

Sometimes the strength of motherhood is greater than natural laws.

—Barbara Kingsolver

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Is Lincoln Square Mall's parking lot all but 'sold'?

Builder to host virtual meeting May 11 to discuss plans

BY PETER VON BUOL

This newspaper has reported extensively on the fate of a city-owned parking lot at 4715 N. Western Ave. that may be given away for free to Boston-based developer, The Community Builders [TCB]. The not-for-profit company wants to build an apartment building there which will eliminate a critical piece of commercial infrastructure, while offering only a few parking spaces to its tenants.

Evidence now points to a deal being struck for the site well over a year ago between TCB, city officials, the Chicago Housing Authority [CHA] and 47th Ward office.

Officials from TCB will be unveiling the latest version of their plans for the site during a virtual meeting 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, May 11. Coincidentally, this meeting will be taking place at the same time as a Welles Park Advisory Council meeting. Undoubtedly, some nearby residents will miss attending one or the other of the meetings.

In March 2020, officials from the CHA announced they had awarded Project Based Vouchers to the "4715 N. Western Apartments" which back then was described as a "new-construction, mixed use development located in Lincoln Square." According to the CHA, this new development would contain a total of 42 units, and that 10 units would be funded through the CHA's Property Rental Assistance program.

TCB's is the only proposal that has been made public, and it appears no other developers were allowed to bid on the property, despite the city's plans to give the multi-million-dollar lot away for free. Why TCB is the only developer being considered for space has never been explained by local Ald. Matt Martin [47th] or TCB. Perhaps this will be addressed in the virtual meeting?

In the past, Ald. Martin's staff have said that the only way that this deal could get done is by giving the property to TCB for free. And in another convenient twist, should this project get the go-ahead, as a not-for-profit builder

constructing an affordable housing project, the Cook County Assessor's office says that TCB will be eligible for reduced property tax assessments and other tax privileges.

From documents released by a Freedom of Information Act [FOIA] request, it seems TCB also tried to get the parking lot in 2019. This newspaper has discerned that secret negotiations with the city and Ald. Martin have been on-going almost from his first days in office, and perhaps also under his predecessor, former-alderman Ameya Pawar.

And in another convenient twist, should this project get the go-ahead, as a not-for-profit builder constructing an affordable housing project, the Cook County Assessor's office says that TCB will be eligible for reduced property tax assessments and other tax privileges.

This newspaper reported on those blacked-out FOIA documents several times over the last year, and has requested that Ald. Martin and TCB share those documents with the Lincoln Square community. They have so far refused the request, and refused to speak about what those letters and emails may say.

In an online flyer distributed and promoted by Ald. Martin last week, the property is now being described as a 51-unit 5-story, mixed-use Transit-Oriented Development [TOD]. Through the elimination of parking requirements, a developer is able to maximize the amount of square footage dedicated to rental space in a TOD. TCB hopes to have the first floor filled with either a restaurant or retailer.

The parking lot was built on land the city had acquired through eminent domain in 1975. The purchase was made after numerous neighborhood Master Plans commissioned by the city of Chicago, 47th Ward Alderman's Office, and the Lincoln Square Chamber of Commerce had found merchants had been losing customers to places with parking readily available. A 1997 study stated that Lincoln Square in fact has a commercial parking

deficit of over 1500 spaces.

Now they seem poised to lose more parking, and many local businesses and cultural institutions have told this newspaper the "sale" of the parking lot will make an already difficult business climate even worse.

This parking lot has also long-served as ground zero for the Maifest and German Day Celebrations, whose viability would be at risk if the parking lot is lost. It's also a staging area for Lincoln Square's AppleFest and for the adjacent Farmers' Markets.

Curiously, just a few weeks ago, Martin's chief of staff Laura Reimers stated that there was no plan in place, and again refused to answer any media questions about the fate of the parking lot. Last week that false narrative fell apart when TCB announced plans to review their plans with the community on May 11.

Reimers dismissed reports the lot had already been all but sold, or given away to TCB. Through the FOIA request, this newspaper had learned discussions with City Hall, Ald. Martin's office and TCB had already been well underway in the summer of 2019.

According to TCB, the new building will include apartments for a mix of incomes. Some will be set aside as "affordable" studio units. Specific units will also be set aside for those who describe themselves as "artists."

Financing for the development will be done through a federal program known as Low Income Housing Tax Credits [LIHTC]. These tax credits are highly sought after by developers and are locally distributed through the city's Dept. of Housing [DOH].

City officials award these tax credits through a process known as the Qualified Allocation Plan [QAP]. Each year, the city receives an allocation of federal LIHTC to create affordable rental housing. The QAP encompasses the application requirements and selection criteria for receiving these federal tax credits and tax exempt bonds. The city is awarded a limited number of these housing tax

SOLD? see p. 12



There is no word yet if a public Banksy piece might be planned for the Chicago event.

Exhibition to bring Banksy art to Chicago

Some 80 pieces of Banksy art worth \$35 million are coming to Chicago.

Banksy, whose actual identity remains a mystery, is considered one of the world's top political artists. Over the years, Banksy has carried out a considerable number of 'pranks.'

Starvox Exhibits, the same people behind the Immersion Van Gogh in Old Town, recently began promoting the Chicago-based display of an exhibition called "The Art of Banksy." There's no indication of exactly when or where the show will debut in Chicago.

This globally acclaimed showcase features original and authenticated works associated with, what may be the most intriguing artist of modern history. On display are prints, canvasses, screen-prints, sculptures, unique works and limited-edition pieces mainly dated between the years 1997 to 2008, the period which resulted in Banksy's most well-known works.

Banksy is most infamous for his outdoor art which can be found in streets all around the world. Banksy's indoor pieces - original and unique works on canvas, wood and paper - have been less exposed and are also on display at

this exhibition.

Banksy has been called a vandal, a genius, a political activist and a businessman. He creates art around the world, usually with a political bent, and sometimes in unexpected places. Overnight, his work could appear on a garage like it did in Wales before it was moved to a gallery a couple of years ago. In Venice, during the Biennale, he painted a young migrant girl wearing a life jacket on a wall at the edge of a canal. His work always delivers a message.

There is no word yet if a piece might be planned for the Chicago event.

In 2018, in one of his biggest pranks, a \$1.4 million painting of "Girl with Balloon" was auctioned off at Sotheby's and when the gavel went down, the artwork mysteriously "shredded itself" before the horrified eyes of those assembled. Critics have noted that the piece is worth more now following the incident. The artwork, first created by Banksy as a stencil street art piece in 2002, symbolized political protests.

For more information visit, <https://banksyexhibit.com>

Rogers Park Business Alliance to host Google Analytics lesson

A representative from the Rogers Park Business Alliance [RPBA] will give a lesson on the use of Google Analytics during a Zoom meeting 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Wednesday, May 19.

During the free event, RPBA membership and business service coordinator Rachel Bowen will offer strategies for making business decisions with information

gleaned from Google Analytics. Attendees will learn how to analyze trends about how customers engage with their businesses online, then turn those insights into well-informed, actionable decisions.

For more information call the RPBA at 773-508-5885. To RSVP to the event visit tinyurl.com/analyticsmeeting.



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Seeking a balm for a city in despair



By Thomas J. O'Gorman

How do you take a city's temperature and read its vital signs?

What are the symptoms of health that you should look for? Is there a formula for good urban hygiene and municipal well-being?

In the past century contentment was often seen as the true measure of a city's health and happiness. You know, the smiling mugs of the general population. The uplifting spirit of a vast municipal grid. Like when the Sox and the Cubs are both winning or a new skyscraper zooms upwards to the heavens.

When things in the city are ripe with success, no one has to announce it, such things tell on themselves. These emotions and feelings are easy to see.

I guess that's why Chicagoans always seemed to have a smile on their face. It marks public approval for everything that holds our commonly shared lives together on the shoreline of Lake Michigan. And that happened best during the period in which most Chicago residents struggled to learn the English language. To learn a new set of highly functioning urban skills as well as committing to their hearts the everyday fresh sacrifices and expectations of your own neighborhood to survive and to thrive.

For many you didn't have to look very far to understand that the city was booming and the Republic was alive.

That much was clear on every street sign that pointed the way. In every traffic light that spelled out as simply as possible "Go. Stop. Wait."

It was alive in every bus and trolley route timetable, every arrival of an "L" train or rising bridge on the river to signal a tall ship. Nearby as every clean glass of crisp Lake Michigan water.

When you're building railroads, a stockyard, a mercantile exchange, new neighborhoods, schools, churches, and a political infrastructure for government the brush strokes are wide. Huge. All over the place.

But life and governance get more complicated after decades of trial and error. Failures and successes. As life becomes more settled, the equations of governance and intelligent rule become more labored, nuanced and complicated. Less flexible and less independent than in the days of pioneers and cowpokes.

Let the dogs run wild. But remember each dog needs a license. Each dog pays a tax. The wild ones run free. But you pay for the luxury.

Control is always a mark of command. If you are in charge of the city you can nuance the rule, or change the language by which you rule.

You can name who's responsible. Who's in charge. Who controls the bottom line. Who lets the doors and windows stay open. Who says what time the meeting starts. And when it ends.

You're witnessing the collision of such worlds right now in Chicago.

Following long decades of political rule of one particular party and one particular family.

The time arrives when those less informed, less in charge, less reasoned and less expansive in their thoughts find they have the chair at the top of the table.

We've just witnessed how destructive this can be on the national level with the shameful disaster of the Trump presidency. The unleashing of capitalism at its worst. The unbound greed of the unschooled, the unwise, shallow, self-serving apparatchiks. Proponents of the survive or



Are blooming flowers and sunny skies the symptoms of health that we should look for from a Chicago emerging from the pandemic?

Photo by Johnny O'Brien / @toomanyshots on Instagram

perish manifesto. Adherents of age-old tactics that doom the human person, the environment, the oceans, the stars as well as the voice of humanity to object to such destruction. When this bankrupted national movement spills its banks, it finds an urban terrain that is unwelcoming and bereft of sympathy.

Chicago, too, is the perfect example of that with an untried, belligerent mayor skeptical of police and fire leadership and personnel. The very professionals without which no city can long survive.

For the mayor and her team, all issues are first philosophical. As if this was a lab class at the Univ. of Chicago. Burning buildings, like armed bandits on the streets, are philosophical projections that are merely taken care of on paper.

City emergency personnel are there to follow orders. Mayoral orders. With no perks for peevish firefighters no matter how much urban wildfire they fight. No chasing of criminals down the streets in quick pursuit. That embarrasses the dignity of the thief.

No, we must languish as a city of fatigued bad planning, making the face of what was once America's most beautiful urban grid, ugly.

Twenty-seven miles of breathtaking urban seashore. From Evanston to Indiana. Not an inch of industry mars our seacoast. Like nowhere else in America.

There is a cruel and unneeded broken spirit that now looms over Chicago. Sadly, it has since the last

election day. Businesses crumble. Corporate leadership looks for ways to evacuate the city, to leave the madness and the mayhem of unsafe streets and crime ridden neighborhoods. Churches close and line up for demolition and effective but irritating long-time politicians are tossed on the trash heap by a mayor with an authority problem. That's really a problem about the successful leadership of others. That stands out more each day as a gender bias of political chromosomes.

Many of Chicago's citizens feel this sad cycle of political psychosis. They see it in every untidy, refuse-littered sidewalk. Every garbage-lined boulevard. Every Starbucks paper-cup-lined street from Hegewish to Rogers Park (which is - of course - actually an aldermanic issue).



Jerry Ranalli

They should insure the neighborhoods upkeep. But letting the walkways deteriorate is the perfect way to demonstrate their disrespect for Mayor

or "Lightfingers."

The good news is that Chicago is not Detroit.

But the bad news is that it's not Paris either.

The "City of Lights" has it all over us. Lots of doggy poop on the streets, but they've got the Eiffel Tower. And the food. The wine. The bread and cheese.

As a real Chicagoan you feel the sadness and shame of our present political mess. The disgraceful urban fracas of the moment. Don't give up. Plant a garden. Buy some good red wine. And cheese. But get upset at the pro-

posed destruction of our history and culture by Lightfingers' crew of half-educated cretans without knowledge or affection for our urban health. Take a minute to take our municipal temperature. Do it the hard way.

ONE OF A KIND: Gerald "Jerry" Ranalli had the gift. The gift of hospitality and common sense. It let him see things others couldn't, he received the City of Chicago's first permit for outdoor dining. People lined up around the block to gather at his place on Lincoln Ave. Some say he is the American who invented the concept of the Sports Bar. The first to stock 100 beers at his bar. He was a larger than life spirit, a front door man. An electric personality in Lincoln Park just as the era of its renaissance brought it back to life. Jerry worked in restaurants his whole life. He scrubbed pots and pans as a youth and shuffled celebrities as the owner of a proud Chicago venue of significance and good food. He's why Chicago still "toddles." We owe him a lot. He was a magic man and a great boss. He had a hard time these last years with cancer. Let him be filled now with God's embrace in peace. He's a Chicago hero.

BOUL MICH FRESH BLOOMS: The Chicago founder of Luxe Bloom, **Shelley Rosen**, is partnering to invest in Chicago's floral landscape, partnering with Paris-based outdoor media's JC-Decaux to produce a month-long floral installation on the Mag-Mile in May. A two-sided floral event will dramatize Chicago's premier shopping core near Water Tower Park. Perfect for Mother's

SEEKING see p. 10

Ronald Roenigk	Publisher & Editor
Katie Fritz	Copy Editor
Sheila Swann	Art Director & Production Mgr
Cindy Amadio	Account Executive
Kathleen Guy	Account Executive

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Chicago, IL 60660
Tel: (773) 465-9700
Fax: (773) 465-9800

E: insidepublicationschicago@gmail.com



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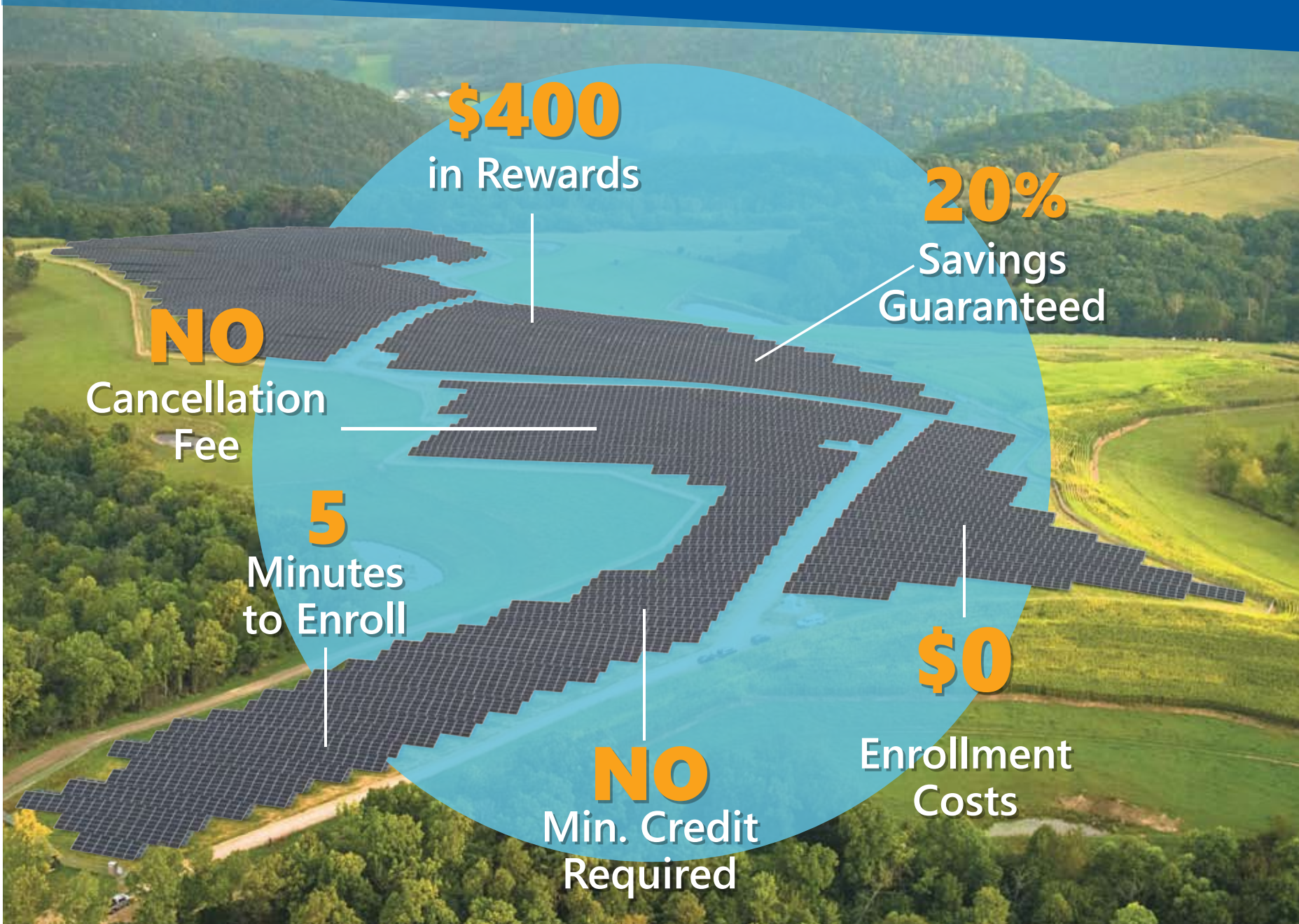
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Wealthy real estate investors may feel Biden's tax bite



The Home Front

by Don DeBat



An increase in capital gains taxes for the wealthiest individuals doesn't mean an end to real estate investment.

The White House is eyeing a big tax bite on wealthy real estate investors in Chicago and across the nation, experts say.

Investors are worried about the potential financial impact of the Biden Administration's plan to change the Internal Revenue Code to help pay for rebuilding America's infrastructure, improved child care and healthcare for seniors.

The White House is developing a proposal to raise the capital gains tax on real estate to 39.6% from 20% for individuals making more than \$1 million a year. Joe Biden also said he wanted to end another sacred cow—the 1031 exchange—a tax break which allows investors to defer capital gains taxes for decades.

An increase in capital gains for the wealthiest individuals doesn't mean an end to real estate investment. However, it could result in significantly different strategies, and create an investment slowdown with less turnover, experts say.

However, the biggest losers might not only be the fat-cat investors. "The majority of investment transactions are relatively small residential real estate," attorney Scott A. Johnson, of Eastman & Smith's real estate practice group, told GlobeSt.com.

"If a property is cash flowing, and has positive equity, an investor will be likely to hold in hopes that the capital-gains rate is reduced in the future," Johnson predicted.

1031 exchanges explained

The Biden Administration's plan to eliminate the 1031 exchange would wipe out an estimated \$50 billion in tax breaks for investors with a net worth of more than \$400,000.

The step-up in basis tax provision has often been criticized as a tax loophole for the ultra-rich and wealthy, who take advantage of it to eliminate or reduce their tax burden on their heirs.

However, an end to the 1031 exchange could likely reinforce an economic slowdown, experts say. Repealing 1031 exchanges could shrink the economy by more than \$13 billion, discourage investment and lower tax revenue, reports an Ernst & Young study.

Under Section 1031 of the IRS tax code, sellers of investment property may defer capital gains taxes on the sale by purchasing "like-kind" properties.

Investors utilizing the 1031, or "Starker" exchange have 45 days to identify new investment properties. After the investor closes on the sale of the old property, he or she has 180 days to buy and close

on the newly identified property. You could sell an apartment building, then buy raw land, or swap your ranch for a strip mall and pay capital gains taxes down the road.

Those "1031 Exchanges aren't just paper transactions involving a single investor looking to defer tax payments," noted Inland Real Estate Investment Corp. "Instead, the investor is able to use the funds that otherwise would have been earmarked for taxes to make upgrades on the property, diversify holdings, and improve their community."

Tax loophole: step-up basis

Another threat to real estate investment is the Biden plan to end the long-established "step-up" basis. A step-up in basis is the re-adjustment of the value of an appreciated real estate asset for tax purposes upon inheritance.

The step-up in basis tax provision has often been criticized as a tax loophole for the ultra-rich and wealthy, who take advantage of it to eliminate or reduce their tax burden on their heirs.

When real estate is passed on to a beneficiary, its value is typically more than what it was when the original owner acquired it. The asset receives a step-up in basis so that the beneficiary's capital gains tax is minimized. A step-up in basis is applied to the cost basis of property transferred at death.

Tax basis is the amount of a taxpayer's investment in property for tax purposes, typically used to calculate figure depreciation, amortization, and other property dispositions.

For example, let's suppose an investor bought a loft condo in 2000 for \$300,000. When the investor's son inherited the loft after his father's death, the loft had a market value of \$500,000.

When the son sold the loft for \$600,000, his tax basis was \$500,000. So, he only paid taxes on the \$100,000 difference between the selling price and his stepped-up basis of \$500,000.

If step-up in basis didn't exist, then the son would have had to pay taxes on the difference between the \$600,000 selling price and the initial buying price of \$300,000.

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.

Hot time in Lincoln Park



Chicago in Flames by Currier & Ives, 1871.

Program on The Great Fire that came to Lincoln Park

DePaul Univ. and the The Lincoln Park Community Research Initiative [LPCRI] are hosting a free program titled, "1871: The Great Fire comes to Lincoln Park."

The LPCRI, a partnership between DePaul Univ. and the Lincoln Park community that documents the shared history between the neighborhood and the university. This Spring program is being held virtually 7 to 8 p.m. May 6. It is being presented by Betty Ann McNeil, D.C., and moderated by Edward Udovic, C.M.

The Daughters of Charity of

St. Vincent de Paul are known for their non-discriminatory public service at times of war, epidemics, disasters, etc., and their first-hand accounts of aiding victims of significant events in our world's history.

Join McNeil and Udovic to hear their accounts about the Chicago fire, on what is called "Night of Judgement for Chicago," where they describe how the spirit of Chicago and the winds of change reshaped Lincoln Park and Chicago forever.

This event is free and open to the public. To register for the event visit: <http://go.depaul.edu/LPCRI>.

CLVN flower sale at Tubman School

Spring is here and Central Lakeview Neighbors [CLVN] will be holding its annual flower sale. Those who want to order may fill out the online order form and return the order form with payment by May 11.

Items can be picked up the afternoon of Friday, May 21, or the morning of Saturday, May 22, at Harriett Tubman School, 2851 N. Seminary in the school parking lot.

All funds raised are used to beautify the neighborhood. To place orders or more information visit CLVN.org.





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— brought to you by Betty Ann McNeil, D.C., moderated by Edward Udovic, C.M.

ONLINE REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED:

<http://go.depaul.edu/LPCRI>

Celebrating Mom with balloons and more



Heart of the 'Hood

by Felicia Dechter

Plus, nominate a small biz for a 'balloon bomb'

Old Town resident Elaine Frei wants to help you celebrate your mom in a bright, cheery and joyful way.

I'm talking about balloons here. Big, shiny, beautiful balloons. Lots of them.

As owner of Luft Balloons, 345 W. Armitage Ave., Frei says her No. 1 mission is to bring joy through the art of the balloon. And that she has done -- and will continue to do -- in a number of imaginative ways.

Not only will she have huge balloons for moms on Mother's Day, but throughout the pandemic, Frei has spread happiness throughout the city.

Her thriving business was 'gone overnight' when COVID forced economic shutdown hit, so Frei "put in a call" to her Instagram community seeking help. Like everyone else, she had to get creative.

She put together a Bag of Fun, which was a bag full of various-sized balloons, and, a Crappy Happy Bouquet with poop-emoji and rainbow balloons, which signified that through the COVID storm and all the poop, there's still a rainbow.

A month later, Frei designed a smiley-face balloon and put it outside of her house. It brought her "so much joy," that she figured maybe other people could use some happiness too and that people can "connect distantly from our houses."

So, she took more than 2,000 balloons and spread them through-



Elaine Frei

out the community. She mapped their locations so that folks out on a walk or a drive could go and, "find these balloons all over and mentally escape."

"That was our pivot," said Frei, who opened Luft in 2016. "It propelled us into balloonsphere."

But Frei's ingenuity and generosity doesn't end there. She has also taken a total of 3,000 balloons with sayings like "You're the best," on them to six area hospitals.

"The idea was to give back to frontline workers," said Frei, who recently did an installation at Rush Hospital commemorating its 100,000th COVID vaccine. "They've gotten so much food, but not balloons. That helps our grow-and-give mission. We are designed to give."

She has passed out Black Lives Matter balloons and "Increase the Peace" balloons after 22-year-old Anthony Alvarez was killed.

"No one can hate balloons," said Frei. "It's a great way to connect us."

During my conversation with Frei, I realized that we take balloons for granted. It's true, they do have the ability to turn a frown into a smile, instantly. I now have a whole new respect for the power of the balloon.



Massive balloon display by Lutz Balloons.

"They tug at that nostalgic childhood memory... that first celebration," said Frei, a mom of three who attended the Rhode Island School of Design. "You can be any age to enjoy balloons. There's not one person who doesn't smile. Balloons make you celebrate the present and the moment. They're not meant to last forever. They're for a time and a moment. They've always been there."

Now Frei has a new initiative she was excited to discuss.

Spread some joy to your favorite small business with her "Balloon Bomb a Business" program. You can nominate your fave small biz for a chance to receive a surprise Balloon Bomb. Head to Luft Balloons' website, nominate the deserving business, and share why they could use some extra joy this spring.

Maybe you go to that coffee shop and love Jane who works there and they also support a local charity or a good cause. Nominate them and surprise them with balloons.

"Business is really good right now and it's important for me to do something," said Frei. "There are so many people hurting. I'm trying to figure out how to give back. It has been a tumultuous time for small businesses and we believe it is important they know their hard work has been recognized by the community."

Frei was eight-years-old when she saw a party-scape on the pages of a magazine. She said she has been bringing people together in celebration ever since.

"I always loved design and getting people around the table and connected," she said. "I just love connecting people."

Throughout June, Luft Balloons will have an immersive and interactive, large balloon exhibit called Love is Love to "make sure people keep pushing love." Frei has done a few of these installations, but this will be her biggest yet and she has teamed up with a set designer to create it.

"Balloons are a simple decoration," Frei says. "Balloons make people happy. And the world needs a little more of the simple and a lot more of the happy."

Change Lake Shore Dr... huh? Change the name of Lake Shore Dr. to DuSable Dr.? Nooooo! I'm all for honoring Chicago's founder, Jean Baptiste Point DuSable, many things in town already bear his name, such as DuSable Museum and DuSable Park.

There's something grand and elegant-sounding about the name Lake Shore Dr. And that's just what it is, a magnificent drive through our city's lakefront. Leave it alone. Do we have to change everything, just because? (And besides that, the current



Don't rename LSD.

name always made for fun LSD ride chatter in the '70s. "Just slipping on by on LSD, Friday night trouble bound.")

And what would I do without my personalized version of the iconic song "Lake Shore Drive" that has my name inserted into it and was made for me by the late great Skip Haynes of Aliotta, Haynes and Jeremiah?

Jeez. What will they think of next? Still, like the "Sears Tower" - you may try to change the names, but many people won't adopt the change, and will continue to call it LSD.

Love me some lox... this is yummy sounding and for a stellar cause. Get mom a Lox Box, created by the Rogers Park-based Urban Tables. For \$36 you get a half-pound of hand-cured and hand-cut lox, a pound of cream cheese (1/2 plain, 1/2 artisanal), four bagels, and garnish. There's also an option to add drinks from Picnic Wine & Provisions, also in RP. Delivery or pick up is available, order deadline is May 5. Proceeds will be used towards matching funds to LINK card users and helping provide neighbors in need with healthy food from the Glenwood Sunday Market. Order at rpba.org.

Happy Mother's Day to all the moms and grandma's out there. Have a simply marvelous day!

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Performing arts camp caters to youth who have lost a parent

Applications are open for the annual Hearts to Art summer camp for young people who have experienced the death of a parent.

The performing arts camp occurs in two sessions: one July 12-13 for children ages 7-10 entering grades 2-5, and another July 26-Aug. 6 for children ages 11-14 entering grades 6-9.

Classes will take place in the Auditorium Theatre, 50 E. Ida B Wells Drive.

"When a death touches a family, it touches an entire community," the theatre said in a written statement. "Can your family, or any family in your life, benefit from this unique program?"

Organizers hope to hold the camp in person this year but note that, "after the successful reimagined camp-at-home in 2020, we know without a doubt that new and returning campers will be acting, singing, dancing, and healing again in summer 2021 – no matter the form we take."

Theatre representatives will contact 2021 camp families as logistical decisions are made.

Camp is available at no cost to families. For more information call 312-341-2300.

Property tax assessment time approaching

Like the Swallows returning to Capistrano, the Buzzards returning to Hinkley, and the Snowbirds returning to Florida, every three years the Cook County Assessor's office returns to see what the world has done to the value of your real estate holdings.

For Chicago's North Side, that process will be getting underway later this month.

Cook County's property tax system is interconnected, and what happens to commercial properties in Franklin Park or Chicago Heights, a mansion in Barrington Hills or an affordable housing project in Rogers Park will impact how we all participate in filling the pot needed to fund local government.

If one property's assessed value is too low, while others are accurate reflections of the market, then that property owner can pay less than their fair share of property taxes – forcing their neighbors to pick up the tab. Distortions like this can hurt the average home or business owner.

In some places, these distortions could cost the average homeowner more than \$1,000 a year in additional property taxes. Not only can this destroy wealth by diminishing the market value of property, but if it's widespread then such a practice could lead to unfair taxes, which take millions or even tens of millions of dollars out of neighborhoods, increasing depopulation and vacancy in our communities.

The goal of Cook County Assessor Fritz Kaegi and his staff is to eliminate these distortions through staff development, better property data and assessment model-

ing, improved technology, and legislation that helps to divide the cost of government services among property owners in every community.

One common misunderstanding is that if a property's assessed value increases, this causes the tax bill to increase in a corresponding manner. That is not always the case. Your tax bill is generally determined by how much your individual taxing bodies spend and the state's equalizer rate.

At this time, another crucial point deserves special emphasis: the restoration of fairness in property taxes.

For decades Chicago Democrats in Springfield, led by Mike Madigan and his law firm, rigged the property tax assessment system to favor the wealthy to the detriment of the middle and lower class.

For decades Chicago Democrats in Springfield, led by Mike Madigan and his law firm, rigged the system to favor the wealthy to the detriment of the middle and lower class. A joint investigation released in 2017 by the Chicago Tribune and ProPublica Illinois reveals the extent to which Madigan & Getzendanner, a law firm Madigan founded in 1972, dominates the property tax appeals business.

They were not the only law firm benefiting from Springfield's rigged tax laws, but you can bet all the other firms bought tick-

ets to most of Madigan's fundraisers over the decades. (Also high on the list is Klafter & Burke, the property tax appeals law firm founded by Ald. Ed Burke [14th].)

That domination comes within a Cook County property tax system found to disproportionately harm lower-income residents, due in part to the appeals process.

From 2011 to 2016, Madigan's firm appealed property taxes for more than 4,200 parcels totaling more than \$8.6 billion in assessed value. No other firm handled more value in commercial and industrial properties over that time. On those parcels, Madigan & Getzendanner won \$1.7 billion in assessed value reductions from the Cook County assessor, a 20% reduction overall. Those who were not clients of Madigan's law firm had to make up the difference.

Depending solely on appeals to repair our system has the aggregate effect of increasing distortions. A minority of people in Cook County use the appeals process, and this minority tends to have the most wealth, knowledge of the system's quirks and weaknesses, and resources to navigate avenues to appeal. The aggregate effect of appeals from this minority is to reduce its share of the base, thus shifting more of the responsibility for property taxes to everyone else.

Getting initial assessments right and ensuring the integrity of the appeals process are the keys to making sure the assessment system is fair.



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Dining venues at The Clare reopen for residents



An inspired cuisine created by Executive Chef Hagop Hagopian on the menu at The Abbey on 53 at The Clare.

Dining at The Clare is a social and culinary event, and residents have dearly missed the opportunity to come together for a meal over the past year. As Chicago continues to loosen restrictions on restaurants implemented in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, so too does The Clare, once again bringing residents together to dine in the community's world-class restaurants.

In March 2020, The Clare shifted dining services entirely to delivery and pickup in order to protect the community, leaving residents to enjoy breakfast, lunch and dinner in their apartments. Throughout the year, The Clare's dining venues reopened and shut down per city restrictions and guidance from the Illinois Department of Public Health. Even during the period that The Clare was offering in-person dining, many residents were still hesitant, weary of COVID-19 and cautious of gathering for meals.

It wasn't until March 2021, though, with the vast majority of the community vaccinated against COVID-19, that residents began to feel more comfortable joining their friends and neighbors to dine together again.

Currently, The Grafton is the main restaurant open to residents for both lunch and dinner. Despite capacity limits and social distancing guidelines, The

Grafton continues to offer classic cuisines with modern touches. Here, residents can order small plates like foie gras and shrimp scampi or opt for entrees like filet mignon and sablefish. And with The Clare's award-winning Executive Chef Hagop Hagopian designing the menu, there's sure to be an innovative dish to sample each day.

Slowly but surely, The Clare is reestablishing a sense of normalcy, one meal at a time.

Each evening, the Ambassador Lounge opens as an extension of The Grafton in order to accommodate more residents. However, The Clare looks forward to the day when the Lounge returns to its intended purpose of providing residents with a relaxing, comfortable space where they can munch on small bites and choose from a wide selection of spirits and cocktails.

By Memorial Day, The Clare plans to reopen The Bistro, which provides a more casual dining experience in a bright and energizing atmosphere. The Bistro is a favorite for those seeking sophisticated comfort food, from starters like shrimp cocktail and house-made soup to entrees like a prime burger cooked to perfection and chef-inspired pasta dishes. And when weather allows, residents can enjoy their

meals on an outdoor terrace, taking in the vibrant city atmosphere.

Upscale dining experiences will also soon be offered yet again in The Abbey on 53, a venue that promises breathtaking views of Chicago complemented by extravagant menu creations. The Abbey on 53 is the epitome of fine dining in Chicago, as residents can savor multi-course meals featuring the likes of squab, branzino and Wagyu filet expertly paired with the perfect wine.

Of course, meal pickup and delivery still remain an option for residents. Yet as The Clare's restaurants accommodate in-person dining once again, the vibrancy and appeal of the community's dining program have residents venturing out for evening reservations in The Grafton and clamoring over the reopening of The Bistro.

Slowly but surely, The Clare is reestablishing a sense of normalcy, one meal at a time.



Your future

starts today.

Transition Network donates to food depository

A local organization for women over 50 recently held a membership renewal drive that generated \$1,700 for the Greater Chicago Food Depository in April.

With each membership renewal registered during the drive, the Chicago Chapter of The Transition Network [TTN] earmarked \$25 for the food depository, which "serves many who have been hard hit by the pandemic," according to TTN Chicago Chapter Chair Kimberly Mulcahy.

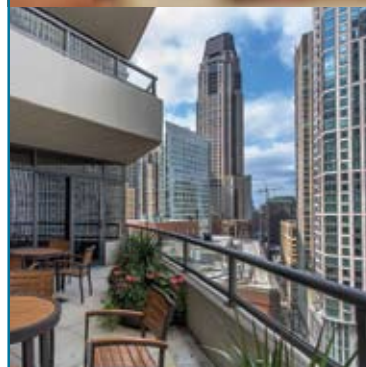
Mulcahy and TTN member Kathy Bobin delivered the check to the food

depository April 16.

"We so appreciate this generous donation," food depository food access supervisor Kelsey Kyle said. "This will enable us to provide 5,100 meals for families in Chicago."

One in seven Cook County residents is food insecure, Mulcahy said, but in some communities the rate is as high as half, involving mostly children, older adults, people with disabilities, veterans and the working poor.

For more information about the TTN visit thetransitionnetwork.org/chapters-chicago/.



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Police Beat...

Six-time, 70-year-old burglar charged with trying to break into Boystown apartment complex

Two men face burglary charges after a Boystown resident allegedly saw them trying to break into an apartment building.

A woman called 911 around 5 p.m. April 25 because she saw a man standing near her car while another man tried to pry open the front door of the apartment complex on the 600 block of W. Buckingham, prosecutors said.

Calvin Lomax, 70, repeatedly tried to force the door open while Michael Kidd, 64, maintained lookout,



Calvin Lomax

according to prosecutors. Lomax was unable to get into the building, so he and Kidd walked away — but not before the witness took pictures of them with her phone, prosecutors said.

Cops located the men about a block away. Lomax had a pry bar in one pocket, another pry bar in his groin area, and two stolen packages in a bag he was carrying, according to a CPD report. Kidd had a 3' bolt cutter in a bag, too, prosecutors said. Police allegedly found pry marks on the apartment building's door frame.

According to state records, Lomax has been sentenced to a combined 70 years in prison since 1982 for various felonies, including robberies and multiple burglaries. In fact, he is currently on parole for burglary, prosecutors said.

Prosecutors charged both men with attempted burglary and possession of burglary tools. Lomax is also charged with theft.

Judge David Navarro gave both men recognizance bonds in the case. But Lomax will be held without bail while the state considers revoking his parole. He'll have to go onto electronic monitoring if he becomes eligible for release, Navarro said.

CTA train system has more robberies this year than many pre-COVID years

CTA train passengers are being robbed this year at a rate far higher than many recent years — and that's even though ridership is down sharply during the COVID pandemic. But better collaboration between police and the transit agency is leading to more arrests, too.

Through April 20, Chicago police logged 94 robberies on CTA trains, platforms, and stations citywide, according to city data. That's equal to or more than the number of cases recorded during many recent years with normal ridership levels. There were 125 incidents during the period last year, 119 in 2019, and 105 in 2013.

Most recently, a 35-year-old man was punched in the head and robbed by an offender who approached him on a CTA train near the Clark-Lake station in the Loop around 7:05 p.m. April 29, a CPD spokesperson said.

Earlier in the week, a 23-year-old man was stabbed and robbed on a Purple Line train at Adams-Wabash.

And a 29-year-old woman was robbed at knifepoint by the same offender on a Brown Line train near Merchandise Mart the next day. Police have charged a 15-year-old boy in those Thursday night attacks.

Police this year have made a significant number of arrests in connection with violent crimes on the train system after improving its collaboration with CTA on investigations and in-progress crimes.

On April 12, prosecutors charged a five-time convicted robber with violently attacking two women in separate robberies on the Blue Line.

The next day, a 29-year-old man was charged with robbing two women as they sat on a bench at the Roosevelt Red Line station April 25. Prosecutors say Darrell Wyatt pointed a gun at one victim's chest while three juveniles, including a 13-year-old boy, helped him rob the women.

During one week this month, police arrested three people who are accused of committing separate robberies on the train lines downtown.

And yet another CTA robbery suspect was arrested at the Jackson Red Line CTA platform April 28 after police surveillance camera operators recognized him from an earlier attack.

Man robs woman at River North gas station — then runs right into the arms of cops

Who needs a foot chase when there are crooks as dumb as this guy?

It all started in Old Town around 3:45 p.m. April 29 when a 22-year-old Amazon driver left the keys in his delivery van while dropping off a package in the 200 block of W. Goethe. As you've probably already concluded, someone jumped into the unattended van and drove away with it.

Cops tracked the truck's GPS signals and found it abandoned on the 100 block of W. Superior about an hour later.

Around the same time, less than a block away, a 59-year-old woman walked out of a gas station while counting money in her hands on the 700 block of N. Wells, Officer Ronald Westbrook said. As you've probably already concluded, a man grabbed her money, fought her for control of it, and then ran down a nearby alley, according to Westbrook.

Guess what happened at the other end of that alley? Once again, you're right! He essentially ran into the arms of cops who were inspecting the stolen Amazon truck. They took him into custody and recovered the woman's money, Westbrook said.

Charges are pending against the robber, but police are still looking for the guy who stole the Amazon truck. CPD did not release a description of him.

Woman jumped, robbed inside her Lakeview apartment building

A woman was jumped and robbed inside her apartment building near Boystown April 29, police said. Detectives are looking for the offender.

The 27-year-old woman was in a common area of her apartment complex in the 600 block of W. Grace when the man grabbed her from behind around 11:40 a.m., CPD spokesperson Kellie Bartoli said.

He covered the woman's mouth with his hand, took her property, and ran from the building, Bartoli continued. The woman declined medical attention. She rode around the area with police as they searched for the suspect, but they did not find him.

Bartoli said the offender is a White male between 20- and 40-years-old. Officers at the scene said he stood about 5'-11" tall and wore a black coat and mask.

Area Three detectives are investigating.

CTA knife attacker in custody, and he's 15



A 15-year-old boy is in custody, accused of attacking a CTA passenger with a knife during a robbery aboard the Purple Line downtown last week. The same teen is also charged with robbing a woman on another "L" train downtown the next day — and using a knife to threaten a CTA employee who tried to intervene.

Police said the suspect was arrested when he entered the Wentworth District police station in Fuller Park around 4:16 p.m. April 29.

On April 26, the teen brandished a knife and robbed a 23-year-old man of his phone as they rode a Purple Line train near Adams-Wabash around 7:18 p.m., according to police. After the victim complied, the robber demanded the phone's passcode and stabbed the victim, police said.

"All I can think about is him screaming for my password and me trying not to get stabbed while also figuring out what he was saying," the victim wrote in a Reddit post. "I didn't know what the 'password' was... until I realized he meant my phone. The wounds were minor, but I'm still in shock."

Around 10:45 a.m. April 27, the teen again brandished a knife to rob a 29-year-old woman as they rode a southbound Brown Line train from the Merchandise Mart, according to a CPD report. He allegedly threatened a 51-year-old CTA worker with the knife and ordered him not to interfere with the robbery.

According to witnesses, the offender got off at Washington and Wells, then dumped his distinctive jacket, a knife, and other property in a West Loop building and fled into Union Station. Just hours later, CPD released images of the suspect in a public bulletin about Monday's robbery.

Prosecutors charged the teenager with two felony counts of armed robbery with a dangerous weapon, felony aggravated battery to a transit employee and misdemeanor assault to a transit employee.

Man shot behind Uptown Theatre

A 40-year-old man flagged down a fire department ambulance after someone shot him in Uptown April 27, police said. No arrests have been made.

The victim caught the attention of the passing ambulance crew as he ran south on Broadway from Lawrence around 3:57 a.m., according to CPD spokesperson Karie James. They took him to Advocate Illinois Masonic Medical Center for treatment of a gunshot wound to his left forearm, James said.

Investigators followed a blood trail and found an apparent crime scene behind the Uptown Theatre on the 4800 block of N. Magnolia, not far from where the victim lives. Cops who spoke with the victim said he was uncooperative. Area Three detectives are investigating.

CPD arrest records show the man has been arrested five times in the past six months and eight times in the past year for charges including battery, domestic battery, assault, and aggravated assault. He is the second person to be shot in Uptown so far this year, which is far fewer than the neighborhood has seen at this point in any recent year.

Lyft driver carjacked in the Loop

Three teenagers carjacked a Lyft driver as he waited for a passenger in the Loop May 2, police said. No arrests have been made.

The 35-year-old victim was waiting in his car on the 300 block of S. Dearborn when three young males walked up to the car around 4:35 a.m., CPD spokesperson Sally Bown said. One of the offenders opened the driver's door, took the keys from the ignition, and ordered the driver out of the car, according to Bown. The driver complied.

At that point, all three of the teens reportedly got into the man's black 2015 Chevy Cruze and drove away.

The victim said the carjackers are three Black males who are about 16-years-old, Each of them wore masks.

Area Three detectives are investigating.

Bungling burglars busted after cops see them walking out of house with crowbar



Gino Wanko (left) and Anthony Miller.

Two bungling burglars face a fresh round of felony charges after cops allegedly saw them walking out of a Lincoln Park home with a crowbar April 29.

According to prosecutors, an officer who saw Anthony Miller and Gino Wanko walk out of the house on the 2200 block of N. Lakewood trailed them in his car while backup units descended on the area.

Miller approached a man who was sitting in a car and asked the driver for a ride while reaching through the vehicle's driver's side window, prosecutors said. The driver had other ideas. Believing that Miller, 23, was about to carjack him, the man slammed his car into reverse, sending Miller flying to the pavement, according to prosecutors. A cop took the opportunity to arrest Miller.

Meanwhile, other officers allegedly saw Wanko, 22, hopping fences in the area. They arrested him after a brief foot chase.

Surveillance video from a home in the area shows Miller and Wanko getting out of a car and entering the victim's home, prosecutors said. The car left while they were inside, according to the allegations. Another surveillance camera allegedly captured images of Miller changing clothes in a gangway after the incident.

Prosecutors said nothing appeared to be taken from the home, but the front door was damaged, and some desks and drawers were rifled inside. In fact, one of the burglars apparently lost money on the project by leaving a pair of sunglasses inside the home, according to a CPD report.

Miller is charged with unlawful vehicular invasion and residential burglary. He has a pending aggravated battery case in DuPage County and a pending theft case in Cook County, prosecutors said. Judge John Lyke ordered him held without bail for violating the terms of bail in the theft case and set bail at \$50,000 in the Lincoln Park case. Miller will have to go on electronic monitoring if he manages to get released, Lyke said.

Wanko, who has another residential burglary case pending, was held in lieu of \$5,000 bail for the new case. He'll need to go onto electronic monitoring if he can post a \$500 deposit bond. But he won't be able to do that right away. Lyke ordered him held without bail for violating the terms of bail in the earlier burglary case.

Bold thief caught on tape sawing-off catalytic converter in Lakeview

Thirteen seconds. Start to finish, that's how long it took a wily thief to saw the catalytic converter off of a car while lying in the traffic lanes of Broadway near Boystown April 30. And the whole thing was caught on video.

The sun is rising and other drivers are just a half-block away as the nimble klepto shimmies under a car on the 3100 block of N. Broadway around 5:50 a.m. After he's done, he climbs back into the SUV that served as his cover and slithers away westbound on Briar.

A witness called 911 as it happened, but cops didn't have time to get there. The same crew sawed the catalytic converter off another car near Barry and Lake Shore Dr. minutes earlier.

As it turns out, the temporary license plate on the thieves' Jeep is stolen. The Jeep probably is, too, cops told the videographer.

Police have repeatedly warned residents across the city about catalytic converter theft crews in recent years. One such warning went out just days ago for residents of Lincoln Park and Old Town. But the crimes unfold quickly. Offenders are rarely caught.

Cops did get lucky on the North-west Side in early April, though. Two alleged catalytic converter thieves were arrested and charged. Officers seized a gun and two stolen converters from the suspects, police said.

Catalytic converter thefts are on the rise across the country as the value of precious metals they contain skyrocket. Thieves use saws to remove catalytic converters from under vehicles and then sell the devices at scrapyards or on the black market for \$100 to \$200 each. The converters, which reduce harmful emissions, are especially valuable because they contain small amounts of expensive metals.

Uptown man shot near Argyle and Kenmore

Argyle St. was bustling in Uptown when a gunman emerged from a car and opened fire shortly after noon May 1. One bullet struck a 28-year-old man in the shoulder, police said. No arrests have been made. The victim was near a sidewalk on Kenmore Ave. just north of Argyle when he heard gunfire and realized he had been shot.

Witnesses said the shooter emerged from a dark-colored sedan with Arizona plates before he began firing. After shooting, he returned to the car, which sped away northbound, according to witnesses.

The victim ran to a nearby dry cleaning business for help. He was taken to Advocate Illinois Masonic Medical Center in good condition.

Saturday's victim is the second person shot in Uptown this week. On April 27, a 40-year-old man was shot in the arm behind the Uptown Theatre around 3:57 a.m., according to police. That victim did not initially cooperate with investigators.

So far this year, three people have been shot in the Uptown community area. That compares to seven victims year-to-date in 2020 and four victims year-to-date in 2019.

— Compiled by CWBChicago.com

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Decision on Welles Park lights postponed

STORY BY PETER VON BUOL

The decision to accept or reject donated lights to illuminate the athletic fields at Lincoln Square's 16-acre Gideon Welles Park, 2333 W. Sunnyside Ave., was postponed after proponents and opponents discussed the matter, sometimes contentiously, at an April 26 meeting of the Welles Park Advisory Council [WPAC], the park's officially-sanctioned volunteer group.

At the close of the meeting, the president of the park's advisory said the WPAC would not make a decision, that they decided to table the matter. A "tabled" meeting of an official Chicago Park District [CPD] body seemed to indicate the discussion would only be picked up again at the next public meeting. Afterwards, however, some members of WPAC's officers, the CPD and officials from the office of Ald. Matt Martin [47th] continued the discussion with the possibility that a compromise could be presented to the public.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the park's advisory council will take place virtually, 7 p.m. Monday, May 11. No agenda has yet been posted, so it's not known if the lights will again be a topic of discussion.

Aaron Durnbaugh, the president of the park's volunteer advisory executive council, confirmed that these discussions did take place, suggesting a different word

should have been used when they did not take a vote.

"The vote to support, oppose or have no position was tabled. Maybe "postponed" would have been a better word, but that was the motion that was offered," (by executive council member Sherry Skalko) said Durnbaugh. "We did agree to provide the survey results and a set of concerns that the members of the WPAC agreed upon with the CPD, the Alderman, and Welles Park Parents' Association [WPPA]. This was discussed at the meeting as a way to convey the results of the survey and public meeting process."

The CPD confirmed it was aware of the ongoing discussions that have been taking place.

"The community process is ongoing with Ald. Martin, the WPPA, the WPAC and the community on plans to install the lights. Based on a survey of more than 1,000 [people], support for the project is divided," said Michele Lemons, the CPD's director of communications.

During the Zoom meeting, advocates for the installation of the lights (funded by the WPPA) have said the lights will allow the WPPA to grow and will enable more children to have the opportunity to play in the WPPA's baseball and softball leagues. Those opposing the installation of the lights believe they will dramatically alter an already difficult parking situation in the surrounding area if games continue well

into the evening.

Opponents say the move is premature because the overall impact of the lights remains unknown. While the lights the WPPA has proposed are being described as more "friendly" because the light is cast directly down onto the athletic fields, still no parks within the CPD presently use this type of lighting. Lemons stressed CPD officials have not made any decision about the lights.

"The WPPA has proposed a plan to install lights on two of the park's five ballfields. It is important to note, no final decision has been approved. The CPD will be working with the WPPA on this proposal and will continue to engage the community to ensure that all interests are heard and considered before moving forward," Lemon said.

The lights have been pitched as necessary to ensure the continued health of the WPPA's popular youth baseball and softball leagues. Once installed, however, the lights will become a CPD amenity and will be available to all users, including adult softball leagues and concerts.

Residents surrounding Welles Park who have contacted this newspaper say they continue to be concerned about being able to park on their own block when more cars will start appearing in the evening, especially since a city's parking lots nearby may soon be lost.

Third man charged with Lincoln Park carjacking

Prosecutors have charged a third man in connection with the May 30, 2020, carjacking of a driver in Lincoln Park. Leonard Johnson, 22, is charged with vehicular hijacking and robbery. Judge Mary Marubio ordered him held without bail.

According to the allegations, a 27-year-old man was sitting in his car on the 900 block of W. Armitage when Johnson and Isaiah McMiller, 21, pulled him from his car and robbed him along with 21-year-old Joseph Perry.

The three men then drove away with the victim's car and used his credit card about an hour later at a gas station near Aurora, prosecutors said. CPD detectives allegedly recognized Johnson, McMiller, and Perry in the service station's surveillance footage. Prosecutors said the victim also identified the men in photo line-ups.

Johnson previously received a three-year prison sentence for robbing a man at the Grand Red Line CTA station in the summer of 2018. Prosecutors said he was on parole at the time of the carjacking.

In that case, Johnson was identified as the "primary aggressor" in a group that surrounded the victim on the subway platform, demanded his wallet, and then tried to withdraw money from an ATM in the station, according to prosecutors.

McMiller and Perry also have criminal backgrounds. In fact, they were charged with robbing

a man together in West Ridge in 2018. That victim, age 54, told police Perry and McMiller were two members of a group that mugged him on the 2000 block of W. Devon. CPD bodycams recorded McMiller telling cops that "Joseph" had the victim's stolen phone.

Perry is also seen on bodycam footage telling cops, "I did not take the phone, but I was there... Isaiah [McMiller] took it and gave it to me afterward." Perry had the victim's phone, police said.

Less than a month later, Judge Marvin Luckman accepted a guilty plea to reduced charges of theft from Perry and McMiller in exchange for sentences of 18-months court supervision and six

days of community service, according to court records.

At the time of the carjacking, Perry had just been released from Cook County jail due to concerns of rapidly spreading COVID cases among inmates. He had been jailed since May 2019 while awaiting trial on allegations of battering a convenience store clerk during a robbery on the 5700 block of N. Broadway.

McMiller, who was charged with the carjacking last September, subsequently posted \$5,000 to get out of jail. He then landed a job as a security guard at a retail store and shot a co-worker a few weeks ago, prosecutors said.

He is currently being held without bail on that charge.



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Letters to the Editor

The damage gang culture does to youth

Thank you for your article regarding "Toledo's Relationship With Roman [April 21]."

Sadly, the threat and extremely negative influence of gangs in Chicago do not get the fanfare and media attention, and Mayor's concern, that "Police conduct" does, in other situations.

Such slanted "news" coverage we enjoy in this great City.

In any event, it is clear that this tragedy is a direct result of gang activity and bad choices.

Perhaps the young man's death would serve a good purpose; to open the eyes of Chicago citizens about this dark world of gangs, and the damage it does to youth.

John Loftus, Edgewater

Density is a dirty word

What is up with the marshmallow alderman of the 47th ward?

In 2020 he was on a "diversity" kick. In 2021 he is on a "density" kick. Doesn't Matt Martin realize density is a dirty word in Chicago? Cabrini Green was dense. Where is it now?

The Robert Taylor Homes were dense. Where are they now? The same with Rockwell Gardens, the Ickes and the ABLA Homes.

Matt Martin doesn't remember them? No. Why not?

Well, he's not from Chicago. He did not grow up here, he's a transplant from Arizona. He does not own property here, why? Maybe he only plans to be here for a short while?

Chicago families desire to live in spacious neighborhoods with tree-lined streets, wide open spaces, plenty of parking and not overcrowded schools.

What is his rationale for more density? What about social distancing requirements for the next COVID-19 mutations? Or when China 'accidentally' releases another pandemic?

Will the proposed density help neighborhood businesses competing with Amazon's business model of free delivery right to your door? How can small businesses compete if the State and the City refuse to let them open up fully?

With around-the-block lines like the Soviet Union, will that satisfy Commissar Martin?

Do you know what would help the small businesses? Expanding the parking options.

Maybe instead of micromanaging the private housing market, the incompetent alderman should concentrate on building another College Prep High School for schoolchildren.

Who does Martin think he is, telling Landrosh Development they cannot build townhouses on the Chicago Joe's site or secretly giving away the Lincoln Square parking lot for free to an out-of-town developer? I would like to see the businesses and developers take the alderman to Civil Court. Tie him up so he can't plot and plan to run against Mayor Lightfoot or U.S. Rep. Quigley.

He can ruin a neighborhood or two and then run off to greener pastures in Washington, D.C., Wisconsin, Arizona or Walla Walla.

If he promises to leave now, I will help him pack.

Mike Sullivan

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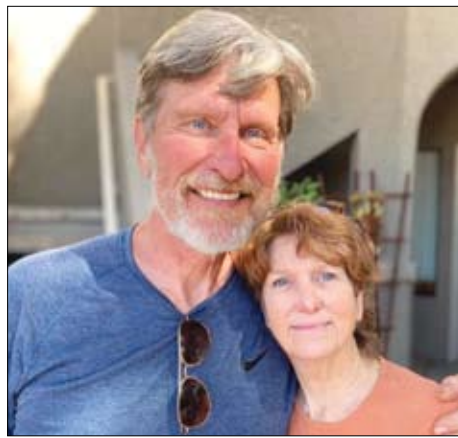




Shaun Rajah



Nate Buescher



Paul and Wendy Meincke.



Stanley Paul by Rosemary Fanti.

SEEKING from p. 2

Day photos with the fam. Floral display designed by **Maggie Roemig**, Vice President and Creative Director of Luxe Bloom.

AU REVOIR, FRIEND: It's fair to say that in his 16 years at the Drake Hotel **Shaun Rajah** spent his time well, usually doing somersaults and working miracles for anxious brides or bridezilla mothers. Ensuring that the complex ceremonies of countless wedding traditions were flawless and the romaine in the Caesar salads was crunchy. That the famed golden Drake cheese rolls had a crackle and photographers had what they needed ... and there was enough Earl Grey to get through another famed Afternoon Tea. He moved through the Drake interiors with a sophisticated aplomb, refined manners and the attitude that the customer was genuinely right. That in itself is a miracle in 2021. Shaun's departure for his new post at the Langham Hotel, 330 N. Wabash, is a huge step. Shaun's fans will follow him to the Langham, of course, but we won't abandon the gracious lady he labored for so resolutely. It's spirit like his that helps keep Chicago alive. Bon chance, mon ami.

SPECIAL ROTHKO EXHIBIT: On view now in Gallery 293 at the Art Institute are five remarkable paintings by American artist **Mark Rothko**, from the 1949-1954 period, demonstrating the painter's dynamic appeal and edgy creativity at the dramatic pinnacle of his ability to develop experiential paintings.

SOUTHPORT RECORDS: Things are booming at Southport Records in Wrigleyville. New CD by **Joanie Pallatto**, Chicago's award winning singer/songwriter. It's getting local radio play, while NY, Boston, St. Louis and the West Coast are also spinning. Produced/arranged by Pallatto and modern guitarist **Fareed Haque**. All songs by Pallatto.

CAMERA ACTION: Chicago actor **John O'Brien** and his talented daughter, **Ruby O'Brien**, a SAG actor herself, just made a great commercial together for DQ, in a national Dairy Queen advertisement. Keep your eyes peeled.

WHO'S WHERE: Myra and **John Reilly** hosted a cozy four-star dinner at their Lake Forest pad with guests **Bobbi Panter**, **Matt Arnoux**, **Heather** and **Eric Spyra**, **Melissa** and **Brian Babcock**... **Rose Marie O'Neill** dining at the Racquet Club with nieces **Libby Lamb Lucas** and **Katie Lamb-Heinz**... **Courtney Daley Thompson** chilling amidst the palms and desert breezes of Palm Springs, CA... singer songwriter **Joni Mitchell** and renowned artist **David Hockney** out for a stroll and keeping each other upright... **Theresa Nelson Buescher's** young son, **Nate Buescher**, actor, song and dance professional, was just booked for a TV pilot, and has just been selected for admission to Lincoln Park High School as a drama major, 1,600 kids auditioned, only 25-30 were selected..... **Stephanie Leese Emrich** getting some spa pampering... **Sherry Lea Fox** and **Lecretia Capista** both looking chic in Scottsdale, AZ ... **Michael Collins**, the NASA astronaut who was the command module pilot for the Apollo 11 mission to the moon, first craft to land on

another world, has died at age 90 after battling cancer... former ABC newsy **Paul Meincke** and **Wendy**, the Mrs., celebrating 39 years of marriage.

THOSE HATS: Stunning chapeaus from the past remind us that the annual Service Club Spring Hat Luncheon will be Friday, May 21, at the Women's Athletic Club. Not to be missed. **Sherrill Bodine** has her troops ready to start showing off their bonnets with the usual style and finesse. Call 312-220-9600.

REQUIEM AETERNAM: Christa Ludwig, the German dramatic mezzo soprano, has died at 93. Her death robs the world of a heavenly voice at home in the musical world of the great Masses, Passions, leiter and oratorios where often her voice lifted audiences to levels of spiritual harmony that ripened faith. She was God's gift to opera. She was opera's gift to God.

CELEBRITY PORTRAIT: Maestro **Stanley Paul**, welcome to the club. The lucky Chicagoans for whom gifted artist **Rosemary Fanti** has created stunning

portraits. Including me. Loving the work. It's the talk-of-the-town.

ON RUSH ST.: Tavern on Rush on Thursday, saw the boys were back in town, with **Shelley Howard**, **Fernando Asturizaga**, **Jay Barksdale**, **Joe Martin**, **Ron March** and **Doug Simons** doing their dinner thing. Setting a tone.

THE TUBE: Don't miss the next installment of "Switching Gears," **Curt Rose** and **Maggie Baczkowski's** podcast series. Taped live from Gene and Georgetown's famed Chicago Steakhouse. **Michelle Dupretti** of Dupretti Special Events is their guest. They're fun, sassy and informative. Don't miss this.

SUMMER'S BACK: Porchlight Music Theatre has its first live, in-person production of 2021, *New Faces Sing Broadway 1979*, Saturday, June 12 at 8 p.m., with host multi-award winner **Alexis J Roston**, directed by **Brianna Borger** and music directed by **Linda Madonia**. Tickets \$35-\$45 at North Shore Center for the Performing Arts, 9501 N. Skokie Blvd. Call 773-

Rogers Park Township Real Estate For Sale

Real Estate For Sale	Real Estate For Sale	Real Estate For Sale
<p>050505</p> <p>IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS COUNTY DEPARTMENT, CHANCERY DIVISION FMV RL II LLC, Plaintiff,</p> <p>vs.</p> <p>BRANDON MEDOW AS EXECUTOR OF ESTATE OF ROSS MEDOW, UNKNOWN HEIRS, LEGATEES, OR DEVISEES OF ROSS MEDOW, IVY MEDOW, BRANDON MEDOW, UNKNOWN HEIRS AND LEGATEES OF PHEBE MEDOW, ATLANTIC MORTGAGE & INVESTMENT CORP., CITY OF CHICAGO, UNKNOWN OWNERS AND NONRECORD CLAIMANTS, Defendants.</p> <p>Case No. 20 CH 5444</p> <p>Property Address: 1958 W. Morse Ave. Unit C Chicago, IL 60626</p> <p>NOTICE OF SALE</p> <p>Sheriff's Sale No.: 210015</p> <p>PUBLIC NOTICE is given that pursuant to a judgment of fore-closure entered by the Court in the above cause on April 14, 2021, the Sheriff of Cook County, Illinois, will sell the property described below to satisfy said judgment, as follows:</p> <p>(a) The name and address of the person to contact</p>	<p>for information regarding the real estate is Adam Rome, Greiman, Rome & Griesmeyer, LLC, 205 West Randolph St., Ste. 2300, Chicago, IL 60606. The telephone number is 312-428-2743.</p> <p>(b) The common address and legal description of the real estate to be sold is as follows: PIN: 11-31-214-054-0000 Commonly Known As: 1958 W. Morse, Unit C, Chicago IL</p> <p>(c) A description of the improvements of the real estate: single family condominium unit.</p> <p>(d) The real estate may not be inspected prior to sale.</p> <p>(e) The time and place of the sale is as follows: May 25, 2021 at 1:00 p.m., Richard J. Daley Center, 50 West Washington Street, LLO6, Chicago, Illinois 60602.</p> <p>(f) The terms of the sale are "as is" for certified funds, requiring that the successful bidder deposit ten percent of the bid at the time of sale and the balance with the sheriff or associate judge within twenty-four (24) hours of the sale, plus interest at the statutory judgment rate and any unpaid portion of the sale price from the date of sale to the date of payment.</p> <p>(g) Title will be conveyed subject to all general real estate taxes which are or shall become a lien upon the real estate, but if not yet due, that may become</p>	<p>due and payable, special assessments, applicable rights of redemption, encumbrances, easements and restrictions of record, if any.</p> <p>Respectfully Submitted, FMV RL II LLC</p> <p>By: Adam B. Rome One of its Attorneys Greiman, Rome & Griesmeyer, LLC 205 West Randolph St., Ste. 2300 Chicago, Illinois 60606 T: (312) 428.2750/F: (312) 322.2781 arome@grglegal.com Firm ID: 47890 13167733</p> <p>282828</p> <p>212121</p> <p>Legal Ads DBA Public Notices. We'll Run Your Ad For 3 Consecutive Weeks For Only \$150.00. Call 773-465-9700</p>

North Township Real Estate For Sale

Real Estate For Sale	Real Estate For Sale	Real Estate For Sale
<p>IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS COUNTY DEPARTMENT - CHANCERY DIVISION U.S. BANK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, NOT IN ITS INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY BUT SOLELY AS TRUSTEE FOR THE RMAC TRUST, SERIES 2016-CTT Plaintiff,</p> <p>-v.-</p> <p>UNKNOWN HEIRS AND/OR LEGATEES OF MAURICE S. MARKS, DECEASED, JOSEPHINE SMITH, AS ADMINISTRATOR OF THE ESTATE OF MAURICE S. MARKS, DECEASED, JOSEPHINE SMITH A/K/A JOSEPHINE SMITH, BONNIE KAY SPILLER, DONALD TRENT MARKS, KENNETH R. MARKS, DEBORAH K. MARKS, DOROTHY BRADFORD, WAYNE E. HENDERSON, LAMONT H. HENDERSON, ROOSEVELT MARKS, JR., AUSTIN MARKS, SHELEETA MARKS, JAMES D. SUMRAL, UNKNOWN HEIRS AND/OR LEGATEES OF GREGORY MARKS, DECEASED, YETTA R. PORTER, THE NORTH TOWN VILLAGE CONDOMINIUM ASSOCIATION, CITY OF CHICAGO, AN ILLINOIS MUNICIPAL CORPORATION, UNKNOWN OWNERS AND NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS, UNKNOWN OCCUPANTS Defendants</p> <p>19 CH 3073</p> <p>1317 NORTH BURLING STREET, UNIT B CHICAGO, IL 60610</p> <p>NOTICE OF SALE</p> <p>PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered in the above cause on March 9, 2021, an agent for The Judicial Sales Corporation, will at 10:30 AM on June 10, 2021, at The Judicial Sales Corporation, One South Wacker Drive, CHICAGO, IL, 60606, sell at a public sale to the highest bidder, as set forth below, the following described real estate:</p> <p>Commonly known as 1317 NORTH BURLING STREET, UNIT B, CHICAGO, IL 60610 Property Index No. 17-04-113-100-1038</p> <p>The real estate is improved with a condominium. The judgment amount was \$264,661.74. Sale terms: 25% down of the highest bid by certified funds at the close of the sale payable to The Judicial</p>	<p>Sales Corporation. No third party checks will be accepted. The balance, including the Judicial Sale fee for the Abandoned Residential Property Municipality Relief Fund, which is calculated on residential real estate at the rate of \$1 for each \$1,000 or fraction thereof of the amount paid by the purchaser not to exceed \$300, in certified funds/or wire transfer, is due within twenty-four (24) hours. No fee shall be paid by the mortgagee acquiring the residential real estate pursuant to its credit bid at the sale or by any mortgagee, judgment creditor, or other lienor acquiring the residential real estate whose rights in and to the residential real estate arose prior to the sale. 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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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).</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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</p>	<p>identification for sales held at other county venues where The Judicial Sales Corporation conducts foreclosure sales.</p> <p>For information, The sales clerk, LOGS Legal Group LLP Plaintiff's Attorneys, 2121 WAUKEGAN RD., SUITE 301, Bannockburn, IL, 60015 (847) 291-1717 For information call between the hours of 1pm - 3pm... Please refer to file number 18-087256.</p> <p>THE JUDICIAL SALES CORPORATION One South Wacker Drive, 24th Floor, Chicago, IL 60606-4650 (312) 236-SALE</p> <p>You can also visit The Judicial Sales Corporation at www.jsco.com for a 7 day status report of pending sales.</p> <p>LOGS Legal Group LLP 2121 WAUKEGAN RD., SUITE 301 Bannockburn IL, 60015 847-291-1717</p> <p>E-Mail: ILNotices@logs.com Attorney File No. 18-087256 Attorney Code. 42168 Case Number: 19 CH 3073 TJSC#: 41-371</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Case # 19 CH 3073 13168336</p> <p>050505</p> <p>282828</p> <p>212121</p> <p>Legal Ads DBA Public Notices. We'll Run Your Ad For 3 Consecutive Weeks For Only \$150.00. Call 773-465-9700</p>

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vs.

Defendant(s):
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Broadway theatre camps available this summer

Two artistic institutions are partnering to bring a musical theatre camp to Chicago this summer.

Registration is now open for the Skyline Studios Summer Broadway Camps, which offer instruction for children ages 3-14 at the Athenaeum Theatre, 2936 N. Southport Ave.

Campers will have the opportunity to sing, dance, act and perform in a variety of different programs, with the session culminating in performances.

“Broadway Mornings” classes are avail-

able for pre-K performers.

Camp days will be filled with rehearsals, creative drama activities, team building, games, crafts and fun in the sun at a nearby park, with age-specific full-day, half-day and extended care options.

In accordance with COVID-19 recommendations, classes will be small, and campers will be socially distanced, wear masks, and eat outdoors.

For more information visit skylinestudioschicago.com.

SOLD? from p. 1

credits to allocate each year based on its population.

According to Dr. Eugenia Orr, spokesperson for the DOH, the 2021 QAP application has not yet been sent out to potential developers. “We have not issued the 2021 QAP application—we are looking to release that in a couple of weeks. Early Fall would be the earliest we would announce the next round,” Orr said.

LIHTCs are meant to subsidize construction of housing with strict income limits. Each year, the Internal Revenue Service sends these tax credits to state and local housing agencies which then grant them to developers.

These tax credits are then monetized through their sale to banks, and other wealthy investors, who use them to lower their income taxes. To complicate matters, these sales are brokered through a person known as a “syndicator.” This makes it difficult to see where - or with whom - the tax credits actually end up. Banks and investors are happy because they covertly claim huge tax reductions.

Flush with cash after their sale, developers like TCB can proceed with their projects with little of their own money at risk. Critics of the program, including National Public Radio and the PBS series Frontline, have found LIHTCs are a very expensive way to fund construction of affordable housing. The large sums of money involved attracts fraudulent operators and there is little regulatory oversight.

And since taxpayers are footing the bill, the fraud and corruption going on with LIHTC allows unscrupulous developers to earn millions of dollars. The tax-incentive program is now the largest source of affordable housing in the U.S., supporting 90% of all affordable rental housing developments. There are over 2.7 million tax credit units nationwide today and this number continues to grow by an estimated 100,000 annually.

This is a very expensive way to provide ‘affordable’ housing, as multiple layers of

profit are built into the program for the benefit of developers. Indeed, the per-unit cost of TCB’s proposed ‘affordable’ housing for Lincoln Square is well over \$400,000 per unit.

In their 2019 IRS Form 990 filings, TCB shows over \$28 million in “property management and site fees” income. Whether any fees are folded into the high costs for the proposed Lincoln Square project is unknown, as neither TCB or the alderman will answer questions related to costs.

Since taxpayers are footing the bill, the fraud and corruption going on with LIHTC allows unscrupulous developers to earn millions of dollars.

Under TCB’s proposal, the value of giving that parking lot away for free would help create vast new wealth for TCB down the road. Incredibly, the “affordability” requirement the rookie alderman is hanging his political future on lasts for only 15 years, at which time some units can be changed to market rate. At 30 years, all affordable units can convert to market-rate or even be sold outright as condominiums.

When first elected in 2019, Ald. Martin described his governing philosophy to a reporter from Forbes magazine by stressing communication and openness. That is hardly the case today with regards to the critical piece of Lincoln Square commercial infrastructure that now hangs in the balance.

Despite now facing broad opposition to this plan from within the 47th Ward, one source tied to the alderman’s office who is not authorized to speak to the media, told this reporter that Ald. Martin is desperate to “cut a ribbon” on this project, thinking it may propel his next aldermanic campaign.



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