

If every day  
is an awakening,  
you will never  
grow old. You will  
just keep growing.  
— Gail Sheehy

# INSIDE-BOOSTER

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NEWS OF LINCOLN PARK, LAKE VIEW, NORTH CENTER & LINCOLN SQUARE

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DePaul Prep's senior forward Rashaun Porter dunks in the first half against Lane Tech on his way to 26 points.

## Lane Tech falls to DePaul Prep 53-24

BY JACK LYDON

Lane Tech had no answer for Rashaun Porter, DePaul Prep's senior forward. Porter, an early candidate for player of the year, put up 26 points against Lane Tech in the finale of this year's Battle of the Bridge Tournament at Lane Tech. The #1 ranked DePaul Prep Rams (3-0) defeated the Lane Tech Champions (1-2) 53-24 on Nov. 26.

The Champions did a great job

stopping DePaul Prep's other Division 1 recruit Rykan Woo (he's going to Brown Univ.) holding him scoreless in the first half.

"That was the game plan. But we did not do our game plan with Porter," said Lane Tech head coach Nick LoGalbo.

"It was the exact opposite last year where we really cut out Porter, but we had Dalton (Scantlebury, who is playing for Penn this

**LANE TECH** see p. 12



Construction of the Elks National Memorial began in 1923, after the Order unanimously agreed on a spacious site for the building, looking out over Chicago's Lincoln Park and within a stone's throw of Lake Michigan.

Image courtesy of the Elks USA

## Elks National Memorial turns 100 next year

The Elks National Memorial will celebrate its 100th anniversary in 2026. The celebration will include a special ceremony, tours of the building at 2750 N. Lakeview Ave., and various events throughout the year.

The Elks National Memorial building will be open for visits throughout the 2026 Elks National Convention.

The Elks Building is a monument in the truest sense, and was built in 1926 to honor Americans whose profound sacrifices for the nation can never be recognized by mere words. It honors the thousands of Elks who have fought and died for our country. It has been described as one of the most magnificent war memorials in the world, but with its monumental architecture and priceless art,

the Memorial is more a symbol of peace and of the patriotism of the members of the Elks fraternity.

Following World War I, there was a strong desire throughout the Elks organization to erect a memorial to those brothers who had laid down their lives in devotion to country which they had assumed at their fraternal altars.

At the Grand Lodge session convened in Chicago in 1920, a special committee was created and assigned with the task of planning the design and construction of this new memorial. The Commission invited seven of the country's most distinguished architects to participate in a competition that would determine the design of the new building. With

**ELKS** see p. 12

## Skyrocketing property taxes hammer fixed-income owners

BY DON DEBAT  
*The Home Front*

Financially squeezed and apparently abandoned by local government, the North Side's senior fixed-income property owners are wondering if they will have to sell their homes and move to rental apartments or out of state in 2026 to avoid foreclosure and bankruptcy.

Homeowners who may have paid off their mortgages, could be losing them over an inability to pay the property taxes.

On Nov. 14, after months of uncertainty and repeated delays, Cook County officials finally mailed the second installment of the 2024 property tax bills. Payment of the tax bill, normally due on Aug. 1, now has been pushed to Dec. 15, 10 days prior to Christmas.

For the 31st straight year, property taxes have gone up in Cook County. About 76% of homeowners will pay more on Dec. 15 this year—with those in predominantly minority neighborhoods on the South and West sides facing dramatic increases, according to Cook County Treasurer Maria Pappas.

"For the tax year of 2024, Chicago homeowners will pay \$469.4 million more than they paid in

2023 because of the tax shift from commercial to other properties," Pappas said.

The median residential tax bill in the city of Chicago skyrocketed a wallet-biting 16.6% to \$4,457, the largest increase in 30 years.

Much of the tax hike is attributed to run-away spending by local government. "Chicago public schools and other local governments are asking for half-a-billion dollars more than they did a year earlier," Pappas said.

Meanwhile, Illinois property taxes remain the second highest in the nation, with effective rates averaging 2.27% of assessed valuation compared with the national average of 1.07%, according to analysts at Jaken Finance Group. Only New Jersey, with 2.47% has a higher tax rate. Cook County's effective property tax rates now exceed 2.5%.

Chicago's soaring property taxes are driven by rising government pension costs, surging property assessments, and a shift in the tax burden from commercial properties to residential ones. Pension costs make up a significant and growing portion of Chicago's budget, with one report stating that more than 80% of Chicago property taxes in 2022 went to city pensions.

As a result, the city has repeat-

edly raised property taxes to fund its underfunded pension systems, which consume a large and growing portion of the city's budget.

***The median residential tax bill in the city of Chicago skyrocketed a wallet-biting 16.6% to \$4,457, the largest increase in 30 years. Much of the tax hike is attributed to run-away spending by local government. "Chicago public schools and other local governments are asking for half-a-billion dollars more than they did a year earlier," Maria Pappas said.***

Chicagoland now has the second-highest effective property tax rate in the US.

The Home Front column learned that one senior "Ma-and-Pa" owner of a small income property in Old Town experienced the following: The retired 81-year-old who resides in his brownstone

**TAXES** see p. 4

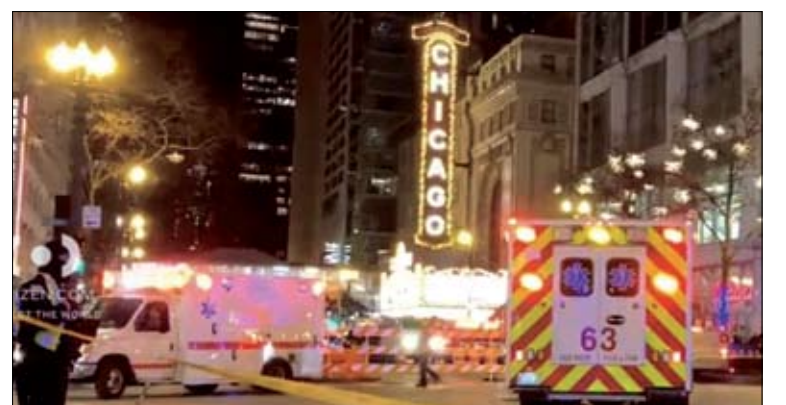
## Downtown violence brings back call for Snap Curfews

Two North Side Aldermen say they will once again introduce a curfew-related ordinance following a teen takeover and riot Nov. 21 during the Millennium Park Christmas tree-lighting.

Aldermen Brendan Reilly [42nd] and Brian Hopkins [2nd] have seen enough of their wards being abused as a target of unruly youths. Multiple mob incidents have occurred in the central business district since the riots and looting incidents of 2020.

Now the two Aldermen are demanding Mayor Brandon Johnson recognize there is a problem, and give power to the police to act quickly in future incidents.

"While these violent incidents invoke emotions of fear, anger, and fatigue, they may not have



Chicago has a regular curfew between 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. for minors 12 and older, and 8:30 p.m. to 6 a.m. for those younger than 12 on most nights, with a slightly later start of 9 p.m. for the younger group on Friday and Saturday nights.

Image courtesy Citizen App

happened at all had the leadership in our city allowed the City Council to enact sensible solutions to prevent chaotic and violent epi-

sodes like this from even taking place," said Hopkins on Nov. 24.

**CURFEWS** see p. 12

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## 312-356-DADS

# Currier and Ives celebrated the quality of everyday American life



By Thomas J. O'Gorman

What's your earliest memory?

Most have no memories as bold and complete as those from early childhood. Like eating chocolate for the first time, first memories are the most solid. Reminders of favorite things and people. Isn't that Sigmund Freud's area of interest?

I still recall shocking folk on the first day of school when I balked at entering Kindergarten. Thank God for a permissive mother. Her response was, "It's ok. Let's go home."

All I wanted was my morning tea and toast in front of the TV watching Dave Garroway doing the Today show. I didn't think, then, that boycotting school would affect my future later life.

We all need reminding of those moments in the past when such recollections shine a spotlight on what's really important. For many of us getting ready for Christmas can be memory therapy. Bringing more clearly into view our forgotten past.

America recovered from the Civil War through a powerful national sense of sharing healthy recollections in the decades after the Civil War.

All this brought the landscape of American living into view, demonstrating a unique form of



American Christmas by Currier and Ives.

patriotism in the way they treasured the paintings, lithographs and prints that kept the beauty of American life in full display.

No one was more responsible for savoring the lifestyles, landscapes and pastimes of American living than Currier and Ives - printmakers to the American People.

Nathaniel Currier (1813-1888) and James Merritt Ives (1824-1895), created a unique pictorial view of the nation that flourished for much of the 19th century. During that time they created more than one million lithographs telling the story of America's growth and transition from an agricultural society to an industrial nation. The envy of the world. They could boast over 7500 titles for the works they created.

While fashioning a genre of undisputed American self-awareness, the celebration of this country's holidays enjoyed a prime focus for their efforts. Thanksgiving and Christmas celebrations in the nation's homes lent themselves to focus on the cultural creativity and subtle nuances of local customs. How often have you received a Christmas card ripe with the stamp and influence of Currier and Ives?

That's what America was glimpsing when viewing Currier and Ives. They held a mirror to the American geography and lifted high the landscape of liberty and patriotic celebration.

A nation living by the sheer

beauty of its continental identity. America was a landscape of towns and villages ripe with natural beauty. They shared fresh identities created by old New England's landscapes. Vistas enhanced by nature, like planets of elegant snowfalls. Its citizens able to blend, especially in wintry conditions, for outdoor entertainments and sport. America was in partnership with nature and the vast manner in which they embraced its charm.

Currier and Ives' print shop was prolific and vastly successful. Responsible for establishing deep pride in Americans. All this from their New York City headquarters from 1857-1907, the most dynamic city in the nation.

Sleigh rides, horse and buggy outings on snowy roads, chopping down the family Christmas trees and sharing the Thanksgiving turkey and prayerful holiday banquet were favorite moments of joy on display through Currier and Ives.

American towns and wintry villages are captured, ready for a holiday.

Americans reached to grasp the poetic beauty of the landscapes as they celebrated our Republic's 100th birthday in 1876.

The population uniting in colorful customs purely American after great change had taken place.

Unity was the strengthening agent of "American identity."

Such festive scenes told viewers the fuller story of how Americans lived. The way they gathered family around them. How they set the holiday table. How they served the sacred turkey and what vittles were along side. Sweet potatoes, traditional stuffing, corn bread. Cranberry sauces of varied geographical origins. Winter cabbage, perhaps. And luscious pumpkin pies or cakes to finish off a meal.

Before photography, lithographs and prints from Currier and Ives made sure these great



Third from left, front row, is Bishop Robert Prevost at Cardinal Blase Cupich's Nov. 18, 2014 Installation.

moments of family celebrations were immortalized. Freeze-framing images of American life. Prints of Americans enjoying winter sports like ice skating or ice fishing or sledding helped them identify with Americans of other historic centuries. America was healing and restoring itself with a strengthened cultural identity and self-understanding.

National civility and restored national customs were marks of the nation's quaint and happy living.

This is the great cultural dividend that unfolds in Currier and Ives' images. Households could hang the freedom and drama of these sights in their homes, the benefice of hard work and personal sacrifice.

Snow-covered homes in cozy landscapes was the dream come true. Sleighs making their way through snow-covered country roads enhanced the identity of a prosperous America in the romantic rectitude of civil living.

Images of elegant Christmas scenes identified families of sweet civil living gathered around their tree. Citizens of the nation gathered to engage with one another in festive winter sports.

Currier and Ives celebrated the social and neighborly quality of everyday America life with elegance. Their life's work was not merely the skill of their images, but the grandeur of the human growth and political harmony they produced. It's that partnership with nature that was so critically important.

So enjoy Currier and Ives this holiday. Maybe they can help you uncover the Christmas you loved the most.

**RED KETTLE:** Brian Bernardoni reminds us it's time for the CBS Chicago Kettle Kick-off Show. Thrilled to reprise this beloved tradition of the Red Kettle season and help support our neighbors in need throughout the holidays.

**HANUKKAH:** Hanukkah will begin Sunday Dec. 14 and continue till Monday, Dec. 22. The light-

ing of the Menorah begins with a single candle and continues each night until all eight candles are lit. The most important of traditions is the lighting each evening of a special nine-branched candelabra called a hanukkah.

**ADVENT:** The four weeks of preparation for the feast of the Nativity. Beginning Sunday, Nov. 30. Purple Season. Purple Hearts. Purple souls. Until Christmas Eve, Wednesday, Dec. 24, with Christmas on Thursday, Dec. 25.

Some years ago I had a wonderful book published on the Season of Advent, a collection of readings from wide sources guaranteed to add devotion and understanding in preparation for the season, called "Advent: A Sourcebook."

**CHICAGO PAPA:** Love the photo in Holy Name Cathedral's booklet for the recent celebration of **Cardinal Blase Cupich's** installation 11 years ago. A photo of the new Archbishop Cupich in his "Cathedra" with former previous Archbishop, **Cardinal George**, sitting beside him. And looking around the image who do you spot very nearby? Chicago native **Bishop Robert Prevost**, now **Leo XIV**, who attended the event on his way from Rome to Peru.

LIFE see p. 8

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# Homeowners shocked by tax hikes should read bills to find out where their money goes

BY MARIA PAPPAS

Record-high increases in property tax bills this month have angered many Cook County property owners.



Maria Pappas

My office has released an analysis of the nearly 1.8 million tax bills. It showed that in Chicago the median tax bill jumped 16.7%, the largest percentage increase in at least 30 years.

And it wasn't just in Chicago. South and southwest suburban homeowners saw a median increase of just under 20% to \$6,117. Median bills for north and northwest suburban property owners increased by 15.7% to \$7,008.

Those spikes are hitting homeowners already dealing with higher prices for cars, insurance, medical care and groceries. Many fear they can no longer afford their taxes and wonder what they can do.

There's one thing every prop-

erty owner can do: Read the bill! Second Installment 2024 bills are online at [cookcountytreasurer.com](http://cookcountytreasurer.com), they were mailed Nov. 14. On the bill you'll see a section called "Where Your Money Goes." It shows which taxing bodies are getting your money and how much. It also shows if your taxes went up or down and compares your latest bill to the previous year's.

If you want even more detail, just go to [cookcountytreasurer.com](http://cookcountytreasurer.com), click on the purple box and enter your address or PIN. Then navigate to the left side and click where it says, "Where Your Money Goes." This reveals the same chart that's on the bill but also lets you access the websites of taxing bodies, where you can get more information.

I did this so you can become informed about which taxing bodies are behind the increases, so you'll know which agencies to hold accountable. Each taxing district holds regular public meetings. As a taxpayer, you have the right to comment publicly and vote on certain items often involving how your tax dollars are spent.

If more people questioned their elected officials about where their money goes, government agencies

might work harder to curb spending.

The second installment due date is December 15, 2025. The Cook County Treasurer's Office offers several convenient payment options: You can pay for free online at [cookcountytreasurer.com](http://cookcountytreasurer.com) using your bank account or by

***I did this so you can become informed about which taxing bodies are behind the increases, so you'll know which agencies to hold accountable.***

mail using the return envelope included with your bill. You can pay in person at our downtown office at 118 N. Clark St., Room 112 or in any Chase Bank branch or at more than 100 participating community banks. Lastly you can pay with a credit card, but you'll have to pay a 2.1 % convenience fee to the card company.

And although paying taxes never really feels "convenient," I hope knowing where your money goes makes it a little easier to deal with the "inconvenient truth" that for most of us 2024 taxes went up.

## New city restriction limits crowd size at Daley Plaza Christkindlmarket

### Last minute change damages annual festival

City Hall regulators stunned organizers and vendors at the popular downtown Christkindlmarket by imposing severe new crowd restrictions just hours before it opened on Nov. 21. One organizer said the market was told a mere 12 hours before it opened last week that their capacity limit had been dramatically reduced.

The Christmas festival is scheduled to run through Dec. 24.

On Friday, organizers said that the Christkindlmarket at Daley Plaza was limited to 1,553 visitors at a time — less than half the 3,494 people allowed under the COVID-19 capacity rules set in 2021, when social distancing was still in place.

"This level of restrictions poses an existential threat to the Christkindlmarket and the hundreds of artisans, performers, seasonal workers, and businesses who depend on the visitors it brings to downtown Chicago," organizers said in a news release.

The move has already led to a significant drop in vendor revenue, even after vendors each paid the city \$25,000 to participate in the annual event. One vendor said sales are down over 40%, as they watch those who want to enter Christkindlmarket wait in lines for hours. In prior years the wait in lines to get into the event were just a few minutes.

"Every day this goes on is a day too long for all of our ven-

dors, and quite frankly, for all the people standing out in the lines," Mark Tompkins, CEO of the German American Chamber of Commerce of the Midwest [GACC] told reporter Cindy Hernandez of The Chicago Sun-Times.

"I travel from Munich every year to sell my honey products and ornaments," said Sabine Korger of Biene's Honighaus told Hernandez. "With tariffs and now capacity limits, we'll lose significant income. I'm not sure I can afford to return next year, or even if I will survive this one."

"Our Chicago workers are losing their hours, they're losing their income," said Korger. "They told me they don't know how they will pay their rent or buy Christmas gifts for their children."

The Chicago Tribune's Rick Pearson first broke the story on Nov. 26, stating that Mayor Brandon Johnson's administration placed space requirements on the event this year, which has created long lines to enter and severely restricts the number of people who can visit the German-themed food and retail booths.

A holiday tradition for 29 years, the event was launched and organized by a subsidiary of the German American Chamber of Commerce of the Midwest Inc. to promote trade between Germany and the U.S.

Christkindlmarket organizers have asked the Johnson's administration to grant a reprieve, warning that the event faces an uncertain economic future if visitors see long entrance lines, give

up and stop attending. Adjacent Loop businesses also generate residual business from Christkindlmarket, and those sales are also expect to decline.

They also note that other big-attendance events in the city, such as Lollapalooza, do not have similar space limits.

Christkindlmarket organizers hosted a press conference on Nov. 28 asking the Mayor's office to reconsider the restrictions.

According to the GACC, 84% of German subsidiaries in the U.S. plan to increase their investments over the next 3 years, and that 27% without a production facility plan to build one in the next three years. The total workforce was expected to grow 88% in the U.S. by 2029. How this insult from the Mayor's office to Germany may play out for Chicago in the long term will be known in time.

## Assistance for Vets Dec. 4

The Veterans Assistance Commission of Cook County is offering a Veterans Resources Day, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., Thursday, Dec. 4 at the 50th Ward office, 2949 W. Devon.

Military veterans can attain resources tailored to their needs, and meet with a veterans service officer to assist with enrollment for health care, disability and compensation, employment, financial assistance, and more. For more information call 773-262-1050.

## Near North Side toy drives

The North Dearborn Assoc. is hosting its 32nd Annual Joy of Toys 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 6, at Mario's Table, 21 W. Goethe St.

Those who would like to make donation can drop off toys and stay for the complimentary wine, beer, and soft drinks, and take home a free pizza to go.

Donated gifts should be intended for children ages 3 to 11 years of age.

The 18th District police are also hosting a toy drive, and is seeking donations now through Dec. 10. All donations can be dropped off at the 18th District lobby, 1160 N. Larrabee Ave.

They are collecting new toys, new coats, hats, scarves, and school supplies for youth aged 5-17. For more information, call 312-742-5778.

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## This newspaper vs Sudler Property Mngt.

Yes, we have a dog in this fight. Inside Publications has hired legal representation to defend us in Sudler Property Management's defamation suit against this newspaper.

But lawfare costs money, and we don't have a lawfare budget. So we are now appealing for your help, and donations.

Below is a link to a GoFundMe page that we established to help raise funds to fight this case in the Cook County Circuit Court. The page is titled "Your Friendly Neighborhood Newspapers."

We would appreciate you sharing this link with anyone in your network who might like to help out their friendly neighborhood newspapers. Visit: [www.gofundme.com/manage/your-friendly-neighborhood-newspapers](http://www.gofundme.com/manage/your-friendly-neighborhood-newspapers).

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# Feds shift spending on homeless, allow faith-based providers

**More than Chicago 100 groups rely on HUD cash**  
 BY SIDNEE KING PINEDA  
*Illinois Answers Project*

Chicago-area housing advocates are claiming that as many as 8,500 formerly homeless people whose residences are subsidized by the federal government could lose their homes after the Trump administration announced it was changing its funding rules and shifting the money available to subsidize long-term housing policies.

The Dept. of Housing and Urban Development [HUD] published new rules Nov. 19 which shifts its priorities away from housing-first policies which, advocates say, have been a bipartisan standard for over a decade. HUD says that those priorities shut out faith-based providers simply because of their values.

More than 100 Chicago groups rely on HUD funds to run affordable apartment buildings or pay rent subsidies to private landlords for people most at-risk of becoming homeless — mainly those who live with long-term disabilities, substance abuse and addictions, or severe mental illness.

The National Alliance to End Homelessness estimates more than 8,500 permanent-supportive housing beds throughout the state are funded by federal taxpayer money. Most of those beds are provided by private landlords who may evict tenants.

The new HUD policy will cap what’s spent of the \$182 million funneled to Illinois through what is called its Continuum of Care [COC] program. Chicago gets the bulk of that money — nearly \$140 million.

Right now, program administrators estimate they’re spending at least 80% of that money to provide permanent housing for people with disabilities who had been on the streets. By January, HUD will require that percentage drop to no more than a third.

“It’s very frightening,” said Fred Spannaus, an independent homelessness consultant who works with COC networks.

In January, under the new rules, HUD will require agencies to screen those people looking for housing for immigration status, to agree to comply with an executive order on immigration to deprioritize any programming that emphasizes race or “a definition of sex other than as binary in humans,” and to require work permits.

HUD said changes are intended to undermine “failed” housing-first programs, which encourage dependence on government support.

“We are stopping the Biden-era slush fund that fueled the homelessness crisis, shut out faith-based providers simply because of their values and incentivized never-ending government dependency,” HUD Secretary Scott Turner said in a press release.

Turner announced \$3.9 billion in competitive grant funding through HUD’s FY 2025 COC Competition Notice of Funding Opportunity [NOFO].

This NOFO would restore accountability to homelessness

programs and promotes self-sufficiency among vulnerable Americans. It redirects the majority of funding to transitional housing and supportive services, ending the status quo that perpetuated homelessness through a self-sustaining slush fund.

The Chicago COC is a membership organization comprised of more than 100 organizations and individuals who work to prevent and end homelessness in the City of Chicago. Chicago COC receives the largest portion of HUD funding and distributes it to various programs and partners across the city. Partner such as All Chicago, 651 W. Washington Blvd., receive taxpayer funds to support services like mental health resources and to administer Emergency Housing Vouchers.

The Chicago Housing Authority is also a COC partner that works with other agencies to provide housing and support services to the homeless.

Now this NOFO will ensure

faith-based providers will no longer be penalized just because they are faith-based organizations.

“Roughly 90% of the last four years COC awards funneled funding to support the failed “Housing First” ideology, which encourages dependence on endless government handouts while neglecting to address the root causes of homelessness, including illicit drugs and mental illness,” says HUD. “The Program was intended to be a national competition to select the most effective and innovative programs, however the Biden administration only competed about 10% of projects over four years. During that same time period, transitional housing, which has been proven to encourage self-sufficiency, never received more than 2% of COC funding.”

As part of this announcement, Turner is requiring that 70% of projects be competed to determine the best programs, ending the status quo that automatically renewed funding without measuring success.

Among other measures, this NOFO will icoompetition for grants to improve system efficiencies and spur innovation; advances public safety through partnerships with law enforcement; focuses on self-sufficiency and not on the expansion of government subsidies and perpetuation of slush funds; encourages personal accountability through enhanced treatment requirements to combat the Fentanyl crisis, and cracks down on DEI, gender ideology extremism, and the misuse of taxpayer dollars on illegal aliens.

“Our philosophy for addressing the homelessness crisis will now define success not by dollars spent or housing units filled, but by how many people achieve long-term self-sufficiency and recovery,” said Turner.

**Deadline Jan. 14**

HUD was already behind in releasing its annual rules, which typically takes housing providers months to complete, but the

government shutdown further delayed its issuance.

Jennifer Hill, executive director of the Alliance to End Homelessness in Suburban Cook County, one of 19 continuum of care networks in the state, says that local service providers are facing an abnormally short timeline to restructure their plans by the Jan. 14 deadline.

The pressure of that timeline is intensified as existing contracts are set to begin to expire as soon as February. If funds dry up or programs don’t match HUD’s requirements, the impact on households could be immediate, she said.

**HOMELESS** see p. 10

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# Police Beat...

## Man charged with 11 felony counts of Retail Theft

Ronald Cusic, 62, of the 6000 block of S. Wabash Ave., has been charged with 11 felony counts on Retail Theft on the North Side.

Cusic was arrested 7:55 a.m. Nov. 25, in 500 block of N. Franklin St. He was identified as the offender who, minutes earlier, entered a retail store and took merchandise from within in the 600 block of N.



Ronald Cusic

La Salle Dr. He is also charged with multiple retail thefts that occurred at the following two locations:

The 3300 block of N. Ashland Ave. on Sept. 28, Sept. 29, Oct. 17, and Nov. 23; the 600 block of N. La Salle Dr. four times on Oct. 21, Oct. 22, Oct. 23, and Nov. 6.

Cusic was placed into custody and charged accordingly.

## Thanksgiving heist goes cold: Cops gobble up three late-night burglars at Mag Mile department store



Chicago police units at the scene of a burglary at Saks Fifth Avenue, 700 N. Michigan Ave., on Nov. 26.

Three men in police custody on Thanksgiving morning are probably wondering how their “early bird gets the Gucci” approach to holiday shopping collapsed so spectacularly.

Chicago cops arrested the trio after they broke into the Saks Fifth Avenue department store on the Magnificent Mile Nov. 26, apparently too eager for holiday shopping to wait for Black Friday’s sanctioned chaos.

Store security reported the break-in around 11:25 p.m. at 700 N. Michigan Ave., saying the men staged their own version of a “doorbuster” by prying open an entrance on the Mag Mile. A wave of squad cars sped to the scene and surrounded the high-rise complex. Officers, aided by store security, conducted a methodical search of the building.

Two suspects were found upstairs inside the store, and police began clearing the scene around 12:40 a.m. on Thanksgiving morning.

But the night still had one more gift to give. As the patrol cars departed, an officer in the district’s surveillance room kept watch on the building through a nearby city camera. At 12:52 a.m., that officer spotted the third burglar emerging onto Michigan Ave. and heading toward Superior St.

Squad cars raced back and arrested the unlucky straggler near Rush and Huron moments later. Charges were pending for the group, who will likely be enjoying a taxpayer-funded bologna sandwich for Thanksgiving dinner.

## CPD links three armed robberies in Lincoln Park and Lakeview, including latest Boystown attacks

Four women were robbed in two incident minutes apart in the Boystown area Nov. 25, and Chicago police now say the holdups are connected to another armed robbery in Lincoln Park the previous evening.

Detectives issued a community alert Nov. 25 linking all three cases and warning residents in Lincoln Park and Lake View East to be on alert.

The overnight robberies began around 12:13 a.m. in the 600 block of W. Stratford. Three women, a 20-year-old and two 21-year-olds, told officers they were walking when a black sedan pulled alongside them. Police said two males got out, displayed guns, and took personal property from each victim before getting back into the car and driving off. No one was injured.

Two minutes later, around 12:15 a.m., a 23-year-old woman was robbed in the 3200 block of N. Broadway. She said two males approached her. One displayed a gun and demanded her belongings. She handed over her property and the offenders fled east. No injuries were reported.

According to the new alert, detectives believe those attacks are related to an armed robbery that happened about four hours earlier in the 2600 block of N. Clark in Lincoln Park. In that case, which occurred around 8:40 p.m. Nov. 24, the robbers approached multiple victims while pointing a black handgun and demanding their property.

Police said the offenders in all three incidents were Black males between 13 and 16 years old, wearing dark clothing and ski masks.

Anyone with information is asked to contact Area Three detectives at 312-744-8263 or submit an anonymous tip at CPDTIP.com using reference P25-3-050.

## More North Side burglaries

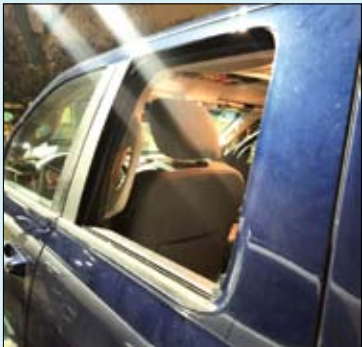
Police are warning North Side residents of recent, related burglary incidents in the North Center, Lincoln Square, Uptown, Lakeview, Roscoe Village, West Lakeview, Lake View East, Wrigleyville neighborhoods.

In the incidents below, the victims’ unoccupied work van was parked on the street when unknown offenders used a cutting tool or saw to defeat the locks on the vehicle. Offenders removed tools from work vans and placed tools into an awaiting vehicle.

Incidents include one on the 2300 block of W. Cullom on Nov. 25, at 8:18 a.m.; the 4500 block of N. Seeley on Nov. 25, at 8:30 a.m.; the 4500 block of N. Seeley on Nov. 25, at 8:30 a.m.; 4000 block of N. Clarendon on Nov. 25, at 7:00 p.m.; 2000 block of W. Barry on Nov. 26, at 8:41 a.m.; 1900 block of W. Melrose on Nov. 26, 2025, at 8:50 a.m.; 1900 block of W. Fletcher on Nov. 26, at 8:52 a.m.; 3100 block of N. Clifton on Nov. 26, at 9:22 a.m.; 3700 block of N. Racine on Nov. 26, at 9:27 a.m., and the 4500 block of N. Clarendon Nov. 26, at 10:50 a.m.

The offenders are described as two Black males, wearing dark clothing. Those who have any information on these crimes may Call Area Three Detectives at 312-744-8263, or submit an anonymous tip at CPDTIP.com and use Reference # P25-3-052.

## Car break-ins surge as Zoo Lights crowds flock to Lincoln Park



A wave of car break-ins hit Lincoln Park last week in an area that draws large nighttime crowds heading to Zoo Lights at Lincoln Park Zoo, according to a Chicago police community alert.

Detectives in the Near North and Town Hall districts said thieves smashed windows and stole property from vehicles parked along Stockton

Drive, Fullerton Pkwy., and Cannon Dr. between Nov. 18 and Nov. 24. Officers said the offenders shattered windows with an unknown object to get inside.

Witnesses described the offenders as two African American males wearing black or gray jumpsuits and ski masks.

CPD said the break-ins occurred: November 18, 9 p.m. in the 2100 block of N. Stockton Dr.; Nov. 20–24, 7 a.m. to 7 a.m. in the 400 block of W. Fullerton Pkwy.; Nov. 24, 7 p.m. in the 2300 block of N. Cannon Dr.; 7:05 p.m. in the 2400 block of N. Cannon Dr.; 7:45 p.m. in the 2400 block of N. Cannon Dr.; 7:50 p.m. in the 2400 block of N. Cannon Dr.; 9 p.m. in the 2300 block of N. Cannon Dr., and at 10 p.m. in the 2100 block of N. Stockton Dr.

Police urged residents and visitors to remove or hide valuables and call 911 if they notice suspicious activity.

Anyone with information is asked to contact Area Three detectives at 312-744-8263 or submit an anonymous tip at CPDTIP.com using reference number P25-3-051.

## Man gets 5 years for going on cross-town robbery spree while wearing ankle monitor



Jerome Jackson, left, and Bryant Robinson.

A man who went on a cross-town robbery spree while wearing an ankle monitor has been given a five-year sentence. His alleged accomplice, coincidentally, is at large after escaping from electronic monitoring while fighting the charges.

Bryant Robinson, 22, pleaded guilty to four robberies in exchange for concurrent five-year terms from Judge Shelley Sutker-Dermer, according to court records.

Prosecutors said Robinson, Jerome Jackson, and at least two others allegedly began their two-hour spree around 10 p.m. on Nov. 1, 2024, at the 79th Street Red Line station, where they took a victim’s Beats headphones.

After riding the Red Line north, the group mugged a 57-year-old man in the 4200 block of N. Clarendon, according to prosecutors. He told police that four men surrounded him as he walked, and Robinson rifled through his pockets for valuables. Robinson took the man’s cash, tossed the billfold to the ground, and fled, a Chicago police report said.

The group also robbed a 26-year-old woman in the 3200 block of N. Pine Grove. When her boyfriend tried to intervene, Robinson raised his shirt to display what appeared to be a firearm in his waistband, according to the report.

In the 600 block of W. Waveland, the crew grabbed a man by the throat, dragged him between planters and parked cars, and forced him to his knees as they robbed him, officials said.

A Chicago police surveillance camera operator spotted four people who matched the suspects’ descriptions entering the Addison Red Line CTA station a short time later. Officers moved in and arrested them. A pistol-shaped Taser was allegedly recovered from the crew.

Robinson was on electronic monitoring for an assault and obstruction case at the time of the robberies. He must serve half of his sentence, giving him a projected release date of April 30, 2027.

Court records show that Jackson, whose real name is Davaughn Credit, failed to appear in court on Nov. 7. Prosecutors filed an escape charge against him, and Judge Sutker-Derm-

er issued arrest warrants in the pending robbery cases, the records show.

During his first court appearance last year, prosecutors requested that Judge David Kelly keep him in custody pending trial. But Kelly, who earned a statistically-proven reputation as the most defendant-friendly judge in the court’s pretrial division, sent him home on an ankle monitor.

## Four more robbed at gunpoint in Lakeview East, bolstering concerns about surging holdup sprees

A string of three robberies on Nov. 26 and 27 is adding to growing concerns that an armed robbery crew is taking root in Lakeview and Lincoln Park. The holdups came amid a surge of similar incidents in the neighborhoods.

The latest incidents involved two gunmen who targeted four people across three separate robberies.

In the first case, around 10:17 p.m. Nov. 26, a 15-year-old boy and a 16-year-old girl were walking along the 1300 block of W. Eddy St. when two men approached them, according to a Chicago police spokesperson. One of the robbers displayed a firearm and demanded their belongings. The offenders fled in a blue sedan, possibly a Hyundai Elantra, with the victims’ phone, wallet, and purse. Officers said the robbers were Black males. One wore black clothing, and the other wore a lighter color, possibly brown.

About three hours later, around 1 a.m. Nov. 27, two men robbed another victim at gunpoint in the 400 block of W. Surf St. In that case, the offenders were described as Black males wearing track suits. One man wore a gray outfit and had dreadlocks. The second, dressed in black, had the gun.

Finally, around 1:45 a.m., a man approached officers in the 3500 block of N. Clark St. in Wrigleyville to report that an armed robber had taken his phone and wallet nearby. The victim could not pinpoint exactly where the robbery occurred, but believed it happened somewhere between Eddy and Newport streets.

## Video shows gunman in the Loop attack that left a 14-year-old dead



A surveillance image shows the man wanted in connection with a double shooting that left a 14-year-old boy dead in the Loop on Nov. 21.

The video clips released Nov. 26 show a man wearing a tan jacket over a purple tracksuit or onesie pulling a gun and aiming it toward a crowd of people gathered in the 100 block of S. Dearborn St. at 10:37 p.m.

An 18-year-old man was wounded and 14-year-old Armani Floyd was killed.

The shooting came just a few minutes after another gunman shot seven people near the Chicago Theatre on State St. as large crowds of young people lingered in the Loop following the annual Christmas tree lighting.

CPD asked anyone with information about the man to contact Det. Goodrich at Area Three by calling 312-744-8261 or submitting an anonymous tip at CPDTIP.com using case number JJ498045.

Cook County Crime Stoppers has also offered a \$10,000 reward for information that leads to an arrest. The organization can be reached at 1-800-535-STOP. Tipsters remain anonymous.

“Crime Stoppers offers complete

anonymity; your name will never be asked, your call will never be traced, and your information will remain confidential,” said Paul Rutherford, the organization’s executive director.

## Venezuelan migrants robbed three women at gunpoint in Buena Park



Jose Dominguez-Rosario, left, and Deus Rojas.

Three Venezuelan migrants are charged with robbing three women at gunpoint inside a Buena Park apartment building, according to Chicago police and court records.

Prosecutors said the women were returning from a night out in the Gold Coast when they reached the front door of their apartment in the 700 block of W. Gordon Terrace around 12:17 a.m. Nov. 22. Unbeknownst to them, three males followed them into the building.

Prosecutors said a juvenile in the group lifted his shirt to show a handgun in his waistband and “shushed” the victims. Two of the women handed over their purses containing wallets and credit cards. The third woman wore her purse across her chest, and a robber cut the strap from behind before the group ran off with all three bags.

All of the victims had their phones in their pockets, so they were able to call 911 quickly, according to a CPD report. Officers searched the area and stopped three males matching the suspects’ descriptions near Lake Shore Dr. and Addison a short time later.

Jose Dominguez-Rosario and Deus Rojas, both 18, and an unnamed juvenile who was with them did not have a gun, nor did they have any of the victims’ property, prosecutors said. But all three women confirmed that the trio was the group that had robbed them, and the police took them into custody.

Several hours later, an officer handling a traffic crash on Lake Shore Dr. was approached by a citizen who found a loaded 9mm handgun in the 3600 block of N. Lake Shore Dr., just steps from where the robbery suspects were arrested, prosecutors said.

Later that morning, another citizen found the victims’ purses in the 4100 block of N. Marine Dr., about three blocks from the robbery scene.

Judge James Murphy III ordered both men detained pending trial. Details about the boy and his case are not available because juvenile records are shielded from public review in Illinois. They are all charged with three counts of armed robbery.

## Gunman robs four women in Boystown

Four women were robbed in two incidents minutes apart in the Boystown neighborhood early Nov. 15 just after midnight.

The first robbery happened in the 600 block of W. Stratford. Three women, a 20-year-old and two 21-year-olds, told officers they were walking together around 12:13 a.m. when a black sedan pulled alongside them, according to a CPD spokesperson.

Two men got out, displayed firearms, and took valuables from each victim before returning to the car and speeding away. No injuries were reported.

Two minutes later, around 12:15



Incoming Chief Judge Charles Beach, left, will need to figure out how to fix an electronic monitoring system that allows dangerous people to roam the streets without consequence.

# New chief judge inherits broken electronic monitoring system that lets dangerous people wander the streets

BY TIM HECKE  
CWBCChicago

For the first time in nearly a quarter century, Cook County saw a new chief judge take office Monday.

It's a job that's rarely in the spotlight, with outgoing chief Timothy Evans emerging from near seclusion only for occasional social club luncheons and press events promoting the court's latest feel-good initiative.

But his successor, Charles Beach, who ousted Evans in an upset vote by the county's judges in September, will find himself under bright lights on day one.

That's because Cook County's electronic monitoring program, most of which came under the control of the chief judge's office earlier this year, is sagging under withering criticism after CWB-Chicago revealed that the man accused of setting a woman on fire aboard a Blue Line train in the Loop last month was wearing an ankle monitor issued by Evans' office at the time of the horrific crime.

Our further investigation revealed that Evans' staff was aware that the accused man, Lawrence Reed, had repeatedly left home without permission, yet they took no action to bring him back.

And, over the weekend, CWB reported that a man recently charged with shooting another man on the CTA Red Line was also on the chief judge's monitoring program.

Now it will be up to Beach, a judge since 2017, to manage the fallout of those headline-making cases and figure out how to fix a program that, by Evans' own admission last week, has no law enforcement mechanism to address AWOL defendants.

## Multiple programs

Cook County actually has four electronic monitoring programs,

three of which are run by the chief judge: a GPS-tracking system for domestic violence defendants, a pretrial curfew system for defendants ordered to be home during certain hours, and the full-blown monitoring program for defendants who, at least on paper, are supposed to be in their homes around the clock.

The fourth system, operated by the Cook County Sheriff's Office, is being phased out. The sheriff's program served as the county's customary "24/7" monitoring system until officials transferred responsibility to Evans' office on April 1. The sheriff's office will continue to monitor participants who were already in its program on that date, but no new participants are being admitted as the operation winds down.

The sheriff's program is different from the chief judge's systems in at least two important ways. First, the sheriff has armed law enforcement officers who can go out to find and apprehend participants who disappear while wearing ankle monitors. Second, the sheriff's operations are subject to public review under the state's Freedom of Information Act. The courts, including the chief judge's monitoring systems, are not subject to FOIA and they have no internal law enforcement mechanism.

In April, Cook County State's Attorney Eileen O'Neill Burke flagged the lack of enforcement as just one of many problems with the chief judge's operation, which she called "a serious threat to public safety."

After staying silent for more than a week, Evans issued his first public statement about his monitoring programs last on Nov. 25, but only after the Chicago Tribune criticized his office in an editorial that cited CWB-Chicago's reporting.

In that statement, Evans admitted that his staff does not try to

apprehend people who abscond from electronic monitoring. The staff does not notify law enforcement either. Instead, they take note of the violations and pass them on to the judge overseeing the case at the defendant's next court date.

Even in what Evans called "major violations," such as the unauthorized removal of an ankle monitor, the chief judge's staff does not notify law enforcement. Within 72 hours of the band's removal, they notify the relevant judge and the Cook County State's Attorney's Office, neither of which has any way to track down and apprehend the violator.

## Essential movement

The state's criminal justice "reform" law, known as the SAFE-T Act, adds to the nightmare. Under that law, a defendant on electronic monitoring is not considered an escapee until they have been away from home without permission for 48 consecutive hours. The law also allows participants to leave their homes 16 hours a week for "essential" activities. But where they actually go, and the essentialness of their activities, is not closely monitored.

And for every day a defendant wears an ankle monitor — whether they are at home, on the streets, or setting someone on fire on a CTA train — they earn a day of

JUDGE see p. 11

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# Chiropractor sentenced to nearly six years

A North Side chiropractor has been sentenced to nearly six years in federal prison for billing a private insurer more than \$2 million in nonexistent services.

Clarence W. Brown III owned and operated Dr. CB3 Wellness, Inc. and Apex Integrated Medical Center, Ltd., both in the Loop. From 2016 to 2020, Brown submitted more than 6,000 fraudulent claims to Blue Cross Blue Shield of Illinois for purported health care services that Brown knew were not actually provided to patients. Some of the fraudulent claims were for services purportedly provided when Brown was on international vacations or while his medical license was suspended.

Brown's fraud scheme defrauded BCBS out of nearly \$2.1 million. Brown used the fraud proceeds to fund a lavish lifestyle, including a house, a \$100,000 BMW X5 sport-utility vehicle, international vacations, and shopping at luxury stores such as Tiffany's.

In 2024, a jury in U.S. District Court in Chicago convicted Brown, 49, on all nine health-care fraud counts against him. On Nov. 19, U.S. District Judge John F. Kness sentenced Brown to five years and 10 months in federal prison and ordered him to pay \$2,088,884 in restitution to BCBS.

# Tool thieves hit ten work vans across the North Side

BY CWBCHICAGO

Chicago police have issued a community alert following a string of early morning and evening burglaries targeting work vans across the N. Side this week.

Police said the thieves used a cutting tool or saw to break through the exterior locks of unoccupied work vans, then transferred tools into an awaiting vehicle before speeding off. Surveillance video from one of the incidents, released by the department, shows two people raiding a van in broad daylight, seemingly unconcerned about the witnesses who are passing by.

According to the alert, many of the break-ins occurred within minutes of each other.

Incidents were reported in the 2300 block of W. Cullom on Nov. 25 at 8:18 a.m.; the 4500 block of N. Seeley on Nov. 25 at 8:30 a.m.; 4500 block of N. Seeley on Nov. 25 at 8:30 a.m.; 4000 block of N. Clarendon on Nov. 25 at 7:00 p.m.; 2000 block of W. Barry on Nov. 26 at 8:41 a.m.; 1900 block

of W. Melrose on Nov. 26 at 8:50 a.m.; 1900 block of W. Fletcher on Nov. 26 at 8:52 a.m.; 3100 block of N. Clifton on Nov. 26 at 9:22 a.m.; 3700 block of N. Racine on Nov. 26 at 9:27 a.m., and in the 4500 block of N. Clarendon on Nov. 26 at 10:50 a.m.

Police described the offenders as two Black males wearing dark clothing.

Anyone with information is asked to contact Area Three detectives at 312-744-8263 or submit an anonymous tip at CPDTIP.com using reference number P25-3-052.

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# PAWS Fur Ball gala raises record \$2.1 million for homeless animals

## Red carpet for city's largest No Kill Animal Shelter

PAWS Chicago, the city's largest No Kill humane organization, hosted its sold-out 24th Annual Fur Ball, presented by Nan and Wayne Kocourek, at The Drake Hotel on Friday, Nov. 14.

The Fur Ball is a perennial favorite where 650 guests and their pets – many dressed in gowns and tuxes like their owners – enjoy all the festivities together, from walking the red carpet to an elaborate dinner buffet.

The evening achieved a record-breaking milestone, raising \$2.1 million to support PAWS Chicago's lifesaving work—funding medical care, recovery, and second chances for Chicago's most vulnerable pets.

The Fur Ball program included a video unveiling PAWS Chi-

cago's next chapter: the newly purchased Rescue Ranch in Hawthorn Woods. This 20-acre suburban adoption and enrichment center will give large dogs—who often have a harder time finding homes in the city—the space they need to thrive and help them find homes faster, while expanding the organization's adopter base in the northwest suburbs.

Rescue Ranch will further increase PAWS Chicago's lifesaving capacity with behavior training, open play spaces, walking trails, suites for dozens of animals, and a surgical clinic providing free and low-cost spay/neuter services.

The event was co-chaired by Lindsay and Carter Hawkins, and Laura Sachs and Jordan Fisher, with Pam and Ed Carey serving as Honorary Co-Chairs.

PAWS Chicago's mission took center stage throughout the eve-



(L) Smashing Pumpkins frontman Billy Corgan, Chloe Mendel Corgan, Sam Lim Achatz, Jennifer Duffy and Chef Curtis Duffy. (R) Fur Ball Co-Chairs Jordan Fisher and Laura Sachs, and Lindsay and Carter Hawkins.

Photos by Allison Wunder



ning, as volunteers showcased cats and dogs like Juniper, an 8-year-old senior who was abandoned on the streets, and Smartie, a 3-month-old Terrier mix rescued by PAWS from Chicago Animal Care & Control, the city's

impoundment facility. Smartie, and several others, found a home that very night.

This year, PAWS is on track to find homes for nearly 5,000 pets, provide 21,000 free and low-cost spay/neuter surgeries, a critical

step in preventing pet overpopulation, deliver 50,000 vaccinations to pets in need, and serve 26,000 homeless and at-risk pets at the Kocourek Medical Center, the nation's largest and most advanced hospital for homeless pets.

## LIFE from p. 2

**LYRIC OPERA:** "Cosi Fan Tutte" will dazzle your hearts with **Mozart's** most delightful opera Feb. 1-15, 2026.

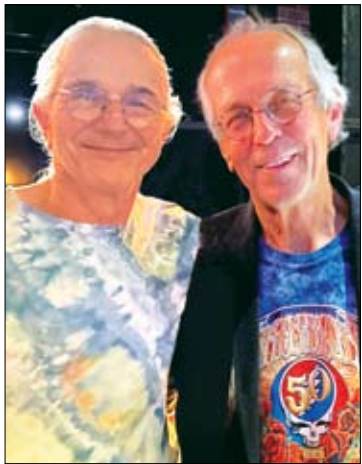
**SAD NEWS:** Smoke Daddy will close their Wicker Park restaurant, after 31 years, on Jan. 4. Wicker Park prepares for a BBQ heartbreak, the neighborhood's culinary treasure is done.

**JAZZ:** **Michael Lerich** "Swingin" into Friday at Winter's Jazz Club on Dec. 10 for a holiday treat.

**GRATEFUL:** **Robert Feder** grateful to **Jamie Sotonoff Bartosch** for sharing the story of his state-of-the-art focal therapy treatment for prostate cancer at U. Chicago Medicine, now, nearly two years after the minimally invasive procedure, he's enjoying life as a new grandfather — and feeling better than ever.

**PETS:** PAWS will soon be hosting their annual Holiday Adopt-a-Thon, taking place Dec. 12-14, at their Lincoln Park Adoption Center. It's a weekend-long adoption marathon where the aim is to match more than 125 dogs, cats, puppies, and kittens with loving homes just in time for the holidays.

**WHO'S WHERE:** Musician/author **David Gans**, in from California, and photographer **Bill Lemke**, in from Wisconsin, had a great turnout at Garcia's Chicago last week for the Aging Gratefully publication party. Enjoying the ride were **James A. Pierce** and



David Gans with Bill Lemke.

**Meagan Panici**, on-Air Personality WZRD (88.3 FM)... Songbird **Catherine O'Connell** is ready for "Siamsa na nGael" that ushers in Old St. Patrick's Irish Christmas... **Tim Egan's** son **Tadhg Egan** is 21, amazing to spend time with him and his Irish godfather, **Colin Downes**... **Sarah Hinkes** celebrating the last of b-day month at Hugo's with good friend **Christine**... 95-year-old **June Squibb** is returning to Broadway in the title role of Pulitzer finalist Marjorie Prime. She has no plans to retire... **Maria Pappas**, the hardest working employee in Cook County, has declared her run for mayor, and was with designer **Al Menotti** at the CPD Ella French Scholarship benefit... City Club's **Dan Gibbons** with **Donovan Pepper**, **Bradley Borowiec**, **Stacey Sweat** and **Kalid Ouariti** on the Mag Mile... **Sean Eshaghy**, **Jeffrey Banks** and **Peter Martino**

lunched at Fortnightly with elegant ladies... **Carol Cheung** and **Adrian Race** with two of their four lads, boys no longer... **Hosea Sanders** at Northwestern's Lurie Cancer Center, just checking things out... **Jean SmilingCoyote** rehabbing nicely from hip surgery... **Bill Zwecker** at Trader Vic's in Munich, Germany... **Grant DePorter** with **Joanna Green DePorter** and **Glenn Eden**, celebrating **Marc and Maureen Schulman's** annual tree lighting ceremony at Seneca Park and **Eli Schulman** Playground... **Dean DeLisle** with **Eamonn Cummins** at Wrigley Field for their first Capital Convergence Forum that was well received and was sold out... **Sam Roti** is getting the troops together for Christmas wonders... Maestro **Rich** and **Kathy Daniels** rode the last ride of the season along the Salt Creek Trail... **Kathy Wolter Mondelli** and **Tina Gravel** overseeing the vino at the Service Club Gala looking wondrous with that young sommelier... **Sherman Kaplan** at a synagogue in Paris on the Rue de Rosier that was never discovered by the Gestapo for all of World War II... In snowy Switzerland, **Dr. Rose Gomez** dined with friends in Geneva at fabulous Beau Rivage, pure five star... **Courtney Thompson** at the Chicago Architecture Biennale... **Flavia** and **Chris Magdalin** with their "kinder" at the fabulous Waldorf Astoria... **Candace Jordan** joining **Jean Coatar Antoniou**, **Tracey Tarantino DiBuono** and



Candace Jordan (second from left) with Jean Coatar Antoniou, Tracey Tarantino DiBuono and Cheryl Dyer Smith.

**Cheryl Dyer Smith** for their annual holiday dinner at Petit Pomey with cute friends... **Zurich Esposito** and **Brian McCormick** celebrated Thanksgiving in Palm Springs, CA... **Barbara Glunz Donovan** was toasted by the **Glunz ladies**, the family Wine Shop remains Chicago's oldest, since 1888... the three **O'Malley** lads, the twins, **Matt** and **Matt**, with **Pop O'Malley** at Gene & Georgetti's... Chicago's doyens of social fame turned out to celebrate a birthday for favorite **Sally Jo Morris Pfaff**.

**BOOK TALK:** Journey through a pictorial history of the Uptown Theatre with **Robert Loerzel** and **James A. Pierce**, co-authors of the new book, *The UPTOWN: Chicago's Endangered Movie Palace*. The discussion will take place 6 p.m. Monday, Dec. 8 at Chicago Architecture Center, 111 E. Wacker Dr.

**MART ANTHONY'S:** The most beautiful Christmas eatery in town. It's wondrous. Refined and soft lit, twinkling with Christmas light and garlands of pine everywhere. And the food sparkles. I've been on a fish diet for three weeks and their salmon with artichoke hearts, cherry tomatoes and peppers served on sautéed spinach was tops. Freshest ingredients in town. Going back real soon. Diners are first rate Chicago. The founder, former prizefighter, the late **Mart Anthony Campo**, was a longtime pal. Today, his son, **Johnny Campo**, and grandson **John Campo** took over and have really reinvented it.

**Earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone.**

- Cristina Rosetti

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(L) “It’s a different level of understanding, a different kind of knowledge – visceral, immediate, and profound,” said Byrne (left). *Photo by Hugo Hentoff* (R) A scene from Theater of the Mind. *Photo by Matthew DeFeo*

## Strong ticket sales for David Byrne’s ‘Theater of the Mind’ opening in River North

*The immersive theatrical experience, arguably the first to blend performance art with neuroscience, sold 3,000 tickets in two weeks for its March premiere at Reid Murdoch Building.*

BY STEVEN DAHLMAN  
*Loop North News*

It took just two weeks to sell 3,000 tickets to Talking Heads co-founder David Byrne’s immersive theatrical experience opening next March at Reid Murdoch Building.

Theater of the Mind will take 16 audience members at a time on a 75-minute “journey of self-reflection, discovery, and imagination inspired by and grounded in neuroscience,” according to Goodman Theatre, which is producing the experience as part of its 2025/2026 season.

Performances will start every 15 minutes. There will be 124 performances each week.

“Audiences will see, feel, taste, and hear this intimate and immersive journey of how we perceive and create our worlds,” according to The Goodman. “Led by a Guide whose stories are inspired from the creators’ lives, audiences will explore how they perceive the world through sensory experiments that reveal the inner mysteries of the brain.”

Tickets went on sale on Nov. 7 and range in price from \$66 to \$96. Initial ticket sales, says Goodman Theatre, have “exceeded projections.”

Friedman Properties says the theater project has signed a lease for 19,000 square feet of space on the ground floor of Reid Murdoch Building.

### Theater inspired by actual neuroscience

Byrne created Theater of the Mind with writer/investor Mala Gaonkar. Elmhurst native Andrew Scoville will direct it.

### Half-price Hot Tix at local theaters

Chicago theaters are offering a wide variety of tickets to plays, musicals, dance, and comedy offerings at half-off this holiday season.

The League of Chicago Theatres has made offerings available at <https://chicago-plays.com/chicago-theatre-guide/>. A list of shows with additional details about each production will be available and updated throughout the month at [www.Chicago-Plays.com](http://www.Chicago-Plays.com).

This discount ticket program runs from Dec. 4 through 15, for select productions, both holiday and non-holiday themed. To date, 47 productions are participating, including the Goodman Theatre, Broadway In Chicago, Chicago Children’s Theatre, Drury Lane Theatre, Marriott Theatre, and Northlight Theatre.

“The film and theater adage ‘show, don’t tell’ became a guiding principle in discovering a way to include these experiences in an entertaining and engaging show,” he said.

Gaonkar says she and Byrne consulted with cognitive neuroscience laboratories “to see how some of the most basic human intuitions determine how humans react.”

They concluded the experiments and concepts “seemed as engaging as any piece of theater.”

Theater of the Mind premiered in Denver on Aug. 31, 2022. It will open in Chicago on March 11, 2026.

The theater is among five leases signed recently at Reid Murdoch. The theater space is part of 107,000 square feet of leases Friedman Properties says it has completed recently at the 104-year-old Reid Murdoch Building, now an official City of Chicago landmark. The Chicago-based real estate investment and development firm acquired the eight-story, 320,000-square-foot building in 1998.

The leases include a new tenant, Smartly, an AI-powered advertising technology company that signed for 5,000 square feet of office space. Storck USA, which has had offices in the building since 2002, expanded from 20,000 to 30,000 square feet. The Motion Agency, a marketing agency located in the building since 2018, expanded from 20,000 to 25,000 square feet. And River Roast renewed its 28,000-square-foot restaurant space that has overlooked the Chicago River since 2014.

“The steady leasing activity at the Reid Murdoch Building speaks to the lasting appeal of places that intentionally combine work, dining, entertainment, and retail experiences in a walkable urban setting,”

said Albert Friedman, Chairman/CEO of Friedman Properties.

“In many ways, the building mirrors River North’s character, where a diversity of uses reflects the neighborhood’s balance of professional and social vibrancy,” Friedman said.

David Byrne (Co-Creator) is a musician, performer, writer, and multidisciplinary artist whose creative ventures have captivated audiences since 1975, when he co-founded the renowned group Talking Heads. In addition to Theater of the Mind, recent works include Here Lies Love, a musical with music by Byrne and Fatboy Slim (2023), SOCIAL! at The Park Avenue Armory, the Broadway production of Byrne’s American Utopia (2019) as well as the Spike Lee-directed film version (2020), the launch of his Reasons to be Cheer-

## Plan ahead for the annual Christmas Day bird count

The 72nd Lakefront Christmas Bird Count [CBC] will be held 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 25, when birders will sally forth to count birds and contribute their sightings to the oldest continuously running citizen science project in the world.

Hosted by the Chicago Ornithological Society, the count circle includes a wide variety of habitats along the Lake Michigan shoreline from the old oaks of Jackson Park, to the harbors of museum campus, to the dunes of Montrose Point.

The Lakefront Count Circle is the 15 mile diameter area centered on downtown Chicago. Given the presence of and overlap with the Chicago Urban Count, the Lakefront CBC is generally restricted to the city lakefront parks, greenspaces, and harbors east of Lake Shore Dr. from Foster Beach to Jackson Park.

The deadline for reservations to volunteer for the effort Monday, Dec. 8, to reserve visit <https://www.chicagobirder.org/events/2025/12/25/lakefront-christmas-bird-count>.

All guests are welcome to join in the endeavor: veteran and novice alike. You don’t have to be an expert on birds or the area. The society will match up people who have never done a CBC before with participants who have.

ful online magazine (2019), and the solo album American Utopia (2018). To date, Byrne has published five books including How Music Works (2012).

Tickets can be purchased by calling 312-443-3800 or by purchasing online at [TheaterOfTheMindChicago.com](http://TheaterOfTheMindChicago.com).

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Zoo animals like the snow

Last weekend’s snowstorm turned Lincoln Park Zoo into a winter wonderland, and Plains zebras Mike and Simon enjoyed a snowman in their habitat, thanks to their keepers. Snow acts as natural enrichment for animals by altering their habitat with new textures, sights, and smells to explore. When visitors see animals like Mike and Simon outside in the snow or cold temperatures, that’s because the animal is choosing to be there; if the zebras wanted to get out of the elements, they always have the option to go inside—just like every animal with an outdoor habitat.

Courtesy Lincoln Park Zoo

CURFEWS from p. 1

Mayor Johnson vetoed Hopkin’s ordinance to establish a place-and-time dependent curfew in June. It democratically passed through the City Council by 27 votes, yet Johnson chose to block it. Then around 9:50 p.m., nine teenagers were shot Downtown in two separate incidents. Seven were wounded in a mass shooting near the Chicago Theatre, 175 N. State St., and two others — including a 14-year-old boy who was killed — were shot in a separate incident.

Reportedly, Chicago Public Schools sent out emails to parents warning them of the youths’ plans to flood Downtown that Friday, and about 700 police officers were deployed for the tree-lighting event, but it wasn’t enough.

The new batch of violence has restarted the push for a change to the city’s curfew laws, with the introduction of “snap curfews.” That proposal would have allowed police to impose a youth curfew at any time and in any location with a 30-minute notice.

Chicago presently has a regular minor curfew between 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. for minors 12 and older, and 8:30 p.m. to 6 a.m. for those younger than 12 on most nights, with a slightly later start of 9 p.m. for the younger group on Friday and Saturday nights. A “snap curfew” ordinance would allow police to implement a temporary curfew for young people during specific large gatherings or riots.

The ordinance was first proposed last Summer, but faced opposition by radical activists including the Mayor, who called it unconstitutional while arguing that it could contribute to over-policing and civil rights abuses. Unfortunately, it now looks like the activists chose to accept further degradation of the central business district at precisely the same time downtown businesses were trying to draw more locals and visitors Downtown.

“I will not accept one proposition over another. We can invest in our young people, as the mayor suggests and that I agree with, while also protecting our neighborhoods from riots that are instigated by a violent few,” said Hopkins. He says that curfews may have very well protected the victims by preventing them from being on the street at all.

Hopkins now says he plans to resubmit a curfew proposal by the next council meeting. And Ald. Reilly said he supports the effort, saying he and Hopkins discussed renewed legislation during the Festival of Lights Parade.

“I plan to renew my efforts for a common-sense curfew that puts our communities first,” he said. “Safety can no longer be brushed to the side to accommodate political whimsy.”

ELKS from p. 1

its massive dome, heroic sculptures and intricately detailed friezes, the Memorial is a distinctively American interpretation of classical greatness.

Construction of the Memorial began in 1923, after the Order unanimously agreed on a spacious site for the building, looking out over Chicago’s Lincoln Park and within a stone’s throw of Lake Michigan.

Workers laid the memorial’s cornerstone on June 7, 1924 amid impressive ceremonies conducted by officers from the Grand Lodge. Two years later, on July 14, 1926, the Annual Convention of the Order was held in Chicago and the building was officially dedicated to the memory of the more than one thousand Elks lost in World

Workers laid the memorial’s cornerstone on June 7, 1924 amid impressive ceremonies conducted by officers from the Grand Lodge.

War I in front of a massive crowd of Elks and their families that stretched across the street and into the park.

For over 157 years, the Elks have championed service, patriotism, and community. In 2024, they contributed over \$520 million nationwide to support veterans, empower youth through scholarships, and strengthen local communities.

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Third composting site opens

The Dept. of Street and Sanitation expanded its drop-off locations for taxpayer-funded citywide food scrap composting initiative to include a third North Side location, for a total of 20 sites across the city.

North Side drop off locations include 5333 N. Western Ave., 5853 N. Broadway, and 6447 N. Ravenswood Ave. All kinds of food scraps are accepted with the program, including meat, bones, and dairy, as well as fruit and vegetable scraps and old leftovers.

LANE TECH from p. 1

year), and (DePaul Prep senior guard Woo) really went off on us,” LoGalbo added.

“So I thought we did a pretty good job on [Woo]. That was our game plan to cut those two out as best we could and make others beat us. But Porter really killed us.”

With Lane bringing out the defense to stop Woo, the lane opened up for Porter to excel.

“It just opened up there really. I didn’t even notice that Woo was cold. I thought he was pretty good. He just did some things that just can’t be put on the stat sheet,” said Porter.

Porter, a commit to Division 1 Univ. of Toledo, has become one of the top players in the City this season. He is ranked #5 in PrepHoops.com’s class of the 2026 players behind only Whitney Young’s Marquis Clark for top players in the City.

Somewhat unbelievably, Porter has been on state championship winning teams every year of high school. The DePaul Prep Rams won the 2A state championship in 2022 and 3A in 2023 and 2024. One might think he would be resting on his laurels, maybe looking ahead to college a little.

Not Rashaun. “I lost weight over the course of four years. I’ve lost a lot of weight, trying to get slimmer and prepare for college and bulk up and using more strength instead of fat,” Porter said.

“It’s boosted my game tremendously. Made me quicker and faster. Then I got in the weight room, so I did get stronger.”

It’s early in the year and the Rams are still growing into their new starting line-up. Porter, Woo and senior point guard AJ Chambers return to the starting line-up from last year’s 3A championship team.

Added to the starting lineup are juniors Gus Johnson who takes his brother Jonas’ spot. Jonas Johnson now plays at DePaul Univ. New to the line-up and the school is Zion Lee, a transfer from Springfield’s Sacred Heart—Griffin high school.

While obviously pleased with the win and the performance of his star player Porter, DePaul Prep head coach and Gordon Tech legend, Tom Kleinschmidt was circumspect about the early 3-0 start for his Rams.

“We are not where we need to be three games in. We are usually in a little bit better shape. I think you can see it in our woeful shooting percentage from three,” Kleinschmidt said.

“I think we left a lot out there today. I’m not knocking my team. I’m just saying I think we got a lot to work on, a lot to improve on. It’s got to happen quick. We’ve got Hyde Park Sunday who’s really good. We’ve got Loyola then we’ve got La Lumiere. So it better happen quickly.”

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