

## Mag Mile Assoc. seeks new SSA to help bring Boul Mich back to life



The Magnificent Mile boasts more than 450 retailers, including flagship experiences; major department stores; international designers and boutiques; innovative technology and jewelry; and three vertical shopping centers.

Image courtesy The Magnificent Mile Michigan Avenue District

The state of Michigan Ave. today may be one of most distressing things for locals and visitors alike in the post-COVID, post-2020 riot and looting era.

For decades the world class shopping district was the pride of Chicago. It was where visitors and locals enjoyed strolling along window shopping and people watching. It was one of the five-largest commercial and retail districts in the nation.

It's where locals told out-of-town guests to visit, where friends frequently met up for spending time downtown, and it was

what tourists and conventioners bragged about visiting when they got back home.

The street today is a shadow of its former self, plagued as it is by crime, shocking first floor storefront vacancies, and smash and grab shoplifting. The Water Tower Mall - now in foreclosure - is perhaps the ground zero poster child of the systemic economic problems Chicago faces.

Now the Magnificent Mile Assoc. is considering a new Special Service Area [SSA] taxing district to help provide the resources to spark a resurgence, with help

from the Illinois General Assembly.

Known as Business Improvement Districts [BID], under Illinois law it is a form of SSA. The BID can provide services above and beyond normal municipal services and assess an additional local tax to fund these special services. The funds are managed locally, controlled through an elected board made up of property owners and lease holders who pay into the tax.

The proposal, lead by State

**MAG MILE** see p. 12

## New River North casino not producing tax revenue that city had hoped

BY DYLAN STARKEY  
*Illinois Policy*

The Bally's temporary casino in Medinah Temple in River North handed Chicago only \$3 million since its opening in Sept. 2023, \$9.6 million below original projections.

The casino averaged \$776,582 in local tax revenue per month in 2023. Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson's 2024 budget assumes the city will net \$35 million in local tax revenue from the casino, or nearly \$3 million a month.

The casino was initially projected to create \$12.8 million in tax revenue for 2023. However, the actual figure was a mere \$3.1 million, despite the casino operating round-the-clock since late December with nearly 800 slot machines, 56 gaming tables and additional amenities.

Bally's permanent location in River West is projected to bring in \$200 million in annual revenue, which is dedicated to police and fire pensions. That seems questionable, considering the meager returns from the tempo-

rary location.

One of the major drawbacks to the current casino location is a lack of suitable parking. Bally's' main competitors all offer free parking. Free parking has become ubiquitous with betting parlors. The gambling industry knows gamblers hate to pay to park.

According to the Illinois Gaming Board report on December operations, the Grand Victoria Casino in Elgin, Harrah's Joliet and, especially, Rivers Casino in

**CASINO** see p. 12

## Signs of resilience downtown, office vacancies rate at 23.8%

The downtown office vacancy rate was slightly better at the end of last year, after a prolonged slump that started when the pandemic hit in 2020.

According to Crain's Chicago, who cited data from CBRE, in the final quarter of 2023, the vacancy rate was up slightly at 23.8%. It was at 23.7% in the 3rd quarter.

Office vacancy records have been set in 11 of the last 13 quarters, highlighting the dire challenge created by the pandemic lockdown and work-from-home era, which have prompted a slew of companies to reduce their real estate holdings. The rate was 21.4% at the end of 2022 and 13.8% at the start of the pandemic.

High interest rates and bank failures lead to a rise in foreclosures and difficulties in companies securing financing. Many property owners gave their properties back over to lenders while others sold their assets at a loss to get out from under them.

There was also a flight to quality by investors. The data from CBRE showed a growing disparity between Class A and Class B buildings, which both stood at 18% vacancy at the end of 2020. Class A vacancies rose to 19.1% by the end of 2023, while Class B vacancies surged to 28.4%.

The fourth quarter saw negative net absorption of approximately 239,000 square feet, contributing

to a yearly negative net absorption, which has rarely occurred since 2010, according to Crains.

A record-setting 8.2 million square feet of sublease space became available in 2023, a stark increase from 6.8 million a year ago and 3.3 million square feet in early 2020.

While CBRE's data paints a gloomy picture of Chicago's office market, Moody's Analytics hints at optimism, the Chicago Business Journal reported. According to Moody's, Chicago's office vacancy rate rose to 20%, compared to the national average of 19.6%.



Concrete bollards are sturdy vertical posts installed to protect buildings, guide traffic, and act as pedestrian safety barriers.

## Are security bollards coming to a commercial district near you?

It's come to this, fed up with crooks crashing cars into downtown storefronts then ransacking the stores, City Hall is considering installing bollards in retail districts across the city.

Bollards are essentially a concrete barrier designed to protect a structure. Initially they were created to protect against motorized attacks on buildings by militants and terrorist. They have since been expanded to be part of protecting commercial storefronts.

After Prada on Oak St. was hit two weeks ago, leading to a shootout between the crooks and police, two aldermen are now ready to allow heavy barriers to be fixed to sidewalks that would stop a car from crashing into a storefront.

Those who have been to New York City know that hundreds of new protective barriers have been permanently installed at Times Square and other key locations around town in an effort to block vehicles from hitting pedestrians or buildings. New York spent \$50 million on their bollards.

Aldermen Walter Burnett [27th] and Brian Hopkins [2nd] are now working with the Mayor's office to change the zoning to include installing bollards to protect retailers hit hard by retail theft across the city.

First up may be the Magnificent Mile Association, who are now in discussions with the Chi-

**BOLLARDS** see p. 12

## Plan for high-density development at North and Halsted dies

The developer sat on the deal so long that the approval they got from City Council has now sunset. That means the deal developer David Trandel and SB/CA 750 North, LLC got to erect an eight-story mixed use building is - for now - over.

The Planned Development at 750 W. North Ave. was originally approved in the summer of 2018. It was to be a sister building adjacent to Yondorf Hall, the landmark building at the corner of North Ave. and N. Halsted St.

The proposal would have replaced the surface parking lot between the building and the CTA's elevated Brown Line 'L' tracks with a new high-density Transit Oriented Development.

The plan called for adding 92 new residential units, while only providing 10 off-street parking spaces, a ridiculous parking space to unit ratio of about .108 to one.

If Trandel and SB/CA 750 North wish to move forward with the project, a new approval process would be required. In the meantime, this proposal is officially scrapped.

Just south of this site, at 1565 N. Clybourn Ave., another project is seeking to build a new high-density skyscraper with very little residential parking. New York-based developer The Georgetown Co. hopes to erect a 37-story, 450-foot-tall high-rise with nearly 400 new units, but only 70 parking spaces set aside for residents.

And to the north lies the troubled Lincoln Yards mega development. Developer Sterling Bay has been struggling with getting the project funded as the interest rate environment and real estate market have both shifted. Now Lincoln Yards and Sterling Bay are facing financial trouble. Last Year Crain's Chicago reported on the financial distress Lincoln Yards is suffering from due to the failure to find commercial tenants, as Chicago is now in the middle of a serious commercial real estate glut.

There are presently no funds in the proposed \$6 billion Lincoln Yards Tax Increment Financing fund, nor are any angel investors coming forward to help boost Sterling Bay's prospects.



# Act like we've been there before, because we have



By Thomas J. O'Gorman

Let me be honest. Keep me in the hospital and I'm gonna have a lot of deep, other worldly thoughts.

And all the wacky thoughts in my noggin are gonna be embellished. I'll be doing a lot of Jesus thinking. Wondering what would Jesus do, why I haven't shaved, and why I am still working out last week's New York Times crossword puzzle.

Or why President Bartlett's White House looks so great on Netflix. The West Wing has legs. And they move fast.

As we wrestle with our new immigrant arrivals, I've been thinking a lot about the public face that "West Wing" has been able to hold since its days on NBC 1999-2006. All those Washington, D.C. stories. White House tales of power and peace.

We didn't exit the world during those years. We had confidence and didn't run from problems. We had reverence for storylines that fit into a believable presidential term of office.

President Jeb Bartlett got to

warring with our global neighbors and helping out the folks next door. Issues of race, history, geography, trusting the Russians or the Chinese, and the countless small issues made into huge issues for the elite members of the White House staff. They'd know what to do with the streaming masses yearning to be free.

I like the notion that while we can tell a great human yarn sitting in the vicinity of the Oval Office, I also treasure our ability to grow the story.

Chicago now has its own unassailable brand of exotic political tea. I would be sad if Chicago didn't give that democratic TV White House of fancy-pants East Coast snobs time to make its full political impact known.

The problem for me is that American politicians aren't more generous, less thieving, conniving or blame casting. More focused on the real problems.

In Jeb Bartlett's case he never stops trying to ingest the fairness and grandeur of the American political philosophy he embraced as a young man. His ability to form a White House of intelligence, reason and promise opens up the nation's chances to act with a more powerful sense of justice from one corner of America to the other. His openness to new immigrants and people from new places reset the compass that guides us.

More than anything else, our nation needs the energy that comes from our willingness to help each other over the barriers and blockages of familiar paths. Paths our own ancestors tread as well. Paths that lead us to the American life we enjoy now.

Nobody leaves their homeland and heads here because things are going well at home.

We are a city - and nation - of immigrants, so let's act like it. We've been here before.

We need more stamina to hike up the skirt, roll up the sleeves, grab the boot straps and lift one another over the ditches and potholes of reckless repair. Based on our common concerns for each other, and not for how good that's going to make us look.

**SUCH A DEAL:** A Goal-Setting Roundtable for Female Entrepreneurs and Executives" will take place 7:15 p.m. Jan. 31, at the Bernard Horwich Jewish Community Center, on Touhy, sponsored by Jewish Neighborhood Development Council of Chicago and The Jewish Woman Entrepreneur. Speakers will include accomplished businesswomen **Robyn Ackerman, Dr. Zahava Berkowicz, Laura Luckman Kelber, and Talia Mashiach.**

**NO PARKING:** The city is hosting an in-person open house Thursday for the Lincoln Square Brown Line Area Streetscape and Plaza Improvements project. The area has suddenly gotten difficult to navigate, and impossible to park in. Pity the poor retailer.

Two large construction projects blocking roadways and sidewalks, next up is work on the CTA transit plaza adjacent to the Brown Line, the Farmers Market taking out the parking lot, the narrowing of Le-

land Ave. for those privileged bike paths, and Western Ave. down to one northbound lane. The open house is at the Old Town School of Folk Music, 4544 N. Lincoln Ave., good luck finding parking. These days I get as far north as Laschet's Inn on Irving Park and just stop there. Order their goulash, best in town.

**RIP: Mike Nussbaum** almost turned 100, dying six days before his birthday. Growing up in Albany Park, he was active in Chicago theater, film and TV commercials, in the lean years and the years of plenty, after serving in WWII. From Faust to mashugana Royals there were few challenges



Stephanie Izard



Rick Bayless



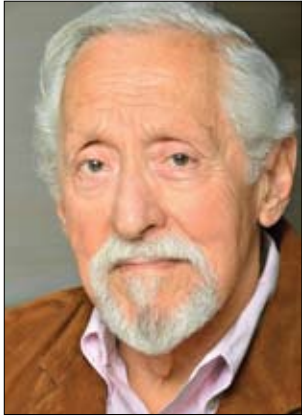
Barry Sorkin



Doug Sohn

he would not rise to. His films include Field of Dreams, House of Games, Things Change, Fatal Attraction and Men In Black. Farewell brilliant actor. All the world is a stage.

**PIZZA PAWS:** PAWS Chicago's second annual "Slice to Meet You" fundraiser in conjunction with Piece Pizza. For three months, starting Feb. 9, pizza-loving Chicagoans can help PAWS Chicago just by eating pizza - talk about a win-win. Piece and PAWS Chicago are again teaming with celebrity chefs **Rick Bayless** (Frontera



Mike Nussbaum

Restaurants), **Stephanie Izard** (Girl & The Goat), **Doug Sohn** (Hot Doug's) and **Barry Sorkin** (Smoque BBQ) and their unique pizza creations to not only raise funds but to spotlight dogs and cats who have been up for adoption for a while. \$10 from each pizza will be donated to PAWS Chicago and all Piece pizzas de-

livered during that span will feature flyers of adoptable dogs on pizza boxes delivered across Chicagoland.

**NAZI ART AND PROUD:** You've got be kidding me. Even sharing the shame of the same artistic aesthetics as Hitler isn't enough to get the Art Institute of Chicago [AIC] to back down on the issue of stolen Nazi plunder.

You've no doubt read of the mega-controversy over the stolen works by Austrian artist **Egon von Schiele**. The finest modern man with a pencil in all Austrian history. Died too young just after the Great War of the Influenza. Tragically young.

In uniform he was a jailer at a prisoner of war facility where he used to sketch the incarcerated. He was always controversial. Before the war, as a teen, he sketched too many scantily clad beauties like an X-ray machine rendering. But the present legal logistics of controversial court case now raises the AIC's compliance to the court's order.

Bottom line, most museums return stolen art from Hitler's crew by return mail. What's the problem AIC? The Fuhrer got your tongue? The AIC is the last hold-out. Shame. Shame.

**BROADWAY BOUND:** Great commotion in the exciting world of Broadway Producer **Richard Robin**. "A Sign of the Times," a new musical featuring the songs of **Petula Clark, Lesley Gore, Dusty Springfield**, and other classic pop hits of the 1960s, is about to open in New York at

**ACT LIKE** see p. 8

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# Buyer beware for new web-based AI-sourced community feedback sites

The developer of the proposed Fern Hill project in Old Town has introduced a new web-based concept for developers to engage with community members without having to participate in live, in-person community meetings.

The social media / urban planning site is called Courbanize [<https://www.courbanize.com/>]. The platform is basically a zoning Artificial Intelligence [AI] platform for development advocates. And as in all things AI, it's buyer beware.

The site itself notes that "most real estate developers dread the community outreach aspect of getting projects approved. Contentious meetings with angry neighbors and a long, tedious entitlement process puts projects at risk - and cause a lot of stress for community members, municipal leaders and project teams alike."

It's not a surprise that most developers and their advocates would like their path to approval

be made much simpler, and what better way than to phase out the whole in-person community engagement part of the process.

Courbanize notes that their

free and open un-censored forum, and give the actual accurate data and input they may be receiving.

Fern Hill specifically is now boasting about their list of engaged

***The site itself notes that "most real estate developers dread the community outreach aspect of getting projects approved. Contentious meetings with angry neighbors and a long, tedious entitlement process puts projects at risk - and cause a lot of stress for community members, municipal leaders and project teams alike."***

experts who created this AI platform "[know] the best way to handle community engagement - one that actually puts community feedback to work in a productive way, shaping project plans and ultimately playing a key role in getting projects approved faster."

The obvious concern that accessing and using AI platforms presents to community stakeholders is that the site demands that proponents and opponents alike must 'just trust us' to provide a

community members they've met with, and making extensive use of the platform. So far this newspaper has not seen any published data from Fern Hill, Courbanize.com or the alderman's office on the number of residents who state they are for and/or against this proposal.

(The Jan. 16 virtual community meeting hosted by Fern Hill occurred after this newspaper's deadline so we are not able to report on how the

platform was utilized by the developer to help hone in their sales efforts.)

But Ald. Brian Hopkins [2nd] and Fern Hill appear to be early adopters of this AI, and have encouraged citizens and community organizations to pick up the site's paintbrush and work on the "blank canvas" of the Old Town development sites: the two gas stations, former Treasure Island space, Moody parking lot, and Walgreens.

For now it appears that the site is being lightly utilized by those in the community, with few painting on the site except for Fern Hill themselves.

Meanwhile, people in the community have told this newspaper they are scrambling to establish dialogue among neighbors in opposition to Fern Hill's high density housing plan that offers scarce off-street parking in a community that exists today in an off-street parking desert.

## Summer lifeguard applications now open

It's below zero this week so that is always the best time to start thinking about summer and becoming a lifeguard.

Being a Chicago Park Dist. [CPD] lifeguard and spending work days on a lakefront beach or at a neighborhood pool is the job we all wish we had in our youth, and some can have if they qualify.

This year, the first 500 applicants that complete the Lifeguard Skills test will receive a \$50 Amazon gift card. The CPD also offers the Lifeguard Explorers training program this winter, which affords Chicago residents ages 15 to 22 the opportunity to learn the required skills needed to successfully pass the Lifeguard Skills Test.

In addition to great lifesaving knowledge, those who complete the Lifeguard Explorers program will receive a \$475 stipend. To pass candidates must attend 15 classes now through March 1.

To learn more about being a lifeguard, and the application process call 312-742-7801, or visit [www.chicagoparkdistrict.com/lifeguards](http://www.chicagoparkdistrict.com/lifeguards).

## CPS inspector finds PPP fraud, stolen laptops and sexual misconduct cases

BY THE CENTER SQUARE

Chicago Public Schools Inspector General William Fletcher's office's annual report was released last week, looking at fraud, waste and misconduct.

The most recent report from IG Fletcher's office found 77,000 laptops to be lost or stolen. Chicago Teachers Union [CTU] Vice President Jackson Potter is calling for more "tech coordinators."

John Kugler, a lifelong educator and a former employee of the CTU, said tech coordinators don't specialize in loss prevention but rather they repair and prepare technology.

"For them to say they don't know where those computers are is ridiculous. They know exactly where every one of these comput-

ers are today," Kugler said.

Kugler was a CPS employee from 2004 to 2010 and then worked alongside Potter and CTU President Stacy Davis-Gates. He worked in a computer lab.

"Tech coordinators do not have authority over students," said Kugler. "They put on an asset tag and they set up the computer so teachers and students can use them."

Each computer would be assigned to a room number or, in the case of remote learning, each computer is assigned to each student, which then would follow that student to each teacher. All of those computers are on a roster under a teacher's name, Kugler said.

"They don't want to retrieve the computers," Kugler said.

The lost or stolen laptops

amount to a total of \$23 million in taxpayer cost. Fletcher said the schools need a complete overhaul on how to track lost or stolen laptops.

"One of the things the performance review showed was that some schools hire their own technology coordinators called 'techos' and those are CPS employees," Fletcher said. "Whereas other schools may hire an external vendor or a company, but those third-party technology coordinators don't receive centralized training and they don't know how to input data into the system."

Fletcher said all of these things resulted in really poor data being entered into the asset inventory system that was completely unreliable and led to 77,000 computers, laptops and tablets being re-

ported lost or stolen.

"One of the recommendations we had in our report was that where we have schools that have school-based technology coordinators ... those audits that were submitted by those schools tended to report fewer lost or stolen devices," Fletcher said. "They were doing a better job at accounting for their inventory."

The report, which details the inspector general's work for the year that ended June 30, 2023, also shows the district spent \$124 million on tech assets.

Kugler said the loss prevention falls on the teacher and the disciplinary action falls on the administration.

"I worked with computers and

CPS see p. 7



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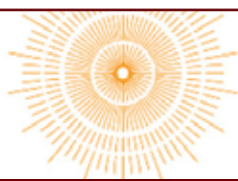


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## State seeking summer instructors for 2024 Urban Fishing Program clinics

The Illinois Dept. of Natural Resources is accepting applications now for instructors for 2024 summer fishing clinics through the department's Urban Fishing Program.

Fishing instructors are the department's boots on the ground at free clinics hosted in communities throughout Illinois. These are temporary positions not to exceed six months, making them perfect for teachers, retirees, students, and others who are eager to help people learn about fishing skills and ecology.

Numerous spots are available for Chicago, Cook County, and the northeastern part of Illinois.

The deadline to apply is approaching quickly. To learn more about the positions, qualifications and how to apply, visit <https://bit.ly/IDNRjobs>. Look for positions titled "conservation education representative."

The Illinois Urban Fishing Program was established in 1985 to teach people of all ages to fish, to provide better local fishing opportunities, and to offer participants an understanding of and a greater appreciation for natural resources.

"Fishing is a great way for families to spend time together outdoors, and our clinics give thousands of young people an opportunity to experience the fun of fishing every summer," said Mike McClelland, chief of fisheries for Illinois. "Is there a better way to spend the summer than teaching children and adults about the joys of fishing and the importance of conservation?"

# Declining rates will stimulate 2024 local home market



The Home Front  
by Don DeBat

The stabilizing and lowering of home-loan interest rates should be a stimulus for the 2024 spring residential real estate season in Chicago.

That's the optimistic early 2024 forecast from Baird & Warner's January Market Analysis, co-authored by Realtors John Irwin and Jackie Lafferty.

On Jan. 11, the Freddie Mac Primary Mortgage Market Survey reported that benchmark 30-year fixed-rate mortgages nationwide averaged 6.66%, up slightly from 6.62% a week earlier. A year ago, the 30-year fixed loans averaged 6.33%.

Fifteen-year fixed mortgages averaged 5.87% on January 11th, down from 5.89% a week earlier. A year ago, 15-year fixed loans averaged 5.52%.

"Mortgage rates have not moved materially over the last three weeks and remain in the mid-6% range, which has marginally increased home-buyer demand," said Sam Khater, Freddie Mac's chief economist.

"Even this slight uptick in demand, combined with inventory that remains tight, continues to cause prices to rise faster than incomes, meaning affordability remains a major headwind for buyers," Khater said.



Overall in 2023, resale-home prices rose by 1.3% over 2022.

The Freddie Mac survey is focused on conventional, conforming, fully amortizing home-purchase loans for borrowers who put 20% percent down and have excellent credit.

In the Baird & Warner January Market Analysis, Irwin noted that after 21 consecutive months of year-over-year home sales decreases, 2023 ended with a 2.3% increase in December for Lincoln Park, Near North Side, Lakeview and North Center.

"Hopefully, these positive numbers for December will signal a Chicago real estate rebound in 2024," Irwin said. However, home buyers and sellers still face some challenges before we can feel confident that the market is rebounding."

The Baird & Warner analysis also noted the following positive trends:

- **Resale homes sales:** In December, 2023, home sales rose 2.3%, compared with a decline of 23.8% in December of 2022. While three of our four neighborhoods reported increases, sales in Lincoln Park declined 29.8%.

The December sales increase was driven primarily by homes priced under \$500,000 and homes priced over \$2 million. "The increase in home sales is great news, but there are still inconsistencies in neighborhoods and price points," Irwin observed.

- **Listing inventory:** With interest rates dropping, historically low inventory levels are now the main obstacle to a real estate rebound. Inventory levels dropped 20.1% in 2023 and fell 23.4% in December.

"These decreases were consistent in all four neighborhoods and price points,"

Irwin noted. "The market will need a significant infusion of new inventory in order to sustain a long-term real estate turn around."

- **Interest rates:** Falling interest rates and rising loan limits have given North Side real estate a new enthusiasm for 2024. Most home loans have dropped into the mid-6% range and are expected to fall as low as 5.5% by the second quarter, economists predict.

- **Loan limits:** Conventional home loan limits have risen to \$766,550 in 2023 from \$726,000 in 2022. The limits for other loans, such as Federal Housing Administration-insured mortgages, also have been increased.

"Loan-limit increases in addition to interest rate decreases are restoring some of the buying power that has been lost in the past two years," Irwin noted. "Real estate brokers can already see an increase in buyer activity in the past few weeks. The lowering of interest rates will hopefully bring sellers back into the market raising inventory levels that are so desperately needed."

- **Resale home prices:** Overall in 2023, resale-home prices rose by 1.3% over 2022. However, in December prices rose a hefty 6.3%. "Traditionally, low inventory levels significantly drive-up prices, but this has not been the case on Chicago's North Side," Irwin said.

*"North Side resale price numbers are lower than the Chicago suburbs and many cities across the country,"*  
*John Irwin said.*

"North Side resale price numbers are lower than the Chicago suburbs and many cities across the country," Irwin said. "As we head into the spring real estate season, sellers should be careful not to fall victim to perceived market momentum. Homes need to be priced competitively to avoid extended market times and lower offers."

- **Crystal ball gazing:** Irwin said it is too early to predict the direction of the 2024 market, but unlike 2023, there are positive indicators.

"Buyers and sellers need to stay updated on a regular basis for market changes in their specific neighborhood and property types," he advised. "The market for a single-family home in Lincoln Park can be entirely different from a high-rise condo in the Gold Coast."

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



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**Judge removes top resentencing prosecutor from murder case over conflict of interest**

BY CWBCHICAGO

Dante Brown waited more than ten years for a judge to reconsider the life-without-parole sentence he received for a double murder in Chicago in 2009.

The case eventually found its way to Judge Michael McHale, who, on November 17, granted Brown a new sentencing hearing. The state, represented by Asst. State's Attorney Michelle Mbekeani, had agreed with Brown's defense team that a new hearing should be held, McHale's order said.

Any relief Brown may have felt upon hearing McHale's decision was short-lived.

McHale vacated his own order on Dec. 8, 2023, after learning that Mbekeani, the head of the Cook County state's attorney's office Conviction Review Unit, appeared to operate a for-profit business linking inmates with wrongful conviction claims with private attorneys. He had read about it on City Wire the day before.

The judge said Brown's case would not proceed until he knew more about Mbekeani's side hustle.

Mbekeani spoke with this reporter about the company, PeriodSentence.com, a couple of days later, saying it wasn't a functioning company. It was an idea, a class project she had at the Univ. of Chicago Booth School of Business.

"The software we envisioned isn't even built fully," Mbekeani said, adding that the company hadn't even been legally formed.

On Jan. 8, all of the parties were back in court, as first reported by Martin Prieb, an author and former Chicago police officer.

Cook County State's Attor-



[L-R] Michelle Mbekeani, Judge Michael McHale's note to vacate his order for a resentencing hearing for Dante Brown.

Images courtesy PeriodSentence.com; Cook County Clerk of Court records; IDOC

***"Based on all the information that I see here, I conclude that you are, indeed, running a for-profit corporation, registered in the state of Illinois with the purpose that involves you spending your time assisting incarcerated defendants and their defense attorneys," McHale announced. "It presents a very disturbing appearance of impropriety in the form of a conflict."***

ney Kim Foxx's top deputy, Risa Lanier, joined Mbekeani for the hearing, which more closely resembled a deposition of Mbekeani by the judge.

The judge had read the CWB Chicago story.

"You were quoted as saying, Period is not a real business. Is that correct?" McHale asked. "You explained that was merely a concept that you had developed last spring for that same business class mentioned before. Correct?"

"Correct," replied Mbekeani to both questions.

"You told the CWB reporter that the company had never been legally formed, right?" McHale continued.

"Period? Yeah, Period. Not legally formed, correct," Mbekeani replied.

After many more questions, including several about the company website, which McHale said he printed out before it was taken offline, the judge revealed that he found active Articles of Incorporation for a company called Due Tech Process Corporation, previously known as Period.

McHale said that Mbekeani is listed as the company's CEO, president, director, and registered agent.

The judge wasn't having Mbekeani's arguments on the topic. "You're — you're fudging, and that's fine. You're an attorney, so I expect that," the judge offered.

"Based on all the information that I see here, I conclude that you are, indeed, running a for-profit corporation, registered in the state of Illinois with the purpose that involves you spending your time assisting incarcerated defendants and their defense attorneys," McHale announced. "It presents a very disturbing appearance of impropriety in the form of a conflict."

"A prosecutor takes an oath to be an advocate of the victims of crimes, and families of the vic-

**FAILURE** see p. 5



## Live ice sculpting in Lakeview

As long as we are all freezing let's put that cold to good use making ice sculptures.

Ice sculpting will take place in Lakeview 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday Jan. 27 and Sunday Jan. 28 in front of St. Alphonsus, 1429 W. Wellington.

Guests may watch master ice carvers make winter magic happen as they sculpt a block of ice

into art pieces of the audience's choosing. That's right — bring your ideas, as the ice sculptor will ask the audience for suggestions of what to create.

Food trucks will be on site both days of the event, offering complimentary beverages and bites to help keep attendees warm. This event is free and open to the public.

## Judges needed for Chicago Metro History Day, contest opens Jan. 25

Formerly known as the History Fair, Chicago Metro History Day is a research program for students in grades 6-12. Each year, over 8,000 students from across the metro region research a topic of their choice connected to an annual theme and develop historical arguments that are shared with the public in a series of local, state, and national competitions.

The event is now seeking volunteer judges. Volunteer judges evaluate the historical quality of students' documentaries, papers, exhibits, performances, and websites.

Teacher and project registration opens on Jan. 25, and

student registration is due Feb. 12. Final project paperwork uploads are due by 9 a.m. Feb. 21. For more information visit [www.chicagohistoryday.org](http://www.chicagohistoryday.org).

The event is co-sponsored by the Univ. of Illinois Chicago, Chicago History Museum and Latin School.

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## Authors to speak at Book Cellar

The three authors who just published the book "Chicago's Modern Mayors," Dick Simpson, and Betty O'Shaughnessy, as well as contributor Kari Lydersen, will be celebrating the launch of their new book Feb. 1 by speaking with customers at The Book Cellar, 4736 N. Lincoln Ave.

The book is filled with analysis and insights on Chicago's modern mayors that tries to illuminate a time of transition and change and considers the politicians who—for better and worse—shaped the Chicago of today. The book examines the five mayors that guided the city through this transition beginning with Harold Washington's 1983 election through Eugene Sawyer, Richard M. Daley, Rahm Emmanuel, and Lori Lightfoot.

**Polar Adventure Days**

— BIG MARSH PARK —  
11559 S. Stony Island Ave.

Saturday • January 20 • February 17 • 12 — 3pm

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- See Husky teams sled around the park •
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Big Marsh Park is located at 11559 S. Stony Island Ave.  
Limited parking is available during Polar Adventure Days.

For more information visit [www.ChicagoParkDistrict.com](http://www.ChicagoParkDistrict.com) or call 312.742.7529

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# Police Beat...

## Woman’s failed U-turn allegedly caused vehicle collision at Fullerton / Damen intersection

A woman has filed a lawsuit against a driver who allegedly crashed into her vehicle during a failed U-turn maneuver at the intersection of Fullerton and Damen avenues.

According to court documents filed in Cook County Circuit Court, on March 5, 2023, the plaintiff, Crystal Correa, was driving westbound on Fullerton Ave. near the intersection with Damen Ave. when her vehicle was struck by a vehicle driven by defendant Kristin Sandquist. Sandquist was allegedly operating her vehicle in the westbound turn lane and intending to make a U-turn, but decided to pull back into the westbound lane of traffic and collided with Correa’s vehicle as she attempted to reenter traffic.

Sandquist is accused of several acts of negligence, including failing to maintain her vehicle in the turn lane of westbound traffic until it was clear, failing to yield the right of way to avoid collision, failing to reduce speed to avoid collision, failing to stop, failing to have adequate brakes, driving at a speed that was greater than reasonable for the conditions, and general carelessness.

Correa claims to have suffered severe and permanent injuries as a result of Sandquist’s negligence. She is seeking damages in excess of \$50,000 for pain, suffering, mental anguish, loss of normal life, loss of earnings, medical expenses, plus court costs, and any other relief the court deems proper.

## Asst. principal at Skinner School allegedly swiped \$273K

Cook County prosecutors say the assistant principal, Tracey Canty-Robinson, embezzled \$273,000 in cash that parents paid for an after-school program at Mark T. Skinner West Elementary School, 1260 W. Adams St.

A Cook County grand jury filed a 17-count criminal indictment against Canty-Robinson, who served for the last 12 years as an assistant principal at the school. She has since resigned amid an investigation.

Prosecutors say Canty-Robinson would transfer thousands of dollars at a time from the school’s PayPal account to a personal bank account. Prosecutors say she then sent checks to many of her own family members.

Canty-Robinson and her lawyer denied any wrongdoing.

## Parolee attacked CTA security dog in the Loop

A parolee with a lengthy criminal background is facing a misdemeanor or animal cruelty charge for allegedly attacking a CTA security canine in the Loop.

Transit security officers asked Ivory Smith, 44, to exit a train at Clark-Lake because he was creating a “disturbance” shortly after 6 p.m. on Jan. 4, according to a Chicago police arrest report.

As he stepped from the train, Ivory struck a security K9 named Roman “multiple times with his foot and hand” in the face and chest, the report stated. Dogs used by CTA’s security contractors wear muzzles that prevent them from biting people—even if they are being attacked.

Roman’s handlers tackled Ivory

and held him down until police arrived.

According to court records, Judge Barbara Dawkins released him from custody the next day with a nighttime curfew.

Smith was released from Stateville Correctional Center on July 17 after serving six months of a one-year sentence he received for criminal damage to government property. His parole is scheduled to end today.

Cook County court records show he has accumulated 59 criminal cases, including 10 felonies, since 1997. In addition to the case he’s on parole for, his previous prison sentences include two criminal damage to government property cases in 2021; aggravated DUI in 2021; being a felon in possession of a firearm in 2018; theft in 2016; escape from electronic monitoring in 2012; and manufacture-delivery of cocaine in 2004.

## Man who robbed two in Wrigleyville while on bail for a felony gun case gets 10 years

A man has been sentenced to 10 years in prison for robbing two people at gunpoint in Wrigleyville while he was on bail for a felony gun case two summers ago.

Damichael Bishop, 27, pleaded guilty to two counts of armed robbery before Judge Michael Hood on Jan. 9, according to court records. The judge gave him 10 years on each charge to be served concurrently.

On Jan. 10, Bishop received another year from Judge Geary Kull for the gun case he was on bail for at the time of the holdups. That sentence will be satisfied by the time Bishop has already served in jail.

The robbery occurred early on July 15, 2022, on Newport Ave., just east of Clark St.

Damichael Bishop pleaded guilty to robbing the two men at gunpoint in Wrigleyville.

Two men, ages 21 and 22, were walking when Bishop allegedly confronted them with a pistol and demanded their property. As Bishop held the gun on the victims, a 17-year-old boy and a third person walked up behind them and rifled through their pockets, prosecutors said.

As that was happening, one of the men screamed for a passerby to call for help because they were being robbed. Bishop and his two accomplices ran away with the victims’ money, credit cards, and jewelry.

Cops caught Bishop and the 17-year-old near the Addison Red Line CTA station and found a firearm nearby. The third person got away.

The teen was charged in juvenile court with two counts of armed robbery and possessing a stolen firearm. Those records are shielded from public review, so the case outcome is unknown.

Bishop’s parole date has not yet been set because he hasn’t been transferred to Illinois Dept. of Corrections custody. However, his 10-year sentence will be cut in half for good behavior. He earned another 557 days of credit while in custody awaiting trial.

## Man charged with shooting Chicago cop after smash-and-grab burglary at Prada store

Prosecutors have filed attempted murder charges against a man who allegedly shot a Chicago police officer after burglarizing the Prada store on Oak St. last week. The accused man had an active federal arrest warrant at the time of the shooting because he went AWOL while awaiting trial for a gun charge.

Deshawn Lucas, 33, was shot and critically injured in an exchange of gunfire with police officers in the first block of E. Walton around 4:16 a.m. on Monday, Jan. 8, said CPD Supt. Larry Snelling.

CPD officers said they found two guns in Lucas’ possession, including one equipped with a switch that en-

abled it to generate automatic gunfire.

He is charged with two counts of attempted first-degree murder, aggravated battery of a peace officer by discharging a firearm, burglary, unlawful possession of a machine gun by a felon, and possession of a firearm by a felon.



Deshawn Lucas

Lucas’ most recent Cook County criminal case was a Class X armed habitual criminal matter that was dropped when federal authorities took up gun charges in the case, according to court records. The case was nearing conclusion when Lucas stopped showing up for court, according to federal court records. A federal judge issued a warrant for him in August 2020.

Records show that Lucas remained hospitalized on Wednesday morning and could not appear for a detention hearing at the Leighton Criminal Courthouse. Judge William Fahy continued the state’s detention motion to Jan. 17.

Snelling said that officers responding to a burglary at the Prada store, 30 E. Oak, encountered a member of the burglary crew near State and Walton streets shortly after 4 a.m. He was armed, and the officers ordered him to drop his gun, Snelling said.

An “exchange of gunfire” ensued, with two officers firing shots, according to Snelling.

The injured officer fired shots, as did a 29-year-old cop who joined the force six years ago, the superintendent continued. The department said both officers will be placed on administrative duties for 30 days, consistent with CPD’s policy.

Other members of the crew who escaped in several vehicles remain at large, Snelling said, and detectives are working on the shooting and burglary cases.

Video provided to this reporter shows a smash-and-grab crew running in and out of the Prada store after they drove a Dodge Durango through the storefront around 4:15 a.m. Officers at the shooting scene said they could not identify Lucas immediately because he carried a fake identification.

## Woman, 61, ‘not expected to survive’ after being savagely beaten on a CTA train in the Loop

Prosecutors say a 61-year-old woman is brain dead and will likely die after an eight-time felon, on parole for robbing an undercover CPD narcotics officer, savagely beat her during a robbery aboard a Red Line train in downtown Chicago.

Judge William Fahy granted the state’s petition to detain Mijawon Johnson, 36, as a public safety threat during a hearing at the Leighton Criminal Courthouse. State officials have also moved to revoke his parole.

Surveillance video showed Johnson trying to steal the Uptown woman’s bag on a train car near State-Lake around 1:33 a.m. Jan. 4, officials said. He soon launched a violent attack, pinning her head on a seat and repeatedly punching her in the head and stomach, the detention petition said. Officials said he “stomped” on her body and left her on the train.

CTA employees found the woman unresponsive when the train arrived at the Roosevelt station.

Prosecutors told Judge Fahy that the woman was “on a ventilator and is brain dead” and was “not expected to survive.”

Investigators identified Johnson as the attacker and sent a bulletin to local police districts, according to a CPD report. On the day after the attack, officers on patrol saw Johnson on a CTA bus in the 700 block of W. Chicago. They pulled the bus over and took him into custody.

He is charged with attempted murder and two counts of aggravated battery, according to court records. Prosecutors also charged him with violating an order of protection for allegedly entering a 27-year-old Old Town woman’s residence on New Year’s Eve after being ordered to stay away.

Johnson was paroled in August after serving half of a six-year sentence he received for robbing a covert narcotics officer on the West Side on St. Patrick’s Day 2021.

In that case, Johnson held his hand to his side as if he had a gun and ordered the undercover cop to give him cash and his phone. The officer surrendered his phone and cash with pre-recorded serial numbers intended for drug purchases, according to the CPD case report.

Other cops moved in and arrested Johnson when the covert officer gave them a secret signal to alert them that he was being robbed.

At the time of the robbery, Johnson was on parole for aggravated battery of a police officer at the Near North (18th) District station, 1160 N. Larabee.

He was sentenced to prison six other times between 2007 and 2015, all for narcotics, according to IDOC records.

## A dispute over discarded water bottles ended in murder at a popular rooftop bar

More than a year after a man was shot and killed on a popular rooftop bar in Lincoln Park, charges have been filed in the case.

Cordaryl Allen, the married father of three boys, was slain at the J. Parker atop Hotel Lincoln, 1816 N. Clark, on Oct. 16, 2022.

At the time, Chicago police said two men were fighting inside the bar when one pulled out a gun and shot the other man in the chest.

But that’s not what further investigation revealed, officials said this week, as prosecutors charged Parrish Jefferson, 37, of Dolton with first-degree murder. The medical examiner determined that Allen had been shot in the back, not the chest. And officials now suspect he was mistakenly killed by Jefferson, who intended to shoot the bar’s bouncer.

On the night of the shooting, Jefferson went to the J. Parker with friends to celebrate his girlfriend’s birthday, prosecutors said in a detention petition filed with the court.

At one point, Jefferson “became upset that water bottles his group brought to the bar were thrown away,” the petition stated.

The lounge’s unarmed security guard offered to replace the water bottles. Jefferson was not satisfied with the offer. He began hitting the bouncer, and the confrontation moved to the outdoor patio area, where only four people were present: Jefferson, Allen, the bouncer, and a friend of Jefferson’s.

Another fight erupted on the deck between the bouncer and Jefferson’s friend. As they fought, Jefferson pulled out a gun and fired one shot, striking Allen in the back.

Officials said the two men who were fighting stopped and turned around to see Jefferson trying to assist Allen, according to prosecutors. They said Jefferson fled before police arrived, but everyone else who was with the birthday party stayed on the rooftop.

Judge Maryam Ahmad granted the state’s detention petition, saying prosecutors presented a “strong circumstantial case.” She said it was “likely” that Jefferson was trying to shoot the bouncer, who was fighting his friend.

“Someone is deceased because he

could not control his temper and actions,” Ahmad wrote in her detention order.

Chicago police officers arrested Jefferson in Calumet Park last week.

“You did this to my kids and they are going Krazy now that everyone left the house y’all [expletive] wrong MANNNNNN, they daddy gone and I don’t have my husband, ughhhh-hh,” Allen’s wife wrote on Facebook shortly after the shooting.

“Life without my Husband I don’t even understand it.”

“This is such a sad occasion,” wrote his sister, CeCe, in a GoFundMe plea. “We’ve lost a brother, uncle, cousin, son and for some a best friend. But most importantly a loving husband and a good father.”

“He was always laughing, or saying something funny. We’re going to truly miss him. I know everyone he met loved him and just know he loved you all too.”

CeCe’s campaign raised \$4,410 for Allen’s family.

## Driver shot while dropping off passenger at River North hotel

A livery driver was shot when gunmen opened fire on a group of people as he was dropping off a passenger outside a River North hotel on Jan. 14, according to Chicago police. It happened around 9:19 p.m. outside the SpringHill Suites and Residence Inn, 410 N. Dearborn.

Police said two men got out of a black sedan and started shooting at a group of people on the sidewalk as the victim was letting his passenger out. A bullet grazed the 52-year-old victim’s left shoulder blade. He was taken to Northwestern Memorial Hospital in good condition.

The gunmen fled in the black car after firing shots, speeding down Hubbard St. with one of its rear doors hanging open.

A video posted to the Citizen app showed police crime scene tape draped across Dearborn St. in front of the hotels’ shared entrance. A bullet hole pierced the hotels’ front door and at least two cars, according to a witness. Several shell casings were also seen lying in the street.

Sunday’s victim is the third person shot on the Near North Side in 2024. A 55-year-old Chicago police officer and 33-year-old Deshawn Lucas were both shot during an exchange of gunfire in the first block of E. Walton early on Jan. 8.

Prosecutors said the officers encountered Lucas with a gun in his hand as he ran from a smash-and-grab burglary at the Prada store at 30 E. Oak. The cops ordered him to drop the weapon, but he opted to shoot at the police, two of whom returned fire, officials said.

Lucas, who had been AWOL from a pending federal gun case for more than three years, is charged with two counts of attempted murder.

## Police investigate man’s claims of being shot in Rogers Park

Chicago police are investigating after a man hobbled into a Rogers Park grocery store, claiming that someone shot him on a nearby street Jan. 14.

The 25-year-old sought help at Jewel-Osco, 1743 W. Howard, around 7:40 a.m.

He told officers he was walking in the 7500 block of N. Wolcott when he heard two people he didn’t know arguing inside a white car, followed by gunfire, according to a CPD report. The man then realized he had been shot.

He was taken to St. Francis Hospital with a gunshot wound to his thigh.

Police did not receive any calls of shots fired in the area. Investigators did not find signs that a shooting occurred in the location provided by the man. An officer at the scene



# Supreme Court to determine if pot odor can be cause for vehicle search

BY DILPREET RAJU  
Capitol News Illinois

On Jan. 10 the Illinois Supreme Court heard arguments as to whether the smell of pot alone is grounds for police officers to search a vehicle, marking a test of the state's 2020 recreational marijuana legalization law.

The court heard two consolidated cases of individuals who were in vehicles that were searched after an officer used the smell of pot as probable cause.

In *People v. Redmond*, defendant Ryan Redmond was pulled over by Illinois State Police for an unsecured license plate and driving three miles per hour over the speed limit, court records show. Upon smelling pot, the officer searched the vehicle and found about one gram of marijuana according to court documents.

The other case, *People v. Molina*, involved defendant Vincent Molina, who was a passenger in the vehicle when an Illinois State Police trooper smelled pot and searched the car, finding a small box of rolled joints, according to court records. Molina told the trooper he had a medical marijuana card prior to the search, the records state. Molina was charged with unlawful possession of cannabis by a passenger in a motor vehicle for not storing the pot in an odor-proof container.

Lawyers for Molina and Redmond argued the smell of pot alone should not be probable cause to search a vehicle given

that the substance is no longer illegal in Illinois.

But Attorney General Kwame Raoul's office argued the law requires drivers to transport pot in an odor-proof container. Thus, the presence of pot odor is grounds for a search, even if the passenger is possessing an amount under the legal limit or has a medical marijuana card.

"It remains illegal to use cannabis in a vehicle and to transport cannabis in a vehicle in a container that is not odor-proof," a November brief filed by Raoul reads. Thus, "the odor of cannabis — whether in raw or burnt form — continues to provide police with probable cause to search."

Mitchell Ness, assistant attorney general, continued the argument before the Supreme Court on Jan 10.

"Cannabis is no longer contraband in every circumstance, but that doesn't absolve the person from following the laws that are in place," he said.

Chief Justice Mary Jane Theis said the central matter of the cases was roadway safety.

"The concern here is the safety of the public driving down the highway and impaired drivers," Theis said at the oral arguments. "We're concerned about drunk drivers, and we're concerned about high drivers."

Nationwide and state-level chapters of the American Civil Liberties Union and the National Assoc. of Criminal Defense Lawyers filed a brief in support of

Molina and Redmond, writing that allowing the odor of cannabis as cause for searching a vehicle will lead to biased enforcement against Blacks and Latinos.

"There is a decades-long pattern of police in this state using pretext like cannabis odor to disproportionately stop and search Black and Latino drivers," the brief reads. Illinois' stop and search policy "unfairly subjects (Black and Latino drivers) to at-will intrusions of their privacy and relegates them to second-class citizenry."

The organizations argued the legalization of pot means its presence is not indicative of contraband or crime.

Alexandra Block, director of the ACLU of Illinois' criminal legal systems and policing project and co-author of the brief, told Capitol News Illinois a probable cause must be objective, not "malleable."

"Even the claim of smelling cannabis can be discretionary. Honestly, it can be made up sometimes when officers are being less than honest because there's no way to challenge it. You can't see (a smell) on a body worn camera," Block said.

Because such accusations are unchallengeable in court, the results "are often coming out worse for drivers of color," she said.

In *People v. Molina*, a trial court determined the odor of pot alone could not be cause for

POT ODOR see p. 10

## CPS from p. 3

I set computers up. School-based and third-party technology coordinators, all of them, wouldn't be able to retrieve these computers. It's not their job and it doesn't make sense for the IG to say that. It begs the question: Why are they mirroring the same talking points?" Kugler said.

When he was at CPS, they would file a police report if the computer went missing, Kugler said.

Fletcher's office's annual report looks at other issues including fraud, waste and misconduct.

Of the 446 sexual misconduct complaints received by the office, 7% were sexual acts while 26% were other sexual misconduct allegations and 67% were guideline violations.

"While there are concerning allegations for sexual abuses and sexual misconduct, most of the 464 complaints relate to guideline violations that relate to appropriate boundaries between staff and students," Fletcher said.

Guideline violations could be giving students presents, texting with students and giving rides.

The Chicago Board of Education is pushing for the removal of police officers in the schools, and Fletcher said when the office reports these suspected crimes they are usually calling detectives especially assigned to investigate sex crimes.

"We are not usually reporting these complaints to the police officers that are stationed in schools," said Fletcher. "I am not familiar with any cases where the initial outcry from a student has

been to a school-based security officer or a school-based Chicago police department officer. I am certain they are a great resource in other ways."

During the pandemic, the government offered taxpayer-funded Paycheck Protection Program [PPP] loans, but CPS employees lied on their applications and did not qualify for those loans. Fletcher's report says 810 employees took PPP loans and of those 16 were asked questions and later resigned or were fired.

"These are year-round employees who applied for these loans under fraudulent pretenses and

the common thread is that they claim to have businesses and have payroll that would qualify them to apply for and receive these PPP loans and our investigations have shown these businesses are entirely made up," said Fletcher. "In some cases they would claim their sole proprietorship would make them \$100,000 a year and our investigations would show if anything it was much less."

Chicago Public Schools has received about \$1.93 billion in additional state and local taxpayer funding since the 2018-19 school year.


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# Burglar held at gunpoint by concealed carry holder gets probation

BY CWBCHICAGO

Tyler Hamlin was charged with burglary last February after a concealed carry holder [CCL] interrupted the break-in and held him at gunpoint until Chicago police arrived. Last week, a judge sentenced Hamlin to probation.

He was already on probation for a criminal damage by fire case, which started as an aggravated arson charge, when the Wrigleyville gun owner detained him around 8:30 p.m. on Feb. 6, 2023.

The CCL holder had received an alert from his security system that someone was on his front porch in the 3500 block of N. Fremont. Prosecutors said he inspected the property and found Hamlin inside his garage. The homeowner warned Hamlin that he had a gun and ordered him to show his hands

while his wife called 911.

"[The police] were here in about 45 seconds, and he couldn't get out of the garage.



Tyler Hamlin

I was standing in the door," the homeowner told CBS2 last year.

Hamlin, 31, has a bachelor's degree in psychology and gender and women's studies from UIC, according to his defense attorney. Despite those credentials, he was homeless and unemployed at the time of the burglary.

He pleaded guilty to burglary last week in exchange for the sentence from Judge Sharon Kanter. His probation in the criminal damage to fire case was terminated unsatisfactorily, according to court records.

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ACT LIKE from p. 2

New World Stages Theater. Robin's darling wife, **Linda Robin**, still coming back from back surgery, won't be doing any high kicks. But I'm sure she'll have a few choice correctives. Chicago friends are delighted Richard's back in production. He has the eye. It is a gift.

**BACH TO BOWIE:** The Auditorium Theatre is presenting Complexions: Contemporary Ballet by the New York City-based contemporary dance company that is reinventing dance. The one-night-only performance, titled Star Dust: From Bach to Bowie, features the Chicago premiere of Star Dust, the company's electrifying, act-long tribute to rock icon **David Bowie**. The performance is 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 3. Tickets start at \$30 and are available at auditoriumtheatre.com.

Founded in 1994 by Alvin Ailey alumni **Desmond Richardson** and **Dwight Rhoden**, Complexions has an artistic approach that mixes methods, styles, and cultures. Richardson is a pioneer in the transformation of ballet from a predominately white art form, and was the first African American principal dancer of American Ballet Theatre.

He also received a Tony Award nomination for his role in the original Broadway cast of Fosse.

Master choreographer Rhoden has created over 80 ballets for Complexions as well as numerous prominent dance companies across America and the world. As a dancer, Rhoden has performed with Dayton Contemporary Dance Company, Les Ballet Jazz De Montreal and as a principal dancer with Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater.

Much like the company itself,

the show is a celebration of differences and the graceful marriage of aesthetic opposites featuring music that spans from Baroque to contemporary pop. The first half of the mixed repertoire program includes beloved works from the company's repertoire including Chaconne (from Ballad Unto); Choke; Pocket Symphony; Elegy; and Work It Out (from SBFTE). The second half of the program is Rhoden's Star Dust celebrating the work and legacy of Bowie and featuring some of the greatest hits from his catalogue of rock classics, including "Young Americans," "Heroes," and "Space Oddity."

"Bowie, who performed on the Auditorium Theatre stage in 1972, is one of the most iconic voices in the last 50 years of rock and glam music," says **Rich Regan**, Auditorium CEO. "Complexions is a company that embodies Bowie's traits of going against the grain, artistic innovation, and blending genre. We're excited to welcome Complexions back to our stage for this thrilling program and touching tribute."

**LA GRANDE:** The "grande" Lady **Cynthia Olson** is a cherished repeat at the Astor Club, the fabled work of the Astor Towers architect **Bertrand Goldberg**. Back many moons ago he had designed the building in the Modernist style in homage to his wife, **Nancy Florsheim** of the shoe folk. On New Years Eve 1960, she opened Maxim's. Olson was present. That was the night a young Frenchman went to work as the wine steward. He would later open his own French restaurant nearby.

**WHO'S WHERE:** **Mark O'Malley** and the "Mrs.," violinist **Patricia Treacy**, doing Dublin and roast goose in Co. Louth at the Treacy farm... **Sherrill Bo-**

INSIDE PUBLICATIONS



Bobbi Panter



Cynthia Olson with staff of Astor Club.



Desomond Richardson



David Bowie



Dwight Rhoden

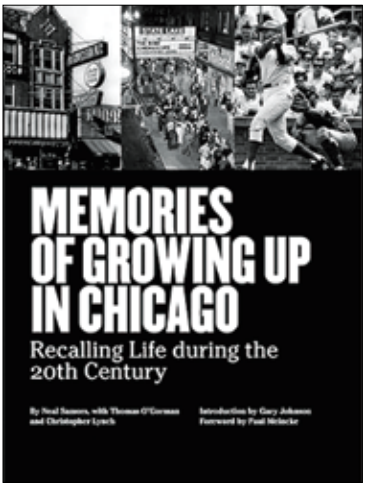


The Broadway Cast of "A Sign of the Times."

dine roaming the warmth of Cozumel and Cancun in Caribbean Mexico... **Ben and Stacey Mednick** doing Paris with senior student, **Jackie Mednick**, and getting back into French while **Anna Mednick** completes the Colgate academic semester there... Attorney supreme **Bob Clifford** at MartAnthony's Italian on Hubbard... Maestro **Stanley Paul** sunning in the California desert... **Rhonda Liesenfeldt** in the land of sun and sand and palms... **Father Bill Flaherty** grew up in St. Philip Neri Parish in South Shore and then came a refined teacher of Shakespeare and the great English writers. He will al-

ways be the voice of intelligence and bravo in the Archdiocese and he was buried last week at 98... **Kevin and Colleen Ryan** visiting sister **Victoria Dal Santo's** new, fuller-expanded familia... and a Univ. of Wisconsin grad now with daughter **Cristina** ... **Kathy O'Malley Piccone**, **Myra Reilly**, **Jennifer Sutton Brea**, **Whitey Reynolds**, **Lyza Schenkler** at Ralph Lauren loving birthday girl **Bobbi Panter**.

**NEW BOOK:** Great excitement at my house. There always is when a new book pushes its nose off the press. This time it's Amazon that has brought out the beautiful work that tells the story



of growing up in Chicago. "Memories of Growing Up In Chicago: Recalling Life During the 20th Century" by **Neal Samors**, **Chris Lynch** and this writer, \$40. It's a great list of Chicago champions. Also featuring **Gary Johnson** (Introduction), and **Paul Meincke** (Foreword).

Never, never be afraid to do what's right – especially if the well-being of a person or animal is at stake. Society's punishments are small compared to the ones we inflict on our soul when we look the other way.

- Martin Luther King Jr.

tog515@gmail.com



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# Restaurant Week is underway

The first big event of Chicago Restaurant Week [CRW] is this Thursday night, but stop right there, the First Bites Bash at the iconic Field Museum is sold out. The bash showcases tasting portions from more than 50 CRW participants, alongside wine, beer, spirits and live entertainment. Tickets are \$150 and available to purchase online - next year for those who don't already have a ticket. A portion of the proceeds will be donated to Pilot Light and the James Beard Foundation. This year Restaurant Week is featuring 21 neighborhood restaurant favorites, 18 vegetarian

options and 23 award-winning hot spots. Restaurant Week brings prices down to a much more affordable price range that more diners can enjoy. CRW participants feature special tasting menus. Each participating location offers prix-fixe lunch (\$25), brunch (\$25) or dinner (\$42 or \$59). There are some great deals to be found out there for those who do some legwork. You haven't gotten a real taste of our town's diverse restaurant scene until you've explored the city's neighborhoods. That's where you'll find an incredible array of dining options represent-

ing cuisines from all around the world. There's no better time to try some of these beloved spots than CRW, happening from Jan. 19 through Feb. 4. This year there are 381 participating restaurants representing over 30 neighborhoods — including more than 60 women- and minority-owned establishments. Reservations go fast so don't delay, most reservations can be made on Open Table or Resy, but you can always call the restaurant directly.

## Chicago Architecture Biennial: Through February 11



The Chicago Cultural Center, 78 E. Washington St., serves as one of the main exhibition venue sites for CAB 5, featuring projects from more than 80 participants.

The Chicago Architecture Biennial [CAB] is the largest architecture and design exhibition in North America. It's a city-wide event that resembles a "World's Fair" of contemporary architecture. CAB, running now through Feb. 11, is held at the Chicago Cultural Center, 78 E. Washington, with a selection of off-site projects, related exhibitions, and programming in neighborhoods all across the city. All events and exhibits are free and open to the public.

This year's exhibition titled, "This is a Rehearsal," offers a chance to dive deep into art and architecture in one of the best architecture cities on Earth. The Chicago-based collective Floating Museum will drive the event's artistic vision. The exhibition will explore how contemporary issues are shared across the globe but are addressed differently through art, architecture, and infrastructure. For a list of scheduled events visit <https://chicagoarchitecturebiennial.org>.

### POLICE BEAT from p. 6

remembered that he had also been in a disturbance at his home on Wolcott Ave. the day before. He is the second person shot in Rogers Park this year. On New Years Day, a 24-year-old man was shot while driving in the 6400 block of N. Sheridan.

### Grindr hook-up brought a gun and an accomplice to rob Rogers Park man

The suburban Christian school teacher accused of robbing and invading the home of a man he chatted up on Grindr, the gay dating app, is now charged with committing a similar crime in Rogers Park last June.



Antoine Perteet

Incredibly, court records say the Rogers Park victim identified Antoine Perteet, 33, as his assailant in early July. But prosecutors did not charge Perteet with the crime until now. If the allegations are true, Perteet victimized at least one other person after authorities identified him.

On Oct. 8, three months after the Rogers Park victim identified him in a photo line-up, Perteet and another man went to the home of a Cicero man that Perteet chatted with on the app, prosecutors said. They allegedly tied up, gagged, and robbed the victim at gunpoint.

At one point, Perteet made the man reveal his phone password, prosecutors said, and Perteet thumbed through the device as he pressed his foot into the man's face.

Now, prosecutors have laid out similar allegations against Perteet in connection with the June 28 robbery in the 1900 block of W. Morse. In recently filed papers, prosecutors said Perteet met the man on a dating app, and the victim agreed to let Perteet and another man come to his home.

They arrived at the victim's house around 11:30 p.m. and, once inside, pulled out guns. They robbed the man, forced him to lie down in the bedroom, and took his cash and phone, prosecutors alleged. The complaint said that Perteet

forced the man to unlock the device and then accessed his digital wallet. While the second man held the victim at gunpoint, Perteet allegedly went to an ATM and tried to make a withdrawal with the phone.

Prosecutors said Perteet and his accomplice collected the man's jewelry and credit cards, then left.

The next day, Chase notified the victim that someone tried to use his debit card at one of their branches in Rogers Park. The victim also learned that one of his cards was used at a gas station on the Far North Side and a liquor store in Waukegan.

Coincidentally, Perteet teaches at a Christian school in Waukegan, according to his defense attorney, and he was arrested there on the Cicero charges late last year.

A video from the liquor store showed Perteet trying to make a purchase with the victim's digital wallet on June 29, but it failed. Officials said he used one of the man's credit cards to complete the transaction.

Perteet and an unknown person were also seen on video at the gas station, according to prosecutors. The business' cameras captured pictures of Perteet's license plate, and investigators used that information to identify him as a suspect, court papers say.

After hearing about the Rogers Park allegations this week, Judge Maria Kuriakos-Ciesel detained Perteet as a public safety threat. He has been detained on similar grounds since prosecutors filed charges in the Cicero case last month.

Prosecutors have not yet charged anyone else in connection with the crimes.

### Man robbed two people in River North, got busted upon returning to his hideout

A South Side man robbed two people in River North Jan. 13 and got arrested by Chicago police when he returned to his hideout after the second holdup.



Jerry Mufid

At about 4:45 p.m., a 27-year-old victim told police that an assailant displayed a knife and robbed him of his laptop, phone, and other items in the 300 block of N. LaSalle, according to a CPD report.

Cops tracked the victim's phone and quickly located the robbery proceeds behind a Chicago Fire Dept. station at Dearborn and Hubbard, but the robber wasn't there.

Shortly after the officers found the first victim's property, a 32-year-old man called 911 after someone put a knife to his neck and robbed him in the first block of E. Grand, not far from the firehouse.

Cops staked out the area where they found the first victim's property, just in case the robber returned there after the second holdup. They detained Jerry Mufid, 20, moments later when he arrived behind the fire station, matching the robber's description.

Police say both victims identified him as the offender. An arrest report said he also had possession of the second victim's ID card.

Mufid appeared for a detention hearing at the Leighton Criminal Courthouse on Jan. 14.

—Compiled by CWBChicago.com

## Letter to the Editor

### Unbelievable!

I'm finding it so hard to believe that all of a sudden there is a great need to build monstrosity type buildings in our neighborhoods of Old Town and Goose Island. One is said to be at 400 feet tall and another at 450 feet. Just those two alone, provide substandard parking for the residents moving in. Leaving the neighborhoods to be even more congested and jammed up than they already are. Let's not forget the blocking of lanes and loss of street parking as it is with bicycles lanes. No word from Ald. Brian Hopkins on what people already living here are going to be going through with the Amazon, Fed Ex, and UPS deliveries, food deliveries, postal deliveries, Uber and Lyft, etc., etc.? Oh wait, I know, cars will just double park with blinkers on! Between the cars with the blinkers on, the buses, and the bike lanes, one might as well not drive. Is that the new thinking?

Don't drive? The state and the city would lose a fortune if people stopped driving their cars. Between the license plate fees, city stickers, parking tickets, speeding tickets, red light tickets, gasoline taxes, and the rest of that type of revenue. The city of Chicago would just continue with an even bigger deficit. The Fern Hill meeting this month is another diversion. The Fern Hill website stated that they wanted the community to pick the new façade for Walgreens. Unless you are face-to-face and can have an in-person community meeting open to discussion, it sounds like - and it smells like - a one-sided monologue. I am just putting it all out there. It's so frustrating that no matter what opinion you have; at the end, they still get built.

Mary Jo Parks  
Old Town

## Free Diabetes and Cholesterol testing Jan. 27

On January 27, the Indo-American Center will host a free diabetes, cholesterol, and blood pressure screening event. Anyone above the age of 18 is welcome to attend this event. They are accepting walk-ins. For more information contact Fahmida at 708-665-5912.

## Free reading at new theater

The American Blues Theater is hosting a live, in person free reading 7 p.m. Jan. 22, at their new home at 5627 N. Lincoln Ave. The reading runs approximately 80 minutes with no intermission. Following the reading, playwright Gloria Majule will join guests in the lobby for conversation. To get tickets, email [boxoffice@americanbluestheater.com](mailto:boxoffice@americanbluestheater.com). The reading will be about four people who journey up to the roof of Africa, Mount Kilimanjaro, and discuss the ghost of colonialism.



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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  
SPECIALIZED LOAN SERVICING LLC  
Plaintiff,  
-v-  
THOMAS QUINN, SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF BEVERLY FISHER, DECEASED, 2424 W. ESTES CONDOMINIUM ASSOCIATION, UNKNOWN OWNERS AND NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS, DIANE FISHER, UNKNOWN HEIRS AND LEGATEES OF BEVERLY FISHER  
Defendants  
2022 CH 07336  
2424 WEST ESTES AVENUE UNIT 3A  
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 June 5, 2023, an agent for The Judicial Sales Corporation, will at 10:30 AM on February 26, 2024, at The Judicial Sales Corporation, One South Wacker, 1st Floor Suite 35R, Chicago, IL, 60606, sell at a public sale to the highest bidder, as set forth below, the following described real estate:  
Commonly known as 2424 WEST ESTES AVENUE UNIT 3A, CHICAGO, IL 60645  
Property Index No. 10-36-207-013-1016 & 10-36-207-013-1044  
The real estate is improved with an apartment building.  
Sale terms: 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

Real Estate For Sale

against said real estate and is offered for sale without any representation as to quality or quantity of title and without recourse to Plaintiff and in "AS IS" condition. The sale is further subject to confirmation by the court.  
Upon payment in full of the amount bid, the purchaser will receive a Certificate of Sale that will entitle the purchaser to a deed to the real estate after confirmation of the sale.  
The property will NOT be open for inspection and plaintiff makes no representation as to the condition of the property. Prospective bidders are admonished to check the court file to verify all information. If this property is a condominium unit, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale, other than a mortgagee, shall pay the assessments and the legal fees required by The Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(1) and (g)(4). If this property is a condominium unit which is part of a common interest community, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale other than a mortgagee shall pay the assessments required by The Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g-1). IF YOU ARE THE MORTGAGOR (HOMEOWNER), YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN IN POSSESSION FOR 30 DAYS AFTER ENTRY OF AN ORDER OF POSSESSION, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 15-1701(C) OF THE ILLINOIS MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE LAW.  
You will need a photo identification issued by a government agency (driver's license, passport, etc.) in order to gain entry into our building and the foreclosure sale room in Cook County and the same identification for sales held at other county venues where The Judicial Sales Corporation conducts foreclosure sales.  
MCCALLA RAYMER LEIBERT PIERCE, LLC Plaintiff's Attorneys, One North Dearborn Street, Suite 1200, Chicago, IL, 60602. Tel No. (312) 346-9088.

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MCCALLA RAYMER LEIBERT PIERCE, LLC  
One North Dearborn Street, Suite 1200  
Chicago IL, 60602  
312-346-9088  
E-Mail: [pleadings@mccalla.com](mailto:pleadings@mccalla.com)  
Attorney File No. 22-09252IL\_778634  
Attorney Code. 61256  
Case Number: 2022 CH 07336  
TJSC#: 43-2548  
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 # 2022 CH 07336  
**13233598**

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Lakeview Township Real Estate For Sale

Real Estate For Sale

171717 -----  
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IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS  
COUNTY DEPARTMENT - CHANCERY DIVISION  
U.S. BANK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, AS INDENTURE TRUSTEE ON BEHALF OF AND WITH RESPECT TO AJAX MORTGAGE LOAN TRUST 2020-A, MORTGAGE-BACKED SECURITIES, SERIES 2020-A  
Plaintiff,  
-v-  
EDMUND C. MEADOWS, III, WENDY S. MEADOWS, 937 W. GEORGE CONDOMINIUM ASSOCIATION, STATE OF ILLINOIS, BMO HARRIS BANK, N.A.  
Defendants  
2022 CH 03401  
937 WEST GEORGE STREET, UNIT 1W  
CHICAGO, IL 60657  
NOTICE OF SALE  
PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered in the above cause on January 4, 2023, an agent for The Judicial Sales Corporation, will at 10:30 AM on January 29, 2024, at The Judicial Sales Corporation, One South Wacker, 1st Floor Suite 35R, Chicago, IL, 60606, sell at a public sale to the highest bidder, as set forth below, the following described real estate:  
Commonly known as 937 WEST GEORGE STREET, UNIT 1W, CHICAGO, IL 60657  
Property Index No. 14-29-225-034-1004 (Vol. 488)  
The real estate is improved with a condominium.  
The judgment amount was \$506,821.54.  
Sale terms: 25% down of the highest bid by certified funds at the close of the sale payable to The Judicial Sales Corporation. No third party checks will be accepted. The balance, in certified funds/or wire transfer, is due within twenty-four (24) hours. The subject property is subject to general real estate taxes, special assessments, or special taxes levied against said real estate and is offered for sale without any representation as to quality or quantity of title and without recourse to Plaintiff and in "AS IS" condition. The sale is further subject to confirmation by the court.  
Upon payment in full of the amount bid, the purchaser will receive a Certificate of Sale that will entitle the purchaser to a deed to the real estate after confirmation of the sale.  
The property will NOT be open for inspection and plaintiff makes no representation as to the condition of the property. Prospective bidders are admonished to check the court file to verify all information. If this property is a condominium unit, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale, other than a mortgagee, shall pay the assessments and the legal fees required by The Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(1) and (g)(4). If this property is a condominium unit which is part of a common interest community, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale other than a mortgagee shall pay the assessments required by The Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g-1). IF YOU ARE THE MORTGAGOR (HOMEOWNER), YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN IN POSSESSION FOR 30 DAYS AFTER ENTRY OF AN ORDER OF POSSESSION, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 15-1701(C) OF THE ILLINOIS MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE LAW.  
You will need a photo identification issued by a government agency (driver's license, passport, etc.) in order to gain entry into our building and the foreclosure sale room in Cook County and the same identification for sales held at other county venues

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cial 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.  
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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 21-9111.  
THE JUDICIAL SALES CORPORATION  
One South Wacker Drive, 24th Floor, Chicago, IL 60606-4650 (312) 236-SALE  
You can also visit The Judicial Sales Corporation at [www.tjsc.com](http://www.tjsc.com) for a 7 day status report of pending sales.  
JOHNSON, BLUMBERG & ASSOCIATES, LLC  
30 N. LASALLE STREET, SUITE 3650  
Chicago IL, 60602  
312-541-9710  
E-Mail: [ilpleadings@johnsonblumberg.com](mailto:ilpleadings@johnsonblumberg.com)  
Attorney File No. 21-9111  
Attorney Code. 40342  
Case Number: 2022 CH 03401  
TJSC#: 43-4607  
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 # 2022 CH 03401  
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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  
SIERRA PACIFIC MORTGAGE COMPANY, INC.  
Plaintiff,  
-v-  
ERIK CASTRO, ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE, KINGSBURY LARRABEE, LLC, RIVER VILLAGE POINTE CONDOMINIUM ASSOCIATION  
Defendants  
2022 CH 12416  
845 North Kingsbury Street, Unit 513  
CHICAGO, IL 60610  
NOTICE OF SALE  
PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered in the above cause on November 8, 2023, an agent for The Judicial Sales Corporation, will at 10:30 AM on February 9, 2024, at The Judicial Sales Corporation, One South Wacker, 1st Floor Suite 35R, Chicago, IL, 60606, sell at a public sale to the highest bidder, as set forth below, the following described real estate:  
Commonly known as 845 North Kingsbury Street, Unit 513, CHICAGO, IL 60610  
Property Index No. 17-04-322-023-1064 AND 17-04-322-023-1115  
The real estate is improved with a single family residence.  
The judgment amount was \$327,653.82.  
Sale terms: 25% down of the highest bid by certified funds at the close of the sale payable to The Judicial Sales Corporation. No third party checks will be accepted. The balance, in certified funds/or wire transfer, is due within twenty-four (24) hours. The subject property is subject to general real estate taxes, special assessments, or special taxes levied against said real estate and is offered for sale without any representation as to quality or quantity of title and without recourse to Plaintiff and in "AS IS" condition. The sale is further subject to confirmation by the court.  
Upon payment in full of the amount bid, the purchaser will receive a Certificate of Sale that will entitle the purchaser to a deed to the real estate after confirmation of the sale.  
The property will NOT be open for inspection and plaintiff makes no representation as to the condition of the property. Prospective bidders are admonished to check the court file to verify all information. If this property is a condominium unit, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale, other than a mortgagee, shall pay the assessments and the legal fees required by The Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(1) and (g)(4). If this property is a condominium unit which is part of a common interest community, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale other than a mortgagee shall pay the assessments required by The Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g-1). IF YOU ARE THE MORTGAGOR (HOMEOWNER), YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN IN POSSESSION FOR 30 DAYS AFTER ENTRY OF AN ORDER OF POSSESSION, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 15-1701(C) OF THE ILLINOIS MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE LAW.  
You will need a photo identification issued by a government agency (driver's license, passport, etc.) in order to gain entry into our building and the foreclosure sale room in Cook County and the same identification for sales held at other county venues where The Judicial Sales Corporation conducts foreclosure sales.  
For information, contact CHAD LEWIS, ROB-

Real Estate For Sale

ERTSON ANSCHUTZ SCHNEID CRANE & PARTNERS, PLLC Plaintiff's Attorneys, 205 N. MICHIGAN SUITE 810, CHICAGO, IL, 60601 (561) 241-6901. Please refer to file number 22-051759.  
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CHAD LEWIS  
ROBERTSON ANSCHUTZ SCHNEID CRANE & PARTNERS, PLLC  
205 N. MICHIGAN SUITE 810  
CHICAGO IL, 60601  
E-Mail: [ILMAIL@RASLG.COM](mailto:ILMAIL@RASLG.COM)  
Attorney File No. 22-051759  
Attorney ARDC No. 6306439  
Attorney Code. 65582  
Case Number: 2022 CH 12416  
TJSC#: 43-4135  
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 # 2022 CH 12416  
**13236310**

171717 -----

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-  
CHRISTOPHER STEPHENS, THE 549-551 W. BELDEN AVENUE CONDOMINIUM ASSOCIATION  
Defendants  
2022 CH 07580  
551 WEST BELDEN AVENUE GRW  
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 November 14, 2022, an agent for The Judicial Sales Corporation, will at 10:30 AM on February 2, 2024, at The Judicial Sales Corporation, One South Wacker, 1st Floor Suite 35R, Chicago, IL, 60606, sell at a public sale to the highest bidder, as set forth below, the following described real estate:  
Commonly known as 551 WEST BELDEN AVENUE GRW, CHICAGO, IL 60614  
Property Index No. 14-33-111-063-1003  
The real estate is improved with a residence.  
Sale terms: 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.

Real Estate For Sale

Upon payment in full of the amount bid, the purchaser will receive a Certificate of Sale that will entitle the purchaser to a deed to the real estate after confirmation of the sale.  
The property will NOT be open for inspection and plaintiff makes no representation as to the condition of the property. Prospective bidders are admonished to check the court file to verify all information.  
If this property is a condominium unit, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale, other than a mortgagee, shall pay the assessments and the legal fees required by The Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(1) and (g)(4). If this property is a condominium unit which is part of a common interest community, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale other than a mortgagee shall pay the assessments required by The Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g-1). IF YOU ARE THE MORTGAGOR (HOMEOWNER), YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN IN POSSESSION FOR 30 DAYS AFTER ENTRY OF AN ORDER OF POSSESSION, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 15-1701(C) OF THE ILLINOIS MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE LAW.  
You will need a photo identification issued by a government agency (driver's license, passport, etc.) in order to gain entry into our building and the foreclosure sale room in Cook County and the same identification for sales held at other county venues where The Judicial Sales Corporation conducts foreclosure sales.  
For information, examine the court file, CODILIS & ASSOCIATES, P.C. Plaintiff's Attorneys, 15W030 NORTH FRONTAGE ROAD, SUITE 100, BURR RIDGE, IL, 60527 (630) 794-9876  
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Attorney ARDC No. 00468002  
Attorney Code. 21762  
Case Number: 2022 CH 07580  
TJSC#: 43-4589  
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**13235827**

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POT ODOR from p. 7

search since the odor of cannabis could be found on medical patients who grow their own marijuana plants or workers at cultivation centers and dispensaries. The ruling was reversed by an appellate court before the case was consolidated with Redmond's and brought to the Illinois Supreme Court.

Other top courts across the country have faced the same question, most recently in Minnesota, where the state's supreme court ruled the odor of pot, in the absence of any other evidence, is not enough "that the search would yield evidence of criminally illegal drug-related contraband or

FAILURE from p. 5

tims of crime. Our criminal courts work as an adversarial system. We have defense attorneys representing the accused on one side, and we're supposed to have a prosecutor representing the People on the other," the judge explained. "When those roles become entangled and blurred, as they most certainly were in this case, the public loses trust and confidence in our criminal justice system. It creates an appearance that something unethical is occurring."

"You're off the case," McHale concluded.

McHale saved a few words for Mbekeani's boss, Kim Foxx, though: "So, to some degree, I do sympathize with you, counsel, because in my opinion, Ms. Foxx basically set you up for failure because this was such a blatantly obvious conflict of interest that I find it shocking that she didn't see it coming. But, indeed, as we've seen before, Ms. Foxx's knowledge of conflicts law is not the best."

In a written order after the hearing, McHale called Mbekeani's responses to his questions "duplicitous, incomplete, evasive and untruthful."

"In this court's 17 years on the bench and 32 years working in the criminal justice system, it has never seen such manipulative efforts used before a judge in open court to such a degree," McHale continued. He barred Mbekeani from ever representing the state in his courtroom again.

The judge said he even considered appointing a special prosecutor to handle Brown's case but determined that other attorneys in the Conviction Review Unit were fit for the job.

When the parties reconvene next month, Assistant State's Attorney Linda Walls will represent the people.

Foxx stands by Mbekeani

The State's Attorney's office is standing by Mbekeani, releasing this statement to us on Jan. 11:

*Michelle Mbekeani's leadership of the Conviction Review Unit is anchored in her unparalleled experience, deep knowledge, and fervent dedication to justice reform. Her extensive legal advocacy and reform work make her ideally suited for this pivotal role. The concerns raised about a potential conflict of interest with her university-level practicum project are unfounded and detract from our critical mission.*

*Casting doubt on Michelle's commitment and integrity leads to significant delays in our work, which have severe consequences – not only prolonging the wrongful incarceration of innocent individuals but also impeding the healing and closure needed by victims and their families. Our commitment to addressing historical wrongs of the past is unwavering. Under State's Attorney Kim Foxx's leadership, this office has worked tirelessly to overturn 246 wrongful convictions, and we remain focused on this vital task. Due to our commitment, Illinois has led the nation five out of the past six years in exonerations.*

*Michelle's academic project, which centers on due process for incarcerated individuals, underscores the crucial societal need to support and rehabilitate those*

conduct."

Last spring, the Wisconsin Supreme Court ruled the smell of pot is enough for police to search a vehicle.

Last year, Sen. Rachel Ventura introduced a bill that would amend the Illinois Vehicle Code and establish the odor of cannabis, raw or burnt, alone "shall not constitute probable cause" to search vehicles or persons. While the bill stalled last year, Ventura said she'd consider reviving the measure depending on how the court cases play out.

The Supreme Court's decision is expected later this year.

*McHale saved a few words for Mbekeani's boss, Kim Foxx, though: "So, to some degree, I do sympathize with you, counsel, because in my opinion, Ms. Foxx basically set you up for failure because this was such a blatantly obvious conflict of interest that I find it shocking that she didn't see it coming. But, indeed, as we've seen before, Ms. Foxx's knowledge of conflicts law is not the best."*

*unjustly affected by our justice system. We are immensely proud to have Michelle, a professional so deeply committed to rectifying historical inequities, leading the charge against corruption and restoring trust in our legal processes.*

Who is Dante Brown?

A jury found Brown guilty of two counts of murder in a double homicide that occurred on Oct. 6, 2003. An appellate court ruling in the case lays out more details.

In a recent filing by his attorney, Gregory Sygert of the Northwestern Univ. School of Law, said Brown was convicted under the theory of accountability, meaning someone else committed the murder, but Brown was accused of some other involvement.

In handwritten appeals sent from his cell at the Stateville Correctional Center, Brown has claimed that a Chicago police detective beat him with a thick phone book on the head and arms until he confessed.

The detective "tortured me into a false confession," Brown wrote in one appeal, saying he told his trial attorney about the beatings. In a later appeal, he claimed that authorities withheld evidence.

Sygert amended Brown's pro se filings in November with a different argument: Brown was sentenced to life without parole in 2009 at the age of 19 because state law didn't allow for anything less.

In a ten-page transcript of Brown's sentencing hearing, Judge James Linn mentioned eight times that he didn't have the authority to sentence Brown to anything less than the law required, Sygert's filing said.

The judge acknowledged that Brown's post-conviction filings contained "wisdom" and compelling arguments, none of which could be considered because the law made a life sentence mandatory, said Sygert.

"The Supreme Court has spoken, and I absolutely must follow the orders of the Supreme Court," Linn said once, according to Sygert.

"Again, my hands are tied. I must follow the law as it is. I will follow the law," Linn offered in a second instance.

Sygert's filing argued that "over 14 years later, the world Judge Linn commented on has changed significantly," and both federal and Illinois courts now recognize "that sentencing juveniles and emerging adults to mandatory life sentences without consideration of factors that reduce their culpability is unconstitutional."

The case continues in McHale's courtroom on Feb. 20.



## Project Linus makes blankets

The Chicago Public Library along with non-profit organization Project Linus is hosting a blanket making event on 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 3, at the Near North Branch Library, 310 W. Division St.

Come by yourself or with a group of friends and help cut and tie fleece blankets. All blankets made are given to children who are seriously ill or otherwise in need.

## Free winter days at the museums

Want some family fun indoors? Museums throughout Chicago are offering a variety of free dates this winter season. The upcoming free museum days in Chicago for Illinois residents are below:

- Shedd Aquarium is free on Jan. 23 – 25, 30, 31
- Field Museum is free on Wednesdays for Illinois residents
- Art Institute of Chicago is free on weekdays now through March 12
- Chicago History Museum is free for Illinois residents on Jan. 15 – 19, 23 – 26, 30 – 31
- Adler Planetarium is free for Illinois residents every Wednesday from 4 – 10 p.m.

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for public sale of miscellaneous items.  
This sale is to be held on Thursday,  
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you'll go.

—Dr. Seuss



Rep. Kam Buckner and Sen. Sara Feigenholtz, would allow for the creation of Business Improvement Districts across Illinois, according to a report in Crain’s Chicago.

A SSA/BID at this location would generate millions in new tax revenue by imposing a self-assessed property tax bill within their commercial district, funds that must be spent back in the district itself. The money would help fund more private security, some street-level capital improvements, parking and to undertake additional marketing and advertising.

Michigan Ave. already has an existing SSA on Michigan Ave., but that is set to expire in 2024. A BID reportedly offers more flexibility in revenue collection and spending. Currently 57 SSA districts exist in Chicago.

“The amount of resources that we have for our district is woefully small,” Kim-

berly Bares, CEO of the Magnificent Mile Association told Crain’s. “Michigan Ave. and this district are assets that we need to invest in, and having a business improvement district is a critical piece of us being able to realize the vision that we have for reimagining Michigan Ave.”

Aldermen Brian Hopkins [2nd] and Brendan Reilly [42nd], whose wards include the Magnificent Mile, both support the proposed plan. Negotiations are ongoing among stakeholders regarding structure and governance of the proposed BID.

An SSA creation timeline is oriented around Cook County’s statutory deadline to receive levy ordinances, which is every December. SSA applications are accepted any time, but holds a May 15 deadline if an SSA is desired for the following year.

Typically an SSA creation process can take 12-16 months with six to eight of those months for legislative actions. The ordinance requires the Committee on Fi-

**CASINO** from p. 1

Des Plaines have far higher revenue than Bally’s Chicago. Even the Hollywood Casino in Aurora is pulling down comparable revenue to Bally’s Chicago.

According to iGamingpost.com, several factors may have contributed to Bally’s underperformance in terms of tax revenue and financial targets. Firstly, the delayed opening of the casino, which was initially slated for June, resulted in lost opportunities and reduced operating days.

Additionally, the ongoing operational challenges faced by the establishment, including the transition from limited operating hours to a 24-hour schedule, may have impacted its revenue-generating potential.

Furthermore, external factors such as competition from other casinos and the prevalence of online gambling platforms may have diverted potential customers

away from Bally’s.

The addition of shuttle bus routes to and from Chinatown and Uptown’s Asia on Argyle district has raised concerns about the casino’s impact on communities with a history of problem gambling. Critics argue that such targeted transportation services may exacerbate gambling addiction issues and disproportionately affect vulnerable populations.

In the best-case scenario, the permanent Bally’s location would only pay for 9% of the city’s annual pension payments. If it falls short of that, the city will need new revenue, which may mean more taxes taken from Chicago residents and businesses.

State lawmakers may have to step up with structural pension reform, freeing up billions in the future for core services, property tax relief or a combination of both. Mayor Johnson could champion that solution with state lawmakers.

**SKYLINE**

nance to convene a public hearing, which is the one legally required hearing by state law. No date for that hearing has been announced.

Generally the tax rate cap may not exceed a cap defined in ordinance, and the annual tax rate can be equal or less than this cap, is usually tied to the projects a district has in mind. The average SSA tax rate cap is 0.95% while the average annual tax rate is 0.60%.

There is a way for those in the district to prevent the creation of an SSA/BID. Sixty days from that lone public hearing, two petitions could be submitted that would terminate the SSA creation: a petition showing 51% of property owners opposed to the proposal, or another petition comprised of

51% of registered voters within the district.

Since BIDs and SSAs are a specific area in which services that benefit the area are delivered, having a district boundary in the district strengthens the rationale for adding these new taxes. The existing boundaries for the Michigan Ave. SSA #76 are the west side of Michigan Ave. from the Chicago River north to Oak St, and the east side of Michigan Ave. from the Chicago River north to Oak St.

In the summer of 2022, participants of SSA #76 were polled on their priorities for the district over the coming years. The top three topics were identified as public safety and crime reduction, customer attraction and business development.

**BOLLARDS** from p. 1

cago Police Dept. and Dept. of Transportation to discuss the possibility of installing bollards along Oak St. and Michigan Ave. Installing new bollards would cost over \$1,000 each and would be paid out of the Special Service Area taxing districts funds from that district.

The rash of dramatic smash and grab robberies have been highlighted in the news lately, as retail theft continues to spiral higher in Chicago, in large part because Cook County refuses to enforce shoplifting laws by prosecuting habitual criminals.

According to Rob Reiter, chief security consultant for Calpipe Security Bollards, a California-based manufacturer, bollards are generally sturdy pieces of steel pipe, with the heaviest models for terrorism protection measuring 25 to 30 centimeters. Bollards generally are hollow rather than solid, because it allows them to be flexible to bend and absorb the force of a vehicle. “With a round pipe, the impact side stretches out the front, and the back side compresses,” he says. “The front stretches

by five percent and snaps back. Like a tree, it’s better to sway with the wind than break off.”

Over the past decade, a whole industry has sprung up with the increasing frequency of vehicular attacks on soft targets, such as shopping streets with high footfall and outdoor markets, festivals and concerts. Hostile vehicle mitigation manufacturers can now be found all around the world, and barriers come in a whole spectrum of shapes and sizes – from automatic steel bollards that retract into the ground to x-shaped barriers designed to upend vehicles and even lightweight containers filled with water.

One downfall, often pointed out by urban designers, is that the crash-rated bollard is not designed with aesthetics in mind – often contributing to a hostile environment. It’s not a good look for Michigan Ave. or Oak St.

Still a bollard can be the inner core of the installation and can be covered with a decorative sleeve to both fit into a cityscape and increase longevity.

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