

FALL ARTS 2025

SEASON'S THEATER

Our top 10 from "Amadeus" to an Alicia Keys musical. A+E



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LIFE+TRAVEL

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From apps to matchmaking: the diverse ways some American Muslims navigate finding love, marrying.

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Chicago Tribune




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SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2025

BREAKING NEWS AT CHICAGOTRIBUNE.COM



'A seed that can bear fruits of justice and peace'

Pope Leo XIV launches Vatican's groundbreaking ecology project directed by a Chicago priest

By Angie Leventis Lourgos
Chicago Tribune

VATICAN CITY — Gazing at the lavish Italian-style gardens and intricate topiaries of the pope's vast summer estate just outside of Rome, a local priest who immigrated to Waukegan from Mexico as a child marveled that he's been entrusted with their care.

The grounds are home to the Vatican's seminal ecological project, the Borgo Laudato Si', a 135-acre experiment in sustainable farming and environmental education. It's designed to serve as a model for intertwining the protection of both creation and often-vulnerable populations such as migrants, refugees and those in poverty, said the Rev. Manuel Dorantes, the initiative's managing director and a longtime Archdiocese of Chicago priest with deep ties to several area parishes.

"We all need to come together to be able to promote environmental sustainability and uplift human dignity, especially of the most vulnerable," Dorantes, 42, said.

Chicago native Pope Leo XIV formally inaugurated the Borgo Laudato Si' on Friday, declaring that "care for creation is truly a vocation for every human being."

Above: The Rev. Manuel Dorantes walks the grounds of Borgo Laudato Si' on May 20 outside Rome. Dorantes moved from serving in Chicago to Italy after being appointed by Pope Francis as the administrative management director of the Laudato Si' Center for Higher Education in 2024. BRIAN CASSELLA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

During the dedication, the Holy Father reaffirmed his commitment to ecological preservation and education, carrying on the legacy of his predecessor Pope Francis, whose writings inspired the Borgo Laudato Si'.

"What we see today is a synthesis of extraordinary beauty, where spirituality, daily life and technology dwell together in harmony," the pope said during his visit according to Vatican News. "It is a place of closeness and convivial proximity, and a seed that can bear fruits of justice and peace."

The inauguration featured a performance by renowned Italian opera singer Andrea Bocelli and his son Matteo. The Holy Father toured the project grounds, fed fish, petted horses and celebrated a liturgy for the program's students, workers and their families.

The sprawling roughly 2,000-year-old property includes ancient Roman archaeological sites, farmlands, pontifical villas and lush papal gardens, with areas for organic farming and regenerative cultivation. More than 3,000 plants from 300 species thrive on the land, Dorantes said.

The site also houses the Laudato Si' Center for Higher Education in 2024. BRIAN CASSELLA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Turn to Dorantes, Page 9

Enrollment plummets at regional universities

The schools are facing significant challenges with no easy solutions

By Jeremy Gornier
Chicago Tribune

MACOMB, Ill. — Swinging their pompoms in sync, the Westernettes danced in the sun on a recent Friday morning as the Marching Leathernecks played their traditional tune "Let's Go 'Necks!" in the shade.

Three days before classes were to start, the dance team and marching band performed before a large crowd outside the College of Fine Arts and Communication Recital Hall on Western Illinois University's main campus. This was a celebration of sorts, warranting an appearance by Ray, the school's beloved English bulldog mascot clad in a WIU sweater of purple and gold.

Inside the recital hall, the school's president, Kristi Mindrup, took the stage with other university administrators and mentioned the school's enrollment figure in 1973 of 15,469 — three times the roughly 5,100 estimated enrolled this school year. But she urged attendees not to dwell on the past, quoting former President Theodore Roosevelt: "Comparison is the thief of joy."

"WIU will be successful at any size because of our people and our dedication to our mission," Mindrup said during the Aug. 22 event. "There is one question: Are we ready to let go of what we were and to lift up where we are now in order to evolve into what we will be?"

With enrollment dropping drastically over the last two decades, WIU is in the same company as many Illinois public regional universities. Sometimes called directional universities, the schools representing geographical areas of the state, including Eastern Illinois University, Northern Illinois University and Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, are facing some of their most significant challenges in modern times in attracting students.

The enrollment drop is part of

Turn to Schools, Page 14

INSIDE



A "No Guard" sign is held up at the Mexican Independence Day Parade. ARMANDO L. SANCHEZ/TRIBUNE

Lower turnout at parade as Trump portends actions

President Donald Trump set the stage for a surge of immigration enforcement with a social media post depicting military helicopters flying over Chicago with the title "Chippocalypse Now." In Pilsen, there were fewer people but the same pride at the Mexican Independence Day Parade.

Stories in Chicagoland, Page 3

Johnson's new speed cameras see big early revenue

Aldermen tout safety impact, but resident reactions more mixed

By William Tong and Jake Sheridan
Chicago Tribune

The black box blinked once. Twice. Attached to a light pole on South Ashland Avenue, the newly-minted speed camera flashed a total of eight times in about 30 seconds one August afternoon, cars zooming by after cruising off I-55 a few blocks north.

Drivers ticketed for speeding there on June 1 — the first day the camera went online — have so far paid the city more than \$40,000, in increments of \$35 and \$100.

It's a drop in the municipal bucket for Mayor Brandon Johnson's citywide camera expansion

Turn to Cameras, Page 2



A speed camera fires its light as vehicles pass in the 7100 block of North Sheridan Road in the Rogers Park neighborhood of Chicago on Aug. 26. ARMANDO L. SANCHEZ/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

TODAY'S WEATHER High 69 Low 49

Complete Chicagoland forecast on Page 22

\$5.75 city and suburbs and elsewhere
178th year No. 250 © Chicago Tribune





People walk through the exhibit "After the Age of Dinosaurs" at the Field Museum in Chicago on Aug. 29. **TERRENCE ANTONIO JAMES/CHICAGO TRIBUNE**

FALL ARTS 2025 MUSEUMS

Carrying lessons of the past into the future

By **Hannah Edgar**
For the Chicago Tribune

Museums are more than just diversions or tourist attractions. A museum—assuming it's doing its job—is a temple to the truth. It's a nexus of rigorous research and varied perspectives, and an invitation to share difficult conversations. And when museums do fall short, the best of them acknowledge it and strive to do better. (One of them is included on this list.) We assembled this guide during an unprecedented chapter for the American museum. Here are some Chicago-area exhibits carrying the lessons of the past into the future.

"Living in the Shade": The second exhibition to go into the rotating second-floor space of Chicago's National Public Housing Museum, this show documents the green spaces that have been incorporated into New York City Housing Authority projects over the last century—their successes, their failures and how they reflected America's rapidly changing urban landscapes.

"After the Age of Dinosaurs": Next time you're feeling down, remember this: If life on Earth survived the apocalyptic event that wiped out the dinosaurs, surely you can handle whatever comes your way. Right? Anyway, you can learn how that all went down at the Field Museum's just-opened exhibition, which delves into the first 15 million years post-asteroid.

"Tiffany Lamps: Beyond the Shade": For a few decades around the turn of the century, sophisticates could own a piece of Tiffany Studios grandeur when the lauded glassmaker began manufacturing lamps for domestic use. Spanning the shift from oil to electricity, these fixtures—gathered at the Driehaus Museum for this exhibition—remain a masterclass in design.

"Megiddo: A City Unearthed, A Past Imagined": One hundred years ago, the Institute for the Study of Ancient Cultures, then called the Oriental Institute, pursued its first major dig—in the ancient city of Megiddo, at the crossroads of West Asia,



A tour group listens as Adam Selzer talks about the haunted history of Lincoln Park Zoo. **CHRIS SWEDA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE**

Egypt and the Mediterranean. You may know it by its Greek name, Armageddon. This new exhibit explores the city and the historic excavation in equal measure.

Sept. 18 to March 15, 2026, at the Institute for the Study of Ancient Cultures at the University of Chicago, 1155 E. 58th St., isac.uchicago.edu

Open House Chicago The Chicago Architecture Biennial happens just once every two years, but this year, it coincides with the annual Open House Chicago for a weekend in October. The 2025 Open House Chicago introduces "neighborhood headquarters" based on the city's South Side (Ramova Theatre in Bridgeport), West Side (Starting by Duo in North Lawndale) and North Side (KOVAL Distillery in Ravenswood), in addition to the usual home base at the Chicago Architecture Center in the Loop. Each offers materials, information and a place to gather before your expedition.

Oct. 18-19 at various locations; architecture.org

"Haunted History Tours": In the city's rush to develop the patch of lakeshore that would become Lincoln Park, it dug up what was then the city's main cemetery. Many bodies were relocated to cemeteries like Rosehill, Graceland and Oak Woods—but not all. Resident ghost guy Adam Selzer unearths the Lincoln Park Zoo's morbid past in a series of nighttime walking tours.

Tuesdays and Wednesdays from Sept. 30 to Oct. 29 at the Lincoln Park Zoo, 2400 N. Cannon Drive, lpzoo.org

"Aquí en Chicago": In 2019, a group of Pilsen students protested the Chicago History Museum for its dearth of material on local Latine history. Like so many institutions before it, the museum could have ignored the students, or puffed up some sort of defense. Instead, it got to work. This exhibit recounts that history through artifacts, photographs, first-person accounts,

family objects and even sweet treats. The family behind El Nopal, a beloved former Pilsen bakery, gave the museum cafe exclusive permission to recreate its famed Hojarsaca cookies during the exhibition run.

Oct. 25 to Nov. 8, 2026, at the Chicago History Museum, 1601 N. Clark St., chicagohistory.org

"American Prophets: Writers, Religion, and Culture": Writers, whether devout or doubters, have long probed the religious psyche. A new exhibition at the American Writers Museum takes a closer look at the spiritual lives of famous authors and how it manifested in their works. Included: Flannery O'Connor's rosary beads and Ursula K. Le Guin's copy of the "Tao Te Ching," annotated in her own hand.

Nov. 21 through fall 2026 at the American Writers Museum, 180 N. Michigan Ave., americanwritersmuseum.org

"World of Tomorrow: A Century of Progress": The 1893 World's Columbian Exposition tends to hog the spotlight, but our city hosted another wildly successful world's fair during its centennial year, 1933. The Elmhurst History Museum takes a closer look with an exhibition that opened last month.

Through Jan. 4 at the Elmhurst History Museum, 120 E. Park Ave., elmhursthistory.org

"Windy City Times @40: Breaking News, Breaking Silence": Like so many gay newspapers, the Windy City Times documented early milestones in LGBTQ representation and the devastation of HIV and AIDS at a time when the mainstream press looked the other way. The Gerber/Hart Library and Archives hosts a retrospective of this trailblazing publication, turning 40 this September.

Through Jan. 31 at the Gerber/Hart Library and Archives, 6500 N. Clark St., Floor 2, gerberhart.org



"Tiffany Lamps: Beyond the Shade" is about the beautiful creations of Louis C. Tiffany's studio, curated by Alexandra M. Ruggiero and now at the Driehaus Museum. **DRIEHAUS MUSEUM**

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