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THURSDAY, JAN. 12, 2023



CHRIS FOX PHOTO Villa Park Review

The Brennan Trio contributes to Willowbrook's art show

About 15 years ago, Villa Park's Funky Java Coffee House (located at 40 S. Villa Ave.) began a December tradition of displaying pieces created by Willowbrook High School art students. The December art show was canceled in 2020 and 2021 because of the COVID-19 pandemic, but it returned in 2022. The Brennan sisters of Villa Park provided live music during the opening reception for last month's

art show at the coffee house. Pictured left to right are Maggie, Claire and Molly Brennan. Molly is a senior at Willowbrook, while Maggie is a sophomore. Claire is an eighth-grader at Jackson Middle School. The 2022 art show featured about 100 pieces of a variety of art mediums, including painting, ceramics, sculpture, graphic design and digital art.

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Warriors start 2023 with two conference wins

Team moves to 10-8 overall, 5-2 in WSGC action

STAFF REPORT

The Willowbrook girls basketball team began the new year with a pair of West Suburban Gold Conference victories.

Playing their first game of 2023, the Warriors earned a 53-28 conference victory over Leyden on Friday in Villa Park. One day later, Willowbrook defeated Proviso East 39-29 in a conference game in Maywood.

The Warriors improved to 10-8 overall and 5-2 in conference play with last week's wins over Leyden and Proviso East.

Willowbrook's season continues with this Saturday's game against Plainfield North at the 33rd Annual Coach Kipp Hoopfest at Montini Catholic High School.

Willowbrook led Leyden 21-6 through one quarter of Friday's conference game. The Eagles trimmed the Warriors' lead to 28-17 by halftime. Willowbrook extended its lead to 40-24 by the end of the third quarter.

Junior Elle Bruschuk provided a team-leading 15 points for the Warriors in Friday's win over Leyden.

Bruschuk, who scored nine of her points in the first quarter, pulled down a team-high 11 rebounds during the game. She also handed out a team-leading seven assists.

Senior Yazmin Setaram made three 3-point shots and scored 13 points in Willowbrook's win over the Eagles. Senior Sara Stout contributed 10 points and nine rebounds. Senior Rimon Kari, who made a pair of shots from 3-point range, supplied 10 points. Senior Nina Nytko added five points.

Willowbrook led Proviso East 12-8 after one quarter of Saturday's conference game. The Warriors held a 21-15 halftime lead. Willowbrook's lead grew to 30-19 by the end of the third quarter.

Nytko made three 3-point shots and scored a team-high 14 points for the Warriors in Saturday's win over the Pirates. Kari provided eight points, while Bruschuk delivered six points and 10 rebounds. Stout scored four points and grabbed 12 rebounds. Setaram added four points, while junior Kalina Henry scored three points.



CHRIS FOX PHOTOS Rock Valley Publishing

Willowbrook's girls basketball team kicked off the new year by winning a pair of West Suburban Gold Conference games over the weekend. The Warriors defeated Leyden 53-28 in Friday's conference game in Villa Park. Willowbrook then beat Proviso East 39-29 in Saturday's conference contest in Maywood. The Warriors moved to 10-8 overall and 5-2 in conference action following Saturday's victory. One photo from Friday's win over the Eagles shows junior Elle Bruschuk (No. 33 - above left), who scored 15 points and grabbed 11 rebounds in the game. Another photo from Friday's game shows senior Yazmin Setaram (No. 4 - above right), who sank three 3-point shots and provided 13 points.

An up and down weekend for the Warriors

After losing to Leyden in overtime, Willowbrook beats Proviso West

STAFF REPORT

The Willowbrook boys basketball team fell to 3-11 overall and 0-3 in West Suburban Gold Conference play following Friday night's 70-67 overtime loss at Leyden.

The Warriors bounced back from Friday's loss to post a 70-60 non-conference win at Proviso West on Saturday afternoon in Hillside. Willowbrook, which moved to 4-11 overall with the win, has won three of its last five games. The Warriors closed 2022 by winning their last two games at the Hinsdale Central Holiday Classic, which concluded on Dec. 29.

Willowbrook's season continues with this Friday's conference home game against Proviso East.

The Warriors trailed Leyden 16-12 through one quarter of Friday's conference battle. The Eagles extended their lead to 34-25 by halftime. Leyden held a 39-25 lead early in the third quarter, but Willowbrook unleashed a 19-6 run to close the quarter, cutting the Eagles' lead to 45-44. The two teams were deadlocked at 59-59 at the end of regula-

tion. Willowbrook missed a shot just before the buzzer sounded at the end of the fourth quarter.

The Warriors led by as many as six points early in the four-minute overtime period, but Leyden rallied to pull out the victory.

Senior Noah Campbell scored a team-leading 18 points for Willowbrook in Friday's overtime loss. Campbell made a pair of shots from 3-point range. He also pulled down seven rebounds.

Senior Jaylin Brown, who also made a pair of 3-point baskets, provided 14 points for the Warriors in Friday's game. Senior Isaac Sobieszczyk supplied 12 points and eight rebounds. Senior Luke Davis added nine points. Senior Jimmy Degnan, who connected on two shots from 3-point range, contributed eight points. Senior Joey Tumilty added six points.

The Warriors led Proviso West 15-14 after one quarter of Saturday afternoon's contest. Willowbrook outscored the Panthers 21-10 in the second quarter to take a 36-24 halftime lead. The Warriors owned a 53-

42 advantage at the end of the third quarter.

Campbell poured in a team-leading 23 points in Saturday's victory. He made 10 baskets, including one shot from behind the 3-point line, and converted two of three free-throw attempts. Campbell also snared eight rebounds in the win.

Davis, who made two baskets from 3-point range, supplied 14 points. He also contributed seven rebounds. Sobieszczyk scored 13 points and piled up a team-high 17 rebounds. Degnan and Tumilty delivered 10 and six points, respectively. Brown added four points.

Willowbrook head coach Chris Perkins became the program's all-time leader in victories with Saturday's win. A 2004 Willowbrook graduate and a standout player with the Warriors, Perkins earned his 153rd victory as the program's head coach with Saturday's triumph. John Hamann, who coached the Warriors for 12 seasons (through the 1983-84 campaign), earned 152 wins. Perkins began coaching the Warriors in the 2011-12 season.



CHRIS FOX FILE PHOTOS Rock Valley Publishing

Willowbrook's boys basketball team played a pair of road games over the weekend. The Warriors suffered a 70-67 overtime loss in Friday night's West Suburban Gold Conference game at Leyden. One day later, Willowbrook earned a 70-60 non-conference win at Proviso West. The Warriors improved their overall season record to 4-11 with Saturday's win. Senior Noah Campbell (No. 25 - above) scored 18 points for Willowbrook in Friday's loss to the Eagles. He provided 23 points in Saturday's win. Senior Isaac Sobieszczyk (No. 15 - right) delivered 12 points and eight rebounds in Friday's game. He scored 13 points and grabbed 17 rebounds in Saturday's victory over Proviso West. The Warriors are pictured during their final game of 2022—a 65-61 win over Morton at the Hinsdale Central Holiday Classic on Dec. 29.



Grant will help pay for trees, shrubs

Birders, FPDDC hope to attract birds

The Forest Preserve District of DuPage County and the DuPage Birding Club jointly announced that the club awarded a \$2,000 grant to the 501(c)(3) Friends of the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County to fund the planting of nearly 100 native tree saplings and shrubs near McKee Marsh at Blackwell Forest Preserve in Warrenville.

The grant will advance a restoration project already begun at the

site, which included the removal of nonnative buckthorn and honeysuckle shrubs. Newly planted native trees and shrubs will increase the habitat's biodiversity, provide needed vegetative structure, and restore resources for native and migratory birds that nest and forage in the woodland's understory.

In addition to funding the purchase, DuPage Birding Club members planted the saplings and shrubs

at the site in November. Members will also tend to and water the new plants through the fall and install small fencing to protect the new plants from animal browse.

"The woodland understory is extremely important to bird species such as the ovenbird, veery and wood thrush," said DuPage Birding Club president Natalie McPaul. "Restoring this small woodland area will improve bird habitat. It will also provide the Forest Preserve District with insight about how birds use the newly restored habitat and information that can be used to guide its future management of DuPage forest preserve woodlands."

The restoration project and grant are an example of an ongoing partnership between the Forest Preserve District and the DuPage Birding Club.

"DuPage Birding Club members are ideal partners for this project because they are knowledgeable about the avian species that live and nest in our forest preserves," said Forest Preserve District chief partnership and philanthropy officer Jeannine Kannegiesser. "They understand birds' needs and are actively engaged in monitoring bird species and stewarding bird habitat in our natural areas."

The Forest Preserve District indicated it will take several years for the saplings and shrubs to reach maturity before the habitat provides the conditions required by understory-nesting birds.

DuPage Birding Club and Forest Preserve District volunteers will monitor bird species' presence and use of the area in the years following the project.

"We look forward to seeing understory flourish with new growth and learning about how birds will use the restored area of the preserve," said Forest Preserve District stewardship program coordinator Cindy Hedges. "The Forest Preserve District will use the collected by the volunteers to evaluate the project's success."

The DuPage Birding Club meets and supports birdwatching and birding in DuPage County. Over 400 members, the club makes more than 80 field trips a year, regional and national speakers at regular meetings, and offers educational opportunities for its members and the public. The club also provides grants and donations to groups and individuals involved in avian research, conservation, and education. Learn more at dupagebirding.org.



While I am not about to become a leftist liberal, I am becoming ashamed of my Republican Party. With this Speaker of the House debacle, how can Republicans secure any real credibility and show strength in numbers to unite, or re-unite this party? While the Democrats delight in continuing to deflect blame for all our woes onto Donald Trump, I feel like he has left a stain on the integrity of the Republican Party. I will give the Democrats one thing: At least they rally around their own, even if it is destructive and counterproductive to our nation. Our current president is a perfect example.

Just a friendly reminder that our southern border is wide open. Drugs and illegals pouring across. The results: fentanyl deaths at record highs, cartels control much of the border and more downward pressure on blue collar wages. Why is this happening, you wonder? To help the Democratic Party, of course! Wake up America!

A Dec. 29 caller wrongly claimed I denigrated downstate Illinois by comparing the southern half of our state with West Virginia. I did nothing of the sort. However, I did point out the risk posed by a simplistic view of secession. West Virginia took that risk, and the price is still being paid out. If you are going to criticize someone else's words, you need to get those words right instead of changing the meaning to fit your narrative. Thank you.

As you know, the price of everything has gone up. The only thing that hasn't gone up is the freeze on homes. Is that going to happen or is that going to remain low? Thank you.

I heard the governor of Colorado is

going to be sending migrants to New York and Chicago. The Colorado governor is a Democrat. Since these migrants are coming from a Democratic governor, I wonder if the mayors of New York and Chicago will complain as much as they did when the Republican governor from Texas sent them to New York and Chicago.

Good morning. It's Jan. 1. A little gloomy out. Hopefully that doesn't portend the balance of the year. FYI, the Dec. 31 *New York Post* has a long article on the Pritzkers. Whether you're pro or con, the article will probably reinforce both sides. But hey, JB wants to be president.

I see the President of the United States is finally going to visit the southern border to take a first-hand look at the chaos he and his administration have created with their terrible border policies. That's nice of him. Is Vice President Giggles going to accompany him? Maybe not. She might be too busy welcoming the illegal migrants that were bused to her house in Washington.

I remember some Speak Out callers have complained about dogs being allowed inside the Yorktown Mall. I agree with them, and I'm a dog lover. They have a dog lounge on the second floor. I happened to be walking past the lounge one night and I noticed a woman with her dog walking into the lounge. She was on her phone, and didn't see that her dog was lifting its leg on the door. If you're going to bring your dog to the mall, pay attention to what your dog is doing. The mall better be cleaning the main floors every day. I'm sure this isn't the first time a dog has lifted its leg at the mall, or worse.



CHRIS FOX PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing

Post 2801 presents district awards

Villa Park Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 2801 and its auxiliary hosted a banquet on Saturday to honor the 19th District's winners in the 2022-23 Voice of Democracy competition. The competition was open to high school students. Contestants wrote an essay responding to the 2022-23 theme question: "Why is the Veteran Important?" In addition to writing their response to that question, contestants made an audio recording (3 to 5 minutes) of their essay. Saturday's banquet honored the competition's post-level winners from 13 area posts (including Post 2801) in District 19. Five of those 13 winners received top-five recognition in the district level. Aldon Hoogstra, a junior at Timothy Christian High School in Elmhurst, was Post 2801 and its auxiliary's winner in the Voice of Democracy Competition. He received District 19's third-place award, and a check for \$250, at Saturday's banquet. Hoogstra (left) is pictured with Judy Sytsma (right), who is an eighth-grade teacher at Timothy Christian Middle School. Post 2801 and its auxiliary nominated Sytsma for the VFW Teacher of the Year Award. Sytsma taught Hoogstra when he was in grade school. Andrew Kula, a senior at Lemont High School, received District 19's first-place award in the Voice of Democracy competition during Saturday's event. Kula advanced to the district level after winning Lemont VFW Post 5819's contest. Kula won a flag set and \$500 for winning the district competition. He advanced to the Voice of Democracy's upcoming state contest in Springfield. The winner at the state level will move on to the national competition in Washington, D.C.



CHRIS FOX FILE PHOTO Rock Valley Pub

Coach sets a new record for wins

Willowbrook boys basketball coach Chris Perkins' new program record for victories when the Warriors defeat Proviso West 70-60 in Hill Country on Saturday. The win marks Perkins' 153rd victory as Willowbrook's varsity head coach. Perkins, who coached the Warriors for 12 seasons through the 1983-84 campaign, guided the program to 152 wins. Perkins, who is pictured as this season, is a 2004 Willowbrook graduate. A standout basketball player with the Warriors, he helped the team win an Illinois Class 4A regional title during senior season. Perkins began his tenure as Willowbrook's head coach in the 2011-12 season, guided the Warriors to an Illinois Class 4A regional champion in 2018.