

## What is the future of public transportation?



Dealing with fears over spreading COVID-19 on public transportation, on Monday the CTA announced changes to riding protocols and the cleaning of buses and trains.

### The heavy toll of Chicago's recent transit shutdown

Many thousands of people who use public transit were stranded when local transit agencies shut down their services on multiple days during the recent riots and looting in Chicago.

Coming on the heels of the two-month COVID-19 lockdown, when ridership dissolved overnight, one wonders what will come of the suddenly risky rides on Chicago's public trains and buses.

Since the economic lockdown, ridership on CTA buses and trains has dropped by 80%, and by 90% with Metra.

Biologists credit the New York City subway system with being a main vector in the spread of the coronavirus. MIT economist Jeffrey Harris wrote a paper in April claiming that the subway seeded the COVID-19 epidemic throughout the region, where a large number of New York City Transit workers have succumbed to the virus. There have been at least 123 MTA employees die from the virus by late May, and over 6,000 transit employees were on quarantine by mid-April.

Dealing with Chicago's own fears of spreading COVID-19 on

public transportation, on Monday the CTA announced changes to riding protocol.

The CTA, in coordination with the Chicago Dept. of Public Health, has set capacity limits for buses and trains: 15 passengers on a standard 40' bus, and 22 passengers on a 60' articulated bus and each railcar. They have also created a color-coding system (Green, Yellow and Orange) to depict possible space availability for each bus route by hour based on the average, historic ridership during COVID-19 compared with the established capacity limits. The report shows general capacity levels, based on prior two weeks of ridership, for each hour of the day—helping customers determine the best times for their travel, especially customers who may have more flexibility on when to ride, and to help promote social distancing.

CTA is working on a similar crowding report for the rail system, and will launch soon. Longer-term, CTA is working on technology tools that would provide real-time information about capacity levels on buses and trains.

Social distancing is an important component of not catching COVID-19 on public transportation. "It is my goal to put as much

FUTURE see p. 8

## Protestors demand alderman support Civilian Accountability Board

BY PETER VON BUOL

On the evening of June 12, hundreds of protestors marched more than half a mile from outside of the 19th District Police Station to the office of Ald. Tom Tunney [44th] to demand the alderman support the creation of a Civilian Police Accountability Council (CPAC).

Currently, only 19 of the 50 members of the Chicago City Council support the creation of an elected council to oversee the Chicago Police Dept. (CPD). Many on the city council support a proposed alternative, the Grassroots Alliance for Police Accountability (GAPA). While both panels would provide civilian oversight of the CPD, the proposed CPAC would hire and fire the police department's superintendent, oversee department policy, issue subpoenas, and investigate misconduct complaints. Members of GAPA would serve only in an advisory capacity.

Prior to his re-election in 2019, in a response to a questionnaire from the Jewish Council on Urban Affairs, Ald. Tunney said he supported the creation of GAPA and pointed out the police department is the biggest expense in the city budget.

"I support GAPA's proposed community oversight. I also support a complete audit of the CPD—it is our biggest expense in the city council budget and it is extremely important we know how and where resources are being spent, and that taxpayer dollars are being spent responsibly," Tunney said.

The organizers of the march described GAPA with disdain and ordered Ald. Tunney to change his opinion.

"GAPA keeps the power with the mayor and the police, leaving your black neighbors vulnerable to police officers," according to [endlakeviewracism.com](http://endlakeviewracism.com), the website of a recently formed anti-police activist group.

With more than 64% of 44th Ward voters supporting him, in 2019 Tunney defeated two challengers and easily won reelection. Tunney is not known as somebody who can be bullied by colleagues in politics or community activists.

End Lakeview Racism, the group which organized the march, posted its rationale for the creation of CPAC at [endlakeviewracism.com](http://endlakeviewracism.com) and at [protestchicago.com](http://protestchicago.com), and is now trying to get a majority of sitting aldermen to back their plan.

"A democratically-elected council to oversee the CPD...is the first step in achieving safety and accountability for our black neighbors. We only need seven more aldermen to stop withholding their support," according to the group's statement posted at [protestchicago.com](http://protestchicago.com).

In many photographs of the march posted to Twitter, many of

DEMAND see p. 8



**Remembering Ald. Burt Natarus**  
See page 3  
Ald. Burton Natarus [42nd] (left), with Chicago band members Walt Parazaider, James Pankow, Lee Loughnane flanked by the rest of the band from June 28, 1999 when part of Chicago Ave. was renamed in the band's honor.  
©1999 Linda Matlow/PixIntl

## Rush St. closed down this weekend for street dining

Rush St., between Oak and Cedar streets, has been selected as a commercial corridor to allow local restaurants the ability to expand outdoor dining. The plan kicked off last weekend and will be open again this coming weekend.

The following local restaurants are participating: Gibson's Steakhouse, Hugo's Frog Bar & Fish House, Nico Osteria, Carmine's, Tavern on Rush, and Lux Bar.

Outdoor dining will be offered by reservation only.

There will be barricades blocking vehicular traffic at Rush and Cedar streets, Rush and Oak streets, Bellevue Pl. and State St., and Bellevue Pl. and the alley east of Rush St. Fire lanes will be maintained at all times for emergency vehicles.

This area will also be utilized as pedestrian walkways while closures are in place.

## Still no date for Cook County tax sale

The Annual Tax Sale, required by state law, is the start of a legal process that can end in a loss of property ownership due to unpaid property taxes.

But this year's sale was postponed due to the pandemic shutdown.

Cook County Treasurer Maria Pappas obtained a court order to postpone this year's Tax Sale, originally scheduled for May 8. She will reschedule the Sale after the statewide pandemic disaster declaration is lifted. More than 42,000 properties currently owe more than \$130 million in delinquent taxes for Tax Year 2018 (due in 2019).

Owners can avoid the Tax Sale by paying all delinquent taxes and interest before the Sale begins. A

new Illinois law increases from nine months to 13 months the time that taxpayers have to pay delinquent Cook County property taxes before they are offered to investors, giving more breathing room to homeowners and business people struggling to pay their bills, according to Treasurer Maria Pappas, who helped draft the legislation.

At one time, property owners had a dozen months to pay delinquent taxes before the Annual Tax Sale. In 2014, the Illinois General Assembly shortened the time, which last year was nine months. Pappas has pushed to extend the time, an effort culminating in the passage of SB 685. Gov. J.B. Pritzker signed the bill into law on June 5.

# Choice

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# For whom are dystopian programming so appealing in a lockdown?



By Thomas J. O'Gorman

Has your lockdown life been filled with change, or is the same predictable living repeating itself over and over?

Has anything changed for you? Altered its regularity, its flavor or appeal?

I have totally changed my opinion on salads. I crave salads and eat one every night, now. I love concocting, mixing, tossing and eating them. Favorite lettuce is Boston, tinged with red leaves. Purple onion, I adore. Small heirloom tomatoes are sweet as grapes. White balsamic vinegar has no comparison. And very fine olive oil. Ground Parmesan to top it off.

Don't get me wrong, I have always been a salad eater, but I kind of gave up on them at home each night. No longer. And my big Lockdown treat has been getting carry-out/delivery from Club Lucky whose Caesar Salad is Chicago's best. So I think it's safe for me to say I have undergone a great change in tastes. And roughage.

Being responsible for dinner each night at home, not in a restaurant, has altered the way I shop. I'm also more punctual and precise in the kitchen. I stock provisions, use food responsibly and maintain the cupboards with essentials.

I now do all grocery shopping

online and have them delivered. Some specialty items like fine cheeses and oils and gelato are available at Olivia's, a small specialty grocer nearby. But all the essentials are within easy reach without ever leaving the house. It makes menu planning and cooking work. I like to treat myself with Tate's Chocolate Chip Cookies and pretend I'm in East Hampton.

My taste in movies has changed. I watch more Britbox now than Netflix. So many of the films on Netflix are just no longer my kind of movies. I'm even kind of giving up on the Crown. Too much Princess Margaret, not enough historical polish and monarchy grandeur. Not like the first season. Churchill stole the show. And they've waited too long with the next series.

Searching through the preview list of films is a losing battle. Yes, I have seen a few good flicks, but then, after that, it's all dystopian visions and science fiction gibberish. So many worlds represented, so few of them I want to see. So much dehumanization. So much totalitarianism. So many tyrannical governments. Such environmental disasters. Dystopian films all feature some aspect of these cataclysms. Films reflect some disintegrating dramatic event in which humanity is reduced to the horror of living amid man-made disaster.

Who wants to sit and couch-potato that? Sorry, no binge-viewing of these for me.

The dystopian key is always a society that is disturbing or frightening. Movies, like Code Eight, Snowpiercer, Selfless and 212, are all reflective of the dark dystopian tales that fill the network.

They're the stuff my mother always said would give us night-

mares. Please, lead me to Downton Abbey, The Last Kingdom, The King, Hercule Poirot, Miss Marple, Midsomer Murders, Inspector Maigret and any action thriller or rom-com. And the French. Let me gorge on the well-dressed characters in French productions. Always both feet lightly planted on the Parisian sidewalk.

Dystopian Netflix makes me feel like I'm back in high school. The 1960s were a time ripe with dystopian literature. It was the perfect faddish text for the times of JFK and LBJ. Having the experience and details of presidential assassination on television, no wonder that genre was so appealing. Especially in English departments with young, too cool pros. We always seemed to be reading some creepy novel filled with sad people trying to survive disasters at every corner.

Ray Bradbury's 451, George Orwell's 1984, Aldous Huxley's Brave New World and William Golding's Lord of the Flies were just some of the dystopian literature that was so fashionable and popular. We'd have been better off reading more Mark Twain and James Fenimore Cooper. I do not believe that dystopian novels fill young minds with optimistic ideals. They don't portray the rich possibilities of the virtuous life, or the essentials of shaping lives of character and reasoned thought. Little transference of historical American values. We could have embraced a wider literature of hope-filled possibilities.

It's good to be American. Sorry. I won't apologize.

We have done things wrong sometimes. But let's not toss out the baby with the bath water. We have a rich literary tradition in the land of the free and the home of the brave. It's no accident. We are not Chekov Russians condemned to meaningless disaster. We're Davy Crockett's folk at Sam Houston's Alamo, sassing other New Yorkers back with the finesse of J.D. Salinger. And the homegrown love and justice of

Atticus Finch. To Kill A Mockingbird is America's story.

So you can see how I fret when confronted with so much dystopian programming on Netflix. For whom are such films so appealing? Why so many depressing movies? Do you really turn on Netflix because you need a good cry? Who is so sad and lonely that they need the soul deadening cinema of hopelessness? Are we that sophisticated or just "phony," as Holden Caulfield was fond of pointing out?

Is this the stuff to get us through Lockdown? Will these films help us in our time of physical separation from family and friends? Will they strengthen our humanity? I doubt it.

Sorry, but Lockdown is the perfect time to deepen our humanity by the creative energy given of films and literature of creative elegance and intelligence.

Some see this Lockdown ending soon. Not me. I have no calendar for such things. I'm quarantined for a longer sentence. At least until I finish writing my cookery book, lose 80 pounds, paint larger canvasses, get Netflix to lighten up, and reread Catcher in the Rye and To Kill a Mockingbird.

Perhaps by then our own dystopian saga will have ended. We will have found the cure to rid ourselves of familiar social dehumanizations, insipid governments, environmental disasters and unwanted pandemics. Lockdown may have changed our eating habits, but more intense recalibrating would be good. Where's my salad?

**A NEW RECORD:** Twenty-one murders in 24 hours. Chicago's most violent day in 60 years. A new standard in mayhem, even for us, set on May 31. How embarrassing.

**TURNOVERS:** Second City owner **Andrew Alexander**, 76, resigned as co-owner and its longtime executive producer after hard to battle accusations of institutionalized racism were leveled against the theater. Second City

named **Anthony LeBlanc**, 41, an African American interim executive producer, to replace him, attempting to rescue the venerated Old Town based comedy institution from long-standing finger-pointing and cover-up.

In another twist, **Erica Daniels**, Executive Director of Victory Gardens Theater, has resigned her post facing similar criticism about racial insensitivity. Curious, but before coming to Victory Gardens, she was President of Second City Theatricals which couldn't have helped her endeavors.

Yet with further fallout, the Poetry Foundation announced on Wednesday that its president, **Henry Beina**, former president of Northwestern Univ., and board chair, banker **Willard Bunn III**, are resigning, several days after an open letter signed by more than 30 poets and 1000 others criticized the foundation's recent statement on the Black Lives Matter movement and called for them to be replaced.

Will more shoes drop?

**AN APOLOGY:** Cooking publications Bon Appétit and Epicurious have confronted their readers, contributors and peers with an apology, in light of **Adam Rapoport's** resignation as editor in chief. A deeply offensive photo of him, taken long ago, is now circulating. It is horrific on its own, but also speaks to the much broader and long-standing impact of racism at their publications. They say that they have been complicit with a culture they don't agree with and are committed to change. The mastheads have been far too white for far too long.

## DYSTOPIAN see p. 6

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# Remembering the unforgettable Ald. Burt Natarus



Heart  
of the  
'Hood

by Felicia Dechter

The city's 42nd Ward just got a little less colorful.

Its former, longtime alderman, Burt Natarus, died on June 11 at the age of 86. As a longtime reporter covering the ward, I had the pleasure of working with Ald. Natarus many times throughout the years. One thing I can tell you: He was never, ever boring.

According to his obituary, Ald. Natarus was an attorney and one of the longest-serving Democratic Aldermen in Chicago history, sitting on the City Council from 1971 to 2008 after having won nine elections for public office. Natarus thought of himself as the "Janitor of the Ward," and he was known in the City Council as "Master of the ordinance," for crafting much of the legislation that was passed during his aldermanic tenure.

The former alderman had lived on the Near North Side since 1960, although he was born and raised in Wausau, WI, and a graduate of the Univ. of Wisconsin and their law school. Also a grad of the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard, Natarus later taught at Loyola Univ. on the subject of local government. He served in the U.S. Army and the U.S. Army Reserves, earning paratrooper's "Jumpwings." Ald. Natarus loved the Chicago Bears,



Former 42nd Ward Ald. Burt Natarus will be fondly remembered by many who knew him.



Virtual submissions to the Artists Off the Wall Fest: Artists Lewis Lain, Freddie Levin and Molly Donlin.



was an avid reader, and enjoyed rafting many rivers out west.

That is all according to his obit. Now I'd like to share a few other, personal memories about Ald. Natarus.

Whenever I wrote something that Ald. Natarus didn't like or wasn't favorable to him, I'd get a scathing phone call. He usually would call me up screaming. After a while I learned a trick: If I called him back that day, he'd yell at me. If I waited a day or two to call back, he was a bit calmer. If I waited a few days, he'd forget about why he called me to begin with! LOL, I usually waited.

Then there was the time years ago that prostitution was becoming a problem around Washington Square Park. I got a good chuckle when Natarus told me that he was going out walking in the middle of the night and early morning hours to check out the ladies of the night and tell them to go home. The very thought makes me smile. But he did solve the problem.

One time, Natarus and I met for lunch downtown. I was running

late and in a hurry to get there and in the midst of the meeting I realized my blouse was on inside out. I don't know if the alderman never noticed or if he just never said anything. But I did eventually escape to the bathroom to fix the situation.

Diapers on our carriage horses and no cell phones while driving were two Natarus ideas. The former never took off but the latter did. We all rolled our eyes when Natarus introduced the cell phone ordinance. Thought he'd gone a little batty. Actually though, that law has saved plenty of lives I'm sure.

And I agree with the alderman's River North neighbor, Sean Tehrani, who said that although Ald. Natarus came across as a little grouchy, once you got to know him he was a "very kindhearted person."

"He loved being around people and I think he really missed not being the alderman," said Tehrani, owner of Basil Leaf Café in Lincoln Park. "If he wasn't hanging out in the lobby of the building you could find him sitting on

the patio at Erie Cafe or Pete's Coffee.

"He really enjoyed the outdoors and I would see him more during the summer," said Tehrani. "I said hello to him every night. I would get home from work when he was hanging in the lobby and always referred to him as alderman instead of Burt. He liked that a lot!"

Tehrani joked that Ald. Natarus was a "little player," as he was really nice to the young girls in the neighborhood. He was "definitely a character," Tehrani said. And sadly, it seems Natarus too was affected by the coronavirus.

"The saddest part was the past few months the building removed the furniture from the lobby due to COVID-19 so he had nowhere to hang out," said Tehrani. "I know he was old but probably passed from loneliness or depression. I used to see him every night hanging out in the lobby before the coronavirus took hold."

For the past year, I'd thought about Natarus a lot, thinking that I should give him a call and see how he was doing and what he

was up to. I didn't do that. One thing the alderman was proud of was the fact that his home phone number was listed and anyone could call him at any time. I'm really sorry I never made that call.

Ald. Natarus was a champion of the 42nd Ward for so many fruitful decades, said Debbie Silverman Krolik, who had a personal wish granted thanks to him.

"He served with honor, kindness, a warm smile, and knew how to get things done," said Silverman Krolik. "I will always be personally grateful to him for so quickly responding to my request that Chicago remember my beloved husband with an honorary street sign across from the Pittsfield building, where he had a suite of offices for 60 years as one of Chicago's most beloved and renowned dentists."

"Alderman Natarus explained to me exactly how to proceed and then passed my written request to Mayor Richard M. Daley," continued Silverman Krolik. "Within three days I had my answer. In

**NATARUS** see p. 5



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# Police Beat...

## Man killed in Old Town

A Chicago man fatally shot his friend in a dispute over money and was then seen dragging the dying man's body through an Old Town apartment building, say prosecutors.

Rotonio Esco is charged with first-degree murder in connection with the death of Courtney Horton, 32, on the 1300 block of N. Hudson June 10. Judge John Lyke ordered Esco held without bail.



Rotonio Esco

Security guards at Marshall Field Garden Apartments reported hearing Esco tell Horton that Horton owed him money about 30 minutes before the murder, Assistant State's Attorney James Murphy said during a bond hearing Friday. Horton told Esco he didn't have any money, the guards said.

About 10 minutes later, around 2:10 a.m., security officers responded to calls of shots fired in one of the complex's apartment buildings. One guard found Horton bleeding in a stairwell and went to get help. When she returned, Horton's body was gone — and Esco was dragging it down an attached hallway, Murphy said. Police later found eight shell casings in the stairwell.

Another security officers said he saw Horton gasping for air on the floor as Esco ran past the guard in the hallway.

Murphy said Horton was shot in the thigh, chest, both wrists, and bicep. He was pronounced dead a short time later at Northwestern Memorial Hospital.

Arriving police officers saw Esco walking toward the housing complex exit with blood on his pants leg, according to Murphy. Esco allegedly ran when the officers tried to ask him about the blood.

Esco dropped a cellphone, his identification, and a loaded 9-millimeter handgun as he ran, Murphy said. Police heard a condo building's sliding glass door break as they searched for Esco in the 1300 block of N. Cleveland.

Murphy said Esco entered an occupied residence through the broken door, accessed the roof, used a walkway to get on a neighboring roof, and then broke into the second residence.

Inside the second home, a woman awakened to find Esco in her bedroom saying, "get on the f\*cking ground," Murphy alleged. Police arrested Esco when he returned to the roof.

As officers stood Esco up to take him to a police vehicle, a shell casing fell from him onto the roof, Murphy said. Cops allegedly found twelve bloody \$100 bills in Esco's pants

pocket. But the pocket that held the money was not blood-soaked, Murphy said.

Shell casings from the murder scene have been matched to the gun Esco allegedly ditched.

Defense attorney Herbert Goldberg said Horton was in possession of a screwdriver at the time of the shooting.

## On bail for cop battery, man now accused of robbing woman on Red Line

A man who's on bail for allegedly battering a police officer at a downtown CTA station last month is now charged with robbing a woman as she rode the Red Line home from work in Uptown June 8.

Prosecutors charged Abdul-Wahab Fadairo, 25, with felony robbery and misdemeanor theft.

The alleged victim, who works as a nursing assistant, boarded a southbound train at the Wilson station around 2:25 p.m., prosecutors said.

She later told police she noticed Fadairo on the train because he was wearing a heavy winter coat in nearly-90° weather. When the train doors opened at another station, someone ripped her purse away and ran onto the platform, the woman reported. When she looked up at the thief, she saw the man in the heavy winter coat.



Abdul-Wahab Fadairo

Later that day, police officers who were monitoring CTA surveillance cameras saw a man matching the robbery suspect's description at the Roosevelt Red Line CTA station.

Patrol officers approached the man as he offered to swipe people into the train station with the victim's stolen Ventra pass for \$1 each, prosecutors said.

The victim identified Fadairo in a photo line-up Tuesday and also identified him in a CTA surveillance photo that allegedly showed him carrying her stolen purse. Video from the Red Line train shows Fadairo looking at the victim, running, grabbing her purse, and exiting the train, according to prosecutors.

Fadairo was on bond at the time of the alleged robbery while awaiting trial for felony aggravated battery of a police officer at the State-Lake CTA station May 19.

Judge Susana Ortiz ordered him held without bail for violating the terms of that bail bond. She set bail on the new case at \$10,000 and ordered Fadairo to go on electronic monitoring if he can post the required \$1,000 deposit bond.

## Man released on recognizance bond charged with injuring two cops

When prosecutors in April charged Ein Julian with robbing a man on the Red Line downtown, he went home on a recognizance bond. Now, prosecutors say he broke one cop's finger and spit in another's face June 7 when they tried to stop him as he brandished a knife in North Center.

Police responded to several calls of a man waving a knife on streets near the Irving Park Brown Line CTA station around 4:30 p.m. A witness flagged down officers on the 4100 block of N. Lincoln a few minutes later and pointed them toward Julian.



Ein Julian

air with his left hand and a metal hair pick with his right hand as he yelled at passersby.

Julian ignored orders from the first officer on-scene to drop the knife, prosecutors said. He allegedly continued yelling, but eventually put the knife in his pocket after a second officer arrived.

Police said Julian began struggling with officers who tried to detain him. One cop dislocated a pinkie finger, according to prosecutors. Another suffered a hyperextended knee as Julian allegedly kicked and fought with officers. Julian spit in one cop's face, prosecutors said. Two officers were treated and released at Swedish Hospital.

Prosecutors charged Julian with felony aggravated battery of police, felony resisting, and misdemeanor assault.

Two months ago, prosecutors charged him with robbing a 25-year-old man on a Red Line train near the Jackson stop. The alleged victim told police that three people jumped him around 12:15 a.m. on April 9 — one offender pushed him into the wall of the train and took valuables from his pockets while another punched him. Two juveniles were also charged in the case.

A judge in April ordered Julian released on his own recognizance with electronic monitoring, but another judge subsequently removed the monitoring requirement.

Judge Susan Ortiz ordered Julian held without bail for violating the terms of his April recognizance bond. She then gave him a recognizance bond with electronic monitoring on the new charges. Upon hearing Ortiz give him another recognizance bond, Julian smiled widely and raised his hands in celebration.

## Cops investigate three Lincoln Park robberies

Police are investigating three robberies reported in the Lincoln Park neighborhood since June 9 — a delivery driver and two businesses were targeted. The hold-ups do not appear to be connected.

First, a food delivery driver told police that two armed men tried to rob him as he dropped off an order in the 400 block of W. Belden at 11:56 p.m. June 9, according to CPD spokesperson Sally Bown.

The victim, age 38, reported that two men approached him while displaying a handgun and demanded his valuables as he got out of his car to make a delivery. He told the men that he didn't have anything of value, began yelling for help, and started running away. Both offenders also ran from the scene.

A witness saw the robbers run eastbound on Belden, Bown said. Another witness reported seeing them turn north on Clark Street. Police did not release descriptions of the robbers.

Bown said the victim fell and injured his foot while running from the men. An ambulance crew treated him at the scene.

Then, around 7 p.m. June 10, a man implied he had a handgun as he demanded money from an employee at Yoberri yogurt, 2224 N. Clark. The victim could not get the cash register open, so the offender took \$1 from a tip jar and fled, according to a CPD report.

According to the victim, the robber was a skinny black male in his 30's who stands about six-feet tall. He wore a gray Nike-brand hat, a blue zip-up jacket, and slip-on shoes. The victim said the man ran west on Grant Place after the incident.

Less than an hour later, around 7:50 p.m., two men battered a 7-Eleven clerk as they stole boxes of cigarettes from behind the store's counter at 2004 N. Halsted, according to a CPD report. The clerk was not seriously injured. Both men fled south on Halsted with a significant number of cigarettes.

The victim described the robbers as two black males who wore masks and gray hoodies tied around their faces.

Area 3 detectives are investigating the robberies.

## Rogers Park convenience store robbed twice in two days

A mom 'n' pop convenience store in Rogers Park was robbed twice in two days last week, according to Chicago police.

Area 3 detectives issued a community alert to warn area businesses about the hold-ups, which a source said took place at Sonny's Food Store, 7001 N. Sheridan.

The corner convenience store was robbed by a man who either displayed or implied that he had a firearm at 8:53 p.m. June 9 and again around 10:50 p.m. June 10. The robber used force against an employee during one of the hold-ups.

On Tuesday, a man entered the store alone, implied he had a gun, and took money from the cash register. He fled the scene in a red vehicle.

The next night, a male robber entered the store while another man waited outside. The offender again took money from the register and also stole cigarettes. Police said the robbers fled westbound on Greenleaf Ave. in a red van or SUV.

Police issued two offender descriptions in connection with Wednesday's crime:

- A black male who's between 25- and 30-years-old. He stands 5'-9" tall, weighs about 160 lbs, and has a dark complexion.
- A 25-year-old black male who stands 5'-11" tall, weighs 170 lbs, and has a dark complexion. The robber on Tuesday was similarly described.

Anyone with information about the crimes can contact Area 3 investigators at 312-744-8263 about crime pattern P20-3-117.

## Cops warn of child luring on North Side

Chicago police have issued a community alert after a man tried to lure a boy into a vehicle June 14 on the North Side.

The offender tried to lure the 13-year-old boy to a vehicle as the teen jogged in the 3000 block of N. Leavitt around 1:24 p.m., according to the alert. Police said the offender, who was next to a four-door car, asked the boy to help him with the vehicle and motioned for the boy to come to him. The teen ran away.

Detectives described the suspect as a Hispanic man who's about 40-

years-old. He stands 5'-9" to 5'-10" tall, has dark hair, and speaks with an accent. Police said he was wearing a dark blue baseball hat, dark sweatpants, and black shoes.

His car is a sedan with a white top and black bottom. It has rust around the wheel wells, a white rear spoiler, and it may have a dent on its left backside.

Anyone with information about the incident can contact Area 3 detectives at 312-744-8266 regarding case JD-263936.

## Shots fired near Mag Mile, but no injuries

Shots were fired June 14 just steps from the Magnificent Mile, but no one is believed to have been injured.

Police responded calls of shots fired on the 100 block of E. Walton around 1:45 p.m. The Drake Hotel and 900 N. Michigan shopping mall are located on opposite corners of the intersection.

Witnesses gave cops conflicting accounts of what happened — with some mentioning a Dodge Charger, others remembering a black Audi, and others seeing a man run from the area with a fanny pack over his chest.

Detectives were trying to piece together exactly what took place.

Officers took a report to document damage to property caused by bullets.

## Explosive device detonated near Boystown ATM

A man detonated an explosive device in an apparent attempt to access money inside an ATM at Fifth Third Bank, 3179 N. Clark, June 14, police said.

Officers responded to reports of a loud explosion at the drive-up ATM around 11:30 p.m., CPD spokesperson Kellie Bartoli said. They found the drive-up cash machine burned with damage to its cement pad. But the machine's cash reserves were not compromised.

Patrick McCarron posted video of the explosion as it appeared from his nearby apartment to Twitter.

Police surveillance cameras also recorded the entire incident. CPD video shows a man walking up to the ATM and placing something next to it around 11:25 p.m. He walks away and the object explodes about 30 seconds later.

The police department's bomb and arson squad cleared the area and deemed it safe.

The suspect is described only as a man wearing a dark jacket, possibly with a white shirt or hoodie underneath. He ran through the lot and then toward Clark St. Police believe he then went west on Belmont and then south into an alley. Area 3 detectives are investigating.

Shortly after midnight Friday, a man got out of an SUV and placed a suspicious package outside the right field gate of Wrigley Field, police said at the time. A message attached to the package reportedly read, "this is just a warning." Bomb and arson investigators determined that the object was not dangerous and the area was cleared. Police have not drawn a connection between the two incidents.

— Compiled by CWBChicago.com



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# North Side resale-home market gradually reviving



## The Home Front

by Don DeBat

Despite battling the virus plague, protests, riots and social unrest, Chicago's North Side real estate market surprisingly is showing some positive signs, according to a new Baird & Warner analysis.

"As expected, the May numbers reported in our June 2020 North Side market analysis are significantly down versus 2019 in most areas," said John Irwin, broker with Baird & Warner's Lincoln Park office. "However, if you look a little deeper at the same numbers week by week, the market has shown improvement."

Irwin noted that this trend is best illustrated by analyzing homes that went under contract each week. The 2020 market began the year with significant increases over 2019. However, as COVID-19 fears began to grow



Analysts said the Fed's economic projections suggest that its policy will keep interest rates near rock-bottom for the foreseeable future.

and "Shelter in Place" policy was enacted, homes going under contract plummeted.

"Home sales hit a low point during the week of April 4th, but have increased week by week through May and into June," Irwin noted. "By early June of 2020, the number of units under contract exceeded 2019."

Here are the trends Baird & Warner sees in the North Side resale-home market going forward for the balance of the year:

- **Increased buyer and seller comfort** with the current situation. As the shock of social situations wears off and Chicago neighborhoods of Near North,

Lincoln Park, Lakeview and North Center begin to reopen, both buyers and sellers will become more comfortable with re-entering the market.

"For many investors, the quick rebound of the stock market has also generated confidence," Irwin noted.

- **Buyer urgency can't wait** in some cases. Whether relocating for schools, growing families or business, there are some housing situations that can't be put on hold.

- **Inventory levels are dropping.** North Side inventory alone declined 19.2% last month alone. This has led to many cases of

multiple offers and lower market times.

- **Median prices are holding** as a result of falling inventory levels. On some competitive transactions, prices are increasing. For example, median prices rose 14.1% in Lakeview in May.

Prices for expensive North Side homes actually rose across the board in May. Luxury homes pegged at \$1-million-plus were up 4%, while prices rose 3.2% on those priced between \$500,000 and \$1-million. Homes listed under \$500,000 did the best—rising 4.7%, Baird & Warner reported.

"Buyers looking for a 'great deal' due to the negative situation are being disappointed," Irwin quipped. Current pricing trends could also change quickly if inventory levels begin to rise.

"All of this could change very quickly as the market continues to open up and sellers rush to list their homes," Irwin said.

- **Record-low interest rates** continue to be a major buyer motivator. Most industry projections project rates to continue in the low 3% range for the near future.

At its June 10 meeting, the Federal Reserve Board left interest rates unchanged and near zero be-

cause of worries about unemployment and recession. Analysts said the Fed's economic projections suggest that its policy will keep interest rates near rock-bottom for the foreseeable future.

**30-year mortgages at 3.21%**

On June 11 Freddie Mac's Primary Mortgage Market Survey reported that benchmark 30-year fixed-rate home-loan rates nationwide averaged 3.21%, up slightly from 3.18% a week earlier. A year ago, the 30-year fixed-rate average was 3.82%.

"The rebound in home-buyer demand continued last week, driven by mortgage rates that hover near record lows," said Sam Khater, Freddie Mac's Chief Economist. "This turnaround in demand, particularly by those who have higher incomes than the typical household, also reflects deferred sales from the Spring."

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).

## NATARUS from p. 3

July, 2005, just one year after I lost my husband, the honorary street sign, 'Dr. PAUL P. KROLIK, DDS WAY,' was unveiled at the northeast corner of Washington and Wabash. It was accompanied by a city proclamation personally given to me by the very compassionate Burton Natarus, who attended the ceremony that he arranged."

"He was there on a very warm July afternoon to comfort me, my brother David Silverman and the many friends who had gathered on that very sad day; and to help me pull the string that would reveal the sign that I see whenever I am in the Loop," recalled Silverman Krolik. "My husband, who emigrated from Winnipeg, Canada as a teen-ager, would be so proud of this honor from his adopted city."

"I shall always remember the kindness and concern of this good man and Chicago legend, Alderman Burton Natarus," said Silverman Krolik. "He will never be forgotten. My heartfelt condolences to his family."

I second that last part, that Ald. Natarus will never be forgotten, as he truly was an unforgettable

personality. And this newspaper also sends its heartfelt condolences to his family. As one Near North Sider put it, "He's flying with the angels now."

Ald. Natarus is survived by his son, Michael, daughter, Jill, grandchildren, Jacob and Jenna and sister, Bonnie (Neil) Dick. Contributions may be made to The Anti-Cruelty Society, [www.anticruelty.org](http://www.anticruelty.org). Select "donate on behalf."

**An off the wall great idea...** every year for nearly three decades, the fabulous community event, Artists of the Wall Fest, has taken place basically right outside my door. The fest is a live, public mural-painting happening annually over Father's Day weekend. One-hundred sixty registered artists of all ages and from all across the city come out and spend the weekend painting the seawall in Loyola Park with



A virtual submission to the Artists Off the Wall Fest: artist Maeve Donlin.

scenes that depict a particular theme which changes every year.

Thanks to the coronavirus, the fest was cancelled. But its current organizers came up with a great

plan that they've named Artists Off the Wall. They're seeking virtual submissions that keep the idea of "Off the Wall," in mind along with themes of the park and neighborhood.

Using any medium, you can create an image and upload it to the advisory council's website at [loyolapark.org](http://loyolapark.org). You can submit a painting, digital image, sculpture, photograph... whatever your heart desires.

Categories are adult, teen, junior and wacky (truly off the wall). The advisory council will purchase \$1,000 in gift certificates to help support its local businesses and award them to the winners. Check out the cool images already posted on the website. You can also buy

a 2020 fest t-shirt for \$10.

There is no fee to participate (which is awesome because I have a gripe with the normal, \$35 charge) and deadline for submissions is midnight on Sunday. Judging begins after the closing date and winners will be announced. Only one image per artist is allowed.

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## Correction

Not the right alderman

In a story on Francis Parker School in our June 10 newspapers we referred to a similar incident in the past that occurred in Ravenswood. In that article we incorrectly noted that the North Park School conspired with Ald. Pawar's 47th Ward office to take a piece of property away from a private party. The alderman involved in that taking was in fact Eugene Schultzer and his chief of staff, who was then named in the lawsuit, not Ald. Pawar or his office. We apologize for that error.







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## SOAR Farmers Market has new rules

The Farmers Market hosted by the Streeterville Organization of Active Residents will now open Tuesday, June 23, and will again be held on the MCA Plaza.

Due to city regulations, in order to visit the market shoppers must wear a face mask which should be worn covering your nose and mouth. If you do not have a mask you can purchase one at the SOAR information booth located at the front of the market.

There will be only one entrance and one exit. Only 40 individuals will be admitted to the market at one time. Shoppers will only be allowed to enter the market by a market staff who will monitor customer flow.

No hand-to-hand contact will be allowed between vendors and shoppers. Shoppers are being asked to point to the products they desire and allow the vendor to bag it and set it down on the table.

Pre-ordering is being encouraged. Shoppers can check the SOAR website [soarchicago.org](http://soarchicago.org) for details.

No dogs or other animals are allowed at the market unless they are service dogs.

SOAR is also seeking volunteer ambassadors for the Farmers Market. Ambassadors will greet and welcome shoppers and make sure everyone social distances. The Farmers Market will look a bit different this year, based on new health guidelines requiring social distancing between vendor tents and shoppers. To volunteer call 312-280-2596.

# They're back, and now coming to the North Side

The scooters are coming back. And this time they will be buzzing up and down North Side streets north of Chicago Ave.

The City has released updated terms and conditions for the controversial 2020 Electric Shared Scooter Pilot Program. City Hall is requesting that this year the three vendors participating in the program will have four times as many electric scooters and include most of the city.

There will be new rules, including a requirement that all scooters be locked to something, such as a bike rack or another fixed object, at the end of a ride. Unlike last year, the companies will not have to round up scooters every night for redistribution in the morning, so be careful when walking at night as the scooters pose a real

tripping hazard.

Only vendors that participated in the 2019 Electric Shared Scooter Pilot Program eligible to participate in the second pilot. The City anticipates selecting a limited number of vendors to participate in the second pilot, but final decisions on the pilot will be made only after reviewing all applicant responses. Vendor application packets are due June 25.

This year there will be 10,000 scooters coursing through the streets, and the devices will be available everywhere except the central business district, the lakefront and The 606 trail. The roll out will start in late July or early August.

[The central business district is defined as Chicago Ave. on the north, Roosevelt

Rd. on the south, Halsted St. on the west, with another western boundary on Clark between Chicago and Division St.]

But in practice, many North Side residents know that the scooters last year were ridden on sidewalks, outside of the designated pilot area that was mostly west of the Chicago River.

Because of pandemic risks, companies will need to clean the scooters each time their staff comes in contact with them, and riders will be encouraged to wear gloves and wash and/or disinfect their hands after each use. Last year, pricing varied, with most unlocking for \$1 plus 15¢ a minute. A 2019 study found that demand was highest in the West Loop and along Milwaukee Ave.

### DEMAND from p. 1

the marchers seem to have been college-aged. Most did not seem to maintain the six-foot social distancing ordered by Mayor Lori Lightfoot and many removed masks to chant slogans. While some neighborhood residents were among the marchers, it is not known how many of them were actually 44th Ward residents. The demographics of the marchers resembled the demographics of other marches throughout the city.

Since the city of Chicago began to tacitly allow large protest marches - ironically just a week after punishing small religious congregations for religious gatherings - affiliated left wing groups have been posting

their daily march schedule at [ProtestChicago.com](http://ProtestChicago.com). The group's website encourages its supporters to fill out a form letter to email to Ald. Tunney or to call his office. Within the text of their form letter, the group (whose own members did not maintain recommended social distancing guidelines throughout their march) used language associated with the COVID-19 lockdown.

"This is one small step towards ending the pandemic of racist police brutality and allowing citizens to hold officers accountable. Your community is demanding that you support CPAC and encourage your fellow [aldermen] to support it, as well," posted the group on its website.

An ordinance establishing CPAC, brought forward by the Chicago Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression was introduced by Ald. Carlos Ramirez-Rosa [35th], but it has been stuck in the Public Safety Committee for nearly two years. According to a story in the Chicago Reader, the alliance has been advocating on behalf of alleged victims of police violence since its founding in 1973 and has been organizing in favor of CPAC for the last five years. Activists have collected more than 50,000 signatures in support of a police oversight council made up of elected representatives from each of Chicago's 22 police districts.

### FUTURE from p. 1

information as possible into the hands of our customers, so that they can make informed travel decisions that help us all achieve proper social distancing," said CTA President Dorval R. Carter, Jr.

Chicago continues to experience a declining number of new COVID-19 cases, with declines seen across racial groups; stable or declining rates of cases resulting in hospitalization, ICU admission, and/or death; and declining emergency department visits for influenza-like illness and/or COVID-like illness. A second important long term measure will be if people return in large numbers to working downtown and for those who do, will they be willing to use public transportation?

The CTA and other public transit remain an essential service to ensure healthcare workers, first responders and others working in essential services and businesses can get to where they need to go. Under these circumstances, the CTA itself is now asking fewer people use their service by demanding locals "limit your travel on our bus and rail system to essential trips only," according to a CTA media advisory. "If a trip is not essential, please do not take it."

The are asking riders to "wear a face mask or covering when you ride, and wash your hands before/after traveling."

They recommend riders "limit touching all CTA surfaces, seat backs, stanchion bars or handles, and to keep your distance from other riders to a minimum of six-feet." Anyone who has ever boarded a Red Line CTA train downtown heading north at 5 p.m. on a workday knows that until recently, that was once an impossible task. The CTA also suggests riders "avoid sitting in a vacant seat directly next to another rider and to keep at least one row of seats between you and other riders, while avoiding crowded vehicles."

The CTA says that every rail car and bus is cleaned before it leaves for daily service—this includes wiping down seats, stanchions, grab handles and surfaces with disinfectant, as well as sweeping and trash removal.

While in service, workers disinfect the

high-touch surfaces of rail cars at all terminals after they finish a run and before they turn around for another run. Workers have also been stationed at the Navy Pier, Jefferson Park, Howard and Midway bus terminals to use a disinfectant/cleaning spray to wipe down high-touch surfaces of buses serving 30 different routes.

The transit shutdowns due to the riots, and the reticence to use public transit during the pandemic era, overwhelmingly hurt workers and residents who don't have access to cars.

The Active Transportation Alliance, a local transportation advocacy group, has collected stories from people about the impact of the recent transit shutdown and what fears over COVID-19 transmission have had on their lives:

- "I am an ICU nurse who relies on public transportation to get from the far north side of Chicago to get to work. I don't have a car, and don't plan on getting one. The shutdown meant that I, an 'essential' worker, could not get to my job where people rely on me to be present, be timely, and provide quality life saving care."
- "The only way to reach my mother, who is almost 95 and who lives independently, was to ride my bike 25 miles and back."
- "My partner works daily on the Mag-

nificent Mile and we both rely heavily on the CTA to get us to and from work. With certain downtown stations shut down, my partner was unable to get to work."

- "I am disabled and it is difficult for me to manage many downtown CTA stations as is."

Other insights from the Alliance survey include that the majority of people they heard from were either stranded after work while trying to get home from the riots, unable to get to work or medical appointments, or just stranded. Over 20% of respondents had to miss work due to the transit shutdown. The next most common experiences were from people who missed a healthcare appointment or grocery store visit. People who were stranded either had to walk many miles or spend upwards of \$30 on ride hailing, or forgo an essential trip as well as miss work or show up late to

work, losing needed income.

Many respondents raised the added problem of finding out about the riot shutdowns with little or no notice, with two hours being the greatest length of time notice given.

Among the most shocking stories were multiple accounts from healthcare workers describing the impact the riot shutdown had on them, their colleagues, and patients in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. One hospital worker said, "I heard 'I don't know how I'm going to get to/get home from work' repeatedly over the four days I worked in which CTA experienced closures. We were all working extra-long shifts (already burnt out from the pandemic) with persistent lack of knowing whether our relief would show up or not."

The conclusion is that Chicago's political leadership had made no plans to deal with a decision to shut down the transit system during public unrest, looting or riots; nor is any planning being done now to deal with a potential long term drop in CTA ridership due to pandemic fears.

Closing the entire public transit system meant significantly limiting mobility for people across the region who lack transportation alternatives but need to travel. The effects of this can be devastating, particularly for people who can't afford — or are unable to use — alternatives like ride hailing or a personal vehicle. Shutting down the entire system is destabilizing for the region and harmful to people without other options for getting around. Ultimately, people now need to plan ahead on their own to make alternate arrangements regarding any future public transportation shut downs or limits due to pandemic outbreaks.

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