

CHICAGO SPORTS

Williams set to go in Bears' preseason tilt

REAL ESTATE

Some hotels keeping Chicago history alive



BARS FOR EARS

A trend in Japan, listening spaces are now popping up all over Chicagoland. A+E

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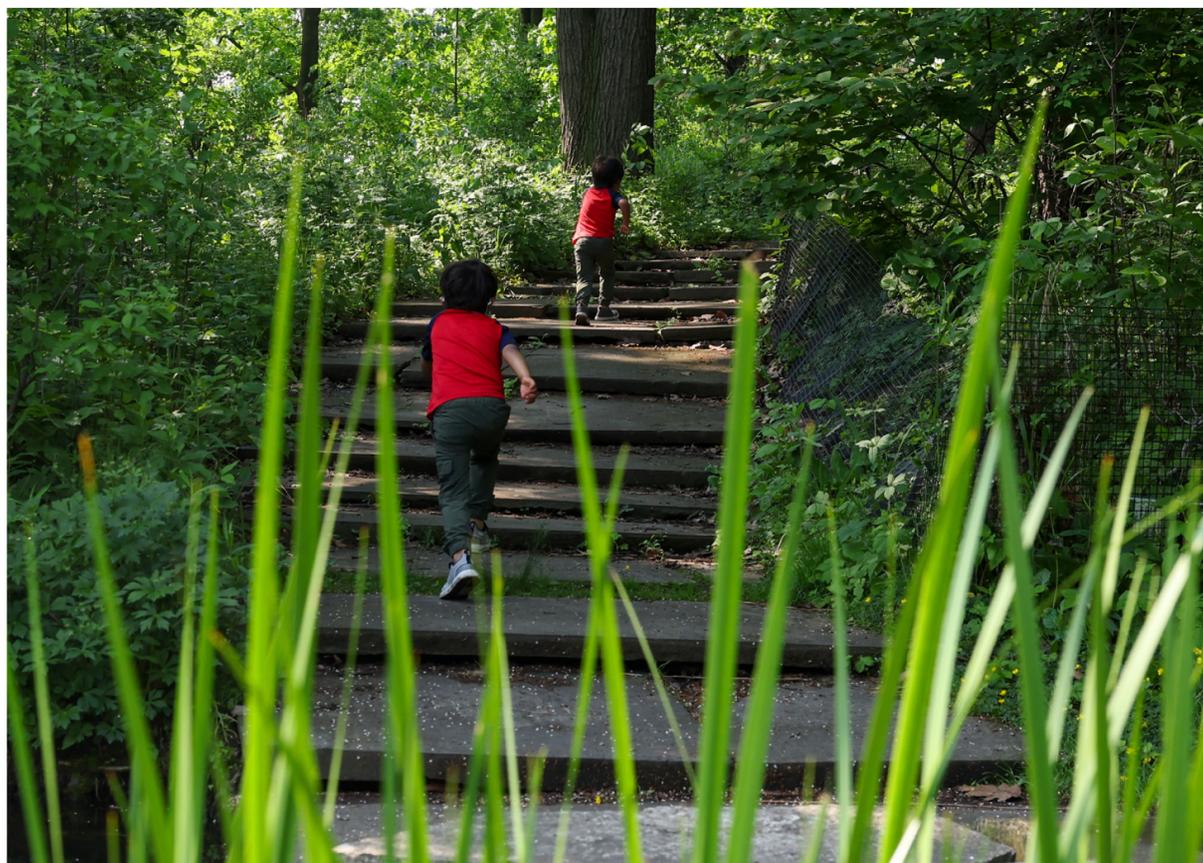
Chicago Tribune



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SUNDAY, AUGUST 17, 2025

BREAKING NEWS AT CHICAGOTRIBUNE.COM



A race to cut SNAP costs

State tries to navigate federal shifts without booting beneficiaries

By Olivia Olander, Chicago Tribune

As an outreach coordinator for one of the Chicago area's largest food banks, Joann Montes is already seeing an impact from President Donald Trump's reductions to public assistance programs even before those cuts take effect.

Anxious older adults who for years received what were once called food stamps are approaching Montes at senior centers to ask if those benefits will continue and whether they'll have to return to jobs "to be able to feed themselves."

"Our folks who are 60 and older are asking questions about whether they're going to be able to receive SNAP," Montes, who works at the Greater Chicago Food Depository, said about the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. "Will they have to go back to work?"

A little more than a month after Trump signed into law a sweeping Republican domestic package that expanded work requirements for SNAP benefits to previously exempt groups such as adults ages 55 to 64, the state and people receiving benefits are getting ready for a recalibration.

Democratic Gov. JB Pritzker's administration is sprinting to figure out how to avoid a potential \$700 million price tag by changing operations to achieve a level of payment accuracy that the vast majority of states currently do not meet. At the same time, Illinois also must handle the federally mandated work requirements on new groups that experts say could lead to people losing benefits.

"It would be almost easier

Turn to SNAP, Page 4

LEARNING IN A LOOPHOLE

Gap in law leaves unorthodox school in Oak Park mansion largely unregulated by state

By Jonathan Bullington and Gregory Royal Pratt, Chicago Tribune

The families had each been so optimistic about the small private school housed in an Oak Park mansion with a castle-like design reminiscent of Hogwarts. The Language and Music School advertised "a year round 'homeschool in school' style of education" where children could learn at their own pace, using a curriculum tailored to their needs and interests — a Spanish-immersive alternative to the perceived rigidity of the public school system.

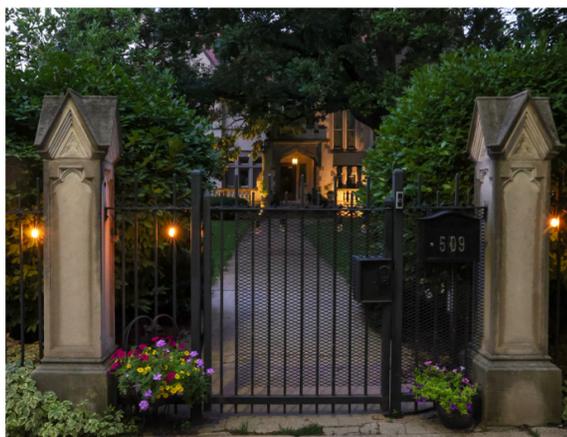
Finding it, said one mother, felt like "magic." Soon, though, five of these families started to ask themselves whether they'd made a mistake.

Some parents said their kids had described being left unsupervised or in the care of older students who exposed them to video games the parents felt were too mature. Some began to doubt whether their children were getting the high-quality education they

expected after paying thousands of dollars a year.

One couple told the Tribune they felt devastated by how the school handled their 4-year-old daughter's allegation that an instructor behaved inappropriately.

Turn to School, Page 12



Top: Two boys who once attended The Language and Music School in Oak Park play in Chicago's Columbus Park this summer. Above: The Language and Music School, housed in a historic mansion, advertises a "'homeschool in school' style of education" tailored to students' interests. STACEY WESCOTT/CHICAGO TRIBUNE PHOTOS

Troubled waters for lake's whitefish

Invasive mussels, climate change are wiping out population that's cultural, culinary cornerstone

By Lily Carey, Chicago Tribune

Sitting by a dock near the northern tip of Door County, Wisconsin, Charlie Henriksen looked out at the surrounding waters, where Green Bay meets Lake Michigan.

"Our dock is 5 miles from what used to be the greatest fishing in the Great Lakes," Henriksen said.

The lifelong Wisconsinite has run his commercial fishing business, Henriksen Fisheries, for over 37 years, and has been fishing in this area for 50. For much of his career, Henriksen said, fisheries in

Green Bay and across Lake Michigan, including his, were anchored by the lake whitefish — a species of freshwater fish native to the Great Lakes.

Yet as climate change and invasive species threaten the whitefish's reproductive patterns, experts say the species is at risk of disappearing entirely from Lake Michigan in the next few years.

"(The decline) kicked the business in the head. It was just devastating," Henriksen said.

From salted whitefish exports that poured out of Chicago's harbor in the late 1800s, to white-

fish dinners in northern Michigan and Wisconsin, to their integral role in some Anishinaabe creation stories, they've been a cultural and culinary cornerstone of the region for thousands of years. They're also a major economic engine for fisheries across the Great Lakes, which bring an estimated \$5.1 billion to the region annually.

Today, whitefish populations have dwindled to between 1% and 10% of their historic highs, according to Jason Smith, a biologist with the Bay Mills Indian Community in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. While the decline has been steady over the past 15 years, Smith said it's getting to the point where there

Turn to Whitefish, Page 6



Jason Smith, center, a Great Lakes fisheries assessment biologist at the Bay Mills Indian Community, and Paul Ripple, director of biological services, survey zooplankton for a whitefish study conducted on Michigan's Whitefish Bay on Aug. 8. ZBIGNIEW BZDAK/FOR THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE

TODAY'S WEATHER



High 81 Low 70

Complete Chicagoland forecast on Page 20

\$5.75 city and suburbs and elsewhere 178th year No. 229 © Chicago Tribune



# Stir up your travels with seaside bars



**Rick Steves**

August is vacation time in Europe. Entire towns seem to shut down as locals head to seaside escapes, eager to enjoy unforgettable beaches and the culture that comes with them. Let's close our eyes, tune in to the rhythm of the waves, picture a sunset glinting through a drink in your hand, and join them. Here are some of my favorite seaside bars in Europe.

**In Dubrovnik, Croatia:** The "Buža" bar offers the most scenic spot for a drink in Dubrovnik. Perched on a cliff above the sea, clinging like a barnacle to the outside of the city walls, this is a peaceful, shaded getaway from the bustle of the Old Town ... the perfect place to watch cruise ships disappear into the horizon. "Buža" means "hole in the wall" — and that's exactly what you'll have to go through to get to this place.

**In Istanbul, Turkey:** The double-decker Galata Bridge spans the Golden Horn, a historic inlet that separates the old and new towns of Istanbul. And all along both the horn and the bridge, you'll find dozens of inviting, no-name bars. Find a place for some Turkish specialties: Drink an unfiltered, highly caffeinated "Turkish coffee" (which leaves a thick coating of "mud" in the bottom) or a cup of tea, and suck on a water pipe filled with flavorful dried fruit.

**In Salema, Portugal:** One bit of old Algarve magic still glitters quietly in the sun — Salema. This simple fishing village has three beachside streets, many restaurants, a few hotels, a couple of bars, a classic



Ayo — a lovable ponytailed bohemian who promises to be here until he dies — has been cooking up beachside paella for decades in Nerja, Spain. **RICK STEVES**

beach with a paved promenade, and endless sun. The Atlántico is known for its tasty fresh fish, fun drinks, friendly service, and a wonderful beachside terrace.

**In Nerja, Spain:** Ayo (www.ayonerja.com) is famous for its character of an owner and its beachside all-you-can-eat paella feast at lunchtime. For decades, Ayo — a lovable ponytailed bohemian who promises to be here until he dies — has been feeding locals. The paella fires get stoked up at about noon. Grab one of the many tables under the canopy next to the rustic, open-fire cooking zone, and enjoy the Burriana Beach setting with a jug of sangria.

**In Villefranche-sur-Mer, France:** In the glitzy world

of the French Riviera, Villefranche-sur-Mer offers travelers an easygoing slice of small-town Mediterranean life. Luxury sailing yachts glisten in the bay — an inspiration to those lazing along the harborfront to start saving their money when their trips are over. Lou Bantry (www.restaurant-lou-bantry.fr) feels nautical, with blue and white tables and umbrellas bellying up to the edge of the harbor. Spill your rosé, and it's in the sea.

**In Vernazza, Italy:** Ristorante Belforte's (www.ristorantebelforte.it) tiny balcony lets you sip your "vino della Cinque Terre" overlooking the Mediterranean from the edge of a stony castle. You can feel the mist from the surf crashing below on

the Vernazza breakwater. And the views of the ancient vineyard terracing all around you makes the experience a highlight.

**In Conwy, Wales:** This Welsh town, watched over by its protective castle, has a particularly charming harbor. On summer evenings, the action on the quay is mellow, multigenerational and perfectly Welsh. Everyone is here enjoying the local cuisine — "chips," ice cream and beer — and savoring that great British pastime: chasing little crabs. Facing the harbor, the Liverpool Arms pub was built by a captain in the 19th century. Today it remains a salty and characteristic hangout.

**In Staithes, England:** A ragamuffin village where

the boy who became Captain James Cook got his first taste of the sea, Staithes is a salty jumble of cottages bunny-hopping down a ravine into a tiny harbor on the North Sea. There's nothing to do but stroll the beach and nurse a harborside beer or ice cream. The Cod and Lobster (www.codandlobster.co.uk), overlooking the harbor, has scenic outdoor benches and a cozy living room warmed by a fire.

**In Solvorn, Norway:** Walaker Hotel, a former inn and coach station, has been run by the Walaker family since 1690 (that's a lot of pressure on ninth-generation owner Ole Henrik). The hotel, set right on the Lustrafjord, has a garden perfect for relaxing and, if neces-

sary, even convalescing. I love to savor my coffee and dessert on the balcony with a fjordside setting — mesmerized by Norwegian mountains.

Skål, santé, na zdravje, prost — cheers! Europe is full of romantic waterfront spots, perfect to grab a drink and slow your pulse. Feel the breeze, smell the sea, and enjoy the cry of the gulls — it could turn out to be your ultimate European moment.

*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

### Lee finds filming on location immersive

By Jae-Ha Kim  
Tribune Content Agency

Tinpo Lee's acting career has ranged from "General Hospital" to the Denzel Washington film "Roman J. Israel, Esq." But ask him which role was his favorite, and he will almost always include the ones with his daughter Peyton Elizabeth Lee. He has fond memories of guest starring on her series "Doogie Kameāloha, M.D."

The duo worked together on the upcoming film "Fu," which Lee describes as a "darkly comic short film I co-wrote, produced and starred in. It was directed by Peyton ... and is a story about identity, legacy and midlife reinvention. It's the most personal project I've ever dared to share. Creating it together as father and daughter was one of the highlights of my life."

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

**Q: You're in "Final Destination: Bloodlines," which was a huge hit. How has that experience been?**

**A:** I played Marty Reyes in "Final Destination: Bloodlines," the newest chapter in the 25-year-old franchise. It was an incredible chance to bring grounded humanity to a genre role, and to be part of a story that's become a cultural touchstone. I'll be honest, I never thought I'd be able to say I was in the No. 1 movie in the world on opening weekend. That was surreal.

**Q: Where are some locations that you've filmed your projects?**

**A:** "Final Destination:



"Final Destination: Bloodlines" actor Tinpo Lee is looking forward to his surfing trip in Indonesia. **DAVID ZAUGH**

"Bloodlines" was shot between February and April in Vancouver. When we arrived, it was gray and wet, but by the time I wrapped, spring had taken hold. The trees, flowers and people were coming back to life. Vancouver is a truly beautiful place to visit. It has all the conveniences and culture of a big city with tons of outdoor adventure and recreation nearby. We shot "Fu" in Salt Lake City. We spent three summers there when Peyton was filming her first show, "Andi Mack," and it felt poetic to return. We hired some of our old crew and realized we'd come full circle, right back to where her creative journey began. In the past, I've also shot in Hawaii, Chicago, New York, Austin, Beijing and Shanghai.

**Q: Do you have any upcoming trips planned for the rest of this year?**

**A:** This October, I'm going on a surf trip to the Mentawai Islands in Indonesia. There will be eight of us, all good friends and all over 50, living on a chartered catamaran for 12 nights. We'll be going island to island in search of perfect, empty waves. Boys only, so the routine will be surf, sleep, eat, repeat, with a smattering of fishing, snorkeling and dumb dad jokes.

**Q: What's a trip you took as a child that stands out?**

**A:** We took a day trip to Catalina Island when I was 4 or 5. I remember snor-

keling in water so cold I was shivering uncontrollably, but I wouldn't get out. I was mesmerized by the fish. I felt like I was one of them. I think it may have been the start of my recurring dream that I can breathe underwater.

**Q: Do you have a preference working on location versus on a set?**

**A:** Working on set in Los Angeles close to home allows me to go home every night, sleep in my own bed and eat home-cooked meals, plus (spend weekends with my family. But I really enjoy being on location. There's something immersive about it. When I'm away, I don't have the distractions of everyday life, so I can fully focus on the work I love. It gives me the time and mental space to sink into a completely new perspective.

**Q: If you could pick a location to film a project, where would it be?**

**A:** I'd love to work somewhere obscure, remote or extreme — Nepal, Antarctica, Africa. A place so far from my daily life that it would shift the way I think and feel in a profound way. Somewhere transformative. I know that sounds ambitious, but I think some places change you on a cellular level. On a simpler note, I'd love to work in Italy, just for the pasta.

For more from the reporter, visit [www.jaehakim.com](http://www.jaehakim.com).

## TRAVEL TROUBLESHOOTER

### Revising itinerary adds hours of travel, removes sightseeing

By Christopher Elliott | King Features Syndicate

I booked a 17-day National Geographic Expedition to Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. I'm traveling with four other people. We recently discovered that on Day 11, our itinerary had been changed. Instead of a day of sightseeing, we were scheduled to spend the entire day traveling from Hanoi to Luang Prabang.

The original itinerary included a 1-hour-10-minute nonstop flight, but National Geographic now has us on a flight with a stopover. Our revised itinerary now includes a 1-hour-50-minute flight from Hanoi to Bangkok, a three-hour stopover, then a 1-hour-25-minute flight from Bangkok to Luang Prabang.

I'm not getting anywhere with National Geographic. Can you help me?

— Harrison Coerver, Dennis, Massachusetts

**A:** National Geographic should have done what it promised in your original itinerary. And what was that? Day 11 says: "Begin the day with a morning cruise by sampan through the stunning landscapes of Tam Coc. Then explore the cave temples of Bich Dong Pagoda and the serene 13th-century Thai Vi Temple, surrounded by beautiful scenery."

I don't see anything about spending more than 6 hours in transit. But have a look at the terms of your tour: National Geographic reserves the right to change the itinerary or activity "as appropriate for safety, security, comfort or convenience without liability or notice."

In other words, National Geographic was both right and wrong. The fine print, which you agreed to when you signed up for the tour, allows National Geographic to turn your nonstop flight into an

all-day affair. But there's also an implied agreement that your tour operator will be respectful of your time. Seeing three countries in 17 days is pretty ambitious, and the tour itinerary certainly leaves you with the impression that you won't waste a minute.

I see you did everything you could to rescue Day 11 of your tour. You asked repeatedly for your original nonstop flights to be restored. When National Geographic refused, you appealed. It's hard to know what was happening behind-the-scenes, but as someone who has spent a fair amount of time in Southeast Asia, I can tell you that flight schedules change all the time. This might have been the only available flight to Luang Prabang.

National Geographic Expeditions are operated by Global Adrenaline, a wholly owned subsidi-

ary of the company. I list the names, numbers and emails of their executives on my consumer advocacy site, [elliott.org](http://elliott.org). A quick note to one of them might have helped.

I thought it was worth asking National Geographic what was going on with your flights. (Full disclosure: I spent 17 years as an editor at National Geographic. I also published my book "How to Be the World's Smartest Traveler" through National Geographic.) I reached out to National Geographic on your behalf. The company switched your flights back to the nonstop ones as you requested.

*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](http://elliott.org/help) or [chris@elliott.org](mailto:chris@elliott.org).*