

Chicago Tribune



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BREAKING NEWS AT CHICAGOTRIBUNE.COM

More Dems cooling on Biden's run

Pelosi says it's up to president to decide on staying in race

By Lisa Mascaro
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Joe Biden's imperiled reelection campaign hit new trouble Wednesday as House Speaker Emerita Nancy Pelosi said merely "it's up to the president to decide" if he should stay in the race, celebrity donor George Clooney said he should not run, and Democratic

senators and lawmakers expressed fresh fear about his ability to beat Republican Donald Trump. The sudden flurry of grave pronouncements despite Biden's determined insistence he is not leaving the 2024 race put on public display just how unsettled the question remains among prominent Democrats. On Capitol Hill, an eighth House Democrat, Rep. Pat Ryan of New York, publicly

asked Biden to step aside. "I want him to do whatever he decides to do," Pelosi said Wednesday on MSNBC's "Morning Joe" rather than declaring Biden should stay in. While Biden has said repeatedly that he's made his decision, she said, "We're all encouraging him to make that decision, because time is running short." It's a crucial moment for the president and his party, as Demo-

crats consider what was once unthinkable — having the incumbent Biden step aside, just weeks before the Democratic National Convention that is on track to nominate him as their candidate for reelection. Biden is hosting world leaders in Washington for the NATO summit this week with a crowded schedule of formal meetings, sideline chats and long diplomatic dinners showcasing his skills. His party at

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INSIDE

Late play by Biden: Run out the clock

The president's resistance to pressure to end his campaign may be a strategy aimed at delay, which could leave too little time to find a replacement. **Nation & World**

In Chicagoland: Mayor Brandon Johnson unequivocal in his backing of Biden. **Page 3**



On Monday, Mary Kay Fawcett holds her last photo of her son, Dean Fawcett, taken in October 1992. BRIAN CASSELLA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

After 30 years, man freed in grisly Barrington murder

By Christy Gutowski
Chicago Tribune

Despite receiving a natural life prison term for the murder and decapitation of a friend more than 30 years ago in Barrington, Paul Modrowski is free again after a judge ruled the defendant had been too harshly sentenced in a grisly crime that garnered widespread headlines. Modrowski was quietly released without media fanfare July 2 from Stateville Correctional Center near Joliet after serving more than three decades behind bars. He turns 50 later this year and, according to public records, is living with a relative in the southwest suburbs. Two hikers found Dean Fawcett's dismembered body without its head, left arm and right hand near a railroad embankment in Barrington on Jan. 18, 1993. Prosecutors charged

Judge rules he was too harshly sentenced in dismemberment case



Paul Modrowski, 18, of Mokena, is removed from the Barrington police station on April 30, 1995, to be arraigned in the murder of Dean Fawcett. VAL MAZZENGA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Modrowski and a co-defendant, Robert Faraci, with the 22-year-old La Grange Park man's murder that April. In a Tribune interview, the victim's mother, Mary Kay Fawcett, said she assumed her son's killer would die in prison. "I just figured with what he had done, no way would they ever let him out," Fawcett said. "The thing I keep wondering, hopefully it was quick and my son didn't suffer. It's hard to comprehend, even after 30 years."

A new sentence

Cook County Judge Marc Martin resented Modrowski on June 28 to 60 years in prison. Under sentencing laws in place at the time of the crime, Modrowski was eligible for day-for-day credit, allowing for his release

Turn to Modrowski, Page 4

Civic leaders take aim at violence

Announce \$100M for crime-fighting efforts after deadly weekend

By Olivia Olander and Jeremy Gorner
Chicago Tribune

In a show of political and private force after a horrifically violent extended holiday weekend in Chicago, civic leaders joined Gov. J.B. Pritzker, Mayor Brandon Johnson and state legislative leaders to announce progress in their commitment to funding community-level violence prevention programs. The Chicago business community has raised \$100 million to support on-the-ground programs, which typically take the form of nonpolice interventions in communities at risk of violence, in a first-of-its-kind effort from the Civic Committee of the Commercial Club of Chicago. In addition, \$175 million in state funding for those programs has begun to be distributed, Pritzker said. The gathering of CEOs, philanthropic leaders, police and violence interrupters came after more than 100 people were shot in Chicago over the extended Fourth of July weekend. Nineteen people died, including an 8-year-old and two family members in a mass shooting in the South Side Greater Grand Crossing community. Thirteen speakers lined up inside a downtown office building to praise the funding effort, but many acknowledged it's not enough and that more needs to be done. "Gun violence I think is a cancer that's destroying the soul of our city," former Chicago Public Schools CEO Arne Duncan, who

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INSIDE



EILEEN T. MESLAR/TRIBUNE

City's baseball teams stare down deadline

The Cubs and White Sox are under the spotlight as the trade deadline nears. Is Cubs' first half an anomaly or trend? What will Sox do with Garrett Crochet and Luis Robert Jr.? **Paul Sullivan in Chicago Sports**

CPS releases \$9.9B proposed budget

Chicago Public Schools said Wednesday the district closed a deficit that had ballooned to \$505 million. **Chicagoland, Page 2**

Globally 'rare' habitat gets an \$8 million boost

'Major ecosystem restoration project' at Lockport site

By Paul Eisenberg
Daily Southtown

The strip of land sandwiched between the Sanitary and Ship Canal and Illinois 53 just west of Lockport never was good for much. For a while, cattle owned by Stateville Prison across the street grazed on the grass and

clover that had found purchase in the thin topsoil at the bottom of the bluff, but crops couldn't grow there, and river water often turned the little dirt that was there into squishy mud. In truth, the shallow bedrock sheltered an ecosystem now considered globally rare, but for a long time, it's likely nobody would have cared. Just across the river, the wheels of commerce were rolling early. Lockport was established in 1837 as the headquarters of the Illinois & Michigan Canal, where offi-

cials directed the construction of the first waterway linking the Great Lakes and the Mississippi River system, putting Chicago on the world map. Business was booming. A larger canal eventually superseded the I&M, and Lockport's fortunes ebbed and flowed over the decades, becoming a Chicago suburb and attracting the usual suburban accoutrements of development. Only the spit of unusable land southeast of the busy corner of Illinois Routes 7 and 53 remained largely

untouched until the early 1970s, when it was eyed as a dump site. Instead, federal officials joined representatives from Will County six years ago to announce millions of dollars would be poured into the property. Long owned by the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago, administrator of the adjacent Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal that reversed the Chicago River at the turn of the 20th century, the land, now called

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TODAY'S WEATHER



High 79 Low 65

Complete Chicagoland forecast on Page 12

\$4.00 city and suburbs and elsewhere
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