

MATTHEW MURPHY



LIFE+TRAVEL

Olympic diplomacy

Crystal Lake native Valerie Tarazi reflects on “the biggest honor” of swimming for Palestine at the Summer Games in Paris. **Chaos of “overtourism”:** Travel is surging and shifting so quickly that some experts say the very term “overtourism” is outdated.

REAL ESTATE

‘She’s unstoppable’

Manhattan real estate agent to host HGTV lifestyle show “The American Dream.”

WINNER OF 28 PULITZER PRIZES FOR EXCELLENCE IN JOURNALISM

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# Chicago Tribune



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SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2024

BREAKING NEWS AT CHICAGOTRIBUNE.COM

## Caleb’s time has arrived, with much riding on it



**Paul Sullivan**  
*In the Wake of the News*



**WEEK 1:**  
Titans at Bears, noon Sunday, FOX-32

**INSIDE:**  
Matt Eberflus enters defining third season as coach. **Chicago Sports**

Black-and-white photographs and grainy videos are all you ever see of Sid Luckman.

The greatest quarterback in Chicago Bears history, who retired in 1950 after leading the team to four NFL championships, played in an era so far removed from today’s game, it’s impossible to compare him to any modern QB, much less one of our own.

But if Bears rookie Caleb Williams lives up to the massive hype that accompanied his arrival in town, you’ll probably be seeing and hearing a lot more about Luckman this year. If Williams is truly The One, the Bears can move on from a past that has haunted the organization for seven-plus decades.

Like the 2016 Cubs squashing the Billy Goat curse, Williams can end the curse of Sid Luckman.

If not, well, that’s too scary a scenario to ponder right now.

Suffice to say there’s no black and white about this Bears season, which

Turn to Sullivan, Page 6

INSIDE

### Council challenges CPS on pension payments

Tensions shift to the City Council amid budget discussions, while embattled chief Pedro Martinez garners support and scrutiny. **Chicagoland, Page 3**

### Israelis protest for return of hostages

Israelis again pour into the streets, while in Gaza, attacks kill several and the polio vaccination effort shifts to its third phase. **Nation & World**

CULTURE OF CORRUPTION



Former Ald. Wallace Davis Jr., standing this year outside his shuttered East Garfield Park restaurant, said of Chicago aldermen: “They get into a position where they feel, ‘Hey, I can do what I want. I don’t have to give an account.’” **BRIAN CASSELLA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE**

# CHICAGO NEVER READY FOR REFORM

Code of silence, aldermanic prerogative fuel dozens of corruption convictions

By Gregory Royal Pratt and Ray Long  
Chicago Tribune

**F**ormer Ald. Ambrosio Medrano lasted five years on the infamously corrupt Chicago City Council before going to prison for taking bribes.

But he made one thing clear about his circumstances: He was not going to snitch on anyone — least of all his council colleagues.

“I grew up in a neighborhood where people respect certain things, and one of the things that they respect is that, if you get in trouble, you don’t squeal,” Medrano

said upon his guilty plea in Operation Silver Shovel, a far-reaching federal probe in the mid-1990s. “You take it like a man.”

More than two decades later, his successor as 25th Ward alderman, Danny Solis, also found himself on the wrong side of federal law enforcement, ensnared in a sordid mix of city business, campaign contributions, bribery, sex, prostitutes and Viagra pills Solis referred to as “blue medicine.”

But unlike Medrano, Solis agreed to become a government mole to avoid prison time, wearing a wire to assist corruption investigations into a pair of powerful Chicago Democrats: former Ald. Edward

**ONLINE:** Find the ongoing Culture of Corruption series at **chicagotribune.com/corruption**

Burke, found guilty in December of racketeering, bribery and attempted extortion, and long-time Illinois House Speaker Michael Madigan, who prosecutors say ran his political and government offices like a criminal enterprise. Madigan has

denied wrongdoing. The tale of the two 25th Ward aldermen illustrates how intractable graft is in Chicago’s City Council, a legislative body always competing for the title of most corrupt in America. But the reaction to Solis’ cooperation with the feds is even more telling,

Turn to Corruption, Page 14

CTA’S CHALLENGES

## Unhoused, others not surprised by Blue Line killings

By Caroline Kubzansky  
Chicago Tribune

Betty Bogg remembered how excited Margaret Miller and her husband were when they landed a place to stay at the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Miller, 64, and her husband had been living out of their truck when they first sought help from Connections for the Homeless, where Bogg is the CEO. They were eventually sheltered through the organization’s hotel shelter program in 2020, where Bogg said she ran into them on a visit.

“They were on the sidewalk, and they called me over,” she said. “They were like, ‘We’re here, we’re here!’”

Turn to Homeless, Page 5



Katie Rafferty brushes her hair as Richard Smith organizes their belongings after boarding a train at the CTA Forest Park Blue Line station on Thursday. **JOHN J. KIM/CHICAGO TRIBUNE**

## Agency has upped security; stubborn problems remain

By Sarah Freishtat and Joe Mahr  
Chicago Tribune

A gunman’s attack on four people sleeping on the Blue Line early Monday came during a difficult week on the CTA, highlighting the challenges city and transit officials face in tackling violent crime rates that have remained persistently higher than before the pandemic.

The likelihood of being a victim of violent crime on the “L” remained lower through the first six months of 2024 than highs seen in the early years of the COVID-19 pandemic, but a Tribune analysis shows that reported transit crime has stayed stubbornly above pre-pandemic levels. And reports of

Turn to Security, Page 4

TODAY’S WEATHER



High 75

Low 57

Complete forecast on Opinion, Page 12

\$5.75 city and suburbs and elsewhere  
177th year No. 252 © Chicago Tribune

