

Chicago Tribune



QUESTIONS? CALL 1-800-TRIBUNE

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2024

BREAKING NEWS AT CHICAGOTRIBUNE.COM

Senators reach a deal on border bill

But package faces steep climb amid GOP policy split

By Stephen Groves
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Senate negotiators Friday reached a deal on a proposal to overhaul the asylum system at the U.S. border with Mexico, clearing the way for Democratic and Republican Senate leaders to begin the diffi-

cult task of convincing Congress to pass a national security package that will include tens of billions of dollars for Ukraine and immigration enforcement, as well as funding for Israel and other American allies.

Sen. Chris Murphy, the lead Democratic negotiator, posted on social media Friday that a deal

had been reached and that text of the bill would be released over the weekend. Senators are still working on finishing the rest of the package, which was initiated by a request from President Joe Biden for \$110 billion for wartime aid for allies, domestic defense manufacturing, humanitarian assistance for conflicts around the world and

managing the influx of migrants at the U.S.-Mexico border.

Senators are preparing for a key test vote on the package next week, but it already faces a steep climb through Congress.

Republicans in both chambers have balked at compromises on border security policy. Senate Republicans had initially demanded that the package include border policy changes, but Donald Trump, the GOP's likely

presidential nominee, has become a vocal opponent of the legislation.

"Republicans said the border is a priority and we should craft a bipartisan bill to help control the border. We did that. We have a deal," Murphy said on X, formerly Twitter. He added: "It's decision time."

The core group of negotiators has been laboring for months to

Turn to Border, Page 4

Lane Bryant murders unsolved

Tinley Park police committed to closing 16-year-old slayings

By Mike Nolan
Daily Southtown

Sixteen years after five women were slain inside a Tinley Park Lane Bryant store, village officials said it remains a crime "that we're committed to solving."

Police have received nearly 8,000 leads in the years since the Feb. 2, 2008, shooting deaths of the women, and still have a detective assigned full time to the case. Two new detectives were assigned to the case just over two year ago,

"This isn't just something we think about every Feb. 2, it's a constant thought and a crime that we're committed to solving," Mayor Michael Glotz said.

More than 50 new leads were received last year, and investigators "keep digging away on this," said Larry Rafferty, deputy police chief.

"Nobody's giving up on this, nobody's giving up on these families," Rafferty said.

Killed that day were 42-year-old store manager Rhoda McFarland of Joliet; Jennifer Bishop, 34, of South Bend, Indiana; Sarah Szafranski, 22, of Oak Forest; Connie Woolfolk, 37, of Flossmoor; and Carrie Hudek Chiuso, 33, of Frankfort.

A sixth woman, also a store employee, was shot in the neck but survived and provided police with a description of the killer.

While years have passed, Rafferty said village offi-

Turn to Slayings, Page 4

Vigil held for CPS student shot, killed

Mourners gathered for a vigil for Daveon Gibson, a student at Senn High School in Chicago, who was shot along with two other students after leaving the school Wednesday. **Chicagoland, Page 3**

New weathercaster named at WGN-TV

As WGN-TV chief meteorologist Tom Skilling prepares to sign off after nearly 46 years, a successor has been named to follow in the Chicago weather legend's footsteps. **Business**

US bombs sites in Iraq and Syria

The U.S. military launched an air assault on militia sites in Iraq and Syria in retaliation for the drone strike that killed three U.S. soldiers in Jordan. **Nation & World**



CHRIS SWEDA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Harry the groundhog doesn't see his shadow, predicts early spring

Bill Murray, left, pretends that he is going to hit Harry the groundhog after it was announced that Harry saw his shadow as the "Groundhog Day" movie cast members commemorate Harold Ramis Day at Harry Caray's Tavern Navy Pier in Chicago on Friday, Groundhog Day. Ramis, the director of the 1993 movie, died 10 years ago.



Derek Eder on Jan. 24 points out the functions of a power inverter installed for his Oak Park home's rooftop solar panels. **JOHN J. KIM/CHICAGO TRIBUNE**

All-electric heating systems on the rise in Chicago homes

Climate concerns, financial incentives drive Midwest sales

By Nara Schoenberg
Chicago Tribune

When Derek Eder started looking for an all-electric heating system for his 100-year-old home in Oak Park, some local furnace installers refused to work with him, saying the tech-

nology wasn't up to the challenge of a Midwestern winter.

Other installers told him they'd do the job, but only if he invested in a natural gas backup system for very cold days.

But Eder, who was trying to go all-electric at home to fight climate change, pressed on, eventually finding a local company that was happy to replace his gas furnace with two high-efficiency electric heat pumps and an all-electric

backup system.

"It's been doing great," said Eder, 41, the owner of a Chicago technology consulting company.

And yes, he said, he was including the recent subzero cold snap: "We had plenty of heating."

Already popular in the South and parts of the Southwest, heat pumps are now making headway in Chicago and other subzero

Turn to Heat pumps, Page 2

Chicago on track to install four new public restrooms

By Rebecca Johnson
Chicago Tribune

For many homeless people in Chicago, finding a restroom often requires walking a long distance. Many restrooms in businesses are only available for customers and public ones are few and far between, an issue Ali Simmons said was brought to the forefront during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"It's definitely humiliating, embarrassing. (Unsheltered people) see it as a necessity," said Simmons, a case and street outreach worker with the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless.

The city is now on track to install new public bathrooms, according to an alderman, more than two years after a Tribune investigation found there were fewer than 500 structures throughout Chicago that contain free public restrooms with few or no barriers to entry, such as security checkpoints or client-only access.

Ald. Daniel La Spata, 1st, told residents in a newsletter that JCDcaux is prepared to install four "high quality" public bathrooms as part of the French

Turn to Restrooms, Page 4

