



NORTHERN ILLINOIS NEWSPAPER ASSOCIATION

# 2020 NEWS COMPETITION



# SPORTS COLUMNIST, COMBINED

Barry Rozner, Daily Herald

“It might seem like Rozner finds a good tale and gets out of its way. On the contrary, he grooms the reader’s path expertly.”

Dick Peach, Evanston RoundTable, 2nd place  
Aimee Barrows, Kane County Chronicle, 3rd place

## After her infamous ask to Patrick Kane, whatever happened to Peggy Kusinski?

**P**eggy Kusinski was driving through a fog so thick even the fog couldn't see where it was going.

Still, she turned the key, tapped the gas and sped forward. It's dangerous, sure, but that's what you do. Besides, who's going to care? Everyone has their head down, looking at their phones. No one's interested in your problems.

So she kept going to work, kept trying to do her job, ignoring the pleas inside her own head, the ones asking her to step away.

Kusinski was headed down a country road at night with the lights off.

A crash was inevitable.

For 25 years, Peggy Kusinski was one of the most respected television journalists around.

Kusinski worked hard and asked harder questions for Chicago's NBC affiliate. She looked for stories and angles, understanding a line not crossed, the line between pomposity and notepad not so much crossed as trampled all over these days, obscuring what had previously been a sacred and professional demarcation.

But by the fall of 2013, Kusinski was struggling to do her job. One of nine siblings, her oldest sister, Pat Kusinski Smith, was very ill. Pat bravely fought breast cancer for 11 years and around Thanksgiving 2013 she took a terrible turn for the worse.

"I was with her as much as I could be, going to as many doctor appointments as possible,"



**Barry Rozner**

Peggy said. "When you're the person going through it, just because you're listening to the doctor doesn't mean you're hearing what he's saying, so I always wanted to be there."

"In January 2014, we went to an appointment and I was stunned by what I saw. In just a few weeks since Christmas, she looked so different ... and I knew."

"I knew this was it. I didn't know how long. So I told her, 'You say the word and I'll take a leave of absence.'"

"She said, 'Yeah, I think it's time.' My producer, Geoff Glick, and our vice president at Channel 5, Frank Whittaker, were so wonderful and understanding. There were some days I couldn't even talk on the phone, I was so emotional."

"They would say, 'Can you maybe just go to Bulls practice and get some sound?' My sister was in Highland Park, so I would go to the Berto Center (in Deerfield), or go to the Bears in Lake



**Peggy Kusinski interviews Andrew Shaw of the Blackhawks after Game 6 of the 2013 Stanley Cup Finals in Boston.**

Forest, do the interviews quickly, shoot my standup, leave it for my cameraman to edit, and go back to her house or the hospital."

"I did that for two months."

Until Pat died in April 2014, leaving behind a husband, a son and a huge number of relatives.

"We're a very close family. It was extremely difficult," Peggy said. "After my mom died, she ran the family."

"I relied on her for everything. She was my sounding board for work, family, my personal life, my

struggle with infertility. She was always there. I was heartbroken."

Peggy took a week off and returned for Blackhawks playoffs.

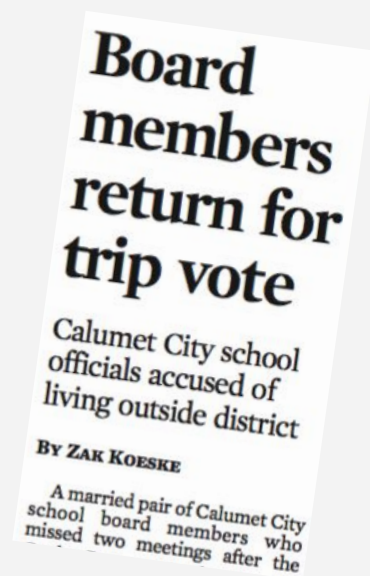
"I wasn't myself," she said. "I thought work would be a great release to take my mind off things. It wasn't."

"I had not ... I did not ..." she paused and searched for the words as she gazed out at the blue sky and brilliant sun bathing Medlana's grand property. "Grief

# EDUCATION REPORTING, COMBINED

Zak Koeske, The Daily Southtown

“Koeske demonstrates why the education beat is one of the best beats.”



---

Kevin Beese, Cook County Chronicle, 2nd place  
Madhu Krishnamurthy, Daily Herald, 3rd place

# RELIGION/OWEN PHELPS AWARD, COMBINED

Staff, The Observer

“Excellent, thorough series that provides great detail in a clear, interesting fashion.”

Amanda Hudson, The Observer, 2nd place  
Wendi Kromash, Evanston RoundTable, 3rd place



# USE OF HUMOR, COMBINED

Irv Leavitt, Cook County Chronicle

“Excellent political perspective with a good balance of humor and seriousness.”

Irv Leavitt, Cook County Chronicle, 2nd place  
Jim Baumann, Daily Herald, 3rd place



By Irv Leavitt

Lots of people are fretting over the possibility of electing Joe Biden president because he's 77. Not me.

I'm a White Sox fan. For us, age is relative. My team picked up Steve Carlton when he was 41, Ken Griffey Jr., when he was 38, Omar Vizquel when he was 43 and Tom Seaver and Orlando "El Duque" Hernandez when they were 39.

So much interest in over-the-hill players drives some fans batty. What good are great players when they're no longer great?

Actually, most of those guys were assets. Seaver won 31 games over two years, Griffey threw a runner out at the plate to save a one-game playoff, and Hernandez was a key to the team's only championship in anybody's lifetime.

All those players had comparatively diminished athletic capacity by the time they got to Chicago. But

Nixon never goes to China. You know that if elected, Biden is not going to hire a coal lobbyist to run the EPA, an oil man to run the energy department, and a secretary of education who dislikes public schools. If Mitt Romney or John McCain had been elected president, they wouldn't have done that, either. That kind of behavior is the province of our most special executive.

If Biden gets in, we're going to see familiar faces. John Kerry, Barack Obama's best secretary of state, will be doing that again, or something else for the new president. U.N. Ambassador Susan Rice is likely to be back. Half of Biden's primary opponents will probably be offered a position in the administration.

Biden's most significant strength has not diminished with age: His agility in the halls of Congress is unmatched by any president since Lyndon Johnson picked up bugles by their ears on the White House lawn.

Biden frequently says goofy things, but that's nothing new. He said goofy things when he was young, too.

And he's skilled at saying the wrong thing at the right time. I think a lot of people enjoyed the heck out of him telling that gent in Detroit what he was full of.

Biden talks slower than some other politicians, but that's not entirely due to age. He's best stammering in his 20s, but it keeps trying to come back and take over.

As for the possibility of Biden dropping dead in his first term: Not

good person to run with him on the ticket. You never know.

If I were Biden and the Democratic power elite, I would give strong consideration to Cory Booker, the young Senator from New Jersey. He is one of the kindest and humblest national politicians I have ever seen. They could use the slogan, "Nice Guys Finish First."

Worried about the potential for dementia? It could happen, and problems could ensue. But then again, it didn't seem to slow down the Reagan Revolution.

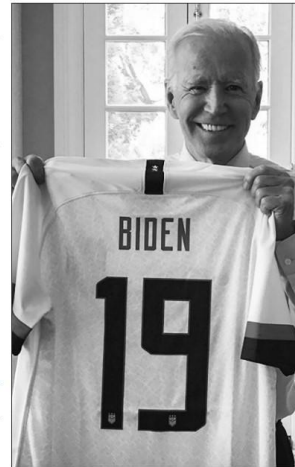
One of the best things about running an old guy for president is that by the time he's, say, 77, he must know how to do something. Biden was a U.S. Senator for 36 years before he was sworn in as vice president. He got a lot done in the Senate, but most people largely ignored him when he wasn't running for president.

That's what it's like to be from Delaware.

Biden is a few months older than a ballplayer I remember well from my youth, when he was pitching for the White Sox in relative obscurity. But Tommy John would move on to the Dodgers and the Yankees, and play in the Major Leagues for 26 seasons, the third-longest stretches in history.

John was considered by many to be washed up when he capped off a terrific 11th season by blowing out his arm. But, famously, a surgeon named Frank Jobe cut a chunk out of his forearm and sewed it into his elbow, and his wing worked again. He was

## Joe Biden and the Over-the-Hill Gang



Is Joe Biden too old for the game? (Biden campaign photo)

# VIDEO, COMBINED

Rick West,  
Daily Herald

“What a delightful  
story told beautifully.”



---

Karie Angell Luc, Pioneer Press Publications, 2nd place  
Rick West, Daily Herald, 3rd place

# **WEBSITE, COMBINED**

**Staff, Daily Herald**

**“The Daily Herald team gets it. The website is organized well and updated regularly. This is a top-notch site.”**

---

**Staff, Cook County Chronicle, 2nd place**

**Staff, Evanston RoundTable, 3rd place**



# SPOT NEWS STORY, COMBINED

Eric Peterson, Elena Ferrarin  
Daily Herald

“This entry clearly shows that reporters were on the scene talking with witnesses and observing the mayhem for readers.”



---

Bob Seidenberg, Evanston RoundTable, 2nd place  
Kevin Beese, Cook County Chronicle, 3rd place

# HISTORICAL FEATURE, COMBINED

Ted Slowik, Daily Southtown

“Timely topic—an infectious disease outbreak—with a local historical angle. Does what a good historical piece should do: Makes the past relevant to today.”

Burt Constable, Daily Herald, 2nd place  
Jack McCarthy, Suburban Chronicle, 3rd place



Railroad tracks run through downtown Lemont in 1913. A recent blog post tells of events from 116 years ago that are similar to today's pandemic.

## Area historian recounts 1903 smallpox outbreak

Lemont epidemic reveals familiar conflict between health, financial, political worries



TED SLOWIK

Infectious disease outbreaks are nothing new, and history is full of stories in which public health and safety concerns seemed to conflict with economic and political considerations. From cholera outbreaks in the 18th century to the Spanish flu pandemic of 1918, the need to prevent the spread of a disease by staying home has repeatedly caused stress and disagreement.

In one instance, a group of armed farmers encircled Lemont and Lemont Township in late 1903 during a smallpox outbreak, according to author and historian Pat Carnalliere, a Lemont Public Library trustee and Lemont Area Historical Society Board member.

“The township was cordoned off to the outside world, while vigilante groups stopped terrified refugees from the town and turned them back on threat of death,” according to a published account. “Only footpaths and medical personnel were allowed to enter the village and township.”

but, recently published the account on her personal blog. She didn't write the original account, she said, and does not know who did. She edited it and published it in the 2016 book, “The History and Anecdotes of Lemont, Illinois, 6th Edition.”

“The historical society had accumulated these stories that had been researched and documented,” she said. “There were also some word-of-mouth stories.”

The recent blog post was shared on social media and summarized events from 116 years ago that bear similarities to today's COVID-19 pandemic. There, as now, people who criticized public safety found themselves at odds with those who seemed more concerned about money.

Farmers who took up arms to blockade Lemont seemed to value their lives above profit.



INCHING HOTLY UP

Author Pat Carnalliere, of Lemont, signs a book at an event. The time, Otto Emswiler, disagreed, saying, “It is only a case of chicken pox, and we are just instituting normal precautions,” according to the account. “Smallpox was an infectious disease that was eradicated in the account.”

“However, Lemont's mayor at the time, Otto Emswiler, disagreed, saying, ‘It is only a case of chicken pox, and we are just instituting normal precautions,’ according to the account. ‘Smallpox was an infectious disease that was eradicated in the account.’”

“However, Lemont's mayor at the time, Otto Emswiler, disagreed, saying, ‘It is only a case of chicken pox, and we are just instituting normal precautions,’ according to the account. ‘Smallpox was an infectious disease that was eradicated in the account.’”

# INFORMATIONAL GRAPHIC, NONDAILY

Jennifer Kranz, Cook County Chronicle

“Using Census data, the State of Disillusion infographic is an excellent depiction of where Illinois residents are moving out of state.”

---

Jennifer Kranz, Cook County Chronicle, 2nd place  
Katharine Ade, Evanston RoundTable, 3rd place

## State of Disillusion

Information from the U.S. Census Bureau shows that every area county lost population in 2017 (the latest available county-to-county migration figures). The Census Bureau data shows that Cook County was the biggest loser of population in Illinois with a drop of more than 50,000 people in the latest American Community Survey. The survey is an ongoing poll that provides vital information on a yearly basis about the nation and its people.

COUNTIES	NET LOSS	COUNTIES	NET LOSS
Cook	-53,137	Peoria	-2,052
DuPage	-10,153	Madison	-1,955
Kane	-4,651	McLean	-1,862
Lake	-4,495	Tazewell	-1,681
McHenry	-3,592	Kendall	-1,390
Winnebago	-2,486	Woodford	-380
St. Clair	-2,060	DeKalb	-121

### Top Destinations for People moving from Illinois

Indiana	31,556	Texas	19,241
Florida	27,622	Iowa	15,699
Wisconsin	25,155	Arizona	13,247
California	22,165	Michigan	10,193
Missouri	20,041	Tennessee	9,857



# HEADLINE WRITING, NONDAILY

Kevin Beese, Cook County Chronicle

“Clear, powerful headlines that tell the story all on their own, but also make the reader hungry to learn more.”

*As the red-light turns  
No telling where traffic-camera probe ends, expert says*

**Public dollars, private gains**

---

Jack McCarthy, Suburban Chronicle, 2nd place

Victoria Scott, Evanston RoundTable, 3rd place

# HEADLINE WRITING, DAILY

Melynda Findlay, Daily Herald

“Findlay’s clever headlines offer wordplay that elicit a smile and desire to read the story.”

---

Don Friske, Daily Herald, 2nd place  
Sean Stangland, Daily Herald, 3rd place

**Go fast, turn left, try not to crash**

*Sycamore Speedway  
in Maple Park*

Stock-car racing can be seen, up close and personal, on Friday and Saturday nights at the Sycamore Speedway in far western Kane County. The roar of engines, smell of exhaust, and the taste of a cold beer make for high-octane fun, even if you don't know a piston from a pinion.

The quarter-mile clay track in Maple Park hosts stock-car racing in the spring, summer and fall. The 2020 season starts April 25.

It's been doing so since 1963, when it converted from go-kart racing. Races are run in about a half-dozen divisions, including pure stock, street stock, late-model, badger and powder puff and spectator.

On Friday nights, after the last race, there is a demolition derby.

And there are special events, such as the Monster Truck Throwdown scheduled July 11-12.

• Sycamore Speedway, at 50W086 Route 64, Maple Park. Gates open for general admission at 6 p.m. Admission to regular events is \$12 for those 12 and older, \$5 for children ages 5 through 11, and free for those 4 and younger. Bring cash, because only the souvenir stand accepts credit cards. The track also sells pit passes, which give you priority access to the pit area. There are age restrictions. The raceway advises that people call ahead before visiting, because rain or other inclement weather may cancel events. (615) 885-5454, [www.sycamorespeedway.com](http://www.sycamorespeedway.com).



Sycamore Speedway's 2020 season starts April 25.

PHOTOS BY RICK WEST  
[rick@dailyherald.com](mailto:rick@dailyherald.com), August 2006

# GENERAL FEATURE, NONDAILY

Shea Lazansky, Oswego Ledger

“This is a very touching tribute to a coach who was obviously well-loved and very special to the community ... nice color, great quotes and telling photos.”

Kevin Beese, Cook County Chronicle, 2nd place  
Wendy Fox Weber, Annie Alleman, Naperville Sun, 3rd place



# GENERAL FEATURE, DAILY

Burt Constable, Daily Herald

“These stories are so heart-wrenching. You told it honestly, without too much bitterness from the family but still showing a lot of love.”

---

Barbara Vitello, Daily Herald, 2nd place  
Madhu Krishnamurthy, Daily Herald, 3rd place

**Constable: 'Invisible beast' of COVID-19 makes family man die alone, and changes mourning**



Healthy and released from a rehab center, 91-year-old Robert Kanney was thrilled to return to his Vernon Hills home on March 24. Two days later, he learned someone with him in rehab had tested positive for COVID-19, and three days after that Kanney became another coronavirus death. (Courtesy of Anne Gulotta)

Show photos



Burt Constable



Updated  
4/8/2020 10:57 AM

Fully recovered from a bout of pneumonia, Robert Kanney was beaming for the photograph as he left his rehab center in Lincolnshire on March 24 and returned to his family in Vernon Hills.

"He was so excited to come home," remembers Anne Gulotta of Barrington, one of Kanney's three daughters, who looked forward to an eventual end of COVID-19 staying-at-home and a return to normalcy with big family gatherings. "We were raised with family. That was very important to my parents. Being committed to family was their thing."

# PERSONALITY PROFILE, NONDAILY

Shea Lazansky, Oswego Ledger

“The writer does a fine job portraying a creative and inspiring public servant.”

## ‘My life belongs to this community’ Kristi Vest reflects on small towns and the Oswegoland Park District

By SHEA LAZANSKY  
shealazansky.com

As Oswegoland Park District Superintendent of Events and Cultural Arts Kristi Vest told us, a rain-soaked playground in Glen Elgin inspired a

When the snow is in, Vest worked a day-long obstacle course through the Glen Elgin Park District. One day, Vest, the other employees and about 500 campers were going to run obstacle courses outdoors, but heavy rains had washed out the playground and turned it into a muddy field.

They ran the obstacle course anyway. “Kids were filthy — we held the parents back because they were going to get filthy — but the kids were filthy, and they loved that they were allowed to get filthy,” Vest said.

That “underdog” experience, Vest put it, was behind the creation of the Park District’s popular Pig Pen event.

Pulling from past experiences and finding her creativity, Vest led Vest to work around at the park district for about six years, leading up many of the most popular community events in the area.

Vest, a native of Glen Elgin, got her start in recreation at the age of 16, but it wasn’t until she joined the park district that she found her true calling.

“We had 100 kids seeing the value of recreation in creating community,” Vest attended the University of Illinois, where she planned to study education, until she realized that what she wanted to do most was to be a teacher.

I wanted to create recreation in education, so I decided that I would not do the education and leave that to the people who are passionate about education, she joked.

After graduation, Vest worked as a recreation supervisor at the Glen Elgin Park District, before moving to Boulder, where she and her husband found a



Oswegoland Park District Superintendent of Events and Cultural Arts Kristi Vest believes that the idea of a small town is culture, not based on population.



While everyone loves the idea of a small town, Vest believes it’s not about population size. “I think that the idea of a small town is culture, and when we create shared experiences and events like we have, I think that’s what happens as we have a chance to define and decide who we want to be,” she said.

“As a resident of the area, we have a responsibility to make sure we respect our neighbors’ choices to live, and that means that I may not know you, but I’m going to talk to you when you’re in line at the post office,” she said.

“That’s how we care about each other as we check in with each other. I don’t know you, I’m assuming you’re a friend, and that we will know each other by the

time we get through the [check-out] line.” This feeling, Vest believes, is what makes a small town special. “You’re not just a number, and you’re not just a name,” she said. “You’re a person, and you’re a part of the community.” Vest has been working at the park district for 20 years, and she’s proud to be a part of it. “I’ve seen so many special events happen here, and one of our first events with the park district was to coordinate volunteers for the Prarie Fire, which is a volunteer organization.”

One of the major parts of Vest’s passion, and one of her first roles with the park district, was to coordinate volunteers for the Prarie Fire, which is a volunteer organization. “The park district really finds itself in this town, people show up, and I believe in that, and I’m proud that I get to work for them,” she said. “Over the years, Prarie Fire has

See COMMUNITY, page 6

Kevin Beese, Cook County Chronicle, 2nd place  
Karie Angell Luc, Pioneer Press Publications, 3rd place



# PERSONALITY PROFILE, DAILY

Robert Feder, Jim O'Donnell

Daily Herald

“This obit package of this larger-than-life local personality combines an overview of a colorful career, warts and all.”



Burt Constable, Daily Herald, 2nd place  
Elena Ferrarin, Daily Herald, 3rd place

# BUSINESS/FINANCIAL COVERAGE, DAILY

Marie Wilson, Elena Ferrarin, Daily Herald

## Preparing for legal marijuana in the workforce

*Can employers ban recreational use among their drivers? Will they change drug tests?*

BY MARIE WILSON  
AND ELENA FERRARIN  
mwilson@dailyherald.com  
eferrarin@dailyherald.com

With Illinois poised to become the 11th state to allow adults to use recreational marijuana starting Jan. 1, employers are contending with questions about how to adjust.

Training managers to recognize marijuana impairment and anticipating future legal challenges are among issues in need of answers.

There are some certainties. The new law will not force employers to change

### More positive results seen in drug tests

- Employer drug tests are showing marijuana more often in results, but after Jan. 1, they're actually expected to show up less. See why on [PAGE 4](#)

whether they conduct drug testing, and it still will allow them to enforce zero-tolerance drug-use policies at work on all employees.

But some employers — especially those in the transportation and manufacturing

industries and other fields in which safety is critical — worry about how to make pot policies effective.

"We can maintain the drug-free policies, tell employees that they cannot be intoxicated at work. But at the same time, how do we enforce it?" said Jim Shanchuk, president of Silver Crown Valet in Naperville. "I'm concerned."

Some, such as the Naperville Park District, which has a zero-tolerance policy, say they plan to keep strict anti-drug rules in place.

"We aren't going to lessen our

See [MARIJUANA](#) on [PAGE 4](#)



MARK WELSH/dailyherald.com  
Jim Shanchuk, president of Silver Crown Valet in Naperville, said he's concerned about how to enforce drug-free policies at work after recreational marijuana becomes legal Jan 1. Here he's working on Water Street in Naperville.

---

Photojournalism staff, Daily Herald, 2nd place  
Eric Peterson, Bob Susnjara, Daily Herald, 3rd place

# TECHNOLOGY/MEDICAL, NONDAILY

## Meg Evans Smith, Evanston RoundTable

### ETHS Alumni Create Self-Sanitizing Copper Cell-Phone Case

Meg Evans Smith

Saturday, May 9, 2020 12:01 AM

Two Evanston High School graduates, eager to help on the current pandemic frontline, have created a product that could help reduce transmission of the new coronavirus: a cell phone case made of copper, which is known for its ability to kill microorganisms such as bacteria, fungi and viruses.

Nick O'Brien and Isaac Lichter – both ETHS class of 2016 – started researching and designing the case after Mr. Lichter and his roommate, Andrew Medland, contracted mild cases of Covid-19. While recovering, an article titled “Copper Kills Coronavirus” caught Mr. Lichter’s eye; he was intrigued by copper’s antimicrobial properties, and surprised he was not hearing more about it during a pandemic.



ETHS alumni Nick O'Brien and Isaac Lichter, together with their Vanderbilt University classmate Andrew Medland, created a copper cell-phone case.

---

Amanda Hudson, The Observer, 2nd place  
Karen Larkin Young, Evanston RoundTable, 3rd place

# TECHNOLOGY/MEDICAL COVERAGE, DAILY

Marie Wilson, Daily Herald

“Great blend of personal stories, experts and facts.”

## FACES OF DYSLEXIA

*How suburban carpenter, hockey pro and The Fonz are working with it*

BY MARIE WILSON  
mwilson@dailyherald.com

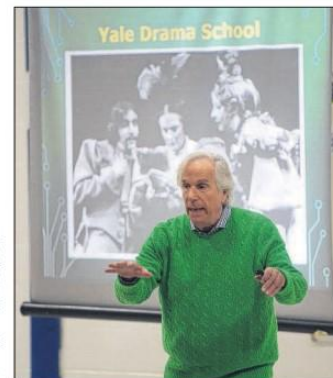
The Fonz from “Happy Days,” a defenseman with the 2010 Stanley Cup-winning Chicago Blackhawks and a construction contractor living in Bolingbrook all have one major thing in common: The way their brains work.

Actor Henry Winkler, hockey pro Brent Sopel and carpenter Jeremy Bailey have dyslexia, a learning disorder that experts say affects as many as one in five people to some degree. They’ve all struggled with self-esteem, self-acceptance

and everyday literacy, and they’re all speaking out to encourage others to seek diagnosis and assistance during October, which is Dyslexia Awareness Month.

Dyslexia isn’t what many people think.

It’s not the simple flipping of letters or numbers. It’s a diversity of brain function that causes difficulty recognizing word parts, sounding out words, spelling, reading and attaining language fluency. It is the most common neurocognitive disorder, affecting between 80% and 90% of people who have learning



JOE LEWNARD | jlewnard@dailyherald.com  
**Actor and children’s author Henry Winkler tells students at Longwood Elementary in Indian Prairie Unit District 204 how he was accepted into Yale despite having undiagnosed dyslexia.**

disabilities, according to the Yale Center for Dyslexia and Creativity.

The disorder is treatable with tutoring and the use of strategies to break

words into chunks, identify them and connect them with meaning. But it never goes away. And it

See **DYSLEXIA** on **PAGE 5**

Staff, Daily Herald, 2nd place  
Staff, Daily Herald, 3rd place

# COLUMNIST, NONDAILY

Irv Leavitt, Cook County Chronicle

“Great storytelling; easy, enjoyable reads.”

## A primer on living with dying alone



By Irv Leavitt

The music played, and I remembered what it was like to lose love forever.

Brahms Clarinet Quintet, Opus 115. I'd never heard it before, and I didn't know much about Johannes Brahms. But I love goes after it's stolen in the middle of the night.

The music historians say he lived much of his life with a broken heart.

For wounded music lovers, and those with other passions, there may come, with time, a moment when heartbreak is so palpable that it can be felt squeezing the center of one's chest.

It spreads out from there. Painful and numbing at the same time, it moves around to

the small of the back, and upward, to make the shoulders shiver. It takes over thought. Emotion breaks, and in its wake, something may change. Love thought stolen away forever may return as an almost tangible gift that you can open at will. Yours to husband or to share. Yours to inspire forgiveness of others and yourself. Yours for good and always.

The music doesn't make it happen. It just reminds you that it happened, that it's possible.

The plaintive notes of the strings flood in, and then they recede, and then the clarinet comes back fuller than before, and suddenly, it's not just Brahms' music anymore. It's yours.

Brahms, they say, was a lonely man. He knew great loss. Soon, you may, too, if you haven't had the experience already.

Many people around the world are now losing loved ones before they've had a chance to prepare. Family members and friends struck by this awful plague are quarantined after they've sickened, and they're cut off from them.

I hope you've been spared this tragedy. Your luck may not last, however.

There's something you should do right now, so that when the time of heartbreak comes, there's a gift of love to receive.

I know about these things. Death and I are on a first-name basis.

Death has come to my house, and I have also gone to meet him. I have argued with him. Won a few and lost quite a few more. He has made off with almost all of those I have held dearest. He tried to take me. And at times, I have helped him in his work.

I have tried to prepare for most of the deaths in my life, sometimes well and sometimes badly. I believe that if we ever want to wrap ourselves around that gift of lost and returned love, we have to prepare consciously, and fill the package in advance. We do that by saying the things we need to say to our loved ones now.

They need to know we love them, and that we forgive them and ourselves for everything that ever pushed us apart.

And if they are separated

from us while still alive, we should know the depths of our love for each other long before the gurney rolls down that cold and brightly lit hall.

The issues that got in the way can be talked about now. Most of them can't be that hard to deal with if they haven't completely ruined our relationships already. And if they're really that tough, just let them go.

After all, we should try to love our families and close friends the way our dogs love us. Unconditionally. What good is it to harbor resentments? Did anyone ever pass on while wishing they had held more grudges?

If we settle our lives before we're separated, the fact of our dying alone may be easier.

Mostly, we must admit, the tough part about dying alone is usually on the survivors.

When you're dying in America, you typically enter a new community of health professionals who minister to you. They become your families.

It's often a strain to respond to visitors, who sometimes

Continued on Page 6

Aimee Barrows, Kane County Chronicle, 2nd place  
Les Jacobson, Evanston RoundTable, 3rd place

# COLUMNIST, DAILY

Burt Constable, Daily Herald

“Good way to bring a national story to a local level.”



---

Paul Eisenberg, Daily Southtown, 2nd place  
Jim Slusher, Daily Herald, 3rd place

# EDITORIAL, NONDAILY

## Staff, Evanston RoundTable

**“A well-written editorial that shines light on a local issue and asks concrete, actionable questions of the people in power to address it. Great!”**

**John Etheredge, Oswego Ledger, 2nd place  
Staff, Evanston RoundTable, 3rd place**

### The District 65 School Board Should Take a Look at Bullying

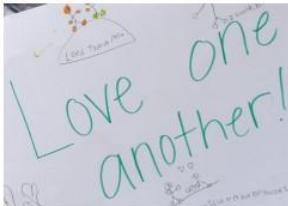
One of the goals in the District's five-year strategic plan adopted in March 2015 is to provide a "safe and supportive school climate." The stated goal is to "Ensure all District 65 Schools have positive school climates built upon clear and equitable policies and practices where all members of the school community feel emotionally and physically safe, included, and accepted."

On April 4, 2019, Superintendent Paul Goren sent a letter to the District 65 community. The letter said, "Recently, several concerns have been raised about bullying. We recognize the real and lasting impact that bullying can have on students and will never condone actions that have the potential to cause physical or emotional harm. We further recognize that until a child has their physical needs met, which includes feeling safe, they will not be able to engage in learning. For these reasons, we are committed to continuing to address issues of bullying to ensure that all children feel safe, welcome, and ready to learn."

We have heard complaints of bullying in the past year, some of which have persisted for extended periods of time. Many are heart-wrenching stories involving students with a disability. On one recent occasion, a mother of color told us in a lengthy email and a followup interview that her daughter had been physically threatened and bullied at school at various times during a two-month period.

School officials did take a number of steps to try to stop the threats and the bul-

lying, but the mother says the steps were ineffective and her daughter did not feel safe at school. She pulled her child out of school after a heated discussion with a school administrator and police were called.



Recognizing that we had only one side of the story, we asked Dr. Goren to comment on the situation, and he responded, "The issues raised reflect a very multifaceted and difficult situation. The [middle school team] has followed protocol in developing short- and long-term strategies to engage families and students in problem solving and solutions."

When we asked the school principal specific questions about the situation, we were told that many of our questions could not be answered due to student privacy laws. But the principal said, "We take bullying and conflict seriously ... and recognize the real and lasting impact that it can have on students. We care very deeply about the well-being and safety of every child. Members of our team have

a responsibility to both understand and address the physical and emotional trauma experienced by students as it relates to issues of bullying."

The principal also listed many things that the school is doing to stop bullying. In regard to a question about calling the police, the principal said, "Officers are only called to intervene in situations where there is a concern for student and adult safety," but the principal did not provide any details justifying why police were called in this particular instance.

We are left with a number of concerns about bullying that arise out of this incident and other incidents that we are aware of as well. We understand that the Board's Policy Committee is planning to consider bullying at its May 13 meeting. We hope Committee members will take a serious, in depth look at these issues:

First, are the schools properly and effectively implementing restorative practices and meetings? Are school staff taking the time to build trust with both sides? What are school staff doing to allay any fears that threatened or bullied students may have about participating in a meeting with those whom they perceive have threatened or bullied them over a period of time?

Second, do the schools have a responsibility to promptly stop any threats and bullying of a student, or is it okay if children suffer the trauma of threats and bullying for weeks or months? If restorative prac-

# EDITORIAL, DAILY

Jim Slusher, Daily Herald

“Expertly looks at perhaps the most existential issue facing the globe today through a hyperlocal lens, offering readers concrete examples of how the crisis will directly impact their lives.”

Pete Nenni, Daily Herald, 2nd place  
John Lampinen, Daily Herald, 3rd place

## Not just remote consequences Global warming will have direct effects on the economy, quality of life in our own region

Third in a series

When we think of global warming, certain images come immediately to mind — melting glaciers, rising sea levels, loss of animal species, even more and stronger hurricanes. Events like these can seem distant not only in time but in location. As bad as it is, a loss of polar bears somewhere decades in the future may not feel like an immediate or direct threat for people living in the heart of the American Midwest.

### Our View

But we don't have to look so far afield to see specific effects of climate change. We will experience them — indeed, already are experiencing them — here in the Chicago region and the state of Illinois.

The Illinois state climatologist, Department of Natural Resources and EPA as well as the National Weather Service, NOAA and many other agencies all have produced various pieces of the picture. Among



Spring rain accumulated in farm fields west of Chicago this spring posing challenges for farmers trying to get their seed planted. Experts say such problems will worsen in Illinois as the effects of climate change intensify.

the issues they foresee for the Midwest:

- Higher temperatures, naturally, but not just a matter of discomfort. Some studies predict heat-related deaths to increase by hundreds a year. Illinois' state climatologist

notes, "Under a higher emissions pathway, historically unprecedented warming is projected by the end of the 21st century."

- More precipitation in spring and winter. The National Climate Assessment notes, "Under a higher emissions data

showing precipitation could increase by as much as 10% to 20% in those seasons around the end of this century.

- More flooding. Most models predict heavier rainfall and snowfall events throughout the state by 2050, leading to drafts, property damage, transportation problems and disruption to one of Illinois' key industries, agriculture. The NCA notes that Midwest flooding in 2008 "caused 24 deaths, \$13 billion in losses and reduced agricultural yields, and ensured of key transportation routes."

- More drought. Ironically, while rains and snows will be heavier during parts of the year, longer periods of drought will occur at other times. Just such a scenario produced a serious problem this year for Illinois farmers, many of whom had to delay planting because of an unusually wet spring only to see crop yields suffer later in the growing season because of lack of rain.

- The water conflict. Expect more immigration — and not just from foreign countries. As water supplies

diminish in many parts of the United States, industries and populations are expected to relocate nearer to the Great Lakes, agencies like Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning predict. This increased growth will create some new economic opportunities but also add to strains on already-stressed infrastructures. Beyond that, increase, possibly violent, competition could emerge for control of a critical global resource.

All of these direct consequences surely lead to further changes will experts predict transportation disruptions, habitat shifts of animal and plant species, threats to trees and plants, declining air quality and more.

In short, climate change isn't just a matter involving far-flung arctic regions or coastal areas whose effects might lead us to deduce certain remote results. It is a reality we will see and feel directly in the environmental factors that determine the quality of life we have come to expect and cherish here.



# SPOT NEWS PHOTO, NONDAILY

Lynn Trautmann, Evanston RoundTable

“Utilizing a bird’s-eye view to add a little extra to what could be considered a mundane assignment is what makes this photo rise to the top in this category.”



“Books are the plane, and the train, and the road. They are the destination, and the journey. They are home.” — Anna Quindlen

---

Mary Helt Gavin, Evanston RoundTable, 2nd place

Mary Helt Gavin, Evanston RoundTable, 3rd place

# SPOT NEWS PHOTO, DAILY

Rick West, Daily Herald

“There’s something to be said for sweet, simple and to-the-point.”



---

Mark Welsh, Daily Herald, 2nd place  
Joe Lewnard, Daily Herald, 3rd place

# FEATURE PHOTO, NONDAILY

**Karie Angell Luc,  
Pioneer Press Publications**

**“Excitement, fear, boredom: The  
making for a great day and a great  
photo.”**



The Pharaoh's Fury was among the amusement rides available at Buffalo Grove Days Aug. 28, 2019 to Sep. 2 in Buffalo Grove. Riders are pictured Aug. 31. (Karie Angell Luc / Pioneer Press)

---

**Shea Lazansky, Sandwich Record, 2nd place  
Sandy Bressner, Suburban Life Media, 3rd place**

# FEATURE PHOTO, DAILY

Rick West, Daily Herald

“Keep looking and you notice the little things that make this photo great.”



---

Brian O'Mahoney, freelance, 2nd place  
Brian O'Mahoney, freelance, 3rd place

# SPORTS PHOTO, NONDAILY

Jeff Krage, Suburban Life Media

“What a fun celebration shot! It shows emotion, is cropped well, all while being crisp and bright. A technically sound photo showing such jubilation earns this top spot.”



Jeff Krage for Shaw Media

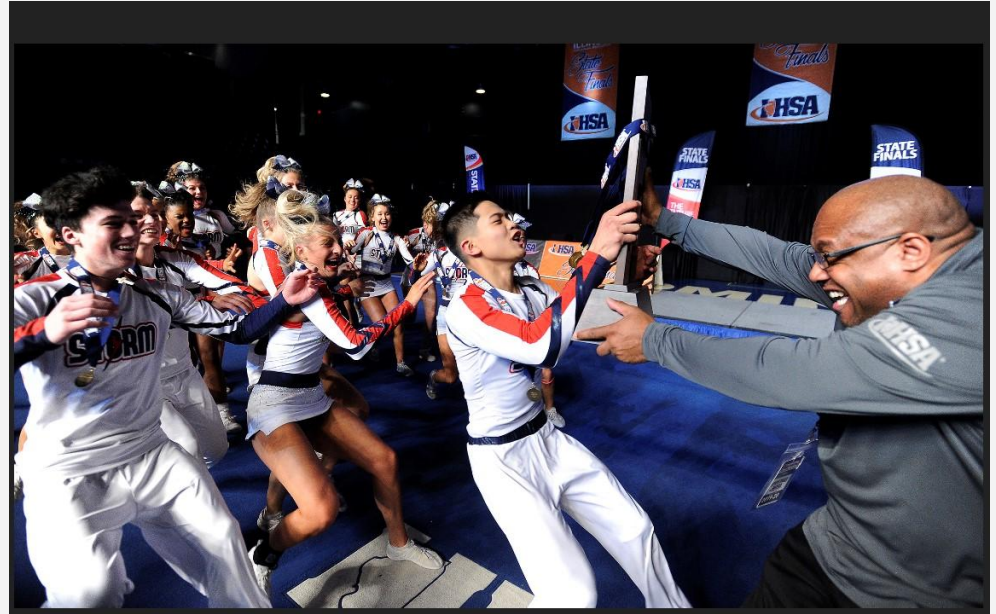
Lyons Township's Eileen Murphy (13) is congratulated in the air by Grace Truax after scoring a goal to give the Lions a 2-1 lead over Whitney Young during the Class 3A Glenbard East Sectional final May 25 in Lombard. Lyons won 2-1

Sandy Bressner, Kane County Chronicle, 2nd place  
Sandy Bressner, Kane County Chronicle, 3rd place

# SPORTS PHOTO, DAILY

Mark Welsh, Daily Herald

“The exuberance shown on the faces of this team ... can melt the most frozen of hearts.”



---

Brian Hill, Daily Herald, 2nd place  
Brian O'Mahoney, Freelance, 3rd place

# SPORTS STORY, NONDAILY

**Karie Angell Luc, Pioneer Press Publications**

**“A lot of effort and keen observation skills make for great storytelling about a beloved coach.”**

**‘We over me’: A day in the life of Glenbrook North football coach Matt Purdy**

By **KARIE ANGELL LUC**  
PIONEER PRESS  
SEP 29, 2019 | 6:18 PM



An interview with Matt Purdy, Glenbrook

---

**Aimee Barrows, Kane County Chronicle, 2nd place**  
**Kevin Beese, Cook County Chronicle, 3rd place**

# SPORTS STORY, DAILY

John Dietz, Daily Herald

“The details make the difference.”

## ‘He’s a leader for a reason’



Blackhawks defenseman Brent Seabrook will miss the rest of the season with shoulder and hip injuries.

*After Seabrook’s season ends due to injuries, teammates say they’ll miss his presence on, off ice*

It’s going to be much quieter in the Blackhawks’ dressing room for the rest of the season.

That goes for the player’s lounge, the airplane and the bus as well.

Players — especially the younger ones — like Seabrook to get away with an occasional sly remark for more often.

“I’d be the first to say, ‘I just wish the season never ended,’” said Seabrook, who will miss the rest of the season with shoulder and hip injuries.

Jonathan Toews, Patrick Kane, Kirby Dach and Duncan Keith all spoke about how much they’ll miss Seabrook’s on- and off-ice presence before the Hawks hosted the Islanders on Friday.

“There’s a reason why he hasn’t missed many games,” Keith said. “He’s a leader in this locker room every since I’ve been here. He’s a leader for a reason.”

“Guys look up to him and follow his lead and that’s important to have guys like that in the organization.”

Said Kane, who loves playing cards with Seabrook on plane rides: “I’ve known him for so long. You’ve got to be on your

own all the time. If you mumble your words or say something that doesn’t make sense — it’s subtle. You make one mistake and he’s not letting it go. He’s always coming up to you.”

“But it’s good — it keeps you on your toes and keeps things loose, too.”

Seabrook and Calvin de Haan both had surgeries on their right shoulders Friday. Seabrook is also scheduled to have surgery on both hips — one in January and one in February.

“We anticipate Calvin ready to return in four-to-five months,” team physician Dr. Michael Terry said in a statement. “We



JOHN DIETZ’S

TAKE ON THE HAWKS

anticipate full recovery for Brent following successful completion of his additional surgeries. Exact recovery time will be announced at that time.”

Coach Jeremy Collan, he’s been told both players should be ready for training camp come September.

“These are two big parts of our

See LEADER on PAGE 3

Scot Gregor, Daily Herald, 2nd place  
Patricia Babcock McGraw, Daily Herald, 3rd place



# ONLINE PHOTO GALLERY, NONDAILY

Shea Lazansky,  
Oswego Ledger

“Informative and artful.”



---

Shea Lazansky, Sandwich Record, 2nd place  
Sandy Bressner, Kane County Chronicle, 3rd place

# ONLINE PHOTO GALLERY, DAILY

Jeff Starks, Daily Herald

“These artful selections show us how much can happen in a week.”

---

Photo staff, Daily Herald, 2nd place  
Jeff Knox, Daily Herald, 3rd place



Standing in a crowd of people in her front yard Saturday, August 17, 2019, Iyanna Martinez, 9, hugs a ceremonial street sign after the 200 block of Melrose Ave. in Elgin was renamed for her brother, Cpl. Alex Martinez, a U.S. Marine who was killed in Afghanistan.

John Starks | Staff Photographer

# IN-DEPTH NEWS STORY, NONDAILY

Eric Schelkopf,  
Kane County Chronicle

“Important topic to cover and good details. Good updates on an ongoing story.”

---

Larry Gavin, Evanston RoundTable, 2nd place  
Larry Gavin, Evanston RoundTable, 3rd place

## Gunman said he would kill co-workers prior to shooting

Report details ordeal at Henry Pratt Co. in Aurora; forensics show Martin may have shot himself

By ERIC SCHELKOPF  
eschelkopf@shawmedia.com

AURORA - Hours before Gary Martin shot and killed five of his co-workers at Henry Pratt Co. in Aurora and wounded five Aurora police officers on Feb. 15, he threatened to kill everyone in the plant and injure police if he were fired.

According to a report released April 29 by Kane County State's Attorney Joe McMahon on the Feb. 15 shooting, Martin had spoke to a few employees that morning and was concerned that he might be fired for a safety violation. He allegedly told one employee, "If I get fired, I'm going to kill every (expletive) in here. I am going to blow police up."

That employee did not report the statement to anyone because he believed the offender was always making "off the wall" statements and, therefore, was not concerned, the report stated. The employee also was aware that Martin carried a gun in his vehicle, but had never seen him with a gun inside the building and wasn't aware that Martin had a gun with him Feb. 15, according to the report.

"It is believed the offender brought the gun and ammunition into the plant that morning when he arrived for work as there is no video evidence of him returning to his car prior to the shooting," McMahon stated in his report.

Martin, 45, of Aurora died that day as well, the result of multiple gunshot wounds occurring during the shootout with police.



Sandy Benavise - sbenavise@shawmedia.com  
Aurora Police Chief Kristen Ziman (at podium) and Deputy Chief Keefe Jackson give the Blue Star Award to officers John Cebulski (from left), Marco Gomez, Adam Miller, Reynaldo Rivera and James Zegar during a Celebration of Courage on April 29 at the Paramount Theatre honoring the first responders to the Feb. 15 shooting at the Henry Pratt Co. in Aurora. The five officers all were wounded by gunfire in the incident.

# IN-DEPTH NEWS STORY, DAILY

Burt Constable, Daily Herald

“Wow! What an important story.  
Thank you for telling it.”

Under orders from Gov. J.B. Pritzker, the Illinois State Board of Education said schools can no longer use locked timeout rooms. That's created a problem in a suburban special ed school where teachers have been injured by upset students.



**WATCH AT DAILYHERALD.COM/VIDEO:** Finding the best way to handle students with behavioral issues is a work in progress throughout the state. Arlington Heights resident Kerry Doctor, a teacher at Kirk School in Palatine, has been home with concussion symptoms since a student injured her on Dec. 16. “I wasn’t strong enough” to subdue the upset student, she said.

## STATE BAN HELPING OR CREATING RISK?

A special-education teacher for 24 years, Kerry Doctor knows there can be dangerous moments working in a classroom with adult-size people who have behavioral issues.

But Doctor says a change in the school's enrollment and the state's recent crack-down on use of locked timeout rooms designed to alleviate tense situations have increased the risk for injury this year.

“I’m not so naive to believe that I won’t get some bumps and bruises



**BURT CONSTABLE'S**  
SUBURBAN STORIES

working with my kids,” Doctor says. “I’ve gotten hit. I’ve gotten kicked. I’ve gotten scratched.”

But what happened to the 49-year-old teacher on Dec. 16 during an incident with a student at Kirk School in Palatine still has her re-perpetrating at home in Arlington Heights, waiting for her concussion symptoms to stop and her confidence to return.

“I am scared to go to work,” says Doctor, saying one fellow teacher has missed work on three occasions this year because of head and shoulder injuries after encounters with students.

Those words land like a gut punch for Judith Hackett, superintendent of the Northwest Suburban Special Education Organization, or NSSEO, which oversees Kirk as well as Timber Ridge and Miner schools in Arlington Heights.

“We don’t want anyone to be hurt. Safety is a priority for us,” Hackett says. She says data about staff injuries is misinterpreted and focusing on it takes away from the accomplishments in the

See **CONSTABLE** on **PAGE 4**

---

Zak Koeske, Daily Southtown, 2nd place  
Emily Coleman, Lake County News Sun, 3rd place

# NEWS STORY SERIES, NONDAILY

Kevin Beese, Cook County Chronicle

## State bets on gambling expansion

By Kevin Beese  
Staff Reporter

The expansion of gambling in Illinois could turn the Prairie State into the Land of Lincoln.

But just where to drop those extra \$5 bills with so many neon lights blinking in your face? The Illinois Lottery instant games await just a vending machine push of the button away. The nimble fingers of the convenience store clerk can easily punch in those lucky Lotto and Powerball numbers for you.

Maybe this is the night to head to the casino: everyone in the ads seems to be having fun. Or maybe a Throwback Thursday at Arlington Park, gambling the only way people did legally in the early 1970s.

The number of gaming opportunities has tripled in Illinois since fiscal year 2013.

And that is before Illinois gets six more casinos, more video gaming machines and higher betting limits per establishment, more games per casino, "racinos," (combining horse-racing tracks and casinos), and soon-to-arrive sports wagering.

It may not be too far down the road when you pass your time waiting for a flight at Chicago's O'Hare or Midway airports dropping coins in a slot machine or pushing in chips at the craps table as both airports now have authority to add casino gaming to their sites.

This spring, state lawmakers approved adding six casino licenses to



Video gaming put \$395 million into the state coffers in fiscal year 2019, the third time the gambling option has outpaced casinos in generating money for the state.

the 10 already on the state books.

The new gambling meccas will be a land-based casino in Chicago and riverboat casinos in Danville, Waukegan, Rockford, southern Cook County and Williamson County.

However, are more casinos the answer when gaming-related revenue from casinos has fallen 18 percent since fiscal year 2012?

Video gaming is the new kid on the block — around only since 2013 — and has put a dent in casino revenue, a new report from the state's Commission on Government Forecasting

and Accountability finds. This year marks the third consecutive year that video gaming has put more money in the state coffers than casinos.

Chicago currently does not allow video gaming within its limits, but Mayor Lori Lightfoot admits that with an \$838 million shortfall nothing is off the table.

During a Sept. 4 town hall about the budget, Rick Heidner told the mayor that video gaming could bring in \$50 million to \$70 million annu-



First in a series looking at the expansion of gambling in Illinois

Continued on Page 6

Staff, The Observer, 2nd place  
Kevin Beese, Cook County Chronicle, 3rd place

# NEWS STORY SERIES, DAILY

Jake Griffin, Lauren Rohr  
Daily Herald

“Concise, straightforward, arranged well.”

REMEMBERING AJ: FIRST OF TWO PARTS

## Preschool could have saved him

*Data shows beating deaths drop sharply when kids can be enrolled in programs*

BY JAKE GRIFFIN AND LAUREN ROHR  
jgri@dailyherald.com  
lrohr@dailyherald.com

AJ Freund was months away from starting kindergarten when he was beaten to death.

There's no indication he had attended day care or early childhood education, even though the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services inspector general last year recommended enrolling all young children under the agency's supervision in such a program as a way to keep them safe.

There also is no evidence AJ's parents — who stand accused of his murder — were told by the state child protection agency how to access a voluntary, subsidized child care program funded under a law that went into effect in February, DCF's officials said.

See **SAVED** on PAGE 4



ALL INFORMATION BY PATRICK M. SCHNEIDERMAN FOR THE DAILY HERALD

Main image: AJ Freund is buried at St. Michael the Archangel Catholic Cemetery in Palatine. Inset: A picture from the City of Crystal Lake shows the interior of AJ Freund's Dole Avenue home where authorities say AJ was murdered. AJ's parents, Andrew Freund Sr. and JoAnn Cunningham, are charged with the crime.

Staff, Daily Southtown, 2nd place  
Jake Griffin, Daily Herald, 3rd place

# WATCHDOG REPORTING, NONDAILY

Larry Gavin,  
Evanston RoundTable

“This story very pointedly  
reminds two public  
officials of their promises  
to be transparent.”

---

**Editorial and Analysis: In the Interest of Transparency, Meetings Between the Top Leaders of the School Board, the District, and the Teachers Union Should Be Open to the Public**

By Larry Gavin

Wednesday, October 30, 2019 8:50 AM

When Board President Suni Kartha and Vice President Anya Tanyavutti were running for the offices of President and Vice President of the District 65 School Board in April 2018 and again in April 2019, they each filed candidacy statements in which they said they supported transparency. Ms. Kartha said in her statement dated April 15, 2019, “My goals for our board continue to be to create greater transparency and inclusiveness in our decision making.”

Larry Gavin, Evanston RoundTable, 2nd place  
Katie Finlon, Kendall County Record, 3rd place

# WATCHDOG REPORTING, DAILY

Zak Koeske, Daily Southtown

“Koeske's deep dive into a well-paid consultant revealed a record of fraud apparently not known by her superiors and prompted her ouster within hours — proof that accountability journalism works.”

---

Zak Koeske, Daily Southtown, 2nd place  
Jake Griffin, Daily Herald, 3rd place

## Suburban financial consultant resigns

Firms owned by  
woman with criminal  
past collected \$1.8M

BY ZAK KOESKE

Companies owned by a Hazel Crest woman with three fraud-related convictions collected more than \$1.8 million consulting two south suburbs on financial and economic development matters even as she faced federal criminal charges, a Daily Southtown investigation has found.

Irma Holloway, a 53-year-old



# COVERAGE OF SOCIAL ISSUES, NONDAILY

**Victoria Scott,  
Evanston RoundTable**

**“Your story personalized  
the students’ situations  
and achievements.”**

## **Evanston Scholars Helps Underserved Kids Blaze a Trail to College Graduation**

By Victoria Scott

Wednesday, July 10, 2019 11:28 AM

By graduating from college, Angel Cardenas and Sarah Williams defied some dismal national statistics. They are among just 55% of all students who enroll in college to go on to graduate – and among only 23% of low-income students who finish.

The two Evanston Township High School alums are quick to admit that they did not make it on their own. Both profited from the comprehensive and individualized support offered by an organization called Evanston Scholars. For eight years, ES has worked to improve college access and success for students like Angel and Sarah.

---

**Kevin Beese, Cook County Chronicle, 2nd place  
Mary Helt Gavin, Evanston RoundTable, 3rd place**

# COVERAGE OF SOCIAL ISSUES, DAILY

Madhu Krishnamurthy,  
Daily Herald

“Four very different but four  
well-told stories.”

**People to be thankful for**



**Her charity helps fellow retirees feel less alone**

**By MADHU KRISHNAMURTHY**  
mk@dailyherald.com

After working nearly 35 years as a neuroscientist, Talar Khan faced the biggest challenge of her life: navigating retirement. “I didn’t have any clue. I was a scientist in the lab,” said Khan of Duxter, who immigrated from Hyderabad, India, in the late 1960s as a college student. It was a dilemma facing many of her South Asian peers living in the suburbs who felt isolated and lonely and didn’t know what to do in retirement, said Khan, now in her 70s.

So she started a referral and consultation service for South Asian seniors and volunteered as a translator with DuPage County Senior Services.

“Whenever there were South Asians speaking Hindi/Urdu, they would call me,” she said. Khan soon realized the older adults she visited were suffering from depression and anxiety due to isolation from their communities, so much so they wouldn’t let her off the phone. “I felt that they need some kind of companionship,” she said. It led Khan to found the not-for-profit American Association of Retired Asians, or AARA, which organizes an older adult congregating meal program for South Asian seniors at restaurants in Hanover Park, Naperville and Villa Park.

“We started something like quarterly get-togethers,” said Khan, who leads as executive director of the American Association of Retired Asians, which offers a meal program for South Asian seniors at local partner restaurants in Hanover Park, Naperville and Villa Park.

PAUL VALABY / photo@dailyherald.com

**See THANKFUL on PAGE 13**

Zak Koeske, Daily Southtown, 2nd place  
Elena Ferrarin, Daily Herald, 3rd place

# PUBLIC AFFAIRS REPORTING, NONDAILY

Larry Gavin,  
Evanston RoundTable

“Good example of  
accountability journalism  
at the hyper-local level.”

**Editorial and Analysis: In the Interest of Transparency, Meetings Between the Top Leaders of the School Board, the District, and the Teachers Union Should Be Open to the Public**

By Larry Gavin

Wednesday, October 30, 2019 8:50 AM

When Board President Suni Kartha and Vice President Anya Tanyavutti were running for the offices of President and Vice President of the District 65 School Board in April 2018 and again in April 2019, they each filed candidacy statements in which they said they supported transparency. Ms. Kartha said in her statement dated April 15, 2019, “My goals for our board continue to be to create greater transparency and inclusiveness in our decision making.”

---

Derek Barichello, Katie Finlon, Kendall County Record, 2nd place  
Kevin Beese, Cook County Chronicle, 3rd place

# PUBLIC AFFAIRS REPORTING, DAILY

Elena Ferrarin, Marie Wilson,  
Daily Herald

“It's obvious that a lot of strategic planning went into the series, and the depth of each piece was impressive.”

Zak Koeske, Daily Southtown, 2nd place  
Robert Sanchez, Daily Herald, 3rd place



Susan Fackler, director of community and family services for Ela Township, says she worries teens will see recreational marijuana “as being OK” once it’s legalized for adult use beginning Jan. 1. The Ela Coalition Against Youth Substance Use plans to send postcards to families in Lake Zurich Unit District 95 this fall informing them about the risks.

## Teen marijuana use is tricky to predict

Part 2 of 2.

By MARIE WILSON  
mwilson@dailyherald.com

Pick a side of the marijuana legalization debate, and studies abound to back it up.

One example: Reports from legal-use states show conflicting data on whether teen use increases, decreases or stays flat after adult use is legalized.

A 2018 research letter in the JAMA Pediatrics journal found “marijuana use among youth may actually decline after legalization for recreational



purposes,” in part, because “it is more difficult for teenagers to obtain marijuana, as drug dealers are replaced by licensed dispensaries that require proof of age.”

The study, which analyzed national Youth Risk Behavior surveys from 1993 to 2017, found an 8 percent decrease

in the odds of youth marijuana use in states where it is recreationally legal for adults, and a 9 percent decrease in the odds of frequent use.

Conversely, a 2019 analysis of National Survey on Drug Use and Health data by the anti-legalization group Smart Approaches to Marijuana found 7.7% of 12- to 17-year-olds use marijuana in states where it is recreationally legal, while 6.2% use in states where it is not.

And these are just two  
See **MARIJUANA** on PAGE 5

# LOCALIZED NEWS STORY, NONDAILY

Katie Finlon, Kendall County Record

“Good job sourcing and related background for the story.”

## Gas prices rise with fuel tax hike

Municipal, county officials anticipating extra revenue to fix roads

By KATIE FINLON

YORKVILLE — Phoenix Blomster of Yorkville just got off of a delivery for his job with China Carbon when he stopped to get some gas to take the truck to the gas station. It was at the 97' Carbon's gas station. MITT, the gas station attendant, let him in. He said he usually spends about \$12 worth of a gas, depending on how many deliveries there are.

"It's got to be really big thing for me," Blomster said.

When it comes to the state gas tax doubling starting next week, Blomster said he wasn't aware of that change, how it would potentially affect him or whether delivery fees would continue to cover his gas costs. He said it's not really something that would make or break him, but he thinks the increase is still a big one.

"I would just wish for everybody," Blomster said.

Blomster's comments come after Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker signed a bill last week on Friday, June 18, increasing the motor fuel tax on regular gasoline by 10 cents a gallon starting Monday, July 1, up from the current 10 cents a gallon. Starting in 2020 and for the next several years, the motor fuel tax will increase annually by the consumer price index, which is usually close to 2%, but would be capped at 1 cent a year increase.

Rhonda Beesley, 21, of Chicago said she was filling up the 97' Carbon's gas station in Yorkville because she said her brother James, 17, was visiting her last month. She said she did not know both of them at the time and the state's gas tax increase is a lot more than what she's used to seeing.

"How you're going to be more conservative about 5%," Blomster said. "Under the current gas tax law, an increase of about 5%," Blomster said. "County that has more than 1 million residents get about 5% of those funds and township road districts get about 5%." The new law also creates a new transportation revenue fund, whose usage guidelines would get an addition of 1% of those funds. Kendall County would get about 1% of that revenue, which is a little bit more than what it would get about 1%.

Blomster said he's been hearing conservative estimates of a negative impact of a 6% to 10% increase in motor fuel tax



Motorists will see a 10-cent-a-gallon increase in the price of gasoline with the hike in the state of Illinois gas tax that went into effect July 1.

numbers are still being evaluated. For now, he said, he's anticipating a 4% increase in the county's motor fuel funds and a 10% increase in the overall county budget.

"It's a good thing because 10% more is a good thing," Blomster said.

Blomster said he's not sure if the increase in the state motor fuel tax will be enough to cover the cost of the new roads, but he said he's not sure.

"Our roads are fine in the money that we're getting," Corneils said.

Corneils said he can only spend on his township and roads that are part of the county's budget. He said he's not sure if the increase in the state motor fuel tax will be enough to cover the cost of the new roads, but he said he's not sure.

"For them, that's a good thing that's been done in Yorkville, that they do get that money," Corneils said.

Blomster said he's not sure if the increase in the state motor fuel tax will be enough to cover the cost of the new roads, but he said he's not sure.

"It's a good thing because 10% more is a good thing," Blomster said.

Blomster said he's not sure if the increase in the state motor fuel tax will be enough to cover the cost of the new roads, but he said he's not sure.

"Our roads are fine in the money that we're getting," Corneils said.

Corneils said he can only spend on his township and roads that are part of the county's budget. He said he's not sure if the increase in the state motor fuel tax will be enough to cover the cost of the new roads, but he said he's not sure.

"For them, that's a good thing that's been done in Yorkville, that they do get that money," Corneils said.

Blomster said he's not sure if the increase in the state motor fuel tax will be enough to cover the cost of the new roads, but he said he's not sure.

"It's a good thing because 10% more is a good thing," Blomster said.

Blomster said he's not sure if the increase in the state motor fuel tax will be enough to cover the cost of the new roads, but he said he's not sure.

"Our roads are fine in the money that we're getting," Corneils said.

Corneils said he can only spend on his township and roads that are part of the county's budget. He said he's not sure if the increase in the state motor fuel tax will be enough to cover the cost of the new roads, but he said he's not sure.

"For them, that's a good thing that's been done in Yorkville, that they do get that money," Corneils said.

Kevin Beese, Cook County Chronicle, 2nd place  
Kevin Beese, Cook County Chronicle, 3rd place

# IMPACTFUL COVID-19 COVERAGE, NONDAILY

Staff, Suburban Chronicle

“A smart choice to devote several pages in each of these issues to dedicated coronavirus coverage.”

**COPING WITH CORONAVIRUS**

## Schools shut, but districts try to keep students fed

By Erika Wurst  
*For Chronicle Media*

Instead of transporting students to and from buildings Monday through Friday, East Aurora school drivers are now transporting snacks and sandwiches to students, and they've become unlikely heroes during this COVID-19 pandemic.

It is because of them, and hundreds of volunteers working hard throughout the district, that thousands of children are getting a nutritious meal during the state-wide shutdown.

Elgin School District 134 Superintendent Tony Sanders said that in the days since school closed, 200,000 meals had been served

alongside 66,000 snacks. In a single day, 134 staff can expect to see more than 20,000 meals hit the hands of hungry students, but it's not done without precaution.

One recent chilly morning, the drive-thru meal service line at Thompson Junior High School in Chicago was steady. A man-child, glove-wearing lady, who you know probably wears a wonderful smile you can no longer see, greeted visitors at the passenger side window.

Keeping her distance, she asked how many students a person was picking up for. After gathering the snack knishes and bagged breakfasts, the volunteer doesn't touch the car or come near, except to

*(Continued on Page 6)*



*Staff at Allen Elementary School in East Aurora School District 131 are offering students the opportunity to pick up lunch (above) and breakfast. This lunch consists of a sandwich, boxed drink and apple sauce. Distribution is available at four district schools each weekday. (Photo by Jack McCarthy / Chronicle Media)*

## Online retailers warned on price gouging

By Kevin Beese  
*Staff Reporter*

Illinois Attorney General Kwame Raoul and 32 other attorneys general are urging Amazon, Facebook, eBay, Walmart and Craigslist to rigorously monitor price gouging practices by online sellers using their services.

In bipartisan letters, Raoul and the coalition acknowledged the companies' cooperation with states' efforts to stop price gouging and asked that online retailers do more to maximize savings by third-party sellers.

"At a time when my office could be assisting people who are concerned about

*(Continued on Page 8)*

**INSIDE:** Coronavirus reports: Elgin church ends gatherings, Aurora mayor, top cop test positive, Page 3; What you need to know, Page 5; Briefs, Page 4

Aimee Barrows, Kane County Chronicle, 2nd place  
Katie Finlon, Kendall County Record, 3rd place

# IMPACTFUL COVERAGE OF COVID-19, DAILY

Zak Koeske, Daily Southtown

“Strong local coverage mixes stories about how people were dealing with the early days of the pandemic.”

---

Staff, Daily Herald, 2nd place  
Ted Slowik, Daily Southtown, 3rd place

## Homeless shelters forced to consolidate

At-risk clients placed in hotels amid push to 'de-densify' spaces

By ZAK KOESKE

A pair of agencies that operate nearly two dozen overnight shelters at churches throughout the south and southwest suburbs are each scrambling amid coronavirus concerns to place their most at-risk guests in hotels and consolidate

their remaining clients into a single shelter by week's end.

South Suburban PADS and BEDS Plus, whose emergency shelters typically house around 150 people combined on any given night, are seeking to cut that number significantly in order to comply with federal health guidelines and minimize the potential spread of COVID-19.

Neither agency has had a confirmed coronavirus case within its shelter population to date, but both are working tirelessly to screen

guests for signs of illness upon arrival, emphasize hand washing and sanitization of common areas and maintain 3 feet between mattresses to limit the chance of contagion.

"On the best of nights, (shelter) is a place where you're always fighting germs and cross contamination," BEDS Plus development director Julie Daraska said. "So in one way, we're doing what we always do, but with a hypervigilance we haven't been required to bring to it before."

To that end, Doug Kenshol, executive director of South Suburban PADS, said he'd been working around the clock to nail down a single church site to house a coed population of no more than 20 to 25 guests for the foreseeable future.

"Our goal based on public health needs is to significantly de-densify the shelters," he said. "We really want it to not be dense and to have ample space between the mattresses."

Daraska said her agency already

had secured one of its 15 church sites to serve as its lone extended-term emergency shelter beginning Wednesday night, but declined to share which location would be used to house 50 of its adult homeless guests for fear of attracting people they won't be able to accommodate.

"We have notified all of our municipal and referring partners to contact us before referring anyone to shelter," she said.

Turn to *Shelters*, Page 4

# SPANISH COVERAGE OF LATINO COMMUNITY, NONDAILY

Margarita Mendoza, El Observador

“A readable piece that has identified  
its readers and given them a feeling of  
having attended.”

---

Marni Harvey, Reflejos, 2nd place  
Sharon Boehlefeld, El Observador, 3rd place

## Viernes Santo en Aurora experiencia de fe

Por Margarita Mendoza

La procesión que inició en la parroquia del Sagrado Corazón a las “nueve en punto” de la mañana, como lo realizó monseñor Anacleto Valdejo, fue precedida por el obispo David Malloy, en ella participaron los sacerdotes de las parroquias locales y el padre Francis, hermano del obispo Malloy.

La memoria se vivió por miles e iba aumentando a medida que avanzaba por las calles Fulton, Union y Liberty, por donde pasó el recorrido, hasta llegar a la parroquia de San Nicolás.

En el viacrucio participaron personas de diversas nacionalidades y se hizo en español y en inglés cada estación de manera alternativa.

En esta oportunidad, al finalizar la procesión el obispo David Malloy bendijo a tres de los cinco oficiales heridos durante el tiroteo ocurrido en la



compañía Henry Pratt en Aurora, el 15 de febrero de este año, donde fallecieron cinco empleados y el agresor.

El obispo agradeció a todos los que participaron en la organización del viacrucio, “y mientras nos agradecemos a ellos, les pido que tengamos un momento especial de dar gracias a la policía que fue tan valiente en ese trágico viernes. Pero nuestra policía

respondió con coraje para salvar a otros. Hoy, oficiales heridos en ese momento están aquí con nosotros. Como una forma de ofrecer nuestros pensamientos, de unir a nuestra amada Ciudad de Aurora y de agradecerles por tal sacrificio, les pido que oremos juntos por ellos a “Padre Nuestro”.

“Tu fe te ha salvado”

heridos, no perdamos ningún oficial, cualquier persona que otros personas fueran heridas”. Dice que en Irak también resultó lastimado pero no fue tan grave.

El oficial Reynaldo Rivera aseguró que estaba contento “de estar aquí, ser bendecido por el Obispo... Significa mucho porque creo que Dios es el que nos permitió superar todo esto”. Después del incidente, afirma que se



**And now, a brief announcement**

# CORRECTION: SWEEPSTAKES WINNER 2019, NONDAILY

Galena Gazette



# GENERAL EXCELLENCE, NONDAILY

**Evanston RoundTable**

**GENERAL EXCELLENCE, DAILY**

**Daily Herald**

# Thank you for attending!

Congratulations to all participants

On behalf of the Northern Illinois University Department of Communication and the Northern Illinois Newspaper Association, thanks for being part of this event.

Stay safe and healthy, and if you haven't already ...

**VOTE!**

Have a good evening.