

A smile is a curve
that sets everything straight.
— Phyllis Diller

River North residents lob tough questions at new police commander

River North residents took to Zoom with tough questions for a new police commander – and an alderman trying to make public safety a key issue but clearly frustrated with a mayor he says is not giving CPD enough money and a State's Attorney not keeping criminals behind bars.

STORY AND PHOTOS
BY STEVEN DAHLMAN
Loop North News



A man does a handstand in the middle of State Street at 3:12 a.m. Aug. 2 as Chicago police respond to a large crowd near State and Hubbard.

Hundreds of questions submitted in advance of a public safety webinar on Sept. 21 reflected a perception by residents that violent crime in River North has spiked.

The webinar, hosted by River North Residents Assoc. [RNRA], featured Ald. Brendan Reilly [42nd] and the new commander of Chicago Police Department's 18th District, Jon Hein.

RNRA Public Safety Chairman Joe Vietri called it an "unprecedented overall level of concern" about public safety by RNRA

members who, he says, believe that shootings, stabbings, armed robberies, and carjackings are up in their neighborhood, while police visibility is down.

"Residents who have lived here for 25 years say they never experienced anything like the incidents and frequency that has been occurring over the last few months," said Vietri. "Everyone loves the neighborhood but they're afraid to go outside, especially at night, and worry about negative impact

on the business community, property values, and overall quality of life."

In addition to violent crime, residents complain of gatherings of large groups, aggressive panhandling, drug dealing, drag racing, loud motorcycles, graffiti, and other nuisances in a downtown neighborhood full of entertainment and hospitality venues. Notable crime hotspots include

QUESTIONS see p. 12

Old Town carjacking linked to citywide hijacking team

Man caught driving the stolen car only charged with misdemeanors

BY CWB CHICAGO

Not long after two armed men forced a 46-year-old driver out of his \$75,000 Audi SUV as he waited to pick up his child from school near Clark St. and North Ave. Sept. 15, police found the stolen car and arrested the man who was driving it after he crashed into another motorist.

But the victim of the crash refused to pursue felony charges and the Audi's owner couldn't identify the man who crashed his car in a photo line-up. So, the accused man was released on a misdemeanor recognizance bond.

We've now learned the person police arrested with the victim's Audi A8 was on bond for driving another car taken in an armed carjacking earlier this year. And investigators have linked Sept. 15's carjacking near the Latin School of Chicago to a series of other violent hijackings across the city — including one that targeted another man who was waiting for his own child outside of a different school and one that took place inside the parking garage of an exclusive Lincoln Park co-op building.

Audi taken, arrest made

Within hours of the Sept. 15

carjacking near the Latin School, members of CPD's vehicular hijacking task force found the stolen Audi in south suburban Dolton and arrested the person who was driving it.

"Extensive vehicle tracking surveillance, combined with other technology-based tools, were used to quickly identify and locate this repeat offender," Ald. Brian Hopkins [2nd] said in an email to constituents the next day. "Once located, the offender attempted to flee but was apprehended."

Dolton resident Julius Livingston, 36, was charged with misdemeanor criminal trespass to a vehicle, misdemeanor leaving the scene of an accident, and was ticketed for running a red light.



Julius Livingston

Then, he was sent on his way because the crash victim refused to assist with felony charges.

Déjà vu

That incident wasn't the first time Livingston allegedly tried to speed away from cops who were trying to arrest him for driving a

hijacked car.

On April 2, two men took a man's Mercedes at gunpoint while he helped his daughter load bags into the car on the 800 block of N. Wood in West Town, prosecutors would say during a bond court hearing for Livingston the following day. The Mercedes sped away with some accomplices following in a tail car.

When police found the car in Dolton a few hours later, Livingston was allegedly behind the wheel. He got out, ran to another vehicle parked nearby, and drove away, prosecutors said.

Police chased him until he crashed into a tree. Officers found the keys to the carjacked Mercedes in his pocket, prosecutors said. But he did not match the physical description of the two men who confronted the victim, so he was charged with felony receiving-possessing a stolen motor vehicle.

During the April bond hearing, prosecutors said his felony convictions included a 2012 forgery. "The rest are guns and drugs," a prosecutor told Judge David Navarro.

Livingston's defense attorney said he was going to truck driving

CARJACKING see p. 12



The Sable Hotel at Navy Pier, offering views of the city skyline and Lake Michigan. Courtesy Chicago Architecture Center / Anna Munzesheimer

Open House Chicago starts Oct. 1

In-person visits Oct. 16-17

For Chicago residents, Open House Chicago is always one of the most popular weekends of the year.

This year that hot weekend is Oct. 16-17, with extended programming and city-wide trails available for the entire month of October.

Every October, the Chicago Architecture Center hosts Open House Chicago—a free public festival that offers self-guided history and architecture trails throughout Chicago, talks and programming, and behind-the-scenes access to architecturally, historically and culturally significant sites across the city.

While this year's program highlights more than 30 Chicago neighborhoods, many of the selected sites are located on Chicago's North Side.

Since 2011, this free public event gives locals and visitors alike behind-the-scenes access to the greatest spaces and places in

Chicago.

For a schedule of events and more details, visit openhousechicago.org or www.architecture.org.

New buildings taking part in Open House Chicago 2021 include the Sable Hotel at Navy Pier, the Pullman National Monument Visitor Information Center, and the Herman Miller Showroom, which recently relocated from the Merchandise Mart to Fulton Market. Themed tours designed for walking or biking unless otherwise noted, include past favorites such as "Beer Baron Row" in Wicker Park and "A Women's History of Lincoln Park." Additionally this year will also include: "Helmut Jahn," a downtown loop of Jahn buildings and the architecture center's Jahn exhibit; The "Great Chicago Fire" that recognizes the 150th anniversary of the fire (a driving or biking trail); and the "Uptown Entertainment District" touring the historic entertainment sites clustered near Broadway and Lawrence Ave. in Uptown.

Even more pot shops for downtown

Despite the fact that it is still against federal law to do so, City Hall last week gave the OK to opening up even more retail pot sales locations downtown, in River North and on the Near North Side.

Formerly city rules exclude most of the downtown area from offering retail recreational marijuana.

Now, by a vote of 33-13, Mayor Lori Lightfoot's plan to make it easier to buy and sell those drugs was approved Sept. 13 by the City Council.

The new ordinance will allow marijuana businesses to spread much more widely into areas where they were previously prohibited, leaving only a small portion of the downtown area still excluded from selling recreational weed, including parts of Michigan Ave., the South Loop, and a stretch of Streeterville approaching Navy Pier from Michigan Ave.

Ald. Brendan Reilly [42nd], in whose ward most of the pot shops would be located, urged a yes vote to benefit minority entrepreneurs and the city.

"Just remember, every dollar we find in revenue from cannabis is one less dollar we have to go and ask people to pay on their property taxes. So we have a real interest as a city in this industry doing well," Reilly told WBBM Radio.

City Hall also eased some zoning restrictions in outlying neighborhoods so license holders don't get drawn into long drawn out negotiations with aldermen and nearby community groups while trying to open pot shops.

With the state of Illinois about to issue dozens of new pot licenses in the Chicago area, the mayor says she wants to make it easier for dispensaries to open in even more neighborhood business districts to sell retail pot.

'Windy City' has nothing to do with breezes on the lakefront



By Thomas J. O'Gorman

The City of Chicago and its citizens have some larger than life moments to celebrate over the next few weeks, despite the cataclysm of current politics and lack of responsible leadership. Not least of all, the 150th anniversary of the Great Chicago Fire, Oct. 8-10, a moment that reset all Chicago's clocks in 1871.

But to turn to a different fire, our fair city's aldermen just voted themselves the largest raise in Chicago history. Five aldermen, though, did feel the public shame was too much to vote aye. So five out of 50 is what appears to have passed for a political conscience here in the "Windy City."

That, by the way, is a perfect example of why our overused nickname ever came to be. It's meant to identify that the City of Chicago, especially the City Council, is filled to the brim with "windbags." It has nothing to do with breezes on the lakefront.

You know, the human hot air machines that talk, and talk, and talk, and eventually do nothing. Or worse.

So congratulations to the present day City Council that has transcended history and time doing what they do best. That is, be dynamically predictable politicians of timeless hot air. Professional political gasbags of dead-ended self-aggrandizement.

Funny how even with the absence today of old-fashioned style

politicos like Hinky-Dink Kenna, Bathhouse John Coughlin, Tom Keane, Dorothy Tillman, Eddie Vrdolyak, William Beavers, Hugh Connelly, John S. Boyle, Bill Lipinski, Vito Marzullo, Harry L. Sain, Joseph Rostenkowski, Richard Mell, Fast Eddie Cullerton, Dorsey Crowe, Paddy Bauler and Bernie Stone, to name but a few, they still manage, even now in 2021, to take care of themselves first. Reserved seats in the lifeboat.

That, by the way, is where we got another of our infamous Chicago mottos, "Ubi est mea," - Where's Mine?

Such familiar, self-serving gluttony displays Chicago's famed political philosophy in a nutshell. It's not complicated or complex. Of course, Chicago's elite brahmin founding families and early commercial millionaires struggled hard to ensure that their offspring would serve in the City Council in the city's early days. They felt that their trust fund type aristocratic heirs were beyond the lure of easy money or low life deal making.

That was the realm of the low born. The working classes, the immigrant offspring. The Irish, German and Polish inhabitants of Chicago. That's why the City Councils before and after the fire had so many McCormicks, Palmers, Hubbards, Wallers, Harrisons, Hoynes, Kinzies, Medills, Newberrys, Ogdens, Wentworths, Smyths and Swifts represented. Young men of proper breeding and education at the service of the metropolis. No pickpockets among them.

But as Chicago expanded and became the thundering commercial capitol of industry and finance, the swelling population could hardly restrict elected office to the commercial nobility.



The Great Chicago Fire. Image courtesy of Chicago Historical Society

The daily news and necessities of the city's expanding neighborhoods needed pragmatic leadership. Guys not afraid to roll up their sleeves.

The early city, begun in 1837 and ravaged by flames in 1871, had outgrown its geography. The tragedy of the fire gave way to the brilliant promise of post-fire recovery. The great commercial barons of Chicago lost no time in the early days following the blaze to travel to New York to secure loans and lock down financial support for rebuilding Chicago.

Potter Palmer, the hotel magnate, and his commercial allies ensured that Chicago would rise from the ashes in a fresh, revitalized modern splendor. The roughly 250,000 people who populated Chicago in 1871 would see the population double every 10 years. Half a million in 1880. More than one million people when the World's Columbian Exhibition opened in 1892. By 1900 there were two million in Chicago.

Chicago achieved a unique leadership among American cities. Of the most creative and modern architectural designs by men like Daniel Burnham, Louis Sullivan, Frank Lloyd Wright and Edward Burling. The most sophisticated financial markets and exchanges. The nation's most dynamic stock yards and meat processing plants. And a vast network of rail lines

that shipped meat, machinery and passengers from one end of the nation to the other.

Chicago rose like a phoenix from the cinders of the 1871 Great Fire in harmony and style. A city for bright young minds and modern engagement of resources. Success stalked Chicago's streets. Tens of thousands of immigrants came from Europe creating a culture like nothing ever before. No problem was too complex for Chicago to solve.

Its first resources were its people. Investing new ways of living and reshaping life in urban America.

Chicago sat at the center of the nation geographically. And philosophically. Life in Chicago was about balance and freedom. Economic success and assimilation. Within one generation, for example, the children of the Irish canal diggers were educated in local schools by an army of religious educators and went on to study medicine and dentistry and law at Loyola Univ. Immigrants who arrived not speaking English found their children embracing the new language which permitted undreamed of success in employment and the city's commerce.

The Second City, the one that replaced the first town of the pioneers, was the nation's most modern and refined metropolis. Offering opportunity and advantage to people willing to work and imagine. It's good to recall the drama and stability that came to the Second City. That energy is still with us. It is still here despite the shambles of the present. In spite of the loss of past expectations for safety and harmony.

As we look to the historic anniversary of the Great Fire, we can renew our urban confidence here in the city on the lake. The dynamic personality of our windswept shimmering lakefront still lifts our hearts by its majesty. No American city has such an inland seascape beside such ageless architectural designs. On streets brimming with character, humor and sophistication that is the envy of the nation.

Don't give up. Great days lay ahead. Hope flows from whom we descend and who has walked these lanes before us. From Mrs. O'Leary to Mother Cabrini. From Mayor Richard J. Daley to the heroes of the Lyric Opera. From Bertha Palmer to Dorsey Connors, Sir Georg Solti to Minnie Mino-so, Colonel McCormick, Harry

Caray and Ron Santo to Michael Jordan and Gwendolyn Brooks. It will get better. No matter who votes themselves a raise.

LIGHTFOOT VANDALS: Residents of Wicker Park are on edge after a spate of indiscriminate paintball shootings by gangs that aimed their paint pellets at outdoor diners and dog walkers, imitating gangland shootings. Cars halted on the busy 1900 block of W. Division St., wildly firing from their cars. Gang destruction and vandalism is excessive in the reborn neighborhood now that deterrents have been removed by the mayor. At least it's not bullets like we're seeing in Old Town, River North and the Loop.



Pat Hughes

HALL OF FAME: The mel-low voice of Cubs baseball on radio, **Pat Hughes**, will be inducted into the Chicagoland Sports Hall of Fame on Oct. 28. He is the voice of Chicago.

CAN O' CORN: Congratulations to the Chicago White Sox, who clinched their first AL Central title in 13 years on Sept. 23 in Cleveland. **Tim Anderson** homered twice in that game.

WRIGLEY CENTENNI-WINDY CITY see p. 8

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Daughter seeks info in father's 2018 drowning death



**Heart
of the 'Hood**
by Felicia Dechter

The Chicago Park District [CPD] —as well as officials from the Chicago Police and Chicago Fire departments and the city's Office of Emergency Management and Communications -- held a press conference Sept. 21 discussing, among other things, future plans for "hundreds of life rings," that will be dispersed citywide as part of CPD's pilot life ring program.

"We said 'pilot,' but let's just say we're doing a flight program, meaning it's already taken off," said Alonzo Williams, CPD's chief program officer. Williams said hundreds of life rings were on order yet delayed by the vendor. But, "As soon as we get them in, we plan on installing them," he said.

Earlier this month, two life rings were installed in Rogers Park, one at Pratt Pier, and the other on the adjacent Tobey Prinz Beach. Sadly, it took the Aug. 22 death of 19-year-old Miguel Cisneros for action to finally be taken by CPD.

The life ring pilot program now includes both sanctioned and unsanctioned swim locations, the latter of which CPD did not include in its original plans.

One person who will "believe it when I see it," is Jessica Leon, a registered nurse who has been working on water safety plans since her 55-year-old father, Horacio Leon Jr. drowned in Lake Michigan in 2018.

"In 2019-2020 I had so many meetings with the park district, they told us they were ready to place the stations

and they stated they had placed a bid," said Leon. "I requested proof of the bid via FOIA and it turns out they lied."

"When I confronted the park district via email, all my emails were left unanswered and I confronted them in a public meeting," said Leon. "Again, I'll believe it when I see it but if it holds water, it's bittersweet. I'm glad that finally action was taken but very sad it took people to lose their lives and us to fight like hell to get it done. Parks is trying to give themselves a pat on the back when it was water safety advocates all along that fought against plenty of resistance for this to be done for the people."

The story of Leon's fight is still ongoing. She's seeking witnesses who might have seen what happened to her dad when he was pulled from Lake Michigan at 5:47 p.m. July 10, 2018, at 300 S. Lake Shore Dr. Mr. Leon was resuscitated and taken to Northwestern Memorial Hospital in critical condition and severely brain dead. He was put on a ventilator, and passed away 10 days later on July 23.

As a nurse who usually knows exactly what people die from, his daughter would like to know the circumstances of her dad's death, as well as thank the kind strangers who administered CPR. There were people on the walkway that day, and/or on a nearby boat. If anyone has any information, please email me at writel2@comcast.net. Leon knows it has been a few years, but when you see someone drown, it's obvi-

ously a sight never forgotten.

"Thanks to them I was able to spend three days with him in the hospital and although he was diagnosed with severe brain death I know he knew I was there," said Leon. "That time I was with him is priceless and I will cherish that for the rest of my life. For that I am so grateful."

For three years, Leon sought information and sent in Freedom Of Information Act requests to the city for camera footage from the site and was stonewalled. She was originally told that if the footage did exist, it couldn't be shared because it might give terrorists information. (She was also given a police report with information blacked out.) Leon was denied the nearby camera footage until earlier this year, when an attorney finally helped her.

"Then it magically appeared," said Leon. Unfortunately, the camera does not span to where Mr. Leon entered the water. "I don't know how my dad ended up in the water," Leon said. "I'm looking for witnesses that were there that could tell me exactly what happened."

Since her dad's death, Leon has been non-stop advocating for water safety in both Chicago and Miami. Legislation passed for the latter city, and due to that, Water Rescue Stations are being placed within Miami/Dade County.

"Everything I have set out to do for water safety in Chicago and Miami has been done in my dad's name and it's my way of being close to him," said Leon, who lives in Miami. "I am trying my hardest to keep his memory alive through water safety while working to avoid another family from losing a loved one to a preventable death like drowning."

As I wrote a couple of weeks ago, since her father's drowning, Leon has communicated with the CPD and the city's aldermen to place Water Rescue Stations along our entire shoreline. She attended park district private and public meetings, reached out to "all lawmakers in Chicago," including the Mayor's office (Emmanuel and Lightfoot), Gov. JB Pritzker and House and Senate members. She also drafted a proposal to bring a lifesaving automated chest compression device to Chicago, so that CPR can continue uninterrupted even while a patient is being transported.

"My father did not receive CPR for several minutes while being transported up the inclined terrain," said Leon. "Chicago does not have not one of these devices and this must change."

Leon also did something that I feel is so crucial for our kids. She reached out to the Illinois State Board of Education, providing them with her proposal for water safety education plus a physical component for middle and high school students. "Water safety is not being taught in Chicago's public schools and this is unacceptable, this must change," said Leon. "I have yet to hear back."

"My father loved Chicago and everything I do for Chicago, I do it for him and in his name," she said. "Through his death, he is



Jessica Leon as a child with her dad, Horacio.

The story of Leon's fight is still ongoing. She's seeking witnesses who might have seen what happened to her dad when he was pulled from Lake Michigan at 5:47 p.m. July 10, 2018, at 300 S. Lake Shore Dr.

making a positive change for Chicago."

The circumstances around Mr. Leon's death, which was ruled a suicide, are unclear. Unfortunately, Mr. Leon had fallen on some hard times prior to his drowning, and Jessica, 28, had not seen her dad since she was 11-years-old.

Here's what she knows: A detective stated Mr. Leon jumped in the lake after removing his clothes, and all his clothes were wet but his cell phone was dry. "A suicidal person would not set their phone aside before taking their own life," said Leon, who disputes the suicide theory.

Additionally, that morning, Mr. Leon withdrew \$100 from the bank and bought a bicycle at Target. He had a pending application for a YMCA apartment and also a pending SNAP application. Mr. Leon became homeless in March after his car broke down and he could not continue to pay for his apartment. At the time of his death, he lived in the Pacific Garden Mission Shelter. "When I picked up his belongings he had saved fruit in his backpack and he had rented a library book," said Leon. "Again, suicidal people don't behave that way."

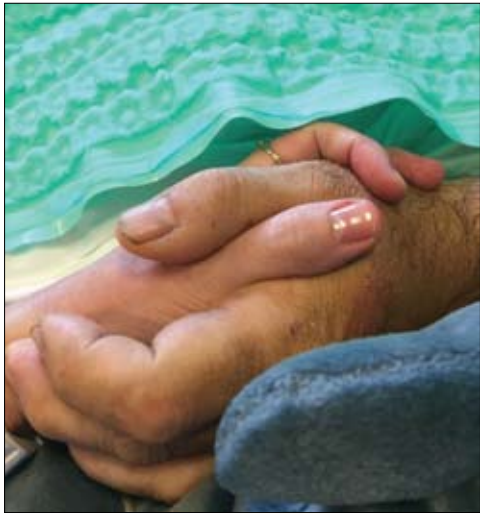
She suspects that her dad's new bicycle fell in the water and he went to retrieve it.

"His bicycle was never recovered," said Leon. "The detective told me to go to the station and write a report and told me 'good luck.' I don't know who pulled


him out and I'm hoping that reliable witnesses that actually saw what happened can tell me what happened.

"It's been difficult but I know my dad did not take his life," said Leon. "I want to clear him of that and I want to have closure."

"I've tried to turn my energy to something positive, it's my coping mechanism," she added. "All around it's been very difficult to find answers and to get anything done for Chicago. I can't understand the resistance but I am persistent," Leon concluded. "He is my Dad and I will do whatever it takes."



Jessica Leon holding her dad's hand while he was in the hospital.



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Conifers 101, dwarfs, and rare witches brooms - oh my!

The Northtown Garden Society will be hosting an in-person meeting at Warren Park, 6601 N. Western, 7 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 7.

The guest speaker will be Bob Iames, Jr., who will be making a virtual presentation from Englewood, OH., titled "Conifers 101 plus Dwarf, Rare and Witches Brooms."

His PowerPoint will guide guests through the knowing and growing of great conifers. Guests will also see conifers of all shapes, sizes and colors to add interest to any garden. He will also discuss witches brooms, what are they and why are they important.

Iames is a groundskeeper at the 173-acre Lange Estate in Ludlow Falls, OH. He is a member of the American Conifer Society, Ohio Valley North American Rock Garden Society, and is current president of the Miami Valley Hosta Society.

His passion is dwarf and unusual conifers and currently he has more than 400.

The Lange Estate gardens also showcase more than 400 hostas, 250 daylilies, rock garden plants, and many other rare and unusual perennials. He has provided continuing education for Ohio's Miami, Montgomery, and Greene Counties and Hendricks County, Indiana.

For more information writ to www.northtowngardensociety.org.

Reassessment sends North Side property values to the moon



The Home Front

by Don DeBat

Home, condominium and small apartment building owners in the North Side neighborhoods of Streeterville, Gold Coast, Near North Side, River North, Old Town and Lincoln Park should brace themselves for hefty property tax increases next year.

Last week, the Cook County Assessor's Office released assessments of residential and commercial properties in North Chicago Township.

Assessor Fritz Kaegi noted that the Near North Side—bounded by Fullerton Ave. on the north, Lake Shore Dr. on the east, and the Chicago River on the south and west—posted "surprisingly robust" real estate values.

In 2020, median sale prices of single-family homes in North Chicago Township were about \$1.1 million, while median condominium prices hit \$320,000, the assessor reported. In 2021, most Near North Side single-family homes range in market value from \$920,000 to \$1.59 million. Condo values ranged from \$270,000 to \$420,000.

"Despite the pandemic, downtown rents have increased since 2018, driving some commercial property values higher," Kaegi said.

In 2021, the entire City of Chicago is being reassessed. The assessment level is 10% of market value for residential property. The 2021 assessment increases will be reflected on the second installment of the property tax bill issued in summer of 2022.

Many North Side apartment building owners are planning hefty rent increases next year to pay the expected sharply higher 2021 tax bills.



The North Side has posted "surprisingly robust" real estate values.

Photo by Don Garbarino

Assessor Fritz Kaegi said the reassessment process is reducing the property tax burden on residential taxpayers and placing more of it on owners of high-rise apartments, office buildings and other commercial properties.

A spot survey by the Home Front column revealed that statement is far from true.

Kaegi said the reassessment process is reducing the property tax burden on residential taxpayers and placing more of it on owners of high-rise apartments, office buildings and other commercial properties.

A spot survey by the Home Front column revealed that statement is far from true. The following examples show hefty residential assessment increases to match the skyrocketing commercial assessment hikes:

• **Old Town:** The 2021 estimated fair market value on a historic red brick 6-flat near Crilly Court rose a whopping 55.5% to \$1,560,000 from \$1,002,980 in 2020. The assessed value jumped to \$156,000 from \$100,298. The 2020 tax bill was \$25,331.

• **Lincoln Park:** The 2021 estimated fair market value on a vintage red brick 4-flat rose 38% to \$1,570,000 from \$1,137,100 in 2020, according to the assessor. The assessed value jumped to \$157,001 from \$113,710. The owner paid a 2020 tax bill of \$21,652.

• **Logan Square:** A graystone 3-flat owner was surprised when the assessor reported his property's fair market value rose 39.3% to \$800,000 from \$574,210. The building is near the CTA Blue Line. The assessed value jumped to \$80,000 from \$57,421. The 2020 tax bill was \$12,144.

• **Avondale:** The fair market value of a Victorian greystone 3-flat in this neighborhood just north of Logan Square skyrocketed 66.4% to \$630,000 from \$378,460. The assessed value rose to \$63,000 from \$37,846. The owner paid a 2020 tax bill of \$7,767.

The owner of a yellow-brick 3-flat on the northern border of Avondale saw his fair market value jump 43.1% to \$450,000 from \$314,440. The assessed value rose to \$45,000 from \$31,444. The 2020 tax bill was \$6,340.

Hot North Side areas such as Old Town, Lincoln Park, Logan Square and Avondale aren't the only neighborhoods being whacked with sharply higher 2021 reassessments. Here are other examples:

• **The Villa:** The fair market value of a stucco bungalow in this landmark neighborhood—bounded by Addison, Avondale and Pulaski—rose 32.2% to \$600,000 from \$453,580. The assessed value rose to \$60,000 from \$45,358. The owner paid a 2020 tax bill of \$10,145.

• **Old Irving Park:** The assessor reported that the fair market value of a vintage red-brick six-flat in the neighborhood rose 46.3% to \$800,000 from \$546,560 in 2020. The assessed value rose to \$80,000 from \$54,656. The 2020 tax bill was \$12,224.

• **North Lincoln Square:** The fair market value of a yellow brick 4-flat skyrocketed 63.2% to \$560,000 from \$343,080 in 2020. The assessed value rose to \$56,000 from \$34,308. The owner paid a 2020 tax bill of \$7,642.

• **North Park/Hollywood Park:** The fair market value of a frame, four bedroom, 3.5-bath single-family home near Legion Park rose 26.5% to \$670,000 from \$529,370. The assessed value rose to \$67,000 from \$52,937. The 2020 tax bill was \$11,833.

• **West Rogers Park:** The fair-market value of a 2-bedroom, 1-bath garden-level condominium in a walk-up building skyrocketed 61.4% to \$130,000 from \$80,520. The assessed value rose to \$13,000 from \$8,052. The owner paid a 2020 tax bill of \$1,102.

The assessor's lofty market-value increases translate into sharply higher assessed values. And, that could spark some shocking real estate tax hikes when the second installment bills arrive in late 2022, analysts say.

"The property-tax bill is deter-

mined by four factors: the assessment, the equalization factor, or 'multiplier,' the tax rate and the exemptions," said Michael Griffin, a Chicago real estate tax appeal attorney.

However, predicting a hefty property tax increase when the second installment of the 2021 bill arrives in late 2022 really centers on two wild cards—the tax rate and the state equalization factor, which can't be challenged by taxpayers.

The equalization factor, or "multiplier," is established each year for Cook County to bring property tax assessments in line with other parts of Illinois. The factor is determined by the Illinois Dept. of Revenue.

The main engine that drives up property-tax bills is the amount of money spent by local government.

For example, homeowners who read their 2020 tax bills will see the continued increased spending for schools and police, firefighter and teacher pensions. Last week, Mayor Lori Lightfoot proposed property tax increases in the new budget.

Property owners who think they are over-assessed should appeal now, Griffin advises. If the assessment increases are not appealed, the hikes will take effect on the 2021 tax bill. A homeowner can not fight the tax bill. It is too late to appeal when the bill arrives.

Visit the assessor's website: www.cookcountyassessor.com, or call 312-443-7550 to find comparable properties or start the appeal process. The assessor's deadline for filing an appeal in North Chicago Township is Oct. 19.

A taxpayer can file with the Cook County Board of Review (312-603-5542) or www.cook-countyboardofreview.com and later with the Illinois Property Tax Appeals Board (217-785-6076), or www.ptab.illinois.gov. Or, call Michael Griffin, an expert tax-assessment lawyer, at 312-943-1789.

Racing Real Estate:

Former race car driver Bobby Rahal sold his 7,000-square-foot mansion in Lincoln Park for just under \$4 million.

The 68-year-old winner of the 1986 Indianapolis 500 now co-owns the Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing team with Mike Lanigan and former late-night talk show host David Letterman, the Chicago Tribune reported.

With a final sales price of \$3.9 million, Rahal took a small loss on the mansion, which he paid \$3.99 million for in 2014. He first listed the home for sale in 2018 with an asking price of \$5 million. After cutting the price multiple times, and even taking it off the market completely before relisting, Rahal finally sold the home.

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

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IT'S NEWS DRIVE

Illinois unemployment officials still can't say how much fraud has been paid

BY GREG BISHOP

Over the last 20 months or so, many North Siders who lost their jobs due to the government-imposed economic lockdown have screamed into their phones, or even stared with blank rage at the locked doors of the Illinois Dept. of Employment Security at 2444 W. Lawrence Ave., when no government officials answered or responded, wondering how it could be so easy for criminal hackers to get paid but not them, legitimate claimants.

Nearly two years into the pandemic, it is still not known how much fraud has been paid out of Illinois' unemployment system from throughout the pandemic.

After Gov. J.B. Pritzker issued a stay-at-home order in March 2020, unemployment filings skyrocketed as people were laid off from the decrease in economic activity. That unemployment hangover lasted for

months with backlogs of unemployment claims stacking up over time.

The result: Illinois' unemployment trust fund debt is around \$5 billion. Taxpayers are already paying interest on that debt with around \$10 million due for this year and up to \$60 million due after the next year, if the debt isn't paid off.

In the spring, the Illinois Dept. of Employment Security said they've stopped 1.7 million fraudulent claims. But, at an Illinois House hearing Sept. 23, IDES Director Kristin Richards still couldn't quantify how much has been paid out.

"Some states have put out their rough estimates," Richards said. "We've not yet been in a position to do so. But those rough estimates have largely been focused on the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance [PUA] program."

PUA was the temporary unemployment program the federal government set up

for independent contractors and the self-employed. When pressed for an estimate of how much fraud there's been, Richards still couldn't say.

One thing that is clear, Jon Coss with Thomson Reuters said, is a trend seen across the country.

"What we've literally seen is claims come in from as many as 150 countries to another state unemployment system," Coss said. "The hackers knew what they were doing."

"This includes the use of technologies like bots, IP spoofing software and email wildcards," Coss said. "Criminals are also taking advantage of a large number of data breaches to use stolen IDs and create synthetic, sometimes referred to as Frankenstein, IDs to steal funds."

While Illinois Dept. of Innovation and Technology's Adam Ford said efforts are ongoing to secure state systems from bad

actors with updated technology, there still needs to be a point of contact for beneficiaries.

"Where they can call in and say 'hey, this did not work for me, how else can I verify I

"What we've literally seen is claims come in from as many as 150 countries to another state unemployment system," Jon Coss said. "The hackers knew what they were doing."

am who I am so that I can continue to take advantage of these services," Ford said.

Offices for IDES just recently reopened by appointment only after being closed to the public for more than 18 months. If you're brave enough, you can drive by the Lawrence Ave. facility and see if they'll let you come in.

Spikes in job scams come as more people return to workforce

BY SCOT BERTRAM

The Better Business Bureau [BBB] is warning of a spike in job scams in Chicago as people return to the workforce.

And with some pandemic-related benefit programs scheduled to end soon, officials are worried the problem could get even worse.

"In Illinois, the BBB is seeing that this is the riskiest scam right now. The complaints are coming in increasingly," said Steve Bernas, president and CEO of the BBB in Chicago and Northern Illinois. "It is a lot more sophisticated than it has been over the years and the numbers are quite alarming."

A recent report indicated people ages 25-to-34 are the most common targets of the operation, with a median financial loss reported by victims of \$1,000.

"They're actually doing interviews," Bernas said. "The scammers are taking the time, not just making the call and asking you for your information, they're actually going through an interview process on Zoom or another source. People are thinking, 'This has to be real.'"

The BBB says many consumers who have been scammed have posted some type of personal information on well-known job

sites, which gives fraudsters a head-start. He advises people to do homework on any potential employer.

"The only way to put scams out of businesses is not to give them your business," Steve Bernas said. "There's not enough law enforcement in the world that could protect you or educate you on these types of scams. It's up to you to become educated."

"The only way to put scams out of businesses is not to give them your business," Bernas said. "There's not enough law enforcement in the world that could protect you or educate you on these types of scams. It's up to you to become educated."

A recent report from the BBB also suggests one gender might be more at-risk.

"About 67% of the complaints are filed by females," Bernas said. "We don't know

what the reason is. It could be them just filing the complaint [on behalf of someone else]. But this is an unusually high percentage of women."

Tips to avoid a scam include looking to find the job posting on a company's website and searching for the potential employer's name along with the word "scam" to see if any similar problems have been reported.

"We find many times that these scammers are using these imposter scams, where they make it look like they're calling from national companies that are well known,

like Amazon," Bernas said. "And it's not, there's just saying they're from Amazon. Even on Amazon's website, you can see the warnings."

Bernas says to look out for offers that appear to be too good to be true or for any employer who asks you to pay up-front before landing the job.

Even if you did not become a victim, consumers who may have been a target of these scams are asked to report attempts to the Better Business Bureau at bbb.org.



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Police Beat...

Charges filed in “attack” on Uptown alderman

An Uptown man is charged with misdemeanor aggravated assault stemming from an alleged confrontation with local Ald. James Cappleman [46th] over the weekend. Tony Landers, 58, is scheduled to appear in court on Oct. 20.



Ald. James Cappleman

“I am completely fine and my injuries were very minor,” Cappleman said in a statement Sept. 19. The case is an interesting study because Cappleman, who has had at least two other people arrested following confrontations since being elected in 2011, worked more than 20 years as a social worker. Police initially said someone struck the alderman with a “blunt object” that Cappleman later identified as a small table. But Landers is charged only with assault, meaning he’s accused of threatening Cappleman but not making physical contact.

The alderman told the Chicago Tribune that he went to the 4700 block of N. Racine on Sept. 18 to address complaints of at least a dozen people drinking and causing a disturbance on the corner. Only one man was on the scene when he arrived, and a small table was on the sidewalk.

Cappleman told the paper he told the man the table didn’t belong there and he took it with him. As the alderman turned a corner, he encountered about eight more men, including Landers, who laid claim to the table, according to the alderman’s account. “Cappleman said his husband called 911 as he continued to hold onto the table. That’s when one of the men put his arm around Cappleman’s neck. At some point, the table broke in half and Cappleman said his husband believes he was struck with a part of the table,” the paper reported.

“He thought they were hitting me with it, that they hit me repeatedly. I had so much adrenaline going, I honestly can’t tell you,” Cappleman said. “He could’ve had a knife. ... That’s not the way I want to die.” CPD dispatch records indicate that whoever called 911 about the incident said the alderman had been attacked and identified Tony Landers by name.

Interestingly, after having Landers arrested, Cappleman told the paper that “we can’t arrest ourselves out of this” problem. Cappleman, who frequently mentions his social work career during public meetings and on social media, has pressed charges against at least two other people following encounters on the streets of Uptown. In 2012, Cappleman claimed that a woman with nearly 400 arrests on her record “reached into her blouse and was chasing me” after he con-

fronted her about drinking on the sidewalk near Montrose and Broadway.

Cappleman said he thought the woman had a knife — a prospect he raised after Saturday’s incident, too — but cops did not find any knife in the woman’s possession when they arrested her for allegedly pushing the alderman into some bushes.

Shermaine Miles served nearly a year in prison for that incident. A few months before that incident, Cappleman accused a 5’-2” 110-lbs woman of shoving him into the street when he tried to sweep up breadcrumbs that she had tossed on the ground for pigeons to enjoy. The woman also threw breadcrumbs at him during the attack, Cappleman alleged.

In that case, a CPD tactical unit swarmed the area and arrested the woman after Cappleman signed a misdemeanor battery complaint against her.

Man recovering after being stabbed in River North

Police are investigating after a 32-year-old man was found with multiple stab wounds in the Loop Sept. 21.

The victim told police he was at a restaurant on the 600 block of N. Clark when a man approached him, began yelling, and stabbed him several times with a knife around 5 a.m. He said he ran all the way to 35 E. Wacker Drive after being stabbed to call for help.

Police met with the man, who had stab wounds to his back, arm, and hip, at a convenience store on the corner of Wacker and Wabash. An ambulance took him to Northwestern Memorial Hospital in fair condition.

Investigators searched the parking lot of the former “Rock & Roll McDonalds” and the Hard Rock Cafe, both of which are on the 600 block of N. Clark, but they found no evidence of a stabbing, according to a CPD report.

Police said the victim described the attacker as a heavyset Black male wearing a blue, black, and white jacket. He was last seen running north.

Driver carjacked near Clark and Diversey; second hijacking near intersection since Friday

Armed men carjacked a driver near the intersection of Clark and Diversey in Lincoln Park Sept. 21, police said. It’s the second hijacking in the immediate area since Friday. And on Tuesday afternoon, a woman was carjacked in West Town.

September carjackings are pacing about 30% higher than the same month last year and about 100% higher than Sept. 2019, according to the city’s data.

Most recently, two armed men confronted a 34-year-old man who was unloading his SUV on the 2700 block of N. Clark around 7:15 p.m. Tuesday, according to police. The hijackers took control of his charcoal gray Range Rover and headed south on Clark accompanied by a blue sedan that may have been occupied by accomplices.

Officers with CPD’s hijacking task force found the Range Rover abandoned on the 9900 block of S. Aberdeen in Washington Heights about an hour after it was taken. No arrests were made.

Police did not release descriptions of the suspects.

Another carjacking was reported in the same area around 7:15 p.m. Friday. In that case, a man told police he was about to go into a restaurant on the 2900 block of N. Broadway to pick up an order when a hijacker pulled him from his car.

The carjacker turned east on Surf St., picked up another man, and then continued toward Lake Shore Dr., the victim reported. No suspect descriptions were available.

Tuesday’s carjacking in West Town took place around 2:45 p.m. on the

1300 block of W. Huron. A woman told police that one hijacker displayed a gun and ordered her out of her SUV while another man jumped into the vehicle.

The offenders were last seen heading north on Ada St. with the woman’s gray Lexus RX350. She said they were both Black males between 16- and 20-years-old who stand about 6-feet tall and weigh about 180 lbs. One of them wore a gray hoodie with black pants. The other wore a black hoodie.

Chicago police logged 1,099 carjackings citywide this year through Sept. 7. Hijackings are up 36% this year compared to 2020’s record-setting total and up 200% compared to 2019.

Driver carjacked at gunpoint near Grant Park

Three men carjacked a driver at gunpoint near Grant Park Sept. 20, police said. No arrests have been made.

A 47-year-old man was parked in an alley behind the 300 block of N. Michigan when the hijackers walked up to his white GMC Terrain around 8:54 p.m., said Kellie Bartoli, a CPD spokesperson.

One of the hijackers pointed a gun at the man and ordered him to get out of the vehicle. He complied, and the carjackers drove away with the SUV. A city license plate reader detected the hijacked vehicle traveling south on the Dan Ryan Expy. at 33rd street about 10 minutes later.

Bartoli said the suspects are described as Black males between 16- and 18-years-old who wore hooded sweatshirts.

Police have logged 16 carjackings in the Loop so far this year. That’s up from 11 cases at this point last year, four at this time in 2019, and five during the same period in 2018.

Citywide, there were 1,124 carjackings reported through September 11. That’s up 37% from the 821 cases reported during the same period last year and up 200% from the 324 carjackings reported as of Sept. 11, 2019.

For this month, police recorded 53 carjackings citywide as of Sept. 11, up from 37 during the same period last year and 25 during the timeframe in 2019.

Uptown man charged with Aggravated Battery of police officer

Timothy Thomas, 31, of the 800 block of W. Sunnyside, was charged with one felony count — Aggravated Battery/Peace Officer, one felony count — Armed Habitual Criminal, and one misdemeanor count — Driving On Revoked License and various other traffic violations when he was arrested 11:43 a.m. Sept. 21 in Rogers Park. He was arrested in the 7600 block of N. Ashland, when less than 20 minutes earlier, officers attempted to conduct a traffic stop on the offender in the 1500 block of W. Jonquil Terrace.

Thomas then fired shots in the direction of officers before attempting to run from the scene. Responding officers located the offender, and he was placed into custody and charged accordingly.

Cops looking for man who grabbed woman in Loop

Chicago police on Sept. 25 released a photo of a man who allegedly touched a woman inappropriately in the Loop earlier this month.

Police said the man grabbed a woman’s buttocks twice while the victim walked on the first block of East Congress Parkway around 6:20 p.m. Sept. 13.



Left to right: Jamaal Ashsaheed, Javion Bush; and Raynell Lanford have all pleaded guilty to federal charges in connection with the carjacking.

Federal jury convicts man of carjacking off-duty cop in Edgewater

A federal jury has convicted a man of carjacking an off-duty Chicago police officer in the Edgewater neighborhood three years ago.

Jamar Jarvis, 21, was found guilty of carjacking and brandishing a firearm in connection with a carjacking on Friday, according to court records. He faces a minimum sentence of seven



Jamar Jarvis

years for the gun charge and up to 15 years for carjacking, according to a statement from the U.S. Attorney’s Office in Chicago. Sentencing is scheduled for Dec. 13.

On Oct. 18, 2018, a 47-year-old CPD officer was parking her Lexus SUV on the 5800 block of N. Winthrop when a group of men approached her. One of the offenders was pointing a handgun at her, police said at the time.

Jarvis and two others — Raynell Lanford, 21, and Jamaal Ashsaheed, 22, both of Chicago — then forcibly took a Lexus sport-utility vehicle from a victim at gunpoint. Javion Bush, 21, of Chicago, provided assistance to the others after the carjacking. After tak-

ing the Lexus, Jarvis, Lanford, Ashsaheed, and Bush drove it to a gas station in the South Loop neighborhood of Chicago, where they purchased gas and a gas can. CPD officers later arrested them.

Lanford and Ashsaheed have pleaded guilty to carjacking and weapons offenses, and Bush pleaded guilty to being an accessory after the fact.

The crew demanded the officer’s car, took her keys, and then all five robbers climbed into her vehicle and drove away, according to a statement from the police department.

Officers working in the Town Hall (19th) Police District became aware of the carjacking and intercepted the vehicle several minutes later in the 4700 block of N. Lake Shore Dr. The Town Hall officers followed the stolen Lexus south until members of the FBI’s Carjacking Task Force and the Chicago Police Dept. helicopter unit joined them.

Officers pulled the vehicle over in the 5500 block of S. Lake Shore Dr. and then chased the occupants on foot. Cops found a gun inside the stolen car.

But DePaul University’s Office of Public Safety included more details



in a safety alert that it issued shortly after the incident. The school said, “a male, described as possibly homeless, approached a female from behind, reached under her clothing and grabbed her. The male then laughed and walked in the opposite direction, northbound on Holden Court.”

DePaul’s alert said the incident happened behind the University Center on its Loop campus.

CPD described the man as White with brown hair and brown eyes. He was wearing a blue shirt at the time of the assault.

Area One detectives are handling the investigation. They can be contacted at 312-744-8261 about case #JE-372443.

Loop regular will be out by Christmas

A man with a long history of sparking trouble and violence in the Loop and near the CTA’s Chicago Red Line station has received a four-year sentence for a violent robbery at the Jackson Red Line Station. But, with a 50% “good behavior” discount and credit for the 593 days he spent in jail, Roderick Sims will be out of prison by Christmas.

Sims racked up eight separate arrests in 2019 along the CTA’s Red Line downtown, and he was supposed to be on electronic monitoring for a pending case when he and four other offenders brutally beat a 37-year-old man on the Jackson Red Line platform

in Dec. 2019, according to prosecutors.

The victim told police that he struck his face on the platform when five men grabbed him by the legs, pushed him to the ground, and beat him before taking his suitcase and other property. Police released surveillance images of the suspects about a week later and Sims was subsequently identified.

Judge Kenneth Wadas oversaw the robbery case and sentenced Sims.

Since 2008, Sims has been sent to prison for mob action, theft by deception, narcotics, being a felon in possession of a firearm, and a 2013 robbery, according to state records.

Another shooting downtown

A 27-year-old woman is being questioned after a man was found shot in the Loop around 8:10 a.m. Sept. 26, according to Chicago police and a source. The woman, who lists a Rockford address and reportedly admitted to shooting the man, surrendered to officers at the scene.

Police released few details about the shooting except to say the man, identified as a “John Doe” of unknown age, was shot several times while sitting in a vehicle with a “known offender” on the 100 block of E. Wacker Dr.

Police said the man was taken to Northwestern Memorial Hospital in critical condition.

CPD dispatch records indicate the victim called 911 after being shot and identified the shooter by name to an operator. According to another dispatch, the woman also called 911, claimed to be a concealed carry holder, and admitted that she shot the man.

She also walked up to a cop at the scene and admitted that she shot

Shoplifting mobs are raiding everything from high-end boutiques to your local Walgreens

Mobs flee with thousands in merchandise

BY CWBCHICAGO

A sometimes violent shoplifting team has repeatedly raided high-end retailers to steal expensive purses along the Magnificent Mile, Oak St., and Rush St. this month, according to several police reports.

But luxury boutiques aren't the only stores falling victim to organized theft teams. Police are also looking for a two-man team that is stealing bags full of cigarettes from Walgreens locations. And another crew is walking out of Ulta Beauty stores across the city with garbage bags full of stolen products.

Here's the latest on the three crime patterns:

Luxury store raids

Some of the biggest names in high fashion are losing thousands — sometimes tens of thousands — of dollars to a team of thieves that is storming into their stores to steal purses and handbags from display shelves, according to CPD reports. The raids have been happening during afternoon hours along the Mag Mile and Rush St. corridors.

Around 4 p.m. Sept. 20, an employee at Bottega Veneta admitted a man into the boutique



Chicago police units sit outside the Ulta Beauty, 2754 N. Clybourn, following a raid by shoplifters on Sept. 17. Photo by Peter von Buol

at 800 N. Michigan. About 11 other men poured in behind the first. The crew collected about 35 handbags, which retail for thousands of dollars each, from the shelves and ran out the door, according to a property management company's email to nearby residents. A police report said the crew escaped in at least two cars, including a gray Honda CRV.

On Sept. 18, a group of six men walked into Salvatore Ferragamo, 645 N. Michigan, but they left without taking anything after apparently becoming spooked. A store employee reportedly recognized some of the men as part of a crew that took \$43,000 worth of purses and critically injured the

shops 73-year-old security guard in August.

Around 5:30 p.m., the same men stormed into Burberry, 633 N. Michigan, pushed the store's security guard, and stole nine handbags, according to a police report. They fled in cars that were waiting outside, according to witnesses.

Shortly after noon on Sept. 17, three men reportedly conducted a similar raid for purses at Intermix at 40 E. Delaware. They got away in a gold BMW.

Another report said a similar crime unfolded Sept. 13, at Moncler, 33 E. Oak. Six people wearing masks entered the store and fled with high-end products. At

least one of those offenders had a gun, the report said.

Ulta trouble

Earlier this month, Chicago police issued two warnings to businesses about groups of shoplifters who were swarming stores to steal perfumes. One of the warnings said the thieves were escaping with garbage bags filled with stolen merchandise. The other warning said a store on the 400 block of N. Michigan was targeted three times between Aug. 27 and 31.

While police did not identify the businesses by name, this re-

Earlier this month, Chicago police issued two warnings to businesses about groups of shoplifters who were swarming stores to steal perfumes.

porter has learned that all of the stores involved are Ulta Beauty locations.

Since the alerts were issued, garbage bag-wielding thieves hit Ulta at 2754 N. Clybourn Ave. around 3:45 p.m. Sept. 17 and at 1107 S. Delano Ct. in the South Loop around 12:15 p.m. Sept. 19.

The Ulta thefts are suspected of being part of a large-scale operation that sells stolen name-brand merchandise online at deep discounts.

Walgreens cases

Police are also working to track down a pair of armed men who are stealing cigarettes from Walgreens stores across the city.

On Sept. 11, the men struck three times between 9 p.m. and 11 p.m. at 111 S. Halsted, 2001 N. Milwaukee, and 3222 N. Milwaukee, according to CPD reports.

The men, who wear masks, were reportedly traveling in a white four-door Buick.

Man charged with armed robbery on CTA train after his aunt recognizes him



Deleon Davis' aunt recognized him from CTA surveillance as one of the men and contacted police.

A man who's on probation for robbing a woman in Bucktown last summer is being held without bail on a new robbery charge after his aunt turned him in to police, according to prosecutors.

Earlier this month, CPD's Mass Transit Unit released CTA surveillance images of two men who allegedly robbed a 22-year-old man aboard a Blue Line train near Clark-Lake. Deleon Davis' aunt recognized him as one of the men and contacted police, Assistant State's Attorney Calvin Astrella said during a bond court hearing Sept. 26.

Davis, an accomplice, and the victim were the only people on the train car when Davis walked up to the man, put a gun to his face, and demanded his phone around 10:15 a.m. Sept. 1, Astrella said. After taking the man's phone and bag, Davis and his companion exited the train. The victim called police.

When police arrested Davis, 21, his hair was much shorter than the man seen in CTA surveillance images, but he identified himself

as the person seen in the photos, Astrella said. He denied robbing the passenger, though.

Davis is currently on proba-

tion for escape and for robbing a woman of her phone in the 2100 block of N. Western on July 14, 2020, according to Astrella and CPD records.

Prosecutors didn't ask Judge David Navarro to hold Davis without bail on the new allegations, and the judge specifically noted that state law prohibits him from holding someone without bail on his own.

Instead, Navarro set bail at \$500,000. Davis is also being held without bail for violating the terms of probation in his 2020 cases.

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Wine Fest in Jonquil Park Oct. 8-10

Wine sommeliers on hand

Jonquil Park becomes the best tasting room in town with the return of Lincoln Park Wine Fest Oct. 8-10. Wine and food pavilions cover the park grounds selling wine, food and accoutrements.

Sommeliers and brand ambassadors will assist wine experts and newbies alike in learning more about all things Oenology and Viticulture.

Lincoln Park Wine Fest takes place in Jonquil Park, 1001 W. Wrightwood Ave. and will offer general admission tasting tickets including a commemorative wine glass start at \$40.

Guests can grow their knowledge as a wine connoisseur during one of the numerous two-hour tasting sessions held over the course of the weekend, by sampling 12 varietals of wine in addition to access to the festival grounds and a commemorative tasting glass, with a VIP ticket, that includes samples of five additional specialty wines. VIP tickets are only sold in advance of the festival.

For more information and tickets, visit chicagoevents.com/events/lincolnparkwinefestival. Varietals from the VIP tasting list include specialty wines that retail for over \$50 a bottle.

Lincoln Park Wine Fest is hosted by the Wrightwood Neighbors Assoc. Proceeds from the event will benefit Wrightwood Neighbors Conversation Program including care of Jonquil Park.

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New architectural exhibit open in Lincoln Park

A new architectural exhibit titled Romanticism to Ruin: Two Lost Works of Sullivan and Wright has opened up a new dual exhibition in Lincoln Park that explores two famous architects' long-demolished masterpieces.

The show opened Sept. 23 at Wrightwood 659, an art space devoted to presenting socially engaged art and architecture, at 659 W. Wrightwood Ave.

The show examines Louis H. Sullivan's innovative Garrick Theatre, once located at 64 W. Randolph St., which stood for only 69 years; and Frank Lloyd Wright's unprecedented Larkin Building, in Buffalo, NY, which stood for just 44. Two distinct presentations—Reconstructing the Garrick: Adler & Sullivan's Lost Masterpiece and Reimagining the Larkin: Frank Lloyd Wright's Modern Icon—feature 3D models and digital re-creations of the original edifices; salvaged architectural ornaments and artifacts; original furniture; historical documentation of the



"Where we park when we shop Downtown Chicago." Photo of the Loop.

design, construction, and demise of the buildings; archival photographs taken by noted preservationist and photographer Richard Nickel; drawings, and historical ephemera.

The show is curated by Jonathan D. Katz, John Vinci with Tim Samuelson, Chris Ware, and Eric Nordstrom, for more information visit www.wrightwood659.org/.

Nordstrom has created a large collection of historical items

through his salvage work to support the project.

"I've spent several months combing through the Richard Nickel committee archive, focusing on Nickel's documentation of salvage operations (e.g., Adler and Sullivan's Garrick Theater and Chicago Stock Exchange), along with letters, pamphlets, and images pertaining to the genesis of the Adler and Sullivan book, and finally, any and all information



A rarely seen albumen print of Adler and Sullivan's partially completed Auditorium Building (theater entrance) taken during the 1888 National Republican Convention where Benjamin Harrison was nominated as presidential candidate. Image courtesy of Ryerson and Burnham archive, Art Institute of Chicago

on Nickel amassing a Sullivan ornament collection that would later find its way to Lovejoy Library at the Univ. of Southern Illinois, Edwardsville, where it is on display to this day."

Nordstrom says he cannot help but pursue subjects and the archives that house them arising from the cross-pollination be-

tween Nickel's body of work "and that of Louis H. Sullivan, Daniel H. Burnham, or 19th century photographer, James Taylor, who was a notable Chicago photographer that documented much of the architecture of the first Chicago School during and after construction."

WINDY CITY from p. 2

AL: The sonorous **Bill Kurtis** and Chicago shindig consultant **Donna Lapietra**, **Maestro Rich Daniels** and orchestra, producer **Mary Ann Rose** and **Dean Rolando** were front and center for the iconic Michigan Ave. celebration of the Wrigley Building, once HQ for America's favorite chewing gum. The white terracotta clad structure is actually two buildings and was the anchor 100 years ago for the development of the Boul Mich north of the Chicago River. **Graham, Anderson, Probst** and **White** were architects for the beloved Chicago skyscraper that internalized the features of the Giralda Tower of the Cathedral of Saville.

CUB'S HISTORY: **Patrick Wisdom** has had the best rookie season in Cubs history. The infielder/outfielder sent his 27th homer into orbit in Milwaukee Sept. 19 against the Brewers.



Patrick Wisdom

WHEN IT RAINS: Famous Morton Salt sign is to be 'revitalized,' as the building is to be transformed into a music venue along Elston Ave.

SERVICE CLUB: The annual gala, the financial grounding for funding philanthropic grants, is scheduled for Nov. 5, **Melinda Jakovich Lagrange**, **Lyn McKeaney** and **Heather Spyra** are co-chairs for the cocktails, dinner and dancing at the Four Seasons. Celebrity MC is popular Hollywood actor **John O'Hurley**.



Ella, Thad and Palmer Wong.

INSPIRED: While at the Casino **Karen Zupko** appears to have said 'yes' to **Mr. Mike's** question.

KNOCKOUT: Celebrating his birthday while visiting Dublin, **Christopher Clinton Conway**, he of the many fabulous pairs of spectacles, found himself a serious boxing match in a local gym where he scared the 'Bejaysus' out of his rivals. Who knew he was such a pugilist?

WHO'S WHERE: Everyone's favorite **Zurich Esposito** and **Brian McCormick** in fragrant Aspen, CO... The Tamar team with **Ron Kittle** at Harry Caray's getting ready for a meeting with the Chicago Police Foundation... **Maria Pappas** doing fundraising for Kenya... present at Opening Night for Verdi's Macbeth at the Lyric was **Stephen Tubbs**, **Oscar Totasian**, **Regina Galliesiute**, **James Staples** and **Gerado Delgado**... **Shelley Howard** having fun at Table One at Carmine's with **Norman Friedman**... Congrats **Elly Greenspahn** on 23 years of supporting PAWS Chicago and raising much-needed funds at the recent 10K run... **Paul Miencke**



Christopher Clinton Conway

caught a White Sox game with great friend **Tony Shute**... Financial wizard **Pat Arbor** looking in the pink and so sociable... Gold Coaster **Rose Marie O'Neill** off to her beloved Dublin where she is scheduled to be the hostess at numerous lunches and dinners around town with friends... the Four Season's bar was hopping with humor and clinking cubes when **Scott Grainger**, **Joe Angell**, **Drew Bertagnolli** and **John Miller** showed up... **Cynthia Olson** traversing the Italian peninsula, "You can't board a train in Italy without proof of vaccination," she says... **Jack Goggin** enjoying the bright orange colors up at Lake Papoose, WI... Congrats to young runner **Owen Flom** who finished a three-mile in 16:01, improving by 22 seconds, to the pride of his dad, Chicago Cuts restaurateur **David Flom**... Gibson's Steakhouse was host for **Davis Heiner's** 39th birthday with wife, PBS's **Whitney Reynolds**... Christie's **Steven Zick** in Minneapolis for the Party In The Garden, the annual fundraiser for the Walker Art Center... Papa **Thad Wong** with

Ella and Palmer Wong all cozy at the Bear's game... **Ald. Maria Hadden** [49th], has endorsed **Dan Balanoff** for Cook County judge... Gibson Group's **Abdel** and Birthday Bondgirl **Diane O'Connell** trading inside info on the glamor scene... **Alice O'Neill Lamb** marking a festive birthday surrounded by family... Yes, boxer **Conor McGregor** threw the first pitch at the Cubs game at Wrigley in a wild and screwball manner causing folk to flee their seats, running for cover.

SAY IT AIN'T SO CAROL: Milk and Honey, that bright spot at 1920 W. Division, has been sold by owner, founder, friend, **Carol Watson**. She developed Chicago's finest granola available on Division St. and finer groceries around town. The new owner lives out of town. New management team appears in place. No one worked harder than Carol. She deserves her reward. But when you invent and develop a unique Chicago eatery, its hard to let go the energy and spirit that was someone's dream. There will always be an owner. Just won't be that great woman of dreams.

BURIAL: **Senator Adlai E. Stevenson III** was buried in Prospect Hill Cemetery in Rice, IL, in Jo Daviess County. His namesake father and grandfather are each buried in the more ancestral graves in Evergreen Cemetery, Bloomington, IL, in MacLean County.

GOOGLE GOGGLE: Google staff are undergoing antiracism 'woke' training which promotes Critical Race Theory, asking employees to 'identify their privileged identities' and rank themselves on a hierarchy and claims 'MAGA' is 'socially acceptable white supremacy.' When will we finally have our fill of the overly woke?

It's this upside-down world that we live in where we afford political correctness to the most intolerant group of individuals on the planet. - Vince Flynn tog515@gmail.com

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Letters to the Editor

Take Chicago back from the criminals

Let's take Chicago back from the criminals. I'm tired of reading in this newspaper, and other newspapers, about shootings, lootings, and about somebody who got arrested and then released right away, only to be arrested again.

We have a mayor who the police turn their backs on. Since she's been in office crime and violence have soared. The Mayor - and all the other 'public servants' who put these repeat offenders back on the streets - should be voted out.

I'm sure it's frustrating to the police to arrest someone and then see them set free, only to be

arrested again.

We need more police so when a crime is being committed they can get to the scene right away. We need public officials who are going to clean up Chicago, and a mayor who can work with the police, not one they turn their backs on.

I live on the Near North Side, grew up in Bridgeport, and at the age of 82 I do not like what the city has become. I want a safe city for people like me who live here and for the people who visit.

Judy Justin
Old Town

Lincoln Square, Chicago's home for white privilege

Is Lincoln Square really Chicago's capitol of white privilege? We will know in October.

It has a great shopping district, great public parks, great public and private school choices, is convenient to public transit options, a great regional public library, great restaurants, a great little theater and great cultural and musical attractions. It is simply, well, great.

And it is going to become even greater once an out-of-town white millionaire developer, with a few Machine connected white millionaires sprinkled on their Board, are set up by a local alderman and his minions at City Hall for a nifty haul of mega-millions proportions. Even better than the lottery. The decision will reportedly be made in October.

These fragile white guys want to be given a city parking lot for free. They want to keep the parking revenue from the indoor garage. They want to put meters around Welles Park. They want Tax Increment Financing monies, property tax rebates, low income housing tax credits, transferable tax credits to sell and property management fees.

And what do Lincoln Square's businesses and cultural institutions residents get in exchange? Nothing really.

Lip service will be paid to affordable housing, with only 10 affordable housing units in a 51-unit building.

Will there be any proof given that Black, Indigenous and Peo-

ple of Color [BIPOC] families will be taken care of? Disabled veterans? Senior citizens?

Nope.

Will those few studio and small one-bedroom apartments go to some hipsters on skateboards who can no longer afford Wicker Park, Bucktown or Logan Square?

All in the name of diversity.

But "diversity" is just a nationalistic dog whistle for "White privilege."

For the amount of taxpayer money that will be gifted to the white guys from Boston in this corrupt deal, it could buy and gift two-flats in Albany Park, Portage Park or Jefferson Park to each of those 10 low income residents.

But doing it their way, out-of-town white guys, and the connected Chicago white guys, make mega-millions. And that, friends, is how systemic white privilege and corruption thrives in Chicago.

For those of you who grew up in Chicago, the State Street Mall was underused and died when access was cut off to cars. The same may now happen to Lincoln Square once the easily accessed public parking lot is gone.

We all know The Community Builders will take care of their favorite BIPOC alderman. Just take a look at all the contributions already rolling in from those not living in the 47th Ward. And he'll be getting lots more as the election nears.

Now that's a 'City Haul.'

Mike Sullivan
Avondale

Two more violent nights on the North Side

BY STEVEN LARSEN

The recent attacks on two crazy summer nights remind us of the violent and lawless acts happening around us now every day.

This reporter wrote about the attack on the senior citizen that occurred in Edgewater on June 17 (News-Star, July 14).

Three young people beat a man over the head with a walking cane—a dangerous attack because such violent trauma to the head can often be fatal.

In this attack three suspects - for random reasons - attacked a senior citizen on the patio in front of the McDonalds restaurant at 6231 N. Broadway, then followed him to the corner of Broadway and Granville, where they added a cane to the attack to hit him over the head countless times (eyewitnesses provide different accounts of blows, ranging from "about a dozen" to "it was maybe 30 but a lot yeah"), finally driving the victim to seek shelter in the CVS store at 6150 N. Broadway, where the attack only intensified.

Eyewitnesses have since provided additional information. For example, one of the eyewitnesses claims he had words with two of the suspects and confronted the third—the main culprit leading the beating of the senior citizen. George B. just last week provided a great deal more information on what went on inside the store. This is helpful because this reporter was not in the store.

There are three known eyewitnesses, and myself, to this attack. Each of us saw different parts of the incident. Two witnesses have agreed to provide additional information—and clarification of earlier statements—during the week of Sept. 6.

The second attack occurred in River North, with two suspects beating and robbing a two men in the middle of State St. in River North as bystanders danced — and police took six minutes to respond. Various clear videos have aired on the news and on the Internet.

In this attack, one of the actions most discussed is the onlookers who danced during the beating.

Yes, sadly, onlookers did nothing to help the victim. In fact they

helped to rob one man, stripping his clothing off, and beating him.

Then a second victim was added to the beating and robbery.

It seemed to be something like a mob action, once the attack on the first victim got to a certain level of insult and injury, like a lion pride taking down tonight's dinner.

In the River North case, there are many eyewitnesses, and videotape of the attack. Two men have

Commentary

been charged, and it is assumed they will be found guilty because of the existence of so many videotapes of the entire incident. Who knows if they'll spend any time in jail? One of the men charged apparently drove to the neighborhood in a stolen car.

A similarity in the attacks is the brazen nature of the suspects. In Edgewater, three young men launched the attack as they laughed and started that evening of violence apparently without any provocation whatsoever. Tony G. says that although one guy tried to stop the attack by picking up the main suspect and carrying him out into the street, this did not do any good. The suspect simply ran back to the senior and started hitting him again.

It is still unknown if there was a problem between the victim and the suspects. The suspects simply continued their attack as if they answer to nobody, have fear of nobody.

In the case of the River North beating, witnesses speak of some sort of "argument" and a disagreement that interested some other people who were within ear shot.

Another similarity in the two attacks is that very few people assisted the victim(s).

In the Edgewater case, George B. says that he stopped two of the suspects from attacking the victim inside the CVS and escorted one of them out of the store. That young attacker said he would get him killed for having done so. George B. emphasized his amazement that none of the people in the store—about 10 of them—did nothing while the attack on the

senior continued. Other than yelling, nobody tried to separate the suspects from the victim or physically stop the assault—such as by taking the cane out of the thug's hand.

George B. said he even "called them out" for doing nothing to help the senior who "could have been killed in that store." According to George B., even the security guard stood by doing nothing to intervene as the beating went on, with the senior eventually unable to get off the floor. "The security guard was a short female, who I think would have been injured if she intervened."

The suspects were brawling in the aisle and knocking everything down, he said. It was a violent attack, and the guard "was just standing there in disbelief frozen."

In the River North case, onlookers danced and "twerked" as people took video of both the dancing and the beating. Such lack of interest in helping the victim is difficult to understand.

The videos are now famous—having been played over and over, and likely watched by people in every nation on earth.

Yet another similarity is the long police response time—and perhaps lack of interest.

In the Edgewater case, police and paramedics arrived only after the three men had already left the CVS store. In addition, some of the police are told by another eyewitness that the three men that walked past the police on the corner were in fact the suspects responsible for the beating.

As the July 14 article revealed, the police ignored the witness who told them about the suspects more than once, and the police instead proceeded over to the store where other police officers and the paramedics were entering and congregating.

VIOLENT see p. 10

Wind knocks out Lincoln Square film fest, now rescheduled for Oct. 1

The Revival Film Fest in Lincoln Square has been rescheduled due to windy weather, it will now be held 7 p.m. Friday Oct. 1, at the Ainslie Arts Plaza, 4836 N. Lincoln Ave.

The film fest uses an inflatable projection screen, which can only withstand max wind speeds of 10 mph. On the former evening of the fest, winds reached the speeds of 17-20 mph.



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Lakview's new Broadway Youth Center



The new youth center at 1023 W. Irving Park Rd.

This five-story masonry edifice will soon become the new permanent home of Howard Brown Health Clinic's Broadway Youth Center [BYC]. It will offer a mix of health and wellness-related programming for LGBTQ youth between the ages of 12 and

24, especially those who may be homeless. The nearly completed five-story, 20,000 square-foot structure at 1023 W. Irving Park Rd. is replacing the former location at 4009 N. Broadway, which was demolished in 2019.

The new site may allow programming for up to 4,500 BYC participants and clinical services for as many as 6,000 teens and young adults annually.

Service to be provided by BYC will include sexual and reproductive health services, including HIV/STI screening, primary care services, including gender-affirming hormone therapy, PrEP, pregnancy tests, birth control options, vaccines, psychiatry, and basic needs; one-on-one assistance signing up for health insurance, GED program, high school and college tutoring, or college application and scholarship assistance, and mental wellness support.

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INSIDE PUBLICATIONS VIOLENT from p. 9

This is where the mayor's orders of "no foot pursuits" hits the pavement. Cops cannot cross the street these days to go get a perp.

Perhaps an important lesson for those of us wanting to be safe in this city is that the attackers and victims in both cases were strangers to each other. The senior citizen in Edgewater did not know the three suspects, and the victim in River North did not seem to know those two suspects.

None of the three Edgewater criminals have been arrested though they still frequent the neighborhood—in the River North case two suspects were arrested and charged. Both suspects were charged with aggravated battery on the 40-year-old man they knocked down and robbed.

One of the suspects—only 19-years-old—was charged with aggravated battery on another victim, this one in his 50s, just a few days before this attack.

The River North beating took place in a heavy bar and business location. Presumably many of the persons present during the beating and robbery had come there

from other neighborhoods—or from out of town.

The contrast in Edgewater is that more witnesses were actual local "neighbors" who knew each other well and could continue to help with more information to get the three suspects into custody and off the streets.

These are streets which are now dangerous, made so by brazen and random youth who do not respect the elderly. We can at least hope neighbors will continue to help.

The victim in Edgewater, "He is the nicest guy I know," said George B.

Thinking back, George B. told of how he intervened—and seemed to be the only one who did so in a major way—and how others were too stunned or confused perhaps to do so. He himself was the one who chased the three suspects out of the CVS store. He "thought they were going to kill him."

Brazen, undisciplined men have taken to the streets to do whatever they wish and for random reasons.

Some suspects go to jail; others walk the streets potentially continuing to menace, attack, and

maybe eventually murder.

Last year, shootings and homicides reportedly increased by 50%. Over Labor Day weekend alone, 58 people were shot in this city.

Yet, some insist there is hope. Peace may come from Chicago neighbors themselves, if there is too little intervention on the part of City Hall, Cook County and police officers, and other forces charged with protecting citizens from what clearly seems to be a big increase in violent crime.

George B. pleaded "We are all brothers and sisters in this community and we should protect our community and help them from those who feel as if they can walk around with impunity and assault good upstanding members of it."

Indeed, we cannot grow weary, distant, indifferent and uncaring. We - our neighbors - are all we have left to maintain order. Just like on Broadway and State St., there is no help coming. When seconds matter, the police and City Hall may or may not arrive in minutes. Do not abandon your neighbor.

POLICE BEAT from p. 6

the man, an officer said. He took her into custody.

Investigators and evidence technicians were seen examining a car parked in a garage on the 200 block of N. Michigan, about a half-block from where they found the shooting victim. Guests of a nearby hotel frequently use the garage.

In a media statement issued shortly after the shooting, police said that more details would be forthcoming, but no new information has been released as of 6 p.m. Sunday.

Early Sunday, another man suffered six gunshot wounds on the 700 block of S. Wabash around 12:40 a.m. He showed up at Northwestern Memorial Hospital about 20 minutes later in a car driven by his girlfriend.

The man, 36, told police he was standing outside when someone apparently shot him from a gray SUV.

There have now been 25 people shot in the Loop during 2021. One of those victims has died. By comparison, 13 people were shot in the Loop by this point last year. Only three were shot in all of 2019. Two of 2019's shootings were deemed to be self-defense.

Five years for two attacks

Jamaal Dennard, 29, has pleaded guilty to attacking a Columbia College student in the Loop and then robbing a man on a Brown Line train in Lincoln Park one year ago.

Just after midnight on Sept. 21, 2020, a 19-year-old female Columbia College student was walking with a friend when a man attacked and choked her near State and Harrison streets. The pair told police the man, who was leaning on a wall, mumbled something as they walked past and then grabbed the woman from behind.

He then put his hands around the student's neck and squeezed. The woman struggled to breathe and thought she was going to die, said prosecutors Sept. 24. The man eventually released his grip and fled the scene. A Columbia College surveillance camera recorded images of the attacker.

Two days later, a 27-year-old man was attacked and robbed as he rode a southbound Brown Line train in Lincoln Park. That victim told police a man jumped him from behind as the train pulled into the Armitage station.

The offender shoved him to the floor, struck and kicked him repeatedly, grabbed his phone, and ran out of the station at 945 W. Armitage, he said. An ambulance transported the victim to a hospital for treatment.

According to prosecutors, CTA cameras captured the entire incident, and footage showed the attacker's clothes matched the Columbia College suspect's. The CTA distributed a bulletin with images of the suspect to law enforcement.

Police arrested Dennard at the Jackson Red Line station a few days later when they noticed he was wearing the same clothes as the Loop and Lincoln Park attacker.

He has pleaded guilty to aggravated battery in a public place, robbery, and criminal damage to government property for allegedly breaking out the windows of a Red Line train. Judge Neera Walsh sentenced him to five years on each charge to be served concurrently and gave him credit for 346 days he spent in jail. With the state's standard 50% reduction for good behavior, he will be paroled on March 23, 2023.

Months after getting probation for Brown Line robbery, man's caught driving carjacked SUV

Just a couple of months ago we reported that a Cook County judge sentenced Jakolbi Lard to three years probation for robbing a 55-year-old man at the Southport Brown Line CTA station and battering a witness who intervened.

Lard, 20, is back in jail already. Cops say they caught him driving a car that was hijacked in Edgewater last week.

The 71-year-old carjacking victim was parking near Rosemont Ave. and Kenmore Ave. when another car pulled up next to him around 2:30 a.m. Sept. 20. Two men wearing ski masks got out of the second car, displayed handguns, and ordered the man to hand over his valuables and get out of his blue Toyota RAV4. He complied, and the offenders drove away southbound on Sheridan Rd. his car, accompanied by the silver SUV that they arrived in.

Around 7:30 Sept. 21, police ran the plate on the stolen car at a South Side gas station and learned that it had been hijacked at gunpoint, according to a CPD report. Cops detained Lard because they saw him walking away from the SUV, the report said.

Surveillance video showed Lard driving the carjacked RAV4 into the gas station lot, getting out, and walking inside, prosecutors said. They said he was also carrying the hijacked car's key fob and the victim's RTA reduced fare permit.

Interestingly, Lard was also carrying the key fobs for a Hyundai and a Nissan, according to CPD records.

Prosecutors charged Lard with felony possession of a stolen motor vehicle.

Judge Charles Beach set bail at \$25,000 and ordered Lard to go onto electronic monitoring if he can post a 10% deposit. But

Beach also ordered him held without bail for violating the terms of probation in the Southport Brown Line robbery case.

On the evening of January 16, 2020, police responded to the Southport station after 911 callers reported that a passenger had been robbed on board a train. Cops arrived to find the alleged victim and a good Samaritan detaining Lard on the platform.

Prosecutors said Lard stole a 55-year-old man's phone on the train and then battered a witness who came to the victim's aid. Lard also struck the victim when the man tried to get his phone back, the spokesperson said. Two other men who were reportedly involved in the mugging got away.

Lard's father, Charles, was the oldest of 21 people to die in the E2 nightclub tragedy in 2003, according to the Chicago Tribune.

Two days after the robbery, detectives tracked down one of the other alleged robbers, 19-year-old Meleh Jackson of River North. Jackson was supposed to be on electronic monitoring for a pending domestic violence case at the time of the robbery, and he was on probation for theft in a case that began as a robbery charge.

He also received probation in the Southport robbery.

—Compiled by CWBChicago.com

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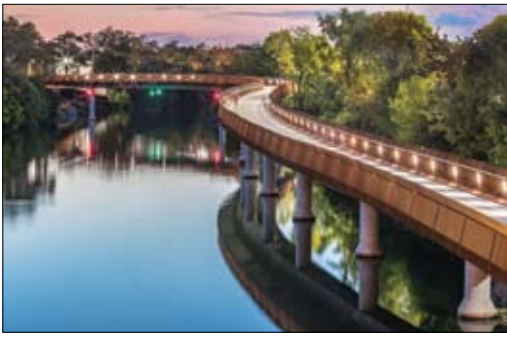
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New pedestrian path over Chicago River now open



Photos courtesy Chicago Dept. of Transportation and Epstein

As part of connecting the lakefront trail to parts north, the new \$18.1 million portion of the path along the banks of the North Branch of the Chicago River, is now open.

City officials gathered to cut the ribbon on a new underbridge bike and pedestrian path beneath Irving Park Rd. The project represents the last piece of the “312 RiverRun” trail system stretching 1.5 miles from Montrose to Belmont avenues.

The signature centerpiece of the effort is the new 1,010’-long Riverview Bridge,

which was completed in 2019.

The Epstein-designed and engineered Riverview Bridge crosses the Chicago River at Addison, providing a new connection for runners, bicyclists and pedestrians. This has created one of Chicago’s largest recreational hubs, by connecting three parks with one path for nearly two miles.

The 312 RiverRun trail system serves several North Side neighborhoods, including Irving Park, North Center, Avondale, and Albany Park.

QUESTIONS from p. 1

A. Montgomery Ward Park and the 400 block of N. State St.

Twenty-one days into his new job, Hein told residents that despite the perception, crime in general is down from last year.

“River North is probably one of the safest spots to be in the city,” said Hein. He says public perception of crime is influenced by seeing reports of a crime “over and over” on news and social media.

Hein says he usually has enough police officers to respond to incidents and can borrow more if needed.

“I’m a big fan of proactive policing,” he said. “And we like to...study the data-driven analysis and we’ll deploy the officers to those locations more. So if I need an increase in officers, we’ll move certain officers. I’ll be in constant contact with Deputy Chief [Michael] Barz if I need. And he’s very, very good at loaning or giving us extra officers from his unit to address these issues.”

Hein says they are towing by the truck-

load illegally-parked vehicles and loud motorcycles operating in violation of ordinances. An ordinance that took effect on June 7 gave police more reasons to impound a vehicle.

“We partnered up with [Chicago Dept. of] Streets and Sanitation for the tow trucks,” said Hein. “And there’s actually up to six tow trucks every Friday, Saturday, and probably Sunday. And we also have a couple flatbeds that are able to tow up to ten motorcycles. So that’s been a huge tool, being able to tow the motorcycles.”

Reilly predicts ‘bitter’ budget battle with mayor

River North residents will continue to see increased police activity, assured Reilly. He says there are now more foot and bicycle patrols throughout River North, and he has been told by Hein that “this level of response will be the ‘new normal’ until crime in River North is under control.”

Reilly says he will press Mayor Lori Lightfoot for more overnight patrols.

“We have good police coverage down



Community Safety Team Deputy Chief Michael Barz, 1st District Cmdr. Jacob Alderden, and Critical Incident Response Team Deputy Chief Michael Piggott near Wabash and Washington in the Loop.

here during the daylight hours,” said Reilly. “I don’t think anyone argues that. But when we creep into the evening hours, especially on the weekends, our police are buried in an avalanche of calls for service. And if you have more calls for service than you do officers, you know how that’s going to work out.”

Whatever crime-fighting tools the new commander needs, Reilly says he “will fight like heck, tooth and nail, to get it for him.”

Reilly says the city should be spending more on recruitment and training of police officers, to catch up with a loss of about 1,900 officers in the past two years. The figure, he says, includes 1,100 officers who left the police department and 800 who were reassigned to specialized police units.

“We’re going to have a very, very bitter debate over the city budget this year,” said Reilly (right). “And a lot of that’s going to be around the police department. There are different ideologies on the city council.

And unfortunately, some of my colleagues don’t have the same appreciation that I do for the men and women in blue that keep us safe.”

“And there are those who think we should be defunding large chunks of the police department budget at precisely the time we need to be doubling down our investment,” he said.

Lightfoot presented her budget recommendations for 2022 to the Chicago City Council on Sept. 21. She said her \$16.7 billion budget for fiscal year 2022 “will allow us to build a stronger and more prosperous city where residents feel safe, communities and businesses thrive, and city services are both responsive and accessible.”

Frustration with State’s Attorney and Chief Judge

Ald. Reilly says Cook County State’s Attorney Kim Foxx, tasked with prosecuting county residents accused of crimes, is not as aggressive as she should be.

“Our police officers are catching the bad guys,” he said. “The problem is they’re catching the same bad guys over and over and over again.”

He says sometimes accused criminals are back on the street within hours.

“I care about the safety of our neighborhoods, and when criminals aren’t properly prosecuted or the State’s Attorney’s office finds excuses not to file charges, we pay the price,” said Reilly. “The State’s Attorney needs to decide whether she wants to be a State’s Attorney or a public defender.”

He had no kinder words for Timothy Evans, Chief Judge of the Circuit Court of Cook County. He says increased use of electronic monitoring of those awaiting trial in Circuit Court is not working. “The idea that we’re putting... accused murderers back into the very neighborhood they’re terrorizing – on electronic monitoring – makes no sense to me whatsoever.”

CARJACKING from p. 1

school, started his own trucking company, and mentors at-risk youth in his neighborhood.

“Look,” Judge Navarro said after hearing from the attorneys, “we’ve got a stolen car, and then we’ve got, like, this subsequent jumping into another car — crashes ... If you’re trying to start a trucking business, this is not the way to be starting.”

He then set Livingston’s bail at \$50,000.

A pattern and a reward

Investigators have linked the carjacking near the Latin School to several other hijackings across the city, mainly because a specific white Volvo was seen carrying accomplices and fleeing with newly stolen cars.

According to a reward poster issued by Cook County Crime Stoppers, the Volvo, which police recently recovered, was itself carjacked in Oak Park on Sept. 7.

In one case, two armed men took a victim’s white 2017 Land Rover while he waited for his child outside William H. Brown Elementary School in West Town

around 2:20 p.m. Sept. 13 — two days before the Audi driver was carjacked outside the Latin School.

Crime Stoppers is offering a \$1,000 reward for information that leads to an arrest in the case.

On Sept. 14, the Volvo was used by carjackers who confronted a woman inside a co-op building parking garage on the 2400 block of N. Lakeview in Lincoln Park.

The 32-year-old woman was getting out of her car when two men with guns ordered her to hand over her keys and valuables. She complied, and they drove away with her blue 2020 Audi SUV, CPD spokesperson Karie James said.

Police determined the same white Volvo, bearing stolen license plate CU96017, was used by the carjackers, according to a police report.

Chicago police continue to investigate the carjackings.

Tips regarding the carjacking outside Brown Elementary can be shared with Crime Stoppers at 800-535-STOP or via email: TIPS@cookcountycrimestoppers.org.

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