



A Super quarterback showdown

IN SPORTS: After Sunday’s wins, Rolling Meadows grad **Jimmy Garoppolo**, left, will lead the 49ers against **Patrick Mahomes** and the Chiefs in **Super Bowl LIV**



Northwest Suburbs

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Monday, January 20, 2020

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Term limits the biggest question

But there’s a host of other issues for suburban voters to decide in March primary

BY CHRISTOPHER PLACEK
cplacek@dailyherald.com

While their names may not be listed, a March 17 ballot question in Elk Grove Village will be a de facto referendum on Mayor Craig Johnson and his long-tenured board of trustees.

The binding municipal retroactive term limits question — if it survives remaining legal challenges — is among the queries voters in the Northwest suburbs will consider when they go to the polls March 17.

Though it is a primary election with Democratic and Republican presidential,

legislative and countywide candidates, those who want to vote only in referendums can request a nonpartisan ballot.

The Elk Grove question would ask voters whether the mayor and village trustees should be able to serve no more than two consecutive 4-year terms. If approved, it would prevent four longtime

incumbents — including Johnson, the mayor since 1997 — from running again in April 2021.

A Cook County judge last week declared a 2019 state law barring retroactive local term limits unconstitutional, but a remaining objection from

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BOB SUSNJARA/bsusnjara@dailyherald.com, July 2017
Barrington Area Unit District 220 wants voters to authorize borrowing \$147 million. DETAILS ON PAGE 4.

Scare inspires suburban sisters to create a charity called Skulls and Drills

Mom’s OK, so it’s time to help others

BY JENNIFER SHEA
Daily Herald correspondent

For Rhea and Ranya Sharma, creating a charity meant triumphing over their worst fears.

It all started around the holidays in 2017, with the most terrifying moment of their lives: their mother lying in a hospital bed at Amita St. Alexius Medical Center in Hoffman Estates, tubes coming out of her head.

Nupur Sharma had a subdural hematoma, a pooling of blood outside the brain, and needed emergency surgery. Her daughters, now a senior and a sophomore at Barrington High School, think it occurred when she accidentally banged her head while opening a car door.

“My sister and I didn’t



JOE LEWNARD/jlewnard@dailyherald.com

Sisters Ranya, left, and Rhea Sharma of South Barrington started a charity, Skulls and Drills, to help people in need afford brain treatment. They were inspired after their mom, Nupur, suffered a subdural hematoma in late 2017 and required a pair of surgeries.

really know what was going on,” Rhea said. “I think that image basically broke us. It was a really scary moment, and one that affected us deeply.”

Doctors told them the surgery was successful. Still, a month later, their mother was back in the hospital with the same symptoms — splitting headaches, dizziness, nausea

— and in need of another surgery.

She got it, and this time she recovered completely.

“The doctors (at St. Alexius) were really down-to-earth and really explained what the issue was,” Rhea said. “I really appreciated that.”

It took Rhea, 17, and Ranya, 15, a while to recover from the experience, too. As they did,

they were struck by how lucky they’d been. Their mother was able to get the surgery she needed, twice. Insurance covered most of the costs. The family didn’t go bankrupt from one bad health scare.

“Toward the end of 2018, when our mom was doing a lot better and our world was

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State Senate chooses its new leader

BY JERRY NOWICKI AND PETER HANCOCK
Capitol News Illinois

SPRINGFIELD — State Sen. Don Harmon, an Oak Park Democrat, was elected by his peers as the 39th president of the Illinois Senate on Sunday after hours of behind-the-scenes negotiations.

The race had been weeks in the making, and by the time the closed-door negotiations began Sunday shortly after 11 a.m., the field of candidates was down to two: Harmon, who has served in the chamber since 2003, and Sen. Kimberly Lightford, a Maywood Democrat and the majority leader, who has served in the Senate since 1998.

The negotiations took place in the Senate president’s



Don Harmon

office, which was then occupied by John Cullerton, who relinquished the gavel Sunday prior to the vote on Harmon. The doors to that

office were locked to the public and media.

Harmon succeeds Cullerton, a Chicago Democrat who surprised his colleagues in November by announcing his plans to step down.

Harmon reportedly held a 22-17 lead after the first blind ballot, with two senators calling in their votes via phone.

Midway through the second round of negotiations,

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Feds want to hear about your long wait for a freight train



MARNI PYKE

THE SUBURBS
IN TRANSIT

Fuming in the idling car while an interminable freight train steals 20 minutes you’ll never get back? Get revenge — or at least get on the record — by reporting the delay to a new Federal Railroad Administration database.

The agency recently launched the website www.fra.dot.gov/blockedcrossings with the intent of capturing data on blocked crossings to help identify chronic situations where trains

cause traffic jams and hamstring first-responders for long stretches of time.

“The FRA understands that blocked crossings pose potential safety risks and negatively impact quality of life in locations where trains routinely stand idle for extended periods,” a spokesman said.

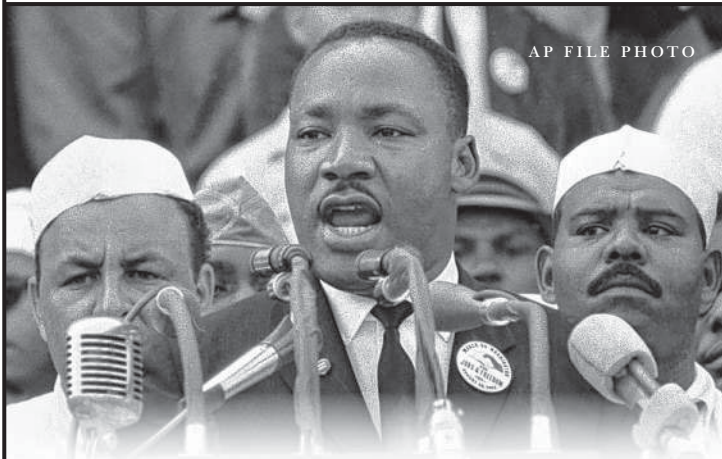
It will “help empower the public to hold the freight railroads accountable when they are blocking crossings,” said

U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin, a Springfield Democrat who lobbied to create and fund the website.

Freight trains have grown in length by about 25% since 2008, with trains on some railroads averaging 1.2 to 1.4 miles in 2017, according to the U.S. Government Accountability Office.

“Blocked crossings are an ongoing problem without a solution,” Illinois Commerce

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MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY

Keeping the dream alive

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Lisle event celebrates MLK’s legacy, looks to future

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Pence honors MLK, focuses on unity at Memphis event

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Column: The question that remains on MLK Day 2020

Neighbor

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For tickets & show details **Sportshows.com**



