



Government may hit the border wall

Shutdown looms as Trump, Democrats face off over funding

BY ERICA WERNER, DAMIAN PALETTA AND MIKE DEBONIS
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump said Thursday he would not sign a stopgap spending bill unless it includes money to build a wall along the Mexico border, sending large parts of the federal government lurching toward a shutdown on Saturday.

His comments came after an emergency meeting with House Republican leaders, in which

Trump revealed he would reject a measure passed in the Senate. That measure would fund many government agencies through Feb. 8, but it would not include new money for a border wall.

“I’ve made my position very clear. Any measure that funds the government must include border security,” Trump said in an event at the White House.

He added, “Walls work, whether we like it or not. They work better than anything.”

Trump’s comments Thursday overturned the plan GOP leaders

were patching together earlier in the day as one of their final acts in the House majority.

With no other viable options available, they had hoped to pass a short-term spending bill that would avert a government shutdown set to start just days before Christmas.

But Trump’s rejection of the stopgap measure set off a chaotic stretch in Washington as officials sought clarity on a proposal many had expected Trump would

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OLIVIER DOULIERY/ABACA PRESS

President Donald Trump says he will veto any bill that does not have funding for the border wall.

INSIDE: People seeking asylum at the U.S. border with Mexico will be forced to wait in Mexico, it was announced Thursday. The change does not apply to children traveling alone or to Mexican asylum seekers.
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Defense secretary quits in protest

Retired general cites conflicts with Trump in resignation letter

BY DAVID S. CLOUD
Los Angeles Times

WASHINGTON — Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis told President Donald Trump on Thursday that he will resign in February, handing the president a strongly worded two-page letter that in effect rebuked the president for his military policies and lack of respect for allies.



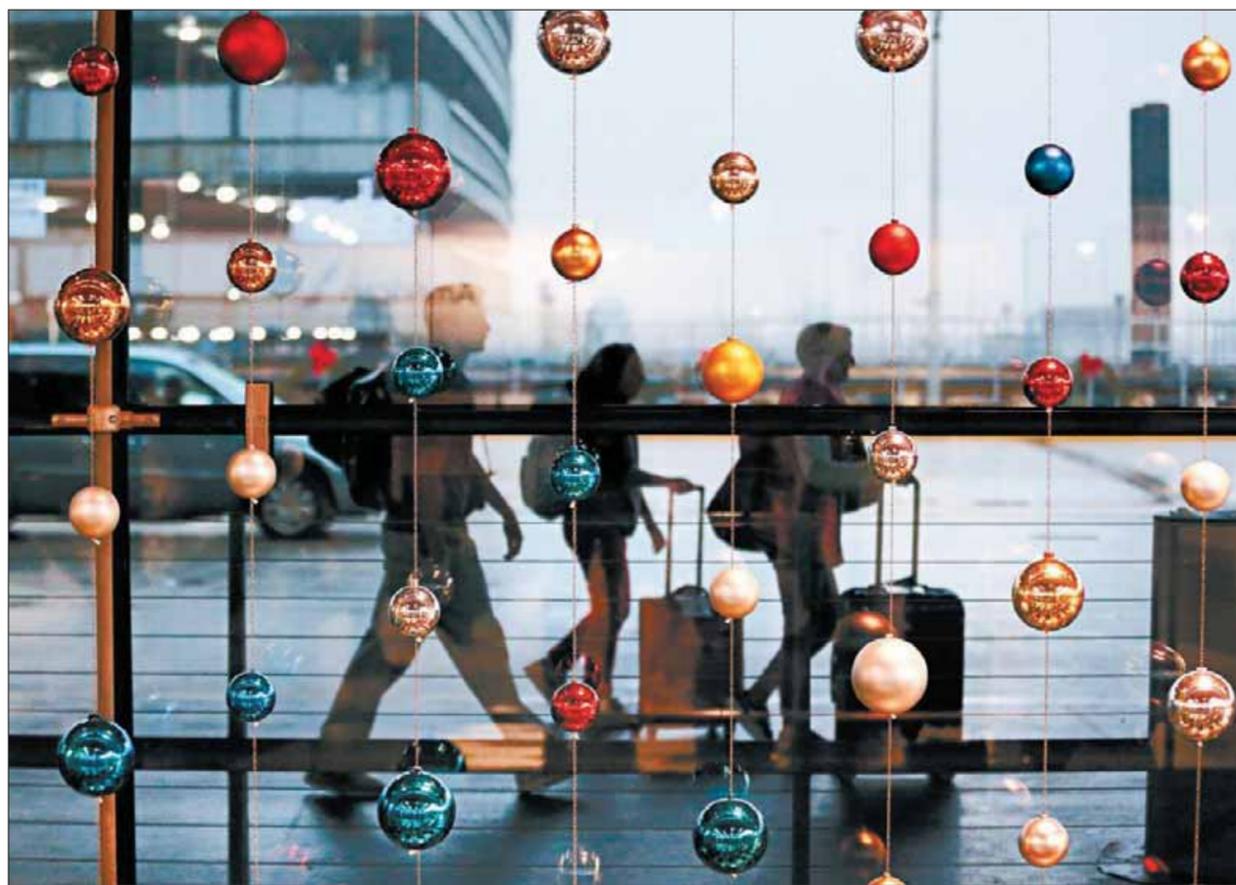
Mattis

Mattis, a retired four-star Marine general, went to the White House on Thursday afternoon to try to persuade Trump to reconsider his plan to pull all U.S. troops out of Syria, a decision the secretary had strongly opposed before the president announced it on Twitter on Wednesday.

When Trump refused to yield, Mattis quit in protest and handed over a resignation letter that made clear his disapproval of parts of the president’s military policy and behavior. A White House aide said the decision for Mattis to leave was “made jointly.”

Mattis’ departure marks the latest shake-up of a Cabinet that appears in perpetual turmoil. Since the Nov. 6 midterm elections, Trump has fired Attorney

Turn to **Mattis**, Page 10



CHRIS SWEDA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

HOLIDAYS IN THE AIR AT O'HARE

Holiday decorations adorn a window as travelers make their way outside of Terminal 3 at Chicago’s O’Hare International Airport. AAA, which provides automotive, travel and financial services, forecasts that

112.5 million people will travel over the holidays, the most since AAA began tracking holiday travel in 2001. The worst day to travel in Chicago is expected to be Monday. See story, **Chicagoland**, Page 5.

Aon observatory, Uptown rehab move forward

The city’s Plan Commission on Thursday backed a \$185 million plan for an Aon Center observatory, a \$75 million project at the Uptown Theatre and a \$69 million Congress Theater renovation. The Aon Center’s owner plans to add an external glass elevator and an observatory with a restaurant and thrill rides. **Ryan Ori, Business**

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Lest we forget, those ‘December to remember’ car ads are no gift



CHRISTOPHER BORRELLI

On Christmas morning when you find a new luxury SUV in your driveway with a giant red bow on the roof, as one does, stop a moment and think about the less fortunate, those overlooked by Santa, not waking up to smooth modernist homes, perfectly fitted J. Crew sweaters and new cars ornamented with bows so large that the ribbon cascades across polar white metallic roofing and 94 cubic feet of cargo capacity.

Can we all agree not to rub it in?

Or, can we agree that Christmas TV commercials for cars are among the most obnoxious, borderline sociopathic cultural phenomena that operate in plain



LEXUS

For Lexus, “it all starts with a December to remember,” per narrator/actress Minnie Driver.

sight, patently ridiculous yet so relentlessly ubiquitous we almost welcome them, as just another patch in the everyday fabric of a perverse universe — the wallpaper of capitalism.

Still, I have questions: Do people buy their loved ones SUVs for Christmas? And who makes these commercials? And who are these commer-

cial for — people watching “Monday Night Football” and “Seinfeld” reruns and bingeing Hallmark movies? And where do they get the big red bows? Do the spouses in these ads ever wake in the dead of night sweaty, wondering where the money came from for matching \$60,000 SUVs? And does the percentage of couples in these ads who divorce outpace the national divorce rate?

As Seinfeld himself might have asked 20 years ago this Christmas, when Lexus first launched its “December to Remember” campaign:
Who are these people?

I sat in front of the TV and experimented: I flipped around randomly for 30 minutes, counting Christmas car commercials I stumbled on, and what to my wondering eyes did appear but 17 of these commercials, most recommending not that you buy

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Ex-judge jailed in mortgage fraud

‘I’m an embarrassment,’ she yells out before 1-year penalty imposed

BY JASON MEISNER
Chicago Tribune

The first Filipina judge in Cook County broke down in sobs in a federal courtroom Thursday before being sentenced to a year in prison for her role in a \$1.4 million mortgage fraud scheme that occurred years before she took the bench.

The dramatic hearing capped a stunning fall from grace for Jessica Arong O’Brien, a pioneering jurist and respected civic leader who was reassigned to administrative duties following her 2017 indictment and officially resigned from her post earlier this year.

A federal jury in February convicted O’Brien, 51, of two counts alleging she and her co-schemers scammed several lenders in the purchase of two South Side properties when she was a lawyer and real estate agent a decade ago.

Before the sentence was handed down Thursday, O’Brien issued a rambling and tearful statement to the court, at one point crying out, “I’m an embarrassment!” and stiff-arming her lawyer who had approached the

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Visit the Tribune's Freedom Center for a two and half hour tour of the printing presses, press plates and enormous paper rolls, and get a taste of the Tribune's history. **9 a.m. Jan. 16, Chicago Tribune Freedom Center, 777 W. Chicago Ave., Chicago. \$25 tickets.** Free parking, lot opens 20 minutes before start of tour. For tickets, go to chicagotribune.com/freedomcenter

CHICAGO TRIBUNE BOOKS

"Holiday Cookies: Prize-Winning Family Recipes from the Chicago Tribune for Cookies, Bars, Brownies and More." A comprehensive collection of the best holiday cookies as curated from decades worth of reader submissions to the Chicago Tribune's annual Holiday Cookie Contest, these delicious recipes represent an eclectic mix of traditional and modern recipes from diverse cultural background and skill levels. From cookie classics to twists on old standards, such as Tropical Nuevo Latino Cookies and Grandma Grump's Peanut Butter Drizzles, this book provides the home baker with a plethora of possibilities for any holiday party.

"Dinner at Home." Cooking at home doesn't have to be difficult, but it should always be delicious. Since 2007, JeanMarie Brownson, culinary director for Rick Bayless' Frontera Foods, has been helping readers put inventive, yet simple, dishes on the table through her Dinner at Home column for the Tribune. Her book includes everything you need to create spectacular food any day of the week, including sample menus and recipes for everything from prosciutto parmesan puffs to roasted chicken with tomato-olive relish. Dinner at home has never been better.

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MARGARET HOLT, standards editor

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NATALIA KOCHINA/EYEEM

'Baby, It's Cold Outside' on repeat? In your face, snowflakes



HEIDI STEVENS
Balancing Act

A couple of radio stations in Kentucky played "Baby, It's Cold Outside" on a two-hour loop over the weekend, announcing on Facebook, "We're not afraid to play it."

In your face, #MeToo snowflakes!

It's not enough to simply not share people's objections to the 1940s Frank Loesser ditty. Those objections must be petulantly shouted down and physically drowned out by five different versions of "Baby, It's Cold Outside" on repeat.

It doesn't leave me optimistic about our ability to absorb the central mission of the #MeToo movement.

Before we go there, though ...

For the record, the song leaves me completely lukewarm. Not incensed. Not charmed. Not especially Christmas-y.

I hear it as a wintry relic from a time when women had to pretend they weren't into sex, even if they were, and men pressed ahead with their flirtation/coercion, knowing that her no might mean, "I want to, but I shouldn't." Shouldn't have sex. Shouldn't want sex.

Shouldn't disappoint my mother, my father, my brother who will be there at the door. (Eww.)

It makes me sad, more than anything.

I thought Minnesota couple Lydia Liza and Josiah Lemanski's update last year was sort of charming — *I really can't stay/Baby I'm fine with that. My mother will start to worry/Call her so she knows that you're coming. Say what is this drink?/Pomegranate LaCroix* — and I said as much when I wrote about it.

Readers disagreed, inviting me to, "Take your over-active sense of grievance, turn it sideways and shove it where the sun don't shine!"

"Changing the lyrics to a 1944 song is politically correct (expletive) brought to us by the whiny wimp (expletive) generation that has never done a (expletive) thing in their lives but managed to get through life protected in a (expletive) bubble," one gentleman wrote. "Shame on you elitist, arrogant (expletive) feckless (expletive) for making this the news of the day!"

"IT'S JUST A SONG!" so many yelled.

"SO IS THE REMAKE!" I yelled back.

And here we are a year later, still yelling. About a song.

Here's where I get a little

demoralized.

It's impossible to untangle the debate over "Baby, It's Cold Outside" from the larger #MeToo movement — a movement that pulled back the curtain on a whole bunch of workplaces and relationships and power structures and found behavior ranging from loutish to violent, obnoxious to abusive.

It's a movement that said, finally, "Enough."

Enough treating women like sexual playthings for the main attraction, the men in the room. Enough turning a blind eye to harassment and assault.

Enough expecting people to just shake it off when their colleagues or supervisors proposition them or worse. Enough with the Harvey Weinsteins and the Les Moonveses and the Mario Batalis and the Matt Lauers and the Kevin Spaceys and the Roger Aileases of the world.

So a song with lines like, *I ought to say no, no, no sir/Mind if I move in closer?* got a closer look. And, for some, it didn't look good. For some, the song became a vehicle for discussion — about consent, about coercion, about changing mores, about shifting gender expectations. Some radio stations decided to take it out of their holiday rotations.

For others, it became a metaphor for all that's

being sacrificed on the altar of political correctness.

(Never mind that you can still fire up Pandora or Spotify or a zillion other radio stations or stroll through any mall/grocery store/Target and hear the original in all its glory.)

I don't know how we move those two sides a little closer together.

A two-hour "Baby, It's Cold Outside" doesn't seem like the way. It seems defensive and, frankly, mean-spirited.

Then again, nobody who spoke up and pushed and fought and sacrificed for #MeToo progress did so expecting a ticker-tape parade. I suppose two straight hours of a lame song is easy enough, in the long run, to shrug off.

Join the Heidi Stevens' Balancing Act Facebook group, where she hosts live chats every Wednesday at noon. This week, she'll be joined by social worker Caryn Curry from Lurie Children's Hospital's Center for Childhood Resilience to talk about creating a healthy emotional climate at home.

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Coming out overcame Christmas ghosts

How 1 gay woman melded, mended families at holiday



MARY SCHMICH

Jane Barker loves Christmas. She always has.

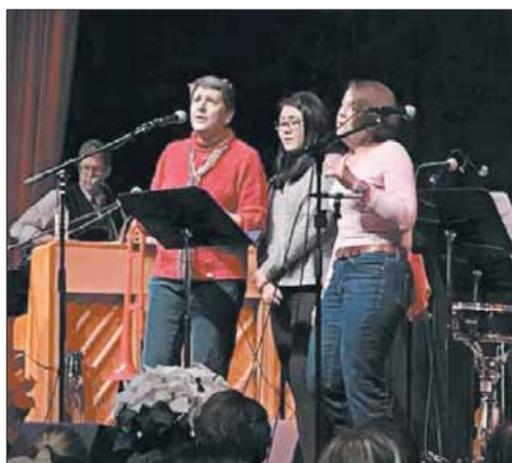
But for many years, starting from her days in college, when she fell in love with her best friend, Christmas also made her sad.

Her problem was as simple as it was complex: She's gay.

"Back then, in the late '70s," as she puts it, "being gay was not OK."

That's how Barker began her story one night last week on the stage of the Old Town School of Folk Music, where she appeared as one of the contest winners at Songs of Good Cheer, the holiday sing-along my colleague Eric Zorn and I put on with a band of great musicians.

This year's contest assignment: Tell us a holiday



Jane Barker, left, and Melinda Haag, right, with their daughter Anne at Songs of Good Cheer this month.

love story. Define love however you want.

All six winning stories were thought-provoking, but none more than Barker's tale of hiding her love relationships from her family at Christmas.

"I was not out to anyone at that time," Barker continued from the stage.

"While my brothers brought their spouses into our family fold, my love was not there. While my brothers wrestled with

splitting holiday time between in-laws and parents, I wrestled with the sadness of splitting away from my partner every holiday. The decades passed and every year I would return home from out of state to celebrate Christmas with my folks. Alone."

Barker, who grew up in the Chicago suburb of River Forest, attended Indiana University and Notre Dame Law School. When her college relation-

ship ended, she fell in love again, this time with a woman named Melinda Haag.

She continued her story from the stage:

"By that time, I was out to everyone except my parents. I believe that my family actually may have invented 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell.' Which meant I still went home alone for Christmas."

Listening to Barker tell her story in public to 400 or so people the other night, I was struck by two things.

One was the mere fact that she was doing it. Not so long ago, her story would have shocked many people, and telling it in public would have been risky. But on this night in 2018, if anyone was shocked it didn't show. Instead the audience listened with attention and respect.

Barker's story also made me think about all the different ways that this season we call the holidays can accentuate the fractures in families.

Shaky marriages. Rifts between siblings. Long-standing anger or misunderstandings between

parents and children.

In the holiday gathering of clans, the ruptures, resentments and secrets that may lie dormant for most of the year are often summoned to the surface.

Barker's story made me think of the many families who never find, or even seek, a way to mend what's broken. It also offered the hope that through persistence, humility and courage, trouble can be overcome.

Here's how it happened for Barker:

In 1996, after several years together, she and Haag set out to adopt a child.

"Anne joined our family in September 1997," she recounted. "She was a 15-month-old spirit full of life and fire and love. Both Melinda's and my folks came to Indiana, separately, to meet her shortly after we brought her home from China. After which, our first family Christmas dawned."

On Christmas Eve that year, for the first time, the family that Barker had made joined the family into which she was born.

"My two families together," she said. "My best Christmas. Ever."

On that Christmas Eve, the infant Anne met her aunts, uncles and cousins for the first time. Some of Barker's family finally met Haag.

"And my folks rose to the occasion," said Barker, who now lives near her parents in River Forest. "Hanging on the hearth, alongside all the other family stockings, hung stockings with 'Anne' and 'Melinda' at the top. Both lovingly knit by my mom."

After Barker told her story in the Old Town School auditorium the other night, she was greeted with loud applause. Melinda and Anne then joined her onstage to sing.

"It was very meaningful for me," Barker told us later, "that people approached me after the concert to tell me that the story resonated in their lives. I am truly blessed."

There's more than one message in Barker's story, but here's a vital one: Whatever difficulty is haunting your holidays, don't lose hope that it can be fixed.

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Video of husband's funeral lost at O'Hare

Wife missed ceremony because of illness, pleads for item's return

BY KATHERINE ROSENBERG-DOUGLAS
Chicago Tribune

Adisa Zec could no more have imagined having to bury her seemingly fit and healthy 41-year-old husband than she could have predicted missing his funeral, but in recent weeks both have happened.

A friend took photos and a video of her husband's funeral, but Zec, who lives in an Indianapolis suburb, says a bag holding the camera that contained the memory card with the recording were lost at O'Hare International Airport when the family returned from the overseas burial.

"Keep the camera, I don't care about it," she said during a telephone interview Tuesday, days after a Facebook post about the lost camera bag that has been shared more than 4,000 times. "Just send us the memory card, please."

The family was returning from Bosnia and Herzegovina, where Adisa and Emir Zec are originally from. Her husband's father died seven years ago, so she and his mother decided to bury Emir in Zenica, their native

city, about an hour drive from Sarajevo, Adisa Zec said.

The couple met when she was 16 and he was 19. After Adisa Zec moved to the United States with her parents in 2000, she returned to Bosnia to marry Emir Zec the same year and the pair moved to America

"Keep the camera, I don't care about it. Just send us the memory card, please."

— Adisa Zec, who missed her husband's funeral after he died of cancer

as husband and wife in 2001. They have two sons, 16, and one who turned 13 the day after his father's Dec. 11 funeral.

"Both of us survived war in Bosnia and we ended up living here for the better future," Adisa said. "Finally we had a life that we could just enjoy and this just happened so suddenly."

"This" was lung cancer. Emir was diagnosed with Stage 4 lung cancer in the

spring and he contracted a rare type of pneumonia, dying Nov. 29, Adisa Zec said. He made a living proofreading the instructions for medications, Adisa said, and in the end he had to take a pill form of chemotherapy he had once worked on. He was a wonderful man who coached his son's soccer teams and kept trim by playing soccer himself, even after his diagnosis.

Adisa Zec and her family went to Bosnia for Emir Zec's funeral and burial, but on the day of the services, Adisa Zec became ill.

"I was too ill to attend the funeral so a friend took pictures and recorded it for me. I said I would watch it when I was able, when I was stronger, and I never got the chance."

When Adisa and her two sons were returning home on Friday after burying Emir Zec, they had a layover at O'Hare as they waited for a United Airlines flight to Indianapolis. One of her sons was carrying the camera bag when he went to the restroom. When he returned to his family, it was time to board and the bag was left behind in



FAMILY PHOTO

Emir and Adisa Zec with their son, Benjamin. Adisa Zec lost a camera at O'Hare airport that had footage of her husband's funeral and now just wants the memory card back.

Terminal 1 at Gate C28, she said.

"As soon as we landed we realized what happened," Adisa Zec said.

Zec immediately called United and a spokesman, Charles Hobart, confirmed the company is searching for her bag. Although Zec said she was discouraged because she was asked to fill out an online claim form, Hobart said United has a customer service team able to respond quickly to requests made on social media.

"This isn't unusual but it is something we're focused on," he said.

The Chicago Department of Aviation said O'Hare Airport does not have a formal lost and found, but encourages passengers to either contact their airline or the Chicago Police Department when items disappear, a spokeswoman said.

A United representative called Zec on Tuesday to say the bag has not yet been found but that workers will continue to search, she said. In her Facebook post she said she is offering a \$1,000 reward for the return of the camera, which can be handed in to United Airlines with no questions asked.

Hobart said if a traveler notices luggage left unattended in a United gate area, the best thing is to give it to any United employee, because they're trained on how to get it to the proper location and eventually back to its owner.

"I kind of believed he might be able to beat all this," Zec said of her husband. "Losing this, too ... I just have to have hope that someone will understand what it would mean to me to get this small piece of him back."

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CHICAGOLAND



TERRENCE ANTONIO JAMES/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Mourners embrace and line up outside Blake-Lamb Funeral Home in Oak Lawn for the visitation for police Officer Conrad Gary on Thursday.

'If something happens to one of us, it happens to all of us'

Hundreds pay respects to officer killed while pursuing suspect

BY MADELINE BUCKLEY
Chicago Tribune

Connie Cronin remembers Officer Conrad Gary as a boy in grammar school, small and playful, always over at her house.

He was her son's best friend. They met as children and attended Oak Lawn Community High School together. She recalls sending them off to school dances together. The two friends played a lot of golf, and hung out with a dependable group of South Side friends.

"He always wanted to be a police officer," Cronin said. "He came home, and was very excited to be on the force."

Cronin stood with hundreds of others Thursday afternoon in a quiet, somber line that snaked around the Blake-Lamb Funeral Home in Oak Lawn where Gary's wake was held.

Gary, 31, and Officer Eduardo Marmolejo, 36, were killed Mon-

day night by a South Shore train after they pursued a suspect onto the tracks following a shots fired call. The two were assigned to the Far South Side's Calumet police district.

Marmolejo's wake is scheduled for Friday at the same funeral home. Gary's funeral services will be held at 9:30 a.m. Friday at St. Rita of Cascia Shrine Chapel at 7740 S. Western Ave. Services for Marmolejo will be at 11 a.m. Saturday at the same church.

The line for the wake extended for half the block and grew as the evening progressed.

Crowds of police officers stood in line along with Gary's family and friends. The mourners spanned generations, with some there because they knew his parents or other distant family members. Some mourners didn't know Gary or his family. They came as members of the community wanting to thank him for his service.

Gary graduated from Eastern Illinois University in 2009 and



Gary

spent more than five years in the Air Force. He and his wife, Kelly, had a 6-month-old daughter, Tess.

Cronin, who had watched Gary grow up, had just met his new baby on Friday, three days before he died.

Officer Sharone Brown waited quietly in line. Before she was reassigned, she worked for six years in the Calumet District, which has been hit by multiple tragedies this year.

Before the deaths of Gary and Marmolejo, two officers in the district died by suicide and one died after she collapsed at the station.

"They're heartbroken," Brown said of the district's officers. "If something happens to one of us, it happens to all of us."

Brown said officers want to have an impact while they're working. They want to get the guns off the street, she said, which was what the two officers were trying to do when they were killed.

"You want to make a difference

in your community," Brown said.

Gary and Marmolejo responded to the area of 103rd Street and Dauphin Avenue after a ShotSpotter sensor picked up gunfire. They saw a man scrambling up the Metra tracks there and followed. Video showed the officers were eyeing an approaching train heading north but never realized they were in the path of an oncoming southbound train.

Investigators recovered a weapon and shell casings and arrested 24-year-old Edward Brown. He is facing two felony gun charges.

As a resident who lives within the Calumet District, Earlene Beard said she is grateful for the officers' work. She didn't know Gary and Marmolejo but waited hours to pay her respects.

She knows many of the officers who patrol her neighborhood. She brought food to the district after the deaths earlier this year. She said she appreciates the risk they take while keeping her street safe.

"I was devastated," Beard said. "My heart goes out to all of them."

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City opens part of Navy Pier Flyover, 41st Street bridge

BY MARY WISNIEWSKI
Chicago Tribune

The long-awaited Navy Pier Flyover is finally, partially, open.

Mayor Rahm Emanuel on Thursday morning opened part of the \$64 million flyover, which the city first began building in 2014. On Thursday afternoon, he also opened the \$33 million 41st Street pedestrian bridge, creating two new ways for pedestrians and bicyclists near the lakefront to get around.

The flyover, which has been discussed by bike advocates and city officials since 1995, was originally slated to open in full this year. But it was delayed by various factors, including more extensive than expected repairs on the Lake Shore Drive bridge over the Chicago River. Emanuel also has blamed the state for delaying funding for the project during the budget crisis.

The newly opened portion of the flyover will carry pedestrians and bicyclists over Grand Avenue and Illinois Street, where there have been frequent conflicts between travelers on the Lakefront Trail and cars. Work is continuing through 2019 on the final phase over the river.

"Today we've achieved one of the most important parts of the Navy Pier Flyover project, separating pedestrians and bicyclists from traffic along Grand and Illinois streets," said Rebekah Scheinfeld, commissioner of the Chicago Department of Trans-

portation, at a news conference Thursday.

The undulating, 1,750-foot-long, 16-foot-wide steel and concrete flyover bridge is intended to eliminate a troublesome, crash-prone bottleneck at the center of the busy 18.5-mile trail, which sees 100,000 people a day on summer weekends. Bikes, in-line skaters and pedestrians all crowd together on dark, narrow sidewalks on Lower Lake Shore Drive, with poor sight lines at Grand and Illinois.

The finished portion of the flyover connects with Lower Lake Shore Drive with a wooden ramp. CDOT spokesman Michael Clafey said this will be replaced by a permanent bridge this coming spring, and the entire flyover across the Chicago River will be done by the end of next year.

Repairs to the Depression-era Lake Shore Drive bridge will cost \$24 million. The flyover and bridge work are funded by state and federal money.

Emanuel called the partially completed flyover "an incredible safety improvement for the city of Chicago," and noted that it comes right after the completion of the separation of the Lakefront Trail into paths for bicyclists and pedestrians.

"Lake Michigan is our Grand Canyon, it's our Yellowstone," Emanuel said. "We're responsible for not just maintaining it but enriching it, both ecologically and then in access."

One of the first cyclists across



ZBIGNIEW BZDAK/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

A runner uses the newly opened Navy Pier Flyover over Grand Avenue and Illinois Street on Thursdays.

the bridge on Thursday was Randy Neufeld, a Chicago bicycling advocate and cycling fund director for the bike company Sram. Neufeld had previously led the Chicagoland Bicycle Federation, which became the Active Transportation Alliance, and he had been one of the early advocates for the flyover.

Neufeld recalled discussing the traffic problems at Grand and Illinois at a CDOT meeting in 1995 and that someone had asked how the city would find money for a solution. A deputy commissioner said the money would be found.

"When he said that I felt that Chicago had gotten to a different level as far as the role of bicycles in transportation," Neufeld said. "It wasn't just a question of the leftovers, but something that was going to become a priority for the city."

He said he thinks the project will pay for itself in a year, with the benefits to tourism.

The 41st Street bridge over South Lake Shore Drive is an S-shaped, 1,470-foot-long span with ramps for bicycles, wheelchairs and emergency vehicles. It was funded by federal and state dollars. It is the second of five

bridge projects intended to improve access to the lakefront on the city's South Side.

A new suspension bridge for pedestrians and bikes opened in November 2016 at 35th Street, replacing a pedestrian bridge that wasn't accessible to people with disabilities. A third planned bridge at 43rd Street will replace another deteriorated bridge that also isn't accessible, the city said.

Increasing access to the lakefront is a goal of "Building on Burnham," Emanuel's plan to invest in the lakefront, the Chicago River and other natural areas in neighborhoods, the mayor's office said. The title refers to architect Daniel Burnham, who co-authored a 1909 plan for the city that included improving the lakefront and adding parks.

Though Emanuel has previously criticized the state for funding delays, on Thursday he praised Illinois Department of Transportation Secretary Randy Blakenhorn for his help. He called Blakenhorn "a real partner in finding all the quarters and dimes and nickels in the couch."

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Officers Eduardo Marmolejo and Conrad Gary were killed by a train while chasing Edward Brown.

Man faces charges after train kills cops

Bail set at \$200K as lawyer says client tried to 'test' weapon

BY ROSEMARY SOBOL
Chicago Tribune

Bail was set at \$200,000 Thursday for a man who found a gun in a Far South Side alley and fired it twice to "test it," setting off a chain of events that led to the deaths of two Chicago police officers hit by a commuter train earlier this week, Cook County prosecutors said.

Edward R. Brown, 24, of the 10100 block of South St. Lawrence Avenue in Chicago, faces charges of aggravated unlawful use of a weapon and reckless discharge of a firearm, both felonies.

Brown told police he was walking home from the 95th Street Red Line CTA station after work Monday as a cook at a downtown restaurant when he stopped to urinate in an alley and found a loaded .380-caliber handgun in a fanny pack, said Assistant State's Attorney Guy Lisuzzo.

Later, Brown decided to fire the gun, so he walked to an embankment leading to train tracks near 103rd Street and Dauphin Avenue, then climbed over a protective fence and onto the tracks, Lisuzzo said.

He then fired the gun twice, the prosecutor said, and both gunshots touched off an alert from a ShotSpotter sensor.

Officers Eduardo Marmolejo and Conrad Gary were sent to the area to investigate about 6:20 p.m. Monday. The officers saw Brown, got out of their car and scrambled up to the tracks, according to police.

As a northbound Metra Electric train approached ahead of them, the partners stayed on tracks used by southbound trains, unaware they were in the path of another train, police said.

Other officers arrested Brown and took him to a police station — not realizing that Marmolejo and Gary had been fatally struck by the train.

Brown's attorney, Frank Kostouros, told the judge that Brown was "devastated" by the officers' deaths. Brown decided to fire the gun off on the train tracks, thinking that was safer, he said.

"It sounds stupid," he said. "... However, my client wasn't shooting at anybody."

"Judge, this is a completely unforeseeable and unfortunate series of events," Kostouros said. "He wasn't gangbanging. It was just the worst of luck."

Despite the precautions he thought he was taking, Brown still fired a "loaded handgun on the streets of Chicago which is, inherently, dangerous," Judge Stephanie Miller said at the bond hearing at the Leighton Criminal Court Building.

Brown has no criminal history in Cook County, officials said.

Marmolejo, 36, had been on the force for 2½ years, while Gary, 31, served as an officer for 18 months, police said. Both were fathers of young children.

They were among four Chicago police officers killed in the line of duty this year.

On Nov. 19, Officer Samuel Jimenez, 28, was killed in a mass shooting at Mercy Hospital & Medical Center on the Near South Side. Two women, Dr. Tamara O'Neal, 38, and pharmacist Dayna Less, 24, also were killed before the gunman died after he was shot by another officer in the abdomen and shot himself in the head.

On Feb. 13, Cmdr. Paul Bauer, 53, was fatally shot after chasing a suspect to a stairwell outside the Thompson Center in the Loop.

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Gutierrez seeks to ID man who made threats

Lawmaker releases videos in which staff is threatened

BY ELYSSA MALAGON
Chicago Tribune

U.S. Rep. Luis Gutierrez temporarily closed his Logan Square office and plans to hire private security after a man Wednesday threatened workers who videotaped a portion of the interaction.

The incident happened about 2 p.m. Wednesday at the office, 3240 W. Fullerton Ave., on the city's Northwest Side. Gutierrez posted two videos to Facebook Wednesday and asked the public for help identifying the man. In one video, the man yelling at workers appears to pick up an object and throw it.

"My staff, as you can see, they were very afraid of him," Gutierrez said in a phone interview. "I mean, who wouldn't be?"

His staff in Washington, D.C., recognized the man's voice as that of a frequent caller who is critical of the congressman, but Wednesday was the first time the man identified himself as a precinct captain for 30th Ward Ald. Ariel Reboyras, Gutierrez said. In the videos, the man is not heard making any mention of Reboyras.

The Northwest Side alderman is facing a challenge in next year's municipal election from Gutierrez's daughter, Jessica Gutierrez, who works as a community organizer. Reboyras, reached by phone Thursday, said he did not recognize the man in the video. Reboyras said the man was not one of his precinct captains and isn't involved in his campaign. He also said he had nothing to do with the incident.

"I would never do anything like that," Reboyras said. "It's not my style."

Gutierrez said the man was buzzed into the office Wednesday afternoon and was told to wait while the receptionist finished speaking to a caller. The man then walked into an office and accused the congressman of being a racist, and the man allegedly told workers he was going to do everything to get Reboyras re-elected, Gutierrez said. The workers did not say anything while the man was complaining about the congressman and told him they couldn't engage in



FACEBOOK

U.S. Rep. Luis Gutierrez is asking the public to help identify a man accused of threatening workers at his Logan Square office.

political partisan conversations, Gutierrez said. In the two videos posted online by Gutierrez, the man is then heard telling someone that they escalated the "matter."

"Let's not yell, let's not yell," a woman is heard saying. "Look at everything going on around us. Let's just live in harmony."

The man responds with expletives and tells a worker he's racist. Someone could be heard clapping in the office.

The yelling man questions someone's education level and asks them what they have done for the country. The man, in the video, tells workers that he served in Iraq. In another video, the man is heard questioning why someone was laughing as a woman is heard pleading with the man to stop.

"Why don't you come outside," the man says in the video. "I'll beat your (expletive) ass, (expletive)."

Gutierrez said his office filed a police report and officers interviewed at least two employees. Chicago police confirmed a report was taken for someone making threats to people in Gutierrez's office. No one was in custody, and Area North detectives were investigating the incident, police said.

It's not the first time Gutierrez's office has faced threats. His office earlier this year forwarded to the Threats Assessment Unit of the U.S. Capitol Police threatening messages Gutierrez had received through Twitter. The messages were allegedly sent by Cesar Altieri Sayoc, 56, of Florida, who is facing federal charges and is accused of mailing pipe bombs to top Democrats.

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Bishops to retreat from abuse report

Archdiocese: State findings won't be on table at summit

BY ELYSSA CHERNEY
Chicago Tribune

Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan made clear Wednesday that her decision to release a report identifying hundreds of allegations of sexual abuse by Catholic priests was supposed to send a message to a contingent of U.S. bishops gathering in the state next month.

But the Archdiocese of Chicago fired back Thursday, saying bishops will not discuss the report or its findings at a seven-day spiritual retreat at Mundelein Seminary in suburban Chicago in January.

The retreat "will strictly be time for prayer, fasting and spiritual lectures," Anne Maselli, a spokeswoman for the Archdiocese of Chicago, said in an email. "No one other than bishops are included in the retreat. ... It will not be open to the public."

Archdiocese of Chicago Cardinal Blase Cupich will serve as host of the gathering, which was convened by Pope Francis in response to an explosive grand jury report in Pennsylvania this summer that found hun-

dreds of church leaders in that state covered up clergy sexual abuse for about seven decades.

Cupich did not make himself available for an interview Thursday to explain why the retreat would not address Madigan's report.

In a statement, a spokeswoman for Madigan said it was "disappointing and absurd" that bishops would not discuss the recent report.

"We now know the Church in Illinois failed to investigate many allegations and has disclosed only a small fraction of the names of accused clergy," spokeswoman Eileen Boyce said in an email. "Crimes of the past have created a crisis in the present that must be addressed and resolved."

Boyce said some of the oldest allegations were from the 1990s, but concerned behavior from decades earlier. She would not discuss the more recent allegations, citing the ongoing investigation.

Other local critics say the church should open up the retreat and allow parishioners to confront the clergy about their concerns.

Hille Haker, who specializes in Catholic moral theology at Loyola University Chicago, said the

church will miss an important opportunity to be more transparent if it does not allow the public to participate in the retreat.

"Not to give the Catholics in Illinois or Chicago at least the opportunity to confront the bishops and make them listen seems not good enough in this situation," Haker said.

"To withdraw or retreat into your private rooms of space and deal with it your own way will not bring about the change," Haker added.

The retreat, which could include some 300 bishops from around the country, comes as more than a dozen state attorneys general have initiated investigations of sexual abuse by clergy since the Pennsylvania report. It also precedes a February summit in Rome that will bring key bishops together to address the sex abuse scandal.

In Illinois, Madigan's preliminary report did not disclose names of the 690 priests implicated in the allegations, or provide information on the time or location of the allegation. The report said about 500 of the allegations had never before been disclosed to the public.

Previously, Catholic officials from Illinois' six Catholic dioceses have publicly

identified only 185 clergy with credible allegations against them.

Madigan's preliminary findings slammed the church for failing to thoroughly investigate all the allegations, particularly when the priest had died, left the ministry or was a member of a religious order and therefore not under the authority of a diocese. Although Madigan is leaving office in February, her successor, Kwame Raoul, has vowed to continue the investigation.

In a news release on Wednesday, Madigan's office said the findings also provide a critical document for discussion at the January retreat in Mundelein.

William Kunkel, the general counsel for the Archdiocese of Chicago, said he could not comment on the retreat. He reiterated that the Archdiocese of Chicago since 2002 has reported all allegations of clergy abuse to police and the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. Kunkel told the Tribune that the archdiocese has no immediate plans to review past allegations because it has already reported those to prosecutors in Cook and Lake counties.

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Holiday travel could break records: AAA

BY MARY WISNIEWSKI
Chicago Tribune

Expect record-breaking crowds this holiday season on the nation's roads, rails and runways, as about one-third of Americans will be on the move.

AAA, which provides automotive, travel and financial services, forecasts that 112.5 million people will travel over the holidays, a 4.4 percent increase over 2017 and the most since AAA began tracking holiday travel in 2001. In Illinois, 5.8 million people will be traveling, with 5.3 million on the roads.

Low gas prices and a decent economy are contributing to the travel trend, according to the AAA.

"Strong economic growth fueled by robust consumer spending continues to drive strong demand for seasonal travel," said Beth Mosher, AAA spokeswoman.

INRIX, which tracks traffic data, predicts that drivers will see the most congestion in the days before Christmas, as commuters and holiday travelers mix on the roads.

Drivers in Chicago will see travel times more than twice as long as a normal trip. The worst day and time to travel in Chicago will be Monday, Christmas Eve, between 1:30 p.m. to

2:30 p.m., according to INRIX, which was cited by AAA.

At the airports, Saturday, Dec. 22; Sunday, Dec. 23; and Wednesday, Dec. 26 will be the busiest days, while Christmas Eve and Christmas Day will see lighter traffic, the AAA said.

People traveling on trains, buses and cruise ships also will see bigger crowds, with travel across these sectors up by 4 percent, AAA said.

For those getting around the Chicago area, Metra has adjusted its service for holiday travel. Special \$10 holiday passes will be available for unlimited travel Dec. 24 and 25, and Dec. 31 and Jan. 1, in addition to the usual \$10 weekend passes for Dec. 22 and 23 and Dec. 29 and 30, according to the commuter railroad. Also, up to three children aged 11 and under will be able to ride free with each adult from Dec. 24 to Jan. 4.

On Friday, Dec. 21; Monday, Dec. 24; Friday, Dec. 28 and Monday, Dec. 31, all lines except the Heritage Corridor will adjust schedules to add early afternoon departures from downtown stations, Metra said. Holiday schedules will be in effect on Christmas and New Year's days.

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Carmakers' ads deck halls, stack decks

Borelli, from Page 1

a miniature sleigh or eight tiny reindeer but rather a four-door, double cab with 455 net horsepower. People who occupy Christmas car commercials are very different from you and me and Santa.

Let's start with Hyundai's ad for the 2019 Santa Fe Ultimate 2.0T.

"Holidays are just around the corner," says the narrator, as we watch a man try to cover an SUV with swathes of silver and red gift wrapping. His home is perfectly appointed, snow coats the trees, the driveway looks professionally plowed. "With savings so big," the narrator continues, "finding the right gift is easy. How to wrap it — that's another story." The man shakes his head — after all, what a pain it is when the car you bought as a gift proves hard to wrap.

Not to be outdone is Lexus, though this year's edition of its "December to Remember" onslaught (narrated by Minnie Driver in a soft British lilt) is relatively practical-minded. It features a family enjoying their Lexus on Valentine's Day, during a break at the beach, on Halloween night — "but it all starts with a December to remember." Cut to a couple wearing expensive overcoats, emerging from a minimalist home decked out in wreaths and garland, the wife moderately surprised at their new silver NX200 AWD with a grill worthy of a "Star Wars" villain. It starts at about \$38,000, and it's topped with a giant red bow.

But every holiday there is one stunner, and this season the award for most obtuse Christmas car commercial goes to GMC's luxury truck campaign. So much to unpack here (notwithstanding 63 cubic feet of cargo space). The ad begins with a woman in a lovely sweater approaching her husband, also wearing a lovely sweater, staring blankly into the void. They seem to live inside Crate & Barrel, one awash in the soft blue tones of a December dusk. She bought an early gift, she says. She presents two watches — "one for you and one for me." Which reminds him — he got them "a little something too." They step outside their spotless home, and two new GMC vehicles, one black, one red, wait in the driveway (without bows, alas). She runs to the black one and before her husband can say the red is hers, she clasps hands on the black — "I love it," she says.



An annoyingly perfect couple with an annoyingly perfect house get fancy watches AND SUVs for Christmas.



This year, Mercedes has Santa commanding a team of the company's cars in reindeer formation.

He starts to speak. "I love it," she interrupts. Ambiguity is thick here. Either way, her husband decides, there and then, he can live with a fully loaded new red SUV, choosing, apparently, to die with his terrible secret.

People do this — give SUVs for Christmas gifts? The quick answer is, they do.

The more complicated answer is, not many do — certainly not as many as endless airings of holiday car commercials may suggest. But traditionally December means steep discounts for cars, and with annual dealership goals and sales quotas knocking, people buy cars in December for a lot of reasons. More than 17 million new cars and trucks were sold last year; 1.6 million were sold in December. Some were gifts, some necessary purchases that conveniently doubled as gifts. Said Akshay Anand, executive analyst at Kelley Blue Book: "The thing that isn't talked about much is that the big luxury manufacturers are all competing in December to claim they were the 'luxury brand sales leader

of the year.'" Which is partly why Lexus, BMW and Mercedes' Christmas ads are so frequent.

At McGrath Lexus of Chicago, "it's our busiest time of the year," said Heather O'Malley, the sales manager for new cars. She said McGrath sells about 120 cars each December at its dealership on Division Street. Maybe five or six are Christmas gifts. "And I have done the whole surprise car-gift thing like in the ads. A husband takes his wife to breakfast and arranges for us to leave the car in the driveway with a big red bow when they return — I love doing that."

People, of course, can buy whatever elaborate gifts they want. And every commercial in its own way is about selling an unattainable dream. But the Christmas car commercial exists outside the typical marketing of desire — or rather, it is that marketing with a seasonal layer of delusional fantasy attached.

"Cars represent social status, cultural baggage," said Pamela Morris, program director of advertising and public relations studies at Loyola Uni-

versity, "but then all advertising is about creating a perception in the minds of the viewer, until it doesn't matter what the reality is."

Consider that GMC ad again.

It was made by the ad agency Engage MI, a merger of the Detroit offices of Digitas and Leo Burnett, the Chicago-headquartered marketing giant; it was shot in the snowy city of Los Angeles; it co-stars Daniel di Tomasso as the flustered husband, better known as a recurring hazmat specialist on "Chicago Fire." And like most holiday car commercials, it summons images of coziness, togetherness, with a hint of old-fashioned tradition in the decor — only in the end to link that sense of dignity and grace with buying luxury vehicles as gifts.

Maybe because all of this looks increasingly at odds with a country that's struggling with extreme inequality — the genre has been parodied viciously online for years, and by "Saturday Night Live" 15 years ago — not all holiday commercials these days outwardly suggest a car makes a perfect gift. Some just ride Santa's seasonal coattails. Mercedes has Santa commanding a team of Mercedes, in reindeer formation, until a present, a puppy, needs to poop — Santa opens a door, the puppy does his business (which Santa doesn't pick up), then the soiled animal returns to his seat.

In a brand-new 2019 GLA 250 compact SUV.

Compared with the hard sell of older auto advertising, contemporary ads look timid. An old Chevy ad from the early '60s features a suave host asking: "What

to get the boss this year? Well, this Impala convertible..." And when magazine advertising is a major force in ad campaigns, "Put a Pinto Under Your Tree" graced glossy pages without a drip of irony. In 1925, Ford recommended you buy your wife "her own" car, and in 1926, the company's ads suggested the "judicious purchase" of a sedan for the whole family.

And, sorry Lexus — Studebaker was shilling for a postwar "Christmas to Remember" in 1945.

But only Lexus, a half-century later, weaponized the Christmas car commercial.

At the height of the Great Recession, as millions of Americans were losing their homes to foreclosure, the luxury brand offered Christmas ads featuring a couple dressed in dashing black evening clothes, with an elevator that opens into their apartment, who find a gifted Lexus parked in front of their townhouse; ads featuring a bombshell elf who sews big bows all night for the roofs of Lexus sedans parked in her European courtyard; and recently, an ad with a couple who commandeer their son's wish list to ask for cars.

Easy to satirize, yet they set a standard for Christmas car ads.

Cynthia Tenhouse, general manager of product and consumer marketing for Lexus, is aware of the years of grumblings: "There is a lot of cynicism out there — this is never meant to be realistic." The goal was aspirational (the agency that makes the commercials is Los Angeles-based Team One, which specializes in premium

brands like Haagen-Dazs and Ritz-Carlton). In the 1990s, when the "December to Remember" campaign began, "we just wanted to be a part of the holiday culture without having to do just another 'car sales event.'" But they do recognize "we need to be sensitive to what is happening (in the world), and so every year we make small changes because of what is happening." This year the message is, a Lexus delivers throughout the year — it's not just a holiday gift anymore.

Michael Rudolph is grateful for that.

He's president of the Car Bow Store outside Philadelphia, which bills itself as the largest manufacturer of oversized car bows in the country. (Yes, there are others.) The Lexus commercials, he says, are a boom for his business. He sells 25,000 giant bows a year, most during the holiday season, to both dealerships and car buyers. "It's staggering how many people out there are actually giving cars as Christmas gifts." That said, he never received a car as a gift, "and I don't know anyone who ever has."

This is, in a sense, an ecosystem of fantasy.

"Very few commercials appeal to everyone," said Derek Rucker, a professor of entrepreneurial studies at Northwestern University who specializes in persuasion. "The fact that the brand might annoy some people could still be fine from a business perspective." He said car commercials like this often create a "positive halo" around a brand even when buying a car for someone as a gift is not possible.

It can also sound insanely tone-deaf.

A remnant of the 20th century, with none of the side-eye of "Mad Men" tacked onto something more contemporary: the idea that the fundamentals of togetherness and good cheer are just acquisitions.

My favorite Christmas car commercial is an Audi spot from 2017. Two guys are racing Audis through a garage for the last parking space at a shopping mall, furiously foiling each other, until — they knock shopping carts.

The race is a daydream, and though the ad is for expensive cars, the message is tempered, about lowering one's expectations, perhaps even about the race of excitement that greets every holiday season and the crash of reality around the bend.

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As clock ticks, Pritzker picks his deputies

BY RICK PEARSON
Chicago Tribune

Democratic Gov.-elect J.B. Pritzker on Thursday began the process of filling his incoming administration, naming three deputy governors including former state Comptroller Dan Hynes.

Also serving deputy governor roles will be state Rep. Christian Mitchell of Chicago, who also has been serving as interim executive director of the state Democratic Party, and Jesse Ruiz, the Chicago Park District board president who also was an unsuccessful Democratic primary candidate for attorney general.

Hynes, a senior executive at UBS Asset Management, served three terms as state comptroller starting in 1999 and then challenged Democratic Gov. Pat Quinn in the 2010 primary. Hynes lost by fewer than 10,000 votes or 1 percentage point, and Quinn ultimately defeated Republican state Sen. Bill Brady of Bloomington.

In 2004, Hynes also ran for the Democratic nomination for U.S. Senate, finishing a distant second

behind Barack Obama. Hynes readily endorsed the future president in the general election.

Hynes has been a budget adviser on Pritzker's transition committee and is a member of the Democratic National Committee.

Mitchell has been a member of the Illinois House since 2013 representing Bronzeville and also has been a senior adviser on Pritzker's transition team. He has a background in campaigns and community organizing and named in July as interim executive director of the state Democratic Party, becoming the first African-American to hold the post running the state party's day-to-day operations. He replaced Timothy Mapes after his ouster in a harassment scandal.

Mitchell was credited with serving in a critical liaison role with the Pritzker campaign as well as working to modernize the state Democratic Party's operations under its chairman, House Speaker Michael Madigan. His addition to the incoming administration had been expected. He previously served campaign roles for



Former state Comptroller Dan Hynes, shown in 2010, will serve as a deputy governor under J.B. Pritzker.

retiring Attorney General Lisa Madigan, Obama's 2012 presidential re-election bid and in U.S. Sen. Tammy Duckworth's successful 2016 bid.

Ruiz has been legal counsel for the transition committee and is currently a partner in the corporate and securities group of the law firm Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP, in addition to his role at the Chicago Park District Board. Ruiz also serves as a commissioner on the city's Public Building Commission.

Ruiz previously has held a variety of positions on city and state boards, including interim CEO of the Chicago Public Schools and chairman of the Illinois State Board of Education. In March, he finished sixth in the eight-way race for the Democratic nomination to replace Madigan as attorney general, a contest ultimately won by state Sen. Kwame Raoul.

Pritzker also named Nikki Budzinski as a senior

adviser to the governor, a post she served on his campaign. Currently the director of the transition team, she previously was the labor outreach director for Hillary Clinton's 2016 presidential campaign and also held a variety of positions in Hynes' comptroller's office.

The governor-elect's budget director will be Alexis Sturm, who currently serves as director of cash management and bond reporting for state Comptroller Susana Mendoza and worked in the administrations of three Republican governors and with GOP Comptroller Judy Baar Topinka.

Pritzker also named Erin Guthrie, regional general manager for Uber Midwest in Chicago, as director of the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity.

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13th Ward ballot battle sent to feds

BY GREGORY PRATT
Chicago Tribune

The Chicago Board of Election Commissioners voted Thursday to refer a controversy over nominating petition signatures in a Southwest Side aldermanic race to federal and county prosecutors.

The board voted to make the referrals after accepting a motion by incumbent 13th Ward Ald. Marty Quinn's team to withdraw its objection to DePaul University student David Krupa's nominating petitions, clearing the way for the challenger to be on the ballot in House Speaker Michael Madigan's home ward. The board also voted to refer the matter to the Cook County state's attorney and United States attorney's office, spokesman Jim Allen said.

"We're not prosecutors. We're not going to sit here and say what we think happened," Allen said. "The referral in itself is a statement."

The saga has captured attention in part because a 19-year-old college student is facing an uphill challenge against an incumbent alderman in the powerful Illinois House speaker's home ward. State Rep. Jeanne Ives, a Wheaton Republican who challenged Gov. Bruce Rauner for the Republican nomi-

nation, has backed Krupa's candidacy.

Krupa filed nominating petitions seeking to challenge Quinn for his City Council seat in the Feb. 26 city election. Those petitions, however, were challenged before the city's elections board, and that challenge subsequently was rescinded.

By law, candidates for alderman are required to submit 473 valid signatures to get on the election ballot. Krupa submitted 1,729 signatures, his attorney Michael Dorf said.

But Dorf said the challenge against Krupa's signatures included affidavits from 2,796 residents who said they were revoking their signatures for Krupa. Only 187 of those matched signatures contained in Krupa's paperwork and there were more than 1,000 people seeking to revoke their signatures than Krupa's paperwork even contained, Dorf said.

Quinn attorney Michael Kasper did not immediately return a message seeking comment. Dorf praised the decision. "It's a proud day for the Board of Elections," Dorf said. "They took the right step in referring this matter to law enforcement."

Nobody has been charged with any crime stemming from the election challenge.

Judge jailed in mortgage fraud

Judge, from Page 1

lectern to try to cut her off. "I will fall on my sword if I have to, but I need you to know the truth!" O'Brien told U.S. District Judge Thomas Durkin through tears, prompting the judge to order a recess so she could collect herself.

When she resumed her statement, O'Brien spoke for another 30 minutes, saying repeatedly that she "should have known better" as a lawyer that she was committing fraud and focusing on how she shamed her family and lost a career she loved.

"Of course, I have remorse as to my stupidity," O'Brien said at one point.

In denying O'Brien's request for probation, however, Durkin said the fraud scheme she orchestrated lasted nearly three years and wasn't done on impulse.

"This wasn't stupid," Durkin said. "This was a crime. ... You really didn't need to do this."

O'Brien was convicted of lying to lenders to obtain more than \$14 million in mortgages on two South Side investment properties that she bought and sold between 2004 and 2007 while owning a real estate company. She was then also working as a special assistant attorney general for the Illinois Department of Revenue.

Prosecutors alleged at trial that O'Brien made a profit by unloading the two homes in 2007 by paying kickbacks to a straw purchaser. In all, O'Brien pocketed at least \$325,000 from the transactions, Assistant U.S. Attorney Matthew Madden said. She also caused losses to lenders after the straw purchaser defaulted on payments and the properties wound up in foreclosure, he said.

"She used lies to buy and sell these properties," Madden had told jurors in February.

While the trial featured mostly dry mortgage documents, Thursday's hearing in Durkin's packed court-



PHIL VELASQUEZ/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Judge Jessica Arong O'Brien, center, was sentenced to a year in prison for her role in a \$1.4 million fraud scheme.

room focused on O'Brien's inspiring rags-to-riches story of a Filipina immigrant who came to the U.S. with almost nothing as a teen and built a life through hard work and determination.

O'Brien, who is married to Cook County Judge Brendan O'Brien, earned degrees in culinary arts and restaurant management. She then made a career change and went to John Marshall Law School, graduating in 1998 and later serving on its board. She was the first Asian elected president of the Women's Bar Association of Illinois, served on the board of governors for the Illinois State Bar Association and co-founded a foundation in 2008 that awards scholarships to law students from diverse backgrounds.

"It is an inspirational story," her lawyer, Steve Greenberg, said in arguing for probation. "She has fallen as far as she can fall. She has lost everything. ... There is absolutely no reason to send this poor lady to jail."

In asking for a two-year prison sentence, Madden said O'Brien's success story was an aggravating factor because she didn't have a financial need to commit fraud yet did so anyway.

Madden also stressed that O'Brien had — up until her statement Thursday — refused to take any responsibility for her crime, even telling a court probation officer in an interview before the sentencing that she was innocent of the charges.

"She doesn't seem to

have acknowledged at all that her poor decisions are what led her here to this courtroom," Madden said.

For much of the hearing, O'Brien listened to the arguments while seated at the defense table with a pained expression, at times burying her head in her hands. When it came time for her to make her statement, she approached the lectern with a yellow legal pad in one hand and started speaking breathlessly.

"Of all those things that everyone has told you about me, one thing was missing — stupid," O'Brien said. "I mean, seriously. This whole process is crazy. I can't put my hands on it."

While nearly two dozen relatives and supporters listened intently in the gallery, O'Brien bemoaned the fact that she let her constituents down. She also said her misdeeds had ruined her husband's name and that people whisper behind his back at the Daley Center, where he's a Law Department judge.

But O'Brien also blamed family issues at that time in 2003 when she said she decided to get into real estate — a decision she would come to regret.

She also said she hoped her downfall would be a lesson to other lawyers that they will be held to a higher standard.

"I hope some day when I am 6 feet under, they will learn from what happened here," she said.

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4,000 shows, none can compare
to what I saw tonight."

—Richard Connema, Broadway critic



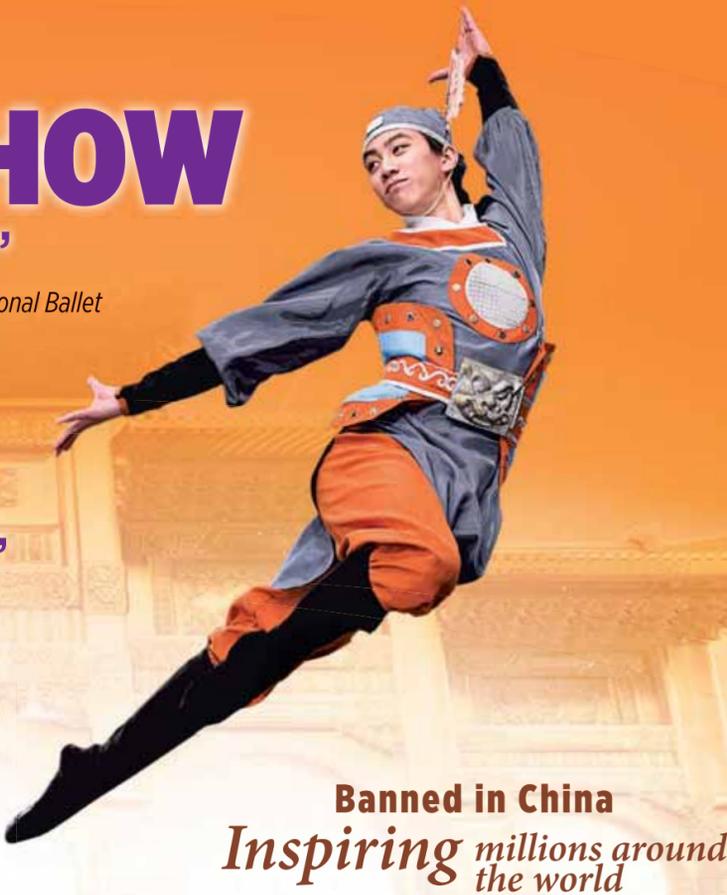
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—Daniel Herman, former Minister of Culture of the Czech Republic



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NATION & WORLD

Defense chiefs scramble on Syria exit

President defends troop pullout amid barrage of criticism

BY ROBERT BURNS
AND LOLITA BALDOR
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Military leaders were scrambling Thursday to devise a swift but safe departure of troops from Syria, as outraged lawmakers appealed to President Donald Trump to reverse an abrupt withdrawal order that rattled Washington's allies and was a factor in the resignation of Defense Secretary Jim Mattis.

Defense officials said U.S. airstrikes would continue until all of the 2,000 U.S. troops are out of Syria, but it was unclear whether the air campaign would then end. Officials said it might depend on whether France and other coalition partners keep ground troops in Syria after the Americans leave. A continued presence of allied troops working with local Syrians might compel the U.S. to contribute air cover.

The Pentagon, roiled first by the surprise withdrawal order from Trump and then the abrupt resignation of Mattis, offered no information about how the withdrawal will happen or how long it will take, apparently because they don't know.

Two officials speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss internal planning said Gen. Joseph Votel, head of U.S. Central Command, will submit a comprehensive withdrawal plan to top Pentagon officials in coming days.



Sens. Jack Reed, D-R.I., left, and Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., blast President Trump's decision to pull U.S. troops out of Syria during a news conference Thursday in Washington.

Officials said the Pentagon also is developing plans to withdraw up to half of the 14,000 U.S. troops serving in Afghanistan, marking a sharp change in the Trump administration's policy aimed at forcing the Taliban to the peace table after more than 17 years of war.

One official said the troops could be out by summer, but no final decision has been made.

Trump has long pressed to pull troops out of Afghanistan.

Trump defended his Syria decision Thursday, saying

on Twitter: "Getting out of Syria was no surprise. I've been campaigning on it for years, and six months ago, when I very publicly wanted to do it, I agreed to stay longer."

He added: "Does the USA want to be the Policeman of the Middle East, getting NOTHING but spending precious lives and trillions of dollars protecting others who, in almost all cases, do not appreciate what we are doing? Do we want to be there forever?"

One official said military commanders are concerned

that the Syria pullout will leave their Syrian Kurdish allies in the lurch.

Turkey, which considers the Kurds a security threat, has said it intends to send its army into Syria to clear them out. Until now, Turkey had to consider the presence of U.S. troops; once they are gone, a bloody clash seems inevitable.

Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., said Thursday that Mattis had told him he is worried about the Kurds and this is not the right time to leave.

Mattis believes that "the

day we leave it's going to be open season on every Kurd who's supported us," he said.

The Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces, or SDF, who have partnered with U.S. troops for years as the key force against ISIS militants, said in a statement laced with bitterness that the fight against the Islamic State, or ISIS, was at a "decisive" stage that requires even more support from the U.S.-led coalition.

"The war against terrorism has not ended and (the Islamic State group) has not

been defeated," the statement said.

Kurdish officials and commanders met into the night, discussing their response, local residents said. A war monitor said among the options discussed was releasing thousands of ISIS militants and their families detained in prisons and camps run by the Kurdish forces.

Graham said Mattis also expressed concern about the Islamic State fighters being held by the SDF, saying they could be released and end up back on the battlefield.

Graham and Sens. Bob Menendez, D-N.J., and Jack Reed, D-R.I., say they have growing support for a resolution urging the president to change his strategy. Graham, a Trump supporter, has savaged the pullout decision as wrong-headed, ill-timed and a gift to America's adversaries.

"I can't explain this decision," Graham said. "I'm not going to suggest motivations that are anything other than a frustrated president. But I can promise this: that if you follow through with this everything that happened in Iraq is going to happen in Syria. It's going to be worse, not better."

ISIS militants hold a string of villages and towns along the Euphrates River in eastern Syria, where they have resisted weeks of attacks by the U.S.-supported Syrian Democratic Forces to drive them out. The pocket is home to 15,000 people, among them 2,000 ISIS fighters, according to U.S. military estimates.

GOP-led House approves prison reform legislation

Bipartisan measure sent to president

BY JOHN WAGNER
AND PHILIP RUCKER
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — The House on Thursday approved the most far-reaching overhaul of the criminal justice system in a generation, sending bipartisan legislation to President Donald Trump that shortens sentences for some offenders and expands job training and other programs for prisoners.

The Republican-led House approved the First Step Act 358-36, reflecting a pivot by the GOP from a law-and-order stance of the 1980s to policies that emphasize rehabilitation and aim to save money.

White House officials have been planning for a signing ceremony Friday before Trump departs for Florida for the holidays. Plans call for him to invite Democrats as well as Republicans, hoping for a rare bipartisan celebration of a new law, aides said.

Trump took to Twitter after the bill passed, hailing what he called "a great bi-partisan achievement for everybody."

"When both parties work together we can keep our Country safer," he said. "A wonderful thing for the U.S.A.!!"

During floor debate Thursday, House Judiciary Committee Chairman Bob Goodlatte, R-Va., called the legislation "a meaningful and historic criminal justice effort," adding that federal prisons should not be nursing homes.

While Democrats overwhelmingly supported the bill, they cautioned that it should be part of a broader effort to address inequities in the system.

"This legislation is not the end of the discussion," said Rep. Jerrold Nadler, D-N.Y., who will take over as Judiciary Committee chairman next month when Democrats take control of the House. "It will not solve long-standing problems with the criminal justice system ... but it does demonstrate we can work together to make the system more



ALEX WONG/GETTY

'This legislation is not the end of the discussion.'

— Rep. Jerrold Nadler, D-N.Y., above

fair."

The bill would revise several sentencing laws, such as reducing the "three strikes" penalty for drug felonies from life behind bars to 25 years and retroactively limiting the disparity in sentencing guidelines be-

tween crack and powder cocaine offenses. The latter would affect about 2,000 current federal inmates.

It also overhauls the federal prison system to help inmates earn reduced sentences and lower recidivism rates.

The bill, which does not cover state jails and prisons, would through reductions in sentencing do the equivalent of shaving a collective 53,000 years off the sentences of federal inmates over the next 10 years, according to the Congressional Budget Office. There were about 181,000 federal inmates as of Dec. 13, according to the Bureau of Prisons.

A similar move has been afoot in many states as crime rates have dropped and officials have pursued cost-effective ways to cut the prison population.

A different version of the bill had previously passed the House, but an amended version remained stalled in the Senate until last week amid concerns by some GOP senators that passage could make them look weak on crime.

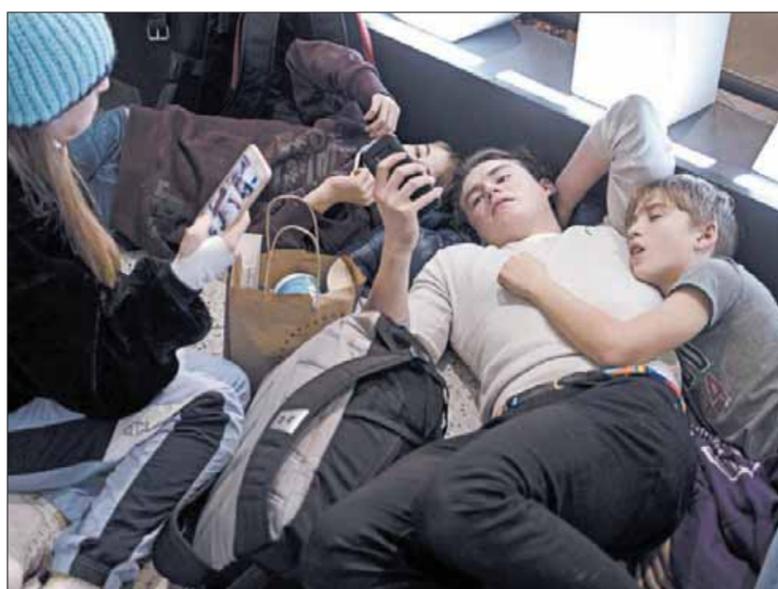
As the House moved to adopt the Senate legislation, Rep. Douglas Collins, R-Ga., pushed back on those concerns in his floor remarks Thursday, ticking off the names of several law enforcement groups that support the bill.

"I stand before you as son of a Georgia state trooper," he said. "We're helping law enforcement do their job."

Some Democrats had pushed for a more generous bill, and similar yet more expansive legislation under the Obama administration was scuttled by Republicans.

"Does (this bill) address the criminalization of poverty? No," Rep. Cedric Richmond, D-La., said during Thursday's debate. "It leaves many sentences, unjust sentences in place. However, there is no doubt in my mind that this bill is a positive step in the right direction."

The bill got a boost last month when Trump endorsed it as "reasonable sentencing reforms while keeping dangerous and violent criminals off our streets." His thinking was influenced by his son-in-law and adviser Jared Kushner, who has advocated sentencing restructuring and marshaled support of the bill from a diverse coalition, including police and the American Civil Liberties Union.



Passengers wait for updates Thursday at Gatwick Airport, 30 miles south of London, after drones led to a shutdown.

Officials close Gatwick Airport when drones buzz runway

Associated Press

LONDON — Drones buzzing over the runway forced the shutdown of London's Gatwick Airport on Thursday during one of the busiest times of the year, stranding or delaying tens of thousands of holiday travelers and setting off a hunt for the operator of the intruding aircraft.

The prospect of a collision between what police described as industrial-grade drones and an airliner led authorities to stop all flights in and out of the airport, 30 miles south of London.

About 20 police units from two forces tried to zero in on the drone op-

erator after the first sighting over Gatwick on Wednesday. Police told airport officials it was too risky to try to shoot down the two drones — stray bullets might kill someone.

"Each time we believe we get close to the operator, the drone disappears," said Sussex Police Superintendent Justin Burtenshaw.

Defense Secretary Gavin Williamson said the military would be deployed to help police.

With drones booming in popularity and becoming increasingly affordable, aviation experts have been warning in recent years about the risk of a collision with an airliner, and Britain — and the U.S. — have

tightened restrictions. Drones could get sucked into a jet engine or crash through a windshield.

The crisis at Gatwick had a ripple effect on air travel in Britain, continental Europe and beyond as incoming flights were sent to other locations and outgoing ones were grounded. British authorities said they would lift some night-flight noise restrictions at other airports to ease the congestion.

The airport's terminals were jammed with thousands of weary travelers. "I haven't slept since yesterday morning. We are very tired," said Andri Kyprinou, of Cyprus, whose flight to Kiev was canceled.



MOISES CASTILLO/AP

Workers on Thursday clean a street where authorities evicted migrants who had remained camped outside the closed Benito Juarez sports complex in Tijuana, Mexico.

Migrants seeking asylum in U.S. must wait in Mexico

New Trump policy marks major shift

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — People seeking asylum at the U.S. border with Mexico will no longer be released in the United States and will instead be forced to wait in Mexico under a policy announced Thursday that marks one of the most significant moves by President Donald Trump to reshape the immigration system.

The measure is in response to a large and growing number of Central American asylum seekers, many of them families, who are typically released in the United States while their cases wind through clogged immigration courts. It does not apply to children traveling alone or to Mexican asylum seekers.

The U.S. and Mexican governments called it a unilateral move by the Trump administration, but the announcement came two days after the U.S. pledged \$10.6 billion in aid

for Central America and southern Mexico to make people feel less compelled to leave.

Critics, including some legal experts, said migrants would be unsafe in some Mexican border towns and said the U.S. was illegally abandoning its humanitarian role, hinting at a legal challenge against a back-dropped of previous courtroom setbacks for Trump on immigration.

The government of Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, who took office Dec. 1, said foreigners will have temporary permission to remain in Mexico on humanitarian grounds after getting a notice to appear in U.S. immigration court and they will be allowed to seek work authorization.

Asylum seekers who pass an initial screening in the U.S. — about three of four do — typically wait years before their cases are resolved, allowing them to put down roots in the U.S. Many are fitted with electronic ankle monitors.

While most pass their initial screening, only about

9 percent are eventually granted asylum.

“They will not be able to disappear into the United States,” Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen told the House Judiciary Committee. “They will have to wait for approval. If they are granted asylum by a U.S. judge, they will be welcomed into America. If they are not, they will be removed to their home countries.”

Nielsen said in a statement that the move “will also allow us to focus more attention on those who are actually fleeing persecution.”

While the number of people caught crossing the border illegally has fallen sharply since the early 2000s, the U.S. has been grappling in recent years with a surge of families and children traveling alone, especially from Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador.

U.S. border authorities fielded 92,959 “credible fear” claims, the initial step toward asylum, in the fiscal year that ended Sept. 30, up 67 percent from 55,584 the previous year.

2 with China intelligence ties charged in hacking

Networks breached in a wide swath of global industries

By MICHAEL BALSAMO AND ERIC TUCKER
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — U.S. officials say two Chinese citizens acting on behalf of their country’s main intelligence agency carried out an extensive hacking campaign to steal data from military service members, government agencies and private companies in the United States and nearly a dozen other nations.

It was the latest in a series of Justice Department indictments targeting cyberespionage from Beijing.

The two are accused of breaching computer networks in a broad swath of industries, including aviation and space, banking and finance, oil and gas exploration and pharmaceutical technology. Prosecutors say they also compromised the names, Social Security numbers and other personal information of more than 100,000 Navy personnel.

All told, prosecutors say, the alleged hackers — identified as Zhu Hua and Zhang Shillong — stole “hundreds of gigabytes” of data, breaching computers of more than 45 entities in 12 states. They are not in custody.

U.S. law enforcement officials described the case as part of a trend of state-sponsored hackers breaking into American networks and stealing trade secrets and confidential and valuable information.

More than 90 percent of Justice Department economic espionage cases over the last seven years involve China, said Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein, and more than two-thirds of trade secrets cases are connected to the country.

“China’s state-sponsored actors are the most active perpetrators of economic espionage,” FBI Director Chris Wray said



MANUEL BALCE CENETA/AP

FBI’s Chris Wray says, “China’s state-sponsored actors are the most active perpetrators of economic espionage.”

Thursday in announcing the case. “While we welcome fair competition, we cannot and will not tolerate illegal hacking, stealing or cheating.”

Last week, officials from the Justice Department, the FBI and the Department of Homeland Security testified to the Senate Judiciary Committee that China is working to steal trade secrets and intellectual property from U.S. companies in order to harm America’s economy and further its own development.

Those efforts have continued even after Beijing committed in 2015 to halting the theft of trade secrets following a first-of-its-kind indictment that accused Chinese hackers of stealing corporate data from brand-name U.S. companies.

“We want China to cease illegal cyber activities and honor its commitment to the international community, but the evidence suggests that China may not intend to live up to its promises,” Rosenstein said.

In recent months, the Justice Department has filed separate cases against several Chinese intelligence officials and hackers. A case filed in October

marked the first time that a Chinese Ministry of State Security officer was extradited to the United States to stand trial.

As the U.S. was announcing its charges Thursday, the British government accused China of conducting a “widespread and significant” campaign of cyberespionage against the U.K. and its allies.

The Foreign Office said a group known as APT 10 — the same one cited by the U.S. — carried out “a malicious cyber campaign targeting intellectual property and sensitive commercial data in Europe, Asia and the U.S.”

It said the group “almost certainly continues to target a range of global companies, seeking to gain access to commercial secrets.”

Hacking by Chinese state-backed hackers dramatically escalated over the summer in response to the trade war with the U.S. and military tensions in the South China Sea, said Tom Kellermann, chief cybersecurity officer of Carbon Black, whose company’s threat-hunting tool is used in global cyber investigations.

Push to restrict food stamps

USDA proposal targets exemptions on adult work rules

By JULIET LINDERMAN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Trump administration is setting out to do what this year’s farm bill didn’t: tighten work requirements for millions of Americans who receive federal food assistance.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture on Thursday proposed a rule that would restrict the ability of states to exempt work-eligible adults from having to obtain steady employment to receive food stamps.

The move comes the same day that President Donald Trump signed an \$867 billion farm bill that reauthorized agriculture and conservation programs while leaving the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, which serves roughly 40 million Ameri-

cans, virtually untouched.

Passage of the farm bill followed months of negotiations over House efforts to significantly tighten work requirements and the Senate’s refusal to accept the provisions.

Currently, able-bodied adults ages 18-49 without children are required to work 20 hours a week to maintain their SNAP benefits. The House bill would

have raised the age of recipients subject to work requirements from 49 to 59 and required parents with children older than 6 to work or participate in job training. The House measure also sought to limit

it circumstances under which families that qualify for other poverty programs can automatically be eligible for SNAP.

None of those measures made it into the final farm bill despite Trump’s endorsement.

Now the administration is using regulatory rule-making to try to scale back the SNAP program.

Work-eligible able-bodied adults without dependents, known as ABAWDs, can receive only three months of SNAP benefits in a three-year period if they don’t meet the 20-hour work requirement. But states with an unemployment rate of 10 percent or higher or demonstrable a lack of sufficient jobs can waive those limitations.

States are also allowed to grant benefit extensions for 15 percent of their work-eligible adult population without a waiver. If a state doesn’t use its 15 percent, it can bank the exemptions to distribute later, creating what Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue referred to as a “stockpile.”

The USDA’s proposed rule would strip states’ ability to issue waivers unless a city or county has an unemployment rate of 7 percent or higher.

The waivers would be good for one year and would require the governor to support the request. States would no longer be able to bank their 15 percent exemptions.

The new rule also would forbid states from granting

waivers for geographic areas larger than a specific jurisdiction.

Perdue said the proposed rule is a trade-off for Trump’s support of the farm bill, which Trump signed Thursday.

“I have directed Secretary Perdue to use his authority to close work requirement loopholes in the food stamp program,” Trump said at the signing ceremony.

“That was a difficult thing to get done, but the farmers wanted it done, we all wanted it done, and in the end, it’s going to make a lot of people happy.”

Democratic House leader Nancy Pelosi on Thursday slammed the Trump administration’s efforts to restrict SNAP.

“Why at Christmas would you take food out of the mouths of American people?” she said.

The administration’s effort, while celebrated by some conservatives, has been met with criticism from advocates who say tightening restrictions will result in more vulnerable Americans, including children, going hungry.



Perdue



RICHARD B. LEVINE/SIPA USA

Experts fear a big increase in vaping at schools

By MIKE STOBBE
Associated Press

NEW YORK — Twice as many high school students used nicotine-tinged electronic cigarettes this year compared with last year, an unprecedented jump in a large annual survey of teen smoking, drinking and drug use.

It was the largest single-year increase in the survey’s 44-year history, far surpassing a mid-1970s surge in marijuana smoking.

The findings, released this week, echo those of a

government survey earlier this year.

That survey also found a dramatic rise in vaping among children and prompted federal regulators to press for measures that make it harder for kids to get them.

Experts attribute the jump to newer versions of e-cigarettes, like those by Juul Labs Inc. that resemble computer flash drives and can be used discreetly.

Trina Hale, a junior at South Charleston High School in West Virginia, said vaping — specifically

Juul — exploded at her school this year.

“They can put it in their sleeve or their pocket. They can do it wherever, whenever. They can do it in class if they’re sneaky about it,” she said.

Olivia Turman, a freshman at Cabell Midland High School in Ona, W.Va., said she, too, has seen kids “hit their vape in class.”

The federally funded survey is conducted by University of Michigan researchers and has been operating since 1975. This year’s findings are based on

responses from about 45,000 students in grades 8, 10 and 12 in schools across the country. It found 1 in 5 high school seniors reported having vaped nicotine in the previous month.

The vaping explosion is a big worry, however. Health officials say nicotine is harmful to developing brains.

Some researchers also believe vaping will make kids more likely to take up cigarettes, and perhaps later try other drugs.

So far that hasn’t happened, surveys show. But

the Juul phenomenon is recent, noted Richard Miech, who oversees the Michigan survey.

After vaping and alcohol, the most common thing teens use is marijuana, the survey found. About 1 in 4 students said they’d used marijuana at least once in the past year. It was more common in older kids — about 1 in 17 high school seniors said they use marijuana every day.

Overall, marijuana smoking is about the same level as it was the past few years. Vaping of marijuana rose,

however.

More teens, however, are saying no to lots of other substances. Usage of alcohol, cigarettes, cocaine, LSD, ecstasy, heroin and opioid pills all declined.

Experts say it’s not clear what’s behind those trends, especially since the nation is in the midst of the deadliest drug overdose epidemic ever.

One leading theory is that kids today are staying home and communicating on smartphones rather than hanging out and smoking, drinking or trying drugs.

Trump has veto, Dems have votes

Shutdown, from Page 1

grudgingly accept. The Republican-led House approved a package Thursday night with his \$5.7 billion request that is almost certain to be rejected by the Senate.

The president's opposition puts Washington back at an impasse: Democrats have the votes to block any bill that includes funding for Trump's wall, and Trump says he'll veto any bill that doesn't.

Funding for 25 percent of the federal agencies whose budgets rely on Congress is set to expire at the end of Friday. The agencies affected deal with homeland security, law enforcement, national parks, transportation, housing and others.

The rest of the government, including the military, would not be affected, as they're funded through September by bills lawmakers passed this year.

The impacted agencies would continue to perform some of their functions, but more than 100,000 employees are expected to be sent home without pay.

The White House hasn't yet revealed the full impact of a partial shutdown; it is up to each agency to implement its own plan.

But it is clear the effects would be widespread: Close to 80,000 IRS employees would no longer come to work, and national parks that are locked at night would not reopen in the morning.

It can occasionally take several days for the full impact of a shutdown to kick in, and some agencies could remain open Saturday but close by Monday.

A government shutdown could drag on for days or weeks, as Democrats have shown no willingness to budge off their refusal to



OLIVIER DOULIERY/ABACA PRESS

President Donald Trump arrives at a signing ceremony Thursday. Trump says he won't sign any funding measure that does not include border security.

finance the construction of a wall.

Democrats take control of the House of Representatives in early January, giving them even more leverage in negotiations.

By Thursday evening, a partial government shutdown began to appear all-but inevitable to many on Capitol Hill, though House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., insisted that "there's still plenty of time" to avoid one.

But the path forward was far from clear, and the 115th Congress threatened to end on a bitter note of dysfunction as House conservatives, who've waged numerous futile battles over the years, picked one last fight before sinking into the minority,

this time backed up by the president.

The president had been scheduled to leave Friday afternoon to spend two weeks in Florida, but late Thursday press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders told reporters that Trump "will not travel in a shutdown."

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., on Thursday warned Republicans that they may have to return for a vote Friday. But it's impossible for McConnell to pass a spending bill without support from Democrats, who have locked arms in opposition to any money for a border wall.

Trump's opposition to the short-term deal brings

him full circle. Last week, he told incoming House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., and Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., that he would be "proud" to shut the government down if he didn't get the \$5 billion for the wall.

This Tuesday, when it became clear Trump didn't have enough support in Congress for the \$5 billion, the White House began backing down from the ultimatum.

Sanders said Trump would find other ways to fund the construction of the wall.

On Wednesday, Trump wrote in a Twitter post that the military would build it, though a number of budget experts said that would be

illegal because money can't be redirected without Congress's approval.

When Trump appeared to be backing down, conservative media outlets and Congress's most conservative members revolted, demanding the president rethink his decision.

By Thursday, Trump was back to demanding his wall and insisting that the money come from Congress.

Conservatives including members of the House Freedom Caucus encouraged the president to take a hard-line stance, arguing that this was his last opportunity to try to extract money for the wall.

As GOP leaders moved to adjust to Trump's shifting stances, Democrats rid-

culed the spectacle, even as they repeated vows to provide no money for Trump's wall.

"I don't know that anyone ever has any assurances from the White House on any subject, including this one," said Pelosi, the likely next speaker. "We're right in the middle of a sort of a meltdown on the part of Republicans."

Many lawmakers, particularly those who lost elections last month, have left Washington and aren't expected to come back. That makes it harder for congressional leaders to rally the votes they need for any measures.

The Associated Press contributed.

Mattis cites Trump strife in resigning

Mattis, from Page 1

General Jeff Sessions, pushed out chief of staff John Kelly and accepted the resignation of Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke.

Mattis made no secret of his disagreements with the president's policies and style in a two-page resignation letter that the Pentagon released shortly after Trump tweeted Mattis' planned departure.

"My views on treating allies with respect and also about being clear-eyed about both malign actors and strategic competitors are well-known," he wrote. "Because you have the right to have a Secretary of Defense whose views are better aligned with yours on these and other subjects, I believe it is right for me to step down from my position."

Mattis said he would remain in the job until Feb. 28, to allow time for a successor to be nominated and confirmed.

Mattis' departure had been rumored for months as signs accumulated that he was increasingly frustrated at Trump's impetuous style and penchant for blindsiding the Pentagon with major policy announcements — as hap-

pened Wednesday with the announcement that the president had ordered the withdrawal of 2,000 U.S. troops from Syria.

Trump had signaled his own annoyance on CBS' "60 Minutes" in October, saying, "I think he is a sort of Democrat, if you want to know the truth."

On Thursday, Trump announced the departure on Twitter, although with more praise than he has offered to many other departing officials.

"During Jim's tenure, tremendous progress has been made, especially with respect to the purchase of new fighting equipment," Trump tweeted. "A new Secretary of Defense will be named shortly. I greatly thank Jim for his service!"

Mattis' departure was lamented by foreign policy hands on both sides of the aisle, who viewed him as a sober voice of experience in the ear of a president who had never before held political office or served in the military.

Last year, GOP Sen. Bob Corker, a frequent Trump critic, said Mattis, along with Kelly and then-Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, were helping "separate our country from chaos."

Tillerson was fired early



MANUEL BALCE CENETA/AP

Defense Secretary Jim Mattis leaves the Pentagon on Wednesday. He said he would remain on the job until Feb. 28.

this year. Kelly is to leave the White House in the coming days.

"This is scary," reacted Senate Intelligence Committee Vice Chairman Mark Warner, D-Va., on Twitter. "Secretary Mattis has been an island of stability amidst the chaos of the Trump administration."

Mattis' exit will leave Trump free to choose a Pentagon chief more in line with his own policies.

As Pentagon chief, Mattis won Trump's support early on for expanding the U.S. military presence in Afghanistan and for unleash-

ing the military against Islamic State militants in Iraq and Syria.

But as a civilian leader, Mattis has more often been the voice of military restraint. He often sought to reverse or slow-roll Trump decisions he opposed, a strategy that became less effective as Trump began insisting the Pentagon follow his wishes.

Mattis recommended against pulling out of the Obama-era nuclear deal with Iran, for example, arguing that it was working to constrain Tehran's nuclear ambitions. Trump with-

drew from the agreement in May.

Mattis also was at odds with the president over Trump's demand to bar transgender recruits from the military, his call to create a new armed service called the "space force," his verbal attacks on NATO allies and his decision to halt training exercises in South Korea.

They also clashed over Trump's suggestions that he may cut U.S. troop levels in Europe and Asia, the president's call to remove U.S. troops from Syria, and the scale of U.S. airstrikes

against Damascus after its use of chemical agents against civilians.

Mattis' tenure in office matched the past three Pentagon chiefs, all of whom served around two years. But it was briefer than two other recent defense secretaries, Robert Gates, who served 4½ years, and Donald Rumsfeld, who held the job for seven years.

Trump chose Mattis to run the Pentagon four years after he had retired as a four-star general.

Associated Press contributed.

Trump's AG pick criticized aspect of Mueller probe

BY ERIC TUCKER
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump's pick for attorney general, William Barr, sent an unsolicited memo to the Justice Department this year criticizing a central prong of the special counsel's Russia investigation, attacking as "fatally misconceived" the idea the president could have obstructed justice.

The memo, sent in June while Barr was in private

practice and months before he was selected by Trump for the Justice Department job, could factor into his confirmation hearings before the Senate Judiciary Committee and may prompt questions about his ability to oversee the special counsel's investigation in an impartial manner.

The document argues there could be disastrous consequences for the Justice Department and the presidency if special counsel Robert Mueller were to

conclude that acts a president is legally permitted to take — whether firing an FBI director or granting a pardon — could constitute obstruction because of a subjective determination that they were done with corrupt intent.

Barr acknowledged that a president can commit obstruction of justice by destroying evidence or tampering with witnesses.

But, he said, he is unaware of any accusation like that in the Mueller investi-

gation, and he said it would "do lasting damage to the Presidency and to the administration of law within the Executive branch" if an act like the firing of ex-FBI chief James Comey could amount to obstruction.

Mueller and his team have spent the last year and a half investigating not only whether the Trump campaign coordinated with

Russia but also whether the president might have obstructed justice by asking Comey to drop an investigation into his national security adviser and firing the FBI director months later. That firing paved the way for Mueller's appointment.

It was also revealed Thursday that Acting Attorney General Matthew Whitaker, who had previ-

ously criticized Mueller's investigation, chose not to recuse himself even though a top Justice Department ethics official advised him to step aside out of an "abundance of caution," a senior official said.

As a legal commentator for CNN, Whitaker had opined about a scenario in which Trump could fire then-Attorney General Jeff Sessions and appoint an acting attorney general who could stifle the funding of Mueller's probe.



Barr

He razed it. Now he has to raise it.

S.F. homeowner told to rebuild home he illegally tore down

BY ALEX HORTON
The Washington Post

Richard Neutra's legacy of modernist architecture, marbled throughout Southern California, has a quieter history in San Francisco.

The Austrian-born architect designed five homes in the city, including a Victorian rowhouse for refugees from Nazi Germany, his first redwood building, along with his first local project, the Largent House — named for the modest family who moved into 49 Hopkins Ave. in 1936.

The stark white house with crisp lines, first occupied by a schoolteacher and an artist, joined a body of work that some have mentioned in the same breath as Frank Lloyd Wright — whom Neutra briefly worked under and admired so much that he named a son after the renowned architect.

"Their beauty, like that of any sea shell, is more than skin-deep — practical, not pretentious," Time magazine wrote about Neutra's designs in 1949, when he graced the cover.

Seven decades later, in October 2017, the business end of a backhoe scoop tore into the redwood-and-brick house in the leafy Twin Peaks foothills, leveling nearly everything except a garage door and frame in what city planners have called "an illegal demolition."

Ross Johnston, the owner who bought the 1,312-square foot house for \$1.7 million last year, had permission to remodel if the first floor of the home remained intact, city planning commissioner Dennis Richards said.

This month, Johnston sought retroactive approval of the demolition, along with permission to build a much larger, nearly 4,000-square-foot home in the



SANTIAGO MEJIA/SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE

A man who illegally demolished a San Francisco house designed by the Richard Neutra was ordered to rebuild it.

footprint of the Largent House.

Johnston was denied. In a 5-0 vote, the San Francisco Planning Commission ordered Johnston to build the exterior of the Largent House exactly as it stood in 1936, using the same material and methods.

Johnston must also install a sidewalk plaque telling its 81-year-old history, from construction to destruction, and finally, some semblance of rebirth for Neutra's modernist vision.

The plaque doubles as a "scarlet letter" for any developer looking to flip starter homes into mega-mansions, and a signal to any architecture buffs looking to see the real home that what will eventually stand there is a replica, Richards said.

The home has undergone several modifications over the years, Richards said, enough to make it ineligible for the most stringent landmark protections.

Johnston had wanted to move his family into the new home.

A similar incident occurred in 2016, when a Russian Hill home designed by master architect Willis Polk and designated a historical resource was demol-

ished despite limits to remodeling, the San Francisco Chronicle reported.

The developer, Troon Pacific, was ordered to pay a \$400,000 fine, the largest in city history for such a violation, but did not have to admit fault and reportedly increased the value sevenfold to \$30.2 million.

The Largent House was built for a different era of functionality and modesty of its first owners. It was designed to fit the narrow Twin Peaks hillside and "combined older memories of clapboarded, vertically attenuated Victorian San Francisco with typically Neutra fenestration and detailing," Thomas Hines wrote in a biography of Neutra.

Johnston conceded he eclipsed approvals for remodeling. Justin Zucker, his attorney, has said the home was in dangerous condition, which necessitated demolition — a claim Richards rebuffed as a falsehood to sidestep regulations.

Neighbor Cheryl Traverce filed a complaint when she discovered the home was razed and the debris spirited away in dump trucks.

"I went to New York for about a week and half and came back, the house was

gone, totally gone," she told KPIX 5. "I was shocked."

Historic preservationists also celebrated the move.

San Francisco Heritage, a

nonprofit group, said that approving Johnston's demolition would have "sent a strong message that existing planning and building laws

can be ignored and there will be no repercussions," the Chronicle reported.

"The question before you once again is whether a person can demolish existing housing stock with impunity and then be rewarded," said Michael Buhler, the group's chief executive.

Johnston can appeal the decision to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors. But Richards is confident that he won't find any sympathetic ears.

"They would probably vote 11-0 and tell him to go to hell," he said.

If the commission's decision is upheld, Johnston would be forced to build the replica or face fines or a lawsuit from the city.

If the plot were sold, Richards said, the construction mandate would carry over for any owner afterward.

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HEALTH CARE *Insights*

What should you know if you're considering Stem Cell Therapy?

Chronic Joint pain and soft tissue injuries are amongst the most common conditions being treated by Stem Cell Therapy (SCT).

It is almost impossible to open a local newspaper or magazine without seeing an advertisement for a Stem Cell clinic, most of which are inviting you to a lunch or dinner presentation where they sell you on all the benefits of some form of SCT just before they tell you how many thousands of dollars it will cost you out of pocket.

Stem cells have tremendous promise to help us understand and treat a range of diseases, injuries and health-related conditions such as osteoarthritis. The truth is that Stem Cell based therapy can be a safe alternative to painful surgery and joint replacement, if properly utilized. So the question should really be, How do I know if it can work for me and which therapy should I consider?

There are several different joint therapy procedures out there that all claim different benefits. Some may even be covered under Medicare and insurance. Here is the run down. Stem Cell Therapy: Stem cells are extracted from the bone marrow in your pelvis and

combined with enzymes /proteins and injected into the affected joint. Platelet-Rich Plasma: also known as PRP involves drawing your blood and separating the platelets and injecting a platelet rich concentration into the effected joint. Both have been used in Europe for quite some time but are considered experimental in the US. Amniotic Derived Growth Factors (also known as Biologics): these treatments are growing in popularity each day. The amniotic fluid, rich in growth factors, is obtained from the placenta of a consenting mother that has been thoroughly tested. There are nearly 75 of these biologics, so which ones have positive outcomes?

Here is where insight and proper research is required. There is no magic wand. There is no miracle cure. If a clinic guarantees they can eliminate pain or cure osteoarthritis, they are likely suspect, especially if the procedure is pitched at a dinner event and/or with a paid local celebrity. Many of the procedures pitched at these events cost thousands of dollars out of pocket and are not covered by insurance.

Due to the fact that these are natural biologics, similar in a sense to vitamins you can buy



Stem Cell Therapy: Unlocking the Natural Regenerative Power of the Human Body.

at your local pharmacy, they are not overseen by the FDA. So in a sense it's like the "Wild West" wherein anyone that can procure and market the product as an injectable biologic can then sell it to clinics to be injected into patients. Most of them make outlandish claims, with only a few that actually help the patient. The difference between the ones that help and the others is the number of live cells they contain. The preservation process is what determines how many of the cells will be live. It can be done via dehydration/crystallization or cryogenically freezing, both can work equally well.

Many experts and insurances companies will recommend trying conservative measures, Cortisone injections, physical therapy, gel

injections or pain medication to name a few, prior to considering regenerative medicine or even surgery

One of the biggest differences between SCT, PRP and Amnio Derived Therapy is that there are a few Amnio Derived Biologics that are covered by Medicare and Insurance. Costs for Stem Cell and PRP range from \$1500-\$12000 per procedure and costs for non-covered Amnio Derived procedures range from \$3000-\$5000 dollars per procedure.

At this point you are probably asking yourself: Why would someone pay out of pocket when there is Medicare and Insurance coverage? The answer most often is, the sales people at the dinner events are very convincing.

There are instances when patients receive

Medicare /Insurance covered Amnio Derived therapy and do not get the desired results. These patients can then try Stem Cell or PRP with the last resort being surgery. If a patient can start with an option that is vetted by Medicare and Insurance and therefore covered under most policies, that seems to be the sensible starting point prior to spending thousands or opting for invasive surgery.

In researching local regenerative clinics, Pain Relief Institute stands out as a leading provider of Stem Cell based services covered by Medicare and insurance. At PRI you actually meet with a member of the medical team rather than meeting with a sales consultant on your initial visit like many other stem cell clinics. Also, unlike many of the other clinics PRI is not offering free consultation, exams or x-rays to entice a prospective patient to come in. They are providers for Medicare and most insurance so visits are covered. To learn more about their services or to meet with a member of their medical team you can call: 312-248-6685.

NEWS BRIEFING

Staff and news services

Democrats to start presidential primary debates in June 2019

Democrats will hold at least a dozen presidential primary debates starting in June 2019 and running through April 2020, with party Chairman Tom Perez promising rules that will give everyone in a potentially large field a fair shot at voters' attention.

Making public his first in a series of decisions over the 2020 debate calendar, Perez said Thursday that the national party will sponsor six debates in 2019 and six more in 2020.

That could be extended if the nomination process lasts deeper into the spring.

Exact dates, locations, media partners and qualifying thresholds will be announced in early 2019.

The first two debates in June and July will have two rounds, possibly over two nights. Candidates will be assigned at random, Perez said, to avoid the party picking and choosing who is a top-tier contender.

Judge: 'No basis' to throw out Weinstein's sex assault case

NEW YORK — A New York judge declined to dismiss sexual assault charges against Harvey Weinstein on Thursday, rejecting the disgraced Hollywood titan's fierce push to have his indictment thrown out.

Judge James Burke's ruling buoyed the prosecution amid a prolonged defense effort to raise doubts about the case and the police investigation.

The defense argued the

case had been "irreparably tainted" by a detective's alleged coaching of a potential witness and one of the accusers. They also said the grand jury should have seen friendly emails he exchanged with his two accusers after the alleged attacks.

But Burke ruled Weinstein's claims had "no basis" and that prosecutors had no obligation to give the grand jury evidence favorable to the defense.

Congo, citing voting machines lost in fire, delays election

KINSHASA, Congo — Congo's electoral commission on Thursday delayed the country's long-awaited presidential election until Dec. 30, citing a recent fire that destroyed 80 percent of the voting machines in the capital.

The vote had been scheduled for Sunday. This is the latest of several delays in the election originally scheduled for late 2016, amid opposition concerns that President

Joseph Kabila had been looking for ways to stay in power. Kabila, in office since 2001, earlier this year announced he would step aside.

After last week's fire destroyed some 8,000 voting machines in Kinshasa, officials found replacement machines but had to get 5 million new ballots printed and prepared, said Corneille Nangaa, head of the national electoral commission.



Grounded: NASA's Serena Aunon-Chancellor is helped out of a Soyuz capsule. She landed Thursday in Kazakhstan with Alexander Gerst of the European Space Agency and cosmonaut Sergey Prokopyev after 197 days on the International Space Station.

N. Korea says it won't give up nukes until U.S. removes threat

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korea will not give up its nuclear arms unless the "U.S. nuclear threat to Korea" is eliminated, North Korean state media said on Thursday.

The statement carried by North Korea's official Korea Central News Agency is a particularly blunt indication that the two countries are still far apart on their ideas of what "denuclearization" means on the Korean Peninsula.

In a historic summit meeting in June, President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un vowed to work toward

"complete denuclearization" on the peninsula but without detailed agreements on how it will be achieved.

Since then, Trump has claimed progress in negotiations with North Korea, but talks appear to have stalled as Pyongyang has been demanding the removal of international sanctions as a precondition for denuclearization.

The North Korean statement said "the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula" includes elimination of not only the North's nuclear arms but also "the United States"

nuclear weapons and other invading forces in South Korea."

A number of analysts had long warned after the Trump-Kim summit that North Korea had little intention of just giving up its weapons without substantial concessions in return from the United States.

The United States withdrew its tactical nuclear weapons from South Korea in 1991, but continues to operate nuclear-armed bombers and submarines that can reach Korea from elsewhere as well as keeping 28,500 troops stationed in South Korea.

Otto Warmbier's parents seek \$1B from N. Korea

WASHINGTON — A wrongful death lawsuit filed this year by the parents of U.S. college student Otto Warmbier against North Korea is now seeking more than \$1 billion from the government the Warmbiers say tortured and killed their son.

Fred and Cindy Warm-

bier, of suburban Cincinnati, sued in April in federal court in Washington. North Korean authorities arrested their son in January 2016 for stealing a propaganda poster. He was sentenced to 15 years in prison.

The 22-year-old died in 2017, days after he was repatriated to the U.S. with

severe brain damage.

The Cincinnati Enquirer reports a motion filed in October in the lawsuit seeks \$1.05 billion in punitive damages and about \$46 million for the family's suffering.

North Korea has repeatedly denied the accusations that it tortured Warmbier.

Putin issues warning on rising threat of nuclear war

MOSCOW — The world is facing a rising threat of a nuclear war because of the U.S. pullout from arms control treaties and its destabilizing military plans, Russian President Vladimir Putin said Thursday.

Speaking at his annual news conference, Putin warned that "it could lead to the destruction of civilization as a whole and maybe even our planet."

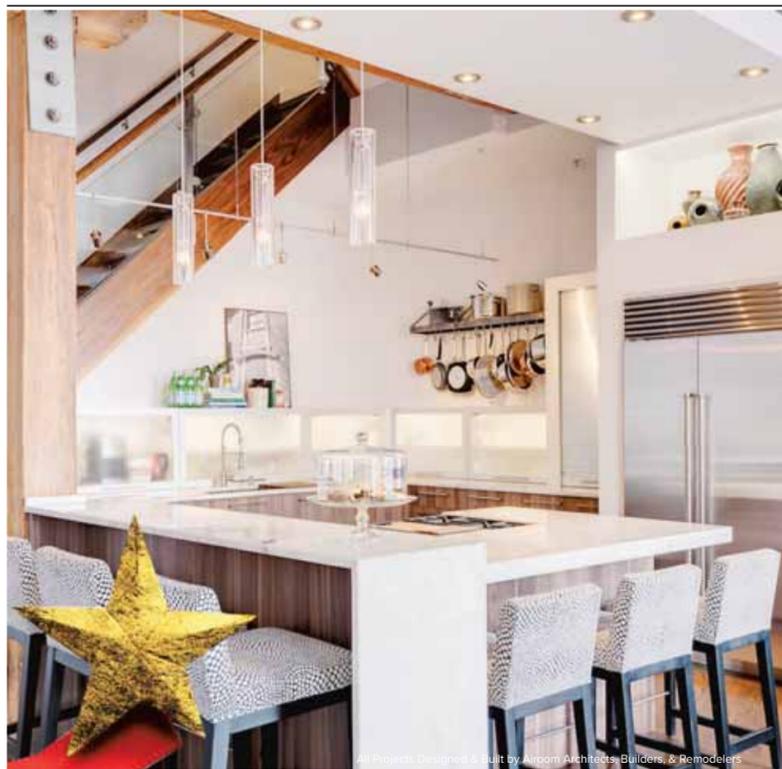
The Russian leader added that even though a nuclear conflict seems impossible to most, the danger is close and real.

He pointed at Washington's intention to walk away from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty and its reluctance to negotiate the extension of the 2010 New START agreement. U.S. officials say the withdrawal from the INF was prompted by Russian violations of the treaty, but Moscow denies any breaches.

On Mars: NASA's new InSight lander's robotic arm has placed a quake monitor on the Red Planet's dusty surface, a milestone achieved Wednesday less than a month after the spacecraft's touchdown.

The ground is slightly tilted so flight controllers still need to make the seismometer level.

In Somalia: The U.S. military says it has killed 11 al-Shabab extremists with a pair of airstrikes outside Somalia's capital. The U.S. Africa Command statement says Wednesday's airstrikes were in self-defense after al-Shabab fighters attacked forces with the Somali military and the African Union peacekeeping mission.



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EDITORIALS

The abuse scandal: Next steps for Madigan and the church

Sixteen years into the scandal of clergy sex abuse within the Roman Catholic Church, the horrors of these crimes still shock and disgust Americans. The exploitation of children, adolescents and adults by authority figures they had been taught to trust is reprehensible. We've written often of the lax, arguably criminal behavior of some local bishops and other church officials who shrouded grave misconduct in secrecy and didn't share reports of abuses with civil authorities.

In August a report from Pennsylvania's attorney general cataloged 70 years of such cases in that state. Attorney General Lisa Madigan responded with a comparable effort in Illinois, and on Wednesday her office issued nine pages of preliminary findings about cases in this state's six dioceses.

The report is a step toward the transparency that's been uneven in Illinois. The dioceses have had years to disclose credible allegations of abuse in some standardized way that's easy to comprehend, and accept. For any church officials who haven't done so, that's the urgent Job One.

Yet while Madigan's document includes strong accusations, it doesn't offer a clue about which church officials allegedly fell short in which diocese, past or present. We hope the final report, whenever it emerges, will be structured to make it more useful to citizens and civil authorities going forward.

We appreciate that Madigan has barely three weeks left in office, and wanted to share some fruit of her staff's work. Her successor, Kwame Raoul, has a chance to fill in the blanks. Given the severity and sweep of the accusations, the lack of specifics or evidence here leaves us yearning for more detailed information — chiefly the extent to which these problems persist to this day. Among the accusations:

■ The scope of clergy abuse of minors in Illinois is significantly more extensive than dioceses have previously reported.

■ Dioceses often disregarded allegations by not investigating them or finding reasons not to substantiate them.

■ Increased transparency would serve the dioceses' stated goal of

holding clergy accountable and promoting healing for survivors.

■ "Flawed processes and practices: The Illinois Dioceses' response to clergy sexual abuses is not uniform across Illinois and is often inadequate."

■ Dioceses' processes often don't prioritize survivor healing, "particularly when conflicts of interest are present with respect to the Dioceses' own interests and liabilities."

We see these findings less as new revelations than as pathways forward for the state, prosecutors and others, including the church. If bad practices persist, we want civil authorities and lawmakers to know that. While the report acknowledges that the dioceses have had different policies and practices in handling complaints, it draws no distinction between dioceses that have moved to make information public and others that evidently have not. Here's one example of why that matters:

News stories about the report have focused on its finding that, over time, Illinois dioceses logged abuse complaints against some

690 clergy, with 185 of those complaints found credible. The report says that math leaves allegations involving "more than 500 clergy that the Illinois Dioceses have not shared with the public."

The suggestion: Illinois could have had many more predator priests than the church wished to acknowledge. That caught our eye because of previous news coverage on the Archdiocese of Chicago's practice for some 25 years of handing every allegation to sex crimes prosecutors in the offices of the Cook and Lake County state's attorneys. (The protocol included a look-back provision giving the authorities access to earlier allegations.)

If some dioceses have kept 500 accusations secret, we want to know who did so. And if some accusations haven't been shared with the public — the report's phrase — because criminal prosecutors decided not to take action, we want to know, too, how common that is. But that brings us to the question Madigan's report provokes but doesn't address: Should accusations that have been discredited or otherwise found lacking by law enforcement

be shared with the public? In other words, it remains unclear to us how many, if any, of the 500 accused clergy should be added to the 185 already proven to have committed wrongdoing.

If we may offer a suggestion to Madigan and Raoul: The final version of this report should include chapters on each of the six dioceses. Tell the people and policymakers of Illinois who has shaped up and who currently is flouting church regulations or civil oversight. That's what all of us need to know.

We're acquainted with victims of clergy abuse, and we'll perpetually condemn what they've suffered and their perpetrators. If the attorney general can supplement our anger by giving us metrics or other information that clarifies the past and present scope of this scandal, good. But if it makes no distinction among locales, church officials and their failings, and doesn't offer some evidence of what is or isn't happening today, the final report won't much help Illinois law enforcement and lawmakers decide what, if anything, to do next.

Trump's foolish decision to leave Syria

One of America's partners in the Middle East fight against terror and chaos does a lot of dirty, dangerous work for little acclaim: the Syrian Kurds. Their militias battled Islamic State on the ground as the U.S. pounded away mainly from the air. The Syrian Kurds are still on the ground, but they've also been left high and dry by President Donald Trump.

Trump on Wednesday, with little apparent thought to the consequences, announced he will recall all 2,000 American troops from Syria, making his own declaration of "mission accomplished" over Islamic State, or ISIS, in Syria. "We have defeated ISIS in Syria, my only reason for being during the Trump Presidency," he tweeted. Good satisfying tweet, but dead wrong and bad policy.

Islamic State, a ragtag army of extremists, stunned Iraq and the United States five years ago by expanding quickly and waging sharp, sudden attacks in the deserts of Iraq and Syria. For a while the group gobbled territory, enslaved populated areas and even knocked Iraq's army on its heels. The tide eventually turned, thanks in part to the Syrian

Kurds, who were key to pushing Islamic State out of its putative capital, Raqqa, Syria.

These days Islamic State has about 1 percent of its former territory, but the group's poisonous ideology remains intact, as does a vacuum of power in war-torn Syria. Cancers of all types can recur: Bashar Assad is still the barbarous leader of Syria, while Russia and Iran are still playing destabilizing games. This is no time to up and leave. On Dec. 11, U.S. envoy to the region Brett McGurk said: "I think it's fair to say Americans will remain on the ground after the physical defeat of (Islamic State), until we have the pieces in place to ensure that that defeat is enduring."

Trump decided otherwise, going with his gut it seems, in defiance of members of his own administration and party. Republican Sen. Lindsey Graham said evacuating Syria would be a huge mistake and morale boost to Islamic State. Trump offered no compelling argument or replacement strategy to protect American interests going forward. He told Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan he didn't want to



A Syrian military council soldier, left, confers in April with an American soldier at a U.S. position in northern Syria. President Donald Trump's decision to pull troops from Syria has rattled Washington's Kurdish allies. **HUSSEIN MALLA/AP**

spend any more money and time in Syria.

This was great news to Erdogan, because he views Kurds as enemies and terrorists bent on carving out an independent state on Turkish soil. With U.S. forces out of the area, Turkey would be free to attack the Kurds in Syria.

Erdogan's isn't the only happy face. Also pleased with Trump's decision: Assad, who gets some breathing room; Iran, which uses Syria as a conduit to deliver arms to Hezbollah, an Israeli foe in Lebanon; and Russia, which built up a military presence in Syria to project power in the Middle East.

The less U.S. activity on the ground in Syria, the greater the instability.

Trump has a bad habit of separating pronouncements from facts. A rash decision to bring home American forces looks good on his Twitter feed, but it's dangerous in reality.

SCOTT STANTIS



WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING

America has always been an angry nation. We are a country born of revolution. Combat — on battlefields, in newspapers, at the ballot box — has been with us from the start. ... Even the country's mythology is rooted in anger: The American dream is, in a sense, an optimistic reframing of the discontent felt by people unwilling to accept the circumstances life has handed them. ...

I'm not proud to admit that I know what it feels like to relish seeing an opponent get his comeuppance. I profess to hate what cable news is doing to the national conversation, but I still tune in. I decry the nasty discourse on Twitter, then check back the next hour to refresh my outrage. I deplore the nation's rank partisanship, but I rarely split my ballot.

My anger has become a burden. Perhaps yours has too. And yet we can't turn away. The anger impulse is too deeply encoded, the thrill too genuine. So where do we go from here? ...

When we scrutinize the sources of our anger, we should see clearly that our rage is often being stoked not for our benefit but for someone else's. If we can stop and see the anger merchants' self-serving motives, we can perhaps start to loosen their grip on us.

Yet we can't pin the blame entirely on the anger profiteers. At the heart of much of our discontent is a very real sense that our government systems are broken.

Charles DuHigg, *The Atlantic*

Chicago Tribune

PERSPECTIVE



STACEY WESCOTT/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

It would not be easy for Illinois to follow in the footsteps of Arizona, where voters have twice OK'd state constitution amendments to cut pension benefits.

Why raising Arizona is unlikely to inspire pension changes in Illinois



ERIC ZORN

Twice in recent years, voters in Arizona have voted to amend their state's constitution in order to cut pension benefits for public employees in an effort to rescue ailing retirement funds.

This development has been greeted with enthusiasm in some quarters here because Arizona's state constitution contains robust language similar to the language in the Illinois constitution saying public pension benefits, once granted, can't be "diminished or impaired." And the courts in Arizona, like the courts in Illinois, had routinely batted down legislative efforts to reduce payments to retirees.

Could it happen here, home of the nation's biggest unfunded pension liability?

Will Illinois voters facing service cuts and tax increases to cover benefits to state retirees rise up to amend the state constitution?

Here are four reasons not to get your hopes or fears up.

1. Arizona was not a revolution.
It was a tweak. In two statewide

referendum votes, one in May 2016 and one in November 2018, voters OK'd amendments to their constitution that allowed lawmakers to trim pension benefits in systems covering police, firefighters, corrections workers and elected officials — only about 10 percent of workers covered by state pension systems.

2. There was very little organized opposition to the ballot initiatives in Arizona.

Even most of the impacted employees and pensioners seemed to be in agreement that the payout formula in these particular systems was unsustainable. Not to get too far into the weeds, but for decades the annual compounded percentage increases in the retirement systems in question were based in part on the investment returns of the pension funds, so that, paradoxically, good years in the market had even more long-term crippling effects than bad years because everyone's baseline payments soared.

The typical annual raise was 4 percent, but according to the Phoenix-based Public Safety Retirement System, some retirees saw occasional annual increases exceeding 15 percent.

The concession — increases linked to the local consumer price index and capped at 2 percent — was sold as a reasonable compromise that reduced volatility in the system and promised to save hundreds of millions of dollars

in the long run. Seventy percent of voters OK'd the 2016 measure (though just 52 percent OK'd the 2018 measure that added elected officials and prison guards to the amendment).

The idea that voters in Arizona are eager to make the sort of sweeping reductions to public pension benefits that some are proposing for Illinois has not been put to the test.

Any proposal to amend Illinois' constitution to attack the state's \$133 billion pension shortfall by allowing for a reduction in the 3 percent compounded annual increase in public-retiree pensions — about double the average cost-of-living increase over the past decade — would almost certainly meet with strong opposition from public-sector unions, which have much more power under our laws than they have in Arizona.

3. There was unanimous bipartisan support in the Arizona legislature for the changes.

Enabling legislation passed without a single "no" vote. In Illinois, in contrast, Democratic Gov.-elect J.B. Pritzker has frequently repeated his belief that a pension is a promise and that he will not support any effort to cut benefits. The Democrat-dominated Illinois General Assembly has voted up some cost-saving ideas in the past — all summarily rejected as unconstitutional by the courts — but has shown no interest in altering the pension-protect-

tion clause in our constitution.

4. It's comparatively easy to amend the Arizona constitution.

Arizona is a state that encourages citizen initiatives. Article 21 of its constitution allows for citizens to propose any and all constitutional amendments via petition drive. If those amendments are approved by simple legislative majorities, they are submitted to the voters, who can approve the amendment with a simple majority vote.

Illinois, in contrast, discourages citizen initiatives. Article 14 of our constitution limits petition-based amendment proposals to "structural and procedural" aspects of the legislature. All other amendments must begin in the General Assembly and be approved by a 60 percent supermajority of the members of each chamber. After that, 60 percent of voters who weigh in on the proposal (or a majority of all those who voted in the election) must approve the amendment for it to become law.

We can debate all day whether Illinois *should* follow Arizona's lead, inexact as the analogy between the two states may be. But the strong likelihood is that it *won't*. The better debate remains over what's fair and achievable here.

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Who will give us Facebook's replacement?

BY JOSEPH HOLT

A stunning report published Tuesday revealed that Facebook provided more than 150 companies — including Microsoft, Amazon and Yahoo — far more access to users' sensitive personal information, including allegedly private messages, than previously admitted. The details, reported by The New York Times, call to mind the sage observation of poet Maya Angelou: "When someone shows you who they are, believe them the first time."

In every company there is some gap between professed core values and the lived values that actually guide decisions and actions. The best companies are mindful of those values gaps and take steps to narrow them. But Facebook is not among the best companies where protection of users' sensitive personal information is concerned.

The company's history is riddled with data privacy scandals, most recently allowing political data firm Cambridge Analytica to access personal data from more than 50 million Facebook users in an effort to help Donald Trump become president. After each scandal those of us who use Facebook for want of a morally better alternative to staying in touch



CHIP SOMODEVILLA/GETTY
Facebook's Mark Zuckerberg arrives to testify at a committee hearing on Capitol Hill in April.

with friends and family members hope the company will finally do the right thing — protect users' personal information — if only for the wrong reason (it has to rather than because it wants to). But in light of the Times report, we apparently hope in vain.

Facebook's five professed core values — as described on its website and in a letter from chief executive Mark Zuckerberg in the prospectus filed ahead of the

company's initial public offering — are as follows: be bold; focus on impact; move fast; be open; and build social value.

Protecting users' private data is not even among those core values, which is as glaring an omission as it would be if "build quality aircraft" were not among the core values of Boeing. And Facebook's lived values are at odds with its stated values.

"Be bold" involves taking the risks needed to accomplish great things in a rapidly changing world. But while boldness can be a virtue, recklessness is a character flaw, and actions detailed in the Times report suggest Facebook's actual value is "Be reckless."

According to reports, the controversial "People You May Know" feature that Facebook introduced in 2008 recklessly recommended friend connections between a harasser and his victim, among patients receiving care from the same psychiatrist and between a man who donated sperm secretly to a couple he knew so they could have a child and the daughter who does not know he is her father. Awkward.

"Focus on impact" aims to solve "the most important prob-

lems" and not waste time on lesser issues. In his letter, Zuckerberg writes, "We don't wake up in the morning with the primary goal of making money," but his company's (in)actions consistently suggest that data privacy is a lesser issue and that the real value is "Focus on making as much money as possible."

"Move fast" reflects the belief that moving quickly and making mistakes is better than moving slowly and missing opportunities. Interviews with former Facebook employees revealed that some executives and engineers saw newly mandated reviews of new products and features for data privacy concerns as "an impediment to quick innovation and growth." That suggests the value embedded in the company's culture is "Never let non-economic concerns (like data privacy) get in the way of economic opportunities."

"Be open" reflects the sound belief that "informing people make better decisions." But Facebook's privacy violations over the years reflect its clear preference that users remain in the dark where lax oversight of their personal information is concerned and suggest its actual value is "Be

no more open than required" by law or occasional user outrage.

"Build social value" by bringing the world closer together. There is a tension in Zuckerberg's letter between his claim that "We've always cared primarily about our social mission" and his commitment to work hard to make shares purchased by new investors in the IPO "worth a lot."

I suspect Zuckerberg does care about bringing people together, but only secondarily. His company's actions consistently suggest its actual value is "Bringing people closer together is a nice plus" but not as important as making as much money as possible for ourselves and our investors.

Facebook leaders have once again shown us who they are, and I for one believe them. I would readily leave their platform for a new social network that brings people closer together as well as Facebook does while zealously guarding users' sensitive personal information. And I believe that many other increasingly disillusioned Facebook users would readily do the same. Who will be our entrepreneurial hero?

Joseph Holt is an ethics professor at the University of Notre Dame's Mendoza College of Business.

PERSPECTIVE



DELIL SOULEIMAN/GETTY-AFP

A U.S. military convoy rolls near the northern Syrian city of Manbij in March 2017. The Trump administration plans to remove 2,000 American troops stationed in Syria.

Will Trump's pulling of troops from Syria prove to be a historic blunder?

BY IVO DAALDER

Against the advice of his entire national security team, President Donald Trump has ordered the full withdrawal of 2,000 U.S. ground troops from Syria.

The decision, as usual, was announced on Twitter. "We have defeated ISIS in Syria, my only reason for being there during the Trump Presidency," Trump tweeted Wednesday. But that is a judgment few in his administration actually shared. Only days earlier, Trump's top military adviser, Gen. Joseph Dunford, declared: "We still have a long way to go." And Brett McGurk, the president's special envoy to the global coalition against Islamic State, said, "Nobody is declaring a mission accomplished," and that withdrawing now would be "reckless."

The president apparently had other ideas. He has long wanted to withdraw American troops from Syria (and, indeed, many other places). In March he first announced that troops would be coming out "very soon," and he was only reluctantly persuaded to keep them there for a longer period. Now the president's patience appears to have been worn out. The troops are coming home.

What seems to have sealed the deal for Trump was a phone call Friday with President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of

Turkey. Erdogan reportedly warned Trump that he would soon move against the Syrian Kurdish forces, which the U.S. had long backed, because they were aligned with Kurdish terrorist groups in Turkey and represented an unacceptable threat. Removing U.S. troops that were deployed with the Syrian Kurds would avoid the possibility of a confrontation between forces of the two NATO allies. To sweeten the deal, Erdogan also agreed to purchase Patriot air defense missiles, a deal worth \$3.5 billion to U.S. firms.

For Trump, therefore, the decision to remove U.S. troops represented a double win: The troops he had long wanted to withdraw were coming home, and Turkey would be spending billions buying American military equipment.

For almost everyone else, however, Trump's decision represents a historic blunder. "An Obama-like mistake," Sen. Lindsay Graham, R-S.C., bitingly called the move. "A colossal mistake," Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., intoned. Countless experts took to the airwaves and Twitter to denounce the move as a win for Russia and Iran, a huge loss for America's allies in the Middle East and a vindication for Bashar Assad, Syria's strongman, whose reign of terror over the past seven years has caused hundreds of thousands of deaths and millions of refugees.

The critics, no doubt, have a point. Trump's decision completely undermines his administration's strategy in Syria and for the region. In September, national security adviser John Bolton promised that "We're not going to leave as long as Iranian troops are outside Iranian borders and that includes Iranian proxies and militias." A month later, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo announced a "reassessment of America's mission in Syria," which was not just to defeat Islamic State but also to secure "a peaceful and political resolution to the Syrian conflict and the removal of all Iranian and Iranian-backed forces from Syria."

In announcing the decision to remove U.S. forces, the White House and Pentagon made clear that "the campaign against (Islamic State) is not over," but both were silent on the larger objectives of the U.S. mission in Syria, including training regional forces to help secure the peace and countering Iranian influence.

That said, there are legitimate questions about the actual viability of the administration's Syria strategy. By itself, keeping 2,000 U.S. troops in Syria for the long term is no guarantee of future success regarding any of its stated goals. Islamic State has morphed into a terrorist threat that extends to many parts of

the globe, and the singular focus on Syria and Iraq may have contributed to that. Our ability to train and equip regional forces to sustain and stabilize post-conflict regions has been found wanting, as the decade-old effort in Afghanistan shows. And while Iran's influence in Syria is no doubt strong, it's not clear how keeping a small number of U.S. troops would actually undermine that influence.

The problem with Trump's decision is that it should have been the product of a reasoned process of evaluation, including an assessment of the likelihood of success in meeting stated goals. It should have followed detailed consultation with allies and others with direct interest in the region and not sprung on them with little, if any, notice. As usual, however, the decision reflected the president's instincts rather than the product of reasoned analysis.

The decision to withdraw American forces from Syria now offers an opportunity for the administration to undertake just such analysis and consider a course of action that has greater likelihood of success than the previous course it was embarked upon.

Ivo Daalder is the president of the Chicago Council on Global Affairs and a former U.S. ambassador to NATO.

VOICE OF THE PEOPLE

STEMming our future workforce

We need to consider whether the continued educational focus on science, technology, engineering and math makes complete sense in today's world ("Illinois continues growth in STEM," Dec. 13). While at face value this information appears to be an achievement, I have some concerns about whether a continued focus primarily on STEM benefits all of us.

While I agree that technology experts are needed especially in today's computer-dependent world, I would like to know if employers in Illinois are currently voicing a significant need for science, engineering and math graduates, or perhaps, experts in other areas? Based on this, are the current math and science requirements for college graduates (even those pursuing associate degrees) appropriate? Or, could they be a roadblock for young adults who are not fluent in advanced math and science, and who are trying to pursue careers in occupational areas that require little, if any, knowledge in these areas?

I have heard stories of young people trying to get a two-year degree in order to become a vet assistant, radiation therapist, dental hygienist, etc., only to fail in their efforts because they couldn't pass the required math classes. So while I think it is great that Illinois is showing growth in this field, I think we need to re-evaluate our STEM requirements at all educational levels to make sure we aren't allowing this focus to serve as an unfair "gatekeeper" to those who want to fill other viable current and future job openings in our state and country.

— Karen Stahlecker, Naperville

Wrap it up, Mueller

Donald Trump is the third president in

CAPTION CONTEST WINNERS



WINNER:

See what happens when you text and drive? — Tom Koshy, Palatine

RUNNERS-UP:

Circle Interchange detour?

— Michael Sackar, Chicago

I'll bet he misses Meigs Field!

— Chris Dransoff, Batavia

That reminds me, Stan, have you untangled that box of Christmas tree lights in the garage?

— Phillip Battaglia, Chicago

my life who has been under investigation by a special prosecutor.

Each had a different outcome. Richard Nixon resigned, Bill Clinton was impeached and Trump will be either be impeached, indicted or jailed, or will resign. We should question how individuals like them were nominated and elected to be

presidents.

Both Trump and Hillary Clinton were flawed candidates. We knew it. Both political parties knew it. Yet they were the candidates.

Now we wait and wait until special counsel Robert Mueller presents his report. It's been over a year and \$29 million spent to date and there is no end in sight.

Trump is no choir boy, but has he committed so many crimes that this probe cannot be completed sooner rather than later? Let's get it done.

We have seen this movie before. We

know what the outcome will be. For the sake of the country, it's time to end it soon.

— Kevin J. Cuttone, Arlington Heights

In 13th Ward, probe needed

Even though 13th Ward aldermanic candidate David Krupa will remain on the ballot in the coming election against incumbent Marty Quinn, there should be an investigation performed by Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan. But as she is the daughter of House Speaker Michael Madigan, we all know that is never going to happen. Therefore the federal government needs to take charge of this investigation into possible election fraud. This is just another reason for term limits for all political offices, as well as an end to gerrymandering by whatever political power controls the state.

— John Reichert, La Grange Park

Unsportsmanlike conduct

What has happened to sportsmanship? Packers fan Russell Beckman's lawsuit to force the Bears to let him wear full Packers regalia on the Bears sideline has officially crossed the line from mere rivalry to full-blown spite and meanness. In doing so he hurts the image of the very team he is trying to promote.

— David Sticha, Marengo

Safeguard journalists

I would like to agree with the editorial, "Time's Salute to Truth-Telling During 'The War on Truth,'" (Dec. 12). I believe we need to protect journalists, not endanger them.

Journalists are killed or imprisoned, dozens of journalist deaths have occurred, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists.

In Uzbekistan, the president threatens journalists with fines and deportation. We need to stand together and promote freedom of the press.

— Gwen Ouellette, Warren, Mich.

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Chicago Tribune BUSINESS

Walgreens to cut costs by \$1B

Within three years, chain plans store and warehouse closings while leaning on technology to gain customers

By **LISA SCHENCKER**
Chicago Tribune

Walgreens announced plans Thursday to cut at least \$1 billion in annual costs within three years while using technology to address changes in how consumers shop and finding more ways to draw customers into stores.

The cost-cutting will include

some warehouse consolidations and store closings, Walgreens Boots Alliance executives said on an early morning call with analysts.

Walgreens also is looking to change and update its products and services and develop new income streams to attract more customers.

"In the world we live in today, we must create a company that

can interact with our customers however, wherever and whenever is right for them," Alex Goulay, co-chief operating officer, told analysts. "We can't wait for them to come to our stores."

The Deerfield-based company said it has retained Accenture to help it review its cost structure over a 16-week period and plans to adopt zero-based budgeting, a tool

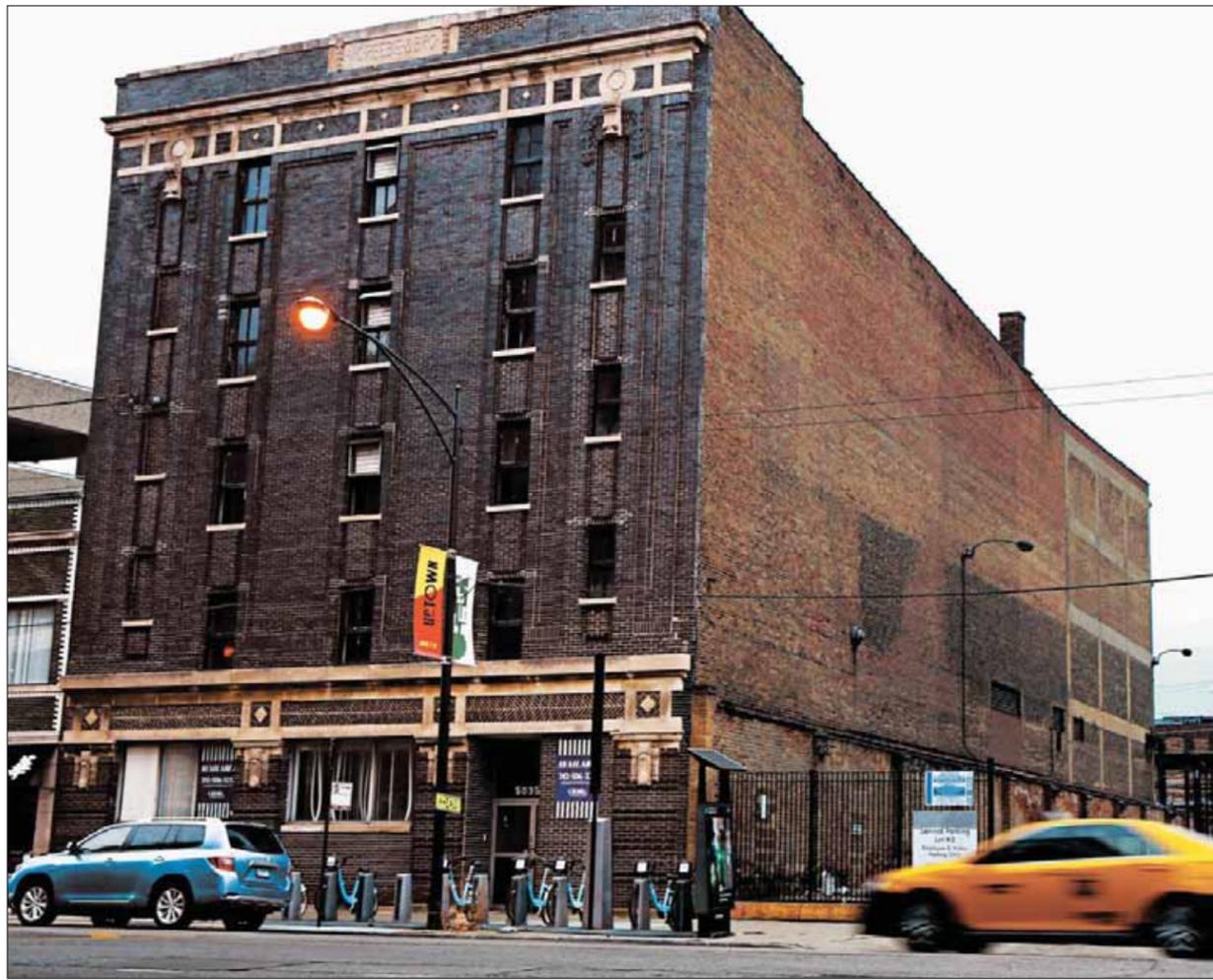
used by consumer product companies to more closely justify all corporate spending. Earlier this year, Accenture said more than 300 companies around the world use the tool. In the Chicago area, that list includes Kraft Heinz and Mondelez International.

"Whether this will be three or five (years) is difficult to say because many of these tests take a lot of time to come to a real fruition," CEO Stefano Pessina said, adding, "We are doing an incredible effort to digitize the company and to use the digitaliza-

tion for not only improving the efficiency of the company but also to offer many, many more services to our customers."

Part of that digitization effort includes a partnership with Verily, which is part of Google parent company Alphabet. In an arrangement that was announced Wednesday, Walgreens and Verily are initially developing a pilot project that will use devices to help people take their medications as prescribed. Broadly, they plan to

Turn to **Walgreens, Page 2**



STACEY WESCOTT/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

The TimeLine Theatre Company purchased the building along the 5300 block of N. Broadway Avenue and the adjoining parking lot to the south.

Another timeline for an Uptown theater

More zoning approvals, more delight in Chicago



RYAN ORI
On Real Estate

A downtown skyscraper and two North Side theaters on Thursday moved closer to securing zoning approval to kick off Chicago redevelopments envisioned as crowd-pleasers.

The Chicago Plan Commission approved a \$185 million plan to add an observatory to the city's third-tallest building, the Aon Center.

The commission also approved renovations of two theaters whose owners want to bring back live music: a \$75 million project at the Uptown Theatre and a \$69 million Congress Theater renovation.

Construction is expected to begin on the three projects in 2019, pending full City Council approval. That final vote for the projects could come as soon as January.

The Aon Center's New York-based owner, 601W Cos., plans to add a glassy pavilion on the ground floor, and an external glass elevator tower up the 1,136-foot tall skyscraper. Those would lead tourists to a new observatory with a restaurant and two thrill rides: the Sky Summit, designed to lift cabs filled with visitors over the building's edge for 30 to 40 seconds; and a virtual reality experience, Ultraflight, that emulates soaring through the Chicago skyline.

The Aon Center, at 200 E. Randolph St., overlooks Millen-

nium Park.

Chicago firms Jam Productions and Farpoint Development plan to restore the Uptown, a 4,381-seat former movie palace and concert venue at 4816 N. Broadway Ave. Seating in the live events venue could be expanded to as much as 5,800.

In a move also approved Thursday, the Uptown redevelopment joint venture will buy an approximately 31,000-square-foot parking lot near the theater, at 1130 W. Lawrence Ave., from the city for \$1.

There are several sources of city and state dollars backing the Uptown renovation, including \$13 million in tax increment financing funds.

The Uptown has been vacant and boarded up since the last concert, by the J. Geils Band, in 1981.

In the Congress Theater plan, developer Michael Moyer would receive \$9.65 million in TIF funds. Moyer's plan includes creating 14 apartments and a 50-room hotel in the existing theater at 2135 N. Milwaukee Ave., as well as building a seven-story structure with retail and 72 residences on a nearby parking lot. Moyer plans to bring back concerts to the 4,900-seat theater in Logan Square.

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In part of a growing entertainment district, TimeLine plans spot inside and astride old warehouse building

By **CHRIS JONES** | Chicago Tribune

On the same day that the Chicago Plan Commission approved renovation plans for the Uptown Theatre, the non-profit TimeLine Theatre Company said it has purchased for itself a new home at the Northern end of the rapidly emerging Uptown entertainment district.

Located at 5033-35 N. Broadway (just north of Argyle Street), the new TimeLine Theatre, will be located both inside and astride a century-old warehouse, long used as a storage facility.

"TimeLine," said Ald. Harry Osterman (48th), "now will breathe life back into that building."

TimeLine, which has been searching for a new home for years and previously entered into a now-aborted agreement with a developer working on the former Trumbull School in Andersonville, said it had paid \$2.69 million for the 45,000 square-foot brick building, and anticipates a total purchase, construction and renovation cost of about \$20 million. The purchase includes an empty lot directly to the south of the building, for which parking would be an obvious use, although there is also a parking garage just to the north.

The theater, which has a \$1.9 million annual budget and currently performs at the Wellington Avenue Church of Christ in Lakeview, said it intends to build two flexible theaters. The new-construction mainstage, with 250 seats, will be right behind the warehouse, up against the CTA tracks, directly adjacent to the Argyle Street station on what is now vacant land. The smaller, 150-seat the-

"They will be able to put down roots here, support the local businesses and plan for their future."

— Ald. Harry Osterman

ater will be inside the expansive fifth floor of the re-purposed warehouse, the rest of which will be used for lobby, bar and exhibition space, as well as housing offices and backstage needs. Architects have yet to be determined, but, assuming all goes as planned, a building of this scale likely will move mid-sized TimeLine in the top budgetary and artistic sphere of Chicago theaters.

The warehouse, built in the

Turn to **Theater, Page 4**

Misery loves company in market

Stocks plummet further, closing in on worst month in decade

By **MARLEY JAY**
Associated Press

NEW YORK — It was another miserable day on Wall Street as a series of big December plunges continued, putting stocks on track for their worst month in a decade.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average dropped 464 points Thursday, bringing its losses to more than 1,700 points since Friday.

The benchmark S&P 500 index has slumped 10.6 percent this month and is almost 16 percent below the peak it reached in late September.

The steady gains of this spring and summer now fell like a distant memory. As we've entered the fall, investors started to worry that global economic growth is cooling off and that the U.S. could slip into a recession in the next few years. The S&P 500 is on track for its first annual loss in a decade.

The technology stocks that have led the market in recent years are now dragging it down. The technology-heavy Nasdaq composite is now down 19.5 percent from the record high it reached in August.

The market swoon is coming even as the U.S. economy is on track to expand this year at the fastest pace in 13 years. Markets tend to move, however, on what investors anticipate will happen well into the future, so it's not uncommon for stocks to sink even when the economy is humming along.

Right now, markets are concerned about the potential for a slowing economy and two threats that could make the situation worse: the ongoing trade dispute between the U.S. and China, which has lasted most of this year, and rising interest rates, which act as a brake on economic growth by making it more expensive for businesses and individuals to borrow money.

The selling in the last two days came after the Federal Reserve raised interest rates for the fourth time this year and signaled it was likely to continue raising rates next year, although at a slower rate than it previously forecast.

The S&P 500 index skidded 39.54 points, or 1.6 percent, to 2,467.42. The Dow fell 464.06 points, or 2 percent, to 22,859.60 after sinking as much as 679.

The Nasdaq fell 108.42 points, or 1.6 percent, to 6,528.41. The Russell 2000 index of smaller companies dropped another 23.23 points, or 1.7 percent, to 1,326.

Smaller company stocks have been crushed during the recent market slump because slower growth in the U.S. will have an outsized effect on their profits. Relative to their size, they also tend to carry more debt than larger companies, which could be a problem in a slower economy with higher interest rates.

The Russell 2000 is down almost 24 percent from the peak it reached in late August and it's down 13.6 percent for the year to date. The S&P 500, which tracks larger companies, is down 7.7 percent.

Tobacco giant buys into vaping market

Marlboro maker Altria purchases \$13B stake in Juul

BY MICHELLE CHAPMAN
Associated Press

Altria, one of the world's biggest tobacco companies, is spending nearly \$13 billion to buy a huge stake in the vape company Juul as cigarette use continues to decline.

The Marlboro maker said Thursday that it will take a 35 percent share of Juul, putting the value of the company at \$38 billion, larger than Ford Motor Co., Delta Air Lines or the retail giant Target.

"We are taking significant action to prepare for a future where adult smokers overwhelmingly choose non-combustible products over cigarettes," Altria Chairman and CEO Howard Willard said in a prepared statement.

E-cigarettes and other vaping devices have been



SETH WENIG/AP

Altria says it will take a 35 percent share of Juul, putting the value of the company at \$38 billion.

sold in the U.S. since 2007 and have grown into a \$6.6 billion business. It also is already intersecting with another seismic shift in the U.S. — the legalization of marijuana across the U.S.

The investment comes about two weeks after Altria stepped into the cannabis market with an investment

of around \$2 billion in Cronos Group, the Canadian medical and recreational marijuana provider.

North American consumer spending on legal cannabis is expected to grow from \$9.2 billion in 2017, to \$47.3 billion by 2027, according to Arcview Market Research, a cannabis-

focused investment firm.

Altria Group Inc. isn't the only major corporation attempting to incorporate marijuana sales.

This week Anheuser-Busch InBev, the maker of Budweiser, partnered with medical cannabis company Tilray in a \$100 million deal to research cannabis-infused drinks for the Canadian market.

In August, Constellation Brands announced a \$4 billion investment in another Canadian pot producer, Canopy Growth Corp., the largest to date by a major U.S. corporation in the cannabis market.

With nicotine-based vaping, devices heat a flavored nicotine solution into an inhalable vapor.

They have been pitched to adult smokers as a less-harmful alternative to cigarettes, though there's been little research on the long-term health effects or on whether they help people quit.

The growing popularity

of e-cigarettes has alarmed a number of health officials.

This week, Surgeon General Jerome Adams said parents, teachers, health professionals and government officials must take "aggressive steps" to keep children from using e-cigarettes. Federal law bars the sale of e-cigarettes to those under 18.

There is a scramble in the U.S. to reverse a recent explosion in teen vaping that public health officials fear could undermine decades of declines in tobacco use.

An estimated 3.6 million U.S. teens use e-cigarettes, representing 1 in 5 high school students and 1 in 20 middle schoolers, according to the latest federal figures.

Juul said Thursday that it recently began to take actions intended to prevent underage vaping.

The company shut down its Facebook and Instagram accounts last month and halted in-store sales of flavored pods, which were

viewed by many critics as a direct play for younger users.

Juul also said that it's also enhancing age-verification for its online sales.

Juul Labs Inc., based in San Francisco, said it had initially hesitated to accept the investment from Altria.

"But over the course of the last several months we were convinced by actions, not words, that in fact this partnership could help accelerate our success switching adult smokers," Juul said.

Juul will remain an independent company, but it gains access to Altria's massive infrastructure and reach. Namely, Altria will help Juul secure space on store shelves beside traditional cigarettes. It will also help Juul reach smokers via cigarette pack inserts and mailings.

Under the agreement, Altria's only entry into the e-cigarette market will be through Juul for at least six years.

'Super Saturday' shaping up as big shopping day — again

BY ANNE RILEY MOFFAT
Bloomberg News

Waiting until the weekend to do your holiday shopping? You're not alone: Saturday may be the biggest spending day of the year.

Although Black Friday used to be America's biggest single shopping day, the final Saturday before Christmas took the title four or five years ago as more retailers began their Black Friday sales on Thanksgiving Day — or weeks before, said Craig Johnson, president of Customer Growth Partners. U.S. shoppers will spend an estimated \$26 billion on Dec. 22, beating the \$24 billion they shelled out on the day after Thanksgiving, the industry researcher said.

"Black Friday is not quite the epic event it used to be," Johnson said. As holiday sales inch earlier, demand gets "pulled forward from Black Friday proper."

Black Friday, now almost four weeks past, was still a wildly successful day for most retailers. With America sporting a growing economy, low fuel prices and rising wages, consumers spent big on the unofficial holiday. More than 165 million U.S. consumers shopped during the five-day Thanksgiving weekend, according to the National Retail Federation, spending \$7.9 billion online on Cyber Monday alone, Adobe Analytics said. The buying surge helped boost retail-sales figures from the Commerce Department 0.2 percent in November, topping forecasts.

On a single-day basis, however, Saturday — dubbed "Super Saturday" in some retail circles — will be even bigger. According to the International Council of Shopping Centers, 44



EVE EDELHEIT/BLOOMBERG NEWS

Shoppers crowd a checkout counter at a Bass Pro Outdoor World store in Tampa, Fla.

percent of U.S. adults plan to shop for holiday presents or related items Saturday, spending an average of \$173 in-store and online. That's up from the 38 percent who shopped on Super Saturday last year.

Part of that is because confident customers are spending more in total this season, but it's also due to where Christmas falls on the calendar. With Dec. 25 landing on a Tuesday, there

are two full travel days between Saturday and the official holiday, rather than the one travel day last year's Monday Christmas offered. That gives procrastinating shoppers all day Saturday to spend before packing their bags for Sunday or Monday departures.

"If Super Saturday occurs and Christmas is Sunday, then it slows it down. It's hard to buy gifts when you're on an airplane," Customer

Growth Partners' Johnson said. "The classic weekend is perfectly situated for all these procrastinators."

Luxury brands, like Tiffany and Prada, will get an outsized share of that spending, Johnson said. That's partially because a big charge made Dec. 22 won't appear until a January credit card statement, meaning it could be paid for with year-end bonuses

arriving in early 2019. Late shoppers also tend to skew more male, though with 75 percent of overall shopping done by women, plenty of female customers will also be making Super Saturday runs, Johnson said.

And what if Dec. 25 rolls around and you've still forgotten to shop? Starbucks Corp. says many of its locations will be open and sell mugs, coffee beans and gift cards.

Plan to close stores, warehouses

Walgreens, from Page 1

work together on finding ways to improve access to health care technology, such as through sensors and software to help prevent, manage, screen and diagnose diseases.

It's the latest in a series of Walgreens partnerships announced recently.

Walgreens partnered with Kroger to carry Kroger groceries in more than a dozen of its stores in northern Kentucky and allow grocery pickup at those stores. Walgreens also recently announced that it would expand its partnership with LabCorp, opening at least 600 LabCorp centers at Walgreens stores, where specimens can be collected for lab testing. Earlier this month, Walgreens announced that it had launched next-day nationwide prescription delivery with FedEx. And Pessina said Thursday that Walgreens has advanced its collaboration with health insurer Humana.

John Boylan, a senior equity analyst with Edward Jones, praised the partnerships in a note to investors Thursday, but he cautioned that only time will tell how much of a difference the partnerships, and the cost-cutting, will truly make.

"Many of these partnerships are still in their very early stages, and we would like to see if these services will have a notable impact on growth and profitability, and if its cost cutting efforts will counteract the continuing reimbursement pressure we are seeing in the drug-store market," Boylan wrote.

Broad details of the cost-cutting program came as Walgreens reported fiscal first-quarter net earnings of \$1.1 billion, or \$1.18 a share, compared with \$821 million, or 81 cents a share, in the year-ago period. First-quarter sales rose 9.9 percent from the comparable quarter a year ago and included results from recently acquired Rite Aid stores.

Walgreens spent more than \$4 billion to acquire nearly 2,000 stores from Rite Aid in a deal it closed last year.

The call also followed a number recent changes to employee benefits that angered many workers and former workers, including deep cuts to bonuses for store and other managers.

Walgreens also decided that starting in 2019, employees won't qualify for paid time off unless they work at least 30 hours a week, versus 20 hours currently. And the chain decided to eliminate health insurance for a number of its eligible retirees after 2019. However, the company is adding a paid parental leave benefit that will offer full pay for eight weeks of leave to new mothers and fathers. Also, it is expanding short-term disability leaves for hourly employees working at least 30 hours a week.

Cresco Labs buys Rockford, Wrigleyville dispensaries

BY ALLY MAROTTI
Chicago Tribune

Medical marijuana company Cresco Labs signed a deal to acquire two dispensaries, one in the Lakeview neighborhood and another in Rockford, weeks after the Chicago-based company went public in Canada.

The dispensaries, Med-Mar Lakeview and Med-Mar Rockford, will be Cresco's fourth and fifth in the state, maxing out the number a company can own in Illinois. Terms of the deal were not disclosed.

"Not only do they become a part of Cresco Labs in Illinois, but they're also part of the fabric of the Cresco Labs company," said Charlie Bachtell, CEO and co-founder of Cresco.

"We'll learn a lot from them, and they'll have a big influence on how we move forward, even with operations in other states."

The acquisitions come just weeks after Cresco debuted on the Canadian Securities Exchange. The company raised \$87 million through its listing, bringing its total capital raised this year to \$205 million, Bachtell said. Third-quarter revenue was \$12.2 million, more than four times what it was in the same period last year.

Illinois medical marijuana companies are making big moves on the state and national levels as the stigma around weed begins to fall away. Besides going public in Canada, Illinois weed companies have raised hundreds of millions

of dollars to fund expansions and consolidated through a number of deals, one topping \$680 million. Interest in the drug is growing, especially as Gov.-elect J.B. Pritzker has called for legalizing recreational marijuana.

Last week, Bachtell was named to the cannabis legalization subcommittee of Pritzker's transition team. That work includes developing recommendations for safely legalizing and decriminalizing the drug, reviewing sentences of people incarcerated for marijuana offenses and making sure it's not just white men running the industry.

There are 55 licensed medical licensed dispensaries in Illinois, which has more than 49,000 qualified



ERIN HOOLEY/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Tammy Machulis trims marijuana buds last August at the Cresco Labs medical marijuana cultivation facility in Joliet.

patients.

Cresco co-owns two dispensaries in Buffalo Grove and Champaign and in October announced that it would acquire its first wholly owned dispensary, FloraMedex in Elmwood Park. The Chicago-based firm also operates three cultivation centers in Illinois, including one in Joliet that recently doubled its

growing capacity.

Cresco employs about 500 people, roughly 200 of whom are in Illinois. The company also has licenses to operate in Pennsylvania and Ohio and has acquired dispensary and cultivation operations in Arizona, Nevada and California.

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TUMMY TUCK FOR THE HOLIDAYS?

Many try to squeeze in elective surgeries at year's end

BY LISA SCHENCKER
Chicago Tribune

People aren't just shopping for toys, clothes and other gifts this time of year.

They're also buying new knees, getting breast augmentations and scheduling colonoscopies.

Each year, elective surgeries spike around the holidays in Chicago and across the nation. Many patients wait to schedule surgeries until after they've hit their health insurance deductibles toward the end of the year so they don't have to pay as much out of pocket for procedures. It's a trend that shows no signs of slowing, especially as an increasing number of people enroll in high-deductible insurance plans.

Last year, more than 43 percent of adults ages 18 to 64 who get health insurance through their employers were enrolled in plans with deductibles of at least \$1,300 per individual or \$2,600 per family, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. That was up from about 15 percent of adults enrolled in similar plans in 2007.

"I have patients calling

and basically begging to get in before the end of the year, and we're trying to fit them in wherever we can," said Dr. Jeffrey Nathanson, a gastroenterologist at NorthShore University HealthSystem. "A lot of people want to make sure they've met their annual deductible before having anything elective."

Among the procedures that see increases this time of year are bunion surgery, breast lifts, vasectomies, tummy tucks, carpal tunnel surgery and gastric bypasses, according to Amino, a digital health company that offers data about health care costs and quality.

Carina Lupisan, of Rogers Park, had a cyst behind her knee removed and a torn meniscus repaired earlier this month at Weiss Memorial Hospital in Chicago. She wanted to get it done sooner rather than later, feeling her knee getting progressively weaker as she walked.

It was a bonus, she said, that she didn't have to pay out of pocket for the procedures because she had already met her deductible and \$3,000 out-of-pocket maximum for the year.

"That's a lot of money for

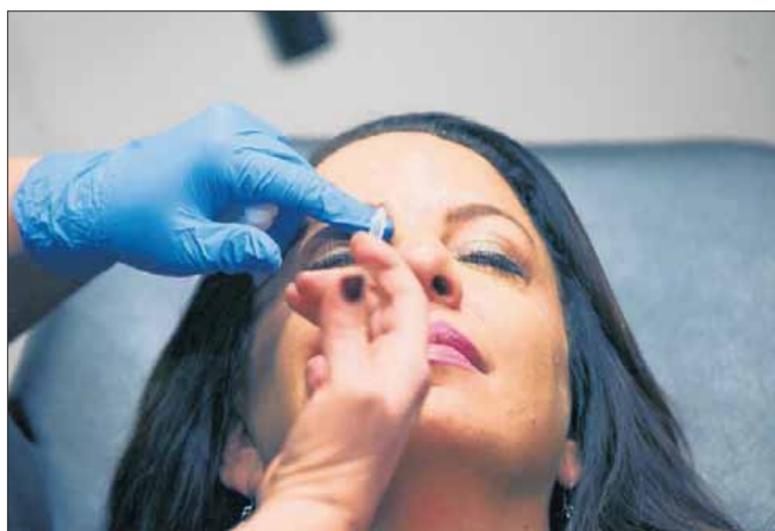
a lot of people," said Lupisan, 55.

Podiatry services, knee replacements and hernia repairs are also common toward the end of the year, said Dr. Shesh Rao, chief medical officer at Amita Health Saint Joseph Hospital Chicago.

"Most patients are fully aware of their deductible ... and what their out-of-pocket expense is, so they're very mindful of that," Rao said.

Rush University Medical Center sees about a 5 to 9 percent increase in surgeries between about Thanksgiving and Christmas, said Murray Fields, associate vice president of perioperative and interventional services. He said patients often try to squeeze in knee replacements, sinus surgeries and plastic surgeries.

Colonoscopies are also popular toward the end of the year, though that may be partly because not all patients understand that colonoscopies done for screening purposes generally must be fully paid for by insurance regardless of when they're done, under the Affordable Care Act, Nathanson said. Colonoscopies performed because a



STACEY WESCOTT/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Michelle Mekky gets botox injections from the Art of Plastic Surgery center on Thursday.

person is experiencing symptoms may cost a patient cash out of pocket.

Deductibles, however, aren't the only reason many patients wait until the holidays to go under the knife. Some patients schedule them so they don't have to take off extra time from work to recover, doctors say.

Others sign up for cosmetic procedures in November and December in hopes of turning heads at holiday parties or starting the new year with a new look. Cosmetic procedures aren't typically covered by insurance.

Sandra Harris, of Crete, has had a number of cosmetic procedures over the years — and she always tries

to squeeze them in at the end of the year. Last year and this year, she had liposuction.

"It's easier for me to be able to stay home to recover during that time," said Harris, 46. "Also, going into the new year, I want a fresh look."

Harris' doctor, Dr. Gregory Wiener with The Art of Plastic Surgery near O'Hare International Airport, said it's something he often hears from patients this time of year. He said procedures generally pick up right before Thanksgiving and stay up nearly until Christmas. A lot of his patients want Botox, Juvederm and light chemical peels this time of year, he

said. He's also recently done breast augmentations, liposuctions, tummy tucks and transfers of fat to the buttocks.

The increase can mean long hours for Wiener in November and December, as well as for surgeons at many other area clinics and hospitals.

Rao, with Saint Joseph Hospital, said surgeons there often postpone their vacations until January.

It's a similar situation at Rush, Fields said.

"We're kind of like UPS," Fields said. "It's pretty tough to get a vacation before the holidays."

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PAUL SAKUMA/AP

Nothing goes away on internet

Start an online post — then delete it? Many websites just save it anyway.

BY DREW HARWELL
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — When a Facebook user starts to post a photo, but decides not to and cancels, the social network still keeps a copy — saving a memory of something the person chose not to share, or wanted instead to forget.

That fact surprised users last week, when Facebook announced it had not just saved those photos, but, for up to 6 million users, inadvertently exposed them to a huge group of third-party apps.

Yet it's not just Facebook holding onto the ghosts of our Internet pasts. Many websites start sharing or saving the text, photos or other information before we commit with a click of "Post," "Enter" or "Submit," and sometimes even after we choose to delete.

Many online users have a general sense that they're being tracked online — a long-lasting footprint of browser "cookies," website log-ins and search histories that can follow them around the Web. That data can help speed up web browsing and allow websites to more precisely track a person for purposes of search or advertising.

But some websites go a step further, by allowing the company to see what its users are typing.

LiveAgent, an online chat service that companies use for customer service, offers a "real-time typing view" of everything a customer

writes before hitting "Send message," saying it will allow the representative to begin preparing a response quicker.

"Customers will appreciate your quick and precise answers," the company's website says.

David Cacik, an official at Quality Unit, which develops LiveAgent, said companies get to choose whether they want to alert people that their typing is being watched, saying it's "up to them to inform their users."

Fewer people know about this special kind of "undead" data — discarded by the user, but still saved by the site. And experts say companies aren't doing enough to educate privacy-minded users already anxious about what they're leaving behind.

People "don't realize that apps can track not only what you post, but any activity on the app," said Tiffany Li, a fellow at Yale Law School's Information Society Project. "And if people don't know the risks, they haven't been well-informed. That's on the companies."

This data can help designers and engineers pinpoint what might have caused a user to get distracted, discouraged or annoyed enough to not finish their work.

But it also opens the possibility that users will unthinkingly offer information they weren't ready to fully share, on the belief they were the only ones looking on.

It's hard to know how many websites keep this stuff saved. But Princeton University researchers last year found that hundreds of websites recorded all of a users' mouse movements

and typed text — without telling the users they were doing so — in such detail that a site could "replay" everything a user had said or done.

This type of software was found on the websites of WordPress, Spotify, LiveJournal and many others, though the presence of it didn't mean everything was being recorded, and websites had a choice in whether to save the data. The tracking, researchers wrote, could expose users' medical conditions, credit-card details, passwords and other sensitive information to scams and identity theft.

Facebook has said it had saved the photos that users abandoned before sending just in case users wanted to finish posting them later. And email services such as Google's Gmail and social-media sites such as Twitter automatically save "drafts" of what people typed for later sending or deletion.

But officials from Instagram and Twitter say they don't upload messages, photos or videos onto their servers until they're posted. The drafts are saved locally on the person's phone, and are viewable only by them.

Instagram, owned by Facebook, also says it wasn't affected by that Facebook bug.

Retail websites have also for years stored similar data on abandoned online shopping carts — in which users said they wanted to buy something, but ended up not finishing the purchase. The sites will often send reminder emails to nudge users into sealing the deal.

Not every company stockpiles its users' data. Snapchat, the video-sharing app in which most messages self-destruct, up-

loads content as an encrypted file to its servers once someone starts a message. But if that user has second thoughts before sending, the keys to decrypt it are never created, and the unsent message is deleted within 24 hours or less.

But peeking at unposted messages is not new territory for many companies, including Facebook. In 2013, two workers there compiled data from 4 million users on what they called "last-minute self-censorship" — status updates, posts or comments that were written, then deleted.

About 70 percent of monitored users, they found, had done so over a period of about two weeks, and that rate changed based on lots of factors, including the makeup of their friend groups.

But the focus of the research was all business: With too much self-censorship, they wrote, the social network "loses value from the lack of content generation."

Even if users read the privacy policies it's not always so clear that their unsent thoughts will be saved and stored. Facebook's data policy says, "We collect the content, communications and other information you provide when you use our Products," but doesn't specifically mention unsent photos or messages.

Users can delete their accounts, but there's no way to go in and re-delete what they've already deleted.

"We store data until it is no longer necessary to provide our services and Facebook Products, or until your account is deleted — whichever comes first," the policy says.

ANALYSIS

For fragrance makers, it just make scents to adapt

BY ANDREA FELSTED
AND SARAH HALZACK
Bloomberg News

Buying a Britney Spears perfume gift set this Christmas? Didn't think so.

That's a problem for the mass fragrance market.

Mid-priced ranges, including those branded with pop stars and actresses, are falling out of fashion in many developed markets. In contrast, luxury and personalized products are growing quickly. If they are to reinvigorate sluggish demand, mid-market producers such as Revlon and Coty will also need to find ways for affordable scents to smell a little more expensive.

The \$49.4 billion global perfume market has some ground to cover. Over the past few years, the need to get Instagram-ready drove a boom in color cosmetics, and more recently skincare.

The trouble is, you can't smell a selfie. Consequently, the 3 percent compound annual growth rate Euromonitor International forecasts for fragrance from 2017 to 2022 lags its forecasts for both color cosmetics and skincare.

But in the affordable segment consumers are choosing cheaper options such as Primark's scent, which starts at \$2.53. Shoppers 35 and under want to smell like themselves, not everyone else, and that's bad news for the many celebrity products that occupy the mid-priced range. At the low end of the spectrum, consumers in the U.S., Europe and Asia want aspirational and unusual options.

Coty has responded by slimming down its portfolio of lower-priced labels since its joint venture two years ago with P&G's beauty unit. It is now focused on its luxury lines, which includes the millennial-friendly Gucci Bloom and Tiffany & Co. These helped drive a 6 percent increase in like-for-like sales in its high-end division in the latest fiscal year.

Estee Lauder has purchased artisan perfume house By Kilian, adding to its store of cult names including Editions de Parfums Frederic Malle and Le Labo, which offers in-store blending on demand to give customers the experience of buying something handcrafted.

Lauder is finding that customization is key to the strength of some of its luxury and artisanal



SARAH BLESENER/
BLOOMBERG NEWS

brands. Anything that customers see as being "tailored to their needs, their taste, their sensitivity, is going to sell well," said Fabrice Weber, Lauder's head of high-end fragrances. The company's Jo Malone stores offer scent-combining consultations so shoppers can develop a custom product, and a Tokyo location recently had an artist positioned near checkout to sketch cityscapes on boxes to create something one-of-a-kind.

Earlier this month, L'Oréal said the first investment by its new corporate venture capital fund is in Sillages Paris, a year-old company that lets customers select the ingredients for their blends online and choose the intensity. Algorithms suggest harmonious combinations recommended by perfumers.

And there could be more deals to come — transactions in this space are a fraction of what they've been over the past few years in makeup and skincare.

Deborah Aitken, analyst at Bloomberg Intelligence, says companies that offer personalized fragrances and bottles, alongside those specializing in natural and organic products, could now be a fertile hunting ground.

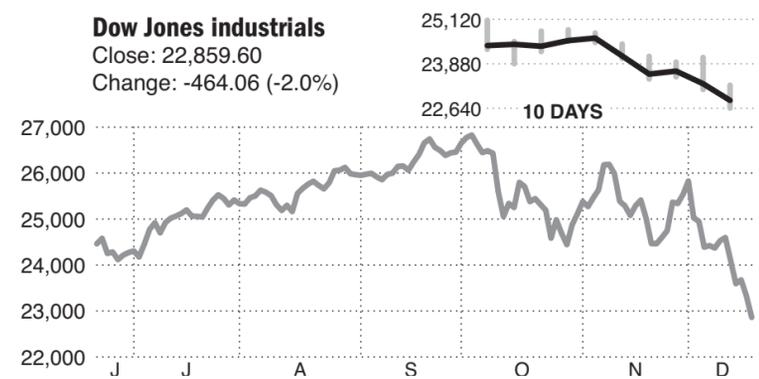
If mid-market producers are to kickstart demand, they will need to find ways to incorporate these trends. That's trickier at lower price points, because a scent created by a top perfumier typically costs thousands of dollars.

The global firms should be able to manage. Producers and retailers have done a good job of taking premium trends into the mass market. There are already some early promising signs, such as the bottle engraving service now offered by The Perfume Shop.

If the industry does not adapt, fragrance risks being left further behind, and not just at Christmas.

MARKET ROUNDUP

Dow High: 23,282.20 Low: 22,644.31 Previous: 23,323.66



Nasdaq	S&P 500	Russell 2000
-108.42 (-1.63%)	-39.54 (-1.58%)	-23.23 (-1.72%)
Close: 6,528.41	Close: 2,467.42	Close: 1,326.00
High: 6,666.20	High: 2,509.63	High: 1,350.89
Low: 6,447.91	Low: 2,441.18	Low: 1,313.02
Previous: 6,636.83	Previous: 2,506.96	Previous: 1,349.23

10-yr T-note	Gold futures	Yen	Euro	Crude Oil
+0.02 to 2.79%	+11.50 to \$1,263.60	-1.25 to 111.11/\$1	-0.0077 to .8719/\$1	-2.08 to \$45.88

Major market growth and decline

5-day % change			30-day % change			1-year % change		
DOW	NASD	S&P	DOW	NASD	S&P	DOW	NASD	S&P
-7.06	-7.66	-6.91	-6.56	-6.37	-6.89	-7.76	-6.27	-8.09

COMMODITY	AMOUNT-PRICE	MO.	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	SETTLE	CHG.
WHEAT (CBOT)	5,000 bu minimum- cents per bushel	Mar 19	524	527.75	521.25	523.50	+1
CORN (CBOT)	5,000 bu minimum- cents per bushel	Mar 19	381.75	382.75	375	375.25	-6.50
SOYBEANS (CBOT)	5,000 bu minimum- cents per bushel	Mar 19	900	905.50	892.75	893.50	-6.50
SOYBEAN OIL (CBOT)	60,000 lbs- cents per lb	Mar 19	28.50	28.54	28.17	28.20	-0.26
SOYBEAN MEAL (CBOT)	100 tons- dollars per ton	Mar 19	307.80	309.50	307.00	307.70	-1.10
LIGHT SWEET CRUDE (NYMX)	1,000 bbl- dollars per bbl.	Mar 19	47.39	47.51	45.67	45.88	-2.29
NATURAL GAS (NYMX)	10,000 mm btu's, \$ per mm btu	Mar 19	3.732	3.938	3.572	3.583	-0.143
NY HARBOR GAS BLEND (NYMX)	42,000 gallons- dollars per gallon	Mar 19	1.3700	1.3855	1.3201	1.3224	-0.0639

Source: The Associated Press

LOCAL STOCKS

Stocks listed may change due to daily fluctuations in market capitalization. Exchange key: N=NYSE, O=NASDAQ

STOCK	XCHG.	CLOSE	CHG.	STOCK	XCHG.	CLOSE	CHG.	STOCK	XCHG.	CLOSE	CHG.
Abbott Labs	N	68.38	-0.62	Equity Lifesty Prop	N	98.90	+2.27	Mondelez Intl	O	41.16	-0.25
AbbVie Inc	N	85.37	+1.85	Equity Residential	N	68.12	-0.11	Morningstar Inc	O	108.99	-2.80
Allstate Corp	N	79.81	-1.17	Exelon Corp	N	45.81	+0.09	Motorola Solutions	N	115.50	-3.55
Aptargroup Inc	N	95.01	-5.58	First Indl RT	N	29.63	-0.44	NISource Inc	O	26.28	-0.99
Arch Dan Mid	N	41.23	-1.17	Fortune Brds Hm&Sec	N	37.83	-1.41	Nthn Trust Co	O	80.52	-1.48
Baxter Intl	N	62.68	-1.37	Gallagher AJ	N	72.90	-0.42	Old Republic	N	20.57	-1.16
Boeing Co	N	313.05	-6.50	Grainger WJ	N	275.14	-3.29	Packaging Corp Am	N	84.43	-1.28
Brunswick Corp	N	45.85	+0.75	GrubHub Inc	N	71.20	-1.51	Paylocity Hldg	O	58.94	-2.62
CBOE Global Markets	N	96.75	-1.33	Hill-Rom Hldgs	N	86.69	-3.47	Stericycle Inc	O	37.86	-0.80
CDK Global Inc	O	46.24	-2.3	IDEX Corp	N	124.94	-0.76	Teleph Data	N	32.79	-0.39
CDW Corp	O	80.58	-3.67	ITW	N	125.20	-0.41	TransUnion	N	54.35	-1.38
CF Industries	N	40.83	-1.09	Ingredion Inc	N	89.83	-1.11	Tribune Media Co A	N	45.10	-2.0
CME Group	O	184.90	-0.63	Jones Lang LaSalle	N	126.96	-1.51	US Foods Holding	N	30.74	-0.84
CNA Financial	N	43.37	-0.58	Kemper Corp	N	65.45	+0.83	USG Corp	N	42.78	-0.12
Caterpillar Inc	N	121.55	-0.78	Kraft Heinz Co	O	44.85	-0.24	Ultra Salon Cosmetics	O	234.01	-5.22
ConAgra Brands Inc	N	24.28	-0.81	LKQ Corporation	O	23.84	-0.49	United Contl Hldgs	O	84.41	-1.96
Deere Co	N	144.64	-1.44	Littelfuse Inc	O	164.11	-0.77	Ventas Inc	N	61.04	-0.37
Discover Fin Svcs	N	57.99	-0.41	MB Financial	O	38.44	+0.35	Walgreen Boots Alli	O	69.61	-3.68
Dover Corp	N	70.06	-1.64	McDonalds Corp	N	173.68	-5.48	Wintrust Financial	O	65.85	+0.1
Equity Commonwealth	N	29.78	-0.44	Middleby Corp	O	103.64	-3.64	Zebra Tech	O	150.99	-8.05

MOST ACTIVE STOCKS

NEW YORK STOCK EXCHANGE

STOCK	CLOSE	CHG.
Gen Electric	7.44	-0.22
Bank of America	24.11	-0.07
Chesapck Eny	1.84	-0.18
AT&T Inc	28.65	-1.17
Weatherford Intl Ltd	2.25	-0.12
Ford Motor	8.26	-0.06
Twitter Inc	29.29	+3.67
Wells Fargo & Co	46.04	+0.37
Citigroup	52.27	-0.55
Kinross Gold	3.14	+0.21
Oracle Corp	46.24	-0.27
JPMorgan Chase & Co	41.95	-0.84
Rite Aid Corp	0.79	-0.02
Itau Unibanco Hldg	9.01	+1.19
Barrick Gold	13.38	+0.50
Nokia Corp	5.76	-0.01
Exxon Mobil Corp	68.63	-2.15
Altria Group	50.44	-0.96
Vale SA	12.94	+0.21
Transocean Ltd	6.64	-0.32
ENSCO PLC	3.31	-0.37
Morgan Stanley	38.91	-0.39
Verizon Comm	55.07	-0.79

LARGEST COMPANIES

Based on market capitalization

STOCK	CLOSE	CHG.
Alibaba Group Hldg	135.11	-2.03
Alphabet Inc C	1009.41	-13.60
Alphabet Inc A	1023.58	-11.88
Amazon.com Inc	1460.83	-34.25
Apple Inc	156.83	-4.06
Bank of America	24.11	-0.07
Berkshire Hath B	193.58	-1.59
Exxon Mobil Corp	68.63	-2.15
Facebook Inc	133.40	+1.6
JPMorgan Chase	96.45	-0.84
Johnson & Johnson	128.27	+0.66
Microsoft Corp	101.51	-2.18
Pfizer Inc	41.95	-0.2
Procter & Gamble	90.98	-0.78
Royal Dutch Shell B	57.63	-0.69
Royal Dutch Shell A	56.43	-0.47
Unitedhealth Group	242.44	-7.87
Verizon Comm	55.07	-0.79
WalMart Strs	87.28	-3.27

LARGEST MUTUAL FUNDS

Based on total assets

FUND	NAV	CHG	1-YR %RTN
American Funds AMCPA x	27.31	-2.62	-4.1
American Funds AmnroBAlA m	24.56	-0.27	-3.7
American Funds CptWldGrInCA	24.16	-0.35	-1.1
American Funds CptlncBldrA m	56.47	-0.30	-7.2
American Funds FdMtlInvsA m	56.05	-0.78	-8.1
American Funds GrfAmrCA m	47.12	-0.74	-4.8
American Funds InvCAmCA m	20.42	-1.16	-5.5
American Funds InvCAmCA m	33.37	-0.43	-7.8
American Funds NwPrspctvA m	39.90	-0.45	-7.1
American Funds WAMtInvsA m	41.65	-0.56	-4.3
DFA IntlCorEqIn	11.58	-0.08	-17.1
Dodge & Cox Inc	13.22	-0.03	-3
Dodge & Cox IntlStk	36.60	-0.32	-17.5
Dodge & Cox Stk	170.56	-2.52	-8.0
DoubleLine TtlRetBdl	10.40	-0.01	+1.6
Fidelity 500ldxInvsPrrm	85.80	-1.37	-6.1
Fidelity Contrafund	10.76	-0.17	-4.7
Fidelity ContrafundK	10.76	-0.17	-4.7
Fidelity TtlMtktdxInvsPrrm	69.47	-1.13	-7.0
Fidelity USBldxInvsPrrm	11.23	-0.03	+1.1
Franklin Templeton Inca1 m	2.13	-0.02	-5.3
Metropolitan WstlTtlRetBdl	10.36	-0.02	+3
PIMCO IncInslT	11.81	-0.01	+6
PIMCO TtlRetIn	9.91	-0.05	-3
Schwab SP500ldx	38.73	-0.62	-6.1
T. Rowe Price BCGr	93.57	-1.86	-1.1
T. Rowe Price GrStk	55.84	-1.05	-3.8
Vanguard 500ldxAdmrl	227.70	-3.64	-6.1
Vanguard DivGrIn	26.08	-0.40	-1.2
Vanguard EqInCAmCA m	64.56	-0.73	-6.7
Vanguard GrdAdmrl	67.98	-1.29	-5.7
Vanguard HCAmrl	78.92	-1.02	-1.5
Vanguard InTrnGdAdm	9.35	-0.02	-5
Vanguard InTrTEAdmrl	13.89	+0.02	+1.8
Vanguard InsdIxIn	223.88	-3.57	-6.1
Vanguard InsdIxInPlus	223.89	-3.58	-6.1
Vanguard InsTlSMInPls	54.55	-0.89	-6.8
Vanguard MCAmCAmrl	169.35	-2.99	-10.3
Vanguard PrrmCAmrl	118.55	-1.63	-4.7
Vanguard STInVGrdAdmrl	10.42	-0.01	+7
Vanguard SmCAmCAmrl	62.50	-1.08	-10.6
Vanguard TrgtRtr2020In	29.78	-0.19	-4.6
Vanguard TrgtRtr2025In	17.37	-0.13	-5.6
Vanguard TrgtRtr2030In	31.33	-0.25	-6.4
Vanguard TrgtRtr2035In	19.10	-0.17	-7.2
Vanguard TtBldxAdmrl	10.41	-0.02	+1
Vanguard TtBldxIn	10.41	-0.02	+1
Vanguard TtInBldxAdmrl	22.09	+0.01	+2.8
Vanguard TtInBldxIn	33.16	+0.02	+2.9
Vanguard TtInBldxIn	11.05	+0.01	+2.8
Vanguard TtInSldxAdmrl	25.42	-1.11	-13.9
Vanguard TtInSldxIn	101.68	-4.44	-13.8
Vanguard TtInSldxInPlus	101.70	-4.44	-13.8
Vanguard TtInSldxIn	15.20	-0.06	-13.9
Vanguard TtSMldxAdmrl	61.41	-0.99	-6.8
Vanguard TtSMldxIn	61.42	-1.00	-6.8
Vanguard TtSMldxIn	61.37	-1.00	-7.0
Vanguard WlntnAdmrl	63.41	-0.59	-4.0
Vanguard WlsvInCAmrl	58.83	-0.31	-2.4
Vanguard Wndrsr1Admrl	54.58	-0.81	-9.4

TREASURY YIELDS

DURATION	CLOSE	PREV.
3-month disc	2.33	2.34
6-month disc	2.47	2.46
2-year	2.65	2.65
10-year	2.79	2.77
30-year	3.01	3.01

SPOT METALS

	CLOSE	PREV.
Gold	\$1263.60	\$1252.10
Silver	\$14.753	\$14.702
Platinum	\$795.80	\$796.00

INTEREST RATES

Prime Rate	5.50
Discount Rate Primary	3.00
Fed Funds Target	2.25-2.50
Money Mkt Overnight Avg.	0.56

FOREIGN EXCHANGE

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Argentina (Peso)	38.0460
Australia (Dollar)	1.4047
Brazil (Real)	3.8439
Britain (Pound)	0.7892
Canada (Dollar)	1.3504
China (Yuan)	6.8852
Euro	0.8719
India (Rupee)	69.999
Israel (Shekel)	3.7685
Japan (Yen)	111.11
Mexico (Peso)	19.9130
Poland (Zloty)	3.74
So. Korea (Won)	1122.11
Taiwan (Dollar)	30.75
Thailand (Baht)	32.65

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		4.712%	15 yr fixed	3.990	0.000	\$999	20%	4.183	847-737-9020	
		Points: 0.000	5/1 ARM	3.750	0.000	\$999	20%	4.962	www.libertybankmortgage.com	
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		4.695%	30 yr jumbo	4.625	0.000	\$755	20%	4.661	708-416-3690	
		Points: 0.000	15 yr jumbo	4.000	0.000	\$755	20%	4.058	www.centralfederalsavings.com	
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		4.385%	3/1 ARM	4.1						

OBITUARIES

SIDNEY J. BLAIR 1923-2018

Hand surgeon, former head of orthopedic surgery at Loyola

By **BOB GOLDSBOROUGH**
Chicago Tribune

Dr. Sidney J. Blair was a nationally known hand surgeon who oversaw Loyola University's Stritch School of Medicine's orthopedic surgery department.

Blair also had a keen appreciation for history, and at age 86 published a 354-page book he had written about three doctors and a dentist, all brothers. Titled "The Doctors Beck of Chicago: Men of Integrity," Blair's book focused on the men's careers in the late 1800s and early 1900s.

"Dr. Blair was a wonderful teacher, a very good surgeon and especially he was a charismatic man," said retired Stritch School of Medicine plastic surgery chief Juan Angelats, who worked alongside Blair at Loyola.

Blair, 94, died of natural causes on Nov. 24 at the Wellington Terrace skilled nursing facility in West Chester, Pa., said his son Brian. Blair had been an Oak Park resident for 57 years until moving to West Chester in November 2017.

Born in Chicago, Blair grew up in the Rogers Park neighborhood and graduated from Sullivan High School in 1941. He earned a bachelor's degree from Washington University in St. Louis, and he enlisted in the Army. After he expressed his desire to pursue a career in medicine, he was transferred to the Navy, which at that time was short on doctors. Naval officials enrolled Blair in an accelerated program at Loyola's medical school, where he received a medical degree in 1948.

Blair served an internship at Cook County Hospital before going on active duty in the Navy in Virginia and in Newport Beach, R.I. While in Newport Beach, he was the chief medical officer aboard the USS Joseph P. Kennedy Jr. destroyer, on which he eventually met Joseph Kennedy, his wife, Rose, and their son, future President John F. Kennedy.

Blair left active naval duty in 1954 and returned to Chicago, settling with his family in the West Side Austin neighborhood as he completed his residency at the Edward Hines Jr. Veterans Administration Hospital in the near west suburbs and at Shriners Hospital in Chicago.

Blair then worked at what is now Community First Medical Center on the Northwest Side as a general orthopedic surgeon in the emergency room, his son said. Blair left that hospital in the early 1960s for a similar job at Michael Reese



FAMILY PHOTO

Hand surgeon Dr. Sidney Blair pioneered microsurgery at Cook County Hospital.

Hospital.

In the late 1960s, Blair decided he wanted to specialize further in hand surgery. So he took time off and moved to Iowa City, Ia., for the better part of a year while undertaking post-graduate study in hand surgery with legendary hand surgeon Adrian Flatt, who had formed the first academic hand surgery unit in the U.S.

He returned to Cook County Hospital, where he pioneered microsurgery and, in a 22-hour surgery, oversaw the reattachment of four fingers to a patient's hand. That was the first-ever four-finger reattachment and it was viewed as "a breakthrough," his son said.

Blair left Cook County Hospital to work in private practice with DuPage County surgeon Douglas Mains for several years. In 1986, Blair returned to Loyola's Stritch School of Medicine and was appointed chairman of the Department of Orthopedic Surgery and Rehabilitation. In that role, he formed the "hand service" unit, which merged the plastic surgery and hand surgery units.

"Sid had this concept with plastic surgeons, hand surgeons and orthopedic surgeons working together, not competing, and using their skills, along with a wonderful hand therapy unit," said Loyola orthopedic surgery professor Terry Light, who succeeded Blair as department head. "So that concept of professionals working together for the benefit of the nation was one he acted out here at Loyola, years before other centers had done so."

Light called Blair "the ultimate professional."

"When he walked into an exam room, he gave that patient full attention for however long as was needed," Light said. "And other physicians would refer the most challenging of cases to Sid, and he just took care of people."

Light also recalled Blair's

resolve to see fewer hand injuries from certain types of industrial machinery and his formation of a national committee to work on ways to prevent industrial injuries. That included working with the National Safety Council.

"I think he thought of his profession as more than simply doing some operations, but caring for the whole patient," Light said. "He was willing to meet with industry to try to make less work for hand surgeons."

"My father also worked with OSHA on ergonomic standards and advised on repetitive motion in the workplace," Brian Blair said.

Blair stepped down as the chairman of Loyola's orthopedic surgery department in 1991 but remained a professor and the chief of the hand section. He retired from Loyola in 1994.

Blair was one of two doctors to found the Chicago Hand Society, a group of area doctors devoted to hand surgery.

Blair's son recalled that his father considered himself to be "a psychiatrist and a surgeon."

"The two areas of disfigurement that people care about the most are their faces and their hands," Brian Blair said.

"The Doctors Beck of Chicago: Men of Integrity" came out in 2010.

"He felt the Becks contributed a lot to medicine and to the city of Chicago with their hospital (that they founded) on the North Side," Brian Blair said. "They were cutting edge and did a lot of things, and the underlying anti-Semitism in the country probably kept them from being exalted more and I think he felt that the world should know how good these guys were. I think that was one of the main motivations (for writing the book)."

Blair took a keen interest in environmental and medical issues in the Middle East. A member of the Society for Protection of Nature in Israel, Blair attempted after the first Persian Gulf War in 1991 to form links with medical groups tied to the Middle East.

"My attempt is to network with other religions," Blair told the Tribune's Casey Bukro in 1991.

Blair's wife of 65 years, LaMoyné, died in 2015. In addition to his son, he is survived by another son, David; four grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

Services were held.

Bob Goldsborough is a freelance reporter.

Chicago Daily Tribune

ON DECEMBER 21 ...

In **1968** Apollo 8 was launched on a mission to orbit the moon.

In **1976** the Liberian-registered tanker Argo Merchant ran aground near Nanucket Island, spilling millions of gallons of oil into the North Atlantic.

In **1978** police in Des Plaines arrested John Wayne Gacy Jr. and began unearthing the remains of 33 men and boys. (Gacy would be convicted of murder, then executed in 1994.)

In **1988**, 270 people were killed when a terrorist bomb exploded aboard a Pan Am Boeing 747 over Lockerbie, Scotland.

In **1989** Romanian President Nicolae Ceausescu delivered what turned out to be his final speech. (He then fled from power but was arrested and executed four days later.)

In **1997** President Bill Clinton, accompanied by his wife and daughter, left for Bosnia to spread holiday cheer — and to carry the news that he wanted U.S. troops to remain

there indefinitely as the region recovered from its devastating war.

In **1998** Israel's parliament voted overwhelmingly for early elections, signaling the demise of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's hard-line government.

In **2000** President-elect George W. Bush resigned as governor of Texas; Lt. Gov. Rick Perry was sworn in to replace him.

In **2012** the Earth survived a day billed by doomsday theorists who follow the Maya calendar as the end of the world.

In **2013** a painting of a blue American flag by George Zimmerman, who was acquitted of murder in the 2012 slaying of Trayvon Martin, sold on eBay for nearly \$100,100.

In **2017**, in a sharp reproach to the Trump administration, the United Nations overwhelmingly voted to condemn the U.S. recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital, ignoring President Donald Trump's last-minute threats to punish countries that voted against the U.S. position.

WINNING LOTTERY NUMBERS

ILLINOIS
Dec. 20
Lotto **09 16 46 47 51 52 / 04**
Lotto jackpot: \$3.75M
Pick 3 midday **754 / 4**
Pick 4 midday **5455 / 1**
Lucky Day Lotto midday
05 15 18 26 45
Pick 3 evening **875 / 5**
Pick 4 evening **3230 / 7**
Lucky Day Lotto evening
04 10 26 31 34
Dec. 21 Mega Millions: \$305M
Dec. 22 Powerball: \$281M

WISCONSIN
Dec. 20
Pick 3 **527**
Pick 4 **4016**
Badger 5 **03 06 13 28 29**
SuperCash **05 15 16 17 29 38**

INDIANA
Dec. 20
Daily 3 midday **008 / 0**
Daily 4 midday **5891 / 0**
Daily 3 evening **494 / 1**
Daily 4 evening **9434 / 1**
Cash 5 **20 29 36 41 44**

MICHIGAN
Dec. 20
Daily 3 midday **101**
Daily 4 midday **5562**
Daily 3 evening **503**
Daily 4 evening **7093**
Fantasy 5 **04 22 25 27 29**
Keno **04 06 07 12 20 21 22**
28 31 32 36 48 49 54 58 59
60 61 65 66 76 78

More winning numbers at chicagotribune.com/lottery

Chicago Tribune Death Notices

Chicago Tribune extends our condolences to the families and loved ones of those who have passed.

chicagotribune.com/deathnotice

Death Notices

Abercrombie, Gloria A.

Beloved Mother
May 19, 1955 - October 16, 2018
Sign Guestbook at chicagotribune.com/obituaries

Bock, Richard J.

Richard J. Bock Korean War Air Force Veteran beloved husband of Joanne nee Naughton; loving father of Deborah (Mike) Jank, Susan (Patrick) Sheehan, Rick (Linda) Bock and the late Michael James Bock; devoted grandfather of Jessica (Jason) Collins, Brain Jank, Ryan Jank, Sean Sheehan, Catherine (Matt Lutrick) Bock, Carolyn (Xavier) Hassert, Christen Bock and Cailyn Bock; dearest great grandfather of Julia and Josee; cherished uncle of many nieces and nephews. Visitation Saturday 10:00 A.M. until time of Service with Military Honors at 12:00 Noon at **Lawn Funeral Home** 17909 S 94th Ave Tinley Park, IL 60487 Inurnment Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery Funeral info (708) 532-310



Lawn
Funeral Home

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Branuskas, Emily M.

Emily M. Branuskas (nee Paukstis) age 92. Beloved wife of the late Stanley. Devoted mother of Carolyn (Jerry) McGovern and Judy (George) Cvack. Loving grandmother of David, Timothy, Judy, Sarah, Jonathan and great grandmother of Aidan, Anna, Gavin, Monica, Jillian and Anthony. Visitation Friday, Dec. 21st, 3-8 PM at the Palos-Gaidas Funeral Home, 11028 Southwest Hwy. (7700W) Palos Hills. Funeral Saturday Dec. 22nd, 1030 AM from the funeral home to Sacred Heart Church, 8245 W. 111th St. (Palos Hills) for 1130 AM Mass. Interment St. Casimir Lithuanian Cemetery. Express your thoughts and memories in the online Guest Book at www.palos-gaidasfh.com (708) 974 4410

Palos-Gaidas FUNERAL HOME

Sign Guestbook at chicagotribune.com/obituaries

Conroy, Martin P.

Age 91. Husband of the late Agnes (nee Joyce); father of Margaret, Kevin (Kathleen), William (Michael), Mary, Joyce (Robert) Petersen, and Patrick (Kelly); grandfather of 10; great grandfather of 3. Native of County Mayo, Ireland. Visitation at **Cooney Funeral Home** located at 625 Busse Hwy. in Park Ridge on Monday from 8:30 a.m.-9:30 a.m. to St. Tarcissus Church for Mass at 10:00 a.m. Interment private. For information please call 847-685-1002 or visit www.cooneyfuneralhome.com

Sign Guestbook at chicagotribune.com/obituaries

Konczyk, Leszek

Leszek Konczyk, age 74, beloved husband of 50 years to Irena Konczyk; loving father of Justyna (Erik Cushman) Konczyk and Greg (Amy) Konczyk; dearest grandfather of Nina and Lily; cherished uncle, great-uncle and godfather of many. Visitation Sunday 3-8 P.M. Funeral Monday 8:15 A.M. from **Lawn Funeral Home**, 7732 W. 159th St. Orland Park to St. Stephen Deacon and Martyr Church Mass 9:00 A.M. Interment Good Shepherd Cemetery. Funeral info: 708 429-3200



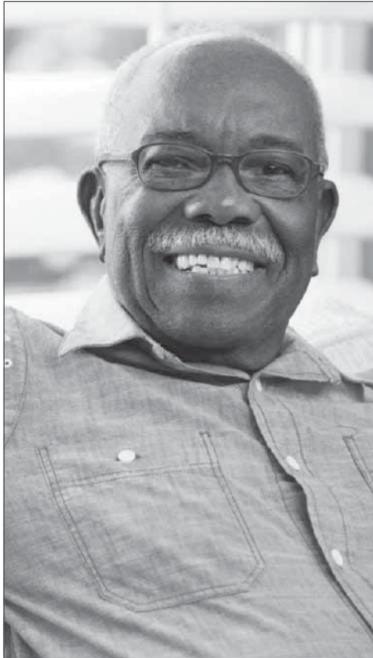
Lawn
Funeral Home

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Krueger, Dolores

Dolores M Krueger, 80, of Dowagiac, MI, passed away on December 18 at her home, with her family.

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Chicago Tribune

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Lilly, Jr, Roosevelt 'Touche'

Roosevelt 'Touche' Lilly, Jr. age 62. Beloved father of JoAnn (Cassandra), brother of Roy (Cheryl), Lynn (Keisha), Terrence (Avery), Beatrice, and Patricia, Godfather of Justin Wade, son of the late Roosevelt and Lillie B., and uncle, cousin, and nephew to many, along with his many friends. Friend to all of Chicago. Visitation Friday, December 21 from 3-7 PM **Golden Gate Funeral Home**, 2036 W 79th St, Chicago. Funeral Saturday, December 22 10 AM New Hope Baptist Church, 4255 W Division, Chicago. Attended Waller and Wells High Schools, playing baseball. On the friendship committee that sponsored picnics and stepping events. Owned a successful family construction business. Loved the city of Paris gaining the nickname, Touché. Bon Voyage!

Sign Guestbook at chicagotribune.com/obituaries

Moody, J Marvin

J Marvin Moody, 94, of Maddock, ND and formerly of Lincolnshire, IL, passed away on Tuesday, December 18, 2018 at his home. Private family service will take place at a later date. Memorials may be made to the charity of donor's choice.

Marvin is survived by his son, Mark Moody of Santa Cruz, CA; daughter, Marie (James) Fragodt of rural York, ND; grandchildren, Laura (Brent) Nichols, Alex Moody, Kelly Fragodt and Eli Moody; great-grandchildren, Owen and Everly Nichols; sister, Ellen Ford of Little Rock, AK; numerous nieces and nephews. He is preceded in death by his wife of 68 years, Alice; son, Bob; brother, Robert; parents, Julius and Laura Moody. Online condolences may be left at www.thenelson-funeralhome.com

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Nicholson, Michael 'Bingo Mike'

Michael "Bingo Mike" Nicholson, age 59. Beloved son of James and the late Lorraine; loving brother of Jeffrey (Janis) and Jim (Sharon); dearest uncle of Sarah Nicholson, Kenneth Nicholson, Cara (Joe) Hendrickson, Katie Nicholson (fiancée Kevin Parfitt) and the late Alysse Nicholson; cherished nephew of Tom (Wendy) Sendag; fond cousin of Lora and Heather; dear friend to many. Funeral Saturday 9:45 a.m. from **Richard J. Modell Funeral Home & Cremation Services**, 5725 S. Pulaski Rd. to St. Turibius Church, Mass 10:30 a.m. Entombment Resurrection Garden Mausoleum. In lieu of flowers, donations to St. Turibius Church would be appreciated. Visitation Friday 2 to 9 p.m. For info (773) 767-4730 or www.rjmodellfh.com

Sign Guestbook at chicagotribune.com/obituaries

Panebianco, Clara

Clara Panebianco nee Gasperini, age 96. Beloved wife of Sam. Beloved mother of the late Carol and the late James. Cherished daughter of the late Frank and the late Palma. Preceded in death by her 7 siblings. Caring aunt and great aunt of many nieces and nephews. Please omit flowers. Clara will lie in state at St. Priscilla Church on Saturday December 22nd from 11:00 a.m. till Mass of Christian Burial 11:30 a.m. Entombment Queen of Heaven Cemetery. Funeral Info 773.286.2500 or www.belmontfuneral-home.com

BELMONT FUNERAL HOME

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Zeisler, Joan C

Joan C. Zeisler (nee Crane) age 84, passed away peacefully with her husband Karl and daughter Karen by her side, on Friday, December 14, 2018, following a devastating battle with severe dementia. Born June 2, 1934 to Loren L. Crane and Gladys (nee Otto) in Urbana, IL. Joan grew up in Milwaukee, WI. A 1952 graduate of New Trier High School in Winnetka, IL, she finished college at National Louis University in 1970, the same year her only daughter Karen, finished elementary school. Joan and Karl were married in 1954 in Wilmette, IL and lived in Chicago and suburbs, Cincinnati, OH, Portland, OR, LaJolla, CA and Aspen, CO. Joan served her family business, Garrett Popcorn Shops, from a little girl behind the counter to President until the business was sold upon her retirement. A memorial service will be held on January 19, 2019 from 11am to 3pm at The Drake Hotel, Chicago, IL. In lieu of flowers, please make a donation in memory of Joan Zeisler to support the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago, 225 East Chicago Avenue, Chicago, IL 60611

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Clemson's D-line doing the dance

All-American Christian Wilkins and the Tigers pose a lot of problems for Notre Dame — and every other team they have faced. **Back Page**



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Chicago Tribune
CHICAGO SPORTS

Chicago's best sports section, as judged by the Associated Press Sports Editors



CLUB DUB

"It's just getting crazy in there."
 — The Truth (aka Mitch Trubisky)

OPEN MOST SUNDAYS



Bears' locker room Chicago's hottest place this season

BY RICH CAMPBELL | Chicago Tribune

If you're a playoff-starved Bears fan reveling in the euphoria of this worst-to-first season, the team has just the place for you.

Chicago's hottest club is Club Dub. This place has everything: a light machine, blasting beats, dozens of dancing football players ranging from 165 to 330 pounds, and the special ingredient to the Bears' sudden success.

Call it fun or camaraderie, unity or pizzazz. The Bears' dance parties after their victories have come to embody what coach Matt Nagy's team is all about and why it surged to the NFC North championship.

"It's a lot of fun," quarterback Mitch Trubisky said with a smile Wednesday. "You guys are missing out."

OK, so it is an exclusive club. Entrance for the public is restricted to social media videos shared by players and the team. But these clips are a window into a young team earnestly following its first-year coach and embracing his insistence that players be themselves and enjoy success.

Turn to **Bears, Page 4**

THIS WEEK
Bears at 49ers
 3:05 p.m. Sunday
 FOX-32
 Coverage, Pages 4-5

CHICAGO TRIBUNE ILLUSTRATION USING A PHOTO OF MATT NAGY

BULLS

Injured Portis will be gone 2-4 weeks

Forward suffers sprained ankle as Bulls' lost season drags on

BY K.C. JOHNSON | Chicago Tribune

The Bulls own the worst record in the league. They can't stay healthy. They already have changed coaches once.

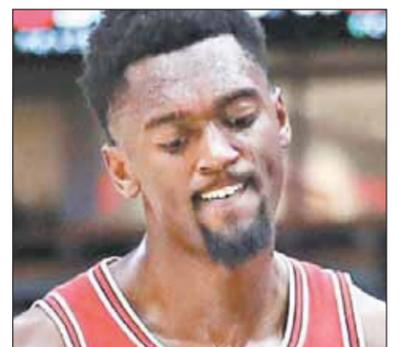
Is it May 14 yet? That's the date of the NBA draft lottery, which, with Thursday's news that Bobby Portis will miss two to four weeks with a sprained right ankle, becomes the most

important date of the season. The runner-up? Feb. 7, otherwise known as the trade deadline. Robin Lopez, Justin Holiday and Jabari Parker are all players who could have different addresses by then. Portis' injury, which seems like piling on, occurred during the fourth quarter of Wednesday's home loss to the Nets and adds to this lost cause of a season. Portis, who turned down close to \$50 million of guaranteed money to be a restricted free agent next summer, played just five games between injuries. He missed close to seven weeks with a sprained MCL

UP NEXT | Magic at Bulls
 7 p.m. Friday, NBCSCH

in his right knee before returning Dec. 10. Portis' injury piles on top of Zach LaVine sitting for at least another week and up to three more with a sprained right ankle. Denzel Valentine is out for the season after reconstructive left ankle surgery. And Kris Dunn and Lauri Markkanen both missed more than six weeks with significant injuries.

Turn to **Bulls, Page 3**



CHRIS SWEDA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Bulls forward Bobby Portis grimaces as he limps off the court Wednesday. He will miss two to four weeks with a sprained right ankle.

TOP OF THE SECOND



PHIL ROSENTHAL

Friday night game help\$ NU

Few in television are thrilled to be moved to Friday nights. It's the ice floe on which dying shows are cast adrift. "Friday night death slot" has its own Wikipedia page.

But that's not why Northwestern football coach Pat Fitzgerald says he's irked that the Wildcats' Big Ten title game rematch against Ohio State has been moved from a customary Saturday date to prime time on Friday, Oct. 18, 2019.

But like the producers of ABC's "Quantico," moved to Fridays this spring in the middle of its third and final season, the Cats will go where they're scheduled in October because that's what their conference's TV deals demand.

It's only for one week. Northwestern will live.

The Big Ten made its scheduling decision for the best of reasons: money.

"I still fundamentally believe that Fridays are for high school football," Fitzgerald told the Tribune's Teddy Greenstein.

The people behind "Chuck," "Highway to Heaven" and "Joan of Arcadia," during what turned out to be their final seasons, had different reason to be upset about shifting to Fridays.

For them, it signaled a lack of faith in their programs and, because the overall audience drops off that night, also meant a lack of opportunity to attract to new fans.

If you take the TV money, though, you take the TV slot you're given and you count your blessings, because there are worse fates than being consigned to prime-time national television.

Even on a Friday.

Ask Northern Illinois and its Mid-American Conference peers, who have made midweek football games their thing, satisfying TV's need for sports programming and sports gamblers' need to bet on something between the weekends.

The Wildcats may have envisioned taking on the Buckeyes on a Saturday night at Ryan Field, with ESPN's "College GameDay" doing its thing from Evanston that morning to hype the prime-time matchup. Having that dream snatched away probably stings.

A Friday night game still will include the aerial beauty shot of the stadium panning up and over the lakefront and to the south, where a stream of car lights up and down Lake Shore Drive tie the scene to the glittering Chicago skyline in the distance.



CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Pat Fitzgerald said playing Ohio State next fall on a Friday "does not make me happy."

It will be fine. Unless it rains.

Alas, it is romantic to think of the Big Ten as an association of major universities in which amateur sports boost school spirit and bring students and alumni together for a few hours to don school colors, cheer and wrap themselves in tradition.

That notion is as dated as raccoon coats and "The Muskrat Ramble."

The Big Ten has evolved into a major media company producing and peddling programming, some of which lands on its own network while some is sold to others.

The schools are brand names as much as academies of higher learning, and this has proved profitable for them as well as the TV outlets. The teams, players, coaches and business partners all get screen time, which also has its benefits.

"I understand why we're doing this, but it does not make me happy," Fitzgerald said.

Happier, no. A bit richer, yes.

Between Fox and ESPN, as well as a basketball deal with CBS, the Big Ten is in the middle of a six-year era of TV packages worth \$2.64 billion, or \$440 million a year.

All told, including their eponymous network operated with Fox as a partner,

Big Ten schools each receive more than \$50 million annually from conference TV agreements, according to a University of Michigan budget document.

But TV not only brings the athletic program money directly, its exposure helps generate cash from donors and business partners.

Schools don't have to pay the players, so that goes into athletic department operations, facilities, staff and coaches, who nevertheless complain when their games are rescheduled or played at odd hours.

The good news is Ohio State at Northwestern is considered worthy of being showcased. That should be seen as validation of progress for Fitzgerald's program.

Television doesn't always pluck the best game for a slot such as this, but no TV executive purposely schedules an expected rout.

If the Wildcats and Buckeyes can put on a decent show, it will be good for everyone — except maybe shows on other channels stuck in Friday night death slots.

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ASK THE REPORTER
JIMMY GREENFIELD

Few options if Crawford goes



If Corey Crawford decides to retire, how dire does the situation become for the Blackhawks, who would have yet another

hole to fill in their path back to contention?

@lukestanbery

It's understandable that people are wondering if this is the end of the line for Crawford because of his history with concussions. But it's important to let this play out. Every concussion is different, so there's no way of knowing what the future holds. As for who would be the starting goalie next season if Crawford can't play, that's a great question. Right now, Kevin Lankinen is the only goalie under contract for the 2019-20 season besides Crawford. However, Collin Delia and Anton Forsberg will be restricted free agents, and neither would be likely to get an offer sheet from another team. The best scenario for the Hawks — aside from Crawford being healthy — is to have Delia prove he can be a starting goalie in the NHL.

What current roster players do you see in a Hawks uniform next season?

Ian C.

Instead of listing who will be around, I'll list the players I don't expect to be around because it's a shorter list: Marcus Kruger, Chris Kunitz, Andreas Martinson, Brandon Manning, Brandon Davidson, Jan Rutta and Cam Ward. All those players — except for Manning — are unrestricted free agents after the season.

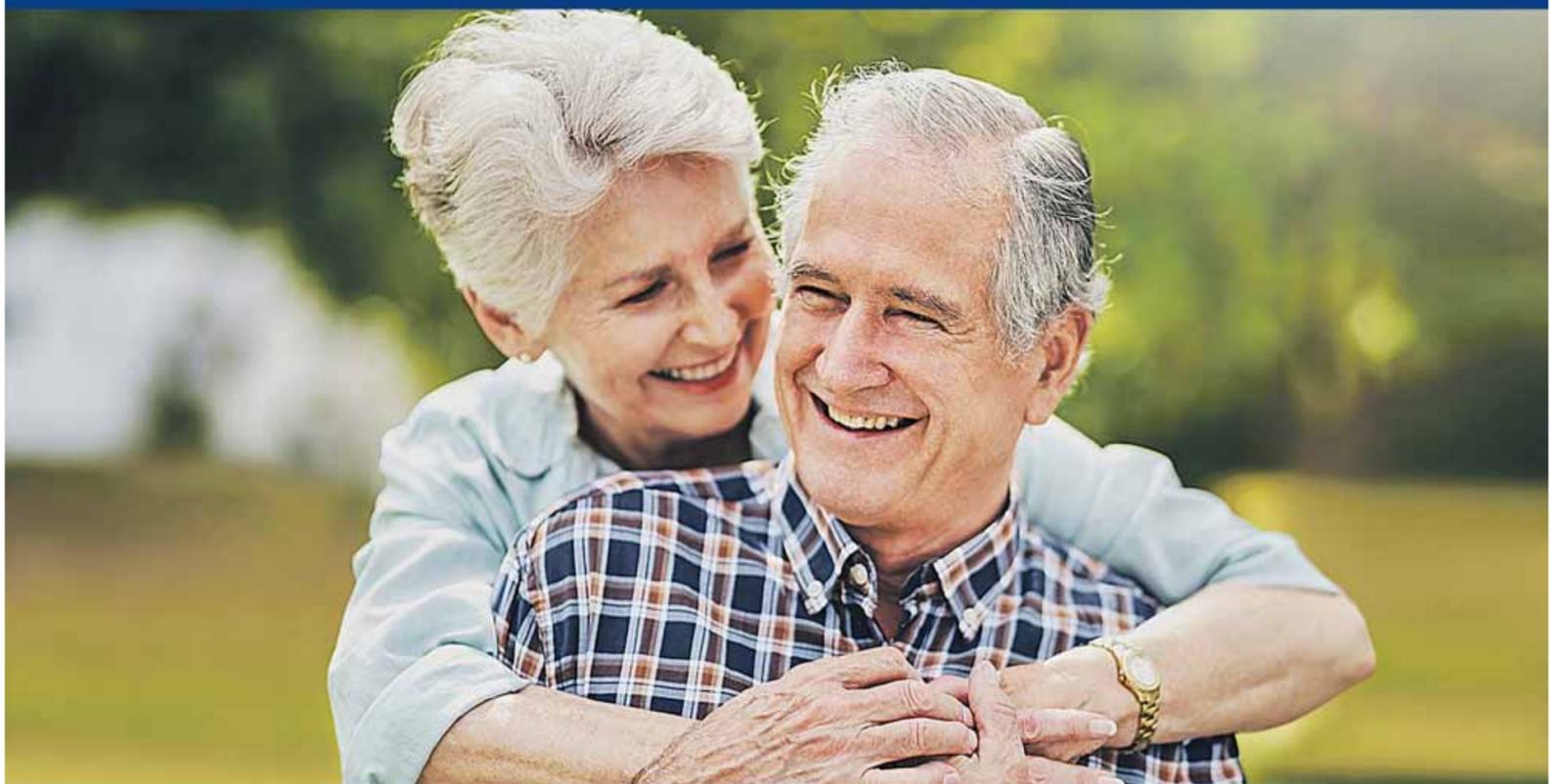
Should the Hawks attempt to trade their aging stars to enable them to finish with a winning team and enjoy one more moment competing in the playoffs before retirement?

George D.

To be clear: The Hawks will do what's best for the Hawks. They're not in a position to deal valuable assets for any reason other than because it's good for the organization. This doesn't mean a player such as Duncan Keith can't be traded if he waives his no-trade clause, but it will happen only if the Hawks get back what they consider to be fair-market value. As for Patrick Kane, he's not going anywhere.

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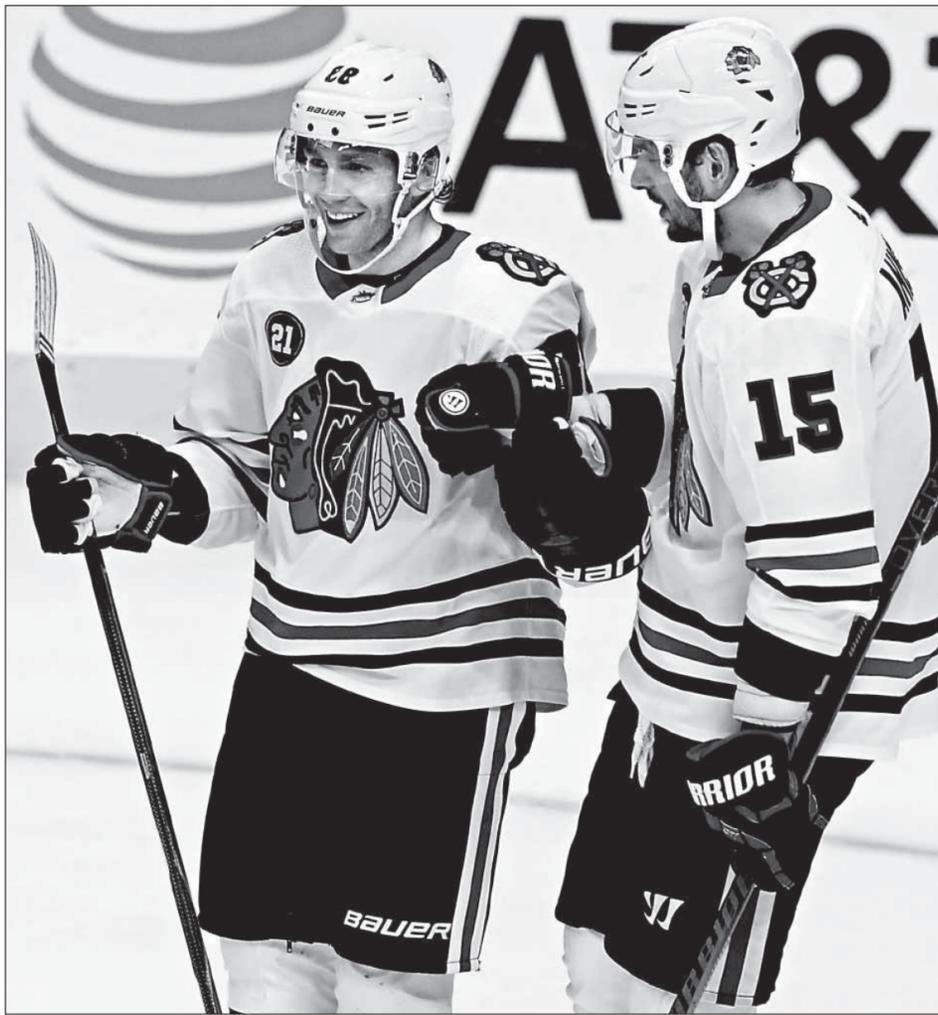
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BLACKHAWKS



LM OTERO/AP PHOTOS

Patrick Kane celebrates his empty-netter with Artem Anisimov. It was his second goal and 17th of the season.

BLACKHAWKS 5, STARS 2

That's a start

DeBrincat's quick goal sparks Hawks to 2nd straight win

BY JIMMY GREENFIELD
Chicago Tribune

DALLAS — The Blackhawks' great start was withering away.

Not long after the Hawks took a three-goal lead, the Stars got one goal back in the second period and another midway through the third.

As the final minutes dragged on, the Hawks did everything they could defensively to maintain their lead.

"We're fighting for our lives at that point," Alex DeBrincat said. "We're bearing down on every puck. Just trying to get out of the zone and maybe get it past their 'D' for a chance.

"Our defensive zone was big at that point. Those are the moments in the game where you've just got to get it out of the zone and live to fight another day."

That they did. Barely.

The Hawks came out blistering as DeBrincat scored 1 minute, 12 seconds into the game, and Erik Gustafsson added a first-period power-play goal that carried them to a 5-2 win over the Stars at American Airlines Center.

The Stars pulled within a goal at 3-2 with 13:44 left in the third before Patrick Kane and Brendan Perlini added empty-netters to seal the victory.

Cam Ward, making his second straight start in place of the injured Corey Crawford, stopped 26 shots to give the Hawks their first two-game winning streak since Oct. 23 and 25.

It comes on the heels of a 7-3 loss to the Sharks that was arguably the Hawks' worst game of the season.

"If you're not angry after that San Jose game, then something's



Blackhawks center Jonathan Toews keeps his eyes on the puck as he battles against Stars defenseman Esa Lindell in the second period.

UP NEXT
Blackhawks at Avalanche
8 p.m. Friday, NBCSCH+

probably wrong with you," Ward said. "To get embarrassed like that at home was unacceptable. I did voice my displeasure, and as a leader, as a veteran guy, if you're going to do that then you've got to be able to back it up.

"I thought as a team, as a whole, we've been able to back up after that lousy performance against San Jose."

The Hawks came in with a 4-12-2 road record that, unbelievably, was even worse than it seemed. They had won only one road game in regulation all season — a 4-1 win over the Blue Jackets in which they were outshot 38-26 — and were 1-13 in their last 14 away from the United Center.

DeBrincat's early goal came on a terrific set play. With a faceoff to the left of Stars goalie Ben Bishop, David Kampf won the draw. Dylan Sikura stepped in and tipped the puck back to DeBrincat, who

didn't waste any time in sending a wrist shot over Bishop's left shoulder for his 15th goal.

After Alexander Radulov was sent off for slashing, Gustafsson scored his eighth goal — and seventh in his last 13 games — when he one-timed a Kane pass past Bishop to make it 2-0 with 2:37 left in the first.

Kane's backhand put the Hawks up 3-0 just under two minutes into the second period. Tyler Seguin got the Stars on the board with his 11th goal at the 11:45 mark of the second.

Connor Murphy left the game with 2:52 to go after taking an elbow to the face from Tyler Pitlick that left him bleeding heavily. Colliton said they did not believe it was anything worse than a cut.

That was a bit more good news after another gutsy performance.

"It's hard to play the way we need to play to win," Colliton said. "But I think it's worth it in the end."

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BLACKHAWKS NOTES

No timetable for Crawford, Kruger

BY JIMMY GREENFIELD
Chicago Tribune

A series of concussions ended Blackhawks coach Jeremy Colliton's playing career, so he knows better than to check on the progress of Corey Crawford and Marcus Kruger every day.

Crawford and Kruger each suffered a concussion during the Hawks' recent homestand. They won't be eligible to return until at least Dec. 27, though there's no indication they'll be ready by then.

"When they're improving, I'll hear about it," Colliton said. "Until then, I'm not going to ask. Having been through that myself, I don't need to be in the kitchen every day."

The threat of a concussion is a concern for every athlete in a

contact sport. Hawks defenseman Duncan Keith said he has had "a few" concussions during his career and doesn't know if that will affect him after his playing days.

"You only have one brain," Keith said. "Any brain trauma, I don't know if there's enough studies out there that show the lasting effects of a concussion and what can happen. So that's the scary part of concussions, and I think that's why the awareness we have out there is a good thing now."

Long and short of it: Even with the Hawks going 2-1-1 on their homestand, they remained in last place in the Central Division and held the league's second-worst record heading into Thursday's game.

It shows the huge hole the

Hawks have dug and why it already might be time to start playing for next season.

"Even if we were at the top of the league, we would still have to be thinking long term," Colliton said. "Now more than ever, this league is about developing players as you go. It's younger than ever. You need to continue to bring guys along and teach them how they're going to have to play to win.

"But that's no different with where we are now. If we're gonna win now and in the future, we've gotta improve every day. From that standpoint, I don't think my focus is going to change."

Benched: Brandon Manning, Chris Kunitz and Andreas Martin were healthy scratches Thursday against the Stars for the second straight game.

BULLS

BULLS NOTES

Boylen: Markkanen must get more shots

Coach says team has 'got to get him the ball' after just 6 FG attempts

BY K.C. JOHNSON
Chicago Tribune

Lauri Markkanen is averaging 14.1 shots per game since returning from a right elbow injury, which made his mere six shots in Wednesday's loss to the Nets stand out all the more glaringly.

Markkanen, who had attempted at least 10 shots in each of his previous eight games, took only one shot after the first quarter.

"It's a team thing," coach Jim Boylen said. "We've got to get him the ball. He's a big piece of what we're doing. The team understands that. I'm big on defining roles, letting guys know who I want doing what. The responsibility is on the team, myself and him to be more aggressive, to get more shots, to execute better. If we screen better and execute better, he does better. Everybody does better.

"Obviously, six shots for him is not what we want. The other night he had 17. I kind of like that. Is it going to be 17 every night? I don't know. Can it be 12 and be an efficient night for him? It probably can be. We have to do a lot of things better offensively. We'll continue to work on that."

Markkanen put on 16 pounds of muscle during the offseason,

knowing he'd be more of a focal point of the offense this season. He averaged 12.7 shots last season.

"All I care about is winning," Markkanen said. "So whatever I can do to help the team, that's what I'm going to do. If that's letting other guys create, then it's going to be that."

Closing time: Boylen wanted Kris Dunn as the primary ball-handler on the final play that resulted in a turnover. Dunn has scored 24 points in two of his last three games.

"He's a guy that has the ability to finish games," Boylen said. "He has proven that. He relishes it. He's locked in. Our relationship is strong. He's willing to be coached. He's becoming more reliable. His development has been hindered by injury — both years. He tore the finger up last year at the start of the season and had the knee this year. It's heartbreaking. But he's on the way back."

Dunn missed seven weeks with a sprained left MCL. He's averaging 13.8 points and 5.2 assists in six games.

Layups: Magic center Nikola Vucevic is due back after missing the last game for the birth of his son. He dropped 26 points and 10 rebounds on the Bulls in Orlando's Dec. 13 victory in Mexico City. ... The Bulls have won five straight home games against the Magic.

Portis to sit 2-4 weeks with a sprained ankle

Bulls, from Page 1

Is now the time to mention that Cameron Payne is day to day with a calf injury and didn't practice Thursday?

"What breaks my heart is guys getting hurt," coach Jim Boylen said. "It's tough on them. It's their career, their life. Injuries are difficult. The personal part of it really bothers me. Obviously, we have a team concern. And it hurts the development of the team when anybody is out, whether they're in the rotation or not. Because we're all trying to get better, we're all trying to work, we're all trying to support the team."

Parker at least practiced fully after missing the last three days with the stomach virus that swept through the team during its visit to Mexico City. But Boylen, who pulled Parker from the rotation on Dec. 13 because of defensive and effort issues, wouldn't even commit to Parker resuming his role as backup power forward now that Portis is out.

"He's one of our power forwards and we'll see how he feels and get our rotation set and see what happens," Boylen said. "We've played Hutch (Chandler Hutchison) there. We can play big-big. We've got all kinds of options. We can play Justin (Holiday) there. We have a roster. We're going to fill in there. Guys have to step up and play their minutes, defend and rebound and try to execute the right way."

Multiple outlets, including the Tribune, have reported that Parker's representatives expressed to Bulls management a desire to amicably resolve Parker's situation by finding him a new home. Management was gauging Parker's trade value even before Boylen pulled him from the rotation.

Asked if he has an edict from management not to play him to protect Parker's trade value, Boylen emphatically said no.

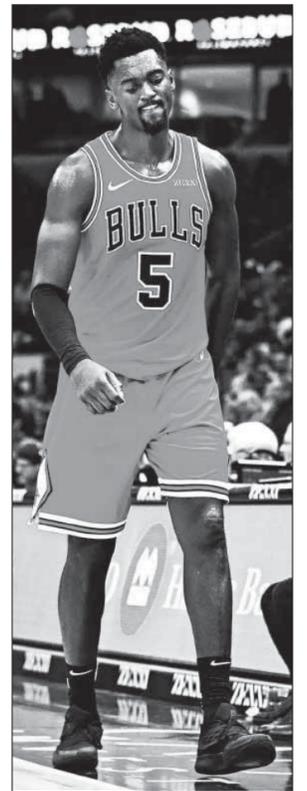
"We don't operate like that," Boylen said. "Not at all. No, sir."

ESPN.com reported that the Knicks are one team that has expressed preliminary interest in Parker, who signed a two-year, \$40 million deal with a team option in July. The Bulls obviously are seeking young assets that fit the rebuild for Parker, and sources said they'd be willing to package either Holiday or Lopez with him in the right deal.

Parker, for his part, said he's merely trying to get back in game shape after his illness and hadn't heard from Boylen regarding if his role will change after Portis' latest injury.

"It was good to get up and down," Parker said. "Still trying to get my appetite going. I haven't been able to eat for the last few days."

With averages of 15.2 points and 6.9 rebounds, Parker is the



CHRIS SWEDA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

A different look at the cover photo of Bobby Portis limping off the court. Any way you crop it, it's bad news for the Bulls.

"What breaks my heart is guys getting hurt. It's tough on them. It's their career, their life. Injuries are difficult. The personal part of it really bothers me."

— Bulls coach Jim Boylen

Bulls' second-leading scorer and third-leading rebounder. The fact Boylen didn't commit to Parker re-entering the rotation is some combination of the lingering stomach virus, trade protection and message sending over what Boylen values for playing time.

Parker may have his flaws, but the Bulls signed him to score and their offense is currently ranked 30th in the NBA.

"Yeah, for sure," Parker said when asked if he's ready to play. "I always love to play the game. I want to be prepared to play how many minutes you want me to play. If it's given to me, whatever. But it's not like I'm expecting anything because I haven't expected anything so far. What's more important is me trying to get back in game shape."

Not everybody on the Bulls is healthy enough to do so.

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BEARS

Week 16 picks

By SAM FARMER
Los Angeles Times

Last week: 11-5 (9-7 vs. spread)
Season: 146-65-2 (108-108-8)



REDSKINS (7-7)
AT TITANS (8-6)
3:30 p.m. Saturday, NFLN
Titans by 10 (O/U 37)

The Titans have found the recipe for good December football. They play solid defense and run the ball well. The Redskins just don't have enough on offense, even though their defense is playing well. **Titans 21, Redskins 13**



RAVENS (8-6)
AT CHARGERS (11-3)
7:20 p.m. Saturday, NFLN
Chargers by 4½ (O/U 43½)

The Ravens have the best defense the Chargers have faced in a while — probably all season. But the Chargers are rested and might be the NFL's most complete team at this point. **Chargers 24, Ravens 17**



BENGALS (6-8)
AT BROWNS (6-7-1)
Noon Sunday
Browns by 9½ (O/U 44)

Browns offensive coordinator Freddie Kitchens has done a nice job sticking with the run, allowing Baker Mayfield a little more time and keeping the defense fresher. Go with the home team. **Browns 27, Bengals 23**



BUCCANEERS (5-9)
AT COWBOYS (8-6)
Noon Sunday
Cowboys by 7½ (O/U 48)

The Bucs can play teams tough but just can't close the deal against good opponents. The incentivized Cowboys are primed for a bounce-back game and play better at home. **Cowboys 28, Buccaneers 23**



VIKINGS (7-6-1)
AT LIONS (5-9)
Noon Sunday
Vikings by 6 (O/U 42½)

The Lions have been a real disappointment this season, and their offense will struggle to hang in here. The Vikings are desperate and talented, so they should roll on the road. **Vikings 28, Lions 20**



BILLS (5-9)
AT PATRIOTS (9-5)
Noon Sunday
Patriots by 13½ (O/U 45)

The Patriots have blown chances to clinch the division in consecutive weeks. This one could be closer than expected for a while because of the Bills defense. The Patriots will pull away late. **Patriots 24, Bills 17**



PACKERS (5-8-1)
AT JETS (4-10)
Noon Sunday
Packers by 3 (O/U 47)

Amazingly, the Packers are 0-7 on the road, and now they're without Aaron Jones. Aaron Rodgers has a groin injury. The Jets are nothing special, but they can be tougher at home. **Jets 24, Packers 20**



TEXANS (10-4)
AT EAGLES (7-7)
Noon Sunday
Eagles by 1 (O/U 46)

The Eagles are coming off an emotional road win over the Rams, but can they keep it going? The Texans are good but don't scream, "We're a Super Bowl team!" They find ways to get the "W," though. **Texans 28, Eagles 23**



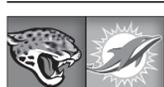
FALCONS (5-9)
AT PANTHERS (6-8)
Noon Sunday
Falcons by 3½ (O/U 43½)

With Taylor Heinicke playing in place of Cam Newton, who is out with a shoulder injury, the Panthers don't stand much of a chance to keep pace with the Falcons on the scoreboard. **Falcons 24, Panthers 20**



GIANTS (5-9)
AT COLTS (8-6)
Noon Sunday
Colts by 9½ (O/U 46½)

The Colts are quietly putting together an impressive season. It isn't just Andrew Luck, either. Their front seven is really solid. The Giants offensive line could be in for a long day. **Colts 31, Giants 20**



JAGUARS (4-10)
AT DOLPHINS (7-7)
Noon Sunday
Dolphins by 4 (O/U 38½)

The Dolphins are looking to bounce back from a bad loss in Minnesota. They typically have a sound defense and solid secondary. The Jaguars are still fumbling around for an identity. **Dolphins 24, Jaguars 17**



RAMS (11-3)
AT CARDINALS (3-11)
3:05 p.m. Sunday
Rams by 14 (O/U 44)

The Rams need this one bad, not just to hang on to the inside track on the No. 2 seed, but for their confidence after back-to-back losses. Look for big rushing numbers. The Cardinals are just waiting for the season to end. **Rams 41, Cardinals 13**



BEARS (10-4)
AT 49ERS (4-10)
3:05 p.m. Sunday, FOX-32
Bears by 4 (O/U 43)

Kyle Shanahan doesn't get a lot of credit for what he's doing with the 49ers, and he deserves a ton. To win with that no-name, broken-down group is amazing. That said, this isn't the week for them. **Bears 27, 49ers 21**



STEELERS (8-5-1)
AT SAINTS (12-2)
3:25 p.m. Sunday
Saints by 5½ (O/U 53)

Like the Rams, the Saints haven't been the same team offensively for some time. But they play better in the Superdome, and that might be enough against the up-and-down Steelers. **Saints 31, Steelers 27**



CHIEFS (11-3)
AT SEAHAWKS (8-6)
7:20 p.m. Sunday, NBC-5
Chiefs by 2½ (O/U 54½)

The Seahawks were embarrassed by the 49ers last week, but they still have their eyes on the playoffs. The Chiefs have fallen off their early pace, even though they have a phenom at quarterback. **Seahawks 28, Chiefs 24**



BRONCOS (6-8)
AT RAIDERS (3-11)
7:15 p.m. Monday, ESPN
Broncos by 3 (O/U 43)

These teams don't have much to play for, but this could be the Raiders' last game in Oakland. That has to mean something, right? Maybe it's enough incentive to lift the Silver and Black to a rare victory. **Raiders 24, Broncos 23**

NFL NOTES

Gordon steps away, is suspended again

Associated Press

Patriots wide receiver Josh Gordon was suspended indefinitely Thursday by the NFL for violating an agreement that allowed him to play after multiple drug suspensions, casting doubt on whether the talented but troubled playmaker will ever play in the league again.

League officials said Thursday that Gordon was returned to the reserve/commissioner suspended list indefinitely for breaking the terms of his reinstatement under the NFL substance abuse policy.

The news came several

hours after Gordon said he was stepping away from football to focus on his mental health.

Gordon said on Twitter his decision was spurred by his own feelings that he could have a better grasp on things mentally. He thanked the Patriots for their support and vowed to work his way back.

"We support Josh Gordon in his continued efforts to focus on his health. His attempt to do so is a private and personal matter, which we intend to respect," Patriots team officials said.

Gordon has been suspended several times by the

NFL for violations of its drug policies, and he missed the entire 2015 and 2016 seasons.

Reid testy: While Eric Reid is "not surprised" he's been drug tested by the NFL six times in the last 11 weeks, his Panthers teammates and coaches are growing increasingly annoyed at the frequency of the league's "random" drug testing policy.

Coach Ron Rivera quipped Thursday at his news conference that "if my name came up that many times I would buy a lottery ticket."

Wide receiver Torrey

Smith added, "It's very excessive."

"I don't think there's any secret about it that something is wrong with that," said Smith, who noted that he has been tested "two or three times" this season in 15 weeks.

Several veteran players say that is about the average for an entire season; Reid said that was his average before returning to the NFL.

Reid said he has taken seven drug tests in all (one was mandatory) since signing with the Panthers on Sept. 27, fined three times for illegal hits totaling nearly \$50,000 and ejected once.



CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Bears defensive coordinator Vic Fangio huddles with Cubs manager Joe Maddon before a game on July 8.

Fangio throws out a curveball

By RICH CAMPBELL
Chicago Tribune

Here are seven things we heard from Bears coordinators Vic Fangio, Mark Helfrich and Chris Tabor on Thursday at Halas Hall as they prepare for Sunday's road game against the 49ers:

Fangio joked that he has another coaching opportunity lined up after this season.

It's one of the most important questions facing the Bears after their playoff run: Will Fangio return as defensive coordinator or be lured away by a team that hires him as head coach?

Fangio, 60, aspires to be a head coach, and after more than three decades as an NFL assistant, it's hard to believe he cares more about money than fulfilling his ambition. However, he was asked Thursday whether the chance to win a Super Bowl with his exceptional Bears defense could trump a head coaching opportunity if one were to be presented to him.

"Well, it's valuable," Fangio said of what the Bears have built in four seasons with him as coordinator. "But the landscape from the end of the Super Bowl to the end of OTAs, things happen in this league that you may not have everybody that you think you're going to have. But all of that is for down the road."

"I do know that I have one interview coming up after the season."

With whom? "The Chicago Cubs," Fangio said. "Joe Maddon's got an opening. That guy that went to the Orioles (bench coach Brandon Hyde), he's promised me an interview for that job."

We're pretty sure Fangio was joking. He and Maddon are friends.

Comparing this Bears defense to the 1985 team does nothing for Fangio.

"Different era," he said. "I came into the league in '86, the year right after that. Totally different era. That's for fans and (media) to talk about, but the game has really really changed from then."

"But the Bears did set a record that year — the '85 Bears — of giving up the least amount of points in

the second half of games during that season, which was to be broken by the '96 Carolina Panthers defense — which still stands today.

Take one guess who coordinated that Panthers defense.

The Bears are managing rookie receiver Anthony Miller's workload after overloading him earlier this season, Helfrich said.

Miller played a season-low 26 snaps against the Packers. He has only one catch in the last three games, and he was not targeted against the Packers.

"We probably overloaded him to some extent in the middle of the season because we (recognized his quality play and thought), 'Oh, my gosh, throw everything at him!'" Helfrich said. "And we kind of throttled that back a little bit."

"People adjusted to him. For a while it was, 'Hey, 'Let's cover this guy,' or, 'Double this guy,' or, 'What about this guy?' So he's been played a little bit differently. But we're very excited about his future."

Tabor lamented the Bears' execution of their fake punt against the Packers, but not that Matt Nagy called it.

"I'll own it, no doubt about it," he said. "We didn't execute. We have to do a better job of coaching that. We are still going to be aggressive. When you don't get them, obviously, you open yourself up to it, and rightfully so. If you get it, then it's a different deal."

"But what I will say about this team is we didn't get it, and when you give Aaron Rodgers the ball at the 50, that's scary. There's no doubt about that. But at the same time, we regrouped. We said, 'That's OK, let's move on,' and no one dwelt on it. We said, 'Hey, we will make a play later on here.' And Tarik had the big punt return. So that's a credit to our guys, and that's a credit to Coach. We're always going to be aggressive."

Injury report: Defensive end Akiem Hicks (illness) did not practice Thursday. Safety Eddie Jackson (ankle) and linebacker Aaron Lynch (elbow) remained sidelined.

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Bears' victory parties hopping at Club Dub, Chicago's hottest place

Bears, from Page 1

"Everybody's getting in on it," Trubisky said. "It's absolutely hilarious. Guys are going nuts. You've got choreographed dances going down. You've got waves. It's just getting crazy in there."

Club Dub was ripe for skepticism upon its inception with the Bears' first victory on Sept. 17. ("Dub" is short for "Double-U," as in "win.")

When something like this is contrived or gimmicky, it could be dismissed as cheesy or juvenile and rendered ineffective.

In that regard, perhaps Nagy took a risk when he borrowed the postgame dance party idea from Cubs manager Joe Maddon, who famously brought a smoke machine and disco ball into their clubhouse in 2015.

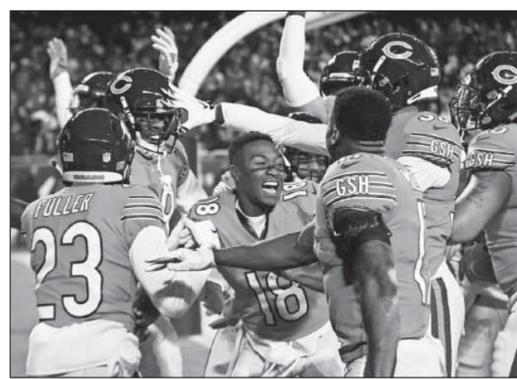
The two Chicago head men share deep Pennsylvania roots and a zest for

individualism. Most importantly, neither guy is afraid to have fun in the cutthroat world of pro sports.

"People enjoy dancing," Nagy said. "Dancing puts you in a good mood, and it's a way for people to celebrate. I'm not a dancer, so I enjoy living vicariously through a lot of others."

Initially, videos of the Bears' dance parties showed more wallflowers than participants. Contrast that, though, with the full-team frenzy of Sunday's Club Dub session after the division-clinching win over the Packers. It's clear the celebrations have grown organically.

"The game is constantly changing, so you've got to add a little spice to it, add a little seasoning," linebacker Danny Trevathan said. "I think it was the right recipe for us. Guys are having fun, and they get to be themselves. A lot of people say that, and a lot and don't mean it, but we mean it here. We're



BRIAN CASSELLA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

The Bears have done plenty of celebrating this season, both on the field and after victories in Club Dub.

having fun and creating memories."

Trevathan makes a great point about Nagy having the right recipe for this specific group of players. Consider that his team consists of only five players who are 30 or older, and Nagy himself is just 40. Only six of his players were not acquired

by fourth-year general manager Ryan Pace.

In other words, the Bears are a young team with an eagerness and willingness to be led, plus an internal drive to succeed.

To put it another way, would Club Dub have the same cohesive, uplifting effect if Nagy had inherited a

team of Jay Cutler, Brandon Marshall, Lance Briggs and Charles Tillman, as Marc Trestman did in 2013?

The results on the field, at least, indicate Nagy is the right leader for this roster. The wins and the off-field vibe have formed a self-propelling cycle.

"Club Dub ... has made this experience so much better," said Trubisky, who danced even after he threw three interceptions in a 15-6 win over the Rams on Dec. 9.

"It has become something very special for this team. We look forward to that. And I think it reminds us to enjoy every single week and that the hard work is paying off."

In fact, the team expanded its dance sessions to Saturday. It's written into the week's schedule: Saturday, 11:30 a.m. Dance Off.

Four players' names are drawn from a hat. Two from the offense and two from

the defense. It's a competition with three judges.

Tarik Cohen, Pro Bowl running back and Club Dub VIP, lamented his recent dance-off loss to practice-squad linebacker Josh Woods.

"It's great to laugh at your teammates that can't dance," Cohen said. "It's great to see your teammates in that light. It brings everyone closer."

As for what it's going to take to get Nagy on the dance floor? Maybe a playoff victory. Probably more than one, actually.

"He's bobbing back there," Cohen said. "He's the bouncer right now, probably. Making sure there's no underage kids in there."

"I love the fact that everybody else likes it," Nagy said. "That's a good thing. We like having fun."

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BEARS

SUNDAY STORYLINES

Time to focus on 'what ifs'



JOHN J. KIM/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Bears defensive coordinator Vic Fangio could finally get his deserved chance to be an NFL head coach in 2019 because his defense has been shutting down opponents this season.

Fangio likely to draw interest for head-coaching jobs; Gould still right on target

BY DAN WIEDERER | Chicago Tribune

The Bears travel to San Francisco this weekend, looking to avoid a letdown after clinching the NFC North and earning the organization's first playoff berth in eight years. As kickoff approaches, here's the inside skinny on two notable storylines.

What's next?

Last Friday, Khalil Mack once again found himself gushing about the strengths of the defense. The indomitable spirit. The collective confidence. The "evil genius" Vic Fangio at the controls.

Five nights earlier, the Bears had bullied the Rams, canceling Sean McVay's fireworks show and holding that high-powered offense to 226 yards and 29 points below its season averages.

Perhaps most impressively, the defense had limited the damage of Mitch Trubisky's three interceptions, allowing only three points and zero first downs after each of those potentially momentum-shifting turnovers.

Said Mack: "It's just an attitude. It's simply an attitude that we want to go back out. And the more opportunities we get to be dominant, the better."

For 2018, this has been a dream formula: a talented, hungry and self-assured defense making a big impact week after week and propelling the Bears into the postseason.

Mack was reminded that this might only be the beginning too. Of the Bears' top 12 players on defense, only safety Adrian Amos and slot cornerback Bryce Callahan have contracts that will expire after this season. Of the other 10 players, nine, including Mack, are under contract through at least 2020.

Mack's mega-deal runs through 2024. Kyle Fuller's extension positions the Bears to keep him here through 2021. Akiem Hicks' contract won't expire until March 2022. Eddie Jackson's rookie deal runs through 2020 — and the Bears will almost certainly work to extend that well before then.

Roquan Smith? Under team control through 2022.

So isn't it only fair to wonder whether the dominance of 2018 could become even more pronounced in the next two, three, maybe four seasons?

Mack, however, shrugged.

"Yeah," he said, "it has a chance to grow. But man, (Charles Woodson) told me this a long time ago. You only get this group for so long. Because of how the league works. So with that you want to make the most of the opportunity you have when you're together. And time is of the essence. You have to make the most of it while everybody's here."

While everybody's here.

That, alas, is a segue to an uncomfortable what-if for the defense. What if Fangio isn't still here in 2019? What if he finally gets his deserved chance to be an NFL head coach? Would that potential exit remove one of the most important blocks in the Jenga tower?

As the brains behind the strongest element of one of the league's most surprising teams, Fangio's opening to become a highly coveted head coaching candidate will reach an all-time high next month. And the Bears will have to hold their breath.

Already, folks in Wisconsin have been wondering whether Fangio might make sense as the next coach of the Packers. Before the playoffs begin, a half-dozen or so other openings will pop up around the league. Each team will have its own desires and its own qualities to prioritize.

In an offense-first league in which young and charismatic offensive gurus such as McVay and Matt Nagy have sparked rapid turnarounds, a 60-year-old defensive coordinator like Fangio will face a steep climb to draw serious consideration for a top job. Even if does get a handful of chances to make his pitch.

Fangio interviewed for the Bears' head coaching job last January. But it was clear from the start that general manager Ryan

Pace was going to target an offensive leader who could unite with Mitch Trubisky and be heavily hands-on in the young quarterback's development. That's a popular path these days for any team that has invested heavily in a young quarterback.

In some league circles, there's also skepticism as to whether Fangio could muster enough consistent enthusiasm and enough of a politician's savvy to smoothly handle the responsibilities of being the face and the voice of a franchise.

What's not in question is Fangio's ability to coach, his knack for connecting with players, earning their trust and turning them loose to use their strengths. The Bears' resurgence has his fingerprints all over it. And week after week, some of the most brilliant offensive minds find themselves gushing with respect over the difficulties Fangio can cause.

"He does an excellent job mixing it up," McVay said two weeks ago. "A sign of a great coach is finding ways to get your players in good spots to accentuate their skill set. But (it's also) making an offense earn every single yard, whether that be running it or throwing it. ... You can see he's extremely in tune with what (his opponents) have done."

And that was before Fangio's defense dismantled the Rams in a 15-6 win.

This week it was Kyle Shanahan extolling Fangio.

"You can tell that he really works at it," the 49ers coach said Wednesday. "It's very obvious. Some people just run a playbook; they run something that someone taught them. And they just stick with it. They don't adjust. They don't really know what you're doing offensively. They just hope the players make plays."

"Vic has a scheme he has always run and something he truly believes in. But you can tell going against him and watching how he calls a game throughout a game that he understands all 11 on both sides of the ball. The blocking schemes, the coverages, the fronts, the fits. He knows how to adjust within his own scheme and he's always trying to stay one step ahead of you."

So yes. Any NFL team looking for a shrewd strategist and one of the most respected defensive minds in the sport would be foolish not to give Fangio a call.

The good news for the Bears is Fangio isn't desperate to become a head coach. And never has been. For years, he has gone about his business with the same attitude and with no concentration on how to position himself for a head coaching job.

"I don't spend a lot of energy on it," he said three Decembers ago, a sentiment he has repeated often since. "I'm not going to feel empty if it never happens. And if it happens, great."

In other words, Fangio will have a personal luxury of being choosy as he considers head coaching opportunities. Plus, right now in Chicago, he's enjoying the way the Bears are playing and the direction his defense is heading.

If Fangio decides to stick around, this might be the beginning of a long run of success. And as even-keeled as he can often be and as close to the vest as he likes to remain with his emotions, he hasn't hid his feelings about the current group he has to work with.

"I just like our guys. I really do," Fangio said. "I trust them. I like their work habits. I like them as people, both individually and as a group. And I really like working with them. That's enjoyable. And in the midst of an NFL season, some things aren't always enjoyable — or you don't let them be. But I really enjoy our guys."

That will factor into things too.

Just for kicks

The 15th game-winning field goal of Robbie Gould's career came Sunday on a rain-soaked field in Northern California with winds up to 25 mph swirling through Levi's Stadium.

"Probably the toughest conditions I've been in (here)," Gould said.

Still, the 49ers veteran kicker had found his comfort zone and knew his line. He already had made kicks from 28, 33 and 45 yards away. He was eager for the moment. And with one easy swing of his right leg, he buried the 36-yard overtime field goal that allowed the 49ers to beat the Seahawks for the first time since 2013.

It turns out, even at 36 and in his 14th NFL season, Robbie Gould is still Robbie Gould. Still supremely self-assured. Still a feisty competitor. Still thumping field goals through the uprights at an admirable clip: 96.7 percent this season and now up to 87.6 percent for his career.

Just a little more than two years after being unceremoniously cut by the Bears, Gould remains one of the league's most reliable kickers. And his 29-for-30 stretch with the 49ers this season includes a current streak of 12 consecutive makes at Levi's Stadium, a deceptively difficult place to kick.

"There's a lot that goes into it," Gould said Wednesday morning. "Obviously there are two open ends, so the wind swirls. And it changes from quarter to quarter, from right hash to left hash. Sometimes it's in your face, sometimes it'll be at your back."

"There are a few keys we look for. So you just kind of trust those keys. I'd love to give you those, but I'm trying to win this weekend."

Gould is trying to win this weekend by upsetting the Bears. Again.

A year and three weeks ago, in his first and only game at Soldier Field as an opposing player, Gould made five field goals, including a game-winning 24-yarder with four seconds left that lifted the 49ers to a 15-14 win.

It was, unofficially, "Robbie Gould Day" by Lake Michigan. And the confident kicker celebrated his game-winner by turning and screaming directly at the Bears' sideline, clearly taking delight in the misery he inflicted.

In the locker room after the game, Gould tried to take a higher road, insisting that his abrupt exit from Chicago caused him to refocus, to make sure he remained a perfectionist with his technique. It also gave him an extra surge of motivation.

Still, if last year's 49ers-Bears game had an obvious revenge element to it, Gould seems to have adopted a softer approach to his former team in 2018. On Wednesday, he said he had plans to take his sons to the Bears' first home playoff game in January.

Gould also gushed with admiration on how the Bears have shot out of the NFC

North basement — their home from 2014-17 — to win 10 games and a division title. When he was back in Chicago last month for the birth of his third son, Grayson, Gould felt a vibe that reminded him of 2005, 2006 and 2010. A playoff vibe.

"I started to see a lot of that same passion and energy," he said. "You see the positivity that's going through the city and, as a player, you get excited about that. ... These guys are built to make a run."

As luck would have it, the 49ers' open date this fall came in Week 11 allowing Gould to return to his Chicago home to spend time with his wife and kids. That was also the week that news helicopters were whirring toward Soldier Field to track an evening practice session for Bears kicker Cody Parkey, who had banged four kicks off the uprights in a home win over the Lions days earlier.

Gould chuckled at the hullabaloo. "I think it's a little crazy and over the top."

As a fellow kicker, Gould had few worries about Parkey. "When you have something where you hit four goal posts in one game, I mean, come on. One of those couldn't have gone in for him? You know what I mean? It's just an unlucky day. I felt really bad for him. ... Really, if you take that one game away, he's had a Pro Bowl type of year."

Gould also said that, other than his rookie year, he never went to Soldier Field during the week to practice. For him, the payoff wasn't big enough, the logistics too disruptive in affecting his practice schedule and his body-maintenance routines.

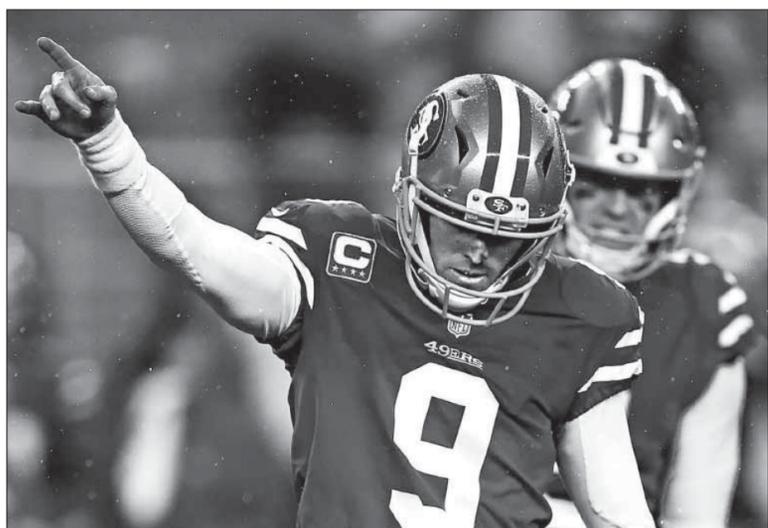
"It's difficult," he said, "because you've got to fight traffic. There's really no easy time during the day to do that. Especially with the practice schedule. I think a lot of it had to do with when you got down there (before games). You kicked extra kicks in the beginning and the first couple of times, obviously you got used to it. You trusted it."

Gould, who, including the postseason, is 80-for-83 on field-goal attempts since leaving the Bears, hasn't talked to Parkey this season. But, with his ties to special teams coordinator Chris Tabor, Gould has let it be known that his line is open. Just maybe not this week.

For one Sunday afternoon, Gould will be determined to do his part to beat the Bears. But it was also clear Wednesday his love for the organization and the city still runs deep.

"Chicago is the place where I spent 11 years of my career," Gould said. "The fans. The city. The organization. These are all things that I love and that I will never forget. No matter where I'm playing or where I go, it's a place where I have tremendous memories."

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BEN MARGOT/AP

Robbie Gould celebrates his field goal that defeated the Seahawks in overtime Sunday.

BASEBALL

Will fans cope if Sox can't sign Harper or Machado?

If you thought you were going to get an Xbox One or PlayStation 4 for Christmas and wound up with some socks, would you eventually get over it?

White Sox fans may face that kind of scenario with the possibility neither Manny Machado nor Bryce Harper will wind up on the South Side despite all the recent media attention and wooing by Sox personnel.

In a tweet Thursday about the difficulty of playing in the AL East, Blue Jays pitcher Marcus Stroman led with two declarative statements: "Machado is going to the Yankees. Yankees go out and get everyone."

Machado met with the Yankees on Wednesday after Monday's meeting with the Sox. But the Yankees had not signed Machado, leading to another tweet from Stroman that began: "Just my opinion on Manny to the Yankees. No insider info."

Machado met with the Phillies on Thursday, so there is still a chance he won't wind up a Yankee. Still, the presumption is the Yankees get whatever they want, so if they want Machado they will make him the proverbial offer he can't refuse.

If the Sox lose out on Harper, too, which seems likely considering Harper



PAUL SULLIVAN
On the
White Sox

expects to become the highest-paid player in baseball history, that leaves them with a haul of Ivan Nova, Alex Colome, Yonder Alonso and James McCann. OK, but just more socks. Of course there are many players remaining on the free-agent market and available via trades and plenty of time left this offseason.

No one expected the Sox to seriously be in the mix for either Machado or Harper right after a 100-loss season, mostly based on their history of free-agent spending. But some talking heads were calling them favorites to sign one of the two during the winter meetings in Las Vegas.

After all the build-up it will be a disappointment if the Sox don't succeed in signing one or the other, even if it makes sense not to give anyone a 10-year contract in this era. Total spending was down on MLB player payrolls for the first time since 2010, and there have been no major signings to date this offseason. The Sox wound up with the lowest payroll at the end of the season, \$82,889,649, so there is room to spend. That doesn't mean it makes sense in Year 3 of a rebuild.

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CUBS

Hughes gets multiyear radio deal

By PHIL ROSENTHAL | Chicago Tribune

Whatever changes the Cubs make in the next couple of years, at least one thing will remain constant: Pat Hughes has signed a multiyear deal to remain the team's radio play-by-play announcer.

The Cubs and their flagship station WSCR-AM 670's parent, Entercom Communications, announced the deal Thursday. It's a two-year deal with an option for a third season.

"I have every reason to think it will be a full three-year deal," Hughes said. "I feel great."

Hughes, 63, has been voice of the Cubs since 1996, initially paired with the late Ron Santo on WGN-AM 720. More recently Hughes has worked alongside Ron Coomer on The Score.

"I was thinking today, I work with Coomer, a great guy," Hughes said. "Mitch

Rosen (WSCR's operations director) is a wonderful guy to report to. The Cubs give us total freedom, and we've had a playoff team for four straight years, and I hope many more in a row. And we have the best fan base on the planet.

"So I feel like, 'How much luckier can a guy be?' I certainly have covered my share of bad teams."

The 2019 season, Hughes' 24th with the Cubs, will be his 37th as a major-league announcer. He broke in with the Minnesota Twins in 1983 after minor-league stints with the San Jose Missions and Columbus Clippers, then spent a dozen seasons with the Milwaukee Brewers.

An eight-time honoree as Illinois Sportscaster of the Year, Hughes is a finalist again this year.

Chicago Tribune reporter Paul Sullivan contributed.

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10:35 AM | Undergraduate Teaching Award



POLITICS

Part II - Looking Forward: The Changing Face of Politics

10:50 AM | Sam Potolicchio / Georgetown University
11:55 AM | "America's Best Professors," Princeton Review



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12:10 PM | Orin Grossman / Fairfield University
1:15 PM | Distinguished Teacher Award



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COLLEGES

NOTRE DAME FOOTBALL

Irish eager for Clemson challenge

Tigers feature four potential 1st-rounders on defensive line

By LAMOND POPE | Post-Tribune

SOUTH BEND, Ind. — Athletic. Big. Physical. Nasty.

Those are some of the words Notre Dame center Sam Mustipher used to describe Clemson's defensive line.

Tackle Christian Wilkins is an unanimous All-American. End Clelin Ferrell is a consensus All-American. Tackle Dexter Lawrence joined them on the All-ACC first team. End Austin Bryant earned third-team All-ACC honors.

"You probably have three guys there that could be top-50, top-60 players in all of college football," Irish coach Brian Kelly said.

The four combined for 176 tackles, 48½ tackles for a loss and 23 sacks this season. And they represent the biggest test for the Irish in the College Football Playoff semifinal in the Cotton Bowl.

"Without a doubt, they wouldn't be in this position, just like us, if they didn't have great players," Notre Dame offensive line coach Jeff Quinn said. "Their front four is as good as anybody's in the country. We are blessed and excited about this tremendous challenge and opportunity for our guys."

The numbers back up the Tigers' dominance.

Clemson is second nationally in scoring defense (13.7 points per game), third in rushing defense (92.9 yards per game), third in sacks (46) and fourth in total defense (276.7 yards per game).

"They are extremely fast, big (and) in terms of their defensive line, everyone knows about them," Irish quarterback Ian Book said. "When we have opportunities, we have to make those plays. I've got to get the ball out quickly. Their defense speaks for itself."

"I'm going to work on getting the ball out quick and getting it to our playmakers. I say it every week. Those guys on the perimeter, I have two 6-foot-(4) guys (receivers Miles Boykin and Chase Claypool) on the outside. I'm going to get them the ball and let them go make plays."

ESPN college football analyst Todd Blackledge, who will be part of the broadcast for the semifinal, echoed Book's thoughts on how to approach Clemson's line.

"You can't hold on to the ball very long," Blackledge said. "You've got to try to keep them balanced and run the football and make them play honestly."

"They're as good as advertised. And the problem with having four of them is you just can't pay too much attention to any one of them because they are all capable of winning one-on-one battles."

A year ago, few expected the group to remain intact in 2018. Wilkins and Bryant, both seniors this season, and Ferrell, a redshirt junior, opted to stay in school despite being projected as potential first-round NFL draft picks.

Now some projections have all four, including Lawrence, a junior this year, going in the first round in April.

Ferrell leads the team with 17 tackles for a loss and 10½ sacks, with Bryant (10½ TFLs, six sacks) and Wilkins (13½ TFLs, five sacks) not far behind. Lawrence (7½ TFLs) is a 350-pound space eater in the middle.

"We have to be sharp," Mustipher said. "There can be no missteps, no misplacement of hands and definitely no missed assignments or blown blocks."

Quinn said going against Notre Dame's stout defensive line in practice has been beneficial.

"We faced a really good Michigan football team (in the season opener), you play against great players, but collectively (Clemson is) one of the better units," Quinn said. "We face a great one every day in our own building."

"We feel confident. To be able to go out there and battle will be a tremendous opportunity for our kids to show they're one of the best offensive line units in the country."

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COLLEGE FOOTBALL PLAYOFF

Cotton Bowl | Dec. 29 in Arlington, Texas
No. 2 Clemson (13-0) vs. No. 3 Notre Dame (12-0), 3 p.m., ESPN**Orange Bowl** | Dec. 29 in Miami Gardens, Fla.
No. 1 Alabama (13-0) vs. No. 4 Oklahoma (12-1), 7 p.m., ESPN**National championship game**
7 p.m. Jan. 7 in Santa Clara, Calif., ESPN

SEAN RAYFORD/AP

Tackle Dexter Lawrence (90) and ends Austin Bryant (7) and Clelin Ferrell (99) make up three-fourths of Clemson's defensive line with unanimous All-America tackle Christian Wilkins.



DANNY MOLOSHOK/AP

Indianapolis native Kris Wilkes returns to the Midwest with UCLA.



GRANT HALVERSON/GETTY

North Carolina's Seventh Woods played well against Gonzaga.



JAY LAPRETE/AP

Ohio State's Kaleb Wesson scored in double figures in nine games.



JAMES CRISP/AP

Freshman Keldon Johnson averages 16.1 points for Kentucky.

COLLEGE BASKETBALL CBS SPORTS CLASSIC

Blue-blood battles

United Center doubleheader offers a rare showcase of winning teams

By SHANNON RYAN | Chicago Tribune

Finally, some winning teams at the United Center.

All joking aside about the Bulls and Blackhawks, the arena will host four of college basketball's elite programs Saturday when UCLA takes on No. 15 Ohio State at 2 p.m. and No. 19 Kentucky faces No. 9 North Carolina at 4:15 in the CBS Sports Classic.

Here's what you need to know about each team:

UCLA (7-4)

The skinny: Patience is growing thin in Westwood with coach Steve Alford. The Bruins have lost by double digits to every high-major team they've played except Notre Dame, falling by 20 points to Michigan State, by 16 to North Carolina and by 29 on Wednesday night at Cincinnati. They also lost by two to Belmont.**Standout stat:** 61.9 percent. The Bruins miss an awful lot of free throws.**Player to watch:** Sophomore guard Kris Wilkes has had his off nights but he's one of the Bruins' more consistent players, averaging 17.4 points and 4.5 rebounds. The Indianapolis native figures to be amped to play back in the Midwest.**What's at stake:** The Pac-12 is abysmal with just three teams ranked in KenPom.com's top 50 and none in the top 35. So a quality nonconference win against the Buckeyes would count for a lot come NCAA tournament selection time.

CBS SPORTS CLASSIC

Saturday at the United Center
Ohio State vs. UCLA, 2 p.m., CBS-2
Kentucky vs. North Carolina, 4:15, CBS-2

Ohio State (10-1)

The skinny: The Buckeyes are exceeding expectations again under coach Chris Holtmann, sailing along despite losing last season's Big Ten player of the year Keita Bates-Diop. They have two strong road wins at Cincinnati and Creighton.**Standout stat:** 3. The Buckeyes have won all three games they trailed at halftime. Don't count them out even after a slow start.**Player to watch:** Sophomore forward Kaleb Wesson has been the Buckeyes' most consistent player. His 31-point performance against Youngstown State was his ninth double-digit scoring night of the season. Wesson averages 16.5 points and 6.6 rebounds.**What's at stake:** Ohio State can improve its already high NET ranking and maintain momentum as Big Ten play resumes in January. This will be the Buckeyes' second game at the United Center this season after beating Illinois 77-67 on Dec. 5. They should feel at ease.

North Carolina (8-2)

The skinny: After losses to Texas and Michigan (by a surprising 17 points), the Tar Heels redeemed themselves with a strong 103-90 victory last week against No. 4 Gonzaga.**Standout stat:** 7. North Carolina players who clock at least nine minutes per game and shoot at least 50 percent from the field. The Tar Heels rank third in offensive efficiency.**Player to watch:** Junior point guard Seventh Woods is coming off a career-high 14-point performance against Gonzaga. Let's see if he can keep it rolling.**What's at stake:** The Tar Heels can keep building off that Gonzaga win and remain in the top 10.

Kentucky (8-2)

The skinny: The Wildcats have played two noteworthy opponents and lost to both. The season started with a demoralizing 118-84 loss to Duke, and Seton Hall stunned Kentucky 84-83 in overtime on Dec. 8 at Madison Square Garden.**Standout stat:** 84.6. Points per game for the Wildcats, 23rd in the country, ensuring this should be a high-scoring game against the Tar Heels, who rank third at 94.3.**Player to watch:** Freshman guard Keldon Johnson has emerged as a go-to player for the Wildcats. He's shooting 58 percent over the last four games, which includes a 24-point performance in last week's victory over Utah, and averaging 16.1 points.**What's at stake:** This could be a major statement game on a national stage for the Wildcats. A win over the Tar Heels followed by a victory against rival Louisville in their next game would send them into SEC play on a strong note.sryan@chicagotribune.com
Twitter @sryantribune

Q&A WITH BROADCASTER BILL RAFTERY

High-profile college players used to big stage

By TEDDY GREENSTEIN
Chicago Tribune

Raftery

Chicago hosted the inaugural CBS Sports Classic in 2014. After stops in Brooklyn, Las Vegas and New Orleans, the doubleheader returns to the United Center on Saturday.

Brad Nessler and Bill Raftery will call the games, starting with the 2 p.m. tip between UCLA and 20th-ranked Ohio State. No. 19 Kentucky takes on ninth-ranked North Carolina in the finale.

Sure, the United Center is a jumbo-sized NBA gym, but Raftery doubts many players will be nervous.

"A lot of the kids have played in so many places — (Madison Square) Garden, the Staples Center, the McDonald's (All-American) Game, all these different types of arenas," he said. "I think the thrill of it sometimes brings out the best in them."

Raftery previewed the event for the Tribune with this Q&A:

Kentucky lost to Seton Hall in overtime and then won big over Utah in its last game. What do you make of the Wildcats?

Seton Hall is solid, so I didn't make much of that (loss). Kentucky is learning how to win. They have an inside game and they have older guys like Reid Travis (a

graduate transfer from Stanford). At times the young guys are super, and at other times they rush their shots.

Which Kentucky players have the most NBA potential?

PJ Washington has come along, and Keldon Johnson is really talented. He is pretty much whatever you want. He can make shots, he handles the ball very well and has an overall knowledge of the game.

Ohio State is 10-1 and a solid 25th in the KenPom ratings. What stands out about this team?

It's a tough group, and (Wake Forest transfer) Keyshawn Woods helps 'em. When C.J. Jackson plays the point well, they are really tough. And (6-foot-9, 270-pound) Kaleb Wesson, I don't know how many can guard that guy. He lays that body on you and moves you three feet.

How have the Buckeyes changed since Thad Matta gave way to Chris Holtmann?

Similar theories and philosophies, but there was a rejuvenation. The half-court defense is solid. They do a good job of getting up shots. The unsung hero is Kyle Young, who sets screens and dives on the floor. Collectively, it's a good team.

UCLA is 7-4 and coming in cold, having lost at home to Belmont before getting throttled Wednesday at Cincinnati. Is this team coming apart?

Everybody is on them about Belmont, but that's a team with seven NCAA (tournament) appearances and a coach (Rick Byrd) with almost 800 wins. They had an opportunity to stretch their lead, they didn't and paid mightily for it. The key is Jaylen Hands and how the backcourt plays. Cody Riley reminds me of a lefty Maurice Lucas. Moses Brown is a 7-footer from New York, and everyone thought he was Kareem (Abdul-Jabbar). He's a nice-looking prospect, but he has a long way to go.

Roy Williams slammed himself after North Carolina lost to Michigan last month, saying, "My coaching sucks." Was that anything more than frustration after a loss?

Michigan was in midseason form and North Carolina was not. The Tar Heels were off for a week after that game, and you can see the difference on the defensive end and with better shot selection. They're not turning it over; they're using better judgment and making that extra pass. Cameron Johnson has really come into his own. You saw that against Gonzaga (25 points on 8-for-12 shooting).

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eNEWSPAPER BONUS COVERAGE

Fowler can regain hope because Cards have faith

BY DERRICK GOOLD

St. Louis Post-Dispatch

SUMMERLIN, Nev. — As blunt as the numbers were on the scoreboard every time he walked up to hit, the heavier struggles dragging on Dexter Fowler revealed themselves when his irrepressible, day-glow smile curved the way of his batting average, down, and then followed his playing time and for stretches vanished altogether.

He faced repeated questions about the reason for his sluggish performance. Nagging foot injuries had healed, he said. His legs were fine. No, he wasn't ill. There was not an allergy, food poisoning, a virus or any other explanation offered for the lethargy that smothered his game. He searched, too, for an answer because he felt what others saw — that he was playing baseball as if underwater, in a darker corner of the deep end.

He was.
“I was depressed,” Fowler said. “That’s what I was. I got mad that I let it get to me. I should be mentally stronger than that. I shouldn’t have let it weigh me down as much as it did. But I was. I was depressed. I was depressed.”

The Cardinals outfielder leaned forward in his chair in the great room of his Las Vegas-area home as he described his feelings of depression during a candid, expansive interview this past week. A day after hosting the Cardinals’ front office and engaging in a karaoke faceoff with a teammate in the same room, Fowler punctuated his comments by tapping a table, sometimes with a water bottle and sometimes with his hand. Often with a grin. He explained how he knew he’s “playing a game” and how he’d “gone through ruts before” with confidence. But 2018 cut deeper. Understanding why brightens his view of a revival in 2019.

The Cardinals have publicly — and privately to Fowler — backed the veteran as their starter in right field. There are three years remaining on a five-year, \$82.5 million deal that saw career-high power numbers in year 1, career lows galore in year 2, and turbulence throughout. He’s energized by the belief the team has shown in him this winter. The bounce is back in more than just his foot. He recently told his wife, Aliya, how he “wants Cardinal Nation to know that side of me. I hope I earn that opportunity.”

As Fowler spoke, his oldest daughter, Naya, 4, scampered through the house looking for her mom and stopped briefly enough to make her father laugh about her urgency. His youngest, 5-month-old Ivy, was carried in for a goodnight kiss and beamed when she heard her father’s voice. He returned her smile. This is his life, he said. Baseball is his job. But, he then stressed, baseball is the game he “truly loves.” Always has been. Ask his mother, he insisted twice. She arrived that day for a visit. She did confirm.

He was asked if he lost that love in 2018.

“Um,” Fowler said.

He paused for five seconds. The house went silent, no tapping.

“I lost loving what is around the game,” he said.

“He’s just a good, happy, positive person,” Aliya Fowler explained later. “It’s the best way to describe him. Last year he wasn’t, and it was confusing. As his wife, I could see, whatever it was, was eating him up. He couldn’t shake it. . . No matter how many times I said, ‘Just go out there and do your job,’ he would agree, and come back that night, defeated. The defeat was beyond the game. It was in his heart.”

Fowler had two singles, a walk and an RBI to back one bold prediction on Aug. 3 in Pittsburgh. Fowler had bounded out of batting practice and told teammates “spring training is over.” He had the commitment of new manager Mike Shildt and felt a groove in his swing. The season seemed buoyant again as he reached second base in the eighth inning.

He hasn’t played since. Fowler fractured his left foot in that game and put his broken 2018 season, officially, in a cast. His .576 OPS ranked 307th of the 313 players who had 250 plate appearances, and he finished the summer with a .180 average and his



CHRIS SWEDA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

After a rough 2018, Cardinals outfielder Dexter Fowler is looking forward to having a better season with a better mental outlook in 2019.

foot back in a protective boot. After returning home in October, Fowler saw a foot specialist who said he needed an additional six weeks in the boot. That setback delayed his return to full workouts and baseball activities until this month.

“I’m excited to put this all behind us and move on,” he said.

Cardinals head athletic trainer Adam Olsen visited Fowler in Vegas last week and later lauded his workouts in an email. Like his teammates, Fowler received a file on his metrics from this past season and suggestions on what he could improve. Fowler’s showed his exit velocity was down and his footspeed slowed. According to Baseball Savant, his average exit velocity shriveled to 85.3 mph from 88.4 mph in 2017, and his sprinting dipped to 27.4 feet per second from 28.3 in 2016. He called the numbers “common sense.”

“I was in a slump,” he said. “When you get hot, your exit velo is going to go up and everything starts to level out. I never got there. My foot speed is down?” He laughed, wryly, and continued, “I didn’t run any bases because really I wasn’t on base.”

John Mozeliak, president of baseball operations, and Shildt flew to Vegas to meet Fowler earlier this offseason and, in Fowler’s words, “wipe the slate clean.” Mozeliak and Fowler have grown close, and Mozeliak was aware of Fowler’s feelings of depression.

The Cardinals have offered whatever support the outfielder wants. In the meeting, Mozeliak and Shildt gave Fowler the kind of confidence he sought this past year. Fowler said he felt doubt emanating from the former manager’s office, and their relationship frayed.

As the crater deepened, Fowler

referenced 2015 for traction. He went from May 1 to June 11 that summer and hit .202/.282/.340 in 279 plate appearances. The Cubs committed to him as leadoff hitter and he responded with a .279/.394/.467 line in his final 75 games, 69 of which he started.

In 2017, his first with the Cardinals, he started slow and on May 25 had hit .203/.300/.420 in his past 160 plate appearances. The Cardinals kept with him. He hit .295 and had a gaudy .926 OPS in his final 88 games.

He started 31 of the first 35 games this past season and wheezed to a .574 OPS. On May 10, he had a .156 average and a .271 on-base percentage. That same day, Matt Carpenter had a .147 average and a .581 OPS. That was the fork in their season.

Carpenter slugged his way to MVP votes.

Fowler’s production idled. His playing time shrank to 43 starts in the next 75 games, his plate appearances per game cut in half. The Cardinals had stronger alternatives at his position in Jose Martinez and Harrison Bader, and pressure mounted on manager Mike Matheny to win. Patience thinned. Fowler requested faith and playing time. When Shildt gave it, the foot injury halted any chance Fowler had to reward the investment.

Now it’s been promised again.

“It was tough because it felt like I couldn’t do anything to change it, couldn’t change how I was treated, and if you couldn’t change it, it felt like you’ve been removed from it,” Fowler said. “It’s a tough thing to describe. . . . It’s like you believe in me, you believe in the way I play, you believe in my talent. I put all of it in God’s hands and let it take care of itself. But it means a lot to hear that. You believe in me.”

On a snow-covered day after

the 2013 season, Fowler checked his Garmin GPS watch and tugged on a knit beanie. He had miles to run outside of Salt Lake City, hills to climb, and a workout to complete all because Barry Bonds said so. Fowler was seeking instruction from the seven-time MVP. In response, he got a workout regimen that Fowler is convinced was designed to “make me quit.”

He had yet to meet Bonds in person.

“He said if he’s going to teach me how to hit, he’s going to need my body in the position that you’re able to learn how to hit,” Fowler said. “I’m trying to be the best, so that’s what I’m going to do. My whole mindset is if I’m going to learn from the best, I’m going to do everything that he says to do, and if I fail at it then I can always look back and say I did it. I did everything. I did everything and it’s not in the cards.”

He did everything and ever since has called Bonds a mentor. Fowler has also hired a chef, a trainer and a physical therapist, and he works with them almost daily, even before reporting to the ballpark. Fowler detailed his workouts because he wished he could bring critics along to “work with me, see what it’s like.” They “only know the numbers,” he said. He’s aware of criticism from fans and has retreated from Twitter, in part because of poisonous things said to him.

Fowler originally planned to travel to a friend’s wedding in Mexico next month, on the same weekend as Winter Warm-up, and miss the annual fanfest for the third consecutive year. After discussions this weekend with his wife, he altered those plans and notified the Cardinals that he will attend the Warm-up. Part of a commitment, shared.

The Bonds story serves another purpose, too.

“I never quit,” Fowler said. “Too competitive.”

Fowler will spend several weeks with Bonds later this winter, and he has already started hitting. Recently, he invited Mozeliak and other officials to see the multi-sport simulator screen he’s using in his garage to measure ball flight and exit velocity off a tee. He challenged them to a contest in simulated golf. Fowler went last and dropped a shot onto the green to win. He celebrated by saying, “And still.”

That’s boxing short-hand for “and still champion of the world.”

That same evening, Cardinals lefty Chasen Shreve could not outduel Fowler in karaoke, the host said. A “microphone hog,” according to his family, Fowler claimed to dominate karaoke because “I have a lot of genres.” He favors Usher, but sometimes shifts to Luther Vandross, Marvin Gaye, and can flash Stevie Wonder, for the knockout. His wife watched and saw what she’s had since the clouds of 2018 broke. The foot injury assured Fowler more time with family, more time with his daughters, more time on the mic, and through them came “the light at the end of the tunnel,” he said.

“The happy-to-the-point-I-will-pester-you-with-my-smile-and-happiness Dex is back,” Aliya Fowler texted this weekend.

And still, indeed.

“Honestly, I’m excited to get back out there, to run around, to catch a fly ball, to hit a home run, to hit a line drive again, to be there and to compete,” Fowler said, tapping that table each time he said “to” for emphasis. “I don’t want to disappoint anybody. If anybody wants to be great, it’s me. . . . I know this: I can do better. I know better is out there. I want to show I’m getting better, better, better — better. Now we go. Now it’s time.”

— eNEWSPAPER BONUS COVERAGE —

Leafs among NHL teams facing salary-cap crunch

By JOHN WAWROW
Associated Press

There are questions Maple Leafs coach Mike Babcock won't touch with a 10-foot hockey stick.

The challenge a Maple Leafs team brimming with young talent faces managing its payroll structure was one topic Babcock particularly enjoyed sidestepping shortly after Toronto and forward William Nylander ended a lengthy contract dispute earlier this month.

"Well, I think you've got to talk to a manager about that," Babcock said, referring to general manager Kyle Dubas. "I just coach the players."

Babcock was so pleased with his response, he winked and added: "I bailed on that one, eh?"

Funny, sure, but it doesn't make the issue go away.

Nylander signing a six-year, \$41.4 million contract was merely a prelude to what will be a busy 2019 for Dubas, who will have to be creative in keeping the young core of his team intact within the constraints of the NHL's projected \$83 million salary cap. With \$55 million in salary already on the books for next season, the Leafs have little wiggle room with 2016 first-round draft pick Auston Matthews and forward Mitchell Marner, the team's current leading scorer, both completing the final years of their contracts.

Matthews, who followed up his 40-goal rookie season with 34 last year, is expected to command a contract similar to the eight-year, \$100 million deal Edmonton Oilers captain Connor McDavid signed in the summer of 2017. And Marner, the fourth pick in the 2015 draft, likely won't be far behind because he is on pace to top the career highs of 22 goals and 69 points he had last season.

"I don't think any of our group and our whole organization should forgo the enjoyment of the season because we have good players that need contracts," he said. "I think it's a fortunate position that we're in."

Dubas is not the only one in this fix.

In Winnipeg, forwards Patrik Laine, Kyle Connor and defenseman Jacob Trouba are eligible to become restricted free agents. With an eye on the future, the Jets were unable to retain Peter Stastny, who elected to sign a better offer with Vegas last summer.

In Buffalo, newly acquired forward Jeff Skinner's asking price goes up with each goal he scores. Skinner has 25 already to match last season's total and ranks second in the NHL behind only Washington's Alexander Ovechkin. Skinner will be an unrestricted free agent this summer if the Sabres can't re-sign him.

Buffalo will have money to spend, but has to be cautious with center Jack Eichel in the first year of his eight-year, \$80 million contract. And the team will also have to keep open a large portion of cap space once No. 1 overall pick Rasmus Dahlin's entry-level contract expires in three years.

The question becomes how teams retain their young stars while keeping enough money aside to fill the remainder of their roster.

"The philosophy is simple, and you're seeing it around the league. The only way you can keep a lot of your top-end players is if you have other players coming up through the system," Sabres GM Jason Botterill said, placing an emphasis on scouting and player development.

Botterill saw that firsthand working in Pittsburgh, where the Penguins complemented their core of Sidney Crosby, Evgeni Malkin and Kris Letang by filtering in younger players on cheaper entry-level contracts.

Still, it can get complicated once a team's high-priced core starts aging.

The troubles are apparent in Chicago, which won three Stanley Cups from 2010-15 with Patrick Kane and Jonathan Toews but is now a team in transition with some big contracts in place. It's no different in Los Angeles, where the Kings have been eliminated in the first round of the playoffs and missed the postseason three times since 2014, when they won their second Cup in three years.

"It's not a perfect business,"



CHRIS O'MEARA/AP

Maple Leafs winger William Nylander ended a lengthy contract dispute this month, and his \$41.4 million deal will have lasting effects on the team.



MADDIE MEYER/GETTY

Jeff Skinner will be an free agent this summer, and an expensive one, if the Sabres can't re-sign him.

Detroit Red Wings GM Ken Holland said. "You make decisions and you may wake up two years later with different information, but it's too late and you have to manage around that decision."

What's changed over the past decade? Teams are spending more money on retaining players over

adding them in free agency.

It's a philosophy that places an emphasis on evaluating potential at a younger age and determining whether they can perform to the value of their contract. Otherwise, a team could be stuck with a player with a high-priced guaranteed contract that handcuffs fu-

ture decisions.

"I don't think there's any easier answer to it. I mean, you just have to make the right decisions on the player," Nashville Predators general manager David Poile said. "One bad contract and it knocks everything out of line."

Poile has done an adept job in

maintaining a competitor on a roster that features six players taking up a combined \$40.25 million in salary cap space this year.

Dallas Stars GM Jim Nill said keeping a team's payroll structure in line also requires making unpopular decisions.

"You've got to be willing to say, 'You know what, the guy that doesn't quite fit in that core, we may need to make a decision that you have to move him,'" Nill said. "I know sometimes fans are going to say, 'Whoa, why are they doing that?' You've got no choice."

The Maple Leafs are among the exceptions in trying to build through the draft and free agency, after signing John Tavares to a seven-year, \$77 million contract last summer.

Dubas insists retaining the team's young talent is "of vital importance." Re-signing Nylander was the first step.

Buffa-love: After missing the playoffs during each of his eight seasons in Carolina, Skinner is enjoying the buzz the Sabres have created in Buffalo, a year after finishing last for the third time in five years.

"I haven't really been here before and realized how much they love the Sabres. It's been fun," said Skinner, who waived his no-trade clause to approve the Hurricanes dealing him to Buffalo for prospect forward Cliff Pu and three draft picks in August. "Hopefully, we can keep giving them something to be proud of."

It was then when Skinner was reminded of how those same fans want him to stay in Buffalo beyond this season.

"Ha, ha, I've heard," Skinner said. "I'm having a lot of fun, too."

Chicago Tribune
A+E
 MOVIES



ANTONIO PEREZ/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Inventor and designer Vic Antolin inspects an item at Big Monster Toys on Chicago's Near West Side.

SECRET WONDERLAND

A peek inside Near West Side's Big Monster Toys, where success is a failure (or 5) away

BY CHRISTOPHER BORRELLI
 Chicago Tribune

There is a strong case to be made that Chicago, former hog butcher to the world, former Al Capone playground, current "most corrupt city in the country" (University of Illinois at Chicago) and all-around "total disaster" (Donald Trump), is actually a secret wonderland of sparkles and daydreams, good cheer and play. Tip the historical record slightly, tilt your brain 45 degrees, and it becomes clear that Chicago is actually, and has always been, the Toy-making Capital of the United States.

That's the Chicago way. Should Santa begin looking for a North

Pole HQ2, the history, infrastructure and elves are already in place. Indeed, Mary Couzin, president of the Chicago Toy & Game Group and founder of its annual fair on Navy Pier, has been making something like that argument for 20 years, to two mayors, with varying success. When Santa comes knocking, she will deserve a lot of credit.

But don't take it from her.

Take it from the evidence: Even a partial list of the toys invented or developed in the Chicago area would be on anyone's list of the stuff we have played with for a century. The Furby. Stretch Armstrong. Electric Football. Air hockey.

Editor's note
 This is the third piece in a series about toy-making in the Chicago area.

Coin-operated pinball began in Chicago, then transitioned into the video-game arcade industry. Radio Flyer and its red wagons started in Chicago (and remains in Chicago). Revell, a pioneer in model kits, is in Elk Grove Village. As is Tree Hopper Toys, known for its memory games. VTech, ubiquitous to parents of young children surrounded by singing plastic, is in Arlington Heights. Learning Resources, a leader in educational toys, is in Vernon Hills.

There are others. And there used to be many, many more, including the giant among all, toy design company Marvin Glass & Associates. From World War II until the end of the Cold War, from its River North building, Glass created the backdrop for many childhoods, designing Mouse Trap, Lite Brite, Mystery Date, Gnip

Gnop, Rock'Em Sock'Em Robots, Spirograph, Simon, Operation, the Evel Knievel Stunt Cycle.

After it closed in 1988, Glass splintered into several successful businesses that carried on the tradition of toy firms with lousy names: Lund and Co. Invention, in River Forest, developed later versions of Tickle Me Elmo; Rehkemper Invention & Design created Giga Pets. But it was Breslow Morrison Terzian & Associates that, in terms of size and consistent success, became the monster.

Today it's called Big Monster Toys. When Santa comes looking for a location, he will need to consider this Near West Side invention house. Being close to

Turn to **Toys**, Page 3



STX ENTERTAINMENT

Charlyne Yi, Alan Aisenberg, Jennifer Lopez, and Annaleigh Ashford in "Second Act."

'SECOND ACT' ★★

J. Lo scams her way to the top, 'Working Girl' style

BY MICHAEL PHILLIPS
 Chicago Tribune

Manhattan! The wondrous toy. The isle of joy. If you can make it there, you can make it anywhere. Nobody can deny it: New York City and environs have been very good for American popular song lyricists as well as every new generation's cinematic fairy tales.

And even a weak mashup such as "Second Act," in which Jennifer Lopez recombines bits of "Working Girl" with

MPAA rating: PG-13 (for some crude sexual references, and language)

Running time: 1:45

pieces of her own 2002 "Maid in Manhattan," might placate a few moviegoers.

Here's the quickie review: Good cast, nearly hopeless script. "Second Act" hinges on a significant reveal around the

Turn to **Act**, Page 3

Classic holiday movies where diversity shines



NINA METZ
 Chicago Close-up

A few weeks ago a heavy, midsize hardcover book arrived in the mail from Turner Classic Movies titled "Christmas in the Movies: 30 Classics to Celebrate the Season."

The table of contents reveals selections from the 1940s you'd expect to see on the TCM schedule this time of year — "Holiday Inn," "Meet Me in St. Louis" and more. But the list also includes movies of a more recent vintage — "A Christmas Story," "Gremlins," "National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation" and "Love Actually" among them.

"This book presents thirty of the best and most-intriguing English-language holiday movies — beloved classics, under-the-radar gems and a few familiar titles you may not have considered for their yuletide slants," author Jeremy Arnold writes in the intro, adding that "for all their differences, they share some interesting patterns and similarities."

True. Here's a pattern and similarity that jumps out immediately: Nearly all the films highlighted in the book center on white people.

It's conspicuous. And it's an odd decision by both Ar-



TRIBUNE ILLUSTRATION

nold and TCM.

All lists of this kind are subjective. And the book's first entry does include 1939's "Miracle on Main Street," which takes place in LA's Old Spanish Quarter during Christmas (starring the Mexican-born actress Margo, who went by the single-name moniker) and was filmed in English as well as Spanish, the latter under the title "El milagro de la calle mayor." Another entry, "3 Godfathers" (from 1948) is something of a Three Wise Men story dropped into a Western setting with Arizona cattle rustlers, one of whom is played by Mexican-American actor Pedro Armendariz. And yes, "Die Hard" does feature Reginald VelJohnson as LAPD Sgt. Al Powell as John McClane's man on

Turn to **Metz**, Page 3

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CELEBRITIES

Tribune news services



Fans divided on Smith's genie in 'Aladdin' remake

The first images of Will Smith as the Genie in the upcoming "Aladdin" remake have been revealed.

The star appears on the cover of Entertainment Weekly's First Look issue in his Aladdin attire, donning a goatee, a ponytail and a singular earring.

"I think it'll stand out as unique even in the Disney world," Smith says. "There hasn't been a lot of that hip-hop flavor in Disney history."

For the Genie's new look, director Guy Ritchie says he wanted Smith to have an imposing but not overly buff appearance.

The first looks have divided some fans, with many criticizing Smith's appearance.

"What could Will Smith possibly have done to deserve this? Jada is gonna have to do a whole episode of 'Read (sic) Table Talk' about this hair piece," Buzz-Feed News' Saeed Jones wrote, referencing Smith's wife, Jada Pinkett Smith, and her Facebook Watch talk series.

However, Smith took to Instagram to calm fans' worries and clarified that while he's not blue on the cover, he would be in the film. "This is how the Genie is in Human / Disguise Form," Smith wrote. "My character will be CGI most of the movie."

"Aladdin" flies into theaters May 24.

— Variety



GOOGLE

Culkin is 'Home Alone' again: It's been nearly 30 years, but Macaulay Culkin is still "Home Alone." The actor, who starred as Kevin in the classic Christmas flick, headed back to the McCallister family home to re-create some of the movie's most famous scenes in an ad for Google Assistant. Culkin jumps on the bed, chows down on mac and cheese, orders pizza and re-stocks on after-shave just as he did in the film. "All the shots were really spot-on," Culkin said in a behind-the-scenes video.

Jersey Shore extortion: A former boyfriend of a "Jersey Shore" cast member is accused of seeking \$25,000 for not divulging secrets to the media. Police on Wednesday charged Thomas Lippolis with third-degree extortion. Lippolis dated cast member Jenni "JWoww" Farley 10 years ago. Farley's publicist had received a call from Lippolis demanding money in exchange for his silence. Farley is seeking a divorce from her husband, Roger Matthews.

Rapper sentenced to prison: Rapper Juelz Santana has been sentenced to 27 months in prison for trying to get a loaded gun onto a plane at a New York-area airport. Santana was sentenced Wednesday in Newark, N.J., after pleading guilty to possession of a firearm as a felon. He will not immediately go to prison after reaching a deal to perform on Long Island.

Dec. 21 birthdays: Actress Jane Fonda is 81. Actor Samuel L. Jackson is 70. Actor-comedian Ray Romano is 61. Actor Kiefer Sutherland is 52. Singer Natalie Grant is 47.



ASK AMY

By AMY DICKINSON

askamy@amydickinson.com Twitter @askingamy

Husband needs to call family meeting

Dear Amy: My wife and I have been married for 25 years. In most respects we have a very solid relationship. We enjoy talking and doing things together, and we have a lot in common.

We have been semiretired for 10 years. We spend a lot of time together. If there is one challenge that never seems to resolve itself, however, it is my wife's claims that I have either not listened to her, or that I have misinterpreted something she says.

She stores away every instance of my "failures" in this area, so that each time I miss or forget something she has said, she becomes frustrated and upset. These miscommunications usually involve minor issues relating to house maintenance, shopping and scheduling. This happens every few weeks.

In my view, considering how much time we spend together, these episodes are not serious enough to evoke her building frustration, which then spills over.

I have apologized often but have also told her that I am human and am going to forget things on occasion or misinterpret what she says. She says these situations are examples of a lack of respect for her. I feel I am under a microscope and that she is growing intolerant to the point that it poses a threat to the marriage. She insists there is no underlying grievance. I would like to try to improve things before suggesting marriage counseling. Any advice?

— Caring Husband

Dear Caring: Holding onto grievances is a terrible habit, in part because your wife's feelings and

outbursts then become the focus of your communication. If she wants you to work on controlling or changing your habits, she should work on her own.

You two should have regular family meetings where you review household matters. Even though you see one another all the time, sitting down with intention would be good for your relationship.

Close these meetings the way a good journalist closes an important interview: "Is there anything important we haven't discussed? Is there anything more you'd like to tell me?" Before you two part, look her in the eyes and say, "Honey, I make mistakes. But I appreciate you." Does she deserve this response? Maybe not. But do it anyway.

Leading with a loving reaction should disarm, charm, and inspire her to behave differently.

Dear Amy: For 10 years I have had a difficult relationship with my younger brother, who lives in Germany. Things got very bad when I found out he had molested his daughter for most of her teen years.

He vehemently denied this accusation. My niece is not physically or emotionally strong enough to bring her father to justice, and now my brother has no relationship with her at all.

He also wouldn't let me see our mother at her house. She became very afraid of him when he began to run her life, so in the end we could only spend time together by going to a restaurant. She passed away five years ago.

I received an email from my brother, saying he

wants to try "one more time" to have a relationship since our family has become very small and we are getting old. He says we should just forget about "the little differences."

I don't even know this guy anymore. He has never been part of my life and has never visited me in the U.S. in the 40 years I've lived here. I feel like I will be betraying my niece if I have a relationship with him; I think he is a monster and should be behind bars.

I have not replied to his email and am waiting to hear what you have to say.

— Wondering

Dear Wondering: Responding to a "bid" is not the same as having a relationship. I think you should respond briefly and simply and see what he wants, and why. This could be the opportunity for you to tell him what you think of him. You have the right to confront him over these "little differences," which don't sound little at all.

Dear Amy: "Wayward Dad" described his anguish over his distant relationship with his son and grandchildren, who lived 3,000 miles away. My husband and I dealt with this by leaving our town and moving to be near our family. We treasure our closeness to the kids and now travel great distances to see our pals.

— Works for Us

Dear Works: A great solution.

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Toys

Continued from Page 1

Fulton Market, parking for the elves may be an issue. But the rest is ideal.

On a snowy Wednesday morning in December, I find it on a residential side street. Dogs and their owners pay no attention to its gargantuan faux front door, or to the monster with the big teeth and horns glaring from its window. They've seen it before. The doorbell, however, gets rung all day, by curious strangers and tourists who are told by a receptionist, speaking through an intercom, sorry, Big Monster is a private toy business, secret — off-limits.

But if you found your way inside, you wouldn't be disappointed. The brick building, which stretches back about 20,000 square feet and once housed a gear factory, looks the way you would hope a toy workshop would look, airy, playful and overcrowded with toys. That said, it is quiet, maybe even a little tense. I walk past a toy designer leaning back in his chair at his drafting table, staring into a blank sheet of white paper. Dominating one wall is a giant old lighted Toys R Us sign, found on eBay, a constant reminder that when the chain collapsed, a third of Big Monster's profits went with it. So designers are tinkering, clicking, clacking and experimenting, preparing to impress toy-makers again, next year. The invention never slows.

In the reception area, its latest toys are stacked like a "Price is Right" showcase showdown — in fact, it is a showcase of what Big Monster has on shelves this holiday. It is not known for any one toy — or working



ANTONIO PEREZ/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Mattel's Bounce-Off is one of Big Monster Toys' most popular games.

with any one toy-maker (its clients include Mattel, Fisher-Price and Hasbro); there are dolls and games and electronics, a Batbot Xtreme Batman and a game named Fish Feud and something called Pop-a-Zit.

And those are just this Christmas, says Brian Kujawski, one of the company's designers and partners. "I think about 80 percent of what you see could be replaced by next year."

The company works off commissions and royalties, particularly of its largest successes, so they pray for perennials, toys that endure. Three years on shelves, he says, picking up a Little Live Pet, an example, is a hit. Polly Pocket pays the bills. So does Uno Attack. And Hot Wheels.

Kujawski needs a crib sheet to remind himself what's new. The workshop is focused, always, on making toys for two Christmases from now; the day I visited, every designer and inventor was working on 2020, and some had 2021 in mind.

In his office, Kujawski

picks up a truck and places it on the floor and lets it run into his shoes. Rather than stop, its tires billow outward like a blossoming flower and provide the support for the truck to roll directly over his feet, continuing on its way. It was pretty neat.

It's also, he says, a prototype. They've been trying to get toy-makers to bite for 15 years.

"It's an industry of rejection," he says with a shrug.

This office looks like Inspector Gadget exploded, casting his broken parts to the wind. Much of what you see around you, he says, are the remnants of toys that Big Monster Toys has not yet been able to sell. There are also completed "Star Wars" Lego sets and an R2-D2 figure, a Radio Flyer wagon that hangs from the ceiling, Barbies and Elsas and toy trains and toy dinosaurs. There are also toys Kujawski created, a Buzz Lightyear doll, a Casey Cartwheel — "First doll to do a cartwheel!" There are about two

dozen designers. Their backgrounds are varied, industrial design and computer programming and fine arts and model-making and sculpting; their workspaces, though, are uniformly like that cubicle occupied by the guy in your office who keeps his action figures standing on every ledge, only 10 times as many action figures, plus assorted toys in assorted stages of assembly, plus vice clamps, a drill, batteries, coils, snaking lines of electrical wire and confettied flecks of colored plastic. Also, most of the designers are white guys — most toy designers in this business, says Sam Unsicker, another of the partners, are white guys. "Actually, the fact most toys are being made by white guys, in their 50s, is really kind of creepy," he says.

Unsicker, who studied industrial design at Illinois Institute of Technology and grew up outside Peoria fascinated with toy design, is a former Benny the Bull at Chicago Bulls games. Ro Annis, the third partner at

the company, comes from a painting background. Together they form the second generation of Big Monster partners. The first generation, all retired now, were veterans of Marvin Glass, which by many accounts was a hothouse of a place.

Glass, an Evanston native, was known as demanding, rarely happy with anything, including himself; The Saturday Evening Post once called him "the Troubled King of Toys," a man "who slumps through the world with the pained expression of a depressed dachshund." (In 1976, two years after Glass died at 59, after complications from a stroke, a toy designer at the company's LaSalle Street offices shot to death two partners and another employee; the police said the man thought fellow toy-makers were conspiring against him.)

We walk past Doug Snook, 53, standing at a bench, pushing a lever up and down, watching a yellow tab of Play-Doh fold and unfold. It's hard to say what he is doing or creating and Snook won't say much.

The workshop itself has the fanciful touches you'd expect from a toy design company — a full-size train car that serves now as a kitchen, the all-day toy train, giant stuffed giraffes, palm trees, an oval conference room so eccentrically unbalanced that merely standing inside leaves you wobbly. But also, here and there, heavy metal milling machines and sanders, a woodworking room, 3D printers and a molding room with old paint-caked pressure pots. In another part of the workshop, there is a small room ringed with professional lighting rigs, for shooting demonstration reels; and beside that, an editing and audio suite, for

recording voice-overs.

The goal of all this is creating a working toy — with some quasi-marketing — and presenting it to toy-makers, who will not go for an idea based on a sketch alone and who want an inkling of how they would sell it in a TV commercial.

As for what to create, designers are not told what to work on, only that, say, Mattel is coming in and they want new Hot Wheels stuff. "It gets hot," Unsicker said. "Because if (a toy-maker) knew what they wanted, they'd make it themselves. Our strength is that thing they didn't expect."

Kids though, he adds, sighing, are worse than toy-makers, much, much harder to impress.

So Big Monster retains stacks and stacks of boxes in its workshop, each one stuffed with thousands of half-realized ideas and toys that, as Kujawski insists, are not actually failed. Not yet. His toy truck, for instance. "It's not that the idea is bad, it's that the idea hasn't connected with the right person yet. It's important what we make here, that what we don't sell right away is not seen as not worthwhile." He points at those rows of boxes of unsold whimsies, marked "Boys," "Girls," "Preschool," "Barbie." "If you sell ideas, keep ideas. A lot of stuff, we've been trying to sell for years."

"Most of it," mutters a designer listening in.

"Yeah," Kujawski corrects himself, "most of it."

It is then a toy workshop like all successful toy workshops, still in business because of the ghosts of Christmas past, though forever haunted by the ghosts of Christmas future.

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Act

Continued from Page 1

midpoint, and it's a lulu in the worst way — preposterously coincidental, outrageously contrived. En route to that rusty hinge, the screenplay by Justin Zackham and Elaine Goldsmith-Thomas follows Maya (Lopez), longtime assistant manager of an outer-borough big box store.

Things are good-ish with her steady, good-hearted boyfriend (Milo Ventimiglia), but he wants kids, and she's not ready. She has yet to share her big secret with him, involving a child she gave up for adoption when Maya was 17.

To this concealment, "Second Act" adds a huge deception. Without her knowledge, Maya's teenage godson (Dalton Harrod) fakes a fancy Ivy League resume and some amazing social media activity in her name. Instantly she gets called in for an interview with a multinational cosmetics firm. Maya's innate blue collar street smarts land her the high-buck consulting gig, but she has to sustain the Ivy League ruse indefinitely.

From there, "Second Act" runs into what are commonly known in theatrical circles as "second-act problems." Maya's paranoia about being ratted out for lying becomes a load for the character and a drag on the movie. Director Peter Segal handles the slapstick interludes with a routine touch, including an office party that turns into sexytime for the mutually attracted nerds played by Charlene Yi and Alan Aisenberg. Yi, in particular, has a way of finding laughs where there are none on paper.

Lopez remains a true movie star, but it's hard to work up a full head of rooting-interest steam since "Second Act" is fundamentally the story of someone who takes forever to come clean.

A lot of rom-coms work that way. But there must be a better way to map out one of these things.

Michael Phillips is a Tribune critic.

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BUENA VISTA/GETTY

Penny Marshall directed "The Preacher's Wife," a 1996 movie starring Whitney Houston and Denzel Washington.

Metz

Continued from Page 1

the ground, and Chiwetel Ejiofor shows up in "Love Actually" as a newlywed who might just lose his wife to his best friend.

Still, it takes work (or bias, deliberate or otherwise) to compile a list of 30 movies without any that focus primarily on a cast of characters who are people of color.

Which means you'll find "The Bishop's Wife" from 1947 with Loretta Young and Cary Grant spotlighted. But the book provides no information about "The Preacher's Wife," the 1996 gospel remake starring Whitney Houston as a church choir director who is quietly frustrated with her neglectful spouse, played by Courtney B. Vance as a preacher in need of a spiritual pick-me-up.

Their marriage is fraying and a charming Denzel Washington (whose production company developed the film) is the fedora-wearing angel in a dove-gray suit sent down to offer a bit of help.

It's sweet and funny and knowing. Maybe occasionally too cute in spots. That's true of most holiday movies. It was directed by Penny Marshall, who died earlier this week, and you see her instinct for comedic grace notes all over the place. One of the first things Washington's angel does with his time on earth is indulge in a bit of street food. The image most associated with the movie is Houston in her long twirly skirt and Washington in his overcoat skating together on a pond — a retro and deliberately subversive throwback

echoing the costumes and skating of the original film, but specifically centering on black people enjoying a classic wintery diversion.

Writing for The Cut, Allison P. Davis digs up an old promotional video that features interviews with the cast and Marshall herself, who, as Davis notes, "demonstrates the care she took — as a white director hired to make a Gospel-centric remake of a movie, starring the biggest black stars of the day — to understand what was so special about the film. She just got it, and knew when to let the magic happen."

There are so many other holidays movies worth checking out each year — 2006's "Last Holiday," 2013's "The Best Man Holiday," 2016's "Almost Christmas" to name a few.

This is also the 10th anniversary of the Chicago-shot "Nothing Like the Holidays," a family reunion movie starring Alfred Molina and Elizabeth Pena as the Rodriguez parents and John Leguizamo, Freddy Rodrig-



OVERTURE FILMS

Alfred Molina, from left, Vanessa Ferlito and Freddy Rodriguez in the Chicago-shot film "Nothing Like the Holidays."

quez and Vanessa Ferlito as their adult children. Their Puerto Rican heritage is threaded throughout the story, as is their connection to Humboldt Park itself, a longtime Puerto Rican neighborhood on the city's West Side.

Leguizamo plays the eldest sibling, a lawyer visiting from New York with his wife (Debra Messing), Rodriguez is a military veteran back from a traumatic tour of duty and Ferlito is a struggling actor trying to make it in L.A. No one is particularly happy with their lives and one of the best scenes finds the three siblings escaping to the attic and reconnecting as they take swigs from a flask.

When the movie came out in theaters, reviews often compared it to "The Family Stone" and "Home for the Holidays" — essentially dismissing it as a Latinx version, as if stories of white family reunions and cacophonous dinners are the default. I think there would be a different kind of conversation about

the film if it were released today.

When I reached out to the film's director, Alfredo de Villa, he noted that "sometimes the script was hitting tropes that those movies hit and I was like: OK, this is almost like a genre exercise. We're going to get there but it would be interesting to find a different way. I wanted to do a ton of research in terms of what life is like in this neighborhood. I asked the location scout to get me in as many homes as I could, so I was visiting homes and talking to people about their lives. And Chicago homes in the city, they're small! So that affects people in different ways."

The film (produced by "The Hate U Give's" Bob Teitel) also stars Luis Guzman and future "Magnum P.I." Jay Hernandez. And for a split second you can catch a glimpse of Tanya Saracho — now the creator and showrunner of the Starz series "Vida" — as the flirtatious Sister Maria, a character so charismatic in just that tiny moment of

screen time she deserves her own storyline.

The film's strength is the easy chemistry among the cast — which de Villa said was the result of carving out rehearsal time. "I knew the shoot was going to be five weeks, so when we were casting I said they have to give us six weeks of their life — meaning, they have to live in Chicago and they can't leave during the shoot. The first week was going to be nothing but rehearsals. And we really just ran it like a play that first week. That's very unusual, especially nowadays, nobody would have approved it. Literally now you just show up, say hi and then the camera is rolling."

Occasionally the studio would ask for changes.

"But I knew if I could get the actors behind me, we could band together and push back. It's easy for the studio to tell the director, 'Shut up and go to work'."

"But when it's the star of the movie pushing back, it's a little harder. For example, they wanted some of the comedy to be broader. Specifically Elizabeth Pena's character, they wanted her to be very sassy. And we had something different in mind. We found a different way of approaching that character and (Pena) honestly just modeled her on her aunt. We wanted to keep it rooted as much as possible in reality."

De Villa and Pena stood their ground, and the performance is all the better for it.

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'BUMBLEBEE' ★★ 1/2

Lovable alien robot shines

BY KATIE WALSH
Tribune News Service

Downsizing was the only answer for the "Transformers" franchise after 2017's epic, sprawling "Transformers: The Last Knight." After five bombastic installments from true gearhead Michael Bay, going bigger simply wasn't an option. So Paramount decided to go home, paring the latest film back to an origin story and getting at what makes this franchise tick: the friendly yellow Transformer known as Bumblebee.

Paramount hired "Kubo and the Two Strings" director Travis Knight to helm the '80s-set "Bumblebee" prequel, with a script penned by Christina Hodson. What Hodson and Knight bring to the film — which was previously missing from the franchise — is heart, honing in on the relationships and emotional connections that

actually make us care about the talking robot cars from outer space.

Hailee Steinfeld stars as Charlie, a music-obsessed 18-year-old who wakes up to the Smiths and has quite the enviable collection of band T-shirts. She's mourning the loss of her father, pouring herself into working on his classic car. All she wants is her own set of wheels, so when a dusty yellow VW Beetle shows up at the junkyard, she finagles a way to take it home. Much to her surprise, the little beater morphs into a scared, quivering, giant robot, whom she dubs Bumblebee.

Bumblebee is initially voiced by Dylan O'Brien, a wee Transformer sent by the Autobots to protect Earth from the Decepticons. During an ugly clash, his vocal machinery is damaged, so Charlie gives him his voice

back with an AM/FM radio he learns to use for communication. All audiences need to know about the context of the Autobot/Decepticon war that's landed Bumblebee here: Two Decepticons in the form of muscle cars land on Earth to destroy him, and in doing so, they infiltrate the U.S. Army's resources. They're hoping to find the rest of the Autobots, and presumably, at some point, plunder Earth for resources.

It's during the melee that Charlie truly comes into her own. She's been distanced from her family, including her mother (Pamela Adlon) and stepdad (Stephen Schneider), distraught over the sudden loss of her father. Fighting to protect Bumblebee is how she learns to step into her power, take responsibility and accept the consequences.

The '80s era of "Bumble-

MPAA rating: PG-13 (for sequences of sci-fi action violence)

Running time: 1:53

bee" harks back to the true origin of the Transformers as Saturday morning cartoons. Everyone's favorite '80s tunes play an important role in the film, and Hodson's script is self-consciously designed as a classic John Hughes send-up. Jorge Lendeborg Jr. vamps awkwardly as Charlie's nerdy love interest, Memo. But several of the best lines come with a bit too big of a wink at the teen movie formula, which lends to a sense of irony that lingers around the edges of the otherwise deeply sincere film.

The heart of "Bumblebee" is Bumblebee itself, and he's the furthest thing from ironic. The giant yellow bot is just a cuddly



PARAMOUNT PICTURES

Charlie (Hailee Steinfeld) befriends a giant robot in "Bumblebee."

creature. His blue eyes widen innocently, and he leans his massive head in for a cuddle. He's a giant golden retriever puppy, unaware of his massive size, sheepish, guilty when he wreaks havoc, an in-

tensely loyal, big old goofball. This prequel offers Bumblebee a chance to shine, and you'll come away with a newfound sense of affection for the most lovable alien vehicle in the universe.

'WELCOME TO MARWEN' ★ 1/2

A hate crime sparks fantasy — and a misjudged movie

BY MICHAEL PHILLIPS
Chicago Tribune

"Welcome to Marwen" is a misjudgment only a first-rate filmmaker could make.

I hope I'm in the minority with this opinion. It's a drag to respond poorly to the latest from director/co-writer Robert Zemeckis, who landed in my Top 10 as recently as 2012 (for "Flight").

Maybe Zemeckis' particular solutions to the narrative challenges posed by "Welcome to Marwen" simply don't feel satisfying or emotionally authentic.

All I can do is try to explain why.

The story behind "Welcome to Marwen" has been recounted, beautifully, by the 2010 documentary "Marwencol." (That film's director, Jeff Malmberg, served as an executive producer on the Zemeckis film.) In 2000, Kingston, N.Y., resident Mark Hogancamp was nearly killed in a brutal five-man assault. The beating left Hogancamp with a traumatic brain injury, severe impairments and virtually no memories of his life until that night.

Hogancamp sought refuge in a wholly invented world, built to his own specifications and filled with 12-inch-high plastic figures. This was "Marwencol," Hogancamp's fantasy Belgian town, and the site of various and variously therapeutic World War II scenarios involving his alter ego, Capt. Hogancamp; a powerful sorceress; a passel of sexy, available female warriors; and an onslaught of Nazis hellbent on the captain's destruction.

There's so much to this story: Hogancamp's post-traumatic stress disorder, the hate crime that brought him to the edge of



UNIVERSAL PICTURES

Cap'n Hogie (Steve Carell) fights Nazis with G.I. Julie (Janelle Monae) and Caralala (Eiza Gonzalez).

MPAA rating: PG-13 (for sequences of fantasy violence, some disturbing images, brief suggestive content, thematic material and language)

Running time: 1:56

the abyss, the creative outlets by which he turned that suffering into something else. It's clear why Zemeckis was compelled to attempt a big-screen dramatization of this defiantly small-scale universe.

Steve Carell plays Hogancamp and, in the extended motion-capture animation sequences, the studly captain. Roughly half the movie takes place in Marwen, as vignettes of combat, carousing, torture and romance are interlaced with real-world scenes. Screenwriters Caroline Thompson and Zemeckis freely fictionalize their version, so that Nicol, the friendly woman new to Hogancamp's neighborhood, played by a warmly empathetic Leslie Mann, becomes an audience conduit. For Hogancamp, Nicol's threatening ex-boyfriend (Neil Jackson) triggers memories of the homophobic thugs we see in flashback.

The foot-high women in Hogancamp's Belgian enclave are played by Janelle Monae (G.I. Julie); Eiza Gonzalez (Caralala); Diane Kruger (as Deja

Thoris, the Belgian witch); and others. Unsettling objects of desire, certainly, and Zemeckis knows it. We spend a lot of time with these figures, in Hogancamp's alternate reality.

Marwen very quickly becomes the very thing "Welcome to Marwen" cannot overcome. The way Zemeckis shapes these stop-motion animation scenes, they're meant to be exciting, funny, scary, a little of everything. But they whack the movie completely off-kilter. We lose the strange, quiet intimacy of Hogancamp's careful manipulation of this world. The real-life scenes don't feel like Hogancamp's real life; they feel like a Hollywood falsification of it.

Zemeckis has long been a technical wizard: In 2004, his mo-cap version of "The Polar Express" planted a flag for revolutionary technology. He's in love with what digital filmmaking can mean, and the tools it affords the clever filmmaker. But he can get lost in all that stuff, and in "Welcome to Marwen," the toggling between Marwen and Hogancamp's real world becomes a source of aggravation — a long way from the triumph of the human spirit promised by Universal's marketing campaign.

Michael Phillips is a *Tribune* critic.



NETFLIX

Sandra Bullock plays a woman trying to guide two children (Julian Edwards, left, and Vivien Lyra Blair) to safety in the post-apocalyptic thriller "Bird Box."

'BIRD BOX' ★ 1/2

Mama Bear can't see forest for trees in dull horror story

BY MICHAEL O'SULLIVAN
The Washington Post

There's loads of promise in "Bird Box."

Start with a killer cast, headlined by Sandra Bullock, and featuring John Malkovich, Jacki Weaver, Trevante Rhodes, Sarah Paulson, Danielle Macdonald, Lil Rel Howery and Tom Hollander in supporting roles. Drop them into a story adapted by Eric Heisserer, the Oscar-nominated screenwriter of the brainy sci-fi film "Arrival." Stir in a high-concept plot, inspired by Josh Malerman's 2014 novel about a post-apocalyptic world in which people must navigate its terrors blind, lest they so much as look at invasive entities with the power to take on the form of one's deepest fears. As a premise — which assumes that the sense of sight could open the door to accelerated madness and suicide — it has echoes of the masterful suspense thriller "A Quiet Place," in which the slightest sound could be deadly.

But as these auspicious ingredients come together under filmmaker Susanne Bier, the Danish director of the Oscar-winning "In a Better World," the dish never quite jells. The film essentially begins at its

MPAA rating: R (for violence, bloody images, crude language and brief sexuality)

Running time: 2:04

climax and then backtracks, via flashback, to the onset of the crisis, hopping forward and back repeatedly over a five-year gap. This has the effect of destroying momentum.

In the very first scene, we meet Bullock's Malorie as she prepares to guide two small children, known only as Boy and Girl (Julian Edwards and Vivien Lyra Blair), down a river in a small boat — with blindfolds on. It's a dangerous journey, yes; the river contains rapids. But it's not as dangerous as opening their eyes.

To explain why, "Bird Box" must go back five years to the arrival of the threat, which we never quite see, except as shadows and a kind of static "wind" that lifts fallen leaves off the ground. Malorie, who is pregnant, finds shelter with a small band of survivors, who have holed up in a house with the windows blacked out. These scenes are among the film's most interesting and suspenseful, although Heisserer's

script sometimes includes bizarre tonal shifts. One scene in which the group makes a run to a grocery store for supplies — driving a car with the windows painted over, guided only by GPS and the vehicle's proximity sensor — is actually rather funny, as the car's tires roll over and crush the skulls of deceased victims lying in the street.

It's treated as a morbid joke, but it doesn't really mesh with the rest of the film, which otherwise plays the dread straight, not for laughs.

There are certain pleasures here, mostly in the cast of characters. Malkovich's misanthropic egoist is chief among them. And Bullock makes for a fierce and relatable Mama Bear.

But as for tension, there's precious little. "Bird Box" (which takes its name from the ability of birds to sense the presence of the film's creatures) never really makes us feel the story's stakes. Unlike "A Quiet Place," which also mixed fear with a meditation on the meaning of family, this story of survival — with one fewer sense than the five God gave us — ultimately remains an intellectual exercise, not an emotional one.

'AQUAMAN' ★ 1/2

As superhero movies go, this one's 20,000 leagues under par

BY MICHAEL PHILLIPS
Chicago Tribune

After surfacing for a cameo teaser appearance in "Batman v Superman" and a proportional slice of the action in "Justice League," the DC Comics superhero Aquaman (born in 1941) takes center stage, on land and under the sea, in "Aquaman." "Game of Thrones" actor Jason Momoa is great in close-up, surly and charismatic, with eyebrows that suggest all sorts of fun. The director, James Wan, came up via the "Saw" franchise, but he also has several good films to his credit, "Insidious"

and "Furious 7" among them.

This is not one of them.

Already a huge hit in China, "Aquaman" opens this week in North America, riding a wave of "yeah, not too bad ... kinda fun" praise from various quarters. Reports of its not-badness turn out to be cruelly misleading. Watching this movie is like getting trapped in a Wisconsin Dells waterpark, over a long weekend. Without a bartender in sight.

Watching this movie is like spending two hours and 27 minutes staring at a gigantic aquarium full of digital sea creatures and



WARNER BROS. PICTURES

Aquaman (Jason Momoa) travels from the mainland to the undersea realms in director James Wan's "Aquaman."

actors on wires, pretending to swim.

Watching Momoa wield his gleaming trident in battle against his half-brother, Patrick Wilson's King Orm, or throwing various submarine parts at the vicious high-seas pirate played by Yahya Abdul-Mateen II, makes you long for the relative visual/spatial clarity of the year's second-lamest superhero

picture, "Avengers: Infinity Wars."

Gripes, specific: ■ Klutzy screenwriting. David Leslie Johnson-McGoldrick and Will Beall stumble all over the place trying to set up simple origin-story exposition. It's not rocket science. It's a story of how Arthur Curry, the lighthouse keeper's son, was born to Queen Atlanna of Atlantis, and how he

MPAA rating: PG-13 (for sequences of sci-fi violence and action, and for some language)

Running time: 2:23

must prevent an apocalyptic surface war waged by Orm and associates, while aquamanning-up to claim a leadership role down where the fishes go.

■ Good director, wrong strategy. Director Wan loads up "Aquaman" with bombastic, horror-inspired jump scares. Why? Elsewhere, the protracted, numbing brutality betrays the hand of executive producer Zack Snyder, who directed both "Justice League" and "Batman v Superman." And no more need be said about that.

■ The designs. Over in the Marvel Studios realm, "Black Panther" proved a triumph of production, costume, digital and practical design collaboration.

Wakanda became a place you wanted to explore. In "Aquaman" the underwater kingdoms look like "Avatar" threw up all over "The Incredible Mister Limpet."

There's one effective and rather beautiful series of shots, when our hero dives down, down, down to the Kingdom of the Trench, with deadly beast-fish swarming all around. As Mera the superheroine, Amber Heard dutifully deadpans her way through the torturous romantic banter. She lends a blase air of early '50s B-movie cheese to the proceedings. The film's just sincere enough where it counts — the family stuff, featuring Nicole Kidman as Aquaman's selfless mom — to float this soggy mediocrity for a global audience.

Michael Phillips is a *Tribune* critic.

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WATCH THIS: FRIDAY



Nicollette Sheridan

"Dynasty" (7 p.m., CW): Old grievances get unwrapped as Fallon and Blake (Elizabeth Gillies, Grant Show) clash over the best way to handle a situation as the Carringtons spend Christmas Eve searching for a dangerous enemy in the new episode "Crazy Lady." Meanwhile, Cristal (Ana Brenda Contreras) is pretty sure Alexis (Nicollette Sheridan) isn't telling authorities everything she knows.

"A Home for the Holidays: The 20th Anniversary" (7 p.m., CBS): In the 20th anniversary edition of the heartwarming annual special highlighting the rewards of adoption, LL Cool J introduces inspirational stories about children in foster care who were lucky enough to find a safe and happy home with adoptive parents. In addition to providing updates on three families featured in previous years, the special also introduces a segment on the Pascucci family of Syracuse, N.Y.

"Midnight, Texas" (7 p.m., NBC): Although things between them remain as tense as ever, Manfred and Kai (Francois Arnaud, Nestor Carbonell) forge an improbable and shaky alliance as they are forced to confront a common enemy in the new episode "Patience Is a Virtue." Elsewhere, fallen angel Joe (Jason Lewis) receives a visitor, while Olivia and Bobo (Arielle Kebbel, Dylan Bruce) put their heads together, hoping to find a way to get Fiji (Parisa Fitz-Henley) back on their side.

"I Want a Dog for Christmas, Charlie Brown!" (7 p.m., ABC): Nothing can replace the classic "A Charlie Brown Christmas," but this animated special — first shown in 2003 — reunites the updated Peanuts gang with the yuletide season. Linus and Lucy's little brother, ReRun, needs stress relief. He goes to Snoopy for attention and fun, but the canine has plans that don't include the boy.

"Paddington" (7 p.m., Disney): The beloved title bear created by Michael Bond comes to life via computer animation and the voice of Ben Whishaw. Seeking a new destiny for himself, he leaves Peru and travels to London, where he gets an adoptive family headed by Hugh Bonneville and Sally Hawkins. He gets an enemy, too: a taxidermist (Nicole Kidman) determined to add him to her collection.

"American Dream / American Nightmare" (7:30 p.m., Showtime): Rap mogul Suge Knight oversaw a seismic shift in the music world as co-founder of Death Row Records, but that world ultimately fell apart in a sad spiral that wound up with him currently serving a 28-year prison term for voluntary manslaughter. This incisive new documentary from director Anton Fuqua ("Training Day"), profiles Knight and takes viewers through that often notorious world, largely through multiple interviews with the iconic music entrepreneur himself.

TALK SHOWS

"The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon" (10:34 p.m., NBC): Jimmy Fallon brings A-list guests, signature comedy bits and chart-topping music to late night.*

"The Late Show With Stephen Colbert" (10:35 p.m., CBS): The comic interviews guests and introduces musical performances.*

"Jimmy Kimmel Live" (10:35 p.m., ABC): TV host Ellen DeGeneres; comic Pete Holmes; Cole Swindell performs.*

* Subject to change

Hey, TV lovers: Looking for detailed show listings? TV Weekly is an ideal companion. To subscribe, go to www.tvweekly.com or call 1-877-580-4159

FRIDAY EVENING, DEC. 21

	PM	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00
BROADCAST	CBS 2	A Home for the Holidays: The 20th Anniversary (N)	Hawaii Five-0: "Make Me Kai." ©	America's Got Talent: "A Holiday of Champions." ©	Blue Bloods: "The Forgotten." ©	News (N) ♦		
	NBC 5	Midnight, Texas: "Patience Is a Virtue." (N) ©			Dateline NBC (N) ©	NBC 5 News (N) ♦		
	ABC 7	I Want a Dog for Christmas, Charlie Brown! ©	The Great Christmas Light Fight: "All Stars."		(9:01) 20/20 ©	News at 10pm (N) ♦		
	WGN 9	blackish ©	blackish ©	Last Man Standing ©	Last Man Standing ©	WGN News at Nine (N) ©	WGN News at Ten (N) ©	
	Antenna 9.2	Alice ©	Alice ©	B. Miller	B. Miller	Coach ©	Coach ©	Murphy
	This TV 9.3	A Christmas Carol (NR,'00)	Ross Kemp. ©			A Perfect Day (NR,'06) ★★	Rob Lowe. ♦	
	PBS 11	Chi. Tonight: Review (N)	Washington Week (N)	Check, Please!	European Christmas	Craft in America: "California." (Season Premiere) (N) ©	Craft (N) ♦	
	The U 26.1	7 Eyewitness News (N)	The Game	Engagement	Broke Girl	Broke Girl	Seinfeld ©	
	MeTV 26.3	Andy Griffith	Andy Griffith	Gomer Pyle	WKRP Cincinnati	Hogan Hero	Hogan Hero	C. Burnett
	H&I 26.4	Star Trek ©		Star Trek: Next		Star Trek: Deep Space 9	Star Trek ♦	
	Bounce 26.5	Scandal ©		The Long Kiss Goodnight (R,'96) ★★★	Geena Davis. ♦			
	FOX 32	Last Man Standing	The Cool Kids	Hell's Kitchen: "One Hell of a Party." ©		News At Nine	Bears Unleashed	Modern Family ©
	Ion 38	NCIS: Los Angeles	NCIS: Los Angeles	NCIS: Los Angeles	NCIS: Los Angeles	NCIS: LA	NCIS: LA	
	TeleM 44	† (6) Red (R,'08) Brian Cox.	Falsa identidad (N) ©			Señora Acero (N) ©	Chicago (N)	
	CW 50	Dynasty: "Crazy Lady." (N)	Penn & Teller: Fool Us			CSI: Miami: "Fallen." ©	Chicago ♦	
	UniMas 60	Me caigo de risa	Rosario Tijeras: "En casa del enemigo." ♦					
	WJYS 62	Kenneth Cox Ministries	Joyce Meyer	Robison	Paid Prog.	Paid Prog.	Monument	Noticias (N)
	Univ 66	Jesus	Mi marido tiene familia		Amar a muerte			
CABLE	AE	Live PD: Rewind ©		Live PD: "Top 40 Moments of 2018, Part 1." (N) ©				PD Cam ♦
	AMC	Elf (PG,'03) ★★★	Will Ferrell, James Caan. ©			Jingle All the Way (PG,'96) ★★★		
	ANIM	Tanked: Unfiltered (N) ©	Tanked (N) ©			(9:01) Tanked ©		Tanked ♦
	BBCA	A Few Good Men (R,'92) ★★★	Tom Cruise, Jack Nicholson. ©					Norton (N) ♦
	BET	(7:03) The New Edition Story: "Part Two."				(9:05) The New Edition Story		
	BIGTEN	† College Basketball (N)	College Basketball: Oklahoma at Northwestern. (N) ©			The B1G		
	BRAVO	† Married to Medicine ©	Married to Medicine (N)			Married to Medicine ©		Game Plan ♦
	CLTV	News at 7	News (N)	News at 8	News (N)	Chic.Best	Weekend	Politics
	CNBC	Deal or No Deal ©	Deal or No Deal ©			Shark Tank ©		Shark ♦
	CNN	Anderson Cooper 360 (N)	Cuomo Prime Time (N)			CNN Tonight (N)		Tonight (N) ♦
	COM	The Office	The Office	The Office	The Office	The Office	The Office	Gaffigan ♦
	DISC	Gold Rush: The Dirt (N)	(8:01) Gold Rush (N) ©			Master of Arms (Season Finale) (N) ©		Reformed (N)
	DISN	Paddington (PG,'14) ★★★ ©		Raven	Raven	Coop		Bizaardvark
	E!	The Longest Yard (PG-13,'05) ★★	Adam Sandler. ©			The Longest Yard ★★		
	ESPN	NBA Basketball: Milwaukee Bucks at Boston Celtics. (N) (Live) ©				NBA Basketball (N) ♦		
	ESPN2	† College Basketball (N)	College Basketball: Providence at Texas. (N) (Live)			SportCtr (N)		
	FNC	Tucker Carlson (N)	Hannity (N) ©			The Ingraham Angle (N)		Fox News
	FOOD	Diners, Drive In, Drive	Diners, Drive	Diners, Drive	Diners, Drive	Diners, Drive	Diners, Drive	Diners, Drive
	FREE	† Santa Clause 3	(8:15) Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas (PG,'00) ★★					
	FX	Trolls (PG,'16) ★★★	Voices of Anna Kendrick. ©			Trolls (PG,'16) ★★★		
	HALL	Christmas Connection (NR,'17)	Brooke Burns. ©			The Christmas Cottage (NR,'17) ©		
	HGTV	Dream	Dream	Dream (N)	Dream	Dream	Dream	Hunters (N)
	HIST	Ancient Aliens: Declassified: "Alien Creatures." (N) ©						
	HLN	CNN Special Report ©	Forensic	Forensic	Forensic	Forensic	Forensic	
	IFC	Two Men	Two Men	Two Men	Two Men	Two Men	Two Men	Two Men
	LIFE	A Christmas Kiss (PG,'11) ★★★	Elisabeth Röhm. ©			(9:03) A Very Nutty Christmas ('18) ♦		
	MSNBC	All In With Chris Hayes	Rachel Maddow Show (N)			The Last Word (N)		11th Hour (N)
	MTV	Ridic. (N)	Ridic. (N)	Ridiculous.	Ridiculous.	Ridiculous.	Ridiculous.	Ridiculous. ♦
	NBCSCH	NBA Basketball: Orlando Magic at Chicago Bulls. (N) (Live)				NBA Basketball (N) ♦		
	NICK	Lip Sync	SpongeBob	The SpongeBob SquarePants Movie (PG,'04) ★★★		Friends ©		
	OVATION	† (6) Space Cowboys (PG-13,'00) ★★★	Clint Eastwood.	Apollo 13 (PG,'95) ★★★	Tom Hanks. ♦			
	OWN	20/20: Homicide	48 Hours: Hard Evidence	48 Hours: Hard Evidence	48 Hours: Hard Evidence	20/20		
OXY	Snapped ©	Killer Couples ©			Killer Couples ©		Homicide ♦	
PARMT	Friends ©	Friends ©	Batman Begins (PG-13,'05) ★★★	Christian Bale, Michael Caine. ©				
SYFY	† (5:30) 47 Ronin ('13) ★★	Z Nation: "At All Cost." (N)			Van Helsing (N) ©		Z Nation ♦	
TBS	Love Actually (R,'03) ★★★	Hugh Grant, Laura Linney. ©			ELEAGUE (N)			
TCM	Breakfast at Tiffany's (NR,'61) ★★★	Audrey Hepburn.			(9:15) The Way We Were ('73) ★★★			
TLC	90 Day Fiancé: "Extended: Backed Into a Corner." (N)				90 Day (N)	American Gypsy Wedding		
TLN	Camp Meeting				Life Today	Dare	Day of Di ♦	
TNT	† (6:30) The Wizard of Oz (G,'39) ★★★★★		The Grinch		(9:15) A Christmas Carol ('99) ★★			
TOON	Gumball	Gumball	Amer. Dad	Amer. Dad	Burgers	Family Guy	Family Guy	
TRAV	Ghost Adventures ©	Ghost Adventures: "Exorcism Editions." (N) ©					Ghost ♦	
TVL	Everybody Raymond	Raymond	Raymond	Two Men	Two Men	King		
USA	† San Andreas	Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban (PG,'04) ★★★	Daniel Radcliffe. ♦					
VH1	RuPaul's Drag Race: All Stars (N) ©	Pretty Woman (R,'90) ★★★	Richard Gere. ©					
WE	Love After Lockup ©	Love After Lockup (N) ©			(9:06) Love After Lockup	Love- Loc. ♦		
WGN America	† (6) Grumpy Old Men (PG-13,'93) ★★		Grumpy Old Men (PG-13,'93) ★★	Jack Lemmon. ©				
PREMIUM	HBO	Justice League (PG-13,'17) ★★	Ben Affleck. ©			The Shop (N) The Prestige ('06) ★★★		
	HBO2	Elvis Presley: The Searcher: "Part 1." ©				(8:50) Elvis Presley: The Searcher ©		
	MAX	† (6:35) War for the Planet of the Apes ('17) ★★★★★				Judge (Sea- Mike Judge	War ♦	
	SHO	† Brian Welch American Dream / American				Sommere-Qun (N)	Bad Moms ♦	
	STARZ	Counterpart: "Outside In."	Outlander ©			(9:01) The Other Guys ('10) ★★★		
STZNC	† The Wedding Planner ★★	Just Married (PG-13,'03) ★			(9:38) Fantastic Four ♦			

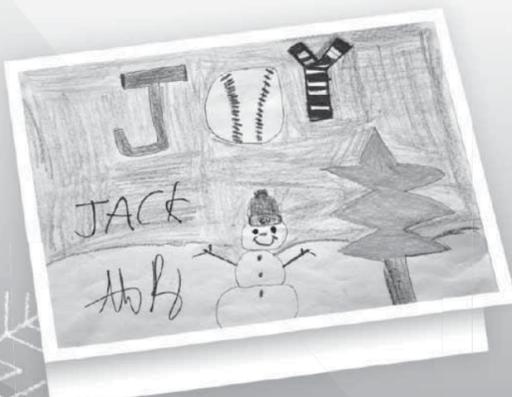
ANTHONY RIZZO'S HOPEFUL HOLIDAYS

You can help bring Hope and Healing this holiday season to children and families facing the challenges of pediatric cancer.

Send your family and friends this Chicago baseball inspired holiday card, personally designed by 7-year old Advocate Children's Hospital patient, Jack Higgins, and his friend, Anthony Rizzo.

The holiday card is available at every Jewel-Osco store throughout Chicagoland. 100% of your purchase benefits the fight against pediatric cancer.

Follow Jack's story and the benefitting organizations online at chicagotribune.com/hopefulholidays.



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Horoscopes



Today's birthday (Dec. 21): Teamwork produces big results this year. Back up will power with action and energy to win. Take charge this winter, and provide support through shared financial changes. A collaboration blossoms next summer, before a personal challenge shifts your attention.

Aries (March 21-April 19): Today is an 8. Articulate visions for the future this Winter Solstice. Over the next four weeks, with the sun in Capricorn, advance your career and assume more responsibility.

Taurus (April 20-May 20): 7. Take profitable actions. Get into an expansion phase this month, with the sun in Capricorn. Studies and travels present new ideas and experiences.

Gemini (May 21-June 20): 9. This month favors your shared finances, with the sun in Capricorn. Fine-tune your budget. Sign on the dotted line. Ask for more, and get it.

Cancer (June 21-July 22): 7. Plan your next moves. Enter a four-week partnership phase, with the sun in Capricorn. Collaborate, negotiate and compromise for shared gain. Support another's dream.

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22): 8. Friends help you make an important connection. You're entering a busy month, with the sun in Capricorn. Grow your physical health, fitness and vitality.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): 8. Your work is getting attention. The next month gets fun under the Capricorn sun. Share your affections with someone special. A romance heats up.

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): 7. Research your options. The next month is good for domestic renovation and interior decoration. Get into a homebody phase, with the sun in Capricorn.

Scorpio (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): 8. Collaborate for shared profits. With the sun in Capricorn, your communications are especially effective. You learn quickly this month. Study a fascinating possibility.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): 9. You and a partner connect on a deeper level. The next month, with the sun in Capricorn, favors making money. Bring home extra bacon.

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): 9. Your exercise routines strengthen you. You're in charge this month. You have an extra advantage, with the sun in your sign.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): 7. Relax; enjoy finer things, like love and laughter. Make long-term plans this month. Enjoy peaceful solitude. Contemplate perfection, with the sun in Capricorn.

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20): 7. Invite your posse to your place. Begin a four-week socially active phase. Your team is especially hot under the Capricorn sun. Friends brighten your heart.

— Nancy Black, Tribune Content Agency

The Argyle Sweater



Bliss



Bridge

Both vulnerable, North deals

North
 ♠ AK 87
 ♥ K 9 8 6 5 2
 ♦ K
 ♣ 6 2

West
 ♠ Q 9 5 2
 ♥ Q
 ♦ J 7 6
 ♣ J 9 8 5 3

East
 ♠ Void
 ♥ A 10 7 3
 ♦ Q 10 9 8 3 2
 ♣ K Q 7

South
 ♠ J 10 6 4 3
 ♥ J 4
 ♦ A 5 4
 ♣ A 10 4

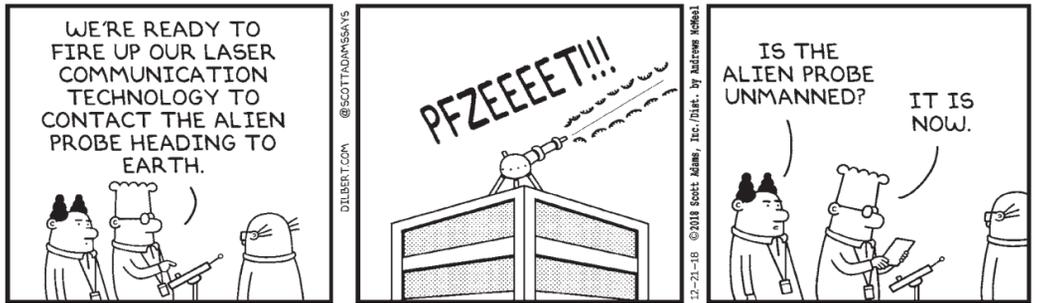
The opening heart lead was covered by the king and won with the ace. East shifted to the king of clubs. Hard Luck Louie was annoyed with the defense. Didn't East realize that West's lead was an obvious singleton? Had East just given partner the ruff he was asking for, the hand would have been easy, perhaps giving him an overtrick. East, of course, was just playing good bridge. One ruff was not likely to defeat the contract, especially if it involved setting up dummy's long suit.

Louie won the club shift with the ace and led a low trump to dummy's ace. When East showed out, the contract could not be made. Louie tried a low heart to his jack, but West ruffed, led a club to East, and ruffed another heart with the queen of trumps.

Lucky Larry got the same defense when he played the hand. He took his ace of clubs at trick two and paused for thought. The apparent 4-1 heart split made a 2-2 split in spades less likely. He didn't have the entries to test the trumps first, so he led the jack of spades and ran it at trick three. Larry then led a spade to the ace, cashed the king, and led a heart to his jack. West refused to ruff, so a diamond to the king was followed by the nine of hearts, covered with the 10 and ruffed by Larry. West over-hearts, but one club trick was all that was left for the defense.

— Bob Jones
 tcaeditors@tribpub.com

Dilbert



Baby Blues



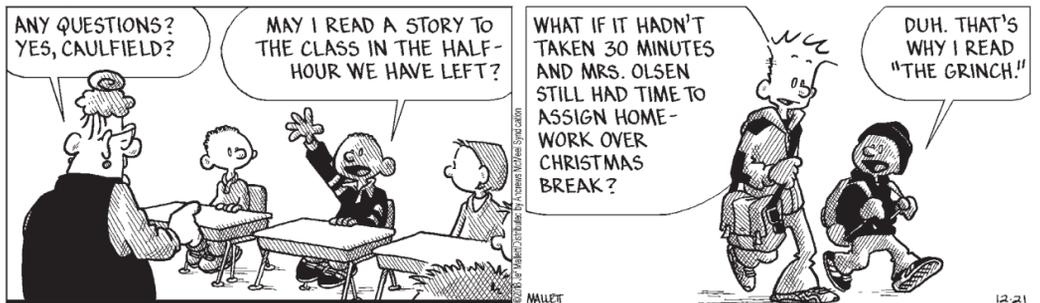
Zits



Mr. Boffo



Frazz



Classic Peanuts



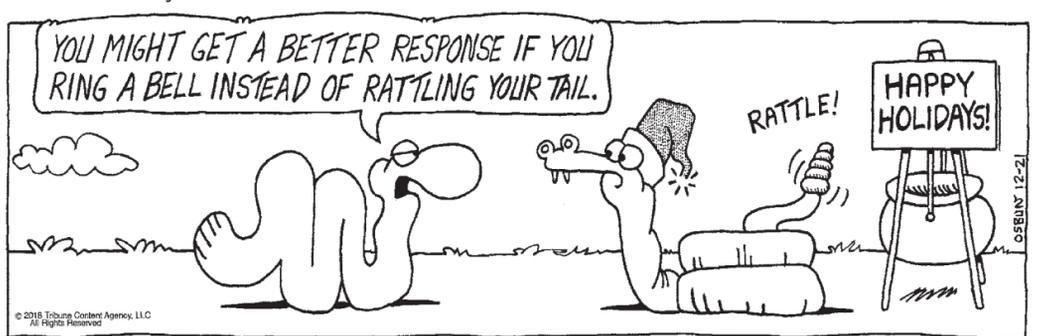
Pickles



Dick Tracy



Animal Crackers



Prickly City



Chicago Tribune
ON THE TOWN

TAKE 10

By JESSI ROTI
Chicago Tribune

1. Stomp: The award-winning, eight member percussion sensation utilizes everything from matchboxes to garbage cans to fill the Broadway Playhouse with pulse-pounding rhythms. \$76. 7:30 p.m. Friday, 2 and 8 p.m. Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday. Performances through Dec. 30. tinyurl.com/yawcqlwm

2. Funny Ha-Ha "The Reason for the Season": This holiday edition of the "showcase for Chicago's smartest, most talented, cleverest folk" will feature funny readings from local storytellers and writers Ashley Ray, Ricardo Gamboa, Maya Haughton, Adrienne Funn, JW Basilo, Elizabeth Gomez and Steve Delahoyde. \$10. 6:30 p.m. Friday. Hideout, 1354 W. Wabansia Ave. tinyurl.com/yc95ozh6

3. Holiday Breakfast at the Shedd: Breakfast, a 4-D showing of "The Polar Express," crafts, photos with Santa and a special aquatic presentation usher in the Christmas holiday. \$54.95, \$39.95 kids ages 3-10. 8-11 a.m. Saturday-Sunday. 1200 S. Lake Shore Drive. tinyurl.com/y8d3rfg

4. Miguel de León Christmas concert: This free concert from Miguel de León and his band will feature traditional Christmas songs from Latin America like "El Burrito Sabanero" along with other holiday favorites. 2 p.m. Sunday. National Museum of Mexican Art, 1852 W. 19th St. tinyurl.com/ybcca4zo

5. The Second City's Nutcracking Holiday Revue: A seasonal blend of new sketches, original songs and classic favorites will feature Second City's trademark mischief, mayhem and magic. \$30. 9:30 p.m. Saturday, 7 p.m. Sunday. Performances through Dec. 31. Metropolis Performing Arts Centre, 111 W. Campbell St. tinyurl.com/yadtzuoh

6. Freddie Gibbs: The rapper is back in Chicago behind his widely-acclaimed 2018 LP "Freddie." Rising local Solo Sam and DJ RTST serve as opening acts. \$25. 8 p.m. Friday. Park West, 322 W. Armitage Ave. tinyurl.com/y77htpbr

7. Handel's "Messiah": The Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Chorus' annual production of Handel's "Messiah" returns. Tickets start at \$67. 8 p.m. Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday. Symphony Center, 220 S. Michigan Ave. tinyurl.com/yb2ljmyf

8. Full Moon Fest: The Museum of Science & Industry celebrates the last full moon of 2018 with an evening of interactive activities and live performances. \$21.95, \$12.95 for kids ages 3-11. 5-9 p.m. Saturday. 5700 S. Lake Shore Drive. tinyurl.com/yat9czdx

9. "A Charlie Brown Christmas" Live: Based on the beloved Peanuts special, this live production features all of your favorite characters (who will lead attendees in caroling) and a three-piece ensemble performing the iconic music of Vince Guaraldi. \$25. 1 and 5 p.m. Saturday. Rosemont Theatre, 5400 N. River Road. tinyurl.com/y8hj97cj

10. Selfies with Santa: Take a photo with Mr. Claus on the Willis Tower Skydeck before he hops in his sleigh Monday night. On Sunday, you'll also get to take part in some caroling with the Merit School of Music Conservatory Choir from 1-1:30 p.m. and 2:30-3 p.m. Santa's on hand from noon to 5 p.m. this weekend only. \$24, \$16 for kids ages 3-11. 233 S. Wacker Drive. tinyurl.com/y8uaybn8

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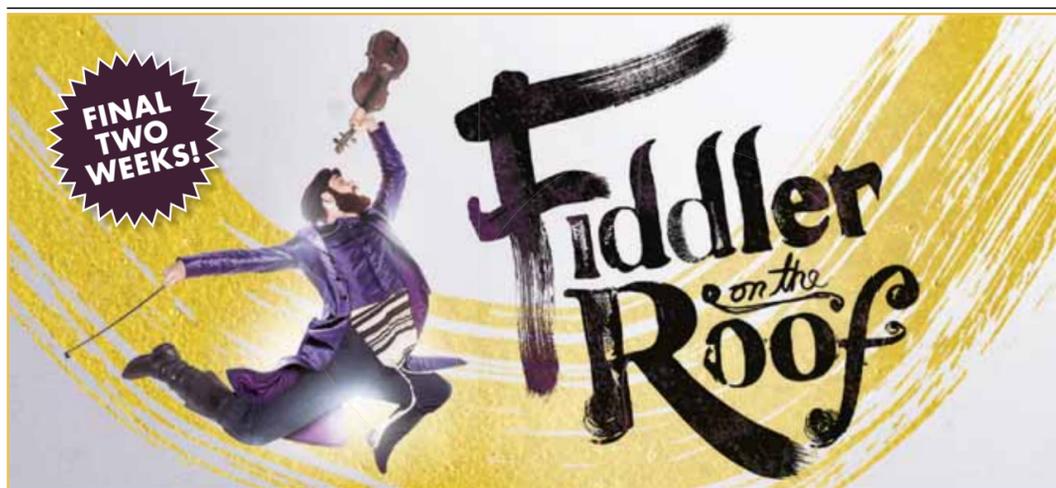
Laugh in the New Year

By ZACH FREEMAN | Chicago Tribune

There's never a bad time for a good laugh and the right comedian can help you close out 2018 in happy tears. Great stand-up comedy is a nightly occurrence across Chicago, and this New Year's Eve — whether you want a laugh in the afternoon and to ring the new year in on your own or to be toasting your favorite comic as the clock strikes midnight — we've got nine top-notch comedians and acts in venues all over town to choose from on Dec. 31.

Turn to Comedy, Page 5

TRIBUNE ILLUSTRATION



FINAL TWO WEEKS!

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TURN IT UP

BY GREG KOT



Top Chicago indie albums of 2018

Once again Chicago's independent music thrived in 2018. Here are my favorite local indie releases of the year:

1. Noname, "25" (self-released): Fatimah Warner is on a mission. After a series of head-turning cameos and an impressive 2016 mixtape, "Telefone," she returns with a potent snapshot of an African-American woman in transition. In an album about the search for an identity, a home, a future, Noname manages to be low-key yet forceful in a series of poetic, soul-tinged songs that pack a quiet wallop. *Dec. 29-31, Thalia Hall, 1807 S. Allport St.; www.thalia-hallchicago.com*

2. Saba, "Care for Me" (Saba Pivot): The MC-producer has been a key element of Chicago's independent scene for nearly a decade with his Pivot Gang, and yet he's still only 24. "Care for Me" eulogizes his cousin and fellow Pivot Gang founder John Walt. It's a beautiful, yet wrenching song cycle that builds to the devastating "Prom/King," which recounts the final moments of Walt's life, and then Walt's voice appears like a phantom: "Just another day in the ghetto ... I just hope I make it 'til tomorrow."

3. Ohmme, "Parts" (Joyful Noise): Sima Cunningham and Macie Stewart, Chicago mainstays across multiple genres, find new musical territory to explore in their guitar-based avant-rock trio. The interplay of voices and guitars skirts convention, even as the songs deliver hooks and pithy commentary. *9 p.m. Dec. 28, Empty Bottle, 1035 N. Western Ave.; www.emptybottle.com*

4. The O'My's, "Tomorrow" (Haight Brand): There's a sense that the duo of Maceo Haymes and Nick Hennessey have been patiently building to this moment, a carefully detailed collection of low-flame soul-dusted songs about perseverance and the healing power of music and family. They seamlessly blend hip-hop stanzas (via cameos by Chance the Rapper and Saba) with Haymes' falsetto cries and Hennessey's jazz-tinged keyboards.

5. Makaya McCraven, "Universal Beings" (International Anthem): The drummer is part of a new-jazz vanguard that includes artists such as Robert Glasper, Kamasi Washington and Shabaka



ALEXA VISCUSI

Ohmme's Macie Stewart and Sima Cunningham

Hutchings, all of whom have earned some degree of crossover success over the past decade thanks in part to their ability to tap into other contemporary styles, including hip-hop, electronic music and soul. McCraven works with different ensembles in four live sessions, then edits the compositions in way that echoes Teo Macero's re-shaping of Miles Davis' sessions circa "Bitches Brew." The results are packed into a double-album that bristles with energy and innovation.

6. Ethers, "Ethers" (Trouble in Mind): Combining members from a variety of garage-rock notables (Heavy Times, Outer Minds, Radar Eyes, Runnies), the quartet brings a distinctive edge to its emotionally wrenching yet rocking songs, distinguished by Bo Hansen's soul-baring lyrics and Mary McKane's overdriven Farfisa organ.

7. Femdot, "Delacreme 2" (Closed Sessions): Coming from behind on a

highway jammed with Chicago hip-hop talent, Femdot found his lane by speaking from the heart about his real-life struggles and blending those revelations with sharp political commentary in tracks such as the searing "Empty Bottle." The music is equally ambitious, the genre-blending arrangements matching the scope and erudition of his lyrics.

8. Ric Wilson, "Banba" (Innovative Leisure): This boundary-breaking artist unveils the most summery in his series of EP's. The musical breeziness echoes Chicago's soul and gospel traditions even as it immerses itself in the contemporary complexities of the city's African-American community. Wilson brings a philosopher's perspective to his lyrics as his arrangements dance across the "rap-disco" divide.

9. DJ Taye, "Still Trippin'" (Hyperdub): Building on the frantic, detailed footwork soundscapes of DJ Rashad and DJ Spinn,

Taye represents a new era in Chicago's decades-long electronic dance tradition. He weaves rap vocals and live instrumentation into his dense matrix of rhythms, and takes this music from the parks, street corners and underground clubs into a new world of avant-pop.

10. Bongripper, "Terminal" (The Great Barrier Records): The quartet's seventh album is divided into two sides of lava-flow riffs and tribal drumming dubbed "Slow" and "Death." This is a band that finds nuance in extremes and catharsis in sludge. If doom is your thing, there's no band that does it better.

Greg Kot cohosts *Sound Opinions* at 8 p.m. Friday, 7 p.m. Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday on WBEZ-FM 91.5. Greg Kot is a Tribune critic

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LOCAL SOUNDS

Dej Monae's dreams are as big as her talent

BY BRITT JULIOUS
Chicago Tribune

"2019 will be a lit year," Dej Monae proclaimed on a late night this December at a local cafe. She wasn't kidding.

Monae has big plans, like another full length album after the surprising success of her latest, "Love Me Right." Sometime soon she'd like to embark on a world tour, meet Beyonce, and collaborate with Kehlani. Her goal is to bring back the skill and sophistication of the late r&b artist Aaliyah.

But first, she has to graduate high school.

It's not everyday one meets a 17-year-old artist who is one hundred percent sure of her skills and ambitions. But Dej Monae is not your average 17-year-old. She performed at the Taste of Chicago last year. And most 17-year-olds are not opening for established performers like Tink or performing solo sets on club stages across the city.

"It's like I'm living an older life, but at 17," she said. "Being in the industry, I have to carry myself as an older person, not as a 17-year-old. I don't mind acting older than who I am."

And those big plans might not as out-of-reach as others may think. In fact with a little hard work, they'll likely come true before Monae even realizes it.

Monae is unlike most artists who get their professional starts later in life. She took a summer program as a preteen where she was immersed in a number of different artistic mediums. But it was music that especially piqued her interest and introduced her to the artist Eesh, who executive produced Monae's last record and is a frequent collaborator.

Since those early years, the two established a strong creative bond which in recent years has seen Monae push beyond the limits she might have placed on herself. Monae said she felt shy about songwriting in the past, but has eagerly begun to embrace her own process. The artist hopes her journey will inspire other young people. "I want to open up eyes of other kids and say they can do what they actually want to do," said Monae.

The result of Monae and Eesh's hard work is a finely-crafted collection of slow-burning r&b and soul tunes that appeal to audiences of an age beyond Monae's. "I want my listeners to feel like they can connect to me when they're listening," she said.

And according to Monae that was part of her master plan all along. "I wanna bring Aaliyah back," she began. "R&B was the lit thing and I want to bring it back. Every-



CADE MCGOWN

Dej Monae, at age 17, is already making a name for herself in Chicago.

When: 8 p.m. Thursday

Where: Refuge Live, 416 S. Clark St.

Tickets: \$12. www.eventbrite.com

body's so into the rap and the hip-hop and "singing-rap," but I want to bring back real r&b, stripped r&b."

In a contemporary age where rap reigns supreme, Monae is not afraid to buck the trends of her peers and make the style of music she likes the most. "I can't really get into other genres. I'm open to it, but r&b I can connect to lyric wise and melody wise," she offered. "It's unexplainable. It's just something about r&b." If being a real artist means staying true to yourself, Monae should have no problem succeeding.

"I want to do this for the rest of my life," she said. "I don't see myself doing anything else. I'm dedicating my whole life to it. Period."

Britt Julious is a freelance writer.

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Dee Alexander swings an Ella Fitzgerald Christmas



HOWARD REICH
On Music

There's no more joyous sound in this world than the vocal flights of Ella Fitzgerald — except, of course, for Fitzgerald singing Christmas.

So imagine the challenge of taking on one of the pre-eminent singer's more ebullient albums, "Ella Wishes You a Swinging Christmas."

That's what Chicago jazz diva Dee Alexander will be doing Friday evening at the Studebaker Theater, in the company of Jeff Lindberg's hard-swinging Chicago Jazz Orchestra.

"I'm going to have a panic attack," says Alexander, jokingly, I think.

"Even though it's Christmas songs, the way Ella does it, they're not easy. There's a lot going on."

But Alexander, a formidable interpreter and vocal technician in her own right, does not need to mimic the work of an inimitable artist, nor does she intend to.

"I believe in interpretation," says Alexander. "I'm not going to try to do what she did. There's no way I could sing exactly the way Ella did."

"I'm going to do my own interpretation. I think that's the best anyway. I think you do the music more justice. I think it's an injustice when you try to copy everything that the artist did."

Considering Alexander's vocal prowess and knack for inventing sounds never heard before, listeners likely will hear Christmas songs thoroughly re-conceived. Yet Alexander believes certain parallels between Fitzgerald's inextinguishable art and her own

may be discernible, if only because of the sway that the First Lady of Song has had on Alexander — and, really, every jazz vocalist who came after.

What does Fitzgerald mean to Alexander?

"Omgod — how much time do we have?" says Alexander.

"I grew up listening to this music, thanks to my mom. And I've always admired Ella for everything. Her ability. Not only that. She sang like she was such a sweet lady, and you could hear the smile in her voice when she sang."

"But she was always a beast — she was a beast!" adds Alexander, referring admiringly to Fitzgerald's towering technical skills.

"I listened to 'Airmail Special,'" recalls Alexander, citing one of many Fitzgerald tours de force. "She's out of her mind. I just sit there with my mouth open."

As does everyone who hears Fitzgerald throwing off brilliantly invented phrases at lightning speed — with impeccable pitch and unstoppable swing — but also reaching a pinnacle of vocal virtuosity unmatched to this day.

Nevertheless, Fitzgerald was modest about her achievements to the point of shyness.

"Don't ask me how I learned all those things," Fitzgerald, a mostly self-taught genius, told me in 1991. "I just always tried to let it come out."

But then she revealed a little more about how she forged her singular art, which transformed a buoyant but embryonic early talent into the standard against which other female jazz singers are measured.

"You might say it was with Chick that I learned how to sing," Fitzgerald told me, referencing her early tenure with drummer-bandleader Chick Webb.

"Chick was the kind of person who had patience and under-



ERIN HOOLEY / CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Dee Alexander will celebrate the spirit of Christmas and Ella Fitzgerald with the Chicago Jazz Orchestra.

When: 7:30 p.m. Friday

Where: Studebaker Theater, 410 S. Michigan Ave.

Tickets: \$35-\$45; www.chicago-jazzorchestra.org

standing.

"Now Chick didn't teach me any style. But he let me do what I felt, he let me sing the way he felt I could sing, and that's what started to make what Ella is today."

Fitzgerald's self-styled education deepened through the years, nowhere more than in the orbit of Dizzy Gillespie.

"After Chick, I used to go and jam with Dizzy, and that's how I learned my bop," explained Fitzgerald.

"Back then (in the 1940s), they

used to have places where you could just go and jam, you know? "Although they'd be the sort of seedy after-hours spots, it was still the place to be.

"So I used to follow Dizzy, travel a couple places with him, and I guess I was just thrilled with what was going on (in Gillespie's bebop band), and I tried to do it.

"I just tried to do what I heard the horns in the band doing."

Fitzgerald held her own, and then some.

"I think she took a lot of chances," says Alexander. "She appeared to be fearless. But I understand that before she went out on stage, she would be scared to death.

"I think that's a good quality. You should never get to the point that you're so vain: 'Oh, I got this'

"Because once you get out there (on stage), you just never know."

'Messiah' time

Matthew Halls will lead the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Chorus in Handel's "Messiah," with soprano Amanda Forsythe, mezzo-soprano Sasha Cooke, tenor Nicholas Phan and baritone Joshua Hopkins. 1:30 p.m. Friday, 8 p.m. Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday in Orchestra Hall at Symphony Center, 220 S. Michigan Ave.; ticket prices vary; 312-294-3000 or www.cso.org.

Howard Reich is a Tribune critic.

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A comic lineup for New Year's Eve

Comedy, from Page 1

Brian Regan

Widely regarded as one of the best stand-up comics currently working, Brian Regan — a sure bet for a laugh-filled New Year's Eve date regardless of who you're with — has been going strong for three decades, touring constantly and reminding fans and fellow comedians alike why he deserves every accolade he gets. He's releasing his 8th hour-long comedy special in 2019 but Chicagoans have one more chance to catch him live this year. *8 p.m. at the Chicago Theatre, 175 N. State St.; www.thechicagotheatre.com*

Christopher Titus

With a performance style that mixes aspects of a stand-up set and a one-man show, the high-energy Christopher Titus is like Bill Burr and Colin Quinn having a fight on stage. His current tour brings his latest 90-minute creation — “Amerigeddon” — to Schaumburg for New Year's Eve. It's his most political yet, though he promises to rail equally hard at both ends of the spectrum. The late show includes cheese, party favors and champagne at midnight. *7:30 p.m. and 10 p.m. at Chicago Improv, 5 Woodfield Road, Woodfield Mall, Schaumburg; chicago.improv.com*

DeRay Davis' Annual Funny and Famous Chi Town Comedy Countdown

Back for a third year straight, this annual comedy show headlined by actor, comedian and Chicago native DeRay Davis — promises a lengthy line-up of big names and Chicago-style celebration. *8 p.m. at Arie Crown Theater, 2301 S. Lake Shore Drive; ariecrown.com*

Jeff Dunham

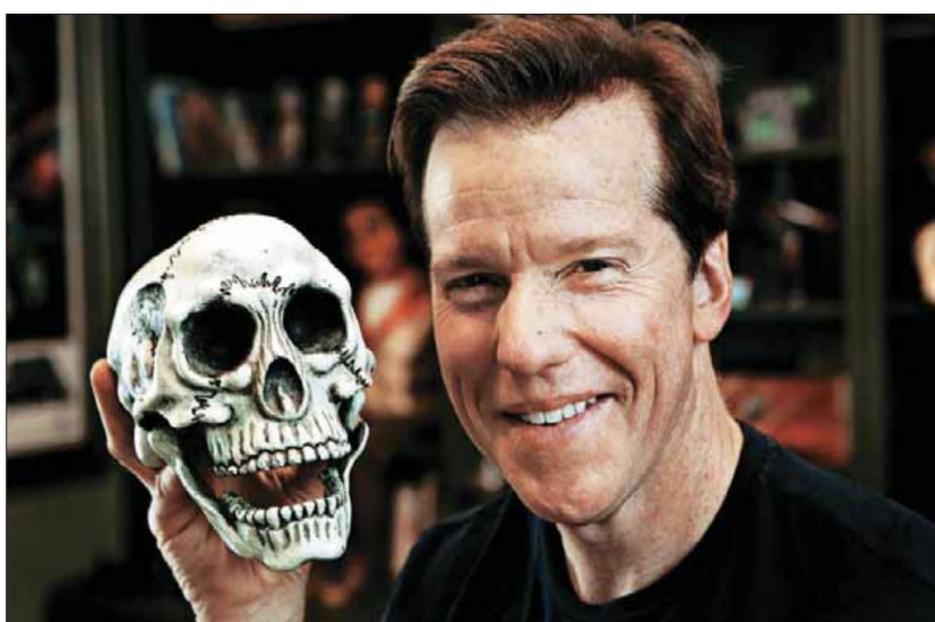
The record holder for “Most Tickets Sold for a Stand-Up Comedy Tour,” comedian and ventriloquist Jeff Dunham is known for his stadium-filling, joke-cracking puppets. His current and ongoing “Passively Aggressive” tour — stopping at the Allstate Arena for a New Year's Afternoon performance — promises the introduction of a new puppet: Bob, an advisor to President Trump. *3 p.m. at Allstate Arena, 6920 N. Mannheim Road, Rosemont; rosemont.com/allstate*

Laugh Factory New Years Eve Comedy Bash

If you're looking to take in a variety of styles as you head towards 2019, Laugh Factory Chicago, a hot spot to catch the best local comedians honing their craft any given night of the week, is offering up two impressive line-ups filled with up-and-coming stars and Chicago headliners. In fact, in the month of December alone, three comics included here



Felonious Munk



Jeff Dunham

— Kellye Howard, Marty DeRosa and Russ Williamson — delivered headlining sets at Zanies. The late show includes a complimentary champagne toast at midnight. *8 p.m. and 10:30 p.m. at Laugh Factory Chicago, 3175 N. Broadway; www.laughfactory.com/clubs/chicago*

Michael Palascak

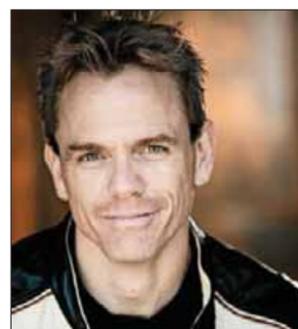
A comic who cut his teeth in

Chicago, Palascak was one of the first comedians to appear on Comedy Central's “The Half Hour” and this year performed on both “The Late Show with Stephen Colbert” and “The Late Late Show with James Corden.” He sports an earnestly awkward charm while delivering perfectly crafted jokes, ideal for guiding audiences on a smooth transition to a new year. *7:30 p.m. and 10:30*

p.m. at Zanies Rosemont, 5437 Park Place, Rosemont; www.rosemont.zanies.com

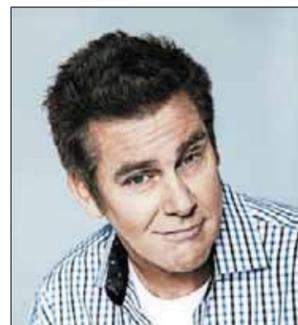
Noname (with Felonious Munk)

Though headliner Noname — the Chicago-born artist whose moving and smoothly melodic sophomore album “Room 25” was released in September — can craft a clever pun, she isn't a co-



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Christopher Titus



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Brian Regan

median. But opener Felonious Munk — named by the Tribune as 2017's Comedy Chicagoan of the Year — is one of the best. This one-two punch of comedy and music is an unbeatable way to glide into 2019. *9 p.m. at Thalia Hall, 1807 S. Allport St.; www.thaliahallchicago.com*

Pat McGann

Last year WCIU aired the hourlong “Pat McGann's Pre-Taped New Year's Special” on New Year's Eve. This year, Chicagoans can catch him live at Zanies on the special night. A frequent opener for Sebastian Maniscalco, McGann is the consummate relatable Midwestern comic, sporting a dry, unflappable style with punchlines that sneak up on you. *7:30 p.m. and 10:30 p.m. at Zanies Chicago, 1548 N. Wells St.; chicago.zanies.com*

Pat Tomasulo and Friends

As the acerbic host of WGN's “Man of the People,” stand-up comic and newsman Pat Tomasulo has been proving every Saturday night that Chicago can more than hang with the coastal late night shows. In Beverly on New Year's Eve — along with “Man of the People” warm-up comic Marty DeRosa — he'll be showing the coasts how to properly ring in the new year as well. *8 p.m. at Beverly Arts Center, 2407 W. 111th St.; beverlyartcenter.org*

Zach Freeman is a freelance writer.

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POP MUSIC PREVIEW

Illenium on the verge of becoming EDM crossover star

BY ALLISON STEWART
Chicago Tribune

Illenium is on the verge of becoming EDM's next crossover pop star, without having had to do much to actually cross over.

The DJ/producer (born Nick Miller, in Downers Grove) hasn't followed the usual protocol: His singles (like the new “God Damnit” or the Griffin collaboration “Feel Good”) tend to be solid performers but not smashes, and he has so far avoided the kind of superstar collaborations that are guaranteed attention-getters.

And yet: His 2017 sophomore release, “Awake” has been a slow-growing hit, and Miller has been on the road almost ceaselessly to support it. In a phone interview from his home in Denver, ahead of two shows at the Aragon Ballroom Friday and Saturday night (Friday night's show is sold out), Miller re-traced his steps. The following are excerpts from that conversation:

A Bassnectar concert started it all

I got really heavily into production in 2012. I saw Bassnectar at Red Rocks, and after that I went full time. Not necessarily as a career, just every day producing, remixing old songs and learning the musical aspects behind it all. Until 2014, the music wasn't very good, which is normal. But ever since I put out my first album, “Ashes,” (combined with) a Chainsmokers remix and a Flume remix, that was the kickstarter.

When: 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday

Where: Aragon Ballroom, 1106 W. Lawrence Ave.

Tickets: \$50 (18+); 800-745-3000 or www.ticketmaster.com

As his career gained momentum, Miller slowly gained confidence onstage

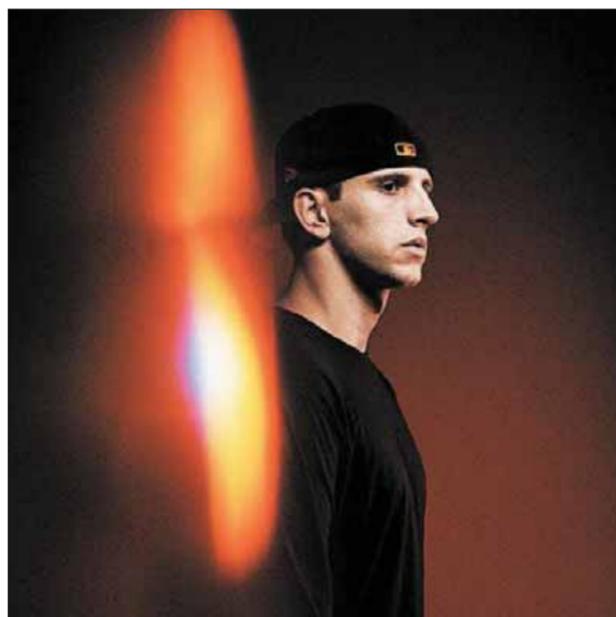
I took every show I could get, and I played from five people to thousands. It was good for me. It was hard at the time, but the past year it felt very normal to get onstage. I feel very comfortable at this point. It was a slow process, it wasn't like one day I was like, “Okay, no nerves.” It's so much easier to go onto a stage where you know everyone bought a ticket to see your show, versus (when) you're just there to please them before the headliner comes on. It's kind of a different experience. That's harder, I think.

He realized that he's really an album artist, a comparative rarity in EDM

I really love making albums, and I feel like the combination of putting remixes out that do really well, and having a whole album for fans to connect to (works). It's all really emotional music, and it kind of created this bond with fans where it's very personal.

He also realized that his lack of a pop-star-assisted hit single may actually be a good thing

I'm grateful things have turned out the way they did. Sometimes



ALEXANDRA GAVILLET

Chicago-born artist Illenium is one of the biggest EDM success stories of 2018.

it can be harmful if you get the huge song, and you don't have the fanbase to back that up. If you have the fanbase, you can have a career without having huge hits.

Last summer, he posted an open letter revealing a battle with substance abuse that culminated in a 2012 heroin overdose. Pressing “Publish” wasn't easy

That's something I really wanted to talk about as I was growing (my career). We felt like it was better to wait, so it could reach more people. It's really the whole reason I make music, was because of that struggle. I needed something to help me through that. I was nervous about it. It's not your normal story... It felt like I was releasing an album—you have all this emotion, and you want to share it with your fans. I was very nerv-

ous and eager to see how people would receive that, but now that it's happened, it's been amazing.

Miller, now six years sober, performs in front of thousands of probably-not-sober people every night. He doesn't judge

In a live element, I'm definitely not someone—I don't think there's a right way to live. There's things that can harm people, and paths that people can go down that are unhealthy, but it's definitely not my place to say that the way I live is the right way. I just hope people are relating to the music, and have that escape. Even if they're using substances, if they're not ruining their lives or relationships, it's okay.

Britt Julious is a freelance writer.

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Twitter @chitribent

Save the Seats is coming

Here are a few of the shows

BY DOUG GEORGE
Chicago Tribune

Save the Seats is coming in the Chicago Tribune, both in A+E Wednesday and online at www.chicagotribune.com/savetheseats, starting at 6 a.m. Dec. 26. This is our big annual holiday feature with loads of tickets reserved at Chicago-area shows for Tribune subscribers on New Year's Eve, including:

- Zanies on Wells Street, in St. Charles and in Rosemont, with headliners Pat McGann, Landry and Michael Palascak.
- Blue Man Group at the Briar Street Theatre.
- New Year's Eve musical bashes at both Metro/Smartbar and City Winery.
- NYE with the Neo-Futurists, including “Burning Bluebeard.”

New this year, both Save the Seats and Save the Tables in Dining will be for Tribune subscribers only — to subscribe, sign up now at www.chicagotribune.com/subscriptions. If you're currently a print subscriber and want to be able to read Save the Seats in both your Wednesday paper and online, you have a free online subscription waiting for you at www.chicagotribune.com/activate.

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PATSY MCENROE PHOTOGRAPHY

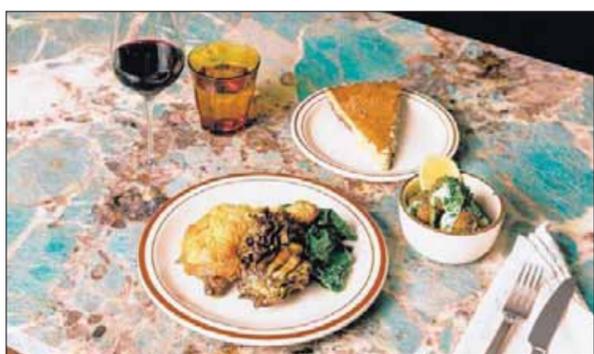
'70s-inspired, all-day cafe and market

BY LOUISA CHU
Chicago Tribune

Brothers and Sisters, a funky new '70s-inspired, all-day cafe, market and bottle shop is now open in Ukrainian Village. The storefront once housed part of the huge Columbia Furniture store, closed in 2016 after 94 years.

The project is a partnership among co-owners Erin Carlman Weber and Derek Herbster with Jonny Hunter, culinary director of Underground Food Collective in Madison, Wis. Hunter may be best known in the Chicago area for the collective's Underground Meats salami sold at farmers markets, though the collective's other projects — particularly Forequarter restaurant and Underground Butcher — are nationally and locally acclaimed.

Despite the name, the trio are not related. "We're just good pals," Carlman Weber said at the shop currently under construction. "Brothers and Sisters" is Herbster's favorite Allman Brothers Band album, released in 1973. "We are heavily inspired by music," she added. "But we



CAROLINA MARIANA RODRIGUEZ
Roasted chicken, lentil croquettes and hickory chess pie are offered at Brothers and Sisters in Ukrainian Village.

also like it because it gets at the familial nature of gathering around food and drink."

Carlman Weber was previously at Girl and the Goat as private event director, and Herbster was involved in coffee production at Stumptown Coffee Roasters. They met at Mast Brothers in Brooklyn, where they worked with friend and designer Nathan Warkentin, now founder and principal at design studio Original Action Group, based in Los Angeles.

Warkentin will transform and design the space.

When you first walk into Brothers and Sisters, you will find the grab-and-go market and bottle shop, with 100 different wines and 50 beers or so. Any beverage bought in the store can be consumed on-site, with applicable corkage fee. On the opposite wall, the main counter will feature a meat and cheese case. Seating will include a six-seat counter under the front windows, an adjacent communal

table, a back-corner banquette and a five-seat turquoise, red and beige Amazonite stone top bar.

"Our designer talks a lot about taking inspiration from the warmth and ease of the 1970s," Carlman Weber said. "We do have a shag rug (along) with lots of natural materials, like wood, stone and leather, with bright splashes of color."

The menu from the small kitchen in the 1,500-square-foot space is still a work in progress, said Hunter by phone from Madison. He promised the collective's renowned charcuterie and hinted at a ham plate with Italian culatello, plus shaved root vegetables like celeriac, when in season.

Ruby Coffee Roasters in Wisconsin will provide the coffee, said Herbster, also by phone, but expect no espresso drinks. "Just really great drip and cold brew with fun brew methods to stay," he said.

Brothers and Sisters, 2119 W. Chicago Ave., www.brothersandsisters.fun

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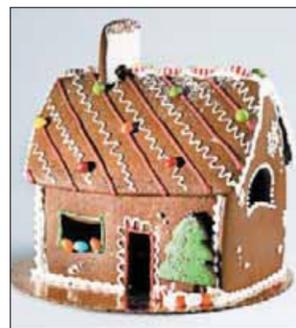


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— Grace Wong

WHERE TO EAT NOW

Restaurant reviews and profiles from Tribune food critic Phil Vettel, staff reporters and freelance writers. Reviewers make every effort to remain anonymous. Meals are paid for by the Tribune.

HaiSous At the brilliant HaiSous, Thai and Danielle Dang offer a pleasant (if occasionally noisy) 115-seat dining room with excellent service and price-conscious drinks, all in service to Thai Dang's skillful cooking and appealing, cliché-free menu. Open: Dinner daily. Prices: Large plates \$16-\$25. 1800 S. Carpenter St., 312-702-1303. — Phil Vettel

Harvest Room Chef Jonathan Harootian manages a nifty balancing act at this eco-conscious south suburban restaurant, presenting cutting-edge dishes with dashes of molecular gastronomy as well as a first-rate hamburger. The ambitious beverage program includes very good craft cocktails, a deep wine list and specialty teas. Open: Breakfast, lunch and dinner daily. Prices: Entrees \$13-\$35. 7164 W. 127th St., Palos Heights, 708-671-8905. — Phil Vettel

The Heritage This appealing American-Mediterranean restaurant shows off twin chefs in Sieger Bayer and Michael Spiewak (both alums of Old Town Social), a well-edited menu of a half-dozen appetizers and about that many entrees and a tidy menu of imaginative cocktails by Nick Kokonas (no, not the one behind Alinea). Dinner Tuesday-Saturday, brunch Saturday-Sunday. Prices: Entrees \$15-\$26. 7403 Madison St., Forest Park, 708-435-4937. — Phil Vettel

Heritage Restaurant & Caviar Bar Chef Guy Meikle is out to take the mystery and shock, out of caviar. More than a half-dozen roes are available each day, costing as little as \$10 for a la carte nibble to \$145 for a full-blown platter of whitefish and tobiko caviars with accompaniments. Elsewhere on the menu

you'll find odes to Eastern Europe fare. Partner Jan Henrichsen created the fascinating wine list and the whimsical, seasonal cocktail menu. Pastry chef Alan Krueger veers from rustic to creative to classic. Dinner daily, brunch weekends. Entrees \$16-\$35. 2700 W. Chicago Ave., 773-661-9577. — Phil Vettel

Il Porcellino Take Italian-American food, make it with top-notch ingredients and finish with bargain prices (for the neighborhood, at least). That's the recipe for the latest from Melman siblings RJ, Jerrod and Molly, overseen by chef Doug Psaltis. House-made pastas, \$17 or less, are the stars, particularly the gnocchi Bolognese. Open: Dinner daily. Prices: Pastas \$15-\$17, entrees \$22-\$30. 59 W. Hubbard St., 312-595-0800. — Phil Vettel

Imperial Lamian From the dining room, watch chef Wang Hong Jun hand pull lamian, the noodles that star in dishes such as a superb brisket bowl. The rainbow xiao long bao basket tempts with six soup dumplings, each a different color with different filling, but beware: They're inconsistent. Open: Dinner daily, lunch Monday-Friday. Prices: Entrees \$18-\$35. 6 W. Hubbard St., 312-595-9440. — Louisa Chu

Jade Court The restaurant is home to arguably the best Chinese food in town. The owners are Eddy Cheung and his daughter, Carol, who owned and operated Phoenix restaurant for 20 years. The menu is typical of most Chinese menus — dozens of poultry, pork, beef, seafood and noodle dishes — but the way to order is to ask what the kitchen is up to that evening. Open: Lunch and dinner Wednesday-Monday. Prices: Main courses \$13.95-\$26.95. 626 S. Racine Ave., 312-929-4828. — Phil Vettel

Katana A concept that originated on LA's Sunset Strip, Katana combines nightclubby



JOSE M. OSORIO/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Le Sud Given the decline in the number of French restaurants in the city, the unapologetic Chicago-meets-Provence decor of this Roscoe Village space carry a certain bravado. With a name that translates to "the south," Le Sud owner Sandy Chen took her inspiration from her travels in Southern France. But the menu, by executive chef Ryan Brosseau (Perennial Virant, Table, Donkey & Stick), also dips into the Mediterranean. Brosseau respects tradition but doesn't feel overly bound by it. Dishes get novel approaches, and meat entrees are lovingly handled. Roasted quail, above, is superb, a Thanksgiving dinner in miniature. Underneath the bird is a savory, walnut-studded bread pudding. Add an interesting and highly affordable wine list and bright, attentive service, and Le Sud looks like a hit. Open: Dinner daily. Prices: Main courses \$18-\$44. 2301 W. Roscoe St., 773-857-1985. — Phil Vettel

visuals with ambitious, high-level cooking, highlighted by the dishes emerging from the sushi and robata bars. The a la carte menu offers a dizzying array of choices, and one can opt for an omakase (chef's choice) menu. General manager and veteran Chicago restaurateur Jason Chan puts a local face on what might otherwise seem like an imported operation. Lunch, weekdays; dinner, daily. Prices: Entrees \$16 to \$42. 339 N. Dearborn St., 312-877-5544. — Phil Vettel

Kitsune The 24-seat spot offers dishes rooted in Japanese flavors, but incorporating the local, foraged ingredients chef Illiana

Regan is known for. Don't miss the thickly sliced porridge bread served with house-cultured butter. Open: Dinner Tuesday-Saturday, brunch Sunday. Prices: Large plates \$16-\$26. 4229 N. Lincoln Ave., no phone. — Phil Vettel

Kimski Chef Won Kim creates a true 50-50 Korean-Polish situation that your babcia (Polish grandma) or halmoni (Korean grandma) would appreciate. Maria's Standard (\$9) is the perfect example: a fat, smoky Polish sausage bursting with garlic and spice that's remixed with a soulful, rice-perfumed, soju-infused mustard and tangy

kimchi kraut. Weekly and daily specials. Dinners to late night, Tuesday-Saturday, brunch and dinner Sunday. Prices: \$9 to \$13. 960 W. 31st St., 773-890-0588. — Michael Nagrant

La Sardine Executive chef Oliver Poilevey is quick to credit his late father, Jean-Claude, for creating La Sardine's vision. At the French bistro, you'll find a picturesque tableau of seared scallops surrounded by coarse fava-bean puree, oyster mushrooms and pickled strawberries. Salads are delicious, but no place for dieters. La Sardine features \$1 oysters and discounted bites and drinks at the bar 5-7 p.m. Mondays-Thursdays. Lunch Monday-Friday, dinner Monday-Saturday. Main courses \$21-\$31. 111 N. Carpenter St., 312-421-2800. — Phil Vettel

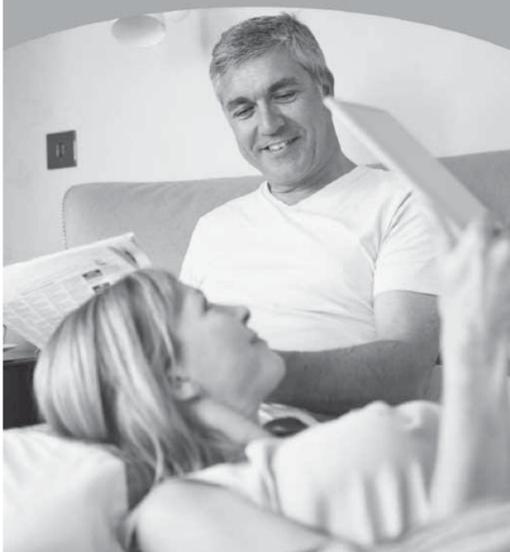
Le Bouchon Utterly authentic French bistro Le Bouchon just celebrated its 25th birthday; executive chef Oliver Poilevey carries on the legacy of his late father, chef Jean-Claude Poilevey, offering fist-sized gougères stuffed with raclette, pecorino and Gruyere cheeses, as well as an Alsation onion tart. Maple-glazed sweetbreads are remarkable. In addition to the fine steak frites, the lamb shank, served over cous-cous with pomegranate, carrots and Moroccan spices, is another menu strength. Take advantage of the half-off bottles of wine on Mondays. Main courses \$20-\$37. Lunch and dinner Monday-Saturday. 1958 N. Damen Ave., 773-862-6600. — Phil Vettel

Lena Brava Rick Bayless' newest effort focuses on Mexico's Baja California Norte, a region whose cuisine is largely seafood based, with a reliance on open-fire cooking. Accordingly, Lena Brava cooks its hot dishes over wood coals, and does so with great finesse. The cold side of the menu features ceviches, aguachiles and laminados. Open: Dinner Tuesday-Sunday. Prices: Entrees \$18-\$26. 900 W. Randolph St., 312-733-1975. — Phil Vettel

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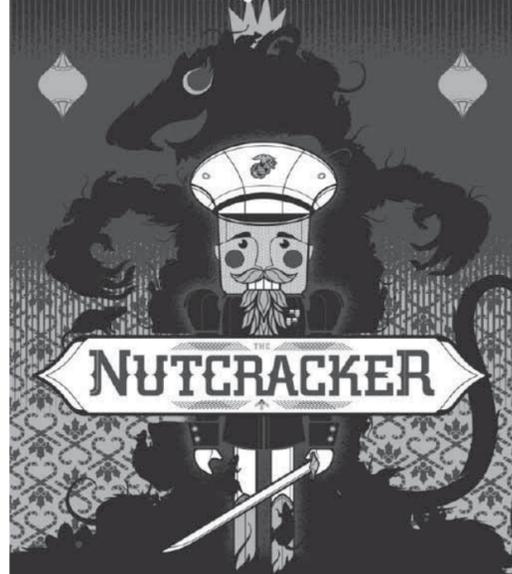
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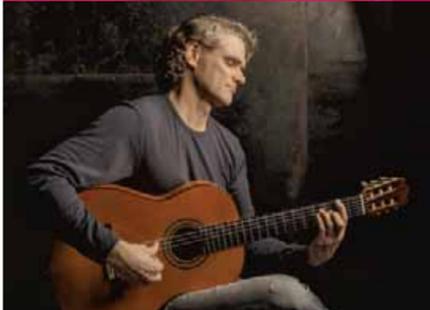
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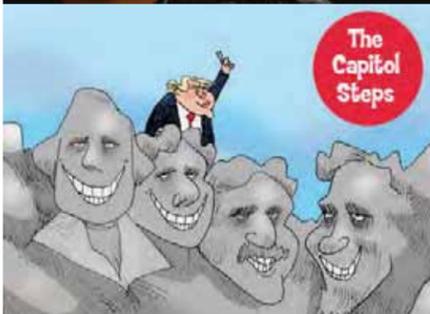
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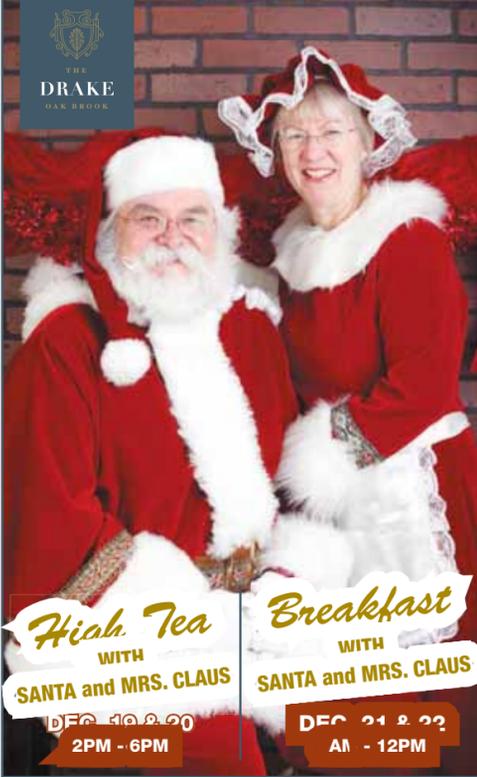
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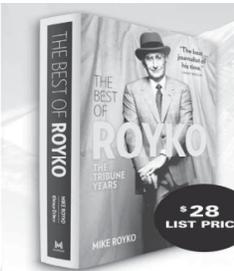
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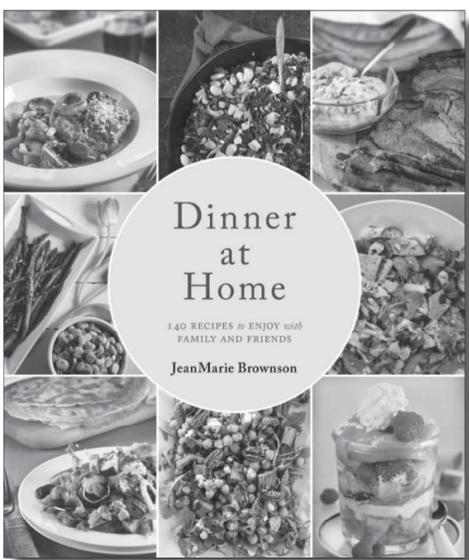
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THE THEATER LOOP

By CHRIS JONES



10 best 2018 performances in Chicago

From sex offenders to amoral business people and nervous autoworkers to self-involved rock stars, Chicago theater was home to some spectacularly vivid characters in 2018.

Here's our annual tribute to the best performances of the year, restricted to casts that were born in Chicago and enriched its cultural year. We've not included tryouts and tours (sorry to the fabulous Santino Fontana of "Tootsie," but your spring is coming, and to the magnificent Shane O'Regan of "Private Peaceful.") Y'all will have to come back.

So how many of these did you see?

1. K. Todd Freeman in "Downstate" at Steppenwolf Theatre: Even among the distinguished ensemble that gathered at the Steppenwolf Theatre for the Bruce Norris play about sex offenders, Freeman grabbed the eyes, even when though his character lurked mostly in the shadows. In a show designed to challenge the audience's preconceptions about innocence and guilt, Freeman's character was a charming man of formidable intelligence and eloquence. And in this actor's hands, you did not know if you were watching a victim of prejudice or the devil himself. Or both. But you knew one thing for sure: this man went through his days with the terrifying energy of a coiled spring, ready to unleash a personal narrative it was impossible to ignore.

2. John Judd in "All My Sons" at Court Theatre: Judd's career in Chicago theater is long and distinguished; he once played a remarkable Laurence Oliv-



"Lettie" at Victory Gardens Theater, with Charin Alvarez and Caroline Neff.

er in David Cromer's production of Austin Pendleton's "Orson's Shadow" and, over the years, he has essayed many an Irishman, tortured by ghosts. But his Joe Keller in director Charles Newell's production of Arthur Miller's "All My Sons" was a majestic, career-capping triumph and entirely different from the way most actors approach the role. Judd showed us not an semi-sympatico Ohio everyman found wanting in backbone, but a human version of a weapon of mass moral destruction, its barrels trained on the morality of capitalist America and on fatherhood itself.

3. E. Faye Butler in "Gypsy" at Porchlight Theatre: What is there left to say about Butler's Madam Rose? Most rhetoric was flattened by the force of this now-famous performance, a testament to what a skilled actor can do when she really, really, wants to get the chance to play a role to which she

long has aspired. This was a killer turn, all right, and a piece of acting not bereft of the joy of competing, even in an unfair world. Life is a banquet, Butler seemed to be saying. You just have to grab your deserved seat at the table.

4. Jacqueline Williams in "Skeleton Crew" at Northlight Theatre: There was a pervasive sadness to Williams' performance as Faye, an autoworker in playwright Dominique Morisseau's lament for the autoworkers in her native Michigan, but this was not a sentimental interpretation of the play's pivotal role. Rather, Williams perfectly caught that moment when workers of a certain age come to see that the employer to whom they dedicated much of their life will not love them back — and will, in fact, throw them out with the trash. But that was just the setup. What stunned audiences was how Williams revealed what a person who under-

stands such a thing can then choose to do.

5. Kelly Felthous in "Cabaret" at the Paramount Theatre in Aurora: There are two kinds of Sally Bowles who usually show up at the heart of "Cabaret." The traditional model is a fun-loving sensualist, happy to party as the world outside collapses. The other — popularized by the late Natasha Richardson — is a drugged-out study in self-loathing and nihilism. Somehow, Felthous combined both of these approaches and forged a performance rich in contrast and self-contradiction, rippling with truth and pain but also fully aware of the fun to be had when you head out to hear the music play. With people you think your chums.

6. Caroline Neff in "Lettie" at Victory Gardens Theater: The heart of the premiere of Boo Killebrew's lovely play about an ex-offender trying to reintegrate herself into a changed world and family, Neff's performance was so sympathetic as to make you worry for the fate of her character, all the way down to your bones. Neff is known for her authenticity, along with a wry sense of humor that always best shows itself when she is playing one of the world's survivors, as was the case here. In the last scene of the play, Lettie realizes that the lost years with her kids are just never coming back, and it was with that understanding that Neff, for a moment, broke your heart.

7. Jo Lampert in "Jesus Christ Superstar" at Lyric Opera of Chicago: Mary Magdalenes in the

iconic rock opera have tended to be a subservient crew, pliant foot-washers happy to get a few alone moments with a celebrity Jesus. But Lampert turned that idea on its head — her Magdalene was very much her own woman, complex, counter-intuitive and vocally spectacular to boot. When she sang "I don't know how to love him," she let you know that the problem did not entirely reside with the would-be lover, but with the immortal department of the one beloved.

8. Joel Reitsma in "Birdland" at Steep Theatre: Playing a self-absorbed rock-star may sound easy, but the central character in Simon Stephens' existential play about the social cost of sensualist excess required a much deeper dive than you might think. Part Adam Lambert, part Freddie Mercury and part George Michael, Reitsma not only was credibly charming as an amoral celebrity, but he peeled the numbing loneliness that often comes with ego-driven success. In other words, you understood both why his character became a star and why he was so destined to exit the heavens with so sickening a thud.

9. Dana Tretta in "Bunny Bunny" at the Mercury Theater: Want to take on the role of Gilda Radner, one of the funniest Americans ever to live? Thought that might give you pause. But Tretta, an under-appreciated longtime Chicago performer best known for musicals, had the guts to do so and she came up with a spectacular piece of comedic acting in writer Alan Zweibel's loving tribute to

his longtime friend. The show was a strange hybrid, but Tretta killed in the classic Radner sketches, exposing her character's raw vulnerabilities, and thus the source of her genius and the explanation of why she was so beloved. Especially in Chicago.

10. Heather Chrisler in "Mies Julie" at Victory Gardens Theater: After appearing last year on this list for her work in "Machinal," Chrisler followed that up spectacularly well with her deep dive into an Afrikaner character based on August Strindberg's ill-fated "Miss Julie." Terrifying in intensity but fully aware of the price Julie pays for her own hopeless drive for sexual fulfillment, Chrisler's performance took a whole series of risks to bring to life a young woman on the wrong side of her own history and sadly unaware of how much damage she has left to inflict.

Ten more fine performances, in alphabetical order: Bradley Armacost in "The Woman in Black," Royal George Theatre; Audrey Francis in "Witch," Writers Theatre; Rashada Dawan in "Caroline, or Change," Firebrand Theatre; Francis Guinan in "Downstate" at Steppenwolf Theatre; James Vincent Meredith in "Radio Golf"; Liz Sharpe in "In the Canyon," Jackalope Theatre; Zachary Stevenson in "Buddy," American Blues Theatre; Bri Sudia in "A Shayna Maidel," TimeLine Theatre; Aurora Adachi-Winter in "Vietgone," Writers Theatre.

Chris Jones is a Tribune critic.

cjones5@chicagotribune.com

CHRIS JONES RECOMMENDS

"Avenue Q" ★★½
"Avenue Q" is once again a long-running hit in Chicago. "Warning, puppet sex" once again appears on the Mercury Theater's marquee on Southport. Director L. Walter Stearns is letting Princeton, Kate Monster, Gary Coleman, Christmas Eve and the rest of the gang in the show by Jeff Whitty, with music by Jeff Marx and Robert Lopez, run on and on and on. On a Wednesday night, the main floor of the Mercury was packed, and the show warmly received. *Through Dec. 30 at Mercury Theater Chicago, 3745 N. Southport Ave.; \$35-\$65 at www.mercurytheaterchicago.com*

"Blue Man Group" ★★½
"Blue Man Group" has been playing at Briar Street since 1997, a remarkable run of 20-plus years. There have been only two major overhauls in that time; the latest adds selfie sticks, new music and a livelier finale. I'd argue the Blue Men need a bigger overhaul — they still chomp marshmallows, bang drums and paint up audience members — but this remains a fine gateway for the young into the arts. If you've never had the pleasure, go. *Open run at the Briar Street Theatre, 3133 N. Halsted St.; \$49-\$69 at www.ticketmaster.com*

"Familiar" ★★★
The aptly named "Familiar," now at Steppenwolf under the skilled direction of Danya Taymor, is by Danai Gurira, a hugely successful Zimbabwean-American actress and playwright and the daughter of immigrant parents. It's about the marriage of a young lawyer named Tendikayi (Lanise Antoine Shelley) to an American named Chris (Erik Hellman), and the debate of how much attention the inter-racial nuptials should pay to Zimbabwean traditions. This production sometimes sacrifices truth

for laughs, but "Familiar" is written with great empathy. *Through Jan. 13 at the Steppenwolf Theatre, 1650 N. Halsted St.; \$20-\$109 at 312-335-1650 or www.steppenwolf.org*

"Gaslight District" ★★★
The best work in the new Second City e.t.c. Stage revue "Gaslight District" engages at an equal level with the paying customers in the seats. For example, there's a terrific Uber Pool bit mocking the faux communities that emerge in the traffic-snarling world of shared rides. And cast member Jasbir Singh Vazquez plays a guy who shows up at the offices of the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, requesting his own deportation. Vazquez is as good as anyone I've seen on the e.t.c. Stage. *Open run on the Second City e.t.c. Stage, 1608 N. Wells St. in Piper's Alley; \$21-\$48 at 312-337-3992 and www.secondcity.com*

"Gypsy" ★★★★★
If you doubt that the passion of one gifted performer can raise the game of an entire young cast, you have not seen E. Faye Butler as Rose in the fabulous new Porchlight Music Theatre production of "Gypsy." Director Michael Weber has nailed the scenes that matter the most: So intense is the moment June (Aalon Smith) realizes that survival means leaving her mother, so deep is the agony of Daryn Whitney Harrell's Louise, I swear you'll stop breathing. Watching Butler, an African-American, play the part for which she clearly has longed merely intensifies the themes of this musical. *Through Dec. 29 at the Ruth Page Center for the Arts, 1016 N. Dearborn St.; \$34-\$61 at 773-777-9884 or www.porchlightmusictheatre.org*

"Hamilton" ★★★★★
This heartland "Hamilton" is performed by players mostly younger and less



Cynthia Carter, Jessica Seals, Ariel Williams and Jayla Williams-Craig perform in "Women of Soul" at Black Ensemble Theater.

HOT TICKET

"Women of Soul" ★★★
What qualifies someone to be a woman of soul? At the Black Ensemble Theater — which prides itself on welcoming everyone — you can hear a cast of eight women performing numbers made famous by Mahalia Jackson, Natalie Cole, Janis Joplin, Mary J. Blige, Gloria Gaynor, Donna Summer, Whitney Houston and Adele, among others. The evening ends with a tribute to Aretha Franklin. Penned and directed by Daryl D. Brooks, "Women of Soul" is all about the vocal talents such as Jerica Exum, Cynthia Carter and relative newcomer Hannah Efsits. If you're a fan of this genre, you'll think, what's not to like in such a show? And you'd be right. *Through Jan. 27 at Black Ensemble Theater, 4450 N. Clark St.; \$55-\$65 at 773-769-4451 or www.blackensembletheater.org*

experienced than the original New York cast and is less flashy. But it is more in touch with the fundamental scrappiness of the early years of a rebel colony turned into a spectacular democratic experiment. And in Chicago, a city where theater is founded on truth, it is somehow very much more human and vulnerable. *Open run at CIBC Theatre, 18 W. Monroe St.; \$65-\$400 at 800-775-2000 or www.broadwayinchicago.com*

"Rightlynd" ★★★
"Rightlynd," a very promising new play by Ike Holter at the Victory Gardens Theater under the direction of Lisa Portes, is a work about Chicago. Set in the fictional 51st Ward of the city, it follows newly elected alderman Nina Esposito (Monica Orozco) in her struggle against gentrification. "Rightlynd" has its super-villains and no

interest in being fair to any arguments for urban redevelopment — the characters in the play spit out "brunch" like it's a four-letter word. But Holter's focus here is also on how any agent of political change has to learn to deal with the world as it currently exists. *Through Dec. 30 at Victory Gardens Theatre, 2433 N. Lincoln Ave.; \$27-\$60 at 773-871-3000 or www.victorygardens.org*

"The Santaland Diaries" ★★★★★
During the peak holiday weeks, the Goodman Theatre likes to have an irreverent seasonal attraction on the smaller of its two stages — this year it's "The Santaland Diaries," the out-of-whack, first-person account by David Sedaris of the satirist's seasonal sojourn at Macy's department store, where he found gainful employment as Crummet the Elf. The show's only

about an hour, well stocked with laughs, and Matt Crowle is a terrific Crummet in director Steve Scott's wry little production. *Through Dec. 30 in the Goodman's Owen Theatre, 170 N. Dearborn St.; \$15-\$61 at 312-443-3800 or www.goodmantheatre.org*

"The Steadfast Tin Soldier" ★★★★★
The hero of the gorgeous new show at Lookingglass Theatre is tormented by a big baby, swallowed by a storm drain, chased by a rat and incinerated. Mary Zimmerman's new adaptation of Hans Christian Andersen's "The Steadfast Tin Soldier" is barely more than an hour long and does not use a lick of human speech. But this is a major new work, with the message that we don't die, we merely change shape. It's one holiday show you don't want to miss. *Through Jan. 13 at Lookingglass Theatre*

OPENINGS

Friday

"La Ruta": To the U.S.-owned factories in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, La Ruta is just a bus. But to the hundreds of women who live, work and often disappear along the route, it's more. A world premiere by Chicago playwright Isaac Gomez. *Through Jan. 27 at Steppenwolf Theatre, 1650 N. Halsted St.; 312-335-1650 and www.steppenwolf.org*

Sunday

"iMagician": British illusionist Jamie Allan is known for fusing magic with technology. His "iMagician" is in Chicago for a weeklong run at the Harris in Millennium Park. *Through Jan. 6 at Harris Theater, 205 E. Randolph St.; 312-334-7777 and www.harristheaterchicago.org*

in the Water Tower Water Works, 821 N. Michigan Ave.; \$35-\$85 at 312-337-0665 or www.lookingglass theatre.org

"The Woman in Black" ★★★★★
"The Woman in Black," now at the Royal George Theatre, is an old-school gothic ghost story, adapted from the novel by Susan Hill about a young lawyer sent to a remote English house to deal with a dead woman's affairs. Plenty of people could tell you what happens next. Director Robin Herford's 1987 production was such a hit that it moved to London's West End, where it plays to this day. Chicago's show is actually directed by Herford, starring Adam Wesley Brown and Bradley Armacost. With low levels of lighting, amplified sound effects and no digital trickery, this is most certainly the scariest show in town. *Through Feb. 17 at the Royal George Theatre, 1641 N. Halsted St.; \$49-\$69 at 312-988-9000 or theroyalgeorgetheatre.com*

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Monday, December 31, 2018
Noon - 6pm Eastern
Tuesday, January 1, 2019
1am - 3am Eastern

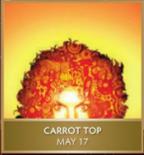
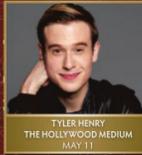
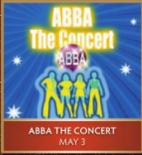
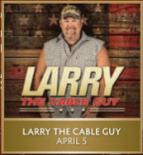
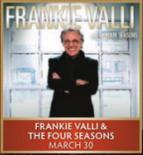
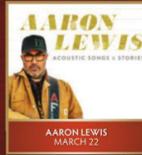
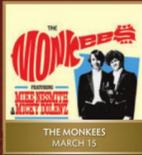
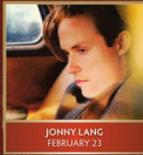
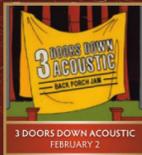
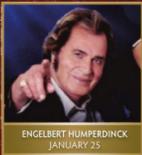
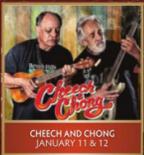


Tuesday, January 1, 2019
2pm - 8pm Eastern

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Sale Dates Friday, December 21, 2018 thru Thursday, December 27, 2018									
 80 Proof & All Flavors Try NEW Grapefruit \$2.70 OFF on all types of Absolut Except Grapefruit is \$5.00 OFF 750ml	 Your Choice 17⁹⁹ <small>750ml</small>	 Your Choice 6⁹⁹ <small>6-12oz Cans</small>	 SAVE \$35.00 Sale Price 25.99 Mail-in Rebate -5.00 Final Cost After Mail In Rebate 20⁹⁹ <small>1.75lt</small>	Save 18.00 on 3 bottles 750ml or larger on Kraken, Jose Cuervo Gold, Silver, Traditional, Margaritas (1.75lt only), Bushmills Original, Black or Red, 1800 Silver, Reposado or Coconut, Boodles Gin & all Types of Three Olives, via Mail-in Rebate. Save \$35.00 on 5 bottles. See Store for Details.					
 33⁹⁹ <small>750ml</small>	 26⁹⁹ Try NEW La Vanille <small>750ml</small>	 47⁹⁹ <small>750ml</small>	 10⁹⁹ Try NEW Banana <small>750ml</small>	 14⁹⁹ <small>750ml</small>	 29⁹⁹ Try NEW Blue Raspberry <small>750ml</small>				
 19⁹⁹ <small>750ml</small>	 19⁹⁹ <small>750ml</small>	 19⁹⁹ Try NEW Peppermint & Pumpkin Spice <small>750ml</small>	 25⁹⁹ Save \$5.00 by Mail when you purchase Makers Mark <small>750ml</small>	 25⁹⁹ <small>750ml</small>	 14⁹⁹ <small>750ml</small>				
 29⁹⁹ <small>750ml</small>	 24⁹⁹ <small>750ml</small>	 15⁹⁹ Try Mentholmint, Apple Pie & Cherry <small>750ml</small>	 8⁹⁹ <small>750ml</small>	 11⁹⁹ Try NEW Moscato Rose <small>1.5lt</small>	 16⁹⁹ <small>3 Ltr</small>				
 10⁹⁹ Try NEW Rose <small>1.5lt</small>	 14⁹⁹ <small>1.5lt</small>	 19⁹⁹ <small>750ml</small>	 11⁹⁹ <small>1.5lt</small>	 15⁹⁹ <small>750ml</small>	 15⁹⁹ <small>24-24oz Nr Bottles or Cans</small>				
 19⁹⁹ <small>18 Pack-12oz Nr Bottles or Cans</small>	 8⁹⁹ <small>6-12oz Nr Bottles</small>	 14⁹⁹ <small>12-12oz Nr Bottles or Cans</small>	 14⁹⁹ Try NEW Peach <small>12-11.2oz Nr Bottles or Cans</small>	 12⁹⁹ <small>30 Pack-12oz Cans</small>	 14⁹⁹ <small>12-12oz Cans</small>				
 13⁹⁹ <small>12-12oz Nr Bottles</small>	 9⁹⁹ <small>12-11.2oz Nr Bottles or Cans</small>	 15⁹⁹ <small>24-12oz Cans</small>	 13⁹⁹ <small>12-12oz Nr Bottles</small>	 15⁹⁹ <small>24-12oz Nr Bottles or Cans</small>	<table border="0" style="font-size: 8px;"> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> Arlington Heights 1776 W. Algonquin Road Burbank The Liquor House 5400 West 79th Street Chicago 1040 Argyle Street Chicago 2300 N. Milwaukee Ave Chicago 5301 N. Milwaukee Ave </td> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> Chicago 3210 N. Cicero Ave Chicago 4616 N. Kedzie Ave Chicago 3301 W. North Ave Chicago 6013 N. Lincoln DesPlaines 1141 Lee Street </td> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> Glendale Heights 2210 Bloomingdale Road Grayslake 145 South Route 45 Chicago 1511 North Avenue Morris 1459 Commons Drive Schaumburg 1050 S. Roselle Road </td> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> Villa Park 532 W. St Charles Road Wilmette 275 Green Bay Road Not all items are sold cold or available at all stores. We reserve the right to limit quantities and correct printing errors. Store prices for Beer may differ. *Lotto games available at these locations. All sale items cash and carry. For further information 708-460-0100 </td> </tr> </table>	Arlington Heights 1776 W. Algonquin Road Burbank The Liquor House 5400 West 79th Street Chicago 1040 Argyle Street Chicago 2300 N. Milwaukee Ave Chicago 5301 N. Milwaukee Ave	Chicago 3210 N. Cicero Ave Chicago 4616 N. Kedzie Ave Chicago 3301 W. North Ave Chicago 6013 N. Lincoln DesPlaines 1141 Lee Street	Glendale Heights 2210 Bloomingdale Road Grayslake 145 South Route 45 Chicago 1511 North Avenue Morris 1459 Commons Drive Schaumburg 1050 S. Roselle Road	Villa Park 532 W. St Charles Road Wilmette 275 Green Bay Road Not all items are sold cold or available at all stores. We reserve the right to limit quantities and correct printing errors. Store prices for Beer may differ. *Lotto games available at these locations. All sale items cash and carry. For further information 708-460-0100
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The sublime Mazda6 is so good, you'll call it by another name

In an era where some midsize sedans have styling that call to mind kabuki masks, while others are disappearing altogether, the Mazda6 remains the choice of those who love to drive, and who find the thought of autonomous cars nauseating. After all, when a car is as enjoyable to drive as the Mazda6, why would you leave driving to a computer?

Artfully rendered and skillfully engineered, the Mazda6 maintains its attractive allure this year, receiving new standard LED lighting, revised interior materials, a new front grille design, revised wheels and a cabin makeover.

What's unchanged is this car's incredible good looks, with a naturally flowing beltline and rakish greenhouse. The new grille adds an additional dash of sportiness, and is framed by an elegant accent of chrome trim. It looks racy, and it has the goods to back up its exquisite appearance.

Credit the new turbocharged 2.5-liter four-cylinder engine, which is the same engine found in the Mazda CX-9 crossover. Rated at 250 horsepower and 310 pound-feet of torque, it mates to a six-speed automatic transmission. A six-speed manual transmission is available, but comes only with the naturally-aspirated version of the same engine that produces 187 horsepower and 186 pound-feet of torque.

Step on the throttle and you'll find generous amounts of power, although initial acceleration could be a little stronger. The transmission shifts smoothly, unobtrusively firing off the shifts that keep this car cooking. Handling is quite good for a front driver, with little body lean and no torque steer. There's a selectable Sport mode, but since it only changes the transmission's shift points, its usefulness is trivial. Besides, the standard tuning works extremely well; this thing is a hoot to drive. The retuned chassis and suspension provide a ride that's firm and fairly absorbent, although the largest bumps crash through uncomfortably. The cabin is fairly quiet, with only the worst road surfaces producing too much racket.

Inside, Mazda fully redesigned the seats to better absorb vibrations. Better yet, they can be equipped with seat heaters and ventilation up front, and heated seats in the rear. The cabin is spacious, with generous front seat legroom and a decent amount in the rear. Of course, if there's not enough space, there's always the generously sized trunk.

The instrument panel is new as well, designed in a sleek minimalist idiom that seems above its station. Opt for the top trim level and you'll be treated to wood, suede and leather accents, which merely gilds the lily, transforming this sublime ride into one that's affordably premium.

Available in ascending Sport, Touring, Grand Touring, Grand Touring Reserve, and Signature trim levels, the Mazda6 benefits from a large 8-inch touchscreen that houses Mazda Connect, the brand's infotainment system. Its intuitive interface makes it easy to use, and pairing a mobile phone is easy and quick. Apple CarPlay and Android Auto are now available.

Like many new rides, the Mazda6 comes with an impressive number of driving assistance aids, including blind-spot monitoring, lane-keeping assist and adaptive cruise control are standard on all but Sport models, where they're part of an optional \$625 package.

There are newer competitors in the midsize sedan segment, but few offer the sophisticated mix of adept handling, ample power, reasonable fuel economy and the latest in tech all wrapped in a beguilingly beautiful package.

— Larry Printz, Tribune News Service

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Mazda Mazda6

Base price: \$21,950
Engine: Turbo 2.5-liter 4-cylinder
Horsepower: 250
EPA fuel economy: 23/31
Wheelbase: 111.4 inches
Length: 191.5 inches
Cargo capacity: 14.7 cubic feet
Curb weight: 3,560 pounds

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ASSUMED NAMES

Notice is hereby given, Pursuant to "An Act in relation to the use of an Assumed Business Name in the conduct or transaction of Business in the State" as amended, that a Certification was filed by the Undersigned with the County Clerk of Cook County File No. Y18000091 on the Date: December 11, 2018 Under the Assumed Name of, INDEPENDENT COUNSELORS OF CHICAGO with the business located at: 4910 N. Lincoln Avenue, Office 2 Chicago, IL, 60625 The true name and residence Address of the owner is: John Knoerzer 4910 N. Lincoln Avenue, Office 2 Chicago, IL, 60625

LEGAL NOTICES GOVERNMENT/EDUCATION

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS JUVENILE JUSTICE AND CHILD PROTECTION DEPARTMENT CHILD PROTECTION DIVISION

IN THE INTEREST OF Angie Beltran

MINOR(S) CHILD(REN) OF Maria Trejo (Mother)

JUVENILE NO.: 14JA00888

NOTICE OF PUBLICATION

NOTICE IS GIVEN YOU, Maria Trejo (Mother), respondents, and to All Whom It May Concern, that on October 11, 2018, a petition was filed under the Juvenile Court Act by KIM FOXK in this court and that in the courtroom of Judge in the Cook County Juvenile Court Building, 1100 So. Hamilton Avenue, Chicago, Illinois, ON 01/04/2019, at 10:00 AM in CALENDAR 13 COURTROOM M, or as soon thereafter as this case may be heard, a hearing will be held upon the petition to terminate your parental rights and appoint a guardian with power to consent to adoption.

THE COURT HAS AUTHORITY IN THIS CASE TO TAKE FROM YOU THE CUSTODY AND GUARDIANSHIP OF THE MINOR, TO TERMINATE YOUR PARENTAL RIGHTS AND TO APPOINT A GUARDIAN WITH POWER TO CONSENT TO ADOPTION. YOU MAY LOSE ALL PARENTAL RIGHTS TO YOUR CHILD. IF THE PETITION REQUESTS THE TERMINATION OF YOUR PARENTAL RIGHTS AND APPOINTMENT OF A GUARDIAN WITH POWER TO CONSENT TO ADOPTION, YOU MAY LOSE ALL PARENTAL RIGHTS TO THE CHILD.

UNLESS YOU appear at the hearing and show cause against the petition, the allegations of the petition may stand admitted as against you and each of you, and an order of judgment entered.

DOROTHY BROWN, CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS December 21, 2018

LEGAL NOTICES GOVERNMENT/EDUCATION

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS JUVENILE JUSTICE AND CHILD PROTECTION DEPARTMENT CHILD PROTECTION DIVISION

IN THE INTEREST OF Armoni Adams

A MINOR NO. 2018JD01975

NOTICE OF PUBLICATION

Notice is given you, Jamell White (Father), respondents, and to All Whom It May Concern, that on December 7, 2018, a petition was filed under the Juvenile Court Act by KIM FOXK, STATE'S ATTORNEY OF COOK COUNTY through her assistant State's Attorney in this court and that in the courtroom of Judge Stuart Lubin in the Cook County Juvenile Court Building located at 1100 S Hamilton Avenue, Chicago, Illinois on 01/07/2019 at 9:00 AM in CALENDAR 58 COURTROOM 11,

or as soon thereafter as this case may be heard, an adjudicatory hearing will be held upon the petition to have the minor declared to be a ward of the court and for other relief under the Act. The court has authority in this case to take from you the custody and guardianship of the minor.

Unless you appear at the hearing and show cause to the contrary, an order or judgment by default may be entered against you for the relief asked in the petition.

DOROTHY BROWN, CLERK OF COURT December 21, 2018

ASSISTANT STATE'S ATTORNEY: B. Pucci, E. Bammel ATTORNEY FOR: THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS ADDRESS: 1100 South Hamilton CITY/STATE: Chicago, Illinois 60612 TELEPHONE NUMBER: (312) 433-7000 ATTORNEY NO.: 33182

CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT, COOK COUNTY OF ILLINOIS

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS JUVENILE JUSTICE AND CHILD PROTECTION DEPARTMENT CHILD PROTECTION DIVISION

IN THE INTEREST OF Daniel Larson

MINOR(S) CHILD(REN) OF Leslie Filipowski (Mother)

JUVENILE NO.: 18JA00968

NOTICE OF PUBLICATION

NOTICE IS GIVEN YOU, Leslie Filipowski (Mother) and Robert Larson (Father), respondents, and to All Whom It May Concern, that on September 26, 2018, a petition was filed under the Juvenile Court Act by KIM FOXK in this court and that in the courtroom of Judge Patrick Murphy in the Cook County Juvenile Court Building, 1100 So. Hamilton Avenue, Chicago, Illinois, ON 01/11/2019, at 9:30 AM in CALENDAR 1 COURTROOM A, or as soon thereafter as this case may be heard, an adjudicatory hearing will be held upon the petition to have the minor declared to be a ward of the court and for other relief under the Act.

THE COURT HAS AUTHORITY IN THIS CASE TO TAKE FROM YOU THE CUSTODY AND GUARDIANSHIP OF THE MINOR, TO TERMINATE YOUR PARENTAL RIGHTS AND TO APPOINT A GUARDIAN WITH POWER TO CONSENT TO ADOPTION. YOU MAY LOSE ALL PARENTAL RIGHTS TO YOUR CHILD. IF THE PETITION REQUESTS THE TERMINATION OF YOUR PARENTAL RIGHTS AND APPOINTMENT OF A GUARDIAN WITH POWER TO CONSENT TO ADOPTION, YOU MAY LOSE ALL PARENTAL RIGHTS TO THE CHILD.

UNLESS YOU appear at the hearing and show cause against the petition, the allegations of the petition may stand admitted as against you and each of you, and an order of judgment entered.

DOROTHY BROWN, CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS December 21, 2018

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS JUVENILE JUSTICE AND CHILD PROTECTION DEPARTMENT CHILD PROTECTION DIVISION

IN THE INTEREST OF Jasin W. Williams AKA Scotter Williams AKA Jason Williams

MINOR(S) CHILD(REN) OF Shirley J. Williams (Mother)

JUVENILE NO.: 10JA00919

NOTICE OF PUBLICATION

NOTICE IS GIVEN YOU, Jonathan Williams (Father) Any And All Unknown Fathers Any , respondents, and to All Whom It May Concern, that on October 13, 2010, a petition was filed under the Juvenile Court Act by KIM FOXK in this court and that in the courtroom of Judge Peter Vilkelis in the Cook County Juvenile Court Building, 1100 So. Hamilton Avenue, Chicago, Illinois, ON 01/04/2019, at 9:30 AM in CALENDAR 13 COURTROOM M, or as soon thereafter as this case may be heard, a hearing will be held upon the petition to terminate your parental rights and appoint a guardian with power to consent to adoption.

THE COURT HAS AUTHORITY IN THIS CASE TO TAKE FROM YOU THE CUSTODY AND GUARDIANSHIP OF THE MINOR, TO TERMINATE YOUR PARENTAL RIGHTS AND TO APPOINT A GUARDIAN WITH POWER TO CONSENT TO ADOPTION. YOU MAY LOSE ALL PARENTAL RIGHTS TO YOUR CHILD. IF THE PETITION REQUESTS THE TERMINATION OF YOUR PARENTAL RIGHTS AND APPOINTMENT OF A GUARDIAN WITH POWER TO CONSENT TO ADOPTION, YOU MAY LOSE ALL PARENTAL RIGHTS TO THE CHILD.

UNLESS YOU appear at the hearing and show cause against the petition, the allegations of the petition may stand admitted as against you and each of you, and an order of judgment entered.

DOROTHY BROWN, CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS December 21, 2018

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS JUVENILE JUSTICE AND CHILD PROTECTION DEPARTMENT CHILD PROTECTION DIVISION

IN THE INTEREST OF Kashmir Winters AKA Kashmir Macon Cormiah Macon

MINOR(S) CHILD(REN) OF Shatila Winters (Mother)

JUVENILE NO.: 18JA00784 18JA00785

NOTICE OF PUBLICATION

NOTICE IS GIVEN YOU, Courtney R. Macon (Father) AKA Kashmir Macon respondents, and to All Whom It May Concern, that on August 16, 2018, a petition was filed under the Juvenile Court Act by KIM FOXK in this court and that in the courtroom of Judge Griffin in the Cook County Juvenile Court Building, 1100 So. Hamilton Avenue, Chicago, Illinois, ON 01/14/2019, at 11:30 AM in CALENDAR 3 COURTROOM C, or as soon thereafter as this case may be heard, an adjudicatory hearing will be held upon the petition to have the minor declared to be a ward of the court and for other relief under the Act.

THE COURT HAS AUTHORITY IN THIS CASE TO TAKE FROM YOU THE CUSTODY AND GUARDIANSHIP OF THE MINOR, TO TERMINATE YOUR PARENTAL RIGHTS AND TO APPOINT A GUARDIAN WITH POWER TO CONSENT TO ADOPTION. YOU MAY LOSE ALL PARENTAL RIGHTS TO YOUR CHILD. IF THE PETITION REQUESTS THE TERMINATION OF YOUR PARENTAL RIGHTS AND APPOINTMENT OF A GUARDIAN WITH POWER TO CONSENT TO ADOPTION, YOU MAY LOSE ALL PARENTAL RIGHTS TO THE CHILD.

UNLESS YOU appear at the hearing and show cause against the petition, the allegations of the petition may stand admitted as against you and each of you, and an order of judgment entered.

DOROTHY BROWN, CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS December 21, 2018

LEGAL NOTICES GOVERNMENT/EDUCATION

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS JUVENILE JUSTICE AND CHILD PROTECTION DEPARTMENT CHILD PROTECTION DIVISION

IN THE INTEREST OF Maximus Morris

MINOR(S) CHILD(REN) OF Mardria Morris (Mother) AKA MADRIA MORRIS

JUVENILE NO.: 18JA00225

NOTICE OF PUBLICATION

NOTICE IS GIVEN YOU, Ricardo Hughes (Father) Any And All Unknown Fathers Any , respondents, and to All Whom It May Concern, that on March 7, 2018, a petition was filed under the Juvenile Court Act by KIM FOXK in this court and that in the courtroom of Judge Peter Vilkelis in the Cook County Juvenile Court Building, 1100 So. Hamilton Avenue, Chicago, Illinois, ON 01/04/2019, at 9:30 AM in CALENDAR 13 COURTROOM M, or as soon thereafter as this case may be heard, an adjudicatory hearing will be held upon the petition to have the minor declared to be a ward of the court and for other relief under the Act.

THE COURT HAS AUTHORITY IN THIS CASE TO TAKE FROM YOU THE CUSTODY AND GUARDIANSHIP OF THE MINOR, TO TERMINATE YOUR PARENTAL RIGHTS AND TO APPOINT A GUARDIAN WITH POWER TO CONSENT TO ADOPTION. YOU MAY LOSE ALL PARENTAL RIGHTS TO YOUR CHILD. IF THE PETITION REQUESTS THE TERMINATION OF YOUR PARENTAL RIGHTS AND APPOINTMENT OF A GUARDIAN WITH POWER TO CONSENT TO ADOPTION, YOU MAY LOSE ALL PARENTAL RIGHTS TO THE CHILD.

UNLESS YOU appear at the hearing and show cause against the petition, the allegations of the petition may stand admitted as against you and each of you, and an order of judgment entered.

DOROTHY BROWN, CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS December 21, 2018

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS JUVENILE JUSTICE AND CHILD PROTECTION DEPARTMENT CHILD PROTECTION DIVISION

IN THE INTEREST OF Raven Macias-Gallardo

MINOR(S) CHILD(REN) OF Anais Macias (Mother)

JUVENILE NO.: 18JA00403

NOTICE OF PUBLICATION

NOTICE IS GIVEN YOU, Victor Gallardo (Father), and any and all unknown fathers , respondents, and to All Whom It May Concern, that on April 27, 2018, a petition was filed under the Juvenile Court Act by KIM FOXK in this court and that in the courtroom of Judge Peter Vilkelis in the Cook County Juvenile Court Building, 1100 So. Hamilton Avenue, Chicago, Illinois, ON 01/14/2019, at 9:30 AM in CALENDAR 13 COURTROOM M, or as soon thereafter as this case may be heard, an adjudicatory hearing will be held upon the petition to have the minor declared to be a ward of the court and for other relief under the Act.

THE COURT HAS AUTHORITY IN THIS CASE TO TAKE FROM YOU THE CUSTODY AND GUARDIANSHIP OF THE MINOR, TO TERMINATE YOUR PARENTAL RIGHTS AND TO APPOINT A GUARDIAN WITH POWER TO CONSENT TO ADOPTION. YOU MAY LOSE ALL PARENTAL RIGHTS TO YOUR CHILD. IF THE PETITION REQUESTS THE TERMINATION OF YOUR PARENTAL RIGHTS AND APPOINTMENT OF A GUARDIAN WITH POWER TO CONSENT TO ADOPTION, YOU MAY LOSE ALL PARENTAL RIGHTS TO THE CHILD.

UNLESS YOU appear at the hearing and show cause against the petition, the allegations of the petition may stand admitted as against you and each of you, and an order of judgment entered.

DOROTHY BROWN, CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS December 21, 2018

LEGAL ADVERTISEMENT HOUSING AUTHORITY OF COOK COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES

Proposals will be received by the Housing Authority of Cook County (HACC) on the date and time (Central Standard Time) stated for the specific Request for Proposal (RFP) listed below at 175 West Jackson Boulevard, Suite 350, Chicago, Illinois, 60604.

Project Name: Utility Allowance Study Specification Number: 2018-100-055 Questions Deadline: January 15, 2019 Time: 2:00 P.M.

Proposal Due Date: January 28, 2019 Time: 2:00 P.M.

Contact Person: Deborah O'Donnell Telephone Number: (312) 542-4725 E-mail Address: do'donnell@thehacc.org

The RFP Package may be downloaded by registering on our website which lists a complete list of all current bid opportunities with the HACC.

www.thehacc.org/e-procurement-services

Proposals that are not properly submitted will be considered non-responsive and be disqualified from consideration. Proposals submitted late will not be accepted. The Authority reserves the right to reject any or all Proposals if deemed in the best interest of the Housing Authority of Cook County.

Richard Monochio, Executive Director

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, OFFICE OF WATER RESOURCES AND ILLINOIS COASTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM NOTICE

The Park District of Highland Park has applied for an IDNR/OWR Permit and an Illinois Coastal Management Program Federal Consistency Concurrence for the annual placement of sand at Rosewood Beach, 160 N. LaSalle Street, Suite 507, Highland Park, IL. Inquiries and requests to view the complete application may be directed to Jim Casey of the IDNR/OWR's Chicago Office at (312) 793-5947 or james.casey@dnr.state.il.us. The full application is also available at http://www.dnr.state.il.us/cmp/Pages/CMPFederalConsistencyRegister.aspx or http://www.dnr.state.il.us/waterresources/Pages/PublicNotices.aspx. You are invited to send comments regarding this project to 160 N. LaSalle Street, Suite 507, Chicago, IL 60601 by January 18, 2019.

LEGAL ADVERTISEMENT HOUSING AUTHORITY OF COOK COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES

Proposals will be received by the Housing Authority of Cook County (HACC) on the date and time (Central Standard Time) stated for the specific Request for Proposal (RFP) listed below at 175 West Jackson Boulevard, Suite 350, Chicago, Illinois, 60604.

Project Name: Third Party Certifier Specification Number: 2018-100-056 Questions Deadline: January 4, 2019 Time: 2:00 P.M.

Proposal Due Date: January 21, 2019 Time: 2:00 P.M.

Contact Person: Deborah O'Donnell Telephone Number: (312) 542-4725 E-mail Address: do'donnell@thehacc.org

The RFP Package may be downloaded by registering on our website which lists a complete list of all current bid opportunities with the HACC.

www.thehacc.org/e-procurement-services

Proposals that are not properly submitted will be considered non-responsive and be disqualified from consideration. Proposals submitted late will not be accepted. The Authority reserves the right to reject any or all Proposals if deemed in the best interest of the Housing Authority of Cook County.

Richard Monochio, Executive Director

LEGAL NOTICES

COUNTY OF COOK TONI PRECKWINKLE, PRESIDENT OFFICE OF THE CHIEF PROCUREMENT OFFICER RAFFI SARRAFIAN

ADVERTISEMENT DATE: Friday, December 21, 2018

DESCRIPTION: Invitation for Bids for Toxicology and Histology Glassware and Consumable Supplies

CONTRACT NO.: 1868-17519R

MBE/WBE GOALS: There are no MBE/WBE requirements for this contract

BID DOCUMENTS: Solicitation Document is available for download at: https://legacy.cookcountyl.gov/purchasing/bids/listAllBids.php

BID DUE DATE: Friday, January 11, 2019 at 10:00 a.m.

CONTACT: Carolyn Jones, Contract Negotiator (312) 603-1322 (office), (312) 603-3179 (fax) carolyn.jones@cookcountyl.gov (email)

Local MBE/WBE firms are encouraged to submit bids. The County has set contract specific goals based on the requested service. The MBE/WBE goals are listed above and in the Contract document. Inquiries regarding MBE/WBE participation should be directed to the Office of Contract Compliance at (312) 603-5502.

The County reserves the right to reject any and all bids.

NOTICE TO DISADVANTAGE BUSINESSES

Vian Construction Co., Inc., 1041 Martha Street, Elk Grove Village, IL 60007. Phone (847) 364-5369, is seeking Disadvantaged businesses for the Village of Indian Head Park "Water Main Replacement Program-Contract 1-2018" project for subcontracting opportunities in the following areas: Landscaping, Trucking, Paving, Concrete, All disadvantaged businesses should contact, IN WRITING, (CERTIFIED LETTER, RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED), Vince Rendina, to discuss the subcontracting opportunities. All negotiations must be completed prior to the bid opening on January 7, 2019. *Subcontracts will be evaluated according to the lowest responsive bidder that is deemed qualified by Vian Construction Co., Inc.

COUNTY OF COOK TONI PRECKWINKLE, PRESIDENT OFFICE OF THE CHIEF PROCUREMENT OFFICER RAFFI SARRAFIAN

ADVERTISEMENT DATE: Friday, December 21, 2018

DESCRIPTION: Invitation for Bids for Transportation and Cremation Services of Minor Indigent Decedents

CONTRACT NO.: 1868-17710

MBE/WBE GOALS: None of the overall estimated expenditures for this procurement

BID DOCUMENTS: Solicitation Document is available for download at: http://legacy.cookcountyl.gov/purchasing/bids/listAllBids.php

PRE-BID CONFERENCE DATE: Tuesday, January 8, 2019 at 9:00 A.M.

PRE-BID CONFERENCE LOCATION: Cook County Building 118 N. Clark Street, Room 1018 Chicago, IL 60602 Attendance at the Pre-Bid Conference is not mandatory

BID DUE DATE: Wednesday, February 06, 2019 at 10:00 A.M.

CONTACT: Daniel Gizzi, Specification Engineer III 312-603-6825 (office or dan.gizzi@cookcountyl.gov (email))

Local MBE/WBE firms are encouraged to submit bids. The County has set contract specific goals based on the requested service. The MBE/WBE goals are listed above and in the Contract document. Inquiries regarding MBE/WBE participation should be directed to the Office of Contract Compliance at (312) 603-5502.

The County reserves the right to reject any and all bids.

FORECLOSURES

F18090089 F18 IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY, COUNTY DEPARTMENT, CHANCERY DIVISION

Fifth Third Mortgage Company Plaintiff, VS. Edita Imrichova; Edgewood Manor III Condominium Association; Unknown Owners and Non-Record Claimants Defendants.

CASE NO. 18 CH 12265 8749 West Summerdale Avenue, Unit 3B, Chicago, Illinois 60656 Spratt Calendar 64 NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION

The requisite affidavit for publication having been filed, notice is hereby given you, Edita Imrichova, and UNKNOWN OWNERS and NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS, defendants in the above entitled cause, that suit has been commenced by Edita Imrichova and other defendants in the Circuit Court of the Circuit Court by said plaintiff praying for the foreclosure of a certain mortgage conveying the premises described as follows, to wit:

UNIT 3B TOGETHER WITH ITS UNDIVIDED PERCENTAGE INTEREST IN THE COMMON ELEMENTS IN EDGEWOOD MANOR III CONDOMINIUM, AS DELINEATED AND DEFINED IN THE DECLARATION RECORDED AS DOCUMENT NUMBER 24724062, IN THE NORTHWEST 1/4 OF SECTION 11, TOWNSHIP 40 NORTH, RANGE 12, EAST OF THE THIRD PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, IN COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS.

P.I.N.: 12-11-117-033-1009

Said property is commonly known as 8749 West Summerdale Avenue, Unit 3B, Chicago, Illinois 60656, and which said mortgage(s) is/are recorded in the Cook County records and recorded in the Office of the Recorder of Deeds as Document Number 0806722030 and for other relief; that Summons was duly issued out of the above Court against you as provided by law and that said suit is now pending.

NOW THEREFORE, unless you, the said above named defendants, file your answer to the complaint in the said suit or otherwise make your appearance therein, in the Office of the Clerk of the Court at Cook County on or before January 20, 2019, a default may be taken against you at any time after that date and a judgment entered in accordance with the prayer of said complaint. E-filing is now mandatory for documents in civil cases with limited exemptions. To e-file, you must first create an account with an e-filing service provider. Visit http://efile.illinoiscourts.gov/service-providers.htm to learn more and to select a service provider. If you need additional help or have trouble e-filing, visit www.illinoiscourts.gov/FAQ/gethelp.asp.

This communication is an attempt to collect a debt and any information obtained will be used for that purpose.

Steven C. Lindberg ANSEL LINDBERG & ASSOCIATES LLC 1771 W. Diehl Rd., Ste 120 Naperville, IL 60563-4947 630-453-6960 | 866-402-8661 | 630-428-2019 Attorney No. Cook 58852, DuPage 293191, Kane 031-26104, Peoria 1794, Winnebago 3802, IL 031262323 ilplandings@anselmilindberg.com

THIS LAW FIRM IS DEEMED TO BE A DEBT COLLECTOR. Pub: 12/21, 12/28/2018, 1/4/2019



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Chicago Tribune

FORECLOSURES

MANLEY, DEAS, KOCHALSKI LLC One East Wacker - Suite 1250 Chicago, IL 60601

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS, WELLS FARGO BANK, N.A., Plaintiff, v. ERNESTO CRUZ, SR.; JAZMIN CASSIO; UNKNOWN OWNERS AND NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS, Defendants, Case No. 2018-CH-12717

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 STOCK #M237**

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 Dealer Discount.....\$20,214
TOTAL AFTER DISCOUNTS \$68,336

*Offer is valid on specific vehicle in stock, while supplies last, 10,000 miles per year, \$7,314 down plus tax, title, license, and \$174.95 doc. fee. Must lease with Maserati Capital, not all buyers will qualify, with approved credit, offer expires 1/2/19.
 **Offer is valid on specific vehicle in stock, while supplies last, 10,000 miles per year, \$7,314 down plus tax, title, license, and \$174.95 doc. fee. Must lease with Maserati Capital, not all buyers will qualify, with approved credit, offer expires 1/2/19.



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2001 DODGE RAM..... \$2,985	2009 FORD FOCUS \$5,150	2006 BMW 5 SERIES..... \$7,485
2004 VOLVO V70..... \$3,785	2003 LEXUS LS 430 \$5,874	2007 VOLVO XC70..... \$7,985
1998 MERCEDEZ-BENZ C CLASS..... \$3,985	2006 VW RABBIT \$5,985	2008 BMW 3 SERIES..... \$8,985
2005 BUCK RAINIER..... \$3,985	2003 GMC YUKON \$5,995	2011 GMC ACADIA..... \$11,995

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