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'A tale of two Mike Madigans' on stand

Testimony offered life story, but also route to sentence

By Ray Long and Jason Meisner
Chicago Tribune

Months before a federal judge sentenced former Illinois House Speaker Michael Madigan to prison on Friday, the once-mighty state Democratic Party chairman took the witness stand in his corruption trial in an attempt to save himself.

The only politician in America to serve 36 years as a House speaker guided jurors through his version of a complex personal and political life where few have gone before.

For a high-profile Chicago politician that some called the "sphinx" because of his secrecy, Madigan's decision to testify demonstrated he could not sit by and let his fate play out without speaking up.

On Friday, Madigan found himself in a different posture, pleading for mercy as he asked for more time with a family that included an ailing wife.

"When I look back on my life, being speaker is not what gives me the most pride," Madigan said. "I am most proud of being a good husband, a good father and now a good grandfather."

In sentencing Madigan to seven and a half years in federal prison and fining him \$2.5 million, U.S. District Judge John Robert Blakey made it clear that Madigan's decision to testify at trial had cost him dearly. The judge called some aspects of his testimony about the details of the alleged schemes "a nauseating display of perjury" that was "hard to watch."

Blakey said he was struck by what essentially was "a tale of two different Mike Madigans," a play on the theme of a Charles Dickens classic, adding that the

Turn to Madigan, Page 8

Massive crowds gather in downtown Chicago for 'No Kings' demonstration in admonishment of Trump, mixing anti-authoritarian messaging with vows to protect immigrants, democracy

'WE'RE ALL PEOPLE'



Demonstrators begin to march at Daley Plaza in Chicago on Saturday. JOHN J. KIM/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

By Andrew Carter, Shanzeh Ahmad and Sam Charles
Chicago Tribune

The sounds of one of Chicago's largest protests in recent memory reverberated throughout downtown streets Saturday afternoon, as tens of thousands gathered in a united admonishment of President Donald Trump and then marched through the center of the city, pausing in front of the tower bearing his name to direct their ire.

Organizers believed the downtown Chicago protest to be one of the largest among the more than 1,500 "No Kings" protests that were scheduled throughout the country, in what leaders of the demonstrations described as "a national mobilization to reject authoritarianism and stand united against fear."

Theresa and Robert Hoban, retired attorneys who split their time between Chicago and Florida, were among those who crowded into downtown Saturday morning and waited for the protest to begin. They were "doing this for our grandchildren's future," Theresa Hoban said, "because we believe the country has taken a turn for the worse under this administration."

In an intentional move, the "No Kings" protests were planned for the same day as President Donald Trump's 79th birthday and the military parade his administration organized in Washington, D.C., at a cost estimated to be as much as \$45 million. "No Kings" organizers said in a statement Saturday afternoon that millions gathered around the country, and that "the turnout has exceeded expectations."

In Chicago, those attending

Turn to Rally, Page 14

From red states to deep blue cities, a look at Saturday's "No Kings" protests across the nation. Nation & World

Martinez reflects as tumultuous CPS reign ends

By Nell Salzman
Chicago Tribune

At an eighth grade graduation last week at his alma mater, John A. Walsh Elementary School in Pilsen, outgoing schools chief Pedro Martinez recounted to parents and students how one teacher — Mr. Asher — turned the trajectory of his life around.

"I was below grade level. I was struggling, frankly. You know, I grew up in poverty," Martinez said. "And (he) just saw something in me."

Martinez is leaving the district

on Wednesday. In an interview with the Tribune on Thursday, he emotionally recounted his passion for Chicago Public Schools and for the city where he found a home as the child of Mexican immigrants. He urged the next leader of the district to practice empathy in order to set an example for the more than 320,000 kids they will oversee.

The top district official drew national attention this school year amid a showdown between



Martinez

CPS and Mayor Brandon Johnson, who was backed by the mayor's close ally, the Chicago Teachers Union. That conflict culminated Wednesday in a claim of defamation Martinez filed against CTU, its president, Stacy Davis Gates, and Chicago Board of Education President Sean Harden. Martinez hopes to add the claim as an amendment to an ongoing lawsuit he filed against the board after he was fired in late December.

He starts a new job as the commissioner of elementary and secondary education in Massachusetts on July 1. In the interview with the Tribune, Martinez did not hold back from describing the toll the drama-laden back-and-forth had taken on him and his family. He compared the political positions of the board members and officials who led the charge to fire him to the polarization under President Donald Trump.

"What you see on both sides is

Turn to Martinez, Page 4

NATION & WORLD Parade projects military might

The grand military parade that President Donald Trump had been wanting for eight years kicked off Saturday evening with tanks, troops and a 21-gun salute, playing out against the counterpoint of protesters around the country.

ONE CENTURY, ONE ROAD: Tribune's Route 66 series continues with a closer look at Arizona's roadside charms. Chicagoland, Page 6

TODAY'S WEATHER



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Complete Chicagoland forecast on Page 20

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Hold on to your castanets in Sevilla



Rick Steves

Sevilla, the capital of Spain's southern Andalucía region, is as soulful a place as I've ever been. It's a wonderful-to-be-alive kind of town, buzzing with festivals, heat, color and guitars.

The gateway to the New World in the 16th century, Sevilla boomed during Spain's golden age. The explorers Amerigo Vespucci and Ferdinand Magellan sailed from its great river harbor, discovering abundant sources of gold, silver, cocoa and tobacco. For a time, these New World riches turned Sevilla into Spain's largest and wealthiest city.

Today's Sevilla has its share of impressive sights, including the world's largest Gothic cathedral (with the tomb of Christopher Columbus) and a fantastic Moorish palace and garden (the Alcázar). But the real magic is the city itself and its unique traditions.

Sevilla swings easily from the sacred to the secular. Holy Week, between Palm Sunday and Easter, is celebrated with intense devotional fervor here. Over the course of the week, about 100 floats depicting some aspect of the Passion of Jesus Christ are paraded over the cobblestones at all hours by the faithful.

As the religious holiday wraps up, the mood shifts to party mode. A week or two after Easter, much of Sevilla packs into its vast fairgrounds for the April Fair. Countless tents line the lanes, each one a private party zone of a family, club, or association. Hold on to your castanets as it's a week of all-nighters, with the focus on dancing, drinking, and socializing.

On opening day, the cream of Sevilla's soci-



An abacería — part grocery store, part tapas bar — is the ideal place to rub elbows with locals in Sevilla, Spain. **RICK STEVES**

ety parades around the fairground in carriages or on horseback. Men wear traditional suits with fitted pants and a short jacket, and women turn out in brightly colored flamenco dresses. Because the party tents are open only to members and their guests, invitations are coveted. If you're not lucky enough to have a Sevillian friend who can get you in, make your way to one of the seven public tents. Inside, drink flows freely, and the food is fun, bountiful and cheap. Wandering the fairgrounds, it feels like a thousand wedding parties all celebrated at once.

Sevilla is the birthplace of another kind of party: flamenco. It's still the best place to experience this emotive dance-and-music form of snapping fingers,

stamping feet and clicking castanets. Many of the concerts in town are designed for tourists, but they are real and riveting. If you stay up to the wee hours, you might be lucky enough to catch a late-night set in a casual bar. In these cases, flamenco is a flamboyant happening, with bystanders clapping along and encouraging the dancers with whoops and shouts.

Even food is a theatrical event in this town. The colorful tapas tradition got its start in Andalucía, and Sevilla is the region's noshing capital. Classic, old-school tapas bars are everywhere, but nowadays gourmet places, with spiffed-up decor and creative menus, are the rage. If you want a good "restaurant" experience,

your best value is to find a trendy tapas bar that offers table seating and sit down to enjoy some raciones (shareable dinner plate-size portions). As the tapas scene goes from early to very late and it's the standard way for locals to "eat out," the adventurous traveler will find it the most memorable and fun way to "eat local."

I always learn something new when I travel. This time in Sevilla, my tapas guide demonstrated how quality jamón (cured ham), sliced thin, will stick to a plate when you upend it. I'm not sure what that has to do with quality, but one thing I am sure of: When in Spain, life's too short to eat mediocre jamón. At least once, pay extra for the best ham on the list (Iberico).

For a different twist on

tapas, look for an abacería, an old-time grocery store that doubles as a tapas bar. The combination isn't completely unexpected, as many tapas chefs rely on Spain's high-quality canned foods in composing their tasty tidbits. Squeeze into the back room of one of these spots, and you're squeezing back in time. Rubbing elbows with local eaters in an abacería, surrounded by tinned sardines and canned peaches, you'll feel like you're in on a secret ... almost a Spanish speakeasy.

To walk off a meal on a balmy evening, wander into the Barrio Santa Cruz, Sevilla's once-thriving Jewish quarter. This classy maze of lanes is too tight and tangled for cars but perfect for meandering among small plazas,

tile-covered patios and whitewashed houses draped in flowers. Getting lost is easy ... and recommended. Orange trees abound, and when they blossom for three weeks in spring, the aroma is heavenly. Rhythms change quickly in Sevilla, from the intensity of flamenco's beat to the quiet of its back alleys. It's street theater that everyone can both enjoy and be a part of.

Rick Steves writes European guidebooks, hosts travel shows on public TV and radio, and organizes European tours. This column revisits some of Rick's favorite places over the past two decades. Visit his website at ricksteves.com, email him at rick@ricksteves.com or follow his blog on Facebook.

CELEBRITY TRAVEL

Checking out keeps Gunnar motivated

By **Jae-Ha Kim**
Tribune Content Agency

Ahead of his tour this fall — which kicks off in Chicago — alternative rocker Gunnar is promoting his new album, "Sun Faded." Full of contemplative lyrics set to taut, guitar-based melodies, the L.A.-based artist reveals his fears and hopes on songs just as "Upside Down."

"I'm really proud of this record," the musician, 24, said. "I feel like it's a perfect representation of who I am today and the things I've gotten through to get to this point."

This interview with Gunnar has been edited for clarity and length.

Q: What do you remember about your first professional gig?

A: This is an incredible question. I remember feeling like I was going to have a full-blown heart attack. I was white as a ghost, trying to hold my stomach from coming up and shaking with nerves (and) adrenaline.

Q: What is your bucket-list venue that you have yet to perform in?

A: I really want to play Radio City Music Hall.

Q: Have you written any songs while you were on the road?

A: Yes! I wrote part of "Bitter" while I was on tour with Maroon 5 in Europe.

Q: Does the music you hear in a particular city or country inspire your own work?

A: Of course. I actually get a ton of inspiration from



Musician Gunnar said that given the choice, he will always opt for a warm beach vacation. **YOUNG ASTRONAUTS**

classic Americana music. Timeless, storytelling, anthemic music.

Q: Do you have any upcoming trips planned?

A: I am actually going to Italy this summer with a small group of friends, and then tour in October across the United States.

Q: What is your worst vacation memory?

A: My worst vacation memory was definitely almost going to jail in Barcelona. When we were on tour, there was a small mishap that could have landed me in a cell for a long weekend, which (would've) included me missing shows. Thankfully, everything got sorted because of my fluent Spanish-speaking manager David.

Q: Have you visited places for work that were so nice that you traveled back there later for a personal trip?

A: One hundred percent. Amsterdam was a city that stood out to me that I absolutely loved and want to go back to. I also want to travel back to Budapest. I think so much of the attraction for me is the dynamics in culture. It's so different from here in the States and I really enjoy it.

Q: What is your favorite vacation destination?

A: I'm a total beach, warm weather guy. I want to play some golf, sit on the beach and relax. My friends always give me

grief because they're all avid skiers and want me to come, but when I can get time off, I want to be somewhere warm.

Q: Where are your favorite weekend getaways?

A: I love driving out to Palm Springs. It's an easy two-hour drive from Los Angeles, but it feels like you're away enough to disconnect.

Q: How do you separate work from vacation trips?

A: I used to really, really struggle with this. I never was able to turn my work mode off. I've really tried to learn how to take time and just relax. Every time I get proper time away, I come back more motivated and excited to dive back in, so being able to check out for a few days has become a necessary healthy part of my life.

Q: What untapped destination should people know about?

A: Costa Rica! I just was in Costa Rica (recently) for the first time and it blew me away. The people, culture, weather and energy was so special. The surf was incredible.

Q: Where would you like to go that you have never been to before?

A: I really want to go to Australia and Tokyo. I've never been to either and would love to experience both.

For more from the reporter, visit www.jaehakim.com.

TRAVEL TROUBLESHOOTER

'Small scratch' on rental car leads to whopping \$1,800 bill

By **Christopher Elliott** | King Features Syndicate

I recently rented a car from the Enterprise location in Munich. When I returned the vehicle after several days, no one inspected it.

A few days later, I received a message in my spam folder saying that I had damaged the car. Enterprise claims I scratched the car during my rental. The scratch is small, barely finger-length and thin. They sent me a bill for just over \$1,800.

The photos they sent show no damage in one photo, and the other two photos that show the scratch don't show the license plate or any indication that it is the same car. I took a video of the car when I returned it, and it shows no damage where they claim the scratch is.

I called Enterprise's customer service. The United States representative couldn't find any record of the damage and couldn't help me.

Three months later, Enterprise charged my credit card for the full amount of the damage. I disputed the charge with my credit card company, but they are siding with Enterprise.

How can I defend myself against this false claim?

— *Eric Weiman, San Diego*

A: You shouldn't have to pay for damage that didn't exist when you returned the vehicle. You're responsible for the car from the time you pick it up to the time you return it. But after you return it? That's on the company.

You did the right thing by taking a video of the car when you returned it. This gives you some evidence to support your claim. I also recommend taking "before" photos and videos of the vehicle, just to establish a baseline.

The most confusing part of your case is that you showed the rental location a video of the car you rented, and it appears the car didn't have a scratch. Meanwhile, the photos they showed that allegedly proved you had damaged the car did not identify this

particular car as the car you had rented. In other words, it could have been any vehicle in the company's fleet. And when you asked for clarification, Enterprise seemed to double down on its claim.

I think you had one more option: an appeal to an executive at Enterprise. I list the names, numbers and email addresses of the top customer service executives at Enterprise on my consumer advocacy site, elliott.org. I contacted Enterprise on your behalf.

"We take seriously any concerns brought to us by customers and investigate them thoroughly," a representative told me. "In this particular instance, damage to the vehicle was not present when the renter took possession of the vehicle, yet was clearly

present when the vehicle was processed for return."

Enterprise says it has a photographic tunnel that is operated by a third party. Vehicles from all rental companies pass through the tunnel in and out of Munich Airport and are photographed for damage. The photos suggest that you returned your car with damage.

"Because of this, we do intend to stand by our charge in this case and pursue the renter for damages," the Enterprise spokesman said.

Christopher Elliott is the chief advocacy officer of Elliott Advocacy, a nonprofit organization that helps consumers resolve their problems. Contact him at elliott.org/help or chris@elliott.org.