

Cook County population drops for the first time in years

BY STEVEN R. STRAHLER

After gaining residents each year since 2007, Cook County lost population during the 12 months ended last June. And Illinois is forfeiting more people than any other state, according to Census Bureau estimates.

Previously, metro Chicago **countered population losses** elsewhere in the state. That is no longer the case amid the state's economic and political challenges.

Census Bureau figures released today show the five collar counties gaining 5,084 residents, not enough to offset the 10,488 decline in Cook County during the period. The population of DuPage and Lake Counties decreased slightly. That left Cook County with 5.2 million residents and the six-county region with 8.4 million.

Data for Chicago and other cities are scheduled to be released in late May, the Census Bureau said. A breakdown by race and other demographic factors will follow in June.

The 22,194 statewide drop in population—a 0.2 percent loss—was caused by more people moving out of state than moving in, a deficit of 67,535 that

“natural growth” (births minus deaths) failed to offset. Illinois' net out-migration accounted for three-quarters of the total population decline of the 11-state Midwest region. Looked at another way, Illinois lost more people than all those other states combined.

As of mid-2015, Illinois had a population of 12.86 million, fifth in the country.

Urbanologist Aaron Renn said that outside “global Chicago”—the 10 percent to 15 percent of state residents oriented directly or indirectly to the borderless information economy—Illinois shares a lot of Rust Belt characteristics with its neighbors, with one exception. “The difference is tremendous mismanagement in government, especially in state government,” he said. “That unique financial mismanagement of Illinois and the political dysfunction is kind of the topper.”

Illinois has the worst credit rating and outlook of any state and, lacking a budget, is spending an annualized \$5.1 billion more than it is taking in.

Though it still ranks second by population in the U.S., Cook was the only county among the nation's 10 most populous to shrink. Detroit's Wayne County, which doesn't rank in the top 10, had the second-biggest drop, at 6,673.

The population of the United States rose 2.5 million, or 0.8 percent, to 321.4 million. California, Florida and Texas added the most residents.

The Cook County exodus probably reflects a disturbing trend: African-Americans, confronted with violence and perceptions of violence on Chicago's streets, continue to vote with their feet.

The 2010 census reported a 17 percent drop in the city's black population over the previous decade. Through 2014, it declined another 4 percent, to 852,756 according to the Census Bureau.

Golden Corridor MakerSpace Working to Make Something of It

BY WES HESSEL

A northwest suburban organization which strives to educate the community about the Maker Movement and support activities inspired by it is formally incorporating to move toward its goal of a dedicated “MakerSpace” in the Golden Corridor area.

Golden Corridor MakerSpace (GCMS) is a collaboration of organizations and individuals who want to encourage the creative renaissance of the Maker Movement, which is a call for a return to the efforts of tinkers, inventors, and artisans to significantly drive the economic engine and inspire all of us to, dare I say it, “think outside the box.” A good definition is stated by Adweek in a March 17, 2014, article: “The maker movement, as we know, is the umbrella term for independent inventors, designers and tinkerers. A convergence of computer hackers and traditional artisans, the niche is established enough to have its own magazine, Make, as well as hands-on Maker Faires that are catnip for DIYers who used to toil in solitude. Makers tap into an American admiration for self-reliance and combine that with open-source learning, contemporary design and powerful personal technology like 3-D printers. The creations, born in cluttered local workshops and bedroom offices, stir the imaginations of consumers numbed by generic, mass-produced, made-in-China merchandise.” Incorporated in this is also the idea of DWO/DIT – “Do With Others/Do It Together,” working together on projects, either via technology or in person in physical spaces which can provide tools and resources, often “building on,” sometimes literally, the creations of others.

Such a place is known as a MakerSpace or MakerLab, where people can come together to create items in technology-related or traditional arts and crafts areas, sometimes crossing over between the two, like wearable technology. GCMS is now drawing up articles of incorporation so that it may obtain 501(c)(3) status as a non-profit, and then begin seeking funding and other donations

toward the MakerSpace goal, setting up the permanent “lab” in the heart of the Golden Corridor area, Schaumburg. In the meantime, the group works with local libraries, educational institutions, and other interested parties to run Maker Movement and STEM (Science Technology Engineering and Math)-related activities, such as Mini Maker Faires, Engineering Challenges, and other like classes and seminars, as well as showings of the main outreach tool of the Movement, “Maker the Movie.”

These events help open eyes to what can be accomplished with initiative, creativity, cooperation, and tools. Students learn about how things work, come apart, and go together in the old, and new and different ways; tinkers find new ideas and methods to add to their customizing work, “building the better mousetrap,” or drone, perhaps; inventors are inspired to try and then succeed with improved or new products and processes. Ultimately, the creativity moves the economic engine by opening avenues for increased and new sales, improved productivity, and the “can-do” and “will-do” attitudes that our country thrives on.

Those looking for further information or a calendar of events can find it at GCMS's website, goldencorridor makerlab.com; they are looking for people interested in the Maker Movement, organizations to partner with, and individuals to assist in the group's goals.

Schiller Park Appoints New Police Chief

Mayor Barbara Piltaver and the The Village of Schiller Park trustees, at their April 7th Board meeting, approved and appointed Tom Fragakis as the new police chief. Tom has been with the Schiller Park police department for over 30 years and is looking forward to serving as Chief.



POPULATION CHANGE July 1, 2014 vs. July 1, 2015

Cook County 5.2 million people (2015)

-10,488

DuPage County 933,736

-33

Kane County 530,847

3,346

Lake County 703,910

-239

McHenry County 307,343

368

Will County 687,263

1,642

SIX COUNTY TOTAL 8.4 million

-5,404

Source: U.S. Census Bureau



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