

Chicago Tribune



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BREAKING NEWS AT CHICAGOTRIBUNE.COM

CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Stakes are high for new board members

A look at appointees facing big questions on CEO and budget

By Nell Salzman, Ikram Mohamed and A.D. Quig
Chicago Tribune

Mayor Brandon Johnson's announcement of six proposed appointees to the Chicago Board of Education at a heated news conference Monday leaves the next several months shrouded in uncertainty for the new board and the district.

The news conference came after last week's announcement that the entire board was resigning over a monthslong controversy related to Johnson's push to oust Chicago Public Schools Chief Executive Officer Pedro Martinez — for refusing to take out a high-interest loan to cover the district's budget shortfall, with \$150 million for a new teachers contract and a \$175 million pension payment.

Facing hundreds of millions in deficits for this school year as federal pandemic relief funding ran out, the schools chief said that taking out a loan would be fiscally irresponsible. Johnson, who was once a middle school teacher and spent years as a Chicago Teachers Union organizer, said at Monday's news conference that "people in this city are tired of political leaders that want the status quo to nibble around the edges."

A lot is at stake in Johnson's announcements, namely: Will the new proposed board members vote to remove Martinez and sign off on the mayor's request to take out a loan?

Turn to CPS, Page 5



Natasha Ducre surveys the kitchen of her devastated Palmetto, Florida, home, which lost most of its roof in Hurricane Milton. Ducre, her husband, three children and two grandkids rode out the storm in a government shelter. **REBECCA BLACKWELL/AP**

Milton takes grim toll

At least 6 dead in hurricane's wake as flooding, power outages repeat for survivors of Helene

By Julio Cortez, Kate Payne and Haven Daley
Associated Press

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. — Florida residents returned to the familiar ritual of assessing hurricane damage Thursday, the day after Milton smashed through many coastal communities and spawned a barrage of tornadoes that killed at least six people less than two weeks after the misery wrought by Helene.

The storm knocked out power to more than 3 million custom-

ers, flooded barrier islands, tore the roof off a baseball stadium and toppled a construction crane.

But many people also expressed relief that Milton wasn't worse. The system spared Tampa a direct hit, and the lethal storm surge that scientists feared never materialized.

The system tracked to the south in the final hours and made landfall late Wednesday as a Category 3 storm in Siesta Key, about 70 miles south of Tampa. Damage was widespread and

Turn to Milton, Page 9



A police department dive team wades through floodwaters in the Buccaneer Bay mobile home park on Thursday in Lakeland, Florida. **NICOLE CRAINE/THE NEW YORK TIMES**



Who needs fast and furious when you can go slow and low?

By Christopher Borrelli
Chicago Tribune

Art Martin's street is nothing too exciting, a suburban street in a subdivision of Shorewood, just like a lot of subdivisions on the outskirts of Chicago, surrounded by fields and strip malls. On Art Martin's street, in the driveways of his neighbors, there are Toyota Siennas and Jeep Cherokees and Ford Explorers, most gray, white or light tan.

In Art Martin's driveway sits a sort of answer, a 1947 Chevy Fleetmaster, painted kandy brandywine, with a little Corvette red

The art and obsession of lowriders comes to Navy Pier

Art Martin takes a test drive in his 1947 Chevrolet Fleetmaster on Tuesday near his home in Shorewood. **TESS CROWLEY/CHICAGO TRIBUNE**

thrown in. The curves go on for days. In fact, to get the paint job right on all those curls and hills, to get the proper depth to the color, Martin went through countless painters; it took him a decade to find the right one. There's also a '47 Cadillac in his garage, black cherry. He's working on it, hood propped open with a rod, engine gleaming. He plans to unveil it next year. The grill alone — long metal teeth, like custom dentures for a dinosaur — is worth \$5,000. And there, out on the street, his everyday ride, what he takes back

Turn to Lowriders, Page 4

Workplace violence draws renewed questions on guns

By Sylvan Lebrun and Peter Breen
Chicago Tribune

Authorities don't know why Mehdi Medellel shot and killed two people in a JJ Fish & Chicken on Monday night. It's not even clear if the fast-food worker should have had a gun at work at all.

The double homicide at the Ashburn restaurant was the latest in a string of recent violent workplace attacks that occurred in the Chicago area earlier this week involving employees carrying weapons on the job.

Just hours after a Bears victory at Soldier Field on Sunday, a man employed by a company offering food and beverage services at the football stadium slashed his co-worker with a knife following a verbal altercation. Earlier that day in the south suburb of Calumet City, a Walgreens employee with a concealed carry license fatally shot a suspected shop-

lifter who had pulled a gun on the store workers.

Experts on occupational safety say that these recent incidents bring to light the importance of employers taking proactive steps to plan for and prevent workplace violence.

Workplace violence is a "known and dangerous workplace hazard," particularly in retail environments, said Jessica Martinez, co-executive director of the National Council for Occupational Safety and Health.

"As we're learning in Chicago, these are not isolated or rare occurrences," Martinez said. "The ideal is that employers should have a plan in place so these things are preventable. Ideally, the plan should include worker engagement and involvement to address these hazards, same as (for) a risk of fire, extreme weather events, infectious disease, risk of working

Turn to Violence, Page 2

INSIDE

Cook County proposes \$9.89B budget

Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle unveiled her budget proposal for 2025 on Wednesday, closing a \$218 million projected shortfall without tax or fee hikes, program cuts or layoffs. The proposal is a \$628 million increase over this year's budget. **Chicagoland, Page 3**

McCaskey confident in new stadium

As the Bears practiced Thursday on a football field surrounded by the rolling hills of the English countryside, Chairman George McCaskey told reporters that the goal remains to begin construction on a \$4.7 billion stadium project on Chicago's lakefront in 2025. **Chicago Sports**

