

The Hinsdalean

Community journalism the way it was meant to be

Thursday, April 18, 2024

Hinsdale, Illinois

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A coachable moment

Hinsdale Central sophomore Tegan Steines, a member of Central's girls soccer team, chats with a participant during the Julie K. Heidecke tribute soccer clinic held at Hinsdale Central recently. The 26th annual free clinic was hosted by Central's girls soccer players and coaches. Julie Heidecke graduated from Hinsdale Central in 1997. She was the captain of the soccer team and an All-Conference selection her senior year. She went on to Illinois State University to continue her soccer career. Unfortunately, Julie died in 1998 at the age of 19 in a car accident. Julie's parents set up the Julie K. Heidecke Tribute Awards Foundation in her honor. Please turn to Page 36 for more pictures. (Jim Slonoff photo)



Toxic trend

Candor intern highlights dangers of latest nicotine product.

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Onto the stage

Central musical offers new take on fairy tale favorites.

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Play ball!

Varsity softball coach hopes younger kids will get in the game.

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NEWS

D181 focused on keeping students safe

By Pamela Lannom
plannom@thehinsdalean.com

Community Consolidated Elementary District 181 has taken several steps to keep staff and students safe while still welcoming community members who visit the schools.

And the work is not done, said Jeffrey Alstadt, communications director.

"We're constantly looking for ways to continue to enhance the safety efforts at the district," he said Tuesday.

Alstadt highlighted past, current and future initiatives for board members at their meeting Monday night. Previous facilities projects created safety vestibules at the schools and secure office areas with visitor management systems. Exterior card readers were installed and safety film was applied to first-floor windows, he reported.

This year the district began using

a three-point entry system. Visitors must first be buzzed into the vestibule and then buzzed into the main office before being cleared to enter the learning environment. The district also upgraded to the Verkada Guest visitor management system to control and track who enters the schools and print visitor badges.

Other safety improvements this year included the installation of security cameras, bringing the number to 210 internal and external cameras, and new room number signs, called tents, that allow all room numbers to be seen from the end of a hallway.

This year served as a pilot year for CrisisGo, a software system that allows the district to send out alerts and communicate and coordinate with first responders. The company also provides tools to help staff understand how to react in an emergency.

One of the most visible changes this year was the introduction of

safety officer visits under a pilot program. Officers from Hinsdale, Burr Ridge and Clarendon Hills have conducted more than 1,300 site visits so far this school year, Alstadt said.

"It's not like your traditional SRO (school resource officer). They don't handle student discipline," he commented Tuesday. "Yes, they interact with students, but it's more of a focus on presence. They're walking the grounds. They're in the school. They check to make sure doors are locked and the school is secure."

Next year instead of one officer being in the district every school day, there will be three.

"If something was to happen, we'd have three internal people deployed to the site instantly in addition to the other first responders," Alstadt told The Hinsdalean.

Police also work with district staff to facilitate safety training, such as the ALICE civilian active shooter

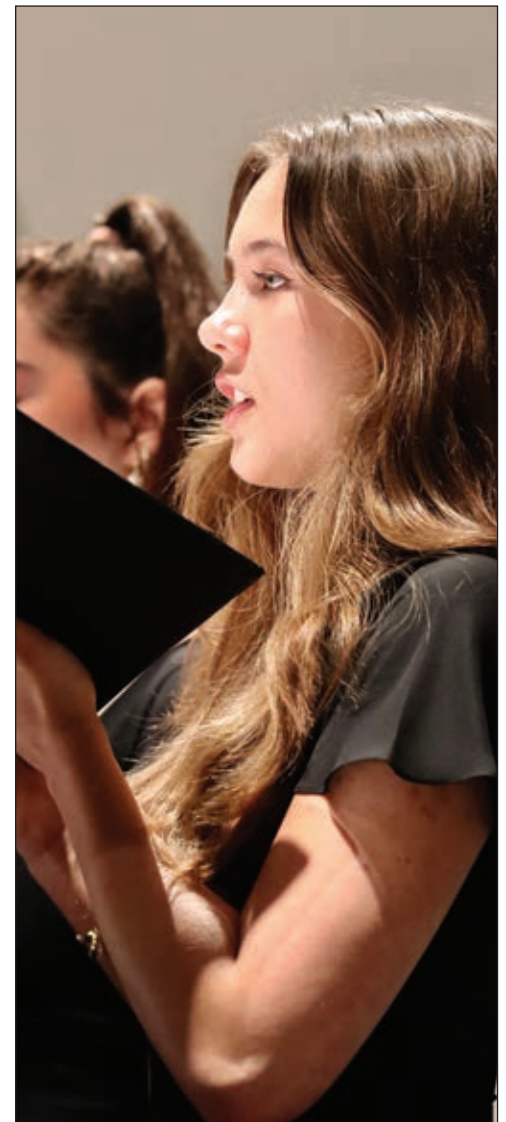
response training.

Alstadt praised the work of the District 181 Safety and Crisis Committee, which is comprised of district staff and representatives from area police and fire departments. Committee members, who meet every other month during the school year, review and monitor the safety and crisis plan and discuss current events involving school security, according to the district's website.

"The collaboration that happens here in this community I would say doesn't happen everywhere," Alstadt told The Hinsdalean.

At the meeting, board President Mike Martin praised Alstadt and Superintendent Hector Garcia for the improved safety protocols that have been implemented during the three years he has served on the board.

"I think it's very unique for an elementary/middle school district to take these steps," he said.



Central sings

The Hinsdale Central Choir performed movements from Missa Brevis KV140 by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. The short Latin Mass was performed with combined choirs, chamber strings from the philharmonic orchestra and four professional soloists from the Chicago area. Five other Central choirs performed as well during the March choir concert program. Meg McMillin, Darren Carlevato and Jocelyn Dodenhoff were among the members of the choir conducted by Jennifer Burkemper. (Jim Slonoff photos)



ONCE UPON A TIME



Places from the past — Hinsdale’s building services supervisor, Jim Piontkowski, took this photo in 1979. This picture is of the Century 21 Real Estate office at 28 E. Hinsdale Ave., currently home to Marabella Home. Do you have a Hinsdale photo that is at least 25 years old? We’d love to share it with our readers. Stop by our office at 7 W. First St. or email it to jslonoff@thehinsdalean.com.



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Happy Birthday!
Jill Lobbezoo
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The Hinsdalean

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Corrections
The Hinsdalean staff strives to provide an error-free newspaper each week. If a mistake is published, however, we are happy to correct it. Call or email Pamela Lannom to report errors requiring correction or clarification.

Letters to the editor
Our letters policy is published on Page 11.

Obituaries
Obituaries are published free each week in The Hinsdalean. Information may be mailed, faxed or emailed to news@thehinsdalean.com. Obituaries may be edited for style and space.

Photo reprint policy
Photographs that appear in The Hinsdalean may be purchased on our Web site at thehinsdalean.com. Occasionally additional photographs that have not been published in the paper may be published on the site; these also will be available for purchase.

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Hinsdale family wants sidewalk safety

Village said it's taken action, but Richards say hazard remains after son was killed

By Ken Knutson

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Hinsdale officials have not done enough to improve safety outside Fuller's Car Wash following the tragic death of 14-year-old village resident Sean Richards last summer, according to his parents, Kristi and Brian Richards.

During public comment at Tuesday night's village board meeting, an emotional Kristi Richards criticized trustees' approval of protective bollards at the site following the accident as an inadequate measure that gives pedestrians "the false sense that they are protected" when walking past the car wash exit area.

"Safety on a sidewalk should be this board's No. 1 priority," she said. "There's a complete lack of understanding by this board of the severity and gravity of this tragedy and the trauma that this community has suffered."

The original bollards were installed by Fuller's in August, shortly after Sean was struck and killed July 17 when a vehicle exiting the car wash accelerated onto the sidewalk where he was walking. The vehicle proceeded into Fontano's Subs across Lincoln Street, injuring three patrons.

Village President Tom Cauley, on behalf of the trustees, expressed his sympathies to the Richards, and assured them public safety is a top priority.

"We're not enemies here. We're on the same side," Cauley told the couple.

He said after the village signed off on the rebar-reinforced concrete bollards that had been placed four feet apart, enclosed in a decorative brick wall, the Richards presented engineering information on stopping a car going 35 miles per hour that led officials to require more posts be added to leave only a

two-foot gap.

"At this point, what we've approved is something that's been approved by our engineers," Cauley explained.

He acknowledged that work to install the additional bollards has not been completed, which Kristi Richards argued leaves people at risk.

"You're allowing that car wash to operate with something that doesn't work?" she posed, questioning why a warning sign hasn't at least been erected.

Cauley said the village will make sure the bollards are put in this spring.

Several of the Richards' friends and neighbors also urged the village to take more steps to ensure such a tragedy isn't repeated. Brian Richards said car wash workers still drive around the bollards and onto the sidewalk adjacent to the business.

"We don't want to be adversarial,"

he told trustees, expressing the family's fondness for Hinsdale. "We're not going to let this go. It's our new mission."

On advice of their counsel, Kristi said, the family submitted a letter to the village demanding the permanent revocation of the special-use permit that has allowed Fuller's Car Wash to operate at the site since 1995. She cited four other instances since 2007 where cars being driven out of the car wash crossed over Lincoln and injured people or damaged vehicles.

"The corner at Lincoln and Chicago Avenue where Fuller's Car wash is located is not safe. This has been known by Fuller's and the village for many years," Kristi said. "We're not interested in things that look safe. We want to know with confidence that our friends and neighbors and their children will be safe walking on a sidewalk on Lincoln Street."

Central girls will join competition on gridiron

By Ken Knutson

kknutson@thehinsdalean.com

Hinsdale Central will join the ranks of the state's newest interscholastic sport next fall: girls flag football.

Hinsdale High School District 86 Board members voted April 11 to field a team at Central to be part of the Illinois High School Association's inaugural 2024-25 season this fall.

"It's a new opportunity for our female athletes," Central athletic director Mike Jezioro said Monday. "It provides another avenue for female students to be involved with the school."

The IHSA announced in February that girls flag football would become part of its fall slate of full-time activities, complete with an IHSA state series and championship game.

"The addition of girls flag football furthers the IHSA mission of creating participation opportunities for high school students in Illinois," said IHSA Executive Director Craig Anderson in a statement. "The sport has experienced significant growth in a short amount of time, and our member schools are excited to see it become an IHSA sport."

The cost of the program is estimated to be about \$29,000, with \$17,000 for uniforms, equipment and transportation, and the rest earmarked for coach stipends. District officials said students led the effort to create a Central team. A survey at Hinsdale South did not indicate enough interest to add the sport at that campus, but South students will be able participate in Central's program.

"The district could complete the IHSA requirements before August 1 to allow South students to participate on the Central team," administrators told board members in a memo.

Jezioro said first steps include assembling a coaching staff and scheduling a summer camp. He expects a learning curve as the game is introduced.

"The sport has different rules (than standard football), and not a lot of female athletes grew up playing football," he said. "It will be a new experience for some of our girls. I think we're anticipating a smooth transition."

Dan Tully, IHSA Board president, said in a statement that being willing to adapt as an organization is vital.

"Girls flag football is somewhat unprecedented in terms of its growth and timeline for achieving an IHSA state series. We are enthusiastic about how much has been accomplished in such a short amount of time, and expect that participation will continue to increase in the years ahead," he said.

Jezioro said a number of schools have been running the sport as a club for several years. More than 100 schools have committed to having a girls flag football team, he reported, including nearly all of Central's West Suburban Conference rivals, although it's not yet a conference sport.

Excitement is high, he related. "A lot of our students have stopped me in the hall or after school to tell me that they're looking forward to it," he said.



It takes a village

Members of Redeemer Church, Union Church and the Unitarian Church of Hinsdale hosed a community wide recycle and shred event Saturday morning. Members of SCARCE — School & Community Assistance for Recycling and Composting Education — were on hand to help volunteers collect items ranging from books to bicycles, and cars lined up well before the event started. Gerry Lee gets help from Tony Oborn unloading several bicycles he donated. (Jim Slonoff photos)

NEXT WEEK

Hinsdale High School District 86 Board

6 p.m. Thursday, April 25
Hinsdale South High School
7401 Clarendon Hills Road, Darien
www.hinsdale86.org/board-of-education/board-meetings

Hinsdale Historic Preservation Commission special meeting

6:30 p.m. Tuesday, April 23
Memorial Building
19 E. Chicago Ave.
www.villageofhinsdale.org

On the draft agenda: public meetings and sign permit reviews for 302 S. Grant (Immanuel Hall ground sign), 5 E. First St. (The Salon by David and William/Brow Paradiso wall signs), 317 E. First St (preservation incentive), 317 S. Park Ave. (preservation incentive)

Hinsdale Public Library Board

7 p.m. Tuesday, April 23
Hinsdale Public Library
20 E. Maple St.
www.hinsdalelibrary.info

MEETING ROUNDUP

Community Consolidated District 181 Board

Among other business at their meeting Monday, board members:

- heard an update on full-day kindergarten from Mindy Bradford, assistant superintendent of business and operations. The district plans to borrow \$18 million to pay for construction of additional classroom space using debt certificates. The district can issue the certificates without the need for a referendum as long as repayments are made from operating funds. The total project is expected to cost \$19.2 million, down from an earlier estimate of \$26.4 million, and the district will make up the \$1.2 million from reserves. The board is expected to vote on issuing the debt certificates at its May 13 meeting.

- learned work will begin on renovating the new district headquarters at 113 Ogden Ave. before the second-floor tenant moves out. The district attempted to buy out the lease to have access to the 900 square feet, but the tenant said she plans to stay until her current lease expires in May 2027 or possibly until the end of her lease extension in May 2032. The board is expected to go to bid this summer and award contracts in September, with work starting in October. The space will be ready before the district's lease on its current space in Clarendon Hills ends on June 30, 2025.

- unanimously elected Bill Cotter to serve as board president, Grace Shin to serve as vice president and Margie Kleber to serve as secretary. Their terms will last for one year.

Cotter took a moment to thank outgoing President Mike Martin for his leadership.

"I wanted to acknowledge that and thank you for your service," Cotter said.

- passed a resolution opposing the deannexation of six homes in the Robin Hood Ranch subdivision in Oak Brook. The property owners have filed a petition to deannex from District 181 and join Butler Elementary District 53.

- approved the final school calendar for the 2023-24 year. As no emergency days were used, the last day of student attendance will be May 31.

- accepted gifts and contributions including \$1,000 from the District 181 Foundation for the purchase of eclipse glasses for students and staff and a violin case and music worth \$75 from an individual donor



More to recycling than meets the curb

With Earth Day coming up next week and spring cleaning on many to-do lists, residents might be wondering what to do with unwanted items — and whether they can be recycled.

Many items can be recycled, even if they can't be placed in a curbside recycling bin, according to DuPage County's website.

As a reminder, curbside recycling in Hinsdale is limited to the following items: aluminum cans and clean foil; plastics (#1, #2, #3, #4, #5 and #7); glass bottles and jars; tin cans and empty aerosol cans; cardboard (cereal boxes, beverage cartons, corrugated); six- and 12-pack rings; and paper (newspaper, direct mail, bills, envelopes, magazines, catalogs, telephone directories, office paper, brown paper bags).

Below are drop-off locations for a variety of items, most of which are listed in DuPage County's recycling guide at www.dupagecounty.gov > Home > Government > Departments > Environment and Sustainability > Recycling. The website also includes information on recycling options for items not listed below.

• **Books, school/office supplies, crayons**

Donations of boxed books, office supplies and crayons can be taken to SCARCE, 800 S. Rohlwing Road, Addison. Hours are 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Tuesdays to Fridays.

Visit www.scarce.org for details. To donate five or more boxes, call (630) 545-9710 to schedule a delivery.

• **Clothing and textile recycling**

DuPage County has partnered with eWorks and RewearAble to collect clothing and textiles for reuse and recycling at several sites. Acceptable items are clothing, shoes, sheets, bedding, towels and other household textiles in any condition (no heavily soiled items). Shoes must be matched and tied together. Items must be bagged.

The closest drop-off is the Burr Ridge Public Works Facility at 451 Commerce St. Hours are 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. weekdays.

• **Electronics recycling**

Computers, laptops, servers, monitors, televisions, printers, fax machines, scanners, VCR and DVD players, video game consoles, cell phones and other electronics and small household appliances can be recycled at several sites. Appliances with refrigerants or not listed will not be accepted.

Fees apply only for TVs and monitors:

\$25 for items up to 21 inches and \$35 for items 21 inches and larger.

The closest drop-off is the Burr Ridge Public Works Facility at 451 Commerce St. Hours are 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. weekdays.

• **Eyeglasses and hearing aids**

Lions Clubs accept eyeglasses and hearing aids to offer the gift of sight or sound to those in need. Items may be dropped off at local clubs, including the ones 18 N. Cass Ave. in Westmont and 300 W. 22nd St. in Oak Brook, and at Walmart Vision Centers. Visit www.lionsclub.org and search "eyeglass donations" for more details.

• **Hazardous waste**

Illinois residents may drop off household items such as automotive fluids, batteries, fire extinguishers, fluorescent bulbs, propane tanks and more at the Regional Household Hazardous Waste Facility, 156 Fort Hill Drive, Naperville. This drive through, free drop-off facility is open from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays.

For more information, visit www.naperville.il.us > Services > Garbage and recycling > Household hazardous waste facility or call (630) 240-6095.

• **Holiday lights**

Any type of holiday string lights —

working or not — along with electrical cords, can be dropped off year-round at SCARCE, 800 S. Rohlwing Road, Addison. Hours are 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Tuesdays to Fridays. Visit www.scarce.org or call (630) 545-9710.

• **Medications**

Residents can drop off prescription and over-the-counter drugs through the Cook County Sheriff's Office free Prescription Drug Take Back program using the collection box in the Hinsdale Police Department lobby, 121 Symonds Drive. Hours are 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. weekdays and 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturdays. No needles or liquids allowed.

• **Styrofoam**

Western Springs offers a styrofoam recycling collection from 9 a.m. to noon the first Saturday of every month in the Recreation Center parking lot, 1500 Walker St. For more information, visit www.wsprings.com/faq.aspx?qid=188.

• **U.S. flags**

The Hinsdale American Legion Post 250 accepts used American flags and disposes of them properly. Flags can be dropped in the box in the circle drive near the Hinsdale Public Library, 20 E. Maple St.

— compiled by Pamela Lannom



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POLICE BEAT

Hinsdale police reports were not available before the paper went to press Wednesday afternoon.

MEETING ROUNDUP

Hinsdale Village Board

Among other business Tuesday, trustees:

- approved outdoor dining for Casa Margarita effective immediately. The restaurant operates in the Brush Hill Train Station at 25 E. Hinsdale Ave. and is subject to a lease agreement with the village as well as a contract agreement between the village and BNSF, rather than the newly adopted regulations for outdoor dining in the village code. The outdoor dining permission runs through Oct. 31.

- approved the addition of six properties to the Historically Significant Structures Property List, which may make them eligible for incentives for historic preservation projects

- approved 2024 pay plans for full-time, part-time and public services employees effective May 1, 2024 to April 30, 2025. The plans incorporate a 3 percent increase across the board for most salaries, in line with the 3 percent increase for police officers as part of the collective bargaining agreement with the Fraternal Order of Police.

- held first reads on temporary use permits to allow for outdoor dining for Fuller House and Giuliano's Pizza beginning May 22. Similar to previous years, Fuller House, 50 S. Garfield Ave., would conduct outdoor dining on its private property through Oct. 31, and would also have live outdoor music every Wednesday through Sept. 26. Giuliano's Pizza, 40 Village Place, will use two of its parking spaces for outdoor dining through Aug. 15.

April initiative targets distracted drivers

The Hinsdale Police Department is partnering with the Illinois Department of Transportation, Illinois State Police and more than 200 local law enforcement agencies to step up enforcement efforts across the state in recognition of Distracted Driving Awareness Month. Throughout April, motorists can expect increased patrols looking for texting and driving as well as other traffic violations with the "U Drive. U Text. U Pay." campaign.

"Distracted driving is one of the leading causes of motor vehicle crashes on our roads today," Deputy Chief Thomas Lillie said. "During Distracted Driving Awareness Month, law enforcement will boost enforcement efforts, stopping

anyone we see texting and driving. We do this to save lives."

Between 2012 and 2021, approximately 32,000 lives were lost in crashes involving distracted drivers. Everyone has the potential for distracted driving crashes, but those between the ages of 16 and 24 are especially at risk. A driver who needs to text should pull over to a safe location, or if there is a passenger, consider appointing a "designated texter." Whatever the solution, don't text and drive.

In Illinois, using a phone in anything other than hands-free mode is not only dangerous, but also illegal.

The Illinois distracted driving campaign is funded with federal traffic safety funds administered by IDOT.

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■ “We have a lot of people who, when a job needs to get done, it gets done. The women that work with us at Brightpoint are amazing.”

— Margaret Facchini

Ladies lead Derby Day down the home stretch

After a single father lost custody of his seven children because of his drug addiction, he reached out to Brightpoint for the tools to get his life back on track and his kids back home.

At last year’s Derby Day fundraiser, sponsored by the agency’s Hinsdale Auxiliary, guests were stirred by the man’s powerful testimony of redemption.

“And now he actually works for Brightpoint in their ‘Fathers First’ program,” related auxiliary volunteer Beth Lyons. “It’s nice to hear those happy stories.”

Lyons, of Elmhurst, and Hinsdale’s Margaret Facchini are co-chairs of the 69th annual Kentucky Derby-inspired Derby Day Party at 4:30 p.m. Saturday, May 4 at Butterfield Country Club (see Page 16 for details). Facchini said Brightpoint — formerly Children’s Home & Aid — works to support families experiencing crisis to keep children from having to enter the foster care system.

“(Brightpoint) tries to help in any way they can, whether it’s counseling for the families, whether it’s child care, whether it’s food, diapers,” she said.

The organization articu-

lates its mission as advancing “the well-being of children by investing in families to disrupt the systemic and multi-generational cycle of racial, social and economic inequality.” It operates several Child & Family Centers in Chicago and the surrounding suburbs providing early education as well as medical, dental, mental health and nutrition resources while also equipping parents with skills to meet life’s challenges.

“They get services there, all of their meals, after-school care. Parents can drop them off so they can go to work and know they’re in a safe place,” said Facchini, who visited one of the centers as dozens of little ones were making art. “We all worked in a room, and it was really fun to be with the kids.”

The vision hits home for Facchini, who shared her own journey growing up with five siblings being raised by their divorced mom.

“It was welfare and food stamps,” she said of the support network in that time. “I cleaned houses in high school. We did what we could.”

Both Facchini and Lyons linked up with Brightpoint about three years ago. But Lyons had been familiar with the outreach for some time.



BETH LYONS & MARGARET FACCHINI

FACCHINI GREW UP IN RIVERSIDE • FACCHINI IS MOM TO DAUGHTER BELLA & SON CUYLER • LYONS IS MOM TO STEPSON HAYDEN • FACCHINI SERVES ON HINSDALE ASSEMBLY BOARD

“Friends of my parents used to go 25, 30 years ago,” Lyons said.

Putting together a Derby Day event requires flexibility and organizational skills, the duo agreed, as well a good team of volunteers.

“We are small but mighty,” Lyons said.

“We have a lot of people who, when a job needs to get done, it gets done,” Facchini

added. “The women that work with us at Brightpoint are amazing.”

Emcee Alex Maragos of NBC Chicago will keep things on track, so to speak, although the fact that the Kentucky Derby lasts only two minutes makes for an efficient affair.

“This whole event is wrapped around less than five minutes,” Facchini quipped.

Amidst the fascinators and

mint juleps, people at Derby Day are mindful that resources collected will go to help families get out of the gate toward a more stable future.

“We can live in our little bubbles here and think that (family struggle) doesn’t happen, but it does,” Lyons said.

“Everybody needs a hand,” Facchini said.

— story by Ken Knutson, photo by Jim Slonoff



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OPINION

EDITORIAL

Become an organ donor and a potential life saver

April is National Donate Life Month, established in 2003 to bring attention to the critical shortage of organs and tissue for patients through various activities and events, and encourage individuals to become organ/tissue donors. Ceremonies are held to honor those who have donated and saved lives, to mourn those who have died while waiting for a transplant, to provide support for patients whose lives depend on finding a donor, and to celebrate the lives saved and improved due to donation.

According to the Health Resources and Services Administration, across the country more than 100,000 men, women and children are currently in need of a lifesaving transplant. Another person is added to the waiting list every 10 minutes, and 17 succumb to their health conditions each day because the organ they need is not donated in time.

About 4,000 Illinoisans are waiting for an organ transplant, as reported on www.donatelife.net. Even though there are 7.1 million people registered to become organ/tissue donors across the state, about 300 Illinoisans die each year waiting for a transplant.

Here are some facts about organ donation from the Gift of Hope organization at www.gift-of-hope.org

- One individual can save up to eight lives as an organ donor, heal more than 25 people in need of skin grafts, bone or tendon grafts or other donated tissue, and help restore sight for two people.

- The major organs that can be donated for transplant are the liver, heart, lungs, kidneys, pancreas, and small intestine. Tissues that can be donated include the corneas, bone, saphenous and femoral veins, heart valves and skin.

- Most people waiting for transplants need corneas or kidneys. Hearts, lungs and livers offer the greatest potential to save people's lives.

- Virtually anyone regardless of age, race or gender can become an organ and tissue donor. Donors are usually healthy people who have suffered a life-ending trauma and are declared legally dead. Medical eligibility depends on many factors and is determined after the donor's death.

Those of all ages and medical histories should consider themselves potential donors

for deceased donation. There is no cost to the donor's family or estate for donation, and donation becomes an option only when a patient is declared clinically and legally dead.

A national system matches available organs from the donor with people on the waiting list based on blood type, body size, how sick they are, donor distance, tissue type and time on the list. Race, income, gender, celebrity and social status are never considered.

Check to see if your Illinois drivers license or state ID card displays a red state logo with "DONOR." If not, think about signing up on the Secretary of State's registry at www.lifegoeson.com.

In a statement, Gift of Hope President/CEO Harry Wilkins said the effort to expand the pool of organ donors is one that requires everyone's involvement.

"We are proud to join forces with communities, partners and advocates in underscoring the importance of life-giving organ and tissue donation and encouraging people to register their decision as organ and tissue donors," he remarked.

COMMENTARY

'Just one more thing' will be the death of me

I was really looking forward to having dinner with a friend last Friday night. My husband and daughter were both going to be out, and I was excited for the chance to relax and catch up with her.

I was all ready to go when I decided I had time to throw a load a laundry into the wash before I left the house. That way I wouldn't have to stay up late waiting for the clothes to come out of the dryer. I headed downstairs to the laundry room and was still sorting clothes when I heard my daughter's voice.

"Bye, Mom," she called out. "I'm leaving."

I felt a moment of panic. She was headed across the street to babysit at 6:15 p.m. I was supposed to leave at 6:15 p.m. I stopped turning inside-out socks right-side-out, threw in some laundry detergent, turned the machine on and left my house in a rush. I was late, of

course, but my friend understood.

"I always think I can do just one more thing before I leave," I told her. She nodded knowingly.

The list of "one more things" I've tried to do before leaving is long. I've loaded dishes and started the dishwasher, refilled the dog's food container from the bin in the basement and sorted through the pile of mail sitting on the kitchen counter. I've even tried to take the dog for a quick walk around the block or call the dentist to schedule an overdue cleaning.

I am particularly vulnerable to this urge on weekday mornings before I head into work. I don't want to face a sink full of dishes when I get home, so I try to wash them quickly before I leave. If it's garbage day, I might convince



Pamela Lannom

myself I have time to quickly clean out the fridge so I don't have to do it after work.

The problem is none of the activities take as few minutes as I have available. And so I am perpetually late, even though I am a firm believer in punctuality — at least theoretically.

For several years I tried to blame being late on

my daughter. Her pace seems to be the same every morning — whether she gets up on time and has a full 30 minutes to get ready or oversleeps and has a mere 15 minutes before we need to head out the door. (She did not inherit my feelings on punctuality.)

But the truth is even when I'm not waiting for her, I'm often late. And it's usually because I'm trying to do just one more thing. The

problem is there is always have one more thing to do. My "to do" list is never really done.

Just this week, I found myself stopping at the store after work to buy some rice. I had carefully planned our meals for the week and purchased rice when I went grocery shopping on Saturday. I had not anticipated that my dog would get sick and I would need to feed her the rice I planned to serve with chicken satay Tuesday night.

As for my laundry-induced lateness on Friday, my friend didn't mind. We had a wonderful time. When I got home, I put the clothes in the dryer — where they remained until morning, as I promptly fell asleep on the couch.

So I had just one more thing to do Saturday morning before heading to the grocery store.

— Pamela Lannom is editor of *The Hinsdalean*. Readers can email her at plannom@thehinsdalean.com.

■ The problem is none of the activities take as few minutes as I have available. And so I am perpetually late, even though I am a firm believer in punctuality — at least theoretically.

GUEST COMMENTARY

Elementary school offers inspiration

It was the day that I had been waiting for. My fourth-grade teacher passed around the large packets filled with lists of activities and choices for the upcoming special day. I scanned through the options, circling the words that jumped out to me the most on the page. Baking. Forensic science. Firefighting. I ranked my top activities and submitted them to my teacher.



Leah Packer

The purpose of these thick, white packets was for High Interest Day, an event in elementary school where instead of going to classes, we went to different classrooms where adults discussed what they did for their careers. I remember attending one session at which veterinarians discussed how they heal and treat animals. I learned how firefighters put out fires and rescue people from burning buildings. I played pickleball outside with a real coach. My favorite course was the baking-in-a-mug course, which, funnily enough, was one of the only courses that didn't mimic a career. I liked it anyway because I got a sweet treat in the end.

This day was one of the experiences I knew I would miss most after graduating from elementary school, because I had a feeling I wouldn't get to participate in an opportunity like this again. And I was right. Not to say that my high school and middle school experiences haven't been great (minus a portion occupied by a certain global pandemic...), but I think we could take

something from the elementary school playbook.

We have never had a day quite like High Interest Day in high school so far. Now that I am a junior and have to think about my future, it would be nice to have a day of learning what

majors and careers actually mean and what people do in their jobs. One of my favorite posts that I saw while scrolling on Reddit was someone saying that even though they are an adult, they still don't know what engineers do. I relate to that; I myself am not 100 percent sure what their work really entails. What I do know is that a day dedicated to learning such information would be helpful in figuring that out.

Or we could go the route my fifth-grade class took and have to participate in a mini-economy with taxes and rent and, of course, fake money to experience budgeting. We could even implement elementary school classics like Field Day, Halloween parades, holiday parties, and other fun events. Elementary school may feel childish, but I really think we could find inspiration in (albeit, age-appropriate inspiration) and learn from its events.

If we ever have a High Interest-esque day, I may finally learn what engineers do. And, hopefully, bake something in a mug, too.

— Leah Packer, a junior at Hinsdale Central, is a contributing columnist. Readers can email her at news@the-hinsdalean.com.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



LETTERS POLICY

Requirements

- 250 words or fewer
- include writer's name, address and daytime phone number

- documentation must be provided for numbers, statistics and other facts mentioned in the letter
- no form letters

Submission

- e-mail to news@thehinsdalean.com
- fax to (630) 323-4220
- mail to The Hinsdalean,

Letters to the editor, 7 W. First St., Hinsdale IL 60521

Questions?

Call (630) 323-4422

OBITUARIES

Beverly Louise Leija

Beverly Louise Leija of Oak Brook passed away April 11, 2024.

Beverly was a straight shooter with a brutally honest personality and loved nothing more than bragging about her grandchildren, who called her Aha, and their accomplishments. She was always up for a good meal while enjoying a top-shelf margarita and fiery political discussions with her family. She will be affectionately remembered as Beckus, and her unique presence will be missed.

She is survived by her husband of 66 years, Dr. Joseph Leija; her children, Joseph and



Leija

Cynthia (Dr. Robert) Wagner, both of Hinsdale; her grandchildren, Michael (Brittany) Wagner, Kathryn (Ryan) Goll and Dr. Mary Elizabeth Wagner; and her great-grandchildren, Adam and Grace Wagner and Charlotte and Daniel Goll.

Interment will be private at Queen of Heaven Cemetery in Hillside.

In lieu of flowers memorials may be made online to St. Jude Children's Hospital at www.stjude.org.

Brian Powell Funeral Directors of Hinsdale handled the arrangements.

Alex McClement

Alexander "Scotty" McClement, 91, passed away peacefully March 28, 2024.

Alex was born in Glasgow, Scotland, in 1932 to Alexander and Janet "Jennie" McClement. He immigrated to the United States in 1951.

In his younger days, he was a semi-professional hockey player and worked within the food industry, which paved the way for his entrepreneurial journey. Alex founded McClement Management Group, dedicating nearly five decades to servicing the McDonald's corporation. The company reflected his values of integrity, honesty and direct communication. Alex also served as a respected mentor to



McClement

countless individuals and was a proud member of the Chicago Blackhawk Alumni Association.

Alex is survived by his wife, Sheila McClement; and his son, Scott (Sheryl) McClement.

Visitation is from 3 to 7 p.m. today, April 18, and from 9 to 11 a.m. Friday, April 19, at Sullivan Funeral Home, 60 S Grant St., Hinsdale.

A service will follow from 11 a.m. to noon Friday at the funeral home.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the Ronald McDonald House Charities, 26345 Network Place, Chicago, IL 60673-1263 or online at www.rmhc.org/donate.

Bruce L. Tobias

Bruce L. Tobias, 68, of Woodridge, a former 30-year resident of Hinsdale, passed away April 14, 2024.

He was born in Chicago in 1955 to Ralph and Anna Tobias.

At age 18, Bruce entered the fire service as a cadet, serving for 15 years until he retired from the Hinsdale Fire Department in 1983. He married Patrice Foster on June 26, 1975, in Hinsdale.

In 1975, Bruce entered into business with his father-in-law as co-owner of Foster ServiceMaster, and in 1998 joined ServiceMaster DSI, with whom he was employed until the time of his death. Bruce was also a longtime member of the DuPage Amateur Radio Club, serving as chairman of the ARRL North American Field Day for 25 years.

Bruce is survived by his wife, Patrice; his children, Erin (Joshua) Boyce, Patrick Tobias and



Tobias

Meaghan (Ryan) Evans; his grandchildren, Liam and Ronin Boyce and Nora, Ella, Quinn and Reese Evans; his sister, Dianna (John) Tomisek; his nephew, Todd Tomisek; his niece, Dianna (James) Cates; and his great-niece and -nephews, Brandon, Alyssa, Jack and Luke.

Visitation will be held from 3 to 8 p.m. Monday, April 22, at Adolf & Powell Funeral Home, 7000 S. Madison St., Willowbrook. Family and friends will meet for a funeral Mass at 10 a.m. Tuesday, April 23, at St. Isaac Jogues Catholic Church, 306 W. Fourth St., Hinsdale.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the Hinsdale Hospital Foundation NICU, 120 N. Oak Street, Hinsdale, IL 60521 (online at www.uchicagomedicineadventhealth.org.)

Arrangements by Brian Powell Funeral Directors of Hinsdale.

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Obituaries are also available online at www.thehinsdalean.com.

GOOD NEWS

CEO SELECTED TO ATTEND SUMMIT



David Pequet, CEO and senior portfolio manager at MPI Wealth Management in Hinsdale, attended the 2024 Barron's

Pequet

Top Independent Advisors Summit, March 13-15 in Salt Lake City, Utah. The invitation-only conference is hosted by Barron's Magazine.

The Barron's Summit is a gathering of self-made leaders who have earned a distinct place within the financial services industry. The event offers the top independent practitioners a unique opportunity to interface and network with the peers who best understand their businesses.

Offered by Barron's Advisor since 2009, this curated experience has become the premier annual event for ranked independent advisors, with content

designed to highlight the best practices and specific needs of independent advisors.

The three-day conference featured several respected speakers from the world of finance providing the attendees unique access and insight not normally available.

The advisors selected by Barron's for the summit are chosen based on the depth and breadth of service offering, assets under management and regulatory records. Firm responses were voluntary, and no fee was paid to Barron's to be included in the ranking.

"As we celebrate our 38th year in business as an independent registered investment advisor, Matt (Pequet, senior vice president) and I are very proud that this is the 13th year in a row we have been invited to the Barron's conference," Pequet said.

MATH TEAM PLACES SECOND

Several students from Hinsdale Middle School par-

ticipated in MathCounts, the largest nationwide middle school math competition.

Eleven students represented the school at the chapter level, securing an impressive second place as a team. Five students competed in the Illinois State MathCounts Competition, where they finished in sixth place.

Their accomplishment stands as one of the strongest performances in recent history for HMS, surpassing the previous best of 10th place in 2016.

The team — composed of eighth-graders George An and James Bednarz, seventh-grader Ryan Zhang and sixth-grader Albert Li, along with individual competitor Andy Dong (seventh grade), faced stiff competition against some 40 school teams in the finals. Renowned schools such as Whitney Young, Kennedy Junior High and the UChicago Lab School were among the competitors.

The team is supported by the school and the HMS Parent-Teacher Organization.

ELM SCHOOL EARNS RECOGNITION

Elm School recently was chosen as a Professional Learning Community at Work school. The school celebrated onsite and was recognized at the District 181 board meeting in March.

Model PLC at Work recognizes schools that demonstrate a commitment to developing a highly collaborative environment for at least three years and have clear evidence of improved student learning.

WB PROGRAM HAS NEW NAME

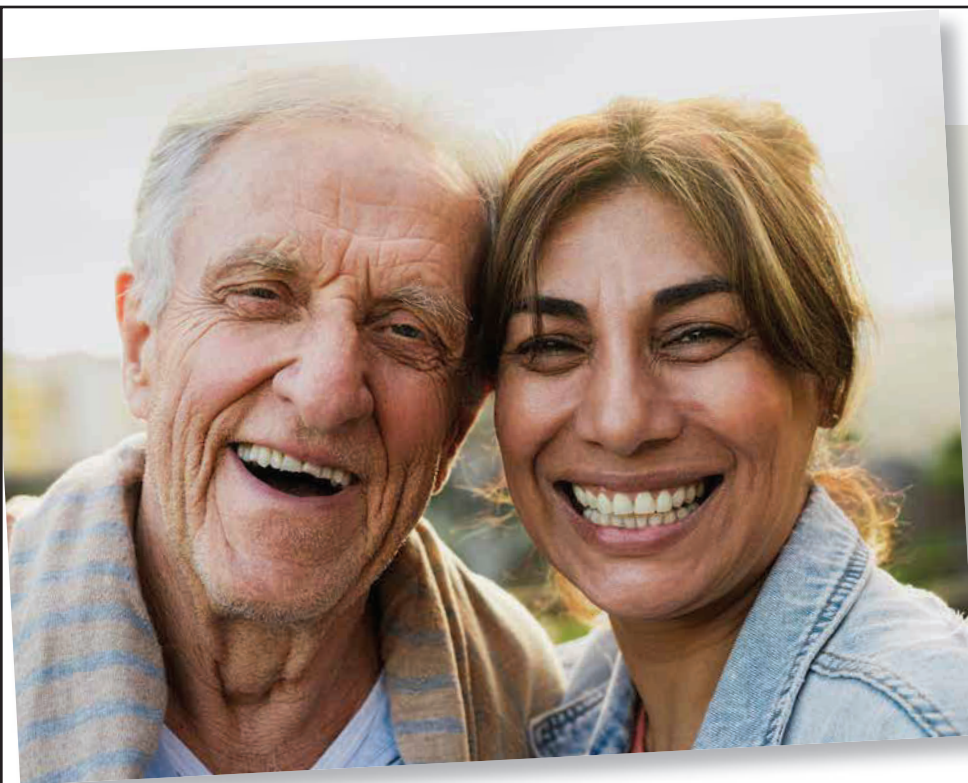
The Community House in Hinsdale has renamed its Willowbrook Corner Youth Learning Initiative the Spark Youth Development Initiative.

"Unlocking the potential of youth in unincorporated Willowbrook is at the core of the newly rebranded and expanded SPARK Youth

Development Initiative," the agency's website states. "With a comprehensive approach, we go beyond academics and foster growth in every aspect. From personalized mentoring to captivating field trips and career exploration, we ignite sparks within young minds.

"Our licensed clinical counselors provide essential mental health services, our mentors guide young minds through homework help and social and emotional wellness activities, while our pool days and off-site adventures add fun-filled memories," it continues. "Services are provided at affordable rates that help us enrich the lives of each student and family."

In addition to offering after-school care and summer camps, the program recently has been expanded to include on-site licensed social workers, additional community recreation programs, literacy programs, career speakers, field trips and Junior Achievement programs also are offered.



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ASK AN EXPERT

GRACE THOMPSON, CANDOR HEALTH EDUCATION INTERN

What is Zyn and why is it harmful?

Parents might not be familiar with Zyn, an oral nicotine pouch, but college students certainly are.

"It was huge on my campus and we have Illinois Wesleyan right next to us as well," said Grace Thompson, an intern at Candor Health Education who will graduate from Illinois State University with a degree in public health in May. "Between those two schools, it would just be everywhere. There would be younger people who would come down for homecoming or parties, and you'd see them doing it as well."

Zyn is the most popular brand of oral nicotine pouches, which first came out in the early 2000s but were eclipsed by the rise of e-cigarettes and vapes. Because the pouches do not contain any actual tobacco leaves, they are not classified or regulated by the FDA as smokeless tobacco products. But the pouches typically have higher levels of nicotine and are absorbed directly into the bloodstream, Thompson said.

Sales skyrocketed from \$126

million in 2019 to \$808 million in 2022, Thompson learned while researching the topic for an article she wrote for Candor's website.

Social media has exposed more young people to the product, Thompson said, with "Zynfluencers" posting on TikTok.

"There's definitely addictions to (social media) and all the things that are attracting them to the newest, brightest, most popular thing," she said. "They want that for sure."

The pouches, like vapes, come in a variety of flavors that appeal to teens. They also can be consumed more discreetly.

"It's not anything I'm smoking, so it's easier to hide from my parents," kids might think, according to Thompson.

And while the sale of nicotine pouches is limited to adults 21 and older, it's often easy for minors to get their hands on the product.

"They can find someone who is 21 who can buy for them," Thompson said. "There are so many gas stations and smoke shops that don't card properly."

While there is a shortage of research about the long-term

effects of nicotine, Thompson said a nicotine addiction in a young person can cause significant damage.

"There is a lot of development happening in their brain, and nicotine can definitely inhibit that development because of all the chemicals and how it reacts with your brain," she said, citing issues with memory and attention span.

"That could lead to problems in school and getting in trouble," Thompson said.

Developing an early addiction to nicotine also could predispose teens to a drug or alcohol addiction as they get older.

"That can definitely make it easier for them to become addicted to worse substances," Thompson said.

She said she hopes more parents and teachers will be aware of the product, which can look like a pack of gum or mints, and have open and honest conversations with kids about the dangers of nicotine use.

"If you sit down and explain things to them and explain the why — a lot of times kids just want the why," she said.

— by Pamela Lannom



The 2023 National Youth Tobacco Survey revealed that some 310,000 middle and high school students had used oral nicotine products, such as Zyn, within the last 30 days, according to Grace Thompson, an intern with Candor Health Education. (photo provided)

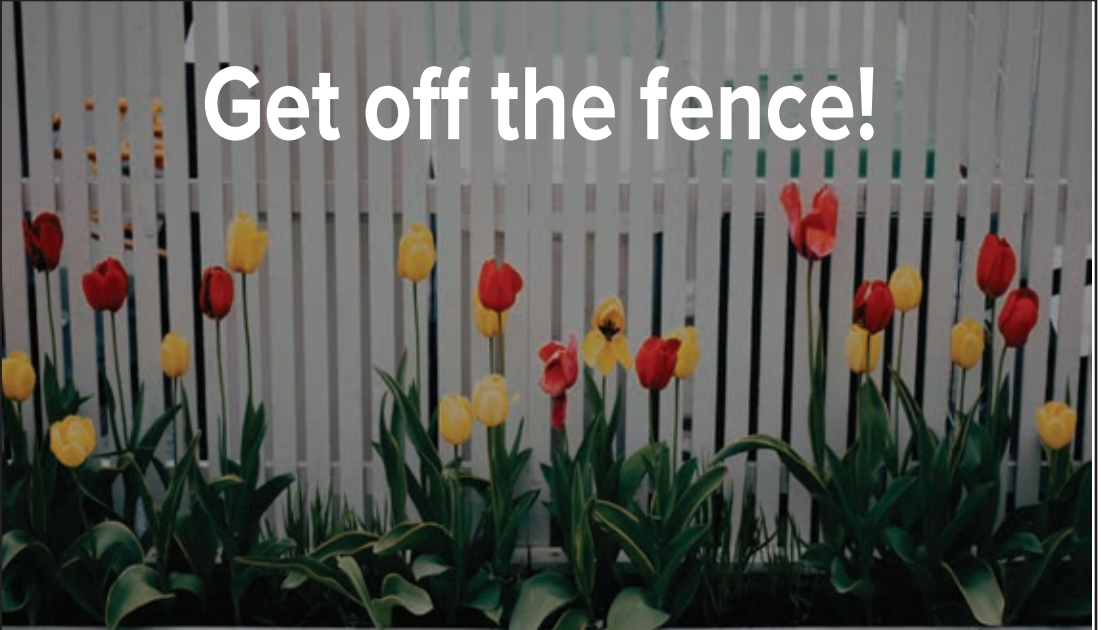


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Take a walk 'Into the Woods'

Central Drama leads audiences through fantastical Broadway classic

By Ken Knutson

kknutson@thehinsdalean.com

Last year Hinsdale Central's drama and music departments were deliberating over which musical to put on in spring of 2024.

Like a stroke of inspiration from a fairy godmother, drama teacher Erin Lundin landed on the Stephen Sondheim-scored "Into the Woods."

"We have perfect kids to do this show this year, and it just sort of gelled immediately. We knew right away it was the right (production) for this year," Lundin related. The mash-up of famous Brothers Grimm stories will be staged at 7 p.m. tomorrow and at 1 and 7 p.m. Saturday in Central's auditorium. 5500 S. Grant St.

Among the familiar characters depicted are those from Rapunzel, Cinderella, Jack and the Beanstalk and Little Red Riding Hood, Lundin said. And, of course, a witch. They venture into the woods in pursuit of their happily-ever-after dreams. But then the production takes a turn.

"In the second part of the show, the characters face the consequences of the wishes that they got in the first half. Reality hits in act two, and we find the darker side of the fairy tales," Lundin said.

Music teacher Jennifer Burkemper was tasked with guiding students through the difficult, tongue-twisting Sondheim compositions.

"This is probably the second-most intensive in terms of vocal score because it's almost all song," said Burkemper, ranking it just below "Les Miserable."

But she said the richly imagined show provides good experience in the various dimensions of the theater.

"It was the right combination for everybody involved: it fit the kids that we had, it fit our instrumental program really well," she said.

Lundin agreed, noting the number of substantial parts in the 24-member cast for those in their final year as Red Devils.

"We have a lot of seniors who we wanted to give that lead opportu-



Cast members of Hinsdale Central Drama's production of "Into the Woods" hold a dress rehearsal Monday in preparation for Friday and Saturday's performances in the school's auditorium. Well-known fairytale characters are brought together in this richly scored musical. (Jim Slonoff photos)

nity to. This gave a lot more kids the chance to have a starring role," she said. "I don't think we've had this many kids involved in a musical since probably pre-COVID, which is what we want."

Senior Max Zhu's assignment does not require speaking but plenty of physical activity as he serves as puppeteer for the white cow that belongs to Jack of beanstalk fame.

"I had to get used to carrying it on my back," Zhu said, acknowledging his preference for a part free of singing and dancing. "I control the face, so I try to match my expression to the feeling that the cow would be having."

Senior Grace McGowan plays the Baker's Wife. McGowan

actually portrayed Cinderella in BAMtheatre's presentation of the musical last year and so came well-versed in the production.

"I was really excited to dig into a new character," she said of the Baker's Wife.

"I really like how the musical takes fairytale characters, who are usually portrayed either as all good or very bad, and bring them to the middle. Nobody is a good person, but nobody is a bad person, either," she said. "I think finding that happy medium to explain them as actual people is fascinating."

She cited one scene when Jack and Little Red Riding Hood are talking on stage.

"It's cool to see these characters

meet in the fairytale world," she said.

McGowan credits the drama program for growing her confidence and expanding her leadership aptitude through assistant director opportunities.

"It's helped me build my independence in creating characters and performing," she said.

Lundin revealed that "Into the Woods" has been on her wish list for some time.

"It's one I've wanted to do since I was about 12 years old," she said. "I'm excited to see it finally come to life."

Tickets are \$15 for general admission and \$10 for students. Visit www.hinsdaledrama.com/tickets.html.



The Morton Arboretum is hosting an Arbor Day plant sale April 25-27. Tickets must be purchased in advance. See Page 18 for details.

ARTFULLY DONE

■ Heartwork Exhibit Opening

April 20
Hinsdale Public Library
20 E. Maple St.
www.hinsdalelibrary.info
(630) 986-1976

Join this art reception honoring the work Heartwork students have created during a series of classes over the past year under the instruction of local artist Maureen Claffy. The work will be on display in the library's Quiet Room through April 30. Light refreshments will be available. Time: 2 to 3 p.m. RR

FOR A CAUSE

■ Blood drive

April 20
Rejuvenate Health
534 Chestnut St.
www.versiti.org/IL
(847) 305-9998

Rejuvenate Health and JLF Fitness are sponsoring this blood drive in cooperation with Versiti Blood Center of Illinois and reminding resi-

dents that one donation can save up to three lives. A photo ID is required. Walk-ins are welcome but appointments are encouraged. Visit the website or text or call the number listed above. Time: 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

■ Derby Day Party

May 4
Butterfield Country Club
2800 Midwest Road, Oak Brook
www.brightpoint.org/events

Watch the Kentucky Derby live on the big screen at Hinsdale Auxiliary's 69th annual event to benefit Brightpoint (formerly Children's Home & Aid) and its comprehensive behavioral health services for parents, children and youth across Illinois. Enjoy cocktails followed by dinner and dancing. Register by noon May 1. Time: 4:30 to 11 p.m. Tickets: \$185, \$1,800 for table of 10.

■ Hinsdale Kitchen Walk

May 10
Hinsdale homes

www.kitchen-walk.com

The Hinsdale Historical Society Women's Board is sponsoring its annual event showcasing the kitchens of six different homes in the village, which are listed at the website above. Proceeds support the Hinsdale Historical Society and its mission to bridge the past, present and future by engaging the community with its history and architecture. Tickets can be purchased online or at Yakee Peddler, 30 E. Hinsdale Ave. Hours: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Tickets: \$75.

GREEN THUMB

■ Containers and Raised Beds

April 20
Hinsdale Public Library
20 E. Maple St.
www.hinsdalelibrary.info
(630) 986-1976

Learn from a master gardener how to raise productive vegetables in containers and other above-ground growing systems for safe and fruitful

Please turn to Page 18



The Hinsdale Middle School PTO thanks all of the Superheros who contributed to the 2023 - 2024 Annual Appeal!

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Six things you might not know about midwifery care

For women, a health care journey can be a winding road with a lot of natural and unexpected health changes. From well-person care and prevention to family planning, conception, pregnancy, delivery, post-partum and even breast health — there's one thing that can remain consistent: our client's active decision-making in their health care. And that is the very focus of certified nurse midwives.

Many people assume that midwives only deliver babies via home birth. This is far from the truth. In fact, nurse midwives are highly trained and credentialed to provide comprehensive care for life.

People have many misconceptions about midwifery care. Let's explore the facts.

1. Nurse midwives are different than doulas

A doula can help you through your pregnancy, labor and birth, but more as an emotional support coach. Doulas are not medical care providers.

A nurse midwife is a clinically trained nurse who receives further training and certification to provide medical care throughout life from

well-checkups to pregnancy, delivery and postpartum.

2. Nurse midwives provide in-hospital labor and delivery care

Another common misconception is that nurse midwives deliver babies only through home birth. While there are midwives that do home births, all our UChicago Medicine AdventHealth nurse midwives are licensed as advanced practice nurses and certified nationally to practice. We do all our deliveries in the hospital setting and collaborate with our OB/GYN physicians on high-risk cases.

3. Nurse midwives support women to make their own pain management choices

Your midwife is your partner through the labor and delivery journey. We support you in whatever decision you make, with, of course, our utmost priority being the safety of you and your baby. That relationship is the same no matter if you choose to give birth with or without an epidural.



Megan Belleavia
Healthbeat

4. Nurse midwives provide the full spectrum of women's care

It's common for people to think that nurse midwives only deliver babies, but in reality, a big and important part of a nurse midwife's care is annual and ongoing well-person care. During those visits, you and your midwife can talk about anything that's important to your health at that age and stage of life and health.

5. Midwives provide whole-health care for the body, mind and spirit

UChicago Medicine AdventHealth nurse midwives are particularly focused on helping clients thrive with a holistic approach to complete health in body, mind and spirit. Midwives promote patient autonomy and their involvement in their own care decisions, help people understand how their body is working and how and why it's changing, and how they can work to have the best life and experiences possible. Because of this approach, nurse midwife visits can be a little longer compared to traditional

OB/GYN appointments.

6. Nurse midwives have a positive working relationship with OB/GYN physicians

Our nurse midwives have a very collaborative and positive working team culture between other nurses and the OB/GYN physicians. We all work closely with nurses and patients to promote a vaginal delivery when safe and the best choice for the patient.

For women with high-risk pregnancies, our midwives collaborate with physicians. We are trained and equipped to do essentially the first line of care, even if high risk, and refer or collaborate when needed. In pregnancy, this could involve multiples or a chronic health condition. In non-pregnant people, it could be a condition like fibroids or menstrual problems.

Midwives are your partner on your healthcare journey, whether that's prevention, pregnancy care or overall wellness.

— Megan Belleavia is a certified nurse midwife with UChicago Medicine AdventHealth Medical Group.



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PULSE

Continued from Page 16

backyard vegetables while maximizing garden space. Construction material options also will be discussed. Time: 10 to 11 a.m. RR

■ Arbor Day Plant Sale

April 25-27
Morton Arboretum
4100 Route 53, Lisle
www.mortonarb.org
(630) 719-2468

Thousands of carefully chosen plants will be available for sale, and expert Plant Geniuses will be on hand to answer questions and suggest plants. Tickets must be purchased for a specific entry time in advance. Early access tickets allow shoppers to enter early Thursday, April 25. Hours: 9 a.m. to noon for early access, 1 to 4 p.m. April 25; 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. April 26 & 27. Tickets: \$32, \$47 for early access April 25. RR, MD

HEALTH & WELLNESS

■ Eating Strategies during

Please turn to Page 22

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PULSE

Continued from Page 18

Chemotherapy

April 25
Wellness House
131 N. County Line Road
www.wellnesshouse.org
(630) 323-5150

Getting enough food and water during treatment can be difficult when not feeling well due to side effects from chemo. Learn strategies from a registered dietitian for curbing or decreasing the severity of common side effects, such as nausea, poor appetite and taste changes. Time: 6 to 7:30 p.m. RR

HELP WANTED

■ Park Clean-up Day

April 22
www.villageofhinsdale.org/pr
Residents of all ages, Scout groups, churches, businesses and service organizations are invited to honor Earth Day by pitching in for this annual event. Tasks include planting trees and removing debris. Volunteers can request to

Please turn to Page 24

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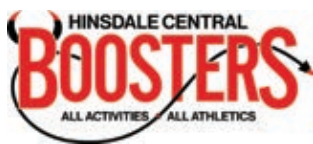
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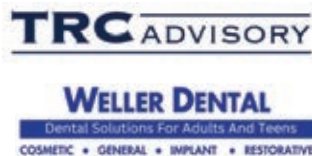
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DATE:

SUNDAY, MAY 19

TIME:

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- Raise \$500, win a WALK fanny pack!
- Raise \$1000 or more, win a WALK tote!

Continued from Page 22

work at a specific park. Hours: 4 p.m. to dusk. RR

JUST FOR KIDS

■ Earth Day Craft & Snack

April 22
Hinsdale Public Library
20 E. Maple St.
www.hinsdalelibrary.info
(630) 986-1976
Kids in kindergarten

through fifth grade can celebrate Earth Day by making a craft and enjoying a sweet snack. Time: 4 to 5 p.m. RR

■ Homework Helpers & Reading Ambassadors

Tuesdays in April
Hinsdale Public Library
20 E. Maple St.
www.hinsdalelibrary.info
(630) 986-1976
Students in kindergarten through eighth grade can

drop in to receive one-on-one homework or reading help from a local high school student volunteer. Time: 4 to 5 p.m.

LISTEN & LEARN

■ A Year Inside College Admissions

April 24
Hinsdale Central auditorium
5500 S. Grant St.
www.d181foundation.org

For an entire admissions cycle, Jeff Selingo was embedded in three admissions offices and followed a group of high school seniors through the process, as well as players behind the scenes, including marketers, financial aid consultants and rankers. Hear Selingo dispel the entrenched notions of how to compete and win at the admissions game, share why families should broaden their notion

of what qualifies as a “good” college and explain how the COVID-19 pandemic will impact admissions in the long run. The program is part of the Community Speaker Series sponsored by District 86, District 181 and the District 181 Foundation. Time: 7 to 8:30 p.m. RR

■ United Foods of America: Mexican Inspirations

Please turn to Page 26



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Tom Lupfer
Owner & President
Lupfer Landscaping

In recent years, the landscaping industry has seen a significant shift toward consolidation, with corporate-owned entities increasingly infiltrating the market. While these companies may offer wide service coverage, several drawbacks are increasingly evident.

- 1. Lack of Personalized Services:** Corporate-owned landscaping companies tend to focus on profit margins over quality.
- 2. Lower Quality of Service:** With a focus on maximizing profits and efficiency, corporate-owned companies may compromise on the quality of service, leading to hurried jobs, use of lower-quality materials, or less attention to detail.
- 3. Less Community Engagement:** An increasing number of companies are selling out. Many times, the result is not only less personalized service and lower quality output, but sadly, less community engagement too.

It's important to note that some smaller, local companies are being bought out by larger corporate entities but are keeping their name. If the name on the truck doesn't belong to the owner of the company, you may want to hedge your bet on a locally owned and operated landscaping firm instead.

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PULSE

Continued from Page 24

April 25
Hinsdale Public Library
20 E. Maple St.
www.hinsdalelibrary.info
(630) 986-1976

In preparation for Cinco de Mayo, learn about the regional foods around the country that have roots in Mexican cuisine, from the California fish taco to the Texas fajita. Enjoy a few samples as well. Time: 7 to 8 p.m. RR

NOTEWORTHY

■ **'Around the World in 80 Minutes'**

April 27 & 28
Emmanuel Episcopal Church
203 S. Kensington Ave., La Grange
www.hinsdalechorale.org
(312) 510-1823

The Hinsdale Chorale will perform its spring concert featuring a wide array of traditional, folk, liturgical and dance songs from a variety of cultures around the world and in nine different languages.

Pieces include the traditional Zimbabwe greeting, "Sorida," folk songs from Newfoundland and Ireland, "Barun Barune," a traditional Iranian folk song and Eric Whitacre's "Five Hebrew Love Songs." Times: 7 p.m. April 27, 3 p.m. April 28. Tickets: \$20, \$15 for students and seniors.

ON STAGE

■ **'Putnam County Spelling Bee'**

April 18-20
Hinsdale South High School
7401 S. Clarendon Hills Road, Darien

The Hinsdale South Fine Arts Department presents this popular musical. Tickets may be purchased an hour before the show. Times: 7 p.m. April 18-20, 2 p.m. April 20. Tickets: \$20, \$10 for students.

■ **'Roald Dahl's James and the Giant Peach'**

Fridays to Sundays, April 19-28
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Please turn to Page 28

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Pet pic of the week

Dallas is a friendly, fun-loving 2-year-old who is looking for a forever home. He is friendly with other dogs and loves to play and zoom around. His white-and-brown markings make him look like a little cow, though he's much better at playing fetch than one. He'll chase tennis balls all day, then snuggle up with you in the evening to watch TV. Dallas is vaccinated, micro-chipped and neutered. He is approved for children 10 and older and his adoption fee is \$300. For more information, stop by the Hinsdale Humane Society Tuthill Family Pet Rescue & Resource Center, visit www.hinsdalehumanesociety.org or call (630) 323-5630. (photo provided)



Continued from Page 26

4384 Hampton Ave.
www.theatreofwesternsprings.com

Based on the poignantly quirky story, this new take on tale features a wickedly tuneful score and a witty and charming book. When James is sent by his conniving aunts to chop down their old fruit tree, he discovers a magic potion that grows a tremendous peach, rolls into the ocean and launches a journey of enormous proportions. Times: 7 p.m. Fridays, 11 a.m. & 3 p.m. Saturdays, 2 p.m. Sundays. Tickets: \$16, \$13 for kids.

RUNS & WALKS

Walk for Wellness House

May 5
Wellness House
131 N. County Line Road
www.wellnesshouse.org

Walk, run or join in the fun remotely with this annual event to benefit Wellness House, which provides free programs for people affected

by cancer. Register as an individual or as a team, and help raise money from family and friends. Time: 8 a.m. program, 8:30 a.m. walk/run. Cost: \$30.

STEPPING BACK

Finding Grace exhibit opening reception

April 30
Hinsdale Public Library
20 E. Maple St.
www.hinsdalelibrary.info
(630) 986-1976

Celebrate the rediscovered life of Hinsdale social reformer Grace Bagley, owner of the Frank Lloyd Wright Bagley House. Bagley worked closely with Jane Addams and made substantial contributions to reform efforts. Historians Julia Bachrach and Jean Follett will share a bit about the exhibit, and light refreshments will be served. The exhibit will run in the library's Quiet Room from April 30 to May 31. Time: 7 to 8 p.m. RR

Key
RR - registration required
MD - member discount



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Crossword Answers

V	A	M	P		N	B	A		S	T	O	P
E	R	A	S		A	L	B		L	E	T	O
T	E	N	A	C	I	T	Y		I	N	O	N
S	A	I	L	O	R		S	O	D	D	E	D
		M	O	O		S	E	E	R			
D	A	T		L	B	S		D	R	I	V	E
O	R	E	O		I	N	A		S	L	I	P
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		E	T	C	H		C	O	G			
T	O	M	A	T	O		E	T	U	D	E	S
A	V	E	R		T	E	N	S	I	O	N	S
R	A	N	I		E	M	T		S	N	I	T
A	L	T	O		L	O	S		E	T	D	S


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MIND GAMES

- ACROSS**
- 1 SIREN
 - 5 CAGERS' GP.
 - 8 HALT
 - 12 EVENTFUL PERIODS
 - 13 CLERIC'S TUNIC
 - 14 JARED OF "HOUSE OF GUCCI"
 - 15 PERSISTENCE
 - 17 PRIVY TO
 - 18 TAR
 - 19 LAID DOWN THE LAWN
 - 21 CATTLE CALL
 - 22 CRYSTAL GAZER
 - 23 NOT "DIS"
 - 26 SCALE ABBR.
 - 28 IMPETUS
 - 31 CRUNCHY COOKIE
 - 33 CHEF GARTEN
 - 35 FAUX PAS
 - 36 REDDISH DYE
 - 38 PC SCREEN TYPE
 - 40 SALTY EXPANSE
 - 41 LEAVE AN IMPRESSION?
 - 43 GEAR TOOTH
 - 45 SALSA INGREDIENT
 - 47 CHOPIN PIECES
 - 51 SAY IT'S SO
 - 52 STRESSES
 - 54 HINDU ROYAL
 - 55 911 RESPONDER
 - 56 TIZZY
 - 57 SAX RANGE
 - 58 - ANGELES
 - 59 JFK POSTINGS

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12				13				14		
15				16				17		
18						19	20			
			21			22				
23	24	25		26		27		28		29 30
31			32		33		34		35	
36				37		38		39		40
		41			42		43		44	
45	46					47		48	49	50
51					52	53				
54					55			56		
57					58			59		

- DOWN**
- 1 NOV. HONOREES
 - 2 BAILIWICK
 - 3 -- -PEDI
 - 4 SACRED SONG
 - 5 CAPITAL OF KENYA
 - 6 CRUNCHY SANDWICH
 - 7 VOID
 - 8 SMALL BURGERS
 - 9 CURLY STRANDS
 - 10 OKLAHOMA TRIBE
 - 11 FROGS' HANGOUT
 - 16 HIP
 - 20 BRITISH REF. WORK
 - 23 HOMER'S CRY
 - 24 "RIGHT YOU --!"
 - 25 MULTI-FAMILY DWELLING
 - 27 NBC WEEKEND SHOW
 - 29 COMPETE
 - 30 ECOL. WATCHDOG
 - 32 TORONTO'S PROVINCE
 - 34 EMPHASIZES
 - 37 PLAY SEGMENT
 - 39 PIXELS
 - 42 "MONOPOLY" BUY
 - 44 APPEARANCE
 - 45 SKATER LIPINSKI
 - 46 ELLIPSE
 - 48 WORD OF WARNING
 - 49 AUTHOR BAGNOLD
 - 50 BYGONE FLIERS
 - 53 PUNK-ROCK SUBGENRE

ANSWERS TO TODAY'S CROSSWORD CAN BE FOUND IN THE CLASSIFIEDS.

Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

	2			6	3		
		6	5	1			8
4				2			7
6					3		9
	5		8				4
	8	2		6		1	
		1	9				6 2
7					8		5
	9			4		7	

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ◆

- ◆ Moderate ◆◆ Challenging
- ◆◆◆ HOO BOY!

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SCRAMBLERS

solution

- 1. Burst; 2. Belong;
- 3. Weird; 4. Scare

Today's Word

WARDROBE



"Please explain to her that a fresh start does NOT mean a new..."

SCRAMBLERS

Unscramble the letters within each rectangle to form five common words. Then rearrange the letters to form the mystery word, which will complete the clue.

- TRUBS
- BENGOL
- DIWER
- ACRES

TODAY'S WORD

S	E	R	L	I	B	G	S	E	Z	A
U	L	S	B	R	E	Z	A	G	L	N
D	Z	Q	V	S	L	G	I	E	8	S
O	S	C	L	L	9	V	Z	8	6	W
K	L	V	9	Z	6	8	E	S	I	E
U	6	Z	8	E	S	I	L	V	9	R
	9	L	S	6	Z	E	8	I	V	
	8	9	Z	4	1	5	6	7	3	
	1	4	3	6	8	L	6	2	5	

HOROSCOPES

April 2024 Horoscopes • Week 4



CAPRICORN – Dec 22/Jan 20
Capricorn, you are ready to move forward, but others in your orbit may be holding you back. Know when to cut loose and do things according to your bigger vision.



ARIES – Mar 21/Apr 20
You can get your spark back with some help from friends, Aries. You may have been struggling in one form or another, but others can provide the perspective needed.



CANCER – Jun 22/Jul 22
Cancer, like it or not, you have to stand by a promise or a commitment you made to someone, even if you no longer feel like doing so. Once it is finished, you can go your separate ways.



LIBRA – Sept 23/Oct 23
Making room for your needs right now is challenging as others seem to require all of the attention, Libra. You will have a chance to balance the scales soon enough.



AQUARIUS – Jan 21/Feb 18
Thinking about all of the things in your life that may not be going to plan could have you feeling down, Aquarius. Flip the perspective and start focusing on the right things.



TAURUS – Apr 21/May 21
Taurus, you are a dependable rock and that comes with a lot of responsibility. Sometimes you may feel overwhelmed, and in those instances feel free to delegate some tasks.



LEO – Jul 23/Aug 23
Leo, if others have underestimated you or written you off in the past, you will have an opportunity to prove them wrong this week, even if you already know the truth.



SCORPIO – Oct 24/Nov 22
Right now you may be reluctant to commit or comment on an issue that is affecting some in your circle, Scorpio. You can get involved once you dig further and do your own research.



PISCES – Feb 19/Mar 20
Pisces, you are known for being a dreamer, but right now you have to come down from the clouds and develop a solid plan of action. There will be time for fanciful ideas later.



GEMINI – May 22/June 21
Too much joking around may strike a nerve of someone close to you, Gemini. Feel out every situation before you start communicating in such a laid back and jovial way.



VIRGO – Aug 24/Sept 22
Your keen eye for detail has you pointing out a mistake that may have cost someone a lot of money, Virgo. Your reward could be a promotion or another commendation.



SAGITTARIUS – Nov 23/Dec 21
Sagittarius, when you hang out with friends, you may be tempted to spend more than is in your budget at the moment. Set a limit, and perhaps leave your credit cards at home.

Central's Zust brings zest for coaching

Continued from Page 38

we still have work to do.”

She said the first thing she focuses on with players is mindset.

“That to me trumps what their physical capabilities are,” she said. “We all know softball is a game of failure. If you go one for three at bat, that’s considered success.”

Her approach doesn’t change when the team faces a particularly tough opponent.

“I do try to remind the girls on any given day, we can hit better than them. We can play better than them. It’s really making sure we play a full seven innings.”

Her message is getting through.

“She has always told us, ‘You are just as good. You need to play just as hard,’” said senior Naomi Cook of Hinsdale, who plays third base for Central. “That has instilled a level of confidence in all the players.”

Zust also emphasizes to players that if they make a mistake, they need to let it go and move on to the next play. And never give up. That lesson will help prepare them for life — as it did her.

“I think by involving these girls in sports and teaching them it’s OK to screw up, it’s part of life, but you have to pick yourself up,” she added. “I think softball does a great job of teaching that.”

Cook echoed that message when asked about the best advice she’s received from Zust, which is “The game doesn’t remember like you will.”

“If I were to make a mistake, she will be like, ‘The game doesn’t remember, so you have to do your best on your next play,’” Cook said.

Zust also makes each player feel valued and makes being part of the team enjoyable, Cook said.

“She really knows how to make every person feel



One of her players said Zust is more than a great coach, she’s a great person who is there if team members need anything — on or off the field.

appreciated for their skill or talent or personality they bring and is able to have a lot of fun while also being serious and putting in hard work,” Cook said. “She is a great morale booster.”

Contreras, who often takes

younger players to watch the varsity games at Central, agreed.

“You can just see it when she coaches, the enthusiasm that she has for the game, for the players,” he said.

Zust said she feels lucky to

have the opportunity to work with the girls on the team.

“I always brag in school. I say, ‘I coach the best kids in the building,’ and I truly believe in my heart that to be true.”



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SPORTS



Soccer clinic

From drills to races to games, attendees had their work cut out for them at the 26th annual Julie K. Heidecke tribute soccer clinic held at Hinsdale Central recently. Hinsdale Central's girls soccer team sponsored the free event. Junior Camila Leal and sophomore Katherine Skinner lead the campers in Simon says. Senior Grace Sakalosky helps out with some uniform adjustments and freshman Caitlin Doherty had a group of campers who held on throughout one of the drills. (Jim Slonoff photos)

SPORTS — ROUNDUP

STUDENT ATHLETE PROFILE

RESULTS



Matt Ruth
Clarendon Hills

What goals have you set for your senior year in volleyball?

My goal for our team is I want us to win regionals again this year, If we win that, it would be our fifth year in a row as a school. Personally, I want to make at least Second Team All State.

What do you enjoy about the sport?

I really enjoy how much of a team sport it is and getting close with my teammates.

How long have you played?

I started playing in eighth grade. That's when my older brother started playing, and I thought I might as well try it out, too.

What's been the biggest challenge?

I went through a couple big position changes. I went from middle to right side, and now I've made the transition from right side to outside hitter. The main adjustment I had to overcome was learning different footwork.

How would your teammates describe you?

I think as a kind, passionate and energetic. This year we have a lot more underclassmen starting on varsity, and I try to help develop them and help them progress. I was in that situation where I was having to learn

to play the game at a whole different speed.

What else have you been involved with at Central?

I'm president of the German club.

Where are you heading next?

Purdue University. I hope to either play club volleyball or just recreationally there.

Will you keep tabs on Red Devils volleyball?

I'll definitely be attending games when I can to watch my younger brother play.

Any special talents?

I can do a cartwheel.

Why does head coach Tom Gilbert like having Ruth on the squad?

Matt Ruth brings patience, experience, leadership and calm to a very young team. He is aware that he is the go-to player in our offense, however he makes it clear to his teammates that he wants them to be that option, too. Matt has done an excellent job in teaching the younger athletes the importance of having a balanced team. When he sees an important lesson to be learned in the middle of a match, he will make sure to communicate the value of that moment. He knows a win is just as important as leading by example.

— profile by Ken Knutson,
photo by Jim Slonoff

Badminton

April 13 vs. Red Devil Invite
V places 2nd with 41 points
1st singles
Sriparam, 4th, 2 points
2nd singles
Gupta, 4th, 3 points
3rd singles
Liu, 2nd, 6 points
4th singles
Malick, 2nd, 6 points
1st doubles
Jiao/Cameli, 2nd, 6 points
2nd doubles
Fang/Tu, 2nd, 6 points
3rd doubles
Graeb/Shen, 2nd, 6 points
4th doubles
Radziszewski/Parvataneni, 2nd, 6 points
April 11 @ Glenbard West
V wins 15-0

Baseball

April 16 vs. Glenbard West
V loses 2-6
April 15 @ Glenbard West
V wins 15-2
Jurack, 3 RBIs
Clark, win, 5 strikeouts
April 12 vs. Willowbrook
V loses 1-8
April 11 vs. York
V loses 2-5
April 10 @ Downers North
V loses 2-10

Gymnastics, boys

April 16 @ LT/York
V places 2nd with 123.5 points
Floor exercise
Cihlar, 2nd, 9
McDaniel, 9th, 7.7
Truong, 10th, 7.1
Pommel horse
Cihlar, 4th, 7.4
Truong, 6th, 5
Ashby, 7th, 4.7
Still rings
Cihlar, 3rd, 8
Ahuja, 7th, 6.5

Ashby, 8th (tie), 6.4
Vault
Cihlar, 1st, 9.2
McDaniel, 6th (tie), 6.5
Truong, 8th (tie), 6.3
Parallel bars
Cihlar, 2nd, 8.7
Ashby, 5th, 6.7
Ravanasa, 8th, 6.2
Horizontal bar
Cihlar, 2nd, 9
Ashby, 6th (tie), 4.8
Ravanasa, 9th, 4.3
All around
Cihlar, 3rd, 51.3
April 11 vs. Downers North
V loses 124-143.8

Lacrosse, boys

April 16 vs. Glenbard West
V loses 2-11
April 11 @ OP-RF
V loses 6-7

Lacrosse, girls

April 13 vs. Carmel (Ind.)
V wins 9-8
Moncrief, 5 goals
Parker-Briones, goal, assist
Brzozowski, goal
Linn, goal
Vande Lune, goal
Venetsanopoulos, 3 assists
Schultz, 3 saves

Soccer, girls

April 16 @ OP-RF
V wins 4-2
McDonnell, 2 goals
Rohn, goal
Sakalosky, goal
Anderson, assist
Bingham, assist
Steines, assist
April 10-13 @ Plainfield North Classic vs. Andrew
V wins 4-1 vs. Geneva
V loses 2-3

Softball

April 15 vs. OP-RF
V loses 2-9
April 12 @ Providence Catholic
V loses 3-13
April 11 @ Leyden
V loses 2-10

Tennis, boys

April 13-14 @ McCallie Shootout (Tenn.) vs. Harvard-Westlake (Calif.)
V loses 3-4 vs. McCallie
V loses 1-6

Track, boys

April 13 @ Downers South Invite
V places 6th with 60 points
100 meters
Bots, 9th, 11.5
Lyne, 14th, 11.81
Walsh, 31st, 12.63
200 meters
McInerney, 8th, 23.48
Goebel, 23rd, 25.29
400 meters
Bandukwala, 2nd, 49.06
Coan, 9th, 53.27
800 meters
Ferren, 15th, 2:06.44
Mikaili, 16th, 2:06.81
Cubbin, 22nd, 2:12.35
1,600 meters
DiCianni, 12th, 4:42.65
Revord, 17th, 4:48.42
3,200 meters
Kurimay, 4th, 9:49.58
Rogers, 6th, 10:05.15
110-meter hurdles
Olaitan, 14th, 22.13
Goebel, 15th, 23.17
300-meter hurdles
Olaitan, 8th, 45.54
Goebel, 14th, 49.25
4x100 relay
Lyne, Bots, Parkins, McInerney, 5th, 44.37
4x200 relay
Lyne, Bots, Parkins, McInerney, 2nd, 1:32.83
4x400 relay

Morrissey, Coan, Bandukwala, Parkins, 11th, 3:46.58
4x800 relay
Cubbin, Garg, DiCianni, Doorhy, 6th, 8:38.07
Shot put
Ortiz, 5th, 15.33m
Stamer, 11th, 13.06m
Discus
Koschik, 10th, 34.6m
Stamer, 20th, 29.25m
High jump
Prieto, 4th, 1.8m
Stach, 9th, 1.7m
Pole vault
Khatau, 4th, 3.71m
Long jump
Parkins, 2nd, 6.13m
McInerney, 4th, 5.97m

Track, girls

April 12 @ Devilette Invite
V places 1st with 122 points
100 meters
Dorris, 3rd, 13.09
Tresslar, 4th, 13.28
200 meters
Tresslar, 2nd, 27.18
Dorris, 3rd, 27.36
400 meters
Gilmartin, 5th, 1:02.84
Elsdon, 7th, 1:03.48
800 meters
Boyd, 1st, 2:23.85
1,600 meters
Satre, 4th, 5:28.35
3,200 meters
Griffin, 1st, 11:57.26
100-meter hurdles
Leech, 5th, 17.51
Abu-Ghazalah, 10th, 18.32
300-meter hurdles
Leech, 3rd, 51.28
Abu-Ghazalah, 4th, 51.31
4x100 relay
Dorris, Tresslar, A. Hodneland, Gilmartin, 1st, 50.34
4x200 relay
Gilmartin, A. Hodneland, Tresslar, Dani, 2nd, 1:48.5
4x400 relay

A. Hodneland, Gilmartin, Boyd, Elsdon, 2nd, 4:12.99
4x800 relay
Gilmartin, Alcalá, Giannini, Angelopoulos, 4th, 10:51.89
Shot put
Veliz-Hernandez, 10th, 7.69m
Ford, 12th, 7.48m
Discus
Veliz-Hernandez, 6th, 24.27
Kawa, 10th, 20.83m
High jump
Chillo, 5th, 1.47m
Dani, 7th, 1.42m
Pole vault
Bisch, 9th, 2.44m
Hamelka, 10th, 2.29m
Long jump
Moser, 1st, 5.15m
Bonino, 2nd, 5.12m
Triple jump
Moser, 2nd, 10.8m
Bonino, 6th, 10.52m

Volleyball, boys

April 16 @ Willowbrook
V wins 29-31, 27-25, 25-22
April 10 vs. Oswego
V loses 25-27, 25-18, 17-25

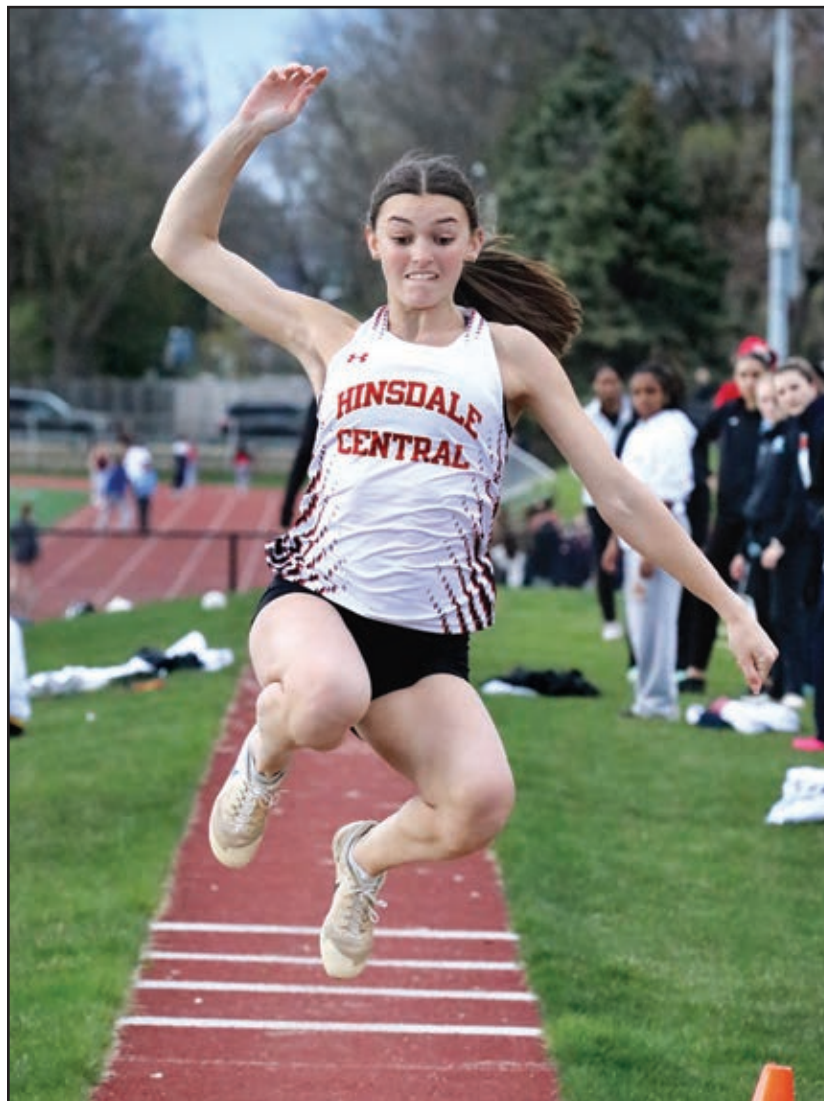
Water polo, boys

April 16 @ Glenbrook North
V wins 8-7
April 12-13 @ Best of the West vs. Lincoln-Way West
V loses 8-9 vs. Mundelein
V ties 8-8 vs. Sandburg
V loses 6-10 vs. Naperville North
V loses 8-20
April 10 @ LT
V loses 5-13

Water polo, girls

April 10 vs. LT
V loses 0-8

Instant replay



Mallory Moser takes flight in the long jump event Friday as Hinsdale Central hosted the Devilette Invitational for girls track. Moser and teammate Avery Bonino took the top two spots in the long jump, helping the Red Devils capture top honors as a team. (Jim Slonoff photo)

SPORTS

Central's Zust brings zest for coaching

Former Illinois Benedictine star now sharing her wisdom with Red Devil softball teams

By Pamela Lannom
plannom@thehinsdalean.com

When Brittany Zust first became head coach of the varsity softball team at Hinsdale Central, she quickly recognized one goal she needed to achieve: grow youth softball.

The Orland Park native said many Chicago suburbs — particularly in the southwest — have competitive softball programs for young girls that lead to experienced high school players. That was not the case in Hinsdale, and she discovered not everyone agreed it should be.

"Stop trying to bring a blue collar sport to a white collar town," one feeder school official told her. "That was the fuel I needed to change things, because I don't believe that to be true."

But many others were happy to help in the effort, and some of the little girls she helped introduce to softball now are in high school.

"That's pretty cool to see that come full circle," Zust said. "In fact, I have one of those students in my class right now."

Steve Contreras, dad to Grayson, a Hinsdale Middle School sixth-grader, said Zust is a wonderful ambassador of the sport to younger kids.

"She coaches varsity players and deals with that age group and skill group," he said. "At the same time she related very well to the 5-year-olds, the 6-year-olds."

Having a strong youth program is critical to having a successful high school team, Zust said.

"Even though I think we've done a really good job in the last 10 years, you look at our surrounding suburbs — Downers Grove, La Grange — they have had softball in their youth programs for years, so they are a step ahead of us," she said. "We are definitely playing the catch-up game."

A lifetime passion

Zust began playing softball as a kid and continued to hone her skills at Carl Sandburg High School before playing shortstop at Benedictine College. There she was a member of two teams that reached



Brittany Zust, a star player at Benedictine University, has been working to grow youth softball in town in order to better prepare athletes for play at the varsity level. (Jim Slonoff photos)

the NCAA Division III Championships and served as team captain for three years. She still ranks second all-time in program history for batting average (.433) and hits (244). Her achievements were recognized last year when she was inducted into the Benedictine Hall of Fame

and described as "one of the most prolific offensive players to take the field for Benedictine."

She said she was humbled by the honor.

"It was cool, because that night all my old teammates showed up. My old coach got to induct me," Zust said. "It's a very surreal moment and it makes you grateful for all the memories, grateful for all the laughs."

The night also served as a reminder that despite the number of wins she and her teammates achieved (137 in four years), the team's record wasn't what she remembered most about playing ball in college.

"When I got inducted I was not thinking about all the wins. I was thinking about all the great memories I had with my teammates and my coach."

From player to coach

After graduating from Benedictine in 2012, Zust

spent a year coaching JV softball and teaching at Addison Trail High School before joining the staff at Central. She was hired as a special education teacher and assistant softball coach.

"It was a good segue just to kind of see how things ran here and what were some of the strengths and weaknesses of the program," she said.

Under Zust's leadership the program has expanded from just a varsity team about the time she took over as head coach to now fielding two JV teams as well.

"Every kid made varsity, and that just doesn't work, especially when you have girls who have never played before," she said. "We're thrilled that we can say we're at three levels. Our next jump would be to make all three levels competitive. Although I'm extremely pleased with where we are now, I know

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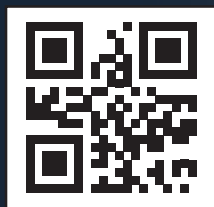
He wasn't at the game Monday, but Zust said her 23-month-old son, Brady, has become the unofficial bat boy for the team.



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*Based on Zillow and Google for Clarendon Hills, Hinsdale, Western Springs, Oakbrook, and Burr Ridge as of 02/28/2023.
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