

# Villa Park REVIEW

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CHRIS FOX PHOTOS Villa Park Review

## Parade winners

The Villa Park Village Board meeting of July 24 included the presentation of awards to honor some of the participants in Villa Park Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 2801's recent Fourth of July Parade. The first-place award in the Most Patriotic category went to Naval Station Great Lakes (top right). Cub Scout Pack 122 finished second, while Katie Kooima Photography placed third. In the Community Choice Winners category, the Morales Mariachi Band (above) received the first-place award. Windy City Curling placed second, while Willowbrook High School's marching band (right) took third. Willowbrook's marching band won the first-place award in the Best Musical Performance category; the Morales Mariachi Band placed second, while the Northwest Suburban Concert Band finished third. In the Best Use of Theme category, St. Paul Lutheran Church received first-place recognition. The Medinah Shriners Car Unit finished second, while the Old Classic Vintage Bicycle Club was third.



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# Sports

## Lombard native Camryn Biegalski nets first NWSL goal

*Former Firebirds SC player was a member of Washington Spirit's 2021 NWSL championship team*

Camryn Biegalski, a 2016 graduate of Glenbard East High School and a product of the Lombard-based Firebirds Soccer Club, is now playing professional soccer with the Washington Spirit of the National Women's Soccer League (NWSL).

A defender and forward with the Spirit, Biegalski scored the first goal of her NWSL career during Washington's recent 4-2 victory over the NJ/NY Gotham FC on July 28. The match took place at the Spirit's home venue—Audi Field in Washington, D.C.

Biegalski's goal tied the score at 2-2 early in the second half. The Spirit added two more goals later in the second half.

In its next match, Washington defeated the Orlando Pride 1-0 in Orlando, Florida, on Aug. 4.

Biegalski, who is a Lombard na-

tive, enjoyed a standout career with the University of Wisconsin women's soccer team. The NWSL's Chicago Red Stars selected Biegalski in the 2020 NWSL Draft.

After making her NWSL debut with the Red Stars in 2020, Biegalski joined the Washington Spirit in 2021. She was a member of the Spirit's 2021 NWSL championship team. The Spirit defeated the Red Stars 2-1 in the title contest, which was played in Louisville, Kentucky, on Nov. 20, 2021.

Biegalski played four seasons with the University of Wisconsin women's soccer team. She started 20 matches for the Badgers during her freshman season in 2016. Wisconsin finished that season with an overall record of 9-5-8. She started all 22 of the team's matches during her sophomore season in 2017.

Biegalski scored her first goal as a Badger during her sophomore campaign. Wisconsin posted an overall record of 14-6-2 during the 2017 season.

In her junior season, Biegalski started all 22 of the Badgers' matches. She tallied her second goal as a Badger during the 2018 season and helped the team to a 14-4-4 overall record.

In her senior season with the Badgers, Biegalski led Wisconsin to an overall record of 16-4-2 during the 2019 campaign. She was named the Big Ten Conference's 2019 Defender of the Year. Biegalski, who contributed three assists during her senior season, was named to the 2019 All-Big Ten Conference First Team. She was also recognized as a Second Team All-American after her senior season.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF WASHINGTON SPIRIT. Rock Valley Publ.

Lombard native Camryn Biegalski is a member of the Washington Spirit of the National Women's Soccer League (NWSL). Biegalski, who played in the Lombard-based Firebirds Soccer Club, graduated from Glenbard East High School in 2016. She played for the University of Wisconsin women's soccer program for four seasons. The Chicago Red Stars selected Biegalski in the 2020 NWSL Draft. Biegalski joined the Spirit in 2021. She was a member of Washington's 2021 NWSL championship team, which won the league title in November 2021. A defender and forward, Biegalski scored the first goal of her NWSL career during her team's 4-2 victory over the NJ/NY Gotham FC at the Spirit's home venue in Washington, D.C. on July 28. She is pictured (above) after netting that goal, which evened the score 2-2 early in the second half. Biegalski celebrated her 25th birthday Aug. 11. Another photo (below) shows Biegalski in action during Spirit's 2021 championship season.



JOE PEARSON PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing

## Willowbrook honors special student-athlete

Willowbrook High School's Athletic Booster Club held its senior athletic banquet near the end of the 2022-23 school year. The banquet, which was held at the school, included the presentation of awards and scholarships to several members of Willowbrook's Class of 2023. The honorees included Villa Park resident Sarah Ball, who received the Helen Carpenter Award. That award is presented to the school year's most valuable female athlete, as voted by the school's entire coaching staff. The honor is named after the first female president of the Willowbrook Athletic Booster Club. Ball was a standout member of the school's flag football team, which won the Illinois state championship during its inaugural season in the fall of 2022. During her career as a Warrior, Ball also excelled as a member of the school's girls gymnastics and girls track and field teams. Pictured (left to right) with Ball (second from left) at the banquet are: Willowbrook flag football coaches Nick Hildreth and Rachel Karos, Willowbrook girls gymnastics coach Andy Isaacson, Willowbrook girls track and field coach Clyde Ware and Willowbrook athletic director Brandon Murphy. Ball will attend Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio, where she plans to study nursing. She will also be a member of the Spartans' women's track and field team.



would try to put groups of students together who were friends, or at least involved in the same activities."

Soger also worked as Montini's yearbook moderator for several years. "Our good friend, Sue Musil, died unexpectedly and there was no one to take over the yearbook moderator position. I knew nothing about producing a yearbook, but I've always loved taking pictures. I talked [former Montini Art teacher] Wanda Drabik into co-moderating this huge task, while teaching me the ropes. From Wanda, to Sue Martin and from Sue to Jessica [Sippel] Rodriguez we produced 11 awesome yearbooks with indexes and supplements."

With the death of her daughter Megan in 2013, Soger stepped out of her yearbook moderator role. "The Montini family was so supportive to our family during this very difficult time," Soger said. "My faith has always been important to me, which I feel is why the Lord led me here."

Perhaps as a way to nurture her own faith-life after her daughter Megan's passing, Soger took an active leadership role in Montini Campus Ministry's Kairos Retreat program. "When [Assistant Campus Minister] Kelly Davis first came to Montini 17 years ago, she was looking for leader help. I told her I had helped out on a couple retreats and could help her. Our first retreat was held on a weekend and had just a few participants. This program has now grown into two solid senior retreats each year, of which I've attended at least one over since."

Soger continues to assist Montini's Campus Ministry program, chaperoning Junior Retreats as well as the annual Sophomore Day of Service event. "For a few years, I would even drive our minibus out to LaSalle Manor to rake leaves!"

Soger is also honored to serve as a Eucharistic Minister at school masses. "Being a Eucharistic Minister here has also been a way to connect with students," she said.

Montini's Theatre Department has also benefited from Soger's services and her dedication to touching hearts. "I've always loved the theater, and when [teacher] Gina Gasbarre left Montini, Dr. Di Matheson asked if I could help out in the role of house manager. So for the past several years I've created and sold tickets to fall plays, spring musicals and concerts. When the theater was upgraded I created a new seating chart too. I've worked with many National Honor Society students in their role as ushers for these events. And when [alumni parent and lunch coordinator] Chris Emat left, I also took over the role of selling concessions. I'm so happy I've gotten to work with Montini's Theatre Director Jackie Martin in her new role. The plays this year have been awesome!"

For the past several years, Soger has acted as co-moderator of Montini's National Honor Society. "Art Stuart had been in charge of this program for many

years and when he needed a co-moderator I raised my hand. We worked together for a couple of years, before he stepped down. And then [teacher] Mike Dailey came on board with me. We've been in charge of choosing the new members, hosting the induction, keeping track of their extra service hours, sponsoring blood drives, getting students to sign up for the many programs where students are needed to help out and volunteering at Feed My Starving Children."

After 30 years, special memories have been 'too many to count' for Soger. "I think the ones that are the most important to me are the ones that involve my daughters' high school years at Montini. Denny, my husband, was the softball coach with [teacher] Elise Barth for 13 years and can boast of nine regional championships. All four of my girls were softball pitchers for Montini. Jenny played volleyball and was a Broncoette, and went downstate twice. Shannon ran cross-country and played basketball. She was a member of the Spanish Honor Society and a member of the Homecoming Court. Erin played volleyball and basketball, was a member of the National Honor Society and was on the Prom Court. And Megan had roles in several plays during her time here and worked on the yearbook with me. All three of the older girls were also in Montini's annual San Miguel Fashion Show, which meant I also volunteered. Even after they graduated, they were asked to come back and model as alumni. The last time I got to model too! And Jenny has come back several years to do hair and makeup for these shows. I'm not sure if the girls were always happy I was here, but I loved being a part of their high school experience!"

Soger also appreciates 'the unexpected' situations that occurred throughout her life as a librarian at Montini Catholic. "Have you heard my duck story? Our first library was in the area the nuns lived [now DeLaSalle Hall], and there was a courtyard. Mommy duck would lay her eggs every spring there, but then the ducklings couldn't fly out. Wanda [Drabik] and I would gather up the ducks and put them in a box, as mommy duck sat on the roof

and squawked at us. Then I would climb a ladder on the outside of the building, holding the box with the ducklings, so the mommy duck could hear them, I would climb down the ladder and dump the ducklings out of the box. Mommy duck would fly down and lead them off to water. I never knew what 'extra duties' would come along to enliven up my day!"

Soger is also proud to have been a part of Montini Family Networks, and having the opportunity to help build houses with Habitat for Humanity. She also fondly remembers participating in the Lasallian Youth Retreat Program in Minnesota with Campus Minister Michael Blanchette. She helped chaperone a summer trip to France, and she worked with [former teacher] Joan Considine to start a book club for Montini faculty and staff; she has also kept score for Broncos' volleyball matches.

"I got to ride in the Montini float for the Lilac parade a few years ago and chaperoned Montini dances—until my daughters asked me not to anymore—a bit embarrassing, I guess," Soger said. "My four daughters were all able to graduate from Montini, and some of their best friends are those that they met either at St. Pius or at Montini."

As much as she will miss Montini, Estelle is really looking forward to the next chapter in her book. "Starting with sleeping past 5:45 a.m.! I'll keep my job at Glass Court, teaching water aerobics. I'll continue in my roles at St. Pius's St. Vincent de Paul Society. I'll be in charge of my grandson, Vinnie, as he attends half-day pre-school at St. Pius. I want to catch up with friends I don't get to see. My retirement gift is a trip to Alaska [taken with friend Mary Ellen Spokas in June]."

"As I look back on 30 years as the librarian, now known as the Library Resource Center Director, the first words that come to mind are 'faith and flexibility' [borrowed from Brother Tom Harding]. Who knew what would transpire from the time I graduated with my MLS in 1978? I do want to thank my Montini family for the incredible memories over these past 30 years. Live Jesus in our hearts, forever!"



SUBMITTED PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing

Estelle Soger of Lombard has retired after serving 30 years as the librarian at Montini Catholic High School. Soger is a parishioner at St. Pius X in Lombard. All four of her daughters (Jenny, Shannon, Erin and Megan) graduated from Montini, where they were pitchers for the Broncos' softball team. In addition to working as Montini's librarian, Soger filled many other roles at the school, including several years of working as Montini's yearbook moderator.

## Warriors' boys golf team starts its season at the St. Laurence Invite

Coppersmith turns in the team's best score with an 85

Willowbrook's boys golf team opened its 2023 season by competing in last week's St. Laurence Invite at Lincoln Oaks Golf Course in Crete. The Warriors finished 11th in the team standings of the Aug. 10 event, which included 13 teams.

Junior Austin Coppersmith delivered the Warriors' best performance of the invite, firing an 18-hole score of 85 on the par-71 course. Senior

Carson Stefani shot a 93 for Willowbrook. Junior Trent Kovacs carded a 96 for the Warriors, while senior Alex Calderon posted a score of 97 to contribute to Willowbrook's team total of 371.

Willowbrook's schedule this week includes today's home meet against Elmwood Park at Sugar Creek Golf Course.

## Willowbrook holds its Community Night event this Friday

Evening will include introductions of Warriors' fall athletes, along with a fireworks display

Willowbrook High School will present its Community Night event in the school's stadium this Friday, Aug. 18, from 6:30 to 8:45 p.m.

The celebration will include introductions of the members of all of Willowbrook's fall athletic teams. There will also be a ribbon cutting for the Warriors' new concession stand, as well as a fireworks display.

The members of the Villa Park Warriors Youth Football and Cheer teams will also be introduced during Friday's event.

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