

A HOT COMMODITY

Despite seasonal appeal, outdoor kitchens are a growing addition to city's backyards. **Real Estate**



STACEY WESCOTT/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

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Never-before-heard tapes by late Jazz Showcase founder hit shelves — just in time for his 100th birthday. **Arts & Entertainment**

Below the surface

The waterways of Treviso, Italy, are teeming with fish. Anglers can wade in to find a serene world in the heart of the city. **Life & Travel**

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Amendment for abortion rights still not a reality

Supporters see more urgent situation in GOP-controlled states

By Dan Petrella
CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Embarking on a second term about six months after the U.S. Supreme Court's conservative majority struck down the federal right to abortion, Gov. JB Pritzker declared in his January 2023 inaugural address that the new realities facing those seeking the procedure "demand that we establish a constitutional protection for reproductive rights in Illinois."

In the four legislative sessions since, however, Pritzker and the Democratic-controlled Illinois General Assembly have taken no visible steps toward realizing that goal. The lack of action in Springfield ahead of a Sunday deadline for lawmakers to place constitutional amendment referendums on the Nov. 3 ballot guarantees Pritzker will end his second term without voters having an opportunity to decide whether abortion rights should be enshrined in the Illinois Constitution.

Undoubtedly, Illinois law contains some of the strongest protections for abortion rights in the nation, and Democratic lawmakers continue to pass measures to protect access for the state's residents and for the many out-of-state patients who come to Illinois to receive services. But the absence of a public push to change the state constitution reflects what abortion rights supporters see as a more urgent situation in Republican-controlled states, as well as the challenge of passing an amendment that requires approval by three-fifths majorities in both legislative chambers and by voters.

For Pritzker, a billionaire governor who has spent millions of dollars supporting similar abortion rights efforts in other states, the lack of action in Illinois cracks the door to criticism that his focus is divided as he campaigns this year for a rare third term in Springfield and considers a bid for the Democratic presidential nomination in 2028. By tabling a possible constitutional amendment, Democrats also have handed abortion rights opponents a rare opportunity to

See **ABORTION** on Page A5



Arabic curriculum faces controversy

Despite groundswell of support, southwest suburban school district's multiyear attempt to add language program has not gone smoothly

By Angie Leventis Lourgos and Addison Wright | CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Father of two Waleed Atawneh has urged his southwest suburban high school district to add Arabic to its world language program, contending it would boost job prospects for students, serve a national interest and provide an opportunity for many children — including his own — to identify with the subject matter they're studying.

"It would allow the students to see themselves in the curriculum," said Atawneh, a second-generation Arab American who hopes his young kids will one day have the option to take Arabic language classes at their public high school. "If the Arab American students saw their language, their culture, being taught as part of the mainstream curriculum ... it would allow them to be seen."

But the argument has not gone smoothly. Despite a sizable population of Arab American students and groundswell of support from many parents, Orland Park-based High School District 230 is facing controversy over a proposal to create an Arabic language program.

Many proponents expressed frustration with the school board and administration as multiyear efforts to bring Arabic language instruction to District 230 appeared to stall, culminating with the recent resignation of the only Arab American member of the school board.

Local educator Mohammed Jaber — who first proposed adding Arabic language instruction to the district's curriculum in 2023 — stepped down from the school board in late March, citing frustration with district resistance and delays to the proposal.

"I asked once, twice, I thought

See **ARABIC** on Page A6

Above: Students learn Arabic words while playing with bilingual flash cards during Modern Arabic 1 class at Richards High School in Oak Lawn on April 17. **ANTONIO PEREZ/CHICAGO TRIBUNE**



Adrian Williams, a senior at Portage High School, with his mother, Tiffany May, in Portage, Indiana, on Wednesday. He was charged with a felony after officers responded to a report of a gun — which turned out to not be real — outside a Planet Fitness. **TERRENCE ANTONIO JAMES/TRIBUNE**

'Senior assassin' game worries officials

Teen faces felony after playing the tag-style high school rite of passage

By Rebecca Johnson
CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Adrian Williams knew something was wrong when the police vehicles pulled up near his parked car outside a Planet Fitness in northwest Indiana.

Officers shouted "hands up" and pointed guns at him, a "nerve-wracking" experience, the 18-year-old Portage High School senior said. He managed to get out of his car and kneel down with his

hands in the air, his mind racing.

As police surrounded him, blue and red lights flashing, Williams could come up with only one possible reason for an arrest. So, even before the handcuffs went on, he started screaming, "It's a water gun!" and "I'm playing senior assassin!"

Up until that April 10 moment, Williams had never been in trouble with the law, he and his mother say. Williams is set to graduate, with plans to attend and play football at St. Xavier University in the fall.

But now, Williams is facing a felony charge after participating in senior assassin, a popular tag-style game where teens hunt

down their opponents with Nerf and water guns. Despite its threatening-sounding name, it's usually a good-spirited elimination challenge that has become tradition for many high school seniors across the Chicago area and the country.

But suburban police and school officials warn that the rite of passage can be "incredibly dangerous," especially when it's played in public. As high school graduation season approaches, police have blasted alerts about the controversial game, which they said has heavily been on their radar in recent years. The game is typically organized on social

See **GAME** on Page A4

US withdrawal plans a wake-up call

The United States' plans to pull 5,000 troops from Germany faced bipartisan resistance in Washington, with some saying it sends the "wrong signal" to Russia. **Nation & World, Page B5**

Banner year for the Big Ten

The Big Ten Conference is reveling in success after having three different schools win a national title in football and men's and women's basketball in the same year. **Sports**



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