



Many Americans have fought for our country, but many other Americans can't even get out to vote for the future of freedom in our country. What's wrong with this picture?

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According to a *Daily Herald* article, County Board Chair Cronin is leaving his job with a \$40 million surplus in the county budget. With Deb Conroy stepping in, let's see

how long that lasts. My experience has been that Democrats are always willing to spend other people's money without regard to personal hardships to the point where these people (me included) may end up needing the very help those tax dollars are paying for.

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I am all for fair employment, wages, etc., but to all these workers

who have the right to strike and do so, I ask, are you not glad you have a job? Many people would like to have your salary and the benefits. Yet these workers seem to want more and more, and in the public sector, it is at the taxpayers' expense. (Remember the threat of a District 87 teachers strike in 1999?) The railroad workers had been planning a strike, which was supposed to happen right around the holidays, no less. That would have hurt so many people when the dominoes fell. Fortunately, Congress and the president stepped in and blocked this strike. The timing was thoughtless and seemed like extortion. I remember how President Reagan handled the 1981 air traffic controllers strike by firing 11,000-plus workers in violation of a return-to-work order.

\*\*\*

It looks like all the people with Biden remorse are going to have another two years trying to stretch their budget, as well as all the people who voted for Trump. We are all Americans first. Let's solve our problems

together.

\*\*\*

Have you seen the ads on television promoting government health care plans? The people are smiling and happy. One young woman says she now gets health insurance for less than \$14 a month. Another woman says she only pays \$16 a month. A man says he "found a great plan for zero dollars a month." Excuse me, who says "zero dollars a month?" It sounds like this man is getting health care for free. If you're like me, you're paying a lot more than these people are for your health care. A lot more.

\*\*\*

It's early December. Kids in our area have been in school since mid-August. From what I've seen, hardly any have been wearing masks. From what I've read and heard, a huge majority of parents are not subjecting their kids to the experimental COVID "vaccine." I applaud those parents for their common sense. There haven't been any COVID-related problems in our area's schools

in the last three and a-half months. But are we still going to hear some people hysterically calling for kids to mask up this winter? I have a message for these people: Let it go. The pandemic is over. Mask up and boost up as much as you want, but the vast majority of us have moved on.

\*\*\*

I have to give the pro-abortion crowd credit. Despite the Supreme Court decision to overturn *Roe v. Wade*, they've been able to control the narrative. Just keep repeating it's a choice, and a right to choose, like they have for decades. Who could possibly be against someone's right to choose? Then you pass a sweeping pro-abortion law like the one we have in Illinois and call it the Reproductive Health Act. Who could possibly be against someone's reproductive health rights? In this law, you state that a fertilized egg, embryo or fetus does not have independent rights, and as long as you refer to it as a fertilized egg, embryo or fetus, instead of a human being, we can wash our hands of it. After all, what's going on inside the womb is simply biology.

## Warriors lose conference opener

### Willowbrook falls to 1-4 overall after a 69-67 loss at Morton

STAFF REPORT

The Willowbrook boys basketball team opened its West Suburban Gold Conference season with Friday's 69-67 loss at Morton. The Warriors' overall season record slipped to 1-4 following the setback at Morton's east campus in Cicero.

The Mustangs led the Warriors 16-12 after one quarter and 29-24 at halftime. Morton's lead stood at 50-46 at the end of the third quarter.

Willowbrook had a chance to tie the Mustangs in the closing seconds of the game, but the Warriors weren't able to convert a last-second shot.

Senior Noah Campbell scored a team-leading 24 points for the Warriors during Friday's loss to Morton. Campbell made seven baskets and sank 10 of 13 free-throw attempts. He also grabbed 10 rebounds and handed out three assists.

Senior Luke Davis provided 16 points for Willowbrook. Davis made six shots, including three attempts from 3-point range. He converted

one of two free throws.

Senior Tyler Royal supplied 12 points for the Warriors by draining four of six attempts from 3-point territory. Senior Isaac Sobieszczyk contributed 11 points and a team-leading 13 rebounds. Sobieszczyk also dished out a team-high six assists.

Senior Jimmy Degnan provided three points by sinking a 3-point attempt. Junior Andrew Ciesinski, who made one of two free throws, added one point.

The Warriors played their first home game of the season earlier this week, when they faced Naperville Central in a non-conference battle.

Willowbrook will play three home games next week. The Warriors will meet Lake Park in a non-conference matchup on Dec. 14. Willowbrook will play Downers Grove South in a Dec. 16 conference game in Villa Park. The Warriors will finish next week's action with a non-conference home game against Libertyville on Dec. 17.

## Warriors (Continued from page 5)

from 3-point range during the overtime period.

Sophomore Emma Caniglia added seven points for the Blazers.

Saturday's loss marked the Warriors' second overtime loss of the week. Willowbrook opened its West Suburban Gold Conference season with a 60-53 overtime loss at Hinsdale South on Nov. 29.

The Warriors led the Hornets 25-18 at halftime and 36-30 after three quarters. The two teams were tied at 51-51 at the end of the fourth quarter.

Bruschuk supplied 19 points and 15 rebounds in the Warriors' loss at Hinsdale South. Nytko contributed

13 points, four rebounds and four assists. Setaram had nine points and four rebounds. Kelly scored five points, while sophomore Halie Ahrens tallied four points and five rebounds.

The Warriors' week also included a 60-45 loss at Lake Park in a non-conference game on Dec. 1. Bruschuk scored 17 points and grabbed 11 rebounds in the loss to the Lancers, while Setaram provided 11 points.

Willowbrook's season continues with this week's conference home games against Proviso East and Morton.



SUBMITTED PHOTO: Rock Valley Publishing

## Interplan LLC 13th annual food drive benefits York Township Food Pantry

Interplan LLC, located at 1 S. 280 Summit Avenue in Oakbrook Terrace, provides development solutions for restaurant, retail, hospitality and commercial programs. As a way to give back to the community, employees organized their 13th annual food drive and donated the proceeds to the York Township Food Pantry. The drive ran for two weeks and collected several truckloads of non-perishable food items, which were delivered to York Township Hall. The donation will be used to help stock pantry shelves for the holidays.

## Police department releases enforcement numbers from Thanksgiving traffic safety campaign

The Villa Park Police Department conducted a traffic safety campaign from Nov. 18-28, reminding motorists to buckle up and drive sober.

The "Click It or Ticket" and "Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over" mobilization during the Thanksgiving holiday period was conducted by the Villa Park Police Department and other state and local law enforcement agencies

across Illinois to reduce highway fatalities.

During the campaign, Villa Park Police officers issued 49 seat belt citations, four child car seat citations, two citations for suspended/revoked licenses, nine cell phone citations and 45 other moving/equipment citations.

"Our officers patrol year-round to keep motorists buckled up and impaired drivers off the roads,"

said Villa Park Sgt. James Cihak. "We do this to save lives and ensure all of us make it home safely at the end of the day."

The recent Thanksgiving enforcement effort was made possible by federal traffic safety funds administered by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), and is part of the statewide "Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over" and "Click It or Ticket" campaigns.

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SUBMITTED PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing

This creative writing student from Mrs. Inzinga's class reads an original story to students at one of the local elementary schools.

## ATHS names Students of the Semester

Each semester, Addison Trail departments establish criteria that guide the nomination of a student who displays Blazer Pride to receive Student of the Semester recognition.

On Thursday, Dec. 1, the Students of First Semester for the 2022-23 school year were presented during an event in their honor by the staff members who nominated them.

The honorees are: art, senior Kimberly Perez; Career and Technical Education (CTE) business, junior Zachary Morris; CTE family and consumer, sophomore Alyssa Fachet; CTE industry and technology, junior Aylin Vargas; English, senior Leilani Nevado; literacy, Melanny Rivera Rodriguez; math, freshman Eliska Zvak; music, senior Apolonio Ramon; physical education, freshman Caterina Moreci; science, senior Alexander Georgis; social studies, sophomore Katelyn Ford; student services, senior Daniel Rozek; and, world languages, freshman Melanie Sosa Maldonado.

## Park district fitness supervisor offers holiday health tips

It can be hard to stay fit or even to maintain the same weight during the holiday season, but Bensenville Park District Fitness Supervisor Silvia Acevedo has some practical advice on how to stay fit and healthy during the holidays.

Acevedo recently shared the following four holiday health concepts on the "Spotlight on Bensenville" cable television program: set realistic expectations, plan ahead, keep it quick and consistent and take advantage of seasonal offerings.

Acevedo says it's okay to relax a little with fitness goals during the holidays, recognizing that it is often a time of great stress.

"Goals should be realistic and achievable, focusing on maintenance," she said. "You can stay active and enjoy all the festivities without feeling overwhelmed."

Acevedo says planning ahead is another key to success.

"Planning ahead for the busy holidays helps you figure out your options to get your workouts in with the understanding that a plan B might be necessary, so consider those plan B's ahead of time," she said.

If hitting the road during the holidays, consider hotels with pools and fitness facilities. If those are not available, there are fitness apps that may be used or consider bringing fitness equipment such as elastic bands on the trip. She also says to research nearby trails to run, walk or hike to stay active.



A young elementary school student is enthralled with the story shared by this Addison Trail creative writing class member.

## Addison Trail students read original stories to grades K-2

On Thursday, Nov. 17, students in Addison Trail English teacher Katie Inzinga's Creative Writing class visited Lincoln, Ardmore and Lake Park elementary schools, where they read their original children's stories to pupils in kindergarten through second grade.

To create their stories, the Addison Trail students analyzed published works and discussed characterization, conflict and plot development. They then drafted, revised and edited their own books. Some students incorporated Spanish words, and others wrote their story in English and Spanish.

The class voted on Best Theme,

Best Characters, Best Illustrations and Reader's Choice, and the winners are listed below.

They received a certificate and a gold seal award sticker to put on their book's cover.

- **Best Theme:** freshman Chiara Camaci, "The Box of Change"
- **Best Characters:** freshman Zuzanna Kwasniewski, "The Day The Monster Joined School"
- **Best Illustrations:** junior Hiajaira Del Moral, "The Impatient Bear"
- **Reader's Choice:** freshman Georgia Zatos, "Thankful for Hope"
- Inzinga's daughter Shelby also voted for her favorite: senior Mia Dravilas, "Big Brother Bear."

## Seniors accepted to Elmhurst University

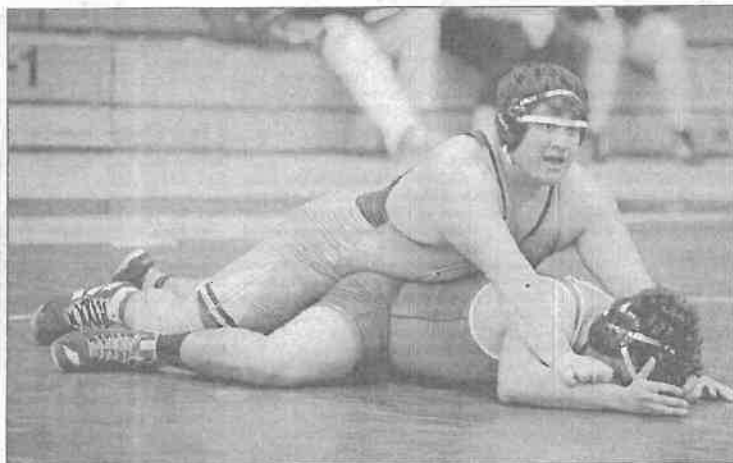
On Thursday, Dec. 1, 40 Addison Trail seniors received exciting news — they have been accepted to Elmhurst University.

The students were surprised with the announcement and a visit from Elmhurst University President Dr. Troy D. VanAken, Senior Director of First-Year Admission Alexander Blumenberg, Associate Director of First-Year Admission Jenny Bogda, Victor E. Bluejay (Elmhurst University's mascot) and Bucky Blazer (Addison Trail's mascot). Dr. VanAken, Blumenberg, Bogda and Addison Trail Guidance Counselor

Shane Cole congratulated the seniors on being admitted to the university through its Early Action program and encouraged them to continue working hard to pursue their goals.

Addison Trail alumni Mateo Gomez and Roohana Amin, class of 2022, spoke with students and shared their experiences as freshmen at Elmhurst University.

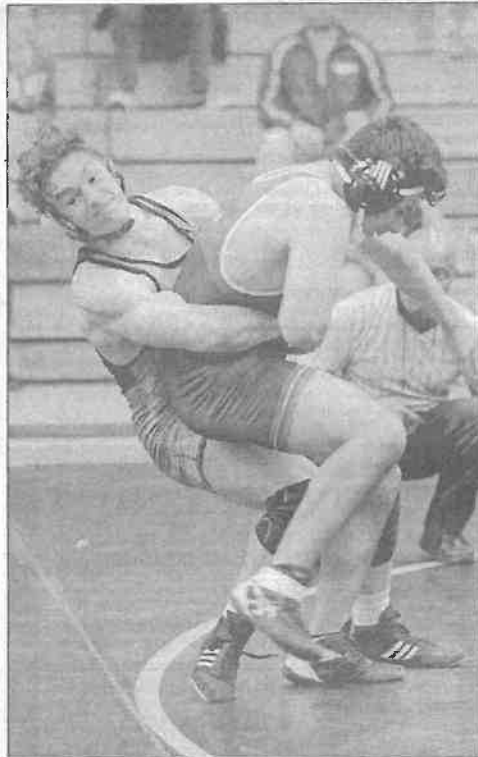
Combined, the recipients were awarded more than \$800,000 a year in total scholarships. Each student also received a "Bluejay Box," which contained a letter of acceptance, a scholarship offer and more.



CHRIS FOX PHOTOS Rock Valley Publishing

## Warriors tangle with Morton

Willowbrook's wrestling team opened its West Suburban Gold Conference season with Friday's home dual meet against Morton. The visiting Mustangs defeated the Warriors 45-29. Willowbrook's winners in Friday's contest included sophomore Sean Gielarowski, who prevailed 10-9 in double-overtime in the 195-pound match. Gielarowski is pictured at right during his exciting victory. Another photo (above) shows sophomore Elias Samayoa, who earned a 2-1 win in the heavyweight contest. The Warriors' other winners against Morton included senior Chris Giroux, who pinned his opponent in the 126-pound contest. Senior Elijah Smith of Willowbrook pinned his Morton opponent in the 138-pound match. Senior Darren Jackowiak provided the Warriors with a technical-fall win in the 152-pound battle. Willowbrook freshman Aris Neal delivered a pin in the 106-pound match. After facing Morton on Friday, the Warriors competed in Saturday's Plainfield North Mega Duals. Willowbrook went 2-3 on Saturday, beating Sandwich and Morris and losing to Canton, Minooka and Moline. The Warriors' season dual-meet record at the end of Saturday's action stood at 5-4. Willowbrook's season continues with this Friday's conference dual meet against Addison Trail in Villa Park. The Warriors will compete in this Saturday's Hoffman Estates Invite.



# Addison Trail Blazers edge Warriors in overtime

## Papanicolaou's 3-point barrage leads Addison Trail to a 46-44 victory

### STAFF REPORT

District 88 rivals Willowbrook and Addison Trail waged a back-and-forth battle in Saturday's girls basketball game in Addison. Led by senior Elena Papanicolaou, the Blazers prevailed 46-44 in overtime.

Papanicolaou scored 28 points in Addison Trail's win over the Warriors. She made six shots from 3-point range and added five 2-point baskets. Papanicolaou scored all six of the Blazers' overtime points by draining a pair of 3-point shots.

Junior Elle Bruschuk scored a team-high 21 points for the Warriors. Bruschuk made 11 of 13 free throws during the game. She sank four free throws to account for all four of Willowbrook's overtime points before she fouled out with 2:17 remaining.

Addison Trail improved to 2-5 overall and 1-1 in West Suburban Gold Conference play with its win on Saturday. Willowbrook fell to 1-6 overall and 0-2 in conference action.

The Blazers led the Warriors 11-6 after one quarter and 21-12 at halftime. Addison Trail held a 34-26 lead at the end of the third quarter.

A basket by Willowbrook senior Sara Stout cut Addison Trail's lead to 36-32 with about 3:30 left in the fourth quarter. Bruschuk connected on a 3-point shot to trim the Blazers' lead to 36-35 with about 2:40 remaining in regulation.

Bruschuk made a pair of free throws to give the Warriors a 37-36 lead with 1:12 to play in the fourth quarter. The Blazers made one free throw a few seconds later to tie the score at 37-37.

Senior Yazmin Setaram's 3-point play gave the Warriors a 40-37 lead with 49.9 seconds left in the fourth quarter. Papanicolaou made a 3-point shot with about 20 seconds on the clock to even the score at 40-40.

Bruschuk made four free throws during the first 65 seconds of the 4-minute overtime period. The Warriors held a 44-40 lead when Bruschuk fouled out with 2:17 on the clock.

Papanicolaou connected on a 3-point shot with about two minutes left in the overtime period to cut Willowbrook's lead to 44-43. She drained her sixth and final 3-pointer of the day with about 1:15 to play to give the Blazers their 46-44 advantage.

Both teams missed free throws in the final minute of the overtime period. The Warriors turned the ball over in the closing seconds; the Blazers then held the ball until the final buzzer.

In addition to scoring 21 points, Bruschuk grabbed a team-leading nine rebounds. Setaram provided 10 points, while Stout contributed nine points. Junior Tia Kelly added two points and seven rebounds. Senior Rimón Kari scored two points.

The Warriors played the game without their starting point guard—senior Nina Nytko—who missed the contest with an injury.

Papanicolaou scored 11 of her 28 points in the first half. She made one 3-point shot during the opening half. Papanicolaou drained a pair of 3-point shots in the third quarter. She made a 2-point basket and a 3-point shot during the fourth quarter before sinking a pair of attempts



CHRIS FOX PHOTOS Rock Valley Publishing

Willowbrook's girls basketball team lost 46-44 in overtime to Addison Trail on Saturday in Addison. The Warriors fell to 1-6 overall and 0-2 in West Suburban Gold Conference play with the loss. Willowbrook opened its conference season with an overtime loss at Hinsdale South on Nov. 29. Junior Elle Bruschuk (No. 33 - above left) scored 21 points for the Warriors in Saturday's game against Addison Trail. Bruschuk, who made 11 of 13 free throws against the Blazers, fouled out with about two minutes left in the overtime period. Another photo from Saturday's game shows senior Sara Stout (No. 15 - above right), who provided nine points.

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CHRIS FOX PHOTOS Rock Valley Public

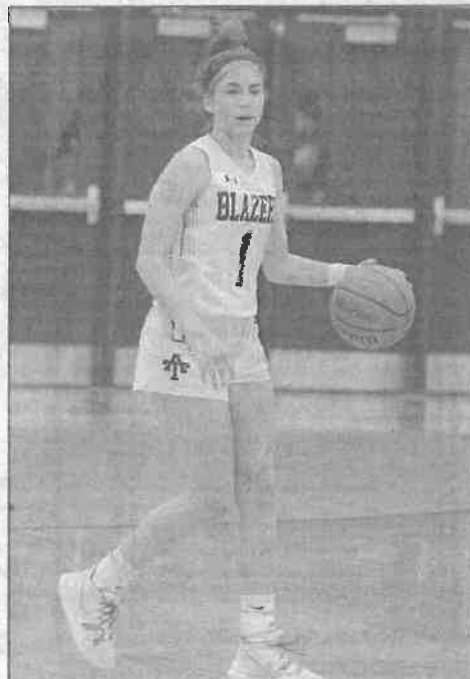
## High-scoring Blazers

Addison Trail's boys basketball team faced Glenbard East in Saturday afternoon's game at Wheat Warrenville South's Crohn's and Colitis Awareness Shootout. Glenbard East defeated the Blazers 92-72. The Rams led Addison Trail 47-40 at halftime and 72-61 at the end of the third quarter. Sophomore Li Smith (No. 1 - left) poured in 40 points for the Blazers. Smith made 14 field goals, including five baskets from 3-point range. He also converted all seven of his free-throw attempts. Senior Charles Little (No. 2 - above) added 16 points for Addison Trail. The Blazers' overall season record dropped to 3-3 following Saturday's loss.



## An exciting win for the Blazers

Addison Trail's girls basketball team defeated Willowbrook 46-44 in overtime in Saturday's West Suburban Gold Conference game in Addison. Senior Elena Papanicolaou (No. 1 - right) scored 28 points to lead the Blazers to the win. Papanicolaou made six shots from 3-point range during the game. She made a pair of attempts from 3-point territory to account for all six of Addison Trail's overtime points. The Blazers moved to 2-5 overall and 1-1 in conference play with the win. Another photo from Saturday's game shows Addison Trail sophomore Emma Caniglia (No. 15 - left), who scored seven points.



CHRIS FOX PHOTOS Rock Valley Public



## Viewpoint Slices of life

# The science of happiness

Lately I've been interested in happiness—scientifically speaking, of course. That sounds counterintuitive, oxymoronic even. How can the cut and dried factual-based world of science have anything to do with something as instinctive and emotional as happiness?

Turns out they have more in common than I originally thought. Happiness causes physiological changes within us that science is able to use to identify, quantify and even predict happy.

I've always thought of happiness as external—something that happens to me. Happiness comes from going to Disney World, opening presents at Christmas, saying "yes" to the dress, a brand new convertible, landing that dream job, scoring the last slice of chocolate cake, winning the lottery and so on.

While this might sound logical, external experiences and things that happen to us aren't the real source of happiness. In truth, happiness comes from within. At least that's what science says.

And who are we to argue with science?

Scientists have studied happiness and they've found it happens naturally. (Duh.) But, (here's the kicker) it can also be manufactured.

Harvard psychologist, Dan Gilbert, describes "synthetic happiness." It's the happy we create when we don't get what we want.

Sort of like seeing the glass as half full.

As it turns out, when we don't get what we want, the happiest among us take on a new perspective and choose to see it another way.

Key word in that last sentence: choose.

Happiness is a choice. Absorb the power in that for just a minute, because it is great. It is gigantic.

You get to choose your own happiness. How flipping awesome is that? Flippingly! Because choice is power. And the power is in your hands. No one else's. You are in charge.

Flippingly in charge. Damn grand.

From my very limited research, along with (extensive) lifetime experience, I've concluded that happiness is a habit. As with all habits, it gets easier and more natural with practice. In contrast, the opposite is also true. Choosing a dim outlook on life can also become a habit. You can send two people to the county fair on the same day. One will see dirt and dust and crowds and long lines in front of the food trucks serving greasy food. The other will see the roller coaster, Ferris wheel and delicious



By  
**JILL  
PERTLER**  
Columnist

corn dogs on a stick.

Same fair. Same day. Same experiences. Different outlooks. Different outcomes.

The people in the white lab coats tell us happiness is a choice, and in that, they have a few other gems that can help us find our own Happiness Boulevard. Here's what their studies suggest:

Gratitude increases happiness. If we spend time thinking of all that we have, we commit less brain energy to all things we want or don't have. Gratitude, like happiness, is a habit. They are best friends and are often seen having coffee together on Tuesday mornings at the cute little pastry shop down the street—visibly exuding appreciation and love for one another over lattes and donuts.

Happiness can be increased by (Ready for this shocker?) engaging in activities you enjoy. Do what makes you happy and you will more likely be happy. Standing ovation for the obvious.

Understand that your emotions are your choice. Even in dire circumstances, you choose how you feel. It may be bad, but it will get better and could possibly be worse. Most of our challenges won't even be on our radar a year from now, much less five years from now. Even if they will be, life won't always be the same as it is today. Ponder and remember that. Allow yourself to give it perspective even if it has to be one conscious breath at a time.

The happiest people believe in something greater than themselves. This lifts the weight of the world off of their shoulders. Perhaps we are not in control after all. Understand this and accept it. Embrace it for the gift it is.

I grew up believing "things" made me happy - experiences, good fortune, other people. Turns out I was only half right. Happiness might (sometimes) come from our environment, but most often it is already within us - waiting for us to embrace and recognize it. It is there for the taking. Go ahead, scoop up a healthy portion for yourself.

You'll be glad you did.

Jill Pertler is an award-winning syndicated columnist, published playwright and author. She invites readers to follow the Slices of Life page on Facebook.

## Man gets 15 years for attempted arson at Oak Brook theater

DuPage County State's Attorney Robert Berlin has announced that a Chicago man has been sentenced to 15 years in the Illinois Department of Corrections after entering a plea of guilty to one count of attempt aggravated arson (Class 1 felony) stemming from an incident at the Oak Brook Center AMC Theater in January, 2018.



David Ferguson

David Ferguson, 33, appeared in court in front of Judge Margaret O'Connell who accepted Ferguson's plea and handed down the sentence. On July 2, 2018, a DuPage County arrest warrant in the amount of \$250,000 with 10 percent to apply was executed against Ferguson while he was being held in the Cook County Jail facing unrelated aggravated arson charges. He has remained in custody since that time.

In the early evening hours of Jan. 12, 2018, the manager of the AMC Theater was notified by a staff member of a suspicious individual walking around the area of theater 5. When the manager went to theater 5, he smelled a strong odor, later determined to be

paint thinner, coming from theater 6. The manager also observed patrons quickly leaving theater 6.

When the manager entered theater 6, he found Ferguson seated in the theater with a can of paint thinner on his lap. The manager quickly escorted Ferguson out of the theater at which time Ferguson pulled out cigarettes and a lighter from his pocket and attempted to light a cigarette. Ferguson was then escorted off the property.

An investigation into the matter led by the Oak Brook Police Department identified Ferguson as a suspect and found that he had poured paint thinner on the floor of the theater and left paper towels soaked in paint thinner in the theater.

"Fortunately, thanks to the alertness of staff and the quick response of the Manager at the Oak Brook Center AMC Theater, a possible tragedy was

averted," Berlin said. "Thankfully, no fire was ever set, and no one was injured from the chemical fumes. During the holiday season, our theaters, restaurants and retail establishments are extremely busy with holiday shoppers and celebrations.

"Judge O'Connell's sentence sends the message that in DuPage County we will use any and all resources available to us to protect our businesses and their patrons through this holiday season and throughout the entire year."

Ferguson will be required to serve 50 percent of his DuPage County sentence to be served consecutively to a six-year sentence he received out of Cook County. Judge O'Connell ordered that the sentences be served consecutively rather than concurrently based upon the defendant's threat to public safety.

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## D88 seeks teams for this year's Relay For Life

At District 88, giving back and helping others is a cornerstone of pride.

One of the district's main fundraising events is the Relay For Life of District 88 Youth, which is the culmination of Willowbrook's Brook Olympics (a weekend series of events and challenges created to enhance tradition and class spirit and pride at the school). Those events - along with "Go Pink" efforts in honor of Breast Cancer Awareness Month - raise funds for the American Cancer Society.

This year's Relay For Life event will take place on Saturday, March 4 at Willowbrook, and all District 88 students and community members are invited to attend. It will feature a variety of activities and games, and there also will be a luncheon to remember those who have lost their battle with cancer. Community members who raise at least \$15 are invited to participate from 6 to 11 p.m. District 88 students who raise at least \$115 can stay for the lock-in from 11 p.m. on March 4 to 6 a.m. on March 5. They also will receive a T-shirt and vouchers and will be entered into a raffle to win prizes.

To register for the Relay For Life of District 88 Youth event, go to relayforlife.org/d88il. Donations can be made at that link as well, and proceeds will benefit the American Cancer Society. For more information, contact Relay For Life adviser Ed Sullivan at esullivan@dupage88.net or 630-782-3019.

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