

# Chicago Tribune



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BREAKING NEWS AT CHICAGOTRIBUNE.COM

SANDRA DAY O'CONNOR 1930-2023

## FIRST WOMAN ON THE SUPREME COURT

Judge Sandra Day O'Connor smiles as she arrives for the start of her confirmation hearings before the Senate Judiciary Committee in Washington for the post of Supreme Court justice on Sept. 9, 1981. **AP**



Justice forged 'a new path' on bench from '81 to '06 retirement

By Mark Sherman  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Retired Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, an unwavering voice of moderate conservatism and the first woman to serve on the nation's highest court, died Friday.

She was 93.

O'Connor died in Phoenix of complications related to advanced dementia and a respiratory illness, the Supreme Court said in a news release.

Chief Justice John Roberts mourned her death.

"A daughter of the American Southwest, Sandra Day O'Connor blazed an historic trail as our Nation's first female Justice," Roberts said in statement issued by the court. "She met that challenge with undaunted determination,

indisputable ability, and engaging candor."

In 2018, she announced that she had been diagnosed with "the beginning stages of dementia, probably Alzheimer's disease."

Her husband, John O'Connor, died of complications of Alzheimer's in 2009.

O'Connor's nomination in 1981 by President Ronald Reagan and subsequent confirmation by the Senate ended 191 years of male

**Turn to O'Connor, Page 6**

## Burke finally landed 'the tuna'

But corruption trial shows developer deal ended after FBI raid

By Jason Meisner  
Megan Crepeau and Ray Long  
Chicago Tribune

After two years of exhaustive pursuit Chicago Ald. Edward Burke had finally landed "the tuna."

And then it got away.

That was the story heard in Burke's corruption trial Friday, where jurors have been shown evidence all week about the then-powerful Finance Committee chairman's alleged chase of private legal work from the developers in the \$600 million make-over of the Old Post Office.

Wiretaps played in court captured Burke referring to getting business from the project's developer, Harry Skydell, as "landing the tuna."

Hidden video footage showed Burke's growing frustration as Skydell repeatedly dragged his feet in hiring Burke's law firm, even after Burke had used his clout to intervene in several issues Skydell was having with the project.

Finally, in August 2018, two years after Burke first brought up getting Skydell's business with FBI mole Ald. Daniel Solis, Burke signed an agreement with Skydell's New York-based company, 601W, to do property tax work for another downtown building, known as the Sullivan Center.

The deal called for a \$15,000 flat annual retainer fee, plus 20% of any refund "as a result of a reduction in assessed value" of the Sullivan Center property, an

**Turn to Burke, Page 3**



Crews work on Peoples Gas pipeline infrastructure in the 5600 block of South Rutherford Avenue in the Garfield Ridge neighborhood on Friday. **ANTONIO PEREZ/CHICAGO TRIBUNE**

## Peoples Gas asks to restore \$134M of paused pipeline work

Utility cites safety risks, says hundreds of jobs would be lost in the new year

By Robert Channick  
Chicago Tribune

Peoples Gas filed an emergency motion Friday with the Illinois Commerce Commission seeking to restore \$134 million of disallowed pipeline infrastructure funding for 2024 to address uncompleted projects and critical improvements.

Without the funding, there will be safety risks from leaking pipes, gaping holes in streets and

sidewalks, replacement meters left "dangling" on customer residences and hundreds of jobs lost in the new year, Peoples Gas warned in the filing.

The utility is hoping to claw back more than half of the \$265 million cut from its budget when the ICC issued an order last month to pause the long-running System Modernization Program to replace 2,000 miles of aging iron pipes below Chicago streets, pending an investigation.

"The company understands the Commission's directive to pause work on SMP; however, the \$265 million in work that was paused includes more than \$134 million in other critical safety and reliability work outside of SMP," Peoples Gas spokesperson David Schwartz said in a statement.

The emergency motion is asking the ICC to restore funding for several areas of work including emergency replacement of leaking pipe segments, system

improvement projects, public improvement projects and the completion of ongoing pipeline replacement projects that cannot be finished by year's end.

Nearly \$47 million of the \$134 million would go toward completing pipeline replacement work in progress, where open trenches and exposed pipes are scattered across Chicago neighborhoods, the utility said in the filing.

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MANDEL NGAN/GETTY-AFP

## Rep. Santos expelled from US House

The House voted to expel Republican Rep. George Santos of New York after a blistering ethics report on his conduct heightened lawmakers' concerns about the scandal-plagued freshman. Santos is just the sixth member — and the third since the Civil War — in the chamber's history to be ousted by colleagues.

■ Israel's war with Hamas erupted again Friday, as airstrikes hit houses and buildings in the Gaza Strip minutes after a weeklong truce expired.

**Nation & World**

## Football team tackles adversity, makes history



Byron football team members hoist the Class 3A state championship trophy at Illinois State University's Hancock Stadium in Normal on Nov. 24. **VINCENT D. JOHNSON/FOR CHICAGO TRIBUNE**

Byron shows spirit of a champion in completing record-setting season

By Robert McCoppin  
Chicago Tribune

Five-year-old Ryker Hoppe was watching the rural Byron High School football team at a game this fall when he had trouble with his eyes, which began to misalign. His family took him to an emergency room, which led to a shocking diagnosis: Ryker had inoperable brain cancer.

A few weeks later, after hearing the news, the team took a bus to Ryker's house, where players and cheerleaders got out to cheer on the 5-year-old and give him fist bumps.

"I made sure to give him a high-five," player Carsen Behn said. "I just wanted to make that night very special for him. He was in our thoughts the whole way."

In one game of passing a collection bucket and selling T-shirts, the crowd

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**TODAY'S WEATHER**



High 44 Low 37

Complete Chicagoland forecast on Page 8

\$4.00 city and suburbs and elsewhere  
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