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Nicholas A. Stobbe

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File #: 205143

April 12, 2024

***VIA ELECTRONIC FILING***

Rosemary Chiavetta, Secretary  
Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission  
Commonwealth Keystone Building  
400 North Street, 2nd Floor  
P.O. Box 3265  
Harrisburg, PA 17105-3265

**Re: PA PUC, et al. v. Peoples Natural Gas Company LLC 1307(f)**  
**Docket No. R-2024-3045945, et al.**

Dear Secretary Chiavetta:

Attached for filing, on behalf of Peoples Natural Gas Company LLC, are Proofs of Publication evidencing that notice of the proposed gas cost rate changes in the above-referenced proceeding was published in the following newspapers on the dates indicated below:

- March 15, 2024 – *Altoona Mirror, Butler Eagle, Indiana Gazette, Kittanning Leader Times, New Castle News, Oil City Derrick-Franklin News Herald, The Punxsutawney Spirit, Sharon Herald, The Tribune-Democrat, Tribune-Review, Tribune Review-Westmoreland, Uniontown Herald-Standard, Washington Observer-Reporter*
- March 16, 2024 – *Somerset Daily American*
- March 17, 2024 – *Beaver County Times, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*
- March 19, 2024 – *The Clarion News*
- March 22, 2024 – *Connellsville Daily Courier*

Due to the size of the filing, and consistent with instructions provided by the Secretary's Bureau, only the cover letter and Certificate of Service will be electronically filed through the Pennsylvania

Rosemary Chiavetta  
April 12, 2024  
Page 2

Public Utility Commission's ("Commission") e-filing website. The Proofs of Publication are being uploaded to the Commission's ShareFile website.

An electronic version of the materials associated with the filing will be served upon the parties listed on the Certificate of Service via a secure download link.

Respectfully submitted,



Nicholas A. Stobbe

NAS/kl  
Attachments

cc: The Honorable Katrina Dunderdale (*via email; w/attachments*)  
Certificate of Service

## CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that a true and correct copy of the foregoing has been served upon the following persons, in the manner indicated, in accordance with the requirements of 52 Pa. Code § 1.54 (relating to service by a participant).

### VIA E-MAIL

Carrie B. Wright, Esquire  
Bureau of Investigation & Enforcement  
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400 North Street, 2nd Floor West  
PO Box 3265  
Harrisburg, PA 17105-3265  
[cwright@pa.gov](mailto:cwright@pa.gov)

Melanie J. Atieh, Esquire  
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Forum Place, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17101-1923  
[OCA1307f2024@paoca.org](mailto:OCA1307f2024@paoca.org)

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555 Walnut Street  
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Kevin J. Moody, Esquire  
212 Locust Street, Suite 300  
Harrisburg, PA 17101  
[kevin@pioga.org](mailto:kevin@pioga.org)  
*Counsel for PIOGA*

Date: April 12, 2024



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Nicholas A. Stobbe

**PROOF OF PUBLICATION OF NOTICE IN ALTOONA MIRROR**



**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:

March 15, 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 15 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

# Biden blasts US Steel sale

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden came out in opposition to the planned sale of U.S. Steel to Nippon Steel of Japan, saying on Thursday that the U.S. needs to “maintain strong American steel companies powered by American steel workers.”

In a statement, Biden added: “U.S. Steel has been an iconic American steel company for more than a century, and it is vital for it

to remain an American steel company that is domestically owned and operated.”

By opposing the merger, Biden has chosen to support unionized workers in a critical election year at the risk of upsetting the business community and an essential ally in Japan. Thursday’s announcement, coming as Biden is campaigning in the Midwest, could have ripples in his race against the presumptive Republican pres-

idential nominee, Donald Trump.

The Democratic president has made the restoration of American manufacturing a cornerstone of his agenda as he seeks reelection, and he has the endorsements of the AFL-CIO and several other prominent unions. The White House said Thursday that Biden called David McCall, president of United Steelworkers, to reiterate his support for its members.

# HASB: Parents had to opt out

(Continued from Page A1)

“There were no questions on there that asked about gender or gender-related issues,” Green said. “We did investigate thoroughly, and we asked additional questions (of the) onsite coordinator that was at that exam.”

According to Green, the coordinator told him that the test included a brief section on student background, which asked about their race, among other questions.

The word “Hispanic,” Green said, is not a word every student understands, so the coordinator suggested that the distressed student may have misread the question.

The NAEP is a program within the federal Department of Education tasked with collecting and analyzing educational benchmarking metrics from districts across the country.

Each year, a number of schools are randomly selected to participate in testing to assess fourth-, eighth- and 12th-grade students’ academic progress. Inclusion in the NAEP testing roster is mandatory for every school district that receives federal education funding.

Green said the district sent a letter in January that informed parents of the upcoming test. Student participation was voluntary and random, but parents had to sign a form if they did not want their children

**The word “Hispanic,” interim Superintendent Rodney Green said, is not a word every student understands, so the coordinator suggested that the distressed student may have misread the question**

to be considered for selection.

“I made it very clear to (the NAEP Pa. coordinator), that in any future exam administration in our district or others, they should consider an opting-out process that is different, or look at an opting-in process,” Green said.

Board member Missy Sullivan added that, “moving forward, letting parents know earlier would be good.”

## Heating systems

In other business, Mark Gallick, a representative of the McClure Co., presented the board with the results of a feasibility study for installing geothermal heat systems at C.W. Longier Elementary and Hollidaysburg Area Junior High, as well as a potential solar farm on district land.

According to Gallick, McClure provides the scope audits free of charge to school districts across the state.

Gallick also mentioned the new DCED Public School Facility Improve-

ment grant, which opens up \$100 million in state funding to school districts for necessary renovation projects, as a funding possibility.

This grant requires a 25% matched contribution from chosen districts, Gallick said, so HASD would need to either dip into cash reserves or take out a loan in order to fund a substantial project.

The DCED grant will be “extremely popular,” Gallick said, so Hollidaysburg is not guaranteed a portion of the funding. “I’m already getting a ton of calls about it.”

While the presentation did not result in any vote or resolution, board president Carmen Bilek said that the district will take the results of McClure’s audit into consideration.

“We’ll be talking about that as a board and discussing ... what is the best next steps, we won’t discount it for sure, but we have to see if it’s right for our district,” Bilek said.

*Mirror Staff Writer Conner Goetz is at 814-946-7535.*

## NOTICE OF PROPOSED GAS COST RATE CHANGES

### To Our Customers:

Effective January 1, 2023, the Peoples Companies legal entities were merged. As such, Peoples Natural Gas Company LLC became Peoples Natural Gas Company LLC – Peoples Natural Gas Division (“PNGD” or “Peoples Natural Gas Division”) and Peoples Gas Company became Peoples Natural Gas Company LLC – Peoples Gas Division (“PGD” or “Peoples Gas Division”).

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**Peoples Natural Gas Division has requested an overall gas cost rate decrease of \$18.8 million per year.**

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- The total bill for a residential customer using 80 Mcf per year would decrease from \$71.05 to \$68.96 per month or by 2.9%.
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To find out your customer class or how the requested changes may affect your natural gas bill, contact Peoples at 1-800-764-0111. The rates requested by the company may be found in Tariff No. 47. You may examine the material filed with the PUC which explains the requested rate changes and the reasons for it. A copy of this material is kept at Peoples Natural’s office and is available on the Company’s website at [www.peoples-gas.com](http://www.peoples-gas.com).

The state agency which approves rates for public utilities is the PUC. The PUC will examine the requested rate change and can prevent existing rates from changing until it investigates and/or holds hearings on the request. The company must prove that the requested rates are reasonable. After examining the evidence, the PUC may grant all, some or none of the request or may reduce existing rates.

The PUC may change the amount of the rate increase or decrease requested by the utility for each customer class. As a result, the rate charged to you may be different than the rate requested by the company and shown above.

### There are three ways to challenge a company’s request to change its rates:

1. You can file a formal complaint. If you want a hearing before a judge, you must file a formal complaint. By filing a formal complaint, you assure yourself the opportunity to take part in hearings about the rate change request. All complaints should be filed with the PUC as soon as possible.

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2. You can send a letter to the PUC telling why you object to the requested rate change. Sometimes there is information in these letters that makes the PUC aware of problems with the company’s service or management. This information can be helpful when the PUC investigates the rate request.

Send your letter or request for a formal complaint form to the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission, Post Office Box 3265, Harrisburg, PA 17105-3265.

3. You can be a witness at a public input hearing. Public input hearings are held if the Commission opens an investigation of the company’s rate change request and if there is a large number of customers interested in the case. At these hearings you have the opportunity to present your views in person to the PUC judge hearing the case and the company representatives. All testimony given “under oath” becomes part of the official rate case record. These hearings are held in the service area of the company.



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## **PROOF OF PUBLICATION**

Kathy Downing  
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Pittsburgh PA 15214-1735

## **STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA, COUNTY OF BEAVER**

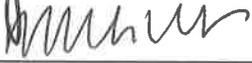
The Beaver County Times, Ellwood City Ledger, a daily newspaper of general circulation, published and having its place of business at Aliquippa, Beaver County, PA; that attached hereto is a facsimile of the printed notice which is exactly as printed and published in said newspaper issue dated on:

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

Sworn to and subscribed before on 03/17/2024

  
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# Independents

Continued from Page 1A

Pittsburgh mechanical engineering major who is interning with an organization in Oakridge, Tennessee. “I wanted to go with something I felt was the best representation of my beliefs.

“I’m very happy to vote Democrat for one office and Republican for the next.”

Someone like Summers would be tough to fit into a neat stereotype: He leans left with his concerns about climate change, yet feels more aligned with the right on the culture wars and immigration. He’s also troubled by a perceived lack of interest among the political class in anti-corruption reforms such as cracking down on insider trading.

“There’s no one who’s really pushing for good government,” Summers said.

“I want) people who are conscious that our democracy is imperfect and are trying to improve it. There’s a lot of other countries that have better democratic system than ours.”

More broadly, there are early signs that independents are opening up to the Republican Party again after a few years of big wins for Democrats.

## Who can fix inflation? Republicans, says plurality

Economist/YouGov polling from January indicates that a plurality of independents (19%) see inflation/prices as the most important issue facing Americans. The Economist is a British weekly newspaper that focuses on politics and business, and YouGov is an international research group that’s graded as a B-plus outfit by the nationally recognized polling aggregator FiveThirtyEight.

Independents’ concerns align more closely with Republicans at this juncture, with both demographics listing inflation/prices and immigration as their top two issues.

Further, according to a separate Economist/YouGov survey from December, voters trust Republicans over Democrats on both inflation and immigration by double digits. Polled Democrats listed climate change and health care as their two most important top-

ics. “It does look like Trump has gained with that group,” Carl Bialik, YouGov America’s U.S. politics editor and vice president of data science, said of independents.

Bialik noted that approximately 71% of independents seem to have made up their minds, with 41% leaning toward Trump, 30% toward Biden and 10% vowing to refuse to vote. Still, a sizeable chunk of the unaffiliated may still be in play, with 11% planning to vote for a third candidate and 9% unsure.

“Trump is leading among independents, but it’s not a big lead,” Bialik said.

“That’s a group that could go for a third-party candidate. Also, a lot of them haven’t decided yet, and could end up in Biden’s or Trump’s camp.”

In Pennsylvania, the GOP has been closing the gap on the Democratic Party for years.

According to the Department of State, Democrats’ advantage has been cut in half since Trump’s first election. They outnumbered Republican voters by 916,274 in 2016, and outnumbered them by 418,080 as of Feb. 5.

Still, another segment of independents are politically homeless specifically because of Trump — and look forward to voting against him and any of his allies.

## Never Trumpers

“I’m a lifelong Republican,” said 79-year-old Vietnam veteran Chuck Zitnick. “And, frankly, the Republican Party left me.”

Zitnick, a York County resident, is conflicted in many ways.

He’s a Catholic who is against abortion and wants to reduce the spending that’s increased the national debt. The only time he went Democratic in a presidential race was a 1972 anti-war vote for George McGovern.

In 2016 and 2020, he voted for Libertarian Party nominees, but he said he’s disgusted enough by the “bully, misogynist” GOP frontrunner to strongly consider the Democratic incumbent.

“I think it’s over for the Republicans unless they make major changes,” Zitnick said. “We need the younger people.

“In this coming election, I probably

will vote for Biden because I can’t stand Trump.”

Down the ticket, Zitnick sees himself supporting moderates wherever he can find them. He said U.S. Rep. Scott Perry (R-York) “belongs in jail” for his support of Trump’s efforts to overturn the 2020 election results.

Another Republican-turned-independent is 69-year-old Catherine Mott of Mercer County.

Mott left the GOP sometime during the second term of then-President Barack Obama. She said she felt it was “no longer the party of (Abraham) Lincoln,” and believes it has since gotten worse.

“I could see the extreme right taking control of the Republican right,” she said, “slowly but surely.”

As owner of BlueTree VC, a venture capital company, Mott said she looks for candidates who will have a stabilizing effect on the economy. She believes she’s only voted straight ticket once in her lifetime.

“I speak on behalf of businesses,” Mott said.

“We have budgets, we have to make plans, we have to think about when we’re going to borrow money. If we don’t have stable legislative activity, it makes it a challenge for businesses to properly plan.”

Mott added that she intends to vote for Biden, viewing him as having the best chance of blocking Trump from a second term.

“Third party? You may as well throw your vote away,” she said.

Others are trying to talk the disenfranchised — such as the 10% of independents who say they won’t vote if Biden and Trump are the major party nominees — into participating in the fall general election even though they can’t vote in the spring.

Pennsylvania is among 22 states with a “closed primary” system that doesn’t permit the unaffiliated to cast a Democratic or Republican ballot, according to the nonprofit Unite America Institute. There are approximately 23.5 million independents in these states.

In Pennsylvania, more than 1.2 million unaffiliated voters are excluded from the primary.

Some preliminary surveys suggest that Keystone State independents may be leaning more toward Biden than those in other states. An Emerson Col-

lege Polling study conducted in February gives Trump a 2-point lead overall despite trailing Biden by 6 points among independents.

## ‘We don’t want that to turn into apathy’

Members of the Forward Party are working promote moderate candidates for office from both major parties. The group also endorses reforms such as open primaries and ranked-choice voting.

“We’re living in an era of just massive political dysfunction,” said Craig Snyder, the Forward Party’s political director for Pennsylvania.

“We don’t want that to turn into apathy. We want to get that into something hopeful.”

In recent years, the Forward Party has cited success in helping incumbents such as state Sen. Lisa Boscola (D-Lehigh) and Allegheny County District Attorney Stephen Zappala ward off challenges from off-center candidates.

For 2024, Snyder would encourage people to vote for Biden over “would-be dictator” Trump. He called Green Party candidate Jill Stein and independents Robert F. Kennedy Jr. and Cornel West “quite dangerous” because they could help Trump win another term.

“There’s no path for somebody to win the race other than the Democratic or Republican nominee,” Snyder said, “and we don’t want to be spoilers.”

“There’s a saying that the fish rots from the head down. I do think a lot of this starts with dissatisfaction with the candidates in the presidential race.”

YouGov’s polling reflects this concept as well, with majorities of Americans wishing that Biden (56%) and Trump (53%) weren’t running.

Summers would agree. He called the potential presidential rematch something that no one in America wants to see — and wonders what their widespread unpopularity will result in once the final votes are counted.

“With this polarization,” Summers said, “I feel like a lot of people feel left out.”

*Bruce Siwy is a reporter for the USA TODAY Network’s Pennsylvania state capital bureau. He can be reached at bsiwy@gannett.com or on X at @Bruce-Siwy.*

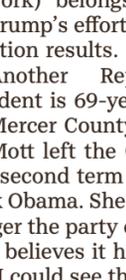
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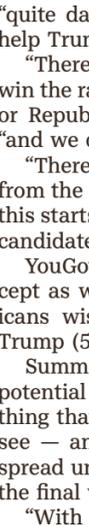
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Send your letter or request for a formal complaint form to the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission, Post Office Box 3265, Harrisburg, PA 17105-3265.
- You can be a witness at a public input hearing. Public input hearings are held if the Commission opens an investigation of the company’s rate change request and if there is a large number of customers interested in the case. At these hearings you have the opportunity to present your views in person to the PUC judge hearing the case and the company representatives. All testimony given “under oath” becomes part of the official rate case record. These hearings are held in the service area of the company.



# Proof of Publication of Notice in Butler Eagle

Under Act No. 587, Approved May 16, 1929

State of Pennsylvania,  
County of Butler.

Cassidy L. Nixon Of the Eagle Printing Company, Inc., of the County and State aforesaid, being duly sworn, deposes and says that the BUTLER EAGLE, a newspaper of general circulation published at 114 West Diamond Street, City of Butler, County and State aforesaid, was established 1869, since which date the BUTLER EAGLE has been regularly issued in said County, and that the printed notice or publication attached hereto is exactly the same as was printed and published in the regular editions and issues of the said BUTLER EAGLE on the following dates, viz.

\_\_\_\_\_ and the  
15th Day of March 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 is not interested in the subject matter of the aforesaid notice or advertisement, and that all allegations in the foregoing statements as to time, place and character of publication are true.

... a large  
... meaning the only  
... gallery is on the opposite  
... was the drop on No. 7 right? Because there was no TV evidence. I was advised side of the fairway.

Butler Eagle

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 15th  
Day of March 2024

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  
3933 Perrysville Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15214  
Attn: Francine Schmidley

TO BUTLER EAGLE, Dr.  
For publishing the notice or publication attached  
hereto on the above stated dates \$ 480.00  
Reimbursing same \$ 3.00  
Total \$ 483.00

Advertising Costs  
BUTLER EAGLE, a newspaper of general circulation, hereby acknowledge that the same have been duly paid.  
EAGLE PRINTING CO., a Corporation, Publisher  
BUTLER EAGLE, a Newspaper of General Circulation.

By \_\_\_\_\_

## NOTICE OF PROPOSED GAS COST RATE CHANGES

### To Our Customers:

Effective January 1, 2023, the Peoples Companies legal entities were merged. As such, Peoples Natural Gas Company LLC became Peoples Natural Gas Company LLC - Peoples Natural Gas Division ("PNGD" or "Peoples Natural Gas Division") and Peoples Gas Company became Peoples Natural Gas Company LLC - Peoples Gas Division ("PGD" or "Peoples Gas Division").

Peoples Gas Division is filing a request with the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission ("PUC") to increase your natural gas rates as of October 1, 2024. This filing also includes a request to merge the Allegheny Valley Capacity Charge ("AVC") and apply to both divisions. This notice describes the company's rate request, the PUC's role, and what actions you can take.

Peoples Gas Division has requested an overall gas cost rate increase of \$3.7 million per year.

Based upon current tariff rates, if the company's entire request is approved:

- The total bill for a residential customer using 80 Mcf per year would increase from \$89.98 to \$92.91 per month or by 3.3%.
- The total bill for a small commercial/industrial customer using 250 Mcf per year would increase from \$223.75 to \$232.04 per month or by 3.7%.
- The total bill for a medium commercial/industrial customer using 1,750 Mcf per year would increase from \$1,347.69 to \$1,374.84 per month or by 2.0%.

To find out your customer class or how the requested changes may affect your natural gas bill, contact Peoples at 1-800-764-0111. The rates requested by the company may be found in Tariff No. 8. You may examine the material filed with the PUC which explains the requested rate changes and the reasons for it. A copy of this material is kept at Peoples Gas' office and is available on the Company's website at [www.peoples-gas.com](http://www.peoples-gas.com).

The state agency which approves rates for public utilities is the PUC. The PUC will examine the requested rate change and can prevent existing rates from changing until it investigates and/or holds hearings on the request. The company must prove that the requested rates are reasonable. After examining the evidence, the PUC may grant all, some or none of the request or may reduce existing rates.

The PUC may change the amount of the rate increase or decrease requested by the utility for each customer class. As a result, the rate charged to you may be different than the rate requested by the company and shown above.

### There are three ways to challenge a company's request to change its rates:

1. You can file a formal complaint. If you want a hearing before a judge, you must file a formal complaint. By filing a formal complaint, you assure yourself the opportunity to take part in hearings about the rate change request. All complaints should be filed with the PUC as soon as possible.

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Send your letter or request for a formal complaint form to the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission, Post Office Box 3265, Harrisburg, PA 17105-3265.

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DE-1553486

*Cassidy L. Nixon*

Butler Eagle

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 15th

Day of March 2024

*Carolyn E. 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

3933 Perrysville Avenue

Pittsburgh, PA 15214

Attn: Francine Schmidley

TO BUTLER EAGLE, Dr.

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Hereto on the above stated dates \$ 480.00

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Total \$ 483.00

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EAGLE PRINTING CO., a Corporation, Publisher  
Of BUTLER EAGLE, a Newspaper of General Circulation.

By \_\_\_\_\_

**IN BRIEF**

**Tate, Page help Westminster win**

ALLIANCE — Seneca Valley graduates Brady Page and Jorden Tate helped the Westminster College men's lacrosse post a 13-10 victory over Mount Union recently.

Page, a sophomore attacker, had a goal and assist. Sophomore goalkeeper Tate made 13 saves.

**Stevenson nets 3 in GCC triumph**

FREDONIA, N.Y.—Butler graduate Tori Stevenson scored three goals and added an assist in Grove City College's recent 16-9 women's lacrosse win over Fredonia State.

Seneca Valley graduate and junior goalkeeper Elyse Kiggins caused three turnovers in the win.

**Mars' Mueller medals in diving**

Mars senior diver Emily Mueller finished with 384.10 points at Thursday's PIAA Class 3A girls championships, good enough for sixth place at the meet, which took place at the University of Bucknell's Kinney Natatorium.

Mueller was seventh heading into the finals, then posted 102.75 points over her final three dives.

No other Class 3A swimmers reached the finals in the pool.

The PIAA Class 2A swimming meet takes place Friday and Saturday, also at Bucknell University.

*From staff reports*

**Kelley**

From Page 5

javelin.

She had surgery a week later and her college career was over.

She became a teacher in Maryland and figured her athletic career was finished.

"A couple of years later, I was feeling better and decided to try running a marathon," Kelley said. "Just jogging along, I felt so light. In high school, I felt like a Clydesdale when I was running."

She won the fitness award in the FBI Academy in 1995, beating out all male and female coun-

terparts with a perfect 50 points. That test included a 300-meter run, 2-mile run, situps, pushups and pullups. Her name is on the 50 point board "on the wall in the FBI Academy.

Kelley spent 20 years in the FBI. During her time in Tucson, Ariz., with the FBI, she ran the Tucson Marathon on a bet with a PD Swat Officer that she couldn't run it in less than 4 hours, 30 minutes. While she had run the Marine Corps Marathon in 3:40, she did little training for Tucson, but still crossed the finish line in 3:20.

"I paid for that one," Kelley said. "I went through

months of physical therapy for overused tendons and all I won was lunch ... definitely not worth it."

While with the FBI, Kelley was a first responder at the Boston Marathon bombing and 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center. "I'm still paying for 9/11," she said. "I've dealt with asthma, COPD, skin cancer, etc., from the toxic dust. Many of my co-workers on the scene that day have since died."

Kelley now works as an investigator for the Judicial Conduct Board of Pennsylvania and lives on the historic family farm in Sarver with her fiancé'

Frank Collins and other family members.

"My fiancé' and I built a house in a field on the farm," she said. "I run my own private investigation business on the side. I specialize in finding people.

"I spend a lot of free time cleaning stalls, feeding and riding horses ... and loving every minute of it."

**Tickets to the BCSHOF banquet are available at [www.butlersportshall.com](http://www.butlersportshall.com) or at the Butler Radio Network on Pillow Street in Butler, Parker Apple in Chicora, Saxenburg Drug or Maddalon Jewelers in Zelenople.**

**BOWLING**

**Penn Street Pizza**

**Standings:** Wedgies 60-31, Nachos 52-39, Strombolis 52-39, Hot Sausages 48-43, Wings 47-44, Gyros 39-52, Subs 34-57, Pizzas 32-59

**High men's game and series-** Brian Filges 256-701

**High team series-Wings 2,404**  
**High team game-Wedgies 863**  
**Jolly Girls**

**Standings:** Yellow 9-3, Brown 8-4, Blue 7-5, Purple 6-6, Orange 5-7, Pink 4-8, Green 3-9, Red 3-9

**High women's game and series-** Abby Kyle 192-533

**High team game and series-** Yellow 617-1,767

**Belmont 2 Monday Niters**

**Standings:** Burg Bar 44-24, Butler Boys 41-27, Belmont II 39.5-128.5, K.R.K. Lawnkare 38.5-29.5, Reges Strike 37-31, Nriks 'n Nat 37-31, Rankin Welding 34.5-33.5, Bowling Stones 30-38, Young Guns 29-39, AKL 27-41, Hearing Life 25.5-42.5, Scherer Electric 25-43

**High men's game and series-** Cody Laue 299-734

**High women's game and series-** Ashley Louis 227-630

**Connoquessing Indians**

**Standings:** Comanche 29-16, Cherokee 29-16, Mohawks 28-17, Navajo 25-20, Seneca 24-21, Seminole 24-21, Winnanago 15-30, Apache 6-39

**High men's game and series-** Greg Reen 268-761

**High team game and series-** Seneca 882-2,415

| All Times EDT         |    |    |    |    |     |     |     |  |  |  |
|-----------------------|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|-----|--|--|--|
| EASTERN CONFERENCE    |    |    |    |    |     |     |     |  |  |  |
| Atlantic Division     |    |    |    |    |     |     |     |  |  |  |
|                       | GP | W  | L  | OT | Pts | GF  | GA  |  |  |  |
| Florida               | 67 | 45 | 18 | 4  | 94  | 221 | 160 |  |  |  |
| Boston                | 68 | 39 | 14 | 15 | 93  | 225 | 185 |  |  |  |
| Toronto               | 64 | 37 | 19 | 8  | 82  | 231 | 201 |  |  |  |
| Tampa Bay             | 66 | 35 | 25 | 6  | 76  | 230 | 222 |  |  |  |
| Detroit               | 66 | 33 | 27 | 6  | 72  | 225 | 222 |  |  |  |
| Buffalo               | 67 | 32 | 30 | 5  | 69  | 200 | 198 |  |  |  |
| Montreal              | 66 | 25 | 30 | 11 | 61  | 184 | 231 |  |  |  |
| Ottawa                | 64 | 27 | 33 | 4  | 58  | 205 | 223 |  |  |  |
| Metropolitan Division |    |    |    |    |     |     |     |  |  |  |
|                       | GP | W  | L  | OT | Pts | GF  | GA  |  |  |  |
| N.Y. Rangers          | 66 | 43 | 19 | 4  | 90  | 217 | 179 |  |  |  |
| Carolina              | 66 | 40 | 20 | 6  | 86  | 220 | 178 |  |  |  |
| Philadelphia          | 66 | 34 | 24 | 8  | 76  | 195 | 196 |  |  |  |
| N.Y. Isles            | 65 | 29 | 22 | 14 | 72  | 197 | 213 |  |  |  |
| Washington            | 64 | 30 | 25 | 9  | 69  | 172 | 204 |  |  |  |
| Pittsburgh            | 65 | 29 | 27 | 9  | 67  | 187 | 189 |  |  |  |
| New Jersey            | 65 | 31 | 30 | 4  | 66  | 212 | 227 |  |  |  |
| Columbus              | 66 | 22 | 33 | 11 | 55  | 194 | 238 |  |  |  |
| WESTERN CONFERENCE    |    |    |    |    |     |     |     |  |  |  |
| Central Division      |    |    |    |    |     |     |     |  |  |  |
|                       | GP | W  | L  | OT | Pts | GF  | GA  |  |  |  |
| Colorado              | 67 | 42 | 20 | 5  | 89  | 251 | 202 |  |  |  |
| Dallas                | 67 | 40 | 18 | 9  | 89  | 245 | 203 |  |  |  |
| Winnipeg              | 65 | 41 | 19 | 5  | 87  | 198 | 157 |  |  |  |
| Nashville             | 67 | 38 | 25 | 4  | 80  | 215 | 203 |  |  |  |
| St. Louis             | 66 | 34 | 29 | 3  | 71  | 187 | 201 |  |  |  |
| Minnesota             | 66 | 32 | 27 | 7  | 71  | 208 | 216 |  |  |  |
| Arizona               | 67 | 27 | 35 | 5  | 59  | 197 | 223 |  |  |  |

**NHL STANDINGS**

| All Times EDT      |    |    |    |    |     |     |     |  |  |  |
|--------------------|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|-----|--|--|--|
| EASTERN CONFERENCE |    |    |    |    |     |     |     |  |  |  |
| Pacific Division   |    |    |    |    |     |     |     |  |  |  |
|                    | GP | W  | L  | OT | Pts | GF  | GA  |  |  |  |
| Chicago            | 66 | 18 | 43 | 5  | 41  | 145 | 235 |  |  |  |
| Vancouver          | 67 | 42 | 17 | 8  | 92  | 237 | 182 |  |  |  |
| Edmonton           | 64 | 40 | 21 | 3  | 83  | 229 | 182 |  |  |  |
| Los Angeles        | 65 | 33 | 21 | 11 | 77  | 198 | 174 |  |  |  |
| Vegas              | 65 | 35 | 23 | 7  | 77  | 212 | 195 |  |  |  |
| Seattle            | 64 | 28 | 24 | 12 | 68  | 178 | 184 |  |  |  |
| Calgary            | 65 | 31 | 29 | 5  | 67  | 202 | 212 |  |  |  |
| Anaheim            | 65 | 23 | 39 | 3  | 49  | 169 | 236 |  |  |  |
| San Jose           | 65 | 16 | 42 | 7  | 39  | 144 | 259 |  |  |  |

| All Times EDT                          |    |   |   |    |     |    |    |  |  |  |
|--|----|---|---|----|-----|----|----|--|--|--|
| WESTERN CONFERENCE                     |    |   |   |    |     |    |    |  |  |  |
| Central Division                       |    |   |   |    |     |    |    |  |  |  |
|  | GP | W | L | OT | Pts | GF | GA |  |  |  |
| Washington at Seattle, night           |    |   |   |    |     |    |    |  |  |  |
| Friday's Games                         |    |   |   |    |     |    |    |  |  |  |
| Anaheim at Winnipeg, 8 p.m.            |    |   |   |    |     |    |    |  |  |  |
| Los Angeles at Chicago, 8:30 p.m.      |    |   |   |    |     |    |    |  |  |  |
| Saturday's Games                       |    |   |   |    |     |    |    |  |  |  |
| Buffalo at Detroit, 12:30 p.m.         |    |   |   |    |     |    |    |  |  |  |
| Ottawa at N.Y. Islanders, 12:30 p.m.   |    |   |   |    |     |    |    |  |  |  |
| N.Y. Rangers at Pittsburgh, 3 p.m.     |    |   |   |    |     |    |    |  |  |  |
| New Jersey at Arizona, 5 p.m.          |    |   |   |    |     |    |    |  |  |  |
| Tampa Bay at Florida, 6 p.m.           |    |   |   |    |     |    |    |  |  |  |
| Carolina at Toronto, 7 p.m.            |    |   |   |    |     |    |    |  |  |  |
| Montreal at Calgary, 7 p.m.            |    |   |   |    |     |    |    |  |  |  |
| Philadelphia at Boston, 7 p.m.         |    |   |   |    |     |    |    |  |  |  |
| San Jose at Columbus, 7 p.m.           |    |   |   |    |     |    |    |  |  |  |
| Los Angeles at Dallas, 8 p.m.          |    |   |   |    |     |    |    |  |  |  |
| Minnesota at St. Louis, 8 p.m.         |    |   |   |    |     |    |    |  |  |  |
| Colorado at Edmonton, 10 p.m.          |    |   |   |    |     |    |    |  |  |  |
| Nashville at Seattle, 10 p.m.          |    |   |   |    |     |    |    |  |  |  |
| Washington at Vancouver, 10 p.m.       |    |   |   |    |     |    |    |  |  |  |
| Sunday's Games                         |    |   |   |    |     |    |    |  |  |  |
| N.Y. Islanders at N.Y. Rangers, 1 p.m. |    |   |   |    |     |    |    |  |  |  |
| New Jersey at Vegas, 3:30 p.m.         |    |   |   |    |     |    |    |  |  |  |
| Carolina at Ottawa, 6 p.m.             |    |   |   |    |     |    |    |  |  |  |
| Detroit at Pittsburgh, 6 p.m.          |    |   |   |    |     |    |    |  |  |  |
| San Jose at Chicago, 6 p.m.            |    |   |   |    |     |    |    |  |  |  |
| Winnipeg at Columbus, 6 p.m.           |    |   |   |    |     |    |    |  |  |  |
| Anaheim at St. Louis, 7 p.m.           |    |   |   |    |     |    |    |  |  |  |

**McIlroy in 3-way tie at TPC golf**

By Associated Press

PONTE VEDRA BEACH, Fla. — Rory McIlroy began The Players Championship with a 65 on his scorecard, two tee shots that went into the water and one lengthy dispute about where to take a penalty drop on Thursday.

McIlroy ended the day with 10 birdies for his low-est start ever at the TPC

Sawgrass, leaving him tied with Xander Schauffele and U.S. Open champion Wyndham Clark. He would love to have back the tee shots on the 18th and the seventh holes, both of which found water and slowed his momentum on an otherwise superb display of golf.

It was the drop on No. 7 that caused so much con-

versation with Jordan Spieth and Viktor Hovland, and some confusion on where he should drop.

"I think Jordan was just trying to make sure that I was doing the right thing," McIlroy said. "I was pretty sure that my ball had crossed where I was sort of dropping it. It's so hard, right? Because there was no TV evidence. I was ada-

mant. But I think, again, he was just trying to make sure that I was going to do the right thing."

McIlroy was 8 under for the day playing the par-4 seventh — his 16th hole of the round — when he pulled his tee shot. The land slopes toward a large pond, meaning the only gallery is on the opposite side of the fairway.

**EVENTS**

**Thursday**

**Swimming**  
PIAA 3A Championships at Bucknell University

**Softball**  
Kane at Union, 4 p.m.

**Boys Tennis**  
Knoch at Kiski Area, 3:30 p.m.

**College Softball**  
North Haven vs. Slippery Rock, 10 a.m., Winter Haven, Fla.  
American International vs. Slippery Rock, 3:15 p.m., Winter Haven, Fla.

**Friday**

**Boys Basketball**  
PIAA 4A Playoffs  
North Catholic vs. Lincoln Park, 6 p.m., at Fox Chapel

**Swimming**  
PIAA 2A Championships at Bucknell University

**Boys Lacrosse**  
Butler at Shaler, 7:15 p.m.  
Seneca Valley at North Catholic, 6 p.m.

**Girls Lacrosse**  
Penn Trafford at Butler, 7:30 p.m.

Knoch at Seneca Valley, 6 p.m.

**Track and Field**  
Seneca Valley at Shaler, 3:30 p.m.

**Boys Tennis**  
North Catholic at Butler, 3:30 p.m.

Knoch at Seneca Valley, 4 p.m.

**College Softball**  
Purdue Northwest vs. Slippery Rock, 9:15 a.m., Winter Haven, Fla.

Hillsdale vs. Slippery Rock, 11:30 a.m., Winter Haven, Fla.

**Saturday**

**Girls Basketball**  
PIAA 4A Playoffs

North Catholic vs. Wyomissing, 2 p.m., at Bald Eagle

**Swimming**  
PIAA 2A Championships at Bucknell University

**College Baseball**  
Saint Anselm at Slippery Rock, DH, noon

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To find out your customer class or how the requested changes may affect your natural gas bill, contact Peoples at 1-800-764-0111. The rates requested by the company may be found in Tariff No. 47. You may examine the material filed with the PUC which explains the requested rate changes and the reasons for it. A copy of this material is kept at Peoples Natural's office and is available on the Company's website at [www.peoples-gas.com](http://www.peoples-gas.com).

The state agency which approves rates for public utilities is the PUC. The PUC will examine the requested rate change and can prevent existing rates from changing until it investigates and/or holds hearings on the request. The company must prove that the requested rates are reasonable. After examining the evidence, the PUC may grant all, some or none of the request or may reduce existing rates.

The PUC may change the amount of the rate increase or decrease requested by the utility for each customer class. As a result, the rate charged to you may be different than the rate requested by the company and shown above.

**There are three ways to challenge a company's request to change its rates:**

1. You can file a formal complaint. If you want a hearing before a judge, you must file a formal complaint. By filing a formal complaint, you assure yourself the opportunity to take part in hearings about the rate change request. All complaints should be filed with the PUC as soon as possible.

If no formal complaints are filed, the Commission may grant all, some or none of the request without holding a hearing before a judge.

2. You can send a letter to the PUC telling why you object to the requested rate change. Sometimes there is information in these letters that makes the PUC aware of problems with the company's service or management. This information can be helpful when the PUC investigates the rate request.

Send your letter or request for a formal complaint form to the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission, Post Office Box 3265, Harrisburg, PA 17105-3265.

3. You can be a witness at a public input hearing. Public input hearings are held if the Commission opens an investigation of the company's rate change request and if there is a large number of customers interested in the case. At these hearings you have the opportunity to present your views in person to the PUC judge hearing the case and the company representatives. All testimony given "under oath" becomes part of the official rate case record. These hearings are held in the service area of the company.



**NOTICE OF PROPOSED GAS COST RATE CHANGES**

**To Our Customers:**

Effective January 1, 2023, the Peoples Companies legal entities were merged. As such, Peoples Natural Gas Company LLC became Peoples Natural Gas Company LLC – Peoples Natural Gas Division ("PNGD" or "Peoples Natural Gas Division") and Peoples Gas Company became Peoples Natural Gas Company LLC – Peoples Gas Division ("PGD" or "Peoples Gas Division").

*Peoples Gas Division is filing a request with the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission ("PUC") to increase your natural gas rates as of October 1, 2024. This filing also includes a request to merge the Allegheny Valley Capacity Charge ("AVC") and apply to both divisions. This notice describes the*

# 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 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):

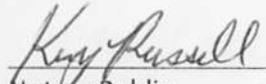
3/19/2024

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

By:   
Signature of affiant

Subscribed and sworn to before me  
This 20<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2024.

Notary Seal:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Notary Public

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania - Notary Seal  
Karry Russell, Notary Public  
Venango County  
My commission expires February 19, 2028  
Commission number 1441526

**AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION**

STATE OF Pennsylvania

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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,

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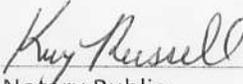
3/19/2024

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By:   
Signature of affiant

Subscribed and sworn to before me  
This 20<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2024.

Notary Seal:

  
Notary Public

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania - Notary Seal  
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Venango County  
My commission expires February 19, 2028  
Commission number 1441526

Signature of affiant

# Post-secondary briefs

## Local student among Thiel College's first class of Master of Science in physician assistant studies graduates

GREENVILLE—Thiel College celebrated the inaugural graduating class of 37 masters of science in physician assistant studies students in late August at the William A. Passavant Memorial Center.

Robin Moore, of Emlenton was a member of the College's first graduating class.

Thiel College's Physician Assistant Studies program began in 2021, with the mission of graduating physician assistants who have the disciplinary knowledge and skills, clinical preparation, and dispositions to provide excellent patient care and serve the needs of their community. Members of the second cohort were recently presented with their diplomas to mark their completion of the first half of the 27-month program at Thiel. The third cohort arrived this summer.

A special highlight of the event was the induction of Monica Leigh Ewansik, Abigail Grace Gallagher, Katarina Lavelle Lewis, Robin Kelley Moore, and Carolyn Mae Peters into Pi Alpha, the esteemed national physician assistant honor society. This recognition celebrates their outstanding dedication to both academic excellence and the commitment to advancing patient care. Faculty members Jennifer Shellenbarger and Lynn Williams, M.D., also joined this esteemed circle as inductees.

Thiel College President Susan Traverso, Ph.D., was further celebrated as an honorary inductee into Pi Alpha, in recognition of her unwavering dedication and advocacy for the physician assistant program. Her commitment has been instrumental in shaping the program's growth and impact within the healthcare landscape.

The celebratory occasion captured the essence of Thiel College's commitment to fostering exceptional healthcare professionals who will leave an indelible mark on their communities. As these graduates venture forth into their careers, they carry with them not only the knowledge and skills acquired during their studies but also the values and spirit that define Thiel's legacy of excellence.

**SNHU announces summer president's list**  
MANCHESTER, NH—It is with great pleasure that Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) congratulates the following students on being named to the summer president's list. The summer terms run from May to August.

Full-time undergraduate students who have earned a minimum grade-point average of 3.700 and above for the reporting term are named to the President's List. Full-time status is achieved by earning 12 credits over each 16-week term or paired eight-week terms grouped in fall, winter/spring, and summer.

Full-time undergraduate students who have earned a minimum grade-point average of 3.700 and above for the reporting term are named to the President's List. Full-time status is achieved by earning 12 credits over each 16-week term or paired eight-week terms grouped in fall, winter/spring, and summer.

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select specially designed honors courses, course-by-contracts, independent studies and internships to earn honors credit. Students are also required to complete 30 hours of community service before graduation.

Learn more at <https://www.kutztown.edu/about-ku/administrative-offices/honors-honors>

**IUP Provost recognizes scholars**

INDIANA—Students from the area have been recognized as Provost Scholars at Indiana University of Pa. (IUP).

Provost Scholar status is achieved when students complete a minimum of 45 semester hours at IUP and have a cumulative grade point average of 3.5 or higher.

Scholar recognition is given only once during a student's time of study at IUP.

A complete listing of Provost Scholars is available on IUP's website: [iup.edu](http://iup.edu)

Provost Scholars from this area and their majors include:

- ✓Fisher: Alana Lee McMaster, Gravel Lick Road, B.A. in Criminology
- ✓New Bethlehem: Matthew David Green, South Street, B.S. in Management Information Sys-tems/Information Technology

**SNHU announces fall President's List**  
MANCHESTER, N.H.—It is with great pleasure that Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) congratulates the following students on being named to the fall 2023 President's List. The fall terms run from September to December.

Full-time students who have earned a minimum grade-point average of 3.700 and above for the reporting term are named to the President's List. Full-time status is achieved by earning 12 credits over each 16-week term or paired 8-week terms grouped in fall, winter/spring, and summer.

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Full-time undergraduate students who have earned a minimum grade-point average of 3.700 and above for the reporting term are named to the President's List. Full-time status is achieved by earning 12 credits over each 16-week term or paired 8-week terms grouped in fall, winter/spring, and summer.

- ✓Addison Shaftic of Leeper
- ✓Isaac Solida of Rimersburg
- ✓Noah Suto of Parker
- ✓Olivia Thompson of Marienville
- ✓Dylan Walters of Tylersburg
- ✓Zackary Wolfe of Sigel

**Tarah Lauffer named to fall dean's list at Hofstra University**

HEMPSTEAD, N.Y.—Tarah Lauffer of Kossuth excelled during the fall semester at Hofstra, achieving a GPA of at least 3.5 to earn a spot on the dean's list. Her majors are public relations and strategic communications.

**Local students named to Westminster College's fall dean's list**

NEW WILLINGTON—Westminster College in New Wilmington recently named 397 students to the dean's list for the fall semester. Students earning this achievement are as follows:

- ✓Megan Clow of Marienville is majoring in exploratory. Clow is a graduate of East Forest High School.
- ✓Ian Runyan of Emlenton is majoring in business administration. Runyan is a graduate of Allegheny-Clarion Valley High School.
- ✓Lauren McTiernan of Venus is majoring in Early childhood education/special education. McTiernan is a graduate of Cranberry Area High School.
- ✓Cutter Boggett of Marble is majoring in biology (BS). Boggett is a graduate of Clarion Area High School.
- ✓Ethan Burford of Shipperville is majoring in business administration. Burford is a graduate of Clarion Area High School.
- ✓Ava Ferringer of Venus is majoring in biology (BS). Ferringer is a graduate of Cranberry Area High School.
- ✓Keenan Heeter of Knox is majoring in marketing and professional sales. Heeter is a graduate of Keystone High School.
- ✓Amelia Sherman of Foxburg is majoring in early childhood education/special education. Sherman is a graduate of Allegheny-Clarion Valley High School.
- ✓Grace Matson of Clarion is majoring in Individual Interdisciplinary (BA). Matson is a graduate of Clarion Area High School.

The Westminster College dean's list recognizes students who achieved a 3.6 grade point average or higher in a minimum of 12 semester hours.

**Students named to dean's list at Grove City College**

GROVE CITY—The following students were named to the dean's list for the fall semester at Grove City College.

- ✓Noel Anthony, a Biology/Health major at Grove City College from New Bethlehem, has been named to the dean's list with High Distinction for the fall semester. Noel is a 2022 graduate of Clarion Area High School and is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Anthony (Bonnie) from Shipperville.
- ✓Kobe Bonanno, a Management major at Grove City College from New Bethlehem, has been named to the dean's list with High Distinction for the fall semester. Kobe is a 2021 graduate of Redbank Valley Junior Senior High School and is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Matt Bonanno (Stephanie) from New Bethlehem.

Students eligible for the Dean's List have a GPA of 3.40 to 3.59; for the dean's list with Distinction a GPA of 3.60 to 3.84 and for the dean's list with High Distinction a GPA of 3.85 to 4.0.

**Thiel College announces dean's list**

GREENVILLE—Four hundred and four students were named to the dean's list for the fall semester at Thiel College.

A student must attain a grade point average (GPA) of 3.4 or a 4.0 score while being enrolled full-time to be eligible for the dean's list at the college.

The full list grouped by available and hometowns is available at [thiel.edu](http://thiel.edu)

- ✓Sydney Bell of Knox is studying early child education/special ed. Bell was a member of the first-year class this past fall.

- ✓Andrea Meals, of Foxburg is studying early child education/special education. Meals was a member of the junior class this past fall.
- ✓Jessica Wagner, of Tonesta is studying exercise science. Wagner was a member of the junior class this past fall.

- ✓Bryce Stubert, of Greenville, is studying business admin. sports management—track. Stubert was a member of the junior class this past fall.

**Klingsmith named to Pennsylvania College of Podiatry fall Dean's List**

WILLIAMSPORT —Rylie Klingsmith of Sigel earned a 4.0 grade point average in the fall 2023 semester at the Pennsylvania College of Podiatry in Williamsport.

Rylie is a 2023 graduate of Clarion-Limestone High School.

**Local students named to IUP dean's list**

INDIANA, Pa.—The following students from Clarion County have been named to the fall dean's list at Indiana University of Pa.

- ✓Students achieve dean's list status when they are full-time—12 or more credits—with a grade point average of 3.25 or higher.
- ✓The entire group of dean's list students is available at [iup.edu](http://iup.edu)
- ✓Dean's List students, their hometowns, majors, and degrees they are seeking are:

- ✓East Brady: Addison McKenzie Christie, B.S.Ed. in early childhood and special education
- ✓Brook E. McCollim, B.S. in mathematics/actuarial science and statistics

- ✓Fisher: Alana Lee McMaster, B.A. in criminology
- ✓Hawthorn: Raegen Beamer, B.S.Ed. in health and physical education/K-12 teacher education
- ✓Jenna Sue Procius, B.A. in criminology
- ✓Lucinda: Diane Albright, B.A. in psychology
- ✓Mayport: Bryant Lyn Smith, B.S. in nutrition/dietetics
- ✓Dominic Allen Trayer, B.S. in computer science/cyber security
- ✓New Bethlehem: Matthew David Green, B.S. in management information systems/information technology
- ✓Aidan Griffin, Vine Street, B.S. in safety, health, and environmental applied sciences
- ✓Christian J. McDonald, B.A. in criminology
- ✓Rimersburg: Teja L. Hagerter, B.S.Ed. in health and physical education/K-12 teacher education
- ✓Peyton Rearick, B.A. in Criminology
- ✓St. Petersburg: Kenzy Kellogg, exploratory
- ✓Shipperville: Amanda Matus, B.S. in hotel, restaurant, tourism, and event management
- ✓Venango County: Alyssa Wright, B.S. in communication media/media production
- ✓Franklin: Gavin Empson, B.A. in theatre
- ✓Quinlynn Rae Keith, exploratory
- ✓Bellevue: Jane Nolf, B.S. in biology/pre-veterinary
- ✓Austin Carl Zinz, B.S.Ed. in English education

**Oil City**  
Jessa Girty, B.S.Ed. in early childhood and special education

Sophie Elizabeth Horner, Division Street, B.S. in speech-language pathology

**Pleasantville**  
Abigail M. Vinson, Chestnut Street, B.A. in history

**Seneca**  
Katelyne Louise Ziegler, B.S.Ed. in health and physical education/K-12 teacher education

**Saint Francis University students named to President's and dean's lists**

LORETTO—Congratulations to the 801 Saint Francis University students named to the fall President's List or dean's list. To achieve either honor, students must have full-time status and attain a quality point average of 4.00 (President's) or 3.500 (dean's) on 12 or more credits during a single semester, with no continuing or incomplete grades.

Dean's List: Korrin Burns, Shipperville—Health Science II  
President's List: Morgan McNaughton of Summerville—Finance/Accelerated MBA  
**Sydney Bell among Thiel College athletes recognized on PAC Academic Honor Roll**

GREENVILLE—Sydney Bell of Knox was among the 60 Thiel College student-athletes who were named to the Presidents' Athletic Conference Academic Honor Roll for their performance in the classroom during the fall semester.

Bell is an early child education/special education major. Bell is a member of the women's volleyball team.

# Murder mystery dinner

BROOKVILLE — The Brookville Laurel Festival is hosting a Murder Mystery Dinner fundraiser, "Montana Marie Gets Gunned Down at Three" on May 11 at the Heritage House in Brookville. Dinner is served at 6 p.m. Pittsburgh's No. 1

interactive dinner theater company is presenting the western farce. Tickets are \$35 each or \$60 for two tickets. Tickets can be purchased at the Brookville Chamber of Commerce office, 100 Franklin Avenue or online [www.BrookvilleChamber.org](http://www.BrookvilleChamber.org)

All proceeds benefit the Brookville Laurel Festival. The Heritage House, 4 Sylvania St, Brookville, PA The Brookville Laurel Festival on June 8-15, 2024. Follow "Brookville Laurel Festival" on Facebook for updates!

## NOTICE OF PROPOSED GAS COST RATE CHANGES

**To Our Customers:**  
Effective January 1, 2023, the Peoples Companies legal entities were merged. As such, Peoples Natural Gas Company LLC became Peoples Natural Gas Company LLC - Peoples Natural Gas Division ("PNGD") ("Peoples Natural Gas Division") and Peoples Gas Company became Peoples Natural Gas Company LLC - Peoples Gas Division ("PGD") or "Peoples Gas Division").

Peoples Natural Gas Division is filing a request with the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission ("PUC") to decrease your natural gas rates as of October 1, 2024. This filing also includes a request to merge the Allegheny Valley Capacity Charge ("AVCC") and apply to both divisions. This notice describes the company's rate request, the PUC role, and what action you can take.

Peoples Natural Gas Division has requested an overall gas cost rate decrease of \$18.8 million per year. Based upon current tariff rates, if the company's entire request is approved:

- The total bill for a residential customer using 80 Mcf per year would decrease from \$71.05 to \$68.96 per month or by 2.9%.
- The total bill for a small commercial/industrial customer using 250 Mcf per year would decrease from \$163.04 to \$156.40 per month or by 4.1%.
- The total bill for a medium commercial/industrial customer using 1,750 Mcf per year would decrease from \$1,047.70 to \$1,008.57 per month or by 3.7%.

To find out your customer class or how the requested changes may affect your natural gas bill, contact Peoples at 1-800-764-0111. The rates requested by the company may be found in Tariff No. 47. You may examine the material filed with the PUC, which explains the requested rate changes and the reasons for it. A copy of this material is kept at Peoples' Natural's office and is available on the Company's website at [www.peoples-gas.com](http://www.peoples-gas.com).

The state agency which approves rates for public utilities is the PUC. The PUC will examine the requested rate change and can prevent existing rates from changing until it investigates and/or holds hearings on the request. The company must prove that the requested rates are reasonable. After examining the evidence, the PUC may grant all, some or none of the request or may reduce existing rates.

The PUC may change the amount of the rate increase or decrease requested by the utility for each customer class. As a result, the rate charged to you may be different than the rate requested by the company and shown above.

**There are three ways to challenge a company's request to change its rates:**

1. You can file a formal complaint. If you want a hearing before a judge, you must file a formal complaint. By filing a formal complaint, you assure yourself the opportunity to take part in hearings about the rate change request. All complaints should be filed with the PUC as soon as possible.

If no formal complaints are filed, the Commission may grant all, some or none of the request without holding a hearing before a judge.

2. You can send a letter to the PUC telling why you object to the requested rate change. Sometimes there is information in these letters that makes the PUC aware of problems with the company's service or management. This information can be helpful when the PUC investigates the rate request.

Send your letter or request for a formal complaint form to the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission, Post Office Box 3265, Harrisburg, PA 17105-3265.

3. You can be a witness at a public input hearing. Public input hearings are held if the Commission opens an investigation of the company's rate change request and if there is a large number of customers interested in the case. At these hearings you have the opportunity to present your views in person to the PUC judge hearing the case and the company representatives. All testimony given "under oath" becomes part of the official rate case record. These hearings are held in the service area of the company.



## Property boundaries – preserving your lands investment

While many of us own land, it is unlikely that we were ever taught in school how to manage and protect our land investments. Many landowners learn the hard way by discovering issues after they have taken ownership of their land and disputes, if not settled amicably, can be very costly. The cost of a land survey, at the time when the issue is discovered, or prior to, is the least of a landowner's worries. Land disputes and title issues often involve the services of an attorney and ensuing litigation. Depending upon the nature of the issue, costs can quickly exceed the value of the land itself.

As a landowner, proper marking, maintenance, and knowledge of your property boundary lines and ownership rights should be of the utmost importance. It is your responsibility as a landowner to ensure that your activities do not encroach on neighboring land. Whether public or private land, property boundaries and the delineation and marking thereof can play a critical role in land management and the protection of your land assets. Throughout my career as a land surveyor, I have observed many land disputes and land related issues, often involving law enforcement. I didn't take me long to realize that a land survey is one of the best investments an individual can make to protect their land assets.

The overwhelming majority of Americans wealth and assets rest in their ownership of real estate, i.e., an individual's home and property. Why would we as property owners not want to know the extent of this asset? Unlike the vehicles we drive every day, land is generally an appreciating asset, meaning the longer we hold on to it, the more the value increases. A property boundary survey shows a professional opinion as to the extent of this ownership on paper in the form of a map, on the ground in the form of physical corners, and if requested, visually by the blazing, painting, and marking of your property boundary lines. A property boundary survey also tends to bring to light any issues pertaining to ownership interests that are discovered during the field survey and courthouse research. The initial marking and the continued

maintenance of your property boundary lines can help avoid adverse claims but does not always eliminate all property boundary related issues or disputes that can occur.

A litany of issues can arise when both public and private property boundaries are not properly marked and maintained, including, but not limited to: trespass and encroachment by individuals with no legal claim to the land, residential issues, fence theft, and misconceptions as to the extent of land ownership. Despite public perception, geographic information system (GIS) boundary mapping data and professional mapping apps do not always represent the true location of property boundaries. Much of this data is acquired through a variety of sources such as local tax assessment parcel data and GIS databases, etc. Some GIS data is created using actual survey data or GPS field observations, but GIS should be viewed as a valuable tool and should never be considered as a representation of legal property boundaries or supplant a survey completed by a Professional Land Surveyor.

While Robert Frost may have coined the phrase "good fences make good neighbors" with fences, there are issues of maintenance and repair. Questions often arise as to whether the fence was constructed on the property boundary, and who owns the fence. In the context of property boundaries, I think it would be better to say "Good fences erected on an accepted and well established surveyed property boundary line makes good neighbors." Hedge rows, tree lines, stone rows, and other physical barriers delineating the property boundary line can also be a potential source of litigation when one party believes that they want to remove them. Fences or other physical barriers may not be a perfect solution to keeping peace with a neighbor, however, if both neighbors are aware of the physical extent of their property boundaries on the ground, this puts both parties on notice.

Unlike some other states, Pennsylvania does not always require a land survey when purchasing real estate nor does it require all land surveys to be recorded. Unless you are

subdividing land, most private land surveys are not recorded in Pennsylvania. This is unfortunate and often leads to new landowners inheriting issues they didn't know existed prior to making the purchase. If you have had your land surveyed by a professional land surveyor, you can record the map at your local courthouse and make it a public record.

Despite a professional land surveyor's employment status, or client he or she may be working for, a land surveyor acts impartially, obligated by the public to adequately identify to the best of their knowledge and professional opinion the legal property boundaries and any apparent issues that may affect the land. Every landowner has the right to exclude or allow others on their land. Knowledge of or unknown trespassing may occur if you trespass on neighboring land if there is uncertainty of the property boundary. If you are uncertain of the location of the property boundary lines, and you want to have posted or no trespassing signs, you should first retain the services of a Professional Land Surveyor in your area who can provide you an estimate on surveying and marking your boundaries.

In 2020 an amendment was made to Section 3503 (b) (1) Title 18 (P.A.C.S.), of the Pennsylvania Crimes Code, Offense of Criminal Trespass, under the Act of November 27, 2019, P.L. No. 103. This amendment describes the new "Purple Paint Law" in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. This amendment provides landowners the option of using purple paint rather than signs to post their properties and to put violators on notice that trespassing is not permitted. Unlike "no trespass" or "posted" signs, the Purple Paint Law has specific marking standards as described in the law.

I hope this article makes you think about the importance of your land investment and provides insight for the management of the land you own. On behalf of the Northwest Chapter of the Pennsylvania Society of Land Surveyors I would ask that you recognize your local Professional land surveyors on this National Surveyor's Week. *Story submitted by Joe McGrath of the Professional Land Surveyors (PLS)*

## PennWest University to host virtual panel on global cooperation

**American Democracy Project promotes active, involved citizens across PennWest campuses**

EDINBORO — The American Democracy Project at Pennsylvania Western University will present a virtual panel discussion exploring global identification and connection-building across societal divides at 11 a.m. Tuesday, March 26.

The event, "Ask an Expert: Are we able to identify with and feel connected with people around the world?", will be accessible via Zoom and streamed live in the following locations:

California campus: Duda Hall 103  
Clarion campus: Founders Hall 203  
Edinboro campus: Compton Hall 107A

International researchers from the Identification with All Humanity Lab will address topics of self-transcendence, empathy and enhancing international cooperation to address real-world problems. Question and answer sessions will follow facilitated by PennWest faculty members Dr. Justin Hackett (California), Dr. Kevan Yenerall (Clarion) and Dr.

Ron Craig (Edinboro).

"PennWest is a proud member of the American Democracy Project, and we continue to lead by example and advocate for the kind of democratic engagement and civic-mindedness the program embodies," said Dr. Laura Tuennerman, professor of history and director of ADP at PennWest. "From encouraging voting and promoting community dialogues to developing the civic skills that stimulate critical thinking and action, PennWest is committed to preparing our students to lead for future generations."

Panelists for the March 26 event, which is free and open to the public, include:

✓ Dr. Anna Włodarczyk is a cross-cultural and political psychologist and associate professor in the School of Psychology at the Universidad Católica del Norte in Antofagasta, Chile. Włodarczyk will discuss "Collective effervescence, self-transcendence, and gender differences in social well-being during International Women's Day: A nine country study."  
✓ Dr. Katarzyna Hamer is head of the IWAHA Lab, social and political psychologist, and associate professor at the

Institute of Psychology of Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw, Poland. Hamer will address "Global social identifications around the world and their connection to concern for global problems and sustainable development goals."

✓ Dr. Theofilos Gkinopoulos, an assistant professor at Jagiellonian University in Krakow, Poland, will explore "Beliefs in conspiracy theories and societal divides: Current evidence and directions forward."

✓ Dr. Justin Hackett is a psychology professor and chairperson of PennWest's Department of Psychology, Counseling and Art Therapy. He will present "Can identification with all humanity moderate political beliefs?"

PennWest joins the American Association of State Colleges and Universities in celebrating the 20th anniversary of the American Democracy Project, a nonpartisan multi-campus initiative focused on higher education's role in preparing the next generation of informed, engaged citizens for our democracy. Its goal is to produce graduates who are committed to being active, involved citizens in their communities.

## Penn State Master Gardeners to offer seed to supper course

CLARION — The Penn State Master Gardeners of Clarion and the First Presbyterian Church Food Bag Program are offering Seed to Supper, a comprehensive beginning gardening program that gives novice, adult gardeners the knowledge needed to successfully grow a portion of their own food on a limited budget.

Classes will meet on Thursdays from 4 to 6 p.m. from April 4 through May 23 in the Social Hall at the First Presbyterian Church, 700 Wood Street, Clarion. The course will

cover vegetable gardening fundamentals topics: Planning Your Garden, Getting Started with Healthy Soil, Planting Your Garden, Caring for Your Growing Garden, and Harvesting Your Bounty. There will be information on container gardening, and there is space at the Clarion County Park for participants who opt for additional hands-on experience in addition to the Thursday evening classes.

Advanced registration is required. Seed to Supper is offered free of charge to those on a low-income bud-

get. The program registration fee for other participants is \$10 to defray the cost of the course book.

To register, call or email the Clarion County Extension at (814) 223-9028 or clarionmg@psu.edu and leave your name, phone number, and email if you use email, and a Seed to Supper facilitator will contact you to complete your registration. Alternatively, to apply online, please complete the 2024 Seed to Supper application: [https://pennstate.qualtrics.com/fform/SV\\_bluVE1QpTjPjNdE5](https://pennstate.qualtrics.com/fform/SV_bluVE1QpTjPjNdE5).

## Clarion County chosen for Cypress Creek Renewables' scholarship program

TROY, N.Y. — Cypress Creek Renewables is pleased to announce the expansion of its Energiz-

ing Tomorrow's Leaders scholarship program. After awarding scholarships to 35 students across seven counties in 2023, the program is being expanded significantly for 2024 to students in 27 counties, including Clarion County, Pennsylvania.

The renewable energy company will be awarding \$1,000, one-time scholarships to up to 135 graduating high school seniors across the United States who have an interest in renewable energy or STEM-related careers.

"The Energizing Tomorrow's Leaders scholarship program was a great success in 2023 and gave us the opportunity to make a positive impact in communities where we are developing and operating solar projects," Sarah Slusser, Chief Executive Officer of Cypress

Creek said. "We are so excited to be able to expand our scope this year to impact even more of the bright young people who are the future of clean energy."

Five graduating seniors attending schools in Clarion County will be selected and awarded \$1,000 each to use for tuition, housing, or books and materials needed for their program of study. Students pursuing a 4-year, 2-year, or certificate program at an accredited university or college are eligible.

More information about the Energizing Tomorrow's Leaders scholarship program, including the application and eligibility requirements can be found by visiting [creek.com/scholarships](http://creek.com/scholarships). The deadline to apply is April 1, 2024.

## First birthday



Keilian C. Keen

**Keilian C. Keen** LOCK HAVEN — Gina and Nathan Keen of Lock Haven announce the first birthday celebration of a son Keilian C. Keen on January 24, 2024.

The former Richard M. and Mary L. Miller of Voinckel were the maternal grandparents.

Fred and Nancy Keen of Lucinda are the paternal grandparents.

For more information about first birthday submissions, please send an email message to: [newsroom.theclarionnews@gmail.com](mailto:newsroom.theclarionnews@gmail.com) or call 814-226-7000.

## NOTICE OF PROPOSED GAS COST RATE CHANGES

To Our Customers:

Effective January 1, 2023, the Peoples Companies legal entities were merged. As such, Peoples Natural Gas Company LLC became Peoples Natural Gas Company LLC - Peoples Natural Gas Division ("PPNGD" or "Peoples Natural Gas Division") and Peoples Gas Company became Peoples Natural Gas Company LLC - Peoples Gas Division ("PGD" or "Peoples Gas Division").

Peoples Gas Division is filing a request with the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission ("PUC") to increase your natural gas rates as of October 1, 2024. This filing also includes a request to merge the Allegheny Valley Capacity Charge ("AVC") and apply to both divisions. This notice describes the company's rate request, the PUC's role, and what actions you can take.

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To find out your customer class or how the requested changes may affect your natural gas bill, contact Peoples at 1-800-764-0111. The rates requested by the company may be found in Tariff No. 8. You may examine the material filed with the PUC which explains the requested rate changes and the reasons for it. A copy of this material is kept at Peoples Gas' office and is available on the Company's website at [www.peoples-gas.com](http://www.peoples-gas.com).

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If no formal complaints are filed, the Commission may grant all, some or none of the request without holding a hearing before a judge.

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Send your letter or request for a formal complaint form to the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission, Post Office Box 3265, Harrisburg, PA 17105-3265.

3. You can be a witness at a public input hearing. Public input hearings are held if the Commission opens an investigation of the company's rate change request and if there is a large number of customers interested in the case. At these hearings you have the opportunity to present your views in person to the PUC judge hearing the case and the company representatives. All testimony given "under oath" becomes part of the official rate case record. These hearings are held in the service area of the company.



**BID ONLINE**

**MARCH 18-21, 2024**

**Hundreds of items up for bid!**

**BROWSE & BID ON ITEMS AT**  
**clarionrotary.com**

Financial support for the Auction provided by Penn Highlands Healthcare



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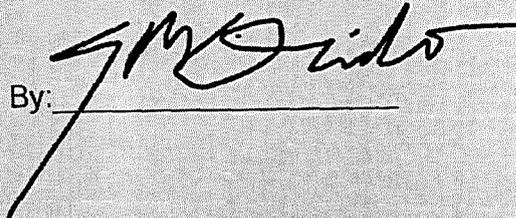
GM Olvido, [in her] capacity as Major/National Accounts Executive on behalf of TRIB TOTAL MEDIA, INC. ("Publisher"), being duly sworn, upon [her] oath, deposes and says:

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

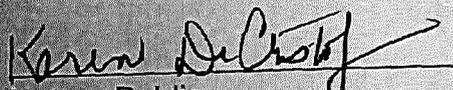
Two ROP ads for Peoples Gas ran in the Kittanning Leader Times on 15<sup>th</sup>, March, 2024.

And one ROP ad for Peoples Gas ran in the Connellsville Daily Courier Publication on 22<sup>nd</sup>, March, 2024

TRIB TOTAL MEDIA, INC.

By: 

Sworn to before me this 26<sup>th</sup> day  
of March, 2024.

  
Notary Public

[Notary Seal]

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania - Notary Seal  
Karen DiCristofaro, Notary Public  
Allegheny County  
My commission expires April 11, 2026

# What to know as Mega Millions jackpot soars to nearly \$1 billion

The winning numbers for a nearly \$1 billion Mega Millions lottery prize will be drawn Friday night, offering sudden riches to any lucky player who matches them and almost certain disappointment for everyone else.

Since three months have passed without a winner, the Mega Millions jackpot has grown to an estimated \$977 million. That large prize reflects the incredibly long odds of winning the jackpot, as the longer the stretch without a winner, the more the prize grows.

The jackpot ranks as the 10th largest in U.S. lottery history — about half the size of a record \$2.04 billion Powerball prize won in November 2022.

### HOW DO I PLAY?

Players can buy tickets for \$2 and select six numbers from separate pools.

Five of the selections come from one pool, with different numbers from 1 to 70, and the other is for the Mega Ball, with numbers from 1 to 25.

Some states also give players the option of paying more for different options that increase payouts or give people extra sets of numbers.

People can pick their own numbers — and some play the same numbers each time — but most players opt for the quick pick option, which lets a computer generate random numbers.

Mega Millions holds drawings twice a week, at 11 p.m. EDT on Tuesday and Fridays, telecast from a television studio in Atlanta.

The numbers are also quickly posted on the game's website.

### HOW MUCH WOULD I WIN?

A lot, but likely a lot less

than you might think.

First, that's because the advertised jackpot of \$977 million is for a sole winner who is paid through an annuity, with an initial payment and then annual checks for 29 years.

Nearly all winners actually prefer a cash payout, which for Friday night's drawing would be an estimated \$461 million — less than half the number splashed across billboards and in neon ads at convenience stores.

Before forking over the money, lottery officials also would deduct 24% for federal taxes.

The final tax bill could ultimately be higher though, as some of the winnings could be subject to the top federal tax bracket of 37%.

State taxes also could be assessed, depending on where a player bought the winning ticket.

There also is a chance that more than one person will buy a winning ticket — as in 2016, when there were three winning tickets for a \$1.6 billion lottery jackpot. Whatever the jackpot amount, it could be divvied into smaller prizes.

### SO WHAT ARE THE ODDS?

Focusing on the amount of a jackpot prize misses the greater point — that you almost certainly will not win.

The odds of winning the Mega Millions jackpot are 1 in 302.6 million, and it's those low odds that enable the game to trundle along without a winner for months.

If the odds were better, people would win jackpots more frequently, so the top prizes wouldn't grow so large — and entice so many people to play.

In fact, Mega Millions lengthened its odds in 2019 in order to create bigger jackpots.

During the current stretch, there hasn't been a jackpot winner since Dec. 8, 2023. That's 29 consecutive drawings without someone matching all the numbers.

That said, lottery officials note there have been millions of winning tickets during that span, with prizes ranging from \$2 to \$1 million.

The key, they say, is to play for fun and take a chance to dream a little, but not with an expectation of getting rich.

And of course, eventually someone will win the jackpot.

### WHO RUNS THESE GAMES?

Mega Millions and Powerball, the other big lottery game, are run separately but both are overseen by state lotteries.

Mega Millions is played in 45 states as well as Washington, D.C., and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Powerball also operates in 45 states plus Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

The games don't operate in Alabama, Alaska, Hawaii, Nevada or Utah.

Both of the games raise money for the jurisdictions where they operate along with profits from other lottery games, such as scratch tickets.

Some states shift the money into their general funds while others use it for specific purposes, such as funding college scholarships or state parks.

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# Bud Murphy's LENTEN MENU



## SHRIMP! FISH! PIZZA!



### Lobster Bisque:

Creamy lobster bisque with a hint of Sherry  
Cup: \$3.50 Bowl: \$4.50

### The Mad Haddy

Icelandic Haddock served on a round bun with American Cheese, lettuce, tomato, pickle and Special Sauce for only \$6

### Steamed Garlic Shrimp:

Peeled and deveined shrimp in a savory garlic butter: 1/2 #..\$7 1#..\$12

### Fire Cracker Shrimp

Lightly breaded shrimp tossed in a spicy fire cracker sauce...\$7

**All our Lent specials are available 7 days a week starting Ash Wednesday through Good Friday!**

**Don't forget about our other meat free items!**

**Including our Breaded Cod, Fresh Breaded Haddock, Cajun Shrimp and Shrimp Basket!**

### Seafood Pizza

Garlic Oil Sauce, Shrimp and Crab, 4 Cheese Small...\$14.30 Large..\$15.75

### Lobster Ravioli

With sauteed shrimp in a lobster cream sauce served with garlic bread...\$13.99

### Fisherman's Platter:

Breaded Flounder, Shrimp and Scallops, Fries, Hush Puppies & Coleslaw..\$10.99

# 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](http://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.

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Amt. Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Sponsor to be Listed \_\_\_\_\_

City of Sponsor \_\_\_\_\_

Mail or bring to the Daily Courier • 127 West Apple Street, Connellsville, PA 15425  
Make checks payable to Daily Courier.

All ages puppies, dogs, cats and kittens are always available



The Daily Courier

724-628-2000



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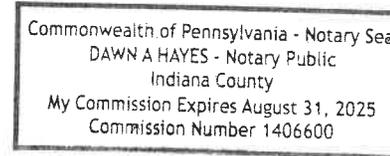
who being duly sworn according to laws, deposes and says, that (s)he is the Solicitor of the Indiana Gazette, that the said Indiana Gazette is a daily newspaper of general circulation, published in the borough of Indiana, in the County of Indiana, State of Pennsylvania, by the Indiana Gazette Inc., and 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:

3/15

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 | _____ | \$675.00 |
| Proof of Intent      | _____ | \$ 15.00 |
| Total                | _____ | \$690.00 |

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 \_\_\_\_\_

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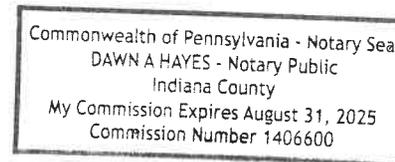
who being duly sworn according to laws, deposes and says, that (s)he is the Solicitor of the Indiana Gazette, that the said Indiana Gazette is a daily newspaper of general circulation, published in the borough of Indiana, in the County of Indiana, State of Pennsylvania, by the Indiana Gazette Inc., and 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:

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By \_\_\_\_\_

# Spring for Amish people in Pa. means ‘mud sales’

By **MARK SCOLFORO**  
Associated Press

GORDONVILLE — A couple hundred used buggies — horses not included — were lined up and ready for the auctioneer's gavel last weekend when day began at the Gordonville mud sale, a local Amish tradition dating to the 1960s.

Mud sales are country auctions that benefit volunteer fire departments across what the Amish community refers to as the Lancaster settlement, located some 70 miles west of Philadelphia where the devout Christian group began to settle about 300 years ago.

They don't sell mud, although a cold rain brought plenty of it. The name refers to early spring, when wet fields have begun to thaw but may not be ready for the plow. Gordonville's mud sale, one of at least a dozen being held this spring in the region, drew thousands of bidders and was expected to net the fire department about \$100,000, about 10 percent of the total proceeds.

Amish people make and donate much of the food and sale items and are the buyers of most of the buggies and the array of horse-drawn farm equipment. They organize and run sales, often serv-

ing as auctioneers.

Michael and Kristen Dean, a couple from Oxford, said Saturday they were enjoying a fun day of mixing with Amish people in hopes of finding a bargain on used fencing. The Deans are regulars at Lancaster County mud sales and a week earlier had purchased a greenhouse at the Bart Township Fire Company mud sale in Quarryville.

"It's bigger than you think when you're trying to get it on a truck bed," Kristen Dean said.

George Olivio drove about 90 minutes from his home in Rosenhayn, N.J., to seek deals among the tools and hunting gear. As he carried chicken corn soup, horseradish and shoofly pie to his vehicle, Olivio recalled how the Amish people seemed less welcoming at his first Gordonville sale about 40 years ago.

"When I first started coming, they were very standoffish. Now most of them are pretty doggone friendly," Olivio said.

Gideon Fisher, who chairs the Gordonville mud sale committee, said that as more fellow Amish people have sought work off the farm, there has been a shift in interactions with others. He sees it as a good thing.

"You know, 50 years or 100

years ago, probably most of the Amish were farmers. And now today there's a lot of them going out — roofing, construction, all kinds of other jobs," Fisher said. "It's becoming more usual — we're mingling."

The first mud sale was apparently held in 1965 by the Bart Township Fire Company, roughly 6 miles south of Gordonville, according to Steve Nolt, director of the Young Center for Anabaptist and Pietist Studies at nearby Elizabethtown College. Within about a decade, similar sales had sprung up in Gordonville, Farmersville, Strasburg and Gap.

The social aspect of the event is unmistakable, with Amish adults greeting old friends warmly and discussing the price of milk and the relative merits of used scooters, rusty wagon parts and fresh doughnuts. Clusters of children roam the grounds, some pulling wagons to help buyers move heavy goods to their cars, others swarming stands selling candy and baseball cards.

From inside a trailer built by her bishop, the title of local Amish church leaders, Sadie S. King's wares included scrapple, homemade bologna and six quarts of her own horseradish. She lives

about a mile and a half from the fire hall and has plenty of reasons to support the cause — Gordonville firefighters have helped put out her own shed fires.

A hand-drawn sign advertised catnip for \$1 a bag. "Oh yeah, I sell a lot of that," King said.

Among the bidders on Saturday, Amish buyers were concentrated in the open field where some of the used buggies that can run as much as \$16,000 new were going for a few thousand dollars. Amish people from Wisconsin bought 15 of the buggies, and on Monday they removed the wheels as they loaded them and other purchases into a tractor-trailer to ship home.

A more mixed crowd of Amish and non-Amish bidders were wedged into tents selling tools and other farm goods, with prices like \$200 for a leather harness and \$10 for an old pitchfork. Sale items included a row of 12 forklifts, industrial sized air compressors, a small sea of lawn furniture and, in the crafts tent, handmade wooden birdhouses of every size and description.

Near the fire hall were auctions of antiques, used furniture and plants — and mostly non-Amish bidders. About

400 quilts and a variety of books were auctioned off in the fire hall's main vehicle bay. Downstairs in the basement, Amish women were doing a brisk business in \$2 hot dogs, \$4 breakfast sandwiches and seemingly every flavor of pie.

In recent years, Gordonville's sale has grossed more than a million dollars.

It no longer sells used firearms and the sales of horses and other animals ended during the COVID-19 pandemic. Organizers also needed more parking, so they pulled the plug on games of corner ball, a dodgeball-like sport enjoyed by Amish boys and known as Eck balle in the Pennsylvania Dutch language.

In booming Lancaster, among the fastest growing counties in Pennsylvania, large Amish families and the cost of farmland has put pressure on the traditional lives they prefer. Weak milk prices are also forcing change.

Jeff Stoltzfus, a Penn State Extension educator, said that over the past 15 years, some Amish farmers in Lancaster have traded in dairy farming to focus on vegetable farming.

"I would say of our commercial vegetable farmers in the state, probably 60 (per-

cent) to 70 percent are probably going to be plain community folks," he said.

There are signs the Amish people in Lancaster are determined to remain amid their half-million neighbors in Lancaster County. The Lancaster settlement extends into neighboring Chester County with smaller numbers in Berks and Dauphin counties in Pennsylvania and Cecil County, Md. It has grown from 95 church districts and more than 16,000 people in 1990 to 257 districts and 44,000 last year, Nolt said.

The rules that govern Amish life and interaction with the wider world vary from group to group, although the wearing of plain dark clothes and the use of horse-drawn transportation are widely observed. Amish people are now in 32 states and Canada, with a total population approaching 400,000, a majority living in Pennsylvania, Ohio and Indiana.

Nolt said that in recent years, four clusters of Amish groups from the Lancaster settlement have established themselves in Bedford County and Littlestown; Points, W.Va.; and Farmville, Va. Together they may total about 500 people, during a time when the Lancaster settlement grew by about 8,000.

BRUSH VALLEY VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPT.  
**BBQ Chicken Halves**  
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---

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**Indiana County Humane Society**  
**SUNDAY BINGO**

Doors Open 4:30

- 4 - \$50 Early Birds
- 12 - \$125 Regulars

**GAMES START 6:00 P.M.**

(Subject to Attendance)  
2 Special Games - \$250 each  
Plus Fast Bingo • All Back

**\$2000 Progressive Jackpot**

All Games: \$35 18-on, \$30 12-on

**Indiana Elks Lodge**  
475 S 13th Street, Indiana  
Bingo Manager Bob Lambert

**INSTANT TICKETS**

## NOTICE OF PROPOSED GAS COST RATE CHANGES

### To Our Customers:

Effective January 1, 2023, the Peoples Companies legal entities were merged. As such, Peoples Natural Gas Company LLC became Peoples Natural Gas Company LLC – Peoples Natural Gas Division (“PNGD” or “Peoples Natural Gas Division”) and Peoples Gas Company became Peoples Natural Gas Company LLC – Peoples Gas Division (“PGD” or “Peoples Gas Division”).

**Peoples Gas Division is filing a request with the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (“PUC”) to increase your natural gas rates as of October 1, 2024. This filing also includes a request to merge the Allegheny Valley Capacity Charge (“AVC”) and apply to both divisions. This notice describes the company's rate request, the PUC's role, and what actions you can take.**

**Peoples Gas Division has requested an overall gas cost rate increase of \$3.7 million per year.**

Based upon current tariff rates, if the company's entire request is approved:

- The total bill for a residential customer using 80 Mcf per year would increase from \$89.98 to \$92.91 per month or by 3.3%.
- The total bill for a small commercial/industrial customer using 250 Mcf per year would increase from \$223.75 to \$232.04 per month or by 3.7%.
- The total bill for a medium commercial/industrial customer using 1,750 Mcf per year would increase from \$1,347.69 to \$1,374.84 per month or by 2.0%.

To find out your customer class or how the requested changes may affect your natural gas bill, contact Peoples at **1-800-764-0111**. The rates requested by the company may be found in Tariff No. 8. You may examine the material filed with the PUC which explains the requested rate changes and the reasons for it. A copy of this material is kept at Peoples Gas' office and is available on the Company's website at [www.peoples-gas.com](http://www.peoples-gas.com).

The state agency which approves rates for public utilities is the PUC. The PUC will examine the requested rate change and can prevent existing rates from changing until it investigates and/or holds hearings on the request. The company must prove that the requested rates are reasonable. After examining the evidence, the PUC may grant all, some or none of the request or may reduce existing rates.

The PUC may change the amount of the rate increase or decrease requested by the utility for each customer class. As a result, the rate charged to you may be different than the rate requested by the company and shown above.

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1. You can file a formal complaint. If you want a hearing before a judge, you must file a formal complaint. By filing a formal complaint, you assure yourself the opportunity to take part in hearings about the rate change request. All complaints should be filed with the PUC as soon as possible.

If no formal complaints are filed, the Commission may grant all, some or none of the request without holding a hearing before a judge.

2. You can send a letter to the PUC telling why you object to the requested rate change. Sometimes there is information in these letters that makes the PUC aware of problems with the company's service or management. This information can be helpful when the PUC investigates the rate request.

Send your letter or request for a formal complaint form to the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission, Post Office Box 3265, Harrisburg, PA 17105-3265.

3. You can be a witness at a public input hearing. Public input hearings are held if the Commission opens an investigation of the company's rate change request and if there is a large number of customers interested in the case. At these hearings you have the opportunity to present your views in person to the PUC judge hearing the case and the company representatives. All testimony given “under oath” becomes part of the official rate case record. These hearings are held in the service area of the company.



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AFFIDAVIT OF DISTRIBUTION

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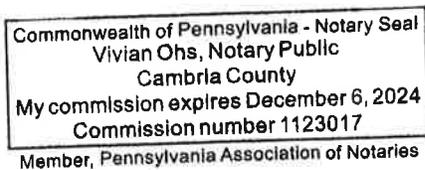
I, CHRISTINE MARKEFKA, being duly sworn on oath now and during all times herein stated, have been the publisher and designated agent of the publication known as, THE TRIBUNE-DEMOCRAT ("Publication") and have full knowledge of the facts herein stated as follows:  
The ad for PEOPLES NATURAL GAS ("Ad/Advertiser") with Insertion Order No. 50910 was distributed to the Publication's full circulation on the 15<sup>TH</sup> day of MARCH, 2024.

By: Christine Markefka

Subscribed and sworn to before me

this 18<sup>TH</sup> day of MARCH 2024

Vivian Ohs  
Notary Public



Money&Markets

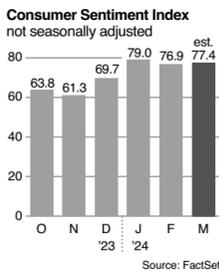
Tracking industrial production

The Federal Reserve issues its monthly update on industrial production today. Economists predict industrial production was unchanged in February after slipping 0.1% in January due to weaker manufacturing and mining output.



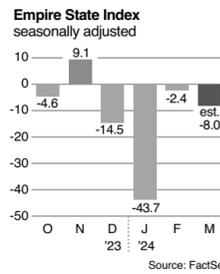
Eye on consumers

The University of Michigan releases its preliminary March snapshot of U.S. consumer sentiment today. Analysts expect the consumer sentiment index, which measures how Americans are feeling about the economy and their personal finances, improved to 77.4 this month.



Manufacturing bellwether

The Federal Reserve Bank of New York releases its latest index of manufacturing activity today. Economists project the index fell to a negative 8 this month.



Market Summary

Table with columns: INDEX, LAST, CHG. %CHG. Rows include Dow Industrials, Dow Transportation, NYSE Composite, etc.

NYSE Most Active

Table with columns: NAME, VOL (00s), LAST, CHG. Rows include FordM, Palantir, BkofAm, etc.

Nasdaq Most Active

Table with columns: NAME, VOL (00s), LAST, CHG. Rows include Tesla, AMD, Apple Inc S, etc.

Main market data table with columns: NAME, DIV, LAST, CHG. Rows include ADT Inc, AES Corp, AFLAC, etc.

Wall Street slips after poor inflation report

BY STAN CHOE

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — U.S. stocks slipped Thursday after a mixed batch of economic data seemed to drive the final nail into hopes that easier interest rates may arrive very soon.

rose after a report showed inflation was a touch hotter at the wholesale level last month than economists expected. It's the latest in a string of data on inflation that's been worse than forecast, which has kept the door closed on earlier hopes that the Federal Reserve could start cutting interest rates at its meeting next week.

to data from CME Group. The Fed's main rate is at its highest level since 2001 in hopes of grinding down inflation, and cuts would relieve pressure on the economy and financial system.

The day's mix of data could push the Federal Reserve to signal it foresees only two cuts to rates this year, down from three, according to Brian Jacobson, chief economist at Annex Wealth Management.

on inflation. The government also said retail sales were weaker in January than earlier thought. Strong spending by U.S. households has been one of the linchpins keeping the economy out of a recession despite high interest rates.

NOTICE OF PROPOSED RATE CHANGES

To Our Customers: Peoples Natural Gas Company ("Peoples" or the "Company") is filing a request with the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission ("PUC") to increase your natural gas distribution rates as of February 27, 2024.

Peoples, which includes the Peoples Natural Gas Division and the Peoples Gas Division, has collectively requested an overall net distribution rate increase of \$156.0 million per year. In this filing, Peoples is proposing to unify the distribution rates of the two divisions.

Advertisement for Peoples Natural Gas, including contact information and a logo.

Biden opposes plan to sell U.S. Steel to Japanese firm

BY JOSH BOAK

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — President Joe Biden came out in opposition to the planned sale of U.S. Steel to Nippon Steel, of Japan, saying Thursday that the U.S. needs to "maintain strong American steel companies powered by American steelworkers."

President cites need for 'American steelworkers' nominee, Donald Trump. The Democratic president has made the restoration of American manufacturing a cornerstone of his agenda as he seeks reelection, and he has the endorsements of the AFL-CIO and several other prominent unions.

Large advertisement for The Meadows frozen custard, featuring a list of flavors, a photo of a shop, and contact information.

Mnuchin plans to form group to buy TikTok

Former Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said Thursday that he will put together an investor group to buy TikTok after the House passed a bill that would ban the popular video app in the U.S. if its China-based owner does not sell its stake.

## 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:

March 15, 2024

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

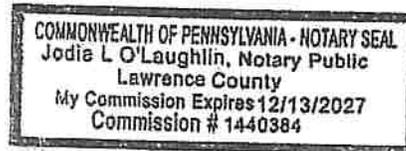
SIGNED:

Cindy DeProspero  
Cindy DeProspero

Subscribed to and sworn to me this 15th day of March 2024.

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

My commission expires: December 13, 2027



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# Commission reviews plans for Aldi, Starbucks

BY DEBBIE WACHTER  
NEW CASTLE NEWS

Plans for an Aldi grocery store and a Starbucks restaurant in Neshannock Township are advancing on the drawing board.

The plan for both businesses, dubbed the New Castle-Aldi Starbucks plan, was reviewed Wednesday by the Lawrence County Planning Commission at its monthly meeting.

The developer, Key Development Partners LLC of Chicago, is acquiring the property currently occupied by Colonial Lanes bowling alley and the former FirstMerit Bank building in front of it on Wilmington Road, according to Tysen O. Miller, an engineer with KU Resources Inc., of Duquesne. Tysen was retained as the project consultant.

Key Development Partners plans to build a 20,664-square-foot grocery store and a 2,286-foot Starbucks coffee restaurant on those

premises, which are in the C-2 Highway Commercial Zone.

Miller answered questions for the commission members about the proposed project, saying Starbucks will include a seating area inside.

Allen Miller, deputy county planning director, reviewed the plans and made recommendations to the commission, which in turn agreed to forward them to the township supervisors.

Miller noted certain details, including a stormwater management plan, are lacking and should be completed before the township approves it. Miller also commented on the required width of driveways providing access to parking areas.

The plan does not show the net floor area of the Starbucks business but states it will have three employees.

Miller also commented the Aldi store is required to have two loading berths, but the plan proposes only one

heavy-duty concrete loading pad and a loading dock.

He noted construction cannot begin until the final land development plan has been approved and the site plan is recorded at the courthouse.

The commission also reviewed a land development plan for a solar array off Harlansburg Road in Scott Township, proposed by Sunrise Energy of Pittsburgh. The plan had been given a conditional review by the supervisors at their regular public meeting last week. About 30 residents attended that meeting.

The company plans to install contiguous solar panels on a section of a 24.116-acre tract.

Matthew Kinney, engineer for project consultant Pennoni, said the company is working with the Lawrence County Conservation District to obtain a required National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit.

The company also is waiting for a highway occupancy permit.

In keeping with the requirements of the township solar ordinance, the company has redesigned its plans to move the operation from a 25-foot setback to a 150-foot setback from the road.

The company is required to provide the township with an estimated cost of performing the decommissioning activities required, prepared by a qualified engineer, and provide 110 percent of the estimated cost of decommissioning the site after its lifespan. Kinney said the project has a life expectancy of 25 years.

Miller noted that all solar energy facilities under the township ordinance must be completely enclosed by fencing that is a minimum of 8 feet high. The plans indicate that the fencing proposed is only seven feet high, he said.

dwachter@ncnewsonline.com

# Police charge man wanted in chase, crash

BY DEBBIE WACHTER  
NEW CASTLE NEWS

A man wanted for reportedly fleeing police and driving at greater than 100 mph through New Castle's East Side and Shenango Township and ending in a crash is facing 31 criminal charges.

New Castle police on Wednesday filed four felony counts, two misdemeanors and 25 summary traffic offenses against Lucas Rubin, 31, of Harrison Street, following a high-speed chase through the City of New Castle. The chase ended when the vehicle Rubin was driving crashed into an embankment on Addis

Street at East Washington Street in the early morning hours, sending his two passengers to hospitals. Rubin then got out and fled and police were unable to find him.

A warrant has been issued for Rubin's arrest on the charges. The police reportedly spotted him driving a Hyundai station wagon near the Columbus Inner Belt and tried to pull him over because he was wanted on a felony warrant for 10 pending forgery charges, and on a bench warrant from the courts for DUI-related charges.

Police said at times his speed was clocked in various places at

between 50 and 110 mph.

Rubin's wife, Alexis Panella Rubin, 40, who has addresses on Harrison Street and Edgewood Avenue, was wanted on a bench warrant for a narcotics possession charge and was taken by ambulance to UPMC Jameson Hospital for treatment, then lodged in the Lawrence County jail.

The other passenger, Robyn Colleen Dean, 58, of Rose Avenue, was transported to St. Elizabeth's Youngstown Hospital with injuries. No information was available about her condition. She also has drug-related charges pending in court.

The vehicle was

towed.

Counts against Rubin are fleeing and eluding police, flight to avoid apprehension, two counts each of accidents involving personal injury and recklessly endangering other persons and 25 counts of obedience to traffic control device violations.

Anyone who knows of Rubin's whereabouts is asked to contact the New Castle police at (724) 656-3570.

All suspects are considered innocent until proven guilty or adjudicated in court.

# Laurel School Board approves bid for water project

BY NICHOLAS VERCILLA  
NEW CASTLE NEWS

The Laurel School Board approved a bid for the district's planned water system upgrade project during its voting meeting Wednesday.

The bid, \$352,525, was through Union Township's Book & Proch. The project was budgeted for this school year through capital reserve funding.

In other business, the board renewed its agreement with New Castle-based Angelus Therapeutic Services through the 2024-25 school year to provide mental health services to students and staff and will pay for it with a \$112,703 Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency mental health grant.

The board also:  
• Accepted kindergarten teacher Carrie Mason's retirement at the end of the school year and the resignation of band manager Patty Miles, retroactive



to March 4; approved Irelyn Pearce as an independent WPIAL gymnast next year; approved Grove City College student Kassi Barry as a student teacher; renewed a five-year contract with The Nutrition Group as the district's food service provider and approved three students from the Slippery Rock Area School District to join the vocational-agriculture program next school year. Slippery Rock is responsible for tuition and their parents are responsible for transportation.

•The board approved a college within high school agreement with Butler County Community College next year to offer a productivity applications course, which teaches basics of computer hardware, electronic communication, web browsing and productivity software, like spreadsheets and database applications. Tuition is \$444 a student.

•Freshman Contessa Cotelesse and senior Alexis Brua were presented the district's Pride and Promise Award after competing in the first girls state wrestling championships last weekend. Cotelesse won the WPIAL's first 148-pound championship. Meanwhile, the eighth-grade boys basketball team was recognized as Tri-County champions.

•A moment of silence was held for former school board president Marcia S. Anderson, who died March 7 at 81.

nvercilla@ncnewsonline.com

# Volunteers needed for downtown cleanup

Tri-County Cleanways will host a cleanup of downtown New Castle from 9 a.m. to noon Saturday.

Volunteers for the litter pickup and beautification work are asked to meet in the Washington Centre parking lot at 8:45 a.m.

and wear sturdy shoes or boots, long pants or jeans and long-sleeved shirts. Work will commence rain, snow or shine. Gloves, safety vests and other cleanup supplies will be provided. Lunch will be provided.

For more information,

call (724) 658-6925 or email tcleanways@comcast.net.

Tri-County Cleanways is partnering with the City of New Castle, New Visions for Lawrence County and the Lawrence-Mercer Recycling Solid Waste Department.

## FOR THE RECORD

Today's weather

AccuWeather.com

Forecast for Friday, March 15, 2024



©2024 AccuWeather, Inc.

Sunrise: 7:30 a.m.  
Sunset: 7:29 p.m.

## WEATHER

**TONIGHT:** Mostly cloudy early, partly cloudy after midnight.

Low: 33.

**TOMORROW:** Intervals of clouds and sunshine.

High: 58.

## LOTTERY PENNSYLVANIA THURSDAY EVENING WILD CARD: 6

Pick 2: 71

Pick 3: 912

Pick 4: 9217

Pick 5: 28200

Cash 5: 2-14-15-18-25

Match 6: 8-11-21-27-30-39

## THURSDAY MIDDAY WILD CARD: 4

Pick 2: 48

Pick 3: 320

Pick 4: 3514

Pick 5: 33863

Treasure Hunt: 3-8-13-16-19

## OHIO THURSDAY EVENING

Pick 3: 170

Pick 4: 3056

Pick 5: 38353

Rolling Cash 5: 4-26-28-32-37

## THURSDAY MIDDAY

Pick 3: 023

Pick 4: 2754

Pick 5: 72296

## District judge

JERRY G. CARTWRIGHT State police charged the following:

•Matthew Mark Kozlowski, 30, of Willoughby, Ohio, small amount of marijuana possession, two counts of drug possession and four counts of use/possession of drug paraphernalia.

•Brady C. Welsh, 23, of Ellwood City, two DUI counts.

•Anthony Wayne Phillips, 62, of New Castle, small amount of marijuana possession, use/possession of drug paraphernalia and disorderly conduct.

•Victor Warren Spincic, 45, of New Castle, three DUI counts.

•Daniel Douglas Nicely, 55, of Hermitage, three DUI counts.



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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,

Oil City Derrick/Franklin News-Herald ("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):

3/15/2024

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

By:   
Signature of affiant

Subscribed and sworn to before me  
This 18<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2024.

Notary Seal:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Notary Public

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania - Notary Seal  
Karry Russell, Notary Public  
Venango County  
My commission expires February 19, 2028  
Commission number 1441526

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## Cranberry

Continued from Page A1

**Dog kennel**

The supervisors tabled a motion to vote on a conditional use hearing for a dog kennel and grooming business to be opened in the old Cranberry High School on Main Street in Seneca.

The hearing was held March 5, and the supervisors have 45 days from that date to issue a decision. The vote was tabled until the next regular meeting at 7 p.m. March 28.

Supervisors Chairman Matt McSparren said after the vote was tabled Thursday that the supervisors want to consult with their legal counsel, who is not available this week, before issuing a decision, since he had just learned that morning that the building is owned by a nonprofit, F.H.

Supervisors, he explained, wanted to check with the township solicitor to ensure no additional documentation would be necessary to ensure Andrew Weckerly, who became chief executive officer of the nonprofit during fall, had ultimate authority over the land parcel.

Weckerly, who attended the meeting, said he had brought paperwork showing he has authority, but supervisors noted they still wanted to seek legal counsel in order to make an informed decision on handling a nonprofit, including questions such as whether the provided documents need notarization.

"We don't know," McSparren said.

Contracted consultant Chad Findlay, who has been filling in for aspects of the township manager role since Heil's resignation, explained

to Weckerly, "They want to make sure all the U's are crossed and the I's are dotted. A lot of times, township supervisors will take the entire 45 days to make a decision."

**Approvals**

Supervisors approved two uses of the bike trail for 5K races, one starting at 8:30 a.m. April 6, for the CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) of Venango County; the other from 7 a.m. to noon May 18, for the Sandycreek parent-teacher organization.

Supervisors approved payment for new zoning hearing board members to attend online zoning classes, which Findlay and township zoning and code enforcement officer Regina Deloe recommended as "beneficial" for the new members.

Supervisors approved the Cranberry-Venango General Authority's withdrawal of an appeal to the Environmental Hearing Board of the state Department of Environmental Protection, regarding plans for a sewage plant that had been submitted in 2018.

Supervisor Mike Deibert, who also is the General Authority chair, explained after the meeting that the plans for a potential township-owned sewage treatment plant at the bottom of Seneca Hill, with outflow into Sage Run, had been submitted to DEP in 2018 but had been rejected, at which point the General Authority had appealed the decision.

"It has been sitting on appeal for years," he said. "We don't see any progress moving forward at this point; so we decided to terminate it."

Deibert said the township has a sewage agreement with Oil City, and the General Authority doesn't have plans

at the moment to construct a wastewater treatment plant in the township.

**ATV feasibility study**

Informationally, Findlay told supervisors that the Oil Registry Alliance of Business, Industry and Tourism sent a letter to the township on the ORA's recently completed All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) feasibility study.

The nonprofit seeks to create ATV trails in the area, and has found it feasible, but "they've been having a hard time getting property owners on board with this," Findlay explained.

The township, he said, never had roads designated for use with ATVs, but "this might be something to approach that discussion, and maybe get involved a little more and find out what other municipalities and maybe what other landowners in other municipalities are participating in this."

McSparren observed he'd seen the study, and back roads and township roads were being sought to use with ATVs.

"Apparently, there seems to be a lot of interest in this," he said, and noted Butler, Martintown and Warren have ATV trails.

**Other business**

Road master Ted Williams said the traffic light on Route 257 in front of UPMC Northwest had been malfunctioning and only letting five or six cars through each cycle on Route 257. The problem was caused by water getting into the workings of the lights and has since been repaired.

Deloe said she had issued five permits in February with a total inventory value of \$1,212,930, one of which went to a warehouse addition to Matrice Unlimited and one of

which was for a new home. Deloe said a variance request heard by the zoning hearing board in February for a second dwelling on a parcel had been granted, and a special exception hearing will be held by the panel at 6 p.m. March 26 for batting cages in the A-1 zoning district, for the Cranberry Area School District.

**HELEN FIELDING**, reporter for The Derrick and The News-Herald, can be reached at helenfielding.the Derrick@gmail.com or 814-677-8374.

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## POLICE & FIRE CALLS

### Richland Township crash

Clarion County 911 said a single-vehicle tractor-trailer crash occurred near mile marker 49 on Interstate 80 eastbound at about 6:05 p.m. Thursday.

Clarion state police and Emlenton volunteer firefighters responded, 911 said.

The scene was still active about an hour later.

er, and no further information was available.

### Oil City brush fire

Oil City fire chief Derek Long said a very small brush fire broke out near the Dollar General on Upper Seneca Street in Oil City at about 12:30 p.m. Thursday.

Oil City firefighters responded and had the fire out "in a couple minutes," Long said.

## Weather

National weather AccuWeather.com

Forecast for Friday, March 15, 2024

Bands separate high temperature zones for the day.



**NATIONAL SUMMARY:** The risk of flooding will increase in the South today as rounds of rain and thunderstorms expand and become heavy. Rain associated with this storm will stretch to the north and east through southern Maine. The Southwest can expect showers of rain and snow, with rain reaching as far west as southern California as a storm lingers nearby.

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### Local forecast Extended forecast

Today: Cloudy. High 53. Low 33.  
 Tonight: Partly cloudy. High 58. Low 39.  
 Saturday: Partly cloudy. High 58. Low 39.  
 Sunday: Cloudy with showers. High 44. Low 29.  
 Monday: Cloudy. Flurries possible. High 35. Low 24.  
 Tuesday: Cloudy. Flurries possible. High 38. Low 29.

## Route 66 resurfacing to begin next month

From staff reports

PennDOT has announced that a resurfacing project along a portion of Route 66 between Leisure Road and Olean Trail Road in Porter, Redbank and Limestone townships in Clarion County will begin April 1. Traffic on work days will be reduced to a single lane with flaggers. Work will be done Monday through Fridays between 7 a.m. and 5 p.m. for most of the project, weather permitting. Contractor IA Construction of Franklin is expected to complete the \$2.4 million project by the end of June.

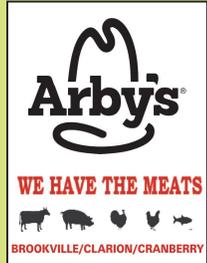
### Open house is March 23 for 100th birthday

The family of World War II veteran Charles Cauvel is hosting an open house in honor of his 100th birthday from 2 to 4 p.m. Saturday, March 23, at the Seneca fire hall on Route 257. An incense date was published in Thursday's newspaper.



### HAVE YOU SEEN ANY OF THESE MISSING CHILDREN?

- 1). I always check first with my parents or the person in charge before I go anywhere or get into a car, even with someone I know.
- 2). I always check first with my parents or a trusted adult before I accept anything from anyone, even from someone I know.
- 3). I always take a friend with me when I go places or play outside.
- 4). I know my name, address, telephone number, and my parents' names.
- 5). I say no if someone tries to touch me or treat me in a way that makes me feel scared, uncomfortable, or confused.



**Kiara Lynn Brandt**  
 Missing Since: Feb 26, 2024  
 Erie, PA  
 Age Now: 17  
 Female



**Adrean Lee Palmer**  
 Missing Since: Dec 31, 2023  
 Erie, PA  
 Age Now: 16  
 Male



**Alexis Hostutler**  
 Missing Since: Dec 31, 2023  
 Erie, PA  
 Age Now: 16  
 Female



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# Pittsburgh Post-Gazette®

2201 Sweeney Drive  
Clinton, Pennsylvania, 15026

## AFFIDAVIT OF DISTRIBUTION

STATE OF: PENNSYLVANIA  
COUNTY OF: ALLEGHENY  
CITY OF: PITTSBURGH

I, Brianna DeJames, being duly sworn on oath says he is and during all times herein stated has been the publisher of the publisher's designated agent in charge of the publication known as

**PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE** ("Publisher")

and has full knowledge of the facts herein stated as follows: Print Advertising was distributed March 2024, in accordance with the campaign dates indicated below:

Advertiser: Peoples Natural Gas  
Order #: 169664  
Date(s) of Insertion: 3/17/2024  
Ad Size: 1/4 Pg-Vert-(3x9.79")  
Ad Cost: \$3,712.50  
Order Total: \$3,712.50

By: *B. DeJames*  
Brianna DeJames

State of: Pennsylvania  
County of: Allegheny

Subscribed and sworn to before me  
This 18th day of March, 2024

Notary Seal:

*Kelly M. Maseth*

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania - Notary Seal  
Kelly M. Maseth, Notary Public  
Allegheny County  
My commission expires March 15, 2025  
Commission number 1275373  
Member, Pennsylvania Association of Notaries

National

# Letter carrier robberies continue as the U.S. Postal Service, union and lawmakers seek solutions

By David Sharp  
Associated Press

When the U.S. Postal Service launched Project Safe Delivery last year, officials pledged they would be “doubling down” on efforts to combat growing rates of letter carrier robberies.

The crackdown has led to hundreds of arrests, and robberies slowed toward the end of the year. But, overall, the number of postal carriers who were robbed in 2023 rose again and the number who were injured nearly doubled as criminals continued to target carriers for “arrow keys” that allow access to mailboxes.

Legislation is being introduced in Congress to accelerate the replacement of tens of thousands of mailbox keys, boost prosecutions and review sentencing guidelines.

All of it can't come soon enough for letter carriers.

“We're like sitting ducks out there,” said Houston mail carrier Tijuana Abbott, who accused postal leadership of failing to do enough to address the problem. “Enough is enough.”

Postal carrier robberies climbed to 643 last year, an increase of nearly 30%, and the number of robberies resulting in injuries doubled to 61, according to figures provided by the U.S. Postal Inspection Service in response to a Freedom of Information Act request by The Associated Press.

All told, robberies grew sixfold over the past decade and the number of postal carriers held at gunpoint increased even more, according to an analysis of the postal statistics.

Under Project Safe Delivery, which was launched last May, there have been more

than 1,200 arrests for mail thefts and letter carrier robberies. The Postal Inspection Service also conducted targeted law enforcement surges in trouble spots including Chicago, San Francisco and cities across Ohio.

The effort also included the deployment of more than 10,000 high-security blue boxes in high-risk locations, and the installation of nearly 30,000 electronic locks on mail receptacles.

There is a glimmer of hope. Postal robberies dipped 19% over the past five months, while arrests for letter carrier robberies grew 73% so far in the 2024 fiscal year, said Jeff Adams, a postal service spokesman.

“We have been unrelenting in our pursuit of criminals who target postal employees and the U.S. mail. The efforts of our postal inspectors and law enforcement partners have yielded positive results,” Postmaster General Louis DeJoy said. “We are not done.”

Postal leaders and the letter carrier union were incensed when a federal judge in San Francisco last month sentenced a man who held a gun to a postal carrier's head to just 30 days behind bars.

Mr. DeJoy called it “unacceptable.” The leader of the letter carriers union called it “absolutely ludicrous.”

“Postal carriers should be able to do their job without any concern of someone putting a gun in their face or in any way assaulting them while they're just trying to do their job and deliver to the American people their mail,” said U.S. Attorney Kenneth Parker, whose district in southern Ohio dealt with growing postal carrier robberies.

Mr. Parker said the rob-

beries represent a “threat to democracy” because in addition to envelopes containing personal checks, prescriptions and other important items, many now use the mail to send in ballots.

A bill is expected to be introduced in Congress soon to appropriate federal dollars to help replace the antiquated keys with electronic versions that have no value to criminals, require all 93 U.S. attorneys to designate a prosecutor for postal crime, and to review sentencing guidelines for postal crimes, said Brian Renfro, president of the National Association of Letter Carriers.

The bipartisan legislation “provides resources to protect our dedicated postal service workers while making sure we are punishing criminals to the fullest extent of the law,” said Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick, R-Pa., the lead sponsor in the House.

Jeremiah Grant, a postal carrier in Oklahoma City, was held up in April 2022 by a man wearing a mask. He tried to take off his thick leather belt to which his key was attached while a gun was being pointed at him. The gunman also snatched his cellphone and smashed it.

Unnerved by the experience, Mr. Grant decided not to go back to his route.

“I'm no longer a letter carrier. I'm a clerk, because I don't feel safe going out there,” Mr. Grant said. “It's not a feeling that I can shake, and it's been almost two years now.”

Ms. Abbott, the Houston mail carrier, was victim of an attempted rape in which she fought off the knife-wielding attacker on her postal route 20 years ago. Ten years later, she was robbed of her arrow key.

Ms. Abbott worked through the trauma and still delivers mail. But she questions the sincerity of postal officials' efforts to stop crime.

“I believe they abandoned us. We are getting robbed of the keys and they're not doing anything about it,” she said. “I feel like they don't care.”

Though unique circumstances led to the 30-day sentence in the San Francisco case, federal law allows for a sentence of up to 10 years for an assault on a postal worker, and up to 25 years for a subsequent offense, officials said.



Nam Y. Huh/Associated Press

The number of robberies of postal carriers grew again in 2023 and the number of injuries nearly doubled, even as the U.S. Postal Service addressed postal crime.

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AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

State of Pennsylvania, }  
County of Jefferson, } SS.

The Punxsutawney Spirit

March 15, 2024

Personally appeared before the undersigned NOTARY PUBLIC

Etc., within and for said County and State, Deanna Mack  
a representative of The Spirit, a daily newspaper published at  
Punxsutawney, County of Jefferson, State of Pennsylvania, who being  
duly sworn, states on oath that the notice of which the annexed is a copy  
was

published in said newspaper for 1  
times, in the issues bearing dates of March 15, 2024

Affiant is not interested in the subject matter of the aforesaid notice or  
Advertisements, and all allegations in the foregoing statement as to  
time,  
Place and character of publication are true.

Deanna Mack

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 15

Day of March 20 24

Robert L. Becker

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania - Notary Seal  
Robert L. Becker, Notary Public  
Jefferson County  
My commission expires January 25, 2027  
Commission number 1244300  
Member, Pennsylvania Association of Notaries

# Top Democrat Schumer calls for new elections in Israel, saying Netanyahu is an obstacle to peace

By Mary Clare Jalonick and Ellen Knickmeyer  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer on Thursday called on Israel to hold new elections, saying he believes Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has “lost his way” and is an obstacle to peace in the region amid a growing humanitarian crisis in Gaza.

Schumer, the first Jewish majority leader in the Senate and the highest-ranking Jewish official in the U.S., strongly criticized Netanyahu in a 40-minute speech Thursday morning on the Senate floor. Schumer said the prime minister has put himself in a coalition of far-right extremists and “as a result, he has been too willing to tolerate the civilian toll in Gaza, which is pushing support for Israel worldwide to historic lows.”

“Israel cannot survive if it becomes a pariah,” Schumer said.

The high-level warning comes as an increasing number of Democrats have pushed back against Israel and as President Joe Biden has stepped up public pressure on Netanyahu’s government, arguing that he needs to pay more attention to the civilian death toll in Gaza amid the Israeli bombardment. The U.S. this month began airdrops of badly needed humanitarian aid and announced it will establish a temporary pier to get more assistance into Gaza via sea.

Schumer has so far positioned himself as a strong ally of the Israeli government, visiting the country just days after the brutal Oct. 7 attack by Hamas and giving a lengthy speech on the Senate floor in December decrying “brazen and widespread antisemitism the likes of which we haven’t seen in generations in this country, if ever.”

But he said on the Senate floor Thursday that the “Israeli people are being stifled right now by a governing vision that is stuck in the past.”

Schumer says Netanyahu, who has long opposed

Palestinian statehood, is one of several obstacles in the way of the two-state solution pushed by the United States. Netanyahu “has lost his way by allowing his political survival to take precedence over the best interests of Israel,” Schumer said.

The majority leader is also blaming right-wing Israelis, Hamas and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas. Until they are all removed from the equation, Schumer said, “there will never be peace in Israel and Gaza and the West Bank.”

The United States cannot dictate the outcome of an election in Israel, Schumer said, but “a new election is the only way to allow for a healthy and open decision-making process about the future of Israel, at a time when so many Israelis have lost their confidence in the vision and direction of their government.”

At the White House, national security spokesman John Kirby declined to weigh in on Schumer’s call for new elections, saying the White House is most focused on getting a temporary cease-fire in place.

“We know Leader Schumer feels strongly about this and we’ll certainly let him speak to it and to his comments,” Kirby said. “We’re going to stay focused on making sure that Israel has what it needs to defend itself while doing everything that they can to avoid civilian casualties.”

The speech drew a swift reprisal from Republicans. Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell said on the Senate floor immediately after Schumer’s remarks that “Israel deserves an ally that acts like one” and that foreign observers “ought to refrain from weighing in.”

The Democratic Party has an anti-Israel problem, McConnell said. “Either we respect their decisions or we disrespect their democracy,” he said.

And at a House GOP retreat in West Virginia, House Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., called Schumer’s speech “inappropriate.”

“It’s just plain wrong for

an American leader to play such a divisive role in Israeli politics while our closest ally in the region is in an existential battle for its very survival,” the Republican speaker said.

Netanyahu has long had a more cozy relationship with Republicans in the United States, most notably speaking at a joint session of Congress in 2015 at the invitation of GOP lawmakers to try to torpedo former President Barack Obama’s nuclear negotiations with Iran. The move infuriated Obama administration officials, who saw it as an end run around Obama’s presidential authority and unacceptably deep interference in U.S. politics and foreign policy.

Just this week, Netanyahu was invited to speak to Republican senators at a party retreat. But Israeli ambassador Michael Herzog took his place due to last minute scheduling issues, according to a person familiar with the closed-door meeting.

Democratic Sen. Brian Schatz of Hawaii, who is Jewish, praised Schumer’s remarks.

“This is a gutsy, historic speech from Leader Schumer,” he posted on X, formerly Twitter. “I know he didn’t arrive at this conclusion casually or painlessly.”

It is unclear how Schumer’s unusually direct call will be received in Israel, where the next parliamentary elections are scheduled for October 2026. Many Israelis hold Netanyahu responsible for failing to stop the Oct. 7 cross-border raid by Hamas, which killed 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and his popularity appears to have taken a hit as a result.

Protesters in Israel calling for early elections have charged that Netanyahu is making decisions based on keeping his right-wing coalition intact rather than Israel’s interests at a time of war. And they say he is endangering Israel’s strategic alliance with the United States by rejecting U.S. proposals for a post-war vision for Gaza in order to appease

the far-right members of his government.

U.S. priorities in the region have increasingly been hampered by those far-right members of his Cabinet, who share Netanyahu’s opposition to Palestinian statehood and other aims that successive U.S. administrations have seen as essential to resolving Palestinian-Israeli conflicts long-term.

In a hot-mic moment while speaking to lawmakers after his State of the Union address, Biden promised a “come to Jesus” moment with Netanyahu.

And Vice President Kamala Harris, Schumer and other lawmakers met last week in Washington with Benny Gantz, a member of Israel’s War Cabinet and a far more popular rival of Netanyahu — a visit that drew a rebuke from the Israeli prime minister.

Gantz joined Netanyahu’s government in the War Cabinet soon after the Hamas attacks. But Gantz is expected to leave the government once the heaviest fighting subsides, signaling the period of national unity has ended. A return to mass demonstrations could ramp up pressure on Netanyahu’s deeply unpopular coalition to hold early elections.

Schumer said that as the highest ranking Jewish elected official in the United States, he feels an obligation to speak out. He said his last name derives from the Hebrew word Shomer, or “guardian.”

“I also feel very keenly my responsibility as Shomer Yisroel — a guardian of the People of Israel,” he said.

Schumer said that if Israel tightens its control over Gaza and the West Bank and creates a “de facto single state,” then there should be no reasonable expectation that Hamas and their allies will lay down arms. It could mean constant war, he said.

“As a democracy, Israel has the right to choose its own leaders, and we should let the chips fall where they may,” Schumer said. “But the important thing is that Israelis are given a choice.”

# Prosecutors say they’re open to delaying Donald Trump’s March 25 hush-money trial for a month

By Michael R. Sisak  
Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — New York prosecutors said Thursday they are open to delaying the start of Donald Trump’s hush-money criminal trial by a month “in an abundance of caution” to give the former president’s lawyers time to review evidence they received only recently from a previous federal investigation into the matter.

The Manhattan district attorney’s office said in a court filing that it’s not opposed to adjourning the start of the trial for up to 30 days, but said it would fight the defense’s demand for a longer delay. The evidence Trump’s lawyers received from the U.S. attorney’s office in Manhattan is “largely irrelevant to the subject matter of this case,” the district attorney’s office said.

Jury selection in the hush-money trial is scheduled for March 25. It is one of four criminal cases against Trump, the presumptive Republican presidential nominee.

Trump’s lawyers are seeking a 90-day postponement and have also asked Judge Juan Manuel Merchan to dismiss the case, alleging that the last-minute disclosures violated rules governing the sharing of evidence. That process, called discovery, is routine in criminal cases and is intended to help ensure a fair trial.

Short trial delays because of evidence issues aren’t unusual.

Since March 4, Trump’s lawyers have received at least 84,000 pages of records from the U.S. attorney’s office, including a batch of 31,000 pages on Wednesday, according to a court filing.

The defense has also sought to delay the trial until after the Supreme Court rules on Trump’s presidential immunity claims, which his lawyers say could apply to some

of the allegations and evidence in the hush-money case. The Supreme Court is scheduled to hear oral arguments April 25.

Merchan has yet to rule on either request.

The New York case centers on allegations that Trump falsified his company’s internal records to hide the true nature of payments to his former lawyer and fixer Michael Cohen, who helped Trump bury negative stories during his 2016 presidential campaign. Among other things, Cohen paid porn actor Stormy Daniels \$130,000 to suppress her claims of an extramarital sexual encounter with Trump years earlier.

Trump pleaded not guilty last year to 34 felony counts of falsifying business records. He has denied having a sexual encounter with Daniels, and his lawyers argue the payments to Cohen were legitimate legal expenses and not part of any cover-up.

Trump has repeatedly sought to delay the start of his criminal trials.

“We want delays,” Trump said to reporters at a pretrial hearing in the New York case on Feb. 15. “Obviously I’m running for election. How can you run for election if you’re sitting in a courthouse in Manhattan all day long?”

The deluge of evidence that spurred Trump’s lawyers to request a delay pertains to a federal investigation into the hush-money matter that sent Cohen to prison.

After a decade of working for Trump, Cohen broke with his boss in 2018 and soon pleaded guilty campaign finance violations related to the hush-money payments, making false statements on a bank loan application, evading taxes related to his investments in the taxi industry and lying to Congress. The contributions were in the form of payouts to women who said they had extramarital sexual encounters with Trump, who denied them.

## NOTICE OF PROPOSED GAS COST RATE CHANGES

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**Peoples Gas Division** is filing a request with the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (“PUC”) to increase your natural gas rates as of October 1, 2024. This filing also includes a request to merge the Allegheny Valley Capacity Charge (“AVC”) and apply to both divisions. This notice describes the company’s rate request, the PUC’s role, and what actions you can take.

**Peoples Gas Division has requested an overall gas cost rate increase of \$3.7 million per year.**

Based upon current tariff rates, if the company’s entire request is approved:

- The total bill for a residential customer using 80 Mcf per year would increase from \$89.98 to \$92.91 per month or by 3.3%.
- The total bill for a small commercial/industrial customer using 250 Mcf per year would increase from \$223.75 to \$232.04 per month or by 3.7%.
- The total bill for a medium commercial/industrial customer using 1,750 Mcf per year would increase from \$1,347.69 to \$1,374.84 per month or by 2.0%.

To find out your customer class or how the requested changes may affect your natural gas bill, contact Peoples at **1-800-764-0111**. The rates requested by the company may be found in Tariff No. 8. You may examine the material filed with the PUC which explains the requested rate changes and the reasons for it. A copy of this material is kept at Peoples Gas’ office and is available on the Company’s website at [www.peoples-gas.com](http://www.peoples-gas.com).

The state agency which approves rates for public utilities is the PUC. The PUC will examine the requested rate change and can prevent existing rates from changing until it investigates and/or holds hearings on the request. The company must prove that the requested rates are reasonable. After examining the evidence, the PUC may grant all, some or none of the request or may reduce existing rates.

The PUC may change the amount of the rate increase or decrease requested by the utility for each customer class. As a result, the rate charged to you may be different than the rate requested by the company and shown above.

### There are three ways to challenge a company’s request to change its rates:

1. You can file a formal complaint. If you want a hearing before a judge, you must file a formal complaint. By filing a formal complaint, you assure yourself the opportunity to take part in hearings about the rate change request. All complaints should be filed with the PUC as soon as possible.

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2. You can send a letter to the PUC telling why you object to the requested rate change. Sometimes there is information in these letters that makes the PUC aware of problems with the company’s service or management. This information can be helpful when the PUC investigates the rate request.

Send your letter or request for a formal complaint form to the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission, Post Office Box 3265, Harrisburg, PA 17105-3265.

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PROOF OF PUBLICATION NOTICE IN THE HERALD

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

County of Mercer

Vanessa Koper, of The Herald, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says The Herald is a newspaper of general circulation published at 52 South Dock Street, Sharon, Mercer County, Pennsylvania. The Herald was established May 13, 1935 and has been regularly published and issued in Mercer County since that time. The printed notice attached to affidavit is exactly the same as was printed and published in the regular edition and issue of The Herald on the dates listed below. I certify that I am duly authorized to verify this statement under oath and am not interested in the subject matter of the attached notice or advertisement. All allegations in this affidavit as to time, place and character of publication are true.



Vanessa Koper

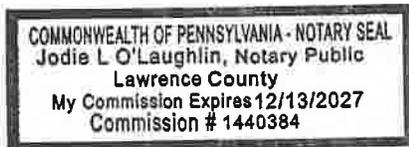
Advertising Director

Sworn to and subscribed to before me  
this 29<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2024



Jodie L. O'Laughlin

My commission expires 12/13/2027



| Date | Ad Caption                       | Size         |
|------|----------------------------------|--------------|
| 3-15 | Peoples Gas Proposal Rate Change | 3 col. X 10" |

## Local official honored by A.C.T.I.O.N.

YOUNGSTOWN — Mahoning County Mental Health and Recovery Board Executive Director Duane Piccirilli, who lives in Hermitage, was recently recognized with the Path Finder Award at A.C.T.I.O.N. of Mahoning Valley's 21st annual banquet, "Empowering... ACTION."

The Alliance for Congregational Transformation Influencing Out Neighborhoods is a multicultural collaboration of diverse leaders, dedicated to raising awareness and seeking solutions to overcome racism, poverty and injustice, according to a press release.

Their annual banquet is to recognize their successes throughout the year, raise funds, and honor honoring individuals or agencies that have bettered the community through their actions.

The Path Finder Award is given to individuals who have made significant contributions to helping members of the community gain access to care and receive the help they need.

"I am honored to receive this award. Being recognized as a Path Finder shows that everything we do at the Mental Health and Recovery Board, our staff and our contract agencies are working to help more people find the help that they need," Piccirilli said in the release.



Contributed  
**Path Finder awardee Duane Piccirilli, left, who is executive director of the Mahoning County Mental Health and Recovery Board, and LaMont English, executive director of the Youngstown Metropolitan Housing Authority, are pictured during A.C.T.I.O.N. of Mahoning Valley's recent banquet.**

## It's ok to lean on others

**Dear Annie:** Please give me your opinion. I am an 84-year-old widow. I have one child, a son, and one grandchild in town. My other children live hours away. I no longer drive. I am financially independent and have someone to come clean twice a month, drive me to run errands, go to the doctor, do grocery shopping and take me to the beauty shop.

I have taken care of my parents and my husband's parents, and I know this can be very tiring. I truly hate to have to call on my children. I try to be careful, and I don't spend unnecessarily. It adds up when you have to have extra help. My son is very caring, takes me to the doctor and never complains about helping me. I have friends who are in the same situation.

I had hoped my son would offer to go to the grocery store for me. It would save me some money. I hate to impose. I was ordering my groceries to be delivered after I had some issues with a different lady who was getting my groceries for me. I became concerned when I was having groceries

delivered. I live alone and use a walker, and a neighbor pointed out that people who deliver groceries are well aware if you live alone. I have friends who

are in the same situation and their children shop for them. Would I be expecting too much? Thank you.

**DEAR ANNIE**  
Annie Lane

**Dear Elder:** You're obviously a very thoughtful, financially responsible, independent senior. But just because you're able to find solutions to your challenges doesn't mean you should feel obligated to handle everything on your own all the time.

You're not a burden nor is it an imposition to him — acts of love and service like this are exactly what family is for.

SEND YOUR QUESTIONS for Annie Lane to [dearannie@creators.com](mailto:dearannie@creators.com).

Creators Syndicate

## ASK THE DOCTORS

**Dear Doctors:** When I had my annual checkup last fall, the blood test showed I am close to having prediabetes. My doctor said I need to change my diet and get more exercise. I recently read that taking a walk right after eating helps lower blood sugar. Do you know if that's true?

**Dear Reader:** Blood sugar control is crucial to maintaining good health. Over time, high blood sugar levels can lead to a wide range of serious health problems. These include damage to the nerves, heart, kidneys, eyes, and the large and small blood vessels.

Prediabetes means that blood sugar levels are elevated beyond the normal range, but are not yet high enough to qualify as Type 2 diabetes. However, someone with prediabetes is at increased risk of developing Type 2 diabetes. Having Type 2 diabetes raises your chances of developing heart, eye or kidney disease, and having foot problems. It also increases risk of a heart attack or stroke.

The good news is that, as your doctor has advised, a healthy diet and regular exercise can reverse prediabetes. That begins with limiting sugar and other simple carbs and avoiding highly processed

foods. At the same time, you want to incorporate 25 to 30 grams of fiber per day, preferably from vegetables, fruit, leafy greens and whole grains.

Exercise is also important. When muscles are active, two things occur. They increase their demand for glucose dissolved in the blood. They also become more sensitive

to the effects of insulin, the hormone that helps move glucose from the blood and into the muscles to be used as energy.

When it comes to exercise, a group of researchers recently uncovered surprising news. They selected seven studies that looked at how sitting, standing and walking

affect the body. In five of the studies, the participants had normal blood sugar. In two, they had either prediabetes or Type 2 diabetes. Among the metrics the researchers examined were changes in blood levels of glucose and insulin.

The data showed that even a five-minute walk after eating a meal had a measurable effect on moderating blood sugar levels. The beneficial effect of walking was observed during a 60- to 90-minute window following the meal. For people who took a walk during that time, changes to blood sugar were not only less extreme, but also occurred more gradually. That's important because sudden blood sugar spikes and drops can raise cardiovascular risk and are believed to play a role in developing Type 2 diabetes.

This positive effect on blood sugar occurred in all the participants who took a post-meal walk, regardless of their diabetes status. Standing after eating also had a beneficial effect, but it was far more modest.

SEND YOUR QUESTIONS to [askthedoctors@mednet.ucla.edu](mailto:askthedoctors@mednet.ucla.edu).



**ASK THE DOCTORS**  
Eve Glazier  
Elizabeth Ko

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COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, COUNTY OF SOMERSET

The Somerset Daily American is a newspaper of general circulation, published at 334 West Main Street, in the borough of Somerset, County of Somerset and State of Pennsylvania. That said newspaper was established as a daily newspaper of general circulation on the First day of July, 1929, since which date said newspaper has been published daily in the Borough of Somerset; 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 American, published in the issue dated:

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# White House urges Johnson to end impeachment inquiry

Joey Garrison  
USA TODAY

WASHINGTON – The White House argued it's time for House Republicans to end their impeachment inquiry into President Joe Biden in a Friday letter to House Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., saying their long investigation hasn't turned up wrongdoing by the president.

"It is obviously time to move on, Mr. Speaker. This impeachment is over," White House counsel Edward Siskel wrote in his first letter to the speaker since House Republicans began investigating the Biden family more than 14 months ago. "There is too much important work to be done for the American people to continue wasting time on this charade."

Siskel said interviews with more than 20 witnesses and 100,000 pages of records in House Republicans' investigation have failed to prove their unsubstantiated claims that Biden was involved in his son Hunter Biden's business dealings and benefited financially through his family's foreign transactions.

"For over a year, House Republicans have been investigating President Biden in an effort to find something – anything – to hurt the President politically. Instead, the investigation has continually turned up evidence that, in fact, the President did nothing wrong," the letter reads.

The House Oversight Committee, which is leading the impeachment inquiry, was dealt a setback last month when former FBI informant Alexander Smirnov, whose story was central to Republicans' bribery claims, was indicted and charged with lying about the Bidens' business dealings.

Smirnov had contact with Russian intelligence services, prosecutors say. He is being held in jail before trial and has pleaded not guilty.

"This impeachment inquiry in large part has been based on allegations made by troubling sources, as recent developments have made clear," Siskel claimed, singling out Smirnov and a



Speaker of the House Mike Johnson's office on Friday pushed back at the White House's call to end the impeachment inquiry against President Joe Biden.

JACK GRUBER/USA TODAY FILE

separate informant, Gal Luft, who was indicted last year on allegations he brokered illegal Iranian arms deals and served as an unregistered Chinese agent.

More recently, a long-awaited deposition from Hunter Biden failed to produce the blockbuster testimony Republicans hoped for, with the president's son disputing the central premise of the impeachment case – that then-Vice President Joe Biden was involved in his overseas business dealings.

Johnson's office pushed back at the White House's call to end the impeachment inquiry.

"It is not surprising that the White House would prefer to close the ongoing House inquiry which has uncovered that the Biden family and their associates received over \$20 million from foreign sources, and that President Biden has lied repeatedly," Raj Shah, Johnson's deputy chief of staff, said in a statement. "The White House does not get to decide how impeachment gets resolved, that is for Congress to decide."

Rep. James Comer, R-Ky., chairman

of the House Oversight Committee, has outlined next steps for the impeachment inquiry, demanding that a public hearing take place next for lawmakers to question Hunter Biden. It's an opportunity the president's son previously requested but recently declined.

Siskel said that instead of admitting that Biden "did nothing wrong," House Republicans are wasting time by trying to re-interview witnesses who already testified "perhaps hoping the facts will be different the second time around."

He called it "just the latest abusive tactic in this investigation" that has targeted Biden's children, grandchildren, siblings and in-laws. "It has intruded into private citizens' personal records on everything from medical visits to birthday presents," Siskel said. "Enough is enough."

Siskel said priorities such as securing funding for Ukraine and passing bipartisan legislation to address the southern border "are not getting the attention they deserve because House Republicans are distracted by this divisive political sideshow."

# Judge won't toss charges in classified docs case

Aysha Bagchi  
USA TODAY

A Florida federal judge rejected former President Donald Trump's bid to toss out many of the charges in his classified documents case but left the door open for the 2024 Republican front-runner to try again.

Trump's legal team argued that 32 of the counts in his lengthy indictment over hoarding classified documents at his private club fell under a law – the Espionage Act – that was too vague to be applied to his case. Trump is accused of illegally retaining documents after his presidency and obstructing justice.

In rejecting the Trump team's request to toss out those charges, Judge Aileen Cannon made it clear that Trump can have another bite at the apple once other aspects of the case have taken shape.

Resolving the overall question "depends too greatly on contested instructional questions about still-fluctuating definitions of statutory terms/phrases as charged, along with at least some disputed factual issues as raised in the Motion," Cannon wrote in a two-page order.

Cannon also said Trump's team had raised "various arguments warranting serious consideration" in the motion, even though she was rejecting it for now.

The Espionage Act bars the "unauthorized possession" of documents that relate to national defense when a person willfully retains the documents and has reason to believe they could be used to hurt the United States or help a foreign country.

Trump's lawyers argued the law includes "confusing and complex" phrases that, when applied to his case, violated his constitutional right to due process.

Contributing: Bart Jansen, USA TODAY

## NOTICE OF PROPOSED GAS COST RATE CHANGES

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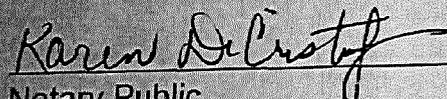
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My commission expires April 11, 2026  
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# NAACP demands federal probe into 2021 death of Jim Rogers

Unarmed Black man had been repeatedly shocked with Taser by Pittsburgh police officer

BY JUSTIN VELLUCCI

The NAACP is calling for a federal investigation into the 2021 death of an unarmed Black man following an encounter with a Pittsburgh police officer who repeatedly shocked him with a Taser. The national civil rights organization told the U.S. Department of Justice in a letter that a “thorough investigation” of the death of Jim Rogers is necessary to provide justice and accountability in the case.

“This incident is deeply troubling,” NAACP President and CEO Derrick Johnson wrote in a letter dated Tuesday to Kristen Clarke, assistant attorney general for civil rights in Washington, D.C. “Without federal intervention, the police officers will not be held accountable for their actions.”

The Justice Department on Wednesday confirmed receipt of the letter but declined further comment.

Rogers, a 54-year-old homeless man, died Oct. 14, 2021, a day after tussling with Keith Edmonds, a Pittsburgh police officer.

Edmonds, who is also Black, was responding to a report of a stolen bike in Bloomfield when he ran into Rogers. The encounter quickly turned violent, with Edmonds shocking Rogers over and over when Rogers didn’t obey all his commands.

After police took Rogers into custody, officers ignored his pleas for medical help, according to an internal police report on the incident. The city inquiry criticized how officers and police supervisors handled the situation, determining that Rogers did not pose a threat and was subjected to conflicting commands. “Mr. Rogers repeatedly told the police that he could not breathe,” Johnson wrote. “He said that he needed some air. While Mr. Rogers struggled to breathe and yelled for help several times, the police chatted to each other. The police told him to relax.”

The city settled a lawsuit with Rogers’ family for \$8 million. Edmonds was fired but reinstated by an arbitrator last week with back pay. “Officer Edmonds himself testified that he violated the policies of the City of Pittsburgh, however this award adopts a new standard that says that even an admission of guilt by the officer isn’t enough to warrant disciplinary action,”



COURTESY OF TODD HOLLIS LAW FIRM

A screen grab from former Pittsburgh police officer Keith Edmonds’ body camera showing the beginning of his confrontation with Jim Rogers on Oct. 13, 2021.

the mayor’s office said in a statement.

Maria Montano, a spokeswoman for Mayor Ed Gainey, told TribLive the city plans to appeal the arbitrator’s decision.

“Edmonds’ reinstatement will not be implemented until the city’s appeals on his reinstatement have been exhausted,” she said.

Allegheny County District Attorney Stephen A. Zappala Jr. has said Edmonds was “wrong” but didn’t commit homicide when he repeatedly shocked Rogers.

Edmonds delivered at least 10 electrical bursts on Rogers within three minutes and 15 seconds, according to a 15-page executive summary of an internal Pittsburgh police critical review board investigation.

The NAACP took up the issue in Washington, D.C., at the urging of its Pittsburgh chapter, said Daylon Davis, the chapter’s president.

Davis said he provided the NAACP with a video of Rogers’ arrest, which had been released publicly Jan. 29 by attorney Todd Hollis, who represented Rogers’ family in the civil suit.

“Just from them watching that video, they had very grave concerns,” Davis told TribLive on Wednesday. “This isn’t about Keith Edmonds, the African-American. This is about Keith Edmonds, the police officer. ... This was an abuse of power. This was an abuse of basic humanity.”

Davis also said Edmonds’ reinstatement “sets a dangerous precedent.”

“Officer Keith Edmonds acknowledged he violated city policy,” Davis said. “If you have an admission of guilt, I’m sorry, I don’t think you should get your job back — and neither does the [NAACP] national office.”

Harry Litman, a former U.S. attorney in Pittsburgh who also served as a deputy assistant attorney general, said the NAACP request is uncommon.

Any potential federal charges, he said, would fall under civil rights violations, including use of unreasonable force, like in the Rodney King case in California.

King, a Black man, was mercilessly beaten in 1991 by a group of Los Angeles police officers, whose acquittal sparked riots in the city. Litman worked on the King case while he was with the Justice Department.

The standard, Litman said, is that “it’s so grievous the cop had to know it was unreasonable. It’s knowing use of unreasonable force.”

Any charges would likely be handled through a joint prosecution between the U.S. Attorney’s office in Pittsburgh and the Department of Justice Civil Rights Division, Litman said.

A charging decision, he said, will likely take a while.

“Nobody should expect it to be soon,” Litman said.

Of the nine officers on scene that the internal police bureau report blamed for not properly performing their jobs, two retired, four were fired but reinstated, including Edmonds, and three others were suspended, according to the police union president. One of the suspensions remains in arbitration.

Robert Swartzwelder, the union leader, previously called the executive summary of the Critical Incident Review Board “a hit piece.”

Staff writer Paula Reed Ward contributed to this report. Justin Vellucci is a TribLive staff writer. He can be reached at [jvellucci@triblive.com](mailto:jvellucci@triblive.com).

# Public ire spurred officials to ‘clarify’ county’s stance

SANCTUARY · FROM A1

reduced immigration, declared Westmoreland a sanctuary county in 2014. The group contended the county “obstructs immigration enforcement and shields criminals.”

The policy approved Thursday states that jail officials will regularly provide a list of people newly booked into the lockup to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, also known as ICE. It also said the county will comply with all immigration-related detainers, unless they are erroneously issued.

“We took steps today to clarify that for the public,” said Doug Chew, a county commissioner and prison board chairman.

That type of detainer is rarely issued to someone at the jail, he said. He estimated there have been a couple such detainers annually for the past 10 years.

County and state officials said they’ve been the target of complaints from the public as a result of being included in the list, which they said prompted Thursday’s action.

“Our office and my personal social media has been contacted by so many people about this, and I don’t know how many times we can say the county commissioners never put us proactively on the list,” said state Senate President Pro Tempore Kim Ward, R-Hempfield.

“Today was about clarity, clarifying what this county has long been doing and that’s been consistently and fully cooperating with ICE,” said state Rep. Eric Nelson, R-Hempfield.

For a person who is booked into the jail as an undocumented immigrant accused of a crime, their court case takes priority

over the ICE detainer, Chew said. After the case is complete, ICE can take custody of the person.

That was the situation with two recent cases:

- Former Pittsburgh Pirates pitcher Felipe Vazquez was expelled from the United States after serving his prison sentence for sexually assaulting a teen girl in Scottsdale.
- Liwu Tian, a Chinese national who was convicted of attacking another man with a meat cleaver in Greensburg, was to be taken into custody by ICE after serving his sentence. He is not at the jail.

South Greensburg resident Patty Lewis stuck around after the prison board meeting to hear what officials had to say during the news conference. “I’m totally against illegals,” she said. “I’m totally for legals, but not illegals.” She said she is pleased the prison board approved the policy.

An official with the Center for Immigration Studies told the Trib this week that approval of the policy would result in the county being taken off the list.

Commissioner Sean Kertes, a prison board member, said public concern over the issue is part of the reason officials made the move Thursday.

“We want to make sure our residents understand that we hear them, we work for them,” he said.

The prison board consists of the three county commissioners, Smail, District Attorney Nicole Ziccarelli, Sheriff James Albert and Controller Jeffrey Balzer.

Renatta Signorini is a TribLive staff writer. She can be reached at [rsignorini@triblive.com](mailto:rsignorini@triblive.com).

# Penn State official says ‘changes need to occur’

PENN STATE · FROM A1

of residential, online and blended programs, at the right locations, to better align with evolving student preferences.

“It’s too early to discuss how course offerings may change,” he said in an email response to questions.

Regarding job loss, he said 69% of education and general funds at Penn State involve personnel costs, including salaries “so it is virtually impossible to address the larger budget challenges without some reduction of employees.”

“That said, layoffs are not the first consideration when, for example, natural attrition and the hiring freeze have already recouped tens of millions of dollars,” he added.

The update, posted Wednesday to Penn State’s website, quotes a Feb. 29 internal email from Margo DelliCarpini, vice president for Commonwealth Campuses and executive chancellor.

She said the campuses must “focus on their distinct areas of excellence and find ways to cut or streamline expenses,” according to the update. “One way to do this is by adjusting program offerings that may be duplicative, no longer necessary or undersubscribed.”

Penn State calls the process its Academic Program and Portfolio Review (APPR).

“If we have courses that don’t attract students, we are not being good financial stewards of our students’ tuition dollars — this is applicable across our full enterprise, here at campuses, University Park or the World Campus,” DelliCarpini said. “The APPR process will help us all determine the right degree portfolio by location and provide the data and rationale for more flexibility in our offerings.”

She stressed that Penn State “is focused on careful evaluation, and despite any rumors, no decisions have been made,” according to the university’s update.

**“Currently 14 of our 19 (undergraduate branch) campuses are part of the University College. These are not independent entities — and we must look at duplication of services in every area, such as the registrar, enrollment management and admissions.”**

MARGO DELDICARPINI  
VICE PRESIDENT FOR COMMONWEALTH  
CAMPUSES AND EXECUTIVE CHANCELLOR

Officials including Penn State President Neeli Bendapudi have stressed the importance of all Penn State’s campuses. In recent weeks, officials have stopped short of saying all would remain in their current form.

“Changes need to occur. What might have made sense decades ago may not make sense today,” DelliCarpini said.

“For instance, currently 14 of our 19 (undergraduate branch) campuses are part of the University College. These are not independent entities — and we must look at duplication of services in every area, such as the registrar, enrollment management and admissions.”

Included in those 14 are five in Western Pennsylvania: Penn State New Kensington; Penn State Greater Allegheny, on the border of McKeesport and White Oak; Penn State Beaver; Penn State Fayette, The Eberly Campus; and Penn State Shenango.

Those five locations as of fall 2023 enrolled 456 at PSNK, 361 at Greater Allegheny, 504 at Beaver, 419 at Fayette and 332 at Shenango.

Statewide, the branches account for close to 23,700 of Penn State’s total of just over 87,900 students. University Park enrolls more than 49,000. DelliCarpini said data will

be gathered by campus chancellors, herself and her staff to establish preliminary campus-level allocation amounts that she hopes to share later this spring.

The university said there would be substantial input from faculty, staff, students and external stakeholders.

Like its peers, Penn State is facing downward pressure on its enrollment from fewer births, worries about escalating student debt and growing skepticism of the value of a four-year degree versus quicker paths into the job market.

Those issues have impacted not only regional university systems but flagship public institutions, including West Virginia University.

Last year, Penn State adopted a two-year budgeting cycle to better plan for operating costs and revenue needs. It faced a projected \$140 million deficit in its \$3 billion education and general fund budget for the fiscal year that ended in June, but by August, had pared it to \$63 million.

Penn State leaders have cited a range of efforts to revitalize the branch locations, from recruiting more out-of-state students and retooling academic offerings to exploring ways to leverage their locations.

For instance, Penn State Shenango and Butler County Community College announced last year they would explore the feasibility of sharing the commonwealth campus with a community college location.

Penn State also announced that branch campuses will renew or enter into new articulation agreements with the state’s community colleges. They will establish a dual admission program, so students working toward an associate degree program may request dual admission to a designated Penn State branch.

Bill Schackner is a TribLive staff writer. He can be reached at [bschackner@triblive.com](mailto:bschackner@triblive.com).

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# NAACP seeks federal probe into Jim Rogers death

Officer involved was reinstated to police last week by arbitrator

BY JUSTIN VELLUCCI

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COURTESY OF TODD HOLLIS LAW FIRM

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Staff writer Paula Reed Ward contributed to this report.

Justin Vellucci is a TribLive staff writer. He can be reached at [jvellucci@triblive.com](mailto:jvellucci@triblive.com).

# Ex-cop who brought South American woman to U.S. illegally gets probation

BY PAULA REED WARD

Blake Babin led a stellar career as a Bethel Park police officer, rising to lieutenant over more than three decades.

Friends and former colleagues said he acted as a mentor to others, organized community programs, participated in an annual food drive and was compassionate to those he served.

But Babin, 60, also traveled to Colombia, where he socialized with prostitutes at nightclubs in the South American country, federal investigators said.

Befriending one, a Venezuelan who investigators said was likely younger than 18, Babin cultivated a romantic relationship and then helped bring her illegally into the U.S. two years ago.

Texts between the two showed that Babin brought her home to Bethel Park “because he loved her” and needed her help because he hates “to keep a house by (him)self.” He shared that he thought she was beautiful, that her body was “perfect,” and that he liked that she enjoyed sex,” the prosecution

wrote in its sentencing brief.

On Wednesday, U.S. District Judge Robert J. Colville ordered Babin, who previously pleaded guilty to one count of transporting an illegal alien, to serve three years' probation, 50 hours of community service and pay a \$2,000 fine.

Sentencing guidelines called for a range of punishments from probation to up to six months behind bars.

Babin, who retired after charges were filed, was indicted by a federal grand jury in May after investigators said he gave money to the woman in the last quarter of 2022.

The money was to pay for her illegal entry into the U.S. from Mexico, the government said.

According to prosecutors, the woman twice failed to get into the U.S. but managed to cross the border near El Paso, Texas, on her third try. Babin was waiting to take her to Phoenix and then Pittsburgh, prosecutors said.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Carolyn Bloch said on Wednesday that it is rare for a police officer to appear as a defendant in court. She also noted that

Babin has had more than one Venezuelan woman living with him.

“We do hold police officers, as we should, to a higher standard, and Mr. Babin should be held to a higher standard,” she said. “This was not a one-time event.”

Currently, according to sentencing documents, a different Venezuelan woman, who is 23, her mother and her child are living with Babin.

Bloch noted that they entered the country legally while the woman was pregnant. Bloch also said Babin initially applied to the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement for the 23-year-old's entry, claiming she was his fiancée.

Defense attorney Charles Porter said his client was a law-abiding man who led a life of service.

“This is a man who made a mistake and admitted it,” Porter said. “The mistake cost him significantly. It cost him his career. It cost him his status. He's now a felon.”

Babin spoke to the court briefly.

“I take full responsibility for

the actions that brought me here today,” he said. “Actions have consequences.”

Several of Babin's friends and colleagues submitted letters to the court on his behalf.

Bethel Park Public Works Director Susan Dolinar, who attended the sentencing, wrote in her letter that she had been friends with Babin for more than 33 years. She called him selfless, caring and dedicated.

Dolinar described instances in which Babin, on multiple occasions, ran into burning homes to save the people inside.

He once found a woman sleeping in her car on Christmas Eve. He paid for her to stay at a local hotel and gave her money for food, Dolinar said.

Babin was well-respected in the Bethel Park Police Department, she wrote.

“I have seen it firsthand as Blake has always put principle over promotions, or his ‘career,’ earning him a reputation for integrity and honesty.”

Several people also referenced work Babin did to raise money to help a young boy in Colombia with severely crossed eyes afford surgery. Babin met the boy and his family in his travels to Colombia, they wrote.

“Blake not only organized the medical care, but he contributed financially as well,” wrote James “Tim” Kirsch, a retired Bethel Park police officer.

“When I asked him about

his deep involvement with this family and their village, he explained that he had no one else in his life and intended to give them everything he had to offer, hoping to provide them with a brighter future,” wrote Crescent police Chief Frank Marks, who previously worked with Babin in Bethel Park.

After the hearing, Porter called what happened to Babin sad: “He terminated a very good and productive law enforcement career in his endeavor to help someone, and, unfortunately, it wasn't consistent with the law.”

Paula Reed Ward is a TribLive staff writer. She can be reached at [pward@triblive.com](mailto:pward@triblive.com).

# New Kensington slated to get its ‘wings’ this month

BY BRIAN C. RITTMAYER

The 13th Wings Across Westmoreland about to be unveiled in New Kensington will be the first to feature color.

The wings are set to debut in a park at the corner of Fifth Avenue and Eighth Street during a ceremony March 23 just ahead of New Kensington's third annual Restaurant Ramble.

The color comes from the flags of 17 nations incorporated into the tips of the wings' feathers, which are meant to reflect the city's melting pot of ethnicities, said Ari Burke, event and program specialist for the Westmoreland Cultural Trust, which has installed 12 other sets of wings throughout the county.

Olde Towne Overhaul, a business development and community revitalization company focusing on renovating and leasing commercial buildings to local business owners, and the New Kensington Downtown Partnership funded the city's wings. It's an effort that has been underway since 2021.

The New Kensington Arts Center helped to choose the images of buildings, businesses, organizations and people that artists Patrick and Riley Mahoney incorporated into the design.

In addition to being the first with color, New Kensington's pair will be the third of the 13 to be freestanding, Burke said. They will be located next to a gazebo in the park, where the Liberty Theater once

## If you go

**What:** Unveiling of New Kensington wings installation  
**When:** 9 a.m. March 23  
**Where:** Fifth Avenue at Eighth Street, New Kensington

stood, and in front of a faded Coca-Cola sign on the side of a building.

“It's a beautiful ghost mural backdrop,” said Daniel Stainer, director of marketing for the Westmoreland Cultural Trust. “It provides a great photo opportunity for anyone.”

The most recent wings installation was unveiled Feb. 21 at the University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg in Hempfield.

Other locations of wings include Greensburg, Art in the Alley; Mt. Pleasant Township, Overly's Country Christmas; Irwin, Lamp Theatre; Jeannette, Sobel's Obscure Brewing; Ligonier Town Hall; Mt. Pleasant Public Library; Trafford Municipal Building; Vandergriff's Casino Theatre; Youngwood's Five Star Trail; Smithton Borough Building; and the West Newton Municipal Building.

## Restaurant Ramble follows

Eleven restaurants are participating in the Restaurant Ramble, sponsored by Shop Small Shop New Ken, which will follow the wings unveiling. A VIP experience starts at 11 a.m. with the general

event beginning at noon. It ends at 3 p.m.

Tickets are available online, with sales ending at midnight Saturday, and at Voodoo Brewing on Fifth Avenue in New Kensington during regular business hours until Saturday. No tickets will be sold the day of the event.

Tickets for the VIP experience cost \$58, while general tickets are \$38.

The participating restaurants offering small bites and beverages range from Farm House Fresh, in its second year, to Eazer's Restaurant & Deli, a mainstay in New Kensington for more than 100 years. Many are in their third or fourth years in business.

“If you look at the stats, I think 50% of restaurants fold within the first year and most don't make it to five years,” said Michelle Thom, operations manager of Olde Towne Overhaul and Voodoo Brewing in New Kensington. “This is a really difficult business to be in, and this event is geared toward the small restaurants downtown coming together to help each other out during a difficult time of year, and getting people familiarized with the food that is downtown and hopefully coming back after the event to eat at the restaurants.”

Added to this year's event is Kimi's Confections, whose desserts are regularly carried at Ashley's Kitchen, Thom said.

Brian C. Rittmeyer is a TribLive staff writer. He can be reached at [btrittmeyer@triblive.com](mailto:btrittmeyer@triblive.com).

## NOTICE OF PROPOSED GAS COST RATE CHANGES

### To Our Customers:

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**Peoples Gas Division is filing a request with the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (“PUC”) to increase your natural gas rates as of October 1, 2024. This filing also includes a request to merge the Allegheny Valley Capacity Charge (“AVC”) and apply to both divisions. This notice describes the company's rate request, the PUC's role, and what actions you can take.**

**Peoples Gas Division has requested an overall gas cost rate increase of \$3.7 million per year.**

Based upon current tariff rates, if the company's entire request is approved:

- The total bill for a residential customer using 80 Mcf per year would increase from \$89.98 to \$92.91 per month or by 3.3%.
- The total bill for a small commercial/industrial customer using 250 Mcf per year would increase from \$223.75 to \$232.04 per month or by 3.7%.
- The total bill for a medium commercial/industrial customer using 1,750 Mcf per year would increase from \$1,347.69 to \$1,374.84 per month or by 2.0%.

To find out your customer class or how the requested changes may affect your natural gas bill, contact Peoples at 1-800-764-0111. The rates requested by the company may be found in Tariff No. 8. You may examine the material filed with the PUC which explains the requested rate changes and the reasons for it. A copy of this material is kept at Peoples Gas' office and is available on the Company's website at [www.peoples-gas.com](http://www.peoples-gas.com).

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The PUC may change the amount of the rate increase or decrease requested by the utility for each customer class. As a result, the rate charged to you may be different than the rate requested by the company and shown above.

### There are three ways to challenge a company's request to change its rates:

1. You can file a formal complaint. If you want a hearing before a judge, you must file a formal complaint. By filing a formal complaint, you assure yourself the opportunity to take part in hearings about the rate change request. All complaints should be filed with the PUC as soon as possible.

If no formal complaints are filed, the Commission may grant all, some or none of the request without holding a hearing before a judge.

2. You can send a letter to the PUC telling why you object to the requested rate change. Sometimes there is information in these letters that makes the PUC aware of problems with the company's service or management. This information can be helpful when the PUC investigates the rate request.

Send your letter or request for a formal complaint form to the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission, Post Office Box 3265, Harrisburg, PA 17105-3265.

3. You can be a witness at a public input hearing. Public input hearings are held if the Commission opens an investigation of the company's rate change request and if there is a large number of customers interested in the case. At these hearings you have the opportunity to present your views in person to the PUC judge hearing the case and the company representatives. All testimony given “under oath” becomes part of the official rate case record. These hearings are held in the service area of the company.



# Father found guilty in son's school shooting

*Prosecutors focused on morbid drawing, access to gun in involuntary manslaughter conviction*

ASSOCIATED PRESS

PONTIAC, Mich. — The father of a Michigan school shooter was found guilty of involuntary manslaughter Thursday, a second conviction against the teen's parents who were accused of failing to secure a gun at home and doing nothing to address acute signs of his mental turmoil.

The jury verdict means James Crumbley has joined Jennifer Crumbley as a cause of the killing of four students at Oxford High School in 2021, even without pulling the trigger.

They had separate trials as the first U.S. parents to be charged in a mass school shooting committed by their child. Jennifer Crumbley was convicted of involuntary manslaughter in February. Prosecutors focused on two

key themes at the father's trial: The parents' response to a morbid drawing on Ethan Crumbley's math assignment a few hours before the shooting and the teen's access to a Sig Sauer 9 mm handgun purchased by James Crumbley only four days earlier.

Ethan made a ghastly drawing of a gun and a wounded man on a math assignment and added disturbing phrases: "The thoughts won't stop. Help me. My life is useless."

But James and Jennifer Crumbley declined to take Ethan home following a brief meeting at the school, and staff didn't demand it. Counselor Shawn Hopkins, concerned about suicidal ideations, told them to seek help for the boy within 48 hours.

Ethan had told Hopkins he was sad over the death of his



MANDI WRIGHT | DETROIT FREE PRESS

When James Crumbley heard about the shooting, he rushed home from his DoorDash job and looked for the gun he had purchased for his son.

dog and grandmother and the loss of a friend who had moved away abruptly. He said the drawing was simply his jottings for a video game and he wasn't planning to commit violence.

Neither he, nor his parents,

told school officials about the gun they had just bought, according to trial testimony.

Hopkins had hoped Ethan would spend the day with his parents. But, when that was ruled out, the counselor felt the teen probably would be

safer around others at school.

Ethan later pulled the Sig Sauer from his backpack and began shooting that same day, killing Justin Shilling, 17; Madisyn Baldwin, 17; Hana St. Juliana, 14; and Tate Myre, 16. No one had checked the bag, though a school administrator had joked about its heaviness.

"James Crumbley is not on trial for what his son did," prosecutor Karen McDonald told the jury. "James Crumbley is on trial for what he did and for what he didn't do."

He "doesn't get a pass because somebody else" actually pulled the trigger, she said.

Hopkins told the jury James Crumbley showed empathy toward his son during the meeting about the drawing but took no additional action.

When James Crumbley heard about the shooting, he rushed home from his DoorDash job and looked for the gun.

"I think my son took the

gun," he said in a frantic 911 call.

Investigators found an empty gun case and empty ammunition box on the parents' bed. A cable that could have locked the gun was still in a package, unopened.

Defense attorney Mariell Lehman tried to emphasize James Crumbley did not consent to any gun access by his son.

"He did not know he had to protect others from his son," she told jurors. "He did not know that it was reasonably foreseeable that his son would commit these offenses. He had no idea what his son was planning to do."

There was no testimony from experts about Ethan's mental health, and no records were introduced. The boy's lawyers said before trial he would invoke his right to remain silent if called to testify.

But the judge allowed the jury to see excerpts from the teen's handwritten journal.

## Police policies reviewed

DRUGS · FROM A1

comment on her arrest.

"Ms. McAtee's personnel-related matters are not subject to disclosure," Kansler wrote via email.

Those matters didn't affect any Greensburg Police Department cases or investigations, he said. Kansler acknowledged the impact the arrests have had on the city.

"Obviously, this entire saga has been a surprise to the city," he said. "To say public officials and fellow employees were shocked about what transpired in these individuals' private lives would be an understatement."

Kansler said the city has reviewed the police department's policies and procedures, and officials are confident in the force. Mayor Robb Bell was not available, and police Chief Charles Irvin declined to comment.

Bruce Antkowiak, a law professor at Saint Vincent College in Unity, said the type of hearing both suspects are scheduled for is indicative of the culmination of ongoing discussions among the parties. He said he expects guilty

pleas to be entered during the hearings.

"It's an expedited way of reaching a conclusion without going through the grand jury process," he said.

Denning is accused of communicating with an informant starting in July 2021 and connecting that person with drug dealers in California to buy cocaine and methamphetamine. That would continue for 15 months, according to court papers.

A Marines veteran, Denning was arrested at Greensburg City Hall and resigned in January 2023.

The original complaint filed in January 2023 in Pittsburgh federal court by the Drug Enforcement Administration laid out evidence of Denning reportedly acting as middle man between the informant and dealers in California. They included conversations between the pair on smartphone apps where Denning is accused of providing contact information for the out-of-state suppliers and a "menu" of their available drugs, as well as how to transmit money to them electronically.

Denning vouched for the

suppliers, and the DEA provided the informant with money to place orders, according to the complaint. The mailed packages that were confiscated contained drugs, authorities said.

Denning joined the force in 2008. He was appointed captain in September 2020, his third promotion in four years. In January 2022, he took over as interim chief and officially was tapped to lead the department two months later.

He and McAtee face potential prison sentences, according to court filings. Antkowiak said he would expect them to be sentenced at a later date, after pre-sentence investigations are complete.

Denning is awaiting court action in a case filed by Westmoreland County detectives in connection with a backpack containing suspected steroids and psilocybin mushrooms that was missing from the Greensburg police evidence room.

Renatta Signorini and Quincy Reese are TribLive staff writers. They can be reached at rsignorini@triblive.com and qreese@triblive.com.

## Kertes: Public's concerns heard

SANCTUARY · FROM A1

That type of detainer is rarely issued to someone at the jail, he said. He estimated there have been a couple such detainees annually for the past 10 years.

County and state officials said they've been the target of complaints from the public as a result of being included in the list, which they said prompted Thursday's action.

"Our office and my personal social media has been contacted by so many people about this, and I don't know how many times we can say the county commissioners never put us proactively on the list," said state Senate President Pro Tempore Kim Ward, R-Hempfield.

"Today was about clarity, clarifying what this county has long been doing and that's been consistently and fully cooperating with ICE," said state Rep. Eric Nelson, R-Hempfield.

For a person who is booked

into the jail as an undocumented immigrant accused of a crime, their court case takes priority over the ICE detainer, Chew said. After the case is complete, ICE can take custody of the person.

That was the situation with two recent cases:

- Former Pittsburgh Pirates pitcher Felipe Vazquez was expelled from the United States after serving his prison sentence for sexually assaulting a teen girl in Scottsdale.

- Liwu Tian, a Chinese national who was convicted of attacking another man with a meat cleaver in Greensburg, was to be taken into custody by ICE after serving his sentence. He is not at the jail.

South Greensburg resident Patty Lewis stuck around after the prison board meeting to hear what officials had to say during the news conference.

"I'm totally against ille-

gals," she said. "I'm totally for legals, but not illegals."

She said she is pleased the prison board approved the policy.

An official with the Center for Immigration Studies told the Trib this week that approval of the policy would result in the county being taken off the list.

Commissioner Sean Kertes, a prison board member, said public concern over the issue is part of the reason officials made the move Thursday.

"We want to make sure our residents understand that we hear them, we work for them," he said.

The prison board consists of the three county commissioners, Smail, District Attorney Nicole Zicarelli, Sheriff James Albert and Controller Jeffrey Balzer.

Renatta Signorini is a TribLive staff writer. She can be reached at rsignorini@triblive.com.

## Hearing set to continue on April 3

WILLS · FROM A1

five-day requirement to complete adoption records and ordered her to produce detailed records of her office's work.

Hamilton faces potential fines and incarceration and could be at risk of having a court-ordered conservator administer the Register of Wills Office if she is found in contempt of court.

The judges made no finding Thursday. They said they will consider additional testimony when the hearing resumes April 3.

Hamilton, during about four hours of testimony Thursday, claimed her office is in compliance with the court order and has eliminated all filing backlogs that had surfaced after 2019.

She blamed those filing delays on staff shortages, disloyalty and insubordination of employees and her absences related to health issues.

"We believe the orders have been complied with," Hamilton said.

A supervisor with a private nonprofit that oversees adoptions for the state's adoption network and serves as a sub-contractor for the Westmoreland County Children's Bureau testified the Register of Wills Office was out of compliance with the court orders for all of 2023 and during the first two months of this year.

Juliann Botten said there were at least four cases in 2023 in which it took more than 200 days file adoption certificates and another three other cases with delays of more than 100 days to produce those records.

Those documents take between five to six minutes to produce, Botten said.

Filing delays can produce substantial hardships to new parents who require those records to secure birth certificates, legal proof for medical insurance, school enrollment



RICH CHOLODOFSKY | TRIBLIVE

The Register of Wills Office at the Westmoreland County Courthouse has 11 employees and two vacancies.

and other issues.

Other allegations leveled against the Register of Wills Office included claims that staff and supervisors ignored court orders to process and forward records to state courts for appeals and were discourteous and dismissive of court administrators and judges.

"There have been problems with adoption (records) for seven or eight years," Botten testified.

She said her staff of paralegals spent one month last year assisting the Register of Wills Office in processing adoption records, and, during that time, backlogs were eased.

Hamilton rejected offers from the county children's bureau to pay for additional staff to continue that work, she testified.

Without that assistance, the adoption filing again slowed, Botten said.

"Was I shocked, no, disappointed yes," Botten said.

Attorney Jeff Loughner said he represented clients who were frustrated by the ongoing delays in completing the required paperwork that, he said, took between four months and a year to finalize in some instances.

"We tried to live with it but hoped someday it would be corrected," Loughner testified.

Hamilton, who was re-elected to a third term in November, defended her oversight of the office. She said, upon her full-time return to work in December, staff performance has improved. She said new employees were hired to augment the workforce because of pay hikes she lobbied county commissioners to approve in February.

The office has 11 employees and two vacancies.

In addition to Hamilton's duties as head of the Register of Wills Office, the judges questioned her qualifications for the job.

Hamilton served two years as the office's chief deputy under then-Register Michael Ginsburg. She previously worked as a lawyer and was a Hempfield Township supervisor.

The office, she said, processes about 3,000 new cases each year, including about 200 adoptions. Much of the filing work is assigned to her staff, she testified.

"In my role, I am more involved with policy, budgets, hiring and working with court administration," Hamilton said.

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

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The **HERALD-Standard**  
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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 15 day of March 2024

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

Central Pennsylvania Newspapers, LLC.

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# MEAL

Continued from A1

“When they see the need, they contact the folks and ask how we can help,” he said.

Central Assembly of God in Houston has a more formalized “Meal Ministry” that’s been going on for at least 10 years, said Kurt Jenkins, the church’s lead pastor. About 20 team members are involved, making an average of 80 meals yearly to fill any number of needs.

“Over COVID, we supplied a lot of meals for people,” Jenkins said.

Those meals supported not just the sick person, but those in the household who cared for them and may have had less time to prepare meals.

Members of the ministry use an online calendar to coordinate what meals they’re making and when it will be dropped at the recipient’s home or at the church for delivery, said Jenkins.

Delivering food has been a blessing to recipients at both churches,

though Higbee said sometimes people are reluctant to ask for assistance, fearing it would be an imposition. Those who felt that way often return to Higbee with a different attitude.

“Afterwards they’re saying how grateful to the body of Christ they are, for being taken care of,” Higbee said.

Jenkins agreed. “The people receiving it really appreciate the reception of the meal – it shows the church body cares for them and are thinking about them in need, and it lifts a burden,” he said.

The Meal Ministry also offers those who prepare the food a chance to use their God-given talents.

“They’re thankful to use those gifts in that way,” Jenkins said.

Bridgeville native and Central Assembly congregant Whitney Warnock is one of many who benefited from the ministry. Warnock, then pregnant, broke her leg and needed surgery.

“People from my church – some I didn’t even know well – showed

up at my home with a full dinner for my family,” Warnock said, adding that daily meals were delivered for two weeks as she recovered. “Our church took care of a simple need that made a huge impact, without even having to express our need during a difficult time.”

While the Meals Ministry is primarily focused on the Central Assembly of God congregation, Jenkins said they have also helped out non-church members when they receive referrals from church members who know a person or family that would benefit.

While the idea of providing meals to those in need isn’t new – many churches, clubs or organizations have been providing help for years – a number of websites allow people to request or give meal help.

One of the most well-known is Mealtrain.com.

Much like those at City Church and Central Assembly, recipients are identified and meals provided to them. The reach, however, can be

much greater depending upon how long help is necessary.

The organizer of the online meal train can electronically invite as many or as few as they’d like to participate.

“Everyone wants to help a friend but not everyone knows how, what is needed, or what to make. Additionally, no one wants to be a burden or overstep during these difficult times,” said Michael Laramee, the founder of Mealtrain.com.

Laramee developed the web-based service in 2010 when his wife volunteered to organize meals for a neighborhood family after they welcomed a new baby, and had difficulty coordinating participants.

In 2023, Laramee said people going through MealTrain.com organized 10.5 million meals and supported 524,917 families.

However, the numbers don’t reflect the meaning behind every meal delivery.

“The meal is just the vehicle to show love and support during difficult times,” he said.

# STEEL

Continued from A1

of the AFL-CIO and several other prominent unions. The White House said Thursday that Biden called David McCall, president of United Steelworkers, to reiterate his support for its members.

Nippon Steel announced in December that it planned to buy the Pittsburgh-based steel producer for \$14.1 billion in cash, raising concerns about what the transaction could mean for unionized workers, supply chains and U.S. national security.

The Japanese company has tried to assuage critics by promising no job losses due to the merger. It also committed to keeping the U.S. Steel name and Pittsburgh headquarters, while noting it already has a presence in the American market and would bring in new resources to foster

job growth.

The company, which is the world’s fourth largest steel producer, launched a website with supportive statements from Larry Summers, the former treasury secretary, and Pat Toomey, a Republican and former senator from Pennsylvania.

Shortly after the steel deal was announced, the White House indicated it would be under review by the secretive Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States. The government does not officially provide updates on the CFIUS review process.

Biden has a big megaphone to weigh in on the matter, but he is not intervening in the review process or formally blocking the deal, according to a person familiar with deliberations who insisted on anonymity to discuss the situation.

# LSA

Continued from A1

before retiring in January, started in the top position earlier this month to lead the City Mission. She said Thursday she’s ready to state the case to the LSA committee about why City Mission, which helps the homeless population in the county, should receive the \$500,000 grant it had requested.

“We’re preparing to answer their questions and preparing the info that has been requested,” Irey Vaughan said. “We’re confident that upon the review, the need in the community, the funding we have and adherence to the county comprehensive

plan, that the board will restore the funding.”

It’s unclear how the county’s comprehensive plan, which was passed in September when Irey Vaughan was on the board, plays into the LSA committee’s review.

The issue over the City Mission’s grant arose last month after Commissioner Larry Maggi questioned why an initial list of recommended projects from the LSA committee dated Jan. 30 showed that nonprofit was included in the projects to receive \$500,000 in funding to help build its 50-bed women’s shelter. However, when the LSA committee voted during its Feb. 6 meeting, the City Mission’s application had been removed and there was \$8.7

million in funds allocated rather than the full \$9.2 million available.

The commissioners unanimously approved the LSA committee’s recommendations to fund 50 projects during their Feb. 15 despite Maggi’s objections to the change. However, he once again asked that the issue be revisited during the commissioners’ March 7 meeting, and they agreed to ask the LSA committee to reconvene soon to reconsider the City Mission’s application.

“The committee will honor the commissioners’ recommendation to limit its review solely to the City Mission’s application,” Kotula said.

The commissioners will meet again at 10 a.m. Thursday to consider the

issue, although it won’t be known until after the LSA committee’s meeting the day before whether City Mission’s application will be recommended for approval. The Redevelopment Authority of the County of Washington, which oversees the LSA funds, has until March 31 to submit the list of projects to the state Department of Community and Economic Development for final approval.

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The PUC may change the amount of the rate increase or decrease requested by the utility for each customer class. As a result, the rate charged to you may be different than the rate requested by the company and shown above.

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  - If no formal complaints are filed, the Commission may grant all, some or none of the request without holding a hearing before a judge.
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  - Send your letter or request for a formal complaint form to the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission, Post Office Box 3265, Harrisburg, PA 17105-3265.
- You can be a witness at a public input hearing. Public input hearings are held if the Commission opens an investigation of the company’s rate change request and if there is a large number of customers interested in the case. At these hearings you have the opportunity to present your views in person to the PUC judge hearing the case and the company representatives. All testimony given “under oath” becomes part of the official rate case record. These hearings are held in the service area of the company.



Effective July 1, 2024, Attorney Simon B. John, Esquire will retire from the practice of law and close his law office.

It has been a privilege to serve the legal needs of the wonderful clients of our community in Fayette County.

If you were a client of Attorney Simon B. John, Esquire and would like your file, please contact the office at 724-438-8560 by May 1, 2024.

**Simon B. John, Esq.**  
 96 E. Main Street  
 Uniontown, PA 15401



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

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March 15, 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 15th day of March, 2024

Notary Signature

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Washington County  
My Commission Expires October 8, 2024  
Commission Number 1382375

# PA VetPets opens North Strabane office

By JON ANDREASSI  
Staff Writer  
jandreassi@observer-reporter.com

PA VetPets is expanding its operation with a brick-and-mortar location in North Strabane Township.

The nonprofit celebrated with a ribbon-cutting ceremony March 7 at The Shoppes at Quail Acres. Omar Brooks and his wife, Nicole Malesic, started the organization in 2020, and had been working out of the Ignite Business Incubator in Washington.

With a dedicated space, Brooks hopes to more effectively carry out their mission of helping connect veterans with emotional support or service dogs. The building at 1445 Washington Road will be open Thursdays for clients to be able to meet with an in-house counselor, and on Sundays for training.

Otherwise, the organization will operate on an appointment-only basis.

"If I could sum it up, it's set up to look like a home instead of a typical training



PHOTOS COURTESY OF VETPETS  
Vietnam Veteran Richard Hawkins with his service dog, Tri

environment," Brooks said of the Quail Acres office, adding that they hope the environment will help veterans focus on their mental health and well-being.

Brooks said the ultimate goal of VetPets is to help veterans determine what their exact needs are when it comes to a support dog. He notes that there is a dis-

inction between a "service" dog and an "emotional support" dog.

Service dogs are expensive and can require up to two years of training before they are ready for their owners.

VetPets will help connect veterans with other organizations that specialize in training service dogs. Most-

ly, however, Brooks says that they see the most success with emotional support dogs and counseling.

"People think they know what a service dog is, but don't understand the work required," Brooks said. "Within seven months they realize, I really just needed an emotional support dog. Someone to be there in my times of loneliness, anxiety or depression."

VetPets hopes this will lighten the load on organizations that train service dogs, and make it easier for veterans in need to be connected with their animal.

"We're doing a service by removing people from the service dog waiting list for people that need service dogs," Brooks said.

The new location will also give people an opportunity to support VetPets. According to Brooks, they are offering five weeks of basic obedience training for puppies. It is \$150 to join a group, and the cost is considered a donation to the organization.



PA VetPets co-founder Omar Brooks with Chrome Federal Credit Union CEO Robert Flanyak at last week's ribbon cutting

## Making sense of new world order

While cleaning out my car this week, I found a relic.

It's a COVID mask, navy blue with gold Rudolfs on it, purchased the first Christmas of the pandemic. It was one of 10 I bought along the way. I don't know where the others are, but this one survived.

It was four years ago this week; four years since news of the virus began bubbling up to the surface, first from occasional news stories from the west coast, and then the almost breathless minute-by-minute reports that followed the progress as the illness spread. I spent those first weeks glued to the TV, watching the line graphs climbing higher and taking my temperature every hour. I bought a pulse oximeter, a device I'd never heard of before the world COVID invaded our language. I used that little square box, clamping it over my finger to make sure I was still getting enough oxygen.

The anxiety was crippling, made worse by not having my children with me. My son had just begun living and working in Los Angeles, and I worried — first about his health and then about the likelihood I wouldn't see him for a while.

"I'm hearing this shutdown might continue at least until September," I said, meaning September 2020.

"Let's hope it doesn't last that long," he said. We shared the naive optimism that plunged all of us into a dreamy denial about how long and painful a time we were in for.

We stopped going to the TV station for work. At first, the team and I met on conference phone calls and then came the novelty of Zoom. We signed into our comput-



BETH DOLINAR

ers to take our place in the squares, showing each other our cats and dogs. People asked about the two Picaso-like paintings on the wall behind me, my kids' framed self portraits from first grade. I was so proud.

My daughter was at college in West Virginia then. Each Sunday I'd pick up her favorite pizza and drive south for a visit with her and her boyfriend at a picnic table outside. My son and I would do FaceTime calls during which I tried to stay upbeat and not foist my anxiety onto him.

Those four months turned to years. I scrambled to find vaccines for elderly relatives and then drove far into Greene County to get my own. I caught COVID at an outdoor holiday party in 2022, but wasn't very sick, thanks to the shot. Older people I knew died of COVID; that made the mask resistance infuriating.

My television colleagues and I kept working. I produced several documenta-

ries, filming interviews outdoors so the subjects didn't have to be masked. The crew and I always wore them, though.

Like many, I spent hours outdoors, clocking hundreds of miles on my bike, but still I didn't feel completely safe. When a rider approached, I held my breath until they passed.

The world is more troubled today than it was in March 2020. Maybe the fear and anxiety of those pandemic years caused us to lose our collective minds; the discord and rancor has multiplied, and we find ourselves in a mess perhaps as bad as a virus.

So much has changed since this week four years ago. My son is engaged to a lovely young woman. My daughter is now married to the kind, smart classmate who shared our pizza picnics. I moved to a new home, close to a different bike trail.

I'm still working and, like the rest of us, trying to make sense of this new world, but glad to have made it through.



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## NOTICE OF PROPOSED GAS COST RATE CHANGES

### To Our Customers:

Effective January 1, 2023, the Peoples Companies legal entities were merged. As such, Peoples Natural Gas Company LLC became Peoples Natural Gas Company LLC — Peoples Natural Gas Division ("PNGD" or "Peoples Natural Gas Division") and Peoples Gas Company became Peoples Natural Gas Company LLC — Peoples Gas Division ("PGD" or "Peoples Gas Division").

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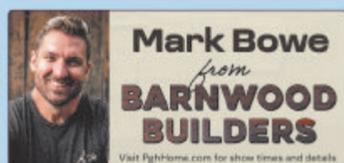
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