

Chicago Tribune



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TUESDAY, JANUARY 2, 2024

BREAKING NEWS AT CHICAGOTRIBUNE.COM

Probe of infamous officer remains in limbo

Chicago police Cmdr. Glenn Evans leaves after the final day of his trial on Dec. 10, 2015, at the Leighton Criminal Court Building.
BRIAN CASSELLA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE



Police accountability agency didn't finish investigation, declines to wrap it up now

By Stacy St. Clair
Chicago Tribune

A city agency tapped to review police misconduct complaints failed to complete an investigation into a high-ranking Chicago cop several years ago and has declined to finish it now, according to documents obtained by the Tribune. The Civilian Office of Police Accountability assigned an inves-

tigator in 2017 to determine whether Lt. Glenn Evans lied about allegedly breaking a mentally ill woman's nose while she was in custody, but public records show the agency shelved the case almost immediately without any explanation — or any real inquiry. The case saw little activity until earlier this year, when the city Office of the Inspector General reviewed the file as part

of its routine oversight and recommended that COPA finish the investigation. The agency declined, saying it “would not be an efficient use” of its limited resources and that the Chicago Police Board would likely dismiss a sustained finding due to the passage of time. The Tribune obtained more than 1,000 pages of records related to the case through Freedom of Information Act requests submitted to both COPA and the Office of the Inspector General. The public

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Israel shifting troops out of Gaza

Nearly 3-month-old war has taken toll on reservists, economy

By Tia Goldenberg, Najib Jobain and Samy Magdy
Associated Press

TEL AVIV, Israel — The Israeli military confirmed Monday that it was pulling thousands of troops out of the Gaza Strip, a step that could clear the way for a new long-term phase of lower-intensity fighting against Hamas. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has vowed to press ahead with the military offensive until Hamas is crushed and the more than 100 hostages still held by the terrorist group in Gaza are freed.

But Israel has come under growing international pressure to scale back an offensive that has led to the deaths of nearly 22,000 Palestinians.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, who has repeatedly urged Israel to do more to protect Palestinian civilians, is expected in the region next week.

In its announcement, the army said that five brigades, or several thousand troops, would be taken out of Gaza in the coming weeks. Some will return to bases for further training or rest, while many older reservists will go home.

The war has taken a toll on the economy by preventing reservists from going to their jobs, running their businesses or returning to university studies.

The army's chief spokesman, Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari, did not say whether the withdrawal of some troops reflected a new phase of the war.

“The objectives of the war require prolonged fighting, and we are preparing accordingly,” he told reporters late Sunday.

But the move is in line with the plans that Israeli leaders have

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Tony M. throws a tree onto a holiday tree recycling pile across from Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum in Chicago's Lincoln Park on Thursday. An annual Holiday Tree Recycling Program is held at 27 locations throughout Chicago. **EILEEN T. MESLAR/CHICAGO TRIBUNE**

Making the holidays more sustainable

How to handle glittering gift wrap, disposable decorations and food waste

By Samantha Moilanen | Chicago Tribune

As the holiday season comes to an end, families are tidying up their homes. This involves disposing of numerous bags filled with torn up wrapping paper, getting rid of leftovers that didn't quite make it to the plate despite good intentions and taking down holiday decorations for the new year. However, what some may not realize is the glittering gift wrap, disposable decorations and excess food waste significantly harm the environment, experts say. Household waste increases by more than 25% from Thanksgiving to New Year's, according to the Clean Air Partnership, a public-private organization that advocates for air quality. The added waste from food, shopping bags, packaging, wrapping paper, bows and ribbons contributes to an additional 1 million tons of trash entering landfills each week.

Sarah Blount, the program director of research and evaluation at the National Environmental Education Foundation, a nonprofit that complements the work of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, said when holiday materials are sent to landfills, they undergo decomposition, producing greenhouse gases such as methane and carbon dioxide. Blount said this process contributes to climate change. “Methane is a climate change powerhouse. It's 28 times more effective than carbon dioxide at trapping heat in the Earth's atmosphere,” Blount said. Landfills rank as the third-largest human-related methane emissions source in the United States. According to Blount, landfills generate emissions equivalent to 23 million gas-powered

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Welcoming the first babies of 2024

Basya and Ezra Moskowitz welcomed their new baby, a boy weighing 7 pounds, 2 ounces, just after midnight Monday. He was among the first children born in local hospitals in 2024 and possibly the very first.
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Mamet on 40 years in Hollywood

The sparks, opinions and anecdotes fly as David Mamet, who was Chicago-born and first became famous here with his early plays, tackles his 40 years in Hollywood in a new memoir, “Everywhere an Oink Oink.”
Rick Kogan, Arts & Living

Illinois job market following differing trends

Recovery slower than elsewhere; some fields likely strong in 2024

By Talia Soglin
Chicago Tribune

Vanessa Tejeda, 25, started a new job at Swedish Hospital in November. Tejeda, a certified nursing assistant, lives in the Albany Park neighborhood with her three kids, who range in age from 1 to 6. She left her old job at a nursing home last year to care for her sick grandfather. When it was time to find a new job, she applied to work for a handful of nursing homes and hospitals on Indeed. Tejeda received a couple of job offers she declined: One because



Vanessa Tejeda, a certified nursing assistant, outside Swedish Hospital in Chicago on Dec. 19. Tejeda started her new job at the hospital in November. **ANTONIO PEREZ/CHICAGO TRIBUNE**

the schedule wouldn't allow to get her kids to school in the morning and one because it didn't pay enough. She likes her new job working overnights in a medical-surgical unit at Swedish. She makes about \$20 an hour and gets off work at 7:30 in the morning, in time to get her kids ready for school. “I actually plan to stay here as long as I can,” Tejeda said. Hiring in health care, an industry that hemorrhaged workers during the pandemic, remained strong last year both in Illinois and across the U.S. Job growth also remained strong in the public sector, where payrolls were up in Illinois by 28,700 over the year in November, according to the Illi-

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