



WAS A.J. LIEBLING RIGHT ABOUT CHICAGO?

Arguably nothing in 100 years of The New Yorker landed on Chicago with more oomph than the infamous 1952 profile of the city. It's time for a second reading. **A+E**

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SUNDAY, JUNE 29, 2025

BREAKING NEWS AT CHICAGOTRIBUNE.COM



ROUTE 66 ONE CENTURY, ONE ROAD

JOURNEY'S END

Eight states, 21 days and 2,448 miles later, the Great American Road Trip comes to a conclusion

By Jonathan Bullington and E. Jason Wambsgans
Chicago Tribune

After three weeks on the road, Tribune journalists Jonathan Bullington and E. Jason Wambsgans completed their Route 66 journey in Chicago — the cornerstone of the historic highway.

As they explored the enduring appeal of America's "Main Street" ahead of its centennial next year, the famed route took them to quirky roadside attractions, mom-and-pop diners and struggling neighborhoods across three time zones.

In their final days, including a 300-mile stretch through Illinois, Bullington and Wambsgans continued to meet the people and places that give Route 66 its soul.

Join them on their last legs:

Hamburgers so savory, they can make you cry

EL RENO, Okla. — The air downtown smells of grilled onions, wafting from the flat tops of three Route 66 restaurants that have helped give this small town about 25 miles west of Oklahoma City a distinct culinary identity.

They're called fried onion burgers. Plenty of places put onions on burgers. Few have been doing it as long, or as well, as they do here.

"They're not like any burger," said Lyndsay Bayne, 48, the city's public information and marketing manager. "It's hard to explain. You have to eat one."

A few years before the country plunged into the Great Depression and the nascent Route 66 ferried Dust Bowl refugees west,

Turn to Route 66, Page 10

Violent crime in city has big drop

Year-to-date homicides fall to level not seen in a decade in Chicago

By Sam Charles and Caroline Kubzansky
Chicago Tribune

Major cities across the country, including New York and Los Angeles, have seen significant dips in violent crime since the unrest of 2020, when protests, riots and looting followed the killing of George Floyd by a police officer in Minneapolis and the COVID-19 pandemic was taking hold.

Now Chicago finds itself firmly in that group. The city is poised to close the first half of the year with its steepest statistical drop in recent memory, with fewer than 200 homicides in the first six months of a calendar year for the first time in more than a decade, according to city and county figures.

And 2025 would be the fourth year in a row that Chicago violence totals have decreased, despite President Donald Trump and others holding the city out as a national punching bag on violent crime.

Police and experts have not singled out one particular cause of the improvement. Police Superintendent Larry Snelling said his department's strategy has been to intensify efforts to tamp down hot spots.

"We've broken down certain locations where we know, number one, there's historic violence that occurs in those areas," Snelling told the Tribune on Thursday. "But we also look at current trends of violence in particular areas, and we focus by making sure that we're allocating resources for those locations."

"If we're going to be serious about saving people's lives, then we need to look where people's lives are being taken," he added.

Turn to Crime, Page 4

INSIDE: Sharp drop in arrests, other long-term crime trends shown on new Cook County data dashboard. **Chicagoland, Page 4**



Above: Tourists stop along Route 66 in downtown El Reno, Oklahoma, on June 14. At top: Eric Wagner, with the state tourism office, photographs Ding Peng, from China, with giant "muffler man" fiberglass statues collected at the American Giants museum in Atlanta, Illinois, on June 21. E. JASON WAMBSGANS/TRIBUNE PHOTOS

INSIDE



Okoro, left, and Ball. AP 2021

Bulls move forward on reshaping roster

In the first trade of the summer for the Bulls, the team sent point guard Lonzo Ball to the Cavaliers in exchange for forward Isaac Okoro, ESPN reports. **Chicago Sports**

Republican senators revamp Trump's bill

The Senate launched a rare Saturday session as the GOP races to pass a package of tax breaks, spending cuts and bolstered deportation funds. **Nation & World**

Heat wave shows gaps in city's cooling center network

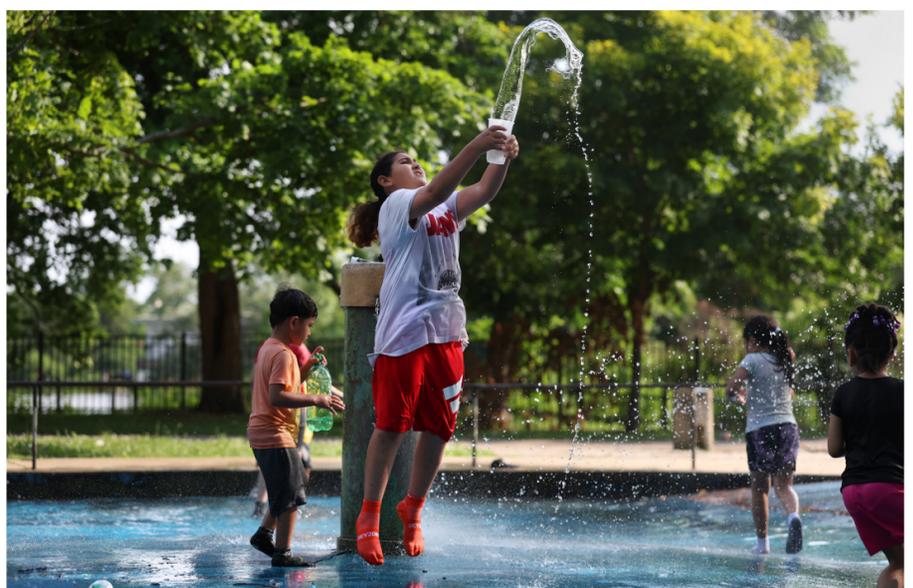
By Lily Carey and Adriana Pérez
Chicago Tribune

Record high nighttime temperatures, a dangerously high heat index and intense humidity swept through Chicago from June 21 to 23, marking the city's first major heat wave of the summer.

Ahead of the heat wave, Mayor Brandon Johnson told residents at a June 20 news conference that the city was "prepared to demonstrate the full force of government" by offering city-run cooling centers.

The city's website promotes 288 cooling center locations across the city, which are intended to "offer residents air-conditioned refuge" during extreme heat advisories. Of those, 110 are outdoor "splash pads" — water features operated by the

Turn to Cooling, Page 5



Ava Montenegro, 9, plays in a splash pad in Chicago's Humboldt Park on Wednesday. CHRIS SWEDA/TRIBUNE

TODAY'S WEATHER



High 94 Low 74

Complete Chicagoland forecast on Page 20

\$5.75 city and suburbs and elsewhere
178th year No. 180 © Chicago Tribune



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Hamburg: Germany's alluring 2nd city



Rick Steves

Hamburg is Germany's second-largest city and its most important port. Like other great European "second cities" — such as Marseille, Glasgow and Antwerp — this northern port city has a special pride. Popular with Germans (but a rare stop for Americans), Hamburg feels real and has an edgy charm. Visiting, you sense it knows where it came from and where it's going.

Travelers looking for quaint, Old World Europe won't find it in Hamburg. The city's medieval center was virtually leveled by a huge fire in 1842, and World War II bombing decimated the rest. Today's city center is a soulless mixture of office buildings and brand-name chain shops.

Instead, Hamburg's allure is around the edges, showcasing reminders of Germany's industrial prosperity. A century ago, Hamburg's port was the world's third largest, and between 1850 and 1930, more than five million Germans emigrated to the U.S. from here.

These days, the city's fishy maritime atmosphere — with a constant breeze and the evocative cry of seagulls — gives Hamburg an almost Scandinavian feel that's worlds away from the sun-drenched, Baroque joviality of Bavaria.

One city-center sight that's worth visiting is the magnificent 600-room City Hall. After the previous City Hall burned down in the fire, the city constructed the current building to highlight the wealth and grandeur of turn-of-the-20th-century imperial Germany.



Speicherstadt, Hamburg's old red-brick warehouse district on the Elbe River, now houses museums and other attractions. **DOMINIC ARIZONA BONUCCELLI**

It shows off Neo-Renaissance, Neo-Gothic, and other Historicist styles popular around the year 1900.

From City Hall, a short walk north leads to Binnenalster, the smaller of Hamburg's two delightful lakes. Lining the lake is the Jungfernstieg, the city's most elegant promenade boasting top-of-the-line shops. Year-round, canal boats take visitors on a sleepy one-hour tour around the lake.

Just above Binnenalster is the larger lake, Aussealster. In the past, private gardens tumbled down from mansions lining the lake. But a 1953 law guaranteed public lake access for everyone, and walking and biking paths now parallel its shore, providing Hamburg — one of Germany's greenest cities — with a sprawling parkland.

Cradling the city to the south is another body of water: the Elbe River, site of the city's former dock-

lands. With the advent of modern container ships that required more space than Hamburg's industrial zone could accommodate, most shipping business shifted to a larger port nearby — and all this prime real estate (just a half-mile from City Hall) suddenly became available.

Now this area — like the former docklands areas in London, Barcelona and Oslo — is being gentrified. The result: Hafencity, long Europe's biggest urban development project. When it's done, downtown Hamburg will be 40% bigger.

The centerpiece of Hafencity is the Elbphilharmonie Concert Hall, a towering and wildly beautiful piece of architecture. Inaugurated in 2017, it's a combination concert hall, hotel and apartment complex that welcomes visitors to ride its escalator to a spectacular city and Elbe River view.

The northern part of

Hafencity is occupied by Speicherstadt, the old warehouse district. The city preserved the area's massive red-brick riverside warehouses as part of the urban landscape, and some of them now house museums, including the International Maritime Museum and Miniatur Wunderland — one of Germany's most visited attractions featuring a sprawling model railway and miniature versions of the Alps, Scandinavia, Italy and the U.S.

Downriver from Hafencity is the St. Pauli Landungsbrücken harbor-front area, which locals call "the Balcony of Hamburg." One of my favorite sight-seeing experiences in Hamburg is to hop a harbor cruise and gaze at the mighty port. The massive ships, container cranes and dry and wet docks are breathtaking.

An interesting place to cap your day is the Reeperbahn, named after the rope

makers who once labored here to supply Hamburg's shipping industry. Home to many of Hamburg's Broadway-style musical theaters and strip clubs, this neighborhood is where the Beatles got their start.

The Reeperbahn also contains the tawdry red-light sailors' quarter. But thanks to a rising tide of affluence, the red-light district is shrinking, and these days, it's confined to one small lane, defined by metal modesty walls erected during Hitler's rule. Back then, German society didn't admit to having prostitutes, but an exception was made for lonely sailors on shore leave.

After being surrounded by the seediness of the Reeperbahn, the nearby Schulterblade district provides a wonderful breath of fresh cultural air. This trendy neighborhood hosts a squatter-building-turned-arts-venue and a strip with so many cafés

it's nicknamed "Latte Macchiato Boulevard." An edgy-yet-charming park has one of the few reminders I saw of World War II in Hamburg — a bunker that's now a climbing wall covered with street art.

Districts like the Schulterblade and Hafencity show off modern-day Hamburg at its finest. No longer content to be famous merely for its lusty sailors' quarter and as the Beatles' springboard to stardom, the new Hamburg is evolving into a cultural capital moving boldly into a promising future.

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

Musician escapes to Wales cottage

By Jae-Ha Kim
Tribune Content Agency

The British synth-pop band OMD (Orchestral Manoeuvres in the Dark) have a plethora of well-known songs, including "Enola Gay," "Tesla Girls" and "Dreaming," that have resonated with generations of music fans. But their most iconic is "If You Leave," played during the prom scene at the end of the 1986 John Hughes film "Pretty in Pink."

Now almost 50 years into their career, OMD is back on the road, playing in cities across the United States. On a break from their tour, Andy McCluskey chatted about the group's early beginnings, some of the memorable venues they've played and how they stay fit on the road — hint, it includes dancing.

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

Q: Where are you right now?

A: I have just climbed off the tour bus after an eight-hour drive from Orlando to Atlanta. Hallelujah for the sleeping bunks! Tour buses have become more luxurious, and the ride is smoother than back in the 1980s. Though I don't know if that is the suspension or the road surfaces.

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

A: The first concert that we played as Orchestral Manoeuvres in the Dark was on Oct. 12, 1978. We had a crazy idea for two



A museum aficionado, OMD's Andy McCluskey said the Art Institute of Chicago is one of his all-time favorites. **ED MILES**

guys to play our electronic hobby music in a new wave club called Eric's in Liverpool. That is why we invented the crazy name. We wanted people to know that the music was different. Also, we thought that the name didn't matter as we only planned one gig as a dare. Now here we are more than 46 years later, still in the same band.

Q: Everyone says that touring can be difficult. What do you do to maintain your health while on the road?

A: My idiosyncratic dance style on stage keeps me fit. I certainly burn calories. The hardest part is not damaging my new titanium knee! I make sure that I get electrolytes on tour and lots of sleep. I am always the first one into my bunk on the bus. Two gin and tonics, sleeping pills and a history audiobook in the ear pods. I am usually asleep before the bus moves. So boring, but the party is on the stage, not afterwards these days.

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

A: We are working our way toward filling the Hollywood Bowl. Possibly on the next tour. We have played The Royal Albert Hall in London three times. They were all special. We remember that it was the most prestigious concert hall in the United Kingdom when we were young.

Q: Do you have any free time built into your tours

to go sightseeing or just enjoy the city you're in?

A: I have always loved the opportunity that the band has given me to travel to different cities and countries that I never could have dreamt of seeing as a working-class kid from Merseyside. I especially adore being able to visit some of the greatest museums and art galleries in the world. The Art Institute of Chicago is one of my favorites. An incredible permanent collection.

Q: Where are your favorite weekend getaways?

A: I am so fortunate that I have a lovely little cottage in North Wales that I can quickly escape to. It is only 80 minutes away from my house, but it feels like a different world. A stream in the back garden, a river in the field out front and steam trains sending ghostly, echoing whistles down the steep valley. It's not the most luxurious place, but I can go for long walks along the river bank, then kick off my muddy shoes, collapse in front of the real fire and totally chill.

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

A: I need to go to Egypt. I would love to take a cruise down the Nile and see the incredible ancient sites. Just got to get the time of year right. I'm not good in big crowds, nor in heat over 85 (degrees).

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

TRAVEL TROUBLESHOOTER

Princess charges cancellation fee after error with payment

By Christopher Elliott | King Features Syndicate

I booked an 11-day coastal cruise on the Majestic Princess from Seattle to San Diego. I made the reservation online and gave Princess my credit card information for the fare and travel insurance.

Princess confirmed my booking, charging my card for the fare but not the insurance. The next day, I received a "shortfall notice" that the travel insurance charge must be paid by the end of the day. Since it was 10 p.m., I called the provided number but only reached their voicemail without an option to leave a message.

At 12:24 a.m. the next morning, I received a "cancellation notification." When I called Princess, a representative said the reservation was canceled and couldn't be reinstated. Princess also charged me a \$3,718 cancellation fee.

I disputed the fare charge with my credit card company, but Princess contested the chargeback. Can you help me get this fee removed?

— Douglas Berry, Sumner, Washington

A: Princess Cruises shouldn't have canceled your reservation and charged you a cancellation fee. You did everything right by providing your credit card information for both the fare and insurance. It seems their system failed to process the insurance payment. This is not your fault.

You followed the instructions in the shortfall notice but were unable to reach anyone because the cruise line's office was closed.

It's unacceptable for the cruise line to cancel your reservation just a few hours later without giving you the chance to rectify the situation.

When you disputed the charge with your credit card company, Princess unfairly contested the reversal, claiming you had canceled the reservation.

How absurd!

What went wrong? It looks like Princess was trying to process your card but couldn't. Credit cards use sophisticated but fallible fraud detection algorithms to pick up any problematic charges.

It's possible that your credit card allowed the first Princess charge but blocked the second one, believing it was fraudulent. You can ensure this doesn't happen by calling your bank to let them know you're about to make a big purchase that could potentially get flagged.

You could have appealed to a manager at Princess. I have a list of contacts for Princess Cruise executives on my website, Elliott.org. I contacted Princess Cruises on your behalf, and it agreed to waive the cancellation fees and refund your money.

So, what happened? Although the cruise line wouldn't tell me, you heard from a representative who offered you a few details. "When they finally looked at what happened with our reservation, it was obvious the problem was their automated reservation system," you told me.

It's a shame that it took my intervention to get Princess Cruises to do the right thing. If this ever happens to you, don't accept a cancellation fee. Escalate your case to a supervisor or executive and stay with it until they return your money.

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.