

Always Teaching, in the Classroom and on the Court

By Tony Hooker
Staff Writer

Corey White has a plan. The head basketball coach for the Villa Grove Heritage Hawks has plenty of ideas in mind for his team, for his career, and for his life. I recently had a chance to sit down with Coach White to learn a little more about him and what's on his mind.

You grew up in Newman, correct?

I grew up in Newman. I went to Newman grade school until sixth grade, and then the consolidation happened and I finished up my career at Shiloh. I graduated in 2000.

Then you went to Eastern?

Yes, I went to Eastern Illinois and spent four and a half years down there, going through the education program for Math. While I was down there, I was a student assistant for the men's basketball team under Coach Rick Samuels. I learned a lot of things, doing that!

Family-wise?

I'm married to Shawn and I have two step kids, Austin and Teagan and then two boys of my own, Rylan and Kaden. They're fourth and fifth graders.

Are they ballers?

Yep! <smiles> Rylan's playing fifth grade basketball here in Villa Grove since we don't have a fifth grade team at Heritage. Kaden's been practicing with them, getting some skill work in. He helps them out in practice.

Have you always taught at Heritage?

No, I spent ten years at Shiloh as a math teacher and then a job opened up at Heritage. I was living in Homer, and knew the kids were going to be going there, so I applied for the position and got it. This is my fifth year, now.

Have you moved from the teaching role into administration?

A little bit. I still teach for five periods out of the day, and then for two periods, I'm a Dean.

Is that something you hope to transition to, down the

road?

I'm hoping to transition to something a little bit further down the road, maybe a principal's position. We've gone the last couple of years with a Superintendent/Principal at the high school. Hopefully we'll move toward a full time principal and I'm hoping to maybe take that position if it's available and offered.

I know you were a thousand point scorer in basketball at Shiloh. Did you play other sports?

Yes, I played football, and baseball there at Shiloh in addition to basketball. I started all three sports from my sophomore year on. I earned all-conference recognition in football and basketball.

Shiloh was part of a co-op then?

Yes, East Central. That actually started when I was a sophomore. It was football and tack only, at that time. Later on, after I graduated they added baseball. The first season, when I was a sophomore, it was just called "the co-op"! <laughs> It was kind of the strangest thing ever. I think I still have a ball cap that has "co-op" on it, with an H and an S on it.

So you're no stranger to these co-ops, then, are you?

I've been involved in co-ops pretty much my entire high school career and my coaching career. My sophomore year of college, I started coaching football, back with East Central. Then, for about six years, I coached golf and helped out with the baseball team. Then when I made the move, it just happened to be into another co-op situation with Villa Grove Heritage.

What's your favorite sport to play?

Basketball's always been my favorite sport to play. It's always been my passion.

What is your role with the football team?

I'm an assistant coach. I've been working with the linemen the last couple of years. I've worked with receivers and linebackers in the past.

What position did you play?



Coach White with his team.

I started out on the offensive line and then moved to tight end as a senior. Defensively, I started on the line and then moved to linebacker my senior year. That's where I made all-conference, was at linebacker.

Let's talk about your team this year. Off to a really good start, but as a coach, I'm sure you aren't ever satisfied, right?

I always tell our kids, "You always want to strive to be perfect, even though no one is ever going to be." We're off to a great start. We took third place in the Thanksgiving tournament, even though we were probably the second best team. Then we came back and won the Christmas tournament, here at home, and that was a plus.

I saw you get pretty emotional after the win. Why did it mean so much to you?

I think it was just all the build-up. After 15 years of coaching and all the work we put into it, we wanted to build a program and I think we're on our way to doing that. It was just a culmination of seeing it happen, winning the championship with a group that's really bought in to what we're trying to teach them. It just kind of took over. It's a tough tournament, with 5

games in 3 days, and it just kind of took an emotional toll.

How good can you be this year?

I'm not sure. I don't think we've played our best game yet. It seems like if we're hitting from outside, we're struggling inside, and if we're doing well inside, we're struggling outside. I don't think we've put it all together yet. Once that clicks all at once it could be interesting to see what happens. It's been nice to have balance.

Do you still have your passion for teaching?

Oh yes. I've always enjoyed helping kids out. I think my patience sometimes has been what's most helpful, especially teaching math. I like to try to change things up from year to year to keep that passion going.

How long do you see yourself doing all these things?

I'm not sure. I've talked about maybe giving it up when my boy gets to high school, but I've had people telling me that I can go longer than that. We'll see, I'm just taking it year by year, at least at this point. The next three or four years here, I'm planning on doing it all, but I know at some point I'll have to look at giving it up and giving time to

the family that I've not given in the past. Right now, I'm still able to make it to their games.

How big a hero is Shawn Hill White? <laughing>

She's dynamic! She gets our boys to wherever they need to be. When I can, I'll try to take them so she can maybe have a little break and have the house to herself without the two boys fighting! She's a big hero to us! <smiles> She keeps things running in our house.

We've talked a little about the future, but do you think that future will be at Heritage?

I hope so. We're pretty well settled in our house there in Homer and are kids have their friends, not only in the Heritage building, but they've gotten to know a lot of Villa Grove kids through JFL and now through the 5th grade basketball program here in Villa Grove. Hopefully we can stay where we're at.

What do you think about the idea of districts for football? That could potentially be a dark subject.

I don't know. It's kind of a toss-up. I can see where it can be beneficial for some districts but not for others. It can make for some murky water for a lot of the co-ops around the

state. I also see our numbers at Heritage, and we've got some big classes getting ready to graduate and some smaller ones coming behind them. I'm just not familiar enough with Villa Grove to know what theirs look like. I'd like to see it all stick together. I think that with those numbers coming in, we might change classes, even with the co-op. If other schools decide to break up and go with the 8-man football, like a lot of them have discussed, that could bring the number up, as well. You never know what's going to happen. I think the kids have bought in to friendships that have come from this co-op. I still have buddies from the old East Central days. It made the rivalries a bit more heated when it came to the sports that we didn't co-op in, but we've remained buddies.

Does Dad help you out?

He's usually the first phone call I make after a game, especially if he's been at the game and we've lost. I always ask him for things he thinks we could have done differently. He's very good at coaching fundamentals and development, that's the main thing I had him teaching when he was a volunteer assistant at Shiloh. He came in and really helped kids with their shot.

Your win in the BSN tournament was the first time I've ever covered a basketball team that won a title. Am I finally going to get to cover a regional champ?

I hope so! It could be a tough regional. We'll see who falls in. The good news is that we get to host it. It was a big deal winning the Christmas tournament on our home floor. I didn't realize until Mr. Davis said it at the trophy presentation that we had never won it at home before.

Is there anything I've left out? Anything you would like to add?

I don't think so. Our kids have done real well, so far. We're going to keep trying to improve and see where it goes, from the conference tournament on.

Sidney Village Board Appoints Trustee John Finn to Serve as President, Discusses Village Jobs cont'd from pg. 1

tional motion from Trustee Jason Arrasmith seconded by Trustee Tyler Bickers to post the job internally for 10 days before posting it in the paper to the general public carried.

Village of Sidney Operations Manager and Water Superintendent job description carried. A motion from Trustee Cyndi McCloud

Sidney Janitor job descriptions were discussed. A motion from Trustee Cyndi McCloud seconded by Trustee Tyler Bickers to accept the Village of Sidney Operations Manager and Water Superintendent job description carried. A motion from Trustee Cyndi McCloud

to accept the Village of Sidney Janitor job description also carried.

Next discussed was the Village of Sidney Maintenance Employee job description. An individual hired for the position will have a 90 day probation period with pay beginning at \$16.50 an hour increasing to \$17.50 an hour after the 90 day probation. A \$2.00 pay increase will be included upon completion of obtaining a Class C Water License if one is needed along with possible merit pay raises. The individual would also need to become a resident of Sidney, Illinois within six months of being hired. A motion from Trustee Cyndi McCloud seconded by Trustee Jason Arrasmith to accept the Village of Sidney Maintenance Employee job description carried.

A motion from Trustee Tyler Bickers seconded by Trustee John Finn to post the Village of Sidney Maintenance Employee job in the newspaper and at the Village of Sidney website carried.

A motion from Trustee Cyndi McCloud seconded by Trustee Jason Arrasmith to accept the Village of Sidney Treasurer job description with a pay rate of \$400.00 a month carried.

Finally a motion from Trustee Cyndi McCloud seconded by Trustee John Finn to accept the Village of Sidney Summer Help job description for 20 hours a week at \$10.00 an hour running from the end of school in the spring (May) to the start of the next school year and posting of the job carried.

The Village of Sidney Board of Trustees special meeting was brought to adjournment at 8:18 p.m. following a motion from Trustee Cyndi McCloud and a second by Trustee Jason Arrasmith.

It's Time: 2019 Illinois Tax Filing Season

IDOR Continues to Save State Tens of Millions Through Fraud Prevention Efforts

SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Department of Revenue ("IDOR") will begin accepting 2018 state individual income tax returns on Monday, January 28, the same date that the Internal Revenue Service ("IRS") begins accepting federal individual income tax returns. IDOR is reminding taxpayers that filing tax returns electronically and requesting direct deposit into a checking or savings account is still the fastest, most secure way to receive a refund.

IDOR's continued focus on identity theft and fraud prevention resulted in the prevention of more than \$66 million in refund fraud in

2018. IDOR will continue to work with the Internal Revenue Service and other states to strengthen protections for tax payers from tax fraud and identity theft.

As a part of IDOR's ongoing fraud prevention efforts, taxpayers who receive an identity verification letter may now authenticate electronically through IDOR's free online account management program, MyTax Illinois. In the past, identity authentication required written documentation sent via paper mail, creating a time-consuming process for the taxpayer and IDOR.

MyTax Illinois will begin accepting individual income tax returns on January 28. Taxpayers can file their Forms IL-1040 for free using

MyTax Illinois. Individuals may also utilize MyTax Illinois to make payments, check the status of their Illinois Individual Income Tax refunds using the Where's My Refund? link, and look up their IL-PINs, amounts of any estimated tax payments they have made, and (when necessary) amounts reported on Form 1099-G.

IDOR anticipates direct deposit refunds will be issued approximately four weeks from the time an error-free electronically-filed return is submitted.

For the most up-to-date information, forms, schedules, and instructions for the 2018 tax year, please visit IDOR's website at: tax.illinois.gov.

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Take a Trip to the Mediterranean for Heart Health cont'd from pg. 3

Directions:

- Combine ricotta cheese, yogurt, lemon zest and fresh lemon juice in a bowl. Stir well.

- Top with raspberries, blueberries and pecans.

Nutrition Facts: 307 Calories, 16 Grams Fat, 22 % DV Calcium, 20 Grams Protein

Greek Style Quesadillas
Yield: 8 servings
Serving Size:- ½ quesadilla; ¼ cup tzatziki sauce

Quesadilla Ingredients:
8 (8-inch) whole wheat flour tortillas
1 (10-ounce) package frozen chopped spinach, thawed and drained

1/2 cup Kalamata olives, chopped
1/2 cup sun dried tomatoes in olive oil, drained and chopped

2 cups mozzarella cheese, shredded

1 cup feta cheese, crumbled

Tzatziki Sauce Ingredients:

1 cup plain Greek yogurt
1 cup cucumber, finely diced

½ teaspoon garlic powder
1 tablespoon fresh dill, chopped

1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice

1 teaspoon lemon zest

Salt and pepper, to taste

1 tablespoon olive oil

Directions:

- To make the tzatziki sauce, combine Greek yogurt, cucumber, garlic, dill, lemon juice and lemon zest in a small bowl; season with salt and pepper, to taste. Drizzle with olive oil. Refrigerate for at least

10 minutes.

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper or foil.

- Top a tortilla with ¼ of the spinach, olives, sun dried tomatoes and cheeses, and then top with another tortilla. Repeat with remaining tortillas to make four quesadillas.

- Place quesadillas onto the prepared baking sheet. Place into oven and bake until the cheese has melted, about 10-12 minutes. Let stand 5 minutes. Cut prepared tortillas into quarter sections.

- Serve immediately with tzatziki sauce.

Nutrition Facts: 392 Calories, 22 Grams Fat, 31 % DV Calcium, 19 Grams Protein