

BEING HIS 'AUTHENTIC SELF'

Caleb Williams is comfortable in his own skin on and off the football field. And the quarterback plans to use his confidence to lead the Bears to greatness.



CHRIS SWEDA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Have you met Chicago's bug girl?

Pest control specialist Janelle Iaccino uses her knowledge to educate the next generation of scientists — especially girls — about bugs, rats and other creepy crawlies.

**Bring your besties:** For girls trips, Charleston, South Carolina, now is a mainstay.

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Chicago Tribune



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BREAKING NEWS AT CHICAGOTRIBUNE.COM

Mayor: Stadium a 'public benefit'

But he faces tough headwinds on \$5B Soldier Field proposal

By Alice Yin and Jake Sheridan  
Chicago Tribune

Chicago's progressive movement has long championed social justice interests, from good government advocates to labor rabble-rousers, police abolitionists and public education reformers.

Now, Mayor Brandon Johnson hopes to shoehorn a wealthy new group into the fold: the Chicago Bears.

During a long-awaited presentation at Soldier Field on Wednesday, the mayor stood with the National Football League franchise's CEO and President Kevin Warren to debut a nearly \$5 billion proposal for a new stadium and lakefront redevelopment that would be half-funded by taxpayer dollars.

With political allies from the Chicago Teachers Union — which has vociferously opposed prior publicly funded stadium projects — looking on at the Soldier Field extravaganza, Johnson then sought to tie the shiny architectural renderings of the glass-domed sports arena dominating the lakefront museum campus to his larger, left-leaning agenda.

"Because of the public benefit," Johnson said when asked how he will make a progressive case for the proposal. "We are investing in people. Look, these pictures are miraculous. We are talking about thousands of lives that will benefit ... Think about how long people have been waiting for investments like this."

His confidence was echoed by Warren, who cast the package as a "win-win-win" that will serve as an economic catalyst and international gem for generations to come.

But elsewhere in city and

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A Chicago police officer detains a migrant near a shelter at the former Standard Club in Chicago on April 16. ARMANDO L. SANCHEZ/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Migrant arrests are up, but it's no crime wave

Analysis shows an increase, but asylum-seekers rarely accused of violent felonies

By Joe Mahr, Laura Rodriguez Presa and Nell Salzman  
Chicago Tribune

As 40,000 asylum-seekers have arrived in Chicago in less than two years, a Tribune analysis of crime data shows the impact of migrants has been mostly felt in nonviolent offenses, particularly driving-related and thefts, and few arrests for violent felonies.

The analysis of crimes since Aug. 31, 2022, when Texas' Republican governor, Greg Abbott, began busing

asylum-seekers to Chicago, shows that as more migrants have arrived, the number of their arrests has increased. But they're typically picked up for traffic infractions and thefts, and any misdeeds they're committing do not appear to have fueled a crime wave.

Researchers say they're not surprised by the Tribune's findings. They point out that most migrants come for a better life, and they surmise that those who end up committing crimes typically steal out of desperation.

"It's certainly not a violent

crime wave," said Graham Ousey, a criminologist at William & Mary in Virginia. "It is the impact of people who are deprived of resources."

Still, tens of thousands of asylum-seekers have descended upon Chicago with an immediate need for shelter and services. In response, the city has rapidly turned abandoned buildings and park field houses into makeshift shelters to accommodate them — often without much notice and as a surprise to the neighborhoods they're in.

Former President Donald

Trump has cited national anecdotes of horrific crimes blamed on migrants to claim Democrats have allowed sanctuary cities to become lawless, even as the Biden administration and allies, including Mayor Brandon Johnson, counter that Republicans created the migrant crisis in cities like Chicago to scare voters and score political points.

Immigration advocates have argued it's a new chapter in a centuries-old playbook by politicians to demonize newcomers,

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Report says 86% of Great Lakes litter is plastic



A plastic bag lies on 31st Street Beach in Chicago on April 25. VINCENT ALBAN/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

"Plastic is not disappearing — it's just getting smaller and smaller. I think finding these pieces of tiny trash is definitely sort of eye-opening to folks, to start thinking about the smaller things. ... What happens when you can't even see them anymore?"

— Olivia Reda, volunteer engagement manager at Alliance for the Great Lakes and author of a report on litter that enters the Great Lakes

Quantifying problem is first step to ending it, researchers say

By Adriana Pérez  
Chicago Tribune

Heads down and attentively scanning the ground, a small group of schoolchildren walked through an expanse of grass dotted with yellow dandelions and toward the concrete steps leading to Lake Michigan.

Andrew Scarpelli, a biologist, ambassador for the Alliance for the Great Lakes and guide for this cleanup effort, asked the children if they had a favorite animal that lived around the lake.

"Cardinals!" "Seagulls!" "Woodpeckers!" "Owls!" the kids yelled out.

"We're doing this for them," Scarpelli said.

Using data from more than 14,000 beach cleanups over 20 years, a new report from the nonprofit Alliance for the Great Lakes found that 86% of litter entering the Great Lakes in a given year is either partially or

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INSIDE



ROBYN BECK/GETTY-AFP

Song lyrics and the debates about them

As the album "Tortured Poets Department" arrives, we wondered: Can Taylor Swift be poetry? Christopher Borrelli in A+E

Voters showed low enthusiasm in March

Chicago voter turnout for the March 19 election was the second lowest in 80 years for a presidential primary. Chicagoland, Page 3

Hamas reviewing Israeli truce proposal

Egypt is intensifying efforts to broker a deal to end the monthslong war and stave off Israel's planned Rafah offensive. Nation & World

