

# Chicago Tribune



QUESTIONS? CALL 1-800-TRIBUNE

MONDAY, APRIL 8, 2024

BREAKING NEWS AT CHICAGOTRIBUNE.COM

KAREN YARBROUGH

## Leader, 73, brought changes to Illinois

Cook County clerk dies; as lawmaker, she helped abolish death penalty

By A.D. Quig, Ray Long and Jeremy Gorner  
Chicago Tribune

Cook County Clerk Karen Yarbrough, a fixture in state and local Democratic Party politics who successfully championed legislation to ban the death penalty in Illinois, died Sunday. She was 73. For decades, Yarbrough and her husband, Henderson, were political mainstays in west suburban Maywood, where he previously served as mayor, and Proviso Township. She represented the area for years in the Illinois House, eventually serving on then-Speaker Michael Madigan's leadership team.

Her alliance with Madigan, a longtime Illinois Democratic Party chair, accompanied her rise in state and local Democratic parties and continued through her successful runs first for Cook County's recorder of deeds and then county clerk. Yarbrough was elected in 2018 as the county's first African American and female clerk.

A spokesperson for the county clerk's office announced on April 2 that Yarbrough was hospitalized with a "serious medical condition," and confirmed her death Sunday evening.

Tributes from colleagues poured in Sunday, describing Yarbrough as a dedicated public servant who fought for veterans, homeowners and civil rights.

Cook County Commissioner Stanley Moore met Yarbrough in Springfield when he was a budget analyst.

Turn to Yarbrough, Page 8



Stefania Rengifo, 23, and her daughter, Lismar Ruiz, 6, both of Venezuela, exchange a kiss while they ride a Metra train from Wilmette to Chicago on Wednesday after traveling by bus from El Paso, Texas. The family said they traveled for over a year to get to the U.S. **ARMANDO L. SANCHEZ/TRIBUNE**

## Hundreds of migrants still arriving in suburbs

As Chicago consolidates shelters, stream of asylum-seekers posing challenges

By Nell Salzman  
Chicago Tribune

After two buses with Texas license plates dropped off more than 80 migrants at the Wilmette train station Wednesday evening, the passengers who had traveled across countries to get to the U.S. didn't know where they were. It was icy and raining.

"What can we expect? Where are we going? Will there be shelter there?" they asked from the platform.

After a lull at the beginning of this year, the number of buses bringing migrants to Chicago is

back on the rise as border crossings have increased. Experts who work at the border say migration numbers typically pick up in the spring and summer.

For the past three months, buses sent by Texas Gov. Greg Abbott — who has made it pointed policy to send migrants crossing his state's border to sanctuary cities around the country — have brought people to the suburbs to avoid city fines for unannounced drop-offs.

Though the number of buses coming to Chicago has slowed from a peak in late December, the new steady stream of migrants

poses challenges. City officials who promised to shelter and feed asylum-seekers nearly two years ago are struggling to provide housing and wraparound support for over 38,000 migrants who have passed through. Suburbs are feeling the effects of Chicago's stressed city infrastructure.

While most migrants dropped off in the suburbs immediately board Metra trains bound for downtown, the unannounced arrivals have spurred a wave of municipalities to pass ordinances restricting bus drop-offs.

The ordinances vary. Grundy County, for example, declared

itself a "nonsanctuary county for immigration." But most counties passed regulations requiring more coordination and communication to avoid buses coming in the middle of the night.

Wilmette, however, has adopted a more welcoming posture. Volunteers coordinate with Wilmette police to meet migrants on the train platform at a moment's notice and hand them care packages with coats, toiletries and essential items.

Michael Clark, deputy chief of services for the Wilmette Police

Turn to Migrants, Page 2

## Special education family struggles to find school

Various roadblocks have kept west suburban boy, 8, out of classroom

By Alysa Guffey  
Chicago Tribune

For the past eight months, Jennifer Schuh has felt powerless as she watches her 8-year-old son with special needs sit at home, isolated from his peers and unable to attend school.

Diagnosed with autism and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder while he was in preschool in early 2021, her son has spent little time in a classroom because of numerous roadblocks.

Schuh has toured specialized schools, hired an in-home tutor, created at-home lesson plans

herself and eventually filed a grievance against the school district. Now, she doesn't know what else to do to help her son.

Experts say a slew of factors are frustrating special education families in Illinois — including a shortage of teachers, school aides and substitute teachers in addition to a lack of space and resources at therapeutic day schools.

And as Schuh's experience illuminates, solutions are not readily available for some of Illinois' most high-need young students when public districts lacking resources can not guarantee school placements, even though they are federally mandated to provide a free and appropriate education for special education students.

Turn to Education, Page 3



CJ Dugan, a producer at WGN-TV, left, shows retired WGN-TV meteorologist Tom Skilling his reflector telescope at Dugan's friend's campsite at Little Grassy Lake Campground in Makanda in southern Illinois on Sunday. Dugan and his family witnessed the 2017 eclipse with Skilling. **EILEEN T. MESLAR/CHICAGO TRIBUNE**

## 'Like a holiday': Thousands flock to eclipse crossroads in Illinois

Southern part of state will again be a prime spot in path of totality

By Adriana Pérez and Avani Kalra  
Chicago Tribune

CARBONDALE — Turtles big and small, from plastic toys to concrete sculptures, adorn the path to Lorri Clendenin's workstation, a camper near the woody,

■ Forecast for today predicts mostly clear skies in Chicago area, some clouds downstate. **Chicagoland, Page 4**

■ Indiana prepares for influx of visitors for total eclipse. **Chicagoland, Page 4**

rocky shoreline of 1,200-acre Little Grassy Lake.

The figurines are gifts from visitors to the campground's manager, whom former Chicago television meteorologist Tom

Skilling dubbed "Turtle" when they met during the 2017 total solar eclipse, which also put southern Illinois in the path of totality.

"We're on turtle time here at Little Grassy — slow and easy," said Clendenin about her unhurried lifestyle and the inspiration for Skilling's nickname.

But planning for Monday's total eclipse was not easy; she

Turn to Eclipse, Page 4



## A perfect ending for South Carolina

Gamecocks cap undefeated season with an 87-75 win over Iowa and Caitlin Clark in the NCAA championship game Sunday. **Chicago Sports**

TODAY'S WEATHER



High 68 Low 50

Complete Chicagoland forecast on Page 10

\$4.00 city and suburbs and elsewhere  
176th year No. 99 © Chicago Tribune

