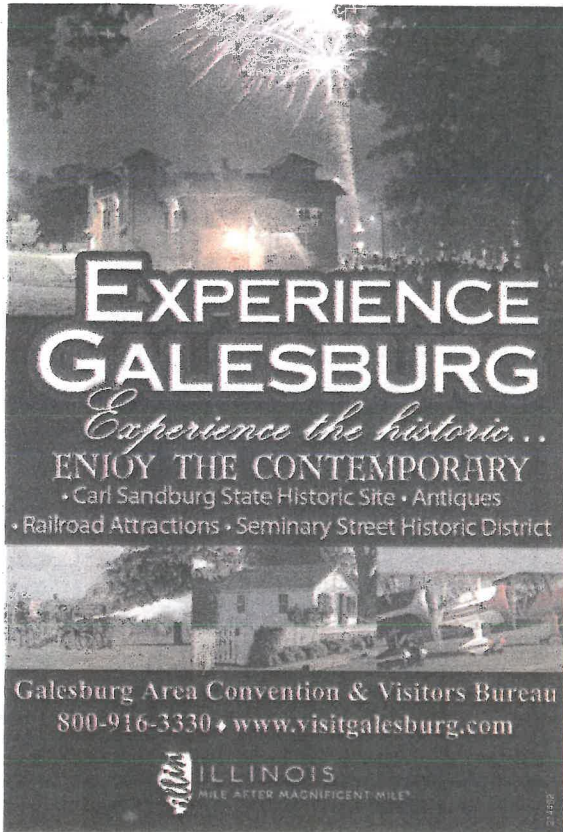
Zimmerman placed second in the backstroke with a time of 1:01.97. Walsh was eighth in the breaststroke with a time of 1:13.95.

AT-Willowbrook was third in the 400 relay with a time of 3:34.67. That team included Grygo, Burns, Strycharz and Wallace.

AT-Willowbrook placed fourth at the junior-varsity level. In the medley relay, AT-Willowbrook was fourth. Team members included Alex Babu, Eugene Ciesla, Calvin Milas and Koji Buzuayene.

Ciesla was third in the 100, while Babu was seventh. AT-Willowbrook was fourth in the 200 relay with Ciesla, Babu, Buzuayene and Milas.

See **SWIMMING**, Page 22



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• SWIMMING

Continued from page 18

Milas was second in the backstroke with a time of 1:25.05. Ciesla was fifth in the breaststroke with a time of 1:20.75.

AT-Willowbrook placed fifth at the frosh-soph level. The medley relay team took fourth with Jack Wentworth, Jeremy Vaupell, Sam Ricchetti and Phillip Campbell.

Izzy Roman was seventh in the 200, while Campbell placed sixth in the 50. Ricchetti was fourth in the butterfly, while Wentworth was fifth in the 100.

AT-Willowbrook won the 200 frosh-soph relay title with Campbell, Ricchetti, Vaupell and Wentworth swimming 1:49.39, better than their 1:55.80 seed time going in.

Wentworth also was third in the backstroke with a time of 1:09.34. Vaupell was seventh in the breaststroke. AT-Willowbrook was fifth in the 400 relay with Ricchetti, Robert Fagan, Roman and Zayd Mujahid.

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