

The surprising reads that stuck

Stories with a fresh take, a subject you assumed you knew, or an antidote to heard-it-all-before-ism. The Tribune's Chris Borrelli lists his top 10 books of 2024. Plus, what books to give and receive for all kinds of readers.

A new, potent documentary: Netflix brings us Elvis as he was meant to be.

Stories in A+E



WHAT'S NEXT FOR BEARS?

After Matt Eberflus' firing, the onus is on Kevin Warren and Ryan Poles to put the Bears on the right path. Plus, the Tribune's Paul Sullivan writes: Leave it to the Bears to botch a coach firing even your Aunt Martha could see coming. **Chicago Sports**

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BREAKING NEWS AT CHICAGOTRIBUNE.COM



Olivia Hutchison, 29, from left, Tristan Newland, 26, and Richard Thomas Jr., 51, sit Tuesday near a tent at a homeless encampment near Interstate 74 in Peoria. **ARMANDO L. SANCHEZ/CHICAGO TRIBUNE**

Peoria encampment ban putting homeless on edge

Unhoused people, their advocates brace for legislation against public sleeping

By Caroline Kubzansky | Chicago Tribune

The most talked-about neighborhood in Peoria still has its Halloween decorations up. The festive decor — a pumpkin, a garland of orange leaves and a lantern with bat cutouts — is arranged on a chair outside one of the camping tents planted at the southern shoulder of the Dirksen Memorial Highway. About a dozen more tents hug the fence overlooking the highway.

Although living in the encampment can at times be perilous, Alyiah Samara said she's found a community there and will fight to stay.

"If they remove me from here, I will put my tent right in front of them," said Samara, 26. "If someone comes into your home, that's what you would do, fighting for your home."

Samara and her neighbors are facing warnings, fines and possible jail time after Peoria became the largest city in Illinois to penalize public camping on the heels of a U.S. Supreme Court decision earlier this summer that allowed municipalities to enforce bans on people sleeping outdoors.

The ordinance, narrowly passed by the Peoria City Council on Nov. 19, follows a wave of local governments in Illinois, from Mundelein to downstate Effingham and suburbs of Peoria like East Peoria and Pekin, that have passed similar measures as the state struggles with rising homelessness and an affordable

housing shortage.

The Chicago Coalition to End Homelessness counts 21 Illinois municipalities so far that have penalized public camping, a trend that worries providers who say they're being squeezed in their efforts to shelter and house people who have nowhere else to go.

"There is no evidence that ticketing and incarceration will improve outcomes for individuals who are experiencing homelessness," Illinois' chief homelessness officer, Christine Haley, said. "In fact, we believe it

Turn to Peoria, Page 6

Airports may face threat to funding

GOP-controlled Senate inquiry into housing of migrants likely to heat up

By Alice Yin  
Chicago Tribune

A nearly year-old U.S. Senate GOP inquiry into Chicago's housing of migrants at O'Hare and Midway airports may become more than a political annoyance for Mayor Brandon Johnson next year as Republicans take control of the federal government with an eye on tightening rules about public spending for noncitizens.

U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas, the ranking Republican member of the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee, months ago escalated an investigation Republicans on the committee had opened about Chicago's policy of having migrants sleep at the airports while they waited for shelter beds.

In an August letter to the mayor obtained by the Tribune via a public records request, the senator said Johnson's staff had been unresponsive to questions he sent in January about the practice, and raised the prospect that continued noncompliance could endanger federal airport grants Chicago receives for projects at O'Hare International and Midway airports. Cruz also suggested Congress could compel Chicago officials to respond should the Johnson administration not provide answers.

At the time, the letter didn't get any notice and Cruz's demands were little more than Washington intimidation tactics as Democrats controlled the Senate and national Republicans were using the immigration issue to rag on big cities across the country, with Chicago consistently being a prime target.

But with the GOP riding anti-immigration fervor that helped sweep Donald Trump back

Turn to Airports, Page 5

INSIDE



TESS CROWLEY/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Cowboys, cowgirls preserve a way of life

Black cowboys and cowgirls carry on traditions brought to northwest Indiana and the Chicago area from the South. **Life+Travel**

Israeli strike kills Gaza aid workers

Israel's military said it targeted a World Central Kitchen worker who was part of the Hamas attack on Oct. 7, 2023. **Nation & World**

In prayer, transcending spoken language

Houses of worship for the Deaf inspire spiritual formation

By Angie Leventis Lourgos  
Chicago Tribune

The occasional boom of a bass drum punctuates the Mass at St. Francis Borgia Deaf Center on the Northwest Side, signaling particularly important moments during the liturgical service, which is celebrated each Sunday in American Sign Language and spoken English.

While many Catholic churches ring small bells for auditory cues, the deep vibrations of the drum beat ripple through the wooden pews of this Dunning neighborhood chapel, a tactile prompt for its predominantly deaf and hard of hearing congregation.

"We hit that drum to kind of signify, look at what's going on, pay attention," said the Rev.

Turn to Deaf, Page 4



The Rev. Joseph Mulcrone, director of the Archdiocese of Chicago's Catholic Office of the Deaf, signs his homily during a Mass held for deaf parishioners on Oct. 13 at St. Francis Borgia. **BRIAN CASSELLA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE**

TODAY'S WEATHER



High 27 Low 18

Complete forecast on Opinion, Page 12

\$5.75 city and suburbs and elsewhere  
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