

Chicago Tribune



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LOLLA LAND

Chappell Roan, above, performs for adoring fans, below, on the opening day of Lollapalooza on Thursday in Chicago's Grant Park. Under gray skies and an occasional drizzle, pink cowboy hats were everywhere, an ode to the rising music star whose name was seemingly on everybody's lips. An outspoken and flamboyant presence onstage, Roan has also been unabologetically political, absorbing all the buzz that comes with it. **Story, Page 4**



EILEEN T. MESLAR/CHICAGO TRIBUNE PHOTOS

Russian inmates freed in US deal

American journalist among prisoners released in swap

By Eric Tucker, Dasha Litvinova and Matthew Lee
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The United States and Russia completed their biggest prisoner swap in post-Soviet history Thursday, with Moscow releasing journalist Evan Gershkovich and fellow American Paul Whelan, along with dissidents including Vladimir Kara-Murza, in a multinational deal that set two dozen people free.

The trade unfolded despite relations between Washington and Moscow being at their lowest point since the Cold War after Russian President Vladimir Putin's February 2022 invasion of Ukraine.

Negotiators in back-channel talks at one point explored an exchange involving Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny but after his death in February ultimately stitched together a 24-person deal that required significant concessions from European allies, including the release of a Russian assassin, and secured freedom for a cluster of journalists, suspected spies, political prisoners and others.

President Joe Biden trumpeted the exchange as a diplomatic feat while welcoming families of the returning Americans to the White House. But the deal, like others before it, reflected an innate imbalance: The U.S. and allies gave up Russians charged or convicted of serious crimes in exchange for Russia releasing journalists, dissidents and others imprisoned by the country's highly politicized legal system on charges seen by the West as trumped up.

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ELECTION 2024 DNC

Plans for police help still fluid

City expects 500 extra cops will guard 'infrastructure'

By Sam Charles
Chicago Tribune

Hundreds of extra law enforcement officers from across Illinois will be in Chicago later this month to assist the Chicago Police Department during the four days of the Democratic National Convention. But with the gathering less than three weeks away, it's still not known which police departments will be sending personnel to Chicago or how many officers they will provide.

Police Superintendent Larry Snelling has said that the city will have as many as 500 extra officers on hand to guard "infrastructure" throughout the city during the DNC. And while activities around the United Center and McCormick Place will no doubt require significant manpower, the superintendent has pledged not to drain police resources from the CPD's 22 patrol districts.

"Based on our assessment, we have a very good complement of officers who will be out there," Snelling told reporters recently. "They're highly trained, they will be responding professionally. And we're going to make sure that as we work with our partners ... we will make whatever adjustments we need to make as things change."

CPD, in response to a Freedom of Information Act request from the Tribune, said this week that the final roster of "mutual aid officers" has not yet been set.

Turn to DNC, Page 2

BMX rider's instinct runs in the family

Father-daughter bike ride turned Lake Villa woman into a 2-time Olympian

By Stacy St. Clair
Chicago Tribune

PARIS — After a young Felicia Stancil's mother died in a car accident, her father began looking for things they could do together.

Activities that would help them both heal, he thought. Activities that would bring them both joy.

When she was only 4, he took her on a short bike ride through their Lake County neighborhood, watching carefully as she pedaled her way around with the help of training wheels. As soon as they arrived home, however, Felicia had a demand.

"I wasn't going in the house until he took off my training wheels," she recalled to the Tribune. "I just stood there and wouldn't let him go inside. So he went into the garage and took them off."

Jamie Stancil, a BMX rider who raced regionally and on the pro circuit, didn't think she was ready. He caved, however, because he wasn't sure how to get her in the house otherwise.

"Then she got on the bike and took off down the street," he said. "She was

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■ Simone Biles edges Brazil's Rebeca Andrade for Olympic all-around gold in women's gymnastics. **Chicago Sports**



Landlord Rufus Reed was among more than 10,500 landlords and renters assisted through the state's rental assistance program. **TESS CROWLEY/CHICAGO TRIBUNE**

As federal rental assistance ends, tenants, landlords seek support

By Lizzie Kane
Chicago Tribune

Rufus Reed, 60, has owned rental properties in Chicago since 1998. Among his seven units on the South and West sides, he's had to evict 15 to 20 tenants, never once being able to recoup the lost rent.

But that changed in May, when Reed was matched with a legal aid attorney and learned he could collect roughly \$6,750 in federal rental assistance, enough to cover losses tied to a tenant who had stopped paying rent in October and ultimately had to leave.

"I was excited to hear about being able to get paid for those seven months — the past five months and two future months (of rent)... That was the best thing since bread," Reed said.

Reed was among over 10,500 landlords and renters who were assisted through

the state's rental assistance program.

The program — which began in October 2022 and was funded through the 2021 federal American Rescue Plan Act — was originally launched to help tenants experiencing COVID-19-related hardships and at risk of eviction. At its height, the program provided up to \$25,000 in rental assistance to cover up to 15 months of past-due rent and up to three months of future rent.

But the program, which doled out nearly \$82 million in federal funds between its inception and July 21, stopped accepting new applications on May 31. A new state program is in the works, with \$75 million in state funding having been allocated to the effort for fiscal year 2025, which began on July 1. But state housing authority representatives say they

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