

# Solon TIMES

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## Solon speech and debate becoming a dynasty

By MICHELE COLLINS

Earlier this month, the Solon High School Speech and Debate team solidified what was already well-known in speech and debate circles in the state and in the nation.

Solon High School has become a speech and debate dynasty.

Solon's team, consisting of 52

state qualifiers, won the 2023 State Championship for Speech and Debate and crowned individual state extemporaneous speech champion, senior Dev Ahuja, for the third consecutive time.

Two debaters, seniors Viresh Mittal and Sarah Liao, were crowned state champions in the policy debate

team competition.

And Solon's Vikram Sundaram, also a senior, was named the District Speech and Debate Student of the Year by the National Speech and Debate Association.

The team also was crowned state champions in 2022.

In 2022, Solon High School was

named a top ten school in the nation for speech and debate.

The 2023 speech and debate state tournament enabled Solon Speech and Debate Coach Dan Ceci to have the full-circle moment of completing his team's take-down of the state competition at his high school alma

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## Happy St. Patrick's Day!



Photo by Michael Steinberg

Dan Clark, owner of D & R Bagels along with his wife Rita, moves his St. Patrick's Day green bagels, from boiling to baking, at the Solon deli and restaurant. D&R Bagels turns about 200 of their 1,200 daily bagels green for the holiday, a tradition customers have enjoyed for almost 30 years. Story on page 6.

## Ondich is 2022 Solon Police Officer of the Year

By MICHELE COLLINS

When Solon Police Officer Mark Ondich was young, his father made him promise that whatever career he chose, to be sure to do what was necessary to be the best at it he could be.

Last month, Officer Ondich made good on that promise, as he was selected as the Solon Police Department's 2022 Officer of the Year.

Officer Ondich said that he was "surprised and humbled" by his selection, adding that, "Solon has so many good officers, almost everyone could have been selected." According to Solon Police Chief Rick Tonelli, "Officer Ondich

was chosen because he showed professionalism and compassion during some very difficult calls over the past year. His fellow officers recognized him for this."

Officer Ondich said that one reason that he is happy about receiving the award is because it recognizes him for a job he truly loves.

"I knew what I wanted to do from a very young age," said Officer Ondich. "I didn't want to waste any time, so I enrolled in the police academy at the age of 20, and started as an officer with Newburgh Heights right after I graduated."

He said he also remembers watching shows like "America's

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## BOE approves academic trips, moves toward rehiring seven retiring teachers

By MICHELE COLLINS

The Solon City Schools Board of Education approved out-of-state student trips at its March 13 board meeting, enabling Solon High School state champion academic-based teams to go to national competitions.

According to district policy, any trip outside of Ohio must be approved by the board.

The Solon Speech and Debate team won the state tournament and qualified for the National Speech and Debate Tournament.

The national tournament, sponsored by the National Speech and Debate Association, will take place in Phoenix, Arizona, June 10 to 17. At least 14 students have qualified

for nationals.

The board also approved a trip for the Solon High School Academic Challenge Club to travel to Atlanta, GA, from May 26 to 28 for the National Academic Quiz Tournament's High School National Championship Tournament.

"This is another example of how successful our students have been in this type of team competition," said Solon Superintendent Fred Bolden. "Our students continue to achieve this kind of state and national recognition. We are all very proud of them and wish them well in the competitions."

In other business, the school board took the second step in the

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