

The Role of the Media in Reporting and Preventing Railroad Crashes

Marni Pyke

*Transportation Reporter
(Suburban Chicago)*

Daily Herald

Motorola joins forces with Siemens

JFK Health World opens in Barrington

Publications — 7 days a week — 10¢ per copy — Monday, October 26, 1998 — 6 Sections — 50 Cents



Firefighters and paramedics stand near the bodies of students killed when an express commuter train derailed into a Gary-Cove High School bus that was stopped at Algonquin Road and Northfield Highway.

THE TRAGEDY IN FOX RIVER GROVE

"I want to tell the mother. You have a good kid, because he was breathing. He was doing what I asked him to do. It wasn't enough. He died in my arms. That's why I want to tell her that he didn't die by himself. I was there. And I held him."

— Nurse Helen Getchell, one of the first on the scene

Every parent's nightmare

5 students killed, 27 injured when train hits school bus

By Dan Horne
Staff Writer

Also been involved commuter train here down Wednesday on a stopped school bus, some of those watching tried unsuccessfully to warn the bus driver of the approaching train.

Gone too soon

■ Jeff Clark, 15: Always pushing himself to be better, he was "naturally" met a "best friend."

■ Mike Hoffman, 14: Very intelligent, athletic and outgoing, he had a great sense of humor and a lot of friends.

■ Joe Kalle, 16: Had four best friends and was most popular in the school. Other boys looked up to him.

■ Shawn Robinson, 14: A junior high basketball player, not only a top outdoors player, but a dynamic who helped organize the team.

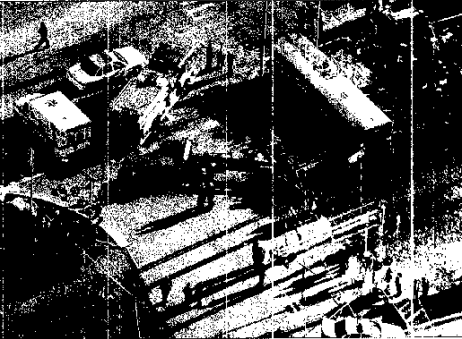
■ Tiffany Schroeder, 15: Sweet, very friendly girl who was new to the neighborhood, and set back a job at a McDonald's.

blocked the Fox River Grove railroad crossing. Other witnesses and bystanders who saw the danger also attempted unsuccessfully to get the bus driver to alert him of the bus but the driver of the bus which penetrated over the railroad crossing.

Killed in the crash were freshman Mitchell Hoffman and Steven Robinson, both 14, and sophomores Tiffany Schroeder, 15, Jeff Clark, 15, Joseph Kalle, 16. All were from Fox River Grove and had middle school friends Wednesday and Thursday.

In addition, 26 witnesses and the senior school teacher were injured in the early-morning crash. Five of those bus passengers remained in critical condition Wednesday night at a suburban hospital.

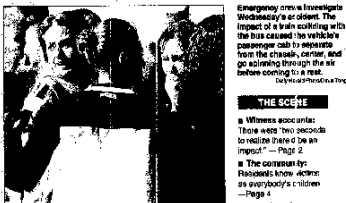
At the crash scene, some boy questions investigators will ask to determine why the bus driver apparently stopped for a few feet but then the vehicle still obstructed the railroad tracks.



Traffic snarls at the intersection, where a senior bus driver said crash occurred hours after a court sign, who will be sentenced by the National Transportation Safety Board and Gov. CHASE on Page 2.

THE SEARCH FOR ANSWERS

■ Seeking safety: Commuters tried to pray at night — Page 2
■ The driver's behavior: was scrutinized on the bus route — Page 3
■ Seat belt: Victim's friend made little difference in crash — Page 3
■ A final warning: Investigation leaves the door open for a bus to stop — Page 4



Debra Kay, left, and Angie O'Neil headline with friends. Students death with the tragedy in different ways. See story on Page 9, Page 10 (back of Epistle).

Emergency crew a forensic investigation of a school bus. The impact of a train striking with the bus caused the vehicle passenger cabin to separate from the chassis, center and go sailing through the air before coming to a rest.

THE SCENE

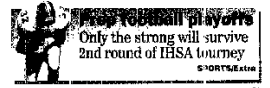
■ Witness accounts: These were two seconds to realize there'd be an impact — Page 2
■ The confusion: Responders know victim on everybody's mind — Page 4
■ Larry Schraier: The grim task of broadcasting the worst of deaths — Page 7

Thursday

WEATHER One more time Partly sunny and mild today with a high in the mid-60s. See weather page 16 for 10-day forecast.	SUBURBAN LIVING A deadly high Many household products, including glue, hair cream and other household items, are used to provide items with a strong odor.		INSIDE Budget showdown nears Dealing a strongly worded note to Congress President Clinton and the GOP push for legislation to the face of Congress.	INDEX Page 2: Lottery 2-11 Page 3: News 3-1 Page 4: Sports 4-1 Page 5: Local 5-1 Page 6: Business 6-1 Page 7: Entertainment 7-1 Page 8: Classified 8-1
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 BUSINESS LEDGER EVENT MARKETING



PHOTOGRAPH BY ... 2nd Year, No. 29 Friday, November 9, 1995 ... (Stations) 40 Cents

Friday

WEATHER

Snow is upon us

Variable clouds were not only a source of snow during high in the middle of the day, becoming clear and sunny in the afternoon. The snow was not too heavy, but it was enough to cover the ground.

REAL ESTATE

BIRTH OF THE SUBURBS

... (Stations) 40 Cents

ROOMS that grow

... (Stations) 40 Cents

INSIDE

Cancer-causing gene

... (Stations) 40 Cents

A star is born

... (Stations) 40 Cents

Veto problem

... (Stations) 40 Cents

BUSINESS

Bank indictment

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TIME GIFT

... (Stations) 40 Cents

Love fest

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Bulls' snazzy new look sends ticket prices leaping

In the country, the snazzy new look of the Bulls' has sent ticket prices leaping. The team's new uniforms, featuring a mix of black, red, and white, have been a hit with fans. Ticket prices for the upcoming season have increased significantly, with some games now selling out weeks in advance.

Lawrence is quoted as saying that the Bulls' new look is a key factor in the team's success. He notes that the team's performance on the court has improved since the change, and that fans are more engaged with the new uniforms. The Bulls' management is confident that the new look will continue to drive ticket sales and boost the team's revenue.

One express train's time down the line

Year	Date into operation	From origin	Time to reach Chicago	Time to reach Gary
GARY				
From Gary to Chicago	11.9	already open	21.0	—
Chicago to Gary	12.2	1966	21.0	19.8
FOX RIVER GROVE				
Chicago to Fox River Grove	5.5	already open	22.1	—
Fox River Grove to Chicago	10.9	already open	21.0	—
BARRINGTON				
Chicago to Barrington	14.8	already open	20.4	—
MELROSE				
Chicago to Melrose	17.7	1972	22.0	18.7
Melrose to Chicago	19.5	7.6	22.0	18.4
THE TRAGEDY AT SEVEN ANGLES CROSSING				
Chicago to Arlington Heights	12.5	never used	20.0	0
ARLINGTON HEIGHTS				
Chicago to Arlington Heights	13.0	already open	22.0	—
Arlington Heights to Chicago	14.2	1966	22.0	20.0
Mount Prospect				
Chicago to Mount Prospect	18.0	never used	22.0	0
Mount Prospect to Chicago	18.1	already open	22.0	17.2
DES PLAINES				
Chicago to Des Plaines	11.4	never used	21.0	0
Des Plaines to Chicago	13.0	already open	21.0	—
Des Plaines to Chicago	13.8	already open	21.0	—



IDOT offers plan for '7 Angels Crossing'

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) has proposed a plan for the '7 Angels Crossing' interchange. The plan involves the construction of a new interchange that will improve traffic flow and reduce congestion. The project is estimated to cost \$100 million and is expected to be completed by 2000.

Signal engineer's actions reviewed

The actions of a signal engineer involved in the '7 Angels Crossing' interchange have been reviewed. The review found that the engineer's actions were in accordance with the rules and regulations governing signal engineering. The review also identified areas for improvement and provided recommendations for future projects.

Director of parks and planning in Arlington Heights set to retire

The director of parks and planning in Arlington Heights is set to retire. The director has served the community for many years and has been instrumental in the development of the city's parks and recreational facilities. The director's retirement will leave a void in the city's leadership, and the city is currently searching for a replacement.

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HANG WITH HALEY TODAY

SPECIAL SECTION IN TODAY'S PAPER:

- How Haley Reinhart got to the final three on "American Idol."
- The highs and lows of her season.
- Assessing her remaining competition — can Haley win it all?

PAGE 8 OF THIS SECTION:

- The plans for Haley Reinhart's "Idol" celebrations today in Wheeling and Arlington Park.
- 40,000 could be going to Arlington Park, so check out the traffic plan.

DAILYHERALD.COM TODAY: GALLERIES, VIDEO • TWITTER @HALEYSLOOP

Lawyer to examine email case

Grayslake Dist. 46 goes to third party

By BOB STENJARA
bstenjara@dailyherald.com

Grayslake Elementary District 46 has authorized an attorney to lead an internal investigation into an ethics policy violation complaint that officials sent political emails over a publicly owned system.

State law prohibits public resources from being used on political campaigns.

Richard Mittelman will head the probe and file a report on his findings on the various accusations involving improper email use.

Mittelman is one of the lawyers for Libertyville-Vernon Hills Area High School District 128. He also is a Libertyville Township trustee and served on the board of Fox Lake based Grant Township High School District 124 from 1988 to '89.

In April, Lake County unity party founder Louise Jarratt's ethics complaint centered on a claim District 46 Superintendent Ellen Correll improperly used her taxpayer-owned work email for the school board campaigns of Susan Packham and Mary Garcia.

Jarratt attached a March 14 email in which Correll reportedly stated she'd check with school board attorney Kevin Gordon on a question about a meet-and-greet gathering for Packham and Garcia.

Packham won re-election while Garcia fell short. Garcia was District 69's board president at the time of the campaign.

District policy would have allowed Correll to investigate Jarratt's complaint. However, Gordon told elected officials



Richard Mittelman

PHOTO BY JOE LEMKOWSKI/www.dailyherald.com

A Metra passenger train derailed after striking a loaded dump truck at Mount Prospect Road Friday morning.

Fiery collision



Metra passengers share details of crash that killed truck driver in Mt. Prospect

By MADHU KRISHNAMURTHY
mkrishnamurthy@dailyherald.com

A truck driver was killed and 26 train passengers taken to hospitals after a concrete truck that drove around a railroad crossing gate was hit by an inbound train in Mount Prospect Friday morning.

Passengers said fire engulfed the front passenger cab after the train clipped the fully loaded dump truck west of the Cumberland train station about 8:40 a.m.

"We broke the emergency window (and) we jumped from the train," said passenger Garth

See FIERY on PAGE 6

Stevenson's new record: robot dancing?

By RUSSELL LINDAU
rlindau@dailyherald.com

that tops them all: an official Guinness World Record.

It wasn't an educational achievement that set the mark, but a recreational one: the world's largest robot dance.

The school has been notified that a September 2010 effort to break the record for largest robot dance was

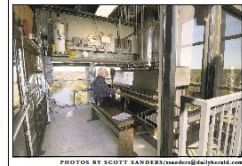
indeed successful. With 525 people participating on the school's football field, Stevenson broke the previous record of 429 dancers.

Officials only recently learned of the honor, which is viewable at guinnessworldrecords.com.

"I'm not sure there are words to properly express what this means. Pantomime might be better," Stevenson spokesman Jim Conroy joked in an email. "And if we can find 525 people to pantomime a response, then we might have another world record on

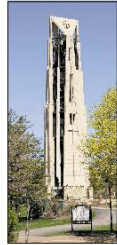
See ROBOT on PAGE 7

PHOTO BY SCOTT SANDERS/www.dailyherald.com



The carillon's bells ring

Naperville's carillon is a complicated combination of mechanical levers, pulleys, cables, and stacks of the air-computer-controlled electronics — all working to make beautiful music. Tim Slomp, the City Carillonneur for Naperville, plays the carillon's console, or keyboard. In the player's cabin 100 feet above ground level. See more pictures in Neighbor.



BEHIND THE SCENES INSIDE THE SUBURBS

LIVE RACING & ENTERTAINMENT

May 6 - Sept 25

ARLINGTON

arlingtonpark.com

POST TIMES

Wednesday	1pm
Friday	3pm
Saturday	1pm
Sunday	1pm

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Welcome home Parker back in town to take on the Sky — Sports



Daily Herald

Ted Cox on TV Documentary traces history of homosexuality in Chicago — L&J

dailyherald.com

Tuesday, June 3, 2008

Price of Paper Annual: \$100; Daily: \$0.25; Subscriptions: 75¢

He has things to add on ethics

Governor won't sign, wants to rewrite bill

BY JAMES PH. RYAN
ryan@dailyherald.com

Gov. Rod Blagojevich says he is filled with ambivalence about whether to sign any ethics law that would prevent state officials from taking campaign cash from their own companies. Instead, he said Monday he will rewrite it and send it back to lawmakers. He is not sure whether he will be able to get the bill passed, but he says he will try.

Gas prices drive away volunteerism

Groups like Meals on Wheels are hurting

BY HARRY WITZMAN
witezman@dailyherald.com

It's a cruel irony of the gas price increase that is driving away volunteerism. The 77-year-old says "I'm interested in working with people." She is not interested in the 77-year-old says "I'm interested in working with people." She is not interested in the 77-year-old says "I'm interested in working with people."

Gas prices drive away volunteerism



Joeanne Rogers of Eight prepares to hand out with meals as part of the Golden Harvest program. She has one of the larger routes, including parts of South Ridge and West Eight addresses and has definitely noticed the increasing strain on her gas bill.

Groups like Meals on Wheels are hurting

BY HARRY WITZMAN
witezman@dailyherald.com

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Is tonight the end?

Obama hopes to deliver clinching speech tonight

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Barack Obama pledged again to victory in the marathon Democratic presidential race Monday on the eve of a final pair of primaries with against Hillary Clinton was preparing to make a final bid to clinch the nomination in the primary competition in Iowa.

Summery splash

As temperatures finally rise to levels worth enjoying, John Mitchell, 7, took his first dip in the local pool on Monday. Here, he splashes around at Oak Glen Park in Oak.



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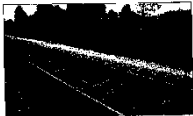
SEE ETHICS ON PAGE 2

SEE MEALS ON PAGE 2

SEE TRAIN ON PAGE 7

Weekend funeral set for West Chicago girl hit by train

Adriana Victoria-Cham, 7, died four hours away from her high school and Eastern Railroad tracks where she was struck by a train and killed Saturday afternoon.



BY MELISSA JENCO
mjenco@dailyherald.com

Adriana Victoria-Cham, 7, died four hours away from her high school and Eastern Railroad tracks where she was struck by a train and killed Saturday afternoon.

Weather Today's forecast: A cloudy but United Way sculptures in Naperville. Page 5.

Local Focus Today's headlines: A cloudy but United Way sculptures in Naperville. Page 5.

Life Stories Honoring the volunteer: A cloudy but United Way sculptures in Naperville. Page 5.

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Contact us: A cloudy but United Way sculptures in Naperville. Page 5.

Daily Herald MEDIA GROUP logo and contact information including phone number (630) 375-1000 and website dailyherald.com.

Sox' stoic leader

Konerko taking it one game at a time amid sweep over Rangers
— Rozner, Sports



Village wants to avoid winter mess

Libertyville asks IDOT to delay intersection work

By Mick Zawislak

What was to have been a disruptive \$23 million project to widen Milwaukee Avenue at and north of Route 137 in Libertyville has not been as bad as advertised, mainly because little of the actual roadwork has been done. And that worries village officials, who have asked the Illinois Department of Transportation to focus on adding lanes to the north while deferring work on the intersection until the 2013 construction season. We're asking that they hold off until next year to start it, Mayor Terry Weppler said. "It'll be a mess for residents over the winter." The village also wants to minimize the potential disruption for area businesses. An official letter will be sent to IDOT brass with copies to local-area legislators. How much weight that carries is to be seen. IDOT says it

See DELAY on PAGE 11

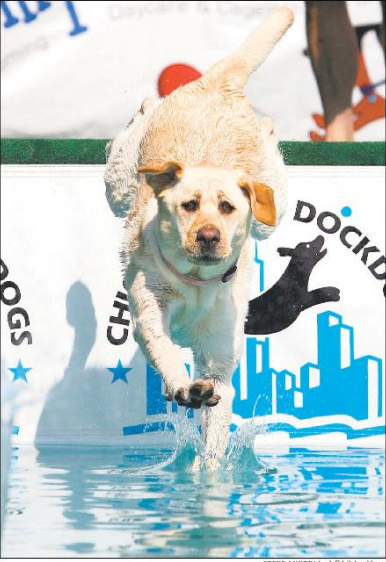
Illegal fireworks sparked brush fire

By David Conway

A rapidly growing brush fire in Long Grove Wednesday afternoon that burned approximately 14 acres of land was started by the use of illegal fireworks and exacerbated by extremely dry conditions, the Long Grove Fire Protection District said in a news release Thursday. Members of the Long Grove Fire Protection District and the Lake County sheriff's department are investigating the fire and a male has been taken in for questioning by the sheriff's department, the fire department news release said. Though residential subdivisions were adjacent to the area in which the fire burned, no structures were damaged. According to the news release, a Long Grove Fire Protection District brush fire truck arrived on the scene at 4:05 p.m. Wednesday, immediately requesting a tanker and a chief officer at the fire. Within four minutes, the situation was upgraded again

See FIRE on PAGE 11

103° Another record falls as heat wave continues



LIBERTYVILLE GOES TO THE DOGS: Heli, a yellow Labrador owned by Dan Harbiller of Libertyville, takes a plunge into the pool during a free jump day at Libertyville's 2012 Dog Days of Summer Thursday. The event continues through Saturday. MORE ON PAGE 9.

When you work like a dog, which is worse: heat or cold?

By Josh Stockinger

When it comes to sweltering heat or blistering cold, is there a lesser of two evils? Not necessarily, any people who work outdoors — they both stink in their own special way. "That's like, would you rather be in the middle of a volcano when it erupts or at the North Pole in the winter?" They're both dangerous but for opposite reasons," said Carol Strain, police Sgt. Tom Miller, who's been running public safety operations during this week's heat wave. A team of Daily Herald reporters — working mostly from the confines of an air-conditioned office — surveyed 10 people whose jobs keep them outside during inclement weather to see if they prefer to

See HEAT on PAGE 5



AMANDO GARCIA WITH LINDBERGH ROOFING WIPES HIS FOREHEAD WHILE WORKING ON A ROOF IN DEER PARK ON THURSDAY. GARCIA SAID IT WAS ABOVE 100 DEGREE ON THE ROOF.

DEADLY WEATHER 3 Chicago-area deaths related to high temps have been confirmed. PAGE 8.
BUCKLED ROADS A half-dozen roads in the suburbs suffered heat damage. PAGE 6.
FEWER AT FESTIVALS Naperville Ribfest sees attendance figures fall by 25 percent thanks to weather. PAGE 6.

2 found dead in train debris

Car trapped after derailment, bridge collapse in Glenview

By Madhu Krishnamurthy

Two bodies have been pulled from under the debris of Wednesday afternoon's train derailment in which a bridge collapsed onto Sherman Road in Glenview, according to authorities. Glenview authorities confirmed early Thursday afternoon that a person became trapped and died under the debris. Authorities don't yet know the identification or sex of the first victim. The Cook County medical examiner was at the scene. WJMB radio reported late Thursday afternoon that the fire chief said a second body has been pulled from the wreckage. The first victim was in a vehicle traveling south under the Sherman Road overpass just south of Willow Road at the time of the derailment at about 1:30 p.m. Wednesday. "At the time of the accident, given the derailed coal cars and amount of debris, it was not immediately clear if any cars had been trapped underneath the collapsed bridge, or if there had been injuries," Glenview Fire Chief Wayne Giesberger said. It wasn't until 10 a.m. Thursday that Union Pacific crews had cleared enough debris to uncover the crushed vehicle, which was found in the middle of the overpass. Recovery crews continue to clear the wreckage to determine whether there are any other victims. It is unclear whether any other passenger vehicles are trapped under the debris at this

See TRAIN on PAGE 10

GOP criticizes Foster event as bunny money

The National Republican Congressional Campaign Committee is raising questions about an upcoming fundraiser that U.S. District Democratic hopeful Bill Foster of Naperville is hosting.



LESTER & RIOPELL SUBURBAN POLITICAL RECOUNT

July 27 fundraiser at Chicago's Scovill Restaurant features former congressman and lawmaker Down Clark Netch and former U.S. Sen. Adlai Stevenson III. The controversy however, is over headliner Christie Heifer, former Flyers coach chairman and CEO, as well as Hugh's daughter. The NRCC is targeting Foster — who is running against Republican Congressman Jerry Riggert of Hinsdale — noting the fundraiser with Heifer is "bizarre" because "Foster pretends to be an advocate for women's rights." Tickets range from \$250 to \$2,500 a pop.

See RECOUNT on PAGE 15

Weather
Heat Index: 115
You read that right.
See the back of Business.

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When safety is a luxury

Track record

RAILROAD SAFETY IN THE SUBURBS

More online

Read the first two parts of our series Part One examines why the suburbs haven't seen a drop in train collisions like the rest of the state has. Part Two follows a father's crusade to make crossings safer.

Some communities can't make up revenue gap

Last of three parts

By MARIAN PYZEK

The Illinois Commerce Commission receives \$30 million a year for railroad crossing safety improvements on local roads. It's not nearly enough, experts say.

About \$115 million in requests for funding from towns and counties wanting to fix problem crossings is left out of the ICC's latest five-year plan.

That revenue gap plays out as a persistent list of death, injury and damage across Chicago and the suburbs, where 5 million people and 1,200 trains a day coexist.

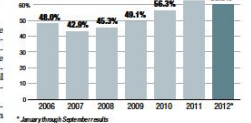
The deadly numbers give rise to questions about funding and fairness. For example, millions of dollars are being poured into sophisticated games for high-speed rail downstate while the metropolitan region lags behind.

Meanwhile, a lack at suburban crossings shows an

A dangerous trend

A high number of collisions, deaths and injuries on railway lines in Illinois occur in Chicago and the suburbs.

Percentage of total Illinois rail incidents that occurred in the six-county area



*January through September results. Source: Illinois Commerce Commission



LESTER RIOPELL

Suburban Political Recount

State leaders and gun issues

People on the suburban politics scene were already thinking about gun issues when the Newtown tragedy struck because of a recent court decision that could pave the way for a law allowing Illinois to carry concealed firearms.

The Connecticut shooting got people talking about the issue locally again.

For example, outgoing Des Plaines Mayor Marty Moylan, a Democrat, tells Daily Herald staff writer Madhu Krishnamurthy that when he is sworn into the legislature in January, he will push hard for a ban on assault weapons — one of his campaign promises, which is weighing heavily on his mind.

Moylan is recovering from knee replacement surgery but hasn't totally stopped working.

Not just guns

Illinois Hospital Association President Maryjane Wirth of Naperville weighed in about

See RECOUNT on PAGE 6

Meet the 2012-2013 Daily Herald Leadership Team



Meet the Lake County Leadership Team. Back row, from left: Lela Sharbini, Grayslake Central High School; Kathleen Morris, Libertyville High School; Kenneth Pecht, Mundelein High School; Ian Fleming, Carmel Catholic High School; Erin Bradley, Lakes Community High School; and Michelle Korfus, Adlai E. Stevenson High School. Front row, from left: Leah Mila, Carmel Catholic; Lauren Sylvia Auster, Lake Zurich High School; and Amanda Hennes, Woodlan Academy of the Sacred Heart. Not pictured: Allison Train of Vernon Hills High School.



Teens who amaze, inspire, look to the future

Welcome to another year of the Daily Herald Leadership Team, our salute to teenagers who go above and beyond their own interests to involve themselves in their school and their community.

We call them "leaders" because that is who they are — and who they intend to be in the future. These are teens who have seen a need and risen to meet the challenge. We hope you'll be amazed, and inspired, by their accomplishments.

See all the leaders in today's Neighbor section.

Dist. 46 seeks subs

Classes could go on in Grayslake amid a strike

By BOB SUSNJARA

Grayslake Elementary District 46 is seeking replacement teachers to work on a temporary basis should the regular instructors strike if they don't have a new contract by mid-January, officials announced Thursday.

District 46 issued a statement about the potential job availability but officials said they remain optimistic a new deal with the teachers union can be achieved before the strike date. They said they must be prepared if talks prove unsuccessful.

Lake County Federation of Teachers union business agent Jim Pergander said he perceives the call for applications as a sign District 46 doesn't plan to reach an agreement before the Jan. 16 strike date. He said both sides are trying to arrange a bargaining session for early January.

"It doesn't seem they're working in good faith with us right now," Pergander said.

See 46 on PAGE 10

'Doomsday' is here. Time to party!

What would you do at world's end?



Sharon Roberts, Mount Prospect

Events, shows mark end of Mayan calendar

By JAMIE SOTONOFF

When the Mayan calendar ends today, some people believe the world is going to end along with it.

Most people — and scientists — find the doomsday prediction preposterous, and in the suburbs, it's being used as an excuse for a party, a topic for sketch-comedy performances, and even an apocalypse-themed art show.

One doomsday-themed event, the 12-21-12 End of the World Bowling Party Friday at St. Charles Bowl, costs \$21.12 for unlimited bowling and a buffet of tacos and nachos — a nod to

the Mayan culture's Latino roots.

"It's something different to do. You don't get to do it every day," said bowling alley manager Kelley Carra. "You can party all the time, but it's more fun when you have a reason to."

Even though doomsday warnings have come and gone many times before (remember Y2K), these types of predictions cause anxiety for some people, said Dr. M. Joann Wright, director of clinical training and anxiety services at Linden Oaks, part of Edward Hospital in Naperville.

Those most susceptible are

See 2012 on PAGE 13

And so it begins ...



Mundelein resident Jay Shin cleans the snow from his car window Tuesday at the Mundelein High School station as measurable snow fell for the first time this season in Lake County. Read more about the storm's suburban impact on Page 6.

Weather
Hold onto your hat
High of 28.
See the Back of December.

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10 That Do it Right
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Homeowners' burden grows

Their share of property taxes is up statewide



JAKE GRIFFIN
SUBURBAN TAX WATCHDOG

Illinois homeowners are shouldering more of the property tax burden than ever before. Much of the increase is fueled by shifts in Cook and DuPage counties, where the proportion paid by homeowners increased 11.3 and 4.6 percentage points, respectively, from 2001 to 2010. Statewide, the share of property taxes paid by homeowners rose by 2.4 percentage points, a Daily Herald analysis of Illinois Department of Revenue records shows. And it's a bigger slice of a bigger pie, with taxes paid to the state's 6,000-plus units of government rising nearly 50 billion over the same decade. Meanwhile, the share of property taxes paid by commercial and industrial property owners shrank. One big reason for the shift is that the value of business property dropped more significantly than home values during the recession, said See WATCHDOG on PAGE 11



Closed business, like this former car dealership along Roosevelt Road in Wheaton, are one reason property taxes are shifting onto homeowners' shoulders.

Track record



As a Metra train departs for Chicago out of downtown Lombard, warning signs and small red lights remind riders to watch out for another train, but some experts say these mid-platform crossings are hazardous.

In harm's way

Suburbs fail to mirror state's drop in collisions

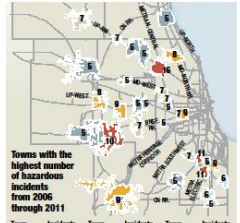
First of three parts
By MARI FYKE
mfyke@dailyherald.com



PHOTO COURTESY OF JASON KING
Traci Spradlin hugs her fiancé's daughter, Sophie King. Spradlin died in December 2009 at a mid-platform pedestrian crossing at Lake Forest Metra station while hurrying across to meet what she thought was fiancé Jason King's slow-moving Metra train. Instead, it was a speeding Amtrak.

Danger on the tracks

Suburbs that rank highest for collisions between trains and vehicles or pedestrians — including fatalities, injuries and suicides — along railway lines in the six-county region.



Towns with the highest number of hazardous incidents from 2006 through 2011

Town	Incidents	Town	Incidents
Blue Plains	16	Elmhurst	7
Blue Island	11	Harvey	7
Harvey	11	Crystal Lake	7
Naperville	10	Lawrenceville	7
Cicero	9	Franklin Park	7
Dolton	9	Madison Park	7
Lisle	8	Chicago Heights	6
Wheaton	8	Lansing	6
Stamwood	8	Arlington Heights	5
West Chicago	7	Elgin	5
Alsip	7	Elgin	5

At least three people a month will die when they are hit by a train in the Chicago region next year, according to statistical forecasts. Nearly three people a month will be injured. And twice a week, collisions between trains and vehicles or trains and pedestrians will snarl traffic, delay commuters and break hearts. Some towns are more dangerous than others. Des Plaines led the suburbs in incidents from 2006 to 2011, with Harvey, Blue Island, Naperville, Wheaton, Joliet, Dolton, Cicero, West Chicago and Glenview not far behind, according to Illinois Commerce Commission data. In all, 641 collisions were caused by the volatile mix of pedestrians, vehicles and trains in the metropolitan region from 2006 to 2011. Though collisions statewide are trending down, the number that occur in Chicago and the suburbs annually did not show a significant decline over the six-year period. The frequency of incidents might not be surprising. The Chicago region is home to 9.5 million people and is the largest freight rail hub in the nation, serving the six biggest railroads in North America. Yes, regulators, rail safety advocates and survivors say more needs to be done to protect against collisions involving trains. For the lucky majority, the collisions are minor, but some will be life-changing. She wasn't just my boss, said Jason King of Lakewood.

PHOTO COURTESY OF JASON KING
Traci Spradlin hugs her fiancé's daughter, Sophie King. Spradlin died in December 2009 at a mid-platform pedestrian crossing at Lake Forest Metra station while hurrying across to meet what she thought was fiancé Jason King's slow-moving Metra train. Instead, it was a speeding Amtrak.

PHOTO COURTESY OF JASON KING
His fiancée Traci Spradlin died two years ago after an Amtrak train hit the Graylake woman as she crossed the tracks on Lake Forest. 'My kids lost her, her son See TRAINS on PAGE 6

Benghazi panel faults leadership

State Department cited for 'grossly' inadequate security at embassy

WASHINGTON — An independent panel charged with investigating the deadly Sept. 11 attack in Libya that killed a U.S. ambassador and three other Americans has concluded that systematic management and leadership failures at the State Department led to "grossly" inadequate security at the mission in Benghazi. "Systematic failures and management deficiencies at senior levels within two bureaus of the State Department resulted in a Special Mission security posture that was inadequate for Benghazi and grossly inadequate to deal with the attack that took place," the panel said. The report singled out the Bureau of Diplomatic Security and the Bureau of Near East Affairs for criticism, saying there appeared to be a lack of cooperation and coordination over protection at the mission in Benghazi, a city in eastern Libya that was relatively lawless after the revolution that toppled Libyan strongman Moammar Gadhafi. Despite those failures, the Accountability Review Board determined that no individual officials ignored or violated their duties and recommended no disciplinary action now. But it also said poor performance by senior managers should be grounds for disciplinary recommendations in the future. The report appeared to break little new ground about the timeline of the Benghazi attack during which Libyan Ambassador Chris Stevens, information specialist Sean Smith and former Navy SEALs Glen Doherty and Tyrone Woods — who were contractors working for the CIA — were killed. Stevens' secretary was the first U.S. ambassador since 1988. But it confirmed that contrary to initial accounts, there See REPORT on PAGE 8

School gets grant for health center — Page 5

Gurnee trustee: Troop memorial settlement is off

Gurnee Trustee Kirk Morris says he wants to scrap a lawsuit settlement with village government over his private foundation's effort to build a memorial to troops who died in Iraq and Afghanistan on public land. His decision comes one day after trustees voted 4-0, with two abstentions, in favor of having the village's insurance carrier pay a \$200,000 settlement to PG, Geoffrey Morris Memorial Foundation. The Foundation is named for Morris' son, a Marine who died in Iraq in 2004. Two decisions in favor of the deal was off Tuesday and the settlement was not entered as planned before Lake County See MEMORIAL on PAGE 5



Kirk Morris

Weather
SUN waiting...
High of 44.
See the back of Business.

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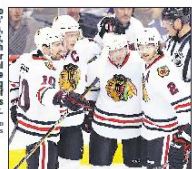
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Hawks head home with 3-1 lead

Chicago Blackhawks' Jonathan Toews, second left, celebrates with teammates after scoring a goal Friday against the Canucks during the first period of Game 4. Toews had a hat trick.



SEMIFINALS

HATS OFF: Bytchliert-Toews powerhouse help Hawks with 7-4 over Canucks.



ROZNER: Hawks use their smarts to goad Canucks into stupid penalty after stupid penalty.

FULL COVERAGE IN SPORTS

GAME 5: 7 p.m. Sunday @ United Center • TV: CNN • Radio: Wisc 560

County jail may house federal inmates

By RUSSELL LISNAU

The Lake County jail's work-release program could house up to 10 federal prison inmates as part of a deal being considered by the county board.

The proposed agreement with the Federal Bureau of Prisons, reviewed Friday by county commissioners, is being considered because the Watkegan work-release facility regularly has vacant beds, officials said.

The deal will allow the sheriff's office, which controls the jail, to collect additional revenue without adding staff or opening new jail units, county reports indicate.

The deal would bring in about \$88 per federal inmate per day. The rate would cover all usual services for prisoners and basic medical services.

The program would be open to federal prisoners only from the Chicago area or southern Wisconsin who qualify for federal work-release status, Assistant County Administrator Amy McEwan said.

Several county board members spoke in favor of the plan Friday.

"We have been wanting to do this for a long time," said county board Chairwoman Suzi Schmidt, a Lake Villa Republican.

"It's a good program, a very good program," added Mary Rose Cunningham, a Watkegan Democrat.

No federal inmates have been identified for the program yet, County Administrator Barry Barton said.

A three-year agreement is on the table. The full board is expected to vote on the proposal Tuesday.

Suburban native works to save fragile Gulf Coast

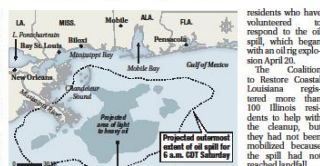


Kristian Anders Gustavson, formerly of Libertyville, founded Below the Surface to promote conservation in areas like the Gulf Coast. He explored the Atchafalaya River in Louisiana earlier this year and has returned to the area in the wake of the oil spill.

Documenting the spill

By ROBERT MCCOPPIN

He used to canoe down the Des Plaines River and swim in a lagoon in suburban pools. Now his love of water is prompting Kristian Anders Gustavson to venture to the massive oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico.



Gustavson is in New Orleans to begin documenting the effects of the BP oil spill that is spewing an estimated 210,000 gallons of oil into the Gulf each day.

A Libertyville native and founder of the waterway conservation group Below the Surface, Gustavson is working with camera crews to film sensitive areas of the Gulf Coast, such as the Gulf Islands National Seashore and barrier islands, before they get hit by the spill and after, if necessary.

residents who have volunteered to respond to the oil spill, which began with an oil rig explosion April 20.

The Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana registered more than 100 Illinois residents to help with the cleanup, but they had not been mobilized because the spill had not reached landfall.

Likewise, the National Audubon Society is signing up volunteers but not mobilizing them, as weather patterns temporarily held the oil off of shore.

The Shedd Aquarium in Chicago also is gearing up to respond to the spill, spokesman Roger Germann said.

Gustavson, who now lives in

See SPILL on PAGE 8

Metra chief dead

Officials say Pagano walked in front of oncoming train

By MARNI FYKE

PHILIP PAGANO

Phil Pagano dedicated most of his professional life to Metra, and when allegations of misconduct threatened his beloved career, he took a desperate way out, authorities contend.

Pagano died Friday morning after walking onto the railway tracks into the path of a Metra train in Crystal Lake. His actions came just hours before an emergency meeting of the board of directors to discuss his job status as executive director.

Pagano, 60, had been placed on paid leave pending an investigation into potential financial irregularities which officials indicated may involve unapproved advances of more than \$50,000 in vacation pay, among other issues.

McHenry County Sheriff Keith Nygren said documents found both on Pagano's body and in his Crystal Lake home Friday indicate he took his own life.

"I would describe it as a letter indicating his intentions," Nygren said, declining further comment on the letter's contents. "We have no reason to believe this was anything but an intentional act on his part."

A train engineer who witnessed the 8 a.m. collision told investigators he spotted Pagano standing on the tracks about 30 feet north of the crossing at East Hillside Road in Crystal Lake.

"He was standing in the center of the tracks, looking straight at the train," Nygren said. "The engineer was unable to stop before hitting."



Page 9
Pagano was crucial in rebuilding Metra's service ridership.

See DEAD on PAGE 6

List of big raises to Stroger aides keeps growing

By TED COX

The hot water surrounding Cook County Board President Todd Stroger got hotter — and deeper — late this week with the discovery he had awarded raises to top aides Eric Morgan Williams and Eugene Mullins.

It was Morgan Williams of the Cook County Board said they suspected when they voted unanimously earlier this week to impose a 72-hour notification requirement on all new hiring, personnel transfers and raises.

Williams, the county's chief financial officer, saw her salary rise \$54,000 from \$176,000 to \$230,000. Mullins, Stroger's director of public affairs and communications, got a raise from \$105,000 to \$115,000.

All while Stroger was in the process of losing February's Democratic Primary and becoming a lame duck scheduled to leave office at the start of December.

See RAISES on PAGE 7

Dist. 118 announces hike in school fees — Page 3

State lawmakers can't agree, so they'll work on budget later — Page 6

Weather

Chillin' High of 55.



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