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# Addison INDEPENDENT

### Easter Event

#### Egg Hunt & Eggstravaganza

10 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. | April 1  
Varble Hill / DGLC  
Egg Hunt - Crafts - Games  
Photos with the Bunny  
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#### Easter Brunch

11 a.m. - 1 p.m. | April 9  
White Pines Golf Club  
Lavish Brunch  
Photos with the Bunny  
Register by April 3, 630-766-0304  
WhitePinesGolf.com  
**WHITE PINES**  
Golf Club

VOL. 20 • NO. 15      WWW.THEINDEPENDENTNEWSPAPERS.COM      THURSDAY, MARCH 30, 2023

## Juveniles lead Villa Park officers on high-speed chase

*Later charged  
with possession  
of stolen vehicle*

DuPage County State's Attorney Robert Berlin and Villa Park Chief of Police Mike Rivas announced that two Aurora juveniles, one of which was allegedly armed, have been accused of leading police on a high-speed chase in a stolen car.

Both juveniles appeared recently at a detention where Judge Demetrios Panoushis ordered that they be detained until at least their next court appearance. One of the juveniles, a 17-year-old male, is charged with one count of possession of a stolen motor vehicle Class 2 (C-2) felony, one count of aggravated fleeing and eluding a police officer (C-4 felony) and two counts of misdemeanor reckless driving. The other juvenile, a 15-year-old male, is charged with three counts of unlawful use of a weapon (C-4 felony) and one count of misdemeanor criminal trespass to a vehicle.

On Tuesday, March 21 at approximately 9:55 a.m., a Villa Park police officer located a car that was reported stolen out of Naperville the previous day traveling eastbound on Roosevelt Road. The officer activated his emergency lights and attempted to pull over the vehicle, a Honda CRV.

It is alleged that instead of pulling over, the Honda fled from the officer at times reaching speeds in excess of 100 mph. It is alleged that the pursuit continued along I-88 and I-290

where the driver exited the expressway on 25th Avenue. It is further alleged that the pursuit ended when the CRV came to a dead end on Derby Lane in Westchester, at which time the juveniles fled on foot.

The juveniles were located in a barber shop approximately one-quarter mile away and taken into custody. Through the course of the arrest, officers located a loaded Polymer 80 9mm handgun without a serial number, underneath a pile of wood along the route the juveniles allegedly ran when they fled.

It is alleged that one of the juveniles was previously in possession of the handgun and attempted to hide it from authorities when he fled.

"We have seen time and again that subjects allegedly in possession of a stolen vehicle will be in possession of a weapon to be used to commit more violent crime in our communities," Chief Rivas said. "Based on this repetitive behavior, and relationship between stolen vehicles and additional violent crimes committed, the Villa Park Police Department will use every resource at our disposal to go after subjects in stolen vehicles."

"A stolen vehicle, fleeing from police at a high rate of speed, places everyone in danger in their path. We urge everyone to stop and pull to the right for emergency lights and siren for everyone's safety. We commend our police officer for his vigilance and bravery in pursuing the stolen vehicle in this case."

The juveniles' next court appearance was scheduled for Thursday, March 30, in front of Judge Panoushis.



## Satisfied smiles!

SUBMITTED PHOTO Addison Independent  
On Thursday, March 23, Addison Trail students in teacher Laura Calo's world language Italian 1 classes celebrated their Italian food unit with a meal from Nardi's Tower of Pizza in Addison. The menu included bruschetta, pasta, meatballs and tiramisu. The goal was to bring the classroom content to life and further students' understanding of and passion for Italian culture. It apparently also brought full bellies and happy smiles.

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## Addison Public Library issues statement on unauthorized use of logo

*Board candidates  
accused of using logo  
on campaign literature*

The Addison Public Library has issued a statement regarding the unauthorized use of its logo in campaign materials of candidates running for the Addison Public Library Board of Trustees.

"The Library is aware of the Library's logo in these campaign materials and assures that it did not authorize the use of the logo for campaign purposes. The Library also has not endorsed any particular candidate. The Library has not used

its resources to support or oppose candidates for elective office, as doing so would be a violation of state law.

"The Addison Public Library is committed to maintaining neutrality in the electoral process and ensuring that all candidates for office have an equal opportunity to campaign."

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202301

# News from Spirito Singers

## Spirito! turns Sweet 16 and is going to Paris

Spirito Singers' 2023-2024 season, entitled *She Hath Wings*, will mark the choral organization's 16th Anniversary. There are some exciting plans in the works to commemorate this milestone.

At the Winter Concert on Sunday, Dec. 3, the Bravura and Ragazze ensembles will undertake Vivaldi's *Gloria in D*. Described as "sunny", "joyous" and "uplifting," this piece will be accompanied by a chamber orchestra and will be the perfect start to the Holiday Season.

At the Spring Concert in May 2024, the treble ensembles have the honor of premiering a commissioned piece by the award-winning composer, vocalist, and teacher Zanaida Stewart Robles.

The Ragazze Ensemble, composed of treble singers in grades 5-8, will enjoy a Chicago tour in the spring with sightseeing, activities, several performances, and a collaboration.

The highlight of the season will be a seven-day tour to France for Bravura, Spirito's elite high school ensemble. The choir will visit Paris, Normandy, and the Loire Valley at the end of March. While there, Bravura will perform in Paris and the Loire Valley, sightseeing and collaborating with a local French ensemble.

Founded in 2008, Spirito Singers is an auditioned choral organization for 5th through 12th grade treble singers with core values of leadership, excellence, and service to others. In addition to weekly rehearsals, Spirito



SUBMITTED PHOTO Addison Independent

The Spirito Singers have announced its 2023-24 season is titled *She Hath Wings* and will mark the choral organization's 16th anniversary. Besides their Winter and Spring Concerts, Bravura, Spirito's elite high school ensemble, will be taking a seven-day tour to perform in France.

to offers music theory education and elective classes in areas like conducting, a cappella singing, and composing. The singers are able to apply their skills through opportunities to arrange pieces for the ensembles, conduct in a

concert, or coach an a cappella group. Spirito is also the Men of Spirito, a group of 18+ year old men who love to sing, mentor, and give back to the community.

Spirito has rehearsal locations in

Oak Brook and Elmhurst. The season runs from August through May and auditions are being scheduled now for the upcoming season. For information on Spirito or auditions please email [spirito@spiritosingers.org](mailto:spirito@spiritosingers.org)

## D88 Board recognizes students for state-level accomplishments

During its March 20 meeting, the District 88 Board of Education celebrated four students from Addison Trail for their State-level achievements from the winter season of the 2022-23 school year. Students who place in the top 10 at State competitions are honored by the Board.

In girls wrestling, AT sophomore Nina Matthews finished in 8th place at the Illinois High

School Association (IHSA) Girls Wrestling State Tournament in the 110-pound division.

Addison Trail junior Angela Anello, sophomore Keegan Sampey and senior Megan Sowa were honored at the Board meeting for the 2023 Illinois High School Theatre Festival (IHSTF) All-State production of "Shrek The Musical."

## Benedictine student faces charges alleging child porn possession, dissemination

On March 16, DuPage County State's Attorney Robert Berlin and Lisle Chief of Police Kevin Licko announced that a student at Benedictine University has been charged with possession and dissemination of child pornography. On Wednesday, March 15, DuPage County Circuit Court Judge Joshua Dreden issued a \$100,000 arrest warrant for Joseph Wilke, 20, of the 5600 block of College Road in Lisle. Later that day, Wilke turned himself in to authorities, posted bond and was released from custody. He is charged with four counts of Dissemination of Child Pornography (Class X Felony) and four counts of Possession of Child Pornography (Class 2 Felony).

Through the course of their continuing efforts into child pornography, investigators from the Lisle Po-

lice Department received information regarding an IP address possibly engaging in child pornography. Based upon this information and through the course of their investigation, it is alleged that in October 2022, Wilke was in possession of and disseminated videos depicting child pornography.

"The Lisle Police Department will relentlessly pursue anyone engaged in creating, possessing, or distributing child pornography, especially in an educational setting," said Police Chief Kevin Licko.

Members of the public are reminded that this complaint contains only charges and is not proof of the defendant's guilt. A defendant is presumed innocent and is entitled to a fair trial in which it is the government's burden to prove his or her guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.



SUBMITTED PHOTO Addison Independent

## AT selects Ortiz as '88's Best

Pictured here with Addison Trail principal Jack Andrews is Stephanie Ortiz, who is Addison Trail's March recipient of the 88's Best recognition. She was honored at a recent District 88 Board of Education meeting.

## AT boys volleyball team hosts event for NAMI

On Friday, April 14, the Addison Trail Boys Volleyball Team will host a "Volley for NAMI" event, and all Addison Trail students, staff, parents/guardians, alumni and friends are invited to attend.

The games will feature a faculty match at 4:30 p.m. and an alumni match at 5:30 p.m. to raise funds for NAMI DuPage, whose mission is to provide support, advocacy and education to improve the quality of life of individuals with mental illnesses and their families. The organization is an affiliate of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI).

There also will be concessions, cotton candy, raffle baskets and more. Donations will be accepted at the door for entry. For more information about NAMI DuPage, go to [namidupage.org](http://namidupage.org).

## Thirty staff members honored with Addison Trail's Golden Apple

Every school year, Addison Trail students have the opportunity to recognize a teacher or a staff member for going above and beyond and making a difference in their life through the school's Golden Apple program.

Addison Trail's Golden Apple is given to teachers and staff members who have made a positive impact on students inside the classroom and beyond. On March 20, 30 staff members were honored. This award is one way pupils can give back to staff members for all they do. It also is a reminder to staff their hard work and continuous effort matter each and every day.

Addison Trail Golden Apple recipients and the student(s) who nominated them include:

Nicoletta Bellavia, nominated by freshman Sydney Mattinson  
English teacher Stephen Bruns, by junior Soha Siddiqui

Vision teacher Wendy Brusich, by sophomore Francesca Gurgone  
World language teacher Laura Calo, by juniors James Cahill Jr. and David Lazzara

Family and consumer sciences teacher Bridget Coleran, by senior Emma Santillan  
Special education teacher Freddy Crone, by senior Brian Bahena

Reading English Learner (EL) teacher Maria DiNovo, by sophomore Rene Chagoya  
Science teacher Carolyn Erwin, by junior Amina Quadri

Science English Learner (EL) teacher Laura Garcia, by freshman Darrell Setyadi  
Science English Learner (EL) teacher Shannon Garcia, by freshman Matteo Giralamo

Alexia Gomez, by junior Valentino Smith and senior Leonardo Diaz Gomez  
Tammy Gomez, by senior Kerri Carr

Social studies English Learner (EL) teacher Antonio Gonzalez, by senior Lindsey Pham  
Art teacher Tim Hockensmith, by Jessica Ficarra

Theatre Tech Assistant Alex Holod, by junior Josephine Ficarra  
Business education teacher Jeffrey Laschinski, by senior Kate Padilla

Raya and junior Zachary Morris  
Cory Little, by junior Aniyah Walker

Social studies teacher Laura Mag-

navite, by senior Daisy Puebla  
Business education teacher Joe Mahoney, by seniors Omar Ibarra and Eva De La Rosa

Family and consumer sciences teacher Lija Marzec, by senior Cassandra Villegas

World language teacher Kathleen McColaugh, by senior Tareq Perez-Shehade

Choir Director Jeff Nellessen, by freshman Savannah Flowers

Social studies teacher Mark Olson, by sophomore Katelyn Ford  
Special education teacher Vicki Ream, by Perez

Physical education, health and driver education department head Rob Schader, by senior Maria Zapata  
English teacher Claire Shoup, by Cerberus Gonzalez

Math teacher Philip Stewart, by sophomore Francis Hester and junior Giselle Hernandez

Orchestra Director Alex Stombres, by senior Verenise Morales-Saavedra

Math English Learner (EL) teacher Ashley Vaca, by senior Mia Dravillas

Science teacher Dena Zarou, by freshman Xavier Young.

## House passes bill prohibiting book bans

*Libraries would be disqualified from state grants*

By Peter Hancock  
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

The Illinois House passed a bill last week that would prohibit libraries from banning books or other material because of partisan or doctrinal pressure, prompting strong opposition from Republicans who called it an assault on local control.

House Bill 2789 is an initiative of Democratic Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulias, whose office oversees the Illinois State Library and administers several grant programs for public and school libraries as well as adult literacy programs throughout the state.

The bill would require that as a condition of qualifying for those grants in the future, libraries or library systems would have to adopt a written policy prohibiting the practice of banning books. Alternatively, they could adopt the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, which includes a statement that "(m)aterials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval."

The bill came in response to a wave of high-profile controversies throughout the country, including at least one in Illinois. School districts and public libraries have come under pressure to remove certain material from their collections, often material dealing with issues involving race, sexuality and gender identity.

"Banning books is the sort of behavior that was once, for good reason, associated with the worst, most repressive and repugnant authoritarian regimes of the mid-20th century and before," the bill's lead sponsor Rep. Anne Stava-Murray, D-Naperville, said during debate on the House floor. "The fact that this is even up for discussion in America in the 21st century is disgusting. And yet, just last year in my district, that discussion was spurred on by a few radical parents and the Proud Boys hate group over a book called 'Gender Queer.'"

That book is a memoir by Maia

Kobabe about a nonbinary person grappling with issues of gender identity and sexuality as a teenager and young adult. According to the *New York Times*, it has been pulled from library shelves in dozens of school districts around the country.

One of the school districts that came under pressure to remove the book was Community High School District 99, in Downers Grove, in Stava-Murray's district. According to a June 2022 *Chicago Sun-Times* story, the pressure was generated by a group of conservative parents and members of the Proud Boys, but students in the district pushed back and the board eventually voted unanimously to keep the book on the shelves.

"Students led a community-supported effort in my district to keep the book in the library," Stava-Murray said. "But kids shouldn't have to be the heroes... Nobody is forcing you or your children to check out or purchase or read these books. If they are not consistent with your personal beliefs, don't read them."

PEN American, in a report on book bans around the country, identified five enforced bans in the state between July 2021 and June 2022, including three bans of *Gender Queer*.

Some Republicans, however, argued that public libraries are governed by locally elected boards, and that those boards should have the authority to decide how best to serve their communities.

"I find this a complete assault on local control," said Rep. Martin McLaughlin, R-Barrington Hills. "... These people volunteer as non-partisan elected local officials, and for the state to tell a local library board, 'listen to the professionals; follow the professionals'—I don't understand why we have local elections anymore if a bill like this passes."

Rep. C.D. Davidsmeyer, R-Jacksonville, said that he used to serve on his local library board and when

## House narrowly passes bill allowing all-gender bathrooms

*Sponsor earlier reported spread of misinformation, threats of violence*

By Peter Hancock  
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

The Illinois House narrowly passed a bill last week that would allow businesses, universities and other building owners to designate multi-occupancy all-gender bathrooms if they choose to do so.

The bill passed on a vote of 60-40, the bare minimum number of "yes" votes needed for passage in the 118-member House, after the presiding officer held the roll open for several seconds waiting for the 60th vote to be recorded.

State Rep. Katie Stuart, D-Edwardsville, who sponsored the bill, said the language of House Bill 1286 is identical to an earlier bill that passed 63-43 in the House in 2021 but was never taken up in the Senate.

Illinois law already allows for single-occupancy bathrooms to be designated for all genders, but Stuart's bill would allow an all-gender designation for bathrooms that accommodate two or more people.

The bill sets out standards that all-gender bathrooms would have to meet, such as "inclusive signage" that does not indicate any specific

gender; stall dividers with functioning locks controlled by the user; and partitions for each stall, if urinals are present.

In addition, if such bathrooms are part of a newly constructed building or a building undergoing major renovation, they would have to comply with requirements of the federal Americans with Disabilities Act and the Illinois Accessibility Code. Each toilet stall would have to include a small trash receptacle, and it would have to have at least one vending machine for menstruation supplies and one baby diaper changing station.

The bill also provides that any multi-occupancy restroom could be converted to an all-gender restroom. But if another single-gender multi-occupancy restroom is located adjacent to or near the all-gender restroom, both would have to be designated as all-gender facilities.

The bill passed out of the House Human Services Committee on Feb. 22 on a 6-3 vote after only brief discussion. But just a few days later, Stuart said she was forced to cancel a planned constituent coffee event in Collinsville, "due to violent

threats and malicious information being spread by special interest groups about bathroom privacy and safety legislation."

"Yeah, there was some, I think, deliberately incendiary information being touted, real falsities about what was in the bill that was leading to, you know, frankly, threats and things that I didn't want to expose my staff and the public to," Stuart said during an interview. "So we chose to cancel a public event."

She said when the 2021 bill passed, there was more debate about it on the floor of the House than there was last week, but she did not receive the kinds of personal attacks and threats over it that she received this year.

"I think it's just the general mood," she said. "Unfortunately, we've gotten to kind of a real ugly place in our politics where people stoke division and fear and hate for political gain. And they're not ashamed to lie in the process."

She stressed that the bill does not mandate that any bathroom be designated for all genders, but only allows building owners to do so if they choose.

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See BOOK BANS, Page 12.

# Villa Park REVIEW

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THURSDAY, MARCH 30, 2023

### Easter

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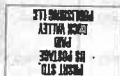
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## Play at the plate

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Junior catcher Dylan Jenkins (left) of the Willowbrook baseball team is pictured while tagging a Bartlett baserunner at home plate during last week's game in Villa Park. The runner, who tried to score from third base on a fly out to left field in the top of the fifth inning, was called safe at home. Bartlett's run on the play cut Willowbrook's lead to 3-2. The Warriors scored two runs in the bottom of the fifth inning to take a 5-2 lead. Willowbrook defeated Bartlett 5-2 in the March 22 contest, which was shortened to five innings because of darkness and rain. The Warriors improved their record to 1-1 with the win. Willowbrook opened its season with a 9-6 loss at Glenbrook South on March 21. The Warriors traveled to Tennessee earlier this week. They are scheduled to play a couple of games in Murfreesboro—near Nashville—before returning from their spring break trip. Willowbrook will open its West Suburban Gold Conference season with a game at Downers Grove South on April 3.

CHRIS FOX PHOTO Villa Park Review



# Warriors split first two games of the season

One day after losing at Glenbrook South, Willowbrook beats Bartlett; Warriors are playing in Tennessee this week

## STAFF REPORT

The Willowbrook baseball team began its 2023 season with a pair of games last week. The Warriors opened their season with a 9-6 loss at Glenbrook South in Glenview on March 21. One day later, Willowbrook defeated Bartlett 5-2 in Villa Park.

Weather permitting, the Warriors opened this week with a game against Glenbard South at Lee Pfund Stadium in Legion Field in Carol Stream. The Warriors will then hit the road during their spring break week, traveling to Murfreesboro, Tennessee. Willowbrook is playing a couple of games in Murfreesboro, which is near Nashville, before returning home. The Warriors will start their West Suburban Gold Conference season with a game at Downers Grove South on April 3.

Willowbrook's 9-6 loss to Glenbrook South last week was shortened to five innings because of darkness. The Warriors' 5-2 victory

over Bartlett on the following day was also called after five innings due to a combination of darkness and rain.

The Warriors led Glenbrook South 6-2 in the middle of the fourth inning, but the Titans scored seven runs in the bottom of the fourth inning to take a 9-6 lead.

Willowbrook connected for only two hits in last week's season opener against the Titans. Senior Eddie Munson of the Warriors provided a two-run single in the top of the third inning. Willowbrook sophomore Vinny Ippolito contributed a run-scoring single later in the third inning. The Warriors scored four runs in the third inning to take a 5-2 lead. Willowbrook added one more run in the top of the fourth inning.

Senior Alex Chaltin pitched the first three innings for the Warriors in their home win over Bartlett on March 22. Chaltin gave up one hit and no earned runs. He recorded six strikeouts and issued three walks.

The visiting Hawks scored an unearned run in the top of the first inning. Bartlett scored another unearned run in the top of the fifth inning.

Willowbrook senior Colin Slivka pitched the final two innings of last week's home opener against the

Hawks. Slivka allowed two hits and one walk. He struck out two batters. Chaltin went 2-for-2 and scored a pair of runs in the Warriors' win over the Hawks. Slivka went 1-for-3 and drove in two runs. His first-inning single brought in two runs to give Willowbrook a 2-1 lead.

Ippolito went 1-for-2 with a pair of runs batted in. He walked with the bases loaded to bring in a run in the third inning. Ippolito singled in the fifth inning to drive in another run. Ippolito scored on an error later in the fifth inning to account for the game's final run.

## Warriors open 2023 season with two narrow home losses

Willowbrook drops three-game decisions to Glenbard East and Glenbard South

## STAFF REPORT

The Willowbrook boys volleyball team opened its 2023 season with a pair of home losses last week. The Warriors lost a three-game battle to Glenbard East on March 21. Two days later, Glenbard South defeated Willowbrook in another three-game contest.

The Warriors lost the first game of their March 21 match against Glenbard East. Willowbrook rallied to win the second game, but the Rams raced out to a 9-0 lead in the third game and eventually earned a 25-15, 22-25, 25-

14 win.

Willowbrook won the first game of its March 23 match against Glenbard South. The Raiders won the next two games to pick up a 19-25, 25-19, 25-17 win.

Senior Patrick Dasbach provided six kills for Willowbrook in last week's season-opening loss to Glenbard East in Villa Park. Senior Jake Vandergrift and sophomore Dean Romano bashed four kills each. Junior Andrew Ciesinski supplied two kills. Junior Carter Ferguson handed out 13 assists for the Warriors in the match

against the Rams. Senior Sean Maciejewski delivered 10 assists. Freshman Jonnie Gosmire made five digs.

Dasbach also connected for six kills in last week's match against Glenbard South. Ciesinski and Romano pounded four kills each. Vandergrift tallied three kills against the visiting Raiders. Ferguson piled up 16 assists, while Gosmire contributed 10 digs.

The Warriors will continue their season at next week's Warren Invitational at Warren High School in Gurnee.

## •Profiles

(Continued from page 4)

fire personnel, and equipping them with the proper equipment to keep families safe.

The front of Jevitz's mailer also referred to economic development; she referred to encouraging development, reducing the tax burden on residents while building a tax base for schools, and enticing businesses that create new revenue streams while keeping residents shopping in Villa Park.

**Kevin Patrick**  
Office sought:  
Villa Park Village  
Trustee

**Family:** Wife April; three kids—Benjamin (12), Max (10) and Grant (7).

**How long have you lived in Villa Park?** 27 years  
**Social media addresses:** [https://linktr.ee/kevin\\_patrick](https://linktr.ee/kevin_patrick)

**Occupation:** Self-employed  
**Education:** BA Urban Studies—Elmhurst University

**Community or civic involvement:** Villa Park Village Trustee (2019-current). Liaison to the Villa Park Cable Commission. Illinois Master Naturalist.

**Awards received (either professional or community related):** Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Humanitarian Service Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Iraq Campaign Medal.

**Previous elected offices held (if any):** Villa Park Village Trustee (2019-current)

**Why are you running to serve on the village board?**

I am running for re-election to serve as a Village Trustee because I am deeply committed to improving our community. I believe that by working together, we can make

positive changes that will benefit all residents. As a board member, I will work tirelessly to ensure that our village is a safe, welcoming, and prosperous place to live. I will listen to the concerns of the constituents and use my experience and expertise to address them effectively. With your support, I am confident that we can create a brighter future for our village.

**What do you see as a major challenge, or challenges, facing the village, and what do you think needs to be done to meet that challenge, or challenges?**

One major challenge facing our village is the looming pension crisis. However, I see this as an opportunity to prioritize fiscal responsibility and innovative solutions. By partnering with our community stakeholders and implementing proactive measures, such as improving revenue streams, we can ensure the long-term financial stability of our village. I remain committed to working collaboratively with the Village Board to address this challenge and ensure a prosperous future for our community.

**What should voters know about you?**

As a current Village Trustee in Villa Park, I am fully committed to serving our community with integrity, transparency and accountability. My track record showcases my ability to work collaboratively with other trustees and community members to address complex issues with innovative solutions. My priority is to maintain our community's high standard of living by promoting economic growth and enhancing public safety. As a lifelong resident of Villa Park, I am deeply invested in our community's future and am enthusiastic about continuing to serve as your Trustee to ensure a bright and prosperous future for everyone.

## Villa Park Police Department urges motorists to 'Drop it and Drive'

Law enforcement to step up efforts targeting distracted drivers in April

April is Distracted Driving Awareness Month, and the Villa Park Police Department is partnering with the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), the Illinois State Police and more than 200 local law enforcement agencies to step up enforcement efforts across the state during the next month. Motorists can expect to see increased patrols and traffic enforcement safety zones


throughout April.

"Distracted driving is one of the leading causes of motor vehicle crashes on our roads today," said Villa Park Police Sgt. James Cihak. "During Distracted Driving Awareness Month, law enforcement will boost enforcement efforts, stopping anyone who is texting and driving. Remember, if you have a phone in one hand, you can expect a ticket in

the other."

In Illinois, using your phone in anything other than hands-free mode is not only dangerous, it's illegal. Remember the slogan: "Drop it and Drive!"

The increased patrols that will take place during the state's distracted driving campaign in April are funded with federal traffic safety funds administered by IDOT.



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**Wheaton North****Coach:** Allie Ravanesi (second)**Last season's record:** 12-10, 6-8 DuKane Conference, tied for fifth place**Top returning players:** Bailey Harverth, sr., C/INF; Makayla Grantz, so., INF/OF/P; Erin Metz, jr., INF/P; Annie Sullivan, sr., OF/P; Monica Kading, jr., INF; Macy Pomatto, jr., INF; Reagan Crosthwaite, so., INF/P**Other returning players:** Hana Stoner, so., OF; Ella Glienke, jr., OF; Erica Alexander, sr., OF; Ava Hartnett, so., INF; Gabby Arrigo, so., INF/OF; Reese Johnson, sr., INF; Emmy Atkinson, sr., INF**Top new players:** Makayla Hammer, fr., OF; Hannah Wulf, fr., P/INF**Worth noting:** Ravanesi is excited to see the growth of Metz, a Valparaiso commit, after she recorded a 2.49 ERA as a sophomore. Harverth is another top returner and will play next year at Elmhurst. The Falcons have a few big spots to fill after graduating three starters. The biggest loss was Lauren Vaughn, who hit .471 with 12 doubles, five home runs and struck out only three times all season. Vaughn is now a freshman at Syracuse. Ravanesi said the competition for starting spots has been strong.

"This team has all the components to make a great run, but in a difficult DuKane Conference ... this will be no easy feat," Ravanesi said. "It's definitely going to be a fun and competitive season - not only against our opponents, but within our program, as well. We have a young team with new girls stepping up to varsity and a lot of competition is going to take place to earn those starting spots."

**Wheaton Warrenville South****Coach:** Jeff Pawlak (13th season)**Last season's record:** 17-13, 6-8 DuKane Conference, tied for fifth**Top returning players:** Katie Jensen, sr., SS; Parker Leonard, jr., 3B; Maddie Pool, jr., P; MacKenzie Sowonik, sr., C; Marisa Lutes, sr., P; Presley Wright, so., P**Worth noting:** The Tigers lost last year's starting first baseman, shortstop and second baseman to graduation. Jensen was all-conference and hit .437 with a .500 on-base percentage, four home runs, 10 doubles and 26 RBIs and is committed to Lewis University. Leonard hit .425 with 10 doubles and 20 RBIs. She played left field her first two years but will move to

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Wheaton Warrenville South's Maddie Pool was all-conference last season.

third base. Pool was all-conference and is the Tigers' top returning pitcher. She was 10-9 with a 2.51 ERA and hit .403 with a .482 on-base percentage. Sowonik is back at catcher for her senior year. She returned last season after suffering two ACL injuries as a freshman and sophomore. Lutes and Wright also return in the circle for the Tigers. Wright went 6-2 while Lutes got experience late in the season and pitched in some big-game situations. "[Sowonik] and our pitchers have established a nice amount of confidence and familiarity and we're looking forward to seeing that grow this season," Pawlak said.

"Jensen and Sowonik will provide some stability in the middle of our defense, while some younger girls step into starting roles," Pawlak said. "We have a number of girls competing in the outfield and we're going to let that play out ... We're excited to compete in the DuKane Conference again and face some of the best teams in the state."

**Willowbrook****Coach:** Rachel Karos (14th season)**Last season's record:** 19-8, 9-3 West Suburban Conference Gold, second place**Top returning players:** Sonia Ruchala, so., SS; Kayleigh Dennison, sr., OF; Karman Rowe, jr., P; Zaida Serrano, sr., UTIL; Lindsey Rugg, jr., UTIL; Isa-

bella Dugo, jr., C; Katelyn Cox, sr., OF; Emily Pearson, sr., 2B

**Top new players:** Isabel Bates, so., P/3B; Caroline Radomski, sr., 1B; Chloe Klamecki, sr., 1B; Hanna Mitrick, sr., OF**Worth noting:** The Warriors lost a tight game to Lyons 3-2 in the Class 4A Lyons Regional final, which snapped an 11-game winning streak to close out last season. Two of Willowbrook's top players - pitcher Caitlyn Kulczynski (Stetson) and third baseman Grace Hayes (Elmhurst) - graduated, but Karos is confident in her returners and newcomers. Ruchala is back after an impressive freshman year in which she hit .456 with 20 RBIs and 33 runs. She was one of just three freshmen to earn All-State honors in Class 4A. Dennison hit .345 with 18 RBIs and 27 runs. Karos is emphasizing pitching and defense early on.

"We're super excited to be back on the field this spring," Karos said. "We believe we have a pitching staff that will give us the ability to stay in games and a solid lineup that will put some runs on the board. Our goal for each game will be to play errorless softball and to put pressure on the [opposing] defense with each at-bat."

**York****Coach:** Lisa Fraticola (first season)**Last season's record:** 9-21-1, 6-6 West

Suburban Conference Silver, fourth place

**Top returning players:** Avery Kanouse, so., P; Taylor McMillen, so., P; Madison Tran, sr., 1B/3B**Other returning players:** Ella Papoccia sr., 1B; Molly Heiss sr., OF; Anna Marsh sr., C; Laney Ledbetter sr., OF; Caitlin Ledbetter so., 2B/SS; Nubia Toledo so., C**Top new players:** Mariann Blass sr., SS/3B; Madison Peck sr., P/1B; Lilly Burda fr., SS/2B**Worth noting:** The Dukes won the West Suburban Conference Silver Division two years ago behind Suburban Life Softball Player of the Year Lauren Derkowski (now a sophomore at Michigan), but struggled in its quest to repeat last spring with a .500 record in conference play. York does have experience on its side with nine seniors, including five that are returning from last spring. Kanouse and McMillen, both sophomores, will lead the Dukes in the circle and will be joined by Peck, a senior. The team is motivated for a quick turnaround, Fraticola said.

"As a first-year head coach, it's been exciting to see the girls come together," Fraticola said. "They've been working hard to build relationships with each other and the coaching staff. We have a motivated team that is looking forward to competing in the conference this year."

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