

I know they are all environmentalists.  
I heard a lot of my speeches recycled.

— Jesse Jackson

# NEWS-STAR

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## Aldermen wield significant power in Zoning matters

*Aldermanic prerogative is unique to Chicago in intensity, density and scope*

BY BOB ZULEY

In Chicago, Aldermanic prerogative [or privilege] is a long-standing, unwritten custom giving alders near veto-power over zoning, land use, and development projects in their own wards. The City Council usually defers to the wishes of the local alder effectively giving them unilateral control over projects.

This opens up the likelihood of improper influence by forces not always aligned with the public good. This is particularly true where the local alder is inexperienced in ward zoning matters.

On her first day in office in May 2019, Mayor Lori Lightfoot signed an executive order tar-

geting Aldermanic prerogative seeking to end this “unchecked” power in order to curb corruption and reduce segregation, stating Aldermen should have a “voice, not a veto.”

While Lightfoot tried hard to end the practice of local alders holding veto power in their wards, Mayor Brandon Johnson has pledged as a general matter to uphold the time-honored tradition. Mostly, that is.

In 2024, the Chicago Plan Commission [CPC] approved two high-rises proposed by mega-developer Sterling Bay over the objections of local Ald. Scott Waguespack, [32nd], as reported in this newspaper and the Chicago Tribune. City Hall supported the project.

Ald. Waguespack didn’t oppose apartments on the site, he explained to his constituents in his weekly newsletter. However the project calling for 615 units was

simply too dense. Waguespack wanted mid-rise structures, not ones 275 and 195-foot-tall, as plans called for.

In 1984 another Lincoln Park alderman suffered a rare loss in a 43rd Ward zoning fight over the

***While former Mayor Lori Lightfoot tried hard to end the practice of local alders holding veto power in their wards, Mayor Brandon Johnson has pledged as a general matter to uphold the time-honored tradition. Mostly, that is.***

44-story Eugenie Terrace at 1700 N. LaSalle in Old Town. Former Ald. Marty Oberman opposed the project, but despite his opposition

ZONING see p. 12



A tiny forest is coming to Jordan School, which they hope will grow into dense, lush greenery teeming with native birds and insects.

## Tiny Forest project coming to Jordan School

The Jordan Community Elementary School, 7414 N. Wolcott Ave., has received a grant from The Awesome Project to build a Miyawaki mini-forest, similar to the school’s earlier project of their Vine Trellis Project.

A Miyawaki mini-forest is an ultra-dense, fast-growing, native forest ecosystem planted in a small, urban space, often no larger than 1,000 square feet. Developed by Japanese botanist Akira

Miyawaki, this method uses 3-5 native plants per square meter to create a self-sustaining, multi-layered forest that grows 10x faster and is 30x denser than conventional plantations, becoming self-sufficient in just 2-3 years.

These mini-forests can offer a low-cost protection to rising heat loads on buildings and streetscapes by mimicking natu-

FOREST see p. 12

## The debate over the fate of TOD on Bryn Mawr, Broadway

*March 12 community meeting to examine development spaces along Red Line corridors*

Now that the CTA’s Red and Purple Line Modernization [RPM] project is mostly completed, the community debate turns to the development of the surrounding communities, as the city aims to add massive new density to the North Side communities adjacent to the tracks.

One area where significant development is underway is in and around the Bryn Mawr Historic District and Broadway Corridor.

The Edgewater Beach Neighborhood Assoc. [EBNA] is hosting an open community discussion 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. Thursday, March 12, at the Edgewater Presbyterian Church, 1020 W. Bryn Mawr Ave.

EBNA’s goal with the event is to “help empower neighbors for meaningful contributions during development input windows.”

The meeting’s theme will revolve around the coming influx of high-density, Transit Oriented Developments in the community.

Two local architects will share an independent study of the area, exploring the challenges facing transit hubs like Bryn Mawr and illustrating what successful, com-

munity-centered development can look like.

The presentation hopes to draw on examples from Chicago and other cities to highlight how density, historic preservation, public space, and quality of life can work together.

EBNA says this meeting is not a development proposal. They say that a significant portion of the evening will be interactive. Attendees will be invited to share what experiences they value in their neighborhood, what they feel is missing, and what concerns or priorities they have as change continues along Broadway and near the Red Line.

The EBNA flier promoting the evening, states that the session is intended to “build shared understanding, surface community values and priorities, and help EBNA translate feedback to decision-makers.”

Presenters will include Todd Baisch is a 36-year resident of Edgewater, architect, and design strategist. EBNA says he has a long-standing passion for revitalizing the Bryn Mawr Ave.

Historic District and reimagining the Broadway Corridor as a more pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use destination.

Baisch previously served as Chair of the 48th Ward Bryn Mawr Alliance and currently

co-chairs the Edgewater Historical Society’s Bryn Mawr Avenue Historic District Preservation Advocacy Task Force.

A second presenter will be Mariusz Klemens, a Chicago-based architect and urban designer with more than 25 years of professional experience. His work ranges from residential and adaptive reuse projects to large-scale mixed-use developments, master plans, and high-rise buildings.

He plans to focus on the relationship between architecture, urban form, and quality of life, with an emphasis on thoughtful density, public space, sustainability, and long-term neighborhood value. He has published his own Edgewater Broadway Study, claiming it is an “independent visioning effort that explores potential future scenarios for underutilized sites along the corridor. The work is illustrative in nature and intended to spark discussion—not to advance a specific development proposal.”

This meeting will prioritize EBNA residents and businesses, however, business owners, renters, and neighbors throughout Edgewater are encouraged by EBNA to attend. Reservations are requested by writing to Justin Carmien at [ebnachicago@gmail.com](mailto:ebnachicago@gmail.com).

## Teen arrested after shooting up Rogers Park liquor store

BY CWBCHICAGO

A 17-year-old boy is in custody for allegedly firing shots inside and outside a North Side liquor store Feb. 19, and then trying to evade capture by repeatedly changing clothes behind a nearby building.

Chicago police responded to reports of shots fired at 6:36 p.m. at Red Violin Wine and Spirits, 7407 N. Clark St., in Rogers Park.

According to a CPD statement, the boy entered the business, took merchandise, and fired multiple gunshots without hitting anyone.

Employees hid inside the store as he then exited and fired more shots at the building, then fled on foot.

Nearly 20 minutes after the initial call, a nearby resident called 911 after spotting someone loitering behind their building on a surveillance camera. The caller reported the person had changed clothes multiple times and refused to leave. Responding officers found the suspicious person, determined he was the gunman from the liquor store, and took him into custody. Police said they recovered a firearm from him.

## Rogers Park Town Hall meeting March 4

The 49th Ward will be hosting their first public Town Hall meeting of 2026. It will be held at 6 p.m. Wednesday, March 4 at Sullivan High School, 6631 N. Bosworth.

## TIF payment proposed for Clarendon Park fieldhouse

Clarendon Park in Uptown would receive \$2 million in Tax Increment Financing [TIF] support for planned improvements under proposals introduced to City Council Feb. 18.

The Clarendon Community Center Park, 4501 N. Clarendon Ave., would receive \$2 million

from the Montrose/Clarendon TIF district for fieldhouse renovations, playground upgrades, pathway paving, basketball court resurfacing, outdoor lighting and drainage improvements.

TIF funds are collected from other property tax payers located in the TIF district.

**Readership survey now underway**

This newspaper is participating with several journalism organizations in undertaking a readership survey examining this newspaper and other independent Chicago media. Those who wish to participate, visit [https://medill.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_eShfyyVDy5qQmbQ?Newsroom=inside\\_publications](https://medill.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_eShfyyVDy5qQmbQ?Newsroom=inside_publications).



# Who's a Diva?



By Thomas J. O'Gorman

Hum, strum, bellow, chant, yodel, scream, screech, shout, in-tone, skip an octave, catterwoller, dog whistle, lullaby, croon, carol, vocalize, trill, chirp, twitter, warble, serenade, harmonize, belt it out, cantillate, echo, Pipe and Purr. In other words sing your heart out.

Famed opera star, Maria Callas once said, "Singing is not just producing sounds from the throat, it is above all expressing emotions and feelings," emphasizing "the deep connection between a diva's performance and the audience's experience."

Opera singer Renée Fleming appeared live in her first solo recital at the Lyric Opera of Chicago on Feb. 5. with her program Voice of Nature: The Anthropocene, inspired by her 2023 Grammy Award-winning Best Classical Vocal Solo album.

A woman of elegance, global fame, golden character, one of opera's most stunning contemporary soprano voices. A treasured presence at home in the great opera houses of the world.

In other words, she's a Diva.

Opera singers were first referred

to as "Divas" because their voices opened something soul-piercingly celestial. Being an operatic prima donna denotes a blend of personality, artistic skill and the highest level of professional attraction, with a rich sense of professional style, rarified performance ability, and a life-long learning in the arts.

Divas, of course, exercise an ability of excellence in the captivation of an audience. Stunning vocal capacity wed to the opera stage of musical performance while acting with dramatic and, often, comic skills.

Divas are first and foremost blessed with a unique ability to navigate the theatricality of the stage within the rarified world of Grand Opera filled with lavish costumes, elaborate scenery and large world class orchestras.

A Diva, of course, must be up for the celebrity of a two-pronged challenge. Someone at home in both the high strata of timeless musical performance by the world's most dynamic composers of grand opera. And the capacity to survive the long decades of musical training so necessary to produce a voice that can lift opera-goers out of their seats.

In addition there is the need for the Diva to simply outlast the excruciating, lengthy performances of the musical works themselves. Followed by the pursuit of this classical stage experience in French, Italian, German, Spanish or even English that keeps alive the musical traditions of



Soprano, Renée Fleming brings effortless elegance and stage presence as she spans octaves and captivates audiences around the world.

the composers. Geniuses all, but artistic madmen who fuse the great cherished events of history and cultural developments over the centuries. Inventing musical traditions.

The physical strain can be as confounding as it is artistic.

History tells us that the use of the sobriquet "Diva" was first established in artistic lingo around 1883. A poignant era in the establishment of great operatic composition and its theatrical engagement of the public. All this artistry unfolding in world capitols like Paris, Berlin, Vienna, London, Rome, Venice, New York and Chicago.

There the complementary Italian title linked the most outstanding female sopranos with a word identifying the deity itself. "Goddess." "Diva."

Fleming unleashed a glamorous and successful Diva performance with wide celebrity appeal.

Long a familiar face at the Lyric, historically, Fleming was unwavering in her capacity to bring some great operatic stories and music to life.

Fleming is a natural Diva. The strong goddess world coming alive in her. Recalling all those famed sopranos like Maria Callas, Anna Netrebko, Cecilia Bartoldi, Frederica Von Stade, Joan Sutherland, Leontyne Price, Bri-

git Nilsson, Joyce DiDonato, Kirsten Flagstad. Artists who enhanced the beauty and drama of the world.

In the business and heavy-lifting of Divas, Fleming has been called The People's Diva, remaining down to earth despite her high status.

Long considered a treasure of the classical operatic stage in Chicago, Fleming has logged decades of astonishing opera performances. She is also an Honorary Member of the Lyric Opera board, after being named the first ever Lyric Opera Creative Consultant in 2010. Performing for more than 25 years here, she has redefined the persona of Diva by combining her operatic talent with dynamic leadership and as a champion of arts initiatives.

Not to be confused with "Diva," a song by contemporary recording artist Beyoncé. A rap version of a hustle. You get my drift.

Fleming elaborated on her dissatisfaction in watching young TikTok performers rap their way to 'divadom'. Embracing their musical careers without the effort and decades of heavy musical training, and learning many of the languages that being an actual Diva requires.

Also joining in the melee for seizing and distorting the true expression of being a Diva are singer/songwriters Youre, Beihold, Jax, Lady Gaga, JADE, Adele, Madonna, Alicia Keys, and Rihanna. That's just the tip of the iceberg. There are many others who like to think of themselves as Diva material.

Ladies, you don't declare yourself a Diva, you earn that title.

Fleming will not embrace such nonsense. She staked her claim from the stage that Feb. 5 night, freeing it from the shallow celebrity of contemporary show business and pop stardom.

She also invited the audience to sing along that night. What a Diva!

Being a Diva for Fleming is a life commitment. It always has been. It's not a self-aggrandizing term. Instead it demonstrates the

bond of the artist to the timelessness and heroics of the opera stage. As one of the world's greatest opera stars, Fleming is also a Chicago treasure.

**CHICAGO DJ TO THE RESCUE: Pope Leo** has blessed a broken statue of the Virgin Mary found in a dumpster by former Chicago radio host **Kevin Matthews**. He discovered the statue during a dark time in his life and says its appearance caused him to rediscover his Catholic faith. He saw himself in the broken statue, and decided to save and repair it. He began taking it around the area and visited hundreds of churches, sharing his story of redemption through a worn statue. Recently, Matthews finally made his way to the Vatican with the Broken Mary. Pope Leo says he was moved by the story and the statue's meaning.

**ST.PATRICK'S FESTIVAL:** Shamrock & Roll as Division St. transforms into Chicago's largest St. Patrick's Day street festival Saturday, March 14. Spanning Division St. from State St. to Clark St., just outside The Lodge Tavern, Shamrock & Roll returns for its second year and will feature two main stages with live band performances, Irish dancers, bagpipers, beer and liquor tents, food vendors serving up bites, and plenty of festive cheer. Hosted by Division Street Merchants and produced by Lodge Management Group as well as Butch McGuire's, the festival brings the best of Chicago's historic entertainment

**HAMILTON RETURNS:** Producer **Jeffrey Seller** and Broadway In Chicago are holding a digital lottery for HAMILTON tickets. The show opens on March 4, at the CIBC Theatre, 18 W. Monroe St. A limited number of tickets will be available for every

**DIVA** see p. 8

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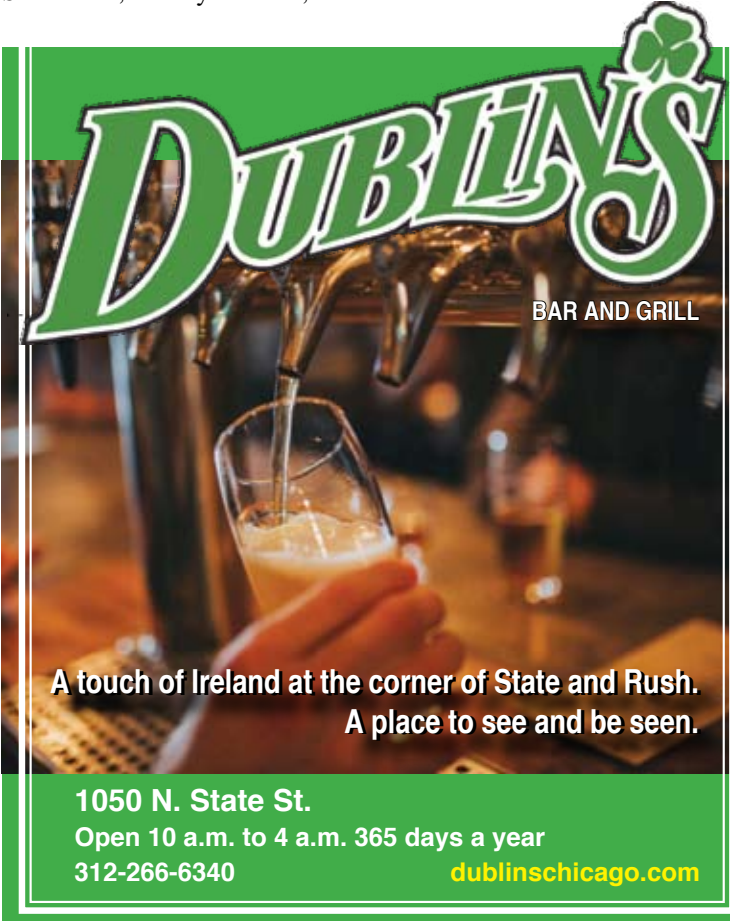



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## Little Sisters of the Poor trivia night March 8

Bring your thinking caps to the Little Sisters of the Poor's annual trivia event, Travinia, on Saturday, March 14, from 4:45 p.m. to 8 p.m., at St. Mary's Home, 2325 N. Lakewood Ave.

Gather your team of friends for an indoor evening of trivia fun. Tickets are \$30 and will be available to purchase online or over the phone only. For more information call 773-935-9600.

## Engineering Fest Feb. 28

The Chicago Architecture Center [CAC] is hosting Engineering Fest from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 28, at Willis Tower, 233 S. Wacker Dr. It is one of the biggest, most popular family-events they host during the year. The festival is free with pre-registration.

Guests will discover how architecture and engineering work together to shape our world. The Fest is where young people are invited to design and build alongside professionals.

The event will include free events to explore the CAC theme Transform Your Future, with over 20 hands-on activity stations, and family walking tours. Activities are geared toward youth ages 8 through 12, but the whole family is welcome to attend. For more information visit <https://www.architecture.org/>.

# Rat Fink proposal fails in City Hall

## Alders feared citizen confrontations over neighbors finking on their neighbors

Chicago's Rat Finks will have to wait for another day to enjoy the thrill of ratting out their neighbors for potential ticketing.

Turning neighbor against neighbor was an idea so wicked that only an Alderman could have come up with it. The proposal was brought forward by Ald. Daniel La Spata [1st], who sponsored the original proposal.

The ordinance was first introduced in City Council July 17, 2025, to the Municipal Code

(Chapter 9-108) which would have added a new "Section 9-108-025" establishing a public enforcement pilot program. The stated purpose of the program would be to empower the public to submit recorded evidence of covered offenses to the city, which would have deputized citizens in the enforcement of various traffic and parking violations.

Unfortunately for Ald. La Spata, on Feb. 18, City Council overwhelmingly rejected the ordinance that would have created a pilot program to allow nosy neighbors to photograph and file reports with the city turning in their neighbors for bus and bike lane violations they witness.

The pilot program, rejected Feb. 18 by a 31-16 vote, would have been a two-year long test run.

This would have included violations such as a car parked in a bike lane while a son drops his

ailing mother off at the front door of her doctors office, or if a parent parks in a dedicated bus lane while picking a child up from school.

A separate but similar program called the Smart Streets pilot

voted against the "Section 9-108-025" pilot program, saying he was concerned about possible confrontations that could be created since the plan would put enforcement at the hands of private citizens.

**Unfortunately for Ald. La Spata, on Feb. 18, City Council overwhelmingly rejected the ordinance that would have created a pilot program to allow nosy neighbors to photograph and file reports with the city turning in their neighbors for bus and bike lane violations they witness.**

was launched in 2024 throughout the central business district (Roosevelt to North Ave.) which is now in use. That program uses mounted cameras on CTA buses and city vehicles to take photos of vehicles parked in bus and bike lanes. The drivers found in violation receive tickets in the mail ranging from \$90-250.

Ald. Gilbert Villegas [36th]

Like all ticketing, the adjudication of civilian ticketing will be done within the city's Dept. of Administrative Hearings, not in Cook County Courts, which would have meant the city would have had to share the fines they collect with Cook County.

## Pi Day run 3.14

Mother Nature is now letting us know that spring is coming, so it's time to plan for this year's Pi Day 3.14-mile Fun Run on Saturday, March 14.

The Pi Run is sponsored by the Illinois Science Council.

This year's Pi run will be a lovely route along the North Branch of the Chicago River. Come to Clark Park on the Chicago River at 3400 N. Rockwell St. at 9 a.m. for the run that starts at 9:30 a.m. For more information write to Pi-Day@IllinoisScience.org.

One does not have to be a runner to enjoy Pi, walkers are welcome too.



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## Meeting March 4 on Diversey substation

Two community groups are cohosting a community meeting 6:30 p.m. March 4, to learn more about ComEd's plans for their substation at 1111 W. Diversey Pkwy.

The meeting will be held at the Advocate Illinois Masonic Hospital, 836 W. Wellington, in their Olson Auditorium. It is an in-person meeting only with no option for attending virtually.

## Leading preservationist to speak at Edgewater Hist. Meeting March 7

The Edgewater Historical Society is hosting their 38th annual meeting 10 a.m. Saturday, March 7 and will be presenting a talk by Ward Miller, the executive director of Preservation Chicago.

The meeting is free to the public and will be held at the Edgewater Branch Library, 6000 N. Broadway. No reservations are required.

Miller will be speaking on how Chicago communities can grapple with preserving historical parts of their communities under new political pressure to add massive new density and housing development to commercial districts, and specifically how the massive new upzoning of Broadway may endanger historic buildings worthy of preserving.

Many North and Northwest side communities in Chicago today are now being threatened by broad up zonings on large swaths of land with the stated goal of adding massive new density. The rush to add high density housing is due to consumers choosing not to seek out housing options on the West, Southwest, South and Southeast Sides of Chicago.

Miller will also review Preservation Chicago's current list of most endangered structures.



Rep. Lilian Jimenez



Sen. Graciela Guzmán



Sen. Adriane Johnson



Rep. Anna Moeller



Rep. Abdelnasser Rashid

# Chicago landlords continue battle against rent control



by Don DeBat

## The Home Front

A clash between tenant-advocacy groups and Chicago apartment landlords is heating up in the Illinois Legislature surrounding proposed new statewide rent-control legislation.

The Illinois General Assembly kicked off the 2026 legislative session on Jan. 14 and several new and returning rent-control bills are on the radar of Shape Illinois, a coalition of landlords and housing advocates who lobby against governmental control of apartment leases and rents.

"While we have successfully prevented the passage of legislation overturning the statewide ban on rent control since our organization began its coordinated effort in 2019, there is a continued push from advocates of rent control, and "rent stabilization" policies have been enacted in several states and municipalities over the past few years," noted Shape Illinois.

The bill filing deadline was Feb. 6. Several rent-control bills currently are on Shape Illinois' watch list for the spring legislative session.

One of the most controversial

pieces of proposed legislation is found in Senate bill 3530, sponsored by State Sen. Adriane Johnson [30th]. The bill, part of a proposed Rent-Security Deposit law that would amend the Landlord and Tenant Act, prohibits a landlord from increasing rent by more than 3.5% in a 12-month period for a dwelling that is the primary residence of the tenant.

the door to rent control in communities across Illinois.

The "Let the People Lift the Ban Act" would allow Illinois communities to opt out of the statewide ban on rent control via local referendum.

Sen. Graciela Guzman [20th], another busy rent-control advocate, has drafted SB1260 and SB2884. Rep. Abdelnasser

can cost \$1,200 to \$2,000.

- What about the cost-impact of federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement [ICE] bullies marching in and arresting immigrant landscaping workers and part-time handymen? Many workers were forced to raise fees because of harassment and lost work.

- Another concern is the added expense of security cameras to guard against endless Amazon and Fed-Ex-delivered packages being ripped off by gangs of wandering porch pirates.

### New 37-page lease

Another layer of administrative cost and red tape is the requirements of the new four-page domestic abuse and sexual violence rider as spelled out in the new 2026 standard residential lease drafted by the Chicago Association of Realtors.

The lease, used for the rental of apartments—including condominiums, single-family homes and townhomes, now has grown to an amazing 37 pages. The lease went into effect on Jan. 1, 2026.

Under requirements of the lease's "Illinois Safe Homes Act," an apartment renter now has the legal right to end his or her tenancy early, and not pay future rent when moving out of the rental unit because of a threat of domestic or sexual violence.

"The proposed rent-control legislation should serve as a wake-up call to property owners who will surely be surprised to learn how radical this is, and the lengths to which proponents of rent control—both in Chicago and in Illinois—are prepared to go," warned landlord advocate Mike Glasser, president of the Rogers Park Builders Group.

It is no wonder that many veteran Chicago landlords currently are selling their apartment buildings to absentee East Coast investors from New York and Boston.

Stay tuned apartment dwellers. Double-digit rent increases could be on the horizon in the Windy City.

For more housing news, visit [www.dondebat.biz](http://www.dondebat.biz). Don DeBat is co-author of "Escaping Condo Jail," the ultimate survival guide for condominium living. Visit [www.escapingcondojail.com](http://www.escapingcondojail.com).

**However North Side "Ma and Pa" landlords, apartment developers and managers likely would happily agree to an annual 3.5% rent-increase ceiling if real estate tax increases and property-insurance rates were also capped at 3.5% per year, instead of the 20% to 30% tax hikes they were hammered with on their 2024 bills, payable in 2025.**

Since there are currently no limitations on landlords demanding excessive or unfair residential rent increases this has led to "skyrocketing rents and encroaching gentrification of once stable neighborhoods" in Chicago and throughout Illinois, according to rent control advocates.

However North Side "Ma and Pa" landlords, apartment developers and managers likely would happily agree to an annual 3.5% rent-increase ceiling if real estate tax increases and property-insurance rates were also capped at 3.5% per year, instead of the 20% to 30% tax hikes they were hammered with on their 2024 bills, payable in 2025.

Illinois property insurance rates for homeowners are rising sharply in 2025-26, driven by a major 27% average rate increase by State Farm, Illinois' largest insurer, effective Aug. 2025.

### Lift the Ban Act

HB3687, sponsored by State Rep. Lilian Jimenez [4th], opens

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### Landlords seek revenue

This spring, even with a forecasted 6% average rent hike on new leases, landlords will still rely on other creative revenue-generating concepts to create a level playing field.

Concepts such as non-refundable move-in fees, pet rent, utility pass-throughs for water, sewer, garbage, common-area electric, Wi-Fi and monthly charges for landscaping and snow removal now are commonplace in the Chicago marketplace.

Most contemporary urban landlords prefer a flat, non-refundable move-in fee to a security deposit. Sequestering a security deposit in a separate bank account is another administrative headache.

Chicago landlords are struggling to maintain properties because of rising costs. One call to a plumber for a minor problem likely will generate a bill of \$300 to \$500. It doesn't matter if it was the renter's fault because his or her hair and body wash stopped up the tub and sink drains. If a tenant complains about mold in the shower he or she forgot to clean, a professional mold inspection costs a landlord a whopping \$550 for a mold report.

Critics wonder if rent-control advocates know how to balance their own personal check books? Landlords are encouraged to review the following issues and questions:

- Do rent-control gurus understand the seasonal expense of heavy snow removal, de-icing sidewalks and repairing "Polar Vortex" ice damage in gutters and downspouts? Weather-related minor roof and gutter repairs easily

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# Housing-aid crackdown targets immigrants

**New rule requires proof of citizenship: CHA now in HUD crosshairs**

The Chicago Housing Authority [CHA] has some explaining to do. They're going to have to prove which of their tenants are U.S. Citizens and which aren't.

With approximately 95% to 98% of the CHA's annual funding coming from the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development [HUD], they can't mess around. Their survival would appear to be on the line. With a 2026 budget of \$1.4 billion, this funding supports housing for over 65,000 low-income households, including public housing and voucher programs.

But now the HUD is preparing to bar families with mixed immigration status from federal housing assistance. Depending on the numbers, this could force tens of thousands of people from government-subsidized units and jeopardize housing options for non-citizen aliens.

HUD wants local housing agencies to verify the immigration status of nearly 200,000 tenants in HUD-supported housing within 30 days or face sanctions.

The HUD published a proposed rule in the Federal Register Feb. 20 requiring every member of a household receiving government aid to verify citizenship or eligible immigration status.

HUD's announcement follows a letter it sent to public housing authorities and

owners on Dec. 16, 2025, reminding them of their legal obligation to verify tenants' citizenship and immigration status prior to admission to HUD-assisted housing, per Section 214 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1980.

U.S. law says assistance should be limited to households in which all residents can prove they are U.S. citizens or lawfully present noncitizens. HUD says they're doing this to crack down on fraud and the number of ineligible recipients now collecting government assistance.

The rule would likely trigger evictions of mixed-status families, freeing up those units to be filled with fully eligible households. Presently, up-to-date data on the exact number of undocumented immigrants

residing in CHA units is not publicly tracked or released by the agency, so something will have to give,

Based on recent reports, there are approximately 32,000 to over 50,000 households on the CHA's waiting list for affordable housing, with some estimates indicating the demand is significantly higher. The waitlist for Housing Choice Section 8 Vouchers is currently closed, while public housing and project-based voucher lists remain open, with wait times ranging from six months to 25 years.

In a recent press release, HUD Secretary Scott Turner said the policy would ensure federal assistance would go to "eligible

**AID** see p. 10

# State's Attorney rolls out ICE prosecution plan, but her own protocol reveals how hard that will be

BY CWBCHICAGO

The Cook County State's Attorney's Office unveiled a sweeping new protocol on Feb. 19 to pursue criminal charges against federal immigration agents who use unlawful force, but a close reading of the document makes clear that actually prosecuting a federal agent in state court faces enormous legal obstacles that could prevent any case from ever reaching a jury.

State's Attorney Eileen O'Neill Burke said her office adopted the Federal Immigration Enforcement Action Response Protocol to prepare for what she called an unprecedented situation: the possibility of bringing state felony charges against a federal immigration officer for on-duty

conduct. The protocol's development was prompted, Burke's office said, by an immigration surge in Minneapolis in which agents fatally shot two civilians in separate incidents.

"No one is above the law — including both ICE agents and prosecutors," Burke said in a statement. "If a federal law enforcement agent commits a crime, my office will not hesitate to act, in accordance with state law."

But the new six-page protocol devotes significant space to cataloguing the very legal doctrines that could make the prosecution of a federal agent nearly impossible and candidly acknowledges at least some of those limitations.

After outlining step-by-step procedures

that local law enforcement agencies can take, local grand jury procedures, and the power to subpoena federal agencies, the

**Chief among the county's hurdles would be the Supremacy Clause of the U.S. Constitution.**

document concedes that there are significant challenges, including the fact that the federal government is under no obligation to comply with the county's subpoenas.

Chief among the county's hurdles would be the Supremacy Clause of the U.S. Constitution. According to the protocol, before

Cook County prosecutors could charge a federal officer, they would first have to overcome a claim of Supremacy Clause immunity — a high bar that requires the state to prove the officer was not performing an act authorized by federal law, or that the officer did more than what was "necessary and proper."

Courts have held that immunity applies when an officer's subjective belief about the necessity of force was also objectively reasonable under the circumstances, a standard that has shielded federal officers from state prosecution in case after case across multiple federal circuit courts.

**PROTOCOL** see p. 7

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# Police Beat...

## 14-year-old boy shot as teen gathering turns violent in the Loop

A 14-year-old boy was shot Feb. 16 after a gathering of teenagers turned violent in the Loop.

The Chicago Police Dept. had already deployed a unit of officers to the area in anticipation of the gathering when a 911 caller reported teenagers fighting near Washington and Madison streets around 8:35 p.m. Officers responding to that call reported shots fired about three minutes later.

Police quickly located the victim, a 14-year-old boy, at the corner of Washington and Wabash. According to CPD, the boy was standing in the first block of E. Washington St. when someone opened fire, striking him in the left foot. Officers recovered two shell casings at the scene. The boy was transported to Lurie Children's Hospital in fair condition.

CPD did not release a description of the suspected gunman, and no arrests have been announced in connection with the shooting. At least one other juvenile was arrested during the incident on allegations of battering a police officer.

The shooting victim is the second person shot in the Loop so far this year.

Monday's "teen trend" is the first downtown since a large crowd formed following the city's annual Christmas tree lighting ceremony on Nov. 21, 2025. A 17-year-old shot seven people outside the Chicago Theatre that night, all of them younger than 18, prosecutors allege. Two additional people were shot a few blocks away that same evening, one of them fatally. No charges have been filed in connection with those shootings.

## Man gets 30 years for killing friend in Rogers Park carjacking gone wrong

A 23-year-old man will spend three decades behind bars for killing his own friend during a botched carjacking in Rogers Park.

Isaias Salas was sentenced Dec. 17 to 30 years in prison after pleading guilty to one count of murder in connection with the fatal shooting of his friend, 21-year-old Julbert Hernandez. The sentence, handed down by Judge Angela Munari-Petrone, must

be served in its entirety by law.

Prosecutors said Hernandez suffered 18 gunshot wounds during the attempted hijacking, which unfolded just after midnight Tuesday, May 3, 2022, in the 7400 block of N. Wolcott Ave.

Another man, Isaiah Cardona, continues to face charges in the case.



Isaias Salas

Authorities said it all began as a night out among friends. Hernandez, Salas, Cardona, and a fourth man had been spending time together before Hernandez drove the group to Salas' home in Rogers Park.

As they got out of the vehicle, prosecutors said, the situation suddenly turned. Salas began punching Hernandez, and Cardona chased after him as Hernandez tried to flee. The confrontation spilled into the street as Hernandez and Cardona circled back toward the car, prosecutors claim.

At that point, Salas pulled on a black mask and opened fire. Hernandez was struck repeatedly. Cardona was also hit by gunfire, apparently unintentionally.

After the shooting, Salas and the fourth man ran into a nearby building operated by the Chicago Housing Authority, where they shared an apartment, prosecutors said.

Cardona initially told police he did not know Hernandez and claimed he had been shot while attempting to break up a fight between Hernandez and a stranger, prosecutors said. But the physical evidence quickly undermined that account.

As Cardona sat in a grassy area near the scene, officers noticed a wallet and cellphone had appeared beside him in a spot that had been clear moments earlier, according to prosecutors. The items belonged to Hernandez.

Investigators also said they recovered messages from the fourth suspect's Facebook account describing the shooting as a robbery that "went sideways." The messages allegedly included discussions about Hernandez's vehicle and plans to commit the hijacking.

Salas had never been arrested before this case, court records show.

## Two charged with mugging 88-year-old Uptown woman walking home from grocery store

Two women attacked and robbed an 88-year-old Uptown resident as she walked home from the grocery store, prosecutors say, and one of them allegedly tried to rob an Uber Eats driver less than an hour earlier.

According to court filings, it all began around 2 p.m. Jan. 21 when Martinique Holloway, 40, entered a restaurant in the 4500 block of N. Sheridan Rd. where a 63-year-old Uber Eats driver was waiting for an order.

Prosecutors allege Holloway began smoking inside and asked the cashier for \$5, claiming she was pregnant. When the employee refused, she turned to the Uber driver with the same request, according to a detention petition. After being ignored, Holloway allegedly snatched the phone from the driver's hand and tried to flee.

As the victim struggled to retrieve her phone, Holloway allegedly struck her repeatedly in the head and face, but the driver ultimately recovered her phone before Holloway ran off.

About 40 minutes later, at 2:40 p.m., an 88-year-old woman who lives in the neighborhood was walking home from Aldi with groceries when she encountered Holloway and 34-year-old Nemioka Horton on the sidewalk outside Sonic, 1022 W. Wilson Ave., according to prosecutors.

One of the women tripped the elderly victim, throwing her into nearby bushes, prosecutors allege. As she lay on the ground, one assailant held her



Martinique Holloway and Nemioka Horton.

down while the other grabbed for her purse, which was wrapped around her shoulder.

The victim initially thought she was being helped up, but then realized she was being held down, prosecutors said. An attacker began punching her in the face and kicking her in the side, pulling the purse so forcefully that the strap broke. The two women walked away, leaving the 88-year-old lying on the ground, according to the petition.

The victim was unable to stand immediately because her legs were crossed, but she eventually pulled herself up and tried to follow the attackers from a distance. She recovered a bank envelope that had been in her purse. It had contained \$100 but was now empty. She found her purse in the street with her wallet missing. A good Samaritan helped her call the police.

The victim was treated at a hospital for severe bruising to her left leg, bruising under her right eye, a bruised rib cage, and pain in her abdomen and chest from being kicked, prosecutors said. According to the detention petition, in addition to her physical injuries, she is deeply upset about the attack and feels ashamed.

Officers on patrol Feb. 12 spotted Horton and Holloway walking in the neighborhood and recognized them from an internal bulletin distributed by detectives handling the case, a Chicago Police Dept. report said. Both are charged with robbery and aggravated battery of a victim older than 60 in the attack on the 88-year-old. Holloway faces an additional robbery charge tied to the confrontation with the Uber Eats driver.

Judge James Costello detained Holloway pending trial but declined the state's detention petition for Horton, releasing her with orders to stay away from the 88-year-old victim, court records show.

Holloway has a significant criminal record, including prison sentences for attempted carjacking and narcotics in 2005, aggravated battery causing great bodily harm in 2009, robbery in 2016, and criminal damage to property in 2024, according to court records.

## Eight years for hit-and-run driver who killed road construction worker near Belmont Harbor

A Chicago woman has pleaded guilty to killing a construction worker in a hit-and-run crash on Lake Shore Dr. near Belmont Harbor nearly three years ago.



Bahiyyah Bost

Bahiyyah Bost, 51, pleaded guilty Friday to one count of failing to report a fatal accident. Judge Michael Clancy sentenced her to eight years in prison. With credit for 540 days earned while on an ankle monitor during the pendency of the case and the state's standard 50% sentence reduction, she is expected to be released in about 30 months.

It took investigators 16 months to build a case against Bost in connection with the April 21, 2023, crash that killed Kenneth Hernandez, 45, as he worked in a clearly marked and brightly lit construction zone in the northbound lanes near Belmont Ave.

Hernandez was standing next to the street sweeper he operated when Bost drove her 2004 Volvo through

the construction zone and struck him at about 10:50 p.m., prosecutors said. He was pronounced dead at the scene. Federal investigators determined the construction zone had a site-specific traffic control plan that was properly marked.

According to Bost's arrest report, CPD investigators compiled video evidence tracking her movements before and after the crash. Camera footage shows that shortly before the collision, she swerved across the center line of Fullerton Ave. at Cannon Dr. before heading north onto Lake Shore Dr. Less than a mile up the road, she allegedly drove through the construction site, struck and killed Hernandez, and fled without stopping.

Her problems did not end there. A short time later, she crashed into another vehicle at 3958 N. Clarendon Ave. and fled that scene as well, the police report said. With her windshield caved in, she then ran a red light at Sheridan and Pratt, narrowly missing three pedestrians in a crosswalk, according to the report.

As we reported at the time, police arrested the driver of a damaged Volvo about two hours after Hernandez was killed. That driver was Bost.

Prosecutors, however, needed additional evidence placing her behind the wheel of the vehicle that struck Hernandez. CPD's Major Accident Investigations Unit spent more than a year doing exactly that.

At an initial hearing in Aug. 2024, Judge William Fahy rejected a prosecution request to detain Bost pending trial, instead allowing her to return home on an ankle monitor. That decision allowed her to earn day-for-day credit toward her prison sentence by sitting at home while the case was pending.

## Mailing meth to Chicago by the pound lands Sacramento man in federal prison for 14 years

A Sacramento man who coordinated more than 200 shipments of high-purity methamphetamine to Chicago, including multiple parcels sent to home addresses in Lakeview and other neighborhoods, has been sentenced to 14 years in federal prison.

Keith R. McCormick, 54, mailed the packages from a shipping store in California, most containing a pound of methamphetamine that was 90% to 100% pure. Officials said he wore gloves while preparing the shipments, cleaned packages with Clorox wipes, vacuum-sealed the drugs, and double-boxed them in an effort to avoid detection.

Local co-conspirators received the parcels and then arranged for the drugs to be sold on city streets, according to prosecutors.

Federal prosecutors said the conspiracy operated from at least Feb. 2022 through early Feb. 2023, with repeated deliveries made to the 1100 block of West Roscoe Street and the 600 block of W. Barry St. in Lakeview, the 5100 block of S. Neenah Ave. in Garfield Ridge, the 5800 block of W. 60th Street in Clearing, the 4000 block of N. Harding Ave. in Irving Park, and the 5000 block of N. Kenmore Ave. in Uptown. Additional shipments were tied to suburban North Riverside.

Authorities said nine of the parcels were intercepted and searched pursuant to federal warrants, yielding more than nine pounds of methamphetamine in total. In May 2022, a package delivered to North Riverside was accidentally opened by a relative of the intended recipient, revealing nearly 450 grams of methamphetamine with a purity of approximately 97%. The relative turned it over to law enforcement.

Investigators detailed encrypted communications, including Signal and Telegram conversations, in which the conspirators discussed shipments, payment details, and distributors.

Among those charged alongside McCormick were five Chicago-area men. Stephen R. Jenkins, 46, was

identified in the complaint as a leader of the organization. He was sentenced to 14 years in prison. Daniel Heise, 43, received a 12-year sentence. Donald W. Grenier Jr., 64, and Jose Hernandez, 48, were each sentenced to four years in prison.

A fifth alleged co-conspirator, William F. Koch, 38, died in 2024. Prosecutors dismissed the charges against him following his death.

Prosecutors alleged McCormick coordinated the scheme with Jenkins and Heise, who then directed the distribution network and arranged for proceeds to be shipped back to McCormick via FedEx and UPS.

## Suspect questioned in Boystown murder, Oakland slaying that occurred barely 36 hours after prosecutors dropped felony charge



Damon Kellum, left, and Darwin Tirado. Images courtesy National Gun Violence Memorial.

A Rogers Park man is being questioned in connection with the murder and carjacking of a man in Boystown on Feb. 11 and the separate killing of another victim in the Oakland neighborhood less than an hour later, we have learned. Court records show the murders occurred barely 36 hours after prosecutors dropped a felony case the 18-year-old suspect was facing.

This reporter is not naming the man because he has not yet been charged in connection with the murder and carjacking of Darwin Tirado, 22, shortly before 4 a.m. Feb. 11 in the 700 block of W. Waveland Ave., or the killing less than an hour later of Damon Kellum, 45, in the 3700 block of S. Lake Park Ave. However, multiple sources say charges are expected to be announced shortly.

We were first to report that Kellum was found in or near Tirado's hijacked Hyundai Sonata, leading police to quickly link the two crimes. Two additional carjackings followed the murders, and Chicago Police Department sources initially believed those incidents were also connected to the slayings.

According to police, Tirado and another man were sitting inside the Hyundai when two armed carjackers approached, displayed handguns, and demanded the vehicle and the victims' belongings. The offenders then opened fire, striking Tirado in the back, and driving away with the Hyundai.

Shortly after 4 a.m., a Chicago Police Dept. license plate reader detected the stolen Hyundai traveling in the 100 block of W. 31st St., a source said.

About 45 minutes later and roughly two miles away, officers located the Hyundai abandoned in the 3700 block of S. Lake Park Ave. after a passerby found Kellum lying unresponsive in or near the vehicle. He had been shot in the head.

In addition to questioning the Rogers Park man, detectives have also been interviewing a juvenile, according to law enforcement sources.

Court records show Skokie police arrested the adult suspect in December after he was allegedly found riding as a passenger in a stolen Hyundai Tucson. He was also accused of possessing three grams of suspected crack cocaine.

Charged with felony possession of a controlled substance and misdemeanor criminal trespass to a

**POLICE BEAT** see p. 10

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# Former ComEd exec-turned-FBI mole in Madigan probe sentenced to probation

CWBCHICAGO

Former Commonwealth Edison executive Fidel Marquez, whose role as an FBI mole furthered the feds' investigation into then-Illinois House Speaker Michael Madigan, was sentenced to two years of probation Feb. 19 for his role in a bribery scheme meant to influence the powerful speaker.

Marquez's sentence, which also includes a \$50,000 fine, is punishment for his involvement

in the scheme before Jan. 2019, when the FBI confronted him with wiretapped recordings of him discussing do-nothing contracts for Madigan allies.

Marquez immediately agreed to cooperate, and over the following weeks he secretly recorded meetings with his colleagues, several of which were played during his testimony in the trials of those same colleagues and Madigan himself.

As the utility's chief govern-

mental affairs executive, Marquez oversaw a roster of lobbyists including ComEd's longtime top contractor, Mike McClain. Owing to their longtime friendship dating back to the 1970s when they were both young Democratic lawmakers, McClain was tasked with maintaining ComEd's relationship with Madigan. Plenty of witnesses at both trials testified Madigan had never trusted utilities, but his relationship with ComEd had been particularly rocky.

ComEd's finances were also rocky; the utility had been contemplating bankruptcy in the mid-2000s, and by 2010 the company was struggling to keep up with demands to its power grid, which serves the northern half of Illinois. But after a multi-year legislative push, ComEd's fortunes began to change after 2011 when the General Assembly passed a law changing how the utility could recoup the costs of major infrastructure upgrades.

# Man jumps into lake to save infant girl

Heroes are minted in unplanned moments, and an incredible example of that was seen last week when a man jumped into the water at Belmont Harbor after a gust of wind blew an 8-month old baby and her stroller into Lake Michigan on Feb. 18.

That's when a few bystanders sprang into action. Lio Cundiff jumped into the freezing water to reach the child, while Luis Kapost and others worked together

**Lio Cundiff, who says he himself cannot swim, fought to keep the baby above water until others rushed in to help pull them both to safety.**

from shore, tossing a jacket and life ring and calling 911 to help bring Cundiff and the baby safely back.

Lio Cundiff said he had one thought as he floated in the water, balancing a stroller with a baby girl inside: "I guess if this baby's going down, then I'm going down with her," he told Sun-Times' reporter Mohammad Samra.

Cundiff, who says he himself cannot swim, fought to keep the baby above water until others rushed in to help pull them both to safety. The quick thinking and actions of these good Samaritans likely saved the baby's life.

Cundiff, 30, said he was wishing his aunt a happy belated birthday when he heard a woman screaming and saw a gust of wind blow the baby's stroller into the lake around 3 p.m., in the 3200 block of N. Lake Shore Dr. Strong wind gusts that day topped out at 40 mph.

"I just realized that the lady wasn't able to help because she was in too much panic, which is understandable. So I'm like, 'I guess I'm going in,' and I just jumped," Cundiff told Samra. "I had no idea what the plan was. There were a few times where I didn't know if I was gonna stay up long enough."

Kapost, 43, who lives near the Belmont Harbor, also lent a hand after seeing Cundiff leap after the stroller. As Cundiff treaded water, Kapost tossed one end of his Chicago Cubs jacket over to him, buying them both time to figure out what to do next.

"I'm holding one sleeve, he's holding the other, and at least they're not floating away," Kapost told Samra.

"Him throwing that jacket down helped me so much," Cundiff said. "I did not know how long I was gonna be able to keep either of us afloat."

Other passersby who saw the situation called 911 and found a life ring to toss to Cundiff. Kapost and the baby girl's nanny helped pull him and the child to safety.



Lio Cundiff  
Image courtesy GoFundMe

"It took forever," Kapost said. "It probably happened in the span of five minutes."

Cundiff, the nanny and the child were all hospitalized afterward, officials said. The child was in good condition, according to Chicago police.

Kapost, who is a pilot for American Airlines, said a blend

of his ability to "slow down and think everything through" and Cundiff's impulsively heroic actions made it possible to pull the child out of the water. He said his training prepared him for a situation like this. "In my line of work, we're taught when you rush, that's when you tend to make mistakes that can eventually lead to disaster." Kapost said. "So that was kind of my focus. Be methodical, take your time, think everything through."

"If it comes to it, we'll get more people," he added. "It's a small baby. I think everyone in the city would've jumped into the lake if it took us all jumping in there to get her out."

Kapost applauded Cundiff's actions and hoped he'd get recognized for his efforts. "That's the epitome of a hero, someone who's going to act, to help somebody else they don't know even though they're placing their own life in danger," Kapost told the Sun-Times. "He's an absolute rock star."

## PROTOCOL from p. 5

Regarding the county's evidence challenges, the protocol notes that key witnesses, documents, and video in any such case could be in the hands of the federal government, which is under no obligation to hand them over. The document notes that while Cook County can make a so-called "Touhy request" asking for federal evidence, "the federal government, including its law enforcement entities, are not required to comply with any subpoena issued by a state prosecutorial body, and CCSAO does not have jurisdiction or authority to mandate subpoena compliance."

Even if charges were filed, the protocol acknowledges that a federal agent could petition to move the case out of Cook County's state court and into federal court, where a federal judge, not a Cook County jury, would decide whether the prosecution should proceed at all.

The protocol also requires prosecutors to check whether fed-

eral authorities are already investigating the same incident before moving forward, adding another potential procedural brake on any prosecution.

None of those hurdles is described in the protocol as an absolute bar to charging, and the document is careful to note that these considerations "do not necessarily preclude" prosecutors from filing charges where appropriate.

Burke's Law Enforcement Review Unit, which ordinarily handles cases involving local officers accused of on-duty misconduct, will be responsible for making felony charging decisions in any case involving a federal immigration agent.

The Illinois Attorney General's Office and the Illinois State's Attorneys Association both reviewed the protocol and offered feedback. State Attorney General Kwame Raoul praised the effort, saying prosecutors must take action "if the burden of proof can be met."

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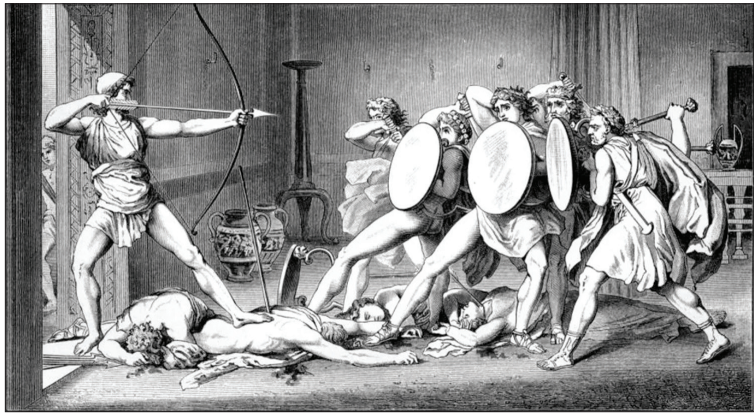
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# Hero or criminal? You decide



Odysseus is going on trial 7 p.m. Thursday, March 12.

After 20 years away, Odysseus returns to his home town of Ithaca from the Trojan War and kills more than 100 men who have taken up residence in his home and are trying to take his wife and throne. Were these justified killings or premeditated murder disguised as justice?

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Guests hear the case argued by some of today's leading legal talent, then the audience will decide: Was the most-cunning warrior of the Trojan War a hero or a criminal?

The trial is being presented by the National Hellenic Museum, and tickets are available at <https://my.harristheaterchicago.org/10918/10927>.

## DePaul Art Museum opening March 5

The DePaul Art Museum, 935 W. Fullerton, is hosting a free opening reception 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Thursday, March 6, in celebration of their Spring/Summer 2026 exhibitions, Alice Tippit: Rose Obsolete and Barbara Nessim: My Compass is the Line.

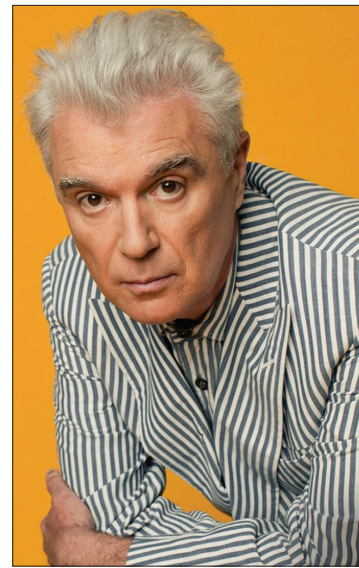
### INSIDE PUBLICATIONS



Michael Lerich



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David Byrne

### DIVA from p. 2

performance for \$10 each. The lottery is open now and will close at 12 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 26, for tickets to performances Wednesday, March 4—Sunday, March 8.

**SWING NIGHT:** Michael Lerich and his orchestra are creating "Swing" night at Winter's Jazz Club at 465 N. McClurg at the Ogden Slip. Offering two shows at 6:30 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. Tickets still available at [www.winterjazzclub.com](http://www.winterjazzclub.com) - check this out.

**100 YEARS:** Goodman Theatre celebrates 100 years and looks to the future with the opening of Chicago's newest cultural attraction, Theater of the Mind—a one-of-a-kind theatrical immersive experience by Academy, Grammy, and Tony Award-winning artist David Byrne with writer Mala Gaonkar.

Theater of the Mind appears March 11 – May 31, at the Reid Murdoch Building, 333 N. LaSalle. Tickets are available at the Goodman Theatre Box Office, 170 N. Dearborn, or by calling 312-443-3800.

**LOOKINGGLASS:** Lookingglass Theatre Co., in keeping with its celebrated tradition of bringing to life Ensemble-created new work, presents the world premiere of *White Rooster*, written and directed by Ensemble Member Matthew C. Yee (Lucy & Charlie's Honeymoon). Drawing from a personal family story rooted in early 1900s China, Yee's inventive and haunting play with music reimagines an American ghost town in a way only Lookingglass can, weaving together puppetry, movement, song, and folklore. Single tickets to the production, which runs March 5 – April 12, are available for purchase at [www.lookingglasstheatre.org](http://www.lookingglasstheatre.org) or

by phone at 312-337-0665.

**LORD OF THE RINGS:** An exciting concert at the Auditorium Theatre will take place March 13 and 14 in celebration of the 25th Anniversary of the Lord of the Rings. The performance will include a 238-piece orchestra with a screening of the film. Because of demand they have now added a third performance.



Holly Bowling

**LISTEN TO THE MUSIC PLAY:** Whether behind the piano on a windswept mountainous cliff, at Carnegie Hall, or playing shoulder-to-shoulder with some of the most legendary musicians in history, solo pianist Holly Bowling subverts convention with virtuosic playing, emotional immersion, and a thirst for invention.

Bowling will perform this Friday, Feb. 27 and Saturday Feb. 28 at 8 p.m. at Garcia's Chicago, the new home for live music and elevated dining in the West Loop. at 1001 W. Washington.

For tickets and more information visit <https://garciaschicago.live/>

**WHO'S WHERE:** Katie Regan and the whole family are in France, at La Tour Eiffel... Fernando Mendoza, the star Indiana QB and future NFL quarterback, was spotted at a wedding going all out, singing and dancing nonstop and showing his energy off the field... Happy birthday, Dansby Swanson... Artist Rosemary Fanti made a visit to the Tip-Top Tap to do a wedding painting... Happy 18th Birthday to Courtney "Coco" O'Malley... Karen Zupko at the 1951 Club in Port Charlotte, Florida... Cynthia Olson wishing everyone "a good night" from the U.K... "Candid Candace - The Podcast" with her co-host/producer John St. Augustine lifting the lid off, honoring Harold Ramis Day and the Chicago Auto Show with a thousand cars, local charities, puppy adoptions, craft beer and more... Eddie Burke Jr. skiing in upstate New York where, off

in the distance, the Miracle on Ice happened during the 1980 Lake Placid Winter Olympics... A river tour boat rescued a man who had fallen into the Chicago River off the Michigan Ave. bridge in downtown Chicago... Blase Foria and Liza Loza doing at Chuck's Lakeside Inn in Fontana, WI... Jannik Sinner, the top-ranked Italian tennis player, sent a message of admiration to Ilija Malinin after his Olympic defeat... Christopher Clinton Conway at Butler University Ballet with his mother... Gail Lumet Buckley, the renowned author, journalist and daughter of the late singer and actor Leno Horne, has died at age 86.

**OLD ST. PATS:** Old St. Patrick's Church has announced that the dancing Gardner Brothers (you've seen their commercials) will return to the Symphony Center stage for "Siamsa na nGael," a night of traditional Irish music and dance 7:30 p.m. March 9 at Symphony Center.

**ROCKWELL:** Norman Rockwell's painting, "The Dugout," is now hanging at the Art Institute, a gift to Chicago thanks to Illinois' former Gov. Bruce Rauner and his wife, Diana. The 1948 work captures a moment the Cubs lose to the Braves, and the dejected Cubs players and the elated Braves fans cheer behind the dugout.

**HISTORIC HOME:** Slowly but surely the Swift Mansion is rising from the ashes. The Edward Morris House or Swift Mansion (1892, Willett and Pashley, architects), is located at 4500 S. Michigan Ave. A true Chicago landmark of the meat-packing industry that made Chicago.

**HEAVENLY NEWS:** The Vatican has officially approved the beatification of Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen, clearing the way for him to be declared Blessed by the Catholic Church. Archbishop Sheen was said to have more viewers on early 1950s TV than Ed Sullivan's Variety Show.

Free speech does not mean free from criticism. It means free from government reprisal. - Salman Rushdie

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# Meet the Beatles presentation at Chicago's DANK Haus

BY PETER VON BUOL

Roll Over Beethoven: Meet the Beatles is the subject of an entertaining and informative talk by Mike Haas, M.A., on the evening of Feb. 26 at the DANK Haus German American Cultural Center, 4740 N. Western Ave.

Haas will be discussing the role Hamburg, Germany (a sister city of Chicago) had in shaping the British band from Liverpool, England which had made its debut on American television on Feb. 9, 1964. Four years earlier, the band's John Lennon, Paul McCartney and George Harrison had been performing in Germany playing for demanding audiences.

"The early Beatles [which then included Pete Best on drums, instead of Ringo Starr] spent parts of two years--between 1960 and 1962--in Hamburg--honing their craft and forging an identity and image as a band which would--in time--take rock n roll music to new, artistic levels and also play a significant role in defining the decade known as the '60s," said Haas, resident historian at DANK Haus.

Tickets for the in-person show are \$25 for the general public and \$20 for DANK Haus members.

Playing before a live audience for hours provided the Beatles with the opportunity to improve their abilities as musicians. To bolster their catalog, they also learned to play not just rock songs but songs from other genres. In the band's official biography published in



The Beatles played Hamburg between 1960 and 1962, for roughly 250-plus nights.

2000, the band's lead guitarist, George Harrison, described the role the city had played in shaping the band's signature sound.

"We had to learn millions of songs. We had to play so long, we played everything. Hamburg was really like our apprenticeship, learning how to play in front of people," wrote Harrison in *The Beatles Anthology*.

While in Germany, the band recorded a rock version of the Scottish Folk song My Bonnie. That record was not meant to showcase the band. Instead, they had simply been the instrumentalists for their countryman, Tony Sheridan. Produced by Bert Kaempfert, a well-known German bandleader and record producer, that recording had been meant to catapult Sheridan to stardom. Instead, it gave the band from Liverpool a calling card recording. Kaempfert would achieve worldwide recognition for a string of songs he would write, including Danke Schoen and Strangers in the Night.

While in Hamburg, the Beat-

les were befriended by a group of young Germans, including Klaus Voorman, Astrid Kircherr and Jürgen Vollmer (who inspired them to get their signature haircuts).

"The Beatles not only rocked the musical world but led a countercultural revolution throughout the West--with a look and an edgy mien that not only rejected the postwar status quo but did it expressing sentiments of love, peace and freedom that resonated the world over. And, it might also be said to have begun in Hamburg," said Haas.

Ironically, it was while they were performing in Hamburg that the three original Beatles were introduced to their future drummer, Ringo Starr, who was performing with the more seasoned band, Rory Storm and the Hurricanes.

According to Haas, John Lennon provided the best description of the experience in Hamburg, from a personal standpoint. John Lennon once said, "I might have been born in Liverpool, but I grew up in Hamburg."

## Spring art classes at the Old Town Art Center

The Old Town Art Center, 1763 N. North Park Ave., has announced a slate of Spring art classes, providing an opportunity for students to sharpen their skills or discover a new passion.

Beginning in March, the Old Town Art Center will host a variety of courses led by professional instructors. These sessions are designed for all skill levels, from beginners to seasoned artists looking for a collaborative studio environment.

Classes start March 18, and highlights include:

- Oil and Acrylic Painting: Master the fundamentals of color theory, composition, and brushwork;

- Watercolor Exploration: Discover the fluidity and light of this classic medium, and

- Beginner Drawing & Painting: Develop technical skills in drawing and perspective.

- Pastel Painting: Explore the most intense and brilliant colors of any medium.

"Art has always been the heartbeat of the Old Town Triangle. Our classes are designed to inspire

neighbors to step away from their screens and engage in the tactile, rewarding process of creation," said Barbara Guttman, Director of Operations for the Old Town Triangle Assoc. [OTTA].

Prospective students can view the full course catalog and secure their spot through the OTTA Art Class Registration Page.

Early registration is recommended as class sizes are kept small to ensure personalized instruction. Discounts are available for OTTA members and scholarships are available.

### Letter to the Editor

#### Buy the car, the taxman needs you

Your [Feb. 11] story on the Chicago Car Show should have reminded everyone about a state senator who wants to invent new taxes to rob us blind.

Chicago and Springfield politician Ram Villivalam is sponsoring bills for new taxes down in Springfield. Odd, but he never sponsors bills to cut spending, does he.

He sees how much Chicago is raking in from the 15¢ tax on plastic bags, and he wants in. He has already suggested a nickel per bag state tax on grocery bags. And the fee/tax/graft will rise another nickel every year.

And wily ol' Villivalam wants to extend it to grocery delivery services. So the senior citizen, the house-bound, the differently-abled and the stay at home parent

will be gouged too. Drinkers are gonna drink, thieves are gonna steal and state senators are gonna tax.

But that is not enough for "my friend" Villivalam. Next is your car. The mileage tax he sponsored in 2025, he is sponsoring again in 2026. Remember when the "greens" told everyone to save the environment and save money by driving electric vehicles [EV]? Well not no more, baby.

What don't EV cars do? The don't buy gasoline. What else don't EV cars do? The don't pay gasoline taxes.

So being "good for the environment" is being bad for Villivalam and his "friends" in Springfield on the state payrolls. So Villivalam has another idea. A mileage tax on EV cars. Sure it's only 1.5¢

a mile. To start! The grocery bag tax started low too, and is expected to reach 25¢ a bag by 2030. The gasoline tax grows yearly, and so too will the EV tax.

And just so no one cheats, everyone will have to put a meter in their own vehicle. And don't think it will be limited to just EVs. Gasoline cars, too. So every delivery van and semi, and of course the pizza, Uber Eats and grocery drivers' cars will be affected.

So when the knuckle-dragging neanderthal comes around this campaign season, or grabs you on your way to vote, tell them what you think of the new taxes and their sponsor, Villivalam.

Mike Sullivan  
Avondale

FEBRUARY 25 - MARCH 3, 2026 • 9

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<https://kiwaniscluboflakeview.weebly.com/>

# Zoo welcomes new red panda this Chinese New Year



Qi, the new red panda at Lincoln Park Zoo.

Just in time for the Chinese New Year, the Lincoln Park Zoo has a new red panda resident named Qi (pronounced “chee”). The adult male red panda, is currently adjusting to his new home at Pepper Family Wildlife Center and can be seen intermittently while he gets to know his habitat mate Nisha.

Qi is 7 years old and comes to the Zoo from New York’s Prospect Park Zoo. He has a breeding recommendation with Nisha through the Red Panda Species Survival Plan, a collaborative population management effort among institutions within the Association of Zoos and Aquariums. The hope is that the two will have cubs in the future.

Red pandas have a native range spanning east Asia and the Himalayas. They live in bamboo forests throughout the mountainous regions that are common within this range. They have an

extended wrist bone that acts like a pseudo-thumb, which allows them to get a better grasp on tree branches and bamboo. Just like Chicago, it can get quite cold in the mountains in red pandas’ native range, so the species has evolved to conserve heat. They can adjust their metabolic rate, curl up in a tight ball, and wrap their bushy tail around their body to provide extra warmth.

Red pandas were actually the first animal to be called a panda; black and white giant pandas were named after because people believed they were related to the smaller red species. Naturalists initially thought red pandas were related to raccoons before reclassifying them as bears. However, red pandas are now classified as the only living member of the Ailuridae family, which are distantly related to raccoons but classified separately.

**Scientific Name**

*Ailurus fulgens*

**Geographic Range**

East Asia and the Himalayas

**Diet**

Young leaves and shoots of bamboo, fruits, roots, acorns, grasses, eggs, and insects

**Did you know?**

Red pandas are one of only a few animals that can climb down trees headfirst, thanks to unique anatomical features.

Red pandas are endangered as a result of habitat loss and degradation driven by human development. According to the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, their populations have declined by 50% in the last three generations.

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**Or Call Justin Wheeler, Auctioneer, 217-855-8358**  
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**Rogers Park Township Real Estate For Sale**

**Real Estate For Sale**

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS COUNTY DEPARTMENT - CHANCERY DIVISION MIDFIRST BANK Plaintiff,

UNKNOWN OWNERS AND NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS, ROGERS PARK HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION, UNKNOWN HEIRS AND LEGATEES OF EMINA DZAMBEGOVIC, DECEASED, HADZIRA DZAMBEGOVIC, DAMON RITENHOUSE, AS SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ESTATE OF EMINA DZAMBEGOVIC Defendants 2022CH08405 1615 WEST GREENLEAF AVENUE UNIT F CHICAGO, IL 60626 NOTICE OF SALE

PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered in the above cause on November 4, 2025, an agent for The Judicial Sales Corporation, will at 10:30 AM on April 6, 2026, at The Judicial Sales Corporation, One South Wacker, 1st Floor Suite 35F, Chicago, IL, 60606, sell at public in-person sale to the highest bidder, as set forth below, the following described real estate:

Commonly known as 1615 WEST GREENLEAF AVENUE UNIT F, CHICAGO, IL 60626 Property Index No. 11-31-213-037-0000 The real estate is improved with a single family residence. The judgment amount was \$145,823.48.

Sale terms: If sold to anyone other than the Plaintiff, 25% down of the highest bid by certified funds at the close of the sale payable to The Judicial Sales Corporation. No third party checks will be accepted. The balance, in certified funds or wire transfer, is due within twenty-four (24) hours. The subject property is subject to general real estate taxes, special assessments, or special taxes levied against said real estate and is offered for sale without any representation as to quality or quantity of title and without recourse to Plaintiff and in “AS IS” condition. The sale is further subject to confirmation by the court.

Upon payment in full of the amount bid, the purchaser will receive a Certificate of Sale that will entitle the purchaser to a deed to the real estate after confirmation of the sale.

The property will NOT be open for inspection and plaintiff makes no representation as to the condition of the property. Prospective bidders are admonished to check the court file to verify all information.

If this property is a condominium unit, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale, other than a mortgagee, shall pay the assessments and the legal fees required by The Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(1) and (g)(4). If this property is a condominium unit which is part of a common interest community, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale other than a mortgagee shall pay the assessments required by The Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g-1).

IF YOU ARE THE MORTGAGOR (HOMEOWNER), YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN IN POSSESSION FOR 30 DAYS AFTER ENTRY OF AN ORDER OF POSSESSION, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 15-1701(C) OF THE ILLINOIS MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE LAW.

You will need a photo identification issued by a government agency (driver’s license, passport, etc.) in order to gain entry into our building and the foreclosure sale room in Cook County and the same identification for sales held at other county venues where The Judicial Sales Corporation conducts foreclosure sales.

For information, contact MANLEY DEAS KOCHALSKI LLC Plaintiff’s Attorneys, ONE EAST WACKER, SUITE 1250, CHICAGO, IL, 60601 (312) 651-6700. Please refer to file number 22-020692.

THE JUDICIAL SALES CORPORATION One South Wacker Drive, 24th Floor, Chicago, IL 60606-4650 (312) 236-SALE

You can also visit The Judicial Sales Corporation at [www.tjsc.com](http://www.tjsc.com) for a 7 day status report of pending sales.

MANLEY DEAS KOCHALSKI LLC ONE EAST WACKER, SUITE 1250 Chicago IL, 60601 312-651-6700

E-Mail: [AMPS@manleydeas.com](mailto:AMPS@manleydeas.com) Attorney File No. 22-020692 Attorney Code. 48928 Case Number: 2022CH08405 TJS# 46-407

NOTE: Pursuant to the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, you are advised that Plaintiff’s attorney is deemed to be a

debt collector attempting to collect a debt and any information obtained will be used for that purpose.

**Case # 2022CH08405**  
8231-962437

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS COUNTY DEPARTMENT - CHANCERY DIVISION ONSLOW BAY FINANCIAL LLC, Plaintiff,

SHAHNAZ FATIMA; HOME BY THE PARK CONDOMINIUM ASSOCIATION; Defendants. 2025CH08081

6420 N. Claremont Ave. Unit 2N, Chicago, IL 60645 NOTICE OF SALE PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered in the above cause on 11/24/2025, an agent of Auction.com, LLC will conduct the Online Only auction at [www.auction.com](http://www.auction.com), with the bidding window opening on 3/23/2026 at 10:00 AM CDT and closing on March 25, 2026 at 10:00 AM subject to extension, and will sell at public sale to the highest bidder, as set forth below, the following described real estate.

Commonly known as 6420 N. Claremont Ave. Unit 2N, Chicago, IL 60645 Property Index No. 11-31-312-045-1002

The real estate is improved with a Condominium. The judgment amount was \$106,119.85 Sale Terms: Full Sale Terms are available on the property page at [www.auction.com](http://www.auction.com) by entering 6420 N. Claremont Ave. Unit 2N into the search bar. If sold to anyone other than the Plaintiff, the winning bidder must pay the full bid amount within twenty-four (24) hours of the auction’s end. All payments must be certified funds. No third-party checks will be accepted. All bidders will need to register at [www.auction.com](http://www.auction.com) prior to placing a bid. The subject property is subject to general real estate taxes, special assessments, or special taxes levied against said real estate and is offered for sale without any representation as to quality or quantity of title and without recourse to plaintiff and in “AS IS” condition. The sale is further subject to confirmation by the court.

Upon payment in full of the amount bid, the purchaser will receive a certificate of sale that will entitle the purchaser to a deed to the real estate after confirmation of the sale.

The property will NOT be open for inspection and plaintiff makes no representation as to the condition of the property, prospective bidders are admonished to check the court file to verify all information. If this property is a condominium unit, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale, other than a mortgagee, shall pay the assessments and the legal fees required by the Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/9 (g)(1) and (g)(4). If this property is a condominium unit which is part of a common interest community, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale other than a mortgagee shall pay the assessments required by the Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g-1). IF YOU ARE THE MORTGAGOR (HOMEOWNER), YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN IN POSSESSION FOR 30 DAYS AFTER ENTRY OF AN ORDER OF POSSESSION, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 15-1701 (C) OF THE ILLINOIS MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE LAW. For information, contact Plaintiff’s attorney: Diaz Anselmo & Associates, LLC (630) 453-6960 please refer to file number 1463-217178. Auction.com, LLC 100 N LaSalle St., Suite 1400, Chicago, IL 60602 - 872-225-4985 You can also visit [www.auction.com](http://www.auction.com). Attorney File No. 1463-217178 Case Number: 2025CH08081 NOTE: PURSUANT TO THE FAIR DEBT COLLECTION PRACTICES ACT, YOU ARE ADVISED THAT PLAINTIFF’S ATTORNEY IS DEEMED TO BE A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT AND ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE.

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**AID from p. 5**

tenants” and not “illegal aliens.”

“We will leave no stone unturned,” he said. “We are proud to collaborate with DHS to execute on the President’s agenda of rooting out abuse of taxpayer funded resources. Ineligible non-citizens have no place to receive welfare benefits.”

Now that the new rules have been published, they face a 60-day public comment period. Once

finalized, affected households would have 90 days to document the eligibility of every occupant or risk losing assistance.

For affordable housing operators the CHA vacated units could be filled by fully eligible tenants, potentially reducing waitlists. It would also dramatically increase administrative burdens for housing authorities like the CHA and private landlords reliant on HUD contracts and government assistance.

**POLICE BEAT from p. 6**

vehicle, he was released from custody three days later after appearing before a judge. On the afternoon of Feb. 9, during his fourth court appearance, prosecutors dropped both charges, court records show.

The exact reason for that decision is not clear from the court file. The Cook County State’s Attorney’s Office did not reply to an email last week seeking clarification.

Earlier court records show that at a hearing five days before the case was dropped, lab tests on the suspected cocaine, a critical step required to proceed with a drug possession charge, had not come back.

Other records indicate the man had contact with Chicago police as a juvenile, but the extent and nature of those events are not publicly available.

Police were investigating the possibility that the killers obtained another vehicle after abandoning Tirado’s vehicle on Lake Park: a gray Nissan sedan bearing Colorado license plates. Exactly where they got it was unclear, but around the time officers were discovering Kellum’s body, two carjackers drove the Nissan onto a gas station lot near 43rd St. and Wentworth Ave. and tried to hijack a man who was inside a red Lexus.

The intended victim sped away before the hijackers could take his car. Surveillance video from the gas station provided the police with the best look at the suspects so far: two males of unknown race dressed entirely in black. The passenger was armed and wore a camouflage ski mask.

About 5:15 a.m., the pair struck again, this time near 87th St. and Lafayette Ave., where they targeted a CTA worker who was heading home after finishing his shift at the nearby Red Line station.

According to a preliminary CPD report, the offenders used the Nissan with Colorado plates to block the CTA employee’s vehicle. They abandoned the Nissan, physically attacked the

CTA worker, and robbed him at gunpoint before driving off in his silver 2025 Chevrolet Malibu. EMS transported the victim to St. Bernard Hospital for treatment.

**Dozens of airbags stolen during raid in Lakeview**

At least two dozen cars were stripped of their airbags along a stretch of Lakeview streets Feb. 17 and 18, the latest flashpoint in a city-wide theft craze that has prompted repeated warnings from Chicago police and left Honda owners scrambling for repairs that may take months to complete.

A passerby called 911 just before 8 a.m. Feb. 17 after spotting a string of parked cars with their driver’s side windows smashed on Racine Ave. just north of Belmont Ave. When an officer arrived, it became clear the broken glass was only part of the story. The cars’ steering wheel airbags were also gone. More calls followed, and the damage extended along Racine and down nearby side streets all the way to roughly Cornelia Ave., according to preliminary information.

The crime is as lucrative as it is quick. Thieves can reportedly strip a steering wheel airbag from certain Honda Civics in as little as 20 seconds, then flip the devices on Facebook Marketplace and other online platforms for \$120 to \$400 each.

The economics are simple: Factory replacement airbags typically cost around \$1,000, according to the National Insurance Crime Bureau, making the stolen versions an attractive bargain for buyers who may not ask too many questions. The bureau estimates approximately 50,000 airbags are stolen annually nationwide.

We have been reporting on the theft surge for several weeks, and CPD has issued at least seven community alerts about the problem since it began taking hold in December. Detectives have since identified three separate crews believed to be working the city.

The most prolific, according to po-

The proposal also underscores HUD’s expanding role in executing the federal government’s crackdown on illegal immigration.

Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem says they have deported more than 675,000 people since President Donald Trump’s second inauguration and that another 2.2 million had “self-deported.”

is a two-man operation whose members may wear jumpsuits and travel in two vehicles: a red Ford F-150 and a black GMC pickup truck bearing stolen license plates. That crew is alleged to have struck neighborhoods from Portage Park and Uptown to Lakeview and Hyde Park. Two other patterns connected to separate theft crews have also been flagged by police, though fewer details have been released about those teams.

The targets, police say, are late-model Honda motor vehicles, typically 2016 to 2021 Honda Civics.

Honda vehicles have become a favored target in part because of the brand’s sheer popularity, which drives demand for parts in both legitimate and illegal markets, according to law enforcement reports and auto body shops. The thefts are not a Chicago-specific phenomenon. The National Insurance Crime Bureau says the trend has been building nationally for a couple of years.

For victims, the nightmare does not end when they file a police report. Auto body shops say a backlog of legitimate replacement parts has pushed wait times into weeks or months, leaving drivers without a functioning safety system in the meantime. The delays have driven some frustrated owners to seek parts from the same black market that victimized them, feeding the theft economy. Making matters worse, the insurance crime bureau warns that some unscrupulous repair shops are installing stolen airbags while billing customers for factory replacements.

Police are urging Honda owners to park in well-lit areas or enclosed garages when possible and to use Club-style steering wheel locks as a deterrent.

— *Compiled by CWBChicago.com*

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## Edgewater Library sets a scene on March 3

Meet three lead actors and the playwright of the world premiere of "Pivot," a dark comedy about tradition, change and things you should never, ever say to your in-laws.

Set in a rural town in Nebraska, it revolves around wedding plans, a crop rotation plan, and plans that go awry.

The actors, Keith Kupfere, Tara Mallen, and Ashley Neal,

will perform a scene from the play followed by a discussion and Q&A with the ensemble and Jeff Award-winning playwright, Alex Lubischer.

Brit Cooper Robinson, director of community engagement at Rivendell Theatre Ensemble, will facilitate the discussion from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 3, at the Edgewater Branch Library, 6000 N. Broadway.

This free program is a partnership with Friends of the Edgewater Library, the Edgewater Branch of Chicago Public Library, and Rivendell Theatre Ensemble.

"Pivot" will be performed at Rivendell Theatre Ensemble, 5779 N. Ridge, through March 21. Visit [www.rivendelltheatre.org](http://www.rivendelltheatre.org) for discount ticket information for residents in ZIP codes 60625, 60626, 60640, 60645, and 60660.

### Letter to the Editor

#### Lakefront high-rise is good news

I have learned to be amused by your newspaper's non-objective hyperbole. Every politician is corrupt, all progress is bad, and bike lanes are demonic. But even with that in mind, your coverage of Emanuel Congregation's proposed Sheridan Road development stands out for its extremely negative bias.

Every article suggests a sweeping conspiracy to violate multiple laws in order to build the world's tallest tower on virgin public land out of pure greed.

The truth is the congregation has the legal right to request (not receive) a zoning change. The

building they've proposed is significantly shorter than every other Sheridan high-rise. This project sits on private property that has been developed for decades, so there will be no loss of natural or open space. Plus, this development will keep a valued community institution in the neighborhood.

A new building under the guidance of the congregation is a good-news story for everyone involved.

Jesse Kane  
Rogers Park

#### ZONING from p. 1

to the plan, the project was still approved by the full City Council. The rejection was partly based on party politics, and the loss was a major embarrassment for Oberman.

Density was the key issue for then-Ald. Dick Simpson, [44th], in downzoning Lakeview's lakefront in the 1970s. "When you have wall-to-wall high-rises, you have too much density," Simpson explained to this newspaper.

The scourge of 'wall-to-wall high-rises' may be observed on N. Sheridan Rd. in Edgewater and was behind then 48th Ward Ald. Mary Ann Smith's successful passage of ordinances in the City Council in 2006 to downzone future developments holding them to a 5-to-6 story height restriction.

But Aldermanic prerogative is now once again on the line in Edgewater.

In the Metropolitan Planning Council issued report, "Unfettered Aldermanic Prerogative," it concluded by writing, "Unfettered aldermanic prerogative ... perpetuates segregation, creates disparities in how we invest in communities and invites political corruption."

That brings us to the 48th Ward and the proposed high-rise development by Fern Hill on the lakefront at Emanuel Congregation, 5959 N. Sheridan Rd., in

Edgewater.

What does Ald. Leni Manaa-Hoppenworth [48th] think about aldermanic prerogative?

In 2023, WTTW issued an Election Voters Guide in which that question was posed to then-candidate Manaa-Hoppenworth: "This is a complex issue. [Alders] need the flexibility to do what is best for their ward, and it may not always be what the city council feels is best. However, it does need to be used carefully and with transparency," she responded.

Where does Manaa-Hoppenworth receive her advice in which to base her informed decisions? One person on her 2025 Zoning Advisory Council is recent-arrival to Edgewater Neville Hemming. The Andersonville resident previously resided in Copenhagen, Beijing, Shanghai, Washington, D.C., and San Francisco. Now, Hemming is an unabashed cheerleader for high-density projects in Chicago, including by developer Fern Hill. He previously supported the Broadway Upzoning in Edgewater.

He has occasionally written letters to this newspaper generally in support of adding density.

Despite not residing in Old Town, Hemming authored a 'letter of support' to the Chicago Plan

## Third Gold Level honor for CMSA

The Chicago Mathematics and Science Academy, 7212 N. Clark St., has been awarded the AP Gold Level School Honor Roll for the 2024-25 school year.

A total of 1,169 schools (7% of eligible schools) received GOLD level AP School Honor Roll recognition.

This recognition marks the third time CMSA has distinguished itself in the AP Honor Roll, having won previous recognition in the Computer Science Female Diversity Award for achieving high female representation in AP Computer Science for expanding girls' access in AP computer science courses.

Commission on Feb. 17, 2025 for the contentious Fern Hill development in Old Town, a project that so aggrieved Old Town neighbors that some residents filed a lawsuit in July 2025 against the developer and the City of Chicago. The lawsuit is on-going.



Nick Anderson

The 1660 N. LaSalle Condominium Assoc. seeks to permanently stop construction on the project. The association is suing Old Town Partners I, an entity tied to developer Fern Hill, according to the Sun-Times.

There is an in-person community meeting at Emanuel Congregation 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 26., which will include potential concept modifications of the development project. Plans ranging from a 420-foot-tall skyscraper to a 12-story high-rise have been disclosed by the developer despite the existing 5-to-6 story height restriction.

Nick Anderson, founder and president of Fern Hill, is counting on clout, and a big dose of Aldermanic prerogative to give him what he wants.

Ald. Manaa-Hoppenworth's fealty to high density development proposals is well-established in her ward. How she rules on this project will be of interest especially in recalling that the voting precincts east of Sheridan Rd. opposed her in 2023.

#### FOREST from p. 1

ral forests and leveraging native plant species. These techniques aim to accelerate forest growth and enhance ecological resilience while becoming a refuge for wildlife. These mini-forests can sequester carbon, mitigate heat and flooding, and provide shade.

However, like any methodology, the concepts carry both advantages and disadvantages, along with considerations of environmental implications over its widespread

adoption and its applicability, effectiveness, and potential ecological impact.

Miyawaki advanced this concept in the 1970s aiming to restore green spaces in industrial areas. By encouraging intense competition among plants for sunlight and resources, the method accelerates forest growth and biodiversity restoration. Moreover, its emphasis on native species promotes ecological resilience and habitat creation for indigenous fauna.

Miyawaki's method gained

traction not only in Japan but also internationally, with projects spanning Southeast Asia, Jordan, Brazil, and beyond. Collaborations with Japanese companies facilitated the application of the Miyawaki method in tropical regions, aiming to regenerate degraded forest lands.

Jordan School officials hope to use their Miyawaki mini-forest as a pilot project, with a goal of expanding it to an area of Pottawatomie Park.

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