



'Frozen' at
Cadillac,
'Cinderella' at
Paramount
— Back Page



Gonzales: Hall
vote comes amid
contradictions
— Sports



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Enough staff at suburban stores? 'We are confident'

Despite labor shortages, retailers say they're ready for Black Friday

BY ELENA FERRARIN
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In light of the current labor shortage, shoppers may wonder what the situation will be like in stores on Black Friday.

Retail businesses across the suburbs, both part of national chains and independently owned, say they have been working hard to attract new employees and are confident

they'll have the staffing they need for one of the busiest shopping days of the year.

"With the (COVID-19) pandemic, hiring has changed in nature and was at times difficult, but lately, we've been able to get more candidates and applications," said Jon Abt, co-president of Abt Electronics in Glenview.

The electronics store will not be short-staffed this holiday season,

after doing things like upping its pay to \$18 an hour and diversifying its advertisement via billboards, website and email, he said.

Sheri McGown, owner of Cocoon gift shop in Geneva, said she's had no trouble keeping the store staffed with her customary 10 employees, none of whom were let go during the pandemic.

See STAFFING on PAGE 5



Sales personnel help customers Friday at Abt Electronics in Glenview. While many businesses nationwide are facing labor shortages, the store and others across the suburbs expect enough staffing on hand to handle Black Friday.

'We are Waukesha strong'

Community unites after 5 killed, dozens injured by SUV at parade; charges coming

BY SCOTT BAUER, MICHAEL BALSAMO AND MIKE HOUSEHOLDER
Associated Press

WAUKESHA, Wis. — Hundreds gathered at a downtown park Monday night for a candlelight vigil to honor those lost and hurt after an SUV plowed into a Christmas parade in this Milwaukee suburb, killing at least five people and injuring 48.

Volunteers handed out sandwiches, hot chocolate and candles at the vigil, which was attended by interfaith leaders and elected officials.

"We are parents. We are neighbors. We are hurting. We are angry. We are sad. We are confused. We are thankful. We are all in this together. We are Waukesha Strong," said a tearful Amanda Medina Roddy, with the Waukesha school district.

The SUV's driver was leaving the scene of a domestic dispute that had taken place just minutes earlier, Police Chief Dan Thompson said. There was no evidence the bloodshed Sunday was a terrorist attack or that the suspect, Darrell Brooks Jr., 39, of Milwaukee, knew anyone in the parade, Thompson said, and he acted alone.

Brooks had left the site of the domestic disturbance before officers arrived and was not being chased by police at the time of the

See PARADE on PAGE 4



A child is among those taking part in a candlelight vigil Monday in downtown Waukesha, Wis., a day after an SUV plowed into a Sunday Christmas parade, killing five and injuring dozens.



A woman puts up a sign saying "Waukesha weeps" outside City Hall in Waukesha.

Social media director for DuPage Dems out

• Downers Grove woman likened Waukesha deaths to "karma" over Rittenhouse verdict. Page 4

Student from Grayslake witnesses panic and horror

BY DOUG T. GRAHAM
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Chaos, screaming and crying were what Kaylee Staral saw after a man drove his SUV through the Waukesha Christmas parade Sunday, killing five people and injuring many more.

Staral, who grew up in Grayslake and moved to Waukesha over the summer, attended the parade with her family as a way to connect with their new community. But the festivities came to a tragic halt late in the afternoon. By evening, Staral — an intern for the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel and a journalism major at Marquette University — was part of the unfolding national story.



Kaylee Staral

She posted on Twitter: "UPDATE: A car just ran through the middle of a downtown Waukesha parade. Multiple people on the ground injured, becoming one of the first to report on the tragedy."

"I was not on assignment. I just

See WITNESS on PAGE 4

Arbery's death soon goes to jury

Prosecutors say he was killed because he was Black; defense claims slaying was self-defense

BY RUSS BYNUM
Associated Press

BRUNSWICK, Ga. — Attorneys made a final push Monday to persuade the jury in the killing of Ahmaud Arbery, with the prosecution saying three white men chased him solely "because he was a Black man running down the street" and defense attorneys repeatedly blaming Arbery for his own death.

In closing arguments, a defense attorney for the man who fired the fatal gunshots said the 25-year-old Arbery was killed as he violently resisted a legal effort to detain him to answer questions about burglaries in a neighborhood just outside the port city of Brunswick, Georgia.

"It is absolutely, horrifically tragic that this has happened," attorney Jason Sheffield said. "This is where the law is intertwined with heartache and tragedy. You are allowed to defend yourself."

The attorneys made their appeals to the disproportionately white jury after 10 days of testimony that concluded last week. Closing arguments were to resume today. Prosecutors will get the final word because they carry the burden of proving their case beyond a reasonable doubt.

Arbery's killing in 2020 became part of a larger national reckoning on racial justice after a graphic video of his death leaked online two months later. Though prosecutors did not argue that racism motivated the killing, federal authorities have charged all three men with hate crimes, alleging that they chased and killed Arbery because he was Black.

Father and son Greg and Travis McMichael grabbed guns and pursued Arbery in a pickup



Ahmaud Arbery

See ARBERY on PAGE 2



Schaumburg police have arrested a Chicago man in connection with the killing of a 28-year-old Oregon woman discovered Friday morning at the Extended Stay America hotel.

Suspect arrested in murder at hotel

Schaumburg police say nobody else appeared in danger

BY ERIC PETERSON
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Schaumburg police have arrested a 23-year-old Chicago man in connection with the killing of a Portland, Oregon, woman found dead Friday morning at an extended stay hotel.

The victim, identified as 28-year-old Susan J. Tobey,

died as a result of blunt-force trauma, according to the Cook County medical examiner's office, which ruled the death a homicide.

Jose Y. Martinez Segundo, of the 800 block of West Cuyler Avenue, was charged with first-degree murder, according to a news release issued late Monday by the Schaumburg Police Department. He

was taken into custody without incident Sunday during the execution of a warrant at his home. He is scheduled to appear in court for a bond hearing Tuesday in Rolling Meadows.

According to police, officers



Jose Y. Martinez Segundo

and paramedics discovered Tobey's body at the Extended Stay America, 1200 E. American Lane, at 11:33 a.m. Friday while responding to a 911 call about an unresponsive person.

It doesn't appear that anyone else at the hotel was in danger, Wolf said.

The killing comes just months after Schaumburg officials approved new regulations to increase safety at its

See ARREST on PAGE 5

Weather
A little warmer

Into the 40s.
See the back of Section 2.



Index

Business	2-5	Horoscope	5-2	Obituaries	2-7
Comics	5-2	Lottery	1-8	Puzzles	5-2
Editorials	1-6	Markets	2-6	Weather	2-8



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Staffing: Bonuses, higher pay help retailers with hiring

Continued from Page 1

"We're fine," she said. "They like to work here. It's a combination of pay and the environment, I'd say."

A total of 4.4 million people nationwide, or about 3% of the workforce, quit their jobs in September, a record for the second straight month. Most left for new jobs, and competition for workers was particularly intense in the retail and delivery industries.

However, Illinois is among eight states with more unemployed workers than job openings, Stateline reported. The others are Hawaii, California, Connecticut, New York, New Mexico, New Jersey and Nevada.

The labor shortage is worst in sectors with relatively low pay and high contact with the public, such as transportation, food service and hospitality.

There is also disparity among who's unemployed: while the national unemployment rate was down to 4.6% in October, Black workers still faced 10.8% unemployment in Illinois, Stateline reported.

Businesses facing worker shortages have tried different methods, said Rob Carr, president and CEO of the Illinois Retail Merchants Association.



A salesperson helps a couple Friday at Abt Electronics in Glenview. The store's management — like many other retailers across the suburbs — expects to have adequate staffing this holiday season, after doing things like increasing hourly pay.

"They have significantly raised pay, they tried bonuses, they've added benefits ... there's been a variety of approaches they've taken," he said. "Nothing has appeared to work so far."

Still, Carr believes that Black Friday staffing will hold up fine for retailers. "I don't think it's going to be

particularly bad," he said.

That's because more people have been shopping online, especially since the pandemic, and many stores started their sales early in November, he said.

This year, Macy's planned to hire approximately 1,500 workers in Illinois — nearly 1,300 in the Chicago area

exceptional service to our customers during this busy season," Olivo said.

Ulta Beauty worked "earlier than ever before" to prepare for the holiday season, said Kelly Gallagher, manager of public relations for the company headquartered in Bolingbrook. That included additional training hours for new employees and an additional \$2 per hour on Black Friday, Christmas Eve, and weekends through Jan. 8, she said. Stylists are eligible for a new-hire bonus of up to \$5,000 based on productivity.

"We feel prepared for the season and, as always, are keeping health and safety as our highest priorities," she said.

Staffing problems for the most part haven't affected small, locally owned retailers, said Teresa Habczyk, who owns Le Obsession Boutique in Arlington Heights. She has one part-time employee who's been there about two years.

"For now we are OK," she said. "I don't think it's a problem for small businesses. I'd say more for department stores and restaurants."

Some local businesses stay out of the Black Friday fray altogether.

"Black Friday has not been

a big day for me," said Tim Monson, owner of Monson Jewelers in Palatine.

"I have specials all year long and my customers are not rushing out on Black Friday. I am definitely different than most."

As for staffing, Monson says he employs three people, two of whom have been there for about 20 years, so it has not been an issue.

Nationally, there have been many reports of angry customers, particularly during air travel. Carr said that locally, he hasn't heard about that kind of problem "other than attempts to enforce the mask mandate."

One issue that might trigger customers this holiday season is the lower availability of products in stores due to pandemic-related supply chain delays, Abt said.

"We do expect that some people will be impatient or potentially irate, particularly when they don't fully understand the situation," he said. "In these cases, our staff employs the ever-famous technique of 'kill them with kindness.'"

"We make sure that we're respectful and informative, so they can begin to understand the larger-scale issues at play."

Schaumburg police have arrested a Chicago man in connection with the killing of a 28-year-old Oregon woman discovered Friday morning at the Extended Stay America hotel.



ERIC PETERSON/epeterson@dailyherald.com, August 2021

Arrest: More domestic violence calls at extended-stay hotels, police say

Continued from Page 1

30 hotels.

At the time, police said they had seen an increase in thefts, car break-ins, assaults, batteries, domestic disputes, juvenile nuisances and noise complaints at hotels over the previous three years.

Extended-stay hotels saw a particular rise in domestic violence calls, Schaumburg Police Chief

Bill Wolf said, as it had become more common for people to use them as primary residences.

The new regulations addressed parking lot lighting, security, video surveillance and the enforcement of curfews for juveniles in common areas. They also involved limits on room occupancy, the keeping of registration records, restricting or monitoring access at entrances between 9 a.m. and 6 p.m., and limiting the

length of stay to 28 days, except for corporate contracts and emergencies.

Membership in the police department's Safe Hotel Program also became mandatory. Started about five years ago, the program provides an open line of communication between the police department and hotels.

Wolf said the Extended Stay America has cooperated with the ongoing investigation.

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