

LAKE COUNTY

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Official decries ‘legalized racism’

County board’s first Latino blasts high court’s ICE ruling on LA

By Joseph States

Lake County Board member Esiah Campos, the first and only Latino to serve on the board, railed against a recent U.S. Supreme Court decision to allow immigration agents to profile people based on race, language, location and job, at the end of Tuesday’s board meeting.

His comments come as the county sees itself swept up in the national fight over deportation,

with the Great Lakes Naval Base becoming “ground zero for ICE operations” in Chicago, Campos said.

Lake County, as well as several local municipalities, have put out statements referencing the potential of deportation operations in the area, affirming that they won’t participate in federal immigration enforcement and acknowledging the rising fears and concerns in the community.

The base has seen hundreds of

protesters since news broke that it would be the base of operations for President Donald Trump’s threatened immigration crackdown in the Chicagoland area.

Most recently, the Department of Homeland Security announced it was launching “Operation Midway Blitz” to target “criminal illegal aliens.” The operation is “in honor” of Katie Abraham, a 20-year-old killed in Illinois

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The Lake County Board’s first Latino member, Esiah Campos, railed against a recent U.S. Supreme Court decision regarding racial profiling for deportation operations. His comments come as the county finds itself in the midst of an immigration enforcement fight between the state and federal government. **JOE STATES/PIONEER PRESS**

He’s in preschool, and in Mensa

Vernon Hills parents of high-IQ 4-year-old aim to help other families

By Joseph States

America’s media loves its geniuses. Maybe they’re broody academics poring over textbooks, or a working-class Boston janitor solving impossible equations on chalkboards, or eccentric white-haired inventors in lab coats explaining time travel.

But Vernon Hills’ own certified genius is nothing so dramatic. He’s a smiling, rowdy preschooler with a fixation on space, a love of puzzles and plenty of energy.

Zorien Royce, who just recently turned 4 years old, got an IQ score of 156 out of 160 on the WPPSI-IV Wechsler test, earning his place in two of the most well-known high-IQ groups in the world — American Mensa and Intertel.

Zorien’s father, Md Naqib Alam Ansari, is an associate director for a pharmaceutical company. His mother, Monirupa Ananya, is a civil engineer at Turner Construction. Ansari came to the United States in 2014, and Ananya joined him in 2018 after completing her master’s. They previously lived in Waukegan before moving to Vernon Hills for the schools.

Ananya said they didn’t initially have an impression that Zorien was out of the ordinary, although they noted he was especially curious. But when he was quick to pick up speaking, the alphabet and more, they went to experts for advice.

That led them to having Zorien take a children’s IQ test, and then the acceptance into Mensa and Intertel. Ananya said the two prestigious organizations offer extensive knowledge and resources on how to raise a gifted child, as well as connections with other families.

“Our whole goal was, when we saw these abilities, we wanted to provide him with resources and support and the right environment so that he can thrive,” Ananya said.

According to a Mensa press release, Zorien was spelling complex words and counting forward and backward to 100 by age 2, and today can read at a second- to third-grade level and handle multiplication and fractions. The release said he is also



Zorien Royce, 4, holds his Mensa card and bites his Kumon Platinum Level medal. The energetic boy from Vernon Hills has scored 156 out of 160 on an IQ test for young children. **JOE STATES/PIONEER PRESS PHOTOS**

fluent in English and Bengali, with “early exposure” to Spanish, Hindi and French.

Zorien now attends Science & Arts Academy in Des Plaines, which is specifically aimed at gifted kids. The “gifted” label isn’t limited to academics either, Ananya said. Kids all have “unique” talents that should be supported, she said, and the parents have encouraged their young boy to follow his interests, whether that’s space exploration or bugs.

“For us as parents, every kid is very unique, and their uniqueness should be celebrated in such a way where they can feel their feelings are valued,” Ananya said. “When Zorien is doing math, when he is swimming, it’s all about what he

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HIGHLAND PARK

Gun law inspired by parade shooting

DOJ to argue against Illinois ban this month

By Jeremy Gornor
Chicago Tribune

President Donald Trump’s Department of Justice has been allowed to insert itself into a federal appellate court case over Illinois’ ban on certain high-powered guns and high-capacity magazines, with the administration arguing it is seeking to protect citizens’ Second Amendment rights.

The Trump administration isn’t a party to the case, but the 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Chicago has allowed the Justice Department’s top official in charge of civil rights, Harmeet Dhillon, to deliver oral arguments for five minutes when the panel hears arguments later this month over whether the 2023 law violates the U.S. Constitution.

It’s the latest effort by the Trump administration to poke Gov. JB Pritzker, a consistent Trump foe and potential 2028 White House aspirant, with Trump and Pritzker most recently waging a war of words over the federal government amping up its immigration enforcement efforts and potentially deploying National Guard troops to Chicago streets.

Trump’s DOJ has also sued over a Pritzker policy allowing immigrants without legal status to pay lower college tuition rates. In addition, Dhillon herself has led the Justice Department’s efforts to get the Illinois State Board of Elections to turn over sensitive data about the state’s roughly 8.3 million voters as part of a broader effort by the Trump administration to exert power over state-run elections, data that state elections officials have not handed over.

In the gun case, the Department of Justice is siding with gun-rights groups to oppose a Pritzker-backed law that was passed following the mass shooting at the 2022 High-

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Out with The Temporary, in with American Place



Construction will start in the fall on American Place’s permanent casino in Waukegan. **FULL HOUSE RESORTS**



Charles Selle

The announcement that the coming construction of a permanent casino in Waukegan is now a sure bet was a dream come true for civic boosters and gamblers. It also comes at a time of increased competition for the Illinois gaming industry.

Officials from Full House Resorts based in Las Vegas said the other day they plan to break ground this fall for the Ameri-

can Place resort and casino on a 38-acre parcel in the Fountain Square entertainment zone on the city’s far West Side.

The long-awaited brick-and-mortar gaming haven will be built alongside The Temporary, the marshmallow-colored giant tent-like interim facility which has been used temporarily — hence the name — for more than two years.

While Full House originally promised a permanent casino when it won the tense bidding for a Lake County gaming license, it has been a long, strange trip to get to the point where the company can see a date certain — late summer or early fall 2027 — to take area gamblers to the

next level. It’s a positive financial trend for the long-term health and popularity of gaming in the county.

Not that the 75,000-square-foot The Temporary, with 1,000 slot machines and 50 table games, has been a bust. It has been the opposite, according to August figures from the Illinois Gaming Board. It ranks fifth in the state out of 17 in adjusted gross revenue for table games and in the top 10 for slots.

Overall in August, it was eighth in total adjusted gross receipts at \$10.9 million, while hosting 77,894 visitors. The casino had record net revenue and operating

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