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# Kmart making way for new Target

Former store in Round Lake Beach more than a decade in the making

By Joseph States

The long-vacant former Kmart is coming down in Round Lake Beach to make way for a new Target, as the community moves on from the department store chain that was once a retail king but is now little more than a memory for most shoppers.

In a news release, the village of Round Lake Beach called the sale and demolition a “major economic

development milestone” for the property at 400 East Rollins Road, marking a “significant revitalization project for the Rollins Crossing Shopping Center.”

The 190,000-square-foot facility has sat empty since December 2013, becoming what residents and village officials described as an “eyesore,” the release said. Round Lake Beach officials eventually moved to condemn the property, but Target stepped in to acquire it with the sale finalized in December.

Mayor Scott Nickles has been talking about the site for years, including in 2021 during his campaign for office, when he pushed for the continued revitalization of the shopping center to

create a downtown for the village.

“We do not have a business district or a town square where people can walk into the small businesses,” Nickles said at that time. “If we can develop that, it will bring a hometown feel.”

After “a lot of time, a ton of work” by village staff and attorneys, he said he is “delighted” to announce the development.

“This process has been more than a decade in the making, so we are thrilled to announce something is finally happening with this site. This is a great day for Round Lake Beach,” Nickles said in the release.

Gil Rivera, director of building, economic and community develop-



Demolition crews are taking down the former Round Lake Beach Kmart, with the site to become a new Target. The building has sat vacant for years. **JOE STATES/PIONEER PRESS**

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Kristina Lancaster has been named as a finalist for 2026 Golden Apple Award for Excellence in Teaching. She described the nomination as validation for the decision she made over a decade ago to get into teaching. **JOE STATES/PIONEER PRESS**

## Round Lake Golden Apple nominee shares her journey

Teaching serves as philosophy, way of life for educator

By Joseph States

A Round Lake teacher whose entry into the teaching field was spurred by personal tragedy has been nominated as a finalist for the Golden Apple Awards for

Excellence in Teaching, one of 30 teacher finalists out of almost 600 nominations.

Big Hollow Elementary fourth-grade teacher Kristina Lancaster talked about her lifelong desire to be a teacher, her teaching philosophy, and how she prepares her students for a new era of technology.

Contrary to what many of her students’ parents assume, Lancaster is a relative newcomer

to teaching. She has worked in various fields previously, including as an attorney and journalist.

“I’ve wanted to be a teacher since I was in college, but everybody said, ‘Oh, there are so many teachers. You don’t want to be a teacher,’” she said.

When she was 45, she even successfully ran for the school district’s Board of Education, saying she hoped to “scratch the itch” for teaching.

But in late 2012, Lancaster’s 12-year-old son Alex, a middle schooler at Big Hollow Middle School, died in an accident at home, and she decided to move ahead with her dream.

“It was sort of like this impetus — ‘What am I going to do?’” Lancaster recalled. “I could have let it wreck everything, but I thought life is too short to not do

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## AI porn ‘prank’ needs legal resolution

By Charles Selle  
FOR LAKE COUNTY NEWS-SUN

Some teens at Lake Zurich High School and President Donald Trump have something in common: The use of artificial intelligence to manufacture deepfakes on social media.

While the president’s use of AI to turn himself into Jesus Christ or a friend of His, it is the Lake Zurich students who took image morphing to another level. They distributed photos of female classmates’ heads on the naked bodies of adult women plucked from online sources.

Another instance where high-tech mixed with social media has taken us down a dark path. The teens’ porn “prank” also continues cyberbullying females online.

Law enforcement authorities and officials in Lake Zurich Unit School District 95 have been tight-lipped over the situation at the high school, home of the Bears. Some may remember the school had been known as Ela-Vernon High School until residents of Vernon Township split and formed Adlai Stevenson High School, which opened in the fall of 1965.

Once more famous for being the alma mater of Chicago Bears linebacker Jack Sanborn, the high school now joins a growing lineup of nearly 100 schools across the nation that have seen a spike in the use of AI-generated fake nudes aimed at classmates.

District officials say the case, the specifics of which they turned over to Lake Zurich police back in February, involves juveniles allegedly distributing the lewd photos online. As juveniles, the names of those involved will not be disclosed.

Certainly, classmates know the perpetrators, as do some parents who have stormed at least one school board session seeking

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## Democrats know Trump probably won’t be removed



President Donald Trump speaks to reporters after walking off Air Force One at Joint Base Andrews in Maryland on April 12. **TIERNEY L. CROSS/ THE NEW YORK TIMES**

Here’s why they’re pushing for 25th measure anyway

By Daniel C. Vock  
FOR THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE

WASHINGTON — A long-shot idea Gov. JB Pritzker and others previously floated took on new life earlier this month when Illinois Democrats joined dozens of colleagues from across the nation in demanding President Donald Trump’s closest allies remove him for being “unable” to carry out his duties.

The Republican president’s recent behavior has raised doubts even among some staunch allies, yet invoking the U.S. Constitution’s

25th Amendment to have Trump ousted — a process that would require Vice President JD Vance, a majority of Trump’s Cabinet and supermajorities in both chambers of the Republican-controlled Congress to support ousting Trump — has almost no chance of happening short of a health crisis.

But that was never really the point.

While there’s little expectation Trump’s inner circle will turn on him, Democrats can keep Republicans on the defensive about the president’s aberrant behavior with a debate over Trump’s ability to carry out his presidential duties. The tactic is also a way to keep the spotlight on Trump’s conduct without pursuing another impeachment that, with Republicans controlling the House, would also be dead on

arrival.

The most recent calls for the president’s removal are largely based on Trump’s handling of the war in Iran. U.S. forces have destroyed civilian infrastructure like schools and bridges, and Trump himself threatened via social media to end Iran’s civilization. It’s only gotten worse, with the president last weekend picking a fight with Pope Leo XIV over the war and sharing an artificial intelligence-produced image of himself as Jesus.

The episodes spurred even several prominent conservative commentators to make the same argument Pritzker pushed months ago — that the 79-year-old president is unable to serve. And as the November midterms approach,

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