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A New South Loop High School? Teachers Academy Could Be Converted Amid Boom

By [David Matthews](#) | May 23, 2017 [DNAinfo.com](#)

National Teachers Academy, 55 W. Cermak Road, could be converted to a neighborhood high school following the completion of the new South Loop Elementary School, CPS officials told parents Tuesday.



AUSLChicago.org

SOUTH LOOP — National Teachers Academy could be converted to a neighborhood high school once the new South Loop Elementary School is built nearby, top CPS officials said Tuesday.

Forrest Claypool and Janice Jackson, respectively the chief executive and education officers at Chicago Public Schools, announced a series of community hearings this summer regarding the future of the academy at 55 W. Cermak Road in a letter to parents.

While reiterating CPS' stance to "strengthen" the academy "so that it continues to effectively serve the community," Claypool and Jackson wrote that some have suggested the academy be converted to a new neighborhood high school serving the South Loop as well as parts of Bridgeport, Bronzeville and Chinatown once the new South Loop Elementary School opens in 2019 a few blocks away at 1601 S. Dearborn St.

"We are exploring ways to best serve all your children with schools that not only provide strong academic programs, but also meet all the educational needs of this community, including high quality options for children from pre-K through their senior year of high school," the letter reads.

The suggestion is welcome news to South Loop parents clamoring for a new neighborhood high school [amid a Downtown building boom](#) that will bring thousands of new homes south of Roosevelt Road. (Cont. on page 12)

May 30, 2017

Vol. 5, No. 7

In this Issue



Beth Finke. The last school visit of the year and the quirky questions kids ask.
Page 9



Bonnie McGrath remembers her father on this Memorial Day.
Page 4



Mondays with Mike: Mike says, "Let's talk about it." A way to learn about and understand depression. Page 5

INDEX

Jazz Showcase.....	p 2
South Loop Neighbors	p 3
Bonnies Blog	p 4
Monday's with Mike	p 5
Lorraine Schmall's Book Review.....	p 7
Beth Finke	p 9
Lit Fest	p 10
Newcity.	p 11
Chicago Public School letter to South Loop Parents	p 13
Police Blotter	p 21
Real Estate	p 22,23

COMING TO THE JAZZ SHOWCASE

Tue, May 30, 8 & 10pm.....WDCB 90.0FM presents a night with Darwin Noguera & Victor Garcia Quartet—FREE!

Wed, May 31, 8 & 10pm.....Vocalist Shara Maxwell Quartet

Thur-Sat, Jun 1-3, 8 & 10pm.....Saxophonist Chris Potter Quartet

Sun, Jun 4, 4pm, 8pm, 10pm.....Saxophonist Chris Potter Quartet

Mon, Jun 5, 7 pm until..... "Noteworthy Jazz Ensemble"

Tues, June 6, 8pm, 10pm Pianist Yvone Faddis Stroud quartet

Thur-Sat, Jun 8-10, 8 & 10pm.....Vocalist/Pianist Judy Roberts Quartet W/ Greg Fishman

Sun, Jun 11, 4pm, 8pm, 10pm.....Vocalist/Pianist Judy Roberts Quartet W/ Greg Fishman

Mon, Jun 12, 8pm, 10pmVibraphonist "Jalen Baker's Tano'

Tues, Jun 13, pm, 10pmWDCB NIGHT Alfonso Ponticelli Trio—FREE!

Thur-Sat, Jun 15-17, 8 & 10pm.....Flutist /Soprano Saxophonist Jane Bunnett & Maqueque

Sun, Jun 18, 4pm, 8pm, 10pm.....Flutist /Soprano Saxophonist Jane Bunnett & Maqueque



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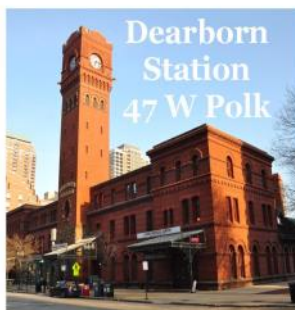
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South Loop Neighbors

South Loop Neighbors is a non-profit membership based organization dedicated to enhancing the quality of life in South Loop's neighborhoods and preserving the area's landmark districts.

South Loop Neighbors represents South Loop residents who are concerned about:

- Ensuring high-quality, reasonably-sized real estate development as well as infrastructure improvements that respect the unique character of our community
- Preserving and protecting the area's Landmark Districts, including Printing House Row and Historic Michigan Boulevard
- Promoting quality education, recreation, services, retail, community activities, and events
- Maintaining a socially, culturally, and economically diverse neighborhood
- Developing strong relationships with key city officials to ensure they respect, hear, and act on the concerns and ideas of the South Loop community. South Loop Neighbors serves members and residents within the area bounded by Congress Parkway to approximately 25th Street and from the Chicago River to Lake Michigan.

www.southloopneighbors.org

Public Meeting: Crime and Safety

Wednesday, June 7, 2017

6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

1st Dist. Police Dept.

1718 S. State St.

Memorial Day marks the unofficial start to the summer. Unfortunately, with summer often comes an increase in crime. Join the South Loop Neighbors for a public meeting focusing on crime and safety.

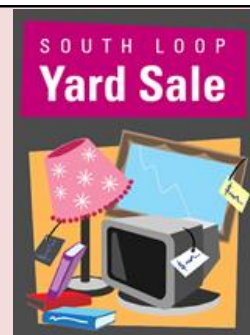
Chicago police officers and Louis Grzesiak, a security guard from Dearborn Park, will be present to discuss incidents of crime in our neighborhood, what's being done about the crime, how to prevent future crimes, and how to stay safe.

Yard Sale

Saturday, June 10, 2017

8:00 am– 3:00 pm

Dearborn Park



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OPINION

The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect those of the editor or South Loop Referral Group.

The first Memorial Day I ever had without the best soldier in the world: My Dad

Yesterday, the Memorial Day celebration at the Logan Statue at 9th and Michigan reminded me that it was exactly a year ago that this celebration made me recall my dad's service during World War II. And what a great soldier--and man--he was. Not to mention funny, smart and adventurous in every way..... I took that inspiration at the time and decided to write his obituary; he had passed away just a few months before at the age of 92--on my birthday, of all days! I am very proud to say that two weeks ago, I received an award from the Illinois Woman's Press Association for the story. What a nice tribute to both me and my dad! I have added many things to the story throughout the year, things that I suddenly remembered about him that I felt were significant and should be included. The word count here has expanded. And maybe every year, as I remember things, they will expand again--in a constant, fluid tribute to my dear dad, who is resting in peace at Westlawn Cemetery with a major league baseball in his hand.

I've been to the big Memorial Day event in the neighborhood at the General Logan statue at 9th and Michigan a few times over the years. They set up chairs and put out flags and lay down wreaths and the whole ceremony is rife with dignitaries. But at this year's ceremony I had a lump in my throat during the whole hour because I thought about my dad, who was a soldier's soldier.

And who always called it "[Decoration Day](#)."

He passed away last year on my birthday during his 93rd year. He didn't want a funeral or an obituary or anything like that--too corny--but two soldiers came, a young man and woman, and played taps. They folded up a flag for us, just before we put him in his crypt forever. And that was that. That he would have liked.

He was the greatest soldier of the greatest generation that fought WW2--The Big One. He loved the army. He loved army food and his fellow soldiers and the cities in France and Belgium that he fought through during the Battle of the Bulge--after he entered Europe on the heels of Normandy on his way to Germany to meet the Russians.

He liberated a concentration camp called [Ahlem, near Hanover](#). They sent him in first. "It was amazing to me," he always said, "the people were totally emaciated, starving, dying...and all they wanted from me was one thing: cigarettes." Which he gave them.

He enlisted right after Pearl Harbor, trained in Louisiana, and the Army sent him to the [Drexel Institute](#) in Philadelphia to study engineering, before they sent him across the sea to fight the Nazis. He loved that.

He grew up on Loomis Street in Englewood. (Yes, that Englewood. He went to Lindblom High School.) He spent all his time at Sherman Park. Through the years, I'd ask him if he ever went to this place or that place around Chicago when he was little. "I never wanted to leave the neighborhood," he said. "Because if something happened, I didn't want to miss it." Yet, he knew every street in Chicago and he knew how to get everywhere and he knew the history of everything in town.

Sometime in the 1980s, Ronald Reagan gave him the Bronze Star at a dinner in Chicago. One of his compatriots in the war was Henry Kissinger, of all people. Same infantry, same regiment. My dad went up to him--he had a few drinks and figured, oh why not? "I don't know if you remember me," he started out. Kissinger smiled and interrupted him, "Of course I do! You're Lew, that skinny medic. I'll never forget you."

My dad always said even though the Nazis weren't supposed to shoot at medics, they did anyway. He dodged bullets, lived in foxholes and learned a lot about how the human body work, he said his feet



Memorial Day ceremony today at 9th and Michigan Photo/Chicago Tribune

got so cold, he thought he'd lose them. He passed out Purple Hearts to those he treated. It cheered up those who were wounded.

He saw it all.

He didn't go on to become a doctor--or an engineer--but rather a great businessman, investor, developer. Very kind and considerate and conservative. Never greedy or impulsive. He was on important boards--but he also took time to go out on Michigan Avenue and bring apples to the horses drawing the carriages. Once he was at a restaurant at Water Tower Place and sitting in a wheelchair at the next table was a girl with cerebral palsy, who was wearing a Bulls T-shirt.

"Do you like Michael Jordan?" he asked her. She did. He left the restaurant briefly and came back with an autographed picture of Michael Jordan that he happened to have at home--and he told her it was hers. She beamed. He was very happy.

My dad was easy-going and a great sport who was always ready to share a wild ride. (Literally. We'd go to [Riverview](#) when I was a kid and go on every ride together. And he *did* teach me how to drive, not to mention ride a bike! [And steer a boat](#). And cook--with my little Betty Crocker stove for little girls.)

When we were at the Worlds' Fair in New York in 1964, he found a spider in his Dutch stew at the restaurant in the Indonesian Pavilion. "Oh, that's a 'Cook' spider," he said, totally unfazed; he took it out and carefully put it on the table.

When he took me for an overnight ride on the Milwaukee clipper across Lake Michigan from Milwaukee to Muskegon, Michigan when I was eight-years-old, we got a stateroom with bunkbeds. My dad was so tall, he had to sleep with his feet on the toilet at the foot of the lower bunk. But he didn't care. When we disembarked, it was the first time I experienced true sadness in my life, true grief, depression. I wanted to stay on that ship forever.

We lived in Uptown. (After we moved from Hyde Park when I was a toddler.) He had true-blue friends--and relatives--from every walk of life who he enjoyed immensely. He'd do anything for them. And he was absolutely hilarious. It was impossible to spend time with him without getting sick from laughing. He totally appreciated the deep human humor of comic geniuses like Jackie Gleason in The Honey-mooners. And he passed that on.

He would have gotten quite a kick out of Donald Trump running for president, let alone winning. I can only imagine the jokes he would have made.... He would have found it interesting, though, because he knew Trump's father's best friend and used to hear gossip about

(Continues on Page 5)

Bonnie McGrath

Visit my blog: <http://www.chicagonow.com/mom-think-poignant/>



OPINION

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Mondays with Mike:

by [mknezo2014](#) |

Let's talk about it.



A few weeks ago our friend Mark did [a guest post about his bout with depression](#). Besides being a well-written and illuminating account, writing and agreeing to publish that post was a courageous act on Mark's part. That's because we've come a long, long way when it comes to mental health, but still, people don't talk about it the way they do, say, migraines or acid reflux. And when it comes to health insurance, mental health coverage tends to be spotty, treated as a sort of luxury add-on.

In other words, a stigma still lingers around mental illness. It's a kind of cloud consisting of a lack of understanding on the part of broader society, and a tendency to conflate mental illness with character deficiency. For those living with a mental health issue, that stigma can create a sense of shame and reluctance to talk about it. All of which results in a negative loop that reinforces the stigma. On one hand a lot of people don't understand, but if we don't talk about it, how can they?

<https://youtu.be/-43DYy1RNqE>

Worth the watch.

Luckily we have the likes of Mark and others who are willing to out themselves and normalize the conversation around mental health issues. One of those others is our friend Jackie, an ebullient force of nature who got a bad break when it comes to brain chemistry but hasn't let that stop her.

Beth and I met Jackie when she was an energetic soccer-playing tween who seemed to have the world on a string. Things are not always as they seem.

I'd tell you more but better to let Jackie tell you. May is mental health awareness month and to mark it, Jackie is doing a series of short (one to two minutes) videos about her experience.

[Here's one](#)—I hope you'll give it a look, and encourage you to binge watch the other episodes. Jackie articulates her experiences in a way that addresses the seriousness of mental illness while also saying, "relax, we can talk about this stuff." And even laugh about it.

They really are short, they're friendly and informal, they're engaging, and they carry a wallop. I learned a lot and I think you will, too.

(Continued from page 4, Bonnie MEMORIAL DAY)

Trump decades ago when he was just getting started.

He was a great adventure traveler (oh, the crazy vacations we took and the crazy people we met) and a man of a million hobbies--from raising pigeons when he was a teenager to herding cattle as an adult, to art collecting, oil painting (he made some wonderful copies of [Piet Mondrians](#) for me), magic classes and "camping" in the first RV of its sort made by General Motors.

He even took baseball lessons with Babe Ruth when he was a kid--and as a young man, he owned a small share of the Cubs and went to stockholders meetings in [PK Wrigley's](#) office. We all got a kick out of everyone at Wrigley Field mistaking my dad for catcher [Joe Girardi's](#) father--and all the perks that came with it, like free parking in the players' lot!

All we had to do was say the word "Girardi" and that was code to break out in laughter, wherever we were. In fact, there were a lot of words that were associated with baseball and cracking up. Like the time on a trip to Arizona when we visited a Wrigley Field groundskeeper's sister who lived there. We had such a good time laughing with her, that we kept it going until the day my dad passed away--with the code words, "Dean's sister."

We decided to keep his distinctive and sought after season ticket to Wrigley Field and I just sat in his seat a few weeks ago, seeing the game from behind the screen--all the while being on TV with all the batters.

My dad knew how everything worked. Once when we were coming back from a summer in Scandinavia, the PanAm jet we were on, about to land in New York, suddenly seemed to be crashing. But my dad knew exactly what was happening--and the plane suddenly took off again without ever hitting the ground. "Something got in his way," he explained, "that's all it is. And he got us out of trouble."

That's how my dad saw life. People getting other people out of trouble. If you were in jail, he'd bail you out. If you needed cash, he'd give you some. If you needed a friend, he'd gladly be one. Whoever he said he felt sorry for, he tried to help. And he felt sorry for a lot of poor souls for a lot of reasons. He used to say to me and my brother, "If anything happens to me..." We knew what he meant: how would we make it without his helping hand and moral support?

But sometimes, something did outsmart him. Like a bird that kept chirping in our Las Vegas hotel room. That confounded him for days; where *is* that bird? we wondered. Until we found out it was our phone ringing. (And by the way, that style of phone was so pretty--like a bird, perhaps?--that it wound up in the Museum of Modern Art.)

Because of the Army, and being a medic, he knew everything about health, too. And nutrition. (He was a wheat germ buff--and in the 60s, when I discovered granola, he was very impressed.) Whenever I had a symptom, I called him first. One morning I called because I had the worst and weirdest sore throat I'd ever had. What do you think, dad? I asked him, after describing what it felt like. I was very scared.

"Well, let's see. Did you eat any pineapple last night?" he said.

Yes, I had. A LOT of fresh pineapple. I had been to a party with a Hawaiian beach theme. "Well, that's what it is," he said, explaining the presence of an irritating enzyme in pineapple. There was nothing I ever asked him about health that he wasn't right about. Mental or physical. He knew all the nuance and made all the connections. He was the first person I ever knew who could identify a panic attack. He had purchased a book about them and read it through. Very much ahead of his time.

(Continues on Page 9)

“Oh the Signs, they are a-changing”

Bob Dylan . . . kinda

According to Kathy Lewis, head of a tenacious group of residents whose goal is to restore the parking ban in Dearborn Park 1, and Prentice Butler, Assistant to Alderman King, the city Council has voted to change the signs back to a ban between the hours of 9 AM and 11AM. This was the first step to replace the present signs which allowed parking 24/7 to the 9 to 11 AM ban which had been in place for over 30 years. As reported in last issue, a packed house of residents met with Alderman Sophia King so they could express their preference as to the parking. An overwhelming majority, over 80%, indicated by vote, that they wanted the parking ban reinstated providing more movement and availability on the street. The Alderman expressed an interest in increasing parking space in Dearborn Park 1 with some proposals based on her walking around the neighborhood.



According to Prentice Butler, Chicago Department of Transportation will change the signs back to the earlier version in the coming week (May 29, 2017).

Harold Washington Library Center – Free author lecture

Wednesday, June 14,
2017 (6:00PM – 7:15PM)

Cindy Pritzker Auditorium

South Loop author **Greg Borzo** discusses his new book, *Chicago's Fabulous Fountains*, with Geoffrey Baer and Debra Shore.



Most people don't realize it, but Chicago is home to many diverse, artistic, fascinating, and architecturally and historically important fountains. In this attractive volume, Greg Borzo introduces readers to more than a hundred of Chicago's outdoor public fountains with noteworthy, amusing or surprising stories about these gems. Complementing Borzo's engagingly written text are around a hundred beautiful fine-art color photos of the fountains, taken by photographer Julia Thiel for this book, and a smaller number of historical photos.

Greg Borzo is an award-winning journalist, an editor, and the author of *The Chicago "L," Chicago Cable Cars*, and other books about Chicago, where he has lived most of his life. Geoffrey Baer is Program Host and Producer at WTTW Channel 11 Chicago. Debra Shore is Commissioner at Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago.

Seating in the Cindy Pritzker Auditorium is available first come, first served. Books are available for purchase and the author will autograph books at the conclusion of the program.

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Book Review:

A Father's Day Odyssey

Greg Borzo's *Chicago's Fabulous Fountains* (SIU Press 2017) is a small, wonderful book where fountains serve as a watery metaphor both for the cosmic connection of city residents to the water all around them and to the corruption that's grafted upon politics and power in Chicago since it set up shop a couple centuries ago. But its fountains also "have the power to gather and rouse...history, art and beauty pour from these displays." With contemporary photos by Julia Thiel and a trove of old prints from city archives, the book takes its readers on a cruise through bubbling, flowing, cascading, pumping, sitting, shot-from-a-cannon Adam's ale. Water in Chicago's 100 fountains has been drunk, dyed, diseased and dipped in; another 150 have disappeared. They've been vandalized more than Viking graves, and used for political ends. They've been built to quench thirst and to promote Christian temperance and to ease one's soul. They first appeared in the 1860s and, until 1911, many had metal mugs chained to them to efficiently satisfy citizens' aesthetic and physical needs. Eventually, these "death cups" were outlawed, not one death too soon.

Some fountains are icons. The Buckingham was patterned after a fountain at Versailles, but "in true Chicago fashion, is much bigger." Queen Elizabeth visited it in 1956.

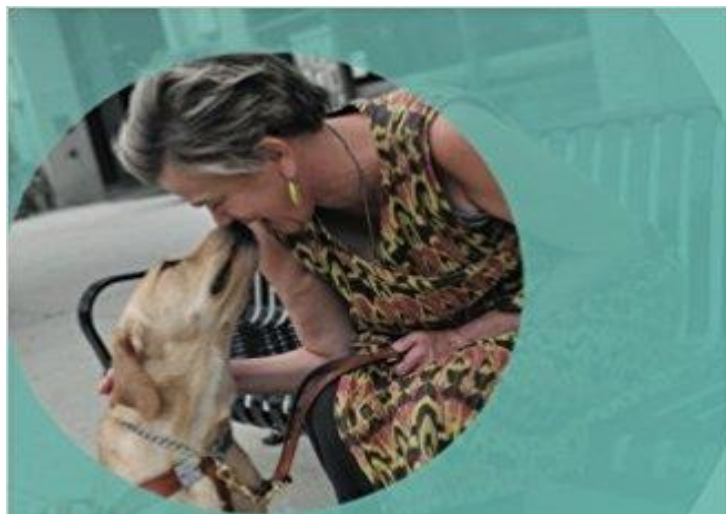
It was named not for her ancestral castle but for the dead owner of the Brown Line. It's one of the largest fountains in the world and was said to have done the city "spiritual good." Not enough good, apparently, to prevent one mayor from dismantling fountains built by a vilified predecessor or another to attempt to name the worst fountain among them--"neglected," "beleaguered," "derelict" and "deplorable"--after recently departed ex-mayor and political persona non grata. Famed homeboy and Paris-trained sculptor Lorado Taft built myriad fountains about town, the most famous at the Art Institute and the most dolorous the disintegrating, gravelly procession of 100 souls marching to eternity with the poetic admonition: "Time goes you say? Ah, no. Time stays; we go." Jaime Plensa's modern, cascading Millennium Park wonder is a destination fountain, with two opposing 10-story spattering movie screens, featuring 1000 Chicago faces that spit water on children who play between them.

Buy the book for your favorite fathers and father figures, who can grab their youngsters and trace the aqueous fountain trail.



Lorraine Schmall

Dearborn Park, May, 2017

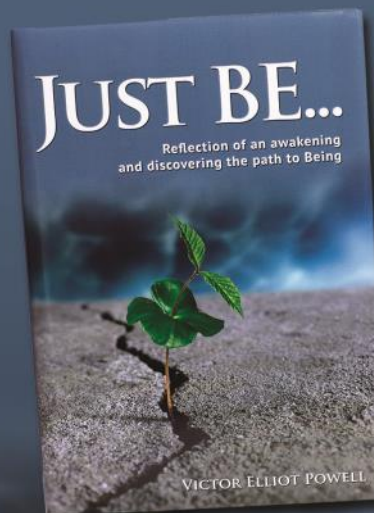


Writing Out Loud

what a blind teacher learned from leading a memoir class for seniors

Beth Finke

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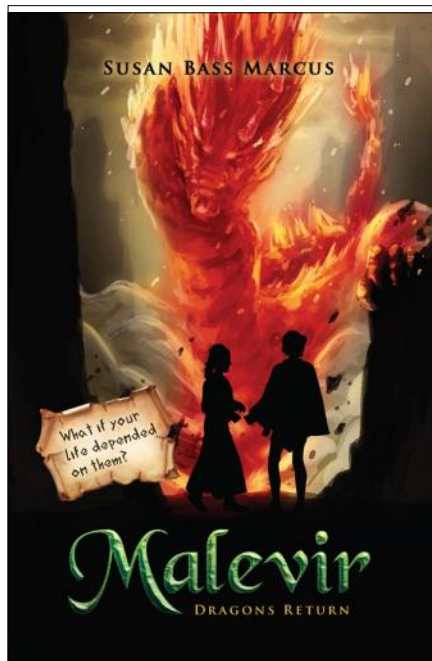
Becca was the student chosen from her class to recite a poem at the Poetry Foundation on May 31. It is an open and free event and I hear that the building is beautiful, so it would be a nice opportunity for people who like poetry to stop by the building. Also, they tell me that there will be a reception following the event, though this is not stated on the flyer. Becca, a fourth-grade student and lifelong resident of Dearborn Park, was chosen to recite her poem, *The Bird's Nest*.



The Bird's Nest

Buried in
love and happiness
the bird sits.
Stares and talks to me.
Flies away
to a place
with aching wings
Tweets its song
to every single person
Then dies
with the snake
holding it prisoner
The bird has fallen
from its nest

it can't sleep.
Or dream,
or wish.
But it does.
With love and envy
it trusts its beautiful song
And repeats it
in human words
To me.
I trust the bird
For the whole world
I'd do anything for that bird.



Dragons have long been absent from their ancestral home in the Veiled Valley. Through spells and deceptions, a mysterious shape-shifter attacked them and now threatens the Valley's hard-won tranquility. With the dragons' strengths and magic apparently gone forever, the lives of the Valley's humans and otherworldly creatures hang in the balance. Will two young dragon-riders help heal the rift between human and dragon?

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Safe & Sound Blog by Beth Finke

<http://Bethfinke.wordsmith.com>



[A puppy, or a dog?](#)

The visit Whitney and I made to Arlington Traditional School last Thursday was our last one for this school year. What a great way to end the season. The second-graders we talked with had already read *Hanni and Beth: Safe & Sound* before we arrived, so they were armed with questions. Some examples :

- How many years could you see, and how many years could you not?
- Do you know when it's daytime?
- How much did it cost to buy that dog at the puppy store?
- Can you write in a straight line?
- How did you pick that dog from all the puppies at the puppy store?
- What games do you play?
- So if you didn't buy your dog at the puppy store, was she free?
- How do you write books if you can't see?
- If you didn't train that dog, who did?
- Can you spend your own money?
- How did you train that dog?
- How did they teach it to cross the street?
- Do you ever get scared?
- Is she a puppy, or a dog?
- How many streets did that dog help you cross so far?

That last question was a toughie, and I took my time answering. "Four thousand three hundred and sixty-two times," I said. They seem satisfied with my answer.



A lot of inquisitive kids.

(Continued from page 5, Bonnie MEMORIAL DAY)

But he hated the Red Cross. My grandfather died at the age of 49 while my dad was fighting the Nazis. The Red Cross assured my aunt and my grandmother that they'd get to him on the battlefield and tell him. They didn't. My dad figured out his father died when he got letters from home from his mother and sister referring to the aftermath of his dad's death, assuming that he already knew. As generous as he was when it came to charity, he never gave a dime to the Red Cross.

Nor would he ever buy a German car.

But he lived happily with a gun, an arm band and other things he'd taken from a Nazi--for the rest of his long and eventful and very interesting life. Those were the symbols that he'd fought against. And won against. And like every soldier they talked about at today's ceremony who fought and lived or fought and died, he was proud and everyone was proud of him.

It was a good war he fought. Once, during the Bush years when I was on one of my tirades about the Iraq war and the soldiers we were losing there, all for nothing, I said, "Dad, don't you think we should just pull out? Just leave as fast as when we got there? Give up and go?"

"Nah, we can't do that," he said. "They'll think we're crazy."

He gave everyone the benefit of the doubt. He was my "cute little daddy." That was what I called him when I was a cute little toddler. Even though he was "6-foot, 4-and-a-half."

And every single day of his life, he lived up to every single inch.

Bonnie McGrath

If you want to effect change, you have to start local. These may or may not be your representative, however, if you live in Printers Row and Dearborn Park, they are.

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Getting your Memoir Off the Ground...and published. Presenters: Beth Finke, Anna Perlberg, Wanda Bridgeforth, Nancy Sayre

Sunday 10:00 am — 11:00 am Workshop Jones College Prep/4th Floor/4008

Chicago authors Beth Finke (Writing Out Loud, 2017) and Anna Nussy Perlberg (The House in Prague, 2016) and their publisher Nancy Sayre (Golden Alley Press) share tips on getting your memoir started and the benefits of having it published with a small independent press. Wanda Bridgeforth (On the Move, 2009) joins to read one of her personal essays excerpted in Writing Out Loud.



Beth Finke



Anna Nussy Perlberg

Beth will be signing copies of her new book Writing Out Loud at the outside table in front of Sandmeyer's Bookstore on Saturday, June 10 from 11 a.m. to noon.



Wanda Bridgeforth



Nancy Sayre



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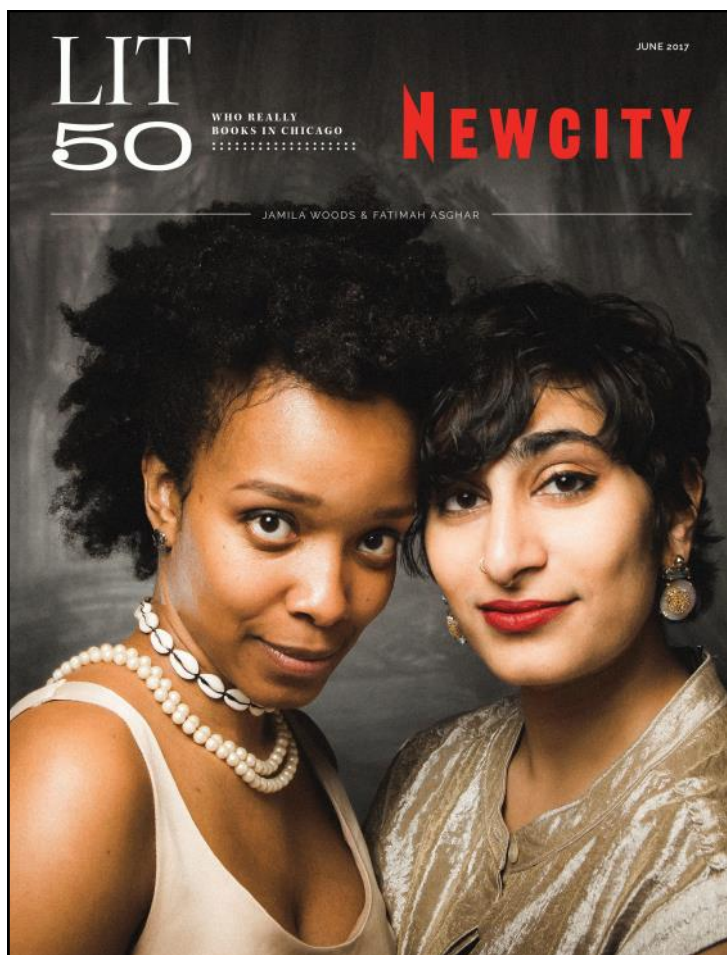


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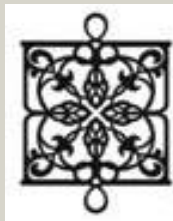
This is the twenty-third edition of Lit 50. Back in 1995, when we started the first of what would become a signature undertaking for Newcity and eventually spread out to seven different “Leaders of Chicago Culture” editions each year, we were motivated by a simple idea: connecting the city’s disconnected literary world. Thanks to our involvement those days in what is now called the Printers Row Lit Fest, we’d gotten to know a handful of Chicago novelists and other literati and discovered that many of them did not know each other. In a form of proto-social media, we wanted to rectify that by describing a community, in print. Today, Chicago’s literary culture has exploded in scale in all directions and, happily, everyone seems to know each other. Our photo shoot for this issue was like a series of micro reunions, where subjects found themselves unexpectedly greeting old friends and current contemporaries over the course of an afternoon.

To continue reading , please click below.

<http://www.newcity.com/2017/05/25/editors-letter-june-2017/>

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(Continued from front page, New So. Loop H.S.?)

But it also affirms academy parents' fears that they'll lose their school, which serves 687 students from pre-kindergarten through eighth grade, as it gets absorbed into the new South Loop Elementary envelope. Many academy parents were alarmed when CPS recently announced that [the new South Loop school's boundaries would extend south to Cermak Road](#), cutting into the academy's territory.

"I don't want to drag out the conversation when I know the direction the district is going in," Jackson said at a town hall meeting last month.

The letter sent Tuesday does not state who suggested the academy's conversion to a high school.

South Loop high school students are currently zoned into Wendell Phillips Academy, 244 E. Pershing Road, a Bronzeville school with a [massive attendance boundary stretching from Wacker Drive to roughly 67th Street](#). Phillips enrolls just 533 students according to CPS, but with its entire 2016 class getting accepted into college and [a recent state championship in football](#), Phillips officials say the school's future is bright. Still, Phillips is miles from either South Loop Elementary or the teachers academy.

Jones College Prep, a selective-enrollment high school at 700 S. State St. [that's one of the city's most prestigious and difficult to get into](#), is another nearby high school.

City officials are spending more than \$60 million, [most of it from tax increment financing funds](#), to build the new South Loop Elementary School following years of

overcrowding. South Loop Elementary opened for 580 students in 1988 at 1212 S. Plymouth Court, but now has 839 students, according to CPS.

The new South Loop school at 16th and Dearborn will fit 1,200 kids and include 50 classrooms, two computer labs, two art rooms and a rooftop play area, among other amenities. The school will house classes for kindergarten through eighth grade and is expected to open in the second semester of the 2018-19 school year.

The teachers academy is a neighborhood school managed by the Academy for Urban School Leadership, a nonprofit that manages 30 other CPS schools, including Phillips. The academy is a relatively new school that opened in 2002 and sits on a large lot near two "L" stops on Cermak Road. The city for years has prioritized investing in the area, most visibly in the form of a new [Green Line station on Cermak](#) and [assisting in the development of a new basketball arena for DePaul University](#).

CPS has scheduled three hearings next month, beginning with one at 5 p.m. June 6 at Second Presbyterian Church, 1936 S. Michigan Ave. The hearings will be led by network chief Herald "Chip" Johnson, who previously shepherded meetings on the [proposed merger between Ogden International School and Jenner Academy of the Arts](#).

The hearings are sure to draw ire from teachers academy parents worried they'll lose their school.

"The South Loop is growing," Elisabeth Greer, chairwoman of the academy's local school council, told DNAINFO last month. "We need two elementary schools."

<http://www.dnainfo.com/chicago/>

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Dear Members of the South Loop and National Teachers Academy communities:

This is an exciting time in the South Loop and surrounding communities, as new families and businesses move into the area and bring vibrant new energy to this area. For Chicago Public Schools, this means that we are exploring ways to best serve all your children with schools that not only provide strong academic programs, but also meet all the educational needs of this community, including high quality options for children from pre-K through their senior year of high school.

To develop a comprehensive plan, we want to hear your feedback, questions and priorities as we move forward. We also want to update you on some developments that have already taken place.

- As many of you know, a new building for the South Loop Elementary School will open in the second semester of the 2018-19 school year.
 - After conversations with the community, CPS is considering moving the South Loop boundary south to 22nd Street to best serve all residents of the community.
 - Our objective is to ensure that a diverse group of neighborhood residents and children can attend South Loop. This change in boundary allows many of the students who are currently attending National Teachers Academy to attend South Loop, a brand-new state-of-the-art facility near their home. CPS is also committed to ensuring that all schools in the area will be attractive to you, which is why we are working on a plan to strengthen NTA so that it continues to effectively serve the community. One of the suggestions we have already heard is to convert NTA to a high school that serves several area communities, including Chinatown, Bridgeport, north Bronzeville and the South Loop.

At a series of public meetings, we hope to hear your reaction to some initial ideas we have put together and gather input from the broader community to hear other ideas. The meeting dates and times are:

Community Meeting 1

Tuesday, June 6, 2017

5 - 7 p.m.

Second Presbyterian Church

1936 S. Michigan Ave.

Community Meeting 2

Tuesday, June 20, 2017

5 - 7 p.m.

South Loop Elementary
School

1212 S. Plymouth Court

Community Meeting 3

Wednesday, June 28, 2017

5 - 7 p.m.

NTA

55 W. Cermak Road

To facilitate these conversations, we have asked the Chief of Schools for Network 6, the area that includes both South Loop and NTA, to oversee the community meetings. Chip Johnson has most recently facilitated community conversations in the Ogden-Jenner neighborhood.

If needed, additional community meetings will be scheduled to continue the discussion the future of schools in the South Loop and surrounding communities. We look forward to hearing your thoughts, ideas and questions, and please feel free to email transitions@cps.edu with input.

Sincerely,

Forrest Claypool
Chief Executive Officer
Chicago Public Schools

Janice Jackson
Chief Education Officer
Chicago Public Schools

Tuesday, May 30, 2017

Hax Opening This Week? Building Going in Parking Lot Next to it?

A lot of readers have [sent us updates](#) stating that the new Hax and Gordo's was getting closer to opening.

However, one reader gave us this juicy tip about Hax's opening date and a potential new development next door:

My husband and I were in Edgewater yesterday and we saw a place called Gordo's. It had the same signage as the Gordo's in the Sloop and it was right next to a Flaco's. We stopped in and talked to the owner(?). He said they just opened that one about a week ago in Edgewater. They make the ice cream bars in the basement of the South Loop Gordo's. He said they plan to open Hax before the Lit Fest and open Gordo's there shortly thereafter. The interesting thing was he said that the owners of the parking lot just to the south of them, will soon be breaking ground and building a space with retail on the street level and their own personal residence above it. He said they (Hax) had just put in a window facing the parking lot when they found this out so now the window will of course be covered up.

We didn't have one, but the Gordo's ice cream bars looked delicious!

<http://www.sloopin.com/>



Wednesday, May 17, 2017

Jimmy Green's Closes After 7-Year Run at 825 S. State

In case you missed it last week - Jimmy Green's (825 S. State) is closed according to their [Facebook page](#):

Well you heard it here first.

Jimmy Green's is saying thank you & goodbye this Saturday night - May 13, 2017. It has been an honor to be part of this truly vital neighborhood.

We have welcomed dozens of sports greats including most of the '85 Bears, Bobby Hull plus Blackhawks, White Sox, Cubs, Bulls and Bears stars from yesterday and today. But mostly we've had the honor of serving thousands of our neighbors. We will never forget what we created here and we never forget the friends we made in the name of Jimmy Green's. Join us 'til closing Saturday night, May 13, 2017

Well, this isn't great news, but in our opinion it's not terrible. We've had some mixed experiences at Jimmy Green's and in our opinion is definitely in the lower tier of options for bars/restaurants in the Sloop.

With [Bulldog Ale House moving in just down the street](#), our guess is that the neighborhood won't really miss Jimmy Green's. That being said, it will be interesting to see what might move in here. Hopefully something good.



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Tuesday, May 23, 2017

Athletico Moving into Corner Retail Space at State/Harrison

Looks like Athletico is moving in at the corner of State and Harrison



<http://www.sloopin.com/>

Friday, May 26, 2017

Poke & Roll Quickly Opens at 555 S. Dearborn

A reader writes: Official opening today hours 11-7pm

As a reminder, [we just posted about this back on May 15th](#). That was a pretty fast opening...

Anyway, we're pretty excited to

check this one out. Has anyone gone? Let us know your thoughts.

<http://www.sloopin.com/>



The new tower from Wood Partners out of Atlanta will be 33-stories tall, with 496 residences and 348 parking spaces. The design is by Pappageorge



Alta Roosevelt at Polk and Financial. Photo below from May 22, 2017.



According to DNAinfo, Giles unveiled plans for the 24-story, 320 unit apartment tower he wants to build at 1136-40 S. Wabash Ave. And he's hoping on a national trend: Half of those units will be studio "quasi-micro" apartments. Rent," Giles Said. "We're trying to meet the demands of younger people that would rather live alone and can only afford under \$2,000 Photo at left from May 10, 2017.



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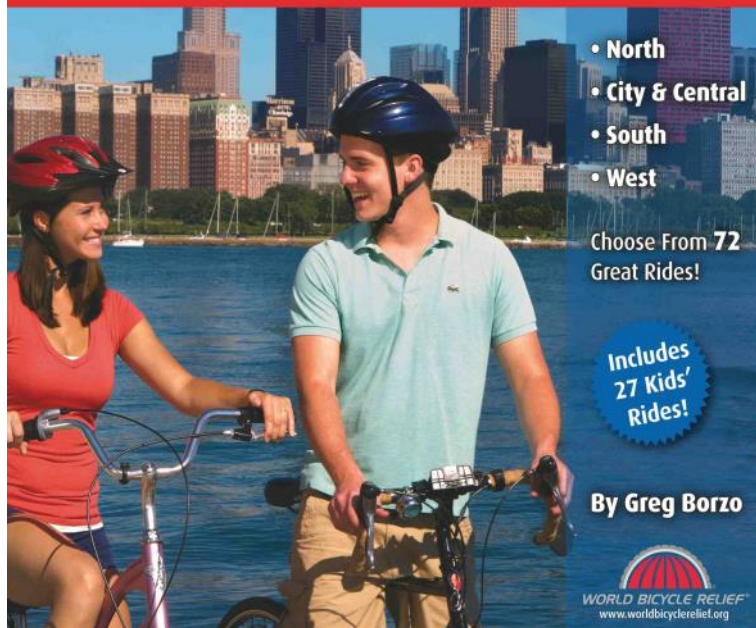
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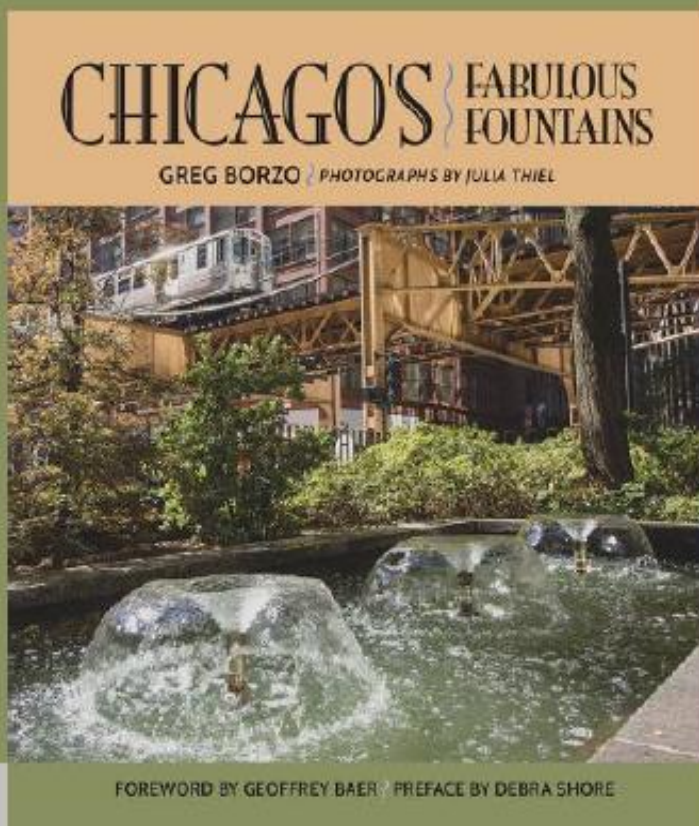
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You'll hear from Geoffrey Baer, who wrote the Foreword, Debra Shore, who wrote the Preface, Julia Thiel, who took the photographs, and Greg Borzo, who wrote the book, which is being published by Southern Illinois University Press (May 10, 2017).

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Monday, May 22, 2017

Plan Progressing for Redevelopment of Old Harold Ickes Homes



In case you missed this a couple weeks back - we did ([via Curbed Chicago](#)):

The long-discussed redevelopment of Chicago's former Harold L. Ickes Homes public housing project has officially started the process of navigating the city's approval process. An ordinance to rezone the vacant 11.3-acre parcel owned by the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) at the border of the South Loop and Bronzeville neighborhoods was filed a few weeks back. While the plan must still pass the Plan Commission and City Council to take effect, the 123-page document provides insight regarding Ickes' future.

According to the plan, the area bounded by State Street, Federal Avenue, Cermak, and 25th Street will see its patchwork of zoning designations changed to a uniform DX-3 Downtown Mixed Use classification and incorporated into a Planned Development (PD). The parcel will be divided into five distinct subareas to be redeveloped in three phases over the coming years.

While previous reports mentioned a total of 887 residential dwellings, the allowable unit count has since grown to 972 to spread across a mix of townhomes, six-flats, and a high-rise at the southwest corner of Cermak and State. The transit-oriented plan also calls for 75,000 square feet of retail, dedicated open space, and at least 270 on-site parking spaces.

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Millennials Want To Buy Homes In Chicago — But They Can't Afford It: Report

By [Kelly Bauer](#) | May 26,

2017 [DNAinfo.com](#)

The majority of Chicago's millennials want to buy a home, a new report found, but they're held back by a lack of knowledge, debt and other issues.

DOWNTOWN — The vast majority of Chicago millennials want to buy a home — but they can't afford to do it, according to a new report.

The report, from rental search site [Apartment List](#), found Chicagoans born between 1982 and 2004 underestimate how much they'll need for a down payment. At the same time, [there's an affordable housing shortage](#), and this age group faces high student loan debt and "stagnant career opportunities," the report said.

That means a significant number of millennials will be left "renting for years," according to the report, which used survey results from 24,000 millennials to study the generation and its homebuying habits throughout the country. It found 80 percent of millennials in Chicago want to buy a home, but 70 percent are waiting because they can't afford one.

"It doesn't seem achievable to a lot of people, so why would they change their lives if they feel like it's impossible?" said Laura Rupp, 34, of Jefferson Park, who saved with her fiancé for six years to find a suitable — and affordable — home in Chicago.

Millennials are also underestimating how long it could take to save for a down payment: They expect it to take 5.7 years, but it might take more than a decade based on how they're saving now, according to the report.



Rupp and her fiancé, Chad Ramos, 35, know the homebuying struggle. They moved into a bedroom in Rupp's mother's home for what they thought would be a month but ended up living there for more than a year as they saved money. They gave up nights out with friends and cut back on luxuries like nights out at the bar.

Despite pinching pennies, it took Rupp and Ramos six years to save for their home.

Finding an affordable home was itself a challenge for the couple. Rupp and Ramos discovered homes in their original budget were usually "fixer-uppers," even if the prices weren't low, Ramos said. Or they'd have to "wait in line" to see quality, affordable homes the day they were put on the market — and the owners wanted more than the asking price by the next day, Rupp said.

"We could have bought a home three times this size if we didn't have student loan debt," Rupp said. "But no one else that I know that had a job and was trying to buy a [house] ever had to look as long as we did. It was almost kind of comical when we'd talk to people about it, like, (Continues on next page.)"



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(from previous page, Millennials Want to Buy Homes.)

'Yeah, we're still looking,' or, 'Yeah, we're still saving.'"

The couple had "no idea" what they would need to save or what they'd have to do, Rupp said, and even when they turned to banks they received misinformation about what they'd need to put down on a home.

Rupp and Ramos finally found a home in Jefferson Park in April 2014 and spent \$25,000 on the down payment, closing costs and other fees.

"Currently, we are paying more a month in our student loans than our mortgages," Ramos said. "And we're fortunate to be able to do that. Don't get me wrong, we got to a place where we could do that. But early on, when we were trying to save money for [the house], there's no way we could have done any of it."

Some of their peers are "looser" with their money than the couple was when saving for a house, Ramos said, which could be contributing to the struggles they're having with buying homes.

As for advice, the couple said to avoid buying a car if possible, and to cut back on nights out to the bar or fancy dinners. Picking up "side hustles," or side jobs, can also help save money while expanding your professional options, Rupp said.

Still, Rupp said juggling steep student loan debt and buying a house at the same time is no easy task.

"It would be a battle not even uphill, up mountains," Rupp said. "A really unachievable goal."

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Operations Backpack is a project of VOLUNTEERS OF AMERICA which is located in Dearborn Station.



Next Edition,

Wednesday

June 20, 2017

Dearbornexpress.org



PARKING FOR SALE

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Reddit/aoscott

Boat Stolen From Downtown Harbor Washes Ashore In Indiana

By [David Matthews](#) | May 26, 2017 11:55am

DOWNTOWN — This little boat was found ashore in Indiana after possibly being taken for a joyride out of Monroe Harbor, the boat's owners say.

The Francis J, a handmade wooden trawler, was reported stolen Sunday from the harbor at 400 E. Monroe St., police records show.

By Wednesday night the Coast Guard told the boat's owners that the Francis J had washed ashore in Michigan City, Ind. A passerby snapped a photo of the beached boat and posted it to [Reddit](#) Thursday night.

The boat's owners think the boat was likely taken for a joyride.

"I had no idea people did boat joyrides," Hal Conick, the son of one of the boat's owners, said. "[This is some] Ferris Bueller s---."

The owners, two suburban lawyers, discovered the boat was missing Sunday when they went to the harbor. They filed a report with Chicago police, who told DNAinfo earlier this week they had no surveillance or other information on any suspects.

Petty Officer James Bradberry, who's stationed in Michigan City, said authorities were alerted to an unmanned boat floating 200 yards off the beach at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday. The Coast Guard searched near the boat to make sure no one was in the water, and by 7:50 p.m. the boat had drifted ashore, where the Coast Guard was able to match the boat to its owners.

A private company then loaded the boat to a truck and drove it back to Chicago, Bradberry said. He declined to say whether the boat was damaged or if there was evidence it was stolen.

Bradberry said this marked the first time he had seen an unmanned boat floating near the beaches of Michigan City.

The boat's discovery was good news for its owners, who were worried their one-of-a-kind vessel was lost forever. The Francis J was handmade in Madison, Wis., by a carpenter who intended to use it on Wisconsin rivers before selling it. The boat resembles a trawler commonly found on the East Coast but not so much in Lake Michigan.

The boat is valued between \$15,000 and \$20,000, much less than many other boats docked Downtown, but the Francis J was worth much more to its owners sentimentally.

"It takes special effort, like piracy on the high seas, to use a craft to take a craft," one owner, Harold Conick of suburban Wheaton, said. "I would've preferred he stole my car, or 15, 20 grand of my money. I could deal with that more readily."

<http://www.dnainfo.com/chicago/>

Next CAPS Meeting June 14, 2017

6:30PM at 525 S. State St.

(Every 2nd Wednesday)

Police Blotter

<http://home.chicagopolice.org/>

Theft: Pocket-picking from restaurant
500 block S. State St. • May 05 @ 7:20 PM

Weapons violation: Unlawful possession of other firearm
on street

0 block E. Roosevelt Rd. • May 05 @ 6:10 AM

Simple battery: CTA Train
1200 block S. State St. • May 11 @ 5:50 PM

Theft: \$300 and under Gas Station
1200 block S. Wabash Ave. • May 11 @ 2:40 PM

Simple assault: school private grounds
100 block W. Roosevelt Rd. • May 11 @ 4:45 PM

Vandalism: Criminal damage to vehicle parking garage
600 block S. Clark St. • May 08 @ 6:05 PM

Aggravated battery: Hands/fist/feet, serious injury
Roosevelt Park
100 block E. Roosevelt Rd. • May 09 @ 3:50 PM

Theft: \$300 and under parking garage
1000 block S. State St. • May 09 @ 5:00 PM

Theft: Over \$300 parking garage
1000 block S. State St. • May 09 @ 8:30 PM

Motor vehicle theft: Automobile on street
700 block S. Wabash Ave. • May 13 @ 2:35 AM

Theft: Over \$300 Gas Station
1200 block S. Wabash Ave. • May 13 @ 9:55 AM

Theft: Over \$300 on street
1200 block S. Wabash Ave. • May 13 @ 9:55 AM

Theft: From building
0 block W. Polk St. • May 14 @ 11:00 AM

Theft: From building Athletic Club
800 block S. State St. • May 14 @ 5:00 PM

Simple battery: Simple Tavern
700 block S. State St. • May 15 @ 5:27 PM

Aggravated battery: Other dangerous weapon Restaurant
700 block S. State St. • May 15 @ 5:45 PM

Narcotics: Possession of cocaine school
700 block S. State St. • May 15 @ 8:15 AM

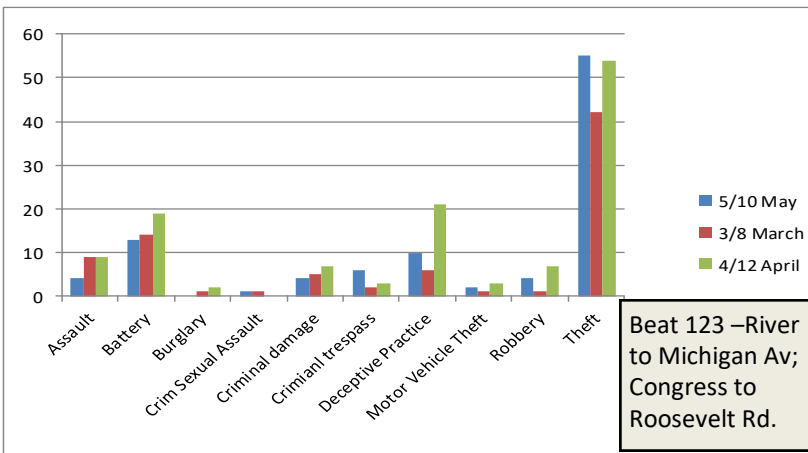
Motor vehicle theft: Automobile parking garage/lot
600 block S. Plymouth Ct. • May 17 @ 2:30 PM

Motor vehicle theft: Automobile on street
600 block S. Wabash Ave. • May 20 @ 4:30 AM

Beat 123 Meeting will be held the 2nd Wednesday of every month at 6:30pm. The Meetings are held at University Center 525 S State.

June 14 August 9

July 12 Sept. 13



Beat 123 –River to Michigan Av; Congress to Roosevelt Rd.

Armed Carjacker Was Free On Bond For Pending Gun Case: Charges

By [Erica Demarest](#) | May 20, 2017 9:55am | Updated on May 22, 2017

Cook County Sheriff's Office

COOK COUNTY CRIMINAL COURTHOUSE — The armed man

who [carjacked a Dodge Durango in the South Loop](#) last month was free on bond for a pending gun case at the time, prosecutors said Friday.

Phillip Smith, 25, is accused of carjacking a 2014 Dodge Durango about 3:30 a.m. April 11 in a "[bump and run](#)" attack in the 600 block of South Wabash Avenue, court records show.

Police believe Smith was armed with a silver handgun.

[RELATED: Armed Carjackers Attacked Drivers Stopped in South Loop Traffic, Police Say](#)

At the time of the attack, he was free on bond for a pending 2016 gun case, court records show. Bail was set in that case at \$75,000 in September; Smith posted \$7,500 (the requisite 10 percent needed to go free) by December.

In that case, officers on patrol in Austin spotted Smith and another man drinking from Solo cups outside in the 5500 block of West Congress Parkway on Sep. 29, according to an arrest report.

Police believed the men were drinking alcohol in public and tried to question them, court records show. That's when Smith took off running and led police on a chase that ended when Smith was discovered under the back porch in a nearby yard, police said.

Smith was carrying a loaded semiautomatic Glock 17 that had been reported stolen in Lebanon, Ky., according to authorities.

Prosecutors charged Smith, of the 3900 block of West Flournoy Street, with aggravated unlawful use of a weapon and possession of a firearm by a felon in the 2016 incident, court records show. He would post bond three months later.

Smith has a 2014 conviction for possession of a controlled substance. In the new carjacking case, Cook County Judge Adam Bourgeois Jr. on Friday set bail at \$1 million.

<http://www.dnainfo.com/chicago/>

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\$305,000
431 S DEARBORN ST 1005
5/9/17

\$338,000
1101 S STATE ST 1702
5/9/17

\$620,000
520 S STATE ST 509
5/8/17

\$328,000
520 S STATE ST 1504
5/8/17

\$475,000
971 S PARK TERRACE 518
5/4/17

\$435,000
520 S STATE ST 707
5/4/17

\$320,000
520 S STATE ST 806
5/4/17

\$265,000
732 S FINANCIAL PL 414
5/4/17

\$139,000
899 S PLYMOUTH CT 2201
5/1/17

\$272,500
124 W POLK ST 506
5/1/17

\$172,000
431 S DEARBORN ST 209
4/27/17

\$410,000
170 W POLK ST 1708
4/26/17

\$230,000
40 E 9TH ST 503
4/25/17

\$425,000
520 S STATE ST 1402
4/25/17

For Sale

See listings on next page

Dearborn Street Realty

Tom Feddor,

312.203.3841

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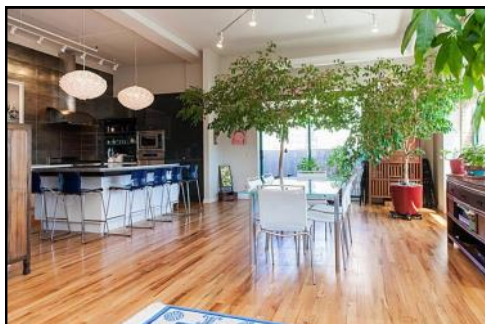
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FOR SALE

732 S. Financial Place Unit #801 ~ Penthouse Loft ~ offered at \$500K

Two indoor parking side-by-side parking spaces are offered at \$50K Sophisticated urban elegance abounds in this fabulous Timber & Brick Loft. This Spacious 1200 Sq Ft -City Home has been completely gutted to the brick walls, Professionally Redesigned and Re-Constructed using only the finest Materials and Custom Finishes. This top-floor Loft with bright eastern exposure offers City Skyline Views and includes: 2 generous sized bedrooms, 2 Spa-Baths and a 'Lofted' Bonus-Room. Features Include: Soaring 16' Heavy Timber Ceilings, Exposed Brick, Hardwood Flooring, Custom Kitchen Cabinetry, SubZero, Miele & Dacor Appliances, Custom Bathroom and Storage Cabinetry, Custom Doors, Windows and Millwork and Beautiful Glass 'Barn-Door' Style Rolling Doors with Imported Nickel Plated Hardware. No Expense has been spared, no detail has been missed. This is truly a One-of-a-Kind Loft in the Hot Printers Row, South Loop Community. Not to be missed!

732 S. Financial Place Unit #412 ~ Timber & Brick Loft ~ Offered at \$239K

Printers Row Lofts - Spacious 900 Sq Ft Timber & Brick Loft. Brand-New Stainless Appliances, Hardwood Floors Throughout, Exposed Brick, Soaring 12' Heavy Timber Ceilings, Brand-New Bathroom Vanity & Fixtures. Unit Shows Very Well! Fabulous Location just steps to Everything the Printers Row, South Loop Community has to offer! Loop Community Offers!

600 S. Dearborn Unit #1003 ~ Fully Rehabbed 1br/1ba Offered at \$265K

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Text or Call ~Tom Feddor #312-203-3841

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CALL John Zimmers, Managing Broker
@ 773-617-4734 or Email JohnZimmers@aol.com Dearborn Street Realty

633 S Plymouth Ct #702
1 bed, 1.5 bath, 1450 sq ft
\$299,724

Matt Laricy,
 Americorp, Ltd
 708.250.2696



727 S Dearborn St #611
1 bed, 1 bath, 1550 sq ft
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Brian Loomis, Coldwell Banker
 Residential
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.547 S Clark St #505
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 Redfin Corporation
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600 S Dearborn St #1805
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\$260,000

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