

Chicago is Broadway for weather people.

— John Coleman

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NEWS OF THE LOOP, STREETERVILLE, RIVER NORTH, NEAR NORTH, GOLD COAST & OLD TOWN

insideonline.com



Sean Pops is seen in a sampling of his 2025 mugshots.

Northwestern doctor beaten in hospital elevator, assailant arrested 12 times this year

BY CWBCHICAGO

Chicago police have arrested Sean Pops a dozen times this year, almost all of them for allegedly trespassing or damaging property on or near Northwestern Memorial Hospital's Streeterville campus. That string of cases follows seven arrests in 2024, again mostly on or near the hospital grounds. Records show he was also arrested at the facility twice in 2020, twice in 2021, once in 2022, and once in 2023.

But the 39-year-old will not be returning to Northwestern for a little while. That's because a judge ordered him jailed after prosecutors accused him of violently attacking a physician on an elevator at the hospital's parking garage.

The case marks yet another instance in which Cook County's criminal justice system cycled a repeat offender back onto the street only to see the behavior violently escalate.

Around 1:39 p.m. Nov. 2, a 42-year-old cardiologist entered a Northwestern elevator at 236 E. Huron St., according to court filings. Pops allegedly followed her onto the lift and immediately

began punching her in the head. He continued striking her, punching her again and again as she stumbled backward, covering her face with her hands, prosecutors said.

A Chicago police report added that the woman sustained multiple bruises, abrasions, and hematomas to her face, head, arm, and hand. She had no prior contact with Pops, officials said, and the attack was entirely unprovoked.

A Northwestern security officer instantly recognized Pops from surveillance video, citing "approximately 30 plus prior incidents at the hospital where [Pops] had to be removed," a detention petition stated. Another Northwestern officer reported having "incidents with [Pops] approximately two times a day over the last 19 months."

At the time of the attack, Pops was on pretrial release for allegedly trespassing at a Streeterville residential building in October and attempting to escape from the police station lockup afterward.

Judge Anthony Calabrese ordered him detained on a charge of aggravated battery in a public place.

Ashland, Western avenues may soon become Bus Priority Corridors, page 5

Virtual Community meeting on new deal for 1120-30 N. State St.

The Gold Coast Neighbors Assoc. and 2nd Ward office are co-hosting a virtual community meeting to provide an update to plans for the property located at 1120-30 N. State St. The site is currently home to Lou Malnati's and a vacant 2-story retail space that was most recently occupied by Barnes and Noble.

The meeting will take place 6 p.m. Monday, Dec. 15. To join this meeting, visit <https://us06-web.zoom.us/j/9876543210>, or contact the 2nd Ward office at office@aldermanhopkins.com.

In August 2021, the Alderman supported a zoning change allowing for the construction of a new

mixed-use building at the subject property, then owned by local developer Newcastle Investors. The property was recently purchased by Convexity Properties, which is also the owner and operator of the adjacent Viceroy Hotel property. Convexity is planning to proceed with a mixed-use construction project similar but smaller than the one approved in 2021.

"Many nearby residents have contacted my office over the last few years inquiring about the latest on the previously approved project," said Ald. Brian Hopkins. "There is now progress toward important economic development at this underutilized site, much of which has been a vacant eyesore for far too long."

Your Christmas gift from the city: The Rat Fink Patrol

The City of Chicago is now working toward making it easier for neighbors to fink on their neighbors.

A proposed new amendment of Municipal Code Chapter 9-108 would add a new Section 9-108-025 establishing a public enforcement pilot program for residents, allowing private parties to submit recorded evidence of parking offenses and violations, so that the city can ticket the unsuspecting target of the neighborhood rat fink.

The legislation now sits before the Committee on Pedestrian and Traffic Safety.

The changes to the public enforcement program would allow residents to record and report instances of vehicles blocking crosswalks, bus lanes, and bike lanes. It would encourage and empower local tattletales to submit recorded evidence of violations

of Section 9-12-060 or Section 9-40-060, either through the 3-1-1 application or through a website or other application designated by the Dept. of Transportation, for the City to use in enforcement of such violations.

The legislation now sits before the Committee on Pedestrian and Traffic Safety.

The program would be administered by the departments of Transportation and of Finance, in consultation with the Dept. of Technology and Innovation. If enacted, a city bureaucrat would be charged with inspection of the recorded images supplied by private citizens, and make a determination if a vehicle was or wasn't parked or standing illegally.

The program would be enforced

through the same system that red light and speeding camera tickets are, with adjudication within the Dept. of Administrative Hearings. Only this new proposal means the evidence could come directly from your nosy neighbor.

The filing is sponsored by Ald. Daniel La Spata [1st] and his co-sponsors include aldermen Michael Rodrigues [22nd], Byron Sigcho-Lopez [25th], Ruth Cruz [30th], Andre Vasquez, Jr. [40th], Timmy Knudsen [43rd], Bennett Lawson [44th], Matt Martin [47th], and Leni Manaa-Hoppenworth [48th].

The registered owner of the vehicle ratted out by their neighbor would be mailed a first warning notice over the commission of a covered offense. After the first warning notice has been issued, subsequent violations will result in ticketing by the Dept. of Finance.

Rich vs Poor Chicago tax spike caused by a perfect storm

BY DON DEBAT

The Home Front

Chicago and Cook County's brainy real estate tax experts are pointing fingers of blame while trying to explain the perfect storm.

When tens of thousands of Chicago homeowners realized that their median property tax bills catapulted 16.7% in a single year, reality hit them between the eyes.

For many of our neighbors who were hit hard, they can only dream that their tax increased by only 16.7%.

On Dec. 15 when taxes are due, the pain will be transferred to their wallets. Yes, 10 days prior to Christmas, the Cook County Grinch arrives to swipe all your gifts.

Experts say the tax-tsunami wave was caused by the financial death-dance between fat-cat downtown commercial property owners—millionaires who own high-rise apartment buildings, office towers and luxury hotels—and lowly bungalow owners in blue-collar neighborhoods.

Timing of the city's astronomical billion-dollar spending demands and the dire need to raise

taxes to pay for the excesses collided with the fox trot that likely will play out in the next mayoral election.

Several city aldermen blame Cook County Assessor Fritz Kaegi for skyrocketing property assessments, which led to dramatically higher tax bills.

Meanwhile, the Chicago Teachers Union, Mayor Brandon Johnson's only real supporters, is taking the side of the bungalow owners and blaming the skyscraper owners, when it is the schools who actually gobble up most of your property taxes.

Kaegi, who is up for reelection in 2026, responded by accusing the Cook County Board of Review—a three-member appeals body with whom he has feuded for years—of slashing downtown commercial property values.

Meanwhile, the Chicago Teachers Union, Mayor Brandon Johnson's only real supporters, is

taking the side of the bungalow owners and blaming the skyscraper owners, when it is the schools who actually gobble up most of your property taxes.

All a hapless property owner has to do is look at his or her property tax bill to realize that spending by the city's less than sterling Chicago Public Schools [CPS] account for a jaw-dropping half of their tax bite. Questionable spending when so many of our graduates leave school with below grade-level reading and math skills. Why are we rewarding failure?

One Old Town owner, who saw the second installment of his 2024 tax bill skyrocket 144.9% to an unbelievable \$20,157, glanced at the numbers. The total 2024 tax bill on the senior's brownstone 4-flat property was \$33,566, up 21.5% from \$27,628 in 2023. The Board of Education expenditures accounted for \$18,414 of the owner's 2024 tax bill. That's a whopping 45% of the total bill!

The senior—who lives on Social Security and a small pension—also is wondering how he will pay the first installment of the 2025

RICH VS POOR see p. 4

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Looking for Divine footprints in the snow



By Thomas J. O'Gorman

Do you remember the blizzard of 1967?

Don't think I ever saw so much snow before on a Chicago street. That was Jan. 26-27 when 23 inches of the white stuff fell on our metropolis. I was in high school, then, cheering the cancellation of Latin class.

Close friends were forced to abandon their new Pontiac Bonneville on the Dan Ryan. Stuck in a massive snow drift, they never saw it again. Lost forever.

Amazingly, I remember how good the food was during that storm. My grandmother kept the homemade bread and butter flowing. My mom kept the stews and soups cooking. It was ultimately a blizzard of togetherness. Cozy and vigilant. Constantly checking on our grandparents who were running their own soup kitchen three doors down. Shoveling snow netted hearty payoffs in vittles.

Despite the complications of that most peculiar winter weather, 55 years ago, it had some positive moments. People made the most of things. We were kind and helpful to one another. Chicago was slowed down by our greatest snowstorm, but tempers remained

calm.

Just 12 years later, Jan. 13-14, 1979, saw our Chicago blasted once again with a blizzard of magnitude. Twenty-one inches of snow. Bridgeport's Michael Bilandic was mayor. And in the aftermath those snowflakes weren't quite so cozy.

By April's election, Bilandic's mayoral career melted faster than the snow and Jane Burke Byrne became Chicago's mayor. A political apocalypse largely frozen in time from the blizzard.

Many Chicagoans believed Mayor Bilandic had botched the city's response to the "Snowmageddon." We all worried and complained about how snow was changing lives. Little did we know what political and significant social change was brewing just beneath the unplowed city streets.

Winter winds and heavy snow whittled away at Bilandic's political life. While at the same time it boosted the political career of Daley apostle Byrne. She had served as Chicago's Commissioner of Consumer Affairs. Her 1977 dismissal from office was seen by many as an act of vengeance. She was active, sharp as a tack, and her relationship to the late mayor many thought anointed her. The only woman in office on Daley's formidable team.

But fresh to the approaching election was the anger many Chicagoans carried with them from the blizzard.

Byrne won the mayor's race with 82.05% of the vote. A powerful statement on Chicago's love of snow. And the highest share of votes in the history of Chicago



By the morning of Friday, January 27, 1967, most all streets were impassable and nothing was moving. Lakeshore Drive was closed as were the expressways and toll roads. It was reported that thousands of cars were stuck in the middle of the streets and had been abandoned with snow up to their hoods or worse.

elections.

When I recall the drama of winter snows of the past, especially in 1967 and 1979, I am moved to hunt for larger things.

One more inch of snow in that 1967 storm, and yet it was a calmer, less bitter and less angry moment in many Chicago lives. Even if you lost your Bonneville on the Dan Ryan.

The stunning upset of a blizzard 12 years later changed many hearts by the suggestion no one was in-charge. It was time for a change in our self-awareness. Our understanding of ourselves. Our purpose. Our meaning. Blizzard snow, though, was just the background of the life-altering circumstances of great and purposeful change.

We hope these days of purpled Advent and blazing Hanukkah will sustain you with fresh understanding, grateful for the journey into the mystery of the Divine

One who draws you ever more near.

I plan to use well this extra down time in a shivering Chicago winter looking for the footprints of the Divine in the snow. We all should. So go make chicken noodle soup and sandwiches for the hungry, they're out there shivering too. Bring coffee for the chilled. Pay the bus fare for the poor. Give an extra \$5 to the tamale lady, she needs it more than you. Be a good neighbor.

COOKS NEEDED: H.O.M.E. is searching for guest chefs at Pat Crowley House in Edgewater and at the Nathalie Salmon House in Rogers Park. Cook and serve a meal (with dessert, if possible) for 10- 16 seniors and join dinner. It's a great way to give back. You can either bring food that you have already prepared, cook it from scratch or bring purchased meals. The essential is that the seniors have something nice to eat for dinner. You won't have to do the cleaning. Contact **Nikki Moustafa** at NikkiM@HOMEseniors.org.

NO SALE: Bloomberg News reports that, on Nov. 19, Goldman Sachs was unable to sell \$75 million in City of Chicago bonds, and was forced to take them off market. The bank reportedly could not find buyers even after boosting interest rates, and was forced to "[take] down a portion of a \$454 million debt deal from Chicago

even after boosting yields on the sales-tax bonds that hold higher ratings than the city." People are now asking what's up with the \$750 Million unspent from **Mayor Brandon Johnson's** last borrowing spree. Not to worry, we're in the best of hands.

TRAVEL BOOK: The book *Blessing My Mother's Rosary: Lourdes. Loss. Love.* was named Best Travel/Pilgrimage Book for 2025 by the prestigious Catholic Media Assoc. It is written by **Carla Knorowski**, a Lake View author. It is an exquisitely touching memoir for those who have lost a parent or loved one,



Carla Knorowski

for those who have ever visited Lourdes or other sacred places, for those who have never taken such a pilgrimage or wish to, and for those who believe in miracles large and small. Knorowski is senior advancement advisor at The Henry Ford; the former president and chief development officer of the U.S. Naval War College Foundation, and the former CEO of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Foundation.

JUDICIAL: Judge Charles Beach II has been Sworn in as Cook County's New Chief Judge replacing **Judge Timothy Evans** after 20 years. And the Chicago Board of Elections welcomes its new Commissioner **Laura Kotelman**, who was sworn in by

DIVINE see p. 8

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Dec. 31st deadline looms

Mayor opposes alternative proposals sponsored by 26 City Council members

BY PETER VON BUOL

On the evening of Dec. 4, Mayor Brandon Johnson once again soundly rejected an alternative budget proposed by a group of 26 of the Chicago City Council's 50 aldermen. That proposal offers an alternative budget the 26 think best protects Chicago's financial future and working families.

"Many of the 26 colleagues who signed onto the alternative budget [have been] meeting with the mayor's staff this weekend [Dec. 6 and 7] to discuss the budget," said Ald. Scott Waguespack [32nd], a longtime advocate for financial transparency in city finances.

"We are in a time of fiscal distress, self-imposed by the mayor, but we are providing options, many that came [directly] from the Ernst & Young [Financial and Strategic Reform Options] report paid for by city taxpayers," said Ald. Waguespack. "We are not cutting back on public safety, nor closing schools as the mayor contends. Under our budget approach Chicago Public Schools will still be getting the full amount they are entitled to from the roughly

\$1 billion Tax Increment Finance district surplus."

According to the recently-released financial report compiled by the accounting firm Ernst and Young, 155 N. Wacker Dr., the city of Chicago is facing a \$1 billion deficit over the next two year period. Within its report, which had been compiled at the behest of the city of Chicago, Ernst and Young's financial experts had made recommendations to cut costs and to increase revenue.

Mayor Johnson's recently proposed \$16.6 billion budget failed to include the accounting firm's recommendations. Instead, Johnson proposed reviving a tax on businesses which employ a certain number of employees.

Decades ago, implementation of such a tax sent an innumerable number of businesses and manufacturers to Chicago's suburbs. Johnson's budget uses an odd term for the reintroduction of the employee head tax: "Community Safety Surcharge."

In November, credit-rating agency Standard and Poor's Global Ratings dropped the city of Chicago from stable to negative.

"The outlook revision reflects our view of the persistent structural budget deficit, significantly weaker reserves following years of deficit spending, and reluctance to fully fund supplemental pension contributions in the fiscal

Decades ago, implementation of such a tax sent an innumerable number of businesses and manufacturers to Chicago's suburbs. Johnson's budget uses an odd term for the reintroduction of the employee head tax: "Community Safety Surcharge."

2026 proposed budget pursuant to its advance pension funding policy," according to S&P's Nov. report.

Prior to becoming the mayor, Brandon Johnson had been employed as a union organizer for the Chicago Teachers' Union. Union members have provided

DEADLINE see p. 4

Watchdog warns \$1B TIF surplus budget sweep creates long-term costs

Civic Federation's report noted Johnson's record surplus props up budgets, while starving neighborhood projects

BY ERIC WEILBACHER
TheRealDeal.com

Chicago's go-to fiscal referee is raising alarms over Mayor Brandon Johnson's plan to pull a record \$1 billion from the city's Tax Increment Finance [TIF] districts to plug budget holes and help pay for a new teachers contract.

In a report released Dec. 1, the local watchdog group Civic Federation said the administration's revamped surplus declaration process has effectively turned TIF into a stealth property tax, the Chicago Sun-Times reported, diverting funds meant for reinvestment in struggling neighborhoods to cover operating needs at City Hall and Chicago Public Schools.

According to the watchdog, the shift is both politically convenient and structurally risky. Surpluses have spiked from \$177 million in 2017 to \$712 million this year and are projected to hit \$1 billion in 2026. But the group argues that the one-time boost engineered by Johnson — which sharply limited aldermanic prerogative to stockpile TIF dollars for pending projects — can't be repeated. With many of the city's 108 TIF districts set to expire beginning in 2030, the revenue well is expected to run dry as budgets across local agencies remain under strain.

The report highlights a core tension in the program. TIF was designed to channel growth in property values back into the areas that generated it, typically

via infrastructure upgrades or development subsidies. Instead, Chicago has leaned on it to fund day-to-day operations, a move the Civic Federation says undercuts the very communities TIF is meant to lift. It is contrary to the letter and the intent of TIF laws.

By law, TIF funds are to be spent within the boundaries of the specific geographic areas they're taken from. TIF funds are supposed to be spent on public improvements, funding projects like infrastructure, job training, or developer assistance, using the Illinois Tax Increment Redevel-

opment Allocation Act (65 ILCS 5/11-74.4), requiring public hearings, Joint Review Board approval, and strict financial reporting to the State Comptroller.

Using TIF funds for general operational expenses is generally illegal because state law strictly defines "redevelopment project costs," requiring funds to benefit specific, eligible development/redevelopment within the district, not just plug budget holes or fund day-to-day government operations. While TIFs can offer

WATCHDOG see p. 4

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RICH VS POOR from p. 1

property tax bill which will be due in four-and-a-half months on April 1, 2026. That estimated bill will be \$20,157 plus 5%—or a total of \$21,185.

And, it is likely that the second installment of the 2025 bill—due on Aug. 1, 2026—will be a similar or larger amount as the first installment of 2025 taxes.

So, unless the owner files for—and wins—a Senior Freeze Exemption, it is possible the senior could be hit with three crushing tax payments totaling a mind-boggling \$62,527 within eight-and-a-half months!

How will small “Ma-and Pa” landlords ever be able to pay Mount Everest-like taxes without selling out, or passing on double-digit rent increases to tenants?

Rental fees on the rise

Squeezed by higher operating costs, many landlords with under-market rental rates are upping base rental charges by passing through fees.

For example, fees—ranging from \$25 to \$200-plus on average per month—are “bundled utility pass-throughs,” that may include water and sewer, electric, heat, garbage hauling, landscaping and snow removal. Dog and cat lovers may be billed monthly “pet rent” of \$25 to \$75 per animal to recoup the landlord’s fees for pet wear-and-tear on the apartment and building premises.

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Most landlords are not charging a security deposit, which typically is refundable, less any damages to the unit. Instead, to improve cash flow, more owners are charging up-front, non-refundable move-in and administrative fees to help cover the cost of the tenant’s wear and tear on the apartment.

All a hapless property owner has to do is look at his or her property tax bill to realize that spending by the city’s less than sterling Chicago Public Schools [CPS] account for a jaw-dropping half of their tax bite. Questionable spending when so many of our graduates leave school with below grade-level reading and math skills. Why are we rewarding failure?

With tax bills soaring, some apartment owners and managers are considering inserting a clause in the standard Chicago Real Estate Board lease that mirrors typical commercial leases.

For example, in a “net lease” used by many commercial managers, the tenant is responsible for a percentage of the building operating expenses, such as property taxes, insurance and maintenance costs, in addition to rent.

Schools account for 45%

For owners and managers, the dinosaur in the room is the cost the Board of Education allocated to the property tax bill. In 2024, the CPS increased its tax levy by 4.5% to nearly \$4 billion. The CPS is subject to caps on how much it can increase property taxes. However, loopholes exist.

The CPS received a special property tax

levy of nearly \$700 million to help pay for Chicago teachers’ pensions, interest on borrowing and capital projects, according to a recent analysis by the Civic Federation and the Univ. of Chicago.

Assessor Kaegi now is calling for reforms to protect homeowners and raising alarms about the unfairness of a property tax system that forces reductions in downtown commercial properties to be shouldered by Black and Latino residents.

“The property tax system is inherently unfair,” said Kaegi. “When commercial properties have their assessments lowered by the Board of Review, homeowners are forced to pay the difference. We cannot have a property tax system that favors corporations and does not provide protections for homeowners.”

Currently, there is no “annual cap” on how high, or how often, taxes are levied on property owners. Critics wonder why property owners who don’t have children, who are older, empty nesters, or those who home-school their children, or pay for private schooling, must be burdened with paying for schools they do not utilize.

This is why Kaegi has been fighting for a “circuit breaker” in the Illinois Legislature in Springfield. It would limit how much a homeowner’s tax bill can increase from year to year.

A report from Cook County Treasurer Maria Pappas shows that while the Assessor’s Office continues to fairly assess homeowners in the neighborhoods of Chicago, large downtown commercial properties are seeing hefty reductions from appeals at the Board of Review.

These reductions, combined with a red-hot residential real estate market, are causing unsustainable tax bill increases for homeowners, particularly for Black and Latino residents.

“Homeowners who stayed in their homes and invested in their community continue to be harmed by this system,” said Assessor Kaegi.

“These increases for residents are outra-



One Old Town owner, who saw the second installment of his 2024 tax bill skyrocket 144.9% to an unbelievable \$20,157.

geous, especially as commercial properties are seeing their taxes go down. I will work with legislators to stop this ongoing racial inequity.”

Kaegi said the Assessor’s Office will continue to advocate for “circuit breaker” legislation at the state level to provide property tax relief to homeowners that have seen unsustainable bill spikes.

A recent analysis by the Assessor’s Office found that nearly 250,000 households have seen this kind of spike in recent years.

“It’s going to be an incredibly difficult year for many of Chicago’s most vulnerable homeowners to find the money to pay their tax bills. It shouldn’t have to be that way,” said Kaegi. “I encourage every homeowner to take advantage of the help our office provides to deal with these unfair tax spikes while I continue to reform this broken system.”

Of course the other option to avoid having your home’s equity seized annually by Cook County is to move out of Illinois into a low tax state. That is just what many people who did attain solid math skills in school have been doing for the last decade.

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.

DEADLINE from p. 3

the majority of financial support for his election campaign.

“We are facing very difficult choices and must put ourselves in the best financial footing possible,” said Waguespack. “The Mayor’s budget is anti-business and anti-working family. The head tax alone would do damage to small, medium and large businesses throughout our city and is opposed by many businesses we talk to.”

While Waguespack and his City Council colleagues have continued budget negotiations with Johnson’s staff, if no consensus is reached, the city’s financial future remains bleak.

“Other aspects of the [Johnson] budget like borrowing hundreds of millions for operating expenses is bad governing and something we did away with years ago,” said Waguespack. “The Mayor’s budget borrowing is putting hundreds of millions more in repayments directly on the backs of children. These and other bad financial practices would cost taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars more in future interest

WATCHDOG from p. 3

flexible financing for projects, they’re for development in blighted areas, and misuse for operations is a violation of the TIF Act, and thereby subject to scrutiny and audits.

Once districts expire, their restored assessed value flows back into the tax base. Local governments can then apply existing tax rates to a larger base, producing a permanent levy increase that doesn’t count against statutory caps.

That dynamic has fueled fierce push-back inside the City Council. Even allies of the mayor balked at the size of this year’s sweep of funds during budget hearings. Ald. Michelle Harris, who represents a South Side ward that relies heavily on TIF

“The Mayor’s budget is anti-business and anti-working family. The head tax alone would do damage to small, medium and large businesses throughout our city and is opposed by many businesses we talk to,” said Ald. Scott Waguespack.

through additional credit downgrades,” he said.

According to Waguespack, it is not yet too late to improve the city’s financial outlook and he and his colleagues will continue to meet with the mayor and his staff.

“We will meet with the mayor’s budget team to reset the budget and will work to pass a budget that protects residents and businesses of Chicago. We must pass a budget by Dec. 31st, so we can continue our efforts to collaborate where we can keep our local government running into the new year,” said Waguespack.

The Civic Federation’s broader message is blunt: Chicago can’t rely on TIF surpluses to balance budgets forever.

to finance public amenities, warned that a broad sweep would wipe out long promised park, school and library projects.

Ald. Nicole Lee voiced similar concerns, saying a field house in her ward could lose virtually all of its set-aside funding while waiting on routine cost estimates.

The Civic Federation’s broader message is blunt: Chicago can’t rely on TIF surpluses to balance budgets forever.

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BROADWAY PLAYHOUSE
BROADWAY IN CHICAGO

Ashland, Western avenues may soon become Bus Priority Corridors

BY PETER VON BUOL

North Siders may feel like they're being crowded out on suddenly narrowing area roadways, because they are. This is not an accident but a planned action, part of the ongoing systemic segregation of access to roadways.

Next up, the Chicago Dept. of Transportation [CDOT] is planning to turn both Ashland and Western avenues into Bus Priority Corridors, with the stated goal of "making bus travel faster, more convenient and more comfortable" for riders.

That will take its form in narrower roadways, less parking and slower traffic for everyone else.

While Mayor Brandon Johnson and the Chicago City Council have been at a budget impasse, many citizens see that one city department seems to have an unlimited supply of money to spend.

According to researchers at the Better Government Assoc. [BGA], beginning in 2021, CDOT has become the second-highest funded city department, behind only the Chicago Police Dept.

"Largely driven by a billion dollar increase in budgeted construction spending, roughly tripled the department's appropriation over three years," according to a recent report by the BGA's Geoffrey Cabbage, a research analyst.

Cabbage describes CDOT as a "heavily grant-dependent department" as it is only 13% locally-funded in this year's budget proposal, up slightly from the previous year's 11.5%.

"More than half of CDOT's proposed budget comes from the Federal Grants funds, with another 21.8% from the State Grants funds. In addition to those and the

Local Public and Private Grant fund and COVID-19 Grant fund, CDOT's 2026 budget draws \$67.1 million in appropriations from a new Disaster Recovery grant fund, which was not present in the 2025 budget," according to Cabbage.

In the 2026 budget, CDOT's share from the motor fuel tax fund will be nearly \$107 million, an increase of more than \$2 million from the previous year. So CDOT is flush with spending money.

According to researchers at the Better Government Assoc. [BGA], beginning in 2021, CDOT has become the second-highest funded city department, behind only the Chicago Police Dept.

Throughout the year, CDOT and the Chicago Transit Authority have hosted a series of meetings to introduce the public to the Bus Priority Corridor Study which has been described as a way to "explore ways to make bus travel faster, more convenient, and more comfortable for riders on five key bus corridors, including Western Avenue (from Howard to 79th)."

According to officials at the CTA, the study is the next step in the full implementation of CDOT's citywide Better Streets for Buses [BSB] Plan. Both the Ashland Ave. and Western Ave. bus routes have continued to experience significantly reduced ridership. According to data from the Regional Transit Authority, both remain well below pre-pandemic ridership, when the consumer made a conscious choice to use private, and/or shared car services to

get around.

As part of BSB, parking lanes (even those with parking meters) are being converted into dedicated lanes for buses.

"[This helps] keep other vehicles clear of areas where buses need priority. This helps buses travel faster, stay on schedule, and allows for easier boarding—making riding the bus a more reliable and attractive travel option," according the authors of the BSB plan.

According to the report, bus priority lanes are selected for the busiest streets. Also adding to the effort are severe financial penalties for cars who cross into those dedicated lanes through automated tickets from cameras that will be placed on buses and other government vehicles.

"Bus lanes are most effective in areas with high levels of traffic congestion. They are usually used on bus routes that run very frequently and have high ridership," according to the authors of the BSB report.

The BSB Plan was created as a result of the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning's On To 2050 Plan. Despite its name, the plan was first implemented pre-pandemic, eight years ago. It did not plan for cultural changes resulting from the pandemic and its government-imposed lockdown.

Similar to the central planners of the old Soviet Union, the study authors believed that if they planned for something to happen, it would. Its stated goal had been to double transit ridership in northeastern Illinois. Unintended consequences were never contemplated.

In reality, less than three years after it was released, transit ridership dropped dramatically with the onset of COVID-

New Years Eve party on the River

Grammy Award-winning artist Chance the Rapper will perform during Chicago's "Dick Clark's New Year's Rockin' Eve with Ryan Seacrest 2026," starting at 7 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 31, live on ABC.

The festivities will take place along the Chicago Riverwalk at Wacker Dr. from Wells to Lake streets, with the main stage located at Wacker and Franklin. The broadcast, also hosted by Chance, marks the city's debut as the program's featured Central Time zone location.

The event will feature this city's musical heritage, with a lineup of acts hailing from Chicago from Blues to House and more from 9 p.m. to midnight.

House musicians include DJ Mike P., NAACP Image Award-winning poet and artist J. Ivy, followed by Chicago Blues vocalist Shemekia Copeland, before Chance the Rapper takes the stage for the countdown performance to ring in the new year.

A custom audio/visual projection program from ART on The Mart will be displayed from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. before on-stage performances begin. The Mart will then transform into the backdrop for the 2026 countdown as fireworks are launched from bridges along the Riverwalk.

More information visit www.chicago.gov/NYE.

19 and it has never recovered. There has also been a mass exodus of businesses from Chicago's downtown central business district.

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Police Beat...

Hit and run in Lake View

Chicago police are seeking information that may assist two Lake View residents involved in a reckless driving hit-and-run at Belmont and Sheffield at about 7 a.m. Monday, Dec. 1. The driver struck their vehicle while traveling south on Sheffield, causing injuries to both residents and the death of their dog, before continuing southbound.

Police are hoping to locate video footage that clearly captures the license plate. Those who have any information about this incident, or have video footage showing a license plate, can call 773-525-6034.

Man charged with multiple counts of robbery

An 18 year old man is being charged as a juvenile for four counts of felony Robbery. He was a juvenile offender at the time of the following offenses.

The man was arrested on Dec. 4, in the 800 block of E. 44th St. He was identified as one of the offenders who participated in multiple robberies earlier this year including one on June 16 in the 400 block of N. Wabash Ave. of a 24-year-old male victim; another June 22 in the 600 block of N. Dearborn St. of a 26-year-old male victim; 2 a.m. July 6 on the 400 block of N. State St. of an 28-year-old male victim, and 3 a.m. July 6, on the 400 block of N. Lower Michigan Ave. to a 52-year-old male victim.

The offender was placed into custody and charged accordingly.

Insanity finding for man who said he killed victim after feeling threatened by plastic fork



Daniel Macias, left, and Christopher Samaniego.

A Chicago man who told police he fatally stabbed another man in an Irving Park alley because he felt threatened by a plastic fork has been found not guilty by reason of insanity.

Judge Ursula Walowski issued the ruling for 30-year-old Daniel Macias after a bench trial and ordered Macias to undergo inpatient treatment. He remains in the Cook County jail awaiting placement by the Illinois Dept. of Human Services.

Prosecutors said surveillance cameras recorded Macias leaving his home around 9:45 p.m. June 28, 2023, wearing Beats headphones as he walked toward the alley behind the 3600 block of N. Kedzie Ave. About 15 minutes later, the video showed him trailing Christopher Samaniego, 49.

As Macias closed the distance,

he removed a knife from a sheath as Samaniego reached into his backpack and pulled out a plastic fork, prosecutors said. Video allegedly showed Macias lunging at Samaniego and stabbing him once. Samaniego swung his backpack to fend him off, but Macias stabbed him two more times and fell to the ground, knocking off Macias' headphones.

Samaniego ran, and Macias followed. They crossed paths with a witness who called 911. Samaniego, who suffered five stab wounds, later died. Investigators recovered a broken plastic fork and a pair of Beats headphones near a pool of blood in the alley.

During Macias' first court appearance, his defense attorney said Macias had been attempting to start an artificial intelligence company and suggested that mental health issues may have influenced the killing. Judge Walowski later found that Macias met the legal definition of insanity at the time of the stabbing.

Man robbed three banks in the Loop, but failed twice



A surveillance image of the robber and, inset, a 2015 mugshot of Timothy Brown.

A man who received a 3-year federal prison sentence for robbing a bank in the Loop in 2021 is now accused of robbing 3 banks in the Loop on Dec. 1, although two of those robberies failed.

Federal prosecutors on Dec. 2 charged 62-year-old Timothy Brown with robbing the Fifth Third Bank at 2 S. LaSalle St., capping what investigators describe as a 24-minute stretch in which Brown unsuccessfully tried to rob two other banks inside the Chicago Board of Trade Building before finally getting away with about \$920 at the third location.

Brown is well known to Chicago police and the FBI. In 2021, officers used a chain of private and city surveillance cameras to track a Loop bank robber from 55 East Monroe Street to a homeless encampment in Chinatown, where they found Brown with seven \$100 bills in his pockets and medical records linking him to the crime. He pleaded guilty in that case and received a 3-year sentence in federal prison.

According to the new complaint, Brown walked into the Chase Bank inside the Board of Trade around 9:25 a.m. Monday, wearing dark pants, a blue-and-black checkered jacket, a black hoodie with a bear graphic, and a gray pom-pom beanie. He allegedly told a teller, "This is bank robbery, I have a gun, I want \$10,000."

The teller locked her computer and walked to a secure area, prompting Brown to leave empty-handed two minutes later.

Three minutes after that, cameras recorded him at the Lakeside Bank branch just steps away. He again asked for \$10,000 and announced a robbery, but the Chase manager and security guard burst into the lobby and ordered him out, the federal complaint said. Brown grabbed a piece of candy from a jar and walked off.

At 9:47 a.m., Brown allegedly entered the Fifth Third Bank at LaSalle and Madison streets. A teller offered help, handed him a withdrawal slip, and Brown allegedly responded, "This is a robbery, I want five thousand," while moving a hand under his jacket as if he had a gun.

The teller pressed the hold-up button and handed Brown \$920, the complaint said. Brown allegedly took the cash in an envelope and left.

Nearly two hours later, Chicago

police officers patrolling near 29th and State spotted a man wearing the same distinctive clothing seen on the bank cameras. Body-worn video shows officers detaining Brown and recovering about \$548 from his pockets. Federal agents charged him with bank robbery by intimidation.

CPS to pay \$17.5M to woman for years of sex abuse by high school dean

Chicago Public Schools has agreed to pay \$17.5 million to a young woman to settle her claims that a male dean at Little Village Lawndale High School sexually abused her for years, allegedly culminating in two pregnancies that ended in coerced abortions, both of which allegedly occurred before she graduated high school, allegedly at the hands of Brian Crowder, former dean of students at the high school.

On Dec. 3, the Chicago Board of Education, which oversees CPS, signed off unanimously on the settlement with the woman, identified only as Jane Doe. The settlement ranks as the highest financial award for a school sexual abuse claim in Illinois history and the second largest payout for a sexual abuse case of any kind in Illinois history.

The deal was reached hours before the woman was set to proceed to trial in Cook County Circuit Court over her claims of alleged severe sexual abuse at the hands of her high school dean, which allegedly began when she was only 15 years old. According to the complaint, the student attended Social Justice High School from 2012-2016.

According to the complaint, Crowder allegedly took the student to abortion clinics, where he allegedly claimed to be her parent to sidestep a law then on the books requiring parental notification for minors seeking abortions. The lawsuit did not indicate which abortion clinics may have performed the illegal abortions.

Crowder allegedly signed consent forms for both procedures under a false name. It doesn't state if the clinics required Crowder to verify his identity before conducting the abortions.

That parental authorization law is no longer in effect, after Gov. JB Pritzker and the Democratic supermajority in the Illinois General Assembly repealed the parental notification requirement in 2022.

Man on pretrial release tried to kill CTA passenger by pushing him onto the tracks: prosecutors

A seven-time convicted felon who has been non-compliant with court orders in a pending misdemeanor case tried to kill a man with an intellectual disability by pushing him onto the CTA tracks as a Blue Line train was approaching the station, prosecutors said Dec. 3.



Tommie O. Carter

Tommie O. Carter, 39, has been ignoring a judge's orders to check in with court officers since being charged in October with trespassing at a Loop building and spitting toward a Chicago police officer who took him into custody, according to court records.

He is now charged with attempted first-degree murder for a violent attack on Dec. 1 at the Harlem Blue Line station in Forest Park.

The 59-year-old victim was standing on the down ramp from the station entrance to the platform when Carter approached him and repeatedly asked for a dollar around 8:30 a.m., according to a detention filing provided by the Cook County State's Attorney's Office. The victim, who was born with an intellectual disability, told Carter he did not have any money.

Carter closed the distance between

DePaul attack case ends with misdemeanor plea and probation

A suburban man who faced a slate of hate crime and felony battery charges tied to an alleged anti-semitic attack on the DePaul Univ. campus, resolved the case by pleading guilty to a single misdemeanor, court records show.

Adam Erkan, 20, pleaded guilty to a reduced charge of misdemeanor battery before Judge Tyria Walton, who sentenced him to two years of probation and ordered 100 hours of community service, according to the records. Prosecutors dismissed seven felonies, including four hate crime counts. The outcome brings a relatively swift end to a case filed in April but rooted in allegations from Nov. 6, 2024.

Prosecutors said the Hoffman Estates resident was among the people who confronted DePaul students who were showing support for Israel during a surge of pro-Palestinian demonstrations on campus and throughout Chicago late last year. In a civil lawsuit filed against the university, student Max Long alleged he suffered a concussion during the confrontation, while another student, Michael Kaminsky, said he sustained a broken wrist.

Video cameras allegedly recorded Erkan arriving on DePaul's Lincoln Park campus about an hour before the confrontation in a vehicle registered to his father. At the same time, Long was outside the school's student center, 2250 N. Sheffield Ave., wearing a sweatshirt reading "Curb Your Antisemitism" and holding a



Mugshot of Adam Erkan (inset) and a surveillance image of one of the suspects.

sign that invited people to "talk about Israel with an [Israel Defense Forces] soldier," officials said. He and Kaminsky had been speaking with students about Israel at that location for several months, according to a court filing.

Erkan, wearing a ski mask, and a companion eventually engaged the men. After a lengthy conversation, Erkan's companion knocked Long unconscious, prosecutors said. When Kaminsky stepped in, Erkan allegedly pulled him away and pushed him to the ground.

Court records show Erkan had no prior criminal history.

them, pointed in the man's face, and backed him down the ramp, the filing said. Carter then pushed the victim to the ground, but he was able to get up and move toward the platform. Carter followed him, struck him in the head, and then shoved him in the back with enough force to knock him off the platform and onto the Blue Line tracks, coming dangerously close to the electrified third rail, according to the detention document.

A train was already approaching the station as the victim lay injured and unable to move because he had suffered multiple fractures to his right knee and another fracture in his left knee.

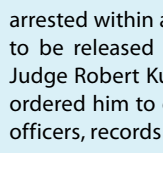
CTA personnel and a bystander rushed to help the man, and the transit worker was able to stop the train and cut power to the third rail.

Forest Park police took Carter into custody a short time later. As officers escorted him to a squad car, Carter allegedly spat on an officer's forehead. Carter continued spitting at the police station, hitting two more officers, according to prosecutors.

Carter's background includes a long record of felony convictions, including aggravated unlawful use of a weapon, robbery, attempted armed robbery, drug offenses, retail theft, and manufacturing or delivering cannabis. He has also faced 40 separate misdemeanor cases in Cook County since 2001.

On Oct. 17, he was arrested after refusing to leave the Citadel Center, 198 S. State St., in the Loop, according to a CPD report. Carter allegedly spat toward an officer and damaged a squad car during the arrest.

Judge Luciano Panici Jr. ordered him to check in with the court's pretrial officers the next day, but Carter never did that, and he failed to appear in court on October 24, according to court records. He was arrested within a couple of days, only to be released again on Oct. 27 by Judge Robert Kuzas, who once again ordered him to check in with pretrial officers, records show.



Kenneth Smith

On Nov. 24, pretrial officers filed a report with Kuzas saying Carter had not contacted them at all since Judge Panici issued the initial order on Oct. 18.

The report asked Kuzas to "kindly ... instruct the justice involved individual to contact" a pretrial officer. Kuzas scheduled a hearing on the violations for Dec. 15 and released Carter once again.

Career criminal shoplifted from same Target store 10 times in 12 days

A man with more criminal cases on his record than most people have holiday decorations is accused of pulling off 10 shoplifting raids in 12 days at the same Lincoln Park Target store, a rapid-fire streak that prosecutors say netted more than \$1,200 in merchandise.

Kenneth Smith, 58, of Westchester, is charged with operating a continuing financial crime enterprise after investigators linked him to the lightning-quick thefts at the company's 555 W. Webster Ave. location, all caught on video.

Prosecutors say the crime spree began on Aug. 30, while Smith was on probation for a shoplifting case and just three days after the state dropped yet another theft case because the victim did not appear in court. The raids, officials said, seemed almost mechanical: Aug. 30: A two-minute raid for comforters and sheets worth \$196; Aug. 31: At 8:25 a.m., another two-minute sweep netted \$206 in Dove body wash. That night, a four-minute spin stripped the shelves of \$247 in body wash and men's t-shirts; Sept. 2: Two minutes, \$112 in bedding; Sept. 3: Two minutes, \$66 in bedding; Sept. 4: Two minutes, \$88 in Dove soap; Sept. 5: \$94 in bedding; Sept. 8: Bedding, socks, and t-shirts valued at \$161; Sept. 9: Stuffed bags with five more sets of sheets worth \$134, and on Sept. 10: Hygiene products, men's underwear, t-shirts, and bed sheets worth \$206.

Operating a continuing financial crime enterprise is a Class 1 felony that can be filed when someone is

POLICE BEAT see p. 10

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Commentary

My Chicago Nativity Scene

Who swiped Jesus, Joseph and Mary?

BY MICHAEL SULLIVAN

With all the snow we got last week, I tried to add a nice Chicago touch to the Nativity scene in front of my home so I added a snowman. Since I am not very artistic, the snowman is leaning and looks like a drunk cityworker.

Oh well, no harm-no foul. Or so I thought.

My neighbor the feminist complained because I built a snowman and not a snowwoman. So I added a snowwoman. Then a gay couple from down the block complained. "Why are you forcing your sexual stereotypes upon snow people? Why not two men?"

Then another couple stopped by, they were upset both snowmen were white and did not represent the diversity of Chicago... So I darkened one of the snowpeople. Then the NAACP was upset because they thought I was signifying my cultural appropriation by using blackface... That's when someone from the LGBTQI+ club stopped me, upset because I did not include a transgendered person of snow.

Then the feminist came back and complained again because she thought I purposely built a voluptuous snowwoman that objectified females. A global warming conspiracy theorist complained that I used coal for the snowpersons' eyes and thought that ridiculed green energy... A vegan complained that I used carrots for the noses and cursed me as a "meateater." A fundamentalist evangelical complained that the snowpeople were not clothed and thought that was dirty, and a Middle Eastern man was upset that that snowwoman's head was unscarved, so out came the hijab.

The feminist came back to complain that the broom signified that I believed women should be subjugated to domestic housework... during her lecture, a neighborhood dog did his business and the dog owner, I mean parent, did not pick up... the local Ward Superintendent stopped by and wrote me a ticket for dog waste and to remind me to make a donation to the fundraiser at his kids' school... A City Inspector showed up and wrote me tickets for a public display of art without an official Unauthorized Public Display of Art Permit, for not obtaining a Building Permit to erect a 24-inch tall Nativity scene, and for not obtaining a Public Amusement License... A lady from the Mayor's office came by and swiped the snowpeople's coal eyes saying they're going in the Mayor's gift room, hoping they'd become diamonds some day, and then she suggested a hammer and sickle for the oppressed snow worker instead of the broom.

Then the Chicago Federation of Labor picketed my home because I did not hire union workers to put up a 24-inch Nativity scene, and they put up a 16-foot tall inflatable rat, but they didn't have a per-

SCENE see p. 10

Old Town knife attack suspect cycled through multiple arrests and electronic monitoring before latest rampage

BY CWBCHICAGO

Prosecutors last week charged a 43-year-old man with attacking or trying to attack three strangers with a knife during a rampage in Old Town two months ago.

But what happened in the months and weeks leading up to that incident is an increasingly familiar Chicago story: Repeated arrests. Repeated violations. Repeated warnings. And repeated releases by judges who kept putting him back on the street.

A review of Chicago Police Dept. reports and court records shows how often Tyshaun Stampley — usually arrested as Rashaun or Rashaun Stampley — cycled in and out of custody before the Old Town attacks. Judges saw missed court dates, new arrests, and multiple violations of pretrial release conditions. Yet each time, he was allowed out, although he was often supposed to be on electronic monitoring, even after he failed to comply with that pro-



Stampley is seen in a selection of his 2025 mugshots.

gram.

His arrest trail begins around 1 a.m. March 24 near the Mag Mile.

Officers responding to calls of a man removing his clothing found Stampley clothed but intoxicated in the 700 block of N. Rush St., a CPD report said. Cops released him to the fire department so he could be taken to Northwestern Memorial Hospital for detox, according to the report.

As a paramedic helped him into

an ambulance, Stampley allegedly swung and struck the medic in the right side of the face. Police removed him from the ambulance and arrested him for aggravated battery of an EMT, a felony. That offense is not detainable under the SAFE-T Act and he was released the next day without electronic monitoring.

Court records show he missed his next hearing on March 31. He was not missing for long.

On April 3, cops arrested around 1 a.m. in the 1100 block of W. Wilson Ave.

A CPD report said he yelled out to a 40-year-old man, "Hey Chinaman! Hey! Yo! I don't like Chinese men!" before punching the man above the left eye, leaving

a bruise. After the victim called 911, police learned Stampley had also displayed a kitchen knife and threatened a 20-year-old man who was walking home from work, the report said.

Although officers noted that "upon further investigation" the first victim was not of Asian descent, that fact does not preclude a hate crime charge. Under Illinois law, what matters is the offender's perception of the victim. They do not have to be right. Yet no hate crime charge was filed. In fact, no felony charges were filed at all.

Stampley instead faced a misdemeanor battery count and a misdemeanor assault with a deadly weapon count. Prosecutors dropped the case on May 2.

A few days later, the judge overseeing the paramedic battery case, Shelley Sutker-Dermer, put him on electronic monitoring. Stampley stopped appearing for hearings on Aug. 7 and Sutker Dermer issued a warrant.

Law enforcement tracked him down and brought him before Sutker Dermer again on Sept. 11. She gave him a fifteen-day jail sanction for violating pretrial

SUSPECT see p. 10

Retired judge gets probation for stealing nearly \$250,000 from elderly Tuskegee Airman



Oscar Wilkerson, left, in 2015 and, center, in 1944. At right is former Cook County Judge Patricia Martin.

BY CWBCHICAGO

A former Cook County judge who stole large sums of money from an elderly friend who served as a Tuskegee Airman received a probationary sentence on Dec. 5.

Patricia Martin, 66, received four years of probation after pleading guilty to theft of \$100,000 to \$500,000, according to court records. The judge also ordered her to pay \$122,763.73 in restitution and comply with standard probation conditions that include random drug testing.

Martin once served as presiding judge of the Child Protection Division and retired in 2020.

Prosecutors initially accused her of stealing nearly \$250,000 from then-95-year-old Oscar Wilkerson, a longtime friend whose finances she controlled under power of attorney. Using that authority, Martin closed some of Wilkerson's bank accounts and withdrew more than \$115,000, officials said. She used the money to buy crypto.

Investigators said she continued making unauthorized transactions for crypto purchases and personal expenses through 2021 and most of 2022.

The thefts were uncovered after a senior living facility terminated Wilkerson's residency because of unpaid bills. An attorney was brought in to examine his finances and filed a lawsuit against Mar-

tin in 2022. She failed to respond, resulting in a default judgment of about \$1.1 million, according to court filings.

Because Martin previously served as a Cook County judge, her case was assigned to McHenry County Judge Tiffany Davis. Wilkerson died in 2023, one day before his 97th birthday. Martin was disbarred the same year.

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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.

Subscribing to this newspaper for online weekly issues for only \$20 a year will also help. Visit www.insideonline.com

Prefer to stay offline? Mail a check to:
6221 N. Clark St., Chicago, IL 60640
We are grateful for your support.

www.gofundme.com/manage/your-friendly-neighborhood-newspapers

DIVINE from p. 2

the Office of the Chief Judge of the Circuit Court of Cook County. In his first public announcement after taking office, Beach unveiled a new committee that he said will urgently review how his office's electronic monitoring program handles reported gross violations by people wearing ankle monitors. That hot mess may be the biggest security problem in Chicago today. A better idea may be just to hold the violent offenders in jail.

2025: This year's Publicity Club of Chicago Year-in-Review lunch program is Thursday, Dec. 11 at Columbia College Chicago. Guest speakers include NBC5's **Stefan Holt**, and Block Club's **Francia Garcia Hernandez**, who join panelists **Shermann "Dilla" Thomas** and **Jessica Dalka** for a wide-ranging talk on the stories, themes, and media trends that shaped 2025. The program explores everything from newsroom pressures and shifts in communications to the narratives influencing conversations across town.

ADVENT: **Kayla Hockman** reminds us that Kraft Cheese is bringing its first-ever limited edition Holiday Advent calendars to town with a life-sized immersive pop-up at Chicago's Christkindlmarket, Dec. 10-13. It's a festive, cheese-filled experience designed to spread joy (and plenty of



(L-R) Robert A.M. Stern, Laura Kotelman, the first Republican woman to lead the Chicago Board of Elections, U.S. District Court Judge Sharon Coleman and Cardinal Arthur Roche.

samples!) to families this holiday season.

PARTY: Free admission to the Teen Holiday Party Dec. 12 at Horner Park, 2741 W. Montrose Ave., 4:30 p.m. This event is for Deaf and Hard of Hearing teens. It's a fun-filled night of holiday games and activities. Food and drinks will be provided.

DRUGS: **Joaquin Guzman Lopez** succeeded his father—**Joaquin Guzman Loera** ["El Chapo"], as one of the heads of the Sinaloa Cartel in Mexico, has pleaded guilty in U.S. District Court in Chicago to federal drug charges.

He pleaded guilty last week to one count

of drug conspiracy and one count of engaging in a continuing criminal enterprise. He may get ten years to life in federal prison. U.S. District **Judge Sharon Johnson Coleman** has not set a sentencing date. We're also blowing up drug smugglers out in the Caribbean Sea. So we wonder, who wants to be next? Who is dealing the dope now?

PRINCETON COUP: **Craig Robinson**, Princeton '83, brother of **Michelle Obama** '85, and a Mount Carmel High School grad, has been selected Princeton's Baccalaureate Speaker, May 24, 2026.

RIP: Famed Architects **Lucien Lagrange** and the late **Robert A.M. Stern** of New York, filled America with modern form and function but never lost their respect for classical design. Stern died this past week at 86.

"THE" CHRISTMAS BASH: **Eamonn Cummins** and **Pennie Taylor** made the most of it at **Tom Serafin's** Christmas bash at Butch McGuire's with former Chicago Police Supt. **Garry McCarthy** and NBC Chicago Channel 5 political reporter **Mary Ann Ahern**... Political celebs abounded between the Jameson's and the Grey Goose and the Egg Nog with Fair Play to the Guinness with **Erin Buns**, **Lisa Truss**, **John Fritchey**, **Deborah McCabe**, **Nancy Pender**, **Mo Buti**, **Frank Calabrese** and the political wizard **Brian Bernardoni** holding court.

WHO'S WHERE: Roosevelt U. professor, **Stephanie Leese Emerick** is everywhere for her latest book-launching... Happy Birthday to Chicago legend **Robert Murphy** whose voice we all heard over the decades from Q101 to the 80s station. His wife, **Cheryl Larsen**, agrees, we all love the chicken entree named in his honor by **Joey Mondelli** at LaScarola on Grand... **Amy Cordell**, the chief operating officer of Ever, is the 2025 MICHELIN Guide Northeast Cities Service Award winner. When Emmy-winning "The Bear" wanted a stand-in for the best restaurant in the world in their fictionalized look at fine dining, they turned to Ever... Long lines for cookie fans in Lincoln Park as Levain Bakery opened its newest location, with found-

ers **Pam Weekes** and **Connie McDonald** sharing what makes their famous cookies so special... **Lauren Lein Cavanaugh** and **Melinda Jakovich Lagrange** are exotic in their holiday fashion... **Tom McGuire** and **Tom Hackett** Christmas shopping with **Bill Bacarella** and **Jean Bacarella**, with **Maureen Pond**, later catching the Zoolights... **Paul Hansen** gathered with daughter, **Holly O'Connell**, husband **Nelius** and Paul's three grandsons, **Declan**, **Ian** and **Liam**, of whom he's most proud... **Sherry Lea Fox** is in merry Ole London staying at my Art Deco favorite, The Savoy, where some claim the Martini was invented, in that teeny tiny bar off the lobby, and the Savoy Grill Room a favorite with succulent vittles and at nearby Rules... **La Scarola** jam-packed early on Black Friday, **Carol Gipson**, looking so chic, controlled the crowds, many on their way to the Blackhawks game, and **Joey Mondelli** arrived in great form full of chit-chat in the hours before the snow, we were well-served by **Caesar**, **Luka**, **Phillippo** and **Francesco**... It was a banger of a Thanksgiving when 55 members of the **Howard Family** that embraces the **John Chambers Family** joined up at **Uncle Frank** and **Aunt Nora Howard Guerino's** table... meanwhile The Elizabeth Ann Seton Food Pantry and Sandwich Kitchen was open in Lincoln Park, serving 50-60 meals daily, while distributing basic necessities to guests who rely on their support.

LATIN MASS: **Cardinal Arthur Roche**, prefect of the Dicastery for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, clarified **Pope Leo XIV's** position on the Latin liturgy. He does not intend to overturn **Pope Francis'** limits on celebrating the traditional Latin Mass, but will grant two-year dispensations to bishops who ask, said **Archbishop Miguel Maury Buendía**, the apostolic nuncio to Great Britain.

March on. Do not tarry. To go forward is to move toward perfection. March on, and fear not the thorns, or the sharp stones on life's path. --Khalil Gibran

tog515@gmail.com

Conservancy names Robinson as Executive Director

The Lincoln Park Conservancy has announced the appointment of Lauren Robinson as its new Executive Director. Robinson brings more than 16 years of nonprofit leadership experience in development, community and volunteer engagement to the Conservancy.

Most recently, she served as Vice President of Development & Community Engagement at PAWS Chicago, where

she led a team of 15 to increase annual revenue, diversify funding streams, and expand community engagement.

She joins the Conservancy following the successful restoration and beautification of the North Pond and Alfred Caldwell Lily Pool. Their next project will be the restoration of the Lincoln Statue and Lincoln Park Conservatory in Lincoln Park.

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Founder/Director



(L-R) Muhammad Nadeem (right) and Rev. Vicki Garlock at the Downtown Islamic Center. The Campus Ministries at Loyola Univ. Chicago hosted Garlock's awards ceremony. It is also where she met her Guinness adjudicator, Lala Teranishi, for the official announcement at Madonna della Strada chapel. Annunciation Greek Orthodox friend.

An interfaith roadmap through the Heart of Chicago

If you think you've had a busy month, in the month of September, Rev. Vicki Garlock, an interfaith educator, earned a Guinness World Records title for the most places of worship visited in one month.

The former record was 111, but Rev. Garlock crushed it, visiting 185 places of worship around Chicago during the month of September.

Nearly all the places she visited were on Chicago's North Side and Downtown. "I would guess at least 100 places out of the 185 but probably more. Guinness would not allow me to use a car, so I was on public transportation the entire time."

Garlock's urban pilgrimage included places from a variety of religious traditions (e.g., Hindu, Buddhist, Sikh, Jewish, Christian, Muslim) and dozens of different denominations/faith movements (e.g., Orthodox, 7th Day Adventist, Zen Buddhism, Christian Science, Conservative Judaism, Brahma Kumaris, Kadampa Buddhism).

Each visit followed strict Guinness World Records guidelines, including photo/video documentation and witness verification.

Since the guidelines prohibited using a personal vehicle, Garlock's adventure included over 65 bus rides, over 65 "L" rides, and over 350,000 steps (about 5-6 miles a day of walking).

Rev. Vicki Garlock, an interfaith educator, earned a Guinness World Records title for the most places of worship visited in one month.

From mosques to monasteries, cathedrals to neighborhood temples, Garlock's pilgrimage was more than a race against time; it was a way to lift up the positive impact that religious communities offer.

"People often see religion as divisive, but places of worship provide a glimpse into how religion can be a positive force in our world today," she said. "In all these various sacred spaces, communities come together to figure out how humans might live in harmony with the Divine, the Earth, and one another. My world record title was about honoring both the places and the people

across religious traditions."

Garlock grew up in Kankakee and is an award-winning kids' book author, who develops non-devotional, constitutionally-appropriate resources to help families and educators teach kids, aged 3-12, about the world's religions.

She earned her Ph.D. in Psychology with dual specialties in neuroscience and cognitive development, writing her dissertation on the early predictors of later reading ability in 4- to 8-year-olds.

While not required by Guinness, Garlock also attended over 20 worship services during her time off. They included worship services in both the Orthodox Jewish and Christian traditions, Buddhist meditation sessions, Islamic prayers, and a kirtan.

She is also grateful to Campus Ministries of Loyola Univ. Chicago for hosting her awards ceremony. Garlock met her Guinness adjudicator, Lala, on the banks of Lake Michigan at Madonna della Strada chapel, for the official announcement and certificate presentation.

"I chose the campus because their campus ministries program is so impressive. By offering dedicated prayer, puja, meditation, and gathering spaces for students of various religious traditions, they create an atmosphere of respect, inclusion, and support," she said. "It's religious freedom at its best and shows what we can accomplish when we operate with both intentionality and compassion."

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Ald. Brian Hopkins' [2nd] hosted his annual holiday party with several hundred friends Dec. 3 at the Ritz Carlton Hotel, 160 E. Pearson St. Pictured L to R are Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulias, Ald. Hopkins, State Sen. Sara Feigenholtz [6th], Ald. Bill Conway [34th], and Democratic Committeeman Tim Egan. Photo courtesy Noreen Heron



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POLICE BEAT from p. 6

accused of committing at least three thefts within eighteen months for the purpose of reselling the goods. Police say Smith knocked out 10 in less than two weeks.

Judge Ankur Srivastava ordered him detained for violating probation.

Smith's court file shows 51 separate criminal cases filed against him in Cook County since 1988 and at least 11 felony convictions, including drug dealing, burglary, possessing a

stolen vehicle, repeated shoplifting, a 2019 escape from electronic monitoring, and a 2024 shoplifting conviction that ended with a four-year prison sentence.

— Compiled by CWBChicago.com

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SUSPECT from p. 7

release, court records show. But that was cut in half by state law and reduced further by six days that he already spent in custody.

Within hours, Stampley was back on the street on electronic monitoring with permission to leave his home for "work" from 9 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. on weekdays.

Less than a month later, on Oct. 5, Stampley was arrested on misdemeanor battery charges again, this time in the 1300 block of W. Albion Avenue. Judge Susana Ortiz placed him on electronic monitoring and noted in the record that he "attacked [a] random person" and has a "pending agg batt."

And eight days later, prosecutors say, he was walking around Old Town with a knife.

Shortly before 6 p.m. on October 13, a 31-year-old man stepped

off a bus in the 300 block of W. Division St. Stampley approached him aggressively, struck him in the shoulder, and held a knife in his hand, according to a detention filing. After the man began calling 911, Stampley allegedly knocked the victim's phone from behind. The victim, who later discovered three small cuts in his shirt, followed Stampley until Stampley slipped inside a public library.

Moments later, police say, Stampley lunged at a 33-year-old man at the library and swung a knife toward the man's abdomen. The knife created a "small pin prick laceration to his stomach" and a hole in the fabric of his jacket, according to the detention petition.

He then approached a 49-year-old man outside the library and swung the knife twice, cutting open the man's backpack and

causing a laceration to his back, prosecutors said.

Officers arrested Stampley nearby. All three victims identified him. Stampley denied carrying a knife.

The only charges filed were misdemeanors: three counts of battery and three counts of assault with a deadly weapon. He was detained only because of his long list of pretrial release violations, not because the new charges qualified for detention.

Prosecutors dropped all six Old Town misdemeanor charges on Oct. 28 and refiled the case this week as five felony aggravated battery counts. During a detention hearing on Dec. 2, Judge Rivanda Doss Beal reiterated a detention order for Stampley, citing what she called his "criminal versatility."

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SCENE from p. 7

mit either... So the Ward Superintendent came back and wrote me another ticket for having a giant rat on my property and to encourage me to put an election sign in my window for the alderman... The City Inspector came back and gave me another ticket for not having a permit for the rat... The Michigan militia picketed my house for having an interracial snow couple and for associating with commies from the labor unions... Antifa came to picket my home for associating with the Michigan militia... The City Inspector came back and cited me for having a public assembly without a permit... Then the Mayor's office limited me to 1,500 visitors per hour to the Nativity scene, and the Chicago Health Dept. shut my Nativity scene down: the feminist, the gay couple, the couple of color, the NAACP, the LGBTQI+, the global warming nut, the meat-hating vegan, the evangelical, the Middle Easterner, the dog owner, the Ward Superintendent, the City inspector, the Mayor's office, the labor union goons, the militiamen, Antifa, all my neighbors and the pushy TV news reporters were

not wearing masks and socially distancing.

That's when things really got interesting. Six black SUV's pulled up and this time they weren't rappers doing a TikTok video. They had guns and body armor. It was ICE. They started asking the Baby Jesus, Mary and Joseph for their papers.

I shout, "Hey stop! They're religious refugees! They came from Nazareth! I mean, they came down from Northbrook to appeal their property taxes!" So the figurines just play it cool, they ain't talking.

That's when the global warming conspiracy theorist notices ICE left their SUVs idling and so he turned off their engines, just when the vegan and the gay couple started attacking ICE. Then the Ward Superintendent started booting the ICE SUVs for double parking, while the City Inspector was writing violations all over the place. Next, a City tow truck showed up asking how they're to tow a manger and the TV News minivans. Next Antifa started backing up the vegan and the gay couple and they all fought ICE together.

So ICE just grabbed the Nativ-

ity scene, while the vegan had another ICE agent in a sleeper hold, and the gay couple was hitting the ICE agents with their shoes. That was when the evangelicals swooped in and rescued Jesus, Joseph and Mary, the whole Holy Family, from ICE and escaped in a TV News minivan, just as the Michigan Militia had switched sides, and joined ICE to square off against Antifa.

The Middle Eastern neighbor shared their falafels with the tow truck drivers in trade for a ride outta there, while the union goons took down their inflatable rat and left since no one authorized overtime. The Ward Superintendent was chasing the City Inspector who was chasing the tow trucks shouting about a food service license.

Why do I think my property taxes are going up again?

I don't think I'm gonna put up my Peter Cottontail next Easter.

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Rogers Park Township Real Estate For Sale

Real Estate For Sale

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS COUNTY DEPARTMENT - CHANCERY DIVISION SELENE FINANCE, LP, Plaintiff, -v- JAYNE B OLEFSKY AND TERRA CASA CONDOMINIUMS ASSOCIATION, Defendants. 25-CH-02965 7078 N ASHLAND BLVD, UNIT 2, CHICAGO, IL 60626 NOTICE OF SALE PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered in the above cause on 10/2/2025, an agent of Auction.com, LLC will conduct the Online Only auction at www.auction.com, with the bidding window opening on January 5, 2026 at 10:00 AM CDT and closing on 1/7/2026 at 10:00 AM subject to extension, and will sell at public sale to the highest bidder, as set forth below, the following described real estate. Commonly known as 7078 N ASHLAND BLVD, UNIT 2, CHICAGO, IL 60626 Property Index No. 11-31-208-035-1014 The real estate is improved with a Condominium. The judgment amount was \$191,221.94 Sale Terms: Full Sale Terms are available on the property page at www.auction.com by entering 7078 N ASHLAND BLVD, UNIT 2 into the search bar. If sold to anyone other than the Plaintiff, the winning bidder must pay the full bid amount within twenty-four (24) hours of the auction's end. All payments must be certified funds. No third-party checks will be accepted. All bidders will need to register at www.auction.com prior to placing a bid. The subject property is subject to general real estate taxes, special assessments, or special taxes levied against said real estate and is offered for sale without any representation as to quality or quantity of title and without recourse to plaintiff and in "AS IS" condition. The sale is further subject to confirmation by the court. Upon payment in full of the amount bid, the purchaser will receive a certificate of sale that will entitle the purchaser to a deed to the real estate after confirmation of the sale. The property will NOT be open for inspection and plaintiff makes no representation as to the condition of the property, prospective bidders are admonished to check the court file to verify all information. If this property is a condominium unit, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale, other than a mortgagee, shall pay the assessments and the legal fees required by the Condominium

Real Estate For Sale

property Act, 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(1) and (g)(4). If this property is a condominium unit which is part of a common interest community, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale other than a mortgagee shall pay the assessments required by the Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g)-1. IF YOU ARE THE MORTGAGOR (HOMEOWNER), YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN IN POSSESSION FOR 30 DAYS AFTER ENTRY OF AN ORDER OF POSSESSION, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 15-1701(C) OF THE ILLINOIS MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE LAW. For information, contact Plaintiff's attorney: Heavner, Beyers & Mihlar, LLC (217) 422-1719 please refer to file number 2044949. Auction.com, LLC 100 N LaSalle St., Suite 1400, Chicago, IL 60602 - 872-225-4985 You can also visit www.auction.com. Attorney File No. 2044949 Case Number: 25-CH-02965 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. **13277856**

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS COUNTY DEPARTMENT - CHANCERY DIVISION CORNERSTONE NATIONAL BANK AND TRUST COMPANY Plaintiff, -v- ANTHONY C. LABROSSE, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY, INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE, UNKNOWN OWNERS AND NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS Defendants 2024 CH 06348 2175 WEST TOUHY AVE. CHICAGO, IL 60645 NOTICE OF SALE PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered in the above cause on September 30, 2025, an agent for The Judicial Sales Corporation, will at 10:30 AM on January 6, 2026, at The Judicial Sales Corporation, One South Wacker, 1st Floor Suite 35R, Chicago, IL, 60606, sell at public in-person sale to the highest bidder, as set forth below, the following described real estate: Commonly known as 2175 WEST TOUHY AVE., CHICAGO, IL 60645

Real Estate For Sale

Property Index No. 11-31-102-001-0000 The real estate is improved with a single family residence. The judgment amount was \$447,933.01. Sale terms: If sold to anyone other than the Plaintiff, 25% down of the highest bid by certified funds at the close of the sale payable to The Judicial Sales Corporation. No third party checks will be accepted. The balance, in certified funds/ or wire transfer, is due within twenty-four (24) hours. The subject property is subject to general real estate taxes, special assessments, or special taxes levied against said real estate and is offered for sale without any representation as to quality or quantity of title and without recourse to Plaintiff and in "AS IS" condition. The sale is further subject to confirmation by the court. Upon payment in full of the amount bid, the purchaser will receive a Certificate of Sale that will entitle the purchaser to a deed to the real estate after confirmation of the sale. Where a sale of real estate is made to satisfy a lien prior to that of the United States, the United States shall have one year from the date of sale within which to redeem, except that with respect to a lien arising under the internal revenue laws the period shall be 120 days or the period allowable for redemption under State law, whichever is longer, and in any case in which, under the provisions of section 505 of the Housing Act of 1950, as amended (12 U.S.C. 1701k), and subsection (d) of section 3720 of title 38 of the United States Code, the right to redeem does not arise, there shall be no right of redemption. The property will NOT be open for inspection and plaintiff makes no representation as to the condition of the property. Prospective bidders are admonished to check the court file to verify all information. If this property is a condominium unit, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale, other than a mortgagee, shall pay the assessments and the legal fees required by the Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(1) and (g)(4). If this property is a condominium unit which is part of a common interest community, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale other than a mortgagee shall pay the assessments required by The Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g)-1. IF YOU ARE THE MORTGAGOR (HOMEOWNER), YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN IN POSSESSION FOR 30 DAYS AFTER ENTRY OF AN ORDER OF POSSESSION, IN ACCORDANCE

Real Estate For Sale

WITH SECTION 15-1701(C) OF THE ILLINOIS MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE LAW. You will need a photo identification issued by a government agency (driver's license, passport, etc.) in order to gain entry into our building and the foreclosure sale room in Cook County and the same identification for sales held at other county venues where The Judicial Sales Corporation conducts foreclosure sales. For information, contact Kimberly Padjen, LAVELLE LAW, LTD Plaintiff's Attorneys, 141 West Jackson, Suite 2800, Chicago, IL, 60604 (312) 332-7555. Please refer to file number 5733.019. THE JUDICIAL SALES CORPORATION One South Wacker Drive, 24th Floor, Chicago, IL 60606-4650 (312) 236-SALE You can also visit The Judicial Sales Corporation at www.jscc.com for a 7 day status report of pending sales. Kimberly Padjen LAVELLE LAW, LTD 141 West Jackson, Suite 2800 Chicago, IL, 60604 E-Mail: kpajen@lavellelaw.com Attorney File No. 5733.019 Attorney Code. 27743 Case Number: 2024 CH 06348 TJSCEF: 45-2694 NOTE: Pursuant to the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, you are advised that Plaintiff's attorney is deemed to be a debt collector attempting to collect a debt and any information obtained will be used for that purpose. **Case # 2024 CH 06348** 8231-960206 101010

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS COUNTY DEPARTMENT - CHANCERY DIVISION JPMORGAN CHASE BANK, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION Plaintiff, -v- UNKNOWN HEIRS AT LAW AND LEGATEES OF MICHAEL C. ARNOLD, JOY USHER, GERALD NORDGREN AS SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE FOR MICHAEL C. ARNOLD, DECEASED, UNKNOWN OWNERS AND NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS Defendants

Real Estate For Sale

2025CH05190 1414 W. SHERWIN AVENUE, UNIT B CHICAGO, IL 60626 NOTICE OF SALE PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered in the above cause on September 25, 2025, an agent for The Judicial Sales Corporation, will at 10:30 AM on January 5, 2026, at The Judicial Sales Corporation, One South Wacker, 1st Floor Suite 35R, Chicago, IL, 60606, sell at public in-person sale to the highest bidder, as set forth below, the following described real estate: Commonly known as 1414 W. SHERWIN AVENUE, UNIT B, CHICAGO, IL 60626 Property Index No. 11-29-314-031-0000 The real estate is improved with a townhouse. The judgment amount was \$143,644.44. Sale terms: If sold to anyone other than the Plaintiff, 25% down of the highest bid by certified funds at the close of the sale payable to The Judicial Sales Corporation. No third party checks will be accepted. The balance, in certified funds/ or wire transfer, is due within twenty-four (24) hours. The subject property is subject to general real estate taxes, special assessments, or special taxes levied against said real estate and is offered for sale without any representation as to quality or quantity of title and without recourse to Plaintiff and in "AS IS" condition. The sale is further subject to confirmation by the court. Upon payment in full of the amount bid, the purchaser will receive a Certificate of Sale that will entitle the purchaser to a deed to the real estate after confirmation of the sale. The property will NOT be open for inspection and plaintiff makes no representation as to the condition of the property. Prospective bidders are admonished to check the court file to verify all information. If this property is a condominium unit, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale, other than a mortgagee, shall pay the assessments and the legal fees required by The Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(1) and (g)(4). If this property is a condominium unit which is part of a common interest community, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale other than a mortgagee shall pay the assessments required by The Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g)-1. IF YOU ARE THE MORTGAGOR (HOMEOWNER), YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN IN POSSESSION FOR 30 DAYS AFTER ENTRY OF AN ORDER OF POSSESSION, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 15-1701(C) OF THE ILLINOIS MORT-

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GAGE FORECLOSURE LAW. You will need a photo identification issued by a government agency (driver's license, passport, etc.) in order to gain entry into our building and the foreclosure sale room in Cook County and the same identification for sales held at other county venues where The Judicial Sales Corporation conducts foreclosure sales. For information, contact JOHNSON, BLUMBERG & ASSOCIATES, LLC Plaintiff's Attorneys, 30 N. LASALLE STREET, SUITE 3650, CHICAGO, IL, 60602 (312) 541-9710. Please refer to file number 25 1376. THE JUDICIAL SALES CORPORATION One South Wacker Drive, 24th Floor, Chicago, IL 60606-4650 (312) 236-SALE You can also visit The Judicial Sales Corporation at www.jscc.com for a 7 day status report of pending sales. JOHNSON, BLUMBERG & ASSOCIATES, LLC 30 N. LASALLE STREET, SUITE 3650 Chicago, IL, 60602 312-541-9710 E-Mail: ljleadings@johnsonblumberg.com Attorney File No. 25 1376 Attorney Code. 40342 Case Number: 2025CH05190 TJSCEF: 45-2601 NOTE: Pursuant to the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, you are advised that Plaintiff's attorney is deemed to be a debt collector attempting to collect a debt and any information obtained will be used for that purpose. **Case # 2025CH05190** **13277346** 030303 262626

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FOR SALE

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Notice of Public Sale

Pro Self Storage intends to enforce its lien on certain self-service Storage Spaces in default listed below on the 18th of December 2025 at 12:00 p.m. at 3632 E. Lake Ave. Wilmette, IL, 60091 at www.storage-treasures.com with the sale to conclude no earlier than 12:00 p.m.
 J3 Camiko Smith
 J5 Jaqual Brown

This public sale will result in the goods being sold to the highest bidder. The winning bidder must pay by cash at the time he/she is declared the winning bidder. Certain terms and Conditions apply; see the Manager for additional details.

Notice of Public Sale

Pro Self Storage intends to enforce its lien on certain self service Storage Spaces in default listed below on the 18th of December, 2025 at 12:00 p.m. at 2724 W. 21st St, Chicago, IL 60608 at www.storage-treasures.com with the sale to conclude no earlier than 12:00 p.m.
 B113 Abigail Olivo
 2001 Berenise Arriaga
 2028 Joshua Coggins
 3093 Kristie A Kuzuhara
 4004 Cathy Galindo

This public sale will result in the goods being sold to the highest bidder. The winning bidder must pay by cash at the time he/she is declared the winning bidder. Certain terms and conditions apply; see the Manager for additional details.

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North Township Real Estate For Sale

Real Estate For Sale

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS COUNTY DEPARTMENT - CHANCERY DIVISION WILLINGMONT TRUST, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, NOT IN ITS INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY BUT SOLELY AS TRUSTEE OF MFRA TRUST 2015-2 Plaintiff, -v- TOMAS KIRVAITIS, TINA KIRVAITIS, 180 EAST PEARSON STREET HOMEOWNER'S ASSOCIATION, UNKNOWN OWNERS AND NONRECORD CLAIMANTS Defendants 2024CH09363 180 EAST PEARSON STREET UNIT #5201 CHICAGO, IL 60611 NOTICE OF SALE PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered in the above cause on October 1, 2025, an agent for The Judicial Sales Corporation, will at 10:30 AM on January 5, 2026, at The Judicial Sales Corporation, One South Wacker, 1st Floor Suite 35R, Chicago, IL, 60606, sell at public in-person sale to the highest bidder, as set forth below, the following described real estate: Commonly known as 180 EAST PEARSON STREET UNIT #5201, CHICAGO, IL 60611 Property Index No. 17-03-226-065-1134 The real estate is improved with a residence. Sale terms: If sold to anyone other than the Plaintiff, 25% down of the highest bid by certified funds at the close of the sale payable to The Judicial Sales Corporation. No third party checks will be accepted. The balance, in certified funds or wire transfer, is due within twenty-four (24) hours. The subject property is subject to general real estate taxes, special assessments, or special taxes levied against said real estate and is offered for sale without any representation as to quality or quantity of title and without recourse to Plaintiff and in "AS IS" condition. The sale is further subject to confirmation by the court. Upon payment in full of the amount bid, the purchaser will receive a Certificate of Sale that will entitle the purchaser to a deed to the real estate after confirmation of the sale. The property will NOT be open for inspection and plaintiff makes no representation as to the condition of the property. Prospective bidders are admonished to check the court file to verify all information. If this property is a condominium unit, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale, other than a mortgagee, shall pay the assessments and the legal fees required by The Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(1) and (g)(4). If this property is a condominium unit which is part of a common interest community, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale other than a mortgagee shall pay the assessments required by The Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g-1). IF YOU ARE THE MORTGAGOR (HOMEOWNER), YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN IN POSSESSION FOR 30 DAYS AFTER ENTRY OF AN ORDER OF POSSESSION, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 15-1701(C) OF THE ILLINOIS MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE LAW. You will need a photo identification issued by a government agency (driver's license, passport, etc.) in order to gain entry into our building and the foreclosure sale room in Cook County and the same title the purchaser to a deed to the real estate after confirmation of the sale.

Real Estate For Sale

identification for sales held at other county venues where The Judicial Sales Corporation conducts foreclosure sales. For information, examine the court file, CODILIS & ASSOCIATES, P.C. Plaintiff's Attorneys, 15W030 NORTH FRONTAGE ROAD, SUITE 100, BURR RIDGE, IL, 60527 (630) 794-9876 THE JUDICIAL SALES CORPORATION One South Wacker Drive, 24th Floor, Chicago, IL 60606-4650 (312) 236-SALE You can also visit The Judicial Sales Corporation at www.jscc.com for a 7 day status report of pending sales. CODILIS & ASSOCIATES, P.C. 15W030 NORTH FRONTAGE ROAD, SUITE 100 BURR RIDGE IL, 60527 630-794-5300 E-Mail: pleadings@il.cslegal.com Attorney File No. 14-24-06332 Attorney ARDC No. 00468002 Attorney Code. 21762 Case Number: 2024CH09363 TJS/C#: 45-2624 NOTE: Pursuant to the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, you are advised that Plaintiff's attorney is deemed to be a debt collector attempting to collect a debt and any information obtained will be used for that purpose. Case # 2024CH09363 **13277621** 101010 ----- IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS COUNTY DEPARTMENT - CHANCERY DIVISION U.S. BANK TRUST NATIONAL ASSOCIATION NOT IN ITS INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY BUT SOLELY AS OWNER TRUSTEE FOR RCF 2 ACQUISITION TRUST Plaintiff, -v- EDMUNDO AGUILAR, CAROLINE YOZA AGUILAR, 448 WRIGHTWOOD MANOR CONDOMINIUM ASSOCIATION, UNKNOWN OWNERS AND NONRECORD CLAIMANTS Defendants 2025CH03644 450 WRIGHTWOOD #1 CHICAGO, IL 60614 NOTICE OF SALE PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered in the above cause on September 18, 2025, an agent for The Judicial Sales Corporation, will at 10:30 AM on January 5, 2026, at The Judicial Sales Corporation, One South Wacker, 1st Floor Suite 35R, Chicago, IL, 60606, sell at public in-person sale to the highest bidder, as set forth below, the following described real estate: Commonly known as 450 WRIGHTWOOD #1, CHICAGO, IL 60614 Property Index No. 14-28-309-034-1005 The real estate is improved with a condo/townhouse. Sale terms: If sold to anyone other than the Plaintiff, 25% down of the highest bid by certified funds at the close of the sale payable to The Judicial Sales Corporation. No third party checks will be accepted. The balance, in certified funds or wire transfer, is

Real Estate For Sale

due within twenty-four (24) hours. The subject property is subject to general real estate taxes, special assessments, or special taxes levied against said real estate and is offered for sale without any representation as to quality or quantity of title and without recourse to Plaintiff and in "AS IS" condition. The sale is further subject to confirmation by the court. Upon payment in full of the amount bid, the purchaser will receive a Certificate of Sale that will entitle the purchaser to a deed to the real estate after confirmation of the sale. The property will NOT be open for inspection and plaintiff makes no representation as to the condition of the property. Prospective bidders are admonished to check the court file to verify all information. If this property is a condominium unit, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale, other than a mortgagee, shall pay the assessments and the legal fees required by The Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(1) and (g)(4). 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Nineteen-time felon gets six years for burglarizing one of Chicago's poshest high-rise homes

BY CWBCHICAGO

An 18-time convicted felon is now a 19-time convicted felon after he pleaded guilty on Dec. 5 to burglarizing one of Chicago's exclusive private homes while the owners slept inside.

Robert Berry, 46, pleaded guilty to residential burglary for entering a home in the 200 block of E. Lake Shore Dr. around 3 a.m. on Aug. 19. The block, home to the Drake Hotel and a row of early 20th-century co-ops, is one of the priciest stretches of real estate in Chicago. The victims' residence had recently been listed for \$8.4 million.

Judge Shelley Sutker-Dermer sentenced Berry to six years in prison, according to court records, but he will be eligible for release after serving half of that time.

Prosecutors said surveillance video showed Berry slipping into a rear gangway, climbing an eight-foot fence, and scaling a fire escape to reach an upper-floor unit. The residents were asleep when he allegedly entered and took a purse containing



The 200 block of E. Lake Shore Dr. rises behind Oak Street Beach. Inset: Robert Berry.

\$345. Video later showed him riding an elevator down and asking the doorman for an umbrella as he left. The doorman courteously obliged, and Berry went on his way. A building employee later found the victim's purse on a stairwell landing.

Within hours of that burglary, Chicago police arrested Berry in River North on a felony shoplifting charge. When detectives circulated images of the E. Lake Shore Dr. burglar, officers who arrested Berry on the shoplifting charge recognized him and confirmed he had been wearing the same clothes when they took him into custody.

Berry told officers he believed someone was chasing him on the night of the burglary, prompting him to run into the gangway and climb the fire escape until he found an unlocked door.

Records show Berry has been arrested in Chicago more than 25 times since 2015. His felony convictions range from arson to burglary, theft, and narcotics.

Teen charged in violent 'friendly strangers' robbery pattern in River North

An 18-year-old man was part of a robbery crew that pretended to be "friendly strangers" before violently mugging late-night bar patrons around River North earlier this year, according to Chicago police.

Detectives issued two community alerts in June and July after identifying a robbery pattern in which intoxicated victims leaving bars were approached by men who acted friendly at first, then beat and robbed them in downtown nightlife districts. Police said the offenders targeted patrons

near bars and restaurants during overnight hours as venues closed for the night.

According to one alert, the offenders "befriended intoxicated citizens and chat them up in a friendly manner" before suddenly attacking them and forcibly taking their belongings.

The newly charged man is accused of participating in four of the robberies. Police said he helped mug a 24-year-old man in the 400 block of N. Wabash Ave. on June 16 and a 26-year-old man in the 600 block of N. Dearborn St. on June 22. He is also accused of taking part in two robberies early on July 6, one involving a 28-year-old man in the 400 block of N. State St. and another involving a 52-year-old man in the 400 block of N. Lower Michigan Ave.

Because he was 17 when the attacks occurred, the man has not been publicly identified. He is charged in juvenile court, where records are shielded from public view. CPD did not say how detectives identified him as one of the offenders involved in the pattern.

Construction to begin in January on new, fully accessible State/Lake CTA station

Elevated station to close on Monday, January 5, 2026

The City of Chicago and Chicago Transit Authority [CTA], have set the start date of construction on the new State/Lake Loop 'El' station in downtown. The existing station will close beginning Monday, Jan. 5, 2026, to allow for demolition and the start of major construction activities for the new, fully accessible station.

The new State/Lake elevated station will replace one of the oldest stations on the CTA system - 120 years - with a modern facility. It is the fifth highest ridership

station in the system and located at one of the busiest transfer points in the Loop. The new station will feature wider platforms, new elevators for full ADA accessibility, a glass canopy and improved lighting and visibility.

The new station is scheduled to open in 2029.

Construction and service impacts at the existing State/Lake 'El' station mean it must close for demolition and reconstruction. Trains operating along the Brown, Green, Orange and Pink lines and the Purple Line Express will no longer stop at the State/Lake station for the duration of the

construction.

Loop trains will continue to operate, and customers can use these adjacent and fully accessible stations: Washington/Wabash and Clark/Lake. The Lake Red Line subway station will remain open.

Eastbound Lake St. between State St. and Wabash Ave. will be intermittently closed during off-peak hours starting now, for preparatory work prior to the start of the station demolition. Lake St. will be limited to local traffic only between Dearborn St. and Wabash Ave. to facilitate work under the tracks.

State St. traffic control will be modi-

fied based on observations during recent work. The existing Southbound closure of State St. will be extended from Wacker Dr. to Washington St. Traffic on Northbound State St. will be restored to all lanes open through the work zone at times in an attempt to alleviate congestion.

The Lake Red Line subway station will remain open. To transfer between the Lake Red Line subway station and the Loop Elevated rail lines, use the Washington/Wabash station.

For more information, and to sign up for updates, visit www.statelakestation.org.

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