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Cubs visit White House again



President Donald Trump welcomed members of the 2016 World Series Champion Chicago Cubs Wednesday in the Oval Office of the White House in Washington. Kris Bryant holds the number matching that on the jersey for the 45th president. Later, Bryant left the game early after he twisted his ankle.

SEE THE CUBS COVERAGE IN SPORTS



They also send Montero away

After the Nationals stole seven times Tuesday night on Miguel Montero, and he criticized pitcher Jake Arrieta for it, the Cubs sent Montero packing.

Recker resigns from District 211 board

After she missed half her meetings, she cites family matters in letter

BY ERIC PETERSON
epeterson@dailyherald.com

Palatine-Schaumburg High School District 211 board member Lauanna Recker, who missed half the board's scheduled meetings since her April 2015 election, resigned Wednesday.

The District 211 administration received a resignation letter attached to an email

from Recker, spokesman Tom Petersen said. The letter was addressed to board member and Secretary Anna Klimkowitz, which is protocol for a board resignation.

Recker said in the letter she resigned because of "recent and significant family



Lauanna Recker

matters," Petersen said. Recker attended only 19 of the 38 school board meetings during her term, and none since Jan. 19, according to records obtained by the Daily Herald through a Freedom of Information Act request.

There has been no public explanation for Recker's frequent absences. She did not return phone calls seeking comment earlier this week. District 211 board President Mucia Burke also declined

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BURT CONSTABLE

FROM TINKER TO BECKERT TO RIZZO

Rebuilt pitcher a body champ

As the hardest-throwing pitcher in college baseball in 1995, Alvie Shepherd dreamed of playing baseball for his hometown Chicago Cubs. Now he's grateful simply to be alive to watch the Cubs on TV.

"I definitely wanted to be drafted by the Cubs," remembers Shepherd, 43, as he watches a baseball game from the bleachers at Hinsdale Central High School, where he has helped coach kids in baseball and football. During his junior year at the University of Nebraska, Shepherd not only boasted a 98 mph fastball, but he also hit .343 with 12 home runs and 70 RBIs. Shepherd pictured himself playing for the Cubs in the National League, where the lack of designated hitters gave pitchers the opportunity to bat.

Instead, with the fourth pick in the draft, the Cubs drafted a hard-throwing Texas high school pitcher, who also could hit a bit — Kerry Wood. Shepherd was drafted 21st by the

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BURT CONSTABLE/
bconstable@dailyherald.com
Alvie Shepherd takes in a game this week at Hinsdale Central High School.

University Center's end?



STEVE LUNDY/slundy@dailyherald.com

Students study in the atrium at The University Center of Lake County in Grayslake. Officials there say that without needed state funding, the center will be forced to close by the end of 2018.

Its fate depends on state budget

BY DOUG T. GRAHAM
dgraham@dailyherald.com

Nora Mena was not in a good position to leave her family to go to college five years ago.

As a first-generation college student with a full-time job and living in Lake Villa with her immigrant parents, heading across the state seemed impossible. Just trying to explain going

away for college to her parents, who lived in Macedonia before moving to America, was difficult.

But as she was completing her associate degree at the College of Lake County, Mena learned the building next door was the University Center of Lake County, where she could complete a bachelor's degree from

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"This is our population we're serving and there's limited opportunities for them."



Nora Mena, who got degrees from two state universities at the University Center and now works for it, on the center's prospective students

Health care bill scramble

McConnell trying to revise Senate proposal by Friday; Trump hints at 'surprise'

BY SEAN SULLIVAN, JULIET EILPERIN AND KELSEY SNELL
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell is aiming to send a revised version of his health care bill to the Congressional Budget Office as soon as Friday as he continues to push for a vote before Congress's August recess.

The effort reflects the tight timeline McConnell faces in his attempt to hold a vote in July — and the pressure he is under to make changes to the bill that will garner enough support to pass. With both conservatives and centrists pushing different policy solutions, Senate leaders were still struggling to craft a rewrite of the Affordable Care Act that would attract votes without torpedoing the CBO's official score of how the legislation affects coverage levels and federal spending.

At the White House, President Donald Trump continued to intersperse encouragement to GOP senators trying to tear down

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KERRY LESTER
THE SUBURBAN
RUNDOWN

What a property tax freeze would cost suburban schools

A property tax freeze would cost schools in the collar counties up to \$360 million by 2019, and \$830 million for schools statewide, a new report finds.

The Center for Tax and Budget Accountability crunched the numbers in light of ongoing negotiations over a state budget. Republican Gov. Bruce Rauner says a property tax freeze must be in place before he'll agree to raising Illinois' income tax from its current rate of 3.75 percent for individuals and 5.25 percent for

See LESTER on PAGE 5

Weather
Rain early

And warmer in 80s.
See the back of Business.



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Cubs, Sox news by email

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Van Dyke testifies for first time in murder case

Chicago Sun-Times

Jason Van Dyke, the Chicago police officer charged with murder in the 2014 shooting of Laquan McDonald, took the witness stand Wednesday for the first time since he was indicted.

Van Dyke testified that he thought he'd be fired if he refused to answer questions from detectives and supervisors who arrived at the shooting scene on the night of Oct. 20, 2014.



Laquan McDonald

The hearing at the Leighton Criminal Court Building was focused on whether prosecutors would be allowed to use Van Dyke's statements and police reports from the night of the shooting. Van Dyke's time on the stand was brief and focused on what



POOL PHOTO BY NANCY STONE/Chicago Tribune
Chicago police officer Jason Van Dyke, charged in the shooting of Laquan McDonald, takes the witness stand during a hearing in front of Judge Vincent Gaughan on Wednesday in Chicago.

his superiors said to him, not what he told them about what happened and why he fired 16 shots at McDonald, 17.

Van Dyke's lawyers are seeking to block prosecutors from using his statements made during the first hours of the investigation of the

McDonald shooting, arguing that Van Dyke was essentially forced to answer questions that might incriminate him or risk losing his badge.

Asked by Special Prosecutor Joseph McMahon if he could recall specifically what investigators asked him the

night of the shooting, Van Dyke paused for several seconds and seemed to fix his gaze somewhere in the middle distance.

"I don't remember exactly what was said," Van Dyke said.

"I knew that there was an understanding that if you don't answer questions you would get fired."

David March, the lead investigator on the McDonald shooting, and David McNaughton, the highest-ranking officer at the shooting scene, both testified Wednesday.

Both officers retired from the department last year, shortly after the city inspector general issued a report that recommended firing them and nine other officers who were either at the shooting scene or were involved in the investigation.

Both officers also took the stand only after receiving

immunity for their testimony, meaning their statements couldn't be used against them in a criminal prosecution.

March, along with two other officers, was indicted Tuesday on charges of obstruction of justice and misconduct in the handling of the McDonald shooting investigation, which had initially cleared Van Dyke of wrongdoing.

On the stand, both officers stated their belief Van Dyke had to answer their questions about the shooting, though both also said they did not tell Van Dyke he'd be disciplined if he refused, or that he was a suspect in a crime.

March, who said he'd handled 30 investigations of police shootings, said he'd never warned any of the officers that the could be fired for statements they made to him.

Long-standing Supreme Court rulings have barred

prosecutors from using statements that police and other public employees have made to supervisors as part of administrative or disciplinary proceedings where the workers can be fired for refusing to cooperate.

After nearly two hours of testimony Wednesday, Cook County Judge Vincent Gaughan issued a split decision: statements and reports from Van Dyke's interviews by March were fair game for prosecutors, while facts generated from Van Dyke's conversations with McNaughton were off limits.

Gaughan asked lawyers for Van Dyke to subpoena officials from the Fraternal Order of Police to testify at a hearing on July 19.

• This report was produced in partnership with the Chicago Sun-Times. For related coverage, check chicago.suntimes.com.

Without a state budget, it's the end of Mega Millions, Powerball for Illinoisans

Chicago Sun-Times

Unless a state budget agreement is reached by Saturday, last night's Powerball drawing will be the last in Illinois, with the last Mega Millions drawing scheduled for Friday.

Complicating things further, if someone in Illinois wins the jackpot this week, the state won't have authority to write a check, Illinois Lottery Director Greg Smith told the House revenue committee on Wednesday.

Lawmakers have until Friday night to pass a budget ahead of the beginning of the new fiscal year on July 1.

Concern over the state's fiscal condition prompted the Multi-State Lottery Association to announce earlier this month that it's dropping Powerball in Illinois. Mega Millions is also dropping the state unless a budget agreement comes together. The Illinois Lottery on Tuesday said it wouldn't be able to pay prizes over \$25,000 without a budget by July 1, which happened in 2015 and sparked lawsuits from players who wanted their winnings.

While the money for the winnings is there, Comptroller Susana Mendoza isn't able to write a check without appropriations authority. In

December 2015, the General Assembly passed a bill to allow the state to pay out winners.

Smith testified that Powerball sales have already dropped since news broke that the state is being dropped.

"The players of these games react by not playing the lottery. ... Last week alone, our sales for the Powerball game dropped over 10 percent just on the news of the idea that we may be suspended," Smith said. "So the players are quick to respond to that."

Smith noted stores that sell lottery tickets are also seeing a drop in overall sales.

State Rep. David Harris, an Arlington Heights Republican, called the Illinois Lottery mess "the height of political stupidity," while trying to encourage lawmakers to come up with a bill to grant the state appropriations authority to pay winners.

"The lottery is a golden goose that lays golden eggs to the tune of about \$680 (million) to \$700 million a year to our revenue, and we're screwing around with it," Harris said.

• This report was produced in partnership with the Chicago Sun-Times. For related coverage, check chicago.suntimes.com.

Constable: Brain aneurysm saved ex-pitcher's life

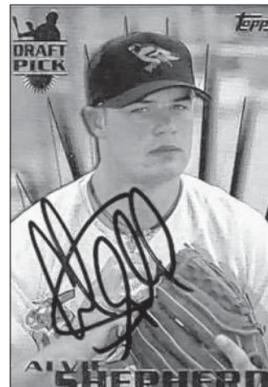
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Baltimore Orioles and given a \$750,000 signing bonus. An athlete whose 6-foot-7, 240-pound frame made him a top athlete in baseball, football and basketball during his years at Proviso West High School in Hillside, Shepherd was projected to be a closer for the Orioles.

"I was raw," Shepherd says of his talent. "It was all potential."

His first season in the advanced A-league, Shepherd was 10 for 10 in save opportunities and struck out 104 batters in 96⅓ innings. During spring training in 1998, Shepherd made ESPN when a TV camera captured him running off the field while pointing to the legend next to him and saying, "Hey, Ma. Cal Ripkin." Shepherd pitched well enough that year in AA ball to be a likely call-up to the Orioles' MLB roster on Sept. 1, 1998. But those MLB dreams vanished when he hurt his shoulder on Aug. 23 and was done for the year. Shepherd worked hard to rehab, but his fastball never recovered. He eventually had surgery, and the Orioles cut him 10 months later. The Angels picked him up, then cut him. So did the Mets. Shepherd's baseball career ended after spring training in 2000.

"I was 24. I had a bank full of money and no purpose," Shepherd says. "There were a lot of bad things that occurred after pro ball. It



COURTESY OF ALVIE SHEPHERD
Signing autographs was part of the gig for Alvie Shepherd, a first-round draft pick of the Baltimore Orioles in 1995.

After years of depression, weight gain and substance abuse, Shepherd, 43, is signing photos again as the face of Isagenix, a direct sales health and wellness company.

really took me away from my values. It took a toll on me."

Bad investments forced him to move back in with his parents, Alvie and Faye, in Bellwood.

His weight ballooned to 307 pounds, and Shepherd turned to alcohol and drugs.

"I was pretty much in a shell at that point. I'd help other kids get their skills sharpened and then go down my sorrows," says Shepherd, who suffered with depression and thought about suicide during a 13-year downward spiral. "It was a battle. I prayed a lot."



COURTESY OF ALVIE SHEPHERD
Alvie Shepherd says people need to focus on why they want to be better people. "My why is my family," Shepherd says. He and his wife, Rachel, have a son, Kingston, who turns 3 in October, and a 1-year-old daughter, Braven.

His prayers were answered on April 27, 2013, he says, by a brain aneurysm that sent him to Advocate Lutheran General Hospital in Park Ridge for emergency surgery and a two-week hospital stay.

"I want to live," Shepherd remembers thinking when he came out of surgery. "I knew right then I was going to get my life back."

He married his longtime girlfriend Rachel, they moved to Darien, and they now have a son, Kingston, who will be 3 in October, and a daughter, Braven, who celebrated her first birthday in April.

Determined to get back in shape physically, emotionally and financially, Shepherd became a distributor with Isagenix International, a 15-year-old company that sells health and wellness

products by using a network of direct salespeople. Shepherd lost weight, gained muscle and beat out thousands of contestants to win the 2016 IsaBody Challenge in Las Vegas, becoming the face of the company and touring the nation giving inspirational speeches.

His #YESYOU CAN hashtag is the motto for his new life.

"It gives people hope," Shepherd says, noting that he is driven by his love for his family. "Because I've become the best version of myself, I've been able to inspire others."

He still roots for the Cubs, and he admits to getting a little teary when the team won the 2016 World Series.

"I fell in love with the energy," Shepherd says of the Cubs and Wrigley Field. "And I like a good underdog."



JAKE GRIFFIN/jgriffin@dailymail.com
Drivers at a McDonald's in Arlington Heights are greeted by a signing warning of the pending Cook County "soda tax."

Hearing delayed on attempt to block Cook County's soda tax

Chicago Sun-Times

Legal efforts by the Illinois Retail Merchants Association to stop Cook County's new sweetened beverage tax from taking effect Saturday were delayed another day.

Arguments on whether to issue a temporary restraining order will be heard today before Judge Carl Walker at the Daley Center in Chicago. A hearing had been scheduled for Wednesday before Cook County Judge James McGing, but he recused himself. Attorney David Ruskin, who

represents the merchants, said that despite the time crunch to get the case before a judge, he believes there will be a ruling today.

The penny-an-ounce tax, approved in November, covers carbonated soft drinks, sports drinks, energy drinks and other pre-made sweetened drinks at stores or in restaurants.

• This report was produced in partnership with the Chicago Sun-Times. For related coverage, check chicago.suntimes.com.

Six counties in 60 seconds

8 million vehicles on tollways:

The extended Fourth of July weekend is expected to be one of the busiest periods of the year on Illinois' tollways with nearly 8 million vehicles using the system. The Illinois Tollway said in a Wednesday statement that the heaviest travel day should be Friday. Around 2 million vehicles are expected on the road then, compared with an average day of 1.6 million vehicles. The agency said that most road construction will be restricted over the holiday. But the speed limit in

work zones is still in effect even when workers aren't present. The agency issued a reminder that it's illegal to use hand-held devices while driving.

Giant deer sculpture installed:

Visitors to Chicago's downtown riverfront can see a new public art sculpture featuring a giant deer. The 12-foot by 20-foot fiberglass sculpture is titled "Deer." The Chicago Tribune reported it was created in 2015 by artist Tony Tasset and was recently installed at a fair in Miami Beach, Florida.

The sculpture will be on display along the Chicago River through October. City officials say it is part of a citywide initiative to install artwork in neighborhoods.

Cheaper fares for eclipse trips:

Amtrak is offering discounted tickets for passengers traveling to southern Illinois to view the upcoming total solar eclipse. A coast-to-coast total solar eclipse — where day briefly becomes night — will occur in the U.S. on Aug. 21 for the first time in 99 years.

It'll last the longest near Carbondale. That's where thousands of people are expected to gather to experience less than three minutes of darkness, along with a festival and other activities planned by area communities. Amtrak is a sponsor of the Carbondale Eclipse event. The rail service said passengers heading to the area on the Illini or Saluki trains between Aug. 16 and 22 may save 30 percent on tickets. The routes make various stops between Chicago and Carbondale.

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