

Notthin' left to do but smile, smile, smile.
—Robert Hunter / Jerry Garcia

SKYLINE

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

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Private security program to expand in the Loop this summer



Unarmed Ambassadors will continue to patrol the downtown area wearing yellow and black uniforms while they meet and greet visitors, workers, and residents; and conduct business security check-ins and observe and report negative or criminal behavior. Photo courtesy Chicago Loop Alliance

Dozens will monitor and patrol Central Loop throughout the summer and fall

On May 31 the Chicago Loop Alliance [CLA] announced an expansion of their Ambassador security program, which focuses primarily on State St. They will now also patrol the central Loop from Dearborn to Canal and Ida

B. Wells to Wacker Dr.

The patrols began on June 5 and will run through through Oct. 7. The program is contracted by CLA through Streetplus, a national business improvement district service. Ambassadors will patrol

the corridor during afternoons and evenings, five days a week, while State St. Ambassadors will continue their patrol seven days a week.

The ambassador program is funded through Chicago's Recovery Plan, a fund intended to be used for economic recovery and support communities suffering from crime, panhandling and trouble makers.

The program has now gone citywide as a continuation of the 2022 initiative, which the city of Chicago modeled after Chicago Loop Alliance's longstanding program. Due to Chicago's inability to recruit new police recruits, the city is now hiring private security and calling them "Ambassadors." This private security force now operates in 11 other community areas, including the Magnificent Mile, Old Town, Uptown, and Rogers Park on the North Side.

For years the city has also leaned on other private security personnel, giving them police powers and asking them to help maintain peace in the communi-

SECURITY see p. 16

Tesla leaving the Gold Coast

After six years, Tesla wants to get out of the Gold Coast. They have put their 5,400 square foot showroom up for sublease.

According to Crain's Chicago, the electric-car maker has hired brokers at ARC Real Estate to sublease its retail space at 901 N. Rush St., signaling that it plans to close the showroom. It's one of two Tesla showrooms in the city. Tesla opened the Gold Coast

showroom in Nov. 2017.

The space is part of the 900 N. Michigan mall.

With the departure of woman's fashion retailer Intermix, that will leave two very prominent storefronts vacant at the corner of Rush and Delaware streets. Intermix left in spring.

But all is not bad, according to retail broker John Vance, a principal at Stone Real Estate. He told

Alby Gallun that "The Gold Coast market is exceptionally strong right now, bordering on frothy."

The decision to sublease the Tesla showroom may be part of a broader shift in its marketing strategy. In 2021, they decided to close showrooms in shopping malls and focus on less-expensive locations.

TESLA see p. 16

Chicago Independent Media Alliance launches annual fundraising campaign

Your support needed for independent media outlets

BY RONALD ROENIGK

This newspaper, and likely several other local media outlets you may consume, have kicked off a two-week fundraiser. This effort benefits nearly 50 small, grassroots newsrooms serving diverse communities across the Chicago-land area.

Donations can be made at IndieMediaChi.org/Donate.

We are all members of the Chicago Independent Media Alli-

ance [CIMA], a coalition of more than 80 local journalism outlets. CIMA is holding its annual fundraiser this month from June 5-19.

With the theme "Powering Independence," the fundraising campaign will highlight the real-world impact of the self-started newsrooms that comprise CIMA's membership, how they disrupt the areas they report in for change, and how CIMA supports these trailblazers. All donations will be matched by local foundations until funds run out.

If you enjoy independent media here in Chicago, then this is how you can help it survive.

"CIMA has such an important mission, and I'm so grateful to be kicking off our fourth annual fundraiser. Local, independent media outlets have done so much good for Chicago, and have helped to reach communities that aren't always covered in legacy media, filling in the gaps in coverage throughout each of Chicago's neighborhoods," said Savannah Hugueley, CIMA Support Specialist. "This fundraiser is so important to ensuring that these smaller newsrooms can stay afloat and have the resources they

FUNDRAISING see p. 16

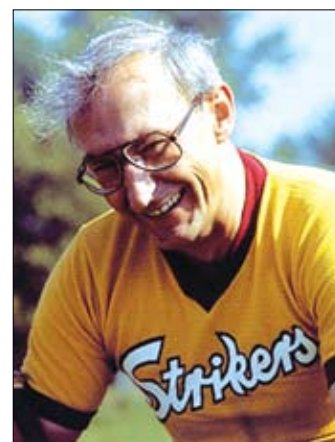


Photo by Tom Bonen

Softball Hall of Fame resurrects Royko 16-inch softball tournament

story on page 5



At present there is no announced option for an in-person community meeting over locating a new pot shop in Old Town.

June 15 meeting over proposed Old Town pot shop and TOD

A virtual community meeting co-hosted by the Old Town Merchants and Residents Assoc. [OTMRA] and 2nd Ward Alderman's Office will be held 6 p.m. Thursday, June 15, regarding a proposed mixed-use development at 1542-44 N. Wells St. that will include a new recreational marijuana store.

At present there is no option to hold an in-person community meeting. The location of the new pot shop will be right across the street from the OTMRA's offices at 1543 N. Wells St.

This virtual meeting will allow for the developer, GLP, to pres-

ent their proposal for a five-story Transit-Oriented Development project with ground floor commercial space and 16 apartment units in the upper floors. Additionally, the proposed rezoning of the property from a B3-5 to a C1-5 will allow for the consideration of a recreational, adult-use pot shop on the ground floor.

To register for the meeting contact the 2nd Ward Office at ward02@cityofchicago.org, or call 312-643-2299, or the OTMARA at 312-951-6106.

Interested parties may also pre-submit questions with your registration.

Community meeting June 13 on proposed new Lincoln Yards high-rise

Developer Sterling Bay is presenting a prepared virtual sales pitch 6 p.m. Tuesday, June 13, regarding a proposed new 15-story high-rise development at 2033 N. Kingsbury St.

There will be no in-person meeting of live questioning allowed. The virtual meeting is being co-hosted with the Sheffield Neighborhood Assoc. and 2nd Ward Alderman's office.

This Zoom meeting will allow developer Sterling Bay to pitch their proposal for a 15-story

mixed-use project with ground floor commercial space, second-floor parking, and approximately 150 residential dwelling units on floors 3-15. The meeting will not allow for any on-the-spot questioning, and participants must submit questions ahead of time during registration, so the developers can prepare pre-packaged answers, and deny any chance for follow up questions.

To register for the meeting, write to ward02@cityofchicago.org or call 312-643-2299.



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If Saks sold pot, this would be it



By Thomas J. O'Gorman

No secret handshake. No password at the door. It's more ordinary than you might think.

No devil doll. No she-witch. No witch doctor either.

No one from the cast of the Exorcist. No spells or curses.

Just some potions. Ancient and modern. The Bronze Age. The Jazz Age.

But summer is not settling with me. I've been tossing and turning at night. With the entire cast of "Home Alone" watching.

There's too much going on in my noggin.

So I reread things on my laptop over and over. This morning's Trib. Death notices in the suburban papers. And screwy stuff, like Madonna's breakfast requests. Or fist-cuffs among the stars. You know, Ben Affleck and the Mrs. squawking at each other. I don't want to know more about the world of high school dropouts, but it keeps pulling me back in.

Sleep time for me has been invaded by the creatures of the deep. I poll friends who have a handle on insomnia, looking for any reasonable resolution. I, of course,

aggravate everything by drinking too much cold water from Simon Pearce goblets before bed. I create the perfect cycle of full bladder and full brain. There's no way out.

That is until I speak to a fan who swears by gummy cannabis.

These surprise, fruity (boysenberry) jelly gummies could break my log jam. My niece kindly gifted me some cannabis gummies last Christmas. Sweet and sugary. Even the lingering taste of the plant, but no sustaining power, I believed, to lull me to La La Land.

I looked up nearby neighborhood cannabis shops. I have no idea where I'm going. Ivy Hall, appropriately named, was nearby, at 1720 N. Damen Ave.

Off I went with my sleep-deprived paler, my Brown Univ. baseball cap and my Irish Black Thorne walking stick, for the knee. Ivy Hall is in the former Marc Jacobs building. Yes, it's just like a quick trip to a rock concert. (Aren't Dead & Company in town this weekend?)

I'm nervously-filled with questions about protocol and the law, here, at what I've been calling the pot shop. In a large four-story building, this is no donut shop enterprise, and it bares no resemblance to a college dorm, the last place I bought my stash.

But I shall not descend to portraying a character of modest psychic balance. Or that of a veteran senior attempting a last jump out at youth.

If Saks sold pot, this would be it.

First stop is the outer area desk where information about State ID is gathered and any questions answered. Then it's off to the huge

glass-encased showroom area. There all the products available will be explained to customers.

A lovely young girl emerges, Julia, and carries a computer screen. From this you can find every product on their menu. They can tell you what it is and what it can do. It is my guess, especially from conversations overheard, that most folk just want to relax. Like ordering a Chianti at dinner.

Many mirrors abound in the product hall. Since my needs were specific, conversations and consultations are down to a minimum.

Product use locates you right away in an area of hands-on speciality. The need to relax and slumber appears to be high on the list of the much-desired notched necessities, for everyone.

After all, opposing forces at war use sleep deprivation as a weapon. Make the other guy drowsy and they'll make mistakes.

I am attempting to be as clear as possible in my product selection. I am encouraged that what I search for will be there. And what I find will alter my sleep patterns.

I brought an empty package of a gummy brand product with me. However, just taking it out of my pocket caused havoc. **Forbidden!** Cameras search for them. His last gummy. A lot of stress and worry on that gummy. Empty packaging is forbidden by law at the pot shop.

Apparently a long list of commandments govern the legit sale of cannabis.

Employees were attentive and guided me to all the immediate benefits of joining casa cannabis and making a purchase.

Two gummies in particular appeared to be that for which I was searching most. One product was stronger than the other. That must be because it is directly infused with THC, the stronger of medic-

nals from cannabis.

Back at home I turn off the phone and take a nap.

Now sleep is actually returning to me in gentle ways. I try to get all necessary prayers in pre-gummy, with my gummy dose taken an hour before sleepy time. No extra water needed. It gives me slumber. Then, TKO. Much like sipping a hot-toddy in the winter. I'm back!

NASCAR: Chicago Street Race will take place over two days of Fourth of July weekend, but has killed 16-inch softball season and affected traffic around Grant Park for over a month. All thanks to Calamity **Lori**. The softball teams are taking their games to Centennial Park in Oak Lawn on June 24-25. It's the



Walter Netsch



Liam Hendriks

first ever Mike Royko Tournament. Too bad there is no place to host the tourney in the town that invented softball.

GUNS ON THE SANDS: Beach closure. The source of that lakefront shooting over Memorial Day didn't take long to discover. North Avenue Beach is our new shooting

range. Shooters gonna shoot, how about we put some of them in jail?

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN: Chicago architect **Walter Netsch's** Old Town home gets a rare interior landmark status for its unconventional multi-level design. The famed architect lived in the home with his wife, politician **Dawn Clark Netsch**. Built in 1974, it was a meeting place for Netsch's architectural practice and

Clark Netsch's legal clinic.

WELCOME BACK LIAM: White Sox pitcher **Liam Hendriks** returned to the pitcher's mound last week, after finishing treatment for stage four non-Hodgkin Lymphoma. And the crowd went wild.

Chicago Cubs players, **Jameson Taillon** and **Trey Mancini**, also cancer survivors, sent Hendriks some cross town congratulations.

CFD: Historic Holy Family Church in all her glory, as Chaplain **Fr. Tom Mulcrone** reads the names of the deceased members of the Chicago Fire Dept. at a special Liturgy of Thanksgiving for their lives and sacrifice.

HYDE PARK / CHINATOWN: Harvesting the highest quality cuisine, **Carol Cheung**, owner and mystic spirit of the Jade Court has created a dynamic Hong Kong restaurant abundant with wondrous delights. Its patrons are the elite of elite and the culture is high. But finest Chinese fair anywhere.

PEACE FOR YOU ALWAYS: In the chic, golden glory that has always been Chicago fashion, the most dynamic and avant garde has always been the quiet, close to silent, vocabulary that permits free but measured conversation. Chicago fashion has always been about people, their thoughts and creative words. No one more refined than the elegant **Joanne Unkovskoy**. Her passing last week drastically drains the industry of natural blue-blood tastefulness. A position of

POT see p. 12

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insideonline.com

North Side housing fair June 17 at Truman College

Housing continues to be a major problem on the North Side, especially now with the arrival of thousands of migrants to Chicago who are now competing with existing home-seekers driving up demand for affordable units.

Northside Community Resources [NCR] and Northside

Community Development Corporation are hosting their 11th Annual Northside Housing Fair 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, June 17, at Truman College 1145 W. Wilson Ave. The event is free and open to the general public.

The event will offer free workshops on fair housing and tenant rights, resources for current and

future homeowners, information on down payment assistance programs, and the opportunity to schedule consultation appointments with NCR.

Attendees may attend workshops, gain resources, and meet the experts who can answer housing queries. The Fair will also offer multiple giveaway contests for the chance to

win an assortment of prizes.

Guests can talk to lenders about mortgage products and refinancing, learn about down payment assistance programs and about resources to help families at risk of foreclosure.

For more information or to RSVP, visit www.northsidecommunityresources.org/, or call 773-338-7722.

NORTHSIDE HOUSING FAIR



The work that provided the basis for this publication was supported by funding under a grant with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The substance and findings of the work are dedicated to the public. The author and publisher are solely responsible for the accuracy of the statements and interpretations contained in this publication. Such interpretations do not necessarily reflect the views of the Federal Government.

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- **FREE** resources for future or current homeowners, renters, and landlords
- **Talk to lenders** about mortgage products & refinancing
- **Learn about down payment assistance programs**
- **Learn about resources** to help families at risk of foreclosure



Date: June 17th, 2023 from 9:30 AM to 2:00PM

Venue: Truman College (at Cafeteria)

1145 W Wilson Ave Chicago, IL 60640

To RSVP call (773) 338-7722 or

Register online at: <https://2023northsidehousingfair.eventbrite.com/>

This event has been made possible through the efforts and financial support of NCR's Fair Housing Program.

New location for June 21 Coffee and Commerce

The Lincoln Park Chamber of Commerce Coffee and Commerce event will be held in a new location, Heritage Bikes & Coffee, 2959 N. Lincoln Ave. It will be held 9 a.m. Wednesday, June 21.

Thieves burglarize four North Side businesses

Chicago Police are warning North Side businesses about burglaries where perps wearing face coverings and hooded sweatshirts stole cash registers from four places on Sunday, June 4.

It happened in the North Center, Ravenswood, and Lakeview neighborhoods during the early morning in less than an hour.

Investigators say between one and five men broke the front windows to get inside the business. Once inside, the offender(s) damages and removes cash registers and bottles of alcohol from property and flees the scene.

Incidents include one on the 1900 block of W. Byron, June 4 at 3:48 a.m.; the 4200 block of N. Ravenswood, June 4 at 4 a.m.; 1700 block of W. Sunnyside, June 4 at 4:11 a.m., and one on the 2800 block of N. Lincoln, June 4 at 4:17 a.m.

Faith organizations undertake new refugee asylum initiative

Pressing groups to commit to support one family for one year

On June 2 a variety of faith leaders and elected officials held a joint press conference calling on faith leaders across the Chicagoland area to join them in tangibly welcoming migrant refugees to Chicago, and supporting them as they become Illinois resident.

Gathered leaders asked Faith Communities to commit to housing, supporting and helping to acclimate current migrants living in police district stations.

They are also asking the groups to commit to supporting one family or group for one year as they settle in and receive work authorization (for those seeking asylum), find employment, work, save enough money to move into

an apartment and help settle children into school, teach the English language, and help with other needs.

The effort is being driven by Rev. Dr. Beth Brown of Lincoln Park Presbyterian Church, 600 W. Fullerton, Father Michael Pflieger of the Faith Community of St. Sabina on the West Side, Daryle Brown from Trinity UCC on the South Side, and aldermen Maria Hadden [49th, and Timmy Knudsen [43rd].

“[We] launched a faith-based migrant relief initiative with Rev. Brown of Lincoln Park Presbyterian Church and other leaders calling on our Chicagoland faith communities to answer the call

for service to help the asylum seekers arriving in our city,” said Ald. Hadden. “The initiative invites groups of faith communities or individuals to band together to support some of our asylum seekers for a year. There will be case management support and training provided. We know that we have enough, we simply need to pool resources and efforts to have a big impact.”

Those interested in participating may visit www.lppchurch.org/ to sign up.

Chicago has received over 10,000 migrant refugees so far, and many more are expected to arrive throughout the summer and fall.

NASCAR Chicago and SailGP challenge kick off racing season



SailGP Event Director Tod Reynolds speaks at the ‘Water to Wheels’ press conference.

Photo courtesy of @angel_ashlea

BY ASHLEY HEARN
Chicagostarmedia.com

During a press conference May 24, at Navy Pier, the NASCAR Chicago Street Race and SailGP’s Lake Michigan Race came together to announce a collaboration to kick off the summer.

Both organizations — represented by the U.S.A. SailGP team athlete Cooper Dressler and NASCAR Chicago Street Race President Julie Giese — accepted the ‘Water to Wheels’ crossover challenge in an official helmet swap ceremony behind the pier’s infamous Centennial Wheel. Executive Director of the Chicago Sports Commission Kara Bachman joined the two on stage for photos after a short speech. Other speakers included SailGP Event Director Tod Reynolds and Navy Pier CEO Marilyn Gardner.

“On behalf of the NASCAR

Chicago Street Race, we accept SailGP and Cooper’s challenge. Let the racing begin!” Giese responded in her acceptance speech. “And make no mistake: no matter who crosses the finish line first, the city of Chicago itself will be the star of the show.”

‘Water to Wheels’ will allow world-class athletes from these two high-speed races to test out each other’s sports and determine which is the most fast and furious — flying across Lake Michigan in a SailGP turbo-charged, hydro-foiling F50 speed boat up to 60 mph or whipping through downtown Chicago in a NASCAR stock car on the simulator.

In an exclusive interview with Chicago Star Media, Dressler commented on his anticipation for the NASCAR collaboration saying, “We’ve thrown the challenge to have NASCAR drivers sail with us, and I

think they’re going to be really surprised at getting on a sailboat that can go these speeds.” Speaking on the upcoming SailGP race, he added, “Navy Pier is just a perfect setup for this race. It’s such a cool summer spot here and the crowds are awesome. People have come out before in droves, so I think this is just a city of hardcore sports fans. Even if someone doesn’t know anything about sailing, you’ll want to come check it out.”

The challenge will take place on June 15, which is also training day for the Rolex U.S. Sail Grand Prix. Participants in ‘Water to Wheels’ will include the U.S.A. SailGP team and Parker Kligerman, a NASCAR Xfinity Series driver and NBC Sports analyst.

SailGP will take place on June 16-17, and fans can watch from Navy Pier. This prime location will include live music, DJs, food and beverages, fan shops, and fireworks. Visit their website to hear about their “bring your own boat” experience.

The NASCAR Chicago Street Race will occur just down the road at Grant Park on July 1-2 for Fourth of July weekend. This first-ever high-speed race includes concerts by The Chainsmokers, Miranda Lambert, The Black Crowes, and Charley Crockett.

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Softball Hall of Fame resurrects Royko 16-inch softball tournament



The Home Field
By Don DeBat

The 16-inch Chicago Softball Hall of Fame [HOF] is resurrecting the once-popular Mike Royko Memorial Softball Classic Tournament after a hiatus of more than a decade.

After learning the NASCAR Road Race's planning and construction will greatly diminish softball-league play in Grant Park June 22 through July 5, HOF president Paul Rowan stepped up to offer Recreational and Co-ed teams an opportunity to play a two-day tournament on June 24 and June 25 at Centennial Park in south suburban Oak Lawn.

"I think what makes it more disappointing is they're pushing softball aside for the NASCAR event, which is not part of Chicago, where this game is known as Chicago's Game," said Rowan.

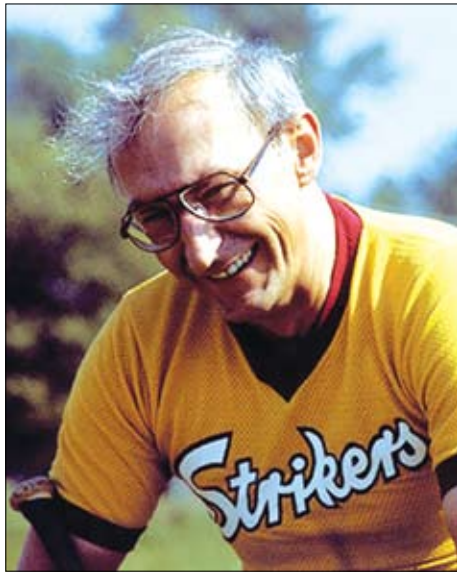
Billed as the "Mike Royko Memorial Classic," the event would effectively resurrect the top-flight tournament played between 2000 and 2010 at Grant Park in honor of the revered, Pulitzer-prize winning columnist and HOF inductee.

Royko, who passed away in 1998, was a legendary 16-inch softball advocate, promoter, pitcher and manager for the historic Chicago Daily News and Chicago Sun-Times teams.

In 1975, Royko was instrumental in the planning and launch of the Chicago 16-Inch World Series of Softball Tournament played at Soldier Field and televised on WTTW. Royko, and the late TV Sports anchor Tim Weigel (and HOF player), announced the historic games along with broadcaster Marty Robinson from Channel 11.

The 16-inch tournament attracted more than 25,000 fans to a championship diamond built at the north end of Soldier Field. Tens of thousands more watched the games on TV.

In the mid-1970s, Royko also defended the historic game of barehanded softball



Mike Royko in Strikers Jersey, 1975.
Photo by Tom Bonen

when he filed a lawsuit against the Chicago Park District to prevent the blasphemy of allowing the use of fielder's gloves in 16-inch games at Grant Park.

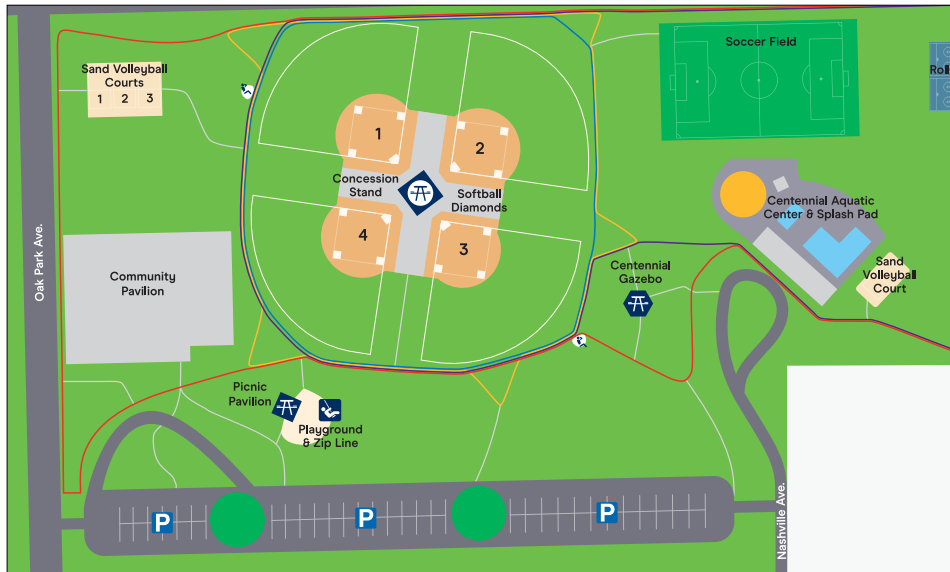
Crafty Royko won the lawsuit with the help of testimony from Bernie Neistein, an old West Side ward boss and former 16-inch player, who told the judge: "Gloves? The only time anybody on our team ever wore any kind of gloves was when they didn't want to leave fingerprints."

Royko was inducted into the HOF in 2000, and his historic teams—along with more than 120 players—followed in 2008.

All the recent positive chirping from Chicago TV news reporters about NASCAR, the red-neck sport that likely will change the future history of the Windy City forever, ignores one fact: Grant Park, the circuit maximus for the 220-mile race, may never again be the same.

NASCAR enthusiasts from across the nation will pay a minimum of \$266 per admission ticket to witness this crazy, dangerous race, which likely will lead to crashes, and maybe even death on the tight corners of Chicago streets.

However, after the exhaust fumes float away, the crowds leave, and the garbage



The Oak Lawn Park District Centennial Park map illustrating four softball diamonds in the classic pinwheel style, with concession stands and ample parking to the south.

Mike Royko Classic 16-Inch Softball Tournament

WHEN: Saturday, June 24 and Sunday, June 25 from 9 a.m. to dusk.

WHERE: Centennial Park at 93rd St. and Oak Park Ave. in south suburban Oak Lawn. The park's four manicured softball diamonds are designed in classic pinwheel style with nearby concession stands. No alcoholic beverages may be consumed on, or near, the softball fields. There will be a concession stand that will serve these products.

TOURNAMENT see p. 8

squeezed, and essentially pushed out of Grant Park.

With a repeat of NASCAR in 2024, and booking of endless music and food festivals—from Lollapalooza, Suenos, and the Taste of Chicago—there is a chance the softball leagues will never return.

Thankfully, a savior has emerged from the chaos. The HOF has come to the rescue of dozens of Grant Park teams who were shafted out of a full season of play because of NASCAR and other social and music events.

The revival of the Mike Royko Memorial Classic Tournament is a historic, grassroots symbol targeted to preserving the essence of softball in Chicago.

At least it will give Recreational and Co-ed softball teams a chance to play "Chicago's Game" in separate brackets over one beautiful summer weekend at classy Centennial Park at 93rd St. and Oak Park Ave. in Oak Lawn.

The following Grant Park softball leagues have been invited to play in the Mike Royko Tournament:

SOFTBALL see p. 8



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Legislature approves bill to tighten restrictions on red-light camera industry

Bill hailed as first step toward broader ethics reform

BY ANDREW ADAMS
Capitol News Illinois

Lawmakers in Springfield have unanimously approved a measure that would place new restrictions on the red-light and speed camera industry's involvement in state and local elections and government.

House Bill 3903 would ban automatic traffic enforcement companies or their officers from donating to candidates for public office at the state and local level. It would also prevent state and local government officials from accepting jobs or contracts with those companies while in office

or for two years after leaving office, a kind of "revolving door" ban.

Sponsors praised the bill as much-needed ethics reform after several public officials in the past decade have been caught by federal investigators engaging in bribery deals and kickback schemes involving red-light camera companies.

"What this does is it tightens up the ethics surrounding the red-light camera corruption and scandals," Rep. Bob Riva, D-Blue Island, said during the House debate on May 25.

Rep. Patrick Windhorst called the two-year revolving door ban "a good step."

HB 3909 received unanimous approval in the House on Thursday after a similar unanimous vote in the Senate last week.

The bill would also grant the Illinois Dept. of Transportation new authority to review and either approve or revoke approval for automated traffic enforcement systems under certain circumstances, such as if a public official is charged with bribery.

The measure would also require that local governments review the safety impacts of automated enforcement systems every two years. Local governments would also have the sole authority to decide to issue tickets, ending their current ability to delegate that decision to the red-light and speed camera companies they contract with.

The spate of indictments and convictions of public officials caught up in bribery schemes with automated traffic enforcement companies was alluded to during debate on the bill at the Capitol.

"We've had issues with this and I think the bill is a great first step," Sen. Jil Tracy, a Quincy Republican and member of the legislature's ethics commission, said.

Tracy has seen two of her Senate colleagues indicted on such charges in the last four years.

In September of last year, Sen. Emil Jones III, D-Chicago, was charged with bribery for a scheme

connecting him to red-light camera company SafeSpeed LLC in exchange for shielding the organization from a study of red-light

CEO of electric utility Commonwealth Edison were convicted of orchestrating a bribery scheme to curry favor with former House

"If you take a look at the indictments that have been made that are going to be tried next year, the allegations include violations of conflict of interest," former Gov. Pat Quinn said. "That's just not right. It's not right for anybody in Illinois who's a taxpayer to have legislators voting on bills where they have a financial interest."

systems in the state. Jones has pleaded not guilty and remains in the Senate. He voted in favor of the measure last week.

The late Sen. Martin Sandoval, D-Chicago, also admitted to accepting bribes from the company and falsifying tax returns in 2020. Sandoval died of COVID-19 complications later that year while he was awaiting sentencing.

"The public deserves to have the utmost trust in their government and their law enforcement," bill sponsor Sen. Laura Murphy said in a news release. "We need to ensure that there is accountability and honesty on all levels."

Two former suburban Chicago mayors, a former Cook County commissioner and his chief of staff have also pleaded guilty to charges involving bribes or kickbacks from SafeSpeed.

In 2016, former assistant Chicago transportation commissioner John Bills was convicted of accepting lavish gifts and \$600,000 in exchange for pushing the city to accept contracts from the red-light camera company Redflex. Bills received a 10-year prison sentence, the longest sentence so far handed down to an Illinois official in connection with a red-light camera company. Federal prison records show he's moved on to a halfway house.

The General Assembly is facing pressure to enact ethics reforms in response to federal probes beyond those involving red light camera companies. Earlier this month, three ex-lobbyists and the former

said. "That's just not right. It's not right for anybody in Illinois who's a taxpayer to have legislators voting on bills where they have a financial interest."

Ryan Tolley, the policy director for the government reform group CHANGE Illinois, noted that HB 3909 marks the first time the legislature has enacted a two-year revolving door ban, an idea that was contentious even when the General Assembly passed a six-month ban on lawmakers leaving for lobbying gigs in 2021.

"Hopefully this can be a first step in moving forward," Tolley said in an interview.

Tolley noted that he believes further action is needed on ethics reform, such as giving the Legislative Inspector General, the General Assembly's top ethics official, more independent authority to investigate potential wrongdoing.

Former LIG Carol Pope cited her lack of power to conduct investigations or impose sanctions as a reason for her 2021 resignation, calling the office a "paper tiger."

Letters to the Editor

Bring back the machines

Once upon a time (over three years ago) there was an exercise room for seniors at the Levy Center on Lawrence and Damen. It has never been reopened after the pandemic, and I understand that is true of all the senior centers.

At first we were told that it was because no staff had been hired. On May 24 I received an update from a fellow frustrated senior:

"I saw former-alderman Gene Schuller one day and asked him to inquire about the fitness center at the next Zoom meeting. He did so this morning. Sean told him they were waiting for parts, but

perhaps could open the room for some machines. Still no date.

How could machines be damaged through disuse? The mind boggles."

(Sean is Sean Dolan, Levy Director)

The Levy machines are needed to build and maintain muscle, preventing falls. The only option is the Park District Fitness Center and its machines are a poor, inadequate substitute.

Lynn Windsor
Ravenswood

Essay would remain the same

June 5 of this year marked the 55th anniversary of the shooting of Robert 'Bobby' Kennedy. I was in high school at the time. The media this week should be full of stories talking about both him and the era in which he lived.

Thomas O'Gorman presented a celebratory column on it May 31. I have vivid memories of being a graduating senior in a Catholic high school in 1968. My religion teacher, a religious Brother, despised Bobby and his opposition to the Vietnam War. My final exam in the religion class came just a day or so after the assassination. There wasn't enough time to change the exam question typed on an old typewriter. The one question on the exam asked us to analyze the shortcomings and unwise posturing of Sen. Kennedy.

I hesitated briefly and then wrote an essay praising Bobby and his bold political views. I wrote the essay as my complimentary tribute to Bobby. In my senior year I earned A's on all my religion essays and tests. I knew my grade was in jeopardy, however, as I wrote my honest answer.

When my report card ar-

rived later in the mail, my final grade was B. A few years later I happened to catch up with this teacher and he quickly remembered my final exam paper and he confirmed that my grade was affected because he didn't agree with what I wrote.

He was quite friendly as he talked. When we ended our conversation he gently pinched my butt.

When I tell this story to friends they quickly ask me if I had to do it over again would I still have written the same answer. I reply without hesitation that I certainly would do it the same way. I value virtue and honesty over pragmatism. In today's political world - as in the 1960's - there are character and honesty issues in government at every level, national, state, and local. I have been told that those who choose a very pragmatic approach are often quite successful, they are thinking of the consequences of their actions or their vote.

Well, a gentle pinch on the butt is not such a bad consequence.

Fred Case
Lake View

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Tricky counterfeit \$100s passed in the West Loop have a tiny, tell-tale flaw

BY CWBCHICAGO

Will you see it? The easy-to-miss detail that confirmed a West Loop boutique worker's suspicion that the \$100 the store accepted yesterday was counterfeit? We've shared a picture of the bill here.

The funny money incident June 1 at a shop in the 1000 block of W. Madison, is one of many counterfeit currency cases to pop up in Chicago lately. In fact, an employee told us that the guy who passed the fake \$100 at the store yesterday did the same thing at another nearby store.

"The situation felt sketchy since he was paying for such a low-cost item with such a large bill," the worker said last night. "I only briefly looked at it when I originally accepted it."

But after the man left a \$12 ring and \$88 in genuine money he received as change, she took another look.

Uh-oh. The bill had Benjamin Franklin's face printed on it, but its watermark wasn't of Benjamin Franklin. It was Alexander Hamilton, the guy on \$10 bills.

Someone bleached a \$10 bill until it turned white, then printed it with a \$100 design. And, because the paper is genuine, the phony bill passed a counterfeit marker test, the woman told us.

Moments after hitting the shop, the same guy passed another phony \$100 at a store just a couple of doors down, she said. There, he bought an \$18 candle and received \$82 change in genuine currency.

Not-so-funny money

Earlier this year, prosecutors charged



Here's the fake \$100 bill that a retailer received on June 1. The watermark at the far right (in circle) is of Alexander Hamilton, the man on \$10 bills, not Benjamin Franklin.

another man with passing similar bills. Coincidentally, he got caught in the West Loop.

Late on April 14, Antoine McGee, 43, sat down at a bar in the 800 block of W. Randolph, asked for "the cheapest thing on the menu, and then ordered a Corona," a prosecutor said during his bail hearing.

McGee gave the bartender a \$100 bill and received change for his order, prosecutors said. The bartender showed the bill to his manager because he thought it looked funny.

Meanwhile, McGee flagged down another bartender and asked her to break another \$100 bill, prosecutors said.

She obliged, then decided to test the bill with a counterfeit detection pen because it didn't feel right. But, just like at the West Loop stores yesterday, the bill passed the test because the paper is genuine U.S. currency stock.

The second bartender took the bill to her

manager anyhow. And the manager called the police.

Cops arrested McGee as he walked out of the establishment. As police handled the situation, a valet worker reported that he had given McGee change for yet another \$100.

A Secret Service agent inspected the three passed bills and five others police allegedly recovered from McGee. The agent determined that the bills had genuine watermarks and security threads for \$10 bills, not \$100s, and some of the notes had the same serial numbers. The money had been "washed" and converted to the higher denomination.

During the court hearing, a prosecutor told Judge Barbara Dawkins that McGee indicated that he knew the bills were counterfeit. But McGee and his defense attorney told Dawkins that he did not know they were fake. The lawyer said that McGee received the bills from a woman

as payment for landscaping services.

Less refined approach

Last week, prosecutors charged another man with passing fake \$100 bills at a Logan Square grocery store. But his scheme, officials said, wasn't as refined as the West Loop scam.

Prosecutors said Antoine Lee gathered a few items at Rico Fresh Market, 3552 W. Armitage, and paid for them with a bogus \$100 bill, receiving \$72 in real money as change. Lee proceeded to the store's restaurant area, presenting another fake C-note and receiving \$65 in change.

But, unlike the West Loop bills, officials said, Lee's funny money was wholly counterfeit. One of the bills even had the word "COPY" printed on it.

Both cashiers at Rico Fresh Market thought the bills were fake, and the manager stopped Lee as he headed out the door. Officials said Lee bit the manager's arm during a scuffle, but he failed to escape before the police arrived.

Believe it or not, people have passed fake hundreds bearing the word "COPY" all over the country.

In February, two phony \$100 bills bearing identical serial numbers and the word "COPY" were passed in Clear Lake, WI. That's about an hour east of Minneapolis. Similar bills were found circulating late last year near the Canadian border in Norwood, NY.

Someone passed movie prop money, marked "COPY" and "For Motion Picture Use Only," near Cleveland in 2018.

SOFTBALL from p. 5

- The 13-team Chicago Advertising Co-ed Softball League
- The six-team Grant Park Co-Ed League
- The four-team Grant Park Men's League
- The four-team Men's Accountants League
- The four-team Men's Architects and Engineers League

The Chicago Sport & Social Club also manages leagues with 18 Co-Ed teams at Grant Park.

"While Grant Park teams are at the top of the tournament's priority list, other teams that are currently playing 16-inch softball in Chicago parks also are invited to sign up," Rowan said. The HOF expects the tournament to attract at least 16 teams in the two brackets.

The championship team in each bracket will receive a trophy and recognition in

the HOF newsletter.

Batter up and grab a beer...

The non-profit 16-inch Chicago Softball Hall of Fame accepts donations. Visit: 16inchsoftballhof.com/donate/ and sponsorship opportunities are available. Contact: Paul Rowan: pauljrowan2021@gmail.com.

For more housing and softball news, visit www.dondebat.biz. Don DeBat is co-author of "Escaping Condo Jail," the ultimate survival guide for condominium living. Visit www.escapingcondojail.com. DeBat also is writing "Chicago's Game," a book on 16-inch softball.

TOURNAMENT from p. 5

PARKING: Ample off-street parking is situated near the softball fields.

TEAMS: Both Co-ed and Recreational teams from Grant Park are invited to play in separate brackets. Every team will be guaranteed two games in this single-elimination/consolation bracket tournament.

RULES: Each Co-ed team must have four women players on the field during the game. Women may wear a fielder's glove. Men in both brackets will play barehanded, 16-inch Chicago-style softball. Bats must be certified as a regulation softball bat up to 34-inches long with 10 inches of tape on the handle. No baseball bats are allowed. Pitching is slow-pitch, with a maximum arc of 6 to 12 feet high.

UMPIRES: The HOF will provide an official umpire for every game. Umpires will be paid out of tournament fees.

FEES: Entry fee is \$275 per team. Each team also is required to bring one new Clincher 16-inch softball for use in the tournament.

PAYMENT: Pre-pay tournament fees via credit card, check or Venmo, to Paul Rowan, president of the HOF. Registration and payment deadline is June 16. The draw for pairings and game times will be on Tuesday June 20 at a location to be determined. Pairings and game times will be announced by June 21, and posted on the HOF Website: www.16inchsoftballhof.com

QUESTIONS: Email: pauljrowan2012@gmail.com, or text or call: 708-574-6191.

CHAMPIONSHIP RECOGNITION: Championship team in each bracket will receive a trophy and recognition in the HOF newsletter.

POST-GAME SOCIAL HOUR: Uncle Buds Bar & Grill, 9700 S. Cicero Avenue, Oak Lawn, IL.

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In 2001 Chicago Scene founder Ted Widen gathered a small group of friends and their boats together and headed out to the “Playpen,” a breakwall protected area that fronts Lake Shore Dr. and the Chicago water filtration plant. This was the birth of the “Chicago Scene Boat Party,” an annual event that is now the largest on Lake Michigan.

Photo courtesy Ted Widen and Chicagoscene.com

Boater-owner sentenced to prison for charter rides to ‘Playpen’

While most criminals serve little to no time in jail in Chicago, a boat owner has been sentenced to a year in federal prison for conducting illegal charter operations on Chicago waterways.

Christopher Mike Garbowski used a 40-foot powerboat known as “Sea Hawk” and “Anchorman” to conduct illegal commercial charter operations on the Chicago River and Lake Michigan, including an area in downtown Chicago known by boaters as “the Playpen.”

The Playpen is the perfect destination for swimming, boat parties, and floating. Boaters stop here and tie-up with other boats for an on-the-water social affair. The Playpen hosts the largest annual boat party in all of Chicago, dubbed the Chicago Scene Boat Party. This year that will be held on Saturday, July 29. This event is usually held the last weekend of July, but boat rental reservations fill up months in advance. The party was started in 2000 by Ted Widen, the publisher of the luxury lifestyle mag Chicago Scene.

The Playpen has been known to get a bit wild and out of hand, which is exactly what some of the participants hope for. More than 800 boats and thousands of people take to Lake Michigan to line their yachts up together and party like there’s no tomorrow.

Social media has been a boom for the private charter business. At any time, boat charter rentals can be found from \$200 to \$800 per hour, depending on the time, date and sized boat a renter prefers.

Whether you are looking for a boat rental for a bachelorette party or a birthday party, there are some very popular days to rent a boat and head out on the water. Those who are looking to rent a boat for the Chicago

Air and Water Show must book far in advance of August because these dates book up months in advance.

Garbowski from 2017 to 2019 charged money to charter the boat to groups of passengers, such as bachelorette parties, even though he lacked the proper boating credentials and the U.S. Coast Guard had not inspected and certified his vessel.

The Coast Guard notified Garbowski about the federal regulations on multiple occasions, including at Monroe Harbor in Chicago on Aug. 19, 2017, when Coast Guard personnel boarded the boat moments before Garbowski was set to begin a five-hour charter for eight female passengers.

As the women were walking down the dock to board the boat, Garbowski called one of them on her cell phone and told her to lie to Coast Guard personnel by pretending they were friends with Garbowski. On multiple occasions, Garbowski both verbally and in writing falsely denied to Coast Guard officials that he was operating a commercial charter service.

Garbowski, also known as “Michael Gunnman,” 37, of Sterling Heights, MI, pleaded guilty earlier this year to a felony charge of violating an order of the Captain of the Port. U.S. District Judge Thomas M. Durkin imposed the year-and-a-day sentence on May 30 after a hearing in federal court in Chicago.

“The Coast Guard regulations are designed to ensure the safety of passengers, crew members, and other vessels and individuals in the waterways,” said Acting U.S. Attorney Pasqual. “Our office will continue to hold accountable those who knowingly violate maritime laws and regulations.”

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Police Beat..

Police seek to ID man for Red Line robbery



Police are seeking to identify a man who committed a robbery on the CTA Red Line at the Morse Station in Rogers Park.

Mass Transit Detectives are seeking to identify the pictured individual in connection to a strong arm robbery. The incident occurred in the vicinity of the Morse Street Red Line station 8:26 p.m. May 18. The victim's handheld gaming device was taken as proceeds.

Those who may have any information about this robbery can contact Bureau of Detectives/Mass Transit at 312-745-4443 and refer to JG-266000.

String of Rogers Park garage break-ins

Police are warning Rogers Park citizens of burglary related incidents which have occurred during May. In these incidents, offender(s) gain entry into residential garages and take property from therein. These incidents have occurred during morning, afternoon and late night hours.

Incidents include one on the 6100 Block of N. Hamilton Ave. 9 a.m. May 14; another on the 2100 Block of W. Highland Ave. 10 p.m. May 15; 6100 Block of N. Leavitt St. 3 p.m. May 17; 6100 Block of N. Hoyne Ave. 9 p.m. May 21, and on the 6100 Block of N. Ave. 10:30 p.m. May 21.

The offender is described as an older Male black with salt and pepper beard

Those who may have any information can contact the Bureau of Detectives - Area 3 at 312-744-8263, and refer to JG-262925, JG-263461, JG-264537, JG-269935, JG-269946, and pattern # P23-3-036.

Man stabbed during argument near Streeterville fountain

Chicago police say a man was stabbed during an argument near a landmark Nicholas J. Melas Centennial Fountain in Streeterville on May 29.

The man got into an argument with a stranger near the fountain, which sits on the Chicago River outside 400 N. McClurg, around 9:26 p.m.

He told police that the other man pulled out a sharp object, stabbed him in the stomach, and fled the scene.

EMS transported the man to Northwestern Memorial Hospital for treatment. A CPD spokesperson said the police report does not list the victim's age.

The fountain, which once blasted an arc of water across the Chicago River every hour, has been dry since 2020. CBS Chicago recently reported that repairs may not be completed for years.

Ald. Brendan Reilly [42nd] wrote to the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District about the inoperable fountain last year.

In the letter, Reilly said he learned that the fountain's repairs won't be finished until the end of next year, five years after it went offline. He

said he had previously been told that the Nicholas J. Melas Centennial Fountain would be up and running by the end of last year.

In 2018, a man suffered a graze wound when someone opened fire during an argument at the fountain.

Woman carjacked, robbed in Lincoln Park

A woman carjacked in Lincoln Park on May 29 is at least the fourth person targeted in robberies in the neighborhood since May 28, according to Chicago police reports.

She was getting into her car in the 2300 block of N. Halsted when two men confronted her around 11:39 p.m., a CPD spokesperson said.

They demanded her keys, took control of her black Volkswagen Jetta, and headed south on Halsted, according to police. The woman, 37, was not injured.

The May 29 carjacking occurred directly outside DePaul's School of Music building.

Two DePaul students were among the victims robbed that Monday.

They were walking in the 1300 block of W. Fullerton when two robbers stepped out of a black vehicle and robbed them at gunpoint around 4:15 a.m., police said.

The victims, men ages 19 and 20, went to University Hall, a DePaul residence hall, and a security officer called 911 and identified them as students.

A little before 11 p.m. May 28, a woman called 911 to report that two men tried to rob her and a friend as they sat on a bench in Oz Park. The woman who called for help bolted from the park, leaving her friend behind.

About 20 minutes later, a 26-year-old woman was knocked to the ground and robbed in the 2200 block of N. Sheffield, according to CPD. The offender escaped in a light-colored vehicle.

All of the robberies occurred in the Near North 18th District, where robbery reports are 13% higher than this point last year but down 12% compared to 2019.

Concealed carry holder shoots himself, another man in the Loop

A concealed-carry holder shot himself and another man during an altercation in the Loop on May 31, Chicago police said.

It started around 10:03 p.m. as two men were arguing on a sidewalk in the first block of W. Van Buren, near the stairs leading up to the L platform.

A 31-year-old concealed carry holder pulled a gun and accidentally shot himself in the leg, according to CPD. He then shot a 30-year-old man in the hand and fled the scene in a vehicle.

A Chicago police media statement referred to the concealed carry holder as the "victim" and the other man as the "offender," but police did not say what the concealed carry holder was a victim of. The shooting was recorded by a CPD surveillance camera.

EMS transported the 30-year-old to Northwestern Memorial Hospital for treatment. The concealed carry holder took himself to Loretto Hospital.

The men are the eighth and ninth people shot in the Loop this year. That's down from 16 victims as of June 1 last year. Four of last year's victims were shot during a single incident in the 400 block of S. Wells, and one was shot by police officers after he allegedly opened fire on them.

FBI ups reward for bank robber who carried gun, stuffed animals

The FBI is pumping up its reward for a robber who entered a Chicago bank branch carrying stuffed animals last month.

Citing the "violent, brazen nature of the bank robbery in addition to concerns about this individual's potential access to children," the agency bumped the reward for information leading to the robber's arrest and



Bank surveillance images of the "Stuffed Bear Bandit."

conviction to \$5,000 from its standard \$1,000 offer.

And they've given the robber a nickname: "Stuffed Bear Bandit."

In a press release issued June 1, the FBI said the man seen in these surveillance pictures entered the PNC Bank at 8700 S. Cottage Grove three times on March 6.

"The first time, he was clutching two stuffed animals, one believed to be a Winnie the Pooh plush and the other, a Dalmatian plush from '101 Dalmatians,'" the agency said.

"He then entered the bank a second time, without the stuffed animals, and finally a third time when he violently robbed the bank," according to the press release.

He "threw decorative rocks at the teller window before threatening the life of an employee, demanding funds, displaying a gun, and forcing a bank employee to the ground," said the FBI.

The agency described him as Black, in his 40s or 50s, and 5'-6" to 5'-8" tall.

Tips can be shared with the FBI's Chicago field office at 312-421-6700 or tips.fbi.gov.

'Sideshow' driver who drove toward Chicago cop pleads guilty to a misdemeanor

A suburban man who allegedly drove his vehicle toward a Chicago police officer during a "sideshow" caravan downtown last summer has pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor, according to court records.



Omar Daaboul

Omar Daaboul, 20, was already on first-time gun offender probation when he encountered officers in the 500 block of S. Clinton around 3:10 a.m. Aug. 27.

Cops were handling calls of drag racing and other dangerous driving when they saw Daaboul standing next to a car they believed was involved in the incident, prosecutor Sahin Jutla said last year.

CPD said officers saw Daaboul's car doing donuts at the intersection of Columbus and Upper Wacker Dr. before approaching him in the West Loop.

Daaboul got into his car as officers approached, and a CPD sergeant stood in front of it. But Daaboul allegedly put his car into reverse, striking a parked car, then drove toward the sergeant. He hit the brakes before hitting the officer, Jutla said.

Daaboul was charged in Feb. 2022 with felony unlawful use of a weapon and received first-time gun offender probation, Jutla said.

Prosecutors charged Daaboul with three felony counts of aggravated assault of a peace officer. But they settled the case last week by allowing him to plead guilty to a reduced charge of aggravated assault on public property, according to court files.

Judge Diana Kenworth sentenced him to 270 days, which was satisfied by the time he spent in jail and on electronic monitoring before entering his plea.

Chicago police struggled to contain a steady stream of so-called car sideshows on the weekend Daaboul was arrested. At least two other men

were taken into custody that weekend at sideshows.

In July 2022, the City Council passed an ordinance allowing the city to mail a "notice of intent to impound" a vehicle to car owners whose vehicles are linked to the incidents. The action came after drivers did donuts in the middle of a West Loop intersection for more than 30 minutes on July 17. Similar incidents were reported across the city, with crowds sometimes injuring officers and damaging police vehicles.

Four women robbed while walking in Lincoln Park

Four young women were robbed while walking together in Lincoln Park on June 1, Chicago police said. A robber punched one woman in the face.

They are the latest victims in a series of holdups in the area around DePaul Univ. One of the earlier victims was carjacked in front of DePaul's music school.

In fact, police believe the victims may have been robbed by a crew that first carjacked and robbed three men on the Near West Side around 10:50 p.m. May 31.

The men, a 21-year-old and two 19-year-olds, had just parked their Toyota Camry when two robbers confronted them in the 700 block of S. Ada. The pair implied that they were armed and demanded the victims' money and the car, a Chicago police spokesperson said.

Later, at 12:08 a.m. June 1, two men implied they had weapons as they robbed the four women who were walking in the 700 block of W. Webster, police said.

A robber punched a 21-year-old victim in the face, police said. The other women are all 18 years old. One of them tried to run away, but she fell to the ground, and a robber grabbed her buttocks, then proceeded with the robbery, police said.

On Wednesday, two men robbed a woman at gunpoint and forced her to reveal her phone PIN just south of Lincoln Park at Halsted and Weed streets around 12:45 a.m.

Man gets 14 years for two sexual assaults; he'll be free in just over 5

A former school janitor has been sentenced to 14 years for sexually assaulting a child and, separately, for trying to sexually assault a woman at a gas station while her young son was nearby.

But Andrew Arciniega, 41, is also receiving various credits that will have him walking out of prison in Nov. 2026 after serving just over five years, according to Illinois Dept. of Corrections records.

Arciniega, who was convicted of four gun-related felonies in the early 2000s, worked at a private school on the North Side in Aug. 2021 when prosecutors charged him with the first crime.

Prosecutors said a 27-year-old woman was buckling her 2-year-old into a car seat when Arciniega approached her from behind, grabbed her by the neck, and forced her into the car at VP Racing Fuel, 659 W. 31st Street, on Aug. 23, 2021.

The force of the attack caused the woman's son to fall to the floor of her car as Arciniega, who stood 6'-2" tall and weighed 350 lbs, used his body weight to force himself onto the woman. Officials said that Arciniega grabbed the woman's chest, pushed his face into her breasts, and rubbed her private areas.

"I want the girl!" Arciniega shouted repeatedly after intervening witnesses shuffled her into the attached convenience store to wait for the police.

Two months after he was charged, prosecutors accused him of sexually assaulting a relative's daughter between 2015 and 2019. Prosecutors dropped 58 felony charges in their plea deal with Arciniega.

Prosecutors said he would satisfy

himself while ordering the girl to undress, threatening to kill her mother and sister if she did not comply. The child was between 11 and 15 years old at the time.

When the girl was 11, he twice forced her to perform oral sex, according to the state's initial allegations.

Once, he pretended to fall on the girl, touching her inappropriately while on top of her. The child's mother witnessed that incident and reported it to Chicago police. But the case stalled when investigators lost contact with the mother, according to prosecutors.

Last week, Arciniega pleaded guilty to attempted criminal sexual assault causing bodily harm and predatory sexual assault of a child under age 13. Judge Sophia Atcherson sentenced him to 7 years on each count, to be served consecutively, according to court files.

Edgewater creep gets 22 years for secretly recording YMCA locker room videos

An Edgewater man has been sentenced to 22 years in federal prison for secretly recording thousands of naked boys inside YMCA locker rooms across the Chicago area.

Michael Porter surreptitiously recorded more than 2,200 videos over 20 years before investigators caught up with him in Dec. 2020, the U.S. Attorney's office in Chicago said in a press release on June 2.



Michael Porter

Porter placed a video-recording device inside of a bag and then strategically placed the bag on the floor of the locker rooms," the release said. "Porter sexually abused at least one of the boys, capturing the abuse on video."

"During the investigation law enforcement seized from Porter six recording devices, seven cameras, 30 USB drives, hundreds of cassette tapes and DVDs, and two laptops," officials said. Investigators also found 46,562 images and 44,553 videos.

Porter, 58, pleaded guilty to federal child pornography charges last year and received his sentence from Judge Sara Ellis this week. Ellis ordered him to pay \$63,500 in restitution to his victims.

Last year, the FBI said Porter recorded videos at the High Ridge YMCA in West Ridge, Leaning Tower YMCA in Niles, and South Shore YMCA in Woodlawn.

The FBI began looking at Porter in 2020 after a Philadelphia man was charged with distributing child pornography online. According to a federal complaint, investigators linked Porter to the East Coast case through internet, phone, online payment, and other records.

When agents searched Porter's home, they "observed an office with an overabundance of unorganized personal items" that included an array of videotapes, discs, and cassettes, the complaint said.

Some of the recordings "contain what appeared to be surreptitiously recorded videos of a locker room, focusing on what appeared to be underage boys, some of which were nude," an FBI agent wrote.

"In one of these videos, the individual physically resembling Porter is seen washing a prepubescent male child, lowering his shorts, and washing his" private areas, according to the 2020 complaint.

Agents also allegedly found receipts in Porter's home from a "spy store" for a keychain DVR and min-



(Left) Customers claim and pay for their kiosk-ordered purchases at a counter where FedEx and Western Union services are also offered. (Center) A handful of self-serve kiosks allow customers to shop the store's "full selection" electronically. (Right) At the new Walgreens concept store at 2 E. Roosevelt in downtown Chicago, this—plus a small bank of refrigerated items behind the camera—is the full selection of merchandise you are allowed to touch.

New anti-theft Walgreens store has just two aisles of touchable merchandise

BY CWBCHICAGO

During an earnings call with Walgreens investors earlier this year, the company's chief financial officer opined that his fellow executives may have overstated the effects of organized shoplifting rings on its operations.

"Maybe we cried too much last year," James Kehoe said.

Good luck balancing that cheery, non-crying analysis with what you see when you walk into the company's freshly redesigned store at 2 E. Roosevelt in downtown Chicago.

In what was once a typical Walgreens, there are now just two short aisles of so-called "essentials" where "customers may shop for themselves." If you want anything else—a bottle of booze, a deodorant brand deemed "non-essential"—you'll need to order

it at a kiosk and pick it up at the counter.

After undergoing a few weeks of construction, the store reopened on May 30.

"This redesigned store will have the latest in e-commerce offerings to increase customer service, mitigate theft, and increase safety for our customers and employees," the company said in a pre-opening statement.

And, boy, are there a lot of employees. Three greet you inside the front door, essentially asking why you're there.

The pharmacy is in the back and to the left, equipped with a fancy new kiosk system of its own. An employee will teach you how to use it.

To the right, gated by anti-shoplifting devices to protect the inventory, two rows of low-rise shelves offer a very limited se-

lection of those so-called "essentials." Unlike the tall shelves you're used to seeing in your neighborhood Walgreens, this store's shelves are no more than five feet tall, giving everyone a clear look at what everyone else is up to.

When we visited on Wednesday morning, two employees were dedicated to the "shop for yourself" section.

But if you want anything other than the very basic of basics, you'll need to use one of the iPad-like "kiosks," where a sign invites you to "Let us do the shopping" from the store's "full selection."

After placing your order, a plastic-framed sign next to the computer instructs, you should "relax while we shop for you." When your order is ready, head to the pickup/FedEx/Western Union counter to claim your goods.

The company's pre-opening letter said the new concept is "aimed at bringing the community a greater convenience and safety."

To start the check-out experience, an employee used their name tag to bring one of the self-serve stations to life. It promptly charged our reporter \$2.89 for the \$1.89 soda. Plus tax, of course.

Walgreens says the store is "focused on getting customers to place orders ahead of time digitally at Walgreens.com or in the Walgreens app for in-store pickup."

So, how was our visit? Weird.

After browsing both aisles of touchable merchandise, our intrepid reporter decided to buy an ice-cold Coca-Cola, priced at \$1.89 or two for \$3.

To start the check-out experience, an employee used their name tag to bring one of the self-serve stations to life.

It promptly charged our reporter \$2.89 for the \$1.89 soda. Plus tax, of course.

The error was quickly remedied with the help of both "shop for yourself" attendants.

Propped on the sidewalk at the corner of State and Roosevelt, a sandwich board boasts that the company has "built a better Walgreens."

You can judge that for yourself between 7 a.m. and 10 p.m. daily.

Man shot by cops in Aug. 2020, sparking waves of looting, found guilty of attempted murder of police

BY CWBCHICAGO

Three years ago today, Chicago was in the throes of another night of protests, riots, and looting that followed the murder of George Floyd by a Minneapolis police officer.

Tensions ran high for weeks, and on Aug. 9, officials claimed, a spark of misinformation about a police shooting in Chicago ignited another night of widespread looting, along the Magnificent Mile, the Loop, and neighborhood retail corridors.

The misinformation that the Chicago Police Department's then-superintendent, David Brown, blamed for the August 9 uprising were inaccurate social media claims about the Chicago police shooting that afternoon of a 20-year-old man named Latrell Allen.

Some of the online posts repeated rumors that police shot at a 15-year-old boy. The chatter spread quickly and widely. Soon, the rumors turned into direct calls for looting in the downtown area. By that night, the rampage was underway.

Last week, after less than three hours of deliberation, a jury convicted Allen on all charges before them, including four counts of attempted murder of police officers. Judge Thomas Byrne set the next court date for July 11.

COPA, the city's police oversight agency, found that two offi-



Chicago police officers swarm the Magnificent Mile during widespread looting that followed the shooting of Latrell Allen (inset) by other CPD officers on Aug. 9, 2020.

Photos by CWBChicago; Cook County sheriff's office

cers who shot Allen that afternoon acted within the department's guidelines after he opened fire on them while running away.

Officials said the officers first approached Allen because he matched the description of a sus-

pect who had a gun in a park with children present.

Chicago police arrested over 100 people as looting and riots spread through the city's downtown retail corridors following Allen's shooting. Two people,

including a store security guard, were shot during the riot.

The guard got into an altercation with a group of rioters in the 400 block of N. Clark around 4 a.m., on Aug. 10, police said. Several people in the group pulled out guns and opened fire on the guard, who was shot in the abdomen, according to police.

The other shooting victim that night was a 20-year-old man. He got shot while trying to drive away from a man who tried to carjack him in the 200 block of S. Wabash.

Another gunman fired shots at police in the Loop that night. Those officers returned fire, but the gunman escaped, Brown said the following day.

Thirteen police officers were injured, including one who was struck by a bottle, Brown said. Another cop's nose was broken.

In addition to the four counts

of attempted murder, Allen was found guilty of two counts of aggravated discharge of a firearm toward a peace officer and aggravated discharge of a firearm into an occupied vehicle, according to court records.



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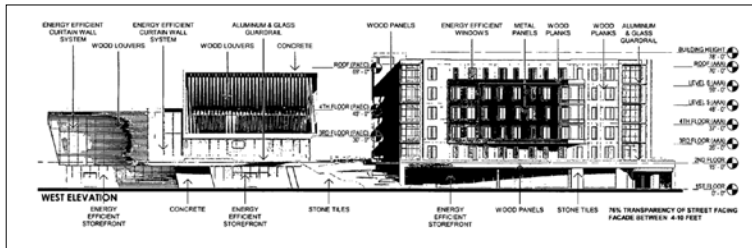
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Black Ensemble Theater has plans for the former home of the Japanese American Service Committee, 4427-59 N. Clark St.

Black Ensemble Theater announces plans for JASC property

Last October we reported that Black Ensemble Theater [BET] had purchased the former home of the Japanese American Service Committee, 4427-59 N. Clark St., for \$5.5 million.

Last week the theater and cultural center's CEO Jackie Taylor covertly provided details on what they have planned for the parcels. (Taylor and BET held a community meeting on the project Tuesday night after this newspaper went to press.)

The information was not released for general distribution, but was culled by a Twitter user [@minc798] who found the zoning application on the Chicago City Clerk's website, and sent it to the Uptown Update community blog.

Plans call for a six-story or more residential building with 50 units, and a plaza facing Clark St. The curving plaza appears to separate the residential from the north building, which will house an education center with classrooms, recording and dance studios, and a small theater that would stretch north toward Sunnyside. The cor-

ner building that once stood there was demolished in 2019.

Plans also call for a cafe or restaurant and three retail spaces spread across the two buildings.

The application included a rendering that provides an idea of what is planned.

Neighbors living within 250 feet of the project can expect to receive zoning notice from the owner's attorney. The proposed zoning change will move the property from the current B3-3 and C1-2 to B3-3 (Business Institutional Residential Planned Development), which in turn will allow for the added density and height. The new buildings will make this stretch significantly taller and more modern, complimenting the newly built buildings on the 4500, 4600 and (soon) 4700 blocks, reports Uptown Update.

No word on BET's plans for funding. Mackenzie Bezos was a previous revenue source, BET previously drew on TIF funds for the 2011 theater project across Clark, and took out a loan for their purchase of 4507 N. Clark and JASC in 2022.



Joanne Unkovsky



Elizabeth Geoghegan meets Pope Francis.

POT from p. 2

trust that Joanne maneuvered for two decades at Neiman Marcus. And long before that at the Chicago Theater. It always reflected her well-liked, off-putting charm, so treasured for centuries amid Europe's palazzos. Her late husband, **Simon Unkovskoy**, was the maternal grandson of **Prince Pavel Pavlovich Galitzine**, a member of the State Council of the Royal Court of **Czar Nicholas II**. Long-time Lake Forest resident and big time snow skier.

PLAYING IN THE BAND: Veteran Grateful Dead members **Bob Weir** and **Mickey Hart** have a long history of playing in Chicago, and will play this weekend at Wrigley Field with Dead & Company, featuring bandmates **John Mayer**, **Oteil Burbridge**, **Jeff Chimenti** and **Jay Lane**. Deadheads will blanket the Wrigleyville area with tie dye and smiles. The joint will be jumpin' and good vibes will abound.

VATICAN SYMPOSIUM: Respected Catholic academics like **Elizabeth Geoghegan**, the American writer, joined international scholars to examine the works of the Southern American Catholic Scholar, **Flannery O'Connell**, this time with Italian American film director **Martin Scorsese** and papal audience.

DANCING ON A SILVER LINING: Dancing with Chicago celebrities has its uplifting moments, **Dr. Sandy Goldman** makes such a rich resource. Get your dancing shoes on Chicago stars.

HONORARY MAYOR'S BIRTHDAY: **Shelley Howard's** birthday at LuxBar on Bellevue allowed him to stage his annual Last Supper with scads of Triangle celebrities with Gibson's **Steve Lombardo** at the head table joined by Maestro **Stanley Paul**, **Dennis Donn**, **Larry Wright**, **Chase Garrett**, **Helda Wardenaar**, **Ron March**, **Irena Zelikov** and **Fredda Studio**.

WHO'S WHERE: In and Out Burgers, Tuscon AZ, **Tom Hackett** and **Tom McGuire** lunching with **Bill Barcella**, thanks Bill... **Liz Teasley** celebrating Memorial Day weekend, and **Gracie's** 10th birthday, with family and friends... **Sherry Lea Fox** and **Kate Krause Prange** looking so chic dining at Gibson's Steakhouse... **Whitney Reynolds** and **David Heiner** brought the gang to cheer on the Cubs... **Lady Cynthia Olson** is off to Merry Ol' London Town



Sean Eshaghy, Mamie Walton and Dennis Healey.



Whitney Reynolds, David Heiner and gang.

bringing beauty and nobility with her... **Kim Duda**, **Jeanae Paul** and **Joyce Selander** dining at Gibson's Steakhouse... **Bill** and **Erin Kresse** at the majestic Cliffs of Moher near Galway... Surrounded by her boys, **Sean Eshaghy** and **Dennis Healey**, **Mamie Walton** has been a celebrity for long years, for style and glamor and now at 95, for the grandeur of age... **Reute Butler** and **Jorie Butler Kent**, mom and daughter, ... "What an amazing journey it's been Ma..." **Marius Morkvenus** and **Hector Gustavo Cardeneas** delighting the French on San Tropez Sands on the sunny Riviera.

FENWICK: The elegant and the bright lights of the Oak Park Catholic anchor, Fenwick Prep, graduated last week and were out in full force at many Chicago restaurants, including Tufano's where so many Oak Parkers's great grandparents first eat out in Little Italy. Charming atmosphere for celebrations.

MUSIC: **Denise Tomasello**

returns to performing with a 17-piece orchestra at Des Plaines Theatre this Sunday, June 11, at 3 p.m. Denise delved into how she started singing, how she met her husband, performing for the first time as a cabaret singer, and getting her very first review, which came from **Rick**, himself.

BATTLE HYMN OF THE REPUBLIC: **Julia Ward Howe** was inspired to write "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" after a visit with Union troops in the thick of the Civil War. In 1862, Atlantic Monthly published Howe's poem, "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," which brought lasting fame and is considered the Union's Civil War anthem.

It's useless to hold a person to anything he says while he's in love, drunk, or running for office.

- **Shirley MacLaine**

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Joffrey For All celebration features blasts from the past

Free ballet event is designed as a gift to Chicagoans

The Joffrey Ballet is planning a first-of-its-kind Joffrey for All Celebration, which will feature free performances by Joffrey Company Artists, the Joffrey Academy of Dance, and students from the Joffrey Community Engagement programs.

The mixed rep program features a series of fan-favorite dances drawn from past performances, including the show-stopping pas de deux from Anna Karenina, original works from Joffrey choreographers, and the American masterwork Suite Saint-Saëns in honor of the late Joffrey co-founder Gerald Arpino's centennial celebration. The Joffrey Ballet's Joffrey for All Celebration takes place rain or shine in the heart of downtown Chicago in Pritzker Pavilion in Millennium Park at 5:30 p.m. Sunday, June 25.

The celebration offers the opportunity for all of Chicago to revisit or experience for the first time some of the most notable works in Joffrey's canon, showcasing a range of styles captivating to audiences of all ages.

"Since its founding, The Joffrey Ballet has championed bold new works that push at the boundaries of traditional ballet," said Artistic Director Ashley Wheater. "The Joffrey for All Celebration shares our heart and soul with Chicago by connecting our past with works by emerging choreographers and the next generation of dancers—the artists who represent the future of ballet."

Kicking off the program is the ultramodern colorem, a work by choreographer Chanel DaSilva which received its world premiere in The Joffrey Ballet's 2022-23 season opener Beyond Borders. Colorem explores the emotional connection to color and its innate ability to inform perspective. The work contrasts passion and love with balance and neutrality in DaSilva's second original collaboration with Joffrey dancers. For the Joffrey for All Celebration, DaSilva incorporates the first and third movements with students from the Joffrey's programs.

The program features Swimmer



'Suite Saint-Saëns' weaves classical movement with the late choreographer's signature neo-classical style of speed, energy, and quality. With its lilting score, choreographer Agnes DeMille once described this American masterwork as like "standing in a flight of meteors."



The June 25 celebration offers the opportunity for locals to revisit - or experience for the first time - some of the most notable works in Joffrey Ballet's history, during a show suited for all ages.

Pas de Deux by frequent Joffrey choreographer Yuri Possokhov, whose most recent productions with the Joffrey include Don Quixote (2022) and Anna Karenina (2019, 2023). First premiered in 2015, Swimmer is a modern ballet set against a backdrop of flowing projections evocative of waves and water, based on the short story by John Cheever.

"Our mission is to create pathways for every person to experience the joy of dance. From expanding our scholarship program to our educational footprint with our new South Loop studio, we are laying the foundation for the future of dance in Chicago and beyond," said Joffrey CEO Greg Cameron. "We hope the celebration sparks inspiration and reaches new audiences with our commitment to empower every Chicagoan through access to the arts."

Highlighting another frequent collaborator are two works by choreographer Nicolas Blanc, titled Convergence and Red Violin Caprices. Convergence features an original score by Philip Glass and was created in collaboration with artist Katrin Schnabl for her art installation EWNS (East, West, North, South).

The piece represents these directions through four dancers who are seen as a collective force yet

as individual, distinct entities. As the title suggests, one needs the other to trace a route that unifies the world. In addition, Red Violin Caprices was born out of a collaboration with world-renowned violinist Philip Quint, depicting a musician's love letter to a muse.

A certain height of the program will be the Italy pas de deux from Anna Karenina. Described by Wheater as the "crème de la crème" in Anna Karenina, which became the highest-grossing non-Nutcracker production in Joffrey's history earlier this year, the pas de deux depicts Anna and Vronsky's sublime new life in the Italian countryside. Filled with passion, emotion, light, and color, the piece bursts with the highs and lows of human emotion.

The program concludes with a celebration of Joffrey co-founder Gerald Arpino's centennial with his seminal, crowd-pleasing work Suite Saint-Saëns. Presented earlier this season in Beyond Borders, Suite Saint-Saëns weaves classical movement with the late choreographer's signature neo-classical style of speed, energy, and quality.

Founded in 1956 by pioneers Robert Joffrey and Gerald Arpino, the Joffrey remains dedicated to artistic expression, innovation, and first-rate education and engagement programming.

Feng Shui your life

Feng Shui is the practice of arranging pieces in living spaces to create balance with the natural world. This idea can also work in writers' offices. The Independent Writers of Chicago [IWOC] will host Kim Downey, a Feng Shui practitioner, to discuss how to use Feng Shui to wring greater writing productivity and efficiency from your own home office.

The IWOC meeting will take place Tuesday, June 13 in Room 4G (4th floor) at the Gratz Center,

126 E. Chestnut St. / 115 E. Delaware, just west of Michigan Ave., adjacent to Fourth Presbyterian Church.

Discounted parking (after 5 p.m., with validation) is located at the 900 N. Michigan Ave. garage. Networking at 5 p.m. The main program starts at 6 p.m.

IWOC members are admitted free, while non-members, pay \$10 if pre-registered at <https://www.iwoc.org/event-5086597>, and \$15 at the door.

Steep Theatre hosts first ever block party

Steep Theater is hosting their first ever free block party noon to 6 p.m. Saturday, June 3. The Party will be a celebration of neighbors and friends, with fun and games for the whole family, live music, food, drink, and some catching up with old friends.

The block party is at Steep's parking lot, 1044 W. Berwyn,

corner of Berwyn and Kenmore. Steep Theatre Company was founded in 2000 by three actors with little more than a shoestring budget and a desire to work in an open, ensemble atmosphere. Over the years, the company has become a dedicated group of 47 actors, directors, designers, and writers.

Learn more about Howard St. during history tour

The Rogers Park West Ridge Historical Society (RPWRHS) is hosting a tour of Howard St. with experienced guide, historian, and Rogers Park resident Glenna Eaves. The tour will take place at noon on Saturday, June 10.

It costs \$15 for PRWRHS members and \$20 for non-members. The tour is limited to 15 participants.

Get intimately acquainted with

the story of the street that marks the northern border of Rogers Park. The tour will start at the Howard Area Community Center, 7648 N. Paulina St., with a presentation on the history of the Howard St. Area, followed by a walk along Howard St.

To reserve a spot, visit <https://rpwrhs.org/civCRM/event/info/?reset=1&id=133>.

POLICE BEAT from p. 10

ature camera DVR.

Porter tried to get the federal charges thrown out, arguing that the locker room videos were not pornographic. U.S. District Judge Ronald Guzman denied the motion in an opinion that included detailed descriptions of the videos' content.

According to Guzman's summaries, many of the recordings included sexual activity, and Porter's face is seen in some footage.

In one ruse, Porter told children who were showering with their swim trunks on that they had to remove their trunks "due to the chlorine in the pool," Guzman wrote.

Federal officials on Friday encouraged victims of sexual exploitation to contact the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children at www.missingkids.com or by calling 1-800-843-5678.

—Compiled by CWBChicago.com

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One dead, another injured in Streeterville shooting

BY CWBCHICAGO

A gunman left one man dead and another injured near Northwestern Memorial Hospital in Streeterville on June 4, Chicago police said. Witnesses and the surviving victim were not cooperating with investigators.

The men were outside in the 300 block of E. Huron when someone opened fire on them around 1:20 a.m. Investigators found 14 shell casings and an ammunition magazine at the scene.

“Witnesses on scene were very uncooperative with officers about the incident

and refused to answer any questions,” according to a Chicago Police Dept. media statement.

The fire department transported a 34-year-old man with gunshot wounds throughout his body to Northwestern. He was pronounced dead.

Police said the second victim, 27, arrived at Northwestern later with a gunshot wound to his leg.

He said he was with the first victim, “then became very uncooperative and refused to answer any questions,” according to the police statement.

A 911 caller reported that two vehicles

sped from the shooting scene, a dark-colored SUV and a black Charger. One caller said at least one person jumped out of the SUV and started shooting.

The men are the 10th and 11th people shot on the Near North Side this year. By comparison, there were 31 shooting victims on the Near North Side at this point last year, including nine shot during a single event outside the Chicago Red Line CTA station.

There were 10 victims at this point in 2021 versus seven in 2020.

Note: The 2020, 2022, and 2023 victim counts each include one accidental self-

inflicted gunshot wound. Those cases are not included in official city data.

The most recent shooting before Sunday occurred inside a guest room at Hotel Chicago, 333 N. Dearborn, May 28.

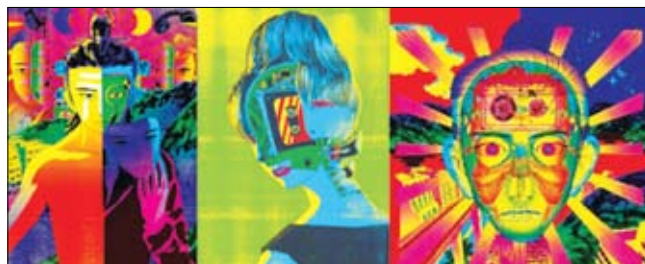
A 23-year-old off-duty police officer from Michigan was handling his weapon inside a 12th-floor room when it fired around 3:10 p.m., a police report said. The bullet struck his left hand and traveled into the stomach of a 25-year-old man who was also in the room, according to CPD. No charges were filed.

Art installation a mix of ancient poetry, modern Anime

Kongkee: Warring States Cyberpunk is on view at Wrightwood 659 through July 15, and features the work of London-based Chinese artist and animation director Kong Khong-chang, known as Kongkee.

Through multi-screen videos, wall projections, neon installations, vibrant graphic works, narrative texts, and ancient Chinese objects, the exhibition tells the story of legendary poet Qu Yuan, who lived during the Warring States Period (481-221 BC), as his soul journeys from the ancient Chu Kingdom to a retro-futuristic Asia where he is reborn as an android in a psychedelic cyberpunk landscape.

Originally conceived by Kongkee as a



(Left to right) Dragon's Delusion — Departure poster, 2017. The Singer, 2018. Dragon's Delusion vinyl cover, 2021.

Courtesy of the artist and Penguin Lab

comic series in 2013, the exhibition transports viewers into an imaginary world where past and future collide.

The exhibition is presented by AlphaWood Exhibitions at 659 W. Wrightwood Ave.

The exhibition traces the life of Qu Yuan (339 – 278 BC), one of ancient China's most revered poets. As the legend tells, Qu Yuan had been a trusted advisor of King Huai of Chu, ruler of one of the Warring States from 328 to 299 BCE, until the poet was banished.

“Qu Yuan's poetry has a psychedelic, wandering quality that I tried to reflect in my art, but I also wanted him to reflect the disorientation, as well as the hope, of our era,” said Kongkee.

Admission is \$15 and available online only at <https://tickets.wrightwood659.org/events>. Admission is by advance ticket only. Walk-ups are not permitted.

SECURITY from p. 1

ties they operate in. Those include school security services at Northwestern, Loyola and DePaul, and the Univ. of Chicago, and organizations like the Chicago Cubs, many North Side hospitals and a variety of chambers of commerce and business organizations like Northhalsted Merchants Assoc.

“The longstanding success of our CLA Ambassadors has provided a model example for safe and clean efforts throughout the city, including the expansion of the program throughout the central business district once again this summer,” said Michael Edwards, CEO of CLA. “Our team looks forward to providing the Central Loop corridor with a safe and friendly space to those living, working and enjoying the downtown area.”

The CLA program primarily services State Street Special Service Area #1-2015, which includes State St. and select portions of Wabash and Dearborn avenues.

TESLA from p. 1

If Tesla closes the Rush St. location, they would have only one showroom left in the city at 1053 W. Grand Ave.

According to Crain's, Intermix ran into financial troubles this year after a Beverly Hills, CA-based private-equity firm, acquired them last fall. Intermix closed at least 17 stores earlier this spring, including the one in the Gold Coast, at 900 N. Rush St.

Intermix's landlord, Fred Latsko, is now marketing the 4,200-square-foot space. He has also has filed an eviction complaint demanding that Intermix pay about \$375,000 in back rent.

FUNDRAISING from p. 1

need to continue doing the original investigative work that local journalism requires, and I'm hopeful about the amount of support we'll be able to get this year.”

CIMA is a relatively new organization that grew up out of the pandemic economic lockdown. Like just about all small independent businesses, the government-imposed lockdown severely damaged the independent media business model. Over the past three years, CIMA's fundraiser has raised more than \$500,000 to support grassroots newsrooms in the Chicago area, like the one you're reading now. These outlets have created award-winning coverage of emergencies such as the COVID-19 pandemic, environmental racism in Chicago's BIPOC communities, news podcasts on the LGBTQ+ community, and much more.

And unlike our previous two fundraisers, this year all the funds raised will be

split evenly among the participating CIMA outlets, allowing outlets with larger readership and reach to help uplift their smaller peers. This year's fundraiser has 47 participating members — more than any previous fundraiser — and 28 of them have budgets under \$250,000 a year, making this fundraiser essential for their continued support.

Individually, CIMA's 66 members representing 80 individual outlets reach anywhere from a few hundred readers to millions, for a combined readership of at least 8.4 million. None of us are owned by, or belongs to large, publicly-traded corporate media. We are literally your neighbors. And we're asking for your help.

Nearly 20% of our member outlets reach primarily Black Chicagoans, overlapping with around 13% of outlets that primarily reach Latino communities. We also reach the LGBTQ+, immigrant, Arab American, Korean American, Polish American com-

munities, and others. We reach all 77 community areas in Chicago with the majority covering the South and West sides, as well as suburbs including Cicero, Harvey and Evanston.

We here at Inside Publications have always counted on the support of our communities... for us that's the North Side, where the community has sustained this newspaper through seven different owners for well over 100 years. You have provided this newspaper and its staff with readers, feedback, story ideas, news tips, advertisers and donors. And as we ask for more help, we also thank you for helping to keep this local newspaper alive all this time.

During the fundraising campaign, CIMA will also be hosting two virtual events, one on social movement and the media and the other on how technology impacts local media. For more information about CIMA and its members, visit indiemediachi.org.

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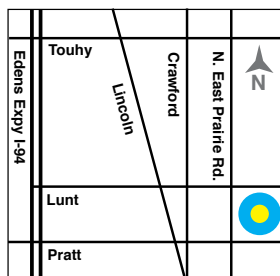


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