

PROOF OF PUBLICATION OF NOTICE IN ALTOONA MIRROR

NOTICE OF PUBLIC INPUT HEARINGS

Re: Peoples Natural Gas and Peoples Gas Rate Increase

To Our Customers:

The Public Utility Commission (PUC) will conduct public input hearings (in-person and telephonic) concerning Peoples Natural Gas and Peoples Gas' request for an increase in rates. The In-Person and Telephonic public input hearings will be held at the following times and places:

In-Person Public Input Hearings:

In Monroeville, PA:	In Butler, PA:
Tuesday, March 5, 2024 1:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m.	Wednesday, March 6, 2024 1:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m.
Community College of Allegheny County Boyce Campus - Auditorium 595 Beatty Rd Monroeville, PA 15146-1396 (724) 327-1327	Butler County Community College Main Campus - Founders Hall 107 College Drive Butler, PA 16002 (724) 287-8711
Parking: Front of South Building - no pass required	Parking: Lot #6 - no pass required

Telephonic Public Input Hearings:

<p>Thursday, March 7, 2024 1:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m.</p> <p>To participate in the public input hearing,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You must dial the toll-free Conference number below You must enter the PIN number below when instructed You must speak your name when prompted, and press # Then, the telephone system will connect you to the hearing <p>Toll-free Conference Number: • 866.566.0649</p> <p>Passcode: 83345259</p>	<p>To participate in the telephonic public input hearing, you are to pre-register by 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 6, 2024. If you do not pre-register and provide the information listed below, you may not have an opportunity to testify.</p> <p>Pre-Registration Instructions for Telephonic Public Input Hearings:</p> <p>Contacting the Office of Consumer Advocate (OCA) toll free at 1-800-684-6560 or by email at consumer@paoca.org (in email, include following information):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) your first and last name; (2) the <u>date and time</u> of the public input hearing at which you wish to testify; (3) a phone number where you can be reached prior to the hearing if we need to contact you; (4) your email address if you have one; and (5) if you require an interpreter to participate in the hearing, the language of the interpreter. <p>Hearing Exhibits: If you have any hearing exhibits to which you will refer during the telephonic hearing, please email them to the OCA at consumer@paoca.org. The OCA will forward the exhibits to the Judges and all parties. Exhibits must be received by: Wednesday, March 6, 2024.</p> <p>Persons who are deaf or hearing-impaired and wish to attend, please dial 717 to be connected to a relay operator.</p>
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Questions?

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h of Pennsylvania - Notary Seal
D. Miller, Notary Public
Blair County
ssion expires July 25, 2025
ssion number 1112043
sylvania Association of Notaries

STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA
COUNTY OF BLAIR

Daniel N. Slep, being duly sworn says: That he is the Publisher of the ALTOONA MIRROR, a newspaper of general circulation, published at Number 301 Cayuga Avenue, Township of Logan, City of Altoona, County of Blair, and State of Pennsylvania.

That said newspaper was established as a daily newspaper of general circulation on the Thirteenth Day of June 1874, since which date said newspaper has been published daily in the City of Altoona; that a copy of the printed notice, hereto attached, is exactly as the same was printed and published in the regular edition of the daily ALTOONA MIRROR published on the following date(s), viz:

February 22nd, 2024

The affiant further deposes and declares that he is not interested in the subject matter of the aforesaid notice of publication and that all allegations in the foregoing statement as to time, place and character of publication are true.

Daniel N. Slep

Sworn to and subscribed before me the 1 day of March, 2024.

Debra D. Miller

Debra D. Miller, Notary Public

My Commission expires

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania - Notary Seal
Debra D. Miller, Notary Public
Blair County
My commission expires July 25, 2025
Commission number 1112043
Member, Pennsylvania Association of Notaries

P

MIRROR

practiced as punishment, with-
out the benefit of a judge and
jury, without any hint of justice
or principle?
Ask Tucker Carlson, who con-
done it. Asked in Dubai about
Putin's treatment of Navalny
(and why he didn't ask Putin
about it when Navalny was still
alive), he said, "Every leader
kills people. Some kill more than
others. Leadership requires kill-
ing people."
He gave him permission.
Ironically, when Trump's own

Israel during and after Israel's
1948-49 War of Independence.
But it's seldom mentioned
that in the aftermath of the war,
900,000 Jews left or were expelled
from Arab and other Muslim
lands.
The slogan "from the river to
the sea, Palestine shall be free"
is often chanted at anti-Israel
demonstrations. UC Berkeley
professor Ron Hassner conduct-
ed a survey that showed almost
half of those chanting could not
identify the river and sea being

Bureau to benefit
newly emancipat-
ed African Amer-
icans.
As Justice Sonia
Sotomayor futilely
pointed out to Jus-
tice Roberts, laws
like that one were
anything but col-
orblind and leave
"no doubt that the
Equal Protection
Clause permits
tion of race to achieve

Court sides with township over backyard gun range

Ban passed by Stroud Board of Supervisors constitutional

The Associated Press

HARRISBURG—A township ordinance that limits firing guns to indoor and outdoor shooting ranges and zoning that significantly restricts where the ranges can be located do not violate the Second Amendment, Pennsylvania's Supreme Court ruled Wednesday.

The man who challenged Stroud Township's gun laws, Jonathan Barris, began to draw complaints about a year after he moved to the home in the Pocos

nos in 2009 and installed a shooting range on his 5-acre property. An officer responding to a complaint said the range had a safe backstop but the targets were in line with a large box store in a nearby shopping center.

In response to neighbors' concerns, the Stroud Township Board of Supervisors in late 2011 passed what the courts described as a "discharge ordinance," restricting gunfire to indoor and outdoor gun ranges, as long as they were issued zoning and occupancy permits. It also said guns couldn't be fired between dusk and dawn or within 150 feet of an occupied structure — with exceptions for self-defense, by farmers, by police or at indoor firing ranges.

The net effect, wrote Justice Kevin Dougherty, was to restrict the potential construction of shooting ranges to about a third of the entire township. Barris' home did not meet those restrictions.

Barris sought a zoning permit after he was warned he could face a fine as well as seizure of the gun used in any violation of the discharge ordinance. He was turned down for the zoning permit based on the size of his lot, proximity to other homes and location outside the two permissible zoning areas for ranges.

A county judge ruled for the township, but Commonwealth Court in 2021 called the discharge ordinance unconstitutional, violative of Barris' Second Amendment rights.

PAY: Other states' wages compared

(Continued from Page A1)

The IFO also noted another 800,000 workers who now make between \$15-\$18 an hour, would also likely get raises, generating another \$1 billion in additional wages for those workers.

The IFO's estimates did note that increasing the minimum wage would result in an estimated 20,000 jobs being eliminated. Knittel said during the budget hearing that about half of those jobs would be part-time positions and that most likely the jobs would be eliminated by businesses not filling vacancies rather than laying off workers.

The IFO's estimate, however, projected that about two-thirds of the cost of paying for the increased wages for low-wage workers would be passed directly on to consumers through higher prices.

In a study released last month, the IFO compared the minimum wages in

Pennsylvania and five neighboring states against the real world minimum wages being paid in those states.

While Pennsylvania is still using the federal minimum wage of \$7.25 an hour, the IFO's analysis found that the average wage being paid to the lowest-paid workers in the state averages between \$9.50 and \$10 an hour in 2022.

Even so, a report released by the state's Minimum Wage Advisory Board estimated that there were 417,800 workers in Pennsylvania who made between \$7.25 and \$12 an hour.

But that effective minimum wage was still lower than the amount being paid to the lowest-paid workers in Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, New York and Ohio.

The IFO review found that in New Jersey, which had a \$13 an hour minimum wage, and Maryland, with a \$12.50 minimum

wage, the state-mandated minimum wage was the same as the effective minimum wage in those states.

That analysis was based on the wages for store cashiers and retail salespeople. The effective minimum wages were slightly higher than the state-mandated minimum wages in New York, with a \$13.20 minimum wage, and Delaware, with a \$10.50 an hour minimum wage.

But in Ohio, where the minimum wage was set by the state at \$9.30, the state minimum was \$1 an hour less than the effective minimum wage being paid the lowest-paid cashiers and \$1.25 an hour less than the effective minimum wage for retail salespeople. Even so, the lowest-paid cashiers in Ohio were paid on average 69 cents an hour more than their counterparts in Pennsylvania and the lowest-paid retail salespeople in Ohio were paid 33 cents an hour more than their counterparts in Pennsylvania.

AMTRAN: Positive response so far

(Continued from Page A1)

That driver ended up first on the list to go — and not by accident, Baker said.

"She had a great time," Baker said of her subsequent ride.

The program will enable operators to see how other operators perform, Baker said.

It will also enable employees to see the "positive impact" the authority has for customers, he said.

And it will enable employees to see the kinds of everyday anxieties customers may endure, like waiting at a stop and worrying whether they'll make it to work on time, Baker said.

Becoming aware of those "complications" should help employees deliver a better "product," Bilotto said.

In potentially helping employees see things from a customer perspective, the program aligns with the Biblical injunction "Do unto others," Bilotto and Baker agreed.

So far, the response from employees has been universally positive, according

to Baker.

Participants have been especially impressed by how well drivers relate to their customers, he said.

Many drivers know their customers by name, he said.

A potential risk when administrators ride is that drivers will feel they're being judged — a perception Baker has worked to dispel.

"We're not evaluating — just riding," he said.

The ROW program is being done in a similar vein as initiatives in PennDOT that got employees out of the office to see firsthand the challenges that field workers faced, said Bilotto, who retired from the department as a maintenance programs engineer.

All the Amtran administrators took their monthly rides for January and most have also done it for February, Baker said.

Four operators have taken their 2024 ride so far.

The employees take the rides during one of their regular shifts.

They get a card, like the ones that customers use

to pay.

The rides should not be confused with the orientation ride-alongs that newly hired operators take, according to Baker.

The new practice may be especially valuable for the newer operators, said Dave James, president of the Amalgamated Transit Union local.

"They can see how the older operators handle it," he said.

Likewise, it's good for the administrators, who can get a feel for what drivers go through, he said.

It might be especially worthwhile for administrators to ride along early in each month, when ridership is higher, James said.

He said it might make sense even for board members to ride along sometimes.

He hasn't had his own "customer" ride for 2024 yet, James said.

The drivers don't plan for them, as Baker determines when they go, without much notice, James said.

"It's a surprise kind of thing," he said.

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Easter

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Hey Kids! Color the Drawing Below & Enter for Your Chance to Win Prizes from our Sponsors!

Winning Entries will appear in the Altoona Mirror on EASTER, MARCH 31

Due to limited space, all artwork may not be chosen. Deadline for entries is Wed., March 20 at 4:00 pm

Name _____ Age _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Please send artwork to:
Easter Coloring Contest • c/o Altoona Mirror
PO Box 2008 • 301 Cayuga Ave. • Altoona, Pa 16602

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29th Day of February A.D. 2024

Affiant further deposes that the Ad Taker is duly authorized by the EAGLE PRINTING COMPANY, a corporation, publisher of said BUTLER EAGLE, a newspaper of general circulation, to verify the foregoing statement under oath, and Affiant

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Carina R. Ne...

Butler Eagle

born to and subscribed before me this 29th

day of February 2024

Caryl Ortiz

Notary Public

My Commission Expires:

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania - Notary Seal
CAROLYN ELAINE ORTIZ - Notary Public
Butler County
My Commission Expires March 25, 2027
Commission Number 1348650

Statement of Advertising Costs

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Attn: Kathy Downing

TO BUTLER EAGLE, Dr.

for publishing the notice or publication attached hereto on the above stated dates \$ 480.00

for obtaining same \$ 3.00

Total \$ 483.00

Advertising Costs

Butler Eagle, a newspaper of general circulation, hereby acknowledge the same have been duly paid.

Eagle Printing Co., a Corporation, Publisher of Butler Eagle, a Newspaper of General Circulation.

By _____

Disappearance still a mystery after 39 years

Mother honors memories of Cherrie Mahan

By Molly Miller
Eagle Staff Writer

Cherrie Mahan disappeared from her bus stop in Winfield Township on Feb. 22, 1985, and despite time, family and law enforcement have not forgotten the missing wide-eyed girl.

Cherrie's mother, Janice McKinney, said the 39th anniversary of her 8-year-old daughter's disappearance has become harder to bear. Nonetheless, she will continue standing at the bottom of her old driveway on Cornplanter Road until she knows the truth.

"I'm paying tribute to her so it brings her life and what happened to her into the public one more time. And I'll do it every year until she comes home or I'm on the other side of the grass," McKinney said.

Some of McKinney's friends will join her at the bottom of the driveway at 4 p.m. Thursday, and she knows many more who can't attend are there in spirit.

McKinney recalled Feb. 22, 1985, as a Friday with pleasant weather; the snow was starting to melt.

She had the day off, and remembered talking to Cherrie as she walked with her down the steep



Cherrie Mahan went missing from her bus stop on Feb. 22, 1985, in Winfield Township.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

driveway to catch the bus that morning. Cherrie was a third-grade student at the former Winfield Elementary School in the South Butler County School District, now the Knoch School District.

"I took her down to put her on the bus, and she gave me orders of what she wanted," she said.

McKinney elaborated that Cherrie was a talkative girl, and told her mother she planned to come home after school, eat dinner and go to a friend's house.

The rest of the story is well known to community members and investigators.

According to Max DeLuca, the detective with state police's criminal investigation unit who handles Cherrie's case, the school

bus arrived back on Cornplanter Road just after 4 p.m.

"Cherrie exited her school bus with three other children," he said. "The stop was approximately 100 yards from her residence."

After she got off the bus, Cherrie was never seen again. According to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, she was last seen wearing a gray coat, blue denim skirt, blue leg warmers and beige boots.

McKinney said she and her husband Leroy, Cherrie's stepfather, both recalled hearing the school bus from their residence up the hill.

"When I heard the bus and she didn't come up, I knew something was up," she said.

McKinney said her family moved to Cornplanter Road from Saxenburg, where Cherrie grew up. Shortly after the move, she said her daughter kept saying someone was looking in at her from outside the window.

This resulted in her daughter requesting to move bedrooms, according to McKinney.

"When we moved, I should have known something was wrong ... Was there somebody? I don't know," she said.

See **Mystery**, Page 7



A field along Cherry Valley Road appeared charred after firefighters fought a brush fire for nearly two hours Wednesday afternoon.

IRINA BUCUR/BUTLER EAGLE

Field burns in Clinton Twp.

By Irina Bucur
Eagle Staff Writer

CLINTON TWP — A field along Cherry Valley Road appeared charred after firefighters fought a brush fire for nearly two hours Wednesday afternoon.

About 2 or 3 acres of grasses and woods were burned in front of a home in the 300 block of the road, Saxenburg Fire Chief Chris Dean said at the scene. No

buildings were damaged in the fire.

Dean said the fire was the result of a homeowner burning weeds in dry conditions. Brush fires are common amid the dry season, he said, and he noted that "very mild winter conditions" contribute to the dryness.

He advised residents not to burn materials during this time, or any time that

grasses and organic material are dry.

According to Dean, Saxenburg Volunteer Fire Company responded to the scene along with West Deer Volunteer Fire Department No. 1 and West Deer Volunteer Fire Department No. 2 from Allegheny County.

He said the fire was reported at 2:48 p.m. Fire trucks began to leave around 4 p.m.

County provides update on data breach

Eagle Staff Report

Butler County has started the process of notifying people affected by an October data breach, according to an update on its website.

According to the notice, on Oct. 2, federal law enforcement alerted the county to suspicious activity involving its computer network.

"Upon being notified, the county immediately began working with a nationally recognized digital forensics team to secure its network and investigate the scope of the incident," said the notice.

On Oct. 30, the county determined that there had

been unauthorized access to, and acquisition of, personally identifiable information maintained on the county's network. Subsequent investigation focused on finding what data was involved and who was affected.

On Jan. 22, the county completed the review and began locating mailing addresses for people who may have been affected, so that it could provide them with written notice of this incident.

According to the statement on the county website, the county has notified local and federal law enforcement and continues

to cooperate with federal law enforcement's investigation into this incident.

The county is advising those affected to take appropriate steps to protect their personal information, including reviewing and monitoring any account statements, free credit reports and health insurance explanation of benefits forms for unauthorized or suspicious activity.

If an individual's Social Security number, driver's license number and/or state identification card number was involved, the county will offer credit monitoring services at no cost.

Charges held against man accused of SR stabbing

By Molly Miller
Eagle Staff Writer

SLIPPERY ROCK TWP — A man accused of stabbing a guest in the neck at a party last month saw a charge added to his case following a preliminary hearing Wednesday.

An additional count of felony aggravated assault was held against Brennan J. Steeley, 24, of Greensburg. State police said he stabbed Oliver Valera, of Slippery Rock, with a fixed-blade knife Jan. 15 at the Grove Apartments in Slippery Rock Township.

Steeley was originally charged with one count of felony aggravated assault and misdemeanors simple assault and reckless endangerment. All the charges were held over to the Butler County Common Pleas Court by District Judge Joseph Nash.

Steeley appeared before Nash, who heard testimony from the investigating trooper as well as Valera himself, who displayed a long, vertical scar he received after surgery for the

'He tried to kill me with a knife, stabbed me right in the neck.'

Oliver Valera,
stabbing victim

knife wound.

According to Valera, the knife damaged his jugular vein and was "millimeters" from his carotid artery, which "would have killed" him if it had been stabbed.

"He tried to kill me with a knife, stabbed me right in the neck," he said.

Trooper Dustin Scheerbaum testified the initial report of the stabbing was received by 911 dispatchers around 4:19 a.m. The call was made by Valera's father.

The second 911 call came from Steeley himself, who told dispatchers he would be waiting outside his apartment for police to arrive.

Scheerbaum said Steeley was present outside as he promised, and he immediately started talking.

"You could tell he was worked up, he was very emotional," he said. "Mr. Steeley was very up front and honest about the events that led up to it."

Scheerbaum later stated it was "very apparent" Steeley was under the influence of a substance.

Steeley brought investigators into the apartment and told them he did not know Valera before that night, but welcomed him into the party along with a group of women, according to Scheerbaum.

Valera testified to arriving at Steeley's apartment with some women he met drinking at a restaurant. He also testified to not knowing Steeley before the gathering.

See **Stabbing**, Page 7

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AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

STATE OF Pennsylvania

COUNTY OF Venango

CITY OF Oil City

I, Melissa Reedy, being duly sworn on oath now and during all times herein stated, have been the publisher or designated agent of the publication known as,

The Derrick, News-Herald & Clarion News ("Publication ")

and have full knowledge of the facts herein stated as follows:

the ad for Peoples Gas ("Advertiser") was printed and published in issue(s) of said newspaper on the following date(s):

2/22/2024

2/29/2024

By: Melissa Reedy
Signature of affiant

Subscribed and sworn to before me
This 1st day of March, 2024.

Notary Seal:

Micheille M Schwab
Notary Public

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania - Notary Seal
Micheille M. Schwab, Notary Public
Venango County
My commission expires December 8, 2026
Commission number 1259422
Member, Pennsylvania Association of Notaries

Looking back in time

The Clarion Democrat
February 23, 1928
William Sansom, Editor

◆ For the year 1927, Clarion County's 11 health officers reported 110 cases of communicable diseases as follows: 35 cases of Scarlet fever, 32 cases of measles, two cases of whooping cough, 12 cases of chicken pox, four cases of Diphtheria with one death, 11 cases of pneumonia, 12 cases of Typhoid fever with three deaths.

◆ Saturday afternoon John S. Groce, age 68, of Paint Township walked to town to do some business. On his return trip he rode with Wade Young and his son Ross. They started down the hill west of town toward the river bridge. The road being quite icy made driving difficult and the differential gear was stripped and Ross lost control of the car. Wade Young jumped out of the car and landed safely. Mr. Groce jumped and struck the hard pavement causing a serious fracture at the base of his skull. Ross drove the vehicle onto an embankment and escaped injury. Mr. Groce was taken to his home where he lay unconscious until Tuesday morning when dissolution of spirit from body took place and he entered upon his last long sleep.

◆ But two marriage licenses were issued during the past week. This being a leap year it looks as if something is wrong. It may be that the young men are just letting matters go and giving the young ladies a chance to pop the question or that the high cost of living has scared them all out except a very few who are willing to try anything once. Come on girls and get busy and if the boys don't have the nerve to propose just show that you have it yourself. Don't let matters lag, as it will be four long years before a leap year comes around again.

◆ Inspector Kelly, flying a government airplane operated by the Department of Commerce, was on an inspection trip Sunday afternoon and ran into a snowstorm west of Clarion. He was flying low and came nearer to earth than he expected as his plane went into a hill on the Barbara Altman farm near Wentlings Corners. His plane was almost a complete wreck but Mr. Kelly got off with minor bruises and cuts. Mr. Kelly went to Foxburg where he continued his journey to St. Louis by rail. William Cramer of the Clarion aviation field is now at work salvaging

1928

what is possible of the plane.

◆ Frances Salada of the Lawsonham School has a very fine record. She has spelled about 2,300 words and missed only three. This is a record to be proud of.

◆ The Shipperville schools seem to have taken on a new lease on life. Good work is being done throughout the school and splendid improvements have been made. Shower baths have been installed, heat has been provided for the auditorium, many library books have been purchased and 100 chairs have been secured for the auditorium.

◆ The East Brady basketball team swamped Farmington last Friday on the East Brady floor the score being 79 to 34. But the East Brady boys couldn't top those 34 points. Good for Farmington. The next game Farmington should show that they are onto their game and give them a good trimming.

◆ A company of Perry Township and Parker citizens has brought in a million foot gas well on the Silas Campbell farm in Perry Township. Shorts and Jeannerat have just brought in a 500,000-foot gas well on Millcreek Township.

◆ Miss Emma Bullock of the Knox High School basketball team was seriously injured at the game with Clarion High School last Friday evening. Just how she was hurt is not known but after the game

she collapsed on the dressing room floor screaming in pain. Dr. H. E. Stahlman examined her and found two of her vertebrae between the shoulder blades were displaced. They were put back in place and she was taken to the Brookville Hospital. We hope for her speedy recovery to her usual good health.

◆ More than 225 people participated in the annual observance of Washington's Birthday by the Joppa Club at Becht Hall. The groundhog handed out the worst snowstorm of the season but inside the hall resembled a bower of lovely spring and summer beauty.

◆ Last Saturday night one of Sligo's citizens who has been in the habit of getting soured and brawling all over our Main Street was arrested. In his possession was a bottle of booze. It was taken to Clarion and lodged in jail. We hope this will be a lesson to others who are often seen in the same condition on the streets on Saturday nights.

◆ Meade ("Barney Google") Henry and Glen ("Sparky") Harriger are two very successful trappers in Scotch Hill and are sure going to bring down the price of furs somewhat when their shipment goes in having caught two mice which have been on the stretchers for several weeks. ■

Compiled by Randy Bartley

Area school districts list menus

CLARION COUNTY—Clarion Area schools announce the following breakfast and lunch menus. Unless otherwise indicated, all breakfasts include fruit and/or juice and milk, and all lunches include milk.

Clarion Area

◆ **Feb. 26:** elementary—mini French toast or cereal choice; high school—flapstick pancake, pick one, pick two
◆ **Feb. 27:** elementary—bacon, egg, and cheese croissant, pick one, pick two

◆ **Feb. 28:** elementary—breakfast pizza, pick one, pick two; high school—egg, sausage, and cheese

◆ **Feb. 29:** elementary—flapstick pancake, pick one, pick two; high school—egg, ham, and cheese croissant

◆ **Mar. 1:** elementary and high school—freshly-baked donut, pick one, pick two

◆ **Mar. 26:** elementary and high school—cheese option with hamburger on a bun or barbecue rib, fries, crunchy carrots

◆ **Mar. 27:** elementary and high school—Buffalo

chicken or ranch chicken wrap, fries, lettuce, tomato, apple slices; add blueberries for high school

◆ **Feb. 28:** elementary and high school—mashed potato bowl with chicken and whole grain roll, corn, fruit; add 100 percent fruit juice for high school

◆ **Feb. 29:** elementary—soft shell chicken taco, black beans, salsa, corn, lettuce, tomato; high school—crispy chicken garden salad with assorted dressings, dinner roll, chickpeas, fries

◆ **Mar. 1:** elementary and high school—pizza, garden salad with dressing

Legion Auxiliary pays tribute to Orsino

CLARION—The February meeting of the Clarion American Legion Auxiliary was held on Monday, Feb. 12.

Total membership is at 371 with eight new members so far this year. Members can renew by mail, on line, or by stopping into the American Legion.

Five scholarships in the amount of \$1,000 will be awarded again this year. Applications have been mailed to seven schools in the county.

The applications can be obtained from the Clarion American Legion Auxiliary Office at each of these schools. We have already received one application back.

Clarion Area, Union, and North Clarion School Districts have been sent information for the eighth grade Americanism Awards.

A plaque has been obtained for the memorial bench in the lobby in Honorable Memory of Ken Orsino, Commander.

Upcoming events include National Poppy Sale Days in May, our Memorial Day Luncheon and the ALF Craft Day will be on October 5. We will be accepting items for our Basket Raffle, our major fundraiser for the year.

Our meetings are held on the second Monday of every month at the American Legion at 4 p.m.

All members are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Allegheny named Pennsylvania's 2024 River of the Year

HARRISBURG — The Allegheny River in western Pennsylvania has been selected by a public vote as the state's 2024 River of the Year. Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn and Janet Sweeney of the Pennsylvania Organization for Waterways and Rivers (POWR) announced today.

"We are excited to honor the Allegheny River as Pennsylvania's 2024 River of the Year, and I cannot wait to celebrate this incredible river during a sojourn later this year," Dunn said. "Congratulations to Three Rivers Waterkeeper for the successful campaign and earning this prestigious honor. Thank you to everyone who voted in this wonderful competition highlighting one of our most precious natural resources."

The historic Allegheny River starts as a stream in Potter County, meandering through a field of wildflowers before crossing briefly through New York and then through six counties in Western Pennsylvania.

The 325-mile river ends in Pittsburgh where it meets the Monongahela River and flows into the Ohio River, providing drinking water to more than one million people and acting as an ecologically and economically precious water trail.

The fertile valleys and abundant biodiversity have led many communities to call this place home, including the O-non-dowagah (Seneca Nation) who call the Allegheny Ohioyo' (beautiful river), the Lenni Lenape (Delaware Nation) who named it welhik-heny (most beautiful stream), and French settlers who referred to it as La Belle Riviere.

A series of locks and dams were constructed in the early 20th century to make the Allegheny River navigable for barges to

transport goods, and now swimming, boating, and fishing are profoundly enjoyed by residents and visitors.

The river includes the Allegheny Islands Wilderness, a seven-island, 372-acre preserve that boasts old-growth hardwoods and prolific bird populations.

The U.S. Forest Service has documented over 50 mammals, 200 birds, 25 amphibians, 20 reptiles, 80 fishes, and 25 freshwater mussels in and around the Allegheny, including the threatened Salamander Mussel (Simpsonia ambigua), who help improve the water quality by filtering out sediment and pollutants.

Whether you are bird watching, island camping, or traveling through the locks, you are sure to find that the Allegheny River is rich with life, history, and beauty.

The public was invited to vote online for the River of the Year, choosing from among three waterways nominated.

A total of 20,259 votes were cast, a record for the River of the Year Program, with the Allegheny River receiving 8,307, the Youghiogheny 7,212, and the Lackawaxen River 4,740.

"POWR would like to commend everyone for their support for the nominated rivers, especially for the strong showing of support for the Allegheny River," Sweeney said. "The River of the Year program continues to engage our communities by providing a wonderful opportunity to showcase all the nominated rivers and the great work being done in Pennsylvania on these resources. We are excited about the opportunity to highlight the Allegheny River this year."

Three Rivers Waterkeeper nominated the Allegheny River, and will receive a \$10,000 Leadership Grant to help fund a slate of year-long 2024 Riv-

er of the Year activities. DCNR and POWR will work with them to create a free, commemorative poster celebrating the Allegheny River as the 2024 Pennsylvania River of the Year.

"We were so excited to see just how many people came together to show their support for the Allegheny River after we nominated it for River of the Year," said Jess Fris, the Director of Community Programs at Three Rivers Waterkeeper. "We are looking forward to everything we are able to do this year to promote all the wonderful resources the Allegheny River provides to us, including a summer kickoff. We are dedicated to protecting the water quality of the Allegheny River and all its uses, and knowing that it was awarded the River of the Year because of the support of the community shows the collective commitment to environmental stewardship, recreation, and love for our waterways that defines this community."

In cooperation with DCNR, selection of public voting choices was overseen by the POWR, an affiliate of the Pennsylvania Environmental Council (PEC).

A commemorative River of the Year sojourn is among many paddling trips supported by DCNR and POWR each year.

An independent program, the Pennsylvania Sojourn Program, is a unique series of a dozen such trips on the state's rivers.

These water-based journeys for canoeists, kayakers, and others raise awareness of the environmental, recreational, tourism, and heritage values of rivers.

Visit DCNR's website for more information on the River of the Year competition and check out DCNR's Calendar of Events for events on public lands.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC INPUT HEARINGS

Re: Peoples Natural Gas and Peoples Gas Rate Increase

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In Monroeville, PA: Tuesday, March 5, 2024 1:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m.	In Butler, PA: Wednesday, March 6, 2024 1:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m.
Community College of Allegheny County Boxe Campus - Auditorium 595 Beatty Rd. Monroeville, PA 15146-1396 (724) 327-1327	Butler County Community College Main Campus - Founders Hall 107 College Drive Butler, PA 16002 (724) 287-8711
Parking: Front of South Building - no pass required	Parking: Lot #6 - no pass required

Telephonic Public Input Hearings:

Thursday, March 7, 2024
1:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m.
To participate in the public input hearing:

- You must dial the toll-free Conference number below.
- You must enter the PIN number below when instructed.
- You must speak your name when prompted, and press #
- Then, the telephone system will connect you to the hearing.

Toll-free Conference Number:
866.566.0649
Passcode:
83345259

To participate in the telephonic public input hearing, you are to pre-register by 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 6, 2024. If you do not pre-register and provide the information listed below, you may not have an opportunity to testify.

Pre-Registration Instructions for Telephonic Public Input Hearings:

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- your first and last name;
- the date and time of the public input hearing at which you wish to testify;
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AFFIDAVIT OF DISTRIBUTION

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania)
County of Allegheny)

GM Olvido, [in her] capacity as Major/National Accounts Executive on behalf of TRIB TOTAL MEDIA, INC. (“**Publisher**”), being duly sworn, upon [her] oath, deposes and says:

1. Trib Total Media, Inc. representing the following publications (the “**Publications**”):
 - Kittanning Leader Times
 - Connellsville Daily Courier

The ROP for *Peoples Gas* – ran in the *Kittanning Leader Times* and *Connellsville Daily Courier* Publication on 22nd and 29th February, 2024

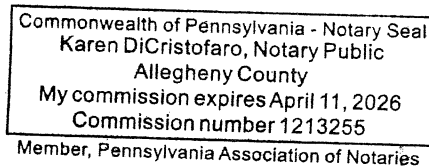
TRIB TOTAL MEDIA, INC.

By: 

Sworn to before me this 29th
day of February, 2024


Notary Public

[Notary Seal



Lancaster

Continued from Page A1

musical). This year, we are performing 'The Little Mermaid.' I'm playing a sea fish, sailor and chef. I just thought it was my senior year, and I wanted to have some fun and try something new," she said.

Lila also serves as a school tour guide and school ambassador.

"I'll tour new students and prospective students. I help around the school with a lot of school events," she said.

Lila came in to the school over summer break as well to help decorate for the new academic year.

"It was a lot of hard work, but very rewarding," she said.

While a student at Southmoreland, Lila's biotechnology class helped to raise rainbow trout in classroom tanks until they were ready for release in the wild.

"We fed them and learned

all about biology and plant life," she said.

During her time at Geibel, Lila and other students had the opportunity to read psalms on a radio station.

She also serves as vice president of student council. She has helped to organize school events, including pep rallies, fundraisers and activities to support students.

"My job as vice president is basically to oversee all of the activities. It's nice. I get to be hands-on and get opinions and inspiration," she said, for events including the homecoming dance.

Last year, Lila helped lead a cheer camp for younger girls.

"We showed them how to cheer, some of the chants, stunting, really fun stuff like that," she said.

Jennifer Smith, Geibel Catholic Junior-Senior High School guidance counselor, nominated Lila as this

week's selection in our Teen of the Week program.

Sponsored by Casini & Geibig, LLC, Attorneys at Law in Connellsville, the program will highlight the accomplishments of an outstanding senior from an area school each Thursday in The Daily Courier and the Independent-Journal.

Once all the student candidates have been recognized, The Daily Courier and Casini & Geibig will select a Student of the Year, who will receive a scholarship provided by the law firm.

"I have had the honor of working with Lila during her junior and senior years of her high school career.

In that time, I witnessed her growth and maturity. I have observed her dedication to academics as well as curiosity for learning. Throughout the years, Lila has shown herself to be a determined, assertive and resilient

leader," Smith wrote in her nomination letter.

"Lila is an exceptional student who has consistently demonstrated a strong commitment to academic excellence. She has maintained an impressive grade-point average and has excelled in a rigorous curriculum that includes various College in High School courses," she added.

"What sets Lila apart is not only her academic achievements, but also her exemplary character and dedication to extracurricular activities. As a member of the National Honor Society, the volleyball team, cheer-leading team and student council, Lila has shown leadership, teamwork and a passion for making a positive impact in our school community. Lila is a reliable mentor to younger students and has served as a National Honor Society tutor and

student ambassador during her senior year," Smith continued.

"In addition to her academic and extracurricular achievements, Lila possesses excellent communication and interpersonal skills. She is articulate, thoughtful, and has a natural ability to connect with her peers and teachers alike. Her ability to collaborate with others and contribute positively to classroom discussions is truly commendable. Lila also possesses excellent leadership skills, which have been recognized by school staff and students," she said.

Smith noted Lila's election as student council vice president and National Honor Society president, as well as her recognition as a Geibel student of the month and the Connellsville Elks student of the month as leadership roles.

"I am confident that Lila

will excel in any academic or professional setting she chooses to pursue," she said.

Lila plans to start looking for a summer job or internship soon.

"I'm really focused on academics right now," she said.

Lila has been accepted to the University of Pittsburgh and looks forward to attending its main campus following graduation.

"I plan to study political science. I do want to go to law school. I've always loved law and politics; I find them fascinating. I think you have to understand the law, and I thought studying political science would be the best way to do that," she added.

Lila is considering practicing criminal law one day and hopes to minor in criminal justice.

Mary Pickels is a Daily Courier contributing writer.

Letters

Continued from Page A1

For any questions, call 724-437-7913, ext. 207.

"We are doing our part and hopefully this time around we can get the first round of funding and we can get this project under way," Lincoln said.

Fay-Penn Economic Development Council is requesting individuals, businesses, municipalities, service organizations and anyone else in the Connellsville, Scottdale, Everson and Mt. Pleasant areas to submit letters showing support for the proposed Iron Horse Bridge project in Connellsville as well as a proposed route to connect the Yough River Trail with the Coal & Coke Trail.

The connection of the Coal & Coke Trail in Westmoreland County with the Yough River Trail in Connellsville, as well as the connection of the Sheepskin Trail to the trail system in West Virginia is just a part of the region-

alization aspect Fay-Penn is looking to include in the submission for the federal Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity grant through the U.S. Department of Transportation for planning the Iron Horse Bridge Project.

Last year a grant proposal for \$2 million was submitted by Fay-Penn on behalf of the City of Connellsville in hopes of garnering funds for the planning portion of the Iron Horse Bridge Project that would create a tourist destination in Connellsville by creating a park on a bridge using an old railroad trestle over the Youghiogheny River in Connellsville.

Although the application did not receive funding at the time, Laura Kurtz Kuhns with Fay-Penn said it was still a strong proposal despite the lack of time to prepare the best grant proposal possible.

After a debriefing with federal officials in charge of the grant, all parties involved agreed to resubmit for the

grant this year, with proposal improvements that would show more regional connections.

Award decisions should be made by the end of June.

The funding being sought is for the planning phase of this project, including the trail connectors, so nothing has been finalized or even looked into in-depth, although there are three possible routes to connect the two trails from a study that was done in 2018.

Fay-Penn will submit the RAISE grant application on behalf of the City of Connellsville since this program requires the applicant to be a unit of government.

Lincoln said these support letters are of the utmost importance.

Lincoln said previously that in the first round a large number of support letters were received.

He said the letters are crucial to show that the project will be beneficial to Connellsville and surrounding

communities.

Fay-Penn officials said the letters to not have to be long. They should discuss why the project is important to your organization, interests or missions.

Some possible reasons for support of the project could include: providing a sense of community pride with quality of life, the expansion of safe active transportation options to neighboring communities and capturing the area's capacity to be a first-choice hospitality destination for Sheepskin, Coal & Coke and GAP trail users.

Other possible reasons for support could include: building transportation alternatives to shift commuter traffic to biking and walking, establishing Connellsville as the epicenter of Laurel Highlands destination recreation tourism, expanding wellness offerings for active living lifestyles to improve workforce health and stimulating business growth, talent retention and attraction with pub-

lic amenities.

Those who wrote letters last year can just change the date and use the same letter; however, reference the expanded trail corridors to communities both north and south of Connellsville.

In other business, council:

- Accepted the resignation of Jennifer Bradmonh, police secretary.

- Permitted City Clerk Vern Ohler to apply for a Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission Smart Transportation for Livable Communities Program grant for funding for the Dutch Bottom Pedestrian Bridge.

- Agreed to apply for a COVID-19 ARPA PA Multi-Purpose Community Facilities Program Grant for repairs and upgrades to city hall. Lincoln said it has been more than 40 years since any upgrades have been made.

- Agreed to increase rental fees on pavilions at all city-owned parks from \$100 to \$125 for Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays and holidays and

from \$45 to \$60 for Mondays through Thursdays, not including holidays.

- Granted the Connellsville Recreation Board permission to stage a hole at the Connellsville Senior Center for the 2024 Barstool Open on June 15. It is a fundraiser.

- Granted permission to the Jamie McPoyle Foundation in conjunction with the Connellsville Recreation Board to use Austin Park on May 25 for an adult kickball tournament.

- Granted permission to the Jamie McPoyle Foundation in conjunction with the Connellsville Recreation Board to hold the second annual Jamie McPoyle Bike/Run/Walk on Oct. 5 at 10 a.m. through the streets of the city's South Side and at and around Austin Park, pending approval from the police and fire chiefs.

Roxanne Abramowitz is The Daily Courier editor. She can be reached at rabramowitz@daily-courier.com.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC INPUT HEARINGS

Re: Peoples Natural Gas and Peoples Gas Rate Increase

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In-Person Public Input Hearings:

Monroeville, PA:	In Butler, PA:
Monday, March 5, 2024 1:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m.	Wednesday, March 6, 2024 1:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m.
Community College of Allegheny County Main Campus - Auditorium Beatty Rd Monroeville, PA 15146-1396 (724) 327-1327 Parking: Front of South Building - no pass required	Butler County Community College Main Campus - Founders Hall 107 College Drive Butler, PA 16002 (724) 287-8711 Parking: Lot #6 - no pass required

Telephonic Public Input Hearings:

<p>Monday, March 7, 2024 1:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m.</p> <p>To participate in the public input hearing, you must dial the toll-free Conference Number listed below. You must enter the PIN number below when instructed. You must speak your name when prompted, and press # when the telephone system will connect you to the hearing.</p> <p>Toll-free Conference Number: 1-800-666-0649</p> <p>Code: 1259</p>	<p>To participate in the telephonic public input hearing, you are to pre-register by 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 6, 2024. If you do not pre-register and provide the information listed below, you may not have an opportunity to testify.</p> <p>Pre-Registration Instructions for Telephonic Public Input Hearings:</p> <p>Contacting the Office of Consumer Advocate (OCA) toll free at 1-800-684-6560 or by email at consumer@paoca.org (in email, include following information):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) your first and last name; (2) the date and time of the public input hearing at which you wish to testify; (3) a phone number where you can be reached prior to the hearing if we need to contact you; (4) your email address if you have one; and (5) if you require an interpreter to participate in the hearing, the language of the interpreter. <p>Hearing Exhibits: If you have any hearing exhibits to which you will refer during the telephonic hearing, please email them to the OCA at consumer@paoca.org. The OCA will forward the exhibits to the Judges and all parties. Exhibits must be received by: Wednesday, March 6, 2024.</p> <p>Persons who are deaf or hearing-impaired and wish to attend, please dial 717 to be connected to a relay operator.</p>
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Proof of Publication

State of Pennsylvania
County of Indiana] SS

On this 29th day of February 2024 A.D.

before me, the subscriber, a Notary Public in and for said County and State, personally appeared:

Sherri L. Bash

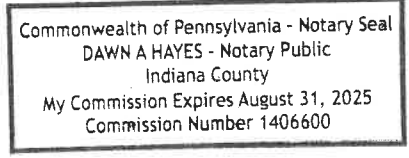
who being duly sworn according to laws, deposes and says, that (s)he is the Solicitor of the Indiana Gazette, that the said Indiana Gazette is a daily newspaper of general circulation, published in the borough of Indiana, in the County of Indiana, State of Pennsylvania, by the Indiana Gazette Inc., and was established in said Borough on the second day of July 1890, since which date, said daily newspaper has been regularly issued in said Borough and County, that annexed hereto is a true copy of a notice in the above matter exactly as the same was printed in the regular editions and issues of the said daily newspaper on the following dates, viz:

2/22, 2/29

Affiant further deposes and says that (s)he is an employee of the publisher of the said daily newspaper and has been authorized to verify the foregoing statement and the (s)he is not interested in the subject matter of the aforesaid notice or publication and that all allegations in the foregoing statement as to time, place, and character of publication are true.

By: Sherri L. Bash

Sworn to and subscribed before me the day and year aforesaid.



Signature of notarial officer

[Handwritten Signature]

Proof of Publication	\$1,350.00
Proof of Intent	\$ 8.00
Total	\$1,358.00

Indiana Gazette Inc., publishers of the Indiana Gazette, a daily newspaper, hereby acknowledges receipt of the aforesaid publication costs, and certifies the same have been fully paid.

Indiana Gazette Inc.
P.O. Box 10, 899 Water Street, Indiana, PA 15701

By _____

Borough advertises garbage ordinance

By **FREY HEIDE**
Fheide@indianagazette.net

BLAIRSVILLE — Borough Council voted Tuesday to advertise a new ordinance aimed at cleaning up streets and houses of trash.

Ordinance 714 states that any residence with trash not properly stored in a receptacle made for garbage storage, including a garbage can or dumpster, or the receptacle not stored in an area that obscures it from public sight,

will be fined no more than \$100 for each offense.

“We’re just trying to clean up the frontage of homes and the streets without having all this refuse being collected on porches or front yards,” borough Manager Jody Poorbaugh said.

The ordinance was unanimously approved to be advertised for 30 days to accept public comment despite some contention about what time on collection day trash is allowed to be placed for

BLAIRSVILLE BOROUGH

collection trucks.

Council President Pro Tempore David Janusek says the current time, noon, is too early and could still be a detriment to the look of the borough and suggested that the time be moved to later in the evening.

“I could tell you the trash that I pick up weekly on Walnut,” he said. “It’s

people putting stuff out at noon.”

Council President John Bertolino says the time is a compromise and can be changed pending public comment.

Council will vote to adopt the ordinance in its next meeting.

Additionally, council gave the go-ahead to pursue purchasing a 2024 Dodge Durango for \$64,698 to replace a police vehicle that had racked up many miles and is currently facing major transmis-

sion issues.

Police Chief Louie Sacco says that normally Blairsville Borough Police would have purchased a Ford Interceptor, but due to strikes causing a substantial backorder and a more than \$70,000 price tag, it was difficult to justify pursuing the purchase of a 2025 Interceptor.

Other topics discussed include:

- After waiving the 30 day waiting period, council unanimously voted to appoint Nicholas Puzak

to the Borough Planning Commission, filling one of the two vacant seats on the three-person commission.

- Daniel Vresilovic was appointed to the Blairsville Municipal Authority, filling its vacant seat.

- Council accepted the re-election of Thomas Smith, Patricia Evanko and Patricia Stasio to the Blairsville Public Library board.

Blairsville Borough Council will next meet at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 19.

Venue near Ford City to become wellness center

By **DENNIS PHILLIPS**
Kittanning Leader Times

FORD CITY — Under new ownership, the former Inn at Lenape Heights Events Center and Golf Resort will be transitioning into the Lenape Wellness Center.

On Tuesday, Lenape Wellness Center Chief Clinical Officer Cecilia Plavnick and Manager Melissa Harmon discussed with the Kittanning Leader Times what the future holds for the site near Ford City in Manor Township, Armstrong County.

Plavnick said the Lenape Wellness Center will be a facility for people with mental health conditions.

“It will be for people that might have depression and/or anxiety,” Plavnick said. “We’re going to be providing clinical services to the patients who will be coming here for a certain amount of months to recover and then they will go back to their community.”

Plavnick said the average stay for a patient will be four to six months, but that will be determined on an individual basis based on a person’s progress.

“It will be mainly between four to six months,” she said.

Plavnick said the center will be for people dealing with mental health issues and not for people recovering from drug addiction or alcohol abuse.

“We’re not here for a rehab,” she said. “We’re here for a wellness center, which is primarily for mental health conditions. We’re not opening this place as a drug addiction rehab center.”

Plavnick, who is also one of the facility’s owners under the name 950 Golf



Submitted photo

WHILE THE golf course on the property may see future use, the Lenape Heights Events Center and Golf Resort will transition into the Lenape Wellness Center.

Course Road LLC, noted that the ownership group has run several similar facilities.

“We have approximately 16 different locations all through the United States, so we have a long history of running facilities,” she said. “I’m a psychologist myself. I’ve been in the field for more than 20 years.”

Plavnick said the wellness center will provide clinical services to patients. There are 20 rooms at the inn, which could be turned into 35 to 40 patient beds.

“We’re going to be providing group sessions. We’re going to be providing individual therapy. We’re going to have a whole staff here to provide

those services,” she said. “We’re going to have psychiatrists. We’re going to have doctors. We’re going to have therapists. We’re going to have people that will oversee the patients here 24 hours a day.”

There will be a lot of extracurricular activities at the center to help patients stay busy as they improve their mental health, she said. Plavnick said that includes keeping the golf course.

However, it’s not known, at this point, if the course will be open to the public.

“We don’t know yet if (the golf course is) going to be open to the public,” she said. “We do know we are keeping (the golf course) as it is.”

Plavnick said only a

minimum of renovations are planned to the facility, with hopes of the center possibly being open by summer.

“The facility is already gorgeous, so we are not planning on doing anything major,” she said as far as renovations. “Hopefully, we will be opening by summer.”

Refunds on the way to

those who had reservations at former business

As far as reservations for people who have booked a wedding reception or a hotel stay or purchased a golf membership, Harmon said people will be receiving full refunds.

She said the owners have offered anyone who had booked a wedding reception before the end of June at Lenape the possibility of still holding their celebration at the resort, but, so far, there has been no interest.

“Beyond (the end of June), we thought other couples had sufficient time to book with another venue,” she said.

Harmon said there had only been three wedding receptions booked at Lenape before the end of June, with two already reserving another location. They have contacted the third party, but have not heard anything back, she said.

In all, Harmon said Lenape only had 14 wedding receptions booked for the year, with most of them scheduled for September, October and November.

As far as Lenape staff, five of 10 full-time employees have been kept on, Harmon said.

She said the other five full-time employees were part of the kitchen staff who had been laid off al-

ready because they’re seasonal workers. She noted four part-time employees have also been kept on to continue cleaning the facility.

Plavnick said once the Lenape Wellness Center is fully operational there will be 50 staff members, which is more employees than when the inn, events center and golf resort were open.

“As we grow, there will be the potential for a lot of different jobs — full time and part time,” she said. Before the Lenape Wellness Center opens, Plavnick said the owners are planning to have an open house, so the community can see the new facility.

She also said they are planning to have community events periodically, so the public can return to Lenape.

“This place being here and listening to, you know, what everyone had to say, it seems this place was very important to the community. It brought the community together,” she said.

“It’s very important to me to bring the community together.”

Dennis Phillips is associate editor of the Kittanning Leader Times, a Sample News Group sibling of the Indiana Gazette. He can be reached at (724) 543-1303, ext. 1318, or dphillips@leadertimes.com.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC INPUT HEARINGS

Re: Peoples Natural Gas and Peoples Gas Rate Increase

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On this 1st day of March, A.D. 2024, before me, the subscriber, a Notary Public in and for said County and State, personally appeared Christine Marhefka, who being duly sworn according to law, deposes and says as Advertising Director of The Tribune-Democrat, Johnstown, PA, a newspaper of general circulation as defined by the "Newspaper Advertising Act", a merger September 8, 1952, of the Johnstown Tribune, established December 7, 1853; and of the Johnstown Democrat, established March 5, 1863,

published continuously at Johnstown Pa. in the County of Cambria, and Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and that the annexed is a true copy of a notice in the above matter published in said publication in the regular issue The Johnstown Tribune-Democrat, Johnstown, PA, on February 22 and February 29, 2024; that the Affiant is not interested in the subject matter of said notice or advertising and that all of the allegations as to time, place and character of said publication are true.

Christine Marhefka
STATEMENT OF ADVERTISING COSTS

Signed and sworn to before me on
1st day of March, 2024
by Christine Marhefka making the statement

Tribune ad	\$1,860.00
Oath	5.00
Clerical Fee	2.50
Total Cost	\$1,867.50

Vivian Ohs
(Notary Public)

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania - Notary Seal
Vivian Ohs, Notary Public
Cambria County
My commission expires December 6, 2024
Commission number 1123017
Member, Pennsylvania Association of Notaries

To The Tribune-Democrat, Johnstown, PA
For publishing the notice or publication
attached hereto on the above stated dates.

PUBLISHER'S RECEIPT FOR ADVERTISING COSTS

_____ for publisher of _____
a newspaper of general circulation, hereby acknowledges receipt of the aforesaid
and publication costs and certifies that the same has been duly paid.

AFFIDAVIT OF DISTRIBUTION

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania)
County of Allegheny)

GM Olvido, [in her] capacity as Major/National Accounts Executive on behalf of TRIB TOTAL MEDIA, INC. (“**Publisher**”), being duly sworn, upon [her] oath, deposes and says:

1. Trib Total Media, Inc. representing the following publications (the “**Publications**”):
 - Kittanning Leader Times
 - Connellsville Daily Courier

The ROP for *Peoples Gas* – ran in the *Kittanning Leader Times* and *Connellsville Daily Courier* Publication on 22nd and 29th February, 2024

TRIB TOTAL MEDIA, INC.

By: 

Sworn to before me this 29th
day of February, 2024


Notary Public

[Notary Seal

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania - Notary Seal Karen DiCristofaro, Notary Public Allegheny County My commission expires April 11, 2026 Commission number 1213255 Member, Pennsylvania Association of Notaries
--

Jury selection begins for trial of ‘Rust’ armorer in fatal 2021 shooting by Alec Baldwin

By **MORGAN LEE**
Associate Press

SANTA FE, N.M. — Prosecutors in New Mexico are pursuing accountability for the 2021 death of a cinematographer who was fatally shot by actor Alec Baldwin during a rehearsal for the Western film “Rust.”

Before Baldwin’s case progresses, the armorer on the set is being tried on charges of involuntary manslaughter and tampering with evidence. Jury selection in Hannah Gutierrez-Reed’s trial started Wednesday in Santa Fe.

Gutierrez-Reed has pleaded not guilty to the charges and maintains she’s not directly to blame for Halyna Hutchins’ death. Baldwin also has pleaded not guilty to an involuntary manslaughter charge in a separate case.

The process for selecting 12 jurors began with a pool of 70 residents from the Santa Fe area, including non-English speakers, a welder, a teacher, a graduate student and a mother who provides for six children. A prosecutor began with questions for jurors about their exposure to intensive media coverage and social media chatter about the case.

Prosecutors plan to present evidence that Gutierrez-Reed loaded a live round into the gun that killed Hutchins after unknowingly bringing live ammunition onto a set where it was expressly prohibited. They contend the armorer missed multiple opportunities to ensure safety on the movie set.

Defense attorneys have said they have evidence that will show otherwise.

The evidence and testimony has implications for Baldwin, who was pointing a gun at Hutchins during an October 2021 rehearsal outside Santa Fe when she was killed and director Joel Souza was wounded.

Here are some things to know about the Gutierrez-Reed trial:

CHARGES

Gutierrez-Reed, the stepdaughter of renowned sharpshooter and weapons consultant Thell Reed, was 24 at the time of Hutchins’ death. “Rust” was her second assignment as an armorer in a feature film.

Gutierrez-Reed faces up to 18 months in prison and a \$5,000 fine if convicted of involuntary manslaughter. The evidence tampering charge stems from accusations she handed a small bag of possible narcotics to

another crew member after the shooting to avoid detection by law enforcement.

Her attorneys say that charge is prosecutors’ attempt to smear Gutierrez-Reed’s character. The bag was thrown away without testing the contents, defense attorneys said.

More than 40 people are listed as witnesses during the trial that’s scheduled to run through March 6.

AMMUNITION

Authorities located six rounds of ammunition on the movie set in locations that included a box, a gun belt and a bandolier worn by Baldwin. Baldwin has said he assumed the gun only had rounds that couldn’t be fired.

Special prosecutors have argued in court filings that Hutchins died because of a series of negligent acts by Gutierrez-Reed. They say she should have noticed live rounds and intervened long before the shooting.

Gutierrez-Reed’s attorneys say she’s unfairly been scapegoated. They contend live rounds arrived on set from an Albuquerque-based supplier of dummy rounds. They also pointed to a broader atmosphere of safety failures that were uncovered during an investigation by state workplace safety inspectors that go beyond Gutierrez-Reed.

Additionally, Gutierrez-Reed is accused in another case of carrying a gun into a bar in downtown Santa Fe in violation of state law. Her attorneys say that charge has been used to try to pressure Gutierrez-Reed into a false confession about the handling of live ammunition on the “Rust” set.

WORKPLACE SAFETY

Gutierrez-Reed was responsible for storage, maintenance and handling of firearms and ammunition on set and for training members of the cast who would be handling firearms, according to state workplace safety regulators.

Live rounds are typically distinguished from dummy rounds by a small hole in the dummy’s brass cartridge, indicating there is no explosive inside or by shaking the round to hear the clatter of a BB that is inserted inside. A missing or dimpled primer at the bottom of the cartridge is another trait of dummy rounds.

The company Rust Movie Productions paid a \$100,000 fine to the state following a scathing narrative of safety failures

in violation of standard industry protocols. The report included testimony that production managers took limited or no action to address two misfires on set before Hutchins was shot.

Prosecutors urged a judge to keep regulators’ conclusions out of the trial because those might be used to argue that “Rust” management was responsible for safety failures, not Gutierrez-Reed.

The judge in the case sided last week with Gutierrez-Reed. The report says the production company did not develop a process for ensuring live rounds were kept away from the set and that it failed to give the armorer enough time to thoroughly inventory ammunition.

BALDWIN

Baldwin, the lead actor and a co-producer on “Rust,” was indicted in January on an involuntary manslaughter charge.

Baldwin has said he pulled back the gun’s hammer — not the trigger — and the weapon fired.

The charge against Baldwin provides two alternative standards for prosecution, one based on the negligent use of a firearm and another tied to negligence without due caution or “circum-spection,” also defined as “total disregard or indifference for the safety of others.”

Legal experts say the latter standard could broaden the investigation beyond Baldwin’s handling of the gun. Alex Spiro, a defense attorney for Baldwin, says that’s unlikely to be allowed in court.

“There’s a theory that, by being the producer, he also has criminal liability,” Spiro said Tuesday before a judge in a scheduling hearing. “We don’t think that will withstand scrutiny.”

Prosecutors Kari Morrissey and Jason Lewis initially dismissed an involuntary manslaughter charge against Baldwin in April, saying they were informed the gun might have been modified before the shooting and malfunctioned. A more recent analysis of the gun concluded the “trigger had to be pulled or depressed sufficiently to release the fully cocked or retracted hammer of the evidence revolver.”

Industry-wide guidance that applied to “Rust” says to “treat all firearms as if they are loaded.”

A trial date hasn’t been set for Baldwin.

88-year-old mother testifies in murder conspiracy trial about daughter’s disappearance

By **DAVE COLLINS**
Associated Press

The 88-year-old mother of Connecticut mother-of-five Jennifer Dulos testified at a murder conspiracy trial Wednesday that she has not seen or communicated with her daughter since she disappeared and was presumed by police to be murdered in 2019.

Dressed in a gray suit with scarfs, Gloria Farber didn’t show much emotion as she told the jury that her daughter was supposed to meet her at her New York City apartment on May 24, 2019, after a doctor’s appointment, but never showed up. She suggested Dulos would never abandon her children.

“She was always there for them,” Farber testified about her daughter in the sixth week of the trial against Michelle Troconis in Stamford Superior Court in Connecticut.

Ever since Dulos vanished, Farber has had custody of her five grandchildren, who at the time ranged in age from 8 to 13. All of them were in the courtroom on Wednesday.

Troconis denies allegations that she helped Dulos’ estranged husband, Fotis Dulos, cover up the killing of Jennifer Dulos. At the time, Troconis was dating Fotis Dulos and living with him in Farmington, after Jennifer Dulos and the children had moved out and were living about 70 miles (113 kilometers) away in New Canaan.

Jennifer Dulos’ body has never been found. Farber’s testimony was part of the prosecution’s effort to show her 50-year-old daughter was killed by Fotis Dulos in an attack at her New Canaan home on May 24, 2019. A state probate court declared Jennifer Dulos legally dead in October.

Fotis Dulos died by suicide in January 2020, weeks after

being charged with murdering Jennifer Dulos. He denied the allegations. At the time of her disappearance, they were battling each other in contentious divorce and child custody proceedings.

Troconis has pleaded not guilty to conspiracy to commit murder, hindering prosecution and tampering with evidence.

The case drew widespread attention and was the subject of a made-for-TV movie, Lifetime’s “Gone Mom.” Jennifer Dulos was a member of a wealthy New York family whose father, the late Hilliard Farber, founded his own brokerage firm. She also was a niece by marriage of fashion designer Liz Claiborne. Fotis Dulos was a luxury home builder originally from Greece.

Troconis, a dual American and Venezuelan citizen, has described herself as a co-founder of horse-riding therapy programs in different parts of the world who once had her own TV production company in Argentina and hosted a snow-sports show for ESPN South America.

Prosecutors Sean McGuinness and Michelle Manning rested the state’s case Wednesday morning after Farber’s testimony. Troconis’ lawyer, Jon Schoenhorn, immediately made a motion for an acquittal, which was denied by Judge Kevin Randolph.

Schoenhorn argued there was no evidence that Troconis knew about Fotis Dulos’ alleged plans for the killing beforehand, or afterward when she accompanied him on trips that prosecutors said were intended to destroy evidence in the case.

McGuinness disagreed, and Randolph ruled there was enough evidence for the jury to make their own conclusions on the charges.

Police alleged Fotis Dulos drove his employee’s pickup

truck to a New Canaan park that morning, rode a bicycle to Jennifer Dulos’ house, attacked her in the garage and drove off with her in her Chevy Suburban, which was later found abandoned at the park.

Later the same day, Troconis accompanied Fotis Dulos to Hartford, where he disposed of several garbage bags in random locations — a trip partially recorded by surveillance cameras.

Police found some of the bags and said they contained clothing, zip ties and other items containing Jennifer Dulos’ DNA. Some of the items, including a shirt and bra, had blood-like stains on them. Some items had Fotis Dulos’ DNA on them, and one bag tested positive for Troconis’ DNA, a state forensics expert testified at the trial.

Schoenhorn said Troconis had no idea what was in the bags. He also said the match with Troconis’ DNA was found on a microscopic sample, and Fotis Dulos could have touched her and later spread her DNA to one of the bags.

Police also said Troconis helped Fotis Dulos write up a timeline of their activities to prepare for potential questioning by police. Troconis told police she only did that at the request of Fotis Dulos and his lawyer. And she also went with him when he had the employee’s truck cleaned and detailed at a car wash, prosecutors said.

And on the morning of Jennifer Dulos’ disappearance, Troconis answered Fotis Dulos’ cellphone, which he had left at his Farmington home. Prosecutors suggested that was part of the murder conspiracy to give Fotis Dulos an alibi. Schoenhorn denied the allegation.

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Police search a car and find cocaine — and a US Army rocket launcher

By **NICK PERRY**
Associated Press

A police detective says he was unnerved to find a U.S. Army rocket launcher along with crack cocaine when searching a suspicious truck in central Massachusetts.

Det. Alex Sinni from the Sutton Police Department told The Associated Press on Wednesday that his first concern after finding the M190 launcher under the backseat of the truck was for everybody’s safety.

“Once we were able to determine it was unloaded, we secured it,” Sinni said. “And then we searched the rest of the vehicle to make sure there were no explosives or rockets, or anything crazy like that.”

Sinni said the driver of

the truck was “pretty vague” about how he had got his hands on the launcher and what he planned to do with it.

“I couldn’t really get a straight answer about it,” Sinni said.

The M190 is a training model of the M72 light anti-tank weapon that was first used in the Vietnam War era. The U.S. Army said it needed more time to look into the situation before providing comment.

The truck was parked outside a Red Roof Inn in Sutton, about 50 miles (80 kilometers) southwest of Boston, and the detective decided to search it after watching the driver sitting in the vehicle for about 30 minutes. Sinni said he thought it was “a bit weird” that the driver was

parked to the side of the hotel away from the rooms for so long and hadn’t gone inside the main hotel entrance.

When he went over to talk to the driver, Sinni said, he spotted some drug paraphernalia.

Sinni and another officer detained the man and searched the truck. They found the rocket launcher hidden among some clothing beneath the backseat.

After doing some research on what to do with a rocket launcher, police said, they contacted the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and turned it over to them.

The driver was charged with possession of crack cocaine and possession/control of an incendiary device.

AFFP
Public Notice

Affidavit of Publication

STATE OF PA }
COUNTY OF LAWRENCE } SS

Cindy DeProspero, being duly sworn, says:

That she is Cindy DeProspero of the New Castle News, a daily newspaper of general circulation, printed and published in New Castle, Lawrence County, PA; that the publication, a copy of which is attached hereto, was published in the said newspaper on the following dates:

February 22, 2024, February 29, 2024

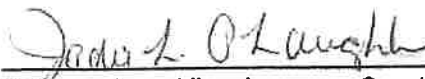
That said newspaper was regularly issued and circulated on those dates.

SIGNED:



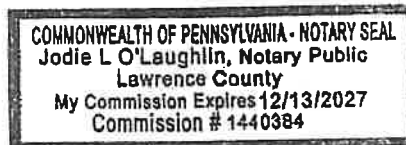
Cindy DeProspero

Subscribed to and sworn to me this 29th day of February 2024.



Jodie L. O'Laughlin, , Lawrence County, PA

My commission expires: December 13, 2027



00013180 00149387

PIPITONE GROUP
3933 PERRYVILLE AVENUE
Pittsburgh, PA 15214

Colorado man dead after pet Gila monster bites him

BY MEAD GRUVER
ASSOCIATED PRESS

A Colorado man has died after being bitten by his pet Gila monster in what would be a rare death by one of the desert lizards if the creature's venom turns out to have been the cause.

Christopher Ward, 34, was taken to a hospital shortly after being bitten by one of his two pet Gila monsters on Feb. 12. He was soon placed on life support and died Friday, Lakewood Police Department spokesman John Romero said Tuesday.

Jefferson County coroner's officials declined Tuesday to comment on the death, including if tests showed yet whether Ward died from the pet's venom or from some other medical condition.

Ward's girlfriend handed over the lizard named Winston and another named Potato to Lakewood animal control officer Leesha Crookston and other officers the day after the bite.

Ward's girlfriend told police she had heard something that "didn't sound right" and entered a room to see Winston latched onto Ward's hand, according



In this December 2018 file photo, a Gila monster is displayed at the Woodland Park Zoo in Seattle. A 34-year-old Colorado man has died after being bitten by his pet gila monster.

to Crookston's report.

She told officers Ward "immediately began exhibiting symptoms, vomiting several times and eventually passing out and ceasing to breathe," according to the report.

Ward was placed on life support in a hospital. Within days, doctors had declared him brain dead.

Ward's girlfriend reportedly told officers they bought Winston at a reptile exhibition in Denver in October and Potato from a breeder in Arizona in November, according to the animal control officer's report. Told that Gila monsters were illegal in Lakewood, the woman

told officers she wanted them out of her house as soon as possible, the report said.

Officers working with the Colorado Department of Natural Resources sent the lizards to Reptile Gardens outside Rapid City, South Dakota. Twenty-six spiders of different species also were taken from the home to a nearby animal shelter.

Gila monsters are venomous reptiles that naturally inhabit parts of the southwestern U.S. and neighboring areas of Mexico. Their bites can cause intense pain and make their victims pass out but normally aren't deadly.

ECLIPSE: Campus preps for festivities

FROM A6

during normal hours of operation, and public restrooms will be available.

David Hurd, director of PennWest Edinboro's planetarium, will lead the educational events on campus. Hurd has dedicated the last 20 years to producing and implementing tactile astronomy materials for visually impaired individuals and has worked with NASA to create the official braille guides to experiencing the eclipse. Guides will be available to view at the PennWest Edinboro watch party.

As a reminder, it is not

safe to look directly at the sun without specialized eye protection for solar viewing. Looking at any part of the bright sun through a camera lens, binoculars or a telescope without a special-purpose solar filter secured over the front of the optics will instantly cause severe eye injury. You can view the eclipse directly without proper eye protection only when the moon completely obscures the sun's bright face — during the brief period known as totality. You'll know it's safe when you no longer see any part of the sun through eclipse glasses or a solar

viewer.

At 2:02 p.m., the partial eclipse will be viewable in the Edinboro sky. Totality will begin at 3:16, with maximum totality at 3:18. Totality will end at 3:20, with partiality ending at 4:30.

Food trucks will be on site at the event in the Jeremy D. Brown Human Services Building parking lot. Also, food will be available for purchase in the Frank G. Pogue Student Center's Food Court and the Van Houten Dining Hall.

For more information about the event, and an official countdown clock, visit pennwest.edu/eclipse.

WILMINGTON: Students on honor rolls

FROM A6

and Peyton Waters.

Grade 8: Heath Chesebro, Kendall Cohen, Frank Donnelly, Rio Hatch, Kiera Hogg, Stone Johnston, Eva Jones, Oliver Little, Julianne Reed, Jaina Reiber, Julian Small and Addison Spaulding.

HONOR

Grade 5: Mackensie Attisano, Ryan Bruckner, Jesse Derry, Jacob Gerber, Jace Hamilton, Blake Harper, Hawk Johnston, Keelan Longwill, Sophia Mathieson, Carson McConahy, Mia

McFarland, Maddux Meade, Phoebe Phanco, Lucy Prentice and Elias Royer.

Grade 6: Jayden Alford, Owen Danch, Alexia Donofrio, Parker Grubbs, Adelina Houck, Lucas Huling, Florence Kaufman, Emma Kelley, Alexander Kobbe, Landen McMurdy, Reed Mershimer, Layla O'Toole, Preston Penwell, Austin Saccol, Hayden Settle and Blaine Stewart.

Grade 7: Evelyn Basso, Dani Bishop, Wesley Bissett, Drake Buchanan, Jovonna Carbone, Gabriella Coast, Delia Donnan, Matthew Eggleston, Olivia Foster,

Devin Fyffe, Cora Garrett, Zachary Huffman, Helena Jordan, Joaquin Littlejohn, Mollie McConnell, Vera Morris, Ella Nau, William Offutt, Luca Pastore, Lola Plyler, Alice Prentice, Ezra Reimers, Tyler Roberts, Zachary Rolli and Ethan Sommers.

Grade 8: Jude Beatty, Alasdair Camlin, Logan Dambach, Laelah Dunn, Gabriella Fennell, Paige Fox, Alexis Gray, Dominick Hagens, Ellie Harper, Kayden Kenney, Maddox Leslie, Karissa Logan, Ceceilia Minto, Leslie Rayner, Avery Sabik, Hallie Senchak, Kallin Sikorski and Cale Worthington.

SRU: New Castle student at Super Bowl

FROM A6

said. "SRU has so many connections and such a strong network of alumni that allow us to have these opportunities."

SRU students met with alumni who were working at the Super Bowl in various capacities, including Jon Radke, '02, director of facilities operations for the Washington Commanders, and Randy Boczkowski, '07, branch manager at Contemporary Services Corporation, a security firm.

Additionally, because the group flew home by way of Los Angeles, they visited Connor Dodd, '15, who works in sales for the Los Angeles Rams and offered a tour of SoFi Stadium, site of the Super Bowl two years ago, and Olivia Beach, '20, an athletic compliance coordinator at the University of Southern California, who showed them USC's facilities.

The SRU students also attended a pro-

fessional development networking event for college students hosted by the NFL at the University of Nevada-Las Vegas.

"It was great networking with other students and the people that we worked with for the NFL who were our managers," Romano said. "They were amazing and we want to keep in touch with them."

The SRU professors were even taken aback by the experience. In addition to Crow, Robertha Abney, associate professor of sport management, and Robert Zullo, instructor of sport management, were a part of the group from SRU. Abney has worked more than seven other Super Bowls during her career.

"I've never seen an event of this magnitude," Crow said. "It was good to see even the small details and how important they were, not just on game day, but the entire week."

Romano and Prioletti said they appreciated engaging with children during the NFL Fan Experience, throwing footballs and running through drills as part of the league's Play 60 initiative. They also benefited from being part of working an event of such a large scale, and how they can apply lessons to much smaller events in the future.

"The one thing I keep learning is there are more jobs out there and there's so much you can do," Romano said. "It was eye-opening just how much goes into an event like this and seeing the behind-the-scenes of the event management is definitely something we can apply in our careers."

"I want to work in the sport industry and there are going to be long days and long nights," Prioletti said. "This type of work is what I want to do and I really enjoyed the whole experience."

CONCERTS: Shows coming to the region

FROM A6

- MARCH 17:** KK's Priest, Stage AE, Pittsburgh
- MARCH 18:** Tow'rs, Thunderbird Cafe, Pittsburgh
- MARCH 19:** Blackberry Smoke, The Roxian, McKees Rocks
- MARCH 20:** Set It Off, The Roxian, McKees Rocks
- MARCH 21:** Sam Barber, The Roxian, McKees Rocks
- MARCH 22:** The Meeting of Important People, Thunderbird Cafe, Pittsburgh
- MARCH 22:** GROUPOLOVE, The Roxian, McKees Rocks
- MARCH 23:** Wheeler Walker Jr., The Roxian, McKees Rocks
- MARCH 23:** Dave Hause,

- Thunderbird Cafe, Pittsburgh
- MARCH 23:** William Black, Stage AE, Pittsburgh
- MARCH 24:** Mom Jeans, Stage AE, Pittsburgh
- MARCH 25:** Avenged Sevenfold, PPG Paints Arena, Pittsburgh
- MARCH 27:** Fall Out Boy, PPG Paints Arena, Pittsburgh
- MARCH 27:** Louisiana Calling, Thunderbird Cafe, Pittsburgh
- MARCH 29:** Kane Brown, PPG Paints Arena, Pittsburgh
- APRIL 1:** Jeff Rosenstock, Mr. Smalls, Millvale
- APRIL 3:** William Fitzsimmons, Thunderbird Cafe,

- Pittsburgh
- APRIL 4:** Girlschool, Mr. Smalls, Millvale
- APRIL 4:** Andrea Bocelli, PPG Paints Arena, Pittsburgh
- APRIL 5:** The Slakcers, Mr. Smalls, Millvale
- APRIL 8:** Mannequin Pussy, Thunderbird Cafe, Pittsburgh
- APRIL 11:** The Motet, Thunderbird Cafe, Pittsburgh
- APRIL 11:** The Koffin Kats & The Queers, Mr. Smalls, Millvale
- APRIL 13:** Brantly Gilbert, UPMC Events Center, Robert Morris University
- APRIL 13:** Dustin Lynch, Covelli Center, Youngstown

NOTICE OF PUBLIC INPUT HEARINGS

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Tuesday, March 5, 2024 1:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m.	Wednesday, March 6, 2024 1:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m.
Community College of Allegheny County Boyce Campus – Auditorium 595 Beatty Rd Monroeville, PA 15146-1396 (724) 327-1327	Butler County Community College Main Campus – Founders Hall 107 College Drive Butler, PA 16002 (724) 287-8711
Parking: Front of South Building – no pass required	Parking: Lot #6 – no pass required

Telephonic Public Input Hearings:

Thursday, March 7, 2024 1:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m.	To participate in the telephonic public input hearing, you are to pre-register by 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 6, 2024. If you do not pre-register and provide the information listed below, you may not have an opportunity to testify.
To participate in the public input hearing, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You must dial the toll-free Conference number below You must enter the PIN number below when instructed You must speak your name when prompted, and press # Then, the telephone system will connect you to the hearing 	Pre-Registration Instructions for Telephonic Public Input Hearings:
Toll-free Conference Number: 866.566.0649	Contacting the Office of Consumer Advocate (OCA) toll free at 1-800-684-6560 or by email at consumer@paoca.org (in email, include following information):
Passcode: 83345259	(1) your first and last name; (2) the date and time of the public input hearing at which you wish to testify; (3) a phone number where you can be reached prior to the hearing if we need to contact you; (4) your email address if you have one; and (5) if you require an interpreter to participate in the hearing, the language of the interpreter.
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George H.W. Bush's speedboat sold at benefit auction

HOUSTON (AP) — Former President George H.W. Bush's speedboat has a new owner.

The 38-foot "Fidelity V" was auctioned for \$435,000 during the George and Barbara Bush Foundation's 2024 Presidential Salute benefiting the George H.W. Bush Presidential Library and Museum, and The Bush School of Government and

Public Service at Texas A&M University, a spokesperson said.

The event last week in Houston featured a number of the late president's friends ranging from former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice to two-time Super Bowl-winning quarterback Peyton Manning. The boat's buyer was anonymous and it's unclear what will

become of the vessel, the spokesperson said. The event raised more than \$1 million in total, she said.

The speedboat sports a presidential seal and boasts three engines with a combined 900 horsepower. It can go up to 75 mph and was used in the waters off Kennebunkport, Maine, where the Texas family has a summer retreat.

AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

STATE OF Pennsylvania

COUNTY OF Venango

CITY OF Oil City

I, Melissa Reedy, being duly sworn on oath now and during all times herein stated, have been the publisher or designated agent of the publication known as,

The Derrick, News-Herald & Clarion News ("Publication ")

and have full knowledge of the facts herein stated as follows:

the ad for Peoples Gas ("Advertiser") was printed and published in issue(s) of said newspaper on the following date(s):

2/22/2024

2/29/2024

By: Melissa Reedy
Signature of affiant

Subscribed and sworn to before me
This 1st day of March, 2024.

Notary Seal:

Michele M Schwab
Notary Public

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania - Notary Seal
Michele M. Schwab, Notary Public
Venango County
My commission expires December 8, 2026
Commission number 1259422
Member, Pennsylvania Association of Notaries

► Migrants

Continued from Page A1

George Singh said he began to hear the rumors in mid-January.

"We have not, either in Franklin or in Cranberry, had any illegal immigrants. We have not even had any legal immigrants staying" at the hotels during that time frame. The information was verified, as the newspaper was granted a look at the bookings at both hotels from December through Feb. 21.

The "legal immigrants" of which Singh spoke are mostly those who have been granted permission to work in the U.S. He said companies that employ them — and "they all have IDs" — do so during the warmer months of the year for contracted work in the local area.

"Personally, if (the talk) didn't bother me," he said, "but when my employees come to me because they are being harassed, it bothers me."

When people call to voice complaints about the Quality Inn renting rooms to illegal immigrants, Pally Singh said she tells them, "Are they illegal aliens or are they ghosts, because I don't see them? Show them to me."

Sunny Singh said the phones in Cranberry constantly ring. "People say (migrants) were dropped off by two buses at the Holiday Inn. I say, 'If you believe that, come over and look.'"

His wife, Aman, who works the front desk at the Holiday Inn, said the many harassing calls that she received has prompted her to forgo the common-courtesy practice of identifying herself on the phone.

Business fallout?

The Singhs have been owners and operators of the Quality Inn for the past 23 years and opened the Holiday Inn Express & Suites in 2007.

George Singh said he doesn't expect the rumors of both establishments renting rooms to immigrants who have crossed the U.S. border without documentation to hurt business at either of the hotels.

"Our business is mostly online, and 98% of people who stay with us are not local (residents). They come in from out of town because of a wedding, a funeral, an event," he said. "For example, Komatsu will book rooms for contractors. I personally don't think it will hurt business."

However, he said, if the federal government were to ask him to rent rooms to illegal immigrants, he would not refuse.

"Provided the government would take responsibility for them, we would do it. We have to pay our bills. The only people we would refuse would be the ones who cause problems," Singh said.

"Give me the law where it says I can refuse (to offer service). If we refuse, that could open us up to discrimination. Can McDonald's or Shebz refuse? The same law should apply to everyone." Pally Singh said, "What do you do?"



George Singh, left, and his brother, Sunny, say their hotels, the Quality Inn in Franklin and the Holiday Inn Express & Suites in Cranberry Township, have been inundated with inquiries as to whether the hotels have been housing illegal immigrants. Front desk employee Kim Whitten, background, says many of the calls have amounted to harassment.

"We have not, either in Franklin or in Cranberry, had any illegal immigrants staying."

George Singh
co-owner of the Quality Inn and the Holiday Inn Express & Suites

someone, because of the way they look, if they are an illegal immigrant?"

Officials' reactions

Franklin Mayor Doug Baker said he had heard second hand about the situation about a month ago and had regarded it as hearsay.

"I thought it had blown over, but Pally had reached out to me with her concerns with the phone calls they were getting," he said.

"I have a background in law enforcement, and I was concerned for their safety. It takes one person who is a little bit off to do something stupid. That was my major concern."

He said a couple of Franklin City Council members had heard about it as well, "but we really didn't discuss it."

Baker said he hopes the talk will now dispel because the Singhs are "good solid business people."

Cranberry Township Supervisor Mike Deibert said township officials have had "no conversations, external or internal, regarding social media posts on the subject."

"I saw a post on Facebook in regard to this topic, but my personal thought is just because it's a post does not mean it's true," he said. "As for myself and the other supervisors, we never discussed it."

"Hopefully, people will not refrain from patronizing (the Holiday Inn). The Singhs are private business owners "who are providing a service to the area, and I don't want to see them fall victim to posts on Facebook."

Venango County Commissioner Sam Breene said he and his fellow commissioners, Albert Abramovic and Ken Bryan, have received "a lot of calls" about the issue.

However, he said, "It's also caused us to give thoughts on preparations on what we need to do if something does happen. Most importantly, our priority is to look out for our Venango County citizens and make sure our limited tax dollars are going to serve them."

"There's no doubt there's a genuine border crisis; it's only responsible for us to be prepared if that situation arrives. There's nothing wrong with being prepared."

LUKA KRNETA, news editor of The Derrick and The News-Herald, can be reached at 814-677-8367 or at lukakrnet@thederrick.com.

Digging for evidence

In early January, the newspaper first got word about the possibility that some people who illegally made their way across the border and into the U.S. eventually made it to Venango County, and that it was likely accomplished through federal or organizational aid.

Verification became a long process, as one source of information led to other possible multiple sources — some of which became contradictory. The goal was to secure tangible evidence, in the form of a contract or other agreement, that stated the migrants were to be housed at either the Quality Inn or the Holiday Inn Express & Suites.

Both direct and indirect sources to help unearth such a document were composed of officials in all levels of government: county (local and regional), state and federal (legislative and executive). As of Wednesday, the newspaper had received no word that such a contract, or legislative or organizational agreement exists.

Although no tangible evidence was uncovered, the decision to approach the hotels' owners was made because of the escalation of social media posts on the issue and the increasing number of public inquiries received by the newspaper.

The only information received in regard to migrant issues in general was the following email forwarded to the newspaper from the administration of Erie County Executive Brenton Davis:

All,

Just had a phone call with Randy Padfield, PEMA Director. He acknowledged the information that was shared with us regarding the migrants being transported to Pennsylvania. This information had started from the Governor's Office, and was more for situational awareness and to get ahead of anything that may transpire. Director Padfield has contacted from the FEMA Region 3 that monitor the migrant situation and they are telling him that nothing is on their radar as of now to come this way.

He did tell me that Pennsylvania being a swing state and with the politics, that is not to say that nothing will happen in the future. He assured me that if there is any talk about migrants heading our way that he would reach out and bring us in the loop as soon as he can.

Brian A. Mesaros
Emergency Management Coordinator

► Forest

Continued from Page A1

In January 2023, Snyder said he had been in contact with representatives of Nittany Minimart, which expressed an interest in developing a one-stop grocery and convenience store and truck stop.

Many Nittany Minimart stores are located in the central part of the state. The chain is associated with State College-based Nittany Energy.

Snyder said he was told Nittany would like to develop a 10,000-square-foot building for its operation with parking for 15 to 20 trailers and access from the nearby trail hub, which would make it the biggest Nittany operation.

The county is trying to acquire the BVK property in Marienville, the site of the former Knox Glass plant. The buildings have been vacant since 2009.

Nittany would be willing to rent one of those buildings from the county, which would in turn provide the county with income to market and develop the other three build-

ings on the site, Snyder said. The county had been working with the state DCED to acquire the property. The DCED required the feasibility study.

In other business at Wednesday's meeting, the commissioners approved an agreement with Allstate Tower Inc. for the construction of a broadband tower at Yellowhammer at 111 Leas Lane in Tionesta at a cost of \$300,900.

The funding for the tower is coming from an Appalachian Regional Commission grant with a 20% county match. In another matter, Snyder spoke about the ambulance service issues that have been in the news recently and have angered some Forest and Clarion county residents.

He noted that the county's only involvement with the Forest Ambulance Authority that services the eastern part of the county is supplying the ambulance, which was purchased with grant funds, and providing data from the county assessment office for mailings.

Snyder added that the county supplies that assessment data to other fire companies

and the Tionesta Ambulance Service, which services the western portion of the county, to use for mailings when they do subscription drives.

Forest County has nothing to do with setting the fee to support the ambulance service that has many residents on the east side of Forest County and Farmington Township in Clarion County up in arms, Snyder said.

In an election-related matter, Snyder said the county is waiting to hear from the Pennsylvania Department of State as to any rule changes surrounding the April 23 primary election. State Rep. Kathy Rapp, who represents the 65th District that includes Forest County, has filed a lawsuit against all 67 counties in Pennsylvania challenging their process for counting absentee ballots.

Snyder said Forest County, like every other county in the state, counts absentee ballots at the election headquarters in the courthouse along with mail-in ballots, per directions from the Department of State. Rapp is challenging this and asking that the absentee ballots be counted at each precinct, Snyder said.

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HEALTH, HAPPINESS & WELLNESS

A guide to local businesses committed to helping our community thrive.

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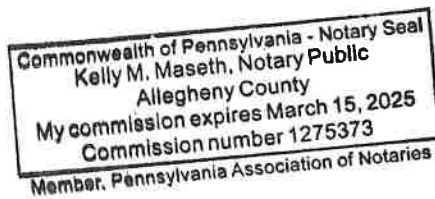
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Mideast Conflict

U.S. asks U.N. to consider Israel's security

Suggests top court should not order prompt withdrawal

By Mike Corder
Associated Press

THE HAGUE, Netherlands — The United States said Wednesday the United Nations' top court should not issue an advisory opinion that says Israel should "immediately and unconditionally withdraw" from territories sought for a Palestinian state.

Acting State Department legal adviser Richard Visek said the 15-judge panel at the International Court of Justice should not seek to resolve the decades-long Israeli-Palestinian conflict "through an advisory opinion addressed to questions focusing on the acts of only one party."

Mr. Visek spoke on the third day of hearings at the court into a request by the General Assembly for a non-binding advisory opinion on the legality of Israel's policies in the occupied territories.

He said the court "can address the questions before it within the established framework based on the land for peace principle and within the parameters of established principles of occupation law."

Mr. Visek added that the court's opinion "will have consequences for the parties to the conflict and for the ongoing efforts of all of those working to achieve a durable peace."

Earlier this week, Palestinian Foreign Minister Riad Malki called on the court to uphold the Palestinian right to self-determination and declare "that the Israeli occupation is illegal and must end immediately,



Peter Dejong/Associated Press

Richard C. Visek, acting legal adviser of the U.S. Department of State, right, arrives to address the United Nations' highest court Wednesday in The Hague, Netherlands, during historic hearings into the legality of Israel's 57-year occupation of the West Bank and east Jerusalem.

totally and unconditionally."

The idea of land for peace has been the cornerstone of U.S.-led diplomacy for decades and was the basis of the Camp David Accords between Israel and Egypt, in which Israel withdrew from the Sinai Peninsula in return for peace and recognition.

The same principle has been applied to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, but the peace process has repeatedly stalled because of Palestinian attacks, Israel's expansion of settlements in occupied territory, and the inability of the two sides to agree on thorny issues like final borders, the status of Jerusalem and the fate of Palestinian refugees.

The U.S. arguments at the world court came a day after Washington vetoed an Arab

-backed and widely supported U.N. resolution demanding an immediate humanitarian cease-fire of the Israel-Hamas war in the embattled Gaza Strip, saying it would interfere with negotiations on a deal to free hostages held by militant Palestinian group Hamas.

The vote in the 15-member Security Council was 13-1, with the United Kingdom abstaining. It reflected the strong support from countries around the globe for ending the war, which started when Hamas militants invaded southern Israel on Oct. 7, killing about 1,200 people and taking nearly 250 others hostage. Since then, more than 29,000 Palestinians have been killed in Israel's retaliatory military offensive, according to the Gaza Health Ministry, which says the vast

majority were women and children.

"Hamas' attacks, hostage-taking and other atrocities, the ongoing hostilities and the suffering of Palestinians in Gaza and the violence in the West Bank reinforce the United States resolve to urgently achieve a final peace that includes the full realization of Palestinian self-determination," Mr. Visek said.

Mr. Visek's comments were preceded Wednesday by condemnations of Israel's policies by representatives of Colombia, Cuba and Egypt. Along with the Palestinians, a total of 51 nations and three international organizations are scheduled to speak at the hearings. The court will likely take months to issue its non-binding advisory opinion.

The Palestinians argue that Israel's open-ended

“ Hamas' attacks, hostage-taking and other atrocities, the ongoing hostilities and the suffering of Palestinians in Gaza and the violence in the West Bank reinforce the United States resolve to urgently achieve a final peace that includes the full realization of Palestinian self-determination.”

Richard Visek
Acting State Department legal adviser

military occupation has violated the prohibition on territorial conquest and the Palestinians' right to self-determination, and has imposed a system of racial discrimination and apartheid.

On Tuesday, South Africa argued that Israel's policies amount to apartheid against the Palestinians and that Israel's occupation of land sought for a Palestinian state is "inherently and fundamentally illegal." Israel rejects such claims.

In a written submission filed last year, Israel argued that the questions put to the court are prejudiced, ignore "Israel's right and duty to protect its citizens," fail to address Israeli security concerns or acknowledge past agreements with the Palestinians to negotiate "the permanent status of the territory, security arrangements, settlements, and borders."

Israel captured the West Bank, east Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip in the 1967 Mideast war. The Palestinians seek all three areas for an independent state. Israel considers the West Bank to be a disputed territory and says its future should be decided in negotiations.

Israel has also built settlements across the West Bank, many of which resemble fully developed suburbs and small towns. The settlements are home to more than 500,000 Jewish settlers, while around 3 million Palestinians live in the territory. The international community overwhelmingly considers the settlements to be illegal.

Israel has also annexed east Jerusalem, home to the city's most sensitive holy sites, and considers the entire city to be its capital. The annexation is not internationally recognized.

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Study says war, illness could kill 85,000 in Gaza in next 6 months

By Stephanie Nolen
The New York Times

An escalation of the war in Gaza could lead to the deaths of 85,000 Palestinians from injuries and disease over the next six months, in the worst of three scenarios that prominent epidemiologists have modeled in an effort to understand the potential future death toll of the conflict.

These fatalities would be in addition to the more than 29,000 deaths in Gaza that local authorities have attributed to the conflict since it began in October. The estimate represents "excess deaths," above what would have been expected had there been no war.

In a second scenario, assuming no change in the current level of fighting or humanitarian access, there could be an additional 58,260 deaths in the enclave over the next six months, according to the researchers, from Johns Hopkins University and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

That figure could climb to 66,720 if there were outbreaks of infectious disease such as cholera, their analysis found.

Even in the best of the three possibilities that the research team described — an immediate and sustained cease-fire with no outbreak of infectious disease — another 6,500 Gazans could die over the next six months as a direct result of the war, the analysis found.

The population of the Gaza Strip before the war was roughly 2.2 million.

"This is not a political message or advocacy," said Dr. Francesco Checchi, professor of epidemiology and international health at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

"We simply wanted to put



Ahmad Hasaballah/Getty Images

More homes were destroyed by Israeli airstrikes in Rafah, Gaza, on Wednesday. Such strikes have intensified as Israel reiterated its intent to press on with an offensive in Gaza's southern city of Rafah, where about 1.4 million displaced Palestinians are sheltering.

it at the front of people's minds and on the desks of decision makers," he added, "so that it can be said afterward that when these decisions were taken, there was some available evidence on how this would play out in terms of lives."

Dr. Checchi and his colleagues estimated the projected excess deaths from health data that was available for Gaza before the war began and from that collected through more than four months of fighting.

Their study considers deaths from traumatic injuries, infectious diseases, maternal and neonatal causes, and noncommunicable diseases for which people can no longer receive medication or treatment, such as dialysis.

Dr. Checchi said the analysis made it possible to quantify the potential impact of a cease-fire in lives. "The decisions that are going to be taken over the next few days and weeks matter hugely in terms of the evolution of the death toll in Gaza," he said.

The projected 6,500 deaths even with a cease-fire is predicated on the assumption there will not be epidemics of infectious disease. With an outbreak of cholera, measles, polio or meningitis, that figure would be 11,580, said Dr. Paul Spiegel, an epidemiologist at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and an author of the research, which has not been peer-reviewed.

"The point there is even with a cease-fire, we're not out of the woods whatsoever," he said. "There's still a significant number of deaths, and that needs to be prepared for."

While it is obvious that a military escalation would bring additional casualties, he added, policymakers should be cognizant of the range in the number of deaths that these scenarios indicate.

"We hope to bring some reality to it," Dr. Spiegel said. "This is 85,000 additional deaths in a population where 1.2% of that population has already been killed."

NOTICE OF PUBLIC INPUT HEARINGS

Re: Peoples Natural Gas and Peoples Gas Rate Increase

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Tuesday, March 5, 2024 1:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m.	Wednesday, March 6, 2024 1:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m.
Community College of Allegheny County Boyce Campus – Auditorium 595 Beatty Rd Monroeville, PA 15146-1396 (724) 327-1327	Butler County Community College Main Campus – Founders Hall 107 College Drive Butler, PA 16002 (724) 287-8711
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The Punxsutawney Spirit

March 1 2024

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Jury selection begins for trial of 'Rust' armorer in fatal 2021 shooting by Alec Baldwin

By Morgan Lee
Associated Press

SANTA FE, N.M. (AP) — Prosecutors in New Mexico are pursuing accountability for the 2021 death of a cinematographer who was fatally shot by actor Alec Baldwin during a rehearsal for the Western film "Rust."

Before Baldwin's case progresses, the armorer on the set is being tried on charges of involuntary manslaughter and tampering with evidence. Jury selection in Hannah Gutierrez-Reed's trial started Wednesday in Santa Fe.

Gutierrez-Reed has pleaded not guilty to the charges and maintains she's not directly to blame for Halyna Hutchins' death. Baldwin also has pleaded not guilty to an involuntary manslaughter charge in a separate case.

The process for selecting 12 jurors began with a pool of 70 residents from the Santa Fe area, including non-English speakers, a welder, a teacher, a graduate student and a mother who provides for six children. A prosecutor began with questions for jurors about their exposure to intensive media coverage and social media chatter about the case.

Prosecutors plan to present evidence that Gutierrez-Reed loaded a live round into the gun that killed Hutchins after unknowingly bringing live ammunition onto a set where it was expressly prohibited. They contend the armorer missed multiple opportunities to ensure safety on the movie set.

Defense attorneys have said they have evidence that will show otherwise.

The evidence and testimony has implications for Baldwin, who was pointing a gun at Hutchins during an October 2021 rehearsal

outside Santa Fe when she was killed and director Joel Souza was wounded.

Here are some things to know about the Gutierrez-Reed trial:

CHARGES

Gutierrez-Reed, the stepdaughter of renowned sharpshooter and weapons consultant Thell Reed, was 24 at the time of Hutchins' death. "Rust" was her second assignment as an armorer in a feature film.

Gutierrez-Reed faces up to 18 months in prison and a \$5,000 fine if convicted of involuntary manslaughter. The evidence tampering charge stems from accusations she handed a small bag of possible narcotics to another crew member after the shooting to avoid detection by law enforcement.

Her attorneys say that charge is prosecutors' attempt to smear Gutierrez-Reed's character. The bag was thrown away without testing the contents, defense attorneys said.

More than 40 people are listed as witnesses during the trial that's scheduled to run through March 6.

AMMUNITION

Authorities located six rounds of ammunition on the movie set in locations that included a box, a gun belt and a bandolier worn by Baldwin. Baldwin has said he assumed the gun only had rounds that couldn't be fired.

Special prosecutors have argued in court filings that Hutchins died because of a series of negligent acts by Gutierrez-Reed. They say she should have noticed live rounds and intervened long before the shooting.

Gutierrez-Reed's attorneys say she's unfairly been scapegoated. They contend live rounds arrived on set from an Albuquerque-based supplier of dummy rounds. They also pointed to a broader atmosphere

of safety failures that were uncovered during an investigation by state workplace safety inspectors that go beyond Gutierrez-Reed.

Additionally, Gutierrez-Reed is accused in another case of carrying a gun into a bar in downtown Santa Fe in violation of state law. Her attorneys say that charge has been used to try to pressure Gutierrez-Reed into a false confession about the handling of live ammunition on the "Rust" set.

WORKPLACE SAFETY

Gutierrez-Reed was responsible for storage, maintenance and handling of firearms and ammunition on set and for training members of the cast who would be handling firearms, according to state workplace safety regulators.

Live rounds are typically distinguished from dummy rounds by a small hole in the dummy's brass cartridge, indicating there is no explosive inside or by shaking the round to hear the clatter of a BB that is inserted inside. A missing or dimpled primer at the bottom of the cartridge is another trait of dummy rounds.

The company Rust Movie Productions paid a \$100,000 fine to the state following a scathing narrative of safety failures in violation of standard industry protocols. The report included testimony that production managers took limited or no action to address two misfires on set before Hutchins was shot.

Prosecutors urged a judge to keep regulators' conclusions out of the trial because those might be used to argue that "Rust" management was responsible for safety failures, not Gutierrez-Reed.

The judge in the case sided last week with Gutierrez-Reed. The report says the production company did not develop a process for ensuring live

rounds were kept away from the set and that it failed to give the armorer enough time to thoroughly inventory ammunition.

BALDWIN

Baldwin, the lead actor and a co-producer on "Rust," was indicted in January on an involuntary manslaughter charge.

Baldwin has said he pulled back the gun's hammer — not the trigger — and the weapon fired.

The charge against Baldwin provides two alternative standards for prosecution, one based on the negligent use of a firearm and another tied to negligence without due caution or "circumspection," also defined as "total disregard or indifference for the safety of others."

Legal experts say the latter standard could broaden the investigation beyond Baldwin's handling of the gun. Alex Spiro, a defense attorney for Baldwin, says that's unlikely to be allowed in court.

"There's a theory that, by being the producer, he also has criminal liability," Spiro said Tuesday before a judge in a scheduling hearing. "We don't think that will withstand scrutiny."

Prosecutors Kari Morrissey and Jason Lewis initially dismissed an involuntary manslaughter charge against Baldwin in April, saying they were informed the gun might have been modified before the shooting and malfunctioned. A more recent analysis of the gun concluded the "trigger had to be pulled or depressed sufficiently to release the fully cocked or retracted hammer of the evidence revolver."

Industry-wide guidance that applied to "Rust" says to "treat all firearms as if they are loaded."

A trial date hasn't been set for Baldwin.

Alabama hospital puts pause on IVF in wake of ruling saying frozen embryos are children

By Kim Chandler
Associated Press

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (AP) — A large Alabama hospital has paused in vitro fertilization treatments as health care providers weigh the impact of a state court ruling that frozen embryos are the legal equivalent of children.

The University of Alabama at Birmingham said in a statement Wednesday that its UAB Division of Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility has paused the treatments "as it evaluates the Alabama Supreme Court's decision that a cryopreserved embryo is a human being."

"We are saddened that this will impact our patients' attempt to have a baby through IVF, but we must evaluate the potential that our patients and our physicians could be prosecuted criminally or face punitive damages for following the standard of care for IVF treatments," the statement emailed by spokeswoman Savannah Koplun read.

Other fertility treatment providers in the state were continuing to provide IVF as lawyers explored the impact of the ruling.

The ruling by the all-Republican Alabama Supreme Court prompted a wave of concern about the future of IVF treatments in the state and the potential unintended consequences of extreme anti-abortion laws in Republican-controlled states. Patients called clinics to see if scheduled IVF treatments would continue. And providers consulted with attorneys.

Justices — citing language in the Alabama Constitution that the state recognizes the "rights of the unborn child" — said three couples could sue for wrongful death when their frozen embryos were destroyed in an accident at a storage facility.

"Unborn children are 'children' ... without exception based on developmental stage, physical location, or any other

ancillary characteristics," Justice Jay Mitchell wrote in Friday's majority ruling by the all-Republican court.

Mitchell said the court had previously ruled that a fetus killed when a woman is pregnant is covered under Alabama's Wrongful Death of a Minor Act and nothing excludes "extra-uterine children from the Act's coverage."

The ruling brought a rush of warnings about the potential impact on fertility treatments and the freezing of embryos, which had previously been considered property by the courts. Groups representing both IVF treatment providers and patients seeking fertility treatments raised alarm about the decision.

And patients were left wondering where it would leave them.

Gabby Goidel, 26, who is pursuing IVF treatment in Alabama after three miscarriages, told The Associated Press that the court ruling came down on the same day she began daily injections ahead of egg retrieval.

"It just kind of took me by storm. It was like all I could think about, and it was just a very stressful thing to hear. I immediately messaged my clinic and asked if this could potentially halt us. They said we have to take it one day at a time," Goidel said.

Barbara Collura, the CEO of RESOLVE: The National Infertility Association, told the AP Tuesday that the ruling raises questions for providers and patients, including if they can freeze future embryos created during fertility treatment or if patients could ever donate or destroy unused embryos.

The Alabama Supreme Court decision partly hinged on anti-abortion language added to the Alabama Constitution in 2018, stating it is the "policy of this state to ensure the protection of the rights of the unborn child."

Boeing ousts head of 737 jetliner program weeks after panel blowout on a flight over Oregon

SEATTLE (AP) — Boeing said Wednesday that the head of its 737 jetliner program is leaving the company in an executive shake-up weeks after a door panel blew out on a flight over Oregon, renewing questions about safety at the company.

Boeing announced that Ed Clark, who had been with the company for nearly 18 years and led the 737 program since early 2021, was leaving immediately.

Clark oversaw the factory in Renton, Washington, where final assembly took place on the Alaska Airlines 737 Max 9 involved in last month's accident. Federal investigators said bolts needed to help keep a panel called a door plug in place were missing after repair work on the plane.

Katie Ringgold, a vice president in charge of delivering 737s to airlines, will succeed Clark as vice president and general manager of the 737 program and the Renton factory, according to an email to employees from Stan Deal, the CEO of Boeing's commercial airplanes division.

The company announced several other appointments, including naming longtime executive Elizabeth Lund to the new position of senior vice president for commercial airplanes quality.

The moves are part of the company's "enhanced focus on ensuring that every airplane we deliver meets or exceeds all quality and safety requirements," Deal said in his email to staff. "Our customers demand, and deserve, nothing less."

The blowout of a panel on the Alaska Airlines Max 9 has led to more scrutiny of Boeing by regulators, Congress and airlines.

The Federal Aviation Administration grounded all Max 9s in the U.S. for about three weeks for inspections of the emergency door panels, and the agency is limiting Boeing production until other quality concerns are resolved. FAA Administrator Mike Whitaker said Boeing is not paying enough attention to safety as it tries to build more planes to meet demand from airlines.

The CEOs of Alaska Airlines and United

Airlines — the two U.S. carriers affected by the Max 9 grounding — expressed outrage and frustration with the company. They asked what Boeing intends to do about improving the quality of its manufacturing.

"We caused the problem and we understand that," Boeing CEO David Calhoun said on Jan. 31. "We understand why they are angry and we will work to earn their confidence."

Calhoun said the company has increased

inspections in its plants and at suppliers, appointed a retired Navy admiral to review quality management, and shut down the 737 assembly line for one day so workers could discuss quality and safety.

Criticism of Boeing has reached levels not seen since the aftermath of two deadly crashes involving Max 8 jetliners in Indonesia and Ethiopia in 2018 and 2019. The crashes killed 346 people and led to the ouster of Boeing's then-

CEO. Shares of The Boeing Co. closed down 1% on Wednesday.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC INPUT HEARINGS

Re: Peoples Natural Gas and Peoples Gas Rate Increase

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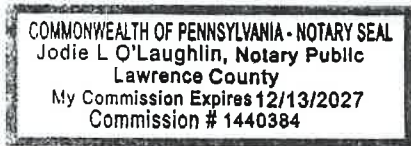
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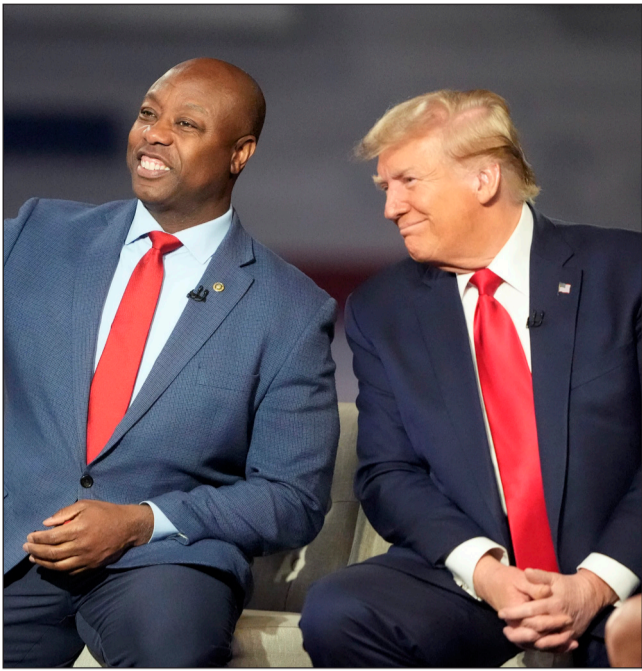
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2-22-24	People's Public Input Hearings	3 col. X 10"
2-29-24	People's Public Input Hearings	3 col. X 10"

Trump compares his criminal indictments to death of Putin's top rival

By **BILL BARROW** and **JONATHAN J. COOPER**
Associated Press



Republican presidential candidate former President Donald Trump looks to Sen. Tim Scott, R-S.C., during a Fox News Channel town hall in Greenville, S.C. on Tuesday.

GREENVILLE, S.C. — Donald Trump doubled down Tuesday on comparing his criminal indictments to the circumstances of Russian dissident Alexei Navalny, the top political opponent of Russia's autocratic leader Vladimir Putin who died in a remote arctic prison after being jailed by the Kremlin leader.

Appearing on a Fox News Channel town hall pre-taped before a live audience in Greenville, South Carolina, Trump bemoaned Navalny's death, which President Joe Biden and other Western leaders have blamed on Putin. Trump then pivoted to himself, repeating his assertions that the prosecutions against him are driven by politics despite no evidence that Biden or the White House ordered them.

"Navalny is a very sad situation and he's very brave, he was a very brave guy," Trump said in response to a question from Fox News Channel's Laura Ingraham. "He went back, he could have stayed away, and frankly probably would have been a lot better off staying away and talking from outside of the country as opposed to having to go back in, because people thought that could happen, and it did happen."

"And it's a horrible thing, but it's happening in our country, too," Trump continued, suggesting his criminal indictments — which include two cases stemming from his efforts to overturn his 2020 defeat — are proof that the U.S. is "turning into a communist country in many ways."

"I got indicted four

times ... all because of the fact that I'm in politics," Trump said. "They indicted me on things that are so ridiculous."

He extended the comparison to his loss in a civil fraud trial last week, in which a New York judge ordered Trump to pay \$355 million in penalties after finding he lied about his wealth for years. With interest, Trump owes the state about \$454 million.

"It is a form of Navalny," Trump said. "It is a form of communism, of fascism."

He did not give a clear answer when asked whether he would post a bond covering the judgment, which is one way he'd be able to avoid having to pay the full amount while he appeals.

Trump made no mention of Putin, part of his longstanding pattern of refusing to denounce and often complimenting the Russian leader going back to when he was in the White House. But his remarks come as House Republicans have refused to provide more funding

to Ukraine in its defense against Russia's invasion and as many in the Republican Party grow more accepting of Russian expansionism.

Putin recently suggested he preferred Biden in the White House to Trump. U.S. intelligence assessments of both the 2016 and 2020 elections found that Russia was behind influence operations to boost Trump at the expense of his Democratic Party opponents.

Ingraham interrupted Trump at the town hall Tuesday to ask whether he believed he could become a "potential political prisoner" for the rest of his life like Navalny. Trump sidestepped the question.

"If I were losing in the polls, they wouldn't even be talking about me and I wouldn't have had any legal fees," he answered. "If I were out, I think — although they hate me so much, I think if I got out they'd still, 'let's pursue this guy, we can't stand this guy.'"

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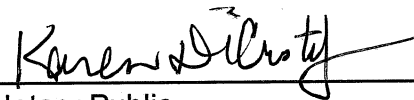
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Karen DiCristofaro, Notary Public
Allegheny County
My commission expires April 11, 2026
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Hunter Biden set to give deposition

JAMES BIDEN · FROM A1

among Republicans. Many GOP lawmakers say they have yet to see evidence of the “high crimes and misdemeanors” required for impeachment, despite alleged efforts by members of the Biden family to leverage the last name into corporate paydays domestically and abroad.

Beyond the internal struggle, a central claim of the GOP investigation also has been undermined by federal prosecutors, who last week indicted an FBI informant who claimed there was a multimillion-dollar bribery scheme involving the president, his son Hunter and a Ukrainian energy company.

The informant’s claims had been part of the foundation of the Republican effort in Congress to investigate the president and his family, with investigators even making mention of the unsubstantiated claim in letters to prospective witnesses.

Rep. Jim Jordan, R-Ohio, one of the lead impeachment investigators, said Wednesday the indictment of Alexander Smirnov doesn’t “change the underlying facts” of their investigation. He added that the FBI saw this informant as a valued source for years.

An attorney for Hunter Biden, who is expected to give a deposition next week, said the charges show the probe

“It feels to me as if everyone knows the impeachment investigation is over. I think Chairman Comer has said publicly that it’s — that it doesn’t look like the support is there for impeachment.”

REP. JAMIE RASKIN
TOP DEMOCRAT ON OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

is “based on dishonest, uncredible allegations and witnesses.”

James and Hunter Biden were subpoenaed by the committee in November. Lawyers for James Biden have said there was no justification for the subpoena because the committee had reviewed private bank records and transactions between the two brothers. The committee found records of two loans that were made when Joe Biden was not in office or a candidate for president.

“With my appearance here today, the committees will have the information to conclude that the negative and destructive assumptions about me and my relationship with my brother Joe are wrong,” James Biden said. “There is no basis for this inquiry to continue.”

The impeachment inquiry, which began in September under the House Judiciary and

Oversight committees, has included the recent depositions of several former Biden family associates. In nearly every one of those interviews, the witnesses have stated they have seen no evidence that Joe Biden was directly involved in his son or brother’s business ventures.

Nonetheless, Republicans, led by Oversight Chairman, Rep. James Comer of Kentucky, have said they are pushing ahead with an inquiry that could result in impeachment charges against Biden, the ultimate penalty for what the Constitution describes as “high crimes and misdemeanors.”

House Democrats have remained united against the months-long impeachment effort and have called on Republicans to end what they call a “sham process.” Rep. Jamie Raskin, the top Democrat on the Oversight Committee, said James Biden is the latest example of Republicans playing political games with no sign of tangible evidence that would rise to the level of impeaching a president.

“This is a subdued affair. And, again, it feels to me as if everyone knows the impeachment investigation is over,” Raskin said Wednesday. “I think Chairman Comer has said publicly that it’s — that it doesn’t look like the support is there for impeachment.”

Crossing has long history of crashes

TRAIN · FROM A1

were no injuries from today’s incident,” Norfolk Southern spokesman Connor Spielmaker said in a statement. “This is not always the case, and this incident should serve as a reminder that railroad crossings can be uniquely dangerous places that always need extra caution to ensure everyone’s safety.

“Never enter one before you are sure you can get through safely, and in case of emergency, always get out and call the emergency number listed on the blue sign at each crossing.”

The railroad crossing has a history of wrecks.

On April 28, 2021, a freight train and a tractor-trailer collided at the intersection. A flatbed was bringing a load of bricks to R.I. Lampus, and the load and trailer were destroyed. That incident was similar to one that oc-

curred April 9, 2021, when a tractor-trailer carrying bricks and building materials was struck at the crossing. Witnesses told TribLive at the time that the truck driver had little time to react to the oncoming train.

In both of those incidents, Springdale police said the tractor-trailer driver had partially crossed the tracks and was unable to clear the left turn onto South Railroad Street.

In 2018, a tanker hauling a nontoxic resin to a nearby business collided with a train at the intersection.

No injuries were reported in any of the incidents.

Reached Wednesday, Springdale Mayor Joel Anderson said he was out of town and unable to comment on the incident.

Kellen Stepler is a TribLive staff writer. He can be reached at kstepler@triblive.com.



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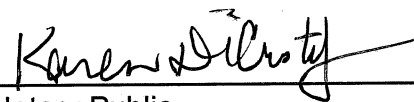
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Distrust for UPS voiced

UPS · FROM A1

facilities to “meet volume demands.” Eugene “Gino” Bosetti, president of Teamsters Local 30, declined to comment after the meeting with membership for more than two hours.

Kramer and Mills, like several other employees, said they have been off work since January. They had been working 3½ hours a day, and more during the run-up to the busy holiday shipping season, but that changed in January when they were not needed as the volume of packages being shipped dropped.

Some workers said they were working one day a week or using vacation time for one day of work so they could remain eligible for the company’s health insurance.

Several UPS workers leaving the meeting said they did not know whether they would have a job after April 15. Some workers with less seniority said their future employment opportunity at UPS might hinge on workers with more seniority opting for retirement or landing another job. Day shift workers were told their only option was to take a job on the “twilight shift” from 5 to 9 p.m. or the night shift from 10:30 p.m. to 2:30 a.m.

Workers with less seniority at UPS are more likely to lose their jobs, prompting one younger part-time employee to say he will start looking for another job. Representatives from PA Career Link, the state’s agency that assists in job searches, were at the meeting.

Others expressed their distrust of UPS. “They’re not telling us stuff, and, when they do, they change a lot,” said Kim Busch of Jeannette, who works part-time during the day at the New Stanton hub.

Busch said she learned UPS would be closing the day packaging operations a few weeks ago, but the official notice did not come down until last week.

“It’s devastating,” Busch said. She said she was hoping to reach 25 years with UPS so she could retire with a full pension.

“I need a little over a year,” she said, noting the volume of work has been really low. “I’ve never seen it this bad,” Busch said.

Karey Moore of Youngwood, who has 29 years of seniority, said she will be eligible for a job on the twilight shift but would have to go from sorting packages to loading trucks, a grueling job she did decades ago.

“I would lose seniority. We are being treated unfairly by the union,” which should get changes in the contract to allow the senior workers to take on their same job in the evening, Moore said.

Moore has to make a decision by April 15. “I think they are trying to push the older people out,” she said.

Joe Napsha is a TribLive staff writer. He can be reached at jnapsha@triblive.com.

Gas royalties are down

DRILLING · FROM A1

fracking going on, but it’s with water being trucked in from other places,” authority business manager Brian Hohman said.

Leases were awarded to Apex Energy for two properties owned by the authority in Hempfield. The authority will receive a one-time \$2,500 payment and 18% royalties for all gas sold by the company that is produced from the Hempfield wells.

MAWC’s board also amended an existing deal with Olympus Energy that allows the company to drill deeper under property at the reservoir site. The authority earns 14% royalties for gas produced at 87 shallow and 55 deep wells on and near the reservoir property.

Royalties from sales of natural gas once were a major profit center for the authority and were expected to generate about \$4 million during the past 12 months. Lower gas prices and reduced drilling resulted in a nearly 75% decline in gas royalties during the 2023-24 fiscal year that ends March 31.

Hohman said the authority, through the first 10 months of the current fiscal year, has earned just \$1.1 million in natural gas royalties.

Joe Mediate of Penn Township told authority board members he feared water used for fracking near the reservoir contributed to decreased water levels and led to the 9% rate hike approved last month for water customers.

“The next thing you know, you’re asking us to conserve water so you

can catch up and then you’re going to approve contracts to three more companies,” Mediate said.

Authority officials said sales of water for fracking was halted after it imposed voluntary conservation measures in November for more than 56,000 customers north of Route 30. They are served through the Beaver Run Reservoir, where precipitation deficits over the previous year left the 11.4 billion gallon reservoir at less than half its capacity.

The authority has more than 120,000 water customers in Westmoreland, Allegheny, Armstrong, Fayette and Indiana counties. The southern half of the authority’s service area is supplied with water processed from a plant along the Youghiogheny River near Connellsville.

Mandatory conservation for the northern half of the authority’s customer base was implemented in December, but, as rains and snow increased throughout January, the authority dialed back the requirement for customers to save water and reinstated a call for voluntary conservation.

Water levels have lagged during a relatively dry February, and officials said conservation mandates could return if drought conditions persist.

“Water levels at the reservoir directly correlate with precipitation levels, and there was very little snow this time last year. We hope for a better spring,” Hohman said.

Rich Cholodofsky is a TribLive staff writer. He can be reached at rcholodofsky@triblive.com.

Criticism of effort grows

JAMES BIDEN · FROM A1

Rep. Andy Biggs, R-Ariz., said during a break. “So when you see the transcript, you’ll see.”

The interview with James Biden is the latest in a series that GOP lawmakers have conducted recently as they seek to rebuild momentum for an impeachment process surrounding the Biden family’s overseas finances that has stalled in recent months.

Criticism over the lack of evidence against the president has grown even among Republicans. Many GOP lawmakers say they have yet to see evidence of the “high crimes and misdemeanors” required for impeachment, despite alleged efforts by members of the Biden family to leverage the last name into corporate paydays domestically and abroad.

Beyond the internal struggle, a central claim of the GOP investigation also has been undermined by federal prosecutors, who last week indicted an FBI informant who claimed there was a multimillion-dollar bribery scheme involving the president, his son Hunter and a Ukrainian energy company.

The informant’s claims had been part of the foundation of the Republican effort in Congress to investigate the president and his family, with investigators even making mention of the unsubstantiated claim in letters to prospective witnesses.

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Biden’s student debt efforts to factor into campaign

DEBT · FROM A1

fierce debate in Washington and elsewhere about the extent to which college students ought to receive dispensation from rapidly rising higher education costs and resulting debt that hangs over graduates for decades.

Amounts in many cases exceed \$100,000, including in Pennsylvania, where average student debt totals typically are third highest in the nation, averaging \$39,375, trailing only New Hampshire and Delaware, according to the Institute for College Access and Success.

In June, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down a more broad loan forgiveness program enacted by President Joe Biden, saying he lacked constitutional authority.

The president since has used executive authority to chip away at what he calls a broken system in a more targeted way, easing or eliminating amounts owed.

To date, 7.5 million borrowers are enrolled in SAVE, 4.3 million of whom have a \$0 monthly payment.

Education Department officials were not immediately available for comment Wednesday. But U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona reiterated the program’s intent in a department statement.

“With today’s announcement, we are once again sending a clear message to borrowers who had low balances: If you’ve been paying for a decade, you’ve done your part, and you deserve relief,” he said. “Under President Biden’s leadership, our administration

has now approved loan forgiveness for nearly 3.9 million borrowers, and our historic fight to cancel student debt isn’t over yet.”

In January, Biden announced his administration was accelerating the shortened time to forgiveness component of the SAVE Plan by about six months to offer borrowers “relief they have earned as quickly as possible,” according to the department’s statement.

For a borrower to be eligible for this forgiveness, they must be enrolled in the SAVE Plan, have been making at least 10 years of payments and have originally taken out \$12,000 or less for college, according to officials.

For every \$1,000 borrowed above \$12,000, a borrower can receive forgiveness after an additional year of payments. All borrowers

on SAVE receive forgiveness after 20 or 25 years, depending on if they have loans for graduate school.

According to the administration, debt cancellation for nearly 3.9 million students has been approved, an amount of \$138 billion collectively.

Biden’s efforts to lessen or eliminate student debt are likely to figure in the president’s 2024 re-election bid.

His administration has pointed to the largest increase to Federal Pell Grants in a decade as an accomplishment, as well as new rules to protect borrowers from career programs that leave graduates with unaffordable debts or insufficient earnings.

Bill Schackner is a TribLive staff writer. He can be reached at bschackner@triblive.com.

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- You must speak your name when prompted, and press #
- Then, the telephone system will connect you to the hearing

Toll-free Conference Number:
866.566.0649

Passcode:
83345259

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- (1) your first and last name;
- (2) the **date** and **time** of the public input hearing at which you wish to testify;
- (3) a phone number where you can be reached prior to the hearing if we need to contact you;
- (4) your email address if you have one; and
- (5) if you require an interpreter to participate in the hearing, the language of the interpreter.

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adno=321839





Dwight Yoakam

March 6, 2024 - 8:00 PM



The Gambler Returns

The Kenny Rogers Tribute
March 14, 2024 - 7:30 PM



Rhythm of the Dance

National Dance Company of Ireland
March 17, 2024 - 4:00 PM



Pittsburgh Oldies All-Stars

April 21, 2024 - 3:00 PM



Jersey Seasons

A Tribute to Frankie Valli & The Four Seasons
May 9, 2024 - 7:30 PM

MAY 19, 2024 - 3:00 PM MY MOTHER'S ITALIAN, MY FATHER'S JEWISH & I'M IN THERAPY
 JUNE 5, 2024 - 7:30 PM FLEETWOOD MACKED
 JUNE 7 - 7:30 PM AIR SUPPLY
 AUGUST 11, 2024 - 7:30 PM CHICAGO # 1 TRIBUTE - BRASS TRANSIT
 AUGUST 22, 2024 - 7:30 PM ELVIS LIVES
 SEPTEMBER 5, 2024 - 7:30 PM HOTEL CALIFORNIA THE ORIGINAL EAGLES TRIBUTE
 SEPTEMBER 26, 2024 - 7:30 PM JOSH TURNER
 OCTOBER 3, 2024 - 7:30 PM FOREVER SEGER THE SILVER BULLET EXPERIENCE
 OCTOBER 10, 2024 - 7:30 PM NEIL DIAMOND TRIBUTE SOLITARY MAN
 NOVEMBER 7, 2024 - 7:30 PM THE ULTIMATE DOORS TRIBUTE
 NOVEMBER 14, 2024 - 7:30 PM ABBAMANIA + CHER TRIBUTE

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PROOF OF PUBLICATION

The **HERALD-Standard**
a daily newspaper of general circulation, published by Central Pennsylvania Newspapers, LLC.,
a Pennsylvania corporation, 8 East Church Street, Uniontown, Fayette County, Pennsylvania, was
established in 1907, and has been issued regularly, except legal holidays since said date.

The attached advertisement, which is exactly as printed and published,
appeared in the regular issue

Central Pennsylvania Newspapers, LLC./ Herald-Standard

BY: Sharon K. Wallach

STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA,
COUNTY OF FAYETTE, }

SS:

Before me, a Notary Public in and for such county and state, personally appeared
SHARON K. WALLACH, who being duly sworn according to law says that she is
ADVERTISING DIRECTOR of Central Pennsylvania Newspapers, LLC./ Herald-
Standard. that neither affiant nor said corporation is interested in the subject matter of the
attached advertisement; and that all of the allegations of the foregoing statement including those
as to the time, place and character of publication are true.

Sworn to and subscribed before me
this 1st day of March 2024

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania - Notary Seal
Amanda M. Kisko, Notary Public
Fayette County
My commission expires June 3, 2026
Commission number 1420437

Member, Pennsylvania Association of Notaries

By Amanda M. Kisko

Central Pennsylvania Newspapers, LLC.

8 East Church Street

UNIONTOWN, PA. 15401-0848



KATHERINE MANSFIELD

Rachel Gladden will celebrate her leap day birthday in Myrtle Beach, S.C.

LEAP

Continued from A1

"It was crazy, because everybody told us she was going to be born on leap day," Heather recalled. "I was induced on the 28th. We were hoping that she was going to be born on the 28th. She didn't come out until 4 o'clock in the morning on the 29th. She didn't want to come out. She had a mind of her own. When I was in the hospital they said you could celebrate for three days."

"I should start doing that," Addie countered.

She enjoys the levity of being a leap day baby.

"This year I'll be turning 4, she joked.

That joke doesn't quite hold the humor it once did for Avery Fee, a sophomore at Peters Township High School.

"I have had so many people ask me about it," Avery said. "I feel like the joke was funny when I was 8. If I hear it one more time I'm going to start hitting people," she said with a laugh.

"When I was younger, it was pretty cool. I thought, 'Wow, that day only exists once every four years. Now that I'm older it's just a day that happens not to exist three-fourths of the time. People will get really excited about it, but it's a little bit overrated, in my opinion."

Avery said she's hoping for a red velvet cake for her birthday. Celebration plans involve a roller skating party with members of the school's Dungeons and Dragons Club.

She marked her birthday in younger days on March 1, but now there's a couple of celebrations.

"I'll celebrate on Feb. 28 with my friends and I'll celebrate with my family on March 1," Avery said.

She said her mother, Tara, chair of the Washington & Jefferson College



Submitted by Baylie Ribel

Baylie Ribel of McDonald will turn 28 in "regular birthdays" today.

English Department, recalled the first time her daughter realized she had a birthday that was different from most. She was about 5 or 6 years old.

"She remembered that I was looking at a calendar to see when my next birthday was and I was really freaked out that there wasn't a day on the calendar for my birthday," Avery said.

Baylie Ribel said she turns 28 "in regular birthdays" Thursday.

"I will be 7 years old in leap day birthdays," she joked. "I try not to joke about it with people that don't know me that well because they get puzzled when I tell them that I'm 7 years old. Sometimes people don't even realize people are born in leap year. They forget that's a thing. It's hard to go through the whole spiel with them."

In years that lack leap day, Baylie celebrates on March 1. Her reason is simple.

"We don't do (Feb.) 28 because I technically wasn't on this earth," she said. "I was still in my mom's womb."

Baylie said she first realized she had a different birthday than most when she turned 8.

It clicked for her when her mom, Joelle Swart, brought out a special

candle to mark the day.

"Every leap year she breaks it out of the closet," Bayle said. "It's a beautiful hand-painted candle. It has all of the leap years listed by the age I'm going to turn and the year. It's just very detailed."

Rachel Gladden of Washington turns 84 this leap day and will be in Myrtle Beach, where son Tom has a place.

"We're going to go down there and we're going to celebrate there," she said. "I'm excited about it."

During her many years of teaching in the Washington and Trinity school districts, she had fun with her students concerning her birthday.

"I would tell kids I was having a birthday and they would say that can't be true, you can't be 12," she recalled.

"It was really kind of funny. Kids would go home and say, 'Mrs. Gladden tells fibs.'"

Of her leap day birthday, she says, "It's different. It's weird ... The other three years are not so pleasant because you just don't have a birthday. You're not born in March, so you have to go with the last day in February.

"Growing up wasn't fun when you didn't have birthdays. It's OK now. I'll take them every four years."

ACCESS

Continued from A1

located at 254 McClellandtown Rd in Uniontown, on Feb. 21.

Warden John Lenkey said, as of Wednesday morning, any public defender or defense attorney can meet with a client. He suggested calling ahead to give the staff enough time to retrieve the inmate and place them in a visitation booth so the attorney is not waiting in the lobby.

With the exception of the time of day when there's a headcount, Lenkey said, the inmates will be available to talk throughout the day.

Public Defender Sue Harper also raised the issue about the lack of manpower in her office to physically go to the prison and meet with clients. The office has been using Skype to conduct virtual client meetings, but the jail now uses Zoom for that purpose.

Harper said she's working with the county to procure a Zoom license

so that virtual meetings can resume.

Until that happens, Harper said public defenders have to contact the prison and find out where their clients are located, and meet them in their range. On Friday, she said, attorneys were only able to meet with between 15 or 20 of the 35 they needed to.

Lenkey told Harper he would meet with her to discuss a solution.

Currently, the jail is housing 166 inmates, including 138 men and 28 women.

SUPPORT

Continued from A1

To prevent that from happening, regional campuses across the state are urging alumni and supporters to intervene before the university's board of trustees approves the proposed fiscal year 2026 budget in July.

Jankoski said the impact of the Fayette campus to the region includes \$28 million contributed annually to the state economy, \$1.5 million in total scholarships awarded annually and free STEM camps to youth over the summer.

"We are more than just this building," Jankoski said. "We are a campus who's making a difference in our community every day."

Jankoski also dismissed a rumor making the rounds on social media that the campus was closing.

During the rally, organizers read statements from Penn State Fayette alumni who wrote about how the campus helped them shape their future.

Gib Prettyman, associate professor of English at Penn State Fayette, said he's been at the campus for 28 years and was thrilled to see how many people the campus has touched and what they're now doing.

Dr. Douglas L. Rutledge, assistant teaching professor in physics at Penn State Fayette, said he earned his doctorate at Penn State's main campus, where lecture halls were packed with up to 1,000 students per class.

"Down here, we have class sizes of up to 30,"



MARK HOFMANN | Herald-Standard

Dr. Jo Jankoski, associate professor of Human Development and Family Studies at Penn State Fayette, The Eberly Campus, welcomes those attending an indoor rally against proposed budget cuts to regional campuses by the university.

Rutledge said, adding that allows better contact with the students. "Somebody said they didn't feel like a statistic here. That's why. Because we actually get to know our students."

As a county commissioner, Dave Lohr, an alumnus of Penn State Fayette, said he wound up working with his former professor in the late 1970s, Terry McMillen Sr., an engineer.

"It's important to keep the campus alive and moving forward because you never know what the future holds," Lohr said. "Yes, we need this campus, and I will do everything I can to make sure that continues on because this campus is vital to a lot of people."

Another alumna, state Rep. Charity Grimm-Krupa, said she took advantage of the opportunity to get college credits at the Fayette campus while she was attending Albert Gallatin Area High School. Krupa said her daughter is in her second year at the branch campus.

"As a mom, it's such a wonderful thing to know that I'm not sending my

vulnerable teenage child out where I don't know who she's with and who's being her role model," Krupa said.

Krupa said a large sum of taxpayer money goes to Penn State and there's no transparency in how that money is spent.

"I would much rather see a transparent conversation about where legitimate budget cuts or budget issues could be made, than to risk jeopardizing our branch campuses," Krupa said.

Current student Seth Stewart said he's a two-year student and will be out before the proposed budget cuts take place in 2026. Still, he drove 35 minutes from his home in Westmoreland County to attend Wednesday's rally.

"Because this campus means that much to me," he said.

An open letter to Gov. Josh Shapiro, available at <https://openletterpa.info/>, asks the governor to intervene before the board of trustees votes on the budget. Organizers at the rally have invited anyone who wishes to express their support to sign it.

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Parking: Front of South Building - no pass required	Parking: Lot #6 - no pass required

Telephonic Public Input Hearings:

Thursday, March 7, 2024 1:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m.	To participate in the telephonic public input hearing, you are to pre-register by 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 6, 2024. If you do not pre-register and provide the information listed below, you may not have an opportunity to testify.
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OBSERVER-REPORTER
Washington, Pennsylvania
Proof of Publication

In compliance with the Newspaper Advertising Act of July 9, 1976, P.L. 877, No. 160, as amended COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, COUNTY OF WASHINGTON SS:

Before me, a Notary Public in and for said County and State, personally appeared

Pamala Tuscano who being duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is Classified Manager of the Observer Reporter, a Pennsylvania corporation, and its agent in this behalf, that the said company is the owner and publisher of the Observer-Reporter, successor to The Washington Observer, established September 18, 1871, and The Washington Reporter, established August 15, 1808, a daily newspaper of general circulation, printed and published and having its place of business at Washington, Washington County, Pennsylvania where it or its predecessors have been established and published continuously for more that six months prior to the publication of the notice hereto attached that the printed notice or advertisement hereto attached is a copy of an official advertisement, official notice, legal notice or legal advertisement exactly as printed or published in the Observer-Reporter in its regular editions on the following date or dates:

February 22 and 29, 2024

That neither the affiant nor the Observer Reporter is interested in the subject matter of said notice or advertising and that all allegations of this affidavit as to the time, place and character of publication are true.

Pamala Tuscano

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 29th day of February, 2024

Allison M. Duratz

Peoples Gas
Pipitone – Kathy Downing
1106 Sitka Drive
Imperial, PA 15126
February 29, 2024
Ad #ORW0063395

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania - Notary Seal
ALLISON M. DURATZ - Notary Public
Washington County
My Commission Expires October 8, 2024
Commission Number 1382375

LOCAL



MARK HOFMANN/FOR THE OBSERVER-REPORTER

Inmates file off of a state Department of Corrections bus and into the new Fayette County jail on Wednesday morning.

Moving day

Over 150 inmates transferred to new Fayette County jail

BY MARK HOFMANN
For the Observer-Reporter
newsroom@observer-reporter.com

For the 157 inmates lodged in the Fayette County Prison, Wednesday was moving day, as law enforcement officials oversaw their transfer to the county's new jail.

Prison Warden John Lenkey said the way the move went was "outstanding."

"It was completely uneventful, the way you want it to be uneventful," said the jail's Deputy Warden of Treatment Angela Kern. "It was the best case scenario all around."

Although uneventful, the logistics and safety precautions put in place for the move started chatter on social media with users asking about a helicopter in the sky and a large police presence on the streets of Uniontown.

"It was not advertised because of safety and security to consider, but a lot of people saw the activity," said county Sheriff Jim Custer.

Lenkey said the state Department of Corrections (DOC) set the date for the move. The agency provided about 40 special emergency response team members from multiple institutions as well as two 40-passenger buses specially equipped to transport inmates, and the Pennsylvania State Police provided a helicopter.

Commissioner Scott Dunn said the state did not charge the county for the manpower and equipment for the move.

"They were more than happy to help," Dunn said. In addition to state police, Uniontown police and the sheriff's office also assisted with the transfer.

Custer said those involved met with the DOC on Tuesday to go over the plan for the move, which took place at 7:30 a.m. Wednesday when buses parked near the courthouse on Main Street were loaded with inmates walking up from the prison.

With a Uniontown police vehicle escorting, one



Inmates are escorted from the Fayette County Prison next to the courthouse to a state DOC bus parked along West East Main Street in Uniontown to be transported to the county's new jail.

bus at a time drove along Main Street through the city, turned left on Route 21 and to the new jail. State police and sheriff deputies blocked intersections along the route for an uninterrupted mile-long trek to the new facility.

Custer said it took five bus trips to move all the inmates with the final bus unloading its passengers around 11:30 a.m.

"It was outstanding for a move and all logistics involved," Custer said. "We couldn't ask for anything better."

County law enforcement and county commissioners were grateful for the teamwork involved in the transfer.

"We were very fortunate to have them," Lenkey said of the state DOC and police. "It took them four hours to do what would have tak-

en us four days because we don't have access to a 40-passenger bus."

"There was a lot of coordination with this event today," Dunn said. "We took this seriously as a potential security threat."

Dunn said it's a monumental day in Fayette County with the century-old old prison having outlived its use. In the past few years, the aging prison was the target of several lawsuits claiming the conditions were inhumane.

Dunn added that the new \$44 million facility will provide a safe location for not only the inmates, but will give the prison staff and employees a better place to work.

"I'm glad we reached this point in time," said Commissioner Vince Vicites. "The transition's been made, they're in, now they're go-

ing to be on a day-to-day basis where things will need tweaked and corrected."

Kern said, with the new facility and new operations at the jail, officials expect there will be an adjustment period.

Vicites said building a new prison in any county is difficult, given the cost and regulations involved.

"When we did have setbacks, we corrected them and moved forward," he said, adding that the project came in under budget. "I think this facility will serve the people of Fayette County for many many decades to come."

Commissioner Dave Lohr said Wednesday that he campaigned on the need to build a new prison three times while running for office.

"It was needed for a long, long time, and now it's off

and running, and it feels good. It's good for all the staff and the prisoners," Lohr said.

"Hopefully the prisoners that go in will come out better," Lohr said.

The now former Fayette County Prison was the fourth prison built in the county and was originally constructed in 1892, making the building 132 years old.

The new facility has the capacity to hold 333 inmates, and has the capacity to provide space for treatment and rehabilitation-focused programming.

"Individuals are placed in jail for punishment, not to be punished," Lenkey said. "This new jail has the capacity to provide services and tools that will afford the inmates an opportunity to leave here a better person from which they arrived."

Two injured in Morris Twp. crash

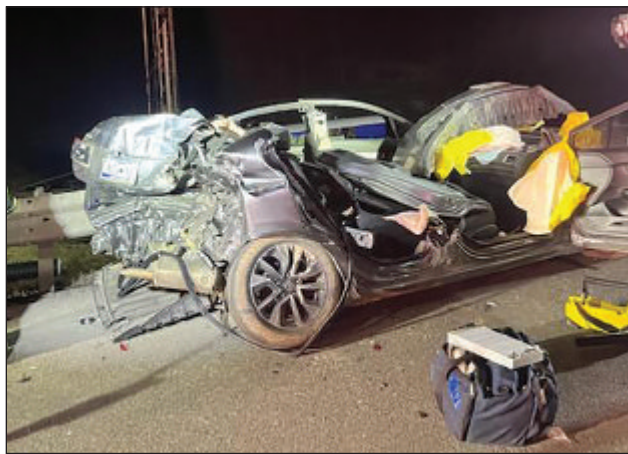
BY JON ANDREASSI
Staffwriter
jandreassi@observer-reporter.com

Two people were injured in Morris Township Tuesday evening after their vehicle crossed the double yellow line and struck a tractor-trailer.

Morris Township Fire Department Chief Dave Dietrich said the accident occurred at about 6 p.m. on Prosperity Pike, just south of its intersection with Cash Day Road. According to Dietrich, the man and woman who were injured are from out of state, and were passing through the area to meet relatives in West Virginia.

Dietrich said the man was driving south and failed to negotiate a slight bend in the road, and crossed into the northbound lane, striking the rear of a tractor-trailer. A second tractor-trailer also headed north then struck the vehicle.

The woman suffered minor injuries.



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

The driver of this vehicle was flown to a Pittsburgh hospital, while a passenger suffered minor injuries. Morris Township Fire Chief Dave Dietrich said the occupants of the vehicle are from out of state.

"We were able to get her out of the car and treat her on scene until the ambulance arrived," Dietrich said.

The driver was trapped in the vehicle, and was flown to a Pittsburgh hospital after first responders were able to extricate him. According to Dietrich, he was alert and

speaking prior to boarding the helicopter.

"When we first got there, he was kind of in and out of consciousness," Dietrich said.

Also responding were South Franklin Fire Department, West Finley Fire Department and Ambulance and Chair.

One injured after trucks crash on I-70

One person was hospitalized after two tractor-trailers crashed on Interstate 70 in North Franklin Township Wednesday morning.

According to a Washington County 911 supervisor, at about 5:30 a.m., a FedEx truck crashed into the shoulder, and another tractor-trailer was reported to have gone over the hill side.

One person was transported to Washington Hospital, according to 911.

I-70 West was restricted to one lane while crews cleared the scene.

Hydraulic fluid leak shuts down Route 19

A portion of Route 19 in Peters Township was closed Wednesday morning after a garbage truck began leaking hydraulic fluid.

According to a Washington County 911 supervisor, the leak was reported at about 4:40 a.m.

The Peters Township Fire Department posted to Facebook that Route 19 was closed between Crosswinds Drive and McDowell Lane. They updated the post at about 6 a.m. to say the road had reopened.

STEPHANIE M. SEWAK, ESQ.

— ATTORNEY AT LAW —

90 WEST CHESTNUT STREET, SUITE 606
WASHINGTON, PA

724.263.5677 OR 412.889.5518
ssewak@sewaklaw.com

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PROOF OF PUBLICATION OF NOTICE IN ALTOONA MIRROR

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Parking: Front of South Building - no pass required	Parking: Lot #6 - no pass required

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<p>Thursday, March 7, 2024 1:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m.</p> <p>To participate in the public input hearing,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You must dial the toll-free Conference number below You must enter the PIN number below when instructed You must speak your name when prompted, and press # Then, the telephone system will connect you to the hearing <p>Toll-free Conference Number: • 866.566.0649</p> <p>Passcode: 83345259</p>	<p>To participate in the telephonic public input hearing, you are to pre-register by 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 6, 2024. If you do not pre-register and provide the information listed below, you may not have an opportunity to testify.</p> <p>Pre-Registration Instructions for Telephonic Public Input Hearings:</p> <p>Contacting the Office of Consumer Advocate (OCA) toll free at 1-800-684-6560 or by email at consumer@paoca.org (in email, include following information):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> your first and last name; the date and time of the public input hearing at which you wish to testify; a phone number where you can be reached prior to the hearing if we need to contact you; your email address if you have one; and if you require an interpreter to participate in the hearing, the language of the interpreter. <p>Hearing Exhibits: If you have any hearing exhibits to which you will refer during the telephonic hearing, please email them to the OCA at consumer@paoca.org. The OCA will forward the exhibits to the Judges and all parties. Exhibits must be received by: Wednesday, March 6, 2024.</p> <p>Persons who are deaf or hearing-impaired and wish to attend, please dial 717 to be connected to a relay operator.</p>
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h of Pennsylvania - Notary Seal
D. Miller, Notary Public
Blair County
ssion expires July 25, 2025
ssion number 1112043
sylvania Association of Notaries

STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA
COUNTY OF BLAIR

Daniel N. Slep, being duly sworn says: That he is the Publisher of the ALTOONA MIRROR, a newspaper of general circulation, published at Number 301 Cayuga Avenue, Township of Logan, City of Altoona, County of Blair, and State of Pennsylvania.

That said newspaper was established as a daily newspaper of general circulation on the Thirteenth Day of June 1874, since which date said newspaper has been published daily in the City of Altoona; that a copy of the printed notice, hereto attached, is exactly as the same was printed and published in the regular edition of the daily ALTOONA MIRROR published on the following date(s), viz:

February 22nd, 2024

The affiant further deposes and declares that he is not interested in the subject matter of the aforesaid notice of publication and that all allegations in the foregoing statement as to time, place and character of publication are true.

Daniel N. Slep

Sworn to and subscribed before me the 1 day of March, 2024.

Debra D. Miller

Debra D. Miller, Notary Public

My Commission expires

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania - Notary Seal
Debra D. Miller, Notary Public
Blair County
My commission expires July 25, 2025
Commission number 1112043
Member, Pennsylvania Association of Notaries

P

MIRROR

practiced as punishment, with-
out the benefit of a judge and
jury, without any hint of justice
or principle?
Ask Tucker Carlson, who con-
done it. Asked in Dubai about
Putin's treatment of Navalny
(and why he didn't ask Putin
about it when Navalny was still
alive), he said, "Every leader
kills people. Some kill more than
others. Leadership requires kill-
ing people."
He gave him permission.
Ironically, when Trump's own

Israel during and after Israel's
1948-49 War of Independence.
But it's seldom mentioned
that in the aftermath of the war,
900,000 Jews left or were expelled
from Arab and other Muslim
lands.
The slogan "from the river to
the sea, Palestine shall be free"
is often chanted at anti-Israel
demonstrations. UC Berkeley
professor Ron Hassner conduct-
ed a survey that showed almost
half of those chanting could not
identify the river and sea being

Bureau to benefit
newly emancipat-
ed African Amer-
icans.
As Justice Sonia
Sotomayor futilely
pointed out to Jus-
tice Roberts, laws
like that one were
anything but col-
orblind and leave
"no doubt that the
Equal Protection
Clause permits
tion of race to achieve

Accused killer faces new charges

Police: Oechsle had homemade knife in jail cell



Oechsle

with possessing an instrument of crime after the knife was allegedly found in his cell Feb. 22.

The shank was made of two sharpened pieces of metal, tied together with a towel and orange shirt. It was hidden in a paper towel roll in Oechsle's cell, with the complaint noting

Oechsle was the only person assigned to the cell. On Oct. 19, Oechsle allegedly stabbed another inmate and was charged with attempted homicide. The inmate is blind in one eye with limited use of his other eye, according to court documents filed in that case.

Oechsle is being held at Blair County prison without bail after being accused of killing his neighbor in

April and living with the body for several days. All charges in that case, including murder of the first degree and murder of the third degree, have been held for court. In addition, all charges filed in the prison stabbing case have been held for court. Those charges include attempted criminal homicide, aggravated assault, assault by prisoner and possession of a weapon.

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Police seeking missing teen

Kravchenko, of Massachusetts, last seen near Clearfield



Kravchenko

the intersection of Gillingham Road and Ridge Road, Girard Township.

He fled the scene before police arrived and is now listed as a missing person in Massachusetts.

It is believed Kravchenko could still be in Pennsylvania.

The missing person poster said Kravchenko drove from Chicopee to Pennsylvania on Saturday and was

involved in the crash on Sunday.

Family and friends have not heard from him since the crash. He is not familiar with the area and does not have a phone to contact anyone for help, the poster states.

Kravchenko is listed as 5 foot, 10 inches tall, 185 pounds, with blue eyes and curly brown hair.

Anyone with information is asked to contact state police at Clearfield at 814-857-3800 or the Chicopee Police Department at 413-594-1700.

ADVERTISE YOUR GARAGE SALE HERE

Place your Garage Sale AD in the classifieds!

814-946-7422

LEYO: Took Uber to Pittsburgh

(Continued from Page A1)

Police found another knife by the victim's body and blood smears on many surfaces within the home. In addition, police followed the blood trail up the stairs, into the victim's bedroom, a second bedroom and into the second floor bathroom.

During the investigation, police learned the victim's son, Joshua Leyo, lived in the home and was treated about 5 a.m. Feb. 13 at UPMC Altoona for a laceration to his left hand.

Security video shows Leyo entering the hospital, the report states. He was discharged later that day.

Police pinged Leyo's phone and found that he was in Pittsburgh, near the airport. It was discovered

During the investigation, police learned the victim's son, Joshua Leyo, lived in the home and was treated about 5 a.m. Feb. 13 at UPMC Altoona for a laceration to his left hand

Leyo used his mother's bank account to pay \$184.92 for an Uber from Altoona to Pittsburgh on Feb. 14.

Police said additional purchases were made in Pittsburgh after the Uber charge, while purchases prior to the Uber charge were made in the Altoona area.

Police contacted a Homeland Security agent in Pittsburgh who was able to determine that Leyo had attempted suicide by jump-

ing off a parking garage, the report states.

In an interview with police at Allegheny General Hospital, Leyo said he got into an argument with his mother and stabbed her in the neck. He admitted he stabbed her multiple times and didn't believe she was alive when he left the apartment.

Police said Leyo had a previous conviction for aggravated assault with a knife in 2021.

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC INPUT HEARINGS
Re: Peoples Natural Gas and Peoples Gas Rate Increase

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Easter COLORING CONTEST

Hey Kids! Color the Drawing Below & Enter for Your Chance to Win Prizes from our Sponsors!

Winning Entries will appear in the Altoona Mirror on EASTER, MARCH 31

Due to limited space, all artwork may not be chosen. Deadline for entries is Wed., March 20 at 4:00 pm

SPONSORED BY: **Gardner's CANDIES**, **Original Daze**, **VARC**, **SLINKY ACTION 2.0**, **DQ**

Name _____ Age _____
Address _____
Phone _____

Please send artwork to:
Easter Coloring Contest • c/o Altoona Mirror
PO Box 2008 • 301 Cayuga Ave. • Altoona, Pa 16602

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Bucks County Courier Times
The Daily American | Beaver County Times
Pocono Record | Burlington County Times

PO Box 630531 Cincinnati, OH 45263-0531

PROOF OF PUBLICATION

Kathy Downing
Peoples Natural Gas
375 N Shore DR
Pittsburgh PA 15212-5866

STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA, COUNTY OF BEAVER

The Beaver County Times, Ellwood City Ledger, a daily newspaper of general circulation, published and having its place of business at Aliquippa, Beaver County, PA; that attached hereto is a facsimile of the printed notice which is exactly as printed and published in said newspaper issue dated on:

02/29/2024

That said newspaper was regularly issued and circulated on those dates.

Sworn to and subscribed before on 02/29/2024

Legal Clerk

Notary, State of WI, County of Brown

My commission expires

Publication Cost: \$625.00

Order No: 9874621

Customer No: 795043

PO #:

of Copies:

1

THIS IS NOT AN INVOICE!

Please do not use this form for payment remittance.

KEEGAN MORAN
Notary Public
State of Wisconsin



NOTICE OF PUBLIC INPUT HEARINGS

Re: Peoples Natural Gas and Peoples Gas Rate Increase

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- Then, the telephone system will connect you to the hearing

Toll-free Conference Number:

866.566.0649

Passcode:

83345259

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Police officer recovering after being struck during traffic stop

Garret Roberts
Beaver County Times
USA TODAY NETWORK

ECONOMY — An officer from the New Sewickley Township Police Department is at home recovering after a driver struck him during a traffic stop.

According to police Chief Gregory Carney, a traffic stop was being conducted by Patrolman Jeremy Brown along Dunlap Hill around 8:30 p.m. Monday when he was struck by a second driver. The motorist had been traveling in the northbound lane of the road and struck Brown as he was crossing the

street toward the other vehicle.

Shortly after the collision, Brown was taken to Allegheny General hospital for treatment of his injuries. The patrolman was released from the hospital on Tuesday morning and is recovering with his family at their home.

The driver, who was not identified in

the release from the New Sewickley Township Police Department, reportedly stopped after the collision and cooperated with officers at the scene. Officers from the Economy Borough Police Department are continuing to investigate the incident.

Concerts

Continued from Page 1A

Amy Grant; June II: Daniel O'Donnell.

Roxian Theatre

March 1: Trombone Shorty
March 2: St. Paul & The Broken Bones
March 3: Jimbo's Drag Circus
March 7: Bryce Vine
March 8: Mammoth WVH
March 16: Blue October
March 19: Blackberry Smoke
March 20: Set It Off
March 22: Grouplove
March 23: Wheeler Walker Jr.
April 5: Drake White; April 13: Owl City; April 20: Priscilla Block; April 24: Queensryche; April 29: Todd Rundgren; April 30: Asking Alexandria; May 1: Saxon and Uriah Heep; May 4: Madison Beer; May 10: Jim Norton; May 12: Thievery Corporation; May 19: Tommy Emmanuel; May 28: Frank Turner; June 4, Keb' Mo'.

Benedum Center

March 7-8: Brit Floyd
March 9: Jason Isbell
April 13: Little Anthony, Gary Puckett, Lovin' Spoonful and Jimmie Ross & The Jaggerz; April 14: Kevin Hart; April 25: Matt Rife; May 3: The Temptations and The Four Tops.

UPMC Events Center

March 16: Donnie Iris
March 21: Leanne Morgan
April 6: Rend Collective; April 13: Brantley Gilbert; Sept. 17: Sum 41.

Palace Theatre

March 1: Little River Band
March 6: Dwight Yoakam
March 10: Kenny Wayne Shepherd
March 16: Casting Crowns
March 22: Leanne Morgan
April 5: John Oates; April 7: Buddy Guy; April 10: Yachtly Crew; May 22: Cahal Dunne; May 28: Joe Jackson; June 7: Air Supply; July 28: Bowling for Soup; Sept. 6: Oak Ridge Boys; Sept. 22: Bachmann Turner Overdrive; Sept. 26: Josh Turner; Oct. 19: The Outlaws.

1st Summit Arena, Johnstown

March 14: Scotty McCreery
March 24: Breaking Benjamin
April 1: Brit Floyd; April 19: Brantley Gilbert.

Byham Theater

March 27: Herbie Hancock
March 30: Margaret Cho
April 16: KT Tunstall and Shawn Colvin; April 21: Jimmy Carr; April 28: Hasan Minhaj; May 1: Joanne Shaw Taylor; July 13: Brad Williams.

Rivers Casino

March 2: DJ Pauly D
March 22: Grand Funk Railroad.

Jergel's Rhythm Grille

March 14: Creed Fisher
March 20: Marshall Crenshaw
March 30: Hailey Whitters
April 21: Molly Tuttle; April 30: Tom Sandoval; May 12: The Alarm; May 22: Orgy and Cold; Sept. 16: Hoodoo Gurus; Oct. 3: Phil Vassar.



Waterparks will headline Stage AE in Pittsburgh.
PHOTO PROVIDED TO THE TIMES BY ELEKTRA ENTERTAINMENT

City Winery Pittsburgh

March 7-8: Josh Ritter (sold out).
March 12: Paul Thorn and Steve Poltz
March 17: Will Hoge
March 26-27: Joshua Radin
April 11: Matthew Sweet; April 12: Suzanne Vega (sold out); April 16: Graham Parker; April 21: Carbon Leaf; April 22: Willie Nile; April 25: NRBQ; May 28: Jill Sobule; July 18: Martin Barre; July 18, July 26: Mary Fahl.

Thunderbird Cafe

March 8: Papadosio
March 13: Marc Broussard
March 23: Dave Hause
March 27: Sonny Landreth & The Iguanas
April 21: Larry Campbell and Teresa Williams; April 25: Ana Popovic.

Petersen Events Center

March 19: Toby Mac
May 2: Death Cab for Cutie and Postal Service; May 3: Brandon Lake; May 19: Sleep Token (sold out); Oct. 26: Lainey Wilson.

Mr. Smalls Theatre

March 2: Blonde Redhead
March 16: Beach Weather
April 13: Real Estate; April 27: The Go-tobeds; May 9-II: They Might Be Giants; May 16: In Flames; May 28: X Ambassadors; June 2: Lucero.

MCG Jazz Concert Hall

March 9: Veronica Swift
March 23: Jazzmeia Horn
April 6: Smithsonian Jazz Masterworks Orchestra celebrates Duke Ellington at 125; April 27: Take 6; May 11: Kim and Kayla Waters.

Spirit Hall

March 5: Laura Jane Grace
March 14: Otoboke Beaver.

Club Cafe

March 12: California Guitar Trio.
March 26: Briscoe
May 9: Robbie Fulks; May 10: Los Straitjackets; June 10: Abigail Lapell.

Hard Rock Cafe, Pittsburgh

March 9: Adelitas Way; April 25: Coco Montoya.

Heinz Hall

April 29: Bonnie Raitt; June 24-25:

Laufey with the Pittsburgh Symphony (second night sold out); July 8: Norah Jones; July 10: Cody Fry.

Pavilion at Star Lake

May 29: Noah Kahan; June 15: Robert Plant & Alison Krauss; June 19: New Kids on The Block; June 29: Hootie & The Blowfish; June 30: Tyler Childers; July 2: Red Hot Chili Peppers; July 9: Third Eye Blind; July 12: Chris Stapleton; July 13: Bret Michaels with Dee Snider and Lou Gramm; July 29: Hozier; July 31: Foreigner and Styx; Aug. 2: Dan + Shay; Aug. 3: Creed; Aug. 10: Jason Aldean; Aug. 16: Kidz Bop; Aug. 17: Tedeschi Trucks Band; Aug. 20: Doobie Brothers; Sept. 3: Alice Cooper and Rob Zombie; Sept. 7: James Taylor; Sept. 14: Willie Nelson, Bob Dylan and John Mellencamp.

Acrisure Stadium

June 1: Kenny Chesney with Zac Brown Band.



Rising country star Hailey Whitters headlines Jergel's Rhythm Grille. PHOTO PROVIDED/CREDIT HARPER SMITH

Carnegie Music Hall of Oakland

June 17: Little Feat; Aug. 26: Waxahatchee.

PNC Park

July 27: Def Leppard, Journey, Steve Miller Band; Sept. 1: Green Day and Smashing Pumpkins.

Crafthouse Stage & Grill

March 8: Socks in The Frying Pan; May 18: Mitch Rossell.

Others

March 9: Punchline, Preserving Underground, New Kensington; March 10: Spyro Gyra, Oaks Theatre, Oakmont; April 9: Christian McBride, August Wilson African American Cultural Center, Pittsburgh; April 27: Judas Priest, Covelli Centre, Youngstown; May 20: Matthew Morrison, Greer Cabaret Theater, Pittsburgh (sold out); July 8: Yakov Smirnoff, Strand Theater, Zelienople.

Scott Tady is entertainment editor at *The Times* and easy to reach at stady@timesonline.com.

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Blackberry Smoke heads here for a show. JOE LOPEZ

29th Day of February A.D. 2024

Affiant further deposes that the Ad Taker is duly authorized by the EAGLE PRINTING COMPANY, a corporation, publisher of said BUTLER EAGLE, a newspaper of general circulation, to verify the foregoing statement under oath, and Affiant

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Carina R. Neer

Butler Eagle

born to and subscribed before me this 29th day of February 2024

Caye Ortiz

Notary Public

My Commission Expires:

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania - Notary Seal
CAROLYN ELAINE ORTIZ - Notary Public
Butler County
My Commission Expires March 25, 2027
Commission Number 1348650

Statement of Advertising Costs

Pipitone Group

933 Perrysville Avenue

Pittsburgh, PA 15214

Attn: Kathy Downing

TO BUTLER EAGLE, Dr.	
for publishing the notice or publication attached hereto on the above stated dates	\$ 480.00
for obtaining same	\$ 3.00
Total	\$ 483.00

Advertising Costs

Butler Eagle, a newspaper of general circulation, hereby acknowledge the same have been duly paid. EAGLE PRINTING CO., a Corporation, Publisher of BUTLER EAGLE, a Newspaper of General Circulation.

By _____

Tentative deal in place to avoid government shutdown

Aid to Ukraine not part of pact

By Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Congressional leaders announced Wednesday they have reached a tentative agreement to prevent a government shutdown for now, days before an end-of-the-week deadline that risked shuttering some federal operations.

Under the new plan, Congress would temporarily fund one set of federal agencies through March 8 and another set through March 22. In the meantime, Congress will try to draft and pass packages of legislation to fund the government for the remainder of the budget year.

But there was no immediate plan to approve the \$95 billion emergency national security funds for Ukraine,

Israel and other allies. “We are in agreement that Congress must work in a bipartisan manner to fund our government,” said the joint statement from House Speaker Mike Johnson, Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell and House Democratic Leader Hakeem Jeffries, along with the Appropriation Committee leaders.

Johnson said the House would vote Thursday to approve the temporary funds — ahead of Friday’s deadline, when some federal monies run out. The Senate would be expected to vote next.

The deal comes together as negotiators in Congress have been working furiously to finish up a federal spending plan and Washington joined Ukraine and other American allies

around the world in watching and waiting for Johnson’s next move.

The new Republican leader is facing the test of his career trying to keep the U.S. government open by Friday’s midnight deadline for several federal departments. At the same time, emergency funding for Ukraine, Israel and Indo-Pacific allies remains stubbornly stalled. President Joe Biden convened leaders Tuesday in hopes of pushing them toward a deal.

“As the President and Congressional Leaders made clear at yesterday’s meeting, we cannot allow a government shutdown,” White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said in a statement. She said the agreement reached would help prevent a “needless” federal shutdown.

Middlesex Township commission advances comprehensive plan

By William Pitts

Eagle Staff Writer

MIDDLESEX TWP — The township has been working to update its comprehensive plan, which has remained unchanged since 2004.

The planning commission voted to advance its updated comprehensive plan to the next level, where it will be reviewed by the township’s supervisors at a future public hearing.

The meeting on Wednesday evening was the fourth time the comprehensive plan went before the planning commission. The main topic of conversation on Wednesday regarded tweaks to the commission’s

proposed changes for the plan’s “designated growth area,” the part of the township where orderly and efficient development is expected to progress.

The growth area is “just a tool that’s part of the comprehensive plan,” said township manager Jeffrey Winkle.

During the meeting, one member of the planning commission, Dave Fowler, raised concerns about the plan’s ability to balance the township’s rural character with the need to allow for future urban development. Fowler was especially concerned that future development would encroach on the Glade Run watershed area.

“The survey shows that our main focus for the comprehensive plan should be the preservation of our rural nature,” Fowler said during the meeting. “I think we should make this thing as restrictive as possible, not as broad as possible.”

“They were just talking about some of the environmentally sensitive areas of the community, and their desire to help those areas,” Winkle said.

“There’s continuing work that needs to be done,” Fowler said.

There is no timetable yet for when the supervisors will hold the public hearing for the comprehensive plan.

TAKING A LAP



With the weather being rainy and windy Wednesday, Tracey Vaccarello and Lisa Chalmers, both of Harmony, visited the Rose E. Schneider Family YMCA in Cranberry Township to walk the track.

ED THOMPSON/BUTLER EAGLE

Sprankle family to appear on ‘Family Feud’

Eagle Staff Report

A national television audience will soon get a glimpse of Saxonburg business owner Doug Sprankle and his family, who are set to appear on an upcoming episode of the syndicated game show “Family Feud.”

Sprankle, the operator of Sprankle’s Neighborhood Market on West Water Street, as well as his sister-in-law, Brandi, confirmed

the Sprankle family is set to appear on the show on April 24.

In addition, Doug and his family were pictured in the studio audience during the episode that aired on Tuesday night.

According to an Instagram post from the Independent Grocers Alliance, the Sprankles’ appearance on Family Feud was filmed in May 2023 at Trilith Studios in Fayetteville, Ga.

The five members of the Sprankle family competing were Doug, his son Colt, his father Randy, his older brother Ryan, and his sister-in-law Brandi.

Brandi said Doug and Randy are planning a watch party for the day of the show, and further details are soon to come.

Family Feud can be seen daily on CBS at 7 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

LOCAL

Reservations for shelters at Alameda begin Friday online

At 9 a.m. Friday, the county parks and recreation department will begin accepting online reservations for

shelters at Alameda Park.

In addition, credit card purchases at the park concession stand will no longer have a \$1 minimum, but the service fee for debit card transactions will increase from 1.79% to 2.19% and will

be passed on to customers, county officials said.

On March 9, a low-cost vaccination clinic for pets is being held in the park’s maintenance garage from 10 a.m. to noon. A fee will be charged to help cover costs.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC INPUT HEARINGS

Re: Peoples Natural Gas and Peoples Gas Rate Increase

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Questions?

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Know someone who has dedicated his or her life to helping the community, someone who is always ready to pitch in or to organize events?

Then you should nominate that person for the **74th Distinguished Service Award**, the premier community award given annually in Butler County.



The award was established in 1949 to honor outstanding volunteerism in the Butler community. In 1952 the award was split to honor two people annually: a junior, 45 years old or younger; and a senior, older than 45. Nominations for the 2023 DSA honorees are sought from the public, and past DSA winners will vote on the nominees.

Letters of nomination should explain why the person deserves to be considered for the award, including history of volunteerism.

Nominations must be received by Friday, April 5.

The dinner will be Wednesday, May 15 at the Butler Country Club.

For more information or questions call Millie Pinkerton at 724-287-3395

Please send nominations for both the junior and senior honorees to:

**DSA Nominee
Rotary Club of Butler
P.O. Box 1081
Butler, PA 16003**

Sponsored by:

Butler Eagle



AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

STATE OF Pennsylvania

COUNTY OF Venango

CITY OF Oil City

I, Melissa Reedy, being duly sworn on oath now and during all times herein stated, have been the publisher or designated agent of the publication known as,

The Derrick, News-Herald & Clarion News ("Publication ")

and have full knowledge of the facts herein stated as follows:

the ad for Peoples Gas ("Advertiser") was printed and published in issue(s) of said newspaper on the following date(s):

2/22/2024

2/29/2024

By: Melissa Reedy
Signature of affiant

Subscribed and sworn to before me
This 1st day of March, 2024.

Notary Seal:

Michele M Schwab
Notary Public

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania - Notary Seal
Michele M. Schwab, Notary Public
Venango County
My commission expires December 8, 2026
Commission number 1259422
Member, Pennsylvania Association of Notaries

Clarion has deep ties to VFW National Home



Submitted photo. This is the historic marker located at the VFW National Home.

By Melanie Parker
For the Clarion News

EASTON RAPIDS, Mich. Residents of the Clarion community have always supported veterans and active-duty military, but may be unaware of a special endeavor to care for veterans and their families that was undertaken in 1950 by the Clarion VFW Post and Auxiliary 2145 that continues to this day.

In Eaton Rapids, Michigan, there is an oasis for veterans and their families, where they can find healing calm in a tranquil, rural, small-town community consisting of 42 single-family homes located on tree-lined streets. Here can be found playgrounds, a fishing pond, hiking trails, a gym, a library, computer and science labs, a daycare center and much more on a sprawling 629-acre campus. This community is known as the VFW National Home.

The mission statement for the VFW National Home states:

The VFW National Home assists military, veterans, and their families with children, by creating a foundation of services and resources to achieve their personal and family goals in order to move forward in a positive, safe and healthy environment.

Piney RailRiders developing ATV/snowmobile trail

CLARION — The Piney RailRiders (PRR) is working on developing 24 miles of abandoned rail corridor between the Clarion River trestle and Brookville for the purpose of opening a public ATV and snowmobile trail.

The PRR was awarded a \$66,000 grant by PA DCNR in 2019 to study the feasibility of establishing the Piney Rail Corridor (PRC) as a public multiuse trail. This trail would permit the riding of ATVs, Snowmobiles, horses as well as other activities including hiking, biking, snowshoeing, and cross country skiing.

The study was recently completed and approved by PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, (DCNR). The PRR is now preparing a grant request for funding of the purchase by PRC. It is anticipated that approximately \$1.2 million will be necessary to purchase the 24.7 mile-long 600 acres of property. Included in the \$1.2 million are the costs associated with Land Appraisal, Closing costs and legal fees.

In addition to the funding requests through grant proposals the PRR are conducting a fund drive among membership.

Its origin can be traced to the efforts of one young woman, Amy Ross, who made it her mission after World War I to help find jobs for unemployed veterans in Detroit. News of her tireless work reached Corey Spencer, a wealthy cattleman, who donated the original 472 acres to build on Amy's vision of supporting veterans.

The VFW National Home was founded in 1925, helping to fulfill the VFW pledge to "honor the dead by helping the living." The first residents to be welcomed were a widow with six children, who had lost her husband's military pension when he died suddenly. This family was now able to live in an old frame farmhouse rather than relying on charity on the streets of Detroit.

Since its founding, the VFW National Home has grown from this single farmhouse to a sprawling campus with park areas and multiple buildings, including single-family homes, a community center, guest lodge, chapel, and administrative offices. More acreage has since been acquired that is farmed or leased out to provide additional support.

Over the years, the National Home has evolved to meet the chang-

ing needs of America's military and veterans' families. Through it all, one thing has remained constant: the National Home's commitment to honor our nation's veterans and active-duty military by providing help and hope for their children and families.

The National Home operates on donations from the VFW and VFW Auxiliaries across the nation. Other organizations such as the Military Order of the Cooties are also large sponsors. Through the efforts of the VFW Auxiliaries, funds were raised for the construction of the hospital, the Margaret A. Armstrong Guest Lodge and Memory Chapel, the library and the Nursery, which is now known as the Early Education Center.

Residents of Pennsylvania in general, and of Clarion in particular should be aware of and take pride in their involvement with two of the 42 cottages at the National Home. Cottage No. 3 was financed and erected in 1950 by the Parker D. Cramer Post 2145 of Clarion. A second plaque now hangs at the cottage — recognizing the post as SPC Ross A. McGinnis Post 2145. The word "cottage" is misleading. The home has four bedrooms, three baths, and a total of 2,456 square feet on two floors. The home



Submitted photo. This is an aerial view of the VFW National Home in Easton Rapids, Mich. The home covers 629 acres.

itself is owned by The National Home organization, as are all of the cottages, but Cottage No. 3 is sponsored by the VFW Dept. of Pennsylvania Auxiliary. All of the VFW Auxiliaries of Pennsylvania donate to the National Home for maintenance and upkeep of Cottage No. 3. The National VFW Auxiliary also raises funds for projects for special needs at the National Home.

Cottage No. 1 is sponsored by the VFW Department of Pennsylvania. All of the VFW Posts in Pennsylvania donate for the support and maintenance of this home. It was built in 1928, has four bedrooms and two bathrooms, and a total of 2,674 square feet on two floors. If you visit the website of the National Home, you can take a virtual tour of PA No. 1.

"The VFW National Home is a community of like-minded people." —

Michael Wilson, SPHR, Executive Director, VFW National Home.

The National Home provides a unique experience for veterans and their families. They are given the opportunity for their family to live for up to four years in an individual and well-maintained home in a beautiful setting at absolutely no cost, allowing them the time and freedom to recover, heal, and explore a path forward. The biggest problem is that people don't know that it exists — they have heard of the VFW, but not the National Home.

In 2025 the National Home will celebrate 100 years of service; first to children of veterans, and then evolving to the veteran and his or her entire family. To learn more about the National Home, please visit their website, and consider making a donation while there. Your

money will definitely be put to good use.

Let's continue Clarion's proud tradition of helping veterans and their families. Please consider joining the VFW National Home family! VFW and VFW Auxiliary members and organizations are eligible to become Life Members. Life Members may vote for the trustees who represent their National Home District and approve any proposed changes to the bylaws and articles of incorporation. Any individual or organization wishing to support the National Home's mission can become an Associate Life Member who do not have voting privileges. By becoming a member of the National Home, you will create a lasting bond between yourself and the mission of the National Home.

Visit <https://vfwnationalhome.org> for more information.

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The PRC has more than 519 family memberships that include more than 1,300 individual members.

The PRR has a yearly lease agreement, which permits the use and maintenance of the trail. The PRR members have invested significant time and capital keeping the rail corridor open for members and non-members alike.

There are seven bridges that cross the Piney Stream and they are in various states of repair. PRR members have been able to keep the bridges safe and functional with volunteer time, volunteer excavation equipment and membership money.

The trail would have an economic impact on the area. "The 24 miles of abandoned rail corridor travels through five townships in Clarion and Jef-

ferson Counties. Four of the townships the PRC crosses have open ATV riding. These four townships connect with at least a dozen other townships," said Bryan Huwar, grant coordinator for the Economic Development Corporation. "Owing to the 24 mile PRC and the Open Road townships it passes through and 12 or so other contiguous townships with Open Roads, ATV riders can legally ride a couple of hundred miles."

Anyone interested in helping to bring the rail corridor into the public domain can send pledges, contributions and membership application requests to; Piney RailRiders President Cinnamon Vosburg, 63 Vosburg Lane, Strattonville, PA 16258

The PRR is a PA Private-not-for-profit 501(c)3 Corporation.

East Forest hosting blood drive

MARIENVILLE — East Forest High School is hosting a blood drive for the American Red Cross on Friday, March 1, in the gymnasium

from 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Please consider making a donation that can help save lives in the community. Walk-ins are welcome.

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AFFIDAVIT OF DISTRIBUTION

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania)
County of Allegheny)

GM Olvido, [in her] capacity as Major/National Accounts Executive on behalf of TRIB TOTAL MEDIA, INC. (“**Publisher**”), being duly sworn, upon [her] oath, deposes and says:

1. Trib Total Media, Inc. representing the following publications (the “**Publications**”):
 - Kittanning Leader Times
 - Connellsville Daily Courier

The ROP for *Peoples Gas* – ran in the *Kittanning Leader Times* and *Connellsville Daily Courier* Publication on 22nd and 29th February, 2024

TRIB TOTAL MEDIA, INC.

By: 

Sworn to before me this 29th
day of February, 2024


Notary Public

[Notary Seal

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania - Notary Seal
Karen DiCristofaro, Notary Public
Allegheny County
My commission expires April 11, 2026
Commission number 1213255
Member, Pennsylvania Association of Notaries

Bullskin to purchase plow truck

By **JAMIE RANKIN**

Bullskin Township Supervisors took action on three items at Tuesday's meeting.

They authorized the purchase of a new plow truck, with Chris Ohler noting the 2008 Peterbilt the township currently is using is on its last legs.

Supervisors have their eye on a 2025 Ford F750 but have not yet purchased the vehicle. Arrangements are being made through the COSTARS program.

Supervisors also voted to advertise for aggregate bids, which will be accepted until 3 p.m. March 26, and adopted the 2024 International Property Maintenance Code.

Ohler said the township still is greatly in need of more firefighters. Anyone interested in joining the Bullskin Township Volunteer Fire Company should contact Chief Kyle Quinn at 724-887-0566.

The Bullskin Senior Center also is looking for new members, who can come from within the township or any of the neighboring communities. For more information, call the senior center at 724-887-0655.

Jamie Rankin is the editor of the Independent-Journal. Reach her at jrankin@dailycourier.com or 724-628-2000.

Authority discusses waterline breaks

By **PAUL S. BRITAIN**

The North Fayette County Municipal Authority discussed waterline breaks that occurred in January.

After lengthy discussion, the board agreed to have the authority's own crews replace 90 feet of pipeline in the Clark area because the current line is in serious condition.

"Our fixes won't seal the 8-inch steel line because it is pitted. We have the pipe we were going to use for the Jefferson project," said authority Director Ken Martray.

Chairman Jason Foster asked if bids could be requested for the work. But Martray said the urgency of the work requires it be addressed immediately.

Martray said the line could be replaced in roughly two months. Board members acknowledged that school bus traffic could interrupt work at various times.

Martray said there were 33 reported breaks, and considerable water was lost during the breaks.

"There were 1,500 customers who were affected," he said.

The board also approved two proposals for Sleighter Design Inc.

The first is for the Crawford Avenue project at \$187,792.15 for design, specs, and inspection of bids.

The second is in the amount of \$54,265.20 for the Wiggins Lane Project from Regency to Walnut Hill in South Union Township.

A proposal for \$6,150 by JRH Contracting for replacement of doors at the Lemont Booster Station was tabled. Foster questioned the cost of the doors, which involve one double door and one single door.

A payment of \$4,482.90 was approved for Piccolomini Contracting for the Fairchance Fire Hydrant Replacement Project.

A payment of \$81,445.90 was approved to Elcon Technologies Inc. for the filter upgrade project.

The authority will purchase a new pump at the Rosy Hill Pump Station in the amount of \$14,047, plus shipping costs. The old pump is in such bad shape that replacement parts won't work for the unit.

The board also approved a donation of \$250 to the Dunbar Fire Department. This is the same amount as was donated in 2023.

Paul S. Brittain is a Daily Courier staff writer.

Wendy's: No plans to raise prices at busy times

(AP) — Wendy's says that it has no plans to increase prices during the busiest times at its restaurants.

The burger chain clarified its stance on how it will approach pricing after media picked up on comments by CEO Kirk Tanner that the company would test features like dynamic pricing at restaurants.

Companies like Uber have used dynamic pricing, or surge pricing, to moderate use by customers during the busiest days of the year, or when drivers or cars are in short supply during the day. Prices rise and fall with demand using that business model.

This month during a conference call with investors and industry analysts, Tanner said, "Beginning as early as 2025, we will begin testing more enhanced features like dynamic pricing and daypart offerings, along with AI-enabled menu changes and suggestive selling."

The company said Wednesday, after the story

began to circulate this week, that any features it decides to test in the future "would be designed to benefit our customers and restaurant crew members."

"Wendy's will not implement surge pricing, which is the practice of raising prices when demand is highest. We didn't use that phrase, nor do we plan to implement that practice," the company said in an email to The Associated Press on Wednesday.

Wendy's Co. plans to invest about \$20 million to launch digital menu boards at all of its U.S. company-run restaurants by the end of 2025. It also plans to invest approximately \$10 million over the next two years to support digital menu enhancements globally.

Wendy's said that its digital menu boards "could allow us to change the menu offerings at different times of day and offer discounts and value offers to our customers more easily, particularly in the slower times of day."

For those suffering from addiction, help is available

Addiction is the compulsive use of substances despite loss of money, relationships, family members, employment, freedom, health, dignity and even life. But addiction is not a sign of weakness or moral failure. Rather, it is a common condition that affects millions of people of all backgrounds.

"Addiction is considered a brain disorder, because it involves complex interactions among brain circuits, genetics, the environment and an individual's life experiences," said Gopi Vadlamudi, MD, medical director of the CNX Foundation Substance Recovery Unit at Penn Highlands Mon Valley. "While individuals in the throes of addiction may feel hopeless, it is a treatable medical disease."

How do I know if a family member or friend has a substance use disorder?

It can be difficult to know if someone is struggling with addiction. While the following symptoms may be caused by other factors, they may also be warning signs of substance abuse:

- Problems at school or work, such as frequently missing days, a sudden disinterest in activities or a drop in grades or performance
- Physical health issues, such as a lack of energy and motivation, weight loss or gain or red eyes
- Lack of interest in appearance, clothing or grooming
- Changes in behavior and in relationships with family and friends
- Money issues, such as

sudden requests for money without a reasonable explanation

Alcohol is often present at many social functions, but when does social drinking become a more serious issue?

"If your alcohol use puts your health or safety at risk, it is an unhealthy use of alcohol," said Dr. Vadlamudi. "Binge drinking, which is defined as a male having five or more drinks within two hours or a female having at least four drinks within two hours, is another sign of unhealthy use. Generally, if your drinking results in repeated significant problems in your daily life, you may have alcohol use disorder."

What do I do if I suspect a loved one is struggling with addiction?

Like other chronic conditions, such as asthma or heart disease, addiction is typically characterized by relapses, but it can be treated. Starting a conversation is an important first step. When you approach the person, do so in a positive, compassionate and helpful way. Do not shame or criticize them. It can help to remember that addiction is a disease like diabetes or high blood pressure.

You may also want to encourage them to talk to their primary care doctor, since it may be easier to talk about the subject with a doctor than with a family member or friend. For someone in the early stages, a conversation with a healthcare professional may be enough to get them the help they need.

You can also get help and resources from The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), which offers a free 24/7 helpline for individuals and family members facing mental and/or substance use disorders. This service provides referrals to local treatment facilities, support groups and community-based organizations. You can reach the helpline by calling 1-800-662-HELP (4357).

Penn Highlands Healthcare offers outpatient, intensive outpatient (IOP) and substance recovery unit care. Outpatient treatment serves those with both substance and behavioral (gambling, gaming, sexual, pornography) addictions. IOP treatment addresses stress and emotional

well-being, as well as the ability to develop and implement skills to increase proper communication and reduce likelihood of relapse and stress. Penn Highlands Healthcare also offers the CNX Foundation Substance Recovery Unit at Penn Highlands Mon Valley. The unit is the only Level 4.0 inpatient withdrawal and treatment facility in Fayette, Greene, Washington and Westmoreland counties. This unit is equipped to treat patients suffering with substance use disorders along with complex medical problems or very high risk withdrawal symptoms. To learn more, visit www.phhealthcare.org/addictionmedicine.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC INPUT HEARINGS

Re: Peoples Natural Gas and Peoples Gas Rate Increase

To Our Customers:

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Community College of Allegheny County Boyce Campus – Auditorium 595 Beatty Rd Monroeville, PA 15146-1396 (724) 327-1327	Butler County Community College Main Campus – Founders Hall 107 College Drive Butler, PA 16002 (724) 287-8711
Parking: Front of South Building – no pass required	Parking: Lot #6 – no pass required

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Toll-free Conference Number: 866.566.0649	Contacting the Office of Consumer Advocate (OCA) toll free at 1-800-684-6560 or by email at consumer@paoca.org (in email, include following information):
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ADOPT A PET

Fayette Friends of Animals



Overcrowding at animal shelters is an ongoing problem, and the result of this overcrowding is heartbreaking. Those animals are homeless through no fault of their own. Won't you help save the life of a homeless pet by sponsoring a photo in "Adopt-A-Pet"?

Pet Photos will be published in The Daily Courier on Saturday, March 30, and the Mt. Pleasant-Scottsdale Independent-Journal on Thursday, April 4, 2024.

If you would like to arrange an ongoing sponsorship, please call Jarrod Lash at 724-628-2000, or fill out the form below and send it in, or drop off, with \$12.00 to the Daily Courier office. Please make checks payable to The Daily Courier.

Help support Fayette Friends of Animals at 724-245-7815. All ages of puppies, dogs, cats and kittens are always available; see them online at fayettefriendsofanimals.net.



Deadline for March Adopt-A-Pet is Saturday, March 23, 2024

Yes, I would like to sponsor ___ "Adopt-A-Pet" photo(s) for \$12.00 each.

Enclosed is \$12.00 for each photo sponsored.

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Proof of Publication

State of Pennsylvania
County of Indiana] SS

On this 29th day of February 2024 A.D.

before me, the subscriber, a Notary Public in and for said County and State, personally appeared:

Sherri L. Bash

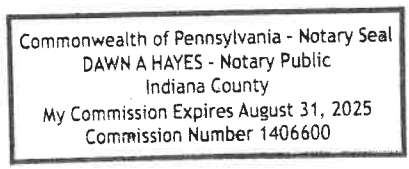
who being duly sworn according to laws, deposes and says, that (s)he is the Solicitor of the Indiana Gazette, that the said Indiana Gazette is a daily newspaper of general circulation, published in the borough of Indiana, in the County of Indiana, State of Pennsylvania, by the Indiana Gazette Inc., and was established in said Borough on the second day of July 1890, since which date, said daily newspaper has been regularly issued in said Borough and County, that annexed hereto is a true copy of a notice in the above matter exactly as the same was printed in the regular editions and issues of the said daily newspaper on the following dates, viz:

2/22, 2/29

Affiant further deposes and says that (s)he is an employee of the publisher of the said daily newspaper and has been authorized to verify the foregoing statement and the (s)he is not interested in the subject matter of the aforesaid notice or publication and that all allegations in the foregoing statement as to time, place, and character of publication are true.

By: Sherri L. Bash

Sworn to and subscribed before me the day and year aforesaid.



Signature of notarial officer

Proof of Publication	\$1,350.00
Proof of Intent	\$ 8.00
Total	\$1,358.00

Indiana Gazette Inc., publishers of the Indiana Gazette, a daily newspaper, hereby acknowledges receipt of the aforesaid publication costs, and certifies the same have been fully paid.

Indiana Gazette Inc.
P.O. Box 10, 899 Water Street, Indiana, PA 15701

By _____

Texas man who long claimed innocence executed for 2 slayings

By **JUAN A. LOZANO**
and **MICHAEL GRACZYK**
Associated Press

HUNTSVILLE, Texas — A Texas man who had long claimed his conviction more than 20 years ago was based on false testimony and questionable evidence was executed Wednesday for fatally shooting two people, including his cousin.

Ivan Cantu received a lethal injection and was pronounced dead at 6:47 p.m. at the state penitentiary in Huntsville for the November 2000 fatal shooting of his cousin, James Mosqueda, 27, and his cousin's girlfriend, Amy Kitchen, 22. In final words from the execution chamber, the 50-year-old inmate said several times that he was innocent.

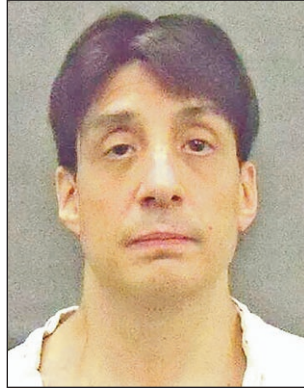
"I want you to know that I never killed James and Amy," he told relatives and a friend of Kitchen who stood feet away from him while watching through a window. "And if I did, if I knew who did, you would've been the first to

know any information." He said he wanted them to know he didn't think his death "will bring you closure. If it does, if this is what it takes or have any reservations off in your mind, then so be it."

Prosecutors had said Cantu killed Mosqueda, who dealt illegal drugs, and Kitchen as he tried to steal cocaine, marijuana and cash from his cousin's north Dallas home. The inmate, who was convicted in 2001, had long claimed a rival drug dealer killed his cousin in a dispute over money.

Before his statement, his spiritual adviser, Helen Prejean, held in her hand his right hand that was strapped to the death chamber gurney and prayed quietly over him. He thanked friends and supporters and urged that his case continue to be investigated to prove, "I don't belong on this gurney."

As a lethal dose of the sedative pentobarbital began flowing, he began snoring. After the eighth snore, which was ac-



IVAN CANTU

companied by a gasp, he stopped all movement. Twenty-one minutes after the drugs started, he was pronounced dead.

Cantu's was the first execution in Texas this year and one of two scheduled Wednesday in the U.S. Hours earlier, Idaho authorities halted the execution of serial killer Thomas Eugene Creech after a medical team repeatedly failed to find a vein to insert an IV line needed to administer a lethal injection. Creech was condemned for killing a fellow prisoner with a battery-filled sock in 1981.

The Texas execution proceeded hours after Cantu's attorney, Gena Bunn, said she would not make a final appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court for lack of "a viable path" for the high court's consideration of the case.

Two lower courts on Tuesday denied Cantu's request to intervene. And on Monday, the Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles voted 7-0 against commuting Cantu's death sentence to a lesser penalty. Efforts to delay Cantu's execution had received the support of faith leaders, celebrities such as Kim Kardashian and actor Martin Sheen, and U.S. Rep. Joaquin Castro, and his brother, former U.S. Housing Secretary Julian Castro.

Collin County District Attorney Greg Willis, whose office convicted Cantu, said that evidence presented at trial proved Cantu committed the killings. "I remain fully convinced that Ivan Cantu brutally murdered two innocent victims in 2000," Willis said in a recent statement.

But Bunn had written in

Cantu's clemency application that new evidence "impugns the integrity of the State's case for guilt and raises the specter that the State of Texas could execute an innocent man."

In Cantu's apartment, police found bloody jeans with the victims' DNA and a key to the victims' home. Police found Cantu's gun at his ex-girlfriend's home. Mosqueda's blood was found on the gun's barrel while Cantu's fingerprints were found on the gun's magazine.

In a 2005 affidavit, Matthew Goeller, one of Cantu's trial attorneys, said Cantu admitted to him "he had indeed killed Mosqueda for 'ripping him off' on a drug deal" and that Kitchen was killed because she was a witness.

Cantu's then-girlfriend, Amy Boettcher, was the prosecution's main witness. Boettcher, who died in 2021, testified that Cantu told her he was going to kill Mosqueda and Kitchen and later took her back to the crime scene after the killings.

But Bunn alleged that Boettcher's testimony was riddled with false statements.

The defense attorney also said new witness statements also helped confirm Cantu's claim that a man who had supplied drugs to Mosqueda had threatened the cousin days before the killings.

Bunn credited an independent probe by Matt Duff, a private investigator, with uncovering much of the new evidence. Duff has chronicled his findings in a podcast called "Cousins By Blood."

Of the new evidence presented by Cantu, Willis' office had said "none of it destroys the cornerstones of the State's case."

The next execution in Texas, which has been the nation's busiest capital punishment state, is not scheduled until June 26. Inmate James Harris Jr. had been scheduled for execution on March 13 until an appeals court issued a stay in his case last week.

Juan Lozano reported from Houston.

Our ancient animal ancestors had tails; why don't we?

By **CHRISTINA LARSON**
AP Science Writer

WASHINGTON — Our very ancient animal ancestors had tails. Why don't we?

Somewhere around 20 million or 25 million years ago, when apes diverged from monkeys, our branch of the tree of life shed its tail. From Darwin's time, scientists have wondered why — and how — this happened.

Now, researchers have identified at least one of the key genetic tweaks that led to this change.

"We found a single mutation in a very important gene," said Bo Xia, a geneticist at the Broad Institute and co-author of a study published Wednesday in the journal Nature.

The researchers compared the genomes of six species of apes, including humans, and 15 species of monkeys with tails to pin-



SKELTONS OF a human and a monkey awaited installation at the Steinhardt Museum of Natural History in Tel Aviv, Israel, in 2018.

point key differences between the groups. Once they identified a significant mutation, they tested their theory by using the gene-editing tool CRISPR to tweak the same spot

in mouse embryos. Those mice were born without tails.

Xia cautioned that other genetic changes may also play a role in losing tails.

Another mystery: Did

having no tails actually help these ape ancestors — and eventually, humans — survive? Or was it just a chance mutation in a population that thrived for other reasons?

"It could be random chance, but it could have brought a big evolutionary advantage," said Miriam Konkel, an evolutionary geneticist at Clemson University, who was not involved in the study.

As to why having no tails may have helped, there are many tantalizing theories — including some that link being tailless to humans eventually learning to walk upright.

Rick Potts, who directs the Smithsonian Institution's Human Origins Project and was not involved in the research, suggests being tailless may have been a first step toward some apes adopting a vertical body posture, even before they

left the trees.

Not all apes live on the ground today. Orangutans and gibbons are tailless apes that still live in trees. But Potts notes that they move very differently than monkeys, who scamper along the tops of branches, using their tails for balance. Those apes hang below branches, swinging between them while hanging largely upright.

New York University biol-

ogist Itai Yanai, a co-author of the study, said that losing our tails was clearly a major transition. But the only way to certainly know the reason "would be to invent a time machine," he said.

The Associated Press Health and Science Department receives support from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute's Science and Education Media Group. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

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On this 1st day of March, A.D. 2024, before me, the subscriber, a Notary Public in and for said County and State, personally appeared Christine Marhefka, who being duly sworn according to law, deposes and says as Advertising Director of The Tribune-Democrat, Johnstown, PA, a newspaper of general circulation as defined by the "Newspaper Advertising Act", a merger September 8, 1952, of the Johnstown Tribune, established December 7, 1853; and of the Johnstown Democrat, established March 5, 1863,

published continuously at Johnstown Pa. in the County of Cambria, and Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and that the annexed is a true copy of a notice in the above matter published in said publication in the regular issue The Johnstown Tribune-Democrat, Johnstown, PA, on February 22 and February 29, 2024; that the Affiant is not interested in the subject matter of said notice or advertising and that all of the allegations as to time, place and character of said publication are true.

Christine Marhefka
STATEMENT OF ADVERTISING COSTS

Signed and sworn to before me on
1st day of March, 2024
by Christine Marhefka making the statement

Tribune ad	\$1,860.00
Oath	5.00
Clerical Fee	2.50
Total Cost	\$1,867.50

Vivian Ohs
(Notary Public)

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania - Notary Seal
Vivian Ohs, Notary Public
Cambria County
My commission expires December 6, 2024
Commission number 1123017
Member, Pennsylvania Association of Notaries

To The Tribune-Democrat, Johnstown, PA
For publishing the notice or publication
attached hereto on the above stated dates.

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a newspaper of general circulation, hereby acknowledges receipt of the aforesaid
and publication costs and certifies that the same has been duly paid.

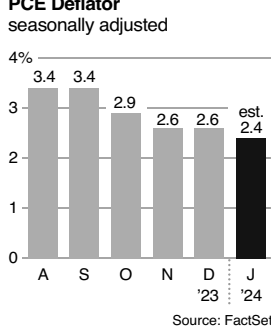
Money&Markets

Inflation gauge

The Commerce Department delivers its January snapshot of U.S. consumer spending and inflation before markets open today.

The Federal Reserve closely watches the report for inflation signals. It recently paused hiking its key lending rate after raising it to a 22-year high in an effort to corral inflation. Analysts forecast that year-over-year inflation ticked down to 2.4% from December's 2.6%.

PCE Deflator



Best Buy results

Minnesota retailer Best Buy releases its latest sales and profit report before the bell today. Analysts expect the nation's largest consumer electronics chain to post profit of \$2.52 per share on \$14.6 billion in sales.



Pizza profits

Pizza chain Papa John's today reports its fourth-quarter financial results before the bell. In the third quarter, Kentucky-based Papa John's missed Wall Street profit targets with earnings of 53 cents per share.



Market Summary

Table with columns: INDEX, LAST, CHG. %CHG. Includes Dow Industrials, S&P 500, NYSE Composite, etc.

NYSE Most Active

Table with columns: NAME, VOL (00s), LAST, CHG. Lists active stocks like Ford, Palantir, etc.

Nasdaq Most Active

Table with columns: NAME, VOL (00s), LAST, CHG. Lists active stocks like MarathnDg, Tesla, etc.

Main market table with columns: NAME, LAST, CHG. %YTD. Lists various stocks like ACM Rsc, ADT Inc, etc.

Wall Street drifts further from highs on down day for technology stocks

NEW YORK — U.S. stocks drifted lower Wednesday to edge a bit further from their all-time highs. The S&P 500 slipped 8.42 points, or 0.2%, to 5,069.76, continuing its quiet and listless run since setting a record last week.

Treasury yields also eased in the bond market after a report said the U.S. economy likely grew a touch slower at the end of 2023 than earlier estimated. The growth was nevertheless still solid, as the economy continues to defy expectations of a recession despite high interest rates meant to bring down inflation.

of the heaviest weights on the market. They're among a small group of Big Tech stocks that have been disproportionately responsible for the S&P 500's run to records. Such concentration in the market can be a concerning signal, according to Scott Wren, senior global market strategist at Wells Fargo Investment Institute.

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Boeing ordered to plan fixes for quality, safety problems

WASHINGTON — Boeing is ordered to plan fixes for quality and safety problems on a Boeing 737 Max jet that lost a panel in flight last week.

FAA gives aircraft maker 90-day deadline. The FAA is currently completing an audit of assembly lines at the factory near Seattle where Boeing builds planes such as the Alaska Airlines 737 Max that suffered a door-panel blowout on Jan. 5.

The agency said the directive followed all-day meetings Tuesday with top Boeing officials at FAA headquarters in Washington.

Boeing CEO David Calhoun said that "we have a clear picture of what needs to be done" because of company and independent reviews, and that "Boeing will develop the comprehensive action plan with measurable criteria that demonstrates the profound change that Administrator Whitaker and the FAA demand."

The FAA did not indicate what action it might take if Boeing fails to meet the 90-day deadline.

The Federal Aviation Administration said Wednesday it's giving Boeing 90 days to come up with a plan to fix quality problems and meet safety standards for building planes after a panel blew off a brand-new Boeing 737 Max jetliner last month.

The incident has raised scrutiny of Boeing to its highest level since two crashes of Boeing 737 Max jets in 2018 and 2019 that killed 346 people.

Whitaker toured the 737 factory two weeks ago. He met with FAA inspectors who are reviewing Boeing's operations and talked with Boeing engineers and mechanics about safety issues, according to the FAA.

This week, a panel of industry, government and academic experts issued a report that found shortcomings in the safety culture at Boeing, which the company says it has been working to improve.

Earlier this month, Boeing replaced the executive who had overseen the 737 program since early 2021 and said it was increasing inspections at the 737 plant in Renton, Washington.

\$1 billion for Superfund program to clean up 25 toxic waste sites

WASHINGTON — Twenty-five toxic waste sites in 15 states are to be cleaned up, and ongoing work at dozens of others will get a funding boost, as the Environmental Protection Agency on Tuesday announced a \$1 billion infusion to the federal Superfund program.

The money is the third and last installment in the \$3.5 billion allocated under the 2021 infrastructure law.

Agency on Tuesday announced a \$1 billion infusion to the federal Superfund program.

The money is the third and last installment in the \$3.5 billion allocated under the 2021 infrastructure law.

Senior Activities Centers of Cambria County Offers Low-Impact Exercise Classes for Seniors. Center Hours: Mainline 8am-2pm, East Hills 8am-2pm, etc.

IN BRIEF

Chrysler recalls 330K Jeep Grand Cherokees

Chrysler is recalling more than 330,000 Jeep Grand Cherokees because of a steering wheel issue that may cause drivers to lose control of their vehicles.

The recall is for 338,238 of Chrysler's 2021-23 Jeep Grand Cherokee L and 2022-23 Jeep Grand Cherokee vehicles.

The automaker said in documents posted this week by the U.S. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration that the upper control arm ball joint and steering knuckle may separate and cause the wheel to fall outward, which could result in losing control of the vehicle and increasing the risk of a crash.

The company said it's not aware of any crashes or injuries due to the problem.

Individuals with impacted vehicles will be able to go to dealers to have the upper control arm pinch bolts replaced for free.

Wendy's: No plans to up prices at busy times

Wendy's said Wednesday that it has no plans to increase prices during the busiest times at its restaurants.

The burger chain clarified its stance on how it will approach pricing after media picked up on comments by CEO Kirk Tanner that the company would test features such as dynamic pricing at restaurants.

Companies such as Uber have used dynamic pricing, or surge pricing, to moderate use by customers during the busiest days of the year, or when drivers or cars are in short supply during the day.

Prices rise and fall with demand using that model.

This month during a conference call with investors and industry analysts, Tanner said, "Beginning as early as 2025, we will begin testing more enhanced features like dynamic pricing and daypart offerings, along with AI-enabled menu changes and suggestive selling."

The company said Wednesday, after the story began to circulate this week, that any features it decides to test in the future "would be designed to benefit our customers and restaurant crew members."

Executive order aims to shield personal data

WASHINGTON — President Joe Biden is signing an executive order aimed at better protecting Americans' personal data on everything from biometrics and health records to finances and geolocation from foreign adversaries such as China and Russia.

The move allows the Department of Justice and other federal agencies to take steps to prevent the large-scale transfer of Americans' personal data to what the White House calls "countries of concern."

The goal is to do so without limiting legitimate commerce under data, senior Biden administration officials said on a call with reporters.

AFFIDAVIT OF DISTRIBUTION

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania)
County of Allegheny)

GM Olvido, [in her] capacity as Major/National Accounts Executive on behalf of TRIB TOTAL MEDIA, INC. (“**Publisher**”), being duly sworn, upon [her] oath, deposes and says:

1. Trib Total Media, Inc. representing the following publications (the “**Publications**”):
 - Kittanning Leader Times
 - Connellsville Daily Courier

The ROP for *Peoples Gas* – ran in the *Kittanning Leader Times* and *Connellsville Daily Courier* Publication on 22nd and 29th February, 2024

TRIB TOTAL MEDIA, INC.

By: 

Sworn to before me this 29th
day of February, 2024


Notary Public

[Notary Seal

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania - Notary Seal Karen DiCristofaro, Notary Public Allegheny County My commission expires April 11, 2026 Commission number 1213255 Member, Pennsylvania Association of Notaries
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NOTICE OF PUBLIC INPUT HEARINGS

Re: Peoples Natural Gas and Peoples Gas Rate Increase

To Our Customers:

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In-Person Public Input Hearings:

In Monroeville, PA:	In Butler, PA:
Tuesday, March 5, 2024 1:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m.	Wednesday, March 6, 2024 1:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m.
Community College of Allegheny County Boyer Campus – Auditorium 595 Beatty Rd Monroeville, PA 15146-1396 (724) 327-1327	Butler County Community College Main Campus – Founders Hall 107 College Drive Butler, PA 16002 (724) 287-8711
Parking: Front of South Building – no pass required	Parking: Lot #6 – no pass required

Telephonic Public Input Hearings:

Thursday, March 7, 2024 1:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m.	To participate in the telephonic public input hearing, you are to pre-register by 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 6, 2024. If you do not pre-register and provide the information listed below, you may not have an opportunity to testify.
To participate in the public input hearing, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You must dial the toll-free Conference number below You must enter the PIN number below when instructed You must speak your name when prompted, and press # Then, the telephone system will connect you to the hearing 	Pre-Registration Instructions for Telephonic Public Input Hearings:
Toll-free Conference Number: 866.566.0649	Contacting the Office of Consumer Advocate (OCA) toll free at 1-800-684-6560 or by email at consumer@paoca.org (in email, include following information):
Passcode: 83345259	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> your first and last name; the date and time of the public input hearing at which you wish to testify; a phone number where you can be reached prior to the hearing if we need to contact you; your email address if you have one; and if you require an interpreter to participate in the hearing, the language of the interpreter.
	Hearing Exhibits: If you have any hearing exhibits to which you will refer during the telephonic hearing, please email them to the OCA at consumer@paoca.org . The OCA will forward the exhibits to the Judges and all parties. Exhibits must be received by: Wednesday, March 6, 2024.
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Questions?

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Affidavit of Publication

STATE OF PA }
COUNTY OF LAWRENCE } SS

Cindy DeProspero, being duly sworn, says:

That she is Cindy DeProspero of the New Castle News, a daily newspaper of general circulation, printed and published in New Castle, Lawrence County, PA; that the publication, a copy of which is attached hereto, was published in the said newspaper on the following dates:

February 22, 2024, February 29, 2024

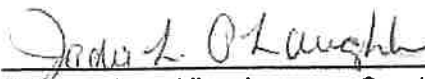
That said newspaper was regularly issued and circulated on those dates.

SIGNED:



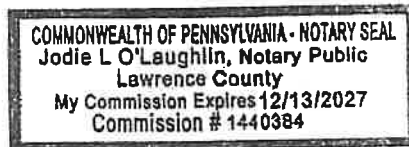
Cindy DeProspero

Subscribed to and sworn to me this 29th day of February 2024.



Jodie L. O'Laughlin, , Lawrence County, PA

My commission expires: December 13, 2027



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PHONES: Despite rules, kids are using devices in class

FROM A7

media companies and greater online safety for kids.

Nationally, 77% of U.S. schools say they prohibit cellphones at school for non-academic use, according to the National Center for Education Statistics.

But that number is misleading. It does not mean students are following those bans or all those schools are enforcing them.

Just ask teachers. "Cellphone use is out of control. By that, I mean that I cannot control it, even in my own classroom," said Patrick Truman, who teaches at a Maryland high school that forbids student use of cellphones during class. It is up to each teacher to enforce the policy, so Truman bought a 36-slot caddy for storing student phones. Still, every day, students hide phones in their laps or under books as they play video games and check social media.

Tired of being the phone police, he has come to a reluctant conclusion: "Students who are on their phones are at least quiet. They are not a behavior issue."

A study last year from Common Sense Media found that 97% of kids use their phones during school hours, and that kids say school cellphone policies vary — often from one classroom to another — and aren't always enforced.

For a school cellphone ban to work, educators and experts say the school administration must be the one to enforce it and not leave that task to teachers. The Phone-Free Schools Movement, an advocacy group formed last year



A ninth-grader places her cell phone in to a phone holder as she enters class at Delta High School in Delta, Utah. At the rural Utah school, there is a strict policy requiring students to check their phones at the door when entering every class.

by concerned mothers, says policies that allow students to keep phones in their backpacks, as many schools do, are ineffective.

"If the bookbag is on the floor next to them, it's buzzing and distracting, and they have the temptation to want to check it," said Kim Whitman, a co-founder of the group, which advises schools to require phones be turned off and locked away all day.

Some students say such policies take away their autonomy and cut off their main mode of communication with family and friends.

Pushback also has come from parents who fear being cut off from their kids if there is a school emergency. Whitman advises schools to make exceptions for students with special educational and medical needs, and to inform parents on expert guidance that phones can be a dangerous distraction

for students during an emergency.

Jaden Willoughey, 14, shares the concern about being out of contact with his parents if there's a crisis. But he also sees the upsides of turning in his phone at school.

At Delta High School in rural Utah, where Jaden is a freshman, students are required to check their phones at the door when entering every class. Each of the school's 30 or so classrooms has a cellphone storage unit that looks like an over-the-door shoe bag with three dozen smartphone-sized slots.

"It helps you focus on your work, and it's easier to pay attention in class," Jaden said.

A classmate, Mackenzie Stanworth, 14, said it would be hard to ignore her phone if it was within reach. It's a relief, she said, to "take a break from the screen and the social life on your phone and actually talk to people in person."

It took a few years to tweak the cellphone policy and find a system that worked, said Jared Christensen, the school's vice principal.

"At first it was a battle. But it has been so worth it," he said. "Students are more attentive and engaged during class time. Teachers are able to teach without competing with cell-phones. And student learning has increased," he said, citing test scores that are at or above state averages for the first time in years. "I can't definitively say it's because of this policy. But I know it's helping."

The next battle will be against earbuds and smartwatches, he said. Even with phones stashed in pouches, students get caught listening to music on air pods hidden under their hair or hoodies. "We haven't included earbuds in our policy yet. But we're almost there."

CONCERT CALENDAR

Ready to get back in the audience?

Here are some upcoming concerts coming to Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Youngstown and more.

- **MARCH 1:** Kashus Culpepper, Thunderbird Cafe, Pittsburgh
- **MARCH 2:** St. Paul & the Broken Bones, The Roxian, McKees Rocks
- **MARCH 2:** The Ruckus Bros., Thunderbird Cafe, Pittsburgh
- **MARCH 2:** Blonde Redhead, Mr. Smalls, Millvale
- **MARCH 3:** Sam Hunt, Covelli Center, Youngstown
- **MARCH 5:** Tanner Usrey, Thunderbird Cafe, Pittsburgh
- **MARCH 7:** Bryce Vine, The Roxian, McKees Rocks
- **MARCH 8:** Lauren Daigle, PPG Paints Arena, Pittsburgh
- **MARCH 9:** Zach Bryan, PPG Paints Arena, Pittsburgh
- **MARCH 9:** Jason Isbell and the 400 Unit, Benedum Center, Pittsburgh
- **MARCH 9:** The Disco Biscuits, Stage AE, Pittsburgh
- **MARCH 11:** JP Saxe, Mr. Smalls, Millvale
- **MARCH 13:** Marc Broussard, Thunderbird Cafe, Pittsburgh
- **MARCH 14:** Circles Around The Sun, Thunderbird Cafe, Pittsburgh
- **MARCH 15:** Bryan Adams, PPG Paints Arena, Pittsburgh
- **MARCH 15:** Arm's Length, Thunderbird Cafe, Pittsburgh
- **MARCH 16:** Blue October, The Roxian, McKees Rocks
- **MARCH 16:** Waterparks, Stage AE, Pittsburgh
- **MARCH 16:** Donnie Iris and The Cruisers, The Vindys, UPMC Events Center, Robert Morris University
- **MARCH 16:** Beach Weather, Mr. Smalls, Millvale
- **MARCH 17:** KK's Priest, Stage AE, Pittsburgh
- **MARCH 18:** Tow'rs, Thunderbird Cafe, Pittsburgh
- **MARCH 19:** Blackberry Smoke, The Roxian, McKees Rocks
- **MARCH 20:** Set It Off, The Roxian, McKees Rocks
- **MARCH 21:** Sam Barber, The Roxian, McKees Rocks
- **MARCH 22:** The Meeting of Important People, Thunderbird Cafe, Pittsburgh
- **MARCH 22:** GROUPOLOVE, The Roxian, McKees Rocks
- **MARCH 23:** Wheeler Walker Jr., The Roxian, McKees Rocks
- **MARCH 23:** Dave Hause, Thunderbird Cafe, Pittsburgh
- **MARCH 23:** William Black, Stage AE, Pittsburgh
- **MARCH 24:** Mom Jeans, Stage AE, Pittsburgh
- **MARCH 25:** Avenged Sevenfold, PPG Paints Arena, Pittsburgh
- **MARCH 27:** Fall Out Boy, PPG Paints Arena, Pittsburgh
- **MARCH 27:** Louisiana Calling, Thunderbird Cafe, Pittsburgh
- **MARCH 29:** Kane Brown, PPG Paints Arena, Pittsburgh
- **APRIL 1:** Jeff Rosenstock, Mr. Smalls, Millvale
- **APRIL 3:** William Fitzsimmons, Thunderbird Cafe, Pittsburgh
- **APRIL 4:** Girlschool, Mr. Smalls, Millvale
- **APRIL 4:** Andrea Bocelli, PPG Paints Arena, Pittsburgh
- **APRIL 5:** The Slakcers, Mr. Smalls, Millvale
- **APRIL 8:** Mannequin Pussy, Thunderbird Cafe, Pittsburgh
- **APRIL 11:** The Motet, Thunderbird Cafe, Pittsburgh
- **APRIL 11:** The Koffin Kats & The Queers, Mr. Smalls, Millvale
- **APRIL 13:** Brantly Gilbert, UPMC Events Center, Robert Morris University
- **APRIL 13:** Dustin Lynch, Covelli Center, Youngstown
- **APRIL 13:** Owl City, The Roxian, McKees Rocks
- **APRIL 15:** Sweet Pill, Thunderbird Cafe, Pittsburgh
- **APRIL 16:** Smallpools/Grayscale, Thunderbird Cafe, Pittsburgh

WOMEN: Annual event set for March 9

FROM A7

their professions.

"This conference provides valuable information on beauty tips, wardrobe updates, health and healing programs and products for all ages. This event is power packed with information that will not only inspire you but will help you reach your goals," stated Gayle Young, executive director, United Way of Lawrence County.

Various women-owned vendors will create a marketplace of custom-made items from our area. Businesses in attendance include: Amazing Grace Collection, Angelus Therapeutic Services, Candy Young, Hoshi Fish Inc., Pretty Much Jewelry by Susan Cole, Productivity Uncorked LLC, Silk Road Market, Steel Magnolia by LV, Connerly's Custom Cleaners, Cookies and Candies by Christy and Locke and Key Boutique.

The cost is \$25 per person, which includes

light breakfast, buffet lunch and \$10 voucher to purchase items from participating women-owned businesses at the event. Register at www.uwlawcty.org/upcoming-events/

lawrence-county-womens-conference/. Check for updates at <http://facebook.com/lawrence-countywomensconference> or by contacting the United Way at (724) 658-8528.

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STATE OF Pennsylvania

COUNTY OF Venango

CITY OF Oil City

I, Melissa Reedy, being duly sworn on oath now and during all times herein stated, have been the publisher or designated agent of the publication known as,

The Derrick, News-Herald & Clarion News ("Publication ")

and have full knowledge of the facts herein stated as follows:

the ad for Peoples Gas ("Advertiser") was printed and published in issue(s) of said newspaper on the following date(s):

2/22/2024

2/29/2024

By: Melissa Reedy
Signature of affiant

Subscribed and sworn to before me
This 1st day of March, 2024.

Notary Seal:

Michele M Schwab
Notary Public

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania - Notary Seal
Michele M. Schwab, Notary Public
Venango County
My commission expires December 8, 2026
Commission number 1259422
Member, Pennsylvania Association of Notaries

A tornado outbreak in February?

Storms leave trail of destruction across four Great Lakes states

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — Severe storms that appear to have spawned a rare February tornado outbreak sent sleeping Midwesterners scrambling for safety and left a trail of damage and power outages across four Great Lakes states, including the Chicago suburbs, ending a spell of summertime, sometimes record temperatures.

At least nine confirmed or suspected tornadoes in Illinois, Indiana, Michigan and Ohio littered roads with fallen trees and branches, shredded homes and barns, and scattered debris across city and countryside alike. No injuries were reported, despite the storm's timing at night.

In Michigan's Grand Blanc Township, near Flint, a confirmed tornado — only the second on record for February in that part of the state — damaged subdivisions, uprooted trees and broke gas lines in Wednesday's wee hours. Its strength was rated at EF-2, with peak winds of 115 mph.

Police and firefighters moved residents in an area of gas leaks to a firehouse, and they were allowed to remain when a utility made repairs, authorities said.

"There are still numerous reports of wires down in the area," police said. "While there is significant damage to houses in the area, no one was hurt."

More than 100 miles to the southwest, a confirmed tornado damaged homes and barns and knocked down trees and power lines in Calhoun County, near the city of Marshall, sheriff's and weather authorities said.

Warning sirens jolted residents of central Ohio awake as a possible tornado hit near Columbus.

Carole Essex's family — husband Andy, their infant and a 2-year-old — were asleep at their home in Columbus as the storm approached. When they became aware of the threat, they ran for cover.



Marshall Gorby/Dayton Daily News via AP

Ted Williams works to put a temporary cover on the roof of his in-laws home following a severe storm near Springfield, Ohio on Wednesday

"We woke up and went down to the basement. We grabbed the kids and went down," Essex, 29, told The Columbus Dispatch. "It sounded like our house collapsed. I looked at Andy and said, 'Oh, my god, we were hit by a tornado.'"

At least five other storms in Ohio were confirmed as tornadoes — in Montgomery and Greene counties in southwestern Ohio; east of Columbus in Franklin and Licking counties; in Hilliard in Franklin County; east of London in Madison County; and ending just south of West Jefferson, and near Springfield in Clark County. The latter was rated at EF-2 strength.

At one point, more than 50,000 customers in Ohio and Michigan lacked power Wednesday, according to PowerOutage.us.

In Geneva, in Chicago's western suburbs, storms uprooted trees and left some homes with broken windows and shored off doors Tuesday evening, Fire Chief Mike Antenore said.

Geneva resident Rebecca Harrington said the storm "cycloned" into her home and collapsed its foyer area.

"The back of my house is sort of hanging off," Harrington told WGN-TV, which reported no injuries.

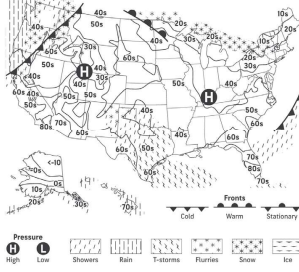
The storms followed unusual warmth across much of the region in recent days. They were followed Wednesday by a return to winter weather, with snow and temperatures in the 20s in some areas.

Weather

National weather AccuWeather.com

Forecast for Thursday, February 29, 2024

Lines separate high temperature zones for the day.



NATIONAL SUMMARY: The next in a series of impactful storms for the West will press inland today, delivering snow from the Washington and Oregon Cascades into Oregon's Blue Mountains and the northern Sierra Nevada. Rain is expected instead along the coast, with snow falling into northern Idaho. Rain will develop late over Oklahoma and East Texas.

Local forecast

Today: Partly cloudy. High 35.

Tonight: Mostly clear. Low 24.

Friday: Cloudy with showers. High 52. Low 41.

Extended forecast

Saturday: Partly cloudy. Very warm. High 63. Low 45.

Monday: Partly cloudy. High 68. Low 49.

Tuesday: Cloudy with showers. High 61. Low 38.

Police accuse inmate of fraud

BY HELEN FIELDING

Staff writer

A Franklin woman who currently is an inmate at Venango County Jail is facing fraud charges after conspiring over the phone to take money unauthorized from another individual's debit card.

Sugarcreek police, in a news release, said they received a report that 64-year-old Lucinda Irwin, through a recorded phone conversation on the jail inmate phone system, had conspired with someone "to utilize the debit card of a known victim without authorization to have funds placed on (Irwin's) inmate account."

Officers obtained debit card information and the bank records of the holder of the debit card, which showed the funds had been removed from

the card holder's account and placed on the inmate account, the release said.

Irwin was charged with three misdemeanor counts of access device fraud, and at her preliminary hearing on Feb. 21, all charges were waived over to court, the release said.

Sugarcreek police, in a news release, said that while on routine patrol on Feb. 22, they saw Damian Carter-Deal, 21, riding as a passenger in a motor vehicle at an intersection on Rocky Grove Avenue.

Police said they knew Carter-Deal had an outstanding felony arrest warrant for aggravated assault and other misdemeanor charges filed through Oil City, and they therefore conducted a traffic stop and arrested Carter-Deal without incident.

Carter-Deal was then transferred to the Oil City Police Department, the release said.

Carter-Deal was wanted on the assault and other charges after threatening a woman on Dec. 23, according to a criminal complaint filed by Oil City police.

Carter-Deal had threatened a woman by pointing a rifle in her face after kicking in the door of her residence in the 400 block of Central Avenue in Oil City, the complaint said.

He then fled the scene on East Fourth Street, the complaint said. After officers arrived, they found his vehicle

Man accused of assault arrested during traffic stop

BY HELEN FIELDING

Staff writer

An Oil City man who had a felony warrant out for his arrest was taken into custody earlier this month.

Sugarcreek police, in a news release, said that while on routine patrol on Feb. 22, they saw Damian Carter-Deal, 21, riding as a passenger in a motor vehicle at an intersection on Rocky Grove Avenue.

Police said they knew Carter-Deal had an outstanding felony arrest warrant for aggravated assault and other misdemeanor charges filed through Oil City, and they therefore conducted a traffic stop and arrested Carter-Deal without incident.

Carter-Deal was then transferred to the Oil City Police Department, the release said.

Carter-Deal was wanted on the assault and other charges after threatening a woman on Dec. 23, according to a criminal complaint filed by Oil City police.

Carter-Deal had threatened a woman by pointing a rifle in her face after kicking in the door of her residence in the 400 block of Central Avenue in Oil City, the complaint said.

He then fled the scene on East Fourth Street, the complaint said. After officers arrived, they found his vehicle

and detained him after he was ordered to return to his vehicle.

While being transported to UPMC Northwest for a mental evaluation, Carter-Deal told police that they would find a firearm in the trunk of his car, and upon later executing a search warrant, police found a .22-caliber rifle in the trunk, according to the complaint.

The woman Carter-Deal had threatened told police that Carter-Deal had "demanded

that she hand over their child," and showed police pictures of Carter-Deal's firearm, which also matched the firearm police later located in the trunk, the complaint said.

Carter-Deal is facing a felony count of aggravated assault and misdemeanor counts of terroristic threats, simple assault, and recklessly endangering another person.

He was arraigned before District Judge Andrew Fish

on Feb. 22, and is being held in Venango County Jail, unable to post bail.

His preliminary hearing is scheduled at 8:30 a.m. March 13 before District Judge Patrick Lowrey.

HELEN FIELDING, reporter for The Derrick and The News-Herald, can be reached at helenfielding.thederrick@gmail.com or 814-677-8374.

No one injured in Clarion County fire

From staff reports

No one was injured in a fire that broke out at 2897 Lickingsville Road in Washington Township at about 8:40 p.m. Tuesday, according to Marienville state Trooper Justin Schmadler, and that state police fire marshals are conducting an investigation into the blaze.

Schmadler said he would "assume (the structure) is a total loss, but I don't know."

Upon arrival at the scene, according to a state police news release, the residence was engulfed in flames. Schmadler also said he does not know the origin of the fire.

The investigation is ongoing, the release said.

The scene was cleared at about 12:40 a.m., according to Clarion County 911.

Surge pricing is not coming to Wendy's

DUBLIN, Ohio (AP) — Wendy's says that it has no plans to increase prices during the busiest times at its restaurants.

The burger chain clarified its stance on how it will approach pricing after media picked up on comments by CEO Kirk Tanner that the company would price at restaurants. Companies have used surge pricing, to moderate use by customers during the busiest days of the year.

Join the Saint Patrick's Day

FUN!

IT'S OUR SHAMROCK HUNT!

Watch the Classified Section Friday, March 1st through Friday, March 8th to win a \$50 Allegheny Grille gift certificate!

Count the number of shamrocks (as pictured) that appear in the Classified "Line Ads," then fill out the coupon below and mail or drop off to:

Shamrock Hunt, VNI, P.O. Box 889, 1510 W. First St., Oil City, PA 16301

Name: _____

Address: _____

Apt./Unit: _____ City: _____

Phone: _____ # of Shamrocks: _____
(Total number appearing March 1st through March 8th)

All entries must be received no later than noon on Monday, March 18th. Winner will be notified by phone.

Winner will be determined by a random drawing from all correct entries. Please, no photo copies of entry form will be accepted.

DO NOT COUNT THE SHAMROCKS IN THIS AD!

NOTICE OF PUBLIC INPUT HEARINGS

Re: Peoples Natural Gas and Peoples Gas Rate Increase

To Our Customers:
The Public Utility Commission (PUC) will conduct public input hearings (in-person and telephonic) concerning Peoples Natural Gas and Peoples Gas request for an increase in rates. The In-Person and Telephonic public input hearings will be held at the following times and places:

In-Person Public Input Hearings:	
In Monroeville, PA: Tuesday, March 5, 2024 1:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m.	In Butler, PA: Wednesday, March 6, 2024 1:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m.
Community College of Allegheny County Boyer Campus - Auditorium 595 Beatty Rd Monroeville, PA 15146-1396 (724) 327-1527	Butler County Community College Main Campus - Founders Hall 107 College Drive Butler, PA 16002 (724) 287-8711
Parking: Front of South Building - no pass required	Parking: Lot #6 - no pass required

Telephonic Public Input Hearings:

Thursday, March 7, 2024
1:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m.

To participate in the public input hearing,

- You must dial the toll-free Conference number below
- You must enter the PIN number below when instructed
- You must speak your name when prompted, and press #
- Then, the telephone system will connect you to the hearing

Toll free Conference Number:
866.566.0649

Passcode:
83345259

To participate in the telephonic public input hearing, you are to pre-register by 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 6, 2024. If you do not pre-register and provide the information listed below, you may not have an opportunity to testify.

Pre-Registration Instructions for Telephonic Public Input Hearings:

Contacting the Office of Consumer Advocate (OCA) toll free at 1-800-684-6560 or by email at consumer@poca.org (in email, include following information):

- (1) your first and last name;
- (2) the date and time of the public input hearing at which you wish to testify;
- (3) a phone number where you can be reached prior to the hearing if we need to contact you;
- (4) your email address if you have one; and
- (5) if you require an interpreter to participate in the hearing, the language of the interpreter.

Hearing Exhibits: If you have any hearing exhibits to which you will refer during the telephonic hearing, please email them to the OCA at consumer@poca.org. The OCA will forward the exhibits to the judges and all parties. Exhibits must be received by Wednesday, March 6, 2024.

Persons who are deaf or hearing-impaired and wish to attend, please dial 717 to be connected to a relay operator.

Requests for Interpreters: If you require an interpreter to participate in an in-person or telephonic hearing, please pre-register as soon as possible. We will make every reasonable effort to have an interpreter present. If your request is too close to the hearing date, we may not have enough time to arrange for an interpreter. To pre-register, contact the Office of Consumer Advocate (OCA) toll free at 1-800-684-6560 or by email at consumer@poca.org.

Questions:
The Pennsylvania Office of Consumer Advocate (OCA) represents the interests of utility customers before the PUC. If you have questions about the public input hearings or Peoples' requested rate increase, please contact the OCA toll free at 1-800-684-6560 or by e-mail at consumer@poca.org. The OCA can help customers register for the public input hearings and/or submit exhibits.

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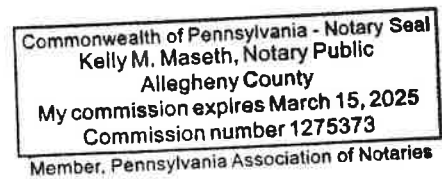
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State of: Pennsylvania
County of: Allegheny

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This 4th day of March, 2024

Notary Seal:

Kelly M. Maseth



National

Doctor: Biden still 'fit for duty'

President gets his annual physical

By Darlene Superville and Will Weissert
Associated Press

BETHESDA, Md. — President Joe Biden “continues to be fit for duty,” his doctor wrote Wednesday after conducting an annual physical that is being closely watched as the 81-year-old seeks reelection in November.

Dr. Kevin O’Connor, Mr. Biden’s physician, wrote that the president is adjusting well to a new device that helps control his sleep apnea and has experienced some hip discomfort but also works out five times per week.

“President Biden is a healthy, active, robust, 81-year-old male who remains fit to successfully execute the duties of the presidency,” Dr. O’Connor said in a six-page memo on the president’s health, following a physical that took Mr. Biden to Walter Reed National Military Medical Center for more than 2½ hours.

His memo added that Mr. Biden “feels well and this year’s physical identifies no new concerns.”

The oldest president in U.S. history, Mr. Biden would be 86 by the end of a second term, should he win one. His latest physical mirrored one he had in February last year when Dr. O’Connor described Mr. Biden as “healthy, vigorous” and “fit” to handle his White House duties.

Still, voters are approaching this year’s election with misgivings about Mr. Biden’s age, having scrutinized his gaffes, his coughing, his slow walking and even a tumble off his bicycle.

After he returned to the White House on Wednesday, Mr. Biden attended an event on combating crime and suggested that when it came to his health “everything is squared away” and “there is nothing different than last year.”

He also joked about his age and people thinking “I look too young.”

Former President Donald Trump, 77, is the favorite to lock up the Republican nomination later this month, which would bring him closer to a November rematch against Biden. Mr. Trump was 70 when he took office in 2017, which made him the oldest American president to be inaugurated — until Mr. Biden broke his record by being inaugurated at 78 in 2021.

Dr. O’Connor’s report said that Mr. Biden’s stiff walking was no worse than last year and was the result of arthritic changes in his spine. He said the president also noted “some increased left hip discomfort.” There were no signs of stroke, multiple sclerosis, Parkinson’s or other similar conditions in what the report called an “extremely detailed neurologic exam.”

Mr. Biden, last summer,



President Joe Biden departs Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Md., on Wednesday following a physical.

Evan Vucci/Associated Press



Carlos Osorio/Associated Press

Dearborn Mayor Abdullah Hammoud speaks during an election night gathering Tuesday in Dearborn, Mich.

‘Uncommitted’ campaign wins 2 Democratic delegates

A victory for Biden’s anti-war opponents

By Joey Cappelletti and Zeke Miller
Associated Press

LANSING, Mich. — The “uncommitted” campaign got enough votes to win two delegates in Michigan’s Democratic primary on Tuesday, as an effort organized to protest President Joe Biden’s support for Israel’s war against Hamas in Gaza made its voice heard in the key swing state.

While Mr. Biden won the state with more than 618,000 votes, more than 100,000 Michigan Democratic primary voters cast ballots for “uncommitted” in the race, enough to pick up the pair of delegates — one from the 6th District, centered around Ann Arbor, and the other from the 12th District, which includes Detroit suburbs with large blocs of Arab Americans.

The vote totals raise concerns for Democrats in a state Mr. Biden won by only 154,000 votes in 2020. Mr. Biden was beaten by the “uncommitted” vote in both Dearborn and Hamtramck, where Arab Americans make up close to half the population.

Some local Democrats such as U.S. Rep. Rashida Tlaib, the first Palestinian American woman to serve in Congress, had advocated for “uncommitted” votes to convey a message to Mr. Biden. Organizers of the “uncommitted” campaign, who had purposely set expectations low with a goal of at least 10,000 votes, celebrated Tuesday’s results as a win.

Mr. Biden still won 115 delegates on Tuesday and is well on his way to clinching the nomination over marginal competition.

“The president appreciates the people of Michigan coming out last night to make sure that their voices were heard,” said White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre. “And he’s proud to receive more than 80% of the Democratic Party vote.”

She added that Mr. Biden aides continue to engage with the Arab American community. “We understand how personal this is, how this moment is incredibly painful,” she said.

In 2012, during

Barack Obama’s re-election bid, the “uncommitted” option received nearly 21,000 votes, representing 11 percentage points. The “uncommitted” vote totals in both 2016 and 2020 — when the Democratic primaries were contested — hovered around 20,000, which was less than 2 percentage points.

“Yesterday was a resounding victory,” Dearborn Mayor Abdullah Hammoud said Wednesday. “This is not just an Arab or Muslim issue now. This is an American issue now.”

“It’s my hope, Mr. President, that you listen to us, that you choose democracy over tyranny,” said Mr. Hammoud.

Unofficial results put the “uncommitted” total at close to 13% of the overall vote in the Democratic primary.

The uncommitted delegates from Michigan will be free to vote for whomever they choose at the party’s national convention in Chicago this summer. The people who will fill those delegate seats will be selected at congressional district conventions on May 11.

The “uncommitted” tally is a concern for Mr. Biden, but is not a “death note” for his chances in the pivotal state in November, said Richard Czuba, a pollster who has long-tracked Michigan politics. Mr. Czuba said the vote would have needed to be between 20 and 30 percentage points to signal significant concerns for Mr. Biden’s prospects in the state come November.

Tuesday’s results also showed some signs of optimism for Mr. Biden, mostly in how weaknesses in the coalition backing former President Donald Trump, his all-but-certain rival, in his quest for the GOP nomination. More than 320,000 Republicans voted for another candidate in the race, the majority for former U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley, even as Mr. Trump appears to be cruising toward re-nomination.

Mr. Biden’s team believes they can court many Haley voters to reject Mr. Trump once again — offsetting, at least partially, any lack of enthusiasm among the Democratic base.

began using a continuous positive airway pressure, or CPAP, machine at night to help with sleep apnea, and Dr. O’Connor wrote that the president had responded well to that treatment and is “diligently compliant” about using it.

A recent special counsel’s report on the investigation into Mr. Biden’s handling of classified documents repeatedly derided Mr. Biden’s memory, calling it “hazy,” “fuzzy,” “faulty,” “poor” and having “significant limitations.” It also noted that Mr. Biden could not recall defining milestones in his own life such as when his son Beau died or when he served as vice president.

Still, addressing reporters the evening of the report’s release, Mr. Biden said “my memory is fine” and grew visibly angry as he denied forgetting when his son died of brain cancer in 2015 at the age of 46.

White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said that Dr. O’Connor was one of a team of 20 different medical specialists who helped complete the physical.

Asked why Mr. Biden wasn’t undergoing a cognitive test as part of the physical, Ms. Jean-Pierre said that Dr. O’Connor and Mr. Biden’s neurologist “don’t believe he needs one.”

“He passes a cognitive test every day, every day as he moves from one topic to another topic, understanding the granular level of these topics,” Ms. Jean-Pierre said, noting that Mr. Biden tackled such diverse issues as Wednesday’s crime prevention event before his planned trip to the U.S.-Mexico border on Thursday and next week’s

State of the Union address.

“This is a very rigorous job,” she added.

Many Americans, including Democrats, have expressed reservations about Mr. Biden seeking a second term during this fall’s election. Only 37% of Democrats say Mr. Biden should pursue reelection, down from 52% before the 2022 midterm elections, according to a poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research.

Wednesday’s report listed Mr. Biden as 6-foot tall and weighing 178 pounds.

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Community College of Allegheny County Boyce Campus – Auditorium 595 Beatty Rd Monroeville, PA 15146-1396 (724) 327-1327	Butler County Community College Main Campus – Founders Hall 107 College Drive Butler, PA 16002 (724) 287-8711
Parking: Front of South Building – no pass required	Parking: Lot #6 – no pass required

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The Punxsutawney Spirit

March 1 2024

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Day of March 2024

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My commission expires January 25, 2027
Commission number 1344300
Member, Pennsylvania Association of Notaries

Appellate judge refuses to halt Trump's \$454 million fraud penalty while he appeals

By Michael R. Sisak and Jennifer Peltz
Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — A New York appellate judge on Wednesday refused to halt collection of Donald Trump's \$454 million civil fraud penalty while he appeals, leaving the former president less than a month to pay the staggering sum or secure a bond covering the full amount he owes.

Judge Anil Singh of the state's mid-level appeals court rejected Trump's offer of a \$100 million bond, though he did give Trump leeway that could help him secure the necessary bond before New York Attorney General Letitia James seeks to enforce the judgment starting March 25.

Singh granted a stay pausing part of Judge Arthur Engoron's Feb. 16 verdict that barred Trump, his company and co-defendants from borrowing money from New York financial institutions. The Republican presidential front-runner's lawyers had told the appellate court earlier Wednesday that the lending ban had made it impossible for him to secure a bond for the full amount.

Trump's lawyers warned he may need to sell some properties to cover the penalty and would have no way of getting them back if he is successful in his appeal. State lawyers said those disclosures suggested Trump — who has more than a half-billion dollars in pending court debt — was having trouble coming up with enough cash to foot the bill. The penalty is increasing by nearly \$112,000 each day because of interest and will eclipse \$455 million on Saturday.

Trump's lawyers proposed their smaller bond amount in court papers

asking the appellate court for an order preventing James' office from enforcing the judgment while his appeal plays out. Singh, sitting in the Appellate Division of the state's trial court, ruled after an emergency hearing Wednesday.

Singh's decision is temporary. A five-judge appellate panel will consider Trump's request on an expedited basis, with a ruling expected in a few weeks. State lawyers must submit paperwork by March 11. Trump's lawyers have until March 18 to respond.

In all, Trump and his co-defendants owe more than \$465 million to the state. They have until March 25 to secure a stay — a legal mechanism pausing collection while he appeals the underlying verdict — before they are forced to pay the penalty or risk having assets seized. Posting a bond in the full amount would trigger an automatic stay.

"The exorbitant and punitive amount of the judgment coupled with an unlawful and unconstitutional blanket prohibition on lending transactions would make it impossible to secure and post a complete bond," Trump lawyers Clifford Robert, Alina Habba and Michael Farina wrote in court papers detailing the \$100 million bond offer.

James' office opposed Trump's plan, saying his lawyers have all but conceded he has "insufficient liquid assets to satisfy the judgment."

"These are precisely the circumstances for which a full bond or deposit is necessary," Senior Assistant Solicitor General Dennis Fan wrote, saying Trump's offer would leave James' office and the state "with substantial shortfalls" if the verdict is upheld.

"A prevailing plaintiff is

entitled to have her award secured, and defendants have never demonstrated that Mr. Trump's liquid assets could satisfy the full amount of the judgment," Fan wrote.

James, a Democrat, has said that she will seek to seize some of Trump's assets if he's unable to pay the judgment.

Engoron found that Trump, his company and top executives, including his sons Eric and Donald Trump Jr., schemed for years to deceive banks and insurers by inflating his wealth on financial statements used to secure loans and make deals.

Paperwork making the judgment official was filed on Feb. 23. That started a 30-day window for Trump to pay up or file an appeal and seek a stay.

Also Wednesday, white powder was found in an envelope addressed to Engoron at his Manhattan courthouse. Officials said preliminary testing showed it was negative for hazardous substances and no injuries were reported.

Trump filed his appeal on Monday. In their notices of appeal, his lawyers said they want the appellate court to decide whether Engoron "committed errors of law and/or fact" and whether he abused his discretion or "acted in excess" of his jurisdiction.

Trump wasn't required to pay his penalty or post a bond in order to appeal, and filing the appeal did not automatically halt enforcement of the judgment.

Trump would receive an automatic stay if he were to put up money, assets or an appeal bond covering what he owes. He also had the option to ask the appeals court to grant a stay with a bond for a lower amount — a gambit rejected

Wednesday.

Trump's lawyers argued that his vast real estate assets and oversight mandated by Engoron's ruling, including supervision of his company by an independent monitor, "would alone be sufficient to adequately secure any judgment affirmed."

The \$100 million bond, they said, "would simply serve as further security."

Trump's lawyers did not ask to pause the monitor's oversight, but Singh did halt some other sanctions affecting the Trump Organization, at least temporarily.

The appellate judge paused Engoron's two-year ban on Eric and Donald Trump Jr. holding executive positions in New York corporations, meaning they can continue running the company. He also paused a similar three-year ban that applied to Trump, but said the company must move forward with hiring an independent compliance director to ensure it follows financial reporting obligations and rules.

Trump maintains that he is worth several billion dollars and testified last year that he had about \$400 million in cash, in addition to properties and other investments, but his legal bills are piling up.

In all, Trump has at least \$543.4 million in personal legal liabilities from Engoron's ruling and two other civil court judgments in the last year.

In January, a jury ordered Trump to pay \$83.3 million to writer E. Jean Carroll for defaming her after she accused him in 2019 of sexually assaulting her in the 1990s. Trump was also ordered to pay Carroll \$5 million a jury awarded Carroll in a related trial last year. He denies the allegations.

EPA awards \$1 billion to clean up toxic waste in third cash infusion for Superfund program

WASHINGTON (AP) — Twenty-five toxic waste sites in 15 states are to be cleaned up, and ongoing work at dozens of others will get a funding boost, as the Environmental Protection Agency on Tuesday announced a \$1 billion infusion to the federal Superfund program.

The money is the third and last installment in the \$3.5 billion allocated under the 2021 infrastructure law signed by President Joe Biden. It will help clear a backlog of hazardous sites targeted by the 44-year-old Superfund program.

Long-contaminated sites slated for cleanup include a former smelting plant in East Helena, Montana; an old textile mill in Greenville, South Carolina, and a New Jersey beach area blighted by lead battery casings and other toxic material used to build a seawall and jetty nearly 60 years ago.

The Raritan Bay Superfund site in Old Bridge, New Jersey, is one of three Superfund sites in the state that will receive new funding. New Jersey is one of several states with more than one project included in the latest round of federal spending. Four sites in Pennsylvania, including the former Valmont Industrial Park in West Hazleton, will receive funding, as will three sites in California and two in New York.

In all, projects in 15 states, plus the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico, will receive federal funds.

The money also will be used to speed the cleanup of 85 ongoing Superfund projects across the United States, the EPA said. The agency has vowed to clear a longtime backlog in the Superfund program, which was established in 1980 to clean up sites contaminated with hazardous substances. There are more than 1,300 Superfund sites across the country, EPA said.

The program languished for years because of a lack of funding but has been replenished after Congress

included a "polluter pays" tax in the 2021 infrastructure law. The tax took effect in 2022 and is set to collect up to \$23 billion over the next five years, said Rep. Frank Pallone, a New Jersey Democrat who pushed for reinstatement of the tax in the 2021 law. Pallone was chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Committee at the time and now is the Republican-led panel's top Democrat.

"Superfund sites threaten public and environmental health across the country," including New Jersey, Pallone said, "but with today's announcement, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law is continuing to deliver on the promise we made to clean up backlogged sites and give our communities the peace of mind they deserve."

The program is particularly important to New Jersey, Pallone said. The state has more Superfund sites than any other, and half its 9.3 million residents live within three miles of a Superfund site.

"I really believe that all of our communities across the country deserve to enjoy their towns and use their space without fear of the health risks that come with living near a Superfund site," he said. "Corporate polluters — not taxpayers — should pay to clean up the messes they created."

Tuesday announcement follows more than \$1 billion announced in February 2023 and \$1 billion announced in December 2021.

"After three rounds of investments, EPA is delivering on President Biden's full promise to invest in cleaning up America's most contaminated Superfund sites," said EPA Deputy Administrator Janet McCabe. She called the funding announcement "an incredible milestone in our efforts to clean up and protect communities, deliver local jobs, enhance economic activity and improve people's lives for years to come."

The funeral of Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny will be on Friday, spokesperson says

By The Associated Press

The funeral of Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny, who died earlier this month in a remote Arctic penal colony, will take place Friday in Moscow after several locations declined to host the service, his spokesperson said.

His funeral will be held at a church in Moscow's southeast Maryino district on Friday afternoon, Kira Yarmysh said Wednesday. The burial is to be at a nearby cemetery.

Navalny died in mid-February in one of Russia's harshest penal facilities. Russian authorities haven't announced the cause of his death at age 47, but many Western leaders have already blamed it on Russian President Vladimir Putin.

His widow, Yulia Navalnaya, accused Putin and Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin of trying to block a public funeral. "We don't want any special treatment — just to give people the opportunity to say farewell to Alexei in a normal way," she wrote on X, previously Twitter.

Yarmysh described the difficulties his team encountered in trying to find a site for a funeral, saying that most venues claimed they were fully booked, with some "refusing when we mention the surname 'Navalny,'" and one disclosing that "funeral agencies were forbidden to work with us."

Ivan Zhdanov, the director of Navalny's Anti-

Corruption Foundation, said the funeral was initially planned for Thursday — the day of Putin's annual state-of-the-nation address — but no venue would agree to hold it then.

"The real reason is clear. The Kremlin understands that nobody will need Putin and his message on the day we say farewell to Alexei," Zhdanov wrote on his messaging app channel.

In an interview with the independent Russian news site Meduza on Wednesday, Zhdanov said authorities were pressuring Navalny's relatives to "have a quiet family funeral" and move the burial to the Khovanskoye cemetery on Moscow's southwestern outskirts.

"They are again blackmailing relatives and saying: either hold a quiet family funeral, or nothing will really work out for you," Zhdanov said.

He said Navalny's lawyer, Vasily Dubkov, who helped Navalny's mother retrieve her son's body, was briefly detained on Tuesday "as some kind of suspicious person" when he went to visit the morgue, where Zhdanov said there currently is a strong police presence.

Zhdanov declined to comment on the circumstances of Navalny's death, but repeated claims by close Navalny associate Maria Pevchikh that there had been negotiations for a possible prisoner exchange involving Navalny before his death.

The exchange "was at the final stage" and would have taken place "with the

mediation of the United Arab Emirates and Roman Abramovich," Zhdanov said.

Claims about negotiations for a prisoner exchange, which were repeated on social media by other Navalny aides, could not be independently confirmed.

Shortly after the announcement of the funeral plans, Navalny's widow addressed European lawmakers in Strasbourg.

Speaking at the European Parliament, she confirmed that her husband would be buried on Friday and expressed fears that the police might interfere.

"I'm not sure yet whether it will be peaceful or whether police will arrest those who have come to say goodbye to my husband," Navalnaya said.

Appearing tearful at some points amid applause from lawmakers but largely resolute, Navalnaya said her husband's death "showed everyone that Putin is capable of anything, and that you cannot negotiate with him."

She appealed to the European Parliament to be "innovative" in its approach to the Russian president and those close to him.

"You cannot hurt Putin with another resolution or another set of sanctions," she said, urging lawmakers

instead to "apply the methods of fighting organized crime, not political competition."

NOTICE OF PUBLIC INPUT HEARINGS

Re: Peoples Natural Gas and Peoples Gas Rate Increase

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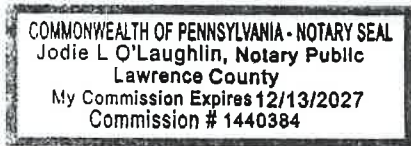
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Vanessa Koper

Vanessa Koper

Advertising Director

Sworn to and subscribed to before me
this 29th day of February, 2024



Jodie L. O'Laughlin

Jodie L. O'Laughlin

My commission expires 12/13/2027

Date	Ad Caption	Size
2-22-24	People's Public Input Hearings	3 col. X 10"
2-29-24	People's Public Input Hearings	3 col. X 10"



Margot Robbie, left, and Diane Warren attend the 96th Academy Awards Oscar nominees luncheon Monday at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in Beverly Hills, Calif.

Gosling, Eilish, Batiste set to perform at Academy Awards

By LINDSEY BAHR
AP Film Writer

The Oscars just got an infusion of Kenergy. Ryan Gosling will sing the pop power ballad "I'm Just Ken" at the show on March 10, the show's producers announced Wednesday. Others set to perform their nominated original songs include Billie Eilish and Finneas O'Connell, Jon Batiste, Scott George and the Osage Singers and Becky G. Gosling is also nominated for best supporting actor that evening. While in character as Ken in a promo for the show with Jimmy Kimmel, he

shrugged that he's not going to win. In fairness, even if it was a joke, he might not be wrong: His fellow nominee Robert Downey Jr. has been sweeping the season. "I'm Just Ken," written by Mark Ronson and Andrew Wyatt, still has a chance, however, even if the other "Barbie" song, Eilish and Finneas's soulful "What Was I Made For" seems to be the clear awards favorite to date, having already won a Grammy. But the Ken ballad is also the one everyone has wanted to see on the Oscars telecast, which will mark Gosling's first time performing at the show.

As Ken might shout, hiding behind a corner that he believes is somehow soundproof: "Sublime!" The other nominated songs include Diane Warren's "The Fire Inside," from "Flamin' Hot," Jon Batiste and Dan Wilson's "It Never Went Away" from "American Symphony," and Scott George's "Wahzhazhe" from "Killers of the Flower Moon." The 96th Oscars will be broadcast live on ABC and in more than 200 territories worldwide from the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles on Sunday, March 10 with the show beginning at 7 p.m. EDT.

Grandmother seeks guidance over navigating boundaries

Dear Annie: I am 70 years old and blessed with two well-settled and caring grown children (one son and one daughter), who have each been blessed with two kids of their own, making me a grandma of 4 under 4; for which I'm very excited and grateful. Every day of my life, it gives me positive energy.



DEAR ANNIE
Annie Lane

My marriage of 36 years fell apart six years ago. My ex-husband started having issues with our kids as they were teenagers, and the family conflicts became worse. My ex seemed to change his whole personality in his middle age. The best father in the world (which is what we considered him) used to work tirelessly to care for the family and, of course, helped our children with their education, their personal lives, etc.

Unfortunately, he has slowly evolved over the course of 10 years into a controlling, short-tempered and somewhat abusive man. Our children, once they were grown, and I tried our best to get help, to not to break the family. Our efforts were met with anger on his end.

I'm very old-fashioned and spiritual, and I didn't want to leave him. Finally, when he got into gambling, wasting our hard-earned money, I had to legally split

after much therapy and counseling for myself. Our adult children, already married and settled by this time, supported me all the way. In fact, my daughter even let me live with her in her newly built home, adding a suite for my privacy, and I feel so blessed in this regard, too.

I know he is not involved in any other relationship, and I am not either; I am not interested in dating at all at this time. He just became more angry at all of us — somewhat making himself believe that we didn't care for him. I prayed so hard for his conversion and reconciliation so he could meet his adorable grandchildren. It hurts me so much that the little angels don't know all these stories about their grandfather, and now the oldest has started asking questions.

My son and daughter are not interested in having him come visit. When they had reached out in the past, he did not seem to care, and he has refused to go to counseling or even take advice from his own family. We think he has a personality disorder and is in total denial.

Please advise me, at this time, should I leave the stubborn grandpa alone or continue to attempt reconciliation? So far, my children want nothing to do with him, and I can only push them so much. I have been able to forgive my husband 100%, and I understand that I can only pray and wish for him to open his eyes one day. I have told him this many times. Forgiveness is very pow-

erful and gives me peace, knowing I tried my best.

He is also 70 years old, lives by himself, is in pretty good health and is doing OK financially (no more hard gambling now, and he retired, too). — Brokenhearted Grandma

Dear Brokenhearted Grandma: It's evident that you love your family, including your ex-husband, despite the challenges you've faced.

While forgiveness is a powerful tool for finding peace, it's also important to recognize the boundaries you need for your own well-being and that of your family. Your children have made their feelings known regarding their relationship with him, and pushing them further may only strain your relationship with them.

At this point, continuing to pray for your ex-husband's well-being and reconciliation may be the most you can do. His refusal to seek counseling or acknowledge the family's concerns suggests he may not be ready to confront his behavior.

Focus on cherishing the precious moments with your family and finding joy in the love and support they offer.

"How Can I Forgive My Cheating Partner?" is out now! Annie Lane's second anthology — featuring favorite columns on marriage, infidelity, communication and reconciliation — is available as a paperback and e-book. Visit <http://www.creatorspublishing.com> for more information. SEND YOUR questions for Annie Lane to dearannie@creators.com.

Creators Syndicate

TODAY IN HISTORY

Today is Thursday, Feb. 29, the 60th day of 2024. There are 306 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On February 29, 1940, Hattie McDaniel became the first Black actor to win an Academy Award when she took best supporting actress for "Gone With the Wind," which won eight Oscars overall including best picture.

On this date: In 1504, Christopher Columbus, stranded in Jamaica during his fourth voyage to the West, used a correctly predicted lunar eclipse to frighten hostile natives into providing food for his crew.

In 1796, President George Washington proclaimed Jay's Treaty, which settled some outstanding differences with Britain, in effect.

In 1892, the United States and Britain agreed to submit to arbitration their dispute over seal-hunting rights in the Bering Sea. (A commission later ruled in favor of Britain.)

In 1904, bandleader Jimmy Dorsey was born in Shenandoah, Pennsylvania.

In 1916, singer, actor and TV personality Dinah Shore was born Frances Rose Shore in Winchester, Tennessee. (Shore, who claimed March 1, 1917 as her birthdate, died in 1994 just days before she would have turned 78.)

In 1936, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed a second Neutrality Act as he appealed to American businesses not to increase exports to belligerents.

Serial killer Aileen Wuornos was born in Rochester, Michigan (she was executed by the state of Florida in 2002).

In 1960, the first Play-

boy Club, featuring waitresses clad in "bunny" outfits, opened in Chicago. Serial killer Richard Ramirez was born in El Paso, Texas (he died in 2013 while awaiting execution in California).

In 1968, at the Grammy Awards, the 5th Dimension's "Up, Up and Away" won record of the year for 1967, while album of the year honors went to The Beatles' "Sgt. Pepper's

Lonely Hearts Club Band." In 1980, former Israeli foreign minister Yigal Alon, who had played an important role in the Jewish state's fight for independence, died at age 61.

In 1984, Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau announced he was stepping down after more than 15 combined years in power.

The Associated Press

TURNING 65 IN 2024...

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC INPUT HEARINGS Re: Peoples Natural Gas and Peoples Gas Rate Increase

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Okla. woman turns 100 on Leap Day

Mary Lea Forsythe: 'I've had 25 birthdays'

Saleen Martin
USA TODAY

When Mary Lea Forsythe turned 16, she'd had only four birthdays.

Now that she's turning 100, she's getting ready for her 25th birthday celebration.

That's because the Sand Springs, Oklahoma, native is a "leapling," a term for people born on Leap Day (Feb. 29), which appears on the calendar only about every four years.

Forsythe was born on Feb. 29, 1924. When people ask her how old she is, she usually replies with a short answer that leaves them scratching their heads.

"I've had 25 birthdays," she told USA TODAY.

In honor of her 25th birthday and 100th year, Forsythe was honored this month by community organizations such as the Osage Hills Chapter of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution and Centenarians of Oklahoma.

Sand Springs Vice Mayor Beau Wilson has proclaimed Feb. 29 Mary Lea Rogers Forsythe Day, the Sand Springs Leader reported.

Her parents explained her birthday to her when she was a child, she said. They showed her a calendar, and her birthday, Feb. 29, wasn't there.

But despite that, the beloved sisters she grew up with made sure she never felt left out and often took her out to lunch to celebrate on Feb. 27, Feb. 28 or

March 1.

On Feb. 15, Forsythe went to a local library with plans to speak in front of the Osage Hills Chapter of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution.

"When I walked in, there were flashers going off and they were taking my picture as I came into the room," she said. "There were dignitaries from the city, and there was a proclamation read. My goodness, it was shocking. The room was full of people. ... I never had been that surprised in my life."

Forsythe has lived a life full of love, worship and music.

She went to Sand Springs High School, where she met her soon-to-be husband, William Wayne Forsythe, also known as Bill. She saw William on school grounds and heard him laughing



Forsythe

with friends.

She was intrigued and thought he was cute. She looked for him later but didn't see him again until chorus class. He sat behind her because he was a bass and she was an alto.

"One day he was laughing and I said, 'That's the guy,'" she said.

Forsythe and her husband shared a love for music, she said. He was the No. 1 bass singer in Oklahoma in high school.

They eventually were married. They had their wedding at home. A friend played the organ, and another friend sang the song "I Love You Truly," she recalled.

The couple had two children 22 months apart, Martha and William.

She said her husband was a wonderful father. They were married for 68 years. He died in 2011.

Progress 2024

Continued from Page 1A

Place apartments, offer residents the opportunity to live independently, work, travel, volunteer and take part in an extensive list of community amenities without the added responsibilities of home and yard maintenance.

"The wait list we have is all for independent living," Mock said. "We have the two different apartment buildings (Vista and Cambridge Place) and the townhomes, those represent 170 units. Our wait list represents 103 people (individuals or couples), that represents 103 future units to be sold. So there's a very strong demand.

"Beyond that, if we look at the industry, there's trends of aging in place, trends of government insurance lessening the amount of time people spend in the skilled unit (what LVV calls its healthcare center), and so communities like ours are trying to rebalance their care beds to residential unit ratio. The industry standard for healthy operators is increasing the number of residential units per (skilled) care bed."

Something for everyone to do

Laurel View Village offers independent living, personal care and healthcare services to over 300 residents who are currently living in its 60 townhomes, two apartment complexes and personal care and health care areas.

The community's amenities for residents include a nature trail, two fitness centers, two swimming pools (a lap pool and a therapy pool), a wood shop, a garden club, train room, pickleball, bocce, billiards, shuffleboard and a restaurant, as well as shopping trips and many other planned activities, said Angela Rizzo, director of independent living and community relations.

The golf simulation room, which opened in December and was donated by residents Sue and Tom Krise, has become a popular addition to the campus, as noted by the many golf bags that were stored nearby.

"We're constantly trying to adjust to the needs, desires and demands (of residents)," Rizzo said. "So if we're not offering something and they have an idea, we'll see if we can make it happen.

"I heard the other day, someone's biggest complaint was 'There's too much happening at the same time.' We do try to be mindful of that but sometimes it does happen."

Gorschak said she gets inquiries weekly from people across the country

who are interested in moving to Laurel View Village or getting their names on the waiting list. Many of those people have ties to this area or have family living nearby, and the region's affordable cost of living, as well as the amenities Laurel View offers to its residents, make the community an attractive place to live.

"Sometimes it's a misnomer of people thinking (because) you're moving, you're going to lose your independence and lose your freedoms, and it's not the case," she said. "Our whole concept is to be able to take off a lot of the homeownership responsibilities so people can focus on what's important to them."

A major employer in Somerset County

Laurel View is also one of the county's top 20 employers, with about 220 staff members currently working on site. Mock said they are looking to add more Certified Nurse Assistants (CNAs) and Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) to their staff.

"For the number of people who are employed, we're at an all-time high," he said. "Most of our departments are feeling well staffed, but we need a few more CNAs and LPNs."

The need for CNAs led Laurel View Village to sponsor a CNA training program last year, in partnership with Arbutus Park Retirement Community in Johnstown and funded by grants from the Community Foundation for the Alleghenies, Lee Initiatives and private donors.

The first class of seven trainees graduated in November, and a second class of CNA students started training this month for their certification.

"We hope to continue that program, not only to benefit ourselves, to make

sure we have caregivers for the residents that live here, but for the Johnstown and Somerset area in general," Mock said.

Residents are giving back to the community

Drawing more residents to Laurel View Village benefits the two-county area in not only economic terms but also in the experience and abilities the residents offer to the community. Rizzo said that Laurel View residents volunteer thousands of hours in community service, both on and off the campus.

"When you look at the economics of it, having these folks stay in the community or retire back to this community is huge," she said. "They're spending their money locally, they're volunteering their time and maybe making donations to local organizations.

"And just as an employer, we're able to be employing over 200 people – again, giving people opportunities to move back and have a good career."

Mock added: "Our residents who are thinking about coming, their most common thought is 'I'm not sure I'm ready.' The people who have come have said, 'I wish I had come sooner.' Those are the two most common feelings that we hear."

For more information about the townhomes under construction at Laurel View Village, visit its website, laurelviewvillage.com or contact Christina Gorschak, lead sales counselor, at 814-205-6744.

Laurel View Village also offers a Priority Club membership that entitles the member access to all the amenities on campus and advance notice when residential openings become available. For more information on this option, contact Angela Rizzo at 814-288-2724, ext 4232.

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Sheriff Dept.

Continued from Page 1A

because it has no official management structure for nonunion employee salary raises.

Tokar-Ickes said consistency is needed. After the board approves salary increases, they receive more requests from other departments, she said after the meeting.

Tokar-Ickes said after the pandemic hit, the workplace and workforce changed, and she said the county needs to have a more systemic and comprehensive way for the union and nonunion employee salaries to be decided.

Somerset Lake project

The commissioners approved paying \$2,500 to Steel Construction to clear the future site of the pavilion at the Somerset Lake Nature Park.

Cathie Beal, recycling coordinator standing in for Lindsay Baer who resigned from the Somerset County Parks & Trails Department for another job, said the area will be cleared of invasive species and brush to allow potential bidders to see what the area looks like. They will leave the trees, she said.

The project is funded through Community Foundation for the Alleghenies grant funds. Work will begin on the project as soon as the weather permits.

Commissioners advertised for the Somerset County Parks & Trails Department director position and will begin interviewing candidates, they said.

More directors resign

The county commissioners accepted the resignations of Doug Walters as an administrator of children and youth services, effective July 5, and Bradley Zear-

foss as director of the planning commission, effective March 29. Both are for retirement.

Walters and Zearfoss both have nearly 40 years of county service, Tokar-Ickes said.

"They're going to enjoy life and enjoy things they want to do now," Commissioner Irvin Kimmel Jr. said.

Commissioners accepted the resignation of Alyssa Bundzuh as director of the GIS Department, effective March 6. Tokar-Ickes said Bundzuh is leaving for a job in Huntingdon County.

"It's been a challenge trying to keep good people. In the workforce, there are those entering into retirement and some are tending to get to that age," she said. "It's daunting to replace people in those positions, very challenging.

"No doubt that the tone of the last year and a half has impacted recruitment. We heard through HR from the candidates, it has created an impact and unless it stops, we'll continue to have that challenge."

Tokar-Ickes said there also are not a lot of people going into those fields or having the experience.

Lease agreement

Commissioners also approved signing a five-year lease agreement with Pennsylvania Western University (Clarion University) at the Somerset County Education Center, pending the university's approval of the agreement.

The approval is an extension of the agreement of \$21,455 per year, payable at the rate of \$1,787.91 per month.

"We're really pleased to be able to sign the five-year agreement," Tokar-Ickes said. She said they have heard the university closed sites elsewhere and that this shows their commitment to Somerset County. Forty students graduated this year.

AFFIDAVIT OF DISTRIBUTION

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania)
County of Allegheny)

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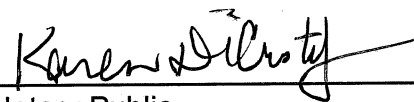
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and
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The ROP for *Peoples Gas in the full run edition of Tribune-Review* was placed in the Publication on 22nd and 29th, February, 2024

TRIB TOTAL MEDIA, INC.

By: 

Sworn to before me this 29th
day of February, 2024



Notary Public

[Notary Seal

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania - Notary Seal
Karen DiCristofaro, Notary Public
Allegheny County
My commission expires April 11, 2026
Commission number 1213255
Member, Pennsylvania Association of Notaries

THE STROLLER

CALENDAR



Allegheny Township

March 13: Westmoreland Conservation District will sponsor a free workshop about maintenance of driveways from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the township building, 136 Community Building Road. Topics will include how to make cost-effective repairs and maintain your driveway. Reservations required. **Reservations:** westmorelandconservation.org.

Apollo

Saturday: Apollo Memorial Library will sponsor a workshop to make sock bunnies at 2:30 p.m. in the library, 219 N Pennsylvania Ave. Bring a glue gun and sharp scissors. Cost: \$5. Reservations required. **Reservations:** 724-478-4214.

Brackenridge

Sunday: Sons of the American Legion will serve an all-you-can-eat community

breakfast from 9 a.m. to noon at the American Legion, 845 E. First Ave. **Cost:** \$9; younger than 12, \$6.

Monday: Brackenridge Improvement Group (BIG) will meet at 7 p.m. in the borough building, 1000 Brackenridge Ave. Volunteers are needed for community events. New members welcome.

East Vandergrift

March 24: Our Lady, Queen of Peace Parish is selling raffle tickets for half a cow and a \$100 gift certificate to Anna's Cucina Rustica in Vandergrift. The winning number will be the 7 p.m. March 24 Pennsylvania Daily Pick 3 number. Cost: \$10 for two numbers. **Tickets:** Deborah at 724-859-3186, Patricia at 724-568-3409 or after Sunday Mass in the church vestibule.

Harrison

March 23: The Veterans of Foreign Wars and Auxiliary will sponsor a purse bash bingo from 1 to 4 p.m. at the post, 894 Veterans Drive. Doors open at 11 a.m., and lunch will be served at noon. Cost: \$35, includes lunch. There will be a 50-50 raffle, pull tab

tickets, cash bar, silent auction, pick of the table and mystery raffle. Must be 18 or older to attend. Proceeds will be used for building maintenance. **Tickets:** Deb at 412-298-6175, Michelle at 724-889-7136 or at the post's bar.

New Kensington

Monday: Peoples Library will host domino games at 1 p.m. in the library, 880 Barnes St. Dominoes provided. Come alone or bring a friend. **Details:** 724-339-1021.

Leechburg

Monday: Leechburg Volunteer Fire Company will host bingo at 7 p.m. in the firehall, 268 Canal St. Doors open at 5 p.m. The kitchen will be open.

CORRECTIONS/CLARIFICATIONS

It is the policy of this newspaper to correct errors of fact in news stories as soon as possible. To request a correction or clarification, call the city desk at 724-226-4666.

Information on this page, including The Stroller, may be dropped off or mailed at least two weeks in advance to: The Stroller, c/o Valley News Dispatch, 210 Fourth Ave., Tarentum, PA 15084; email vndnews@triblive.com; or fax 724-226-4677

National Pig Day event to raise funds for rescue

A National Pig Day celebration will be from 7 to 9 p.m. Saturday at Voodoo Brewing Co., 956 Fifth Ave., New Kensington, to benefit Pigsburgh Squealers Pig Rescue in Frazer. There will be pig-themed drinks and flights, as well as vegan food from Sweet Alchemy Bake Shop. Several pigs will be on hand to visit. Donations will be accepted, and a portion of the price of each flight will be donated to the rescue.

Children welcome to meet Shrek and friends

The Burrell High School Theater Company will host a "Shrek the Musical" meet-and-greet from 1 to 3:30 p.m.

Saturday at the high school, Puckety Church Road.

Children in kindergarten through fifth grade will be able to spend time with the characters of the upcoming musical. There will be crafts, games, snacks, backstage tours and dancing. Characters will sign the free autograph books that will be distributed.

The cost is \$10 and \$5 for each additional child. Children can be from any school district and must be accompanied by an adult at all times. Reservations are required.

For reservations, visit tinyurl.com/bdfaxw3b.

Tri City Soccer plans Night at the Races

A night at the races to benefit Tri City Soccer will be Saturday at the Kinloch firehall, 915 New York Ave., Lower Burrell.

Doors open at 6 p.m., dinner will be at 7 and races start at 7:30. Tickets are \$25 and include a buffet dinner, beer, alcoholic beverages, soda, water and snacks. Horses are \$10. There will be a silent auction, a 50-50 raffle, strip tickets and door prizes. No BYOB.

Those attending must be 21. For tickets and horse purchases, call Nadia at 724-822-3029, email tricityprcoordinator@gmail.com or visit tinyurl.com/4wybbub2.

Let us know about your Easter events

The Valley News Dispatch will be publishing a list of community Easter egg hunts and activities.

To have an event listed online and in the print edition, send information as soon as possible to The Stroller, Valley News Dispatch, 210 Wood St., Tarentum, PA 15084; email cpinto-smith@triblive.com; or fax 724-226-4677.

Independence Health addresses losses in 1st year as merged system

by JULIA MARUCA

Independence Health System continued to lose money as it passed its one-year mark at the end of December 2023, though annual losses have shrunk by almost \$9 million, according to recently released financial reports.

Reports indicate the health system formed by the merger of Excelsa and Butler health systems has experienced \$74.1 million in operational losses during the period between Jan. 1 and Dec. 31, 2023. However, for the same period in 2022 prior to the merger, the systems saw \$82.9 million in combined losses.

Independence was officially formed in January 2023. Though the two sides are merged, they still file financial reports separately.

The system saw the financial headwinds coming, and is looking forward to results that arise from ongoing cost reduction efforts, according to Chief Financial Officer Tom Albanesi. "We anticipated operating losses. Unfortunately, the whole industry right now is experiencing operating losses, including some of the much bigger health systems that are out there," he said. "We knew what we were getting into, and we are working on the financial improvement plan, and we are seeing results from it. We still have got a long way to go, but

we are encouraged by what we see so far."

For the last three months of 2023, Excelsa saw nearly \$5.4 million in losses, while Butler lost just under \$4 million. For those same three months at the end of 2022, Excelsa had \$13.3 million in losses, and Butler lost \$21 million.

Getting on track

Independence has pointed to pandemic aftershocks, inflation, low reimbursements from Medicaid and Medicare, and an aging regional population as some of its challenges while it loses cash.

In a bondholder meeting in early November, Independence leadership detailed a recovery plan the system put together with FTI Consulting. According to the plan, the system expects to stanch some of its financial bleeding in fiscal year 2024.

Upcoming next steps in that plan include ongoing negotiations with insurance companies to get better rates for the system, Albanesi said, which he expects will show results in the financial reports for next quarter.

"We have contracts with, for instance, Aetna, Highmark, and UPMC Health Plan — those are the three big (companies) in Western Pennsylvania — and we are in the process of renegotiating those contracts. We need to

"We anticipated operating losses. Unfortunately, the whole industry right now is experiencing operating losses, including some of the much bigger health systems that are out there. We knew what we were getting into."

TOM ALBANESE

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER OF INDEPENDENCE HEALTH SYSTEM

get rates that better reflect the inflationary environment we have been experiencing since covid-19," he said. "We've had some successes since Dec. 31 that will be reflected in future quarters' numbers, but that is the biggest item in the financial improvement plan that you haven't see any progress on."

So far, the \$32.1 million operating losses for Independence for the six months ending Dec. 31, 2023, are slightly worse than budgeted, Albanesi said.

Volumes, or people coming into the system, and revenues are exceeding budget, he noted, but expenses are outpacing them because of inflation on labor, medical supplies and medications.

The Excelsa side of the system saw 5,493 patient admissions in 2023, as compared to 4,960 in 2022. Patient days and outpatient and inpatient operating room procedures also were up. Emergency room visits were down slightly, with 21,367 in 2023 and 21,528 in 2022.

Inpatient surgical procedures were up at Butler Me-

morial Hospital, but slightly down for outpatient surgeries and emergency room visits.

"We're pleased with where volumes are. One of the challenges every hospital in Western Pennsylvania has is we all have about 70% of our payer mix as governmental patients — either Medicare or Medicaid," Albanesi said, noting that Medicare and Medicaid do not reimburse health systems as much as commercial insurance.

"You basically don't have a prayer of making money on that 70%, so you have to make money on the other 30%, and it's getting harder and harder to (do) that."

Strategies ahead

The health care world is still catching up from the impacts of covid, Albanesi said.

"We had a lot of the workforce, particularly nurses, leave health care or leave working for hospitals and we're still catching up from where we were then," he said. "The big challenge that we have is that demand is really strong — we don't lack for demand right now, (but) we still have a lack of clinicians, primarily nurses, to help treat all the patients that are seeking treatment these days."

The Butler Health System side has been successful in minimizing the use of agency nurses, a goal that Excelsa is still working toward, Albanesi said.

Independence cut 226 positions in 2023. Albanesi noted that at this time, no further position eliminations are planned.

The system's two hospital

presidents, Brian Fritz and Karen Allen, confirmed in August that all five of the system's hospitals — Westmoreland, Frick, Latrobe, Butler Memorial and Clarion — would be part of its future despite the ongoing financial challenges. CEO Ken DeFurio said similarly in June 2023, and system spokesperson Tom Chakurda confirmed that this is still the case on Wednesday.

The health system has more than 1,000 physicians and advanced practice providers and employs 7,300 people.

"While there is much work yet to be done, we are pleased with the trajectory of our progress and confident we are (on) track to achieve the goals we set out to obtain with the formation of Independence Health System," Albanesi said.

Julia Maruca is a TribLive staff writer. She can be reached at jmaruca@triblive.com.

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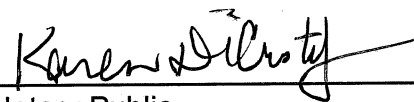
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Karen DiCristofaro, Notary Public
Allegheny County
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Lewis, humorously morose stand-up known for role on 'Curb,' dies at 76

ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — Richard Lewis, an acclaimed comedian known for exploring his neuroses in frantic, stream-of-consciousness diatribes while dressed in all-black, leading to his nickname "The Prince of Pain," has died. He was 76.



Lewis

Lewis, who revealed he had been diagnosed with Parkinson's disease last year, died at his home in Los Angeles on Tuesday night after suffering a heart attack, according to his publicist, Jeff Abraham.

A regular performer in clubs and on late-night TV for decades, Lewis also played Marty Gold, the romantic co-lead opposite Jamie Lee Curtis, in the ABC series "Anything But

Love" and the reliably neurotic Prince John in "Mel Brooks' Robin Hood: Men In Tights." He introduced himself to a new generation opposite Larry David in HBO's "Curb Your Enthusiasm," kvetching regularly.

"Richard and I were born three days apart in the same hospital, and for most of my life he's been like a brother to me," David said in a statement. "He had that rare combination of being the funniest person and also the sweetest. But today he made me sob, and for that I'll never forgive him."

Comedy Central named Lewis one of the top 50 stand-up comedians of all time, and he earned a berth in GQ maga-

zine's list of the "20th Century's Most Influential Humorists." He lent his humor for charity causes, including Comic Relief and Comedy Gives Back.

Lewis told GQ his signature look came incidentally, saying his obsession with dressing in black came from watching the television Western "Have Gun - Will Travel," with a cowboy in all-black, when he was a kid.

Lewis was the youngest of three siblings — his brother was older than him by six years, and his sister by nine. His father died young and his mother had emotional problems. "She didn't get me at all. I owe my career to my mother. I should have given her my agent's commission," he told The Washington Post in 2020.

He is survived by his wife, Joyce Lapinsky.

Supervisors will revisit vote March 25

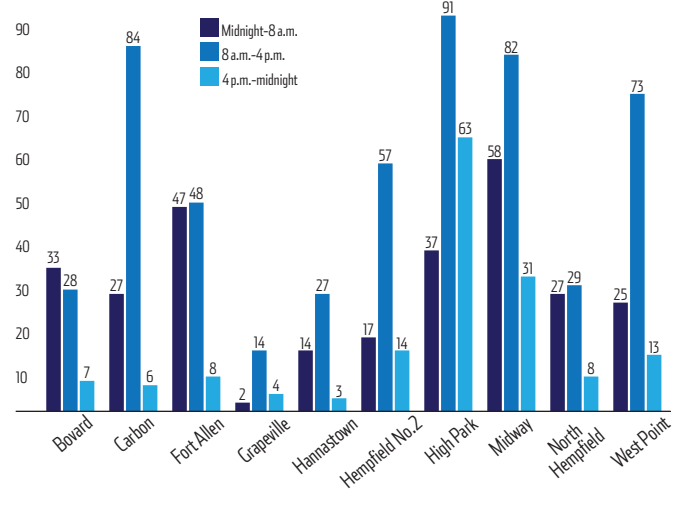
HEMPFIELD · FROM A1

"We're trending toward a paid fire department in the eyes of some people. I have no interest in a paid fire department," Reese said. "I'm not opposed to the idea (of hiring a driver). I just want to hear more from our firefighters, our guys who are doing it. I think it's a good idea to wait. One month isn't going to make a big difference."

Hempfield Fire Department Chief Anthony Kovacic said the driver position is meant to support the stations' emergency response rate during the day. The department has seen fewer volunteers available to respond to calls during daylight hours, he said.

This January, the fire department responded to 250 emergency calls, 133 of which came in between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. In 2023, the highest number of failed responses to emergency calls came between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. for all but two of the stations: Adamsburg and Bovard.

Weimer said he feels it is important to approve the driver position for reasons of public safety.



HEMPFIELD TOWNSHIP

This graph shows a breakdown of the percentage of calls that each of Hempfield's fire stations failed to respond to in 2023, based on the time of day. Adamsburg had no failed calls.

"I think that we have been talking about deficits in running calls and the need for addressing that. We are responsible for public safety as elected members here, so I certainly am not going to jeopardize that in waiting a month for anything to occur in which we could have gotten this

process started sooner," he said. "I don't even think this will be filled within a month." The supervisors will revisit the vote at 7 p.m. March 25 at the municipal building, 1132 Woodward Drive.

Quincey Reese is a TribLive staff writer. She can be reached at qreese@triblive.com.

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The **HERALD-Standard**
a daily newspaper of general circulation, published by Central Pennsylvania Newspapers, LLC.,
a Pennsylvania corporation, 8 East Church Street, Uniontown, Fayette County, Pennsylvania, was
established in 1907, and has been issued regularly, except legal holidays since said date.

The attached advertisement, which is exactly as printed and published,
appeared in the regular issue

Central Pennsylvania Newspapers, LLC./ Herald-Standard

BY: Sharon K. Wallach

STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA,
COUNTY OF FAYETTE, }

SS:

Before me, a Notary Public in and for such county and state, personally appeared
SHARON K. WALLACH, who being duly sworn according to law says that she is
ADVERTISING DIRECTOR of Central Pennsylvania Newspapers, LLC./ Herald-
Standard. that neither affiant nor said corporation is interested in the subject matter of the
attached advertisement; and that all of the allegations of the foregoing statement including those
as to the time, place and character of publication are true.

Sworn to and subscribed before me
this 1st day of March 2024

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania - Notary Seal
Amanda M. Kisko, Notary Public
Fayette County
My commission expires June 3, 2026
Commission number 1420437

Member, Pennsylvania Association of Notaries

By Amanda M. Kisko

Central Pennsylvania Newspapers, LLC.

8 East Church Street

UNIONTOWN, PA. 15401-0848

Republicans attempting to remove Vodvarka from primary

By Mike Jones
newsroom@heraldstandard.com

The candidacy for an Allegheny County man once again attempting a run for U.S. Senate is in jeopardy after hundreds of signatures on his nominating petitions submitted to get on the Republican primary ballot were challenged in Commonwealth Court.

Three registered Republicans and their

attorneys filed paperwork before Tuesday's deadline to challenge the candidacy of Joseph Vodvarka of Robinson Township in an attempt to get him removed from the ballot for the April 23 primary.

The challenge claims there are multiple defects with Vodvarka's nominating petitions and is attempting to strike 572 of the 2,439 signatures the candidates and his surrogates accumulated, which

would put him below the 2,000 needed to run for U.S. Senate.

In the nearly 2,000-page filing, the challenge mainly claims there were issues with the petition's circulators and problems with individual signatories, over whether they are not registered to vote, aren't Republicans or gave incorrect information.

The three objectors are Andrew Ritter Jr. of

Camp Hill, Ashley Boop of Lancaster and Richard Toms of Doylestown. Their attorneys who filed the challenge are Walter Zimolong III and James Fitzpatrick III of Viltanova. Zimolong did not respond to a phone call seeking comment on the challenge.

Vodvarka could not be reached for comment Wednesday and it was not clear whether he had an attorney.

It's not known when Commonwealth Court would rule on the challenge to Vodvarka's candidacy. But if the challenge is successful in removing Vodvarka from the ballot, it would leave only David McCormick on the Republican primary ballot to challenge Democratic U.S. Sen. Bob Casey in the general election.

Vodvarka, 80, has run for the U.S. Senate several times before and been

removed from the ballot on multiple occasions, including in 2010 when he was a Democrat and in 2018 when he was a Republican. Vodvarka campaigned as a Democrat for races in 2012 and again in 2016, when he was initially removed from the ballot only to be restored at the last minute by the state Supreme Court. Afterward, he changed his party affiliation to run as a Republican.

SHELTER

Continued from A1

"We're talking about unusual circumstances where CYS would have to take custody of children, usually later in the evening. Last year, about a dozen times, CYS was in a position where they didn't have any other option than to move children they removed from their home to a local hotel for the night. Hotels are fine for us when we're going on a trip, but for a kid taken from the only home they've ever known, a hotel is a white box that's not designed to make them feel comfortable," said Houser. "The kids are scared, they've been removed from their home.

My thought was, 'What purpose does an empty building serve?' The idea was, let's provide an inviting space with accommodations and distractions for children. We have the ability to make those fairly rare occasions much less traumatic and make things easier for the CYS staff that has to be there with them."

The brightly painted, kid-friendly emergency overnight shelter can house up to seven children.

Growing Up Greene partnered with Snee-Rhinehardt Charitable Foundation, which provided partial funding, while Greene County Commissioner Betsy Rohanna McClure secured remaining funds through Pennsylvania's PHARE Program.

T&N Contracting remodeled the office space, adding a new bathroom and shower. The house includes a living room filled with games, toys, a library and stuffed plushies, and includes a fully equipped kitchen for preparing meals, a washer and dryer, and a private bedroom space with bunk beds and a television.

Children at the overnight shelter also are visited often by Coalbie, a 17-month-old therapy dog whose handler and "fur parent" is Houser.

Coalbie also comforts children at Greene County Juvenile Court during court hearings and supervised visitations.

"Having (worked) with CYS for the last four years, I'm aware of how traumatizing it is for children (to

be removed from their homes), so anything we can do to relieve that trauma and make it more genuine, more relaxing for the child, that's what we want to do," said McClure.

The shelter hasn't been used yet.

At a tour of the shelter in January, Booker said, "We hope to never use this, but in reality there are times it will have to be used."

Growing Up Greene board member Keshia Weaver said after the organization evaluated its office space and looked into the costs associated with the project, it was "an easy decision" to move ahead with a search for funding.

"I previously worked for CYS and have personally been in the position of being unable to find appropriate housing for a child

late at night. Remembering the look in their eyes when I was striking out made this project a no-brainer," said Weaver.

Growing Up Greene partnered with EQT to provide foster care comfort bags that include a blanket, book, journal, crayons, and toiletries at the shelter.

Growing Up Greene's mission is to protect children, Houser said. The nonprofit's volunteer child advocates, board members, and staff serve children and families inside and outside the child welfare system.

In December, Growing Up Greene's Iron Senergy Children's Gear Distribution provided winter clothing - including jackets, hats, boots, and blankets - to 320 children

from more than 100 families.

Houser said the overnight emergency shelter is an effort to "try something new in the hope we can help the next generation be in a better position than the one before.

"The idea of the (emergency shelter) was, any possibility we have of providing a distraction that night when children are removed from their home is a benefit to the kids," said Houser. "Every kid is different. Whether it's quiet time reading in the corner, or making popcorn and watching a movie in the conference room, or getting a shower and getting into some clean clothes, all of those distractions are available. They can figure out the rest in the morning."

DAM

Continued from A1

The initial inspection took place in 1981, when DEP designated it a high-hazard, small-size dam and eventually classified it as an unsafe nonemergency dam. Measures to be taken to ensure safe operation of the dam were given. The borough sent its report detailing what would be done to fix it.

Detts-Dranzo said throughout the years the borough has taken steps to address DEP concerns, but said the DEP raised other concerns, such as how repairs to the spillway could reduce the water intake and stability of the dam's embankment.

A 2012 plan submitted by the borough engineer appeared to meet DEP approval, but in 2016 the borough was informed the dam would become high hazard again because a potential failure in a submitted design could result in flooding on Route 917.

"It's been very frustrating," she said. "We had a plan that was acceptable by the DEP. We were ready to go to bid. They pulled the rug out. We had to go back to square one and redo the design. Each time the dam has been changed from high hazard to low hazard back to high hazard, that's more engineering and designs to meet DEP's expectations, and it seems no matter what we do, we do not meet the expectations."

A drawdown of water was completed in December, as required by the DEP, and is being maintained. In January, the annual inspection report was submitted by borough engineers and an update on the latest submission was requested last week via email. DEP responded it did not receive the entire dam application package, nor the emergency plan.

"These latest emails illustrate the numerous back and forth delays that we have experienced since 1981," Detts-Dranzo said.

She added that the delays have been costly.

Most of a Department of Community and Economic Development grant received in 2013 had to be returned. The deadline for a \$200,000 Local Share Account grant has been extended numerous times. She said it has cost the borough at least \$100,000.

"The DEP will not give us a go-ahead," Detts-Dranzo said.

The dam holds many memories for Cokeburg residents for its recreational opportunities. From 1958 until 1992, the dam was stocked with fish for recreation.

Lambert said the dam is a valuable resource for the firefighters.

"The dam has been used numerous times over the years as an emergency fill source or a secondary water source in any type of emergency in the borough," Lambert said. "It's also used numerous times throughout the year by mutual aid services and ourselves as a training aspect where we can conduct training flowing volumes of water back

into the dam. It doesn't create a financial burden on the department or the municipality or the water department."

Lawmakers in attendance offered support for restoring the dam.

"I'm at a loss for words to express my dismay

that there is not some sort of resolution moving forward," O'Neal said. "What you do with your community asset should be up to you, and DEP should stay out of the way."

Cook said a concentrated effort needs to be made to remedy an issue

that he says has gone on far too long.

"This is about building a team," he said. "This is our invitation from our community, the great people of Cokeburg and the commonwealth of Pennsylvania to get this done whatever it takes."

NOTICE OF PUBLIC INPUT HEARINGS Re: Peoples Natural Gas and Peoples Gas Rate Increase

To Our Customers:

The Public Utility Commission (PUC) will conduct public input hearings (in-person and telephonic) concerning Peoples Natural Gas and Peoples Gas' request for an increase in rates. The In-Person and Telephonic public input hearings will be held at the following times and places:

In-Person Public Input Hearings:

In Monroeville, PA: Tuesday, March 5, 2024 1:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Community College of Allegheny County Boyce Campus - Auditorium 595 Beatty Rd Monroeville, PA 15146-1396 (724) 327-1327 Parking: Front of South Building - no pass required	In Butler, PA: Wednesday, March 6, 2024 1:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. Butler County Community College Main Campus - Founders Hall 107 College Drive Butler, PA 16002 (724) 287-8711 Parking: Lot #6 - no pass required
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Telephonic Public Input Hearings:

Thursday, March 7, 2024 1:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. To participate in the public input hearing, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You must dial the toll-free Conference number below You must enter the PIN number below when instructed You must speak your name when prompted, and press # Then, the telephone system will connect you to the hearing Toll-free Conference Number: 866.566.0649 Passcode: 83345259	To participate in the telephonic public input hearing, you are to pre-register by 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 6, 2024. If you do not pre-register and provide the information listed below, you may not have an opportunity to testify. Pre-Registration Instructions for Telephonic Public Input Hearings: Contacting the Office of Consumer Advocate (OCA) toll free at 1-800-684-6560 or by email at consumer@paoca.org (in email, include following information): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> your first and last name; the date and time of the public input hearing at which you wish to testify; a phone number where you can be reached prior to the hearing if we need to contact you; your email address if you have one; and if you require an interpreter to participate in the hearing, the language of the interpreter. Hearing Exhibits: If you have any hearing exhibits to which you will refer during the telephonic hearing, please email them to the OCA at consumer@paoca.org . The OCA will forward the exhibits to the Judges and all parties. Exhibits must be received by: Wednesday, March 6, 2024. Persons who are deaf or hearing-impaired and wish to attend, please dial 717 to be connected to a relay operator.
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JAIL

Continued from A1

prison having outlived its use. In the past few years, the aging prison was the target of several lawsuits claiming the conditions were inhumane.

Dunn added that the new \$44 million facility will provide a safe location for not only the inmates, but will give the prison staff and employees a better place to work.

"I'm glad we reached this point in time," said Commissioner Vince Vicites. "The transition's been made, they're in, now they're going to be on a day-to-day basis where things will need tweaked and corrected."

Kern said, with the new facility and new operations

at the jail, officials expect there will be an adjustment period.

Vicites said building a new prison in any county is difficult, given the cost and regulations involved.

"When we did have setbacks, we corrected them and moved forward," he said, adding that the project came in under budget. "I think this facility will serve the people of Fayette County for many many decades to come."

Commissioner Dave Lohr said Wednesday that he campaigned on the need to build a new prison three times while running for office.

"It was needed for a long, long time, and now it's off and running, and it feels good. It's good for all the staff and the prisoners," Lohr said.

"Hopefully the prisoners that go in will come out better," Lohr said.

The now former Fayette County Prison was the fourth prison built in the county and was originally constructed in 1892, making the building 132 years old.

The new facility has the capacity to hold 333 inmates, and has the capacity to provide space for treatment and rehabilitation-focused programming.

"Individuals are placed in jail for punishment, not to be punished," Lenkey said. "This new jail has the capacity to provide services and tools that will afford the inmates an opportunity to leave here a better person from which they arrived."

OBSERVER-REPORTER
Washington, Pennsylvania
Proof of Publication

In compliance with the Newspaper Advertising Act of July 9, 1976, P.L. 877, No. 160, as amended COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, COUNTY OF WASHINGTON SS:

Before me, a Notary Public in and for said County and State, personally appeared

Pamala Tuscano who being duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is Classified Manager of the Observer Reporter, a Pennsylvania corporation, and its agent in this behalf, that the said company is the owner and publisher of the Observer-Reporter, successor to The Washington Observer, established September 18, 1871, and The Washington Reporter, established August 15, 1808, a daily newspaper of general circulation, printed and published and having its place of business at Washington, Washington County, Pennsylvania where it or its predecessors have been established and published continuously for more that six months prior to the publication of the notice hereto attached that the printed notice or advertisement hereto attached is a copy of an official advertisement, official notice, legal notice or legal advertisement exactly as printed or published in the Observer-Reporter in its regular editions on the following date or dates:

February 22 and 29, 2024

That neither the affiant nor the Observer Reporter is interested in the subject matter of said notice or advertising and that all allegations of this affidavit as to the time, place and character of publication are true.

Pamala Tuscano

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 29th day of February, 2024

Allison M. Duratz

Peoples Gas
Pipitone – Kathy Downing
1106 Sitka Drive
Imperial, PA 15126
February 29, 2024
Ad #ORW0063395

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania - Notary Seal
ALLISON M. DURATZ - Notary Public
Washington County
My Commission Expires October 8, 2024
Commission Number 1382375

