

The first of April is the day we remember what we are the other 364 days of the year.

— Mark Twain

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Ald. Hadden cites threats, closes office after Loyola murder comments

BY CWBCHICAGO AND BOB ZULEY

Rogers Park Ald. Maria Hadden [49th] shut her office for three days last week, citing threats she received after a comment she made in the wake of a Loyola Univ. student's murder in her ward went viral.

"To ensure we are available to the constituents of the 49th Ward and to protect the safety and wellness of my team, we have altered our operations for the remainder of this week," said Ald. Hadden in a March 25 email. Her office resumed normal operations on Monday.

Hadden's decision came a day after she published a page-long explanation of comments she made in a Fox Chicago interview about the murder of Sheridan Gorman, 18, at the Loyola Beach pier that she said were "misconstrued" by "some media outlets." Hadden further suggested "conservative news cycles" were partly to blame for the negative feedback.

In the clip that circulated widely

last week, Hadden explained that the murder "might have been a wrong place, wrong time, running into a person who had a gun." She went on to suggest that Gorman and her companions "might have startled [the murderer] at the end

In the clip that circulated widely last week, Ald. Maria Hadden explained that the murder "might have been a wrong place, wrong time, running into a person who had a gun."

of the pier unintentionally."

On March 25, Hadden blamed "conservative news cycles and social media groups ... along with the high-profile nature of the tragedy" for "an overwhelming number of phone calls and emails to my office."

"The majority of these communications are from out-of-state individuals who are angry about my



Ald. Maria Hadden [49th]

comments and Chicago's sanctuary city status. Our social media pages have also been inundated with negative reviews and hateful comments. The content of the phone messages and emails that my staff and I have been receiving is explicit and disturbing," Hadden stated. "The messages and calls include threats of violence against myself, my family,

HADDEN see p. 12



Several North Side non-profits and Non-Governmental Organizations organized a "No Kings" protest last weekend in multiple locations across the city, including in Lake View, Edgewater and Rogers Park.

Photos courtesy Pat Curry

Man charged with burglarizing Loyola students' apartments, neighbor's garage

BY CWBCHICAGO

A convicted burglar is facing new charges for allegedly burglarizing Loyola Univ. students' apartments and another resident's garage, incidents that saw him arrested three times before a judge finally detained him.

The trouble began on Jan. 29, when a 21-year-old Loyola student came home to find his Bluetooth speaker missing from the bathroom of his apartment in the 6400 block of N. Magnolia Ave. Surveillance video later showed someone walking through the alley behind the building carrying a speaker, and the student identified it as his property, but he could not identify the person who had it, ac-

ording to court filings.

About two weeks later, a 62-year-old man living in the 6400 block of N. Greenview Ave. reported that he had video of someone entering his detached garage on February 9, taking tools and loading them into a garbage can before walking off with it.

On Feb. 15, shortly before midnight, the situation escalated. The second victim called 911 and reported that the same man had



Christopher Johnson

CHARGED see p. 12

Pappas reform on City, Cook County runaway taxes

BY DON DEBAT
The Home Front

Chicago and Cook County property owners are beaten, battered and bewildered by soaring real estate taxes. With wallets already flattened, homeowners are bracing for another big cash bite on April 1, when the first installment of 2025 taxes are due.

Our many taxing bodies have turned our homes into their ATM machines, emptying more and more equity every year.

According to a new study released March 30 by Cook County Treasurer Maria Pappas, real estate taxes in Chicago and the county have grown at double the rate of inflation over the past three decades.

As a result, home and business owners are being forced to pay an ever-greater percentage of their annual earnings to local governments while canceling family vacations and dining on fast-food burgers, Spam and franks and beans.

Here's what we know about those 30 years.

Local governments in Chicago and Cook County imposed \$19.2 billion in property taxes in 2024, up nearly 182% from the \$6.8 billion taxed in 1995, according

Property taxes skyrocketed despite a state law designed to limit tax increases, primarily because government leaders have exploited loopholes in the law, Maria Pappas charged.

to the report. Over those three decades, inflation rose by 91%, while average wages grew by about 161%.

The Pappas study notes that the Illinois Dept. of Revenue is working on a comprehensive property-tax report, and urges that now is the time for Illinois lawmakers to pass significant tax reform and

find ways for local taxing agencies to cut spending.

"The annual increases in property taxes are relentless, taking more and more money out of peoples' pockets," Pappas said. "Many people are wondering how they are going to pay their tax bills, or even whether they can afford to stay in their homes."

Illinois in 2025 had the highest residential property tax rate in the nation. "And, Chicago has the highest commercial property tax rate in the U.S.," Pappas said. "It's time for the governor, state lawmakers and local government leaders to come up with a real reform plan that works for taxpayers."

Property taxes skyrocketed despite a state law designed to limit tax increases, primarily because government leaders have exploited loopholes in the law, Pappas charged. Here is a summary of those key loopholes:

- Tax-Increment Finance [TIF]

REFORM see p. 4

Shuttered Weiss Hospital professional building vacated

USPS stops mail deliveries to complex; "Business Closed"

STORY AND PHOTO BY BOB ZULEY

A visit to the Medical Office Building [MOB] at Weiss Memorial Hospital, 4646 N. Marine Dr., in Uptown on March 26th revealed the building doors are unlocked but the building appears vacated. The MOB is directly attached to Weiss. Physicians have reportedly relocated elsewhere.

No security officers or building staff are visible in the MOB. A sign posted by the Chicago Health Medical Group in the empty first floor lobby states that nine physicians are assigned to the Arvey Clinic in Suite 300 on the 3rd Floor.

Meanwhile, West Suburban Medical Center patients are being left without service amid Resilience Health's hospital suspension announcement. The Village of Oak Park said the hospital was suspending all patient care due to a "financial crisis." That is - was - the sister hospital to Weiss.

However a telephone call to the Jacob M. Arvey Community Health Center in the MOB only

connected to a recorded voice recording asking to leave a call-back number if an on-call physician was required.

Formerly, Weiss Hospital physicians supervised the internal medicine residents at the Arvey Clinic, a teaching facility specifically focused on internal medicine. It is presently unknown where the clinic physicians are from as Weiss Memorial Hospital closed in the summer of 2025.

A posted notice from the U.S. Postal Service, dated Dec. 9, 2025, and signed by the Uptown Post Office on Broadway informs customers that "mail service to this address has been suspended. All incoming mail is currently being returned to sender with the legal endorsement 'Business Closed.'"

Many employees are being furloughed as hospital owner Manoj Prasad struggles to pay staff. Prasad blames the hospital's fiscal troubles on the year-old electronic medical records system.

With Haddonfield Memorial Hospital in mind [from the 1981 film Halloween II], this reporter didn't go looking around upstairs to see who he might find in this creepily empty hospital.

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Is Spring really in the air?



By Thomas J. O'Gorman

Can you smell that Spring is in the air? Take a whiff, like a clean beer glass in a dirty tavern, or a towel that's never been used. There's no mistaking it, crisp and clean. Without the complications of the familiar layered fragrances of the past.

A fresh start is on the way, and we can't kid ourselves.

Spring always gives Chicagoans a good gander at the damage left behind by Winter. Potholes, Florida sunburns, desert wrinkles and failed political careers.

It's the chance to recognize what survivors we really are. Always a good thing. For many, winter is a time to head for southern zip codes. So Spring becomes a time for returning home and catching up.

In my home, Winter was a breeze since the arrival of the new furnace. No more shivering with the heat blasting away to keep up. Before the new furnace we were like Victorian peasants freezing in the dank of winter amid the drafts in a 130-year old Chicago cottage.

In the past, I had to abandon my studio and move my paints and easel into the kitchen and paint by the oven that was usually roasting a winter pie or shank of game. Now even the studio gets heat, losing its 19th century Parisian chill.

But who needs "La Bohème" every day?

It's funny, but I cannot help but feel I am really speaking in metaphors about Chicago politics. The details of a cold and drafty house, battling inefficiency and waste. The perfect symbolic images of what stress our city and Cook County are under. Don't get me started about Springfield and Washington D.C. Of "the Donald" and our slimmed down Governor running unopposed.

But it is also an appropriate perception of what now remains impossible for our hapless mayor, just getting near the halfway mark of his time in office. An incompetent mayor being pushed around by a City Council that is sometimes imbalanced, too self-focused and oblivious of how to work for the good of an insolvent city.

Much of the old guard has been sent packing. Off to the Bastille or the Big House. Or simply neutered. Maybe the St. Patrick's Day Primary election was like a change in furnaces.

Have we undergone a powerful transformation in tossing out the old equipment and installing something new?

But having to endure more Toni Preckwinkle nonsense does not build confidence. I was hoping Brendan Reilly would be permitted to knock some heads together in the County. Especially with Bridget Gainer now out of the picture since her defeat. I'm still trying to piece together what happened there. Her long tenure and vast experience was just ripening.

It's enough to make you want to shut off Buckingham Fountain.

Is there any splash left in Chicago?

Dying the river green and parades for St. Patrick's Day are

popular events. But we'd like to see real Chicago leaders walking around the neighborhoods and connecting to people on other days too.

Common sense is something I rarely see used in City Council, and we could really use some right about now. In the 22 years I worked for Boss Ed Burke, it was just 50 little Tsars scrapping for their fiefdoms. Their city cars, fat pensions, their client lists. Now there is a willingness to thwart the mayor's plans.

They really did a job on him with the new CHA boss. What does that tell you about trying to achieve balance and harmony? When the City Council is your adversary it blows all harmony and reason to Kingdom come.

Maybe its time we stopped quoting Chicago's failed leaders who actually thrived on the idea of the 50-Ward mentality, where each alderman was a mini-mayor. Seems like all you can abstract from that concept is competition over who's more powerful, better-connected and filling their piggy bank.

Wouldn't it be great if when new leadership finally arrives the new folk actually have a broader urban understanding? Seeing the terrain as one city? One homeland to be loyal to?

We all have expectations of what should go on in the mayor's office. This past primary was a bit of a dress rehearsal of what we must work to achieve politically in the 2028 Mayoral election.

But I hope those looking ahead to a desk on City Hall's fifth floor have some intelligent expectations of their own.

We always thought Commissioner Gainer would become a Chicago Mayor, one to be proud of. But we've all been disillusioned by the present disintegration that's been unfolding on an almost daily basis in "Johnsonville."

What was the source of opposition to Gainer? Was it the landscape of her County Board District? Something within County Board politics itself? Old grudges, bad karma? Brendan Reilly?

After years commanding a seat on the County Board, Gainer

failed to hold on to her North Side base. Drake Warren, an industrial engineer, and an LGBTQ candidate, who looks more like a rural apple-picker, busted Gainer, a 16-year incumbent and a most seasoned, effective politico.

Gainer's 10th District includes leafy Edgebrook as well as the lakefront neighborhoods, the source of the big upset. Lakefront voters appear to have defeated Northwest Siders, as it were, 31,718 votes to 24,563 (56.32% vs 43.68%) in the 10th District.

Besides simple voter issues on the neighborhood level, what is this outcome telling us about our political emotions? What's unfolding that wasn't there before?

Recall Warren, a new face who self-funded most of his campaign, was also critical of Gainer for missing more County Board meetings than most of her colleagues and holding an outside job with insurance giant Aon.

A decisively not so happy St. Patrick's Day for her.

The contested races for the 17-member Cook County Board ended with two established incumbents toppled, Gainer, and in the Southwest suburban 16th District, incumbent one-term Commissioner Frank Aguilar, who managed to drop to third place.

The primary said to me that Maria Pappas, running without challenge for treasurer, is the hardest working person in City Hall and the County Building. She is deep-souled. Someone whose vision is internal and eternal. She wants a new urban unity. She's a tough, no-B.S. lady and I think she can get it done.

She wants to highlight a fresh domestic cohesion. I think she is a woman of the world who can see through a veneer and find the truth, a person who seeks to banish the self-serving corruption of the past.

With insolvency our fate, the time is ripe for betting on Pappas. We would become the envy of the nation, once more. Just when things appear to be at their worst in our politics, Chicago turns around and boldly re-elects a serious woman of consequence, like Pappas, to the sensitive

Treasurer's post. She appears to have her head screwed on right.

At a sad moment in American history, I predict she will not only help Chicago raise its head with pride, but will also breathe some fresh air into the lungs of our larger American life.

The St. Pat's Primary we must now put behind us as a strategic passage leading to a fresh political dynamic.

I wish that many of Chicago's old guard curmudgeon politicians were alive today to feel the energy that's brewing. The really smart ones would understand how important Pappas is. The others would miss the bus. From Ald. Tom Keane to Mayor "Big Bill" Thompson, from Ald. Vito Marzullo to Ald. P.J. "Parky" Cullerton, the emotion of Chicago politics often steered the city back to the past.

How refreshing to have someone who can turn this bus around and head for the future with some intelligence, style and grace. Spring is in the air, like a savory Frango Mint.

BEARS NEWS: Architect **Edward Peck** has come up with a plan that puts a handsome translucent dome on Soldier Field. But the Bears seem focused only on fleeing Chicago proper. Has the governor given up?

LYRIC OPERA: Lyric Opera of Chicago welcomes to its Board five nationally recognized leaders whose expertise in music, arts, business, law, and civic life strengthens the company's national profile while reinforcing its deep roots in Chicago. **Billy Corgan, Edmund Lester, Suzanne Mulshine, John Sabl, and Michael Strautmanis** were unanimously elected by the Board.

ALLIANCE FRANCAIS: April 15, May 13 and June 10 are

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Over 40 development projects stalled in city Zoning impasse

Acting committee chair pauses zoning work until mayor acts

BY BOB ZULEY

Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce president Jack Lavin is urging Mayor Brandon Johnson to break the City Council impasse over the appointment of a permanent Zoning Committee chairperson that has essentially brought zoning in the city to a halt, and stalled more than 40 development projects.

In late 2025, Acting Zoning Committee chair Ald. Bennett Lawson [44th] gave the mayor an ultimatum – make his zoning committee role permanent with control over hiring his own staff or find his replacement.

So far the Mayor has done nothing and the lack of a permanent chair has frozen crucial zoning, building code, and development projects prompting warnings from business leaders like Lavin regarding the

economic impact.

Though Zoning is seldom assigned to freshmen aldermen and never as chairman, Lawson is unique in his expertise on the committee, likely challenging the zoning knowledge of other aldermen. He obtained his considerable zoning background having served as interim chair on two occasions as well as served as the zoning committee's chief of staff for four years before becoming its vice chair once he was elected alderman.

The impasse highlights Johnson's weakened influence over the City Council with various caucuses vying for the position. Nobody in City Hall seems to fear ignoring Johnson.

Johnson is known to value loyalty highly. But to Johnson's consternation, Lawson supported Johnson's opponent, Paul Vallas, in the 2023 election. And with only one year remaining before the next mayoral election, Johnson also faces challenges by dueling racial blocs in the Council.

Lawson refused to hold a Zoning Committee meeting in January, though in February he chaired one meeting that included Foundry Park, a scaled down version of the now failed Lincoln Yards development.



Ald. Bennett Lawson, 44th. Image courtesy 44th Ward

Chicago used to be a good town to do business in. Under City Hall's current lack of leadership, that is no longer the case.

"Time is money. ... We have a long list of [stalled] projects. Just going to contin-

ue to grow. We need the mayor to show some leadership to get it resolved," Lavin told Fran Spielman of the Sun Times. "The more we send the message that we're not open for business, that we can't get our act together – investors and developers are going to look at the city and they're going to prioritize their investments elsewhere."

Senior mayoral advisor Jason Lee said it's now up to the City Council to get its own act together. "The City Council has had multiple opportunities to vote. It's literally statutorily required for them to vote for a Zoning chair. They also are the ones who have the zoning applications," Lee told the Sun-Times.

Lawson said he hasn't decided yet whether to call a Zoning Committee meeting in April, though he plans to send out the required public notice to give him that option.

"It hurts me to stall the committee long-

IMPASSE see p. 11

Facial recognition helps cops solve some of Chicago's most heinous crimes, now state legislator wants to shut it down



Illinois State Rep. Kelly Cassidy, center, and images of some of the people who have been charged with violent crimes following investigations that involved the use of facial recognition.

BY CWBCHICAGO

When Chicago police detectives needed to figure out who stabbed 37-year-old Dominique Pollion to death and left his body on a Blue Line train in the Loop in January, facial recognition helped them get the investigation on the right track.

By feeding high-quality CTA video images into the Illinois Secretary of State's database of state ID and driver's license photos, detectives narrowed their focus to possible matches, including 21-year-old Demetrius Thurman. As their investigation continued, investigators allegedly found video on Thurman's phone that shows him committing the crime.

Powerful stuff. But if a North Side state

legislator gets her way, Illinois police will soon be barred from using any facial recognition database, including the Secretary of State's, to do their work ever again.

The bill is called the Illinois Biometric Surveillance Act, and it's being pushed by Rep. Kelly Cassidy [14th], who represents most of Rogers Park and Edgewater in Springfield. Cassidy's office did not respond to an email seeking comment for this story.

Her proposed law would ban the use of facial recognition and other biometric identifiers by law enforcement statewide. No agency could use the technology or enter into an agreement with a state or federal agency to use it. The bill would still allow "fingerprinting pursuant to an arrest or

conviction, or to collect forensic evidence at a crime scene." The bill does not include the ultimate biometric, DNA, among its "biometric identifiers."

To be clear about how the tool works: a potential facial recognition match alone is not enough to file charges. Detectives use it to help generate leads and identify potential suspects.

It is especially useful in CTA investigations because the transit system is blanketed with an exceptionally high-quality surveillance camera network.

Two days before Christmas last year, someone shot and killed 44-year-old Raymond Harrison during an altercation aboard a Pink Line train near the Washington-Wells station. A second person was also shot.

CTA cameras recorded the altercation. A

knife appeared, then a gun was drawn, then the gun was dropped. Someone picked it up and shot the surviving victim, who fled to the next car. They then shot Harrison directly in the chest.

Detectives fed the surveillance footage through facial recognition software, which returned Pedro Villareal as a possible match. Prosecutors said the surviving victim later picked Villareal out of a photo lineup. Multiple law enforcement officers and civilians allegedly identified him from surveillance stills, too.

Days later, Cicero police arrested Villareal and allegedly recovered a .380 caliber handgun from a bag he was carrying. Testing determined it was the gun that was used to kill Harrison, prosecutors said. Villareal

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Illinois banks warn credit, debit cards may no longer work in eateries, retailers

BY BOB ZULEY

This may sound like an April Fools joke, but it's not. Starting July 1, credit and debit cards used in Illinois restaurants, bars, and retailers may face disruption due to the Interchange Fee Prohibition Act [IFPA], which bans swipe fees on sales taxes and tips. [An interchange fee is another name for "swipe fee."]

Banking groups argue this, a first-of-its-kind law, is technically unworkable for payments systems. IFPA stops financial institutions, credit card companies, and payment processors from charging transaction fees on the sales tax and gratuity portions of a bill.

The Electronic Payments Coalition [EPC] warns that because payment systems calculate fees on the total of the transaction amount, separating tax/tip from the total is technically difficult, which could lead to cards being declined or not working at all in businesses. So it may be wise to start traveling with cash in your pockets too.

A federal judge for the Northern District of Illinois upheld the law on Feb. 10, but banking groups, including the Illinois Bankers Assoc., are appealing the decision. "The payment card networks built this ecosystem, and the payment card networks set these fees," Judge Virginia Kendall wrote.

Proponents claim this will reduce costs for small businesses, while opponents argue it will create checkout confusion and potential privacy concerns, say the National Restaurant Assoc. [NRA]

"This decision is a meaningful win for Illinois restaurants that have been shouldering rising costs on every transaction," said Sean Kennedy, the NRA's executive vice president.

Restaurants and small businesses have expressed concern that their current point-of-sale [POS] technology cannot separate taxes and tips from the total charge, according to Yahoo Finance.

But Toast, a large supplier of POS systems in Chicagoland, say



Swipe fee advisory signage in an Edgewater eatery.

their systems can generally handle complex payment configurations, and it has tools, such as an ability to identify debit cards and manage customer surcharge rules, that can help restaurants adapt to the IFPA.

Every time an Illinois consumer pays with a credit or debit card, a portion of that transaction is routed to credit card companies through swipe fees. Most people assume those fees only apply to the price of what they're buying, but for decades, card networks have imposed those fees on sales taxes collected for the government and tips left for workers.

Illinois retailers act as sales tax collectors on behalf of state and local governments, administering one of the most complex sales tax systems in the nation. They also pass tips directly to workers. Yet the retailer pays fees on both, even though the money never be-

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REFORM from p. 1

districts. Government is placing no limits on property-tax increases in special TIF taxing districts.

A portion of property tax money in each district simply is set aside to subsidize private development and job creation. Taxes in those wide-spread TIF districts, which have dramatically multiplied over the years, grew more than 1,000%, exceeding \$1.8 billion in tax year 2024. And as we now know, our current mayor is using TIFs as a cash slush fund to fill his budget deficit and gift the Chicago Public Schools [CPS] with additional property tax dollars they are supposed to have denied to them by state law. They got an extra \$553 million in TIF funds last year from Mayor Johnson, above their own existing limit-up property tax increase.

• K-12 school district taxes. A 189% in-

crease in taxes imposed by K-12 (kindergarten to senior-high) school districts far outstripped the 91% inflation rate.

A total of 153 school districts levied more than \$10.5 billion in taxes in 2024, accounting for nearly 55% of the total county property-tax burden.

To see why their property taxes have skyrocketed, all Chicagoans have to do is look at the line on their bill earmarked for the Chicago Board of Education. That expenditure is a crushing 45% of their total tax bill.

"Every taxpayer is forced to foot the bill for Chicago's inferior public schools, even if they are young couples with no kids in school, senior citizens with grown children, and parents who pay to enroll their children in private or parochial schools," one childless, senior homeowner complained.

Chicago's failing school system may be the single biggest moral failure committed

by our public officials in our lifetime.

"What we need is a special-assessment exemption category for homeowners who do not have children enrolled in CPS," suggested another senior homeowner, who recently was hit with a 21% tax hike. "That would cut my property tax bill nearly in half."

Our current mayor is using TIFs as a cash slush fund to fill his budget deficit and gift the Chicago Public Schools [CPS] with additional property tax dollars they are supposed to have denied to them by state law.

The study, titled: "How State Laws Failed to Stop Decades of Skyrocketing Property Taxes: A Case for Reform," notes that state legislators have long been aware of the unsustainable upward trajectory in property taxes. But despite producing a slew of studies and legislative initiatives, our public officials have failed to provide relief for businesses and homeowners.

Although the state Property Tax Extension Limitation Law (PTELL) was designed to limit tax increases to the rate of inflation or 5%, whichever is less, local officials took advantage of that law's loopholes to enact tax increases that substantially exceeded that limit," Pappas said.

Although the state Property Tax Extension Limitation Law (PTELL) was designed to limit tax increases to the rate of inflation or 5%, whichever is less, local officials took advantage of that law's loopholes to enact tax increases that substantially exceeded that limit," Pappas said.

For example, K-12 school districts, which accounted for 55% of county property taxes in 2024, increased property taxes to an amazing \$10.5 billion from \$3.64 billion, or 189.4%, over the 30-year period in 153 districts.

TIF districts, in which property taxes are diverted to subsidize private development and promote job growth, increased taxes by more than 1,000%, to \$1.84 billion. Over the past 30 years, the number of TIF districts in Chicago and its suburbs exploded, increasing their portion of the tax bill to nearly 9.6% from 2.4%.

Pappas outlined the gaping loopholes that allowed those increases to dramatically exceed the rate of inflation:

• Home-rule municipalities, which are granted more leeway by the state to increase taxes, are not bound by PTELL.

• Local government agencies can increase their taxes beyond PTELL limits if voters approve higher taxes in a referendum. That occurs frequently, often in very low-turnout elections that allow a minority of motivated voters to decide whether taxes go up.

• TIF district tax increases are not limited by PTELL. TIF surpluses can be dis-

tributed to local taxing agencies with no limits, and when TIF districts close, their taxes can be added to local taxes above and beyond PTELL limits.

• New funds that allowed CPS to reinstate a property tax levy dedicated to public pension payments, are not bound by PTELL in their first year. In the case of CPS, the state also eliminated PTELL limits on that reinstated tax in future years.

• Other gaping loopholes include exempting certain bond issues from PTELL and allowing taxing agencies to increase their levies beyond PTELL limits to "recapture" taxes refunded through taxpayer appeals.

"Local governments for many reasons may feel the need to exploit PTELL loopholes," Pappas said. "Key among those is that the state of Illinois provides just 24% of all K-12 public-education costs, the lowest percentage of any state."

For CPS, the issue is compounded because—unlike the rest of the school districts in the state—it pays for most of its own pension costs, driving up the financial burden on Chicago taxpayers, Pappas noted.

"Municipalities across the county are grappling with two primary fiscal pressures: state mandates to contribute more to poorly funded public pensions, which were battered by economic downturns, and a cut in the percentage of state revenues shared with municipalities," Pappas noted.

The Treasurer's study points out that other local taxing agencies, such as Cook County government and the Chicago Park District, have managed to keep taxes below the rate of inflation by turning to other revenue sources. For example, a 1-percentage point increase in the sales tax for the county, and fees from events and programs for the Chicago Park District have kept increases lower.

Although property tax protests have been increasingly frequent, the issue of runaway property taxes is not new, the study notes.

The study documents several property tax studies and proposals dating back to 1982 that either ended up going nowhere or failed to win approval. As a result, property taxes continue to soar.

Currently, the Illinois Dept. of Revenue is studying the Illinois property tax system, with an end-of-July 2026 deadline.

Given the heightened awareness of the tax burden on property owners, the Cook County Treasurer's study suggests the time may be ripe for the General Assembly to finally provide property tax relief to Illinois residents and businesses.

To read the full report, visit: <https://www.cookcountytreasurer.com/skyrocketingpropertytaxes.aspx>

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

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Holy Week Schedule

Celebrations at Queen of Angels Church unless noted

Palm Sunday
Saturday Vigil March 28
5:00 pm Mass of Anticipation in English
Sunday March 29
8:00am Mass in English (St Matthias)
9:00am and 11:00am Mass in English
12:30pm Mass in Spanish

Holy Thursday, April 2
7:00pm Bilingual Mass of the Lord's Supper

Good Friday, April 3
3:00pm Liturgy of the Lord's Death (St Matthias)
7:00pm Liturgy of the Lord's Death in Spanish

Holy Saturday, April 4
7:30pm Bilingual Easter Vigil

Easter Sunday, April 5
8:00am Mass in English at St Matthias
9:00am and 11:00am Mass in English
12:30pm Mass in Spanish

Tech companies seek to delete Chicago social media user tax

BY JONATHAN BILYK
Legal Newsline

A trade group representing social media companies and other big tech companies is suing to challenge Chicago's so-called social media user tax, saying the tax — which Illinois' governor also has called to replicate statewide — amounts to unconstitutional taxation and unconstitutional discrimination against social media publishers.

The lawsuit was filed March 12 in Cook County Circuit Court.

"The government cannot single out publishers for disfavored tax treatment. But that is exactly what Chicago's social media tax does. This tax penalizes a subset of online publishers for no other reason than they are popular," said Paul Taske, co-director of the NetChoice Litigation Center, in a statement announcing the legal action.

The lawsuit aims at Chicago's Social Media Amusement Tax. The tax was imposed by the city at the beginning of 2026, after it was approved by the City Council in Dec. 2025. Mayor Brandon Johnson chose neither to veto nor sign the ordinance, meaning it automatically took effect.

Under the ordinance, the city would impose a tax of .50¢ per user, after the first 100,000 users, as measured by user location data tracked by the social media companies, calculated monthly.

Supporters of the measure said they expect the tax will result in \$31 million in new city revenue each year, which the city has claimed will be used to support community mental health services.

Illinois Gov. JB Pritzker has signaled his support for the new tax, calling in his February address to the Illinois General Assembly for a similar "fee" statewide, which his office indicated could raise up to \$200 million per year for the state.

In its filing, NetChoice has signaled its intent to use the courts to shut down any move toward such taxes in the future, as they seek orders declaring such social media user fees not only to be bad policy, but also unconstitutional and illegal.

They called the tax a "targeted strike against America's most popular online publications."

The new fight marks the latest clash between Chicago City Hall and the tech and online entertainment industries over the city's use of its powers to tax so-called "amusements" to extract big money from platforms and their users.

In 2019, for instance, the city prevailed over an effort by Apple, Netflix and others to defeat the city's 9% tax on streaming services.

As in the past fight, NetChoice has lobbed allegations that the social media user tax violates the Internet Tax Freedom Act (IFTA), a federal law that prohibits state and local governments from imposing

certain taxes which discriminate against online commerce.

In this case, NetChoice asserts the city tax illegally singles out social media companies and platforms, while exempting other online publishers.

But NetChoice further asserts the tax ordinance amounts to an illegal tax aimed at online speech and publishing, which NetChoice asserts violates the First Amendment.

They note the tax specifically exempts what the ordinance calls "bonafide" news sites, yet "does not provide any criteria—neutral or otherwise—to distinguish 'bonafide news' websites from other news websites."

"Because the Tax applies only to 'social media business[es],' it necessarily singles out websites that engage in expressive activity and facilitate a 'staggering' amount of fully protected speech across 'billions of posts,'" NetChoice said in its lawsuit.

They said this amounts to unconstitutional discrimination against social media publishers, and unconstitutional decisions by the city defining "bonafide" news reporting.

Further, NetChoice asserts the tax is unconstitutional because it cannot be properly apportioned, and may ultimately result in the companies being taxed multiple times for the same users.

Because the tax is calculated based on user location tracking data, it cannot ac-

curately calculate how many users actually live in the city of Chicago. And NetChoice noted that social media companies do not collect the home addresses of people using their platforms.

Social media companies "may obtain IP addresses or locations via wireless signals that indicate a phone or a computer's location while a covered website is being used, but social media businesses have no way of knowing if that user is a resident of Chicago.

"Moreover, IP addresses are ill-suited to determining where precisely a user is located—or whether the user is a 'resident' of Chicago," NetChoice wrote.

And users moving about to different locations and engaging in content on the social media platforms in different geographical locations could result in their IP addresses being counted multiple times. Should other local governments enact similar taxes, it could result in the companies being taxed in multiple locations for the same users.

NetChoice is seeking a court order declaring the tax illegal and unconstitutional.

In a statement announcing the lawsuit, NetChoice said consumers will ultimately bear the price of such taxes, in the form of reduced services and increased costs for advertising and other online services.

"Beyond the legal problems, this tax is

Police Beat...

Two men stole merch worth \$9,000 from Lakeview Lululemon store



Michael Brown, left, Christopher Slawek, and a selection of the allegedly stolen merchandise.

Two men who walked out of a Lakeview store with more than \$9,000 worth of yoga gear are facing felony charges, the Cook County Sheriff's Office said March 25.

At about 5:15 p.m. March 22, the men stepped out of a Honda minivan, which left the area, as the pair walked into Lululemon, 3556 N. Southport Ave., the sheriff's office said. Each man filled a bag with merchandise and they left without paying.

Members of the sheriff's retail theft task force spotted Christopher Slawek, 25, and Michael Brown, 51, carrying a bag, and both men ran from officers, officials said. Slawek was taken into custody in the 3500 block of N. Greenview Ave., and Brown was arrested in the 1400 block of W. Addison St. The police recovered both bags, which allegedly contained a total of 118 Lululemon items valued at \$9,384.

The minivan the pair arrived in was later found in the 3600 block of N. Ashland Ave. Inside, officers say they found another \$9,000 in merchandise taken from various other retailers.

Brown, of Matteson, and Slawek, of Chicago, were each charged with felony retail theft. Slawek was also held on outstanding warrants for retail theft out of Cook, DuPage, and Will counties.

Feds: Streeterville man posted synagogue shooting threat on Twitter

A Streeterville man faces a federal threat charge for allegedly posting a threat to shoot up a synagogue on X, the social media platform commonly known as Twitter, while also allegedly publishing what he claimed was the home address of relatives of an Israeli government official.

Timothy Holmes, 31, who went by the username @MapleStCapital and the display name "End The FED," is charged locally but was arrested last week in Florida, federal officials said.

According to an affidavit filed by an FBI Task Force Officer, Holmes used the @MapleStCapital account to post "I'm going to shoot up a synagogue" on March 3, in reply to a post from the Israeli government's official account about the death of Iranian Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. The

@MapleStCapital account was suspended by X as of March 24.

The threat allegedly followed a series of antisemitic posts, including one in which he shared what he claimed was the Florida home address of relatives of an Israeli official, along with statements including "the jew will be destroyed and discarded;" "From the river to the sea every Jew will die;" and "Die jew."

He also allegedly posted "What's their address? Flying to Florida this week. Just out of curiosity," which prosecutors say appeared to be a request for additional location information about the official's relatives.

Airline records obtained by investigators showed Holmes flew to Florida on March 7, but his attorney has said he traveled there to care for a relative, the complaint said.

Investigators traced the @MapleStCapital account to Holmes through emergency disclosure records from X, which listed a Gmail address that includes his name and an IP address linked to an apartment he shares with his partner in the 500 block of N. McClurg Ct., according to the complaint.

Following his arrest, a judge released Holmes on a \$100,000 bond and ordered him to stay off social media, barred him from possessing weapons, and placed him on electronic monitoring.

Holmes faces a maximum penalty of five years in federal prison.

Boy shot inside Loop hotel, downtown sees most year-to-date shootings since at least 2019

A boy was shot inside a downtown Chicago hotel overnight, and police say he refused to cooperate with officers who responded to the scene.

Chicago Police responded to the first block of E. Wacker Dr. around 3:36 a.m. March 30 for a call about a person shot. The victim sustained a gunshot graze wound to the leg but was uncooperative with officers and did not provide any details about what happened, according to a CPD media statement. He was transported by Chicago Fire Dept. paramedics to Lurie Children's Hospital in good condition. Police did not disclose his age, saying only that he is a juvenile.

Officers were seen going in and out of the Royal Sonesta Hotel, 71 E. Wacker Dr., following the shooting. On a local police radio channel, an officer said the boy may have been shot in a hallway on the 12th floor of the hotel. A group of "kids" was seen running down the hotel stairwell after the shooting, the officer said.

The boy is the fifth person shot in the Loop so far this year, the highest year-to-date total for the downtown neighborhood since at least 2019.

Six time felon gets 15 years for back-to-back carjackings

Marcus Montgomery's serious criminal history got a little more serious on March 27 after he pleaded guilty to committing two carjackings in 30 minutes in late 2024, one in Old Town and the other outside the now-shuttered migrant shelter at the Salt Shed.

Cook County Judge Anjana Hansen sentenced the 40-year-old to concurrent 15-year prison terms, according to court records.

The spree began around noon on Dec. 7, 2024, when a 59-year-old New Berlin woman was unloading her 2020 Subaru SUV in the 1400 block of N. Cleveland. Montgomery approached her and ordered, "Give me your keys," according to a Chicago Police Dept. report. He got the keys, took her car, but failed in an attempt to take her purse as well.

Minutes later, a 33-year-old Calumet City man was sitting in his red Ford Mustang in the parking lot of the migrant shelter at 1308 North Elston when Montgomery knocked on his driver's side window with a firearm.

"Open the door or I'm going to shoot you!" Montgomery allegedly told the man.

When the victim complied, Montgomery ordered him to empty his pockets. The man handed over his phone, key fob, credit card, and a personal check before Montgomery drove off in the Mustang, prosecutors said.

While police were investigating the carjacking outside the Salt Shed shelter, two migrants who had been working on a car nearby told police that Montgomery robbed them, too. According to the police report, the men, ages 24 and 34, said they watched Montgomery park the stolen Mustang across the street and walk away, then return driving the Subaru to rob them. They said he displayed a gun and took a wallet, keys, a belt, a car title, and a phone.

While the migrants were speaking with officers, they spotted Montgomery near the Mustang again across the street and identified him. Police detained him on the spot.

Officers allegedly found a loaded handgun in Montgomery's jacket pocket. All of the stolen property from the victims was recovered from his backpack, according to the report. When police inventoried his belongings at the station, they also allegedly found the second victim's stolen check inside his wallet.

Both migrants ultimately chose not to pursue charges.

At least three hospitalized, eight arrested after teen mob causes chaos in Loop

A downtown Alderman is, in a way, saying "told ya so" after a teen mob spun out of control March 25, until police began enforcing the city's long-established 10 p.m. curfew.

For more than two hours, an estimated 400 people, mostly teenagers, flooded street corners in the Loop as 911 callers reported fights, shoplifting mobs, and other chaos that has become all too familiar in the social media-fueled mob phenomenon commonly called "teen trends," though city officials more euphemistically refer to them as "large groups."

At least three people were taken to hospitals for injuries suffered in attacks on downtown streets during the trend. Chicago police said eight juveniles were arrested and 24 received curfew citations.

CPD had units deployed downtown and at Promontory Point in anticipation of the trend, which aligned with Chicago Public Schools' spring break week. Only the downtown trend gained steam.

Starting around 7:30 p.m., large numbers of young people were re-

ported near the intersection at the Wrigley Building. That crowd made its way across the river, where things quickly spiraled.

By 8:15 p.m., a migrant vendor who sells fresh fruit near Millennium Park told police that a group of teenagers stole the knife she uses to cut produce, threatened her with it, and walked away, tossing the blade into the street.

Random attacks were reported throughout the downtown area. One officer observed a group harassing homeless people, knocking down their cardboard box shelters. Other groups were reported jumping on cars.

Around 9:30 p.m., a passerby shot video of a violent attack on the corner of Michigan Ave. and Randolph St. The victim was knocked unconscious and taken to a hospital by EMS.

Moments later, just a block away, a large group began tasing and spraying each other with pepper spray, officers reported.

At exactly 10 p.m., police announced the city's curfew had taken effect and issued dispersal orders. Juveniles who did not comply were detained and cited.

Ald. Brian Hopkins [2nd], who has repeatedly pushed Mayor Brandon Johnson to support a so-called "snap curfew" ordinance that would allow CPD to order juveniles out of an area overrun by troublemakers even before the city's standard curfew kicks in, was in the Loop Wednesday night watching it unfold.

"I'm at State and Lake," he posted on X at 10:48 p.m. "Crowd partially dispersed by 10:40 p.m. The situation was out of control about an hour ago. But then at 10:00 p.m., an order was issued for curfew enforcement. It had an immediate impact on this violent teen trend. Curfew enforcement is effective."

Of those arrested on March 25, CPD said seven were charged with misdemeanor reckless conduct: a 13-year-old girl, a 14-year-old girl, a 15-year-old girl, a 15-year-old boy, a 16-year-old girl, and two 16-year-old boys. A 16-year-old boy was charged with three felony counts of aggravated assault of peace officers and misdemeanor reckless conduct.

Two gunmen shoot motorist in River North

A 26-year-old man was shot three times in River North the night of March 20, after two armed men pulled up alongside his vehicle and opened fire, according to Chicago police.

The shooting happened around 11:17 p.m. in the 400 block of W. Ontario St. Police say the victim was sitting in his vehicle when a dark-colored sedan pulled up and parked nearby. Two men got out, displayed guns, and opened fire before fleeing in the vehicle. 911 callers reported hearing between nine and twelve shots in the area. Officers recovered rifle and handgun casings at the scene.

CPD said the victim was struck three times in the right leg and drove himself to Northwestern Memorial Hospital, where he was listed in good condition.

The gunfire also struck a nearby vehicle belonging to another motorist, though that person was not injured. Other drivers in the area were

involved in a crash as a result of the shooting, according to a CPD report, but no injuries were reported there.

The victim is the second person shot on the Near North Side this year and the first shooting victim recorded in the River North neighborhood in 2026.

Mather High School student charged with raping girl at gunpoint



Surveillance images show two men CPD sought in connection with the armed sexual assault of a teenage girl on Nov. 21, 2025. Prosecutors said the suspect on the left is Gerson Flores.

A 17-year-old Mather High School student is charged with raping a 15-year-old girl at gunpoint in an Albany Park alley late last year while his accomplice held the victim's friend at knifepoint nearby. Gerson Castillo Flores, originally from Colombia, was ordered detained pending trial by Judge Luciano Panici, Jr.

Prosecutors told Panici that the victim and her friend, also 15, were walking toward a bridge to take pictures around 9:20 p.m. Nov. 21. As they approached the Rockwell Brown Line station, they noticed two males were following them and one, later identified as Flores, was wearing a ski mask.

The girls crossed the street to avoid the males, but Flores and his accomplice began chasing them, prosecutors said. The victim's friend tripped and fell, separating the two. Flores allegedly caught up to the victim, began speaking to her in Spanish, which she did not understand, and pressed a dark gun to her chest.

Prosecutors said Flores forced the girl into the alley behind the 2900 block of W. Wilson Ave. at gunpoint, pushed her against a wall, and sexually assaulted her. Prosecutors allege he assaulted her while armed and ordered her to stay quiet or he would shoot her.

During the assault, the victim managed to text her friend her location, writing that she was being raped. Her friend entered the alley, at which point the accomplice pulled a knife and held it to the friend's stomach to prevent her from intervening or calling 911, and took her phone, prosecutors said.

At one point, prosecutors said, the victim kissed Flores in an attempt to get him to lower his guard, and in doing so was able to see his face when he briefly lifted his mask.

A man walking his dog spotted the teenagers, called 911, and then walked away.

Surveillance cameras captured Flores and his accomplice leaving the area. Prosecutors said Flores admitted to firing his weapon, which he claimed was an air gun, as he walked backwards out of the alley after the attack.

Investigators used partial plate information from the assailant's getaway car to find body-worn camera footage from a traffic stop on the same vehicle on May 12, 2025. That footage allegedly showed Flores with the accomplice and a second person he was with on the night of the assault.

The victim identified him in a photo lineup last month.

—Compiled by CWBChicago.com

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Lawsuit over Edgewater boy killed by mom's ex-boyfriend dropped; IL Prison Board let killer out early

BY JONATHAN BILYK
Legal Newswire

It was a murder that grabbed the attention of the entire city. Now the mother of an 11-year-old boy, who was killed in an Edgewater attack by his mother's ex-boyfriend after he was released from prison early by an Illinois board appointed by Gov. JB Pritzker, appears to have withdrawn her lawsuit seeking to hold the state, city of Chicago, and the Cook County Sheriff responsible for his death.

According to the federal court docket, attorneys for Lateria Smith voluntarily withdrew her lawsuit on March 11.

The plaintiffs did not include a reason for the voluntary dismissal in the filed motion. Nor did an attorney for Smith respond to questions from this reporter about the dismissal.

The dismissal was without prejudice, meaning Smith could file a new complaint to try again to sue. However, it is not clear what the next steps, if any, may be in the case.

Smith had filed suit a year earlier in March 2025, demanding the state and other government defendants pay for the death of her son, Jayden Perkins. The 11-year-old boy was stabbed to death in front of his five-year-old brother while attempting to defend his pregnant mother against a murderous attack by her ex-boyfriend, Crosetti Brand.

Brand's attack on Smith and murder of Perkins came just one day after the Illinois Prisoner Review Board had ordered Brand released from prison.

Brand was convicted in Aug. 2025 of first-degree murder and other charges related to his attack on Smith and her children in their Ravenswood Ave. home in Edgewater in March 2024. He was sentenced to life in prison for murder, plus two 60-year sentences for other offenses in the attack.

Brand's attack on Smith and murder of Perkins came just one day after the Illinois Prisoner Review Board had ordered Brand released from prison.

Brand was serving a 16 year prison sentence on convictions related to home invasion and aggravated assault. He had been paroled in Oct. 2023.

However, police had taken him back into custody in Feb. 2024, after Smith told police Brand had sent her threatening text messages and allegedly attempted to force his way into the apartment Smith shared with her two children, Perkins and then-five-year-old Kameron Miles.

According to court documents, when Brand was later confronted by a parole officer about Smith's accusations, Brand allegedly lied, telling officers he was merely looking for an apartment.

However, he was taken back to Stateville Correctional Center on multiple parole violations.

According to court documents,



Jayden Perkins. Photo courtesy Facebook/Helen C. Peirce School Of International Studies

Smith told both police and a Cook County judge of Brand's threats against her.

However, on March 12, the Illinois Prison Review Board [IPRB] nonetheless released Brand from custody after a hearing.

Brand reportedly again lied at the IPRB hearing about going to Smith's home. And according to

court documents, the IPRB reportedly "accepted his version of events," never following up on Smith's allegations against him, including declining to ask Smith to testify and tell her account of the events.

The very next day, on March 13, 2024, Brand returned to Smith's apartment, forced his way into the home with a knife, "launching a brutal and premeditated attack that should have never been allowed to happen," the complaint said.

In July 2025, Smith issued an open letter to Gov. Pritzker, calling on Pritzker to step in and "settle this case instead of fighting us." In the letter, Smith said she was issuing a "call to your conscience" and "to your humanity," as she asked him to "tell your lawyers and agencies to settle this case..."

She particularly criticized

Pritzker and other Illinois state officials and lawmakers who have used her son's death to score political points, but she said are now also fighting to prevent the boy's family from finding healing through the justice system.

"I trusted the system. I tried everything I could to keep my family safe. But the Chicago

Police Dept., the Cook County Sheriff, the Illinois Dept. of Corrections, and the IPRB all failed us," Smith wrote in the letter to Pritzker. "... Their failures cost Jayden his life."

That letter came after the Pritzker-appointed IPRB, along

LAWSUIT see p. 11

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SPRING from p. 2

the dates for the Symposium of the Arts of France at their headquarters on Chicago Ave. Top notch specialists examine Scent: The Invisible Art—a three-part series bringing together perfumers, leaders from the luxury industry, and academic voices to explore fragrance as the invisible art. Limited tickets.

EXPO CHICAGO: The Contemporary Art Fair returns to Navy Pier this April 9–12 for its 13th edition, featuring over 130 leading galleries from across the United States and the globe, alongside a dynamic program of talks, on-site installations and special events. For tickets and event details visit expo-chicago.com.

CALL FOR ARTISTS: Local artists, this is your chance to leave your mark in Rogers Park. The neighborhood is seeking artists for two upcoming mural projects at 7442 N. Ashland Blvd. and 1532 W. Jarvis Ave. This request pays well and is open to Illinois-based artists interested in creating impactful public art. Deadline is April 14. Apply through the City of Chicago Dept. of Cultural Affairs and Special Event.

SERVICE CLUB: Spring Hat Luncheon. The tickets are now "live" for "Spring Splendor" May 20, at 11 a.m., The Ritz-Carlton Hotel. Co-Chairs: **Lauren Brynjelsen** and **Claudine Schramko**. Go get a ticket.

THE OSCARS: The Academy Awards this year brought joy and pride to many Chicagoans as **Amy Madigan** received the 2026 Oscar for best supporting actress for the film "Weapons." She's Chicago born and bred. My pal Charles Connor reminded me that Amy was a grade school classmate of his at St. Philip Neri in South Shore. And I recalled her parents were friends of long years with my parents.

Papa **Jack Madigan** was a treasured Chicago voice at WBBM radio as its most distinguished newsmen. He also dated my aunt. Amy has the distinction of setting a new record with the win because it made her the actress with the longest gap (40 years and one month) between a first nomination and a first victory. She's a stunner. She thanked her husband, actor **Ed Harris**. And her dogs. What a woman!

GOOGLE: The Thompson Center will keep its name as Google plans a 2027 move into the historic and newly renovated Loop office building. Leasing is now open, and property taxes will be collected.

MEAT LOAF: The Auditorium presents "Bat Out Of Hell – The Musical" direct from London's West End, 7:30 p.m. April 9. Featuring the timeless music of **Jim Steinman** and **Meat Loaf**, this electrifying production is full of rock 'n' roll favorites.

HE SHOOTS, HE SCORES: The Chicago Police Memorial Foundation hosts the Paul R. Bauer Hockey Classic April 18 at Fifth Third Arena. The puck will drop for the Chicago Police Dept. Stars vs Blackhawks Alumni at 8:10 p.m. Meet the players afterward at the Chicago Blackhawks Alumni After-Party at the Barn Hockey Bar, 1659 W. Ogden. For tickets and more information visit www.cpdmemorial.org.

Zachary Koran... Julia Jacobs at the keyboard with afternoon piano practice... **Michael LaPorta** celebrated St. Patrick's Day with **Tracy Tilton, Sofia Eleftheriou, Jared Walraven, Liza Gibbs, Melissa Stasio, Amy Cooney, Quinn Marcom, Tana Higman Marcom** and **Kim Patel**... **David Pasquesi's** performance in **Carson Lane's** film "Hole" is the talk of the town after just six festival screenings... **Rick Kogan** applauding 40 years of the publication "New City," delivering the city's culture scene... hard to believe songbird **Catherine O'Connell** was the Queen of the St. Patrick's Parade 50 year ago, she's still a beauty... **Whitney Reynolds**

and **David Heiner** are heading to Paris... **Susie Forstmann Kealy** and **Lyssa** in Palm Beach for Irish Georgian Society events and staying at the great Brazilian Court Hotel... Snowbird **Jim Hirsch** returning from Florida and the Carolinas... **Pope Leo** had a visit from his past, childhood classmates in Rome for a sweet reunion... Bravo to **Danny O'Connor** and **Liam O'Connor** on being the



The Hideout, 1354 W. Wabansia Ave.

WHO'S WHERE: **Shaun Rajah** in Malaysia visiting family... Former Alderman **Ed Burke** dining at Via Carducci on Division St. to the delight of owner-host **Giovanni Scalzo**... longtime TV and radio star **Joan Esposito**, received a top award at the 127th Anniversary of Anti-Cruelty Chicago from **Dr. Rae Ann Pelt** and **Darlene Duggan**, giving much of the credit to her dog... Happy belated birthday to **Cardinal Blase Cupich** who I first met in Rome in 1974 at the North American College... **Candace** and **Chuck Jordan, Kathy Wolter Mondelli, Doc and Jennifer Sutton Brieva, Paul Iacona, Maria Pappas** and husband, **Peter Kamberos** and **Michael Kutza** celebrated birthdays at LaScarola with wonderful boss man **Joey Mondelli**... birthday boy **Sean Eshaghy** with **Cassie Healy, Dennis John Healy, James Goeke, Carmen VS, and Matthew Mata** all going "loco" in Acapulco, Mexico at Las Brisa for birthday and Spring Break... **Sherry Lea Fox** with **Georgeann Yetis Rivas** and **Mary Laskey** in San Jose del Cabo, Mexico... **Bunny Frum** dining with Gibson's **Kathy O'Malley Piccone** at Hugo's Frog Bar & Fish House with some of the **Shannon Rovers**... famed restaurateur **Gordon Sinclair** is on the mend after a bad fall and related injuries... Birthday greetings to the celebrated

Pickleball Champions at Loyola University... **Eamonn Cummins** cheered on the runners doing the "Shamrock Shuffle" through Grant Park.

MARY JO MCGUIRE'S: Visit the hot spot saloon, Mary Jo McGuire's, 2251 N. Lincoln Ave., opened by the late **Mary Jo's** grandsons. She'd be so proud that the **Butch McGuire** hospitality has been passed down through daughter, **Loretta's** sons. Butch would be genuinely delighted. A most handsome "drinkery." Nice staff. Delish tater tots. Good Guinness.

THE HIDEOUT: New owner at the Hideout is pledging to keep the Bucktown bar and venue's legacy alive. Former employee **Teri O'Brien** purchased the Hideout and promptly declared: "I'm not changing anything."

SPRINGTIME TRIBUTE: **Barb Bailey's** new show featuring singer **Bill Serritella**, "Around Sinatra's Piano Bar," is scheduled for 5 p.m. Sunday, April 19, at the Gateway Lounge of the Copernicus Center, 5216 W. Lawrence Ave. Free parking. The 90 min. show is a tribute the great **Frank Sinatra**. Box Office 773-205-0044.

It's tough to make predictions, especially about the future.

-- Yogi Berra

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Local book authors declare our times require vigorous defense of First Amendment

On March 24, a federal consent decree was reached in the Missouri v Biden (later Murthy v. Missouri) lawsuit, restricting federal agencies from pressuring social media companies to censor protected speech. This settlement prohibits the Center for Disease Control, Surgeon General, and Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency [CISA] from influencing content moderation for 10 years.

The suit alleged that The White House and Biden administration violated the First Amendment by coercing social media platforms to suppress content related to COVID-19 and the 2020 election.

In the decree, the Trump Administration has agreed to block federal agencies from threatening social media companies with legal, regulatory, or economic penalties to remove lawful speech. It covers major platforms including Facebook, Instagram, X (formerly Twitter), LinkedIn, and YouTube.

It covers the free speech of individual writers too, many who were censored and had their livelihoods threatened by the local, state and federal governments during the government-imposed pandemic lockdown.

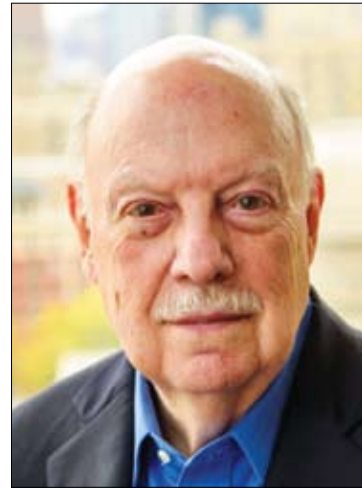
This settlement is considered a major development in restricting government-induced censorship. But this censorship was not just online. It has also reared its ugly head in printed materials and newspapers.

On March 29, the Society of Midland Authors [SMA] published a declaration spelling out to the American public “troubling government assaults on writing and journalism and even to the availability of uncensored books,” said Dick Simpson, a past president of the society and former writer for this newspaper.

“Books are part of the free press,” Simpson said. “Yet increasingly we have seen books banned from school libraries, public libraries, and archival sites,” Simpson said as he described the SMA’s declaration. “History has

been rewritten in textbooks, websites, and public displays. Civil servants have been dismissed defending literature, journalism, and facts, he continued.

A free press is promised to all Americans by our Constitution, as one of the cornerstone guarantees of the First Amendment, which states that “Congress shall make no law ... abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press.”



Dick Simpson

“To those ends, we continue our ongoing commitment to writing and writers,” said Simpson. “We believe in our Constitution. We vociferously remind every level of government of those principles, at this pivotal marker in our 250-year history.”

The SMA, which was founded in 1915, is an association of published authors from 12 American states including Illinois.

Following is part of the SMA Declaration:

Declaration of Authors’ Rights and Freedom of the Press

Marking the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution, we as an organization of authors feel compelled to restate the importance of the writings in the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution.

As part of “We the People” we raise our voices to support, defend, and celebrate the bedrock American freedoms of expression, opinion, and an unfettered press. Simultaneously, we denounce encroachment on those rights. As

authors, we know words matter.

Freedom of the press should not be subject to governmental whims or fears that such exercises would upset those in power. So says the Declaration of Independence from July 4, 1776.

We abhor governmental assaults on writing, journalism, and the availability of what we hold sacred: books.

Yet increasingly we have seen books banned from school libraries, public libraries, and archival sites. History has been rewritten in textbooks, websites, and public displays by those who are not historians. Civil servants have been dismissed defending literature, journalism, and facts.

Books are part of the free press. A free press is promised to all Americans by our Constitution, as one of the cornerstone guarantees of the First Amendment, which states that “Congress shall make no law ... abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press.”

To those ends, we continue our commitment to writing and writers, back to our nation’s guiding documents. We believe in our Constitution. We vociferously remind every level of government of those principles, at this pivotal marker in our 250-year history.



The cast of Theater of the Mind with creator David Byrne (seated). (Back row, from L): Shariba Rivers, Emily Zhang, Victor Musoni, Helen Joo Lee, Elizabeth Laidlaw, Kelli Simpkins, Lucky Stiff, Em Modaff, and James Earl Jones II (front row, from L): AJ Paramo and Maidenwena Alba.

Photo by Anna Lee Ackermann

Goodman Theatre celebrates opening of Theater of The Mind

New entertainment experience on Near North Side

The debut of Theater of the Mind took place on March 25, developed by the Goodman Theatre and co-creators David Byrne and Mala Gaonkar.

The effort will operate in a space within the landmark Reid Murdoch Building, 333 N. La-Salle St.

Theater of the Mind was co-created by Grammy-winning musician and artist Byrne and philanthropist Gaonkar, whose work explores the intersection of neuroscience, storytelling, and human perception.

Directed by Andrew Scoville, Theater of the Mind invites participants through a sequence of rooms designed to engage multiple senses and challenge assumptions about how people understand the world around them.

“For a century, The Goodman has continuously reinvented itself, winning countless awards and exporting Chicago-made theatrical productions all over the world, adding to our City’s global reputation for artistry, creativity and innovation,” said John Collins, Goodman Theatre Executive Director. “Today we’re proud to share Theater of the Mind, a world-class immersive theater experience, offered exclusively in

Chicago.”

Inspired by both historical and current neuroscience research, the show takes guests on an intimate and immersive journey inside how we see and create our worlds.

The opening night reception, hosted at Nonnina in River North, welcomed over 100 artists, donors, civic leaders, and cultural partners. The event marks the public debut of a groundbreaking production.

“Theater of the Mind will help realize a number of central area revitalization goals involving cultural experiences that are immersive, innovative and staged in non-traditional locations,” said Cmsr. Ciere Boatright of the Chicago Dept. of Planning and Development. “It’s another great reason to come downtown.”

The show utilizes immersive, non-traditional performance that moves the audience through different environments. Some of the spaces are large and open, and some spaces are small and constrained. Some spaces may be dizzying or disorienting. The experience includes cognitive and sensory manipulations, including flashing and moving lights, and some adult themes.

For a list of sensory elements in the show, contact the box office at 312-443-3800 or email Ticket Services@GoodmanTheatre.org.

Letter to the Editor

A welcoming place for generations of Catholics

Spring having arrived presents Chicagoans with many beautiful attractions. But this spring a very unhappy event is set to happen, the destruction of Our Lady of Lourdes church and grotto at Ashland and Leland. A photo of this beautiful church appeared recently in the Inside Publications newspapers. The historic church with its unique basement grotto will be torn down to make way for some nondescript and possibly overpriced condos. Shame on both the Archdiocese of Chicago and our local politicians for allowing this to happen on their watch.

The multi-steeped church was both a historic and welcoming place for generations of Catholics in Uptown, Andersonville, and Ravenswood. It certainly is a beautiful attraction to view when

walking, driving, or bicycling past. I especially enjoyed looking up at the steeples when standing at the corner of Clark and Wilson before a group of newly constructed condos interrupted the view.

Some years ago a friend was seriously considering marrying a woman who told him that inside that church “they have God sitting in a box.” Although amused at her comment he subsequently took religious lessons there and converted to becoming a Catholic. Regardless if God is seated in a box and maybe waving at those passing by from the now empty sanctuary, I will sorely miss seeing this inspiring structure in my spring walks along Wilson, Leland, and Ashland.

Fred Case
Lakeview

Write a Letter to the Editor at www.insideonline.com

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FACIAL from p. 3

is awaiting trial.

In another CTA case, Henry Seals is awaiting trial on allegations that he took a man's handgun and shot him during a confrontation aboard a Red Line train near Sox-35th last June. Detectives used facial recognition software on CTA surveillance images to identify Seals by matching the footage to his driver's license photo, prosecutors said.

The victim picked Seals out of a photo lineup, and four Chicago police officers who had previously arrested or encountered Seals on the Red Line over the past year also identified him.

The technology has also been used to help solve countless robberies on the city's transit system as well as a CTA bus hijacking.

Last summer, the case against Michael Anderson, said to be a "serial groper" of women on the CTA, was bolstered by facial recognition results.

Facial recognition has also helped investigators crack crimes away from the CTA, including the murder of a cab driver, who had a surveillance camera inside his taxi.

A murder that shocked Lincoln Park last April was cracked when detectives tracked the killer to a Red Line train and then CTA video through facial recognition.

A man with a history of violent crimes and sexual assault allegations is awaiting trial on accusations that he followed a 54-year-old woman home from a restaurant and attacked her inside the stairwell of her Gold Coast apartment building last summer. Detectives used facial recognition technology to help identify him.

One of the earliest facial recognition cases that we reported on involved a brutal kidnapping and

INSIDE PUBLICATIONS

sexual assault that stunned Wrigleyville nearly a decade ago.

On March 9, 2017, Jarqueese O'Brian Henigan abducted a woman he had never met at gunpoint as she was unlocking the door to her home in the 3700 block of N. Fremont St. She tried to hand over her valuables, hoping to end the ordeal. It did not work.

The technology has also been used to help solve countless robberies on the city's transit system as well as a CTA bus hijacking.

Henigan forced the woman into her garage, took her phone and other belongings, and then forced her into the trunk of her own car. Prosecutors alleged he sexually assaulted her there. With her locked in the trunk, he drove to an ATM and withdrew money from her account.

Chicago police located the car and pursued Henigan until

CARDS from p. 4

longed to the business in the first place. Those costs do not disappear. They are ultimately paid by the consumer at the register.

One example cited is a restaurant check is authorized once, a tip is added, and the final amount is settled without a second swipe or separate payment. The new law leaves that familiar process intact and only changes how the credit card processor calculates its fee internally.

Credit card companies may still charge fees on the product or service. They are simply prohibited from charging extra fees on money that isn't theirs.

Banks, credit card companies,

he crashed into a tree. He fled on foot and got away. The victim eventually escaped from the wreckage and sought treatment for her injuries, including a brain bleed, officials said.

Investigators focused on Henigan after facial recognition software identified him as the man seen on surveillance footage using the victim's credit cards. She later picked him out of a photo lineup. Prosecutors also pointed to fingerprints found in the woman's car and the fact that someone had entered Henigan's home address through a navigation app on her phone.

Henigan, 38, took the case to a jury trial last summer. The panel found him not guilty of criminal sexual assault but convicted him on every other charge: two counts of aggravated kidnapping with a firearm, aggravated vehicular hijacking with a firearm, armed habitual criminal, and armed robbery with a firearm.

Two years ago, Judge Michael McHale sentenced him to 94 months in prison.

Whether this is the banking industry banging the drum of fear mongering remains to be seen. It may turn out to be a boon for small, locally-owned businesses. But let's face facts, most servers still prefer you tip them in cash, so perhaps it's time for consumers to start doing that first.

and credit card processors are adapting to different standards across the nation and the world, with several states not even charging a sales tax, and versions of this law already exist in other countries.

The impact of IFPA on small businesses that pay swipe fees on taxes and tips will be noticeable. Any chaos created in implementing the new law will be the banks',

Cassidy's bill, introduced March 18, has been assigned to the Judiciary – Civil Committee.

If it passes, people who believe their biometric data was improperly collected or used could sue under the bill. A court could order the data deleted and award damages of \$1,000 per negligent violation or \$5,000 per intentional or reckless violation, plus attorney fees. The state Attorney General would also have authority to file or join civil actions against agencies believed to be violating the law.

The bill would also amend the Illinois Identification Card Act and the Illinois Vehicle Code to restrict what the Secretary of State can do with facial recognition technology. Under the proposal, the Secretary could use facial recognition only in the narrow context of verifying a person's identity when issuing a mobile driver's license or ID card, and even then could not share that search capability with any outside government agency or third party.

North Township Real Estate For Sale

Real Estate For Sale

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS COUNTY DEPARTMENT - CHANCERY DIVISION BMO Bank, N.A. Plaintiff

vs. Charles S. Oddo; Amy C. Oddo; RBC Mortgage Company; Wells Fargo Bank, National Association; The Bristol Condominium Association; Defendant 22 CH 7689 CALENDAR 58

NOTICE OF SALE

PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure entered in the above entitled cause Intercounty Judicial Sales Corporation will on May 5, 2026, at the hour 11:00 a.m., Intercounty's office, 120 West Madison Street, Suite 718A, Chicago, IL 60602, sell, in person, to the highest bidder for cash, the following described mortgaged real estate:

P.I.N. 17-03-217-015-1019; 17-03-217-015-1334.

Commonly known as 57 E. Delaware Place Unit 1206 and Parking Space P155, Chicago, IL 60611.

The real estate is: condominium residence. The purchaser of the unit other than a mortgagee shall pay the assessments and the legal fees required by subdivisions (g)(1) and (g)(4) of Section 9 of the Condominium Property Act. Sale terms: At sale, the bidder must have 10% (or 25% if so ordered in the Judgment of Foreclosure) down by certified funds, balance within 24 hours, by certified funds. No refunds. The property is sold AS IS subject to all liens or encumbrances. The property will NOT be open for inspection. Prospective bidders are admonished to check the circuit court case record, property tax record and the title record to verify all information before bidding. IF YOU ARE THE MORTGAGOR (HOMEOWNER), YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN IN POSSESSION FOR 30 DAYS AFTER THE ENTRY OF AN ORDER OF POSSESSION, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 15-1701(C) OF THE ILLINOIS MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE LAW.

For information call Sales Department at Plaintiff's Attorney, Diaz Anselmo & Associates P.A., 1771 West Diehl Road, Suite 120, Naperville, IL 60563. (630) 453-6960, 6180-181122

INTERCOUNTY JUDICIAL SALES CORPORATION

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IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS COUNTY DEPARTMENT - CHANCERY DIVISION U.S. BANK TRUST NATIONAL ASSOCIATION NOT IN ITS INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY BUT SOLELY AS OWNER TRUSTEE FOR RCF2 ACQUISITION TRUST Plaintiff, -v- WILLIAM B. STEVENSON, STATE TOWER CONDOMINIUM ASSOCIATION Defendants 2025CH01175 1230 NORTH STATE PARKWAY, #100 CHICAGO, IL 60610 NOTICE OF SALE

Real Estate For Sale

PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered in the above cause on September 18, 2025, an agent for The Judicial Sales Corporation, will at 10:30 AM on April 20, 2026, at The Judicial Sales Corporation, One South Wacker, 1st Floor Suite 35R, 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 1230 NORTH STATE PARKWAY, #10D, CHICAGO, IL 60610

Property Index No. 17-04-224-049-1022

The real estate is improved with a residence.

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/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, examine the court file, CODILIS & ASSOCIATES, P.C. Plaintiff's Attorneys, 15W030 NORTH FRONTAGE ROAD, SUITE 100, BURR RIDGE, IL 60527 (630) 794-9876

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You can also visit The Judicial Sales Corporation at www.js.com for a 7 day status report of pending sales.

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630-794-9300

Real Estate For Sale

E-Mail: pleadings@ilcslegal.com

Attorney File No. 14-25-00142

Attorney ARDC No. 00468002

Attorney Code. 21262

Case Number: 2025CH01175

TJSC#: 46-606

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 # 2025CH01175

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IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS COUNTY DEPARTMENT - CHANCERY DIVISION Rocket Mortgage, LLC f/k/a Quicken Loans, LLC f/k/a Quicken Loans Inc. Plaintiff, -v- Oluqbenga Fadiya; Wells Fargo Bank, N.A.; The Towers Condominium Association; Unknown Owners and Nonrecord Claimants Defendants. 2025CH06467

1221 N Dearborn St Apt 207N, Chicago, IL 60610

NOTICE OF SALE PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered in the above cause on 12/18/2025, an agent of Auction.com, LLC will conduct the Online Only auction at www.auction.com, with the bidding window opening on 4/13/2026 at 10:00 AM CDT and closing on April 15, 2026 at 10:00 AM CDT 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 1221 N Dearborn St Apt 207N, Chicago, IL 60610

Property Index No. 17-04-224-047-1105

The real estate is improved with a Residential Property. The judgment amount was \$214,108.71

Sale Terms: Full Sale Terms are available on the property page at www.auction.com by entering 1221 N Dearborn St Apt 207N 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 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

Real Estate For Sale

the Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/9 (g) (l) 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: CODILIS & ASSOCIATES PC (630) 794-5300 please refer to file number 14-25-04143. Auction.com, LLC 100 N LaSalle St., Suite 1400, Chicago, IL 60602 - 872-225-4985 You can also visit www.auction.com. Attorney File No. 14-25-04143 Case Number: 2025CH06467 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. 13283578

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS COUNTY DEPARTMENT - CHANCERY DIVISION U.S. BANK TRUST NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, NOT IN ITS INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY BUT SOLELY AS OWNER TRUSTEE FOR RCAF ACQUISITION TRUST, Plaintiff, -v- SONIA G GALINDO; BETTY NIEVES, INDIVIDUALLY AND AS TRUSTEE OF THE BETTY NIEVES LIVING TRUST DATED, MAY 8, 2010; CARL SANDBURG VILLAGE CONDOMINIUM ASSOCIATION NO. 2; SANDBURG VILLAGE CONDOMINIUM HOMEOWNERS' ASSOCIATION; UNKNOWN OWNERS AND NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS; UNKNOWN BENEFICIARIES OF THE BETTY NIEVES LIVING TRUST DATED, MAY 8, 2010, Defendants. 24 CH 05146 1460 NORTH SANDBURG TERRACE UNIT 1406A, CHICAGO, IL 60610 NOTICE OF SALE PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered in the above cause on 1/12/2026, an agent of Auction.com, LLC will conduct the Online Only auction at www.auction.com, with the bidding window opening on 4/13/2026 at 10:00 AM CDT and closing on April 15, 2026 at 10:00 AM CDT 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 1460 NORTH SANDBURG TERRACE UNIT 1406A, CHICAGO, IL 60610 Property Index No. 17-04-207-086-1145 The real estate is improved with a Multi-Family. The judgment amount was \$153,840.03 Sale Terms: Full Sale Terms are available on the property page at www.auction.com by entering 1460 NORTH SANDBURG TERRACE UNIT 1406A 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.

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS COUNTY DEPARTMENT - CHANCERY DIVISION AMERIHOMEMORTGAGE COMPANY, LLC, Plaintiff, -v- SETH JORDAN PHILLIPS; EMILY MERDZINSKI; RIVER PLAZA CONDOMINIUM ASSOCIATION; Defendants. 2025CH02659 405 N. Wabash Ave. Unit 2314, Chicago, IL 60611 NOTICE OF SALE PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered in the above cause on 12/19/2025, an agent of Auction.com, LLC will conduct the Online Only auction at www.auction.com, with the bidding window opening on 4/13/2026 at 10:00 AM CDT and closing on 4/15/2026 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 405 N. Wabash Ave. Unit 2314, Chicago, IL 60611

13283550

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS COUNTY DEPARTMENT - CHANCERY DIVISION AMERIHOMEMORTGAGE COMPANY, LLC, Plaintiff, -v- SETH JORDAN PHILLIPS; EMILY MERDZINSKI; RIVER PLAZA CONDOMINIUM ASSOCIATION; Defendants. 2025CH02659 405 N. Wabash Ave. Unit 2314, Chicago, IL 60611 NOTICE OF SALE PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered in the above cause on 12/19/2025, an agent of Auction.com, LLC will conduct the Online Only auction at www.auction.com, with the bidding window opening on 4/13/2026 at 10:00 AM CDT and closing on 4/15/2026 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 405 N. Wabash Ave. Unit 2314, Chicago, IL 60611

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Real Estate For Sale

All payments must be certified funds. No third-party checks will be accepted. All bidders will need to register at 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) (l) 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: McCalla Raymer Leibert Pierce, LLP (312) 346-9088 please refer to file number 24-18282L. Auction.com, LLC 100 N LaSalle St., Suite 1400, Chicago, IL 60602 - 872-225-4985 You can also visit www.auction.com. Attorney File No. 24-18282L Case Number: 24 CH 05146 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. 13283550

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS COUNTY DEPARTMENT - CHANCERY DIVISION AMERIHOMEMORTGAGE COMPANY, LLC, Plaintiff, -v- SETH JORDAN PHILLIPS; EMILY MERDZINSKI; RIVER PLAZA CONDOMINIUM ASSOCIATION; Defendants. 2025CH02659 405 N. Wabash Ave. Unit 2314, Chicago, IL 60611 NOTICE OF SALE PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered in the above cause on 12/19/2025, an agent of Auction.com, LLC will conduct the Online Only auction at www.auction.com, with the bidding window opening on 4/13/2026 at 10:00 AM CDT and closing on 4/15/2026 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 405 N. Wabash Ave. Unit 2314, Chicago, IL 60611

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3480E-Capers, Saleena Bridgette
5490F-Capers, Saleena Bridgette
8196SM-Capers, Saleena Bridgette
1240E- Chiapelli, Jonathan
6350X- Garcés, Alexander
4130F-Hofbauer, Michael
8212SM- Imogie, Akeshi
7910V- Luke, Robert
4200H-Petzold, Susan
4285H-Petzold, Susan
4345H-Petzold, Susan
4075X-Talley, Tefny Catrice
3415G- Trujillo, Henry
for public sale.

This sale is to be held on Tuesday, April 28, 2026, at 2:00PM.
Cash payments only.

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Registration Number: M26001472
on March 19, 2026
Under the Assumed Business Name of NEW NEST MEDIA with the business located at: 8410 N. OKETO AVE, NILES, IL 60714
The true and real full name(s) and residence address of the owner(s)/partner(s) is:
Owner/Partner Full Name: JEREMY WALSH
Complete Address: 8410 N. OKETO AVE, NILES, IL 60714, USA

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IMPASSE from p. 3

term because there's good projects that we need as a city. That's just not the person I am. But at the same time, I wanted to bring some resolution to this sooner rather than later," Lawson said.

"So it's on the mayor. It's on us, as well, to get something done. We found this with the budget where we were going to have to do it on our own. This may be another situation where we have to do it on our own."

LAWSUIT from p. 7

with the city of Chicago and Cook County Sheriff Tom Dart, all asked a federal judge to dismiss Smith's lawsuit.

In the motion to dismiss claims against the IPRB, attorneys from the office of Illinois Attorney General Kwame Raoul asserted the IPRB is treated similarly to judges under the law, meaning they enjoy absolute legal immunity under the law and cannot be sued for their decisions.

Similarly, they said, the IPRB cannot be held responsible for actions taken by Brand or other criminals the board may release from custody.

In Brand's case, they argued "Board Members were fulfilling their obligations to afford due process to all incarcerated individuals..."

Chicago and Sheriff Dart argued they also could not be sued for Brand's actions, because they had no obligation to arrest or hold Brand before he allegedly attacked Smith and killed her son.

The court proceedings, however, came after public outcry over Perkins' murder prompted changes on the IPRB, including the resignation of former Chairman Donald Shelton and former IPRB member LeAnn Miller who had presided over the hearing that resulted in Brand's release.

Miller had been appointed by Pritzker in 2021. Miller's appointment won

TAX from p. 5

short-sighted," NetChoice's Taske said. "Ultimately, Chicago residents and their businesses should expect to see the cost of advertising dramatically increase. That means increased costs for Chicago businesses doing all they can to survive—local restaurants, auto dealers, artists and more will be the hardest hit under this proposal.

"This is a lose-lose for Chicagoans' free speech, businesses and residents alike."

confirmation from the Illinois State Senate despite concerns raised by some Republican state senators over Miller's backing of the release from prison of a woman who had killed her infant daughters in the 1980s.

Following Jayden Perkins' death, JB Pritzker in March 2024 placed the blame for the boy's murder on LeAnn Miller and the IPRB and he extended his sympathy to Smith and her family.

Shelton, a former longtime Champaign Police Officer, had served on the IPRB since 2012, when he was appointed by former Gov. Pat Quinn. Pritzker had reappointed Shelton to the IPRB as recently as 2023.

Following Perkins' death, Pritzker in March 2024 placed the blame for the boy's murder on Miller and the IPRB and he extended his sympathy to Smith and her family.

No judge ever ruled on the motions to dismiss, nor did Smith reply to the motions to dismiss in court.

Rogers Park Township Real Estate For Sale

Real Estate For Sale

010101

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS COUNTY DEPARTMENT - CHANCERY DIVISION CITIBANK, N.A. Plaintiff vs. UNKNOWN HEIRS AND LEGATEES OF JERRY MATTHEWS; DONNA J. MATTHEWS; 6500N. RIDGE CONDOMINIUM ASSOCIATION; WILLIAM P. BUTCHER AS SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF JERRY MATTHEWS; UNKNOWN OWNERS AND NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS Defendant 23 CH 2907 CALENDAR 60 NOTICE OF SALE PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure entered in the above entitled cause Intercounty Judicial Sales Corporation will on May 4, 2026, at the hour 11:00 a.m., Intercounty's office, 120 West Madison Street, Suite 718A, Chicago, IL 60602, sell, in person, to

Real Estate For Sale

the highest bidder for cash, the following described mortgaged real estate: P.I.N. 11-31-401-091-1022. Commonly known as 6500 N. Ridge Blvd. Unit 41, Chicago, IL 60626. The real estate is: condominium residence. The purchaser of the unit other than a mortgagee shall pay the assessments and the legal fees required by subdivisions (g)(1) and (g)(4) of Section 9 of the Condominium Property Act.. Sale terms: At sale, the bidder must have 10% (or 25% if so ordered in the Judgment of Foreclosure) down by certified funds, balance within 24 hours, by certified funds. No refunds. The property is sold AS IS subject to all liens or encumbrances. The property will NOT be open for inspection. Prospective bidders are admonished to check the circuit court case record, property tax record and the title record to verify all information before bidding. IF YOU ARE THE MORTGAGOR (HOMEOWNER), YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN IN POSSESSION FOR 30 DAYS AFTER THE ENTRY OF AN ORDER OF POSSESSION, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 15-1701(c) OF THE ILLINOIS MORTGAGE

Real Estate For Sale

FORECLOSURE LAW. For information call Sales Department at Plaintiff's Attorney, Diaz Anselmo & Associates P.A., 1771 West Diehl Road, Suite 120, Naperville, IL 60563. (630) 453-6960. 6710-191745 INTERCOUNTY JUDICIAL SALES CORPORATION intercountyjudicialsales.com **13284053**

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Lakeview Township Real Estate For Sale

Real Estate For Sale

010101

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS COUNTY DEPARTMENT - CHANCERY DIVISION NewRez LLC db/a Shellpoint Mortgage Servicing Plaintiff, -v.- Robert Chereck; 3033 Sheridan Tower Condominium Association; Unknown Owners and Nonrecord Claimants Defendants. 2024CH08021 3033 N Sheridan Rd Apt 403, Chicago, IL 60657 NOTICE OF SALE PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered in the above cause on 1/15/2026, an agent of Auction.com, LLC will conduct the Online Only auction at www.auction.com, with the bidding window opening on 4/20/2026 at 10:00 AM CDT and closing on April 22, 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 3033 N Sheridan Rd Apt 403, Chicago, IL 60657 Property Index No.14-28-202-031-1016; 14-28-202-031-1176 The real estate is improved with a Residential Property. The judgment amount was \$239,917.61 Sale Terms: Full Sale Terms are available on the

Real Estate For Sale

property page at www.auction.com by entering 3033 N Sheridan Rd Apt 403 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 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

Real Estate For Sale

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: CODILIS & ASSOCIATES PC (630) 794-5300 please refer to file number 14-24-05211. Auction.com, LLC 100 N LaSalle St, Suite 1400, Chicago, IL 60602 - 872-225-4985 You can also visit www.auction.com. Attorney File No. 14-24-05211 Case Number: 2024CH08021 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. **13283785**

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Senior tech hour April 8

Chicago Jewish Elderly Metro at Anshe Emet Synagogue, 3751 N. Broadway, are hosting a tech hour event for seniors, 11 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. Wednesday, April 8. For more information visit <https://cje.net/supportiveservices/cje-metro/>.

Easter egg hunt at Zoo

The Lincoln Park Zoo's will be celebrating spring and Easter with their annual egg hunt event designed for children ages 1 - 8, 7:45 a.m. to 11:35 a.m. Saturday, April 4, at 2400 N. Cannon Dr.

Youths will gather eggs across

themed zones, take photos with the Easter Bunny, dance and clap along to musical entertainment, animal chats and more. Timed entry allows families to explore at their own pace.

HADDEN from p. 1

and my team, including racist, misogynistic, and homophobic language. Additionally, many callers have been verbally abusive to my staff, making it difficult to serve [her constituents]."

Hadden said "anti-immigrant, anti-sanctuary city" protesters and counter-protesters outside her office sparked a police response March 24. Another protest took place on Friday.

"We must respect the First Amendment rights of everyone, so if you encounter this group, do not engage in anything that could escalate into physical altercations," Hadden wrote. "Though they may not represent the views and values of our community, we will always respect and uphold the civil liberties afforded to everyone in our nation by our Constitution."

Prosecutors have charged 25-year-old Venezuelan national Jose Medina-Medina with Gorman's murder, saying he shot her in the back as she ran away. Federal officials have said he was in the U.S. illegally.

Bill Morton announces candidacy for Alderman

Seeing a political opportunity in Hadden's predicament, on March 27 Bill Morton announced his candidacy for Alderman of the 49th Ward, "launching a campaign focused on accountability, neighborhood engagement, and practical leadership that puts residents first."

"For too long, many in our community have felt unheard or shut out," Morton said. "Being

an alderman means showing up, listening, and doing the work—especially when it's difficult. I'm running to restore trust, ensure transparency, and make sure every resident knows their voice matters."

Morton is a longtime community advocate and small business supporter. He claims his campaign will prioritize responsive constituent services, support for local businesses, and policies that reflect the needs and concerns of the ward's diverse community.

He said he would be rolling out additional policy priorities and community events in the coming weeks.

Bad timing for criminal-friendly legislation

Even after surveillance cameras helped solve the Loyola student murder case in her district, a bill that would bar Illinois law enforcement agencies from using facial recognition databases to help identify crime suspects is scheduled for a second day of legislative hearings.

The hearing comes days after the technology helped Chicago police ID the man accused of murdering a Loyola Univ. freshman in the bill's sponsor's own district.

House Bill 5521 is sponsored by Rep. Kelly Cassidy [14th], whose District includes Rogers Park.

Cassidy introduced the measure March 18, hours before 18-year-old Gorman was shot and killed at the Loyola Beach pier. Chicago police have since charged Medina, a 25-year-old Venezuelan citizen, with Gorman's murder.

An arrest report describes how

detectives worked to identify Medina as the shooter. Among the investigative steps, an officer wrote that video images of the gunman were sent to U.S. Customs and Border Protection, which "returned matching candidate Jose Medina Medina."

If passed, HB5521 would prohibit Illinois law enforcement agencies from obtaining, retaining, possessing, accessing, requesting, using, or entering into agreements with third parties, state or local government agencies, or federal agencies to use certain biometric identification systems, including facial recognition.

It also bars the Secretary of State from providing facial recognition search services except when issuing a mobile driver's license or identification card. That facial recognition database is the most commonly used within CPD.



Rep. Kelly Cassidy [14th]

Rep. Kelly Cassidy introduced the measure March 18, hours before 18-year-old Sheridan Gorman was shot and killed at the Loyola Beach pier. Chicago police have since charged Jose Medina-Medina, a 25-year-old Venezuelan citizen, with Gorman's murder.

On March 11, CWBChicago published a report detailing dozens of violent crimes — including murders, robberies, and sex offenses — that Chicago Police Dept. detectives have solved with the assistance of facial recognition. The technology has proven particularly useful in cases involving the CTA, where offenders are often anonymous, crimes can be random, and the transit system's high-definition cameras provide broad coverage.

Cassidy did not respond to an email seeking comment for that initial report. After CWBChicago followed up, specifically noting that facial recognition had been used to identify Medina as the man accused of killing a university student in her own district, on March 24 she said:

"Just as with all bills introduced in our body, HB5521 is a work in progress aimed at curtailing the

abuses of biometric data we've most recently seen during Operation Midway Blitz. It is tragic that some people want to use individual tragedies to justify the use of flawed technologies that risk the private information of millions in our state."

"Rather than look at anecdotes, we should know that facial recognition technology is demonstrably inaccurate. It is curious that in discussing this issue, we hear about particularly heinous and troubling crimes, but nothing about people being misidentified by facial recognition technology and held for hours (if not days) based on system errors. House Bill 5521 does not limit state and local police from investigating crimes. It simply protects the privacy of millions of Illinois residents simply because they have an Illinois driver's license."

Contrary to Cassidy's claim, her bill would prohibit state and

local police from using facial recognition to investigate crimes, according to lawyers who have read the bill. When asked if she believes her bill does not limit police use of facial recognition as an investigative tool and if she plans to amend her bill to allow police to use the technology in their investigations, Cassidy did not respond.

When asked to provide specific examples of people in Illinois who were wrongly charged with crimes based on facial recognition, Cassidy did not respond.

Investigators and prosecutors note that a facial recognition match alone is not sufficient to charge someone with a crime. Like a fingerprint hit or a DNA match, being identified as a "matching candidate" is one step in a broader investigative process — a starting point for detectives trying to put a name to an

unknown suspect, not a basis for prosecution on its own.

They also note that people are questioned in cases built on fingerprints, DNA, and eyewitness identifications — widely regarded as among the least reliable forms of evidence — every day. The legislature has not moved to ban them.

Another common identification technique is called a "show-up." If police stop a suspect shortly after a crime, they'll drive the victim to the scene and ask whether that person is the perpetrator. If the victim says yes, the suspect gets arrested. Show-ups are far from foolproof. But the legislature hasn't outlawed them, either.

If Cassidy's bill passes, people who believe their biometric data was improperly collected or used could sue under the bill. A court could order the data deleted and award damages of \$1,000 per negligent violation or \$5,000 per intentional or reckless violation, plus attorney fees. The state Attorney General would also have authority to file or join civil actions against agencies believed to be violating the law.

The bill would also amend the Illinois Identification Card Act and the Illinois Vehicle Code to restrict what the Secretary of State can do with facial recognition technology. Under the proposal, the Secretary could use facial recognition only in the narrow context of verifying a person's identity when issuing a mobile driver's license or ID card, and even then could not share that search capability with any outside government agency or third party.

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entered his home. When officers arrived, they found the victim had the intruder pinned to the ground, officials said. That man was Christopher Johnson, 48. Despite the confrontation and the victim's identification of Johnson as the burglar from Feb. 9, police only charged Johnson with trespassing. They released him from the police station hours later.

Six days later, Loyola Univ. police responded to a burglary in the 1200 block of W. Arthur Ave., where students reported an Apple Watch and two Apple MacBooks had been stolen, according to prosecutors.

A Loyola officer followed location data and found Johnson about two blocks away with the watch and computers, prosecutors said. But he was only charged with one count of misdemeanor theft, and he was released again.

Once he was back on the streets, the Loyola officer who arrested him realized that Johnson was the same man seen walking in the alley with the student's Bluetooth speaker on January 29, according to prosecutors. Johnson is now charged with that crime.

Prosecutors are also now charging him with burglarizing the 62-year-old man's garage on Feb. 9. Judge James Costello detained him pending trial on both burglary charges. The misdemeanor theft case involving the Loyola students is still pending.

Court records show that he received a five-year sentence in 2023 for burglarizing an apartment in the 6200 block of N. Wayne Ave.

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