

A+E
FORGOTTEN SOULS
There are few memorials for the Chicagoans who died during the 1995 heat wave. While there are some reminders, a question lingers: Why did it become an afterthought?



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Chicago Tribune



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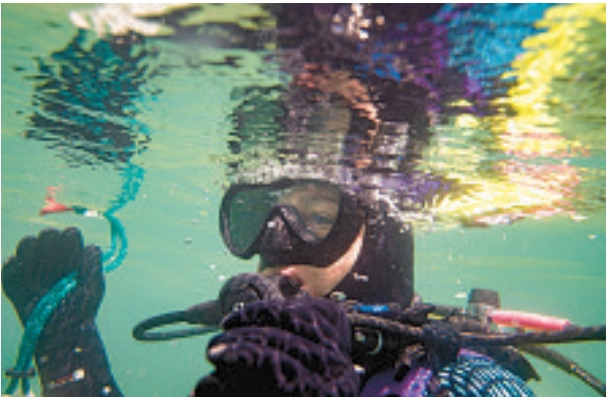
SUNDAY, JULY 13, 2025

BREAKING NEWS AT CHICAGOTRIBUNE.COM



Shoring the lake

Can artificial reefs in Lake Michigan slow erosion and boost fish population? Researchers are aiming to find out



Above: Hillary Glandon, an associate research scientist with the Illinois Natural History Survey's Lake Michigan biologist station, surfaces after collecting sediment core samples on a dive on June 30 at an artificial reef site in Zion.
Top: Team members collect samples from the artificial reef off the coast of Illinois Beach State Park in Zion on June 24. The team collected nine sediment samples and four algae samples that day. **AUDREY RICHARDSON/TRIBUNE PHOTOS**

By Lily Carey | Chicago Tribune

Floating about 500 feet offshore of Illinois Beach State Park, Hillary Glandon tightened her scuba goggles, grabbed a small masonite plate from a nearby kayak and dove beneath the Lake Michigan surface.

The masonite plate, called a Hester-Dendy sampler, helps biologists like Glandon scrape algae off underwater rocks. Just a few feet below the surface, she reached a huge underwater ridge made of limestone and other rocks piled into 750-foot rows parallel to the coast.

On this dive in late June, a crew of four scuba divers ferried equipment back and forth between the kayaks and the underwater ridges, collecting sediment samples near the boulders and dropping off underwater cameras on the bottom of the lake. As the divers continued their work, a thick morning fog began to fade, giving way to clear blue waters. From the surface, schools of juvenile fish could be spotted drifting between patches of sunlight at the bottom of the ridges.

These structures, called “rubble ridges,” aren’t just typical rocky reefs found on the bottom of the Great Lakes — they’re entirely man-made.

“We just want to see, are these reefs impacting aquatic biodiversity as well as sediment retention?” Glandon said. “We’re trying to get the whole picture of the aquatic community, and in order to do that, we need to sample

Turn to Lake, Page 10

Chicago’s fiscal house in disorder

Upcoming budget ‘grimmiest picture of all’ for mayor, aldermen

By A.D. Quig
Chicago Tribune

On a warm, late June morning at Truman College in Uptown, Mayor Brandon Johnson welcomed attendees to the first of several budget roundtables.

He hit on a familiar litany of positive developments, touting a drop in crime, expanded mental and behavioral health services, and youth employment opportunities.

“Let’s continue to expand and find innovative ways that we can bring true collaboration into the budgeting process to ensure that all of our residents are heard and that their needs are met,” Johnson said. “I’m truly honored that you are all here to help guide this budget process. It will not be easy, but nothing ever worth fighting for ever is.”

It was the only allusion Johnson made to the disorder in Chicago’s fiscal house that threatens the improvements and investments he’s fought for: a more than \$1 billion anticipated deficit for 2026, a major pending union contract, a fractious City Council resistant to both new revenues and cuts, federal threats to cancel grants to local governments and a school district long overdue on a promised pension payback.

Two days after that roundtable, Johnson’s finance team would disclose the city ended 2024 with a \$161 million deficit, emptying one of its key emergency funds. Adding to the bad tidings last week was a final \$7 billion estimate for the cost of a state bill boosting benefits for police and fire pensioners through 2055.

That zeroed out “unallocated” reserve balance is even lower than the depths of the 2008 recession, when it held just \$226,000, according to the city’s annual financial reports. It represents a serious

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INSIDE



CHRIS SWEDA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

A meteoric trajectory

How the Cubs’ Pete Crow-Armstrong, a first-time All-Star at 23, has become elite in every facet of the game. **Chicago Sports**

Tariffs on EU, Mexico

President Donald Trump said he is levying tariffs of 30% against the European Union and Mexico beginning Aug. 1. **Nation & World**

Safety-net hospitals face potential service cuts, layoffs

Trump’s tax bill throws into question future of Medicaid

By Lisa Schencker
Chicago Tribune

Christine Mertzalos is trying to avoid having her leg amputated.

Twice a week, a hospital van carries her from her home in Wrigleyville to the wound clinic at Humboldt Park Health, where a diabetic ulcer on her ankle is cleaned, treated and dressed. At one point, the ulcer wrapped nearly all the way around her lower leg — a situation that can lead to amputation if not controlled. The ulcer, however,

has shrunk significantly.

“This place has been a life-saver for me,” said Mertzalos, 61. “Without this clinic I don’t know what I would do.”

She and others, however, are worried they may have to find out in coming years. The recent signing of the “One Big Beautiful Bill” has thrown into question the future of services at safety-net hospitals like Humboldt Park Health that care for large numbers of people on Medicaid.

The new law will slash an estimated \$1 trillion from Medicaid over the next 10 years to help pay for tax cuts and enhanced border and national security, according

Turn to Hospitals, Page 6



Christine Mertzalos discusses new Medicaid cuts while receiving treatment for a diabetic ulcer at Humboldt Park Health in Chicago on Thursday. **E. JASON WAMBSGANS/CHICAGO TRIBUNE**

TODAY’S WEATHER



High 86 Low 66

Complete Chicagoland forecast on Page 20

\$5.75 city and suburbs and elsewhere
178th year No. 194 © Chicago Tribune



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