

Chicago Tribune



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SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 2023

BREAKING NEWS AT CHICAGOTRIBUNE.COM

Johnson's vision of policing different

His budget ends 800 vacant street cop jobs, creates 400 new civilian positions

By Alice Yin
Chicago Tribune

During the mayoral race, the evolution of Brandon Johnson's messaging on the Chicago police budget captured interest and caused concern.

At a progressive candidates forum in September 2022, Johnson declared "absolutely yes" when asked if he'd commit to not raising the department's budget. But by March, shortly before defeating his more conservative opponent, Paul Vallas, he vowed that if elected he "wouldn't reduce the CPD budget one penny."

He followed through on that

promise. Johnson's recently passed first budget allocates a record \$2 billion to the Chicago Police Department, a slight uptick from this year's total that the mayor attributed to scheduled pay raises.

Perhaps more revealing of Johnson's policing philosophy than that top-line number, however, is his reshuffling of jobs within what has historically been the city's most expensive department.

His budget eliminates more than 800 vacant street cop positions and creates almost 400 new civilian positions, which his administration said will free up more officers to patrol the streets. The budget also beefs up training and supervi-

sory roles that could help bring the department in line with the federal consent decree.

"I've said this repeatedly: The system that we inherited will not likely be the system that we pass on. It's just different, you all," Johnson told reporters after unveiling his budget proposal last month.

The final police budget earned accolades from a broad coalition of aldermen and fiscal watchdog groups who applauded changes including the addition of more civilian jobs.

But a contingent of dozens of grassroots organizations that supported Johnson's candidacy argued his budget falls short of his campaign promise to transform public safety.

Turn to CPD, Page 2



New police officers during the Chicago Police Department graduation ceremony in the Aon Grand Ballroom at Navy Pier on Nov. 14.

EILEEN T. MESLAR/CHICAGO TRIBUNE



People take a break from shopping on Black Friday at Water Tower Place on Friday. EILEEN T. MESLAR/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

'Everything has changed'

Chicago-area Black Friday enthusiasts continue traditions, despite evolution in how people shop

By Lisa Schencker and Alysa Guffey | Chicago Tribune



The days of parents stampeding through toy stores on Black Friday, elbowing one another to grab Cabbage Patch Kids, are long gone, thanks to the advent of online shopping and a longer holiday shopping season.

But Black Friday is far from dead. This year, crowds of shoppers headed to Chicago area malls and stores on Friday morning, kicking off what's expected to be a record-setting — if more civilized — holiday weekend of shopping.

An estimated 182 million people are expected to shop in stores and online this long weekend, from Thanksgiving through Cyber Monday, the highest number of estimated shoppers since the National Retail Federation began tracking the data in 2017.

Black Friday was expected to be the busiest of those shopping days, with many people still eager to go to real-life, brick-and-mortar stores.

By 8 a.m. Friday, the massive Woodfield Mall in Schaumburg wasn't crazy crowded, but it was hopping. Several stores, including Pandora, the Lego Store and Akira, already had lines outside their entrances. By 9 a.m., even some men's bathrooms had short lines.

Kate Fromberg, 50, of Byron, said she still does all of her holiday shopping in person. She woke at 4 a.m. Friday and drove an hour and a half to Woodfield to be there with her three daughters when it opened at 6 a.m.

Turn to Shopping, Page 4

Black Friday shoppers take a break on benches between store visits at Fashion Outlets of Chicago in Rosemont on Friday.

TRENT SPRAGUE/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Cannabis, mental health lead to dispute

'Marijuana Moms' take on prosecutor 'Dad' in controversy

By Robert McCoppin
Chicago Tribune

A clash between the Marijuana Moms and a Dad for Mental Health is highlighting an escalating controversy over the effects of cannabis.

The moms are a group of lawmakers who helped write the law that legalized pot in Illinois, and the dad is McHenry County State's Attorney Patrick Kenneally. Each side has referenced those self-given nicknames, somewhat facetiously, in their attacks against each other on the issue.

The feud arose recently after Kenneally required licensed marijuana retail stores in McHenry County to post warnings about the mental health dangers associated with cannabis use including psychosis, depression and thoughts of suicide.

The lawmakers, who are Democrats, say Kenneally, a Republican, is posting disinformation about a highly complex subject. More broadly, the dispute illustrates widespread concerns and uncertainty over the mental health effects of cannabis.

The stores are also required to eliminate from their marketing and websites any suggestion that their products have medical benefits. The requirements were part of a settlement with prosecutors to avoid a consumer fraud lawsuit. Dispensaries that don't go along with the program will face litigation, Kenneally warned.

As a prime example of the dangers of cannabis, Kenneally cited the case of William Bishop, who after vaping oil with a high concentration of THC, the part of pot that gets users high, believed Howard Stern on the radio told him to veer into oncoming traffic, which Bishop did, Kenneally said. He killed a father of two and permanently disabled another man. His defense in court,

Turn to Cannabis, Page 4

Sentence filed in US capitol riot

Federal prosecutors are seeking more than a year in prison for a retired Chicago firefighter who stormed the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021. Page 4

To do this weekend

Holiday events go into full swing around Chicago — but there are other options too. Arts & Living

Hamas returns 24 as Israel frees 39 during cease-fire

Hostage-prisoner swap begins while aid trickles to Gaza

By Najib Jobain,
Josef Federman
and Jack Jeffery
Associated Press

RAFAH, Gaza Strip — Hamas on Friday released 24 hostages it held captive in Gaza for weeks, and Israel freed 39 Palestinians

from prison in the first stage of a swap under a four-day cease-fire that offered a small glimmer of relief to both sides.

Israel — wracked by the abduction of nearly 240 people in Hamas' Oct. 7 attack that triggered the war — cheered as 13 Israeli women and children emerged free from Gaza. Most were in their 70s or 80s, and the youngest was a 2-year-old. Also released were 10 people from Thailand and one from the Phil-

ippines.

In Gaza, the truce's start Friday morning brought the first quiet for 2.3 million Palestinians reeling and desperate from relentless Israeli bombardment that has killed thousands, driven three-quarters of the population from their homes and leveled residential areas. Rocket fire from Gaza militants into Israel went silent as well.

Increased supplies of food, water, medicine and fuel prom-

ised under the deal began to roll into Gaza, where U.N. officials had warned that Israel's seal on the territory threatened to push it to starvation.

But relief has been tempered — among Israelis by the fact that not all hostages will be freed and among Palestinians by the briefness of the pause. The short truce leaves Gaza mired in humanitarian crisis and under the threat

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TODAY'S WEATHER



High 39 Low 29

Complete Chicagoland forecast on Page 8

\$4.00 city and suburbs and elsewhere
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