

Chicago Tribune



QUESTIONS? CALL 1-800-TRIBUNE

TUESDAY, MAY 14, 2024

BREAKING NEWS AT CHICAGOTRIBUNE.COM

Cohen: Trump involved in payoffs

He testifies he acted at candidate's behest to aid '16 campaign

By Michael R. Sisak, Jill Colvin and Eric Tucker
Associated Press

NEW YORK — Donald Trump was intimately involved with all aspects of a scheme to stifle stories about sex that threatened to torpedo his 2016 campaign, his former lawyer said Monday in

matter-of-fact testimony that went to the heart of the former president's hush money trial.

"Everything required Mr. Trump's sign-off," said Michael Cohen, Trump's fixer-turned-foe and the prosecution's star witness in a case now entering its final, pivotal stretch.

In hours of highly anticipated

testimony, Cohen placed Trump at the center of the hush money plot, saying the then-candidate had promised to reimburse Cohen for the money the lawyer fronted and was constantly updated about secret efforts to bury stories feared to be harmful to the campaign.

"Stop this from getting out," Cohen, the prosecution's star

witness, quoted Trump as telling him in reference to porn actor Stormy Daniels' account of a sexual encounter with Trump a decade earlier.

A similar episode occurred when Cohen alerted Trump that a Playboy model was alleging that she and Trump had an extramarital affair. "Make sure it doesn't get released," Cohen said Trump told him. The woman, Karen McDougal, was paid \$150,000 in

an arrangement that was made after Trump received a "complete and total update on everything that transpired."

"What I was doing was at the direction of and benefit of Mr. Trump," Cohen testified.

Cohen is by far the prosecution's most important witness, and though his testimony lacked the electricity that defined Daniels'

Turn to Trump, Page 11



STACEY WESCOTT/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Memorial grows for teen killed in Glenview crash

Teens from Glenbrook South High School gather Monday to mourn their friend Marko Niketic, who was killed in a car crash late Sunday night in the 1200 block of East Lake Avenue in Glenview. Preston Schute said Niketic was his best friend and "the best guy I ever knew." Schute said, "He's one of those people that you meet him and he's glowing. The most genuine human being ever." Schute added, "He was super-popular." Page 3

'We're on the friends and family plan now'

New details in alleged AT&T bribe scheme involving Madigan

By Jason Meisner and Ray Long
Chicago Tribune

Less than two weeks after AT&T Illinois' bill to end mandated landline service became law in 2017, the utility's then-president, Paul La Schiazza, allegedly received a request from a relative of House Speaker Michael Madigan to sponsor a nonprofit event.

The unidentified relative said the idea came "at the suggestion of our good friend, Mike McClain," a former lobbyist and Madigan's longtime confidant, according to a new prosecution filing. La Schiazza forwarded the request to a colleague in the legislative affairs department on July 12, 2017, writing "this will be endless," according to the filing. "I suspect the 'thank you'

Turn to La Schiazza, Page 2



Sri Sri Dantam practices bowling during tryouts for the Breybourne Cricket Club in Naperville on March 27. TROY STOLT/BEACON-NEWS

Suburban cricket club gets quick OK for its future home in Oswego

33-acre site to include hotel, restaurant, training facility

By R. Christian Smith
Beacon-News

While professional sports teams in Chicago are taking a look at new stadiums, and facing roadblocks along the way, a professional cricket team

in the far west suburbs got quick approval for a stadium that could hold up to 24,000 fans.

The future Breybourne Stadium in Oswego is planned to be the seat of the Breybourne Cricket Club, which currently has teams in a number of regional amateur and professional leagues. Club Chairman and CEO Paresch Patel, an Oswego resident, hopes that the stadium will also allow the club

to one day field a team in the newly-formed Major League Cricket.

"Chicago has the second-highest cricket consumption in the country," Patel said. "There is so much demand to play cricket, in the six months of the summer that we have, that every single day I can sell this stadium up."

Turn to Cricket, Page 4

Proposal prompts concern of prosecutor

Bill would help moms with babies born with drugs in system

By Robert McCoppin
Chicago Tribune

A proposal to change the way Illinois handles new mothers with drug-use disorders is meant to prioritize treatment, but it has prompted "grave concerns" from a prosecutor who oversaw one infamous case.

A bill in Springfield would end the requirement that prosecutors be notified when a baby is born with controlled substances in his or her system and would no longer necessarily consider that evidence of child abuse.

The hope is that by taking away the threat of losing custody of a baby, mothers would be more likely to seek treatment.

The initiative was prompted by a finding that the leading cause of death in Illinois among expectant or new mothers is drug use. Almost one-third of the 263 such mothers who died in 2018 to 2020 died of substance use, the state Department of Public Health reported.

The proposed change in the law would create a task force to develop a plan for helping infants and mothers exposed to illicit drugs during pregnancy. These family recovery plans would include medical care, recovery support and referrals to community services for the child and caregiver.

McHenry County State's Attorney Patrick Kenneally, a Republican, objected to the

Turn to Babies, Page 7

Statewide public defender revisited

Illinois legislators plan to make a second push to create a statewide office to help provide resources to public defenders after a previous effort fizzled. Chicagoland, Page 3

Ex-Loretto Hospital executive charged

A former high-level executive at Loretto Hospital has been hit with federal charges alleging she helped embezzle nearly half a million dollars at the height of the COVID-19 crisis. Business

Trump leads in battleground states

Former President Donald Trump leads President Joe Biden in five crucial battleground states, a new set of polls shows. Nation & World

