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Addison Trail honors Students of Second Semester

On April 26, the Students of Second Semester for the 2021-22 school year were presented during an event in their honor by the staff members who nominated them. The honorees are (not as pictured): in Art, junior Stephanie Ortiz; Career and Technical Education (CTE) business, senior Samantha Bartosik; CTE family and consumer, senior Atziri Valbuena; CTE Industry and technology, junior Cait-

lin Muhr; English, freshman Katelyn Ford; literacy, senior Hailey Konrad; math, senior Ellison Castillo; music, senior Hugo Arellano; physical education, junior Esmeralda Buclo; science, senior Michal Niemirski; social studies, sophomore Zachary Morris; student services, senior Christian Benitez; and, in world languages, junior Mateusz Stachura.

Elmhurst man caught in crossfire of shooting in Loop

Incident wounds two in Chicago Theater District

By Dee Longfellow

FOR THE ELMHURST INDEPENDENT

An Elmhurst resident was shot and wounded in downtown Chicago near the Theater District last week.

Ryan Bush, a Nederlander Theater stage hand, along with a fellow stage hand from Elmhurst, had just departed the theater late Sunday afternoon, May 1, when they heard gunfire, according to a report in the *Chicago Sun-Times*.

Bush told the *Sun-Times* he observed two persons running down the alley westbound toward State Street and that someone was shoot-

ing at them.

The stage hand who Bush was with, a 55-year-old Elmhurst man, was struck in the crossfire by gunfire in the neck and right ear, according to the *Sun Times*.

Another bystander was also struck in the hand, according to Chicago police.

Both of the injured men were transported to Northwestern Memorial Hospital in fair condition. That evening's performance of "Moulin Rouge! The Musical" was canceled at the Nederlander Theater.

Later, according to the *Sun*

Times, police said the shooting stemmed from a drug deal that had apparently gone wrong at a Taco Bell restaurant in the 100 block of North Wabash Street at about 5 p.m. Two groups had met at the restaurant and someone in the group "implied a weapon" and robbed the others, police told the *Sun Times*.

At a news conference on Monday, May 2, Chief of Detectives Brendan Deenihan said the following:

"The people who were robbed took out a firearm and started discharging at the individuals who

took something from them."

Deenihan described the shooting victims as "unintended targets," the *Sun Times* reported.

According to the *Sun Times*, a bartender at the Chicago Theatre—near where the incident took place—said he had seen three males running through the alley, when he heard a couple of "pops."

The bartender told police he hid between the trash cans and saw someone fire a handgun twice. The shooter later ditched his jacket near the State/Lake Red Line stop, according to a police report.

At press time, no one was yet in custody, but Deenihan said police were reviewing video to track down the suspects.

Bush later told the *Sun Times* he had gratefully received a text message from the Elmhurst man, who was on the mend at the hospital.

"He's a great guy, stagehand, [who's] been in the business for 30-plus years," Bush said of the Elmhurst resident, adding that he was a grandfather who was "just looking to retire."

The Elmhurst resident remained unidentified at press time.

Man gets 16 years for fleeing after killing bicyclist with vehicle

DuPage County

State's Attorney

Robert Berlin

announced that a

Chicago man

accused of killing a

bicyclist with his

car and then fleeing

the scene of

the crash has been

sentenced to 16 years in the Illinois

Department of Corrections (IDOC).

Norris Watt, 26, appeared in court

where he entered a plea of guilty to

one count of failure to report an

accident involving death (Class 1 felony)

and one count of aggravated DUI



Norris Watt

causing death (Class 2 felony).

Following his guilty plea, Judge Daniel Guerin sentenced Watt to six years in the IDOC to be served at 50 percent on the Class 1 felony and 10 years in the IDOC to be served at 85 percent on the Class 2 felony. The sentences will be served consecutively.

On Nov. 18, 2020, Watt appeared in Bond Court where his bond was set at \$250,000 with 10 percent to apply. He has been held in custody at the DuPage County Jail since that time.

On Nov. 15, 2020, at approximately 11:04 p.m., officers with the

Lombard Police Department were dispatched to the area of Roosevelt Road and Stewart Avenue regarding a pedestrian that was struck by a vehicle. Upon their arrival, officers found the victim, 41-year-old Troy Young on his back, near the northeast corner of Roosevelt Road and Stewart Avenue. He was pronounced deceased at the scene.

Officers further observed a deformed bicycle laying in the right lane of westbound Roosevelt Road.

An investigation into the matter found that prior to the 9-1-1 call, Watt was driving his vehicle westbound on Roosevelt Road near Ste-

art Avenue in excess of 80 mph when he hit Young with his vehicle. After hitting Young, Watt failed to stop and drove away.

At approximately 11:26 p.m., Oak Brook police officers reported they had stopped the vehicle suspected to be involved in the crash. Watt, who was driving the vehicle, was taken into custody at this time. The investigation also revealed that Watt had a combination of alcohol, ecstasy, amphetamine and cannabis in his system at the time of the crash.

"The senseless, 100 percent avoidable death of Troy Young serves as a sobering reminder of the possible

tragic consequences of driving under the influence," Berlin said. "With a cocktail of drugs and alcohol in his system, there is absolutely no reason whatsoever that Mr. Watt should

have been operating a motor vehicle. When considering his drug and alcohol infused state of mind, coupled with the fact that after the defendant hit Mr. Young he fled the scene leaving his victim to die on the street, Mr. Watt has most definitely earned his sixteen-year sentence. I wish Mr. Young's family and friends strength as they continue their lives with only their memories of Troy to see them through."

Freshman Sonia Ruchala sparks Willowbrook

By JOSHUA WELGE
jwelge@shawmedia.com

(17). Perhaps most impressive, she has not struck out.

"She just displays confidence," Karos said. "She's fearless in the box, never fazed by the speed of the pitcher. No matter who we're playing, it looks like she has the same mindset in the batter's box. She is a girl who can see some pitches, is smart, not overly aggressive, seems to be level headed in the box. Good hitters even strike out. It shows that she can get her hands on a lot and is not going to go down easy."

Ruchala, who plays second base, started off the season hitting third. Because of injuries, she was moved up early in the season to leadoff.

"It was a big change for me. Usually on my travel team, I'm not hitting leadoff," Ruchala said. "My mentality is just wait for the pitch and when I know it's coming drive the ball in any place in the order."

"I don't think her mindset has changed. Regardless of where she's hitting, she's going to do what she does well," Karos said. "She's doing exactly what we want from her hitting leadoff. If something is not broken, we're not trying to fix it."

Ruchala said she didn't know what to expect competing at the varsity level as a freshman. She worked to prepare with night time reps with her travel team, ESP Elite. She did weight training, lessons and practice four times a week.



Sonia Ruchala

"I mean, yeah, I was a little nervous playing with girls two and three years older than me. I didn't know how they would accept me as a freshman because of the age gap," Ruchala said. "But me and [freshman] Hannah [Kenny] have adapted well being with this team."

Glenbard West's amazing Grace

On a Glenbard West team that graduated eight starters off last year's group, senior outfielder Grace Walker is clearly the girl who makes things go.

She's certainly been leading with her bat.

The lefty slapper who hits leadoff for the Hilltoppers started the season on an 11-game hitting streak. She's currently hitting .403 on the season with six doubles, one triple, nine RBIs and four walks in 66 plate appearances.

Glenbard West coach Mary McGrane said Walker is the catalyst for a lineup filled with freshmen and sophomores.

"Her confidence at the plate gives her teammates confidence when they go up to bat," McGrane said. "In a sense she's a triple threat. She doesn't bunt a lot, but she hits it in the hole and can hit for power. Her confidence at the plate is just contagious. She goes up there and there is no doubt she's getting on base. She's a competitor and a fighter when she gets in the batter's box."

A three-varsity member, Walker was the lone junior in last season's lineup. She was Glenbard West's left fielder last season until she was sidelined with a concussion.

She came out on fire this season and

didn't exactly take advantage of a soft schedule. Glenbard West has played Fremd, St. Charles East and Lake Park in nonconference games.

"She's facing very solid pitchers, pitchers that can spin the ball and mix speeds. It was a true 11-game hitting streak," McGrane said. "She reads defenses well and knows where she's trying to place the ball. If the pitch is outside, she'll take it to the left side. If it's inside, she'll pull it down the line."

Around the horn

Glenbard South and Glenbard West are partnering for a special Title IX game Friday at Glenbard South. The programs are bringing back the pioneers of the schools' girls athletics for the event. Mary Grady will be throwing out the first pitch at the game and Karen Judge will speak to the girls after the game about the progress girls sports have made and where they can go from here. Glenbard South on Saturday will be bringing back its 2012 state championship to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the state title.

A number of area teams are in the latest Illinois Softball Coaches Association rankings. Lemont is ranked second behind Antioch in Class 3A. Montini is ranked 10th in Class 2A. Downers Grove South is ranked 17th and Lyons is ranked 19th in Class 4A. Benet is ranked 20th in Class 3A.

Montini and IC Catholic were both awarded No. 1 sub-sectional seeds in the Class 2A Montini Sectional in voting released this week. Class 3A and Class 4A pairings and seeds come out next week.

BASEBALL NOTES

Continued from page 30

Tober has struck out 52 batters in 31½ innings and earned a save.

"Last year, Casey stepped up as a freshman and was in the two-hole all year and played like a guy who belonged on varsity," Whartnaby said. "His sophomore year has been everything we could have asked for. Casey is batting in the heart of the order and hitting well over .400, driving the ball to both gaps and getting clutch hits for

us. On top of that, he's played a solid shortstop and has been a reliable option on the mound in relief. Fletcher has been our leader by example in the field, at the plate and on the base paths. He's got a high baseball IQ and has been a tough out all season. He's got power to all fields.

"Donald has been our ace. He's the guy we look to when we need a win versus a tough opponent. He's gotten hot lately at the plate and has been adding to his extra base hit total. He's also a smart catcher with a strong arm and solid blocking ability."

Nazareth one win away from No. 20

Nazareth has endured injuries to its top two pitchers, but remained on track for a 20-win season.

The Roadrunners (19-7, 6-6 East Suburban Catholic) defeated Marmion 8-1 on Monday behind a solid pitching effort from Finn O'Meara (2-0).

"Our team has shown resilience battling through a tough conference with our top two pitchers out for six weeks," Nazareth coach Lee Milano said.

John Hughes came back on Satur-

day for 25 pitches after being out for six weeks. Luca Fiore, meanwhile, is still out and hasn't pitched in five weeks.

Leadoff hitter Lucas Smith, shortstop Cooper Malamazian and pitchers Nick Drtina (7-1) and David Cox (2-0 with a 1.59 ERA) have played solid all season, Milano said.

Smith is batting .457 and Malamazian is at .405.

"Lucas has been great leading off and playing center field," Milano said. "Cooper is another defensive standout and offensive threat."



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ATHLETE OF THE WEEK



CAITLYN KULCZYNSKI

Willowbrook, senior, softball

Why Kulczynski was selected: Kulczynski threw a perfect game with 17 strikeouts in a 1-0 win over York. She was voted the Athlete of the Week in an online vote by readers.

Here is Kulczynski's interview with Sports Editor Joshua Welge.

Welge: What do you remember about that perfect game?

Kulczynski: I remember it going by pretty quickly and remember the last batter, realizing I had a perfect game, thinking one more out, one more batter, don't let her get on base. I knew during the game I was pitching well and if I continued to pitch well it would be a high-strikeout game.

Welge: Have you thrown a perfect game before?

Kulczynski: Yes, I had another perfect game the first game of this season. I also had a no-hitter against Proviso and another one freshman and junior year.

Welge: What was working for you?

Kulczynski: My curveball was working well and my fastball was working well. It felt great knowing that it's my senior year that I had one of these big accomplishments. A perfect game is not something that's easy to do.

Welge: You were injured earlier this season. What happened?

Kulczynski: I sprained my ankle in one of my first games playing in the outfield. After that, coming back it was a mental adjustment to get over my injury. It was more of a mental comeback than physi-

cal. I knew I was capable physically but mentally I had to get over the injury.

Welge: Did you miss games?

Kulczynski: I did miss a couple games. I was out for a month, but thankfully we had rainouts and I was out for a month but only missed a couple games. It was a lot of time at physical therapy before school or after practice.

Welge: How are you feeling now?

Kulczynski: Now I feel way more confident. I'm hoping to finish up strong. My goal is to get to 100 strikeouts this season and I think I will accomplish that. I want to enjoy the last moments with my teammates and have fun.

Welge: You're committed to play at Stetson. How did you get connected with them? It seems like a lot of girls around here are playing there.

Kulczynski: Yes, the girl on Addison Trail, we're travel teammates, we got recruited together. I got recruited to Stetson through a travel tournament, at a showcase in Florida. The coaches happened to be there and I pitched a great game. A couple phone calls had me down on campus and I ended up really liking it.

Welge: What do you plan to study there?

Kulczynski: Applied statistics and mathematics.

GIRLS SOCCER: BENET 6, ST. VIATOR 1

Benet routs St. Viator, clinches ESCC title

By **MATT LE CREN**
For Shaw Local News Network

LISLE— Benet is going to have some big shoes to fill following the graduation of Lewis-bound senior striker Mariana Pinto.

But Pinto's replacement might already be on the roster.

Pinto scored her team-leading 22nd goal on a penalty kick. Freshman forward Keira Petrucelli and senior midfielder Katie Lewellyn each had two goals and an assist as the host Redwings routed St. Viator 6-1 on Monday to complete a second consecutive unbeaten run through the East Suburban Catholic Conference.

Benet (15-4, 7-0) has won three straight ESCC titles. The Redwings shared the 2019 crown but have won the last two outright.

"It's a really, really good feeling," Lewellyn said. "My freshman year when we won state, we were co-champions of the conference, so it feels really good my senior year to win it outright."

Lewellyn scored on a short shot five minutes into the game to open the scoring. Benet later scored on three consecutive shots to open up a 4-0 lead.

Petrucelli made it 2-0 when she got her first goal of the game at the 27:31 mark off an assist from Brinkley Douglas. Pinto converted her penalty kick 37 seconds later and Gabi DiMatteo tapped in a sharp cross from freshman Chloe Sentman 2:10 after that.

The fast start shocked everyone.

"We thought it would be a closer game, but everyone was just playing for the seniors and it really showed on the field," Lewellyn said. "We were so fired up. We all just wanted to win so bad today."

That included the rookie Petrucelli, who bagged her second two-goal game of the season. She also scored twice in

Benet's 5-1 win over Marist.

"The seniors have honestly been the biggest help and obviously got me to where I am today," Petrucelli said. "They show me how I can improve and they've always been there for me, which is why I think our team works so well together and why everybody is happy for each other."

St. Viator (8-4-3, 3-2-2) got on the board when Emillie Doersching scored off a feed from Josephine Westerkamp with 4:39 to go in the first half.

The Lions had a gusty wind at their backs in the second half but couldn't take advantage as Lewellyn and Petrucelli took turns setting each other up for Benet's fifth and sixth goals.

"Keira is doing amazing," Lewellyn said. "She really stepped into her role and knew her place and is always just there for the team and listens really well."

"I think she'll be a huge impact through her senior year."

Petrucelli already is making a significant impact. She has recorded six goals and five assists.

"She has incredible feet," Benet coach Gerard Oconer said. "Her soccer IQ is so high, especially as a freshman."

"She's just a sponge when it comes to what we try to coach her to do, and the most impressive thing is before the season she really hadn't played in a little over a year because she had a torn ACL. So for her to come into a team like this and be able to contribute like she has, she's been spectacular."

The Redwings, who have won six in a row, were spectacular in beating a fierce rival. The Lions hadn't surrendered six goals in a game since 2015.

"It was really scary, but the whole team was really excited," Petrucelli said. "We just went in wanting to step to every ball and show how we play and why we deserve to be conference champions."



Benet's Keira Petrucelli (left) and Katie Lewellyn each had two goals and an assist in a 6-1 victory over St. Viator on May 9.

Matt Le Cren for Shaw Local News Network

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Educators push back against testing requirements

State board looks to overhaul annual assessments

By Peter Hancock
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS
Teachers and other education professionals are urging the Illinois State Board of Education to reduce the amount of time students spend on standardized tests each year and to adopt a new testing system that produces more useful information to help teachers improve their instruction.

"One thing that we're saying and that our members are saying is that we have a testing regime that has gone too far, and is not helping children learn," Illinois Federation of Teachers president Dan Montgomery said during a virtual news conference April 29.

Under state and federal law, all students in grades 3-8 are tested each year in English language arts and math. They are also tested in science in grades 5, 8 and 11. In Illinois, those tests are known as the Illinois Assessment of Readiness, or IAR, and are taken by students in the spring.

Nationwide testing mandates are a product of the 2002 federal law known as the No Child Left Behind Act which uses them to hold teachers, schools and districts accountable for meeting state educational standards.

Recently, though, the State Board of Education has considered overhauling its testing system and at one

point proposed replacing the single year-end test with three smaller tests that would be given in the fall, winter and spring. The plan also would have given districts the option of testing children in kindergarten through grade 2.

Amid pushback from teachers unions and others, however, ISBE backed away from that plan last year and instead commissioned a survey from the national Center for Assessment to get feedback from teachers, administrators, parents, students and others about ways to improve the state's testing system.

"We don't want to just decrease the amount of time of the end-of-the-year test, we want to decrease the amount of testing period," said Monique Redeaux-Smith, IFT's director of union professional issues.

The results of that survey were presented to the board April 20. Among the key findings was that many people found the current testing system doesn't provide much instructionally useful information because the tests are administered in the spring and results aren't released until the next fall after students have already advanced to another grade.

Many respondents also said too much time is devoted to preparing for and administering tests, taking away from actual classroom instruction. Many people surveyed also sug-

gested the state could provide more resources to help local districts give interim tests at different times of the year—tests that would be completely separate from the accountability tests given in the spring—to help teachers tailor their instruction to meet their students' immediate needs.

Finally, the report recommended that ISBE take its time and move deliberately before making any major changes to the testing system.

"There is high agreement about the need to improve state assessment, but less consensus about what improvement consists of," the report stated. "ISBE can play a central role in providing leadership, building up trust, and developing plans that balance moving forward with maintaining needed quality."

The push toward standardized testing as a way of holding schools accountable grew out of a movement that began decades earlier, known as outcomes-based education—the idea that schools should be graded on the basis of how much students learn rather than the resources that go into them.

That movement got a big boost during the Reagan administration with the publication of a 1983 report, A Nation at Risk, which painted a highly critical picture of the failures of American schools, calling the entire public education system "medi-

ocre" and warning that it was quickly being surpassed by those of other nations.

But the emphasis on testing has long met resistance from many people within education, particularly teachers unions who have complained that it is unfair—especially to minority and low-income students who are more likely to attend under-resourced schools—and that it detracts from classroom education.

"This is a racist relic of the past," state Sen. Cristina Pacione-Zayas, D-Chicago, said during the news conference. "Assessments have served to keep groups out of institutions, and we know that the value, the validity in our education system of using these assessments are highly questionable."

Paul Zavittovsky, a former teacher and principal who now works at the Center for Urban Education Leadership, said there are testing systems available that would produce more useful information for teachers, but many of them don't report the results in any meaningful way.

"It looks like what the job of teaching is, is teaching a larger number of discrete skills faster and more effectively," he said. "And that actually ends up reinforcing exactly the kind of teaching and learning that creates a lot of the opportunity gaps that we actually see out there."

Villa Park's 2022 Spring Sweep recycling and shredding event will take place on May 21

Drive-through event is free to Villa Park residents, but there are fees for some items

STAFF REPORT

Villa Park's Community FUN (Focus on Unifying Neighbors) Commission is joining the Villa Park Environmental Concerns Commission to hold the 2022 Villa Park Spring Sweep recycling and shredding drop-off event from 9 a.m. to noon on Saturday, May 21.

The drive-through Spring Sweep will take place on Home Avenue, near Villa Park Village Hall. Traffic will enter from Harvard Avenue, heading north, and exit onto Ardmore Avenue. Entering onto Harvard from St. Charles Road will be prohibited during the event.

Participants will recycle from the safety of their vehicles by driving to different stations on Home Avenue. Volunteers will collect and remove items from vehicles. Attendees are asked to remain in their vehicles and

pack all of their recyclable items in the trunk of their vehicles. If possible, residents should pack items in easy-to-carry boxes clearly labeled with what items are inside.

The event is free to Villa Park residents. There is a \$20 fee per vehicle for non-residents. Fees will apply for residents who drop off paint and some other items (including aerosol products, insecticides, household cleaners, personal care cans) for recycling.

Accepted items include bicycles, scooters, helmets, gently used games, puzzles and LEGOS, hardcover and paperback books for children and adults (no encyclopedias, textbooks, workbooks or reference books), used clothing and shoes, small appliances in working order, full and discharged fire extinguish-

ers, old, tattered and faded American flags, eyeglasses, hearing aids, ink cartridges, metal (house) keys, soda/pop tabs, decorative lighting strings, paint, computers, monitors, printers, household batteries, digital cameras and cell phones.

Other accepted items include lead/acid automotive and marine batteries, as well as soccer gear (girls leggings,

soccer uniforms, cleats, balls, nets, referee/goalie gear, first aid kits).

The document shredding offers a limit of three banker boxes per household.

For more information, or to volunteer for the event, send an email to the Villa Park Community FUN Commission at pride@invillepark.com.

Warriors reel off three shutout victories

Trio of non-conference shutouts push Willowbrook's overall record to 10-4

STAFF REPORT

The Willowbrook girls soccer team improved its overall season record to 10-4 by winning three non-conference home matches last week. The Warriors opened the week with a 1-0 victory over Fenwick on April 26.

Two days later, Willowbrook defeated West Chicago 3-0. The Warriors completed their successful week with Saturday's 10-0 win over Ridgewood.

Senior Brooke Vandergrift scored Willowbrook's goal in the team's 1-0 victory over Fenwick. Senior Erin Fitzgibbon provided an assist on Vandergrift's goal.

Vandergrift, Fitzgibbon and freshman Liz Tretina each scored one goal in the Warriors' win over West Chicago. Vandergrift assisted Tretina's goal. Senior Rachael Klamecki delivered an assist on Fitzgibbon's goal. Fitzgibbon earned an assist on Vandergrift's goal.

Junior Haley Preuss scored three goals for Willowbrook in Saturday's victory over Ridgewood. Fitzgibbon contributed a pair of goals. Sophomore Grace Soltys also netted two goals for the Warriors. Vandergrift, freshman Emily Barth and junior Jenna Boynton supplied one goal each.

Junior goalkeeper Maddie Aderholt helped the Warriors to last week's three shutout victories.

Willowbrook's schedule this week includes West Suburban Gold Conference matches against Hinsdale South and Proviso East, along with Saturday's non-conference match against York in Elmhurst. The Warriors will enter this week's action with a conference record of 1-2.

Obituary

Keith J. LaPointe, 55

Keith J. LaPointe, of Glen Ellyn, passed away recently at the age of 55.

Beloved husband of Michelle LaPointe; loving father of Joseph LaPointe, stepfather of Kaitlyn, and Ronald Rentner; dear son of the late Ronald LaPointe and Kathleen LaPointe, nee King; fond brother of Tina (Tom) Baranowski, William (Dana) Oliver, Steven (Christine) LaPointe; uncle of many nieces and nephews; and dear friend of the Sudrowicz family; and many other

friends and family. Keith worked for Sherwin-Williams for 38 years.

Visitation was held Wednesday, April 27, 2022, from 3:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m.

Funeral service was held Wednesday, April 27 at 7:00 p.m. at Steuerle Chapel, 350 S. Ardmore Ave, Villa Park.

Interment Private. Memorials to Moose International Inc., 155 S. International Dr., Mooshearth, IL 60539 are appreciated.

Funeral info: steuerlefh.com or 630-832-4161.