Post & Schell P.C.
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

17 North Second Street
12th Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17101-1601
717-731-1970 Main
717-731-1985 Main Fax
www.postschell.com

Nicholas A. Stobbe

nstobbe@postschell.com
717-612-6033 Direct
717-731-1985 Direct Fax
File #: 202658

June 24, 2024

VIA ELECTRONIC FILING

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

Re: Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission, *et al.* v. FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company
Docket Nos. R-2024-3047068, *et al.*

Dear Secretary Chiavetta:

Enclosed for filing are Proofs of Publication evidencing that notice of the public input hearing in the above-captioned proceeding was published in the following newspapers on the dates indicated below:

- **June 15, 2024** – *Bedford Gazette, The Bradford Era, The Progress, Indiana Gazette, The Tribune-Democrat, The Sentinel, The Meadville Tribune, Oil City Derrick/Franklin News-Herald, The Punxsutawney Spirit, The Courier-Express, The Somerset Daily American, Daily Review, Morning Times, The Times Observer, The Corry Journal, Daily News, The Tri-County Independent, The Herald, New Castle News, Record-Argus, Tribune Review Newspaper, The Leader Times, The Daily Press, Gettysburg Times, Reading Eagle, Daily Local News, and The Mercury*

- **June 16, 2024** – *The Erie Times-News, Altoona Mirror, The Beaver County Times/Ellwood City Ledger, Butler Eagle, Centre Daily Times, The Public Opinion, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, The Herald-Standard, Observer-Reporter, The Express Times, The Evening Sun, The Lebanon Daily News, York Dispatch, York Daily Record, Patriot News, The Pocono Record, and The Intelligencer*

- **June 17, 2024** – *The Tribune-Democrat, The Meadville Tribune, New Castle News, and Record-Argus*

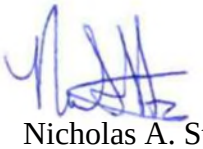
- **June 18, 2024** – *Bedford Gazette, The Bradford Era, The Progress, The Erie Times-News, Indiana Gazette, The Sentinel, Oil City Derrick/Franklin News-Herald, The Punxsutawney Spirit, The Courier-Express, The Somerset Daily American, Daily Review, Morning Times, The Times Observer, The Corry Journal, Daily News, Altoona Mirror, The Tri-County Independent, The Beaver County Times/Ellwood City Ledger, Butler Eagle, The Public Opinion, Tribune Review Newspaper, The Leader Times, The Daily Press, The Herald-Standard, Observer-Reporter, The Express Times, The Evening Sun, The Lebanon Daily News, York Dispatch, York Daily Record, Gettysburg Times, Patriot News, Reading Eagle, The Mercury, Daily Local News, The Pocono Record, and The Intelligencer.*

- **June 19, 2024** – *The Herald*

- **June 20, 2024** – *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*

Copies are being provided per the attached Certificate of Service.

Respectfully submitted,



Nicholas A. Stobbe

NAS/dmc
Enclosures

cc: The Honorable Katrina Dunderdale
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

Scott B. Granger, Esquire
Bureau of Investigation & Enforcement
Commonwealth Keystone Building
400 North Street, 2nd Floor West
PO Box 3265
Harrisburg, PA 17105-3265
sgranger@pa.gov

Darryl Lawrence, Esquire
Harrison Breitman, Esquire
Andrew Zerby, Esquire
Emily Farren, Esquire
Office of Consumer Advocate
555 Walnut Street
Forum Place, 5th Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17101-1923
dlawrence@paoca.org
hbreitman@paoca.org
azerby@paoca.org
efarren@paoca.org
OCAFirstEnergy2024@paoca.org

Sharon Webb, Esquire
Rebecca Lyttle, Esquire
Office of Small Business Advocate
555 Walnut Street, 1st Floor
Forum Place
Harrisburg, PA 17101
swebb@pa.gov
relyttle@pa.gov

Elizabeth R. Marx, Esquire
Ria M. Pereira, Esquire
John W. Sweet, Esquire
Lauren N. Berman, Esquire
Pennsylvania Utility Law Project
118 Locust Street
Harrisburg, PA 17101-1414
pulp@pautilitylawproject.org
Counsel for Counsel for Coalition for Affordable Utility Services and Energy Efficiency in PA (CAUSE-PA)

Charis Mincavage, Esquire
Susan Bruce, Esquire
Kenneth R. Stark (I.D. No. 312945)
Harrison Ryan Block (I.D. No. 334653)
McNees Wallace & Nurick, LLC
100 Pine Street, P.O. Box 1166
Harrisburg, PA 17108
cmincavage@mcneeslaw.com
sbruce@mcneeslaw.com
kstark@mcneeslaw.com
rblock@mcneeslaw.com
Counsel for Met-Ed Industrial Users Group, Penelec Industrial Customer Alliance, and West Penn Power Industrial Intervenors (MEIUG/PICA/WPPIUG)

Brian T. Kadlubek, Esquire
Pullman Center
112 Hollywood Drive, Suite 101
Butler, PA 16001
btkadlubek@lawgol.com
IBEW Local 459

Nicholas Enoch, Esquire
Lubin & Enoch, PC
349 North Fourth Avenue
Phoenix, Arizona 85003
nick@lubinandenoch.com
IBEW Local 777

Mark E. Belland, Esquire
O'Brien, Belland & Bushinsky, LLC
509 South Lenola Road, Building 6
Moorestown, NJ 08057
mbelland@obblaw.com
IBEW Local 777

Joseph S. Pass, Esquire
219 Fort Pitt Boulevard, Floor 1
Pittsburgh, PA 15222
jsp@jpilaw.com
Counsel for UWUA System Local 102

Whitney E. Snyder, Esquire
Thomas J. Sniscak, Esquire
Hawke McKeon & Sniscak, LLP
100 N. 10th Street
Harrisburg, PA 17101
wesnyder@hmslegal.com
tjsniscak@hmslegal.com
Counsel for PSU

John Dolan
145 N 7th Street
Indiana, PA 15701
Johndolan145@gmail.com

Derrick P. Williamson, Esquire
Barry A. Naum, Esquire
Steven W. Lee, Esquire
Spilman Thoman & Battle PLLC
1100 Bent Creek Boulevard
Suite 101
Mechanicsburg, PA 17050
dwilliamson@spilmanlaw.com
bnaum@spilmanlaw.com
slee@spilmanlaw.com

Annette Martin
3350 White Church Road
Chambersburg, PA 17202
G15a20@yajoo.com

Connie Dunmyer
138 Status Lane
Somerset, PA 15501
Cdunmyer07@yahoo.com

Donald Ellenberger
206 Huch Farm Road
Mars, PA 16046
Dmrjj724@gmail.com

Amy Stutzman
159 Status Lane
Somerset, PA 15001
pastutzman@mail.com

Amy Stutzman
161 Status Lane
Somerset, PA 15501
pastutzman@mail.com

VIA FIRT-CLASS MAIL

Hattie Coates
1650 Dodge Hollow Rd
Ulysses, PA 16948

Date: June 10, 2024

Nicholas A. Stobbe

PROOF OF INSERTION

Name of Publication: Bedford Gazette

City, State: Bedford, PA

Client/Advertiser: First Energy/First Energy Media

Insertion Order #: 22474

Date[s] of Insertion: 6/15/204; 6/18/2024

Caption: #1663 Rate Hearings – June MAIN NEWS

Ad Size: 4 Column x 13 Inches

Total Number of Insertions: 2

My signature verifies that this ad was inserted as scheduled according to the above specifications.

Trisha K. Clingerman — Signature

6.24.24 — Date

Trisha K. Clingerman — Name [please print]

BEDFORD FORECAST

AccuWeather Visit AccuWeather.com

TODAY	TONIGHT	SUNDAY	MONDAY
Sunny, breezy and less humid	Partly cloudy	Partly sunny	Very hot; more humid in the afternoon
HIGH 80°	LOW 53°	83°	63°	96°	69°

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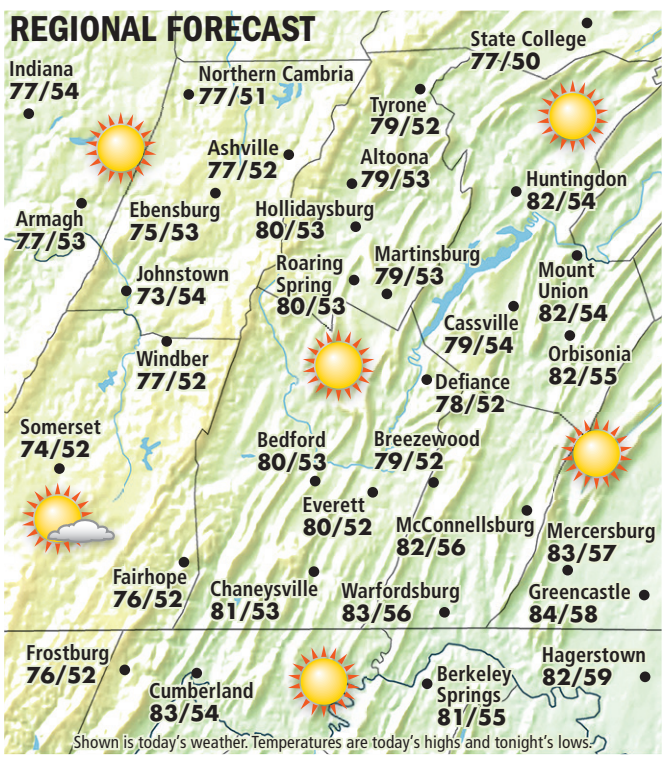
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Bedford, PA 15522

REGIONAL FORECAST



Shown is today's weather. Temperatures are today's highs and tonight's lows.

REGIONAL CITIES

City	TODAY Hi/Lo/W	SUN. Hi/Lo/W
Allentown	80/51/s	80/58/s
Baltimore	85/64/s	84/67/pc
Bradford	73/46/s	82/60/pc
Chambersburg	83/57/s	84/64/pc
Cleveland	75/59/pc	90/68/s
Erie	71/58/s	83/68/s
Harrisburg	83/57/s	85/65/pc
Lancaster	83/54/s	83/61/pc
Philadelphia	84/62/s	86/65/s
Pittsburgh	78/56/s	90/66/s
Reading	83/54/s	85/61/pc
Scranton	78/49/s	79/60/s
Sunbury	80/48/s	82/59/s
Uniontown	77/55/s	91/67/s
Washington, DC	86/67/s	86/70/pc
Williamsport	79/48/s	81/60/s
York	82/54/s	84/65/pc

NATIONAL CITIES

City	TODAY Hi/Lo/W	SUN. Hi/Lo/W
Atlanta	96/75/pc	93/74/pc
Boston	74/56/c	71/60/s
Buffalo	72/53/s	81/69/pc
Charleston, WV	82/56/s	93/70/pc
Charlotte	91/71/s	86/71/pc
Chicago	85/66/pc	92/75/pc
Dallas	96/76/s	94/75/s
Denver	89/63/t	97/63/s
Detroit	78/60/pc	86/69/s
Houston	94/74/s	93/75/t
Indianapolis	84/61/pc	92/73/pc
Las Vegas	110/80/s	104/79/s
Los Angeles	84/63/s	80/60/s
Memphis	97/76/s	100/77/pc
Miami	83/77/t	90/79/t
New Orleans	97/79/s	89/75/t
New York City	81/61/s	75/65/s
Oklahoma City	91/72/s	90/72/s
Orlando	89/74/t	90/73/t
Phoenix	113/83/s	111/80/s
St. Louis	95/74/pc	99/79/pc
San Francisco	71/52/s	70/54/s
Seattle	58/46/sh	60/48/pc
Tampa	88/78/t	90/78/t

SUN AND MOON

	TODAY	SUN.
Sunrise	5:45 a.m.	5:45 a.m.
Sunset	8:45 p.m.	8:45 p.m.
Moonrise	2:37 p.m.	3:37 p.m.
Moonset	1:54 a.m.	2:14 a.m.

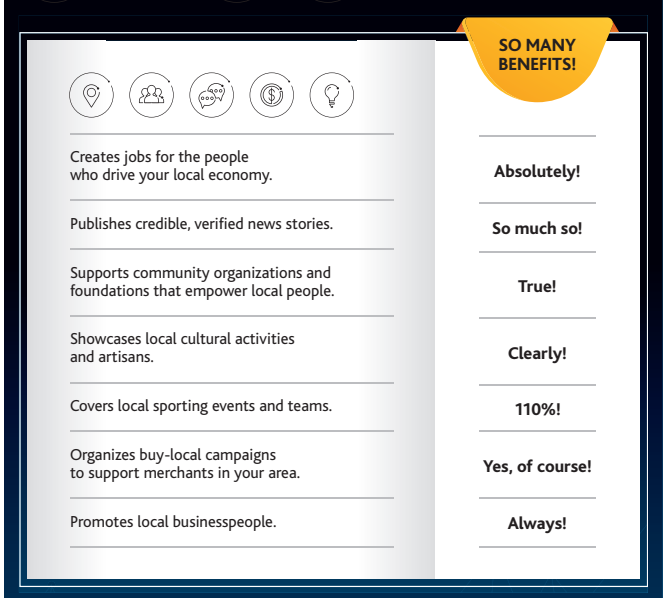
Full	Last	New	First
Jun 21	Jun 28	Jul 5	Jul 13

Weather(W): **s**-sunny, **pc**-partly cloudy, **c**-cloudy, **sh**-showers, **t**-thunderstorms, **r**-rain, **sf**-snow flurries, **sn**-snow, **i**-ice.

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Reported birth of rare white buffalo calf in Yellowstone park fulfills Lakota prophecy

HELENA, Mont. (AP) — The reported birth of a rare white buffalo in Yellowstone National Park fulfills a Lakota prophecy that portends better times, according to members of the American Indian tribe who cautioned that it's also a signal that more must be done to protect the earth and its animals.

"The birth of this calf is both a blessing and warning. We must do more," said Chief Arvol Looking Horse, the spiritual leader of the Lakota, Dakota and the Nakota Oyate in South Dakota, and the 19th keeper of the sacred White Buffalo Calf Woman Pipe and Bundle.

The birth of the sacred calf comes as after a severe winter in 2023 drove thousands of Yellowstone buffalo, also known as bison, to lower elevations. More than 1,500 were killed, sent to slaughter or transferred to tribes seeking to reclaim stewardship over an animal their ancestors lived alongside for millennia.

Erin Braaten of Kalispell took several photos of the calf shortly after it was born on June 4 in the Lamar Valley in the northeastern corner of the park.

Her family was visiting the park when she spotted "something really white" among a herd of bison across the Lamar River.

Traffic ended up stopping while bison crossed the road, so Braaten stuck her camera out the window to take a closer look with her telephoto lens.

"I look and it's this white bison calf. And I was just totally, totally floored," she said.

After the bison cleared the roadway, the Braatens turned their vehicle around and found a spot to park. They watched the calf and its mother for 30 to 45 minutes.

"And then she kind of led it through the willows there," Braaten said. Although Braaten came back each of the next two days, she didn't see the white calf again.

For the Lakota, the birth of a white buffalo calf with a black nose, eyes and hooves is akin to the second coming of Jesus Christ, Looking Horse said.

Lakota legend says about 2,000 years ago — when nothing was good, food was running out and bison were disappearing — White Buffalo Calf Woman appeared, presented a bowl pipe and a bundle to a tribal member, taught them how to pray and said that the pipe could be used to bring buffalo to the area for food. As she left, she turned into a white buffalo calf.

"And some day when the times are hard again," Looking Horse said in relating the legend, "I shall return and stand upon the earth as a white buffalo calf, black nose, black eyes, black hooves."

A similar white buffalo calf was born in Wisconsin in 1994 and was named Miracle, he said. Troy Heinert, the executive director of the South Dakota-based InterTribal Buffalo Council, said the calf in Braaten's photos looks like a true white buffalo because it has a black nose, black hooves and dark eyes.

"From the pictures I've seen, that calf seems to have those traits," said Heinert, who is Lakota. An albino buffalo would have pink eyes.



Erin Braaten

A rare white buffalo calf, reportedly born in Yellowstone National Park's Lamar Valley, is shown on June 4, 2024, in Wyo.

A naming ceremony has been held for the Yellowstone calf, Looking Horse said, though he declined to reveal the name. A ceremony celebrating the calf's birth is set for June 26 at the Buffalo Field Campaign headquarters in West Yellowstone.

Other tribes also revere white buffalo.

"Many tribes have their own story of why the white buffalo is so important," Heinert said. "All stories go back to them being very sacred."

Heinert and several members of the Buffalo Field Campaign say they've never heard of a white buffalo being born in Yellowstone, which has wild herds. Park officials had not seen the buffalo yet and could not confirm its birth in the park, and they have no record of a white buffalo being born in the park previously.

Jim Matheson, executive director of the National Bison Association, could not quantify how rare the calf is.

"To my knowledge, no one's ever tracked the occurrence of white buffalo being born throughout history. So I'm not sure how we can make a determination how often it occurs."

Besides herds of the animals on public lands or overseen by conservation groups, about 80 tribes across the U.S. have more than 20,000 bison, a figure that's been growing in recent years.

In Yellowstone and the surrounding area, the killing or removal of large numbers of bison happens almost every winter, under an agreement between federal and Montana agencies that has limited the size of the park's herds to about 5,000 animals. Yellowstone officials last week proposed a slightly larger population of up to 6,000 bison, with a final decision expected next month.

But ranchers in Montana have long opposed increasing the Yellowstone herds or transferring the animals to tribes. Republican Gov. Greg Gianforte has said he would not support any management plan with a population target greater than 3,000 Yellowstone bison.

Heinert sees the calf's birth as a reminder "that we need to live in a good way and treat others with respect."

"I hope that calf is safe and gonna live its best life in Yellowstone National Park, exactly where it was designed to be," Heinert said.

666A

PUBLIC INPUT HEARING NOTIFICATION

For FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company's Rate Increase Request

Docket No. R-2024-3047068

The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC) will conduct 18 Public Input Hearings concerning FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company's request filed on April 2, 2024, to increase electric rates by $502 million per year. The Commission will conduct a series of Public Input Hearings, totaling eighteen (18) in total, with fourteen (14) Public Input Hearings to be conducted in-person at seven (7) different locations within the territory of FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company. An additional four (4) Public Input Hearings will be conducted by telephone using the Commission's conference bridge technology.

Different processes will be used for the in-person hearings than will be used to the telephonic hearings. Individuals wishing to testify at either the in-person or telephonic hearings will only be permitted once. Time limitations may apply to how long individuals may testify, if a large number of other individuals wish to testify at the same session.

In-Person Public Input Hearings will take place at the following locations:

Tuesday, June 25, 2024 at 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
VFW Post #2540 and Canteen, 546 Fawn Road, East Stroudsburg, PA 18301

Wednesday, June 26, 2024 at 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Reading Public Museum (Ground Floor Auditorium), 500 Museum Road, Reading, PA 19611

Thursday, June 27, 2024 at 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Graduate Palo Alto (Coaly Ballroom A/B), 125 S Atherton Street, State College, PA 16801

Tuesday, July 9, 2024 at 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Erie County Public Library (H.O. Hirt Auditorium – Museum Entrance), 160 East Front Street, Erie, PA 16507

Wednesday, July 10, 2024 at 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Butler County Community College (Founders Hall – Parking Lot #6), 107 College Drive, Butler, PA 16002

Thursday, July 11, 2024 Time: 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Greensburg Garden and Civic Center (Laurel Room & Iris Room), 951 Old Salem Road, Greensburg, PA 15601

Friday, July 12, 2024 at 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Double Tree by Hilton (Junior Ballroom), 340 Racetrack Road, Washington, PA 15301

Requests for Interpreters: If you require an interpreter, please contact Judge Dunderdale's office at (412) 565-3550 or via email at mswarner@pa.gov, as soon as possible. If you contact the office too close to the hearing date, we may not have enough time to arrange for an interpreter. If you request an interpreter, we will make every reasonable effort to have one present.

Telephonic Public Input Hearings

Presiding: Administrative Law Judge Katrina L. Dunderdale, **Dates: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 & Wednesday, July 17th, 2024, Times: 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM**

If you wish to testify at one of the telephonic public input hearings, you are encouraged to pre-register by 4:00 p.m. on Friday, July 12, 2024. If you do not pre-register and provide the information listed below, you may not have an opportunity to testify.

To pre-register by email, please email Judge Dunderdale's Legal Assistant, Mary Swarner, at mswarner@pa.gov, and provide: (1) your first and last name, (2) the date and time of the hearing at which you wish to testify, (3) the phone number you will be using to call into the public input hearing, and (4) if you require an interpreter to participate in the hearing, the language of the interpreter.

To pre-register by phone, please contact Judge Dunderdale's office at (412) 565-3550 and leave a message providing: (1) your first and last name, (2) the date and time of the hearing at which you wish to testify, (3) the phone number you will be using to call into the public input hearing, (4) a phone number where you can be reached prior to the hearing if we need to contact you, (5) your email address, if you have one, and (6) if you require an interpreter to participate in the hearing, the language of the interpreter.

If you do not wish to testify but want to listen to the public input hearing(s), please contact Judge Dunderdale's office by email at mswarner@pa.gov or phone at (412) 565-3550 and provide your name and the hearing(s) you want to listen to so we can ensure we have adequate caller capacity on the conference bridge to accommodate all callers.

To participate in the Telephonic Public Input Hearing:
- You must dial the toll-free number listed below
- You must enter a PIN number when instructed to do so, also listed below
- You must speak your name when prompted
- The telephone system will connect you to the hearing

Toll-free Bridge Number: 1.866.675.4411

PIN Number: 23464163

HEARING EXHIBITS: If you have any hearing exhibits to which you will refer during the telephonic hearing, please email them to Judge Dunderdale's Legal Assistant, Mary Swarner, at mswarner@pa.gov. The legal assistant will forward the exhibits to the Judge and all parties. Exhibits must be received by: **Tuesday, July 9, 2024.**

QUESTIONS? The Pennsylvania Office of Consumer Advocate (OCA) represents the interests of utility customers before the PUC. If you have questions about the public input hearings or the Company's requested rate increase, please contact OCA at its toll-free number (1-800-684-6560) or by email (consumer@paoca.org). Additionally, OCA can help customers pre-register for the Public Input Hearings.

OTHER WAYS TO BE HEARD: If you want to be heard about the proposed rate increase but will not or cannot testify at the Public Input Hearings, you may file a formal complaint or comment to the proposed rate increase. Please visit the PUC's website to use the applicable form available at https://www.puc.pa.gov/complaints/formal-complaints/.

TTY-based Telecommunications Relay Service number for persons who are deaf or hearing-impaired is: 711.

BEDFORD FORECAST

AccuWeather Visit AccuWeather.com

TODAY	TONIGHT	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
Hot with sunshine and patchy clouds	Partly cloudy, warm and humid	Partly sunny, hot and humid	Sunny to partly cloudy, hot and humid
HIGH 93°	LOW 67°	91°	67°	94°	68°

TODAY'S WEATHER SPONSORED BY

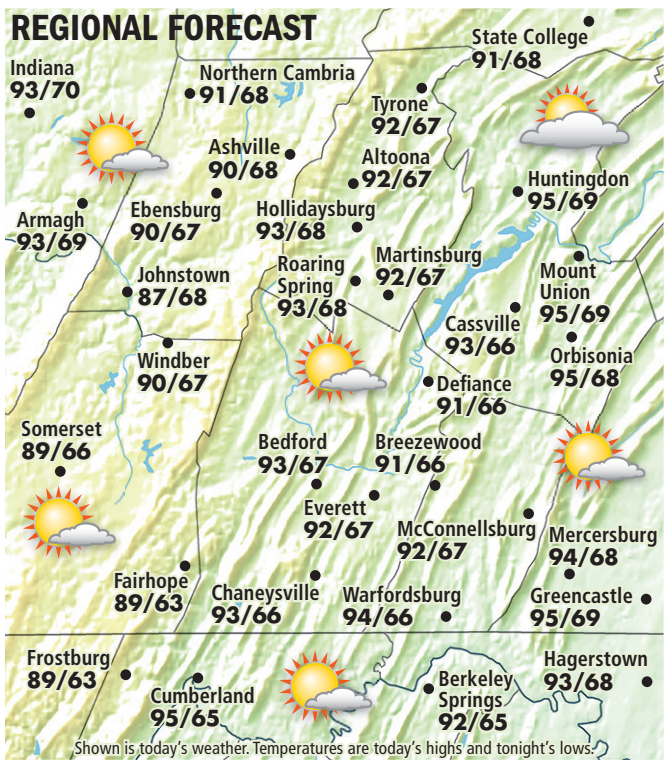
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FAITH ZEMBOWER
REAL ESTATE AGENT
OFFICE: 814.623.7009
CELL: 814.977.6641
faithzembower@gmail.com



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REGIONAL FORECAST



Shown is today's weather. Temperatures are today's highs and tonight's lows.

REGIONAL CITIES

City	TODAY Hi/Lo/W	WED. Hi/Lo/W
Allentown	93/65/s	92/63/pc
Baltimore	91/67/s	89/66/pc
Bradford	91/67/t	91/64/pc
Chambersburg	94/68/s	90/67/pc
Cleveland	96/75/t	94/72/t
Erie	90/77/t	89/73/t
Harrisburg	96/69/s	91/67/pc
Lancaster	93/66/s	90/65/pc
Philadelphia	93/70/s	91/71/pc
Pittsburgh	95/74/t	92/68/pc
Reading	95/68/s	93/67/pc
Scranton	95/68/s	95/66/pc
Sunbury	94/66/s	93/64/pc
Uniontown	94/70/s	94/67/pc
Washington, DC	93/70/s	89/70/pc
Williamsport	94/69/pc	92/64/pc
York	95/66/s	92/66/pc

NATIONAL CITIES

City	TODAY Hi/Lo/W	WED. Hi/Lo/W
Atlanta	90/70/pc	88/70/pc
Boston	90/70/pc	93/72/pc
Buffalo	93/76/t	92/74/t
Charleston, WV	93/70/pc	92/68/pc
Charlotte	89/66/pc	88/69/pc
Chicago	94/76/t	96/74/pc
Dallas	91/74/t	81/75/c
Denver	75/50/pc	71/56/pc
Detroit	93/75/t	92/74/t
Houston	85/75/r	83/76/r
Indianapolis	90/73/t	92/74/pc
Las Vegas	96/73/s	101/75/s
Los Angeles	80/61/pc	79/61/pc
Memphis	89/75/c	92/74/pc
Miami	89/79/pc	89/77/sh
New Orleans	83/80/r	89/79/t
New York City	86/70/pc	88/72/pc
Oklahoma City	85/72/pc	86/68/pc
Orlando	89/73/sh	90/74/sh
Phoenix	105/81/s	106/81/s
St. Louis	93/75/t	93/76/pc
San Francisco	71/52/s	67/53/pc
Seattle	69/51/pc	75/54/s
Tampa	94/77/sh	91/76/sh

SUN AND MOON

	TODAY	WED.
Sunrise	5:45 a.m.	5:45 a.m.
Sunset	8:46 p.m.	8:46 p.m.
Moonrise	5:45 p.m.	6:53 p.m.
Moonset	2:59 a.m.	3:29 a.m.

Full	Last	New	First
Jun 21	Jun 28	Jul 5	Jul 13

Weather(W): **s**-sunny, **pc**-partly cloudy, **c**-cloudy, **sh**-showers, **t**-thunderstorms, **r**-rain, **sf**-snow flurries, **sn**-snow, **i**-ice.

Forecasts and graphics provided by **AccuWeather, Inc.** ©2024

Business
BEDFORD COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
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Thurs. June 20th – 5-7pm
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INTENTIONAL NETWORKING
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Education News

Local students on lists

Saint Francis University in Loretto has announced its president list students and dean's list students for the spring semester. Local residents named to the president's list with 4.0 grade-point averages are Leah Decker of Roaring Spring; Matthew Hall of New Enterprise; Kaitlyn Maxwell of Everett; and Liah Ramsey of Everett. Local students named to the dean's list with at least 3.5 grade-point averages are Madyn Allison of Alum Bank; Colten Allison of Alum Bank; Emily Clark of Bedford; Regan Dodson of Roaring Spring; Kristen Ewing of Everett; Emily Folk of Schellsburg; Rachel Fortman of Everett; Bailey Garver of Claysburg; Corey Hammel of Claysburg; Jordyn Heuston of Roaring Spring; Hallie Hillegass of Everett; Annie Kitt of Roaring Spring; Abbie Kitt of Roaring Spring; Emily Liebal of Roaring Spring; Lydia Martin of New Paris; Jessen Poullos of Queen; Nathaniel Scritchfield of Hyndman; Anna Stover of Clearville; and Mercury Swaim of Everett.

Penatzer, Yanoshak on dean's list

Ava Penatzer of Bedford and Dominic Yanoshak of Bedford have been named to the spring semester dean's lst at the University of Alabama. Students must complete the semester with at least a 3.5 grade-point average to be named to the list.

Whisel named to list

Essence Whisel of Bedford has been named to the spring semester dean's list at Lee University in Cleveland, Tenn. Students must complete the semester with at least a 3.7 grade-point average to be named to the list.

Mannion on list

Aiden Mannion, a sophomore from Osterburg, has been named to the spring semester dean's list at Penn State Behrend in Erie. Aiden, a science major, maintained a grade-point average of 3.5 or higher for the semester.

Wilt graduates with honors

Matthew Robert Wilt of Everett graduated from Elizabethtown College on May 11 with summa cum laude honors and a 3.97 cumulative grade-point average. Wilt earned Bachelor of Arts degrees in both Political Science and Legal Studies with a minor in international studies. Wilt, a 2020 graduate of Everett Area High School, plans to pursue a law degree at the University of Massachusetts Law School in the fall.



WILT

Items published

Education and military news items, with or without photos, are published free of charge. For more information, call 814-623-1151 or email vhenry@bedfordgazette.com.

Deeds

Melanie K. Weller* to Jeremy Weller*, South Woodbury Twp., $1.

Bryan Tyler Fetter to Bedford Rural Electric Co-op, Bedford Twp., $45,000.

New Enterprise Stone & Lime Co. Inc. to Stacy D. Woomer*, Broad Top Twp., $1.

Craig M. Instone to David R. Layman*, Bedford Twp., $70,000.

Ronnette I. Musselman* to Michael S. Esh*, West St Clair Twp., $792,000.

Mary Beth Burket* to Cathy M. Burkett*, Kimmel Twp., $145,000.

Debra A. Barnes* to Alan W. Barnes II, Colerain Twp., $1.

Charlee Howsare* to Layne W. Defibaugh*, Monroe Twp., $250,000.

Fitz Holdings LLC to Kylee R. Brown*, West St. Clair Twp., $70,000.

Samuel A. Calhoun* to Joy Lepako*, East Providence Twp., $56,000.

Robert M. Octavio to Christopher Charles Maley*, Bedford Twp., $376,000.

Maureen Kerrigan* to Ryan W. Price, East St. Clair Twp., $300,000.

Sandra Jo Richardson* to Lesley M. Swope,* Broad Top Twp., $10,000.

Kristine L. Wertz* to Melinda K. Foor, Bedford Twp., $1.

Rex A. Clark* to Rex A. Clark*, Southampton Twp., $1.

Condo Drive Condo Drive Development LLC to Development LLC, Bedford Twp., $1.

Judy Fogal to Jeremy M. Fogal*, Hopewell Twp., $1.

Alpine Resort Operations to Two LLC to Michael J Flood, Kimmel Twp., $53,000.

Erin K. Weyant* to Melanie D. Loop*, Bedford Twp., $90,000.

Tammy Jo Wratten* to Vacant Land Now LLC, Monroe Twp., $15,000.

Rosemarie C. Holm to Stephanie D. Vignola*, Monroe Twp., $1.

Donald M. Suttmiller to Misty D. Wilson, Juniata Twp., $1.

Adam Paul Talbert to Kaelob Michael Norris*, Mann Twp., $125,000.

Judy E. Hillegas* to David Reaugh, West Providence Twp., $10,000.

Christine A. Sullivan* to Christine A. Sullivan*, Napier Twp., $1.

Heritage Estates Partnership to Angela G. Moir*, Juniata Twp., $30,000.

Mary R. Emerick* to Danielle L. Emerick-Engle, Londonderry Twp., $1.

Mary R. Emerick* to Mary R. Emerick, Londonderry Twp., $1.

*and others

666A

PUBLIC INPUT HEARING NOTIFICATION

For FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company's Rate Increase Request

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Graduate Palo Alto (Coaly Ballroom A/B), 125 S Atherton Street, State College, PA 16801

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PIN Number: 23464163

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TTY-based Telecommunications Relay Service number for persons who are deaf or hearing-impaired is: 711.

AFFIDAVIT OF INSERTION

Please Fill out Information Below:

(Note: Any line marked with an asterisk (*****) must be filled in completely & accurately)

***Name of Publication: The Bradford Era**

***City, State: Bradford, PA**

***Advertiser Name: First Energy**

Insertion Order #: 1664

***Date of Insertion: 6/15**

Caption: Notice of Rate Hearing

***Ad Size: 4x13**

***Total # Inserted:** 4132

My signature verifies that this ad was inserted as scheduled according to the above specifications.

Jill Henry _____ 6-17-24 _____

Signature Date

Jill Henry

Name (Please Print)

AFFIDAVIT OF INSERTION

Please Fill out Information Below:

(Note: Any line marked with an asterisk (*) must be filled in completely & accurately)

***Name of Publication: The Bradford Era**

***City, State: Bradford, PA**

***Advertiser Name: First Energy**

Insertion Order #: 1664

***Date of Insertion: 6/18**

Caption: Notice of Rate Hearing

***Ad Size: 4x13**

***Total # Inserted:** 4207

My signature verifies that this ad was inserted as scheduled according to the above specifications.

Jill Henry _____ 6-18-24 _____

Signature Date

Jill Henry

Name (Please Print)

Potter Co. chosen for National Excellence awards

WASHINGTON — Potter County has been chosen for two national excellence awards by the National Association of Counties.

The awards are in recognition of "No Veteran Left Behind," based on the launch of a military veterans transportation program, and "Revitalize Potter County," a strategy to address population loss and outmigration of young adults.

Just six of Pennsylvania's 67 counties are being recognized through NACo's 2024 awards program. Potter is the lone county among them to receive two awards. The awards will be presented during the NACo Annual Conference in Tampa, Fla., on July 13.

Summaries of the county's award-winning initiatives have been posted on the NACo website as follows:

"No Veteran Left Behind: Potter County is sparsely populated and remotely situated. There is little to no access to public transportation. Availability of health care is also limited. Among the most underserved residents are military veterans. There is no VA medical facility in the county. Many veterans are senior citizens with low incomes who lack the means to access quality health care," the site read.

"In 2022, a coalition of veterans' advocates embarked on a lofty mission — a transportation service dedicated solely to taking veterans to medical appointments. This team effort was coordinated by the Potter County Department of Human Services (PCHS), with support from the Potter County Commissioners, Potter County Director of Veterans Services, American Legion/VFW posts, and community supporters," the site noted. "Widespread support, appreciation and respect for military veterans, coupled with the judicious and innovative use of state and county funding, have made the Potter County Veterans Medical Transportation Program a reality. It is funded annually as a line item in Potter County's Human Services Block Grant provided by the state. Local veterans' advocates, community organizations, businesses and individuals support the service through fundraisers and outreach activities. As a result, any eligible military veteran can access transportation for medical care."

The second honor, for Revitalize Potter County, explained the demographics of the rural county, and the desire of many people after the pandemic to live a rural lifestyle.

"Many are seeking affordable housing, high-speed internet access, outdoor recreational opportunities, and vibrant communities. Potter County checks each of those boxes — with the exception of the latter," the site noted. "In 2022, a team of stakeholders spearheaded by the Potter County Commissioners embarked on a strategic plan to revitalize communities with an intensive focus on five core areas. Among them was developing arts and cultural activities.

"In 2023, this innovative mission bore fruit. An arts council that had been dormant for nearly a decade was revitalized as the Potter County Creative Council (PC3). National and state arts/culture organizations provided support, while a broad cross-section of public officials, artisans, community leaders, volunteers, school administrators and other key stakeholders have come aboard. Revitalize Potter County was off and running."

The Bradford Era Another Era

By MARCIE SCHELLHAMMER

10 YEARS AGO

The Studio K dance company of Kane is taking the old saying "Let's get this show on the road!" quite literally later this week as they take the Studio K Dream Team to Disney World in Orlando, Fla., to perform at Downtown Disney on Saturday.

50 YEARS AGO

Bradford Hospital will offer a summer internship for students in four fields of study — pharmacist, physical therapy, medical records librarian and nursing students. The purpose of the program is to promote student involvement in the delivery of rural health care services.

100 YEARS AGO

With new and larger stage fixtures, a new grand piano shipped directly from the Kimball factories, rich mulberry shade hangings and a variety of changes in scenery to please its patrons, Redpath Chautauqua will open in Bradford Thursday on the Second Ward school grounds.

Lewis Run VFRA audit noted two findings

By MARCIE SCHELLHAMMER
marcie@bradfordera.com

A state audit of Lewis Run Volunteer Fire Department Relief Association, released this week by Auditor General Timothy DeFoor, noted two technical issues to correct.

"Relief associations provide vital support to Pennsylvania's dedicated first responders," DeFoor said. "Our audits make sure state aid is used to equip and protect volunteer firefighters and the communities they serve."

In all significant respects, the report noted, the Lewis Run Volunteer Fire Department Relief Association complied with all applicable laws. There were two findings noted in the audit.

According to the audit report, the VFRA's checks contained only one signature, when the law requires two. The association representative noted the checks they were using were set up to only have one signatory. They agreed to remedy the issue.

The second finding was that the minutes of meetings did not contain detailed information on financial transactions. The association representative said a new secretary wasn't familiar with the requirements, but had since received further training.

The report also noted the VFRA had paid $67 in sales tax, which they should not have paid. Because of the small amount, it was not included as a finding in the audit report.

The Department of the Auditor General distributes state aid for VFRAs and audits how they use the funds, which are generated by a 2% tax on fire insurance policies sold in Pennsylvania by out-of-state companies. In 2023, $67.44 million went to 2,519 municipalities for distribution to VFRAs to provide training, purchase equipment and insurance, and pay for death benefits for volunteer firefighters.

Chapel Ridge kicks off summer with week of fun

The summer season is almost officially upon us, and the folks at Chapel Ridge are aiming to start the season off right with a "Kickoff to Summer Celebration" beginning on Sunday and lasting through the week. This event also helps to mark Personal Care Home Week 2024.

The fun starts on Father's Day at 8 a.m. during an Out to Breakfast Men's Trip to the John Williams European Pastry Shop. This will be followed by a church service held at 2 p.m. and a Sunday show held at 6:30 p.m.

On Monday, things get fancy during 10 a.m. manicures. At 11 a.m. there will be shopping and banking, at 1 p.m. there will be a Skype Session. This will be followed by the 2 p.m. resident and staff T-ball game, with Watermelon Social to Follow. At 3:30 p.m. there will be an exercise group and 40's Trivia Time.

On Tuesday, residents will be taken on a trip to Walmart at 10 a.m. There will be devotional reading held at 2 p.m. with an exercise group and 50's Trivia Time to follow at 3:30 p.m. That night, residents will be taken to see the show Perry D'Andrea: Perry Sings Sinatra.

On Wednesday, there will be devotions with John Kearns held at 10 a.m. with a Happy Days Variety Show set for 2 p.m. Rounding out the day will be another 3:30 exercise group and 60's Trivia Time.

On Thursday, the official first day of summer, residents will be treated to a screening of the movie "Grease" at 10 a.m. on the big screen. At 1:30 p.m. there will be a rosary gathering. At 1:30 there will be Pokeno and classic car facts. At 3:30 there will be an exercise group and 60's Music Trivia Time. At 6:00 p.m. the 6th Annual Classic Car Show and hot dog roast will be held. Music will be provided by the RSVP Band.

On Friday, there will be manicures at 10 a.m. followed by 11 a.m. shopping and banking. Then at 2 p.m. the residents and staff will participate in 50's themed games. There will also be an ice cream sundae bar available. The week will finish off with a 3:30 exercise group and 50's Music Trivia Time.

For more information, contact Becky McMillen, Assistant Director of Activities at beckymcmillen@behcr.com or call 814-368-5648.

2 men die after falling into manure tanker in Upstate NY

CLINTON, N.Y. (AP) — Two men died after falling into a manure tanker in Upstate New York, police said.

It happened just after 11 a.m. Thursday at a farm in the Central New York town of Kirkland, Oneida County. One of the men tried to retrieve a piece of equipment that had fallen into the tanker, the Kirkland Police Department said, according to WKTV.

"He passed out and fell inside of the tanker," and then the second man also passed out and fell in as he tried to help, police said.

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SBU receives $953,000 NSF grant

Launches BONAS-Teach Scholarship

ST. BONAVENTURE, N.Y. — St. Bonaventure University is the recipient of a $953,000 grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF) to encourage and support aspiring adolescence education teachers in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

The project, titled "Building Opportunities for Nurturing Aspiring STEM Teachers," or BONAS-Teach, is under direction of Dr. Kaitlyn Dykstra, SBU assistant professor of biology, who serves as the principal investigator of the grant, and Dr. Adam Brown, an SBU professor of education, co-director of the Center for Attention, Learning and Memory, and co-principal investigator.

The overall goal of the program is to increase the number of qualified teachers for grades seven through 12 teachers with strong STEM content knowledge to teach in high-need school districts.

Recipients of the scholarship will be able to receive up to $14,000 per year during their junior and senior years at St. Bonaventure. The program also offers research stipends and opportunities for professional development in areas such as cultural competency and place-based learning. The grant will also support the development of a STEM summer camp for local middle school students to be run by BONAS-Teach scholars.

Additionally, BONAS-Teach scholars will be paired with St. Bonaventure alumni in a long-term mentorship experience that will be facilitated in their first year as a scholar and continue through their first years as a new teacher.

As one of the requirements for the scholarship, recipients must work at least two years for each year of scholarship received in a high-need school district. There are more than 60 high-need school districts in the counties surrounding St. Bonaventure (Cattaraugus, Erie, Allegany, Wyoming and Chautauqua).

"There is a critical shortage of highly qualified STEM teachers, particularly in rural areas," Dykstra said. "Our hope is that the substantial financial support and comprehensive training provided by this grant will incentivize students to pursue careers in STEM education and equip them with the necessary skills to be effective educators."

The BONAS-Teach program is supported by a grant from the NSF as part of the Robert Noyce Teacher Scholarship program. Applications for the 2024-25 academic year are due by July 12.

More information about the program and an application link can be found at www.sbu.edu/bonas-teach.



Pixabay

Pa. waste company finds $10M in loose change

HARRISBURG (TNS) — You know what they say: One man's trash is another man's treasure.

A waste management company in Pennsylvania has collected about $10 million in coins that've been tossed away over the years.

Fox Business reports how Ash Processing at Reworld — which is located in Morrisville, Bucks County — "bridges the divide between trash and treasure" by sorting through incinerated trash for loose change.

"What we have is a series of assorted materials," explains employee Rebecca Guardino.

"This is about the quarter-sized particles where we usually get…a little bit of hardware, but mostly quarters," she said.

Waste Advantage — a publication that "is solely dedicated to covering the solid waste and recycling industry with one publication and one price" — continues to report that the company's machines finds these coins in the trash by forcing them through round holes, sorting them into bins.

They then, continues the same Waste Advantage article, go through a washing station to get all squeaky clean. Finally, they dry out on a rack to top off the process.

"This allows us to better sort the coins to determine what coins are in good condition or have been damage, but it also lets us know which denominations we're dealing," explains Guardino via the publication.

And since the company first got started, according to Fox Business, it's managed to collect that aforementioned $10 million in change.

The same Fox article says that this process aims to restore value to these coins and to keep trash out of landfills.

The Bradford Era
Another Era

By MARCIE SCHELLHAMMER

10 YEARS AGO

The Bradford Sanitary Authority is ready to advertise for an executive director.

At Tuesday's meeting, the authority voted in favor of advertising to fill the newly-created position. The group has been talking about the move for several months and recently sat down to develop a job description.

50 YEARS AGO

Interest sparked by a study of Shakespeare in English class has evolved into a trip to England by ten Kane High School girls and a home economics teacher, Christina Stehman. Miss Stehman contacted several travel agencies and made arrangements with the Ambassadors for Friendship organization.

100 YEARS AGO

A large crowd gathered at the Public Square last night and greatly enjoyed the second of a series of summer municipal open air band concerts given by the Citizens band. The concert marked the inauguration of the new bandstand at the Public Square.

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Winner of our
Father's Day Draw
your Dad Contest



Thank you to all our business sponors.
The Bradford Era

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Presiding: Administrative Law Judge Katrina L. Dunderdale, **Dates: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 & Wednesday, July 17th, 2024, Times: 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM**

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- The telephone system will connect you to the hearing

Toll-free Bridge Number: 1.866.675.4411

PIN Number: 23464163

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TTY-based Telecommunications Relay Service number for persons who are deaf or hearing-impaired is: 711.

PROOF OF INSERTION

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The Progress

City, State:
Clearfield, Pennsylvania

Client/Advertiser:
First Energy

Insertion Order #:
1665

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6/15/2024 + 6/18/2024

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Public Input Hearing Notification

Ad Size:
4 column x 13 in.

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2

My signature verifies that this ad was inserted as scheduled according to the above specifications.

Angelique Aughinbaugh
Signature

6/18/2024
Date

Angelique Aughinbaugh
Name [please print]

Kassab named Clearfield BPW Woman of the Year

CLEARFIELD — Leanne Kassab has been named "Woman of the Year" by the Clearfield Business and Professional Women's Organization.

Kassab is a graduate of Clearfield Area High School and Indiana University of Pennsylvania with a B.S. in business administration/marketing. In addition, she has received multiple banking diplomas from the Professional Development Network.

She graduated with honors from the American Bankers Association School of Bank Marketing and Management at the University of Colorado, and she earned the Certified Financial Marketing Professional designation from the Institute of Certified Bankers in 2003. Kassab graduated with honors from the PA Bankers Advanced School of Banking in 2011 and the PA Bankers Commercial Lending School in 2021.

She joined the marketing team at CNB Bank in 1996 and was promoted to assistant marketing director in 2001, marketing officer in 2003, assistant vice president of marketing in 2008, vice president of marketing in 2012, and executive vice president of client experience in 2014, becoming the first woman to become a member of the executive team at CNB Bank. In 2021, she was promoted to Senior Executive Vice President/Chief Experience Officer.

Kassab has been active in her community, currently serving as president of the Clearfield Arts Studio Theatre Board of Directors, where she had previously served as vice president and a member of the finance committee. She also currently serves on the American Bankers Association Bank Marketing Conference Advisory Board.

She served on the Greater Clearfield Chamber of Commerce Board from 2011 through 2017, the Clearfield-Curwensville Country Club entertainment committee from 2017 through 2021 and coordinated "The Giving Tree" tag donations with CNB Bank team members from 2015 through 2022.

Over the years, she has volunteered at various community events, including the March of Dimes walks, American Cancer Society Relay for Life, Big Brothers Big Sisters Bowl for Kids Sake, the 4-H livestock auction, CRC Beautification Day, the Salvation Army bell ringing campaign and highway clean up.

A loyal friend to the animal community, Kassab is also a supporter of The Central Pennsylvania Humane Society and Orphans of the Storm. Last summer, she adopted Heidi, a dog whose owner had passed away. Heidi was sight and hearing impaired and in declining health but has been thriving under the care of Kassab and her family.

The Woman of the Year award was presented to Kassab during a banquet held in her honor on May 23 at the Copper Cork Event Center in Clearfield, which was attended by members of her family and friends, colleagues, representatives of local clubs and organizations, and several past BPW Women of the Year.

Clearfield BPW President Angela Chew provided the welcome and closing remarks. The guest speaker for the evening was Kassab's sister, Gail Carbol of Nicholasville, Kent., who shared many stories about Kassab's life, her character, her involvement in the community and her many accomplishments, including not only her achievements on a professional level but also on a personal level, as a survivor of triple-negative breast cancer.

The Rev. Shayne Lumadue of Curwensville provided the invocation and benediction, and the entertainment was provided by Liam Webster, Noah Webb, Jenna Bowman, Jeremiah Dobo and Theodoro Chitester on behalf of Clearfield Arts Studio Theatre, who performed songs which will be featured in CAST's upcoming production of "Cabaret".

Following the introduction of Kassab as the 2024 Woman of the Year by Kristin Duttry, BPW Woman of the Year Chairperson, Kassab took the opportunity to address her guests. She expressed her gratitude and shared stories about the generosity of her fellow employees at CNB Bank and gave examples of the various ways they support the local community. She encouraged everyone to become involved by joining local clubs and organizations and volunteering at community events.



Submitted

Pictured from left are Clearfield BPW Woman of the Year Chairperson Kristin Duttry, guest speaker Gail Carbol, 2024 Woman of the Year Leanne Kassab, and Clearfield BPW President Angela Chew.

Kassab resides in Clearfield with her husband, Scott. Her daughter, Paige Spingola, "bonus" daughter and son-in-law, Shannon and Joe Kelly, and grandson, Joe, also reside in Clearfield. She is the daughter of Connie Peoples of Clearfield and the late Barry Peoples.

The Clearfield Business and Professional Women's Organization has been awarding the Woman of the Year award since 1944. In addition to organizing the annual Woman of the Year banquet, Clearfield BPW also awards an annual scholarship to a graduating senior who attends Clearfield Area High School.

Anyone interested in joining Clearfield BPW or attending a meeting as a guest, may send a message through the Facebook page under "Clearfield Bpw" or may contact any current BPW members. Meetings are typically held on the third Wednesday of each month at 6 p.m. at various locations in Clearfield.

Bridge Continued from A1

technical sergeant.

Legislation to name the bridge was sponsored by state Sen. Wayne Langerholc Jr., R-Clearfield/Cambria/Centre. His bill was supported in the state House of Representatives by state Rep. Dallas Kephart, R-Clearfield/Cambria.

Langerholc, chairman of the state transportation committee, said he is delighted to advance legislation. He said the bill to name the bridge in Lane's memory was unanimously approved in both the senate and the house. It was signed by Gov. Josh Shapiro in October of last year.

"The bridge will stand as a symbol of his selflessness and his unwaivering sense of duty," he said.

Kephart said, "Whenever anyone crosses the bridge they will remember Walter."

Morgan Sidberry, Lane's granddaughter, said she did not know her grandfather but many members of her family have shared their stories and memories of him with her.

She said Lane and his wife Esther had four children, 11 grandchildren and 18 great-grandchildren. "Twenty-three of them are here today," she said.

Lane's son, Robert Lane, told those in attendance that his father was a strong man — both mentally and physically. "He was a hard worker and a skilled craftsman. He loved his family."

"He was a quiet man. His deeds and actions spoke volumes. If there was a job to be done, he did it," he noted.

Robert Lane said it is fitting that the bridge on Nichols Street is named in his memory. "He grew up 500 feet from that bridge," he said.

"They say the measure of a man is the impact he has on those around him. Walter Lane lives on through the legacy of his family and those who loved him," he said.

The introduction and welcome were given by PennDOT District 2 District Executive Thomas Prestash.

Lane is one of 90 PennDOT employees who have been killed while working for the department since 1970.

"PennDOT is grateful for dedicated workers who put their lives on the line everyday. We ask the public when they see workers along the road to slow down and pay attention. They are someone's child, sibling, spouse, Mom or Dad," Prestash said.

The national anthem was sung by Lane's grandson, A. Jason Maycock. The invocation was provided by his granddaughter, Ashley Jacobs. The benediction was given by his grandson, Edward Pelote II.

The honor guard from the Veterans of Foreign Wars F. Michael Sicks Post 1785 of Clearfield, conducted a gun salute and performed Taps.

Deitrich Continued from A1

On Thursday night, Lion's club member Jim Bennet recognized Robert Deitrich as the 2024 recipient.

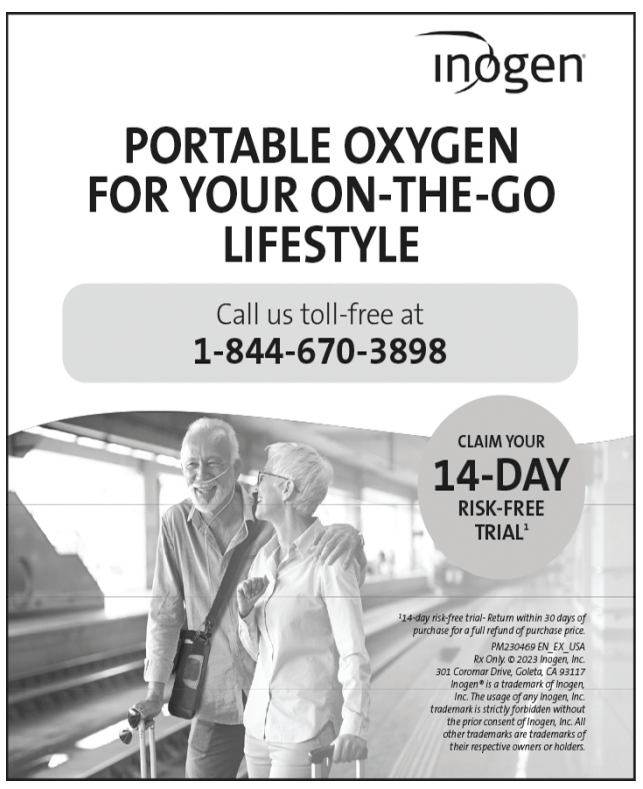
"He is man who has dedicated his life to God, his family, and the community," Bennet said as he presented the plaque to Deitrich. "He is a man respected by his community and a man who displays his love of God in his daily life."

Dietrich is very involved within the community. He holds the office of trustee within his church where he fills in as a lay speaker. He also previously served as the president of the church council. He contributes to needy children's programs and volunteers for the Grampian Community Bible School where he works with the children, teaching classes.

He serves on the Grampian Days committee and is a member of the Anderson Creek Watershed Association.

He spends his time painting, planting flowers, and doing clean-up work to keep the park beautiful.

"I feel unworthy, but very grateful that they chose me out of the bunch of many people who do great things for the community." Dietrich said.



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Docket No. R-2024-3047068

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Decline in gas prices stalls

Average gasoline prices in Pennsylvania have fallen 2.1 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging $3.64/g, according to GasBuddy's survey of 5,269 stations in Pennsylvania.

Prices in Pennsylvania are 9.7 cents per gallon lower than a month ago and stand 2.3 cents per gallon higher than a year ago. The national average price of diesel has fallen 1.6 cents in the last week and stands at $3.73 per gallon.

According to GasBuddy price reports, the cheapest station in Pennsylvania was priced at $3.09/g while the most expensive was $4.49/g, a difference of $1.40/g. The lowest price in the state was $3.09/g while the highest was $4.49/g, a difference of $1.40/g.

The national average price of gasoline has risen 1 cent per gallon in the last week, averaging $3.41/g. The national average is down 18.0 cents per gallon from a month ago and stands 13.8 cents per gallon lower than a year ago, according to GasBuddy data compiled from more than 11 million weekly price reports covering over 150,000 gas stations across the country.

Historical gasoline prices in Pennsylvania and the national average going back ten years:

- June 17, 2023: $3.62/g
- June 17, 2022: $5.03/g
- June 17, 2021: $3.18/g
- June 17, 2020: $2.33/g
- June 17, 2019: $2.80/g
- June 17, 2018: $3.02/g
- June 17, 2017: $2.49/g
- June 17, 2016: $2.47/g
- June 17, 2015: $2.89/g
- June 17, 2014: $3.72/g

Neighboring areas and their current gas prices:

- CLEARFIELD — $3.69/g at BP, Clearfield Shawville Highway
- COALPORT — $3.65 at Nittany Minit Mart, Main Street
- DUBOIS — $3.64/g at Snappy's, Bee Line Highway
- MAHAFFEY — $3.59/g at Mahaffey Fuel & Service, E. Main Street
- PHILIPSBURG — $3.64/g at Fuel On, Walton Street

"Since the national average price of gasoline fell to its lowest June level since 2021 last week, we've seen the drop in prices take a break, with some states seeing a small rise over the last week. Thankfully, I expect this to be more like a short timeout, with an eventual return to falling gasoline prices in most states," said Patrick De Haan, head of petroleum analysis at GasBuddy.

"The decline in diesel prices continues, with the national average price of diesel now at its lowest level since January 2022. Both gasoline and diesel prices remain below their year-ago level, which is music to the ears of the Federal Reserve, as fuel prices are a significant component of the Consumer Price Index. Also factoring in gasoline demand that has been running a bit weaker than expected, market fundamentals look pretty good right now if you're a motorist."

DuBois man sentenced to jail for to illegally distributing marijuana

By Jeff Corcino
jcorcino@theprogressnews.com

CLEARFIELD — Judge Paul E. Cherry sentenced a DuBois man to prison on felony drug distribution charges yesterday at Colloquy Court.

Landon Davohn Dale Williams, 19, pleaded guilty to criminal use of a communication facility — felony of the third degree and possession with intent to deliver a controlled substance-marijuana — ungraded felony. It was an open plea meaning the commonwealth and the defense couldn't agree on a minimum sentence leaving it to the presiding judge.

Williams' attorney, Fabio Fortunato of DuBois, said the probation department is recommending a sentence of a minimum of four months and a maximum of one year in the Clearfield County Jail. But Fortunato asked Cherry to instead sentence Williams to probation.

Fortunato said Williams is a valuable employee at a local hotel and he has two letters of recommendation from his employers. He said Williams is young and made a bad decision,.

"It was a mistake," Fortunato said. "He made a bad choice."

However, Cherry noted that the commonwealth agreed to drop five felony charges in the plea agreement.

"That's a lot of marijuana," Cherry said.

Cherry sentenced Williams to serve a minimum of four months and a maximum of one year in the Clearfield County Jail plus four years concurrent probation.

He is also prohibited from possessing or consuming alcohol or controlled substances without prior permission from the probations department and must undergo a drug and alcohol assessment.

According to published reports, DuBois City Police received an anonymous email in July that was sent to the drug tip line.

The complainant said that multiple times per day, vehicles would stop in front of a house on Spring Avenue. A man in his early 20s would allegedly approach the vehicles, and an exchange would occur. The Drug Vice Unit determined that Williams was an occupant of the address and matched the description they were given.

Police then conducted surveillance of this location, and observed a vehicle approach and park on Spring Avenue. The driver entered the residence and left a few minutes later and drove away. A traffic stop on that vehicle resulted in an arrest for marijuana wax possession, and the driver said they allegedly purchased it from Williams. In August, a vehicle was observed stopping at this Spring Avenue residence, entering then leaving shortly thereafter. The vehicle was later stopped by police, and the passenger was found to be in possession of marijuana wax, who they said they obtained from Williams, according to the affidavit of probable cause.

In September, police conducted surveillance of the Spring Avenue residence and observed another vehicle arrive. Williams made contact with the occupant and was seen placing something into his pocket. This behavior was consistent with hand-to-hand drug transaction.

A confidential informant was also involved in the investigation of Williams. The CI displayed text messages where an arrangement to buy a controlled substance from Williams was made. A controlled purchase of suspected marijuana wax at the Spring Avenue was conducted. The CI went to the residence and exchanged the cash for the suspected controlled substance. He also identified Williams as the person selling it.

The suspected marijuana wax seized from the individuals going to the Spring Avenue residence were field tested and indicated the presence of marijuana.

According to the affidavit of probable cause, on Sept. 12, the DuBois City Police Department conducted a raid on the Spring Avenue apartment. Williams was at the apartment and was detained. Inside the apartment police found two large bags of marijuana, THC consumables, $6,190 in cash, numerous bags containing marijuana wax and small containers.

Contact The Progress: (814) 765-7813
NEWS@THEPROGRESSNEWS.COM
SPORTS@THEPROGRESSNEWS.COM
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Festival Continued from A1

approximately 50 units participating.

"We were a little smaller than some years but everyone seemed to enjoy it. Main Street was lined with people. There was a crowd up and down the street. It was wonderful," said committee member Elaine Elensky who had a vantage point from atop one of the floats.

Witherow said the week's activities started with Bible school on Monday, June 10 and concluded with Heather Olson and The Silver Eagle Band's performance, Saturday evening.

Also during the day Saturday was the annual basket raffle that raises money for the next festival and homecoming. Witherow said more than 50 baskets were donated.

"The committee raised $1,800. There were some really nice baskets. There was wonderful participation. We are very grateful to everyone who donated baskets and purchased raffle tickets. The raffle will keep the festival going," she said.

Witherow said the committee concentrated on booking some additional food booths and activities, especially to appeal to younger visitors.

"I think having more food booths and games for the kids really helped us," she said.

The parade committee provided The Progress with a list of winners. They are:

Best appearing band: Curwensville Area High School, first; and Curwensville Area Junior High School, second.

Floats, CenClear Child Services, first; and WokW radio station, second.

Tractors, Robert L. Russell, first.

Cars, Tracy Webber, first.

Trucks, Keith Pentz, first.

Semi-trucks, Audie Pentz, first and second.

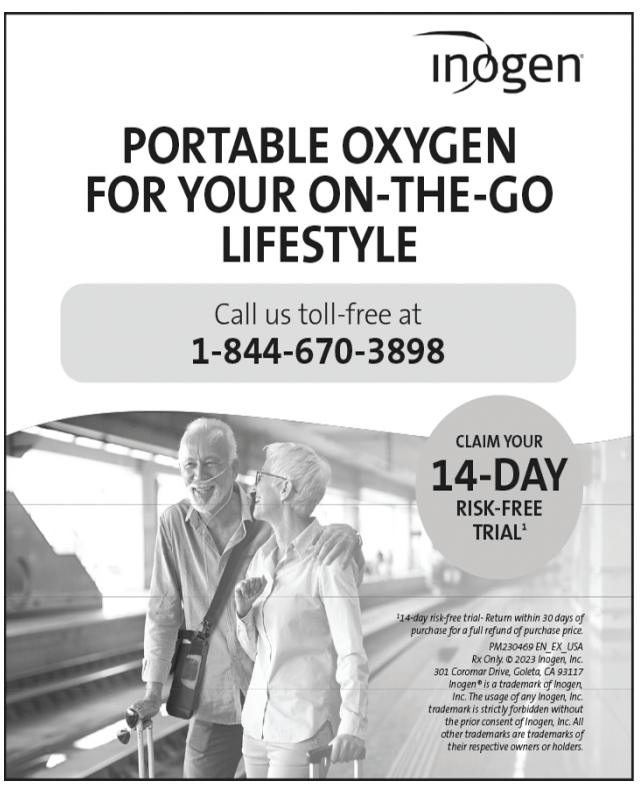
Emergency medical services units, Rescue Hose & Ladder Co. Ambulance Service, 854, first; and 852, second.

Brush trucks, Grassflat Fire Co., first; Adrian Sandy Township, second.

Rescue trucks, Rescue Hose & Ladder Co., first; and Lawrence Township Fire Co. No. 5, second.

Engine: Rescue Hose & Ladder Co., first; and DuBois Fire Co., second.

Community Vol. Fire Dept. of Mahaffey received the chief's choice award for its attack vehicle.



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AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

Kathy Alexander
Accounts Payable
First Energy
154 EAST AURORA RD #174
NORTHFIELD OH 440672053

STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA, COUNTY OF ERIE

The Erie Times-News is a newspaper of general circulation, whose principal place of business is at 205 W 12th Street, Erie, Pennsylvania. That a copy of the printed notice, hereto attached, is exactly as the same was printed and published in the regular edition of the Erie Times-News, published in the issue dated:

06/16/2024, 06/18/2024

Sworn to and subscribed before on 06/18/2024

Legal Clerk

Notary, State of WI, County of Brown

6/30/2025

My commission expires

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AMY KOKOTT
Notary Public
State of Wisconsin

Why kids across US are missing so much school

Chronic absenteeism has persisted, worsened since pandemic

Alia Wong
USA TODAY



The chronic absenteeism epidemic has meant more empty desks in America's classrooms.
MIKE CARDEW/AKRON BEACON JOURNAL FILE

Cur'ra McCoy is one of millions of students who missed weeks of school over the past few years.

Instead, the Baltimore teen often slept in or played on her phone. She did a whole lot of nothing, for the most part. McCoy blames her absences on boredom, which led to her not doing well in some classes. That made her dislike school even more.

"When I don't do nothing, I don't feel like doing nothing at all," the 18-year-old said. "So I stopped trying."

Chronic absenteeism – when students miss at least 10% of the school year – has become an epidemic in America's schools. Though educators and advocates hoped attendance would improve after the instability of the pandemic, in many cases it has become more pervasive and intractable. From 2018 to 2023, the rate of chronic absenteeism nearly doubled, from 15% to 26%.

The problem, which has contributed to lower performance even among students who aren't chronically absent, became one of the most pressing challenges this past school year. The American Enterprise Institute, a right-leaning think tank, has described it as "the biggest problem facing schools right now." And it's not just low-income kids who are missing class time: Students across the socioeconomic spectrum are skipping school at record-high rates.

Why has the problem become so grave? The causes are usually complex and multidimensional. Here are five key explanations:

Kids are bored and disconnected

McCoy, the Baltimore teen, loved math when she was little. She appreciated its simplicity, the fact that it's a universal language.

But as she got older, she says, she started "slacking." The instruction became boring, zapping her energy and will to put in effort. In eighth grade, she decided math was no longer for her. By the time she got to high school, she began failing some of her classes.

"We barely had any activities," said McCoy, who added she learns best when she gets one-on-one support. "When I started getting worse at math, I just stopped coming."

A nationally representative poll published in April found that nearly 2 in 3 teens say school is boring. Just 2 in 5 of the roughly 1,000 respondents said they liked going to school, and almost a third said going is a waste of time. Such disengagement leads to absences. And sometimes, schools' strategies for handling absenteeism – like fines for truancy – exacerbate rather than solve the problem.

In her junior year, McCoy started getting tutored

See SCHOOL, Page 8A

VITAL STATISTICS

Marriage licenses issued between June 3-7 in Erie County

Amador, Lourdes Cristal, 29, 1755 W 25th Street; **Reyes-Hercules**, Tomas, 30, 1755 W 25th Street.
Baldwin, Peter Daniel , 39, 3524 Route 215, East Springfield; **Haskell**, Malinda Rae, 39, 3524 Route 215, East Springfield.
Carson, Joell Danyae, 19, 413 Poplar Street; **Camp**, Makaylee Rose, 18, 413 Poplar Street.
Deal, Emily Grace, 23, 2513 Station Road; **Gardiner**, Joseph Benjamin, 23, 2513 Station Road.
Dill, Michael Thomas Jr, 47, 7650 Hamot Road; **Goss**, Tiffany Lynn, 53, 7650 Hamot Road.
Dyke, John William, 70, 3725 W 26th Street; **De Sousa**, Matos Anderson, 25, 3725 W 26th Street.
Fisher, Kaleb William , 21, 3415 1/2 Edison Ave., Wesleyville; **Diandrea**, Nikki Marie, 31, 3415 1/2 Edison Ave., Wesleyville.
Glazier, Allison Renee, 45, 12012 Kerr Road, North East; **Mcgaughey**, Amberlee Ryanne, 36, 12012 Kerr Road, North East.
Graves, Haile Marie, 21, 3137 W 41st Street ; **Ferris**, Brendan Michael Eamon, 21, 3137 W 41st Street.
Hammer, Robert John , 42, 314 Meadville St , Edinboro; **Ertsgaard**, Lauren Elizabeth, 38, 314 Meadville St., Edinboro.
Heberle, Tyler Dietz, 34, 4424 Neptune Dr.; **Miller**, Jennifer Lynn, 39, 4424 Neptune Dr.
Hillhouse, Zachary Andrew, 28, 822 Nagle Road; **Lopez**, Kayla Marie, 28, 822 Nagle Road.
Kuhn, Jeremy William, 33, 3326 W 38th Street; **Wiertel**, Amanda Mary, 31, 3326 W 38th Street.
Laky, David George III, 65, 5194 Deyo Drive, Honeoye, NY; **Rapp**, Jill Arlene, 61, 3148 State Route 54A, Bluff Point, NY.
Lander, Elizabeth Iris , 21, 8568 W Main Road, Westfield, NY; **Buss**, Zachariah Thomas, 31, 8568 W Main Road, Westfield, NY.
Link, Robert Paul, 73, 6201 Fisher Ct; **Link**, Leslie Carolyn, 72, 6201 Fisher Ct.
Miller, Cody Everett, 29, 2705 Ganzer Lane; **Walton**, June Leigha, 39, 2705 Ganzer Lane.
Moyer, Matthew Robert, 33, 2059 Water St; **Miller**, Jessica Kate, 31, 2059 Water St.
Pavelka, Bradyn David, 20, 467 Mohawk St , Clymer, NY; **Rickard**, Natalie Elizabeth, 21, 467 Mohawk St., Clymer,NY.
Quinn, Robert Andrew, 24, 2924 Woodview Drive; **Widomski**, Gabrielle Anastasia, 24, 2809 W. 34th St.
Rogers, Andrew Mcfarland, 33, 5428 Reese Road; **Eisenberger**, Suzanne Marie, 33, 5428 Reese Road.
Roney, Vincent Robert, 44, 5000 E Ave., Mckean; **Black**, Stephanie Margaret, 39, 5000 E Ave., Mckean.
Silka, Michael Anthony, 22, 40065 Route 6, Bear Lake; **Hazeltine**, Mia Chantel, 23, 40065 Route 6, Bear Lake.
Smith, Aaron Jacob, 24, 1840 W. 38th St. ; **Kunst**, Jenna Irene, 24, 1840 W. 38th St.
Walters, Jeffrey Samuel, 50, 4749 Avonia Road, Fairview; **Metcalfe**, Lindsay Erin, 42, 4749 Avonia Road, Fairview.

U.S Federal Court Bankruptcy

Bogert, Stefanie Marie 2303 Gillette St., Mill Village 24-10296-Jcm 30-May-24 7.
Fohner, Jerry Dean Jr. and Amy Jo 551 East 29th St., 24-10289-Jcm 28-May-24 13.
Howze, Tyrone D. and Toni E. 4121 Parade Blvd., 29-10295-Jcm 29-May-24 13.
Kaliszewski, Jeffrey J. 11170 Bowman Town Road, Albion 24-10305-Jcm 31-May-24 13.
Konieczko, Dennis M., 8946 Main St., Unit 22, McKean 24-10302-Jcm 31-May-24 7.
Mealy, Shaun Patrick and Jamie Lea 1107 West Pleasant St., Corry 24-10297-Jcm 30-May-24 7.
Steen, Jacob Russell 3118 Elmwood Ave., 24-10298-Jcm 30-May-24 7.
Wright, Joshua Allen 2316 E. Gore Road, 24-10300-Glt 31-May-24 13.

PUBLIC INPUT HEARING NOTIFICATION

For FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company's Rate Increase Request

Docket No. R-2024-3047068

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‘Predator catcher’ videos raise questions

Some prosecutors refuse to take on cases after vigilante traps

Jeanine Santucci
USA TODAY

The confrontation often starts with a simple question: “What are you doing here?”

In video after video posted by groups across the country, a version of that question is posed to a panicked man who, according to the makers of the videos, expected to meet a child he’d sent sexual messages to online.

The men soon learn they were tricked – not by police, the FBI or law enforcement of any kind – but by a complex decoy operation set up by so-called “predator catchers.”

Essentially modern-day iterations of the early 2000s TV segment “To Catch a Predator” tailor-made for the social media age, the videos are made by everyday citizens intent on catching and shaming people they believe would abuse children.

USA TODAY found evidence of their stings in about three-quarters of U.S. states in recent years. No formal national organization links them all; they operate a ragtag network of like-minded people.

Some formally organize, including the nonprofit Bikers Against Predators, which works with volunteers to set up operations across the country. Other individuals and small groups are active in their local communities, like Musa Harris – known as the Luzerne County Predator Catcher in Pennsylvania.

Still others are social media influencers who film confrontations with their targets in public places. On social media, the predator catchers are cheered on by people glad to see alleged sexual predators exposed.

Some experts and law enforcement officials, however, have a more conflicted view.

Xavier Von Erck, a founder of the group Perverted Justice that worked with Dateline NBC to produce “To Catch a Predator,” told USA TODAY part of the driving force behind today’s self-governing predator catchers has changed.

“There seems to be more of a motivation nowadays to expose these guys to enhance an individual’s social media stature than there is to build an organization that can work with police and get arrests,” Von Erck said.

When he started out, Von Erck said few laws were on the books prohibiting the online grooming of children. Today, modern-day groups run up against laws that don’t always support their operations and face the ire of police and prosecutors at odds with their methods.

“We don’t have a criminal justice system in the United States where vigilantes or citizens investigate crime,” said Eric Hoffman, an Indiana county prosecutor.

Those who identify as “predator catchers” say their motives are pure: They want to expose those who prey on children.

“We want to catch the sickest of the sick. We want to catch the worst guys,” said Bikers Against Predators President Robert Bloom, who goes by the name “Boots” online.

Predator catcher operations have been credited with arrests all across the country, including recently in Winchester, Indiana; Albany, Oregon; Lower Burrell, Pennsylvania; and University City, Missouri.

Bloom and his team of about a dozen volunteers have been confronting and catching people since 2021. The goal, he said, is to make communities aware of potential predators among them and deliver cases to law enforcement. Out of roughly 300 investigations, he estimated about one-third have led to successful court cases.

“Our mission has always been to spread awareness to the community, and our videos do that pretty easily,” Bloom said. “But at the same time we want them to face justice and pay for these crimes.”

Even if their efforts don’t result in criminal charges, some predator catcher groups say the exposure and shame of alleged offenders is worth it.

“The way I see it, the justice system is not doing what it needs to do as far as locking up these guys and giving them actual sentences,” Eric Schmutte, founder of Predator Catchers Incorporated, told the Indianapolis Star, part of the USA TODAY Network, in 2021. “So, us exposing them is the next best thing so people can at least know that these guys are predators.”

The videos of the interactions that follow often include a heated exchange. The predator catchers often do their own interrogations, which sometimes spiral into arguments and threats.

But a growing number of law enforcement agencies and prosecutors are warning against such improvised investigations, which they say amount to vigilantism.

Experts worry predator catcher operations put public safety at risk and can jeopardize getting a conviction in court – leading to potential predators walking free.

In Hartford City, Indiana, police said an altercation turned violent and had to be broken up by an officer last month. In Winston Salem, North Carolina, a confrontation inside a Target ended with a shot fired, WGHP reported two years ago.

And in an infamous case that contributed to the cancellation of the NBC Dateline series, the subject of a sting operation took his own life.

In some jurisdictions, a suspect’s conduct is only illegal if they are talking to an actual child or law enforcement posing as a child – self-proclaimed “predator catchers” don’t count.

Mary Graw Leary, a former prosecutor and a senior associate dean at the Catholic University law school, said legal statutes have elements that have to be proven in court, which citizens with no training may not know.

“Like all investigations, they have to be done very professionally and correctly, so there can be issues about preservation of evidence, there can be issues about potential entrapment,” she said.

In Orange County, California, District Attorney Todd Spitzer has made it clear to law enforcement that he will not bring charges against any suspect caught in a predator catcher trap, unless police can conduct their own investigation without relying on evidence collected by citizens, according to a 2023 memo to police chiefs provided to USA TODAY.



Austin Spain, who runs Bedford Predator Patrol, looks at his Facebook Messenger inbox on his phone.
KELLY WILKINSON/INDYSTAR FILE

“Cybervigilantes, even when well-intentioned, lack the training necessary to properly and safely investigate these cases,” Spitzer wrote. “The Orange County District Attorney’s Office does not condone or endorse this behavior and encourages anyone who believes criminal activity has taken place to report it to law enforcement and avoid direct confrontation.”

If the alleged predators make a run for it, the predator catchers may follow them to their homes. The encounters sometimes end in arrest, but other times, police will take a statement and say they’ll investigate further without taking anyone into custody.

And in some parts of the country, arrests and convictions in cases initiated by predator catchers have been racking up. Predator Catchers Incorporated boasts on its website of 150 arrests and 61 convictions based on its investigations.

In Albany, Oregon, police arrested 26 people in March and April after reports from a California-based predator catcher, according to Public Information Officer Laura Hawkins. She said the local prosecutor filed charges in all the cases, and at least a couple have already led to guilty pleas.

“Personally, I’m not a fan of the methods here, but the intent is good,” Albany Police Chief Marcia Harnden said in a statement.

Depending on state laws, some type of child solicitation charge may result from the civilian sting operations, or police may uncover additional evidence of online child sex crimes.

Predator catcher efforts can’t fix one tragic reality: Most abusers of children are not strangers on the internet, but rather, already part of the children’s lives. Bloom said he’s helped expose some subjects who were also abusing their own family members.

Many predator catchers’ efforts focus on so-called “stranger danger,” said Ryan Shields, a criminology professor at the University of Massachusetts Lowell and an expert on child sexual abuse prevention.

Even so, the problem of the exploitation of children online is real, Shields said. Parents and guardians are the first line of defense.

Keeping kids safe online includes fostering an open dialogue about how to use the internet, establishing family rules and expectations about internet use and knowing what to do if kids see something that makes them uncomfortable.

Parents should also talk to them about what to do if someone online asks for pictures or personal information.

Don’t scare children about being online, Shields said; give them the tools to navigate it.

“One of our shared values is that we want to keep kids safe,” he said. “We really need to think big in terms of solutions … and not focus on things that are unlikely to really move the needle.”

Contributing: Holly V. Hays, Indianapolis Star

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Proof of Publication

State of Pennsylvania] SS
County of Indiana

On this 18th day of June 2024 A.D.

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

Sherri L. Bash

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

6/15, 6/18

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.

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania - Notary Seal
DAWN A HAYES - Notary Public
Indiana County
My Commission Expires August 31, 2025
Commission Number 1406600

Signature of notarial officer

Proof of Publication	$1,560.00
Proof of Intent	$ 15.00
Total	$1,575.00

Indiana Gazette Inc., publishers of the Indiana Gazette, a daily newspaper, hearby 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 _____

SCOUTUS strikes down ban on bump stocks

By LINDSAY WHITEHURST
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court on Friday struck down a Trump-era ban on bump stocks, the rapid-fire gun accessories used in the deadliest mass shooting in modern U.S. history, in a ruling that threw firearms back into the nation's political spotlight.

The high court's conservative majority found that the Trump administration overstepped when it changed course from predecessors and banned bump stocks, which allow a rate of fire comparable to machine guns. The decision came after a gunman in Las Vegas attacked a country music festival with assault rifles equipped with the accessories.

The gunman fired more than 1,000 rounds into the crowd in 11 minutes, sending thousands of people fleeing in terror as hundreds were wounded and dozens killed.

The ruling thrust guns back into the center of the political conversation with an unusual twist as Democrats decried the reversal of a GOP administration's action and many Republicans backed the ruling.

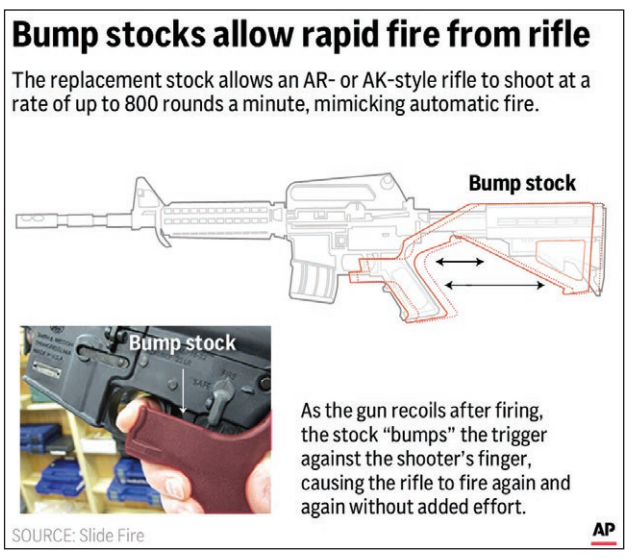
The 6-3 majority opinion written by Justice Clarence Thomas found the Justice Department was wrong to declare that bump stocks transformed semiautomatic rifles into illegal machine guns because, he wrote, each trigger depression in rapid succession still only releases one shot.

The ruling reinforced the limits of executive reach and two justices — conservative Samuel Alito and liberal Sonia Sotomayor — separately highlighted how action in Congress could potentially provide a more lasting policy, if there was political will to act in a bipartisan fashion.

Originally, imposing a ban through regulation rather than legislation during Donald Trump's presidency took pressure off Republicans to act following the massacre and another mass shooting at a high school in Parkland, Fla. Prospects for passing gun restrictions in the current divided Congress are dim.

President Joe Biden, who supports gun restrictions, called on Congress to reinstate the ban imposed under his political foe. Trump's campaign team meanwhile, expressed respect for the ruling before quickly pivoting to his endorsement by the National Rifle Association.

As Trump courts gun owners while running to retake the presidency, he has appeared to play down his own administration's actions on bump stocks, telling NRA members in February that "nothing happened" on guns during his presidency despite "great pressure." He told the group that if he is elected again, "No one will lay a finger on your firearms."



The 2017 mass shooting in Las Vegas was carried out by a high-stakes gambler who killed himself, leaving his exact motive a mystery. A total of 60 people were killed in the shooting, including Christiana Duarte, whose family called Friday's ruling tragic.

"The ruling is really just another way of inviting people to have another mass shooting," said Danette Meyers, a family friend and spokesperson. "It's unfortunate that they have to relive this again. They're really unhappy."

The opinion comes after the same Supreme Court conservative supermajority handed down a landmark decision expanding gun rights in 2022. The high court is also expected to rule in another gun case in the coming weeks, challenging a federal law intended to keep guns away from people under domestic violence restraining orders.

The arguments in the bump stock case, though, were less about Second Amendment rights and more about whether the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, a Justice Department agency, had overstepped its authority.

Bump stocks are accessories that replace a rifle's stock, the part that rests against the shoulder. Invented in the 2000s, they harness the gun's recoil energy so that the trigger bumps against the shooter's stationary finger, allowing the gun to fire at a similar speed as an automatic weapon.

The Supreme Court majority found that the 1934 law against machine guns defined them as weapons that could automatically fire more than one shot by a single function of the trigger. Bump stocks don't fit that definition because "the trigger must still be released and re-engaged to fire each additional shot," Thomas wrote. He also pointed to over a decade of ATF's findings that claimed bump stocks weren't automatic weapons.

The plaintiff, Texas gun shop owner and military veteran Michael Cargill, applauded the ruling in a video posted online, predicting the case would have ripple effects by hampering other ATF gun restrictions. "I'm glad I stood up and fought," he said.

In a dissent joined by her liberal colleagues, Justice Sotomayor said that bump stocks fit under the ordinary meaning of the law: "When I see a bird that walks like a duck, swims like a duck, and quacks like a duck, I call that bird a duck," she wrote. The ruling, she said, could hamstring the ATF and have "deadly consequences."

ATF Director Steve Dettelbach echoed the sentiment, saying that bump stocks "pose an unacceptable level of risk to public safety."

The high court took up the case after a split among lower courts. Under Republican President George W. Bush and Democrat Barack Obama, the ATF decided that bump stocks didn't transform semiautomatic weapons into machine guns. The agency reversed those decisions at Trump's urging. That was after the Las Vegas massacre and the Parkland, Florida shooting that left 17 dead.

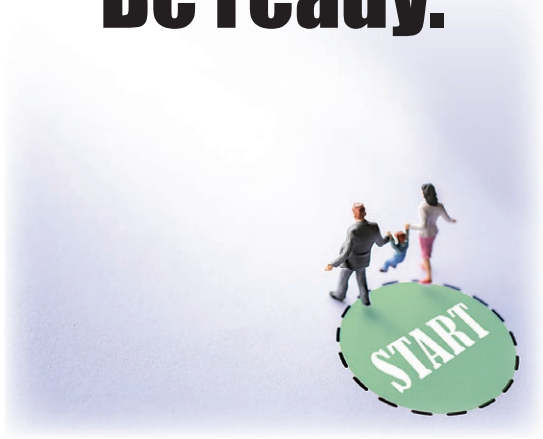
Sixteen states and the District of Columbia have their own bans on bump stocks that aren't expected to be affected by the ruling, though four state bans may no longer cover bump stocks in the wake of the ruling, according to the gun-control group Everytown.

Cargill was represented by the New Civil Liberties Alliance, a group funded by conservative donors like the Koch network. His attorneys acknowledged that bump stocks allow for rapid fire but argued that they are different because the shooter has to put in more effort to keep the gun firing.

The Biden administration had argued that effort was minimal, and said the ATF came to the right conclusion on bump stocks after doing a more in-depth examination spurred by the Las Vegas shooting.

There were about 520,000 bump stocks in circulation when the ban went into effect in 2019, requiring people to either surrender or destroy them at a combined estimated loss of $100 million, the plaintiffs said in court documents.


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PUBLIC INPUT HEARING NOTIFICATION

For FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company's Rate Increase Request

Docket No. R-2024-3047068

The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC) will conduct 18 Public Input Hearings concerning FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company's request filed on April 2, 2024, to increase electric rates by $502 million per year. The Commission will conduct a series of Public Input Hearings, totaling eighteen (18) in total, with fourteen (14) Public Input Hearings to be conducted in-person at seven (7) different locations within the territory of FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company. An additional four (4) Public Input Hearings will be conducted by telephone using the Commission's conference bridge technology.

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TTY-based Telecommunications Relay Service number for persons who are deaf or hearing-impaired is: 711.

Netanyahu dissolves influential war Cabinet

By TIA GOLDENBERG
Associated Press

TEL AVIV, Israel — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu dissolved the influential war Cabinet that has overseen the fighting in Gaza, a government spokesperson said Monday, days after a key member of the body bolted from the government over frustration with the Israeli leader's handling of the war.

The move was widely expected following the departure of Benny Gantz, a centrist former military chief. Gantz's absence from the government increases Netanyahu's dependence on his ultra-nationalist allies, who oppose a cease-fire. That could pose an additional challenge to the already fragile negotiations to end the eight-month war in Gaza.

Government officials said Netanyahu would hold smaller forums for sensitive war issues, including with his security Cabinet, which includes far-right governing partners who oppose cease-fire deals and have voiced support for reoccupying Gaza.

The war Cabinet was formed in the early days of the war, when Gantz, then an opposition party leader and Netanyahu rival, joined the coalition in a show of unity following the Oct. 7 attack on southern Israel by Hamas. He demanded that a small decision-making body steer the war, in a bid to sideline far-right members of Netanyahu's government. It was made up of three members — Gantz, Netanyahu and Defense Minister Yoav Gallant.

The move to scrap the war Cabinet comes as Israel faces more pivotal decisions.

Israel and Hamas are weighing the latest proposal for a cease-fire in exchange for the release of hostages taken by Hamas during its attack. Israeli troops are still bogged down in the Gaza Strip, fighting in the southern city of Rafah and against pockets of Hamas resurgence elsewhere, in addition to a dramatic escalation last week on the northern border with Lebanon.

After launching hundreds of rockets and drones toward Israel in some of the most intense barrages in the conflict, Hezbollah sharply reduced the number of projectiles fired toward northern Israel on Sunday and Monday.

The lull continued even after Israeli military officials said they killed a key operative in Hezbollah's rocket and missile department, Mohammed Ayoub, in a drone attack on Monday morning. The Israeli military said it tracked just two missiles fired Monday from Lebanon, and they did not enter Israeli territory. In the past 48 hours, there were just six launches, down from more than 200 on Thursday.

The lull could be due to the Muslim feast of Eid al-Adha that began Sunday morning, as well as a visit from Amos Hochstein, a senior adviser to U.S. President Joe Biden. Hochstein is in Israel to discuss the volatile situation along the Lebanon-Israel border. He is scheduled to be in Beirut today.

The U.S. has been trying to ease tensions along the frontier, and Hochstein made several trips to the region in recent months. Hezbollah began attacking Israel almost immediately after the Israel-Hamas war erupted, and daily exchanges of fire have been commonplace since then. In recent weeks, the exchanges have intensified, with fires breaking out on both sides of the border.

Netanyahu has played a balancing act throughout the war, weighing pressure from Israel's top ally, the U.S., and growing global opposition to the fighting, as well as from his government partners, chief among them Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich and National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir.

Both have threatened to topple the government should Israel move ahead on a cease-fire deal. The latest proposal is part of the Biden administration's most concentrated push to help wind down the war. For now, progress on a deal appears to be stalled.

Critics say Netanyahu's wartime decision-making has been influenced by the ultra-nationalists in his government and by his desire to remain in power. Netanyahu denies the accusations and says he has the country's best interests in mind.

Gantz's departure, while not posing a direct threat to Netanyahu's rule, rocked Israeli politics at a sensitive time. The popular former military chief was seen as a statesman who boosted Israel's credibility with its international partners at a time when Israel finds itself at its most isolated. Gantz is now an opposition party leader in parliament.

Gantz's decision also prompted another resignation. Former army chief and fellow party member Gadi Eisenkot left the war Cabinet, where he had observer status.

Netanyahu's government is Israel's most religious and nationalist ever. In Israel's fractious parliamentary system, Netanyahu relies on a group of small parties to help keep his government afloat. Without the support of Gantz's party, Netanyahu is expected to be more beholden to far-right allies.



OHAD ZWIGENBERG/Associated Press

PEOPLE WAVED Israeli flags during a protest Monday outside of the Knesset, Israel's parliament, in Jerusalem, against Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government, demanding new elections and the release of the hostages held in the Gaza Strip by the Hamas militant group.











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County of Cambria } SS

On this 18th day of June, A.D. 2024, before me, the subscriber, a Notary Public in and for said County and State, personally appeared Christine Marhefka, who being duly sworn according to law, deposes and says as Advertising Director of The Tribune-Democrat, Johnstown, PA, a newspaper of general circulation as defined by the "Newspaper Advertising Act", a merger September 8, 1952, of the Johnstown Tribune, established December 7, 1853; and of the Johnstown Democrat, established March 5, 1863,

published continuously at Johnstown Pa. in the County of Cambria, and Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and that the annexed is a true copy of a notice in the above matter published in said publication in the regular issue The Johnstown Tribune-Democrat, Johnstown, PA, on June 17, 2024; that the Affiant is not interested in the subject matter of said notice or advertising and that all of the allegations as to time, place and character of said publication are true.

Christine Marhefka

STATEMENT OF ADVERTISING COSTS

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(Notary Public)

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To The Tribune-Democrat, Johnstown, PA
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Navy faces most intense combat since WWII against Houthi rebels

BY JON GAMBRELL
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ABOARD THE USS LABOON IN THE RED SEA – The U.S. Navy prepared for decades to potentially fight the Soviet Union, then later Russia and China, on the world's waterways. But instead of a global power, the Navy finds itself locked in combat with a shadowy, Iran-backed rebel group based in Yemen.

The U.S.-led campaign against the Houthi rebels, overshadowed by the Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip, has turned into the most intense running sea battle the Navy has faced since World War II, its leaders and experts told The Associated Press.

The combat pits the Navy's mission to keep international waterways open against a group whose former arsenal of assault rifles and pickup trucks has grown into a seemingly inexhaustible supply of drones, missiles and other weaponry.

Near-daily attacks by the Houthis since November have seen more than 50 vessels clearly targeted, while shipping volume has dropped in the vital Red Sea corridor that leads to the Suez Canal and into the Mediterranean.

The Houthis say the attacks are aimed at stopping the war in Gaza and supporting the Palestinians, though it comes as they try to strengthen their position in Yemen. All signs suggest the warfare will intensify – putting U.S. sailors, their allies and commercial vessels at more risk.

"I don't think people really understand just kind of how deadly serious it is what we're doing and how under threat the ships continue to be," Cmdr. Eric Blomberg with the USS Laboon told the AP on a visit to his warship on the Red Sea.

"We only have to get it wrong once," he said. "The Houthis just have to get one through."

The pace of the fire can be seen on the Arleigh Burke-class destroyer, where the paint around the hatches of its missile pods has been burned away from repeated launches. Its sailors sometimes have seconds to confirm a launch by the Houthis, confer with other ships and open fire on an incoming missile barrage that can move near or beyond the speed of sound.

One round of fire Jan. 9 saw the Laboon, other vessels and F/A-18s from the aircraft carrier USS Dwight D. Eisenhower shoot down 18 drones, two anti-ship cruise missiles and a ballistic missile launched by the Houthis.

Nearly every day – aside from a slowdown during the holy Muslim fasting month of Ramadan – the Houthis launch missiles, drones or some other type of attack in the Red Sea, the Gulf of Aden and the narrow Bab el-Mandeb Strait that connects the waterways and separates Africa from the Arabian Peninsula.

The Navy saw periods of combat during the "Tanker Wars" of the 1980s in the Persian Gulf, but that largely involved ships hitting mines. The Houthi assaults involve direct attacks on commercial vessels and warships.

"This is the most sustained combat that the U.S. Navy has seen since World War II – easily, no question," said Bryan Clark, a former Navy submariner and a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute.

"We're sort of on the verge of the Houthis being able to mount the kinds of attacks that the U.S. can't stop every time, and then we will start to see substantial damage. ... If you let it fester, the Houthis are going to get to be a much more capable, competent, experienced force."

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Judge: Infowars host's assets to be liquidated

HOUSTON – A federal judge ordered the liquidation of conspiracy theorist Alex Jones' personal assets Friday, but dismissed Jones' company's separate bankruptcy case, leaving the immediate future of his Infowars media platform uncertain as he owes $1.5 billion for his false claims that the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting was a hoax.

Judge Christopher Lopez approved converting Jones' proposed personal bankruptcy reorganization to a liquidation.

But Lopez threw out the case of Jones' company, Free Speech Systems, after failed attempts by Jones to reach an agreement with Sandy Hook families on his proposals to reorganize and keep operating the company while paying them millions of dollars.

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Telephonic Public Input Hearings

Presiding: Administrative Law Judge Katrina L. Dunderdale, **Dates: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 & Wednesday, July 17th, 2024, Times: 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM**

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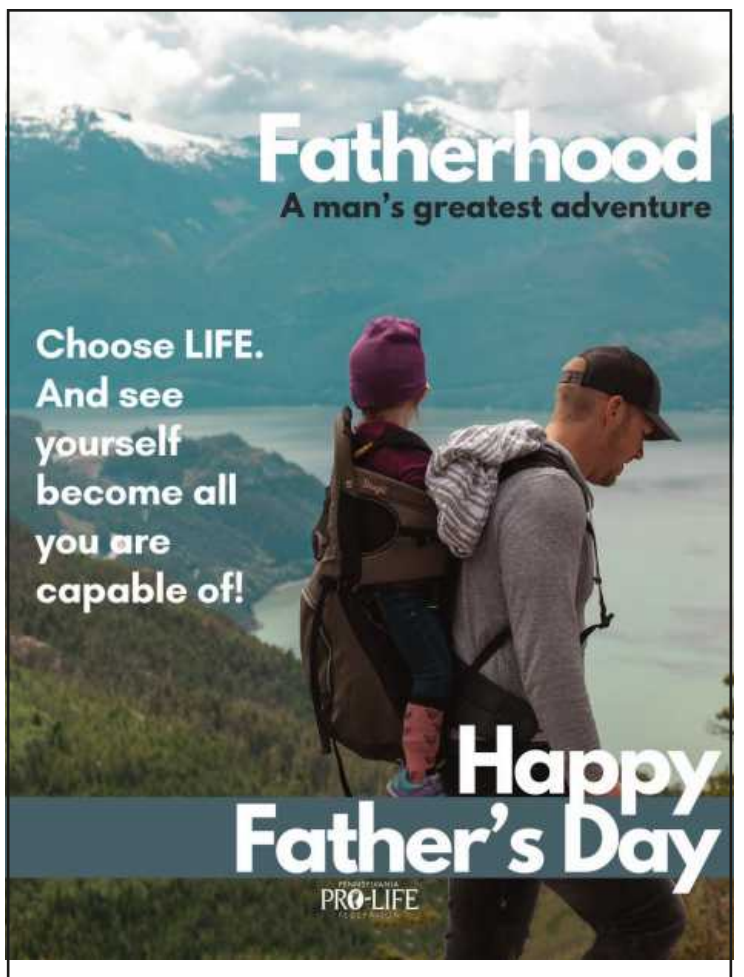
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ROLL CALL

Continued from A3

YEAS: Burns, Rigby, Kephart
NAY: Metzgar

■ **HOUSE BILL 2357:** Creates the Pennsylvania Food Bucks program to provide benefit incentives to SNAP recipients for purchasing eligible fruits and vegetables, no less than 40 cents for each $1 spent. Pass 171-30. Moves to Senate.

YEAS: Burns, Rigby, Metzgar
NAY: Kephart

■ **SENATE BILL 887:** Exempts certain deposit and registration requirements for cemetery companies. Pass 201-0. Goes to governor.

YEAS: Burns, Rigby, Kephart, Metzgar

SENATE VOTES

■ **SENATE BILL 1213:** Amends existing law to make it illegal to create and distribute deepfake pornographic images generated through artificial intelligence. Pass 50-0. Moves to House.

YEAS: state Sen. Wayne Langerholc Jr., R-Richland Township; state Sen. Pat Stefano, R-Fayette

■ **SENATE BILL 1152:** Revises eligibility criteria for the Ready to Succeed Scholarship Program, raising the family income threshold from $126,000 to $175,000 and lowers the minimum grade point average from 3.25 to 2.5 on a 4.0 scale. Pass 47-3. Moves to House.

YEAS: Langerholc, Stefano

■ **SENATE BILL 1153:** Expands the Fostering Independence Tuition Waiver Program to include nonresident students who are foster children or were adopted, waiving tuition and fees for undergraduate courses at Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education schools. Pass 50-0. Moves to House.


Langerholc


Stefano

YEAS: Langerholc, Stefano

■ **SENATE BILL 126:** Excludes veterans' benefit payments from income eligibility calculations for commonwealth programs. Senate concurs on House amendments, 49-0. Goes to governor.

YEAS: Langerholc, Stefano

■ **SENATE BILL 464:** Allows local full-time police officers in Pennsylvania who've satisfied vesting requirements to buy up to five years of pension service credit for prior service at other departments if the applicable municipalities authorizes such. Pass 49-0. Moves to House.

YEAS: Langerholc, Stefano

■ **SENATE BILL 801:** Establishes new section of Public School Code to, beginning July 1, 2025, mandate the implementation of comprehensive, evidence-based reading curriculum for kindergarden through third-grade students. Pass 48-1. Moves to House.

YEAS: Langerholc, Stefano

■ **SENATE BILL 1150:** Creates the Grow Pennsylvania Scholarship Grant Program under the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency to provide up to $5,000 in grants to students in courses of study that lead to in-demand occupations. Pass 49-0. Moves to House.

YEAS: Langerholc, Stefano

■ **SENATE BILL 1151:** Establishes the Grow Pennsylvania Merit Scholarship Program within Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education to award merit scholarships to nonresident students – the difference amount between tuition for residents and non-residents – in courses of study that lead to in-demand occupations. Pass 48-1. Moves to House.

YEAS: Langerholc, Stefano

■ **SENATE BILL 1154:** The Performance-based Funding Council Act authorizes the creation of a council toward the development of a new system to distribute funding to state-related universities using performance-based metrics designed to increase degree attainment, encourage affordability in higher education, meet workforce needs and grow the economy. Pass 28-21. Moves to House.

YEAS: Langerholc, Stefano

■ **SENATE BILL 1155:** Creates the Higher Education Tax Force to make recommendations to the Legislature regarding state-owned universities and the commonwealth's community colleges. Pass 28-21. Moves to House.

YEAS: Langerholc, Stefano

■ **SENATE BILL 186:** Amends the Crimes Code to replace the term "child pornography" with "child sexual abuse material" as recommended by the bipartisan Child Pornography Task Force. Pass 48-0. Moves to House.

YEAS: Langerholc, Stefano

■ **SENATE BILL 187:** Amends the Child Internet Protection Act to replace the term "child pornography" with "child sexual abuse material" as recommended by the bipartisan Child Pornography Task Force. Pass 48-0. Moves to House.

YEAS: Langerholc, Stefano

■ **SENATE BILL 761:** Amends the Workforce Development Act to require the Department of Labor and Industry to share data on new hires and unemployment with local workforce development agencies to develop plans and assess program eligibility. Pass 48-0. Moves to House.

YEAS: Langerholc, Stefano

■ **SENATE BILL 1099:** Reauthorizes and makes technical changes to the Fire Company and the Emergency Medical Services grant programs. Pass 48-0. Moves to House.

YEAS: Langerholc, Stefano

■ **SENATE BILL 1138:** Amends the Administrative Code of 1929 for the reauthorization of the State Geospatial Coordinating Board, adds members and changes terms for executive director salary. Pass 48-0. Moves to House.

YEAS: Langerholc, Stefano

■ **SENATE BILL 1236:** Clarifies the legal status of squatters and seeks to streamline the process for their removal from residential properties. Pass 48-0. Moves to House.

YEAS: Langerholc, Stefano

■ **HOUSE BILL 1331:** Amends the Stuffed Toy Manufacturing Act to allow for the use of recycled materials in stuffed toys and to update labeling requirements. Pass 47-1. Returns to House for concurrence of amendments.

YEAS: Langerholc, Stefano

■ **SENATE RESOLUTION 196:** Simple resolution directing the Commission on Sentencing and other stakeholders to study the effects of post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury on military veterans in the criminal justice system from 2016 through 2021 and recommend changes based on the study results. Pass 48-0.

YEAS: Langerholc, Stefano









PUBLIC INPUT HEARING NOTIFICATION

For FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company's Rate Increase Request

Docket No. R-2024-3047068

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STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA
COUNTY OF MIFFLIN: ss

Matthew Bolich personally appeared before me a Notary Public in and for said County and State. Matthew Bolich, who being duly sworn according to law, doth depose and say that he is the Advertising Director of The Lewistown Sentinel, a daily newspaper of general circulation, established in 1903, and published every week day at 352 Sixth Street, Lewistown, Pennsylvania. The advertisement was inserted in the regular issue of said publication, June 15, and 18, 2024 and the affiant has no interest in the subject matter of said advertisement and that all facts set forth in the statement are true and correct.

Matt Bolich

Sworn to and subscribed before me

This 18 day of June 2024

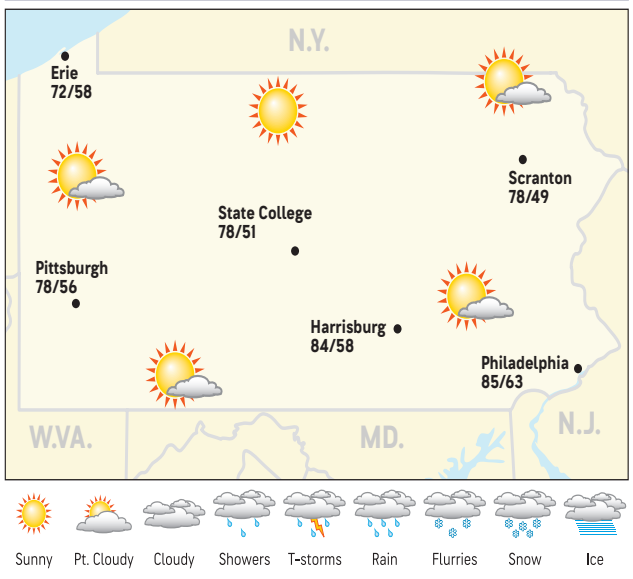
Sue Kline

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania - Notary Seal
SUE KLINE - Notary Public
Mifflin County
My Commission Expires February 18, 2026
Commission Number 1328015

JUNIATA VALLEY WEATHER

TODAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
Sunny	Partial clouds	Very hot with partial clouds	Very hot and partly cloudy	Mostly sunny and very hot
High 81° Low 50°	High 83° Low 60°	High 97° Low 67°	High 99° Low 69°	High 99° Low 69°

PENNSYLVANIA



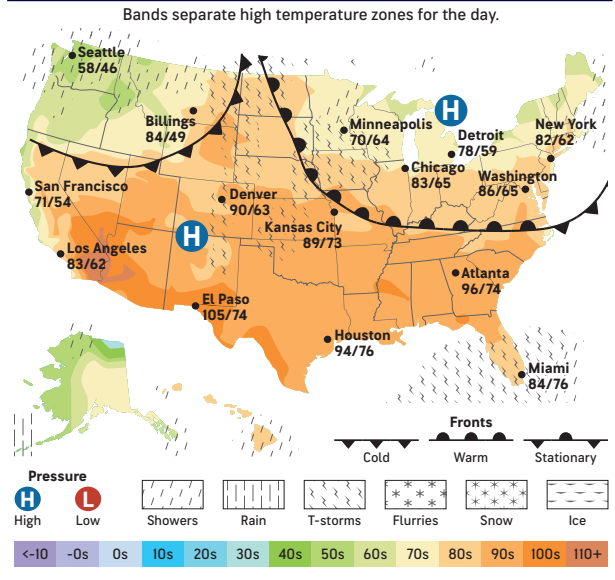


Deacan Neff
Lewistown
Age 9

Precipitation as of 8 a.m. Friday	0.00”
Precipitation for month of June	0.51”
Juniata River at Lewistown	3.72’
Today’s record high temperature	96° set in 1956
Today’s record low temperature	43° set in 1978
Sunset tonight	8:43 p.m.
Sunrise Sunday	5:39 a.m.

UNITED STATES

Bands separate high temperature zones for the day.



Sources: AccuWeather, National Weather Service, The Associated Press. Weather data for Lewistown.

Florida residents clean up after rainfall, floods

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (AP) — Although more rain could trigger additional isolated Florida flooding on Friday, forecasters say the strong, persistent storms that dumped up to 20 inches in southern parts of the state appear to have passed.

Some neighborhood streets in the Miami and Fort Lauderdale areas still have standing water, although it is rapidly receding, officials said.

“The worst flooding risk was the last three days,” said Sammy Hadi, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Miami. “The heaviest rainfall has concluded.”

The no-name storm system pushed across Florida from the Gulf of Mexico at roughly the same time as the early June start of hurricane season, which this year is forecast to be among the most active in recent memory amid concerns that climate change is increasing storm intensity.

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis held a media briefing in Hollywood, south of Fort Lauderdale, and said while more rain was coming, it’s likely to be more typical of South Florida afternoon showers this time of year.

“We are going to get some more rain today, maybe throughout the balance of the weekend. Hopefully it’s not approaching the levels that it was, but we have a lot of resources staged here and we’ll be able to offer the state’s assistance,” he said.

DeSantis said the state has deployed about 100 pumps in addition to what cities and counties are using to try to clear water from streets.

Florida Emergency Management Director Kevin Guthrie said while flooding was extensive, there were no reports of destroyed homes and very few of severely damaged homes. No deaths or serious injuries have been reported.

“We don’t think there’s going to be enough damage to necessarily qualify for a federal disaster declaration,” DeSantis said. But he added the storms may have affected enough business to qualify for Small Business Administration assistance.

The downpours hit Tuesday and continued into Wednesday, delaying flights at two of the state’s largest airports and leaving vehicles waterlogged and stalled in some of the region’s lowest-lying streets. The main problem was hundreds of vehicles that were stranded on streets as people were unable to navigate the flood waters.

“Looked like the beginning of a zombie movie,” said Ted Rico, a tow truck driver who spent much of Wednesday night and Thursday morning helping to clear the streets of stalled vehicles. “There’s cars littered everywhere, on top of sidewalks, in the median, in the middle of the street, no lights on. Just craziness, you know. Abandoned cars everywhere.”

Rico, of One Master Trucking Corp., was born and raised in Miami and said he was ready for the emergency.

“You know when its coming,” he said. “Every year it’s just getting worse, and for some reason people just keep going through the puddles.”

In Aventura, north of Miami, Juan Gomez, a 27-year resident of South Florida, has never seen flooding as severe as the recent storm that hit his rental unit. He said Friday he is preparing for future storms, having experienced firsthand the devastating effects of flooding on his property Tuesday and Wednesday.

“We were taking water from 5 p.m. to 11 p.m. that night. And we did as much as we could. Yeah, but still some furniture got damaged. Some of the kitchen cabinets and the bathroom cabinets got damaged because of the water and the material in the floors, definitely, they need to be changed,” Gomez said.

“So it is hard and we have to be prepared,” he added. “We are going to be more prepared. In fact, we are trying to get some supplies if something comes in the few next weeks. So, like sandbags, more supplies to be prepared.”



AP photo

City workers and residents fill sandbags to help protect local property on Friday in Miramar, Fla.

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LOCAL AND NATION

AG names prosecutor to crimes on SEPTA

HARRISBURG — A special prosecutor has been appointed to investigate and prosecute crimes on the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) public transit system in Philadelphia.

Attorney General Michelle Henry announced that Act 40 was passed by the legislature and signed into law by the governor in December and required the Office of Attorney General to appoint a special prosecutor to "investigate and institute criminal proceedings" for violations of law occurring within SEPTA.

On Friday, the Commonwealth Court ruled the Act is constitutional. The Office of Attorney General had advised the court on June 11 that it would be making the appointment Friday, and the opinion allows that appointment to proceed.

Michael Untermeyer, Esq., of Philadelphia, has been appointed to fill that role.

Untermeyer most recently worked as an attorney in private practice. He has fifteen years experience as a prosecutor, including serving as special counsel to the Office of Inspector General, Deputy and Senior Deputy Attorney General, and as an Assistant District Attorney. Additionally, he has four years experience as a hearing examiner for the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board.

Act 40, as written by the legislature, required potential candidates to: reside within Philadelphia County; have at least five years of criminal prosecution experience in Pennsylvania; not have been employed by the Philadelphia District Attorney's Office or the Office of Attorney General in the past six years, among other requisites.

"We worked diligently to follow the mandates of Act 40 to fill the position, first by posting the opportunity, then interviewing applicants to ascertain if they fit the specific criteria established by the law," Attorney General Henry said. "We selected a candidate who expressed a commitment to public safety while possessing the qualifications required by Act 40."

US says Michigan, CUNY didn't suitably assess harassment from Israel-Hamas war

WASHINGTON (AP) — The University of Michigan and the City University of New York did not adequately investigate complaints about antisemitic or anti-Palestinian harassment linked to campus protests over the Israel-Hamas war and other incidents, according to the results of investigations by the U.S. Education Department announced Monday.

These are the first investigations to reach a conclusion among dozens launched by the Education Department since Oct. 7, the day Hamas launched a surprise attack on Israel.

The department's Office of Civil Rights investigated 75 instances of alleged discrimination and harassment at the University of Michigan based on shared Jewish ancestry and shared Palestinian or Muslim ancestry. The investigation found that the university's responses did not meet its Title VI requirements to remedy the hostile environment.

In one instance, when a Jewish student reported being called out for viewing a graduate student instructor's social media post about pro-Palestinian topics, the university told the student that "formal conflict resolution is not a path forward at this time," because the incident occurred on social media.

In another instance, when a student who participated in a pro-Palestinian protest was called a "terrorist," the university said it held "restorative circles" to address the incident but did not take further action.

In its resolution agreement, the University of Michigan agreed to administer a climate assessment, implement additional training and revise its policies as necessary. It also agreed to monitoring by the Office of Civil Rights through the end of the 2026 school year, reporting its responses to future incidents of discrimination to the department.

"The university condemns all forms of discrimination, racism and bias in the strongest possible terms," University of Michigan President Santa J. Ono said in a statement. "We continually work to educate our community around the rights and privileges of free speech to ensure that debate does not tip over into targeted harassment or bullying. This agreement reflects the university's commitment to ensuring it has the tools needed to determine whether an individual's acts or speech creates a hostile environment, and taking the affirmative measures necessary to provide a safe and supportive educational environment for all."

The department also announced the resolution of nine pending complaints against schools in the City University of New York system, dating back to the 2019-20 academic year.

Biden will announce deportation protection, permits for US spouses

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden is planning to announce a sweeping new policy Tuesday that would lift the threat of deportation for tens of thousands of people married to U.S. citizens, an aggressive election-year action on immigration that had been sought by many Democrats.

Biden will announce the new program at a White House event to celebrate the Obama-era "dreamers" directive that offered deportation protections for young undocumented immigrants, according to three people briefed on the White House plans.

The policy will allow roughly 490,000 spouses of U.S. citizens an opportunity to apply for a "parole in place" program, which would shield them from deportations and offer them work permits if they have lived in the country for at least 10 years, according to two of the people briefed. They all spoke on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the announcement publicly.

The White House on Monday declined to comment on the announcement.

Families who would potentially benefit from Biden's actions were expected to attend the White House event Tuesday afternoon.

For some time, administration officials have been deliberating various options to offer protections for immigrants who lack legal status in the U.S. but who have longstanding ties — even after the White House crafted a restrictive proposal that essentially halted asylum processing at the U.S-Mexico border.

Biden is invoking an authority that not only gives deportation protections and work permits, but removes a legal barrier to allow qualifying immigrants to apply for permanent residency and eventually, U.S. citizenship. It's a power that's already been used for other categories of immigrants, such as members of the U.S. military or their family members who lack legal status.

"Today, I have spoken about what we need to do to secure the border," Biden said at a June 4 event at the White House, when he rolled out his order to suspend asylum processing for many migrants arriving now to the U.S. "In the weeks ahead — and I mean the weeks ahead — I will speak to how we can make our immigration system more fair and more just."

Biden was also expected to announce a policy of making recipients of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program eligible for visas, rather than the temporary work authorization they currently receive, according to two of the people briefed.

Immigration advocates praised the policy expected to benefit the spouses of U.S. citizens, saying on a conference call Monday that it is often impossible for the spouses to gain legal status even though they have deep ties in the country.

Biden has come under political pressure to show he can gain control of the U.S. border with Mexico, which at times has been defined by historic levels of immigration during his four years in the White House. As he prepares for a reelection contest against Donald Trump, Biden earlier this month enacted plans earlier for significant restrictions on migrants seeking asylum at the southern border.

That decision was met with criticism by immigration advocates as well as Democratic lawmakers, particularly groups that represent progressive and Hispanic lawmakers.

In recent weeks, the Congressional Hispanic Caucus has called on Biden to act to shield the spouses of U.S. citizens from deportation as well as to consider a policy making work visas available to graduates of U.S. colleges who came to the country without authorization as children.

Donation

Continued from Page A1

To make a donation, visit www.jrvchamber.com and click on the Independence Day Fireworks Display "Donate Here" button, or mail a check to Juniata River Valley Chamber of Commerce, 1 W. Market St., Lewistown, PA 17044 and write "Fireworks" in the memo.

For more information, call (717) 248-6713.

"Let's come together as a community to ensure that the Independence Day Fireworks Event continues to light up our skies and our hearts for years to come," Kelley said.

Pageant

Continued from Page A1

Miss Pennsylvania 2024's reign officially began as Pittsburgh native Page Weinstein was crowned on Saturday. She will now compete for the title of Miss America 2025.

"I'm really excited for my year of service," Weinstein told reporters. She has been part of the Miss America organization for 16 years and nearly didn't come back to the competition this year after receiving a cancer diagnosis.

"To hear that I was Miss Pennsylvania, the tears just started flowing," Weinstein added. "I just remember thinking, like, 'Wow, I'm so blessed for this opportunity. My life just changed in that one little moment, and I'm just so excited.'"

Although none of the five contestants from the Miss Central Pennsylvania Scholarship Competition garnered the prestigious title of Miss Pennsylvania, each of them came home with some hardware — in the form of scholarships.

"It was very exciting," said Miss Central Pennsylvania Scholarship Competition Director Lisa Metzger. "Three of the top 11 were from Miss Central Pennsylvania with Abby, Finley (Miller) and Bryn (Patton)."

"For all of them to receive scholarship funding to further their education, that's the best we can ask for as directors," Metzger added.

There were 24 contestants in this year's field, who competed for talent, evening wear, on-stage questions and fitness.

Finley Miller, who entered as Miss Greater Juniata Valley, earned a $1,750 scholarship as the third runner-up. On Thursday night, Miller was a preliminary event winner for evening wear. For that win, Miller, of Hanover, Pa., and a first-year student at Penn State, received a $1,000 scholarship.

Miss MidState Bryn Patton, of Waynesburg, Pa., and another Penn State student, took home a $1,000 scholarship by finishing in the top 11.

Miss Freedom Forge Shannon Cattie, of Lafayette Hill, was the recipient of a special award, a $2,000 Women in Business scholarship.

Additionally, Miss MidState's Teen Ella Rabin earned a $500 scholarship for the non-finalist Interview Award.

The Miss Central Pennsylvania competition certainly has a successful lineage at the state level. The previous Miss Pennsylvania was Miranda Moore, who won Miss Central Pennsylvania in 2023.

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Docket No. R-2024-3047068

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Butler County Community College (Founders Hall – Parking Lot #6), 107 College Drive, Butler, PA 16002

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AFFIDAVIT OF INSERTION

Please Fill out Information Below:

Name of Publication: The Meadville Tribune

City, State: Meadville, PA

Client name: FirstEnergy

Insertion Order #: 1670

Date of Insertion: 06/15, 06/17

Caption: Rate Hearing - June

Ad Size: 4 col • 13"

Total # Inserted: —

My signature verifies that this ad was inserted as scheduled according to the above specifications.

Signature

06/18/2024
Date

Claire Nicholson
Name (Please Print)

Micro communities for the homeless sprout in U.S. cities eager for small, quick, cheap solutions

ASSOCAITED PRESS

ATLANTA — In a dreary part of downtown Atlanta, shipping containers have been transformed into an oasis for dozens of previously unsheltered people who now proudly call a former parking lot home.

The gated micro community known as "The Melody" doesn't look like a parking lot anymore. Artificial turf is spread across the asphalt. Potted plants and red Adirondack chairs abound. There's even a dog park.

The shipping containers have been divided into 40 insulated studio apartments that include a single bed, HVAC unit, desk, microwave, small refrigerator, TV, sink and bathroom. On a recent afternoon, a half-dozen residents were chatting around a table in The Melody's smoking area.

"I'm just so grateful," said Cynthia Diamond, a 61-year-old former line cook who uses a wheelchair and used to be chronically homeless. "I have my own door key. I ain't got to worry about nobody knocking on my door, telling me when to eat, sleep or do anything. I'm going to stay here as long as the Lord allows me to stay here."

Faced with years of rising homelessness rates and failed solutions, city officials across the U.S. have been embracing rapid housing options emphasizing three factors: small, quick and cheap. Officials believe micro communities, unlike shelters, offer stability that, when combined with wraparound services, can more effectively put residents on the path to secure housing.

Denver has opened three micro communities and converted another five hotels for people who used to be homeless. In Austin, Texas, there are three villages of "tiny homes." In Los Angeles, a 232-unit complex features two three-floor buildings of stacked shipping containers.

"Housing is a ladder. You start with the very first rung. Folks that are literally sleeping on the ground aren't even on the first rung," said Denver Mayor Mike Johnston, sitting in one of the city's new micro communities that offer tiny, transitional homes for that first rung.

More than 1,500 people have been moved indoors through the program, with over 80 percent still in the housing as of last month, according to city data. The inexpensive units are particularly a boon for cities with high housing costs, where moving that many people directly into apartments wouldn't be financially feasible.

Both Atlanta's and Denver's programs act as stepping stones as they work to get people jobs and more permanent housing, with Denver aiming to move people out within six months.



Associated Press

Eric Martinez sits outside of his room at a micro community in Denver on June 5. Martinez along with the others were directed into the micro communities of small cabin-like structures with a twin bed, desk and closet, after his Denver tent encampment was swept.

That includes Eric Martinez, 28, who has been in limbo between the street and the bottom rung for most of his life. At birth, Martinez was flung into the revolving door of foster care, and he's wrestled with substance use while surfing couches and pitching tents.

"It's kind of demeaning, it makes me feel less of a person," said Martinez, his eyes downcast. "I had to get out of it and look out for myself at that point: It's fight or flight, and I flew."

Martinez's Denver tent encampment was swept, and he, along with the others, was directed into the micro community of small cabin-like structures with a twin bed, desk and closet. The city built three such communities with nearly 160 units total in about six months, at roughly $25,000 per unit, said Johnston. The 1,000 converted hotel units cost about $100,000 each.

On site at the micro community are bathrooms, showers, washing machines, small dog parks and kitchens, though the Salvation Army delivers meals.

The program represents an about-face from policies that for years focused on short-term group shelters and the ceaseless shuffle of encampments from one city block to the next. That system made it difficult to keep people scattered through the city connected to services and on the path to permanent housing.

Those services in Denver's and Atlanta's micro communities are largely centralized. They offer residents case management, counseling, mental health and substance abuse therapy, housing guidance and assistance obtaining anything from vocational skills training to a new pair of dentures.

"We're able to meet every level of the hierarchy of needs — from security and shelter, all the way up to self-actualization and the sense of community," said Peter Cumiskey, the Atlanta site clinician.

The Melody, and projects like it, are a "very promising, feasible and cost-effective way" to tackle homelessness, said Michael Rich, an Emory University political science professor who studies housing policy. Rich noted that transitional housing is still just the first step toward permanent housing.

The programs in Denver and Atlanta, taking inspiration from similar ones in cities like Columbia, South Carolina, and Savannah, Georgia, offer a degree of privacy and security not found in congregate shelters or encampments.

Giving each resident their own bathroom and kitchen is a crucial feature that helps set The Melody apart, said Cathryn Vassell, whose nonprofit, Partners For Home, oversees the micro community. Aside from a prohibition on overnight guests, staff emphasize the tenants are treated as independent residents.

Vassell acknowledged it's unclear how long the containers will last — she's hoping 20 years. But, she said, they were the right choice for The Melody because they were relatively inexpensive and already had handicap-accessible bathrooms since many were used by Georgia hospitals during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The project, which took only about four months to complete, cost about $125,000 per unit — not "tremendously inexpensive," Vassell said, but less than traditional construction, and much quicker. Staffing and security operations cost about $900,000 a year.

The Melody is the first part of Atlanta Mayor Andre Dickens' target of supplying 500 units of rapid housing on city-owned land by December 2025. A 2023 "point-in-time" count found there were 738 unsheltered people in Atlanta, far fewer than many cities, but still an increase over the previous year.

"We need more Melodies as fast as possible," said Courtney English, the mayor's chief policy officer.

Few objected when The Melody was announced last year, but as city officials seek to expand the rapid housing footprint, they know local pushback is likely. That's what Denver faced.

Mayor Johnston said he attended at least 60 town halls in six months as Denver tried to identify locations for the new communities and faced pushback from local residents worried about trash and safety.

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Wall Street hangs around its records after European stocks slump

ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — U.S. stocks hung around their record levels on Friday as Wall Street remained relatively quiet following another slide in Europe.

The S&P 500 edged down by less than 0.1 percent, marking the first time this week that it did not set an all-time high. The Dow Jones Industrial Average dipped 57 points, or 0.1 percent, while the Nasdaq composite added 0.1 percent to its record set a day before on the back of gains for technology stocks.

Losses were sharper across the Atlantic, where markets have been rocked by the results of recent elections in Europe. Wins by far-right parties have raised the pressure on France's president in particular, and investors worry it could weaken the European Union, stall fiscal plans and ultimately hurt France's ability to pay its debt. Recent elections have also shaken markets in Mexico, India and elsewhere.

France's CAC 40 fell 2.7 percent to bring its loss for the week to 6.2 percent, its worst in more than two years. Germany's DAX lost 1.4 percent.

On Wall Street, RH fell 17.1 percent after reporting a worse loss for the latest quarter than financial analysts expected. The seller of home furnishings called this "the most challenging housing market in three decades."

High mortgage rates have hurt the housing market, as the Federal Reserve has kept its main interest rate at the highest level in more than two decades. The central bank is intentionally slowing the economy through high rates in hopes of starving high inflation of its fuel.

Cruise-ship operators were among the market's biggest losers after analysts at Bank of America flagged softening price trends for trips. Norwegian Cruise Line dropped 7.5 percent for the worst loss in the S&P 500, and Carnival fell 7.1 percent.

Stocks have nevertheless set records as hopes rise that inflation is slowing enough to convince the Federal Reserve to cut interest rates later this year. Big technology stocks, meanwhile, continue to race ahead almost regardless of what the economy and interest rates are doing.

Adobe jumped 14.5 percent after reporting stronger profit for the latest quarter than analysts expected.

Broadcom rose 3.3 percent for a second straight day of gains after reporting better profit than expected and a 10-for-one stock split to make its price more affordable. Nvidia gained 1.8 percent as the poster child of the rush into artificial intelligence technology seeing its total market value climb even higher above $3 trillion.

Nvidia was the strongest single force pushing upward on the S&P 500, as has become almost routine recently. Adobe and Broadcom were close behind.

All told, the S&P 500 dipped 2.14 points to 5,431.60. The Dow lost 57.94 to 38,589.16, and the Nasdaq composite added 21.32 to 17,688.88.

STOCK MARKET REPORT

FIRDAY'S STOCKS OF LOCAL INTEREST

Apple Inc.	212.49
Amer. Eagle Outfitters	20.55
AFLAC	87.01
AIG	73.41
Abercrombie & Fitch	186.08
Best Buy	87.20
BankNY/Mellon	58.02
Cisco Systems	45.68
WaltDisney	99.96
First Energy	38.77
Fifth Third Bank	35.22
FNB Corp	12.73
Hershey	187.04
Minn Mining	100.93
National Fuel Gas	54.44
Norfolk Southern	219.91
Northwest Bancorp	10.71
PepsiCo	163.81
PNC	151.08
PPG Inds	127.28
PP&L Resources	28.08
Rite Aid	0.05
Rockwell Automation	254.69
Sherwin Williams	296.98
Steris Corp.	218.34
ATT	17.65
Trinity	28.10
Textron	85.24
Exxon Mobil	109.15
Verizon	39.68
Gold	2,326.16
Silver	27.02

DOW JONES CLOSING AVERAGES

Industrials	38,589.16 down 57.94
Transportation	14,807.47 down 161.34
Utilities	916.73 down 0.41
Total volume	948,330,000

OVER-THE-COUNTER

Representative inter-dealer quotations from NASD at Thursday's close. Prices do not include retail markup, markdown or commission.

MUTUAL FUNDS

Affiliated	18.21
Amcap	42.23
Bond Fund of Amer.	11.26
Delaware Value Fund	17.13
Europacific Growth	57.42
Growth Fund Amer.	73.15
Investment Co. of Amer.	56.77
New Perspective	62.31
Scudder Dreman High Return	53.70
Smallcap World	66.90
Wash. Mutual	60.21

Prices from Janney Montgomery Scott LLC

78 countries at Swiss conference agree Ukraine's territorial integrity must be basis of any peace

ASSOCIATED PRESS

OBBÜRGEN, Switzerland — Nearly 80 countries called Sunday for the "territorial integrity" of Ukraine to be the basis for any peace agreement to end Russia's two-year war, though some key developing nations at a Swiss conference did not join in. The way forward for diplomacy remains unclear.

The joint communique capped a two-day conference marked by the absence of Russia, which was not invited. Many attendees expressed hope that Russia might join in on a road map to peace in the future.



Associated Press

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy attends the plenary session during the Summit on Peace in Ukraine in Obbürgen, Switzerland, on Sunday.

The all-out war since President Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 has killed or injured hundreds of thousands of people, unsettled markets for goods like grain and fertilizer, driven millions from their homes and carved a wedge between the West — which has sanctioned Moscow — and Russia, China and some other countries.

About 100 delegations, mostly Western countries, attended the conference that was billed as a first step toward peace. They included presidents and prime ministers from France, Germany, Britain, Japan, Poland, Argentina, Ecuador, Kenya and Somalia. The Holy See was also represented, and Vice President Kamala Harris spoke for the United States.

India, Mexico, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Thailand and the United Arab Emirates — represented by foreign ministers or lower-level envoys — were among countries that did not sign the final document, which focused on issues of nuclear safety, food security and the exchange of prisoners. Brazil, an "observer," did not sign on but Turkey did. China did not attend.

The final document signed by 78 countries said the U.N. Charter and "respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty … can and will serve as a basis for achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine." That has been a nonstarter for Putin, who wants Ukraine to cede more territory and back away from its hopes of joining the NATO military alliance.

Viola Amherd, the Swiss president, told a news conference the "great majority" of participants agreed to the final document, which "shows what diplomacy can achieve." Foreign Minister Ignazio Cassis said Switzerland would reach out to Russian authorities but did not say what the message would be.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy hailed the "first steps toward peace" at the meeting and said Ukraine was in talks with some countries, which he did not name, that had offered to host a "second peace summit." No timetable was laid out.

Zelenskyy earlier this month accused China, backed by Russia, of attempting to undermine the Swiss conference, a claim denied by Beijing.

Allies of Ukraine now face the task of trying to keep up momentum toward peace. Zelenskyy said national security advisers would meet in the future, and "there will be a specific plan" afterward.

Testifying to war fatigue and other preoccupations, only about half of U.N. member countries took part. It's a far cry from March 2022, when condemnation of Russia's invasion led to passage of a non-binding resolution at the U.N. General Assembly by 141 countries calling for Russian troops to leave Ukraine.

It wasn't clear why some developing countries attending didn't line up behind the final statement, but they may be hesitant to rankle Russia or have cultivated a middle ground between Moscow, its ally China and Western powers backing Kyiv.

"Some did not sign — even though very few — since they are playing 'Let's have peace based on concessions' game, and they usually mean concessions by Ukraine, and basically accommodating Russian demands," said Volodymyr Dubovyk, a Ukraine expert and senior fellow at Center for European Policy Analysis, a Washington-based think tank. "They also like this 'neutrality' positioning."

Dubovyk said the way forward for Ukraine was to receive aid — weapons and humanitarian assistance — that could improve its situation on the ground and thus give it a better negotiating position.

At the Swiss event, the challenge was to talk tough on Russia but open the door for it to join a peace initiative.

"Many countries ... wanted the involvement of representatives of the Russian Federation," Zelenskyy said. "At the same time, the majority of the countries do not want to shake hands with them (Russian leaders) ... so there are various opinions in the world."

Ursula von der Leyen, the president of the European Union's executive Commission, said peace won't be achieved in a single step and asserted that Putin isn't serious about ending the war.

"He is insisting on capitulation. He is insisting on ceding Ukrainian territory -- even territory that today is not occupied by him," she said. "He is insisting on disarming Ukraine, leaving it vulnerable to future aggression. No country would ever accept these outrageous terms."

Analysts suspected the conference would have little concrete impact toward ending the war because Russia, was not invited. China and Brazil have jointly sought to plot alternative routes toward peace.

Qatar's prime minister, Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani, said Saturday that his rich Gulf country hosted talks with both Ukrainian and Russian delegations on the reunification of Ukrainian children with their families. It has so far resulted in 34 children being reunited.

The Ukrainian government believes that 19,546 children have been deported or forcibly displaced, and Russian Children's Rights Commissioner Maria Lvova-Belova previously confirmed that at least 2,000 were taken from Ukrainian orphanages.

In Kyiv, at a regular demonstration by relatives of soldiers captured by Russia, the response to the Swiss gathering was muted.

"I would really like to believe that this (conference) will have an impact, but some very important countries did not sign the communique," said Yana Shyrokyh, 56, whose army serviceman son has been in captivity since 2022. "I would really like them to find powerful levers of influence on Russia."



WORLD BRIEFLY

Israel's army says it will pause daytime fighting

JERUSALEM — Israel's military announced on Sunday that it would pause fighting during daytime hours along a route in southern Gaza to free up a backlog of humanitarian aid deliveries for desperate Palestinians enduring a humanitarian crisis sparked by the war, now in its ninth month.

The "tactical pause," which applies to about 7½ miles of road in the Rafah area, falls far short of a complete ceasefire in the territory that has been sought by the international community, including Israel's top ally, the United States. It could help address the overwhelming needs of Palestinians that have surged in recent weeks with Israel's incursion into Rafah.

The army said that the daily pause would begin at 8 a.m. and last until 7 p.m. and continue until further notice. It's aimed at allowing aid trucks to reach the nearby Israel-controlled Kerem Shalom crossing, the main entry point, and travel safely to the Salah a-Din highway, a main north-south road, the military said. The crossing has had a bottleneck since Israeli ground troops moved into Rafah in early May.

COGAT, the Israeli military body that oversees aid distribution in Gaza, said the route would increase the flow of aid to other parts of Gaza, including Khan Younis, the coastal area of Muwasi and central Gaza. Hard-hit northern Gaza, an early target in the war, is served by goods entering from the north.

Kate at first public event since diagnosis

LONDON — Britain put on a display of birthday pageantry Saturday for King Charles III, a military parade that marked the Princess of Wales' first appearance at a public event since her cancer diagnosis early this year.

The annual event was also a show of stability by the monarchy after a testing few months in which both the king and Kate, wife of heir to the throne Prince William, have been sidelined by cancer treatment.

In a symbolic display of unity, Charles, Queen Camilla, William, Kate and their children were joined by other members of the royal family on a Buckingham Palace balcony at the end of the King's Birthday Parade.

It was Kate's first appearance at a public event since December. She disclosed in March that she was undergoing chemotherapy for an unspecified form of cancer.

Charles is being treated for an undisclosed form of cancer.

PUBLIC INPUT HEARING NOTIFICATION

For FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company's Rate Increase Request

Docket No. R-2024-3047068

The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC) will conduct 18 Public Input Hearings concerning FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company's request filed on April 2, 2024, to increase electric rates by $502 million per year. The Commission will conduct a series of Public Input Hearings, totaling eighteen (18) in total, with fourteen (14) Public Input Hearings to be conducted in-person at seven (7) different locations within the territory of FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company. An additional four (4) Public Input Hearings will be conducted by telephone using the Commission's conference bridge technology.

Different processes will be used for the in-person hearings than will be used to the telephonic hearings. Individuals wishing to testify at either the in-person or telephonic hearings will only be permitted once. Time limitations may apply to how long individuals may testify, if a large number of other individuals wish to testify at the same session.

In-Person Public Input Hearings will take place at the following locations:

Tuesday, June 25, 2024 at 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
VFW Post #2540 and Canteen, 546 Fawn Road, East Stroudsburg, PA 18301

Wednesday, June 26, 2024 at 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Reading Public Museum (Ground Floor Auditorium), 500 Museum Road, Reading, PA 19611

Thursday, June 27, 2024 at 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Graduate Palo Alto (Coaly Ballroom A/B), 125 S Atherton Street, State College, PA 16801

Tuesday, July 9, 2024 at 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Erie County Public Library (H.O. Hirt Auditorium – Museum Entrance), 160 East Front Street, Erie, PA 16507

Wednesday, July 10, 2024 at 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Butler County Community College (Founders Hall – Parking Lot #6), 107 College Drive, Butler, PA 16002

Thursday, July 11, 2024 Time: 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Greensburg Garden and Civic Center (Laurel Room & Iris Room), 951 Old Salem Road, Greensburg, PA 15601

Friday, July 12, 2024 at 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Double Tree by Hilton (Junior Ballroom), 340 Racetrack Road, Washington, PA 15301

Requests for Interpreters: If you require an interpreter, please contact Judge Dunderdale's office at (412) 565-3550 or via email at mswarner@pa.gov, as soon as possible. If you contact the office too close to the hearing date, we may not have enough time to arrange for an interpreter. If you request an interpreter, we will make every reasonable effort to have one present.

Telephonic Public Input Hearings

Presiding: Administrative Law Judge Katrina L. Dunderdale, **Dates: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 & Wednesday, July 17th, 2024, Times: 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM**

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- You must speak your name when prompted
- The telephone system will connect you to the hearing

Toll-free Bridge Number: 1.866.675.4411

PIN Number: 23464163

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QUESTIONS? The Pennsylvania Office of Consumer Advocate (OCA) represents the interests of utility customers before the PUC. If you have questions about the public input hearings or the Company's requested rate increase, please contact OCA at its toll-free number (1-800-684-6560) or by email (consumer@paoca.org). Additionally, OCA can help customers pre-register for the Public Input Hearings.

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TTY-based Telecommunications Relay Service number for persons who are deaf or hearing-impaired is: 711.

Howard Hanna
Bainbridge Kaufman Real Estate
2024 READERS' CHOICE WINNER The Meadville Tribune
Thank You
We're proud to announce that Howard Hanna bainbridge Kaufman Real Estate has been voted the #1 Real Estate Company in the 2024 Meadville Tribune Reader's Choice Awards! This honor is thanks to our wonderful clients and customers who chose to buy or sell their property with us.
814-724-1100
Visit us on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn to see what some of our clients had to say about their Realtors.

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 FirstEnergy Notice ("Advertiser") was printed and published in issue(s) of said newspaper on the following date(s):

6/15/2024

6/18/2024

By: Melissa Reedy
Signature of affiant

Subscribed and sworn to before me
This 19 day of June 20 24

Notary Seal:

Karry Russell
Notary Public

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



Contributed photo

The Western Pennsylvania Conservancy will manage 250 acres of property on French Creek and located in Frenchcreek Township, which will be used for recreation.

Creek

Continued from Page A1

Her donation provided funds needed for the removal of an existing structure and invasive plants, and the implementation of public access improvements including a new trail, parking lot and signage, the conservancy said.

Funding to protect the land for the reserve was made possible by a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service North American Wetlands Conservation Act grant, and private donations from conservancy members, including a gift in memory of Bradford Barnes, the release said.

According to the conservancy, there is a mix of forest and wetlands on the preserve, which also has more than 1 mile of frontage on French Creek. There are many tall and mature American beech, red maple, white pine and Eastern hemlock trees with significant canopies.

Also, the conservancy said, the natural area's wetlands provide floodplain protection and erosion control, which contribute to improved water quality and aquatic habitat important for the variety of fish, freshwater mussels and other aquatic species at the site.

French Creek and its tributaries are documented as having the highest aquatic biodiversity of any stream of its size in Pennsylvania and all states to the northeast of Pennsylvania, according to the conservancy. French Creek and its tributaries provide habitat for six species of federally endangered and threatened freshwater mussels and other mussel species, as well as numerous fish species of greatest conservation need in the state.

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TTY-based Telecommunications Relay Service number for persons who are deaf or hearing-impaired is: 711.



By Kara O'Neil

Boy Scouts Kody Weisenfluh, Cody Proper and Kyle Conway unfold a large American flag while the other Scouts in Troop 17 look on during the troop's annual Flag Day ceremony in Hasson Park Friday.

Flag

Continued from Page A1

Multiple flags were then properly retired in the park. The retirement ceremony was conducted by the V.E.T.S. Honor Guard, the Commission to Remember our Heroes, and Cochranton Scouting America Troop 836.

O'Polka gave the patriotic address, and Heather Brown, funeral director with the Gardinier-Warren Funeral Home which assisted with the event, read a poem during the ceremony.

Elks past exulted ruler Margaret O'Polka gave a history of the flag, and Elks and Silver Cornet Band member Toby Saltarelli gave the response to the flag after the band played "God Bless America."

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Elks exalted ruler Brenda Westover, and Elks chaplain Missy Confer said the final benediction.

The Venango Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution also distributed booklets containing the United States flag code before the ceremony.

In Oil City, Boy Scout Troop 17 conducted its 31st annual flag retirement ceremony in Hasson Park beginning at 7 p.m.

Scoutmaster with Troop 17 Jodie Chittester led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The scouts stood by a large flag while "America the Beautiful" played.

This year, Troop 17 Scoutmaster Dan Myers said, the Scouts didn't invite a speaker because the weather was predicted to be awful all week, including on Friday.

Myers spoke briefly on the history of the American flag and Flag Day.

Members of Boy Scout Troop 17, which includes both boys and girls, retired well over 1,000 flags Friday evening with a helping hand from everyone who attended the ceremony.

American flags are respectfully retired by cutting away the field of blue from each flag and putting each part into a fire.

It is estimated that the Oil City Boy Scouts have retired more than 20,000 flags since they began their Flag Day ceremony in Hasson Park in 1993.



By Helen Fielding

"Big" Bay Allen, blues musician from Russell, plays acoustic blues music before the Franklin Flag Day ceremony in Bandstand Park on Friday.

Hunting licenses will be available in Franklin

Hunting and furtaker licenses for the 2024-25 season will go on sale Monday, June 24, at the treasurer's office in the Courthouse Annex at 1174 Elk St. in Franklin.

Hours are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

To qualify for a resident license, a person must have maintained a true, fixed and permanent home and principal residence in Pennsylvania for 30 consecutive days immediately before applying for a license.

Anyone with questions can call (814) 432-9526 or (814) 432-9523.

Class Reunions

Oil City Class of 1979

The Oil City High School Class of 1979 will hold its 45-year reunion Saturday, Aug. 17, at Cross Creek Resort.

Dinner tickets are $60, and payment can be sent to Brian Butchart, 61 Paul Revere Road, Oil City, 16301.

For more information, class members can contact Butchart at bdbutchart@comcast.net or Robin Duffy Evans at rechenoz62@gmail.com

Class Gatherings

Cranberry Class of 1956

The Cranberry High School Class of 1956 will meet for lunch at 12:30 p.m. Thursday at Montana's Country Cafe in Marble.

The lunch is open to all classmates and their guests.

Oil City Classes of 1956 and 1958

The Oil City High School Classes of 1956 and 1958 will have a meeting at 11 a.m. Tuesday at King's in Franklin.

Weather

Local forecast

Today: Mostly sunny. Hot. High 94.

Tonight: Partly cloudy. Low 70.

Wednesday: Partly sunny. Hot. High 92.

Extended forecast

Thursday: Mostly sunny. Hot. High 94.

Friday: Mostly sunny. Hot. High 93.

Saturday: Sunny. Hot. High 93.

Sun & moon

Sunset tonight: 8:55 p.m.
Sunrise tomorrow: 5:44 a.m.

Full moon: June 21
Third quarter: June 28
New moon: July 5

2 men face multiple charges after leading police on chase

BY KARA O'NEIL
Staff writer

Two men — one from New York and one from Moon Township, near Pittsburgh — have been charged with attempting to fraudulently withdraw money from a local bank and leading police on a chase through Cranberry Township on Friday, which ended in a crash.

At about 3:30 p.m. Friday, Franklin state police were called to Northwest Savings Bank, where employees said a man in a suit, later identified as Julian James, 42, of the Bronx, provided a false Pennsylvania driver's license, claiming to be Jason Chiappini, and attempted to withdraw $4,000 from a bank account, police said in a criminal complaint.

The employees told police that James then left the bank and walked toward Taco Bell, according to the complaint.

As police drove toward Taco Bell, they saw a silver Honda Accord pulling out of the restaurant's parking lot with a front-seat passenger who matched James' description, the complaint said.

When police turned on their emergency lights to stop the vehicle, the driver, later identified as Oluwakayode Ajayi, 25, of Moon Township, pulled the Honda Accord into the Aldi parking lot and seemed like he was stopping before he then "accelerated quickly," the complaint said.

Police pursued Ajayi's vehicle through the Cranberry Mall parking lot, where it then made a left turn from Regina Drive onto Route 322 westbound, the complaint said.

Ajayi's vehicle "passed vehicles in the opposing eastbound lane" and drove through two red lights, the complaint said.

As the vehicle attempted to drive between two stopped vehicles at the intersection of Route 322 and the entrance to the Home Depot and Tractor Supply, it crashed into the stopped vehicles and slid off the road, the complaint said.

At that point, James and Ajayi tried to get out of the vehicle quickly and flee but they were arrested by police, the complaint said.

Checkbooks and "other bank documents" were observed in the vehicle, which was towed to the Franklin state police barracks and searched, the complaint said.

Three false identification cards, five fraudulent debit/credit cards, five checks, seven cellphones, an E-Zpass and a receipt from Northwest Savings Bank were found in the vehicle, the complaint said.

All the fake ID cards had James' picture on them, the complaint notes.

The false driver's license James had attempted to use at the bank was retrieved from bank employees, the complaint notes.

James has been charged five felony counts of forgery, five felony counts of access devices used to obtain or attempt to obtain property/service, three felony counts of identity theft and felony counts of conspiracy-fleeing or attempting to elude officer and theft by deception-false impression as well as a misdemeanor count of evading arrest or detention on foot.

Ajayi has been charged with felony counts of fleeing or attempting to elude officer, conspiracy-forgery, conspiracy- access device used to obtain or attempt to obtain property/services, conspiracy-theft by deception-false impression, conspiracy- identity theft as well as misdemeanor counts of evading arrest or detention on foot and recklessly endangering another person and four summary traffic violations.

James and Ajayi were arraigned Friday before District Judge Patrick Lowrey and placed in the Venango County jail with bail denied due to being flight risks.

Their preliminary hearing is scheduled June 26 in Central Court.

KARA O'NEIL, reporter for The Derrick and The News-Herald, can be reached at karaoneil.thederrick@gmail.com or at 814-677-8369.

Allegheny's River's distinction honored

From staff reports

ASPINWALL — The state Department of Conservation and Natural Resources on Saturday honored the Allegheny River as Pennsylvania's 2024 River of the Year during the celebration at Allegheny RiverTrail Park, located just north of Pittsburgh in Aspinwall.

In addition, Gov. Josh Shapiro signed a resolution acknowledging June as Rivers Month as a part of the River of the Year celebration, and has committed to protecting clean water in Pennsylvania through multiple budget initiatives, according to a DCNR news release.

The Allegheny River starts as a stream in Potter County, meandering through a field of wildflowers before crossing briefly through New York and then through six counties in western Pennsylvania, including Venango, Clarion, Forest and Warren.

The 325-mile river ends in Pittsburgh, where it meets the Monongahela River and flows into the Ohio River.

Silver Cornet Band to host meet the band night

The Franklin Silver Cornet Band will host a meet the band night from 7 to 8:30 p.m. Wednesday in the Franklin Area High School band room.

The event is open to any community member and students entering ninth grade and older interested in joining the band.

Meet the band night will give musicians an opportunity to "play, meet and eat."

Attendees will experience a regular rehearsal and mingle with other band members while enjoying some light refreshments.

Anyone with questions can contact the band on its Facebook page or by email at franklinsilvercornetband@gmail.com.

Motorcyclist dies in crash

A New Bethlehem man died in a motorcycle accident at the intersection of Route 66 and Old Route 899 in Jenks Township on Sunday afternoon, according to Marienville state police.

William F. Smead III, 26, was traveling at a high rate of speed on a 1997 Honda CBR600 at 3:36 p.m. when he was unable to negotiate a right curve, according to police. The motorcycle turned over onto its side and then traveled about 54 feet and struck a concrete island.

Both Smead and the motorcycle became airborne in a south direction on Old Route 899, police said. Smead struck a road sign and was found on the ground about 28 feet from the island, police said, and the motorcycle traveled uncontrolled through a grassy area between Route 66 and Old Route 899, crossed Old Route 899 and came to a final rest about 285 feet south of the island.

Forest County Coroner Norman Wymer pronounced Smead dead at the scene.

One dies in Cranberry crash

One person died as a result of a crash on Monday at the intersection of Route 322 and Van Road in Cranberry Township, according to Venango County 911. The crash took place at 2:40 p.m.

Franklin state police, Seneca Volunteer Fire Department, Community Ambulance Service, the Venango County corner and the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation all responded to the scene, which was cleared as of 7:30 p.m.

Police & Fire Calls

Barkeyville crash

A New Castle man suffered suspected minor injuries as the result of a one-vehicle crash on Interstate 80 in Barkeyville on Saturday evening, according to Franklin state police.

Thomas A. Murray, 85, was driving west in the left lane in a 2020 Buick Enclave at about 6 p.m. when he fell asleep and veered off the road, subsequently hitting the end of a guardrail and skidding across both travel lanes and spun around, police said.

The vehicle came to a final stop on the shoulder of the right lane of Interstate 80 westbound, police said.

President burglary

Franklin state police said several items were stolen from a Stewart Run Road residence in President Township between 5 p.m. May 25 and 3 p.m. June 3.

A Tionesta man reported to police that his home had been broken into and various deeds were missing, along with his girlfriend's birth certificate and Social Security card, police said.

Anyone with information is asked to contact police at 814-676-6596.

Franklin crash

Venango County 911 said that a two-vehicle crash took place in the 1200 block of Liberty Street in Franklin at about 1:20 p.m. Monday, with no reported injuries.

Franklin police, who responded, said the scene cleared at about 1:40 p.m.

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Class Gatherings

Oil City Class of 1960

The Oil City High School Class of 1960 will meet for lunch at 12:30 p.m. Saturday at Eat'n Park.

The lunch is open to all classmates and their guests.

Keystone Class of 1961

The Keystone High School Class of 1961 will meet for a class outing at 1 p.m. Thursday at Sweet Basil.

The outing is open to all class members and their guests.

Franklin Class of 1974

The Franklin High School Class of 1974 will meet at noon on Friday for lunch in the patio of FoxTales Pub in Franklin.

All classmates and their guests are welcome to attend.

PUBLIC INPUT HEARING NOTIFICATION

For FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company's Rate Increase Request

Docket No. R-2024-3047068

The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC) will conduct 18 Public Input Hearings concerning FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company's request filed on April 2, 2024, to increase electric rates by $502 million per year. The Commission will conduct a series of Public Input Hearings, totaling eighteen (18) in total, with fourteen (14) Public Input Hearings to be conducted in-person at seven (7) different locations within the territory of FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company. An additional four (4) Public Input Hearings will be conducted by telephone using the Commission's conference bridge technology.

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Reading Public Museum (Ground Floor Auditorium), 500 Museum Road, Reading, PA 19611

Thursday, June 27, 2024 at 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Graduate Palo Alto (Coaly Ballroom A/B), 125 S Atherton Street, State College, PA 16801

Tuesday, July 9, 2024 at 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Erie County Public Library (H.O. Hirt Auditorium – Museum Entrance), 160 East Front Street, Erie, PA 16507

Wednesday, July 10, 2024 at 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Butler County Community College (Founders Hall – Parking Lot #6), 107 College Drive, Butler, PA 16002

Thursday, July 11, 2024 Time: 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Greensburg Garden and Civic Center (Laurel Room & Iris Room), 951 Old Salem Road, Greensburg, PA 15601

Friday, July 12, 2024 at 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Double Tree by Hilton (Junior Ballroom), 340 Racetrack Road, Washington, PA 15301

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Telephonic Public Input Hearings

Presiding: Administrative Law Judge Katrina L. Dunderdale, **Dates: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 & Wednesday, July 17th, 2024, Times: 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM**

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- You must dial the toll-free number listed below
- You must enter a PIN number when instructed to do so, also listed below
- You must speak your name when prompted
- The telephone system will connect you to the hearing

Toll-free Bridge Number: 1.866.675.4411

PIN Number: 23464163

HEARING EXHIBITS: If you have any hearing exhibits to which you will refer during the telephonic hearing, please email them to Judge Dunderdale's Legal Assistant, Mary Swarner, at mswarner@pa.gov. The legal assistant will forward the exhibits to the Judge and all parties. Exhibits must be received by: **Tuesday, July 9, 2024**.

QUESTIONS? The Pennsylvania Office of Consumer Advocate (OCA) represents the interests of utility customers before the PUC. If you have questions about the public input hearings or the Company's requested rate increase, please contact OCA at its toll-free number (1-800-684-6560) or by email (consumer@paoca.org). Additionally, OCA can help customers pre-register for the Public Input Hearings.

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US Navy faces its most intense combat since World War II against Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi rebels

By Jon Gambrell
Associated Press

ABOARD THE USS LABOON IN THE RED SEA (AP) — The U.S. Navy prepared for decades to potentially fight the Soviet Union, then later Russia and China, on the world's waterways. But instead of a global power, the Navy finds itself locked in combat with a shadowy, Iran-backed rebel group based in Yemen.

The U.S.-led campaign against the Houthi rebels, overshadowed by the Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip, has turned into the most intense running sea battle the Navy has faced since World War II, its leaders and experts told The Associated Press.

The combat pits the Navy's mission to keep international waterways open against a group whose former arsenal of assault rifles and pickup trucks has grown into a seemingly inexhaustible supply of drones, missiles and other weaponry. Near-daily attacks by the Houthis since November have seen more than 50 vessels clearly targeted, while shipping volume has dropped in the vital Red Sea corridor that leads to the Suez Canal and into the Mediterranean.

The Houthis say the attacks are aimed at stopping the war in Gaza and supporting the Palestinians, though it comes as they try to strengthen their position in Yemen. All signs suggest the warfare will intensify — putting U.S. sailors, their allies and commercial vessels at more risk.

"I don't think people really understand just kind of how deadly serious it is what we're doing and how under threat the ships continue to be," Cmdr. Eric Blomberg with the USS Laboon told the AP on a visit to his warship on the Red Sea.

"We only have to get it wrong once," he said. "The Houthis just have to get one through."

Seconds to act:

The pace of the fire can be seen on the Arleigh Burke-class destroyer, where the paint around the hatches of its missile pods has been burned away from repeated launches. Its sailors sometimes have seconds to confirm a launch by the Houthis, confer with other ships and open fire on an incoming missile barrage that can move near or beyond the speed of sound.

"It is every single day, every single watch, and some of our ships have been out here for seven-plus months doing that," said Capt. David Wroe, the commodore overseeing the guided missile destroyers.

One round of fire on Jan. 9 saw the Laboon, other vessels and F/A-18s from the aircraft carrier USS Dwight D. Eisenhower shoot down 18 drones, two anti-ship cruise missiles and a ballistic missile launched by the Houthis.

Nearly every day — aside from a slowdown during the holy Muslim fasting month of Ramadan — the Houthis launch missiles, drones or some other type of attack in the Red Sea, the Gulf of Aden and the narrow Bab el-Mandeb Strait that connects the waterways and separates Africa from the Arabian Peninsula.

The Navy saw periods of combat during the "Tanker Wars" of the 1980s in the Persian Gulf, but that largely involved ships hitting mines. The Houthi assaults involve direct attacks on commercial vessels and warships.

"This is the most sustained combat that the U.S. Navy has seen since World War II — easily, no question," said Bryan Clark, a former Navy submariner and a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute. "We're sort of on the verge of the Houthis being able to mount the kinds of attacks that the U.S. can't stop every time, and then we will start to see substantial damage. … If you let it fester, the Houthis are going to get to be a much more capable, competent, experienced force."

Dangers at sea and in the air:

While the Eisenhower appears to largely stay at a distance, destroyers like the Laboon spend six out of seven days near or off Yemen — the "weapons engagement zone," in Navy speak.

Sea combat in the Mideast remains risky, something the Navy knows well. In 1987, an Iraqi fighter jet fired missiles that struck the USS Stark, a frigate on patrol in the Persian Gulf during the Iran-Iraq war, killing 37 sailors and nearly sinking the vessel.

There's also the USS Cole, targeted in 2000 by boat-borne al-Qaida suicide bombers during a refueling stop in Yemen's port city of Aden, which killed 17 on board. AP journalists saw the Cole patrolling the Red Sea with the Laboon on Wednesday, the same day the Houthis launched a drone-boat attack against a commercial ship there that disabled the vessel.

That commercial ship was abandoned on Friday and left adrift and unlit in the Red Sea, the British military's United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations center said.

Rear Adm. Marc Miguez, the Navy's commander for its Carrier Strike Group Two, which includes the Eisenhower and supporting ships, said the Navy had taken out one underwater bomb-carrying drone launched by the Houthis as well during the campaign.

"We currently have pretty high confidence that not only is Iran providing financial support, but they're providing intelligence support," Miguez said. "We know for a fact the Houthis have also gotten training to target maritime shipping and target U.S. warships."

Asked if the Navy believed Iran picks targets for the Houthis, Miguez would only say there was "collaboration" between Tehran and the rebels. He also noted Iran continues to arm the Houthis, despite U.N. sanctions blocking weapons transfers to them.

Iran's mission to the United Nations told the AP that Tehran "is adept at thwarting the U.S. strategy in a way that not only strengthens (the Houthis) but also ensures compliance with the pertinent resolutions."

The risk isn't just on the water. The U.S.-led campaign has carried out numerous airstrikes targeting Houthi positions inside Yemen, including what the U.S. military describes as radar stations, launch sites, arsenals and other locations. One round of U.S. and British strikes on May 30 killed at least 16 people, the deadliest attack acknowledged by the rebels.

The Eisenhower's air crews have dropped over 350 bombs and fired 50 missiles at targets in the campaign, said Capt. Marvin Scott, who oversees all the air group's aircraft. Meanwhile, the Houthis apparently have shot down multiple MQ-9 Reaper drones with surface-to-air missile systems.

"The Houthis also have surface-to-air capabilities that we have significantly degraded, but they are still present and still there," Scott said. "We're always prepared to be shot at by the Houthis."

A stalemated war:

Officers acknowledge some grumbling among their crew, wondering why the Navy doesn't strike harder against the Houthis. The White House hasn't discussed the Houthi campaign at the same level as negotiations over the Israel-Hamas war.

There are several likely reasons. The U.S. has been indirectly trying to lower tensions with Iran, particularly after Tehran launched a massive drone-and-missile attack on Israel and now enriches uranium closer than ever to weapons-grade levels.

Meanwhile, there's the Houthis themselves. The rebel group has battled a Saudi-led coalition into a stalemate in a wider war that's killed more than 150,000 people, including civilians, and created one of the world's worst humanitarian disasters.

The U.S. directly fighting the Houthis is something the leaders of the Zaydi Shiite group likely want. Their motto long has been "God is the greatest; death to America; death to Israel; curse the Jews; victory to Islam." Combating the U.S. and siding publicly with the Palestinians has some in the Mideast praising the rebels.

While the U.S. and European partners patrol the waterways, Saudi Arabia largely has remained quiet, seeking a peace deal with the Houthis. Reports suggest some Mideast nations have asked the U.S. not to launch attacks on the Houthis from their soil, making the Eisenhower's presence even more critical. The carrier has had its deployment extended, while its crew has had only one port call since its deployment a week after the Oct. 7 Hamas attack on Israel.

Meanwhile, the Houthi attacks continue to depress shipping through the region. Revenue for Egypt from the Suez Canal — a key source of hard currency for its struggling economy — has halved since the attacks began. AP journalists saw a single commercial ship moving through the once-busy waterway.

"It's almost a ghost town," Blomberg acknowledged.

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For FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company's Rate Increase Request

Docket No. R-2024-3047068

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TTY-based Telecommunications Relay Service number for persons who are deaf or hearing-impaired is: 711.

The war in Gaza is wiping out entire Palestinian families, one branch at a time. This is how

By Sarah El Deeb
Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — Israel's air and ground campaign in Gaza has killed hundreds of family members from the same bloodline, an unprecedented toll on the small community mostly made up of refugees and their descendants.

An Associated Press investigation analyzed 10 strikes across the Gaza Strip between October and December that killed over 500 people. Nearly every Palestinian family has suffered grievous, multiple losses. But many have been decimated, particularly in the first months of the war.

AP geolocated and analyzed the strikes; consulted with weapons investigators; open data-analysts and legal experts; and drew on data by Airwars, a London-based conflict monitor. They hit residential buildings and shelters with families inside. In no case was there an obvious military target or direct warning to those inside. In one case the family said they had raised a white flag on their building in a combat zone.

This war has proven even deadlier than the displacement from Israel in 1948, said Rashid Khalidi, a Palestinian-American historian at Columbia University, when 20,000 were killed in what is known as the Nakbah, or Catastrophe.

"I don't think anything like this has happened in modern Palestinian history," said Khalidi.

Al-Agha family, 31 killed

On Oct. 11, an airstrike levelled Amin al-Agha's home in western Khan Younis. The 61-year-old was asleep on the ground floor of the two-story building with his wife and three sons. The top floor was the home of his son Muhannad al-Agha, 30, his wife Hind and their two girls, Talin, 2, and Asil, 1. The airstrike killed 11 in the family, including two cousins in an adjacent building.

"It was no longer a house. It was a pile of sand," said Jaser al-Agha, a cousin who arrived shortly after the strike.

Early Oct. 14, an Israeli bomb struck the house of Khamis al-Agha, an employee of a Hamas-linked charity. The three-story building in central Khan Younis was reduced to rubble. Among the dead: Khamis al-Agha, 38, his wife, Nisreen, two sons, aged 11 and 13, two daughters, 8 and 6, and his younger brother and 9-year-old son, a cousin and her son. Only the brother's wife survived.

On Nov. 14, the house of Awni al-Agha, a second cousin to Khamis, was hit, destroying the three-story building in western Khan Younis. Brian Castner, weapons investigator with Amnesty International, said the damage indicated it was an airstrike as well.

Only a satellite dish was sticking out above the debris. The strike killed the wife of Awni al-Agha, 64-year-old Samia; his four sons, aged between 42 and 26, his daughter Ramah, 41, her husband and two sons, aged 18 and 16. Awni al-Agha, a government education official, survived because he had woken up for dawn prayers. Three months later, in February, Awni al-Agha died at the age of 69, most likely of a broken heart, said Jaser al-Agha.

Emily Tripp, director of Airwars, said her investigators struggled to grapple with the killing of entire families, across generations.

"At times we had to create family trees to understand the civilian harm," she said.

Abu Naja family, 20 killed

Israeli aircraft struck the homes of Abu Naja and Madi families in southern Rafah on Oct. 17. Twenty members of Abu Naja family were immediately killed, including two pregnant women, and eight children. The airstrikes killed the 78-year-old grandmother, her granddaughter and her children. Airwars said one of the men killed was identified on Facebook as a "Mujahid" or "warrior." His wife, pregnant sister, and her 2-year-old daughter also died.

Killing a fighter who is not participating in hostilities and is in a place crowded with civilians is considered a violation of the laws of war.

Tarzai and Souri families, 20 killed

An Israeli airstrike destroyed a church building in Gaza City where hundreds of displaced were sheltering. The Oct. 19 strike killed 20 members of the intermarried Tarzai and Souri families, from the dwindling Christian community in Gaza, including at least seven children. Ramez al-Souri lost all three children and his wife.

Israel's military said it struck a Hamas command-and-control center, accusing the group of embedding among civilians. It acknowledged that a church wall was damaged.

Amnesty visited the site and analyzed videos, including one posted and since deleted by the Israeli army and concluded it was an airstrike. Even if a military target was identified, Amnesty said, it "was reckless and therefore amounts to a war crime."

Jabalia refugee camp, more than 130 killed

The Oct. 31 Israeli bombing was among the deadliest of this war. Jabalia refugee camp was one of Gaza's most densely populated areas and has been struck multiple times since Oct. 7. The true toll remains unknown because many remain under the rubble.

Airwars named 112 civilians killed from 11 families, including 69 children and 22 women. They included at least 47 members of the Okasha and Abou al-Qoumsan families. AP identified an additional 17 from the al-Qoumsan family, where uncles, fathers and children perished.

The bombs left several craters in an area stretching for over 100 yards. Several buildings collapsed. "This is consistent of the biggest craters we've seen … for the last 20 years," said Cobb-Smith.

Israel said it targeted a Hamas command-and-control center and a Hamas battalion commander inside who would be the most senior member of the group killed so far.

Doghmush family, 44 killed

A strike on a mosque in Gaza City's Sabra neighborhood hit in the early evening of Nov. 15, killing at least 44 people from the Doghmush family, including the head of the family, a 9-year-old, community leaders and two women relatives in an adjacent building.

The damage appeared limited to the mosque's top floors. In a video taken afterward, there was no crater and the mosque appeared to have been cleaned up. There was no sign of significant damage nearby, indicating the mosque may have been targeted directly with small aerial ammunition, said Chris Cobb-Smith, a former U.N. weapons inspector and British army officer who has investigated in Gaza after past wars.

The mosque was built and owned by the Doghmush family. Ragab Doghmush, whose 21-year brother was killed, said the mosque has no militant affiliation and that the family does not permit any militant activity in its neighborhood. A feud between Doghmush family and Hamas that dates to Hamas' power grab in 2007 has largely kept the area off-limits to Hamas militants.

Salem family, 173 killed

Israeli airstrikes destroyed two separate shelters for the Salem family on Dec. 11 and Dec. 19. At least 173 family members were killed, including children, at least one pregnant woman, and many elderly, among them the 87-year-old head of the family.

The Dec. 11 airstrike ripped through a block of family buildings. One was destroyed, while others lost their facades. Experts said the limited damage indicated it was a large bomb programmed to delay an explosion until after impact.

At least eighty people were killed, including multiple generations from the same bloodline. Relatives said there were no obvious combat activities nearby.

On Dec. 19, an Israeli airstrike hit another group of displaced members from the Salem family, sheltering in a villa in Rimal. The attack left a deep crater but surrounding buildings were undamaged. Survivors said tanks rolled over the rubble. At least 90 Salems were killed.

"I saw the bodies of my uncles and cousins strewn over the floor," said Mohamed Salem, who survived the Dec. 19 strike. "We only could identify the bodies from their IDs. They were just a pile of flesh."

Maghazi refugee camp, at least 106 killed

Witnesses said at least four homes, hosting many displaced Palestinians, were hit directly on Dec. 24. Body parts were strewn across the surrounding areas.

Videos showed damage consistent with airstrikes. Images showed several destroyed homes in narrow alleys lined with small, mostly one-story buildings, and a large crater at the camp's entrance.

The AP had access to the post-strike hospital records that registered 106 people killed. From public death notices and partial health ministry data, AP was able to identify 36 from the Nawasreh, Abu Hamdah and Qandil families.

Israel said it was targeting Hamas militants and mistakenly struck two adjacent structures.

In the first and a rare statement to admit an errant strike, Israel said it regretted the "injury to those not involved." It said it had taken necessary measures to avoid harm to civilians. A military official told Kan, the Israeli public broadcaster, that the wrong weapon was used in the strike, without elaborating.

Drug shortages keep on growing. Older, injectable medicines are among the most vulnerable

By Tom Murphy
Associated Press

Erin Fox has tracked drug shortages for more than 20 years, and she sees no easy solutions for what has become a record run.

Total active shortages hit an all-time high of 323 in this year's first quarter, according to the University of Utah Drug Information Service. That's up about 86% from a 10-year low of 174 last reached in 2017.

There were 48 new shortages recorded this year through March, according to the data, published by the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists.

Still, Fox also sees positive news developing. The associate chief pharmacy officer at University of Utah Health spoke recently with The Associated Press. The conversation has been edited for clarity and length.

Q: Are there any signs that this is letting up?

A: Unfortunately, no. We haven't necessarily solved some of the root causes.

We have, overall, relatively few manufacturers. (The U.S. Food and Drug Administration) halted inspections during COVID. Now they're back, at factories that maybe haven't been inspected for five or six years. They're finding some things to fix. Those fixes can take anywhere from 6 to 18 months for production to get fully back on schedule.

Meanwhile, other companies don't necessarily have the capacity to ramp up production to make up the difference.

It's not the FDA's fault. We want them to find those quality deficits. But when FDA goes out looking all at once, it can be pretty disruptive.

Q: What are the typical drugs that land on the shortage list?

A: Generic, injectable hospital drugs or older drugs. They are usually pretty low cost. There's not a lot of resilience in the supply chain for another company to make up the difference.

We saw all those chemotherapy shortages last year in part because a large factory in India, (the FDA) found quality problems there. They made a large amount of the U.S. supply. The other companies were unable to quickly make up the difference.

Things have definitely improved, but that factory is still not running.

Q: What is one thing about shortages that patients underestimate?

A: They shouldn't automatically assume they won't be able to get that treatment.

It might be delayed or they might have to take a capsule instead of a pill. They might have to call their insurance company to ask if they will cover the brand because sometimes (that) is available while the generic is not.

Don't panic. It's frustrating to have to do a little bit of work, but usually you will still be able to get a treatment.

Q: Is there any good news?

A: Last year, Congress held four hearings on shortages. They're still very interested. People are really starting to talk about doing hard work both on the policy side but also maybe a little bit of Congressional action to really try to move this problem forward.

I've been leading our efforts to provide data on drug shortages since 2001. This is truly the most interest I've ever seen.

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Docket No. R-2024-3047068

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Double Tree by Hilton (Junior Ballroom), 340 Racetrack Road, Washington, PA 15301

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Presiding: Administrative Law Judge Katrina L. Dunderdale, **Dates: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 & Wednesday, July 17th, 2024, Times: 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM**

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- The telephone system will connect you to the hearing

Toll-free Bridge Number: 1.866.675.4411

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DuBois Continued from A1

at the Pulaski Club, 724 W. Washington Ave., DuBois. "Kay Days" Night Out With Friends will start at 6 p.m. Music will be provided by Lonnie Lee. The cost is $20 per person and will include appetizers and barbecue dinner. A cash bar will be available. There will also be a basket raffle. All proceeds will benefit the "Kay Days Fund" for free parking at Hillman. A limited number of tickets are available by calling Rowe at 814-590-4898; Ferra at 814-591-5480; or Polohonki at 814-771-7547.

Rowe said the goal is to provide five days of free parking for patients at Hillman on June 21 and from June 24-27.

"We're over $6,000 raised for this year already. And I'm taking care of all the expenses, so everything raised is going to the 'Kay Days' fund," said Rowe.

"'Kay Days' continues to make a profound impact on our patients and their loved ones," said Busch. "Often, as patients face the uncertainty of upcoming appointments, the simple act of free parking becomes a beacon of community support. It reminds them that they are not alone in their battle against cancer. The inspiration behind 'Kay Days' lies in the touching experience of Kay herself, who, while receiving treatment at UPMC Hillman Cancer Center in Shadyside, was deeply moved by a free parking day. Her desire to pay it forward has blossomed into a lasting legacy, thanks to the unwavering generosity of her family and friends."

Busch said philanthropy plays a pivotal role in uplifting the community, especially when it comes to supporting cancer patients and their families.

"These acts of generosity resonate with our patients and create a ripple effect of compassion that leaves an indelible mark on us all," said Busch. "We are fortunate to have donors who, like Kay's family, understand that any form of support for patients during cancer treatment is welcome. Free parking days and even weeks at our Shadyside location are made possible by a diverse range of donors, including individuals, families, organizations, and corporations, all of whom are united in their support for our patients and their families."

Rowe expressed appreciation to Dr. Kirkwood, as well as Melissa Wilson, PA-C, MPAS and Collaborative Practice Nurse Julie Haught RN, BSN, OCN, who provided "amazing care" for his wife during her journey at Hillman. He also thanked Ferra and Polohonki for doing so much work on the fundraiser.

Some of Boyd-Rowe's community service over the years included volunteering for the Down to Earth Garden Club, Downtown DuBois Inc., the DuBois Jaycees and Tri-County Church. She also organized a program called Church Without Walls, which encouraged people to volunteer in their community.

More information about the nonprofit is available on the "Kay Days" Facebook page.

Inmates Continued from A2

ney with the public defenders office filed a motion to reduce McCauley's bail. On May 8, the judge tentatively granted a motion to allow McCauley to live at a homeless shelter in Altoona, but requested McCauley's attorney and the assistant district attorney first draft an order for his signing that would include conditions for his release.

To McCauley's knowledge, according to the complaint, his attorney has not presented an order to the judge for his release. On June 12, a judge issued an order denying the motion to reduce bail.

The lawsuit also uses the case of Daniel Polites as an example of indigent defendants allegedly being detained for weeks or months without being able to reach their defense attorneys. According to the complaint, Polites was incarcerated in Clearfield County Jail for missing a court hearing. He was held in pretrial detention for almost three weeks. Polites attempted to reach his attorneys, but all three of his letters went unanswered.

When his public defender finally visited him in jail, she said her delayed response was due to understaffing, according to the complaint. Shortly after, the public defender moved successfully to have Polites bail be reset and he was promptly released.

The lawsuit is asking the court to find that Pennsylvania's reliance on county funding for public defenders is a violation of the Pennsylvania Constitution and the U.S. Constitution and to have oversight of the state's plan to fix these constitutional violations.

TRI-COUNTY WEEKEND

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Friendship's Continued from A1

Science Center representatives after a few years absence.

Campers also received art supplies from the Brockway Center for Arts and Technology (BCAT) to enjoy during camp.

In addition, campers enjoy group activities like horseback riding and swimming, too, among others.

Goss said there has been great attendance numbers for the Punxsutawney and DuBois camps held thus far with both campers and counselors (typically high-school age volunteers). Participating in this initiative is usually a very rewarding experience for volunteers.

"The campers and the counselors get to know each other well," she said. "They can form lifelong friendships."

Next up are the Brookville and Autism camps, directed by Jeanine DiPietro, who says Camp Friendship is a team effort, with everyone involved "having a blast" throughout the month of June.

A variety of talents were showcased in Thursday's show, an annual tradition at Camp Friendship. Several campers sang their choice of tunes, while Zach Walker did finger skateboard tricks. Julianne Concel did both singing and skateboard tricks to one of her favorite songs.

Campers and counselors made sure to cheer one another on with encouragement and clapping.

The show ended with everyone dancing together under the pavilion to the song "Y.M.C.A."

The Run/Walk for Someone Special, held in Sykesville each year, is crucial in helping to fund these camps.

The activities held at Camp Friendship help the campers gain social experiences and grow outside of their comfort zones, Goss said.



Brianne Fleming

Camp Friendship counselor Rhea Baun (left) helps Rachel Kirkwood sing during Thursday's talent show.

"They have the opportunity to socialize with other kids who are campers, and with the counselors, in a more relaxed setting," she said. "There are group activities and lots of playtime. These are opportunities they don't get during the school year or haven't had before."

For more information, visit www.jcarc.org/camp-friendship and the Facebook group: www.facebook.com/groups/226800441404688/

VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT
WWW.THECOURIEREXPRESS.COM/TRI_COUNTY_SUNDAY/

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One year anniversary of Titan's tragic dive

Deep-sea explorers vow to pursue Titan's mysteries

By PATRICK WHITTLE and HOLLY RAMER
Associated Press

PORTLAND, Maine (AP) — The deadly implosion of an experimental submersible en route to the deep-sea grave of the Titanic last June has not dulled the desire for further ocean exploration, despite lingering questions about the disaster.

Tuesday marks one year since the Titan vanished on its way to the historic wreckage site in the North Atlantic Ocean. After a five-day search that captured attention around the world, authorities said the vessel had been destroyed and all five people on board had died.

Concerns have been raised about whether the Titan was destined for disaster because of its unconventional design and its creator's refusal to submit to independent checks that are standard in the industry. The U.S. Coast Guard quickly convened a high-level investigation into what happened, but officials said the inquiry is taking longer than the initial 12-month time frame, and a planned public hearing to discuss their findings won't happen for at least another two months.

Meanwhile, deep-sea exploration continues. The Georgia-based company that owns the salvage rights to the Titanic plans to visit the sunken ocean liner in July using remotely operated vehicles, and a real estate billionaire from Ohio has said he plans a voyage to the shipwreck in a two-person submersible in 2026. Numerous ocean explorers told The Associated Press they are confident undersea exploration can continue safely in a post-Titan world.

"It's been a desire of the scientific community to get down into the ocean," said Greg Stone, a veteran ocean explorer and friend of Titan operator Stockton Rush, who died in the implosion. "I have not noticed any difference in the desire to go into the ocean, exploring."

OceanGate, a company co-founded by Rush that owned the submersible, suspended operations in early July. A spokesperson for the company declined to comment.

David Concannon, a former adviser to OceanGate, said he will mark the anniversary privately with a group of people who were involved with the company or the submersible's expeditions over the years, including scientists, volunteers and mission specialists. Many of them, including those who were on the Titan support ship Polar Prince, have not been interviewed by the Coast Guard, he said.

"The fact is, they are isolated and in a liminal space," he said in an email last week. "Stockton Rush has been vilified and so has everyone associated with OceanGate. I wasn't even there and I have gotten death threats. We support each other and just wait to be interviewed. The world has moved on ... but the families and those most affected are still living with this tragedy every day."

The Titan had been chronicling the Titanic's decay and the underwater ecosystem around the sunken ocean liner in yearly voyages since 2021.

The craft made its last dive on June 18, 2023, a Sunday morning, and lost contact with its support vessel about two hours later. When it was reported overdue that afternoon, rescuers rushed ships, planes and other equipment to the area, about 435 miles (700 kilometers) south of St. John's, Newfoundland.

The U.S. Navy notified the Coast Guard that day of an anomaly in its acoustic data that was "consistent with an implosion or explosion" at the time communications between the Polar Prince and the Titan were lost, a senior Navy official later told The Associated Press. The official spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive technology.

Any sliver of hope that remained for finding the crew alive was wiped away on June 22, when the Coast Guard announced that debris had been found near the Titanic on the ocean floor. Authorities have since recovered the submersible's intact endcap, debris and presumed human remains from the site.

In addition to Rush, the implosion killed two members of a prominent Pakistani family, Shahzada Dawood and his son Suleman Dawood; British adventurer Hamish Harding; and Titanic expert Paul-Henri Nargeolet.

Harding and Nargeolet were members of The Explorers Club, a professional society dedicated to research, exploration and resource conservation.

"Then, as now, it hit us on a personal level very deeply," the group's president, Richard Garriott, said in an interview last week. "We knew not only all the people involved, but even all the previous divers, support teams, people working on all these vessels — those were all either members of this club or well within our network."

Garriott believes even if the Titan hadn't imploded, the correct rescue equipment didn't get to the site fast enough. The tragedy caught everyone from the Coast Guard to the ships on site off guard, underscoring the importance of developing detailed search and rescue plans ahead of any expedition, he said. His organization has since created a task force to help others do just that.

"That's what we've been trying to really correct, to make sure that we know exactly who to call and exactly what materials need to be mustered," he said.

Heat moves east, storms threaten Plains, snow falls in the Rockies

By ANITA SNOW
Associated Press

PHOENIX (AP) — Hot and cold extremes are expected this week in the U.S. Officials warned residents from coast to coast to take precautions as a heat wave moved east, while heavy rains and flooding could drench the Gulf states and snow threatens parts of the Rockies and Northwest.

Extreme heat spread across Arizona, New Mexico and parts of Texas, Colorado and Kansas as severe weather swept across many parts of the U.S. on Sunday. There was unseasonable cold in the Pacific Northwest, snow headed to the northern Rocky Mountains and heavy rainfall forecast from the northern Plains to the Upper Midwest.

The National Weather Service estimated more than 63 million people were under heat advisories on Sunday, stretching from the Southwest northward up through Denver and into Chicago. Much of the Midwest and Northeast were under heat warnings or watches on Monday.

Temperatures in Phoenix, which hit 112 degrees Fahrenheit (44.4 Celsius) on Saturday, eased slightly on Sunday to 110 degrees Fahrenheit (43.3 Celsius). Weather service forecasters say the first two weeks of June in Phoenix already have been an average of 5.6 degrees Fahrenheit hotter than normal, making it the hottest start to June on record.

"We have already seen some pretty significantly high temperatures in our area," said Ted Whittock, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Phoenix. "We are recommending that everyone reduce their time outdoors between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m., stay hydrated and wear light, looser fitting clothing."

The heat in metro Phoenix will ease a bit Monday through Wednesday, with the highs pushing back up as the week progresses, likely prompting another excessive heat warning, Whittock said.

The heat has been especially dangerous in recent years in metro Phoenix, where 645 people died from heat-related causes in 2023, which was a record.

The city and Maricopa County have adopted additional measures this year in hopes of keeping people safer, including two new overnight cooling centers where people can rest in air conditioning after the sun goes down. There are more than 100 other cooling centers that have been open since May 1 where people can get cold water and sit in a cool space during daytime hours.

In neighboring New Mexico, a heat advisory was in effect over the weekend for the Chavez County plains including Roswell, where the high was forecast to hit 107 degrees F (41.6 degrees C) on Monday. The high for Albuquerque reached 99 degrees F (37 C) on Sunday and is forecast to cool slightly to 98 degrees F (36 C) on Monday. The high Sunday was 104 F (40 C) in El Paso, Texas, which opened five cooling centers.

Temperatures in Colorado ranged from near 90 degrees F (32.2 C) in areas of metropolitan Denver Sunday to 100 degrees F (37.7 C) in the southern city of Pueblo, with temperatures expected to surpass 100 degrees F Monday in the southern reaches of the state.

The heat wave was moving eastward Sunday into the Plains and the Great Lakes area and was expected to arrive in the Northeast by Tuesday. The threat of thunderstorms with potential high winds and heavy rainfall increased in the Chicago area, even as heat indices were forecast to reach near 100 degrees F (37.7 C) through the middle of the week.

As the heat wave spreads eastward, temperatures in Washington, D.C., and the rest of the mid-Atlantic, as well as New England, were likely to see highs in the mid- to upper-90s as the week progresses, with excessive humidity making it feel even more oppressive.

The U.S. last year saw the most heat waves, consisting of abnormally hot weather lasting more than two days, since 1936.

While much of the country swelters, late season snow was forecast for the northern Rockies Monday and Tuesday. Parts of Montana and north-central Idaho were under a winter storm warning, with as much as 6 inches (15 centimeters) of heavy, wet snow expected in the mountains around Missoula, Montana. As much as 20 inches (51 centimeters) was predicted for higher elevations around Glacier National Park.

Meanwhile, a fresh batch of tropical moisture will bring an increasing threat of heavy rain and flash flooding to the central Gulf Coast late Sunday into Monday. Heavy rain is expected to start Monday morning, with the moisture shifting toward the Gulf Coast by Tuesday.

The intense flooding from heavy rains continued to dissipate in southern Florida, where some areas in and around Miami and Fort Lauderdale were left underwater in recent days as storms dumped up to 20 inches (50 centimeters).

That unnamed storm system coincided with the early start of hurricane season, which this year is forecast to be among the most active in recent memory.

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For FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company's Rate Increase Request

Docket No. R-2024-3047068

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AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

Kathy Alexander
First Energy Media
154 E Aurora RD # 174
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06/15/2024, 06/18/2024

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Group sanctioned over aid convoy attacks

Any assets held under US jurisdiction to be frozen

Simon Lewis
REUTERS

WASHINGTON – Washington imposed sanctions on an Israeli group on Friday for attacking humanitarian aid convoys bound for starving civilians in Gaza, U.S. officials told Reuters, in the latest move targeting actors Washington believes threaten the prospects for peace between Israelis and Palestinians.

The sanctions target Tsav 9, a group with ties to Israeli army reservists and Jewish settlers in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, over activities including blocking, harassing and damaging aid shipments.

Palestinians have been desperately in need of aid as Israel continues its eight-month invasion and bombardment, which has killed at least 37,000 people, according to the territory's health ministry. Israel has also faced accusations of blocking aid, which it denies doing.

Right-wing elements in Israel's government, with links to the settler movement, have opposed U.S. President Joe Biden's effort to forge a cease-fire agreement between Israel and Hamas to end the Gaza war that began with Hamas' attacks on southern Israel on Oct. 7, which killed around 1,200 people, according to Israeli tallies.

The financial sanctions will be imposed under an executive order on West Bank violence Biden signed in February, which was previously used to impose financial restrictions on Jewish settlers involved in attacks on Palestinians as well as a Palestinian militant group.

Tsav 9 was listed as sanctioned on the website of the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control on Friday. Reuters was first to report the sanctions.

"We're using the authority to sanction an ever-broadening selection of actors, targeting individuals and entities that threaten the peace, security and stability of the West Bank regardless of religion, ethnicity or location," Aaron Forsberg, director of the State Department's office of sanctions policy and implementation, told Reuters.

On May 13, members of Tsav 9 looted and then set fire to two aid trucks near the West Bank city of Hebron.

Tsav 9 – Hebrew for Order 9, a reference to call-up orders for Israeli military reservists – said after the May 13 incident it acted to stop supplies from reaching Hamas and accused the Israeli government of giving "gifts" to the Islamist group.

"For months, individuals from Tzav 9 have repeatedly sought to thwart the delivery of humanitarian aid to Gaza, including by blocking roads, sometimes violently, along their route from Jordan to Gaza, including transiting the West Bank," State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller said in a statement seen by Reuters. "They also have damaged aid trucks and dumped life-saving humanitarian aid onto the road."

The move freezes any assets the group holds under U.S. jurisdiction and bars Americans from dealing with it.

Democracy for the Arab World Now, a U.S.-based human rights group, this week called for U.S. sanctions on Tsav 9 and said the group raises funds from Israeli companies and Israeli and U.S. nonprofit organizations.

DAWN said in a statement that such vigilante groups have enjoyed impunity from Israeli authorities.

Palestinians and human rights groups have long accused the Israeli military and police of deliberately failing to intervene when settlers attack Palestinians in the West Bank.

Israel arrested four of those involved in the May 13 attack, including a minor, according to lawyers.

"We'll continue to use all tools at our disposal to promote accountability for those who attempt to undertake or perpetrate such heinous acts," Forsberg said. "We have raised this at all levels of the government of Israel and we expect that Israeli authorities will do the same."

Hamas' armed wing al-Qassam Brigades said Friday that two Israeli hostages held in Gaza were killed in an Israeli airstrike on Rafah a few days ago.



Trucks carrying aid to Gaza were stopped after being damaged by Israeli settlers May 14 near Hebron in the Israeli-occupied West Bank. Members of Tsav 9 looted and then set fire to two aid trucks the day before. MUSSA QAWASMA/REUTERS FILE

The group, in a video posted on its Telegram channel, did not release the names of those said to have been killed or provide any evidence.

The Israeli government "does not want your hostages to return, except in coffins," the al-Qassam Brigades statement said.

Israel rescued four hostages held by Hamas in a hostage-freeing operation in central Gaza's al-Nuseirat on June 8. The health ministry in Hamas-run Gaza said more than 250 Palestinians were killed in the raid.

Israel says its campaign in Gaza is intended to eliminate Hamas as a threat and free the remaining hostages.

Southern Gaza food supply at risk

Supplies of food to southern Gaza are at risk after Israel extended its military operations and those displaced by the offensive there face a public health crisis, a senior United Nations official said Friday. While hunger and the risk of famine has been most acute in northern Gaza in recent months, the situation is now deteriorating in the south, said Carl Skau, deputy director of the U.N. World Food Program.

The main pipeline for aid earlier in the eight-month war was from Egypt into southern Gaza, but this was largely cut off when Israel expanded its campaign in the city of Rafah, where much of Gaza's population was sheltering, beginning in early May.

"We had stocked up before the operation in Rafah so that we had put food into the hands of people, but that's beginning to run out and we don't have the same access that we need, that we used to have," Skau said after a two-day trip to Gaza.

When Israel advanced in Rafah, many of those who had taken refuge there were displaced again northward and toward an evacuation zone in Al-Mawasi, an area on the coast.

"It's a displacement crisis that brings a protection catastrophe really, that a million or so people who have been pushed out of Rafah are now really crammed into a small space along the beach," Skau said. "It's hot, the sanitation situation is just terrible. We were driving through rivers of sewage. And it's a public health crisis in the making."

Distribution of aid has been hampered by military operations, delaying Israeli authorizations and increasing lawlessness within Gaza.

The Blessing of the Tractors set for Wednesday

Madolin Edwards
The Daily American | USA TODAY NETWORK

Geiger Church of the Brethren is planning a "Blessing of the Tractors" at 7 p.m. Wednesday at the Zehner Farm.

"We are all so blessed by the beautiful farming country that surrounds us," said the Rev. Linda Stoner in an email. "The planting season is well underway and so much is being accomplished by the silent heroes in our midst. Our farmers help provide for our very existence and they do so with not nearly enough recognition. We at Geiger Church plan to change that."

Friends and neighbors are invited to join the church members at the John and Winona Zehner farm, 152 Zehner Road, Somerset, as they pray over the tractors and the people who operate them. If bringing the actual tractors isn't a possibility, they can bring photographs of their tractors.

"These dedicated men and women need our prayerful support as we wish them safety and success in their endeavors," Stoner said. "We want these folks to know how very important they are."

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Cucumber-linked reports of salmonella still growing

Mike Snider
USA TODAY

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Food and Drug Administration continue to investigate two salmonella outbreaks likely connected to cucumbers as the total of those sickened has grown to more than 380 people in at least 28 states.

Cases in the first reported outbreak have risen to 196 in 28 states and Washington, D.C. – up from 162 people in 25 states.

The CDC said that 68 of those sickened with the strain Salmonella Africana have been hospitalized. No deaths have been reported; most of the cases occurred in the South, Northeast and Midwest.

Those cases were reported between March 30 and May 23, the CDC says. Nearly three-fourths of the 85 patients interviewed (74%) said they ate cucumbers.

The number of people infected with the strain Salmonella Braenderup in the second outbreak has risen to 185 in 24 states, up from 158 in 23 states, the FDA says.

On May 31, Fresh Start Produce Sales Inc. of Delray, Florida, recalled cucumbers grown in Florida and shipped to 14 states between May 17 and 21. That recall came after some cucumbers tested positive for a third strain, Salmonella Bareilly, which doesn't match any of the currently reported outbreaks, the FDA said.

The FDA and CDC are continuing to investigate these outbreaks and the specific sources and products involved. However, with so many people who developed salmonella infections having reported eating cucumbers, it's likely the Fresh Start cucumbers are involved, Bill Marler, a food safety lawyer, told USA TODAY.

The epidemiological investigation after the Fresh Start cucumbers were recalled led "to cucumbers in that company," he said.

"Just because the leftover cucumbers (those tested), which are clearly the ones people didn't eat, have a different strain doesn't mean the CDC and FDA are wrong" about having Fresh Start issue the recall, he said. "Most of the time there's never food to test because people eat the evidence."

Consumers should be concerned about food safety during this situation because we don't know the specific sources of salmonella contamination in the outbreaks, said Barbara Kowalcyk, director of the Institute for Food Safety and Nutrition Security at George Washington University's Milken Institute School of Public Health in Washington, D.C.

Even though the initial shipments of cucumbers potentially linked to the Salmonella Africana outbreak were recalled – and likely wouldn't be edible by now – eating cucumbers could still be risky, she said.

"I hate to tell someone not to eat fresh produce, but if I were someone over the age of 65, with a compromised immune system, maybe I was dealing with cancer … I probably wouldn't eat cucumbers now."

Honored

Continued from Page 1A

Acts of merit and valor are both types of officer decoration that recognize exceptional actions, but are different in their focus. The acts of merit typically recognizes outstanding performance, achievement or service. The acts of valor is awarded for bravery or heroism in the face of personal danger.

The three officers received their medals along with a uniform bar and insignia.

Rosemeyer presented the Medal of Valor to Huzsek and the Medal of Merit to Borosky and Grus.

All three officers received the chief commendation, which is a formal statement of praise for their actions.

The event was more than a commendation for the three officers, it was a commendation for all public safety officers.

Somerset Council, mayor, borough manager, county and state elected officials and community members expressed their appreciation for what they did, and for all those who have elected to serve in the Somerset County law enforcement ranks.

"The bravery and heroism that the Somerset police exhibit each and every shift. Their unwavering dedication while upholding the laws making Somerset a better and safer place to live," according to a letter issued to all local police officers and read by Rosemeyer to the crowd.

"Thank you for serving. Thank you for being the professionals that you are," he said.

Another thanks

Somerset First Methodist Church hosted its annual Back the Blue lunch Wednesday for all police in the Somerset area. Nearly 70 officers were "recognized and given thanks for all that they do," according to Pastor Dave McCall.

Driving around Somerset County one often sees blue lights illuminating the night at homes and businesses, showing support for local law enforcement.

"They saved my mother's life"

"When I realized my house was on fire, I went outside and called 911," said Robert Shaw, owner of the Clark Street house, from a podium with a line of blue-clad officers behind him.

While he was hanging up from the 911 call, he saw Huzsek coming toward him. He thought, 'Wow, they must be listening to the 911 call.' Only to find, the police officer was responding to his mother activating her emergency alert beeper.

"When he (Huzsek) came up he said, 'Are there any people in the house?'"

Shaw responded: "There are three. My mother is down in the basement and I have two babies upstairs."

Huzsek asked Shaw to take him and show where his mother was which was in the part of the house being engulfed by the fire.

"I did and without one second of stopping, he kicked the door down and he went into the black smoke and the fire. At that point, I went to the top of the house and got the babies out, a 3-year-old and an 18-month-old."

Huzsek couldn't get into downstairs using the stairwell in the front of the house because it was burning. He went to the back of the house where there was an entranceway to the downstairs, but it was also in flames. Next, he found a window at the lower level that led to the bedroom where he could see the woman trapped. He took a deep breath and smashed the window entering the room and picking up the woman and handing her through the window to two officers who had arrived minutes later and waiting to help.

"He saved my mother," Shaw said. "Sgt. Borosky and Officer Grus helped my mother up to the ambulance and then they helped Officer Huzsek with some breathing (smoke inhalation). They saved my mother's life."

Huzsek was so overcome with the smoke that he could not follow the woman out the window on his own power. His fellow officers helped him escape the burning room by ripping off the window frame to get to him.

Back story

The call came to 911 on March 26, "home on fire with entrapment."

The fire had trapped a woman in a basement bedroom, while a father and his two young children were able to make it to safety because they were upstairs in the house.

Huzsek was was the first on the scene followed within seconds by Borosky and Grus. Quickly after the officers arrived at the burning house, fire departments and ambulances arrived. But, there was no time to spare. A woman was trapped. The fire was fierce, the smoke heavy. The officers immediately acted, saving the woman's life.

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TTY-based Telecommunications Relay Service number for persons who are deaf or hearing-impaired is: 711.

Juneteenth

Continued from Page 1A

4:30 to 6 p.m., DJ Moe Be

- 6 to 8 p.m., Music by The Egress (jazz group)

Wednesday, June 19

- Noon to 1 p.m., third annual Juneteenth parade starts at Sargent's Stadium at the Point and travels up Main Street, ending at Clinton St.
- 1 p.m., Juneteenth proclamation by Johnstown Mayor Frank Janakovic
- 1 to 2:30 p.m., Heroes' Alley service honoring Black veterans with speaker Artie Lightfoot, Sr., a solo performance by Darlene Seals and a Fallen Soldier Table exhibit
- 2:30 p.m., a Juneteenth group photo will be taken (participants are encouraged to wear their "I Am Juneteenth" T-shirts)
- 3 p.m., raffle drawings
- 4 to 6 p.m., a performance by Ibeji Drum Ensemble from Pittsburgh
- 6 to 8 p.m., music by The Palovations from Baltimore

Bradford County
Commonwealth of
Pennsylvania

Kelly M. Harp, being duly sworn, says she is the designated agent of the Daily Review, of general circulation, established in 1879, published in the borough of Towanda, county aforesaid, and that the notice hereto attached is exactly as was printed in said paper once a day on the following date(s):

06/15/2024 06/18/2024

Kelly M. Harp, Accounting

Kelly M Harp

Sworn and subscribed before me this day

18th day of June 2024

Susan M Rought

Notary Public

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania - Notary Seal
Susan M. Rought, Notary Public
Bradford County
My commission expires August 6, 2025
Commission number 1277916
Member, Pennsylvania Association of Notaries

• LOCAL •

Harlan Rowe recognizes honor students for fourth marking period

Mr. James Schmieg, principal of the Harlan Rowe Middle School in Athens, recently announced that the following students made the honor roll for the fourth marking period of the 2023-24 school year.

Sixth grade

Kord Alfred, Cooper Bailey, Kensley Bailey, Jozelyn Bean, Hannah Behm, Brady Boor, Josiah Bowman, Ivy Brown, Kellan Callear, Graham Campbell, Molly Carling, Lilah Carlson, Noah Cobb, Cohyn Cockcroft, Lucy Cole, Nicholas Coleman, Tyler Dobrzensky, Abby Folkers, Sophia Fuller, Haleigh Garland, Bryce Gombocz, Raelynn Goodwin, Syghlas Grate, Kloeyona Hatch, Jystalyn Henrich, Ryan Hicks, Colton Jennings, Ian Johnston, Olivia Kautz, Aniecia Kraus, Alayna Lackey, Evan Marhefka, Erica Matthews, Bella McCollum, Brooklyn Morse, Isaac Navickas, Ariana Nelsen, Silas Nichols, Wyatt Randall, Payton Riley, Evelyn Roy, Maxim Satterly, Lennox Schmoyer, Paisley Smith, Parker Smith, Samantha Smith, Elexia Sweet, Ashlynn Trivelpiece, Caroline Vogell, Lucas Wagner, Everleigh Waring, Liam Warner, Addison Westbrook, Lane Westbrook, Natalie Yale, and Parker Yale.

Seventh grade

Shayan Ankam, Blake Bowman, Aidan Briggs, Layne Brown-Swisher, Maci Campbell, Emily Cocco, Elijah Corby, Shea Davidson, Charlotte Delamater, Abby DeLosa, Eden Fedorchak, Kayla Forbes, Sarah Gifeisman, Chase Gombocz, Peighton Henry, Jaxson Holbrook, Molly Hunsinger, Alexis Inthavongsa, Joshua Karakala, Emmitt Kingsley, Katyayini Kinthala, Jordan Lattimer, Sorana Marica, Lilli Miller, Marlena Miller, Brianna Ndegwa, Olivia Niles, Chelsey Renninger, Zachary Renninger, Charlotte Rosh, Gavin Ross, Ryder Schmidt, Joseph Schuler, Xoie Shoemaker, Madison Sinsabaugh, Rory Smart, Griffin Smith, Morgan Smith, Urijah Souder, Graham Steinfelt, Jolene Taylor, Stella Unger, Chace VanDyke, Mangus Wakely, Jonica Walters, Elijah Wayman, Bilikula Wennie, Bailey Woodward, Karter Woodward, Aurora Wright, Cy Yeager, and Taylor Yoder.

Eighth Grade

Treyton Barrett, Peter Bertsch, Hailey Brinkley, Ryan Brown, Marissa Carey, Abigail Conklin, Anndrea Davis, Sienna Everson, Lilyann Fritch, Maleah Hadlock, Sophia Harris, TenleyJo Isham, Caroline Johnson, Allison Kemp, Carly Leonard, Brooke Lyon, Ella Marhefka, Elliana Mosher, Judah Nason, Tatyana Nasser, Memphis Paul, Audrey Riddle, Allyson Rowe, Sophie Schmoyer, Christalynn Sutton, Alissa Vough, Ella Walrath, and Emma Williams.

NEB

FROM PAGE A1

recent measure that had passed the state house capping cyber charter tuition at $8,000 per student. Currently the school district pays $17,000 per student to attend cyber charter programs. Special education tuition would be tiered

"So the update we got is they were talking about two tiers originally," explained Superintendent Mattew Holmes, "so your high incident disability would have a lower-tiered rate because they're not providing as many services as we are. Your students with profound disabilities would be at a higher-tier rate."

Holmes said provisions in the bill would put the onus on cyber charter providers to prove they are providing the services to children that justify the cost to school districts. The current special education rate the district pays cyber charter providers is $32,000 per student.

Connie Kuhlman asked if rural school districts would be included in that, and Holmes replied that they would be and Northeast Bradford would significantly benefit from the measure.

The board's fund balance at the beginning of the fiscal year was close to $7.6 million, ending the year at $6.6 million.

The board ultimately passed the 2024-25 budget 6-1, with Connie Kuhlman voting "no" and David Martin and Richard Jones absent.

Holmes reported that the end of the year was busy, but successful.

"I thought it went very well," he remarked. "I like to tell people when the summer starts it's a completely different kind of busy."

The board voted to authorize Holmes and the administration to carry on district business through the month of July in anticipation of its next meeting in August.

After the meeting, the school board adjourned to an executive session for the annual safety and security review.

Connect with Matt (570) 265-2151 mrjennings@thedailyreview.com

APPRECIATION

FROM PAGE A1

Department of Human Services, who sponsored the event. The county's employee fund was also used for funding as well.

Porter explained that the event was a way to show appreciation to the employees, as they are the "backbone of the county" and deserved to be recognized more.

Anderson shared this sentiment and stated that there are over 300 county employees who ensure the safety of the county and remain hardworking and dedicated to the betterment of the county.

"We all do it together," said Anderson.

Employees were offered a free meal, catered by Jones Diner in Towanda, as well as various gifts and door prizes. The event also hosted Coops Scoops Ice Cream Truck for those with a sweet tooth.

Commissioner Doug McLinko stated that, although it may not seem like it, these types of events "mean a lot to people" and can be helpful in boosting "employee morale."

He also stated that this event helps to maintain a "good atmosphere" within the courthouse and brings people together.

McLinko further commended Porter and Anderson on their hard work in bringing the event together, as well as all of the employees for the work that they do every day.

Connect with Sunshyne: (570)-265-2151 ext. 1627 sunshyne@thedailyreview.com

ASSAULT

FROM PAGE A1

while her clothes were off and his clothes were on, according to the criminal complaint.

During the third victim's interview, she told the interviewer that Boone "was touching her," which caused her to have an infection.

This victim further stated that Boone "started touching her and doing bad stuff," and "touched her on her private parts multiple times," according to the criminal complaint.

She said that the abuse began when she was 5 or 6 years old and that "it would start with massages" and move into a game that Boone allegedly called "play time." She also stated that Boone would allegedly be "rough" to the point of leaving "red marks."

Boone's preliminary hearing will take place before Magisterial District Judge Carr on July 31 at 9:15 a.m.

Connect with Sunshyne: (570)-265-2151 ext. 1627 sunshyne@thedailyreview.com

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Club News

Heritage Garden Club

Members of the Heritage Garden Club met on Monday, June 3 at the Mt. Pisgah State Park Environmental Interpretive Center. The program "All About Trees" was presented by DCNR environmental education specialist Richard Gulyas.

Gulyas explained a helpful acronym for identification of tree leaves. If the leaves are growing on opposite sides of a twig, there's a good chance the tree is a maple, ash, dogwood of the Caprifoliaceae family, or horsechesnut (AKA buckeye). Just remember MAD Cap Horse! M — Maple, A — Ash, D — Dogwood, Cap — Caprifoliaceae, and horse — horsechestnut! For pine trees ID, he explained White Pine trees have five needles in each bundle, for one species.

Also, the bark color and texture is a good identifier of a tree. Sycamore, hornbeam and black cherry have shagbark texture. Gulyas had examples to show and all took a walk in the forest and learned the difference in the leaves of oak trees. A red oak has pointed leaves and the white oak has rounded leaves.

Delicious refreshments were served by hosts Charlotte Lyon and Cindy Shaylor and enjoyed by all. President Caroline Hall called the meeting to order with 15 members present. The 2024 Club Yearbooks were passed out by Caroline, who chaired the publishing of the programs and GCFP State and District information. Thanks was given to those who planted the pole baskets on the Troy streets and the new pedestals created by Adam and Caroline Hall. The usual order of activities on the agenda were discussed.

For Arbor Day tree planting, a native Serviceberry tree is planned to plant at the Mitchell House when the garage part is being remodeled. The Exceptional Garden of the month of June was awarded to Pastor Lynn and Suzanne Lockwood's porch! Afterwards, members walked through the Pollinator Garden.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- June 17 — 23, 2024 is Pollinator Week see pollinator.org
- June 25 — 28, 2024 Garden Tour with Sandy bus trip to Akron & Toledo, Ohio.
- July 15 at 4 p.m. Annual Heritage GC workbee at the Troy Fair Exhibit Hall garden and dish-to-pass picnic at 5 p.m. Families welcome!
- Aug. 13 Dahlia Show Steuben County Fairgrounds in Bath, N.Y. during fair hours.

PUBLIC INPUT HEARING NOTIFICATION

For FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company's Rate Increase Request

Docket No. R-2024-3047068

The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC) will conduct 18 Public Input Hearings concerning FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company's request filed on April 2, 2024, to increase electric rates by $502 million per year. The Commission will conduct a series of Public Input Hearings, totaling eighteen (18) in total, with fourteen (14) Public Input Hearings to be conducted in-person at seven (7) different locations within the territory of FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company. An additional four (4) Public Input Hearings will be conducted by telephone using the Commission's conference bridge technology.

Different processes will be used for the in-person hearings than will be used to the telephonic hearings. Individuals wishing to testify at either the in-person or telephonic hearings will only be permitted once. Time limitations may apply to how long individuals may testify, if a large number of other individuals wish to testify at the same session.

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Thursday, June 27, 2024 at 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Graduate Palo Alto (Coaly Ballroom A/B), 125 S Atherton Street, State College, PA 16801

Tuesday, July 9, 2024 at 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Erie County Public Library (H.O. Hirt Auditorium – Museum Entrance), 160 East Front Street, Erie, PA 16507

Wednesday, July 10, 2024 at 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Butler County Community College (Founders Hall – Parking Lot #6), 107 College Drive, Butler, PA 16002

Thursday, July 11, 2024 Time: 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Greensburg Garden and Civic Center (Laurel Room & Iris Room), 951 Old Salem Road, Greensburg, PA 15601

Friday, July 12, 2024 at 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Double Tree by Hilton (Junior Ballroom), 340 Racetrack Road, Washington, PA 15301

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Telephonic Public Input Hearings

Presiding: Administrative Law Judge Katrina L. Dunderdale, **Dates: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 & Wednesday, July 17th, 2024, Times: 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM**

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- You must enter a PIN number when instructed to do so, also listed below
- You must speak your name when prompted
- The telephone system will connect you to the hearing

Toll-free Bridge Number: 1.866.675.4411

PIN Number: 23464163

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STATE • NATION

SERVICES

FROM PAGE A1

to get these services, a common experience in Pennsylvania.

Because the level of need exceeds what's appropriated in the state budget, adults with autism and intellectual disabilities in the commonwealth spend months, if not years, waiting for waivers that pay for services, to which they're entitled as Medicaid beneficiaries. April data from the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services show nearly 13,000 adults are on waitlists to receive these services. A 2022 report from DHS found that the median amount of time that people spend on all waiver waitlists is 2.6 years.

Once Rovito got the approval to be added to a waiver waitlist, it took nine months for a group home spot to open up. He describes these months of limbo as a "nightmare."

"That period of time was really hard on both of us," seconded Bowling. During the nine-month wait, she said they wondered "'You know, is it going to happen?'"

Democratic Gov. Josh Shapiro's budget proposal includes $78 million that would allow the Office of Developmental Programs to increase the number of waiver slots by 1,500 so that people like Rovito don't need to wait so long for spots at group homes, as well as other services. The waiver program gives families access to a range of services, including various therapies, shift nursing, job counseling, respite for caregivers, and assistance with daily living tasks such as personal hygiene, transportation, and budgeting.

Legislative leaders, including Democrats who control the state House and Republicans who run the state Senate, are currently negotiating what the final budget deal will look like ahead of the June 30 deadline.

"The governor put a lot on the table with his budget proposal. While accommodating all his requests is not feasible, this is an area I certainly feel a need to address to the best of our ability," said state Senate Majority Leader Joe Pittman (R., Indiana) in an emailed statement.

Sherri Landis — executive director of the Arc of Pennsylvania, which advocates for Pennsylvanians with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and their families — called Shapiro's proposal "historical."

"I couldn't even begin to tell you when a governor has really taken on the waiting lists in the magnitude that Gov. Shapiro has," she said.

However, even people who have waivers struggle to access services, which are provided by community-based nonprofits and companies. Providers say that employee recruitment and retention has long been an issue for the direct support professional [DSP] industry, where entry-level wages are notoriously low.

That's why in addition to the $78 million to expand the number of available waivers, Shapiro l wants lawmakers to allocate another $483 million in state and federal money, or a 12% rate increase, to direct service providers, which they in turn can spend on pay bumps, retention bonuses, recruitment, and other costs related to staffing. The last time direct service agencies got a rate bump was January 2022.

"Access to services is not possible without supporting the providers and DSPs who provide services, and this investment in rates will support … DSPs across this field," a DHS spokesperson told Spotlight PA in an emailed statement.

While providers would not be mandated to use Shapiro's proposed infusion of tax dollars to increase pay, DHS says that previous rate increases have bolstered staff salaries.

Landis is confident that wages will increase if Shapiro's budget is approved, and that doing otherwise would be "incomprehensible." She said many providers tell her they struggle to keep their doors open due to an inability to retain workers.

"They need to compete with the Sheetz and the service industry, and the warehouses," she said.

Stephen Suroviec — president and chief executive officer of Achieva, a Pittsburgh-based waiver services provider that's affiliated with the Arc of Pennsylvania — told Spotlight PA via email that direct support professionals have cited low pay as the reason they've resigned from the nonprofit, which has a starting hourly wage of $15.76.

"While we haven't directly reduced the employment services we offer, due to staffing shortages there is often a significant delay between the time a person has services authorized and (is ready to receive them) and when we can provide them," said Suroviec. "This delay is regrettable and highlights the ongoing challenges finding staff."

Bowling worries about her son's quality of life as she ages. It's unlikely that Rovito will live in this particular group home for the rest of his life, and inevitably other issues will come up that will necessitate Medicaid-funded support. At 65, she's aware that one day she won't be able to advocate for her son.

Or, as Rovito puts it, "She's getting too old to do this."

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KIDS

FROM PAGE A5

Bazarova, a professor of communications and director of the Cornell Social Media Lab. "They need to have instruction."

Start early, earlier than you think. Elgersma suggests that parents go through their own social media feeds with their children before they are old enough to be online and have open discussions on what they see. How would your child handle a situation where a friend of a friend asks them to send a photo? Or if they see an article that makes them so angry they just want to share it right away?

For older kids, Elgersma says to approach them with curiosity and interest, "asking about what their friends are doing or just not asking direct questions like, 'What are you doing on Instagram?' but rather, 'Hey, I heard this influencer is really popular.'" And even if your kid rolled their eyes it could be a window."

Don't say things like "Turn that thing off!" when your kid has been scrolling for a long time, says Jean Rogers, the director of the nonprofit Fairplay's Screen Time Action Network.

"That's not respectful," Rogers said. "It doesn't respect that they have a whole life and a whole world in that device."

Instead, Rogers suggests asking them questions about what they do on their phone, and see what your child is willing to share.

Kids are also likely to respond to parents and educators "pulling back the curtains" on social media and the sometimes insidious tools companies use to keep people online and engaged, Elgersma said. Watch a documentary like "The Social Dilemma" that explores algorithms, dark patterns and dopamine feedback cycles of social media. Or read up with them how Facebook and TikTok make money.

"Kids love to be in the know about these things, and it will give them a sense of power," she said.

SETTING LIMITS

Rogers says most parents have success with taking their kids' phones overnight to limit their scrolling. Occasionally kids might try to sneak the phone back, but it's a strategy that tends to work because kids need a break from the screen.

"They need to an excuse with their peers to not be on their phone at night," Rogers said. "They can blame their parents."

Parents may need their own limits on phone use. Rogers said it's helpful to explain what you are doing when you do have a phone in hand around your child so they understand you are not aimlessly scrolling through sites like Instagram. Tell your child that you're checking work email, looking up a recipe for dinner or paying a bill so they understand you're not on there just for fun. Then tell them when you plan to put the phone down.

WHAT ABOUT PARENTAL CONTROLS?

Social media platforms that cater to children have added an ever-growing array of parental controls as they face increasing scrutiny over child safety. For instance, Meta unveiled parental supervision tools last year that lets parents set time limits, see who their kid follows or is followed by, and allows them to track how much time the minor spends on Instagram. It does not let parents see message content.

But as with similar tools on other platforms such as TikTok, the feature is optional, and both kids and parents have to agree to use it. In order to nudge kids toward agreeing to set up the controls, Instagram sends a notice to teens after they block someone, encouraging them to let their parents "supervise" their account. The idea is to grab kids' attention when they might be more open to parental guidance.

By making the feature optional, Meta says it is trying to "balance teen safety and autonomy" as well as prompt conversations between parents and their children.

Such features can be useful for families in which parents are already involved in their child's online life and activities. Experts say that's not the reality for many people.

U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murthy said last year it's unfair to expect parents to manage what their children do with rapidly evolving technology that "fundamentally changes how their kids think about themselves, how they build friendships, how they experience the world — and technology, by the way, that prior generations never had to manage."

Putting all of that on the shoulders of parents, he said, "is just simply not fair."

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TTY-based Telecommunications Relay Service number for persons who are deaf or hearing-impaired is: 711.

Got a news tip?

Call our news/editorial department at (570) 265-2151 or email reviewnews@thedailyreview.com.

PROOF OF INSERTION

Name of Publication: Morning Times

City, State: Sayre, PA

Client/Advertiser: First Energy / Penelec

Insertion Order #: 1675

Date[s] of Insertion: 6/15/24 + 6/18/24

Caption: Rate Hearings

Ad Size: 4 x 13

Total Number of Insertions: 2

My signature verifies that this ad was inserted as scheduled according to the above specifications.

Signature

6/18/24
Date

Ashley Moore.
Name [please print]

OBITUARIES

Paul L. Goble

Paul L. Goble, a cherished father, brother, Pop's and friend, passed away peacefully on June 13, 2024, at the Elderwood at Tioga Nursing Home, Waverly, NY.

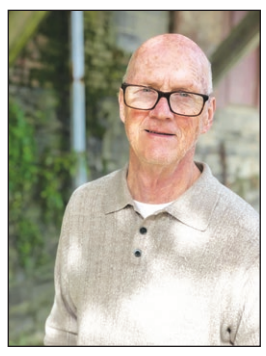
Born on August 13, 1943, in Waverly, Paul's life was a testament to the power of kindness, humor, and hard work.

Paul's journey began as a proud graduate of Waverly High School, where he forged lifelong friendships. His academic pursuits were temporarily set aside when he was called to serve his country in the US Air Force from 1964 to 1968. After his honorable discharge, Paul returned home, where he would later become a dedicated Systems Analyst for IBM Owego and Bank of America.

Beyond his professional endeavors, Paul was a devoted member of the Waverly United Methodist Church. His community was important to him and he played an active role in the preservation of the Waverly Cemeteries, ensuring that the history and memories of the community were honored and maintained.

Paul's love for the outdoors was undeniable. He found solace and joy in the simple pleasures of nature — whether it was a leisurely walk, tending to his home, or enjoying a round of golf. His culinary skills were renowned among family and friends, particularly his apple pie, peanut butter fudge, and pancakes, which were always served with a side of laughter and love.

Family was the cornerstone of Paul's life. He leaves behind a legacy of warmth and guidance through his daughters and sons-in-law, Carrie and Ben Norton, Jennifer and Chris Jacobs, and Kristen and Chris Brewster. His role as "Pops" to his grandchildren, Ada Sleutel, Bowie Sleutel, and Kira Jacobs, was one he embraced with every ounce of affection. Paul's siblings, Stan Goble, Lois Douglas, and Shirley Tyrrell, along with his brother-in-law and sister-in-law, Dan and Rose Eiklor, sister-in-law Lois Gowan, and his favorite "out-law" Shirley Goble, will fondly remember his loving and friendly spirit. Paul was predeceased by his parents, Wilbert and Ruth (Maslin) Goble, and his wife, Leslie "Paula" Goble.



The caring staff at Elderwood Nursing Home held a special place in Pop's heart, as they provided him with comfort and companionship during his final years. His face would light up with a childlike joy at the sight of a jelly-filled donut, a small pleasure that meant the world to him. Paul's great sense of humor and his ability to encourage and cheer on his girls were among his most endearing qualities. He was a man who was always ready to lend a hand, share a joke, and make the most of every moment. His legacy is one of love, friendship, and the simple, yet profound, ability to enjoy life.

Family and friends are invited to attend a graveside service on Saturday, August 3rd at 9 am at the Smithboro Cemetery. Memories and condolences may be shared by visiting his guestbook at www.sutfinfuneralchapel.com Those who wish may kindly consider a memorial contribution to your local Animal Shelter or Lions Camp Badger, 725 Larue Road, Spencer, NY 14883 www.lionscb.org in loving memory of Paul L. Goble. As we bid farewell to our Dad, we celebrate a life beautifully lived and a journey completed with grace. His memory will continue to inspire and comfort those who were fortunate enough to know him.

FUNERALS

Rolfe

Join us to celebrate the life of Cilene Delaney-Rolfe. August 24, 1960 to January 14, 2024.

An incredible wife and best friend and close friend to a lot of people. You were simply the best thing to ever happen to me and thank you for sharing your life with me. My nickname for you was special because you were the most loving and caring person I have ever met. I cherish the time we had together and thank you.

Let's remember this incredible lady by sharing our happiest memories of her on June 15, 2024 from 11 a.m. — 3 p.m. Jim King Memorial Park, East Athens, Pa 18810. Please bring a dish to pass. Please dress casual, Cilene would not want a fancy gathering.

Swetland

It is with deep sadness that we announce the passing of Courtney Shae Swetland.

Courtney passed peacefully on Thursday, January 4, 2024 at Florida Osceola Hospital in Kissimmee, FL.

A Celebration of Life will be held at Round Top Park (Pavilions 7 & 8) in Athens Township, Pa at 2 p.m. on June 22, 2024. Light food and drinks will be provided. Please come as you are (casual attire is ok), and join us as we share stories, memories, and celebrate Courtney with us.

In lieu of flowers, you may wish to send a donation in Josie Mitchell's name to PO Box 482 Fair Haven, NY 13064

We love you so very much, Courtney Shae. You will be missed dearly.

PUBLIC INPUT HEARING NOTIFICATION

For FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company's Rate Increase Request

Docket No. R-2024-3047068

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Graduate Palo Alto (Coaly Ballroom A/B), 125 S Atherton Street, State College, PA 16801

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Butler County Community College (Founders Hall – Parking Lot #6), 107 College Drive, Butler, PA 16002

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Greensburg Garden and Civic Center (Laurel Room & Iris Room), 951 Old Salem Road, Greensburg, PA 15601

Friday, July 12, 2024 at 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Double Tree by Hilton (Junior Ballroom), 340 Racetrack Road, Washington, PA 15301

Requests for Interpreters: If you require an interpreter, please contact Judge Dunderdale's office at (412) 565-3550 or via email at mswarner@pa.gov, as soon as possible. If you contact the office too close to the hearing date, we may not have enough time to arrange for an interpreter. If you request an interpreter, we will make every reasonable effort to have one present.

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Presiding: Administrative Law Judge Katrina L. Dunderdale, **Dates: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 & Wednesday, July 17th, 2024, Times: 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM**

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- The telephone system will connect you to the hearing

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Celebrations

From Page A1

important to recognize that some of those stories are very challenging ones."

Following this, community member Sue Wheeler stated that she agreed with Ben Miller.

Wheeler stated that, despite the fact that she has gay friends, whom she loves, she does not think there should be any pride celebrations, as the county is "not ready for this."

Wheeler further stated that her beliefs align with the bible, as "it is a total abomination" and that the community needs to take a stand.

Ben Miller followed Wheeler in responding to Carter's comment on the higher suicide rate of individuals in the LGBTQIA+ community and agreed, but questioned whether the community is helping this by supporting "what is actually causing the mental health and the suicide rate," and claimed that studies show that, regarding trans individuals, "the rate actually goes up seven years after they transition."

"I would argue that the discrimination and the stigma and the hate that they suffer based on who they are drives them to possible suicide," stated Carter.

Carter further agreed with Wheeler in that some community members are not ready for Pride Month celebrations and said that while organizations were setting up the Pride Month events, "somebody drove down Main Street and blasted a machine gun sound" in order to "intimidate" them.

Gates followed Carter's statement by sharing his personal experiences regarding the subject.

"I lost family during the height of the AIDS crisis, at a time when they were informed that they were not wanted, that they could be marginalized, that they were able to be forgotten, and that a disease that took their life was somehow some just punishment on them," stated Gates. "Not on my watch."

Heat

From Page A1

high 70s to the low 80s.

Additionally, as of Friday afternoon, Wiles noted that there is little chance of a reprieve in the form of pop-up thunderstorms until at least Friday. Fortunately, the humidity is expected to remain relatively low, so the heat index should be close to the actual air temperature.

"Even so, it's going to be hot, and you're not going to want to be in it," he said. "There will probably be heat advisories, and in the Valley and city areas like Elmira, you could see an isolated 100-degree day. "

Wiles explained that the cause of the heat wave is a giant "heat dome" of high pressure that stretches from the middle of the Atlantic Ocean to the east coast, funneling air from the southwest into the northeast and well into Canada.

"Our best chance for a break and some thunderstorms will be Friday, but even then I think we'll see above-average temperatures into the following week," Wiles said. "Thankfully, there will be some recovery at night with lows in the upper 60s to low 70s. But during the early morning and evening hours it will definitely be muggier."

Regardless, residents are reminded to stay hydrated, avoid over-exposure to the sun and heat, and to take proper safety precautions, especially with children, the elderly and pets.

MORNING TIMES
READ IT ONLINE
www.morning-times.com

Preacher's Point: My Take On Global Warming

We installed the window air conditioner in our bedroom last week. I installed the one that goes into the office/living room this morning. We have one more to go; it cools the dining room and kitchen.

Julie and I agree on almost everything except the temperature at which to use an air conditioner. If there is no breeze coming through the house, she would turn an AC on at about seventy degrees; I tend to wait until it reaches above ninety degrees. In a vehicle, I believe in 455 air conditioning — four windows down, fifty-five miles an hour.

However, since Julie had Covid, those window air conditioners get installed earlier each year, but this year caught us by surprise.

The weather in Indiana this year has been nothing short of beautiful. Most days have seen high temperatures in the seventies or low eighties with a constant gentle breeze. Occasionally, the farmers express a desire for more rain. Still, the rain has fallen in just the right amount at the right time. The crops, especially the corn, are a plush green and taller than usual at this time of year. God has been good to us.

Just a week ago, the forecast called for an overnight low of 44. I made a joke on social media about how global warming was keeping us from freezing. A long, sustained heat wave was not on anyone's mind. Then Sunday came.

I woke up Sunday morning to a weather alert — plan for a heat index of over 100. By the end of the day, the weathermen were telling us that this scorching heat would be with us at least through next weekend, warning farmers that drought conditions may develop over the next two to three days. Looking at the extended forecast (through the end of June), the heat is staying for a while. Except for a few days of highs in the upper eighties, everything else is in the nineties. June 30 is currently forecast for a high of 94. How long will the heat run into July? Will there be damage to what seems like a bumper crop in the fall? Will we see the worst-case scenario — a drought that turns into famine? God only knows. God knows because He knows the future. God knows because He is the one who creates and sends us our weather. God knows because He created the universe and the natural laws that operate the things of the universe. God knows because He is the only one who can override nature's laws.

If global warming is a thing, and I am not saying it is or it isn't, God will either cause it Himself or allow us to bring it on. Either way, God is still in charge of the weather.

The Bible talks about the weather a lot.

At times, God uses the weather as punishment. Noah and the ark would be the most obvious illustration, but the Bible describes earthquakes, fire, and brimstone raining down from heaven, storms, drought, and more used as punishment for sin. In the coming seven-year tribulation, we read of God using earthquakes, scorching heat, one-hundred-pound hailstones, and more as judgment upon the world.

Luke 21:25 mentions that "the sea and the waves roaring" are signs of the end times. Could this mean more frequent, immense, and more powerful hurricanes? Are the bigger, stronger hurricanes we experience a result of global warming, or is God simply ramping things up a bit as He promised would happen before His return, or both? Whatever the correct answer is, one thing we can be sure of is that God is still in charge of the weather.

We also see in the Bible that prayer can affect the weather. Samuel, in 1 Samuel 12:16-18, and Elijah in 1 Kings 18:41-45 are only two of several examples.

God also uses the weather to show us the brevity of life and our need for Him. James 1:11, "For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth: so also shall the rich man fade away in his way."

To summarize, my take on global warming is this: God is in control of the weather.

If God allows us to cause global warming, then He must have a reason. We should pray and study the Scriptures to understand His reasoning.

If global warming does not exist, then God is causing the sea, wind, and waves to roar, and we should pray and seek the Scripture to discover why God is doing these things.

God is in control of the weather. Seek Him for the answers to your climate questions.

Preacher Johnson is the Pastor of Countryside Baptist Church in Parke County Indiana. Website: www.preachers-point.com; Email: preacherspoint@gmail.com; Mail: 25 W 1200 N; Kingman IN 47952. Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/Timothy-Preacher-Johnson-101171088326638. All Scripture KJV.

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Lori Emborsky, being duly sworn, deposes and says that

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The publisher of The Times Observer, a daily newspaper published

in the City of Warren, Warren County, State of Pennsylvania,

printed in the City of Jamestown, Chautauqua County, State of New York,

and that a notice of which the annexed is a printed copy, was published in said

newspaper on the following date(s)

June 15, 2024

Signed: Lori Emborsky

Lori Emborsky, Clerk

Signed before me this 17th day of June 2024

Barbara J. Musso

Notary Public

BARBARA J. MUSSO, #01MU4890621
Notary Public, State of New York
Qualified in Chautauqua County
My Commission Expires 3/4/27

Warview 6/18

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June 18, 2024

Signed: Lori Emborsky

Lori Emborsky, Clerk

Signed before me this 19th day of June 2024

Barbara J Musso

Notary Public

BARBARA J. MUSSO, #01MU4890621
Notary Public, State of New York
Qualified in Chautauqua County
My Commission Expires 5/4/27

National & World News

G7 leaders tackle migration, AI and economic security

BARI, Italy (AP) — The Group of Seven leading industrialized nations turned their attention to migration, artificial intelligence, economic security and the Indo-Pacific region on Friday, the second and final day of their summit in Italy. The G7 leaders stressed their determination to meet global challenges "at a crucial moment in history."

The gathering in a luxury resort in Italy's southern Puglia region also discussed other major topics, such as financial support for Ukraine, the war in Gaza, climate change, Iran, the situation in the Red Sea, gender equality and China's industrial policy and economic security.

"We are working together and with others to address the pressing challenges of our time," the G7 leaders said in a final communique, noting their solidarity with Ukraine, support for a deal that would lead to an immediate cease fire and release of hostages in Gaza, investment in sustainable infrastructure in Africa and commitments to address climate change and migration.

Divisions did emerge during the summit, however, notably over the lack of a reference to abortion in the summit's final declaration.

Asked if the G7 gathering has lived up to expectations, French President Emmanuel Macron was circumspect.

"The aim of the G7 is to create convergence and be able to remove misunderstandings. It's not a place where you decide emergency measures or regulate things," he said, adding that there was "true convergences on Ukraine and Mideast."

"It was a useful G7, with useful results," Macron said. "The coming weeks will create the conditions for political opportunities in particular around the two conflicts."

Migration was the first topic of discussions Friday, with the leaders mulling ways to combat trafficking and increase investment in countries from where migrants start out on often life-threatening journeys.

The issue is of particular interest to summit host Italy, which lies on one of the major routes into the European Union for people fleeing war and poverty in Africa, the Middle East and Asia.

Right-wing Italian Premier Giorgia Meloni, known for her hard line stance on migration, has been eager to increase investment and funding for African nations as a means of reducing migratory pressure on Europe.

The leaders "launched the G7 Coalition to prevent and counter the smuggling of migrants," the summit's final declaration said, noting the seven nations would "focus on the root causes of irregular migration, efforts to enhance border management and curb transnational organized crime, and safe and regular pathways for migration."

British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak said he and Meloni - who he described as "fantastic" - saw "eye to eye" on migration.

"We can't have criminal gangs decide who comes to our countries," Sunak said.



AP Photo

From left, European Council President Charles Michel, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, French President Emmanuel Macron, Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, U.S. President Joe Biden, Japan's Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, Britain's Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen stand for a group photo at the G7, Thursday, June 13, 2024, in Borgo Egnazia, Italy.

Meloni has a controversial five-year deal with neighboring Albania for the Balkan country to host thousands of asylum seekers while Italy processes their claims. She has also spearheaded the "Mattei Plan" for Africa, a continent wide strategy to increase economic opportunities at home and so discourage migration.

For its part, Britain has a deal to deport some asylum seekers to Rwanda, although no flights have yet taken off. Human rights organizations have blasted the agreement as unethical and unworkable.

The United States has also been struggling with a growing number of migrants. President Joe Biden introduced new policies to curb migration after a bill he tried to get through Congress failed to pass. However, the future of the new policies is unclear after immigrant rights advocates challenged them with lawsuits.

Apart from the G7 nations of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the U.S., the Italian hosts also invited several African leaders — Algerian President Abdelmadjid Tebboune, Kenyan President William Ruto and Tunisian President Kais Saied — to press Meloni's migration and development initiatives.

But rights groups decried what they said was a lack of ambition in support for developing countries.

The ONE Campaign, which advocates for investment in Africa, said it had found the G7 and EU institutions' share of aid going to Africa was at its lowest point since 1973.

"Without any concrete action, the G7 in Italy amounts to no more than pointless platitudes," said David McNair, executive director at The ONE Campaign. Although the summit's final statement "reflects promises of increased partnership between the G7 and Africa, there are very few specifics on what new financing, if any, will be available."

Pope Francis also became the first pontiff to address a G7 summit, delivering a speech on artificial intelligence. Other invitees include Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

The summit opened Thursday with a strong show of support for Kyiv: an agreement on a U.S. proposal to back a $50 billion loan to Ukraine using frozen Russian assets as collateral.

Russian President Vladimir Putin denounced the freezing of Russian assets as "theft" and vowed it "will not go unpunished."

Biden also signed a bilateral security agreement with Zelenskyy, aiming to send a signal to Russia of American resolve in supporting Kyiv.

But some cracks appeared among the G7 leaders, notably French President Emmanuel Macron deploring a lack of a reference to abortion in the summit's final document.

The statement after last year's summit in Hiroshima, Japan, expressed a commitment to provide access to safe and legal abortion to women and girls, and pledged to defend gender equality and the rights of members of the LGBTQ+ community.

The word "abortion" was absent from this year's final communique, although it included a reference to promoting sexual and reproductive health rights.

"It was not possible to reach agreement on these things in the room," a senior EU official said, speaking on condition of anonymity to reveal details of the private discussions.

Asked on Thursday about reports that abortion would not be included in the final text, Macron said it was something he regretted. France "has included women's right to abortion, the freedom of decision on one's own body, into its Constitution," he said, adding that France defends "this vision of equality between women and men."

"It's not a vision that's shared across all the political spectrum," Macron said, replying to a question from a reporter.

Meloni, who campaigned on a 'God, Family, Fatherland' motto, has denied she is rolling back rights to abortions, which have been legal in Italy since 1978. But the center-left opposition has warned that her initiatives are chipping away at those rights, including by giving pro-life groups access to women considering abortions.

Speaker Johnson says House will go to court for Biden audio

WASHINGTON (AP) — Speaker Mike Johnson said Friday that the House will move in court to enforce the subpoena against Attorney General Merrick Garland for access to President Joe Biden's special counsel audio interview, hours after the Justice Department refused to prosecute Republicans contempt of Congress charge.

"It is sadly predictable that the Biden Administration's Justice Department will not prosecute Garland for defying congressional subpoenas even though the department aggressively prosecuted Steve Bannon and Peter Navarro for the same thing," Johnson said in a statement to The Associated Press. "This is yet another example of the two-tiered system of justice brought to us by the Biden Administration."

In a letter to Johnson earlier Friday, a Justice Department official cited the agency's "longstanding position and uniform practice" not to prosecute officials who don't comply with subpoenas because of a president's claim of executive privilege.

The Democratic president last month asserted executive privilege to block the release of the audio, which the White House says Republicans want only for political purposes. Republicans moved forward with the contempt effort anyway, voting Wednesday to punish Garland for refusing to provide the recording.

Assistant Attorney General Carlos Felipe Uriarte noted that the Justice Department under presidents of both political parties has declined to prosecute in similar circumstances when there has been a claim of executive privilege.

Accordingly, the department "will not bring the congressional contempt citation before a grand jury or take any other action to prosecute the Attorney General," Uriarte said in the letter to Johnson. The letter did not specify who in Justice Department made the decision.

Republicans were incensed when special counsel Robert Hur declined to prosecute Biden over his handling of classified documents and quickly opened an investigation.

Republican lawmakers — led by Reps. Jim Jordan and James Comer — sent a subpoena for audio of Hur's interviews with Biden, but the Justice Department only turned over some of the records, leaving out audio of the interview with the president.

Republicans have accused the White House of suppressing the tape because they say the president is afraid to have voters hear it during an election year.

A spokesperson for Jordan criticized the Justice Department's move Friday, saying, "The rule of law for thee, but not for me."

A transcript of the Hur interview showed Biden struggling to recall some dates and occasionally confusing some details — something longtime aides say he's done for years in both public and private — but otherwise showing deep recall in other areas. Biden and his aides are particularly sensitive to questions about his age. At 81, he's the oldest-ever president, and he's seeking another four-year term.

The attorney general has said the Justice Department has gone to extraordinary lengths to provide information to the lawmakers about Hur's investigation. However, Garland has said releasing the audio could jeopardize future sensitive investigations because witnesses might be less likely to cooperate if they know their interviews might become public.

In a letter last month detailing Biden's decision to assert executive privilege, White House counsel Ed Siskel accused Republicans of seeking the recordings so they can "chop them up" and distort them to attack the president. Executive privilege gives presidents the right to keep information from the courts, Congress and the public to protect the confidentiality of decision making, though it can be challenged in court.

The Justice Department noted that it also declined to prosecute Attorney General Bill Barr, who was held in contempt in 2019. The Democratically controlled House voted to issue a referral against Barr after he refused to turn over documents related to a special counsel investigation into former President Donald Trump.

The Justice Department similarly declined to prosecute former Trump White House chief of staff Mark Meadows after he was held in contempt of Congress for ceasing to cooperate with the Jan. 6 Committee investigating the attack on the U.S. Capitol.

Years before that, then-Attorney General Eric Holder was held in contempt related to the gun-running operation known as Operation Fast and Furious. The Justice Department also took no action against Holder.

Two former Trump White House officials, Peter Navarro and Steve Bannon, were prosecuted for contempt of Congress for defying subpoenas from the Jan. 6 committee. They were both found guilty at trial and sentenced to four months in prison. Navarro has been behind bars since March, and Bannon has been ordered to report to prison by July 1.

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Warren Times Observer 6/15/24

National & World News



AP Photo

A bulldozer unloads the bodies of Palestinians killed in Israeli strikes and turned over by the Israeli military during a mass funeral in Rafah, Gaza Strip, Tuesday, Dec. 26, 2023.

AP investigation shows Palestinian families are being decimated in Gaza

BEIRUT (AP) — To a degree never seen before, Israel's air and ground campaign in Gaza is killing entire Palestinian families.

Entire bloodlines, sometimes four generations from the same family, have perished in single airstrikes or a series of airstrikes on members of the same family sheltering together from the bombs. Often there is no warning.

An Associated Press investigation identified at least 60 Palestinian families where 25 people or more were killed in bombings between October and December. It was the deadliest and most destructive phase of the war, now in its ninth month.

Here are the key takeaways from the AP analysis:

No one left to document the tollSeveral families have almost no one left to document the toll and thousands cannot account for all their dead because so many bodies remain under rubble.

The AP review encompassed casualty records released by Gaza's health ministry until March, online death notices, family and neighborhood social media pages and spreadsheets, witness and survivor accounts, as well as a data from Airwars, a London-based conflict monitor. AP also geolocated and analyzed 10 Israeli strikes, among the deadliest in the war, between Oct. 7 and Dec. 24. Together the strikes killed more than 500 people.

Among the hardest hit are the Mughrabi family: more than 70 were killed in a single Israeli airstrike in December. The Abu Najas: over 50 were killed in October strikes, including at least two pregnant women. The large Doghmush clan lost at least 44 members in a strike on a mosque and the total soared over 100 weeks later; by spring, over 80 members of the Abu al-Qumssan family had been killed.

"The numbers are shocking," said Hussam Abu al-Qumssan.

No warning, no access-Gaza was under siege before the war, but since Oct. 7 Israel and Egypt have totally blocked access for outside reporting teams or independent investigators. Hundreds of local reporters juggled covering the relentless Israeli bombings - 6,000 in the first five days of the war - while running for their own lives and seeking shelter for themselves and their families.

In the first month after Hamas deadly Oct. 7 attack on Israel, which killed about 1,200 people, Gaza's health ministry said 300 Palestinian families lost over 10 members. That's twice as many as during the devastating 51-day war of 2014.

The 10 strikes analyzed by AP mainly hit residential buildings, homes and shelters where parents, children, grandparents were huddled together for safety. In no case was there an obvious military target or direct warning to those inside. The Salem family has lost at least 270 members in all.

At one point the Salems raised a white flag on their building, which was in the midst of a battle zone. They told the army they will not leave because they said nowhere was safe.

Over 170 members of the family were killed in two bombings eight days apart. Three strikes over four weeks killed 30 al-Agha members; and a series of strikes in a refugee camp in December killed 106 people from at least four families. A Dec. 24 attack was the first time Israel admitted "mistakenly" striking next to its intended targets.

In one attack in the crowded Jabaliya refugee camp in northern Gaza, Israeli bombs erased an entire block of buildings. Nearly 40 members of the Abu al-Qumssan family were killed, while the toll for that Oct. 31 attack remains unknown. Unusually, Israel identified a target, saying it went after a senior Hamas commander.

Why it's part of the war crimes and genocide caseIsrael has said it takes measures to mitigate agains t civilian harm. In past conflicts, it often directly warned civilians about to be targeted. But in this war, that method is rarely used, replaced by evacuation orders for entire areas that not everyone can or will obey.

When civilian deaths are involved, the laws of war come down to a question of proportionality, whether the military advantage justifies the destruction.

The world's top court, the International Court of Justice is considering whether Israel is committing genocide against Palestinians in Gaza. The killing of families across generations is a key part of t he case.

Separately, the International Criminal Court prosecutor is seeking arrest warrants for two Israeli leaders for war crimes and crimes against humanity, including for the intentional killing of civilians, as well as for three Hamas leaders over crimes connected to the Oct. 7 attack.

Craig Jones, a lecturer at Newcastle University who studied the role of Israel's military lawyers, said Israel has clearly relaxed its standards for civilian casualties, fueled by anger over the Oct. 7 attacks and domestic politics.

The law of war allows for a "sort of rushed form of warfare" with higher civilian casualties where a military needs to respond quickly and in changing circumstances. But "Israel is just so clearly violating the law because it's pushing the rules so far," he said.

How the deaths affect the Palestinian futureThe deaths of so many Palestinian families will reverberate for generations. Kinship reaches far beyond the nuclear family in Gaza. Compounds, frequently multiple buildings of three stories or more, are occupied by an entire bloodline.

When the Salem family home in northern Gaza was destroyed in 2009, Youssef and his brothers chipped in to rebuild it for their father and uncles. It was damaged again in 2014. Now it is a skeleton, torched from the inside.

Palestinians will remember entire families that have disappeared from their lives, said Ramy Abdu, chairman for the Geneva-based EuroMed Human Rights Monitor, which monitors the Gaza war.

"It is like a whole village or hamlet has been wiped out."

The Washington Post's leaders are taking heat for journalism in Britain that wouldn't fly in the US

NEW YORK (AP) — New leaders of The Washington Post are being haunted by their pasts, with ethical questions raised about their actions as journalists in London that illustrate very different press traditions in the United States and England.

An extraordinary trio of stories over the weekend by The New York Times, NPR and the Post itself outline alleged involvement by Post publisher Will Lewis and Robert Winnett, his choice as a new editor, in wrongdoing involving London publications as much as two decades ago.

The Post said on Monday that it had brought back its former senior managing editor to oversee the newspaper's coverage of the matter.

Lewis took over as publisher earlier this year, with a mandate to turn around the financially-troubled newspaper. He announced a reorganization earlier this month where the Post's executive editor, Sally Buzbee, stepped down rather than accept a demotion.

The coverage revealed Lewis' sensitivity about questions involving his role in a phone hacking scandal that rocked the British press while he was working there. Lewis has maintained that he was brought in by Rupert Murdoch-owned newspapers to cooperate with authorities to clean up after the scandal. Plaintiffs in a civil case have charged him with destroying evidence, which he has denied.

Differences between US and British journalism — some of them bigThe public revelation of phone hacking in 2011 led to the closure of Rupert Murdoch's News of the World tabloid and sparked a public inquiry into press practices that curbed some of the worst excesses.

The British press has long been considered free-wheeling in its pursuit of scoops, willing to tolerate behavior frowned upon by its American counterparts. For example, when Lewis and Winnett worked at The Daily Telegraph in 2009, they cooperated on stories about politicians' extravagant expense-account spending. They paid for data that revealed the spending, a reporting practice that would be considered a substantial ethical breach in the U.S.

The Times reported on Saturday that both Lewis and Winnett worked on stories in the 2000s that appeared to be based on fraudulently obtained phone and business records.

Both the Times and Post reported on a 2002 story article about British politicians who had sought to buy a Mercedes-Benz vehicle described as the "Nazi's favorite limousine," based on information obtained by an actor who had faked a German accent to call a manufacturer who gave it to him.

The Post story delved into Winnett's relationship with John Ford, the actor whose "clandestine efforts" helped uncover stories that included private financial dealings by former Prime Minister Tony Blair. He was allegedly adept in "blagging," in which a person misrepresents themselves to persuade others to reveal confidential information. That's illegal under British law unless it can be shown the actions benefit the public.

Headlined "Incoming Post editor tied to self-described 'thief' who claimed role in his reporting," it was among the newspaper's most popular stories on Monday. Winnett was chosen by Lewis to take over the Post's main newsroom after the presidential election.

It was an unusually harsh story for a news organization to write about its own leadership. In announcing that Cameron Barr, who left his position last year, would supervise the reporting, the Post said that "the publisher has no involvement or influence on our reporting." Other editors, including Buzbee's temporary replacement Matt Murray, will also look over stories produced by the media team.

NPR's story details several of these issues, along with Winnett's supervision — when he worked at the Sunday Times in London — of a reporter, Claire Newell, who was hired as a temporary secretary in the U.K. Cabinet office, giving her access to sensitive documents that made their way back to the newspaper.

Is this an 'unrecoverable' situation for Post leadership?The Post said Lewis declined comment on the stories. Winnett, a deputy editor at the Telegraph in London, did not comment on the three most recent stories, and a message to the newspaper by The Associated Press was not immediately returned on Monday.

Similarly silent: Jeff Bezos, the billionaire owner of the Post, who will ultimately decide whether this is a public relations and internal morale storm that he and the institution can weather.

Not everyone is sure that he can, or should.

"The Washington Post is a great, great, great paper, and its greatness pushes the rest of us in the media world to do a better job," New York Times columnist Nicholas Kristof wrote on X Monday. "Yet its leadership is now taunted in ways that are unrecoverable: time won't heal the injury but let it fester."

Lewis, a former publisher of The Wall Street Journal who is also vice chairman of the board at The Associated Press, has spent the past week trying to assure Post staff members that he understands and will live up to the ethical standards of American journalism.

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Warren Times Observer 6/18/24

Local

Home Again By R.L. McCray

Are you ready for the weather to get even hotter next week?

What a great weekend for CorryFest, though it's going get even hotter next week. I'm seeing 90 degrees for Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. As they say, if you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen.

Blue Lights for **Trooper Jacques Rougeau** is June 16-22, and people are asked to light it up. I'm told that the city building is supposed to be going blue as well. 6 Little Monkeys has blue lights if you need one.

Corry's softball team lost three games this past season, two to Sharon and one to Harbor Creek. Ironically, those two teams played for the District 10 title, and in the western finals. Harbor Creek defeated Sharon 9-6, the same score that the Huskies downed Corry. Congrats to Harbor Creek on its 1-0 win on Thursday.

I read that more Catholic parishes are closing, including Our Lady of the Snows in Panama.

Just learned about the Sherman Hotel Steakhouse & Saloon. I'll have to check it out.

The subject of a Slippery Rock came up at **Gabby Troyer**'s graduation party. **Kay Simmons Black** reminded me it was Slippery Rock College when she attended, and I'm sure what it was when **Rachel, Kelly** and **Vic Cragg** went there.

I see that Warren girls basketball coach **Lisa LaVan** has stepped down after 16 seasons. She guided the Lady Dargons to 268 wins, two this past season over Corry (48-30 and 50-13), plus four District 10 titles including 2021 and 2022.

Candy Marsh-Savko and her husband live in Elkhart, Indiana.

A blast from the past: **Tom Sawyer** and **Barb Seel** were both YMCA state swimming champions, 1967 and 1969, I believe.

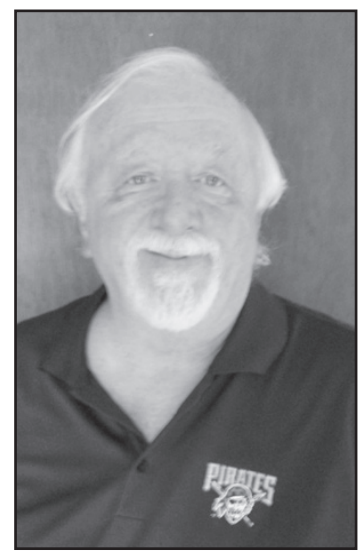
Kudos to **Norm Swart,** Class of 1944, who was recognized for being the oldest male alumnus in attendance, celebrating his 80th high school reunion. The oldest female was **Mary Burrows**, Class of 1946.

Happy birthday tomorrow to **Bonna Oyer, Cody Rose** and **Ken Heacox**; Monday to **Terry Williams** and **Gary Counasse**; and Tuesday to **Scott Crowel**, **Jim Crowther** and **Mickie Clark**.

Happy 37th anniversary to **Jean** and **Ted Cressley**.

Sympathy to **Lanny Fox** on the passing of his brother.

Happy Father's Day to those who still have their dads. For the rest of us, just think about your dad often on Sunday.



Anything to report? Email me at rlmccray@thecorryjournal.com.

Sunset Drive In
Route 97 · Waterford
Inside Out 2 - PG
The Garfield Movie - PG
Friday-Saturday-Sunday
Gates Open at 8:00
Show Starts at Dusk
FLEA MARKET Every Sunday

High orange juice prices loom

BY DEE-ANN DURBIN AND TATIANA POLLASTRI
Associated Press

MOGI GUACU, Brazil (AP) — Orange juice prices have always been volatile and highly dependent on the weather. But the record-high prices the world is seeing for OJ right now may be on the table for a while.

An invasive pest that has been killing Florida's orange trees since 2005 also is spreading in Brazil, the world's largest orange juice exporter. Extreme weather is another factor.

This year's orange harvest in Brazil is likely to be the worst in 36 years due to flooding and drought. Florida's orange production fell 62% last year in the wake of Hurricane Ian.

In the U.S., a 12-ounce can of frozen orange juice concentrate cost 42% more in April than a year earlier

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Presiding: Administrative Law Judge Katrina L. Dunderdale, **Dates: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 & Wednesday, July 17th, 2024, Times: 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM**

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- You must enter a PIN number when instructed to do so, also listed below
- You must speak your name when prompted
- The telephone system will connect you to the hearing

Toll-free Bridge Number: 1.866.675.4411

PIN Number: 23464163

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Historic SS United States is ordered out of its berth in Philly



AP Photo/Jack Harris

The S.S. United States glides down the Hudson River as it begins its first voyage to Europe from New York in this view from Hoboken, N.J., July 3, 1952. On Friday, a federal judge said the historic ship that still holds the transatlantic speed record it set more than 70 years ago must leave its berth in Philadelphia by Sept. 12.

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — The SS United States, a historic ship that still holds the transatlantic speed record it set more than 70 years ago, must leave its berth on the Delaware River in Philadelphia by Sept. 12, a federal judge says.

The decision issued Friday by U.S. District Judge Anita Brody culminated a years-old rent dispute between the conservancy that oversees the 1,000-foot ocean liner and its landlord, Penn Warehousing. It stemmed from an August 2021 decision by Penn Warehousing to double the ship's daily dockage to $1,700, an increase the conservancy refused to accept.

When the conservancy continued to pay its previous rate, set in 2011, Penn Warehousing terminated the lease in March 2022. After much legal wrangling, Brody held a bench trial in January but also encouraged the two sides to reach a settlement instead of leaving it up to her.

The judge ultimately ruled that the conservancy's failure to pay the new rate did not amount to a contract breach or entitle Penn Warehousing to damages. But she also ruled that under Pennsylvania contract law, the berthing agreement is terminable at will with reasonable notice, which Penn Warehousing had issued in March 2022.

"The judge's decision gives us a very limited window to find a new home for the SS United States and raise the resources necessary to move the ship and keep her safe," Susan Gibbs, conservancy president and granddaughter of the ship's designer, told The Philadelphia Inquirer.

Besides finding a new home, the conservancy also must obtain funds for insurance, tugs, surveys and dock preparations for a move.

"The best hope of everyone involved was that the conservancy could successfully repurpose the ship," said Craig Mills, an attorney for Penn Warehousing. "But after decades of decay and delay, it is time to acknowledge the unavoidable and return Pier 82 to productive commercial service."

Christened in 1952, the SS United States was once considered a beacon of American engineering, doubling as a military vessel that could carry thousands of troops. On its maiden voyage in 1952, it shattered the transatlantic speed record in both directions, when it reached an average speed of 36 knots, or just over 41 mph (66 kph), The Associated Press reported from aboard the ship.

On that voyage, the ship crossed the Atlantic in three days, 10 hours and 40 minutes, besting the RMS Queen Mary's time by 10 hours. To this day, the SS United States holds the transatlantic speed record for an ocean liner.

It became a reserve ship in 1969 and later bounced to various private owners who hoped to redevelop it but eventually found their plans to be too expensive or poorly timed.

It has loomed for years on south Philadelphia's Delaware waterfront.

PUBLIC INPUT HEARING NOTIFICATION

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Name of Publication: The Corry Journal

City, State: Corry, PA

Client/Advertiser: First Energy

Insertion Order #: 1677

Date[s] of Insertion: June 15, 2024 & June 18, 2024

Caption: First Energy Notice Rate Hearing - June

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Account : 1214 FIRST ENERGY MEDIA

I, Autumn McDivitt being duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that she is Administrative Assistant of the Daily News, a newspaper of general circulation in Huntingdon, published at Huntingdon, Pennsylvania, daily, and the advertisement attached hereto and made part hereof was published in said newspaper

SATURDAY, JUNE 15 & TUESDAY, JUNE 18, 2024

that the affiant is not interested in any manner in the subject matter of said advertisement, and that all of the allegations contained herein as to the time, place and character of the said publication are true and correct.

Autumn McDivitt

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 18th day of June A.D., 2024.

My commission expires Sarah Snare

Sarah Snare
Prothonotary
Huntingdon County, Pennsylvania
My Commission Expires First Monday 2026

PUBLIC INPUT HEARING NOTIFICATION

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Men really do eat more meat than women, study says

By MELINA WALLING
— Associated Press



Joshua A. Bickel — staff, ASSOCIATED PRESS

A man eats a chicken wing, Wednesday, June 12, 2024, at a barbecue restaurant in Cincinnati. Psychologists have known for years now that men tend to eat more meat than women, but a study of people around the world now reveals that that's true across cultures.

CHICAGO (AP) — Vacationing in Chicago this week from Europe, Jelle den Burger and Nirusa Naguleswaran grabbed a bite at the Dog House Grill: a classic Italian beef sandwich for him, grilled cheese for her.

Both think the way their genders lined up with their food choices was no coincidence. Women, said Naguleswaran, are simply more likely to ditch meat, and to care about how their diet affects the environment and other people.

"I don't want to put it in the wrong way, that male people feel attacked," said Naguleswaran, of Netherlands, laughing. She said she used to love eating meat, but giving it up for climate reasons was more important to her. "We just have it in our nature to care about others."

Now, scientists can say more confidently than ever that gender and meat-eating preferences are linked. A paper out in Scientific Reports this week shows that the difference is nearly universal across cultures — and that it's even more pronounced in countries that are more developed.

Researchers already knew men in some countries ate more meat than women did. And they knew that people in wealthier countries ate more meat overall. But the latest findings suggest that when men and women have the social and financial freedom to make choices about their diets, they diverge from each other even more, with men eating more meat and women eating less.

That's important because about 20% of planet-warming global greenhouse gas emissions come from animal-based food products, according to earlier research from the University of Illinois. The researchers behind the new report think their findings could fine-tune efforts to persuade people to eat less meat and dairy.

"Anything that one could do to reduce meat consumption in men would have a greater impact, on average, than among women," said Christopher Hopwood, a professor of psychology at the University of Zurich and one of the authors of the paper. The work drew on surveys funded by Mercy for Animals, a nonprofit dedicated to ending animal agriculture. Hopwood said he is not affiliated with the organization and is not an advocate.

The researchers asked over 28,000 people in 23 countries on four continents how much of various types of food they ate every day, then calculated the average land animal consumption by gender identity in each country. They used the United Nations Human Development Index, which measures health, education and standard of living, to rank how "developed" each country was, and also looked at the Global Gender Gap Index, a scale of gender equality published by the World Economic Forum.

They found that, with three exceptions — China, India and Indonesia — gender differences in meat consumption were higher in countries with higher development and gender equality scores.

The large number and cultural diversity of people surveyed is "a real strength of this," said Daniel Rosenfeld, a social psychologist at UCLA who studies eating behavior and moral psychology and was not involved in the study.

The study did not answer the question of why men tend to eat more meat, but scientists have some theories. One is that evolutionarily, women may have been hormonally hardwired to avoid meat that could possibly have been contaminated, affecting pregnancy, whereas men may have sought out meat proteins given their history as hunters in some societies.

But even the idea of men as hunters is intertwined with culture, Rosenfeld said. That's a good example of another theory, which is that societal norms shape gender identity from an early age and thus how people decide to fill their plates.

Rosenfeld, who said he stopped eating meat about 10 years ago, said his own experience hanging out in college "as a guy hanging out with other guy friends" illustrated the cultural pressure for men to eat meat. "If they're all eating meats and I decide not to," he said, "it can disrupt the natural flow of social situations."

The same cultural factors that shape gender influence how people respond to new information, said Carolyn Semmler, a professor of psychology at the University of Adelaide in Australia who also studies meat eating and social factors like gender. Semmler was not involved in this study. In some of her past work, she's studied cognitive dissonance around eating meat.

In those cases, she said women presented with information about poor animal welfare in the livestock industry were more likely to say they would reduce their meat consumption. But men tended to go the other direction, she said.

"One participant said to me, 'I think you guys are trying to get me to eat less meat, so I'm going to eat more,'" she said.

Semmler said meat can be important to masculine identity, noting for example the popular notion of men at the grill. And she said presenting eating less meat as a moral cause can be a sensitive issue. Still, she said, people should be aware of how their food choices affect the planet.

But she and Hopwood acknowledged how difficult it is to change behavior.

"Men are a tough nut to crack," Hopwood said.

Jose Lopez, another diner at the Dog House Grill, said he thought men should eat less meat but said that in general he has observed otherwise.

"We're carnivores. Men eat like savages," he said.

This story was first published on Jun. 13, 2024. It was updated on Jun. 14, 2024 to correct the name of the academic journal in which the study was published to Scientific Reports.

Follow Melina Walling on X: @MelinaWalling.

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Stephen Smith — staff, ASSOCIATED PRESS

Bradley Waddle, left, stands with Stefani De Palma at Emeril's restaurant in New Orleans, Thursday, June 13, 2024. De Palma is the head chef and Waddle is the commis chef for Team USA at the Bocuse d'Or Americas culinary competition in New Orleans this week.

You don't think corn dogs are haute cuisine?

By STEPHEN SMITH and KEVIN McGILL
— Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Stefani De Palma, an award-winning chef and head of the a team vying to represent the Americas in a French culinary competition in January, knew she wanted her team's work to feature flavors of her native California.

The challenge at the Bocuse d'Or Americas competition this week in New Orleans was to also incorporate regional ingredients from the host city — specifically wild boar, alligator sausage, grits and Gulf of Mexico seafood.

Among the results: a corn dog.

"We were really excited to hear that we would be using alligator sausage. And, so, Bradley said, 'We have to do a corn dog,' " De Palma said Thursday as she sat next to Bradley Waddle, the commis chef on Team USA. "So, I'm like, 'Show me a refined corn dog and let's work through it.' "

Their corn dog features alligator boudin battered in a mixture using buttermilk, ground grits and corn meal.

There's also what DePalma called a "California Celebration of Louisiana shellfish."

"We incorporated beautiful tomatoes, corn, squash, squash blossoms. So, really, really fun things that really spoke to just the bounty of California," she said during an Associated Press interview at Emeril's, the namesake restaurant of celebrity chef Emeril Lagasse.

De Palma, 35, gained culinary fame working for Chef William Bradley at Addison in San Diego. She joined the restaurant's staff in 2008, worked her way up to Chef de Cuisine in 2016 and was part of the team that earned Addison the top honor — three stars — in the Michelin Guide in 2022. She left to head Team USA, the third woman to lead the team since Bocuse d'Or was begun in 1987.

Waddle, 22 and also a California native, said he has been cooking since he was 9. He started working in restaurants at 16 and nabbed a job with California restaurateur and chef Thomas Keller in 2021.

"I moved to England shortly after to work in a Michelin star restaurant on the Southwest coast," he said. "And then through some connections I had from Thomas Keller's restaurant group I was put in contact with Stefani for the competition."

They have been training for the competition at the Culinary Institute of America in Napa, California.

Nine nations from North and South America are represented in the competition. Five teams will advance to the finals in Lyon, France, in January.

Both chefs expressed gratitude at being able to represent the U.S. in the competition with some of the world's finest chefs. And they were appreciative of the New Orleans experience.

"To me, New Orleans is just soul," De Palma said. "It's people cooking with love and from their hearts and so much strong, bold flavor .... We were really fortunate to work with beautiful ingredients that New Orleans provided."

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Greensburg Garden and Civic Center (Laurel Room & Iris Room), 951 Old Salem Road, Greensburg, PA 15601

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Presiding: Administrative Law Judge Katrina L. Dunderdale, **Dates: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 & Wednesday, July 17th, 2024, Times: 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM**

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Letters to the Editor

A problem we're able to work toward solving

Editor
The Daily News
Dear Editor,

In an unsurprising move, state Rep. Rich Irvin once again stood in the way of a productive school day by casting a vote against HB 851. Once again, the Commonwealth will benefit despite his vote, as the measure passed with no small amount of bipartisan support. The measure, if enacted into law, would create a grant program to allow schools to provide free access to menstrual products for students who need them.

I am quite certain that accounting for students' basic needs during the school day is well within the mandate of our public education system. A student not in class due to something as common as a menstrual issue is well within our ability as a Commonwealth to solve for. While my opponent may object to the funding, the House isn't solving the existing overall funding system that was declared unconstitutional well over a year ago.

My opponent is also ostensibly concerned with the lack of definition of a "female" in the bill. Indeed, there are no references at all to gender in the bill's text, because the issue at hand is who is in need of the products, not the gender with which they identify. Scoring a cultural point at the expense of our students is unwarranted and unhelpful.

While a visit to the nurse's office might have sufficed in the past, we needn't take so much time from the already packed school day when we can solve the problem both more quickly and more easily. If my opponent is concerned about spending taxpayer money to do this, I have to wonder how he feels everything else is paid for in a public school. With "period poverty" affecting up to 40% of people who menstruate, and disproportionately affecting disadvantaged communities, this is a problem that we as a Commonwealth are able to work toward solving.

Respectfully
Sean Steeg
CEO, Juniata Brewing Co.
Candidate for State House, District 81

Thank you, Coach Lucko

Editor
The Daily News
Dear Editor:

On behalf of Huntingdon County Military Share Food Program, I would like to personally thank Huntingdon Area High School Bearcats football coach Tim Lucko and his players for volunteering each month to help feed our local military families. The monthly food distribution could not have been successful without your help and the help of the fine young men who play football.

Tim, we appreciate your support in promoting volunteerism in our young adults.

We once again thank you and your team for volunteering their services to our program and our community. We highly appreciate everyone's time and we wish everyone the best of luck for the future and a successful upcoming season.

With gratitude
Reeder Swartz
Huntingdon County Military Share Food Program

Op-Ed

If not now, when?

By JOHN THOMAS

Twenty years ago I was a young man in my early 60s, newly retired from a career as a teacher in the Milton Area School District where I taught music for 33 years.

Today I'm a little bit older, and I'm not as fast as I used to be. My expenses have sure gone up. But you know what's remained the same over all these years?

My pension retirement income.

That's because the Pennsylvania Legislature has not approved a cost-of-living pension adjustment for retired public school teachers and support staff since 2002.

That was five years before the first iPhone hit the market. Netflix was still sending people DVDs in the mail. It was a long time ago.

And I don't have to tell you that the costs of everything from gasoline to housing to groceries and medications have gone up precipitously since then.

Now keep in mind that our state legislators have voted to give themselves automatic cost-of-living increases in their salaries each and every year. But for the hardworking educators, paraprofessionals, secretaries, bus drivers and countless others who dedicated our lives to public education, we have to go begging, hat in hand.

As a retired teacher, it is disappointing. For decades, we were there every day for the students of Pennsylvania, helping them to learn, grow and succeed. Nine months out of the year, educators like me routinely worked 60 hours or more a week. We spent all day teaching students, then we helped out with after-school activities. In the evenings and on the weekends, we were busy prepping lessons and grading tests. We supported our communities and went the extra mile for our students.

But some lawmakers in Harrisburg don't care about that. They tell us a cost-of-living adjustment for retired teachers and other public workers is out of the question.

Here's what I want those lawmakers to know. Those of us who retired prior to 2001 receive smaller pensions than those who retired since then. That's because Act 9 of 2001 increased the pension multiplier for active members but not those of us who were already retired.

So we started off with smaller pensions than more recent retirees. Add to that more than 20 years without any cost-of-living increase, mix in a lot of inflation, and you have a crisis on your hands.

According to the Pennsylvania State Education Association (PSEA), pre-Act 9 retirees are, on average, 84 years old, with pensions that are less than $20,000 a year. From 2002 until today, the cost of food has increased 88%, the cost of housing has gone up 85%, and the cost of medical care has gone up 111%.

It is unconscionable that Pennsylvania's elected officials have let it go this far. The good news is that there is growing momentum in Harrisburg to do the right thing for our public school retirees.

In October, the Pennsylvania House of Representatives approved a cost-of-living adjustment for those of us who retired before the passage of Act 9 — the ones getting the smallest pensions. The bill passed with broad bipartisan support.

Advocates like me and PSEA are working to convince lawmakers, especially our state senators, to make a pre-Act 9 cost-of-living adjustment part of the final 2024-25 state budget that gets enacted later this summer. That's when important initiatives like this get done.

We are not asking for anything that wasn't provided to prior generations. Between 1968 and 2002, the General Assembly passed cost-of-living legislation every four or five years for retired public school employees and state workers. We had every reason to think the same would happen for us in retirement.

Instead, over the past 20-some years, we've been told to make do with less and less. With each passing year, it gets increasingly difficult for us to pay our bills. Nobody should have to choose between buying groceries or medicine, especially our retired school teachers and support staff.

We gave our lives to our schools and communities, and we expected to live out our golden years quietly and with dignity. But now in our 80s and 90s, we find our income is falling short.

It is long past time for state policymakers to restore the promise of a secure retirement to our retired public servants. If not now, when?

John Thomas is a retired music teacher in the Milton Area School District where he taught music for 33 years.

PUBLIC INPUT HEARING NOTIFICATION

For FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company's Rate Increase Request

Docket No. R-2024-3047068

The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC) will conduct 18 Public Input Hearings concerning FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company's request filed on April 2, 2024, to increase electric rates by $502 million per year. The Commission will conduct a series of Public Input Hearings, totaling eighteen (18) in total, with fourteen (14) Public Input Hearings to be conducted in-person at seven (7) different locations within the territory of FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company. An additional four (4) Public Input Hearings will be conducted by telephone using the Commission's conference bridge technology.

Different processes will be used for the in-person hearings than will be used to the telephonic hearings. Individuals wishing to testify at either the in-person or telephonic hearings will only be permitted once. Time limitations may apply to how long individuals may testify, if a large number of other individuals wish to testify at the same session.

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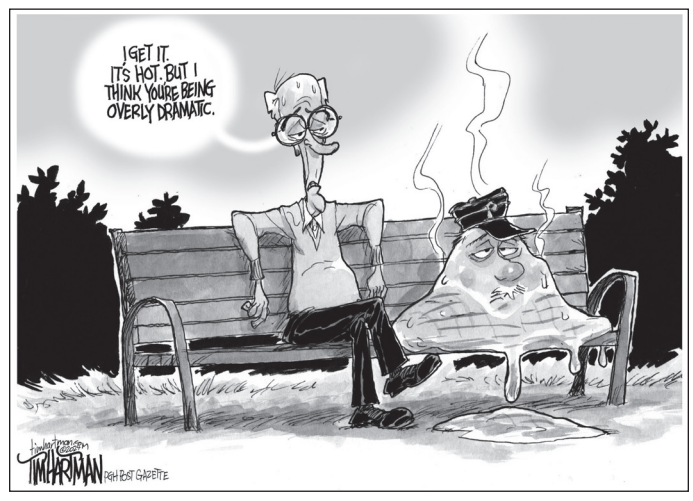
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Address Letters to the Editor to:

The Daily News

Attention: Editor
P.O. Box 384
Huntingdon, PA 16652

Letters must be signed and should include a daytime phone number

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:

June 16 & 18, 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.

Sworn to and subscribed before me the 18 day of June, 2024.

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

House OKs driving bills

Measures would improve access

By Robert Swift
Capitolwire.com

HARRISBURG — A House committee approved two bills Monday to make it easier for two groups of individuals to drive legally.

The Transportation Committee voted unanimously for House Bill 127 sponsored by Rep. Ryan Bizzarro, D-Erie, to waive the state fee for homeless youth to obtain a driver's license. HB127 would apply to youth enrolled in an education program and allow them to use a shelter or temporary address for that purpose. Under the bill, a teacher, social worker or youth caseworkers would sign a certification saying the individual has completed 65 hours of driving experience.

The bill would help more than 40,000 students identified by the state Education Department as homeless in Pennsylvania, said Bizzarro.

Also approved unanimously was House Bill 1359 sponsored by Rep. Paul Schemel, R-Franklin, to allow members of a military family to transfer their driving hours under an out-of-state driver learner's permit toward obtaining a Pennsylvania learner's permit.

Military families can move every two or three years on average and this can play havoc with members trying to get the necessary driving hours for a state permit, said Schemel.

The panel voted unanimously for House Bill 2364 sponsored by Rep. Joshua Siegel, D-Lehigh, to provide for a $50 refund of the state fee needed to take the Pennsylvania Motorcycle Safety Program if that person completes that training.

Siegel said providing the refund will give students an incentive to complete the program. There's been a trend with students registering for the class and not showing up, he added.

The panel unanimously voted forHouse Bill 2391 sponsored by Committee Majority Chair Ed Neilson, D-Philadelphia, to create a State Safety Oversight Office with inspection duties for public transportation systems under statute. The office has existed since 1991, but it's not codified in law.

Neilson said Pennsylvania faces an Oct. 24 deadline to codify this office or face the loss of federal transportation funds. He said a similar bill will move in the Senate.

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*Offer expires on July 5, 2024.

RULING: School board to review, discuss options

(Continued from Page A1)

"The court conducted a complete review of the case and came to the right conclusion," Lewis said. "We are pleased with the decision and hope this resolves the matter."

Altoona attorney Jennifer Dambeck, who represented the school district during the June 12 court hearing, declined to comment on the ruling.

"The school board will review it and discuss options during an executive session," Dambeck said Friday.

The board's options could include appealing to Commonwealth Court, allowing the ruling to stand or taking some other action.

In the conclusionary portion of his ruling, Consiglio stated: "...this opinion and order does not prohibit the district from enacting and enforcing any policy it seeks to adopt in order to protect students from being exposed to sexually graphic, obscene content in the schools ..."

At the June 12 court hearing, when the district took the position that allowing the arbitrator's ruling to stand would present a risk of future similar actions, Marshall disagreed and pointed out that the district still retains policy-making authority over conduct and activities within the district.

Court documents indicate that Stouffer purchased the novel "Gender Queer" by Maia Kobabe for an educational training program on controversial books in which she was enrolled. She took the book into her junior high school classroom in September and October 2022, where she reportedly had it on her desk for about 15 days.

Controversy developed after the district administration received a call from a concerned parent on Oct. 28, 2022, about the book.

In his review of the case, Consiglio acknowledged that the case offered no evidence that Stouffer taught using the book, read the book to students or that any student had read the book or viewed its content.

The judge also recognized the district's position — that leaving the book in plain view of 12- and 13-year-old students demonstrated poor professional judgment — and added his own belief while spelling out the reasons behind his ruling.

"In short, while the court can fathom no legitimate reason for a teacher to bring any material containing sexually graphic content into a seventh grade classroom, it is simply not within its authority to vacate the arbitrator's award," the judge said.

EDITOR: Rudel to help manage Mirror initiatives

(Continued from Page A1)

He served as associate sports editor from 1983-2002 and sports editor from 2002-06 before being named managing editor in January 2006.

In addition to Penn State coverage, he will continue to help manage the Mirror's community initiatives (20 Under 40, Athlete of the Year, Mirror Basketball Classic) along with providing other stories and commentaries as warranted.

Rudel, 67, is the president of the Blair County Sports Hall of Fame and a member of the Altoona Rotary Club.

He graduated from Westmont Hilltop High School in 1974 and Penn State in 1978.

"We have a number of people who have spent their careers here that are near or beyond traditional retirement age," Slep said. "Newspaper work is in your blood, so many like to remain involved, and the Mirror is better for it. Neil has many relationships in the community, and we're very glad he'll still be part of the Mirror family."


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Altoona council hires consultant

Adviser to aid with manager search, community development

By William Kibler
bkibler@altoonamirror.com

City Council recently hired a consultant to help with the search for a permanent city manager, with rebuilding the Community Development Department and with putting into practice a community development plan the consultant drew up for the city in 2018.

Strategic Solutions LLC of Pittsburgh would be paid based on hours worked, according to Mayor Matt Pacifico.

The search for a permanent manager is currently in a "holding pattern," but that's OK for now, because replacements have been doing a good job, according to Pacifico.

"There's no big rush," he said.

When the last permanent manager, Omar Strohm, retired at the beginning of the year, Police Chief Joe Merrill became interim manager, until he asked to return to his preferred regular job.

Public Works Director Nate Kissell is now interim manager, and his regular job is being handled by Rob Crossman, who is in charge of engineering and buildings; and Kevin Bechtel, who is in charge of operations, Pacifico said.

The Community Development Department is in need of being rebuilt because of jobs eliminated in early 2021, in an effort to avoid raising taxes after COVID-related revenue losses.

That rebuilding effort could include creation of an executive director position for the Redevelopment Authority, which, coupled with the new Land Bank, is seeking to return to its activist role of generations ago.

It may also include adding positions to ensure that individuals and companies bringing development proposals to the city can get those proposals handled expeditiously, according to Ellis.

The community development plan, created by the consultant under the leadership of then-City Manager Marla Marcinko, was never implemented, after Marcinko left to become manager of Sewickley Borough, said City Councilman Dave Ellis.

Putting the plan into practice in a way that would make sense nowadays would mesh with the proposed reconstitution of the Community Development Department, according to officials.

The original consultant's plan included proposed changes to the zoning and subdivision and land development ordinances, Ellis said.

Those are now under contract to be revised by another consultant, czb, which recently completed a new comprehensive plan for the city.

There's a common theme for most of the consultant's proposed work, according to Ellis.

"The driving force for hiring Strategic Solutions is to improve and streamline how development and redevelopment (is handled by the city)," and to ensure it's being done efficiently, Ellis said.

Law enforcement service scheduled

Memorial to be held June 20

The Blair County Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Foundation Inc. will host a memorial service at 6 p.m. Thursday, June 20, at the memorial site in front of the Blair County Courthouse.

The Law Enforcement Memorial Service is held each year to honor officers who gave their life protecting others.

The public is invited to the service, which will be held rain or shine.

The Blair County Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Foundation Inc. was created after the line-of-duty death of Blair Township Patrolman Ronald J. Turek in March 1985.

According to online records, 26-year-old Turek was shot and killed after responding to a domestic dispute on Swinging Bridge Road. While on the scene, a chase ensued and Turek attempted to prevent the suspect from entering the house, where it was known the suspect had several weapons. The man then pulled out a concealed handgun and shot and killed Turek and wounded another officer. The wounded officer was able to return fire and killed the suspect.

Turek had been with the Blair Township Police Department for three years.

Suspect accused in killing sought

Anyone with information asked to contact Johnstown police


Bermudez

From Mirror staff reports

The Johnstown Police Department is seeking the whereabouts of 47-year-old Phillip E. Bermudez, who has been accused in the death of a man found with an arrow wound to his heart.

According to the Cambria County District Attorney's Office, Johnstown police were dispatched Sunday to the 1100 block of Bedford Street for a report of injuries caused by an arrow. At the scene, police found a wounded Alfredo Cabrera-Merced, 53. He was transported to Conemaugh Memorial Medical Center and was pronounced dead at 8:15 p.m. in the Emergency Room.

An autopsy by ForensixDx and Coroner Jeff Lees on Monday determined Cabrera-Merced died due to massive blood loss. The death was ruled a homicide.

During the investigation, the state police bomb squad was called the scene after grenade-like objects were found. The objects were not charged explosives and the scene was cleared, according to a press release.

During a search of the residence, police recovered multiple devices capable of discharging projectiles.

Based on the investigation, the incident is believed to be a family dispute that turned violent, a press release stated.

Bermudez has been charged with murder of the first degree, aggravated assault and recklessly endangering another person.

The investigation is ongoing and the case remains inactive as police seek Bermudez's whereabouts.

Anyone with information is asked to contact the Cambria County 911 center at 814-472-2100 or Johnstown police at 814-421-2100.

Winners announced for Miss PA contests

Page Weinstein, Miss Greater Pittsburgh, was crowned Miss Pennsylvania 2024, presented by the J. William Warehime Foundation, at the Appell Center for the Performing Arts June 15. Weinstein, 26, of Pittsburgh, is a flight attendant and training for her private pilot's license. She also won the Kevin J. McAleese Community Impact Award and a Preliminary Talent Award. Weinstein performed a dance and baton routine as her talent, and she advocated for her community service initiative "Promoting the Ability in Disability." Moore received a $12,000 scholarship for winning Miss Pennsylvania, a $3,000 in scholarships for her additional awards. She will compete at the 103rd Miss America Competition.

Runners-up include: first runner-up – Abby Traxler, Miss Central Pennsylvania, winner of Friday's Preliminary Eveningwear Award; second runner-up – Victoria Vespico, Miss Wilkes-Barre/Scranton; third runner-up – Finley Miller, Miss Greater Juniata Valley – winner of Thursday's Preliminary Eveningwear Award and the James Deimler Memorial Overall Eveningwear Award; and fourth runner-up – Madelyn Rowan, Miss Berks County – winner of Friday's Preliminary Talent Award and the Frank Gillespie Miss PA Scholarship of Lehigh Valley Community Foundation.

A Cambria County woman, Kailee St. Pierre, competed as Miss Moraine State.

Arianna Spurlin, Miss Wilkes-Barre/Scranton's Teen, was crowned Miss Pennsylvania's Teen on Friday. Arianna, 17, is the daughter of Dave and Amanda Spurlin of Dallas, Pa. She performed Tap Dance as her talent, and she advocated for her community service initiative "Unshakeable: Parkinson's Disease Awareness, Advocacy." Arianna received an $8,000 scholarship for winning Miss Pennsylvania's Teen.

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AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

Kathy Alexander
Not specified
154 E Aurora RD # 174
Northfield OH 44067-2053

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The Tri-County Independent, a daily newspaper printed and published in the city of Honesdale, and of general circulation in the Counties of Wayne, Pike and Lackawanna, State of Pennsylvania; that the publication, a copy of which is attached hereto, was published in said newspaper in the issues dated:

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NEWS

Accountability sought after RI assault

Authorities: Investigation at nursing home ongoing

Antonia Noori Farzan
Providence Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK



A woman was told her mother, who suffers from dementia, was assaulted at Hebert Nursing Home in Smithfield, R.I. KRIS CRAIG/PROVIDENCE JOURNAL

PROVIDENCE, R.I. – Like many elderly people who suffer from severe dementia, Sandra Balay's mother has a tendency to wander.

Within a month or two of arriving at Hebert Nursing Home, she'd started to roam in and out of other residents' rooms. The Rhode Island facility suggested moving her to a locked unit where she'd be much safer, Balay said.

Then, one snowy afternoon this February, Balay got a call. There'd been an incident, the voice on the other end of the line said.

A nurse had discovered Balay's 78-year-old mother behind the privacy curtain in another resident's room. The man had his pants down. He was touching her mother's exposed breasts.

"I just went numb," Balay told the Providence Journal.

From the police report, Balay learned that the alleged perpetrator didn't suffer from dementia, yet was housed in the same secure unit as vulnerable dementia patients like her mother. He had a history of inappropriately touching nurses and making sexual comments to them, which should have been a red flag.

Yet months later, neither the nursing home nor the alleged perpetrator have faced any consequences for the Feb. 13 incident. Balay, who ultimately moved her mother to another facility, is still searching for accountability.

"I don't want this to happen to anyone ever again," she said.

As the Providence Journal highlighted in an investigation earlier this year, it's not uncommon for nursing home residents to sexually abuse or assault other residents.

And, as Balay's experience demonstrates, those incidents don't necessarily lead to repercussions for the perpetrator or the facility.

As soon as she learned that her mother was sexually assaulted, Balay filed a complaint with the Rhode Island Department of Health, which sent a surveyor to investigate the nursing home. Weeks later, after repeatedly inquiring about the status of that report, she received a letter saying that the facility would not be penalized.

"Upon completion of this investigation, it was determined that the facility had not been in compliance with the appropriate state and/or federal regulations," stated the letter, which Balay shared. "However, since the facility had taken appropriate corrective action, no deficiencies were cited."

That was difficult for Balay to swallow: In her view, Hebert was "completely negligent."

She was shocked that her mother, who was supposed to be safe in the secure unit, had been left unsupervised for so long that she'd wandered into the alleged perpetrator's room.

Hebert "knew this man was a danger," she said, since he'd behaved inappropriately toward the staff.

The Providence Journal is not naming Balay's mother because she is a victim of sexual assault, and is not naming the alleged perpetrator because he has not yet been charged with a crime.

Balay also questioned why the alleged perpetrator was housed in a secure unit alongside residents with dementia when he didn't suffer from the disease himself.

While the exact details of his condition haven't been made public, it's become increasingly common for nursing homes to accept patients who suffer from psychiatric issues and substance-use disorders. Balay witnessed that shift over the nearly five years that her mother lived at Hebert, noticing during her frequent visits that a growing number of residents were younger men.

Since her mother was receiving good care, she didn't see any reason to move her to a different facility.

But after her mother was sexually assaulted, she was filled with guilt – and anger. In her view, the nursing home clearly wasn't equipped to treat severely mentally ill patients.

"Clearly, a nurse working in a nursing home is not a psych nurse," she said.

At the very least, she said, there "absolutely" should have been more supervision.

Hebert's administrator, Linda Wheeler, did not respond to phone calls seeking comment.

Department of Health spokesman Joseph Wendelken said that some Rhode Island nursing homes have units that are reserved exclusively for patients with dementia, Alzheimer's disease or similar disorders – but Hebert isn't among them.

"This unit at Hebert is a secure unit, but it is not a dementia-exclusive unit," he wrote in an email.

Additionally, he said, residents "do have the ability to move about freely" in that setting – which is why the facility wasn't cited for a deficiency.

"For example, residents walk between their rooms and dining rooms and activity rooms, and they can visit other residents," Wendelken wrote. "There is no expectation or requirement for facilities to be providing one-to-one supervision when all this is happening."

Balay said that she understands that the locked unit isn't designed to be a prison. That's exactly why people with severe mental illnesses shouldn't be mixed together with patients with severe dementia, she said.

"You're doing these people no justice by putting them in a nursing home that's not the right fit for them," she said. "They need more rehabilitation."

Balay said that she wanted the alleged perpetrator removed from Hebert after the incident, but Wheeler said they had to take him back after he underwent a psychiatric evaluation.

Federal regulations limit nursing homes' ability to discharge patients against their will, although they can do so when a resident is endangering the health and safety of others.

What happened instead, Balay said, was that the man was moved to a less-secure unit. That didn't give her much comfort, since he was now free to roam the entire building – including the shared dining room and activity spaces that her mother used.

Her mother couldn't fully comprehend the fact that she'd been sexually assaulted. Left to shoulder the burden of that knowledge herself, Balay started to feel almost as if she were the one who had been violated.

"It's a living nightmare," she said.

Balay said she wants someone to be held accountable, but she's not sure that she wants the alleged perpetrator to face charges.

"That's a tough question," she said.

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Snapchat

Continued from Page 1A

gives prosecutors a decisive weapon. They also say the public should be aware that even presumed private conversations on social media may be monitored by law enforcement with court orders.

'Gang Members Only' group

Bell was one of several Boston-area gang members whom agents found sharing snaps of guns on a group titled "Gang Members Only," according to court filings in the U.S. District Court of Massachusetts.

All were under court supervision, and were either previously convicted on gun charges or had pending firearm offenses, according to the U.S. Attorney's sentencing memorandum.

Bell, a member of a group calling itself the Heath Street gang, posted videos of himself with a black semiautomatic Glock 9mm pistol.

Investigators linked him to an account named "jurassic_trot" based on selfies he shared, court documents say. One of his snaps included a post to a rival gang's chat of him racking the Glock in a mall bathroom, according to court papers. Bell was under house arrest but got permission to leave home to attend his son's birthday party. Investigators traced the gun and linked it to Bell through the snaps.

The U.S. District of Massachusetts has successfully brought gun charges against other gang members who posted to the same Gang Members Only Snapchat group, according to court documents:

- Freily Cabral, 25, pleaded guilty in August 2023 to illegally possessing firearms after the D Street gang member was identified posting pictures of himself with five firearms on Snapchat.
- Dumari Shakur Scarlett-Dixon, also a Heath Street gang member, was sentenced to over two years in prison and three years of supervised release in April. The 22-year-old pleaded guilty to being an unlawful drug user in possession of a firearm and ammunition he posed with on Snapchat.
- Dane Mitchell, 32, was sentenced to seven years in prison and three years of supervised release in March for illegally possessing a firearm with a defaced serial number. Mitchell regularly posted snaps of himself with guns.

Around the country, law enforcement has begun conducting searches of Snapchat and other social accounts to aid in bringing charges.

In Davenport, Iowa, investigators sentenced a man to nearly four years in prison for illegal possession of a AR-15 rifle they discovered in reviewing his Snapchat account, according to the Southern District of Iowa U.S. Attorney's Office. One snap showed Davante Shamod Howard, 24, threatening to shoot people.

Hector Reyes Jr., 20, was sent to prison for obstructing justice after uploading a message from a Gulf Cartel member to Snapchat warning a federal agent not to testify against him, according to the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Texas.

Snapchat video helped Minnesota law enforcement connect James William Turner to the murder of an 11-year-old, according to the Department of Justice. The video shows the 44-year-old speaking angrily outside the child's house and in possession of an AR-15 minutes prior to the shooting.

Requests for information

The number of law enforcement requests for snap data has grown by nearly 3,000% since the company, which has hundreds of millions of users, began releasing transparency reports.

The first report, covering January to June 2015, showed 762 requests for snap data from U.S. law enforcement, plus 75 requests from 12 other countries. The most recent report, covering July to December 2023, showed 22,326 requests for data in the U.S. and 20,000 requests from outside.

Around 60% of data is requested via search warrant and 26% is obtained via subpoena. About 80% of requests were honored. Company transparency reports also show dozens of requests for wiretaps from government agencies.

Experts say the social media content gives prosecutors a decisive weapon. They also say the public should be aware that even presumed private conversations on social media may be monitored by law enforcement with court orders.

Snapchat says it deletes snaps as soon as they are viewed, though data including the date, time, sender and receiver are preserved for 30 days or more.

The pitfalls of being friendly

Cops can learn a lot when criminals accept their friend requests.

Federal agents in Minnesota broke up a "social media-based machine gun distribution ring" in a sting operation that involved an agent going undercover to interact with criminals on Snapchat, Justice officials said.

The trio posted about firearms and controlled substances to a group called "BLICCS&STICCS3," according to the U.S. attorney's office in Minnesota. The videos showed the group was selling devices to turn pistols or rifles into fully automatic machine guns. The group was charged after members tried selling the switch devices to an undercover agent who posted snaps of himself with a prop firearm, federal prosecutors said.

The men were identified in federal court papers as Rafael Carter Wesley, 19; Kyrees Darious Johnson, 22; and Avont Akira Drayton, 21.

Gangs use Facebook, too

Snapchat isn't the only platform law enforcement is watching. Justice Department news releases show investigators also look for illegal guns on Instagram and Facebook, typically on live video. As with snaps, such videos have a short life span and often give users a sense of security that their communications will soon disappear into the ether.

The Massachusetts U.S. Attorney's Office has prosecuted several other criminals through such social media activity. Ernest "Yo Pesci" Johnson was sentenced to more than eight years in prison for illegal possession of a firearm in February 2023. Vincent "Fatz" Caruso, leader of the Crips gang, was sentenced to over 20 years in prison in 2022 for crimes including possession of a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime, according to the U.S. attorney's office.

"Mr. Johnson brazenly flaunted his arsenal through livestream videos," acting U.S. Attorney Joshua S. Levy said of Yo Pesci. "His days as a social media influencer for criminal enterprises have ended."

Caruso had a penchant for Snapchat and took snaps of himself handling a machine gun with Johnson "looking on approvingly," according to court documents. In another video, Fatz handles tens of thousands of fentanyl pills.

"You won't be hearing from them on Instagram for a long long time," Levy said of Caruso and another convicted co-conspirator.

As with Snapchat, transparency reports from Meta, the parent company of Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp, chart a tremendous increase in law enforcement requests since 2013.

The company received 25,600 requests for data from January-June 2013; 41,200 requests during the same six-month period as Snapchat's first report; and 301,553 requests in its July-December 2023 report, including 73,400 from inside the U.S. Meta granted 78% of requests.

A spokesperson for Meta said the company "responds to government requests for data in accordance with applicable law and our terms of service. Each and every request we receive is carefully reviewed for legal sufficiency and we may reject or require greater specificity on requests that appear overly broad or vague."

TikTok's July-December 2023 report shows it received 12,550 requests from law enforcement.

Genie out of the bottle

Jim Dempsey is a senior policy advisor at the Stanford Program on Geopolitics and an expert in how the Fourth Amendment is applied to online information to protect people from unreasonable search and seizure by the government.

He said the field has changed tremendously as technology evolves. But one constant is how people incriminate themselves via social media.

"It would have to be an extraordinarily clueless police department that didn't utilize the investigative value of digital information," Dempsey said.

Evidence grabbed from social media is a bonanza for federal agents because it can not only catch criminals in the act but give cops the exact time and place the crime happened.

"I've seen a lot of self-inflicted wounds on social media, and law enforcement is more than happy to take the layup," said Gross, the law professor. "If they can walk in and show that to the jury, there's nothing I can do as a defense attorney about that kind of evidence that you, the defendant, are creating to connect you to the crime."

Justice Department officials declined to comment on how they get incriminating social media videos, which should serve as a warning to all users, Gross said.

"Is it really gone or is it in the cloud somewhere law enforcement can go looking for it?" Gross asked. "That's why this stuff is so valuable. You're letting the genie out of the bottle. You don't know where it's going to go. You don't have a lot of control or privacy over what you're putting out on these platforms."

Gross said he fears companies and law enforcement will soon use artificial intelligence to review social media users' private data.

"It's going to put this all on steroids," he warned. "Law enforcement is looking at this tech and at how they can deploy it in all sorts of ways."

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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 29th day of February, 2024

Jodie L O'Laughlin

My commission expires 12/13/2027

Date	Ad Caption	Size
6-15-2024	First Energy/Penn Power	4 col. X 13"
6-19-2024	Public Input Hearing Notification	

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA - NOTARY SEAL
Jodie L O'Laughlin, Notary Public
Lawrence County
My Commission Expires 12/13/2027
Commission # 1440384

Mercer County Community Federal Credit Union receives financial literacy award

HERMITAGE — The Mercer County Community Federal Credit Union recently received a Leaders in Financial Literacy Award from the CrossState Credit Union Foundation at its annual convention on May 20.

This award was presented to the MCCFCU for their support of financial literacy by partnering with Junior Achievement of Western Pennsylvania and sponsoring students from Mercer County to participate in the JA BizTown experience.

The JA BizTown program involved 167 fifth-graders from Ionta Elementary School in Hermitage and started with classroom lessons on personal economics and basic finances.

Students then put those lessons into action when they spent a day at the JA BizTown facility, an interactive mock town that simulates the various roles in a thriving community and helps students learn the reality of the business world.

The Financial Literacy Award included $2,500 to further support financial literacy in the community. Plans are already in place for additional students from local school districts to participate in the JA BizTown experience in the coming school year.



Contributed

From left, Sandi Carangi, CEO of the Mercer County Community Federal Credit Union, and Leah Beckert, administrative assistant and CU Ambassador Top 10 Finalist, received the Leaders in Financial Literacy Award at the CrossState Credit Union Foundation Awards Luncheon, May 20, 2024.

Also at the annual convention, Leah Beckert, administrative assistant at the MCCFCU, was a top 10 finalist in the CU Ambassador Contest with her project entitled "What You Didn't Learn in School – Young Adult Savings Club."

The CU Ambassador program recognizes young adult professionals who present their ideas for credit union initiatives that would benefit their credit union and the community.

ORGANIZATIONS

Study Class of Jamestown

The Study Class of Jamestown, organized in 1897, convened at the Manor recently for its monthly meeting. Following a brief business meeting, Kelly Figiel presented a program on the history of Polk State School and Hospital. The commonwealth of Pennsylvania opened Polk in 1897. More than 13,000 developmentally disabled persons were residents during the 126 years of operations.

In 1973, volunteers from Allegheny County Chapter of Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Children (ARC), toured the facility and revealed that residents were being drugged, bound, and caged. The wards were crowded and understaffed. In the 1990s, doctors were under investigation for many infractions.

The state gradually emptied Polk while building a new model of community-based services. Verland Community Living Arrangements accepted 27 residents of Polk and hired Polk staff who continued to care for these residents. Verland received a grant to help construct group based homes for displaced residents.

The doors of Polk State School and Hospital officially closed May 1, 2023.

Patty Andrews shared her experience choosing a vacation rental for her family through AirBnB. She chose a beach house that provided her large family space to gather indoors and outdoors while enjoying a private pool and other amenities. A private board walk to the beach was easily accessible for all.

Another vacation option is a bed and breakfast which offers a well appointed room and private bath. A light breakfast is provided by the owner and enjoyed with other guests. Some B&B's may offer their guests fancy teas and cocktails.

This would be a nice choice for a romantic get-a-way.

Tiny homes, which are growing in popularity, are also available to rent or own. Some homes are on wheels, while others are on permanent sites. The maximum size for the homes is just 400 square feet, a very minimal, yet cozy choice.

AT THE SENIOR CENTERS

Shenango Valley Senior Center

Activities at the Shenango Valley Senior Center for next week include:

- **Monday** - 9:30 a.m., Bingocize and Bridge; 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., CDSMP; 10:30 a.m., Inspirational Tymes; 12:30 p.m., chair Zumba; 1:30 p.m., arthritis exercise
- **Tuesday** - Juneteenth party; 9 a.m., total body fitness; 9:30 a.m., laps for lottery tickets; 10 a.m., book club and sculpt and strengthen; 11 a.m., trim and tone and entertainment by musician Doug James; 12:30 p.m., yoga
- **Wednesday** - Center closed for Juneteenth
- **Thursday** - 9 a.m., total body fitness; 9:30 a.m., laps for lottery tickets; 10 a.m., bingocize and sculpt and strengthen; 11 a.m., trim and tone; 12:30 p.m., yoga; 1 p.m., afternoon Euchre
- **Friday** - 9:30 a.m. arthritis exercise with Robin; 11 a.m. speaker John Morris from Lakes at Jefferson; 1 p.m., line dancing, director's bingo, and Antiques Roadshow in the lounge

Shenango Valley Senior Center is located at 220 N. Buhl Farm Dr., Hermitage. Info: 724-981-7950.

Greenville Senior Center

Activities and events planned for next week at Greenville Senior Center include:

- **Monday** - 9 a.m., total body fitness; 9:15 a.m., bingo; 10 a.m., line dance; 11 a.m., arthritis exercise and speaker Tom Hall from PHN on "Sun Safety/Sun Stroke"; 12:30 to 4 p.m., haircuts with Patty; 12:30 p.m., Pickleball.
- **Tuesday** – 9:15 a.m., Bingo! Pig Bingo!; 10 a.m., cornhole; 11 a.m., speaker Dawn Shaffer, master gardener, on "All About the Praying Mantis"; 12:30 p.m., Euchre tournament ($5) and Pickleball
- **Wednesday** — Center closed for Juneteenth
- **Thursday** — 9:15 a.m., Bingo! Extended Bingo! and Silver Sneakers; 10 a.m., line dance; 11 a.m., chair Zumba; 12:30 p.m., Euchre Tournament ($5), Greenville Needlers, SilverSneakers stability, and Pickleball
- **Friday** — 9 a.m. total body fitness; 9:15 a.m., Bingo! Pig Bingo! Prize Bingo!; 1 to 4 p.m., haircuts with Patty; 12:30 p.m., Pickleball

GREENVILLE SENIOR CENTER is located at the entrance to Riverside Park, 45 Alan Ave., Greenville. Info: 724-588-3155

DEAN'S LISTS

Saint Vincent College

LATROBE, Pa. – **Cody James May** of Greenville has been named to the spring 2024 semester Dean's List at Saint Vincent College in Latrobe, Pa. He is a health science major. To qualify for the Dean's List, students must achieve a minimum grade point average of 3.5 on a scale of 4.0.

The 2021 graduate of Kennedy Catholic High School is the son of Steve and Amy May and grandson of Chuck and Liz Bolster, all of Greenville.

Dr. Denise Vuich, DC

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PUBLIC INPUT HEARING NOTIFICATION

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Docket No. R-2024-3047068

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Herald broadsheet ■ Blox 2021-0810jz Ins6 cmyk

TODAY IN HISTORY

Today is Wednesday, June 19, the 171st day of 2024. There are 195 days left in the year. This is Juneteenth.

Today's Highlight in History:

On June 19, 1964, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was approved by the U.S. Senate, 73-27, after surviving a lengthy filibuster.

On this date:

In 1775, George Washington was commissioned by the Continental Congress as commander in chief of the Continental Army.

In 1865, Union troops arrived in Galveston, Texas, with news that the Civil War was over, and that all remaining slaves in Texas were free — an event celebrated to this day as "Juneteenth."

In 1910, the first-ever Father's Day was celebrated in Spokane, Washington. (The idea for the observance is credited to Sonora Louise Smart Dodd.)

In 1911, Pennsylvania became the first state to establish a motion picture censorship board.

In 1917, during World War I, King George V ordered the British royal family to dispense with German titles and surnames; the family took the name "Windsor."

Associated Press

Celebrating summer

Dear Annie: I feel you overlooked an important point in your response to "Inheritance Issues," which has been an occasional topic in your column.

Elder financial abuse is all too common. If the mother can't make bill payments without help, the implication is that the brother prepared, or had a lawyer prepare, the paperwork to transfer the beach property to himself. Was the mother acting as a well-informed and independent agent in this transaction?

The mother's excuses could be hiding a very real struggle with declining abilities. The other two siblings might be well advised to be less judgmental of their mother, converse with each other about their mother's state of health and, if possible, talk with her doctor. If her abilities are declining, she will need their understanding and possibly legal protection.

Dear Inheritance Issues: Thank you for your letter and commonsense suggestions.

Dear Annie: I love your column and read it every day.

I am a firm believer in positive vibes.

I believe in waking up every day in gratitude.

I believe in helping others.

I believe that we all have a purpose.

Thank you for living your purpose.



DEAR ANNIE
Annie Lane

Your purpose is helping others by giving your positive advice to those in need.

Have a great day. — Positive Vibes

Dear Positive: Thank you for your letter. It made me smile.

Dear Readers: Below are some poems to help you enjoy the beginnings of the summer months.

"The Lake Isle of Innisfree" by William Butler Yeats

"I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree, / And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made; / Nine bean-rows will I have there, a hive for the honey-bee, / And live alone in the bee-loud glade. / And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes dropping slow, / Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the cricket sings; / There midnight's all a glimmer, and noon a purple glow, / And evening full of the linnet's wings. / I will arise and go now, for always night and day / I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore; / While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements grey, / I hear it in the deep heart's core."

"Fireflies in the Garden" by Robert Frost

"Here come real stars to fill the upper skies, / And here on earth come emulating flies, / That though they never equal stars in size, / (And they were never really stars at heart) / Achieve at times a very star-like start. / Only, of course, they can't sustain the part."

SEND YOUR questions for Annie Lane to dearannie@creators.com.

Creators Syndicate

ASK THE DOCTORS

Dear Doctors: We have a family friend who passed away just three weeks after being diagnosed with neuroendocrine cancer. There were no symptoms at all, and it was found pretty much by accident, during an appendectomy. What kind of cancer is that? Does it always move so fast?

Dear Reader: Neuroendocrine cancer is a rare form of the disease. It occurs in a network of specialized cells that, working together, make up the neuroendocrine system. Known as neuroendocrine cells, they behave both as nerve cells and, because they release hormones, also as glands. These cells help regulate digestion, blood pressure, air flow, blood glucose metabolism and muscle and bone development. The pituitary and parathyroid glands are made up primarily of neuroendocrine cells. They also form the inner layer of the adrenal gland. Neuroendocrine cells are found throughout the gastrointestinal tract, including the appendix, and in the lungs. They are also found in the gall bladder, pancreas, liver, kidneys, as well as in the cervix, testicles and prostate.

This type of cancer can develop anywhere in the body and often doesn't cause symptoms. it is most often seen in the appendix, small intestine and lungs. A small percentage occurs in the pancreas. The presence of symptoms depends on the part of the body that is affected. For instance, as with your family friend, a tumor in the appendix may only be discovered when it causes the signs of appendicitis. These include inflammation, abdominal pain and nausea. Tumors in the lungs may cause wheezing, a persistent cough or shortness of breath.



ASK THE DOCTORS
Eve Glazier
Elizabeth Ko

Although this is often a slow-growing cancer, some forms can advance quite quickly. When symptoms are not present, which prevents the tumor from being discovered, metastasis also becomes a risk. Treatment of the disease depends on each individual case — that is, the location of the tumor and the degree to which the cancer has spread. When possible, tumors are surgically removed.

If a tumor is quite large, and if the cancer has spread to other parts of the body, supplementary treatments will be considered. Additional treatments can include targeted therapies, which are drugs that interfere with the life cycle of a cancer cell. Some directly target the genes and proteins that allow cancer cells to reproduce. Others take aim at cells that are involved in cancer growth, such as blood vessels. When dealing with neuroendocrine cancers that have spread to other parts of the body, a treatment known as somatostatin analogs may be used. These are drugs that slow the body's production of certain hormones, which may help slow tumor growth. Chemotherapy can be an option, but it is most effective on fast-growing tumors.

A newer treatment option, known as peptide receptor radionuclide therapy, combines the use of hormone therapy with radiation. It exploits the fact that most neuroendocrine tumors contain specific hormone receptors. In this form of treatment, the patient receives infusions of hormones armed with radioactive molecules, which then bind directly to the cancer cells. This carries the radiation directly to the tumor and spares the surrounding healthy tissues.

SEND YOUR questions to askthedoctors@mednet.ucla.edu

Andrews McMeel Syndicate

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AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

Kathy Alexander
First Energy Media
154 E Aurora RD # 174
Northfield OH 44067-2053

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:

06/16/2024, 06/18/2024

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

Sworn to and subscribed before on 06/18/2024

Legal Clerk

Notary, State of WI, County of Brown

9-25-26

My commission expires

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MARIAH VERHAGEN
Notary Public
State of Wisconsin

‘This shouldn’t be normal’

Hackers took over her Facebook account. So why did it take 7 months to get it back?

Tamia Fowlkes
Milwaukee Journal Sentinel | USA TODAY NETWORK – WISCONSIN

MILWAUKEE – It was just after 8 p.m. when Marjorie May got a message on Facebook from her niece, Emma Kangas, saying “I need your help.”

May froze. Her niece had moved into her home several months earlier. Together, they were working on reducing the frequency of Kangas’ epileptic seizures. Though May was certain her niece was in the house, she worried that she might be experiencing a health crisis in a bedroom several feet away. As she typed a hurried “OK” in response, she rose to her feet to go check on her.

To her relief, she found her niece in the living room, scrolling on her phone. “Are you messaging me on Facebook right now?” May recalled asking, before a new message popped into the inbox.

“Will you be able to loan me 200 bucks? I will pay you tomorrow with interest of 50 bucks.”

Kangas’ account was hacked.

May contacted Public Investigator in December. In her call, she her 20-year-old niece had been unable to deactivate the account, which continued to spam other friends and family members with urgent requests for money.

“I reported it. Her friend reported it. She started a new account, but this other profile was still showing up and we couldn’t get it closed down,” May said.

After repeatedly reporting the account as compromised, Kangas and May received two emails from Facebook. Each stated that Facebook had reviewed the activity on Kangas’ account and found no evidence of suspicious activity.

Facebook does not provide an option to speak directly to a representative, so Kangas was unable to escalate her issue. Instead, she was directed back to the platform’s “help center,” which provides instructions on how to report a hacked account.

“These companies, I think they need to be held accountable,” May said. “If you’re going to automate and do all this cost saving stuff, that’s great for certain things, but if somebody’s getting hacked and it’s their personal identity and personal data at stake, they should be able to talk to a live person and actually get help.”

Since December, Facebook messages from the hacker have continued to arrive in friends and family members’ inboxes.

Public Investigator contacted Meta, the parent company of Facebook, in December, January, April and May in an attempt to get answers about the hacking of Kangas’ profile.

Representatives from the company did not respond until late May, when Meta communications director Andy Stone said he would send Kangas’ case to the Meta investigations team.

“This shouldn’t be normal,” Kangas said. “I feel like Facebook should do more to prevent this from happening to other people.”

Facebook’s history with data breaches and hacking

Meta has faced criticism about its handling of hacked accounts before.

In March, 41 attorneys general wrote a letter to Meta’s Chief Legal Officer Jennifer Newstead complaining that the company had neglected hacking victims and exposed them to potential financial harm. The group includes Wisconsin Attorney General Josh Kaul.

“Our offices have experienced a dramatic and persistent spike in complaints in recent years concerning account takeovers that is not only alarming for our constituents but also a substantial drain on our office resources,” they wrote.



Marjorie May helps her 20-year-old niece, Emma Kangas, who recently had her Facebook account hacked. JULIE GRACE IMMINK/MILWAUKEE JOURNAL SENTINEL

Dorothea Salo, an information security and privacy expert at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, said Kangas’ experience reflects the lack of regulations on tech companies to address hacking and security issues for its users.

“There aren’t really laws mandating a certain amount of customer service,” Salo said. “The United States courts do not have a clear evaluation of what the harms are when a social media account gets hacked.”

Salo said many court cases about digital account privacy and protections hinge on whether there is “legally cognizable harm.” The court must agree that the individual impacted has faced a significant level of harm and that a company like Facebook must take action to resolve the issue.

Salo said Facebook is also “notorious” for poor customer service and tech support, particularly for non-English speaking communities.

“They’re a lot worse than they have to be, I think because they’re so hyper-focused on making money through advertising and user surveillance,” she said.

When asked why Facebook might choose not to provide a live chat option to users, Salo said it is likely an issue of scale. Facebook serves billions of users who speak hundreds, if not thousands, of languages, she said.

“If you have billions of users, you don’t have to care about just one,” Salo said.

Frustration and embarrassment

May, who used to work in the tech industry on AI automation projects, said her niece’s experience reminded her of the necessity of human intelligence and interaction in addressing customer service and other issues, especially for individuals with developmental and neurological disabilities.

Kangas’ Cash App and Chase bank account were also hacked within the same two weeks of the Facebook hack, but Kangas was able to cancel the Cash App payments and close her bank account.

May assumed that with so many of their family members reporting Kangas’ Facebook account for spam and abuse, it would eventually be deleted or returned to her niece. However, despite the page going dormant for several months, the messages began again in April.

“I need your help,” the hacker said in one such message. “Can you loan me some bucks of money still tomorrow. I will surely pay you back.”

When she realized she had been hacked again, Kangas attempted to change the password on the account, she said. But the hacker had changed the email, password and phone number connected to the profile.

Kangas’ frustration about the incident is about more than just the loss of hundreds of social connections and memories. She feels embarrassed and worried about how the messages sound to family members and friends.

“When you text my family late at night, saying I need help, they are now all worried about me having a seizure,” she said.

After six months, Meta responds

In May, after 10 attempts to reach Meta’s media department through email and social media, Stone responded to Public Investigator and asked for an email address to send Kangas an account reset link.

When Public Investigator contacted Meta two days later for an update, Stone said the company’s investigative team was unable to identify a Facebook profile linked to Kangas’ email address.

A Public Investigator reporter explained that was because hackers had changed the email and phone number affiliated with the profile – information that had also been stated in previous outreach to Meta’s communications team.

On June 4, nearly seven months after Kangas’ account was first hacked, Stone told Public Investigator that the company had successfully secured her account.

Facebook emailed Kangas a password reset code to restore the account, which she said allowed her to regain access to her account in minutes. She didn’t understand why the resource was not offered sooner.

“I have all the pictures of my loved ones that have passed away that I couldn’t get to because I couldn’t get in the account,” Kangas told Public Investigator. “So I feel like weight lifted off my shoulder now that I’m back into it.”

Tactics for protecting your social media accounts

Over the past decade, a variety of tactics have emerged for social media users to protect their accounts from hackers.

Salo recommends establishing multi-factor authentication on social media accounts. Multifactor authentication is when an account requires a password and one or two additional security questions to be answered before granting access.

Salo said there are many types of internet scams, like phishing emails with fake links and ransomware. But the reason why hackers target Facebook and Instagram accounts is because they can masquerade as the account owner, she said.

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$50M case highlights Chicago police abuse

At least 5 officers named in suit have city pensions

Michael Loria
USA TODAY



Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson said police reform is "ongoing" with "a lot of work that obviously has to be done." ALEX WROBLEWSKIGETTY IMAGES

CHICAGO – Four teenagers confess in 1995 to murders during grueling interrogations by city cops. Now, after growing up in prison, they're getting $50 million for the decades they wrongly spent behind bars.

The payout for the "Marquette Park 4," as they became known after the infamous murder case, is the largest since at least 2008 for reversed convictions in Chicago, a city that's racked up nearly $329 million in lawsuit settlements for wrongfully convicted people, according to a USA TODAY review of documents from Chicago's Department of Law.

The Marquette Park 4 settlement is bigger than any in the published records.

Illinois has been dubbed by the Innocence Project, a nonprofit legal organization that's helped to successfully overturn over 300 convictions nationwide through DNA-based exonerations, as "the wrongful conviction capital of the country." Illinois' 540 exonerations of wrongfully convicted people tops the ranking of states, followed by Texas, with 474 exonerations, according to the Innocence Project.

Cook County, Illinois – with its population over 5 million people, including about 2.7 million within Chicago's city limits – ranks number one in the nation in terms of wrongful convictions, according to the National Registry of Exonerations, a project from the University of California Irvine Newkirk Center for Science and Society, the University of Michigan Law School and the Michigan State University College of Law.

There have been 465 exonerations in America's second most populous county, more than double the exonerations in Harris County, Texas, which has the second most with 213.

Of the wrongful convictions in Cook County, 121 came as a result of false confessions, according to the exonerations registry.

The exonerees in the latest case – LaShawn Ezell, Charles Johnson, Larod Styles and Troshawn McCoy – said in a joint statement they're grateful the city has recognized the hurt that police did to them. But millions of dollars can't replace what was taken away.

"No amount of money can ever return the years we lost due to Chicago Police misconduct that caused our collective 73 years of wrongful imprisonment," they said in the statement. "The City of Chicago must take steps to protect our teenagers from police abuses like those we endured."

Ezell, Johnson, Styles and McCoy were charged in 1995, when they were between the ages of 15 and 19, for the murders of Khalid Ibrahim and Yousef Ali, owners of a used car lot near Marquette Park on Chicago's South Side who were killed in their office "execution style," according to court filings.

Police picked up McCoy first based on an anonymous tip, said Alexa Van Brunt, an attorney on the case. Officers subjected McCoy to hours of grueling interrogation without counsel during which he implicated the three others whom he knew from the neighborhood.

Chicago police coerced the teens into making false confessions and inculpatory statements and withheld evidence that would have proven them innocent, according to the lawsuits. No physical evidence linked the teenagers to the murders.

DNA evidence analyzed in 2009 proved none of the four were connected to the murders, the complaints say, and in 2017 the Cook County State's Attorney's Office dismissed the charges.

The four filed lawsuits in the Northern District of Illinois in 2018 that named 13 police officers, a Cook County Assistant State's Attorney, Cook County and the City of Chicago.

Two of the former officers, homicide detectives James Cassidy and Kenneth Boudreau, served under Chicago Police Commander Jon Burge, a notorious figure in the city who tortured false confessions out of scores of Chicagoans between the '70s to the '90s, according to the Chicago Police Torture Archive, a project documenting Chicago police violence against over 100 Black people based on legal cases from the People's Law Office and others.

None have been charged with crimes related to the Marquette Park 4 exonerations, according to Van Brunt.

The Cook County State's Attorney's Office declined to answer questions about whether it would bring charges.

Burge was fired in 1993 after the police department's review board ruled he had tortured people, according to the Illinois Torture and Relief Commission, a group formed by the state in 2010 to provide assistance to Burge's victims. He was sentenced to prison for four years for perjury after lying about the torture; he died in 2018.

Cassidy could not be reached for comment.

Boudreau, named in the lawsuit brought by the four Marquette Park 4 exonerees, told USA TODAY in a rare interview Friday that "my conscience is clear." He said he and he and his co-defendant officers are being maligned in a scheme to make money and free people from prison.

"I don't believe for a second that any of them did anything improper, certainly nothing in my presence," he said of the officers named in the lawsuit.

Boudreau said he was only named in the recent lawsuit because of Burge, but that his connection to the notorious figure was tenuous. He reported to him for about a month and was one of hundreds of detectives who did so, he told USA TODAY.

Boudreau, who now helps run a therapeutic horse riding center for veterans and law enforcement, said he spent years working to bring dirty cops to justice.

"They make the argument we framed these guys – I worked over 800 murders, you think I got time, why am I going to pick this one person to frame them," he said.

A review of state pensions data compiled by the Illinois Better Government Association showed at least five of the officers named in the suit, including Boudreau, received pensions in 2022, bringing in a collective $469,000. None are active on the police force.

Attorneys for the other police defendants deferred USA TODAY to comments from Mayor Brandon Johnson, who said police reform is "ongoing" with "a lot of work that obviously has to be done."

The city has created new bodies like the Civilian Office of Police Accountability to strengthen police oversight. In 2019, a federal judge ordered the department to reform in response to civil rights abuses, according to the Illinois Attorney General's Office. But Chicago cops were only in full compliance with 7% of the mandated reforms, a court-ordered monitoring team found in May.

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AFFP
Public Input Hearing

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:

June 15, 2024, June 17, 2024

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

Cindy DeProspero

Subscribed to and sworn to me this 17th day of June 2024.

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

My commission expires: December 13, 2027

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA - NOTARY SEAL
Jodie L O'Laughlin, Notary Public
Lawrence County
My Commission Expires 12/13/2027
Commission # 1440384

00004281 00151266

FIRST ENERGY
154 E AURORA RD
#174
NORTHFIELD, OH 44067



FILE | AP

Pennsylvania Gov. Josh Shapiro delivers his budget address for the 2024-25 fiscal year to a joint session of the state House and Senate in the Rotunda of the state Capitol on Feb. 6.

ACLU files class action lawsuit against Shapiro, Legislature

BY ERIC SCICCHITANO
CNHI HARRISBURG BUREAU

HARRISBURG — The ACLU of Pennsylvania sued the governor and the respective leaders of the state House and Senate alleging Pennsylvania continues to fail to properly fund indigent defense in violation of the state and U.S. constitutions.

The class action lawsuit filed in Commonwealth Court alleges all 67 counties in the commonwealth fail to provide consistent, effective legal representation to the poorest defendants, those unable to pay for a private attorney. The lawsuit alleges counties either lack the money or the political will to fully fund public defender offices, and the state fails its constitutional duty to do the same.

Gov. Josh Shapiro, House Speaker Joanna McClinton and Senate President Pro Tempore Kim Ward are each named as defendants.

The ACLU filed the lawsuit on behalf of 17 plaintiffs. The organization estimates the lack of state funding for public defense impacts 100,000 people annually.

They highlight the plights of several plaintiffs at the suit's outset, describing how one person jailed in Lebanon County never spoke with their court-appointed public defender but that the attorney filed a trial continuance on their request.

Another jailed in Clearfield County went three months without speaking with their public defender before filing a motion on their own to dismiss criminal charges, only to show up for a court hearing to find the public defender withdraw as counsel without any consultation, the lawsuit states.

"For decades, we have relied on the criminal legal system to adjudicate and reinforce stigmas related to poverty, race, gender, and many other socio-economic factors. The inconsistent and insufficient funding of indigent defense in Pennsylvania makes us less safe. Excluding the Defender Association of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania is tied with Mississippi for the worst-funded state public defender system on a per capita basis," Mike Lee, executive director of the ACLU of Pennsylvania, said.

According to the ACLU, Pennsylvania counties collectively spent $125 million on public defender offices in 2020, or less than $10 per capita. The ACLU compared the commonwealth to Michigan, which has about 3 million fewer residents but budgeted $319 million for indigent defense services this year, or $32 per capita.

Massachusetts, which has about 6 million fewer residents than Pennsylvania, budgeted $331 million, or $47 per capita, for 2024, according to the lawsuit.

"Both states responded to lawsuits in the early 2000s alleging widespread deficiencies in indigent defense services by dramatically increasing state funding for such services," the lawsuit states.

Pennsylvania's 2023-24 budget included $7.5 million for indigent defense services — legal representation for those who can't afford private counsel — the first time the state funded any sort of public defense. It was considered a highlight of the governor's first year in office, and he's seeking to raise the total to $10 million in the next budget.

The first-ever state grants are now available through the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency.

Pa. House supports proposed grants for addiction recovery

ERIC SCICCHITANO
CNHI HARRISBURG BUREAU

HARRISBURG — A strong bipartisan vote this week in the Pennsylvania House advanced a bill proposing to create a new grant program to support addiction recovery and develop educational materials about opioid-related overdose.

House Bill 1783 passed 187-14 on Wednesday. It moves to the state Senate for further consideration.

Introduced by Rep. Arvind Venkat, D-Allegheny, an emergency room physician, the bill creates a new educational awareness initiative to be led by the state Department of Health.

The department is mandated to design and distribute posters to be displayed in public and private settings that explain the signs of an opioid-related overdose, directions on how to respond, information on obtaining the opioid-overdose reversal medication naloxone and additional resources.

House members voted unanimously on Tuesday to add language from a dormant proposal, House Bill 1650, that would create the Lifetime Recovery from Substance Abuse Grant Program originally introduced by Rep. Jim Gregory, R-Blair, and Rep. Joe Hohenstein, D-Philadelphia.

There's no dollar amount attached to the program. If approved, the Legislature would be tasked to fund it annually including with funds from court settlements with opioid manufacturers, distributors, and pharmacy chains.

The grant program would be administered by the Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs. It would be used to develop, expand or improve recovery support services. Grants would be available statewide as well as regionally in specific areas targeted for similar financial support.

According to the bill, funding could be used in part for peer recovery support services and also in assisting recovery support providers through training opportunities, creating or improving services and developing "tools and facilities" necessary for support services.

Prior to Wednesday's floor vote approving the bill, Venkat noted that in the House gallery were district constituents Sherry Jo Matt and her husband Tom Bott. The couple founded Stop the Judgment Project in memory of their daughter Siena, 21, who died in 2020 of a fentanyl overdose at the family home. They took on a public role in advocating for greater resources to treat substance use disorder and eliminate addiction stigma.

"I've treated many patients in the throes of an opioid overdose as an emergency physician, and proactive measures to help stem the tide of this crisis are imperative," Venkat said in a statement following the vote and thanking members for bipartisan support.

Gregory himself is in lifetime recovery and he expressed the importance of helping others do the same.

Hohenstein reiterated how most everyone is impacted by the opioid epidemic in some way. An estimated 4,800 people died of a drug overdose in Pennsylvania in the 12-month period that ended in November, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, largely due to fentanyl and related opioids.

"In my neighborhoods in Philadelphia, there's hardly a single family, my own included, who have been left untouched by the scourge of the opioid epidemic and the death, disruption and deterioration it continues to wreak," Hohenstein.

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PICNIC

June 18th is International Picnic Day

To celebrate, stop by The Addison of Clen-Moore Place to receive your complimentary picnic style meal to go!

Pick-up at 22 West Clen Moore Blvd. from 1:00 to 3:00pm

To Reserve Your Picnic Meal Call 724-656-0132

*Tours available – ask about our Summer Move-in Special!!

THE ADDISON OF CLEN-MOORE PLACE

a Senior Lifestyle community

22 W. Clen Moore Blvd., New Castle, PA 16105
724-656-0132

Solar energy development growing in Pa., proposals pending in Legislature

BY ERIC SCICCHITANO
CNHI HARRISBURG BUREAU



HARRISBURG — Solar energy generated bill proposals and policy shifts in Pennsylvania but fundamental differences over reliability compared to fossil fuels challenge a broader, more rapid transition to renewable resources.

Pennsylvania saw a rush of solar energy development in 2023, adding more than 800 installations. Fewer than 200 were completed in each of the previous seven years, according to the Solar Energy Industries Association. The trend extended nationally as materials and labor became more readily available to accommodate a backlog of projects, largely utility-scale installations as states adjust to new standards for renewable energy.

The Keystone State ranked 12th nationally in new installations in 2023 and rose to 10th through the first quarter of 2024, according to a market analysis via SEIA. More projects could follow as the Shapiro Administration works to enact new policies to diversify Pennsylvania's energy generation beyond natural gas, nuclear and coal — categories where the commonwealth ranks near the top.

Skeptics warn that the commonwealth should focus more on generating energy through fossil fuels as grid reliability is questioned. PJM Interconnection, the regional electric grid powering Pennsylvania and 12 other states plus Washington D.C., says that reliability is at risk during the transition to renewable resources as electric demand swells, coal-fired power plants are retired and replacement projects lag.

Gov. Josh Shapiro announced an ambitious two-pronged proposal in March. One part is a Pennsylvania-only cap-and-trade program known as PACER, or the Pennsylvania Climate Emission Reduction, which effectively is an alternative to the multistate Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative for which the commonwealth's participation is stalled in court. It's coupled with proposed updates to the commonwealth's existing alternative energy portfolio requiring all utilities to purchase 50% of their electricity from renewable sources by 2035.

Solar would be an integral part. Pennsylvania Reliable Energy Sustainability Standard, known as PRESS, would require 35% from a specific class of renewables including solar, wind, low-impact hydropower and more.

ECONOMIC BENEFIT

An economic assessment commissioned by Advanced Energy United, an industry association, found that the resulting development of renewable energy projects from policies similar to Shapiro's proposal could bring net economic benefits exceeding $11 billion to Pennsylvania and create nearly 130,000 direct, indirect and induced jobs.

"I think the most compelling piece of all of this is the economic opportunity," Sharon Pillar, founder and executive director of the Pennsylvania Solar Center, said. "It's a missed opportunity if we don't take advantage of it. We're talking about tens of thousands of jobs and billions in investment into Pennsylvania."

Corresponding legislation was introduced in May by Democrats in both the House and Senate though none have moved, yet, ahead of ongoing budget negotiations. Republicans have already signaled opposition, especially for any cap-and-trade initiatives.

On Earth Day in April, Shapiro announced that 16 commonwealth government agencies will get at least 50% of their electric needs — 361,000 megawatt-hours of electricity annually — from 10 solar arrays in six counties, two of which are already online with three more expected to go live by year's end.

That same day, the Biden Administration announced that the Pennsylvania Energy Development Authority would receive more than $156 million through the Solar for All grant competition, tasking the entity to create solar energy programs benefiting low-income and disadvantaged communities.



COMMONWEALTH MEDIA SERVICES

Gov. Josh Shapiro discusses his energy plans in March.

Terrance Fitzpatrick, president and CEO of the Energy Association of Pennsylvania, echoed the PJM report, calling concerns about the adequacy of electric generation the biggest issue facing the commonwealth on energy. He said the commonwealth must work to maintain its existing network of traditional power plants and stave off pending retirements as renewable resources are further developed.

"We can have some renewable energy as part of our portfolio. We certainly will compared to now because there's so much federal money out there. We know it's going to grow over time but we can't choke off the dispatchable plants that you need to keep the lights on," Fitzpatrick said, referring to plants that are available 24/7.

An analysis by the Commonwealth Foundation of Shapiro's energy policy proposal found that in-state cap-and-trade could result in nearly $500 million in new taxes while the enhancement of renewable energy sources threatens to cut grid reliability by half.

LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS

A bill permitting community solar projects in Pennsylvania, allowing groups of people to invest together to subscribe to or own a solar array, moved through the House in late March with a small measure of bipartisan support.

Bipartisanship was far broader around a House bill approved in June 2023 proposing a grant program for schools to invest in solar energy facilities, however, just a single vote in the lower chamber approved a resolution directing the Joint State Government Commission to study the potential of agrivoltaic farming where crops are grown beneath solar panels.

None of the bills that advanced to the state Senate have received consideration, however, the upper chamber did vote in March 2023 to approve a bill setting terms for decommissioning solar facilities which now awaits action in the House. Related bills introduced in the Senate that await action include another community solar proposal, a measure allowing electric customers to choose to purchase 100% local solar energy, and legislation that would prohibit the leasing of "prime agricultural land" for large-scale solar projects.

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Docket No. R-2024-3047068

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Proof of Publication of Notice in the Record-Argus

Under Act No. 587, Approved May 16, 1929

State of Pennsylvania
County of Mercer } ss:

James D. Rust of Greenville Newspapers, Inc., of the County and State aforesaid, being duly sworn,deposes and says RECORD-ARGUS, a newspaper of general circulation published at Greenville, County and State aforesaid, was established in 1848 as a weekly newspaper, and in 1897 as a daily newspaper, since which date said daily newspaper 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 said RECORD-ARGUS on the following dates, viz:

15th and the 17th day of June

A.D., 2024

Affiant further deposes that he is authorized by Greenville Newspapers, Inc., publisher of said RECORD-ARGUS, 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.

Affiant for the Record-Argus

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 17th day of June 2024

Notary Public

My commission expires:

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania - Notary Seal
Lyn A. Merz, Notary Public
Mercer County
My commission expires October 29, 2027
Commission number 1110671
Member, Pennsylvania Association of Notaries

Copy of Notice of Publication

Statement of Advertising Costs

First Energy
154 East Aurora Rd #174
Northfield, OH 44067

TO THE RECORD-ARGUS, Dr.

For publishing the notice or publication attached hereto on the above stated dates	$ 1872.00
Notary fee	$ 5.00
Total	$ 1877.00

Publisher's Receipt for Advertising Costs

Greenville Newspapers, Inc. publisher of the RECORD-ARGUS, a newspaper of general circulation hereby acknowledges receipt of the aforesaid notice and publication costs and certifies that the same have been duly paid.

Greenville Newspapers, Inc.
Publisher of the RECORD-ARGUS,
a Newspaper of General Circulation

By .....

ALL-STAR

Continued from Page B1

First Selection

— Davis was a ninth-place finisher for the Lady M's at the Franklin Invitational and placed 11th at the Mercer County meet.

3,200 Run: Maggie Jewell, Mercer
2023 Second Team (1600-run)

— Jewell placed second at the Slippery Rock Invitational and went on to place third in both the Big Red and Oil Country Invites. At the Mercer County Invite, she placed second and went on to place 13th at Districts.

4x400 Relay: Greenville (Peyton Swank, Peyton Davis, Lily Bailey, Karis McElhaney)
First Selection

— The Greenville relay team had a good run, finishing second in both the Mercer County and District 10 Invitationals to earn a trip to the state meet, where they placed 19th.

Shot Put: Maggie Goodlin, Greenville
2023 First Team

— Goodlin improved on her fourth-place finish last season at the state championship. This year, Goodlin placed third after winning multiple invitationals with included the District 10 meet and the Mercer County Invitational.

Discus: Kyndra Seddon, Lakeview
2023 First Team

— Seddon controlled the invitational events she participated in and went on to place first in the Mercer County Invitational and District 10 meet, advancing to the state meet where she placed 13th.

Javelin: Tayler Whitesell, Greenville
2023 Second Team

— Whitesell was a fouth place finisher at the Mercer County Invitational and placed sixth at the Big Red Invite and the District 10 meet. She also placed 14th at Pine-Richland.

High Jump: Peyton Davis, Greenville
2023 Second Team

— Davis placed fourth in both the Big Red Invitational and at The Mercer County meet. At the District 10 meet, Davis placed ninth.

Long Jump: Ava Murcko, Reynolds
First Selection, First Team 200-Dash (2023)

— The speedy Murcko adds to her first-team honors the long jump, after being on the first team last season in the 200-meter dash. Murcko has a good mentor to follow in four-time first teamer Grace Bresnan. Murcko was first in the long jump in the Mercer County Invitational and went on to win the gold at the District 10 meet to advance to the state meet where she placed 18th.



Contributed photo

SLIPPERY ROCK — Commodore Perry's Grace Mozes gets set to throw the shot put at the District 10 meet on May 18 at Slippery Rock University.

Triple Jump: Grace Bresnan, Reynolds
2021, 2022, 2023 First Team

— Bresnan is one of the few that make the first team in all four seasons in the same category. Bresnan was back on the podium at states this season with a fourth-place finish. Bresnan was second in the Mercer County Invitational and also finished second in the District 10 meet.

Pole Vault: Megan Wood, Greenville
First Selection

— Wood can not only kick for the Greenville football team but can vault to high levels. After placing sixth in the Big red Invitational and 14th at Pine-Richland, she finished third in the Mercer County Invitational. and finished sixth at the District 10 meet.

Second Team

4x800 relay: Lakeview (Ella Theic, Gabby Moose, Delainee Snyder, Hannah Barnard)
First Selection

100 Hurdles: Brianna Craig, Reynolds
First Selection

100 Dash: Karleigh Heckathorn, Mercer
First Selection

1,600 run: Emily Blough, Mercer
First Selection

4x100 Relay: Greenville (Karis Thurber, Kelsi Russell, Payton Swank, Lily Bailey)
First Selection

400 Dash: Kendall Emmert, Lakeview
2023 Second Team

300-Hurdles: SiClara Cook, Lakeview
First Selection

800 Run: Bella Snyder, Commodore Perry
First Selection

200 Dash: (Tie) Peyton Swank, Maddy Shelton, Greenville
First Selection (Swank), Second Team (Shelton, 100 Dash)

3,200 Run: Denna Sommers, Lakeview
First Selection

4x400 Relay: Mercer (Emma Cameron, Natalie Davis, Makiya Kohnen and Taylor Pears)
First Selection

Shot Put: Grace Mozes, Commodore Perry
First Selection

Discus: Gracie McLaughlin, Reynolds
First Selection

Javelin: Ella Tokar, Greenville
First Selection, 2023 Second Team (Shot put)

High Jump: Alexa McDonald, Mercer
First Selection

Long Jump: Hannah Reckhart, Reynolds
First Selection

Triple Jump: Lilly Waleff, Commodore Perry
First Selection, 2023 Second Team (Long Jump)

Pole Vault: Brenna Mowry, Lakeview
First Selection



Brad Reichard/R-A





SLIPPERY ROCK — (Top) Reynolds' Ava Murcko leaps into the air for the long jump at the District 10 meet on May 18 at Slippery Rock University; (middle) Mercer's Emily Blough begins her last lap in the 1,600 meter-run at the District 10 meet on May 18; (bottom) Greenville's Peyton Davis clears the bar in the high jump at the District 10 meet on May 18 at Slippery Rock University.

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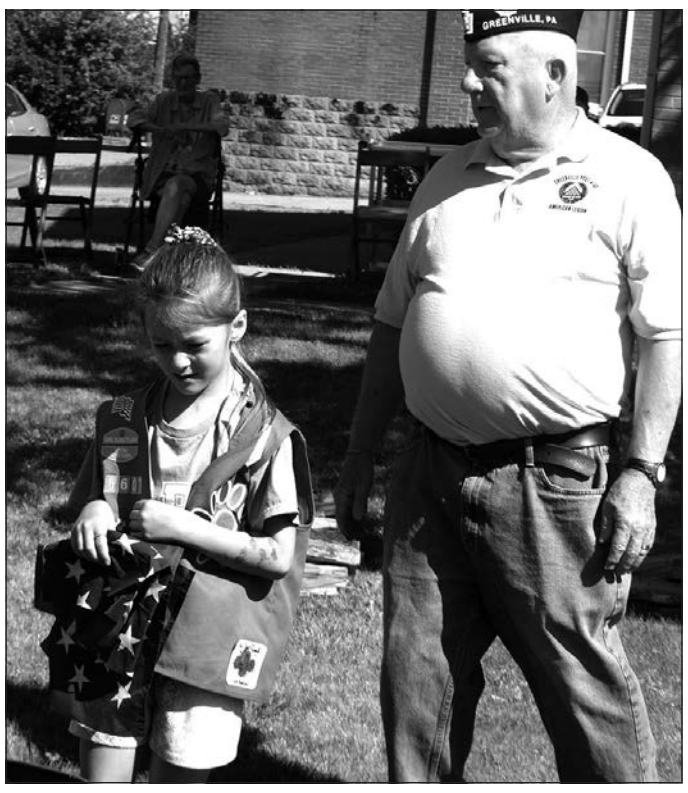
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Earl Corp/R-A

Girl Scout Kensi Cooper prepares to throw a union into the fire during the flag retirement ceremony on Saturday.

FLAG

Continued from Page A1

said.

American Legion Post 140 conducted a flag retirement ceremony on Main Street in front of the post. Girl Scouts from Troop 46607 helped the veterans retire the flags.

Throughout the year, the post collects unserviceable flags and waits until June 14 to retire them.

Traditionally, veterans' groups and scouts have chosen Flag Day to retire flags that are no longer fit emblems for display. When a U.S. flag is unable to be repaired or is too tattered, it should be retired.

According to the U.S. Flag Code, the only proper way to retire a flag is to burn it. It should be noted the Scouts weren't burning flags, because prior to throwing them into the flames, each one had the blue field, or union, separated from the stripes. This way, they weren't burning the nation's flag, just cloth.

THIEL

Continued from Page A1

during their time at Thiel.

"There was one place on campus that needed a boost — the quad," Saternow said.

A lot of activities took place on the quad, such as touch football games, pickup softball games, throwing frisbees and intramural soccer games. But Thiel now has athletic complexes where those activities can happen.

"The students we have now will generate their own memories on the quad," Saternow said. "That's what it's all about."

Class of '71 senior class President Scott Russell was scheduled to offer his reflections but due to ill health was unable to attend. John Hauser read the speech Russell had prepared for the occasion.

"I can't remember who, or how many of you, suggested that our 50th reunion class gift was for the Class of 1971 Quadrangle but I thought it was brilliant," Hauser read.

Russell talked about four major "touch points" that occurred on the quad and helped to shape his life after Thiel.

The first one was at his visit to the campus. Seeing soccer goals on the quad he got excited, only to find out Thiel didn't have a varsity team and intramural soccer was only open to sophomores and above. His tour guide suggested they could form a dorm floor team and challenge other dorms.

"The significance of this touch point is it created some life-long bonds with some of the men on the team and kept my passion for this sport going, later in life playing on the All-Army Europe Team, and onwards in Hong Kong, and finally back in the U.S. with old men's teams," Russell said.

The second touch point Russell shared was watching out of his dorm room window All-American Gary Larson playing catch in the quad with Dave Harding. Harding has ALS but never backed away from a challenge or gave up.

"The fact that Gary Larson took the time to initiate a compassionate, close friendship and bond with Dave will be forever seared into my heart and psyche in what I call my "true north of my life compass," Russell said.

The third touch point occurred on a winter day when Jodie Johnson invited Russell to go skiing with her and her future husband, John Enterline. Russell told her he'd never skied before, she said that was ok because they were easy slopes, and he could get a lesson there.

"So I went; did not break any bones, that was to happen later in life, and got hooked on skiing and later snowboarding," Russell said.

The final touch point, Russell shared was when he ran into his French professor, Dr. Bowen in the Quad. Bowen asked if he was interested in doing a semester abroad at the University of Basel in Switzerland.

Since they play a lot of soccer and ski in Europe, Russell jumped at the chance. But when he got to Basel, he found out the primary language spoken was German, not French.

"It incented me to embrace different cultures, ideas and languages even when I wasn't totally prepared to do so," Russell said.

"These touch points were totally unplanned, unexpected events that happened at our quad which touched me briefly with a personal contact with a classmate or professor but made a profound change in the direction in my life," Russell said "And all of it for the better."

Thiel College President Susan Traverso thanked the class of '71 for their generous gift to Thiel.

"I assure you this is a place where students can come and make memories," Traverso said.

And the Quadrangle Rock will serve as daily reminder to students those who came before them have their back.

Then the Class of '71 Gift Committee — consisting of Louis Benko, Karen (Carlson) Benko, Hauser, Enterline, Cathryn (Rich) Zawacki, Frank Newman and Saternow — joined Traverso in a ribbon cutting ceremony.

PADDLE

Continued from Page A1

River Watchers board member Joan Christy was able to cross a bucket item off her list during her float this year. She came across a fawn laying in the water and was able to secure a picture. The next wildlife she encountered was a complete surprise — otters playing in the Shenango.

"I was so excited. All I ever wanted to do was see otters on my river," Christy said.

The Brooker family, of Evans City, consisting of John, Kristine and Luke were making their third float down the Shenango.

"It's a good cause and it's fun," John said. "It's a good float."

Sharon's Brad Maun joined his brother, Brandon, and Gina Fertig for his first ever ride in a kayak.

"My brother got a kayak, and I thought it would be fun to start floating down the river," Brad said. "I'll definitely do it again."

For brother Brandon, this was his third paddle fest.

"It's relaxing hanging out with nature," Brandon said.

It was Fertig's second time paddling. She has found the event to be well organized and the staff super helpful.

"It was super enjoyable, the scenery's beautiful and the weather was nice," Fertig said.

Hollidaysburg's Carla Dente-Firment was wearing a T-shirt with a picture of a kayak that said, "Just add water."

This was her first time attending the event which she found on Facebook. She considered floating down the Shenango as a bucket list item.

"Facebook is great about listing them; I'm going further and further," Dente-Firment said.

Hermitage's Jeff Lukonic has been to several paddle fests. What keeps bringing him back?

"It's always fun and it's a good cause," Lukonic said.

Jamestown's Luann Way has been on all the paddle fests.

"Every spring and fall, it's right in my backyard," Way said.

FIELD

Continued from Page A1

attended the Youth Field Days and Mercer County Conservation Camp.

"He was a big hunter," said Harthegig President Todd Shipton.

Since Tyillian enjoyed the outdoors so much, the family established a memorial fund and split donations between the youth field days and the conservation camp.

The donation enabled Harthegig to buy new air rifles for the event, according to Shipton. The banner was available at the registration table for all 110 youth participants and the 60 volunteers to sign the back of.

It was then presented to Tyillian's parents, Tim and Julie.

"That's to let her know how many people that gift touched," Shipton said.

This was the 12th year Harthegig has hosted the event, and the program offered youngsters a chance to find a new hobby other than video games.

"It's to give the kids a taste of the outdoors; for most of the guys here it's a way of life," Shipton said. "Some of the kids will never have the opportunity otherwise."

Among the outdoor skills the kids get familiarized with are gun, bow and boating safety. For some, it's their first time shooting a gun, bow or casting a fishing line.

"Those are the kids we really want to reach out to," Shipton said.

Sharon Schmitt brought grandkids Parker and Peyton Kluchurosky to the field day for the first time, though the youngsters are no strangers to the outdoors. The kids were most excited about hitting the archery station.

"Their grandma has 80 acres in Masury and they shoot there," Schmitt said.

Greenville's Nick Redmond brought Camdyn and Mason to the field day for their first time. Redmond hunts and is looking forward to hitting the woods with Mason.

"Mason just took his hunter safety course so he's going to be going out this year," Redmond said.

Both he and his wife, Breanna, see a lot of value to the youth field days teaching the safety of all the equipment.

"And it gets them off video games," Redmond said.

Fredonia's Brandon Byler brought daughters Madalyn and Charleigh to field days for the second year in a row.

"They had a lot of fun last year; Charleigh was up at 6 a.m. ready to go to field day," Byler said.

It takes 55 to 60 volunteers to run the youth field day, which includes grilling hot dogs and burgers for lunch.

"We start planning for this day and fundraising in the middle of January," Shipton said. "It's about a six-month ordeal."

PUBLIC INPUT HEARING NOTIFICATION

For FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company's Rate Increase Request

Docket No. R-2024-3047068

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Graduate Palo Alto (Coaly Ballroom A/B), 125 S Atherton Street, State College, PA 16801

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Presiding: Administrative Law Judge Katrina L. Dunderdale, **Dates: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 & Wednesday, July 17th, 2024, Times: 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM**

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- You must dial the toll-free number listed below
- You must enter a PIN number when instructed to do so, also listed below
- You must speak your name when prompted
- The telephone system will connect you to the hearing

Toll-free Bridge Number: 1.866.675.4411

PIN Number: 23464163

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TTY-based Telecommunications Relay Service number for persons who are deaf or hearing-impaired is: 711.

Proof of Publication of Notice in Butler Eagle

Under Act No. 587, Approved May 16, 1929

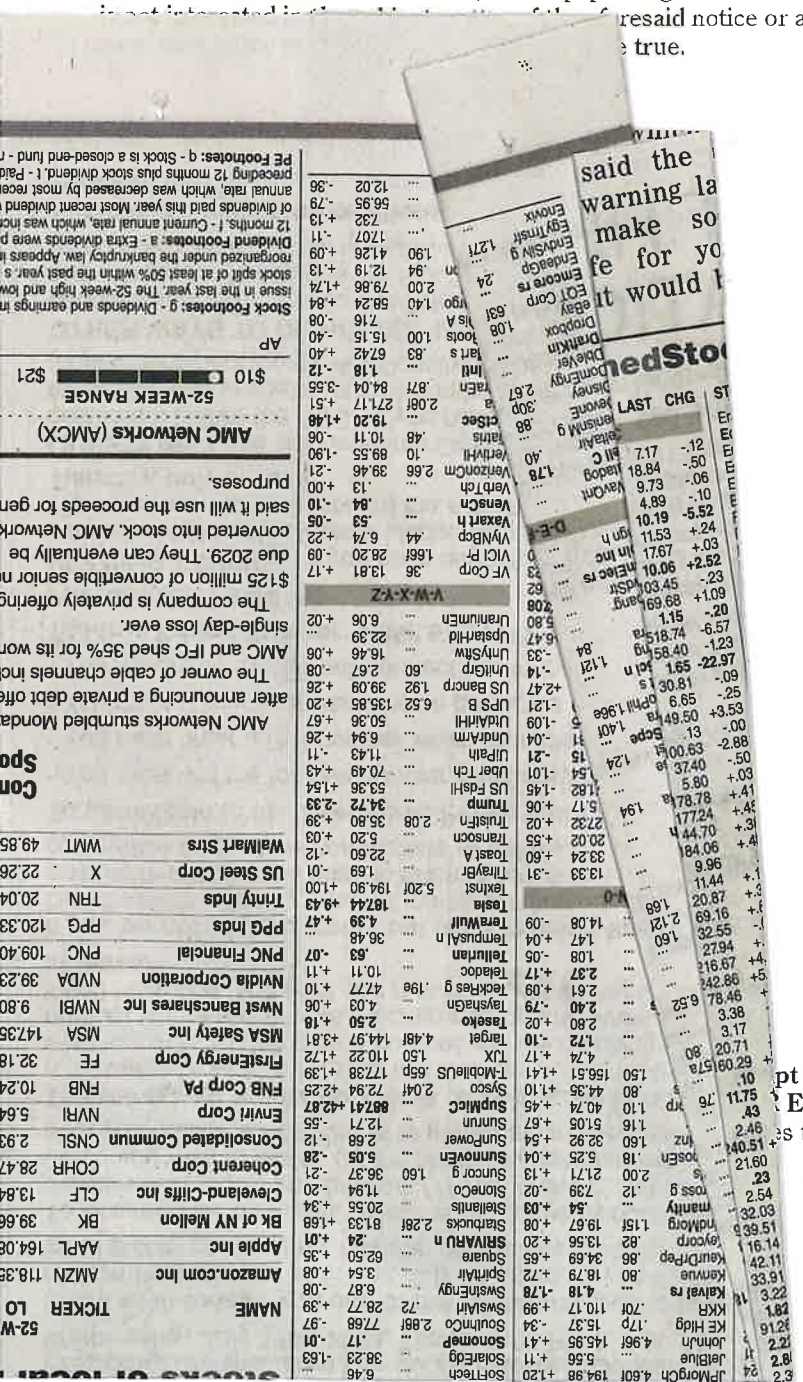
State of Pennsylvania,
County of Butler.

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

18th Day of June 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.



Butler Eagle

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 18th

Day of June 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

First Energy Media

154 East Aurora Road #174

Northfield, OH 44067

Attn: Kathy Alexander

TO BUTLER EAGLE, Dr.

For publishing the notice or publication attached Hereto on the above stated dates	$	569.00
Probating same	$	3.00
Total	$	572.00

pt for Advertising Costs

EAGLE, a newspaper of general circulation, hereby acknowledge s that the same have been duly paid.

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

By _____

OBITUARIES

James Harrison

James R. "Jim" Harrison, 90, a former resident of South Buffalo Township, Pa., passed on Sunday, Oct. 29, 2023, surrounded by the love of his immediate family.



Harrison

Born April 15, 1933, in Keyser, W.Va., Jim came of age in Moorefield, W.Va., where his parents managed the Hotel McNeill and owned Harrison's Restaurant for many years. It was here he developed his lifelong passion for fishing, spending many hours along the South Branch of the Potomac River. After high school graduation, Jim served three years in the U.S. Navy before going on to receive his bachelor's degree in business administration from Shepherd College. He then embarked on a career in teaching, first in Prince George's County, Md., before spending the majority of his career in Buffalo Township, Pa.

Jim touched countless lives as a fifth- and sixth-grade teacher and a Little League Baseball coach, helping kids navigate the difficulties of growing up through his kind and affable demeanor and constant willingness to invest himself in their personal development. Jim also was an extremely talented builder, and he performed most of the construction renovation work on the home in South Buffalo where he lived for more than 30 years.

Jim was preceded in death by his parents, Lena and James Marvin "Red" Harrison; his older sister, Marjorie Collins; and his younger brothers, Ed and Dick.

He is survived by his wife of 57 years, Karin (Claypool) Harrison; son, Christopher and his wife, Tiffany; grandchildren, Keira and Blake; and many beloved nieces and nephews.

HARRISON — A celebration of the life of James R. "Jim" Harrison, who died Sunday, Oct. 29, 2023, will be held from 3 to 7 p.m. Monday, June 24, 2024, at Slate Lick Presbyterian Church, 106 Brown Road, Slate Lick, Pa., with an informal lay memorial service and remembrances starting at 6:30 p.m. Light refreshments will be served.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests memorial donations in Jim's name be sent to Trout Unlimited, Seneca Branch No. 272, 242 Sartwell Creek Road, Port Allegany, PA 16743.

Please sign the guest book at www.butlereagle.com.

James Wahl

James E. Wahl, 83, of Evans City, passed away peacefully at home on Thursday, June 13, 2024, surrounded by his family.



Wahl

He was born in Evans City on June 30, 1940, son of the late Clara Wahl Hager and Frank Hager. He was the youngest and last surviving member of 11 children.

In 1958, Jim enlisted and served honorably in the U.S. Army. During his active service time, he was based at Fort Benning, Ga. Upon returning to Butler County, he married the love of his life, Alice Ann (Montgomery) Wahl, and the couple were happily married for the past 62 years.

Jim was a member of Old Union Presbyterian Church in Mars. He retired from Vesuvius USA (Lava Crucible), where he had worked at their former plant in Zelienople for 37 years.

Family was always Jim's first love. He took great pride in his two children, five grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. He was an active part of their lives and an ever-present guide to their well-being.

If Jim had a second love, it was bound to have an engine. From classic cars, of which he has owned a few, to motor sports and NASCAR, he was always interested in automobiles and was a backyard garage man that could tinker with the best of them.

Jim was preceded in death by his parents and 10 siblings.

He is survived by his wife, Alice Ann (Montgomery) Wahl; son, James L. Wahl Sr. (Sara Slaghenhaupt); daughter, Dianna M. (Mark) Burd; granddaughter, Mallory L. (Jason) Haefner; grandsons, James L. Wahl Jr., Simon D. Burd, Garrett J. Burd and Hayden D. Burd; and great-grandchildren, Aiden R. Haefner, Sophie Ann E. Haefner and Alyce K. Wahl.

WAHL — Family and friends of James E. Wahl, who died Thursday, June 13, 2024, will be received from 2 to 4 and 6 to 8 p.m. Monday, with services to follow at 8 p.m., at **BOYLAN FUNERAL HOME & CREMATION CENTER OF CONNOQUENESSING TOWNSHIP**, 856 Evans City Road, Renfrew. Pastor Peter de Vries will be officiating the services.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Jim's honor to the Butler Humane Society, https://butlercountyhs.org/make-a-donation/memorial-donations/

Online condolences and directions are at www.boylanfuneralservices.com.

Please sign the guest book at www.butlereagle.com.

IN MEMORIAM

Julian J. Bieber

February 2, 1930 – June 16, 2013



Miss you Dad,
Hard to believe it was
Father's Day, 11 years
ago, when we lost you.
I miss you more than ever,
Your guidance and your
love,
But I know you're still
watching
Silently from above.

Love,
Your daughter Kathy

IN MEMORIAM

In loving memory of Shamus Young who passed away on June 15, 2022.



He who made life
wonderful is gone,
And we are bereft,
Of all save the blessed
memories
We've cherished since he
left.

Sorrowing Still,
Mom, Patrick,
Ruth and Daniel

IN MEMORIAM

In loving memory of
Edward S. Kosinski
July 3, 1933 -
June 16, 2023
on his year anniversary
of his passing from
his wife of 72 years.
I remember the day I met
you
And the day God made
you mine,
I remember the day I lost
you
And will till the end of time.
Among my tears and
heartaches
There's one thing that
makes me glad,
That you chose me to
spend
The happy years we had.
I tend your grave with
loving care.
Because a part of my heart
is buried there.

With love,
Jane

EAGLE WANT ADS
BRING RESULTS

FATHER'S DAY Tributes

FATHER'S DAY TRIBUTE

William R. Riding



Happy Heavenly Father's Day to you on this day.
We may not have you with us but you are certainly in our heart.
We love and miss you, Dad.

Love,
Mom, Cyn, Stevo,
Plume and Sandy

FATHER'S DAY TRIBUTE

In loving memory of our dad, Rick Everly on Father's Day.



It's hard to believe that it's been 10 years since you left us, but we hold onto the memories of the laughter and joy you brought into our lives.
Know that you are forever in our hearts.
Happy 10th Father's Day in Heaven!
Forever loved and missed,
Jeremy, Jason and Mum

FATHER'S DAY TRIBUTE

In loving memory of
Lester R. Hall

Dad, not a day goes by that we don't think about you.
We wish we could hear your laughter and still have your wisdom to guide us.

Love and miss you,
Barb, Ron,
Bev and Elaine

FATHER'S DAY TRIBUTE

To our very special dad and grandpa, Regis R. Ferrere.
Happy Father's Day
June 16, 2024



Each night we shed a silent tear,
As we speak to you in prayer,
To let you know we love you,
And just how much we care.
Take our million teardrops,
Wrap them up in love,
Then ask the wind to carry them,
To you in Heaven above.

All our love,
Children and
Grandchildren

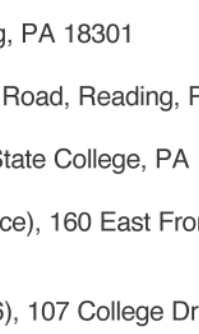
FATHER'S DAY TRIBUTE

In loving memory
of my dad,
DeLorme "Sweeney"
Baughman,
on Father's Day.
His life was full of kindly deeds
A helping hand to those in need.
A happy smile, a heart of gold
No dearer friend this world did hold.

Missing you,
Pam and Family

FATHER'S DAY TRIBUTE

Happy Heavenly Father's Day to our dad and grandfather Gene Manuel.

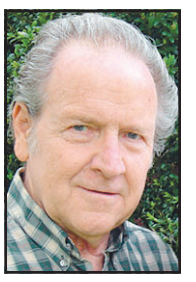


Dad, even though you're no longer with us, your love and guidance continue to live on in our hearts.

Love and miss you,
Tim and Tori,
Terry, Margie,
Nathan, Amber and Lumen
Cindy, John, Patrick, Olivia,
Sean, Beckett,
Cian and Enda,
Gary, Jen, Zach, Megan,
Liz and Connor

FATHER'S DAY TRIBUTE

In loving memory of Paul D. Kane, Sr.
October 4, 1939
to
November 21, 2023



If we could write a story
It would be the greatest ever told
Of our kind and loving Dad
Who had a heart of gold.
Someone who meant so much
And was loved by all he knew,
Who left behind a trail of tears
And precious memories, too.
This first Father's Day without you, Dad,
Will be difficult beyond measure,
But your love, smile, and endless humor
We will hold in our hearts and treasure forever.
We say that you were our Dad with great pride,
And words just can't convey
How much we wish you were still here
With us on this Father's Day.

We love and
miss you, Dad,
Marilyn, Kris, and Paul Jr.

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Docket No. R-2024-3047068

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BE-1558412

Auto enthusiasts seek parts, more at event

By William Pitts
Eagle Staff Writer





Above, a large stock of NASCAR merchandise was sold by Jimmy Johnson and Joe Mazza for charity during the Big Butler Parts-A-Rama on Sunday. Right, Mazza stands next to a stock car driving simulator during the event.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY WILLIAM PITTS/BUTLER EAGLE

PROSPECT — The Big Butler Fairgrounds came alive this past weekend as automotive enthusiast packed the grounds for the annual Big Butler Parts-A-Rama, a supersize, four-day automotive swap meet.

Throughout the fairgrounds, vendors set up to hawk all manner of automotive accessories and memorabilia — everything from massive truck tires to paint supplies, from oil filters to chrome wheels, and service manuals for cars dating back nearly a century.

If you were looking for parts for a very specific year and model of car — especially American cars — chances were a Parts-A-Rama vendor such as Clyde Crispen had something to offer.

"We have Mustang parts, (Chevy) Nova parts," Crispen said. "I've sold a bunch of air filters and PCV valves."

"We sell everything as far as probably from 1930s all the way up to the '90s," said fellow vendor Jay Nichols. "I think wheels sell the best ... wheels and tires."

Not all of the vendors were there to sell car parts. One vendor, Chris Berteto, found Parts-A-Rama to be a good place to sell his art.

For 15 years, Berteto has been making sculptures out of everyday household items, and patrons had a chance to take some of them home. These included a dog made out of silverware and wrenches, as well as a little girl made out of metal cans and a chain-link hare riding a tiny bicycle.

"I work on this stuff for a few hours after work, and that's pretty much it," Berteto said. "I've been coming here for the last four years, and I sell once a year."

Another popular exhibit was Jimmy Johnson's extensive collection of NASCAR memorabilia, which was being sold to benefit Project Help, a charitable organization which serves homeless and struggling veterans.

"All of our merchandise is donated," Johnson said. "All the money goes to the veterans."

Johnson, along with partner Joe Mazza, also sold time in a "NASCAR simulator" — a version of the Sega arcade game Daytona USA 2 stuffed inside a full-sized stock car which anyone could play for a few bucks at a time.

According to Mazza, the car itself was driven by former NASCAR Cup Series champion Kevin Harvick at one point, before being repainted and retrofitted into a simulator game.

The two came in from Virginia to spend time at Parts-A-Rama this week and promote their cause, as part of a nationwide tour.

"We're all over the country doing this every week," Johnson said. "I travel from Florida to Michigan to New York. This is the first time I've been here."

Johnson, in particular, was impressed with the show that Butler has put on.

"The facility is a good facility, the people are friendly, and we've done some good business," Johnson said.

Historic SS United States ordered out of its berth in Philly

By Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — The SS United States, a historic ship that still holds the transatlantic speed record it set more than 70 years ago, must leave its berth on the Delaware River in Philadelphia by Sept. 12, a federal judge says.

The decision issued Friday by U.S. District Judge Anita Brody culminated a years-old rent dispute between the conservancy that oversees the 1,000-foot ocean liner and its landlord, Penn Warehousing. It stemmed from an August 2021 decision by Penn Warehousing to double the ship's daily dockage to $1,700, an increase the conservancy refused to accept.

When the conservancy continued to pay its previous rate, set in 2011, Penn Warehousing terminated the lease in March 2022. After much legal wrangling, Brody held a bench trial in January but also encouraged the two sides to reach a settlement instead of leaving it up to her.

The judge ultimately ruled that the conservancy's failure to pay the new rate did not amount to a contract breach or entitle Penn Warehousing to damages. But she also ruled that under Pennsylvania contract law, the berthing agreement is terminable at will with reasonable notice, which Penn Warehousing had issued in March 2022.

"The judge's decision gives us a very limited window to find a new home for the SS United States and raise the resources necessary to move the ship and keep her safe," Susan Gibbs, conservancy president and granddaughter of the ship's designer, told The Philadelphia Inquirer.

Besides finding a new home, the conservancy also must obtain funds for insurance, tugs, surveys and dock preparations for a move.

"The best hope of everyone involved was that the conservancy could successfully repurpose the ship," said Craig Mills, an attorney for Penn Warehousing. "But after decades of decay and delay, it is time to acknowledge the unavoidable and return Pier 82 to productive commercial service."

Christened in 1952, the SS United States was once considered a beacon of American engineering, doubling as a military vessel that could carry thousands of troops. On its maiden voyage in 1952, it shattered the transatlantic speed record in both directions, when it reached an average speed of 36 knots, or just over 41 mph.



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For FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company's Rate Increase Request

Docket No. R-2024-3047068

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Butler County Community College (Founders Hall – Parking Lot #6), 107 College Drive, Butler, PA 16002

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Greensburg Garden and Civic Center (Laurel Room & Iris Room), 951 Old Salem Road, Greensburg, PA 15601

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Presiding: Administrative Law Judge Katrina L. Dunderdale, **Dates: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 & Wednesday, July 17th, 2024, Times: 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM**

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- You must enter a PIN number when instructed to do so, also listed below
- You must speak your name when prompted
- The telephone system will connect you to the hearing

Toll-free Bridge Number: 1.866.675.4411

PIN Number: 23464163

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TTY-based Telecommunications Relay Service number for persons who are deaf or hearing-impaired is: 711.

BE-1558412

PROOF OF INSERTION

Name of Publication: Centre Daily Times

City, State: State College PA

Client/Advertiser: FirstEnergy

Insertion Order #: 1681

Date[s] of Insertion: 6/16/24

Caption: FirstEnergy Notice Rate Hearings -June

Ad Size: ½-page ad

Total Number of Insertions: 1

My signature verifies that this ad was inserted as scheduled according to the above specifications.

Pamela Wynn _____ 6/20/24

Signature Date

Pamela Wynn

Name [please print]

YOUR 7-DAY FORECAST

AccuWeather

Get notifications of nearby lightning!
Get the AccuWeather App

Sat. night	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Patchy clouds	Partly sunny and nice	Near-record warmth with some sun	Sunny with extreme heat	Partly sunny and continued very hot	Hot; a t-storm around in the p.m.	Sunny, hot and humid	Sunny, very warm and humid
51°	79° 61°	92° 66°	97° 70°	97° 69°	95° 67°	95° 69°	88° 65°
RealFeel: 53°	**RealFeel:** 82°/61°	**RealFeel:** 98°/69°	**RealFeel:** 102°/73°	**RealFeel:** 102°/70°	**RealFeel:** 100°/68°	**RealFeel:** 100°/69°	**RealFeel:** 93°/64°
	UV Index: 11	**UV Index:** 11	**UV Index:** 11	**UV Index:** 11	**UV Index:** 10	**UV Index:** 11	**UV Index:** 11

The patented **AccuWeather.com RealFeel Temperature®** is the only index that includes all the weather factors that play a role in how we perceive temperature, including the effects of wind, humidity, sunshine, precipitation, pressure, and elevation. Shown are the highest and lowest values for each day. The higher the **AccuWeather.com UV Index™** number, the greater the need for eye and skin protection.

YOUR ACTIVITIES FORECAST

	Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thu.	Fri.	Sat.
FISHING INDEX	7	9	9	9	9	9	8
OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES INDEX	9	9	7	8	7	8	8
HIKING INDEX	9	9	7	8	6	8	8
GOLFING INDEX	10	10	9	9	8	10	9

0-2: Poor; **3-4**: Fair; **5-6**: Good; **7-8**: Very Good; **9-10**: Excellent.

ALMANAC

State College through 2 p.m. Friday

TEMPERATURE

High/low*	79°/61°
Normal high/low	77°/59°
Last year high/low	66°/52°
Record high	93° (1988)
Record low	40° (1978)

PRECIPITATION

24 hours through 2 p.m. Fri.*	0.02"
Month to date (normal)	0.42" (1.92")
Year to date (normal)	23.24" (17.93")
Last year to date	13.03"

*Estimated

COOLING DEGREE DAYS

Degree days are an indicator of energy needs. The more the total degree days, the more energy is necessary to cool.

Friday	5
Month to date (normal)	43 (47)
Since January 1 (normal)	106 (94)
Last year to date	75

NATIONAL EXTREMES

FRIDAY

for the 48 contiguous states

High: 100° in Blythe, CA

Low: 35° in Sun River, MT

SUN & MOON

Sunset tonight	8:45 p.m.
Sunrise Sunday	5:39 a.m.
Moonrise today	2:34 p.m.
Moonset today	1:51 a.m.

MOON PHASES

Full	Last	New	First
Jun 21	Jun 28	Jul 5	Jul 13

WEATHER HISTORY

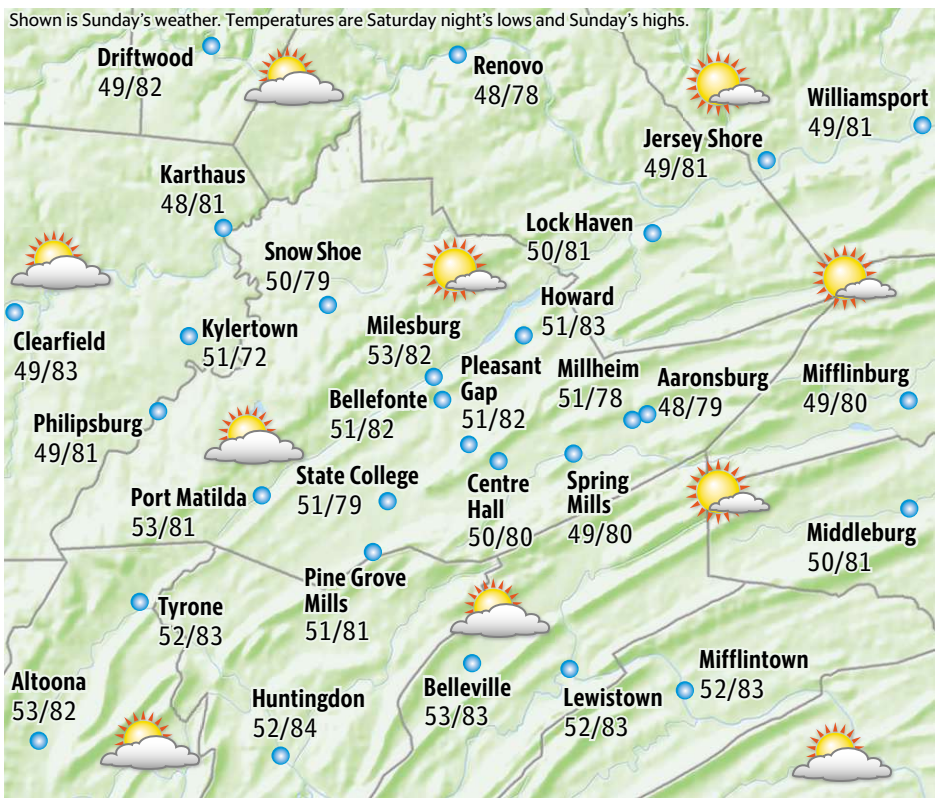
Damaging hail pelted Dubuque, Iowa, on June 16, 1882. Bits of material were found in the hailstones, including gravel, blades of grass and even live frogs.

WEATHER TRIVIA™

Q: What weather instrument was named after Dorothy's dog?

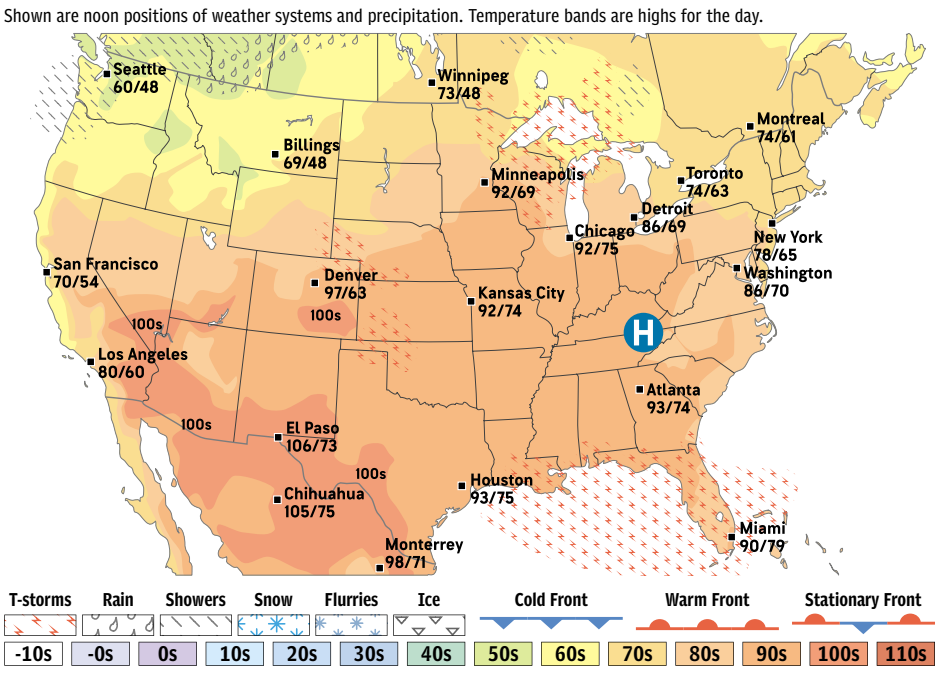
A: Toto which is designed to study tornadoes

Forecasts and graphics provided by **AccuWeather, Inc.** ©2024



SUNDAY'S NATIONAL FORECAST

Shown are noon positions of weather systems and precipitation. Temperature bands are highs for the day.



AROUND THE REGION

	Sunday			Monday		
City	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Allentown	80	58	s	87	63	pc
Altoona	82	63	pc	94	69	pc
Bloomsburg	80	59	pc	92	64	c
Clearfield	83	61	pc	96	65	pc
Danville	80	59	pc	92	65	pc
DuBois	83	62	pc	93	67	pc
Ebensburg	81	62	pc	90	68	c
Erie	83	68	s	89	75	c
Harrisburg	85	65	pc	95	69	pc
Hazleton	77	57	s	88	62	pc
Huntingdon	84	62	pc	96	68	pc
Jersey Shore	81	60	s	94	65	pc
Johnstown	78	65	pc	89	73	pc
Lancaster	83	61	pc	89	68	pc
Lewistown	83	60	pc	94	67	pc
Philadelphia	86	65	s	90	70	pc
Pittsburgh	87	66	s	95	71	pc
Punxsutawney	84	62	pc	95	67	pc
Scranton	79	60	s	92	67	c
St. Mary's	82	59	pc	94	67	c
Tyrone	83	59	pc	96	68	pc
Wilkes-Barre	81	60	s	92	67	pc
Williamsport	81	60	s	93	66	pc

AROUND THE NATION

	Sunday			Monday		
City	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Anchorage	67	53	s	62	52	s
Atlanta	93	74	pc	92	71	pc
Boston	71	60	s	79	67	pc
Bozeman	65	43	pc	58	37	r
Chicago	92	75	pc	95	78	pc
Dallas	94	75	s	91	75	t
Denver	97	63	s	97	59	s
Detroit	86	69	s	97	74	c
Honolulu	87	76	sh	86	75	sh
Las Vegas	102	76	s	98	73	s
Los Angeles	80	60	s	76	60	s
Miami	90	79	t	88	78	t
New Orleans	91	75	t	85	79	t
New York City	78	65	s	83	69	pc
Orlando	90	73	t	89	74	sh
Philadelphia	86	65	s	90	70	pc
Phoenix	111	80	s	107	77	s
Richmond	89	66	s	93	70	s
St. Louis	99	79	pc	97	77	pc
Salt Lake City	82	66	s	83	51	pc
San Francisco	70	54	s	71	54	s
Seattle	60	48	pc	66	49	c
Washington, DC	86	70	pc	93	73	pc

Weather(W): **s**-sunny, **pc**-partly cloudy, **c**-cloudy, **sh**-showers, **t**-thunderstorms, **r**-rain, **sf**-snow flurries, **sn**-snow, **i**-ice

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For FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company's Rate Increase Request

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AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

Kathy Alexander
Not specified
154 E Aurora RD # 174
Northfield OH 44067-2053

STATE OF WISCONSIN, COUNTY OF BROWN

The Public Opinion, a newspaper published in the city of Chambersburg, Franklin County, State of Pennsylvania, and personal knowledge of the facts herein state and that the notice hereto annexed was Published in said newspapers in the issue:

06/16/2024, 06/18/2024

and that the fees charged are legal.
Sworn to and subscribed before on 06/18/2024

Legal Clerk

Notary, State of WI, County of Brown

3-7-27

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KAITLYN FELTY
Notary Public
State of Wisconsin

Books

Continued from Page 1A

496, Iowa's new law requiring "age-appropriate" library programs and prohibiting most books depicting or describing sex acts from schools. The law also restricts instruction and curriculum about gender identity and sexual orientation through sixth grade.

But a Des Moines Register survey of Iowa's 325 public school districts found that some schools pulled dozens – even hundreds – of books under the law before a federal judge issued an injunction last December after Butler Abry and other teachers, families and publishers sued.

The Register's reporting also shows several schools returned their pulled books to the shelves after the injunction.

Other districts – more than half – didn't remove books. Several cited the injunction for their decision.

Even so, the Register's data shows districts removed nearly 3,400 books and two DVDs to comply with the law, including nearly 1,000 unique titles.

The data also exposes the breadth of pulled books, including the American classic "To Kill a Mockingbird" by Harper Lee, the Newbery Medal novel "The Giver" by Lois Lowry and "Captain Underpants and the Sensational Saga of Sir Stinks-A-Lot," a popular children's book with an LGBTQ+ character by Dav Pilkey.

For Butler Abry, the frustrating experience illustrates what she and other opponents view as the overly broad nature of Senate File 496, which they say is so vague that it conflates literature with pornography and discriminates against LGBTQ+ Iowans.

"It was like we were having to solve a problem that we had already solved," Butler Abry said of having to vet books when policies already existed for the public to challenge books. "But with very little guidance, and in a way that we were very scared that people were going to come in and yell at us metaphorically or in real life."

Republican lawmakers who passed the law contend that school officials have gone far beyond the law's intent, removing classic books and novels they say do not contain explicit sex.

George Orwell's "1984" is one of the books Iowa Senate Education Committee Chair Ken Rozenboom, a Republican, says was caught up in the overreach. The book was pulled by nine districts, the Register survey found, with only one of them returning the book to its shelves.

"The plain text of Senate File 496 does not ban a single book. All it does is put forth an age-appropriateness standard for the districts to apply for themselves," said Republican state Rep. Jeff Shipley. "Therefore, when these school districts are banning '1984,' and when these school districts are banning Holocaust memoirs, that is 100% on them. Nothing in state law compelled them to do that."

Rozenboom said he reread the classic novel during the 2023 legislative session as lawmakers crafted the bill's language prohibiting books depicting or describing sexual acts as defined by law.

" '1984' never met that definition – never did," he said of the dystopian book about an authoritarian state that censors information.

The novel does contain sexual content: Main characters Julia and Winston talk about and later have sex. Within the first 20 pages of the book, Winston fantasizes about having sex with Julia and killing her.

Lawmakers were warned by library associations that books like Orwell's best-known novel could be caught up in the bans, Butler Abry said.

"I guess they should be more careful about the way they write laws, because if this had unintended consequences, people tried to tell them what consequences this would have," she said, "and the lawmakers didn't listen."

Culling thousands of books

On Jan. 30, the Register launched a statewide survey to determine how many books have been removed from Iowa's 325 public school districts under Senate File 496 and were returned to shelves after the injunction.

Register reporters undertook the task because no Iowa governmental body, including the Iowa Department of Education, is required to track materials removed because of the law.

Hundreds of open record requests showed that, after Senate File 496 passed in April 2023, banned books in Iowa schools went from a relatively rare occurrence to a culling that included thousands of books.

A previous Register investigation documented just 100 challenges, encompassing 60 individual book titles and one movie in Iowa's public school districts between August 2020 and May 2023.

All 325 public school districts responded to the Register's survey on Senate File 496, with 92% answering a question about whether they removed books from their libraries in response to the new law.

Of the 325 districts, 36% confirmed they had removed at least one book because of the law.

In total, the Register identified 3,385 books – and two DVDs – removed. After the injunction, 1,295 of those books were returned to shelves.

That means more than 2,000 books remain inaccessible to students, including works by renowned authors such as Orwell, Toni Morrison and Stephen King.

"It's unacceptable that some schools are continuing to follow this blocked law, even though the court has ruled that the book ban violates students' rights and cannot be enforced during the lawsuit," said Thomas Story, an ACLU of Iowa staff attorney. The ACLU is representing plaintiffs in one of two lawsuits against Senate File 496.

On average, school districts removed about 30 books. But some districts removed more than 100 titles, including Clear Lake with 126; West Burlington with 142; and Clear Creek-Amana with 230.

After the injunction, Clear Creek-Amana returned nearly all of the removed books to the shelves. Clear Lake reshelved 25, and West Burlington reshelved none.

FAFSA

Continued from Page 1A

release of the application from its typical Oct. 1 date, cutting the time students had to submit their applications by three months compared to previous years.

In March, when the FAFSA issues were worse, schools serving the lowest-income students experienced a larger decrease in the number of applications completed. Specifically, there was a 48% drop in processed applications for these schools. Meanwhile, schools with a high-income student body saw only a 34% drop. Nationwide, the overall decrease was 40%.

The 14-point difference between the lowest and highest-income schools underscores a significant disparity in how many students, and from which backgrounds, ultimately get connected with federal financial aid, experts said.

While economically disadvantaged students are the ones most in need of financial aid, they have historically had the lowest FAFSA completion rates, said Bill DeBaun, senior director of data and strategic initiatives at the National College Attainment Network, a nonprofit organization that promotes college access and success.

The latest data as of May 24 showed that the disparity has narrowed as the Education Department addressed some of the problems with the form and accelerated application processing in April and May.

The Education Department says more than 10 million FAFSA forms have been submitted to date, and the agency is processing them in one to three days. James Kvaal, the education undersecretary, told USA TODAY last month that any student who still hasn't submitted the form should complete it as soon as possible.

Nonetheless, the overall rates are still worse than last year, and the disparate impact on low-income students in the initial months of the rollout remains a concern for families, educators and policymakers, especially considering that the path to college education heavily depends on financial aid packages.

The fact that several institutions were unable to make these determinations in March and April would have a "disproportionate impact" on the enrollment numbers of low-income students, said Emmanual Guillory, senior government relations director at the American Council on Education.

Another concern is whether the FAFSA mishap will further widen the equity gap – essentially reversing progress made in recent years, advocates and experts say.

Last month, the American Council on Education and 35 other higher education groups sent a letter to Congress asking them "to undertake a long-term assessment of the FAFSA delays' impact on students – particularly low-income students – and institutions."

"Everybody's far behind, but the schools and districts that are farthest behind are lower income," said Ellie Bruecker, director of research at the Institute for College Access and Success, a nonprofit group that advocates for affordable college education. "They also tend to be serving higher proportions of students of color."

When USA TODAY compared the lowest-income schools with the highest-income ones, the difference in average completion rates was 13 points this year. Last year, it was 11 points.

'Do I even get to go to college?'

Jesse Johnson will be the first in his family to go to college. He plans to study radiology at Northern Kentucky University this fall. But for months, the FAFSA rollout debacle threatened that prospect.

The 18-year-old northeastern Kentucky student was afraid that his financial aid application wouldn't be processed in time to cover his college costs.

He started to doubt his future

"Do I even get to go to college?" Johnson asked. That nagging question swung back and forth in his head for months.

"I was on pins and needles the whole time because I didn't think I'd be able to go," he told USA TODAY.

Johnson first tried submitting his FAFSA in early January, but it took months for the Federal Student Aid office to process his mother's Social Security number, a common issue reported by applicants.

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Docket No. R-2024-3047068

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Netanyahu dissolves coalition War Cabinet

UN says promised pauses in fighting to allow aid in haven't materialized yet

John Bacon
USA TODAY



Palestinians hold Eid al-Adha prayers Sunday by the ruins of the Al-Rahma mosque destroyed by Israeli airstrikes in Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip.
MOHAMMED SALEM/REUTERS

Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has disbanded the coalition War Cabinet that helped manage the military operations against Hamas in Gaza and Hezbollah in Lebanon, multiple media outlets reported Monday.

The decision came days after key opposition leader Benny Gantz, a former defense minister, resigned from the War Cabinet, citing Netanyahu's failure to reveal his plans for postwar Gaza. Gantz also accused the prime minister of failing to prioritize negotiating the release of more than 100 hostages still held by militants in Gaza.

The War Cabinet had included Netanyahu, Gantz and current Defense Minister Yoav Gallant. Netanyahu aid Ron Dermer and Gantz supporter Gadi Eisenkot, a former general, served as observers. The change allows Netanyahu to stave off demands from far-right Israeli leaders to join the war operation's inner circle.

Netanyahu and Gallant will instead conduct smaller consultations with officials ahead of key war decisions, The Times of Israel says.

Meanwhile, U.S. Special Envoy Amos Hochstein will meet Monday with Netanyahu, President Isaac Herzog and opposition leaders Yair Lapid and Gantz with aims to to deescalate tensions between Israel and Hezbollah militants, multiple media outlets in the U.S. and Israel reported.

Intensified cross-border fire from Lebanon's Hezbollah movement into Israel "is bringing us to the brink of what could be a wider escalation, one that could have devastating consequences for Lebanon and the entire region," Israeli military spokesperson Rear Admiral Daniel Hagari said Sunday.

A daily pause in fighting along a main road in Gaza promised by the Israeli military – that drew criticism from Netanyahu – has not materialized, a U.N. official said Monday. U.N. Palestinian relief chief Philippe Lazzarini said fighting continues unimpeded in Rafah and southern Gaza despite the announcement of "tactical pauses" from 5 a.m. until 4 p.m. daily to allow for the flow of humanitarian aid.

Lazzarini said his agency received a notification that there would be a pause, but it was soon followed by the government contradicting that instruction.

"For the time being, I see nothing which would qualify to the definition of a pause," he said. "Operationally, nothing has changed."

Despite growing international pressure for a cease-fire, an agreement to halt the fighting still appears distant, more than eight months since the Oct. 7 attack by Hamas fighters on Israel triggered a ground assault on the enclave by Israeli forces.

Although opinion polls suggest most Israelis support the government's aim of destroying Hamas, there have been widespread protests attacking the government for not doing more to bring home around 120 hostages who are still in Gaza after being taken hostage on Oct. 7.

Since Hamas' incursion, which killed some 1,200 Israelis and foreigners in Israeli communities, Israel's military campaign has killed more than 37,000 Palestinians, according to Palestinian health ministry figures, and destroyed much of Gaza.

An Associated Press investigation identified at least 60 Palestinian families where at least 25 people were killed – sometimes four generations from the same bloodline – in bombings across Gaza between October and December, the deadliest and most destructive period of the war. Nearly a quarter of those families lost more than 50 family members, and several families have almost no one left to document the toll, especially as documenting and sharing information became harder.

Youssef Salem spent months filling a spreadsheet as news of the deaths of family members was confirmed. He said he wanted to preserve a last link to the web of relationships.

"My uncles were wiped out, totally," Salem said. "The heads of households, their wives, children and grandchildren."

The Palestinian Authority, the governmental body President Joe Biden hopes will govern Gaza after the war, could fall apart in the coming months, Norwegian Foreign Minister Espen Barth Eide said on Monday.

The authority manages the Israeli-occupied West Bank, but has struggled to remain solvent as Israel withholds hundreds of millions in tax collections claiming the authority is funding Hamas members and their families. Barth Eide cited the lack of funding, continuing violence and Israel's employment crackdown that banned an estimated 500,000 Palestinians in the West Bank from working in Israel.

"The situation is extremely dire," Barth Eide told Reuters. "If (the authority) collapses, you could end up having another Gaza, which would be terrible for everybody, including the people of Israel."

Contributing: Reuters

CDC: Salmonella outbreak linked to bearded dragons

Mary Walrath-Holdridge
USA TODAY

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is investigating a multistate salmonella outbreak linked to pet bearded dragon lizards.

While bearded dragons are popular pets, they are also prone to carrying germs that can easily cause illness in humans, especially children, the CDC said in a warning Friday. As of June 14, the ongoing investigation has found a total of 15 people in nine states who have gotten salmonella illnesses in the outbreak, the agency said. Nearly 60% of cases have been found in children under the age of 5, the CDC said. No deaths have been reported.

Twelve of the fifteen impacted people were interviewed and the CDC found 58% reported direct contact with a bearded dragon before getting sick.

In at least one instance, a child did not directly touch the bearded dragon but may have been exposed via indirect contact, the CDC said. Most people had close contact with their pets at home.

Though they are generally considered easier to keep than other reptile species, the CDC does not suggest bearded dragons be kept as pets for children younger than 5, adults 65 or older, or people with weakened immune systems.

Bearded dragons can carry salmonella germs in their droppings even if they look healthy and clean, according to the CDC. Touching your lizard or anything in its environment and then touching your face, mouth or food can lead to the ingestion of germs that can lead to salmonella poisoning.

Symptoms include bloody diarrhea for more than three days, excessive vomiting and stomach cramps, and most commonly occur between six hours and six days after exposure. Though most people recover in four to seven days, those with weakened immune systems, including children younger than 5 and adults over 65, may experience more severe symptoms that require medical treatment or hospitalization.

The CDC suggests the following safety tips when interacting with your pet reptile:

- **Wash your hands:** Anyone who touches or feeds your bearded dragon should always wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water right after that. This is especially important before someone holds or feeds a baby or child under the age of 5.
- **Play safely:** Don't kiss or snuggle your bearded dragon, and don't eat or drink around it. This can spread salmonella germs to your mouth and make you sick.
- **Keep things clean:** Clean your bearded dragon supplies – such as feeders, toys, and food and water containers – outside of the house, if possible. If you must clean the supplies indoors, don't clean them in the kitchen or other areas where you eat or prepare food. Use a laundry sink or bathtub, and thoroughly clean and disinfect the area afterward.

The CDC says related cases were reported in California, Georgia, Iowa, North Carolina, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Tennessee and Texas. New York is home to the most cases with four, followed by Ohio with three and California with two. All other states reported only one case.

As with most outbreaks, the actual number of cases is likely higher than those recorded by health officials, as many people recover at home without testing.

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AFFIDAVIT OF DISTRIBUTION

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
County of Westmoreland

Jenna Poorbaugh, in her capacity as Marketing & Advertising Representative on behalf of TRIB TOTAL MEDIA, INC.

Trib Total Media, Inc. is the publisher of the following publications, Tribune Review Newspaper

1. The inserts for First Energy Media with Insertion Order No. 1682 was distributed to the Publications' Westmoreland circulation on Saturday, June 15th & Tuesday, June 18th.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I hereby execute this Affidavit on this 18th day of June 2024.

TRIB TOTAL MEDIA, INC.

By: J Poorbaugh
Jenna Poorbaugh

Sworn to before me this 19th day of June 2024.

Karen DiCristofaro
Notary Public

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

Jay-Z enters Pa.'s school voucher fight

Billionaire rapper a supporter of initiative backed by Shapiro

BY **STEPHEN CARUSO** AND **KATIE MEYER**
SPOTLIGHT PA

HARRISBURG — A series of events intended to get Philadelphians to support using taxpayer money to fund private school vouchers is bankrolled by an unexpected figure: billionaire rapper Jay-Z.

His company's entrance into the rancorous funding debate comes amid sustained lobbying by advocates for vouchers. An opaque organization with ties to Jeff Yass, Pennsylvania's richest person, has spent nearly $1 million over the past year primarily on this one cause and has loosened its purse strings further during this year's state budget talks.

The voucher effort is largely championed by conservatives but has support from key Democrats including Gov. Josh Shapiro.

Supporters say taxpayer-funded vouchers would give parents and children who attend public schools with low test scores crucial options. Opponents, including many Democrats as well as public school unions and advocates, say the program would divert needed dollars from already underfunded systems and weaken them more.

Republicans, who control the state Senate, championed a $100 million voucher program last year, but it was defeated by the Democratic-controlled state House. Such a proposal is again on the table as lawmakers debate a budget deal ahead of the June 30 deadline.

Dania Diaz — who is the managing director of philanthropy at Roc Nation, Jay-Z's entertainment company, and the executive director of one of Jay-Z's nonprofits, the Shawn Carter Foundation — said the rapper and entrepreneur got involved in the voucher push because of his longtime work funding college scholarships, and because of his familiarity with Philadelphia.

He is a founding partner of the Philly-based REFORM Alliance, which advocates for a less punitive criminal justice system, and also runs the annual Made in America festival in the city.

Jay-Z also is close with Michael Rubin, a Philadelphia billionaire who co-heads REFORM and has put his money behind private education before. Rubin, rapper Meek Mill and comedian Kevin Hart have together donated at least $24 million since 2020 to provide scholarships for Philadelphia students to attend private schools, according to media reports. In at least one case, the three ran the money through a group that helps donors claim a state tax credit that reduces their annual tax payments for donating to private schools.

Diaz spoke with Spotlight PA as Roc Nation kicked off its series of Philadelphia events Tuesday with a session at a North Philly conference center run by the nonprofit Esperanza.

More than a dozen Roc Nation representatives were there, wearing matching T-shirts and handing out materials on the voucher program pending before the Legislature. Several said they had heard about the effort from friends or from Instagram, and noted Roc Nation was paying them for their time.

Diaz said Roc Nation is holding the informational events in part to push back against the argument that the voucher proposal, known as the Pennsylvania Award for Student Success, or PASS, will weaken public schools.

"There are messages out there that are not true," she said. "PASS is not taking money out of the public education system. It's a completely separate line item. It is separately appropriated just for this program."

According to Diaz, Jay-Z's pro-voucher push includes billboards and trucks with digital displays driving through Philadelphia, along with the info sessions. A spokesperson for Roc Nation said he couldn't share how much had been spent, as the number is "still being calculated."

Diaz's argument that vouchers won't harm public education is a common one for supporters of the program.

But many opponents argue creating a voucher program is a slippery slope. The program, they say, could grow year by year and end up diverting considerable dollars from the state's public education budget. They also argue that pulling students out of public schools makes the schools worse for children who remain there.

The debate also comes as Pennsylvania works to fulfill a judge's order to make the state's public education system more equitable, a task Democratic lawmakers and public school advocates have argued will take billions of dollars.

"The crisis in public education funding in America could have been solved a long time ago if billionaires like Jeff Yass and Jay-Z simply paid their fair share in taxes instead of robbing needed money from public schools to fund failed voucher schemes, which hurt poor kids," said Arthur Steinberg, president of the Pennsylvania chapter of the American Federation of Teachers.

This isn't the first time a famous person has thrown their weight behind vouchers.

When the proposal first arose during last year's budget talks, supporters sent a letter to lawmakers urging them to pass it, and signers included prominent conservatives such as Grover Norquist and former U.S. Education Secretary Betsy DeVos, as well as music industry figures with Philadelphia ties such as Mill and talent manager Troy Carter.

It's also not the only major effort underway to promote vouchers in the commonwealth.

The other one is decidedly un-Hollywood. Commonwealth Action, a group formed last year, has prodigiously funded pro-voucher advertisements. Spokesperson Erik Telford said the effort is not connected to Jay-Z's, though he added that the organization is "excited" about the celebrity involvement.

Slightly more information is available about Commonwealth Action's effort, though crucially, the source of its funding is secret.

The group is incorporated as a 501(c)(4) nonprofit, which means it doesn't have to share its donors publicly; opponents have dubbed these "dark money" organizations. Commonwealth Action formed last year just before budget talks began and has spent almost $1 million in the past year to pressure lawmakers, according to state lobbying disclosures.

The group has funded a series of digital, newspaper, radio and billboard ads advocating for the voucher program.

From January to March of this year, the group reported spending nearly $98,000 on indirect lobbying, which targets the public. (Direct lobbying targets state officials or employees.)

Telford confirmed to Spotlight PA that this spending is ongoing and said it resumed for the new budget season in March. Google's political advertising tracker also shows that in May, the group began running digital ads for the first time this year.

"Commonwealth Action remains steadfast in our support for Governor Shapiro's promise to enact Lifeline Scholarships, ensuring Pennsylvania's most vulnerable children have access to a quality education," Telford said in a statement. "The momentum that you see, with celebrities joining alongside parents in highlighting the demand for these scholarships, shows the progress that is possible here in Pennsylvania."

Commonwealth Action has ties to some of Pennsylvania's most powerful and monied conservatives.

It is connected to the Commonwealth Foundation, a prominent Republican think tank in Pennsylvania, and the two share personnel.

Between October 2022 and September 2023, Commonwealth Action also received $575,000 from Commonwealth Partners Chamber of Entrepreneurs, according to that group's most recent filings to the IRS.

Commonwealth Partners — which is run by the Commonwealth Foundation's former CEO — is a free market organization that operates two political action committees that are among the most active in Pennsylvania's pro-voucher movement. Both PACs are almost entirely financed by Yass, a billionaire Wall Street trader.

The voucher proposal that Jay-Z and Commonwealth Action are pushing would give low-income families whose children attend "low-achieving" schools up to $15,000 to pay for private school tuition and fees.

A family would be eligible for the program only if their child attends a school that ranks in the bottom 15% in test scores and if the household income is less than 250% of the federal poverty limit, or about $62,000 for a family of three.

Jay-Z's group is publicly lobbying for $300 million in taxpayer money for scholarships. State Senate Republicans asked for $100 million last year. The bill's language this year doesn't have a price tag.

Last year, state House Democrats who control the chamber presented a united front and pressured Shapiro to remove a voucher proposal from the budget. That front so far appears to be intact, despite the increased pressure.

"Folks have not called, emailed or contacted my office about the numerous mailers from the Commonwealth Foundation," state Rep. Donna Bullock, D-Philadelphia, told Spotlight PA. So far, she hasn't noticed any new calls after Jay-Z's jump into the field either.

State Sen. Anthony Williams, D-Philadelphia, is a vocal advocate for alternatives to public schools and told Spotlight PA that "it's always helpful to have people involved in conversations that can connect with the public."

But amid June's complicated budget debates, he said, "I'm not quite sure what (Jay-Z's involvement) does with regard to the political process."

Spotlight PA is an independent, nonpartisan and nonprofit newsroom producing investigative and public-service journalism that holds power to account and drives positive change in Pennsylvania.



adno=331793

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Friday, July 12, 2024 at 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Double Tree by Hilton (Junior Ballroom), 340 Racetrack Road, Washington, PA 15301

Requests for Interpreters: If you require an interpreter, please contact Judge Dunderdale's office at (412) 565-3550 or via email at mswarner@pa.gov, as soon as possible. If you contact the office too close to the hearing date, we may not have enough time to arrange for an interpreter. If you request an interpreter, we will make every reasonable effort to have one present.

Telephonic Public Input Hearings

Presiding: Administrative Law Judge Katrina L. Dunderdale, **Dates: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 & Wednesday, July 17th, 2024, Times: 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM**

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- You must dial the toll-free number listed below
- You must enter a PIN number when instructed to do so, also listed below
- You must speak your name when prompted
- The telephone system will connect you to the hearing

Toll-free Bridge Number: 1.866.675.4411

PIN Number: 23464163

HEARING EXHIBITS: If you have any hearing exhibits to which you will refer during the telephonic hearing, please email them to Judge Dunderdale's Legal Assistant, Mary Swarner, at mswarner@pa.gov. The legal assistant will forward the exhibits to the Judge and all parties. Exhibits must be received by: **Tuesday, July 9, 2024**.

QUESTIONS? The Pennsylvania Office of Consumer Advocate (OCA) represents the interests of utility customers before the PUC. If you have questions about the public input hearings or the Company's requested rate increase, please contact OCA at its toll-free number (1-800-684-6560) or by email (consumer@paoca.org). Additionally, OCA can help customers pre-register for the Public Input Hearings.

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TTY-based Telecommunications Relay Service number for persons who are deaf or hearing-impaired is: 711.

adno=336658

Cemetery's role in Mt. Pleasant borough history noted

CEMETERY · FROM A3

the all-time wettest April on record, according to the National Weather Service. That's nearly 6 inches more than April 2023 and nearly 5 inches more than April 2022.

"If we could get a little cooperation from the weather here," Meason said, "it wouldn't be so bad."

Crunching the numbers

The cemetery's former maintenance service charged $2,000 per cut. Crews cut between 12 and 18 times from April to October, Meason said, meaning the cemetery paid $24,000 to $36,000 per year for grass cutting.

With new bids offering $3,500 per cut, that increases annual grass cutting costs to between $42,000 and $63,000 per year, he said.

A grass cutting service offered a cheaper rate Tuesday, Meason said, but he wouldn't provide specifics.

"We are strongly considering hiring this company to cut the cemetery at least once a month, twice if we can pull enough money," he said. "We plan on making a public announcement once everything is finalized."

The cemetery receives $700 per lot purchased, a $125 fee from the company that pours the foundation for the headstone and about $500 to open and close the grave.

There are also two gas wells on the property, Vought said, but they don't produce as much as when they were first drilled.

Revenue goes into a perpetual care fund at a local bank, where it accrues interest, Meason said.

"That fund is there to grow interest so that we can use the money for maintenance in the cemetery, and most of the money we get goes toward cutting grass," he said.

Burials on the decline

But with fewer people purchasing lots at the cemetery in recent years, revenue is harder to come by.

Nearly 61% of people who died across the country in 2023 opted for cremation, according to the Cremation Association of North America based in Wheeling, Ill. The association — which has collected cremation data in the United States and Canada for 25 years — predicts more than 65% of deaths will result in cremation by 2028.

Vought was unable to provide the number of Mt. Pleasant Cemetery lots purchased in recent years, but he has noticed fewer purchases in his seven years on the board.

"Nowadays, most people are getting cremated. If we sell one plot to someone, they can get two cremation burials in that plot," he said. "We're sort of losing money, because you can get two into one plot."

The cemetery also falls outside of the state Small Games of Chance Law, meaning it can't host its own fundraisers, Meason said.

"We could raise the prices, but the problem with that is we don't want to price ourselves out of competition with other local cemeteries," he said. "It's kind of a Catch 22. If you raise the prices, people won't want to be buried in your cemetery anyway."

Community members coming together to form a Friends of the Mt. Pleasant Cemetery nonprofit is one potential solution to the problem, Meason said.

Community pitches in

Bev Lazor and her husband, Dale, have maintained the grass surrounding their loved ones' gravesites at Mt. Pleasant Cemetery since the fall of 2019.

"We try to get here every month, but that's kind of hard with work," said Bev Lazor of Norvelt. "(We come) as often as we can get here."

The Lazors tended to the gravesites of Bev's mother, grandparents, aunt and uncle Memorial Day weekend, pulling weeds, clearing debris off the headstones and decorating with artificial flowers.

"This is their place of rest," Bev Lazor said. "You have to respect it and make it nice. It shouldn't look so bad."

The cemetery is a focal point of the borough, Dale Lazor said.

"This is the city. It's Mt. Pleasant Cemetery. You drive by, people see, 'Oh, wow, look at that,' " he said. "You want to be proud of your town, especially for their resting place. That's the bottom line."

Larry Galley was disappointed to see the state of the cemetery Memorial Day weekend. He and his son, Brian, went to trim the weeds around a handful of family members' gravesites after reading about the grass cutting plight on the cemetery association's Facebook page.

"I don't know who's in charge now, but they're not doing a very good job," said Galley, 85, of Scottdale. "It's a shame, because it's an old cemetery. You would've thought they would have some money in reserve somehow."

Three generations of Galley's family are buried at the cemetery, including his grandfather, father and mother.

'Preserving our history'

The cemetery's historical ties are what drew Meason to becoming a board member a decade ago.

"To me, the Mt. Pleasant Cemetery is the most historic place in the town because that's where all of our forefathers are," said Meason, president of the Mt. Pleasant Area Historical Society. "There's some very interesting, very prominent people that are laid to rest up there, and they helped build our town.

"To me, it's absolutely essential for preserving our history to take care of the place so that future generations can go up there, they can see the monuments and, hopefully, be inspired to look up some of the names, see what these people did," he said.

Veterans who served in conflicts from the Revolutionary War to the present day are buried at the cemetery, including more than 130 Civil War veterans who represented 12 states.

Vought is concerned about the future of the cemetery. But until another solution is reached, he will continue cutting the grass.

"I don't want to stop doing it," he said, "because if I do, I don't think anybody else is going to step up to the plate and do that."

Quincey Reese is a TribLive staff writer. She can be reached at qreese@triblive.com.

Bigfoot sightings recorded on website

BIGFOOT · FROM A3

sightings, going back to the '60s and '70s and continuing to today.

"It's definitely something that has happened here and that people are interested in. It's another way to recognize the significance in our area and a way to attract people to our town."

Council President Barbara Phillips agreed the borough should step up to the promotional possibilities of Bigfoot because efforts to bring back some of the jobs and foot traffic lost with the closure of major employers over the decades have yet to bear fruit.

"Let's do something for ourselves," Phillips said. "Nothing's going to happen if we do nothing."

Phillips suggested the possibility of attracting a Bigfoot-related festival to Derry.

Interest in Bigfoot and/or Sasquatch and other uncanny, unexplained creatures known as cryptids has grown with the proliferation of cable-channel shows and podcasts devoted to such subjects.

Regional events on similar themes include a Forest County Bigfoot Festival, which was held June 7 to 9 in Marienville, and the fourth Pennsylvania Bigfoot Camping Adventure, set for Sept. 6 and 7 at the Benner's Meadow Run campground near Farmington.

Eric Altman, executive director of the Pennsylvania Bigfoot Society, is promoting the Farmington event.

In addition to raising money for local charities, Altman said, the camping weekend will include speakers, workshops and hikes meant to provide attendees with more information about the Bigfoot phenomenon and the work groups like the Pennsylvania Bigfoot Society undertake to investigate creature sightings.

"The Chestnut Ridge has been a hot spot for sightings for decades and decades," Altman said. "It's probably one of the most active areas in the state."

Stan Gordon of Greensburg, a longtime researcher of sightings of Bigfoot, UFOs and other anomalies, has noted that 2023 was a prominent year for such incidents in Pennsylvania and the local region.

On his website, stangordon.info, he recorded several reports that year from sites along Chestnut Ridge.

About 7:15 a.m. Feb. 20, a witness spotted a creature about 4 feet tall and covered in gray hair that ran from behind a building toward "loud whoop-whoop sounds coming from the nearby woods," Gordon reported. Two days later, residents there described a stench similar to rotten eggs or meat that lasted for a half-hour.

About 12:30 p.m. Aug. 30, a woman walking her dogs saw a figure about 7 feet tall covered in black and brown fur and with arms hanging down at its side among trees in the woods. When the creature stared in her direction, Gordon wrote, "She left the area quickly and never looked back."

"I think we're getting more (Bigfoot) reports because it's a more acceptable topic than it was 10 or 15 years ago," Altman said. "It's becoming more popular with the mainstream public as part of pop culture.

"I think it's making people feel more comfortable about coming forward. I always get people telling me about a sighting they had years previously."

As for the Pennsylvania Bigfoot Society, Altman said, "We're doing this as kind of a hobby, as citizen scientists. Our goal isn't to prove that Bigfoot is real, but to collect data, information and evidence, anything we can pass along to scientists to study or analyze."

That includes a cast preserving unusual tracks discovered by hunters on April 26 at a site south of Hollidaysburg, he said. Each of three footprints was 15 inches long and 7 inches wide.

Visit pabigfoot.com for more information about the society.

Jeff Himler is a TribLive staff writer. He can be reached at jhimler@triblive.com.

Lower Burrell checks for ways to remove or reduce algae

ALGAE · FROM A3

public works, attended a webinar last week to learn what the city can do to mitigate the bloom.

The algae emits an odor and has taken over much of the lake's surface.

The webinar was provided by Solitude Lake Management, a nationwide environmental firm. The city is considering hiring Solitude to treat the lake to remove the algae, or at least reduce it, Primm said.

Primm said he has been in contact with other municipalities that use Solitude for algae treatment and are pleased with its service. The contract could cost roughly $300 to $400 a month, from April to October.

"We're waiting on a quote from (Solitude)," Primm said.

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

New assistant to be named

SUPERINTENDENT · FROM A3

necessary moving forward to alleviate the ongoing taxpayer burden Norwin faces," Ilagan said.

Totin said her opposition was not a reflection on McCracken, but she also preferred another candidate.

Baverso said she believed that the hiring process "became very rushed at the end" and that "some of the best candidates did not go before the (full) board."

Detschelt said he believes McCracken is qualified for the job but preferred that McCracken be named the interim superintendent with the board then involved in the hiring process. He said he did not believe all of the best candidates were brought before the board.

McCracken's hiring as superintendent comes after the board approved a new five-year contract in March for her as the assistant superintendent.

Thomas said she will have the opportunity to recommend the person she wants as an assistant superintendent, which would require board approval. Thomas said he does not have a timetable for that hiring, as the district has to prepare for the upcoming school year.

The board's decision to hire Templeton Advantage of Newport, Perry County, at a cost of $20,000 to conduct the search for the superintendent was criticized by some board members.

"I was very disappointed in the process," Detschelt said.

But, Bojalad defended the decision to hire Templeton Advantage, saying it was a robust interview process and a number of good candidates were presented to the board. Templeton also conducted surveys and workshops to determine what people wanted in a superintendent, Bojalad said.

"This was a community decision," Bojalad said. "It was $20,000 well spent."

Thomas said Tom Templeton, the search firm's owner, will continue to work with Norwin in the first year of McCracken's tenure. This will include an evaluation of the superintendent, Thomas said.

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

PUBLIC INPUT HEARING NOTIFICATION

For FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company's Rate Increase Request

Docket No. R-2024-3047068

The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC) will conduct 18 Public Input Hearings concerning FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company's request filed on April 2, 2024, to increase electric rates by $502 million per year. The Commission will conduct a series of Public Input Hearings, totaling eighteen (18) in total, with fourteen (14) Public Input Hearings to be conducted in-person at seven (7) different locations within the territory of FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company. An additional four (4) Public Input Hearings will be conducted by telephone using the Commission's conference bridge technology.

Different processes will be used for the in-person hearings than will be used to the telephonic hearings. Individuals wishing to testify at either the in-person or telephonic hearings will only be permitted once. Time limitations may apply to how long individuals may testify, if a large number of other individuals wish to testify at the same session.

In-Person Public Input Hearings will take place at the following locations:

Tuesday, June 25, 2024 at 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
VFW Post #2540 and Canteen, 546 Fawn Road, East Stroudsburg, PA 18301

Wednesday, June 26, 2024 at 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Reading Public Museum (Ground Floor Auditorium), 500 Museum Road, Reading, PA 19611

Thursday, June 27, 2024 at 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Graduate Palo Alto (Coaly Ballroom A/B), 125 S Atherton Street, State College, PA 16801

Tuesday, July 9, 2024 at 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Erie County Public Library (H.O. Hirt Auditorium – Museum Entrance), 160 East Front Street, Erie, PA 16507

Wednesday, July 10, 2024 at 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Butler County Community College (Founders Hall – Parking Lot #6), 107 College Drive, Butler, PA 16002

Thursday, July 11, 2024 Time: 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Greensburg Garden and Civic Center (Laurel Room & Iris Room), 951 Old Salem Road, Greensburg, PA 15601

Friday, July 12, 2024 at 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Double Tree by Hilton (Junior Ballroom), 340 Racetrack Road, Washington, PA 15301

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PIN Number: 23464163

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adno=336675

Proof of Publication of Notice in Leader Times

Under the Act of July 9, 1976, P.L. 877, No. 160

State of Pennsylvania

County of Armstrong

Tammy Bish, Publisher of West Penn Media, a corporation of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, publisher of the Leader Times, of the County State aforesaid, being duly sworn, deposes and says that the Leader Times, a newspaper of general circulation published at Kittanning, County and State aforesaid, was established January 10, 1898, since which date the Leader Times has been regularly issued in said county, and that the printed notice or publication attached hereto is exactly the same as printed and published in the regular editions and issues of the said Leader Times on the
following dates.

15th and the 18th of June, 2024

Affiant further deposes that she is an officer duly authorized by West Penn Media, publisher of the Leader Times, a newspaper of general circulation to verify the foregoing statement under oath, and affiant is not interested in the subject matter of the foresaid notice or advertisement, and that all allegations in the foregoing statements as to time, place and character of publication are true.

Copy of Notice or Publication

Tammy Bish

, Leader Times

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 18th of June, 2024

Julia A Jordan

My Commission Expires:

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania - Notary Seal
JULIA A JORDAN - Notary Public
Armstrong County
My Commission Expires Jun 28, 2024
Commission Number 1080564

Statement of Advertising Costs

To Leader Times

For publishing the notice or publication attached **$_1248.00_**

Probating same ..... $_____

Publisher's Receipt for Advertising Costs

Leader Times, a newspaper of general circulation, hereby acknowledges receipt of the aforesaid notice and publication cost and certifies that the same been duly paid.

Pope Francis becomes first pontiff to address a G7 summit, raises alarm about AI

By NICOLE WINFIELD AND KELVIN CHAN
Associated Press

BARI, Italy — Pope Francis challenged leaders of the world's wealthy democracies Friday to keep human dignity foremost in developing and using artificial intelligence, warning that such powerful technology risks turning human relations themselves into mere algorithms.

Francis brought his moral authority to bear on the Group of Seven, invited by host Italy to address a special session at their annual summit on the perils and promises of AI. In doing so, he became the first pope to attend the G7, offering an ethical take on an issue that is increasingly on the agenda of international summits, government policy and corporate boards alike.

Francis said politicians must take the lead in making sure AI remains human-centric, so that decisions about when to use weapons or even less-lethal tools always remain made by humans and not machines.

"We would condemn humanity to a future without hope if we took away people's ability to make decisions about themselves and their lives, by dooming them to depend on the choices of machines," he said. "We need to ensure and safeguard a space for proper human control over the choices made by artificial intelligence programs: Human dignity itself depends on it."

Francis is joining a chorus of countries and global bodies pushing for stronger guardrails on AI following the boom in generative artificial intelligence kickstarted by OpenAI's ChatGPT chatbot.

The Argentine pope used his annual peace message this year to call for an international treaty to ensure AI is developed and used ethically. He argues that a technology lacking human values of compassion, mercy, morality and forgiveness is too perilous to develop unchecked.

He didn't repeat that call explicitly in his speech Friday, but he made clear the onus is on politicians to lead on the issue. And he called on them to ultimately ban the use of lethal autonomous weapons, colloquially known as "killer robots."

"No machine should ever choose to take the life of a human being," he said.

Directing himself to the leaders around the table, he concluded: "It is up to everyone to make good use of (AI) but the onus is on politics to create the conditions for such good use to be possible and fruitful."

Italian Premier Giorgia Meloni invited Francis and announced his participation, knowing the potential impact of his star power and moral authority on the G7. Those seated at the table seemed duly awed, and the boisterous buzz in the room went absolutely quiet when Francis arrived.

"The pope is, well, a very special kind of a celebrity," said John Kirton, a political scientist at the University of Toronto who directs the G7 Research Group think tank.

Kirton recalled the last summit that had this kind of star power, that then translated into action, was the 2005 meeting in Gleneagles, Scotland. There, world leaders decided to wipe out the $40 billion of the debts owed by 18 of the world's poorest countries to the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

That summit was preceded by a Live 8 concert in London that featured Sting, The Who and a reformed Pink Floyd and drew over a million people in a show of solidarity against hunger and poverty in Africa.

"Gleneagles actually hit a home run and for some it's one of the most successful summits," Kirton said.

No such popular pressure is being applied to G7 leaders in the Italian region of Puglia, but Francis knew he could wield his own moral authority to renew his demands for safeguards for AI and highlight the threats to peace and society it poses if human ethics are left to the side.

"To speak of technology is to speak of what it means to be human and thus of our singular status as beings who possess both freedom and responsibility," he said. "This means speaking about ethics."

Generative AI technology has dazzled the world with its capabilities to produce humanlike-responses, but it's also sparked fears about AI safety and led to a jumble of global efforts to rein it in.

Some worry about catastrophic but far off risks to humanity because of its potential for creating new bioweapons and supercharging disinformation. Others fret about its effect on everyday life, through algorithmic bias that results in discrimination or AI systems that eliminate jobs.

In his peace message, Francis echoed those concerns and raised others. He said AI must keep foremost concerns about guaranteeing fundamental human rights, promoting peace and guarding against disinformation, discrimination and distortion.

On the regulation front, Francis will in some ways be preaching to the converted as the G7 members have been at the forefront of the debate on AI oversight.

Japan, which held the G7's rotating presidency last year, launched its Hiroshima AI process to draw up international guiding principles and a code of conduct for AI developers. Adding to those efforts, Prime Minister Fumio Kishida last month unveiled a framework for global regulation of generative AI, which are systems that can quickly churn out new text, images, video, audio in response to prompts and commands.

The European Union was one of the first movers with its wide-ranging AI Act that's set to take effect over the next two years and could act as a global model. The act targets any AI product or service offered in the bloc's 27 nations, with restrictions based on the level of risk they pose.

In the United States, President Joe Biden issued an executive order on AI safeguards and called for legislation to strengthen it, while some states like California and Colorado have been trying to pass their own AI bills, with mixed results.

Antitrust enforcers on both sides of the Atlantic have been scrutinizing big AI companies including Microsoft, Amazon and OpenAI over whether their dominant positions stifle competition.

Britain kickstarted a global dialogue on reining in AI's most extreme dangers with a summit last fall. At a follow-up meeting in Seoul, companies pledged to develop the technology safely. France is set to host another meeting in the series early next year. The United Nations has also weighed in with its first resolution on AI.

On the sidelines of his AI speech, Francis has a full day of bilateral meetings. He had meetings with Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, as well as invited leaders from Algeria, Brazil, India, Kenya, Turkey. He will also meet with G7 members, including Biden, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and French President Emmanuel Macron.

Serbian court rules to extradite to Belarus a critic of its authoritarian regime

BELGRADE, Serbia (AP) — A Serbian court has ruled to extradite a Belarusian filmmaker and pro-democracy political activist to the authoritarian government in Minsk where he could face prison and torture, his lawyers and supporters said Friday. He is wanted in Belarus for alleged tax evasion.

"Today, the lawyers of movie director Andrei Hniot received the decision of the Higher Court in Belgrade on Andrei's possible extradition to Belarus," said a statement from exiled Belarusian opposition leader and former presidential candidate Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya. "If extradited for criminal prosecution, Andrei will inevitably face a severe prison term for his peaceful civil activism and exercising his rights."

He has the right to appeal.

"We have been in touch with diplomatic representatives of EU countries, lawyers, human rights defenders, attorneys, and journalists to ensure his release," the statement said.

Hniot was arrested last year on Oct. 30 at Belgrade airport based on an Interpol warrant issued at the request of the Belarusian authorities for alleged tax evasion. Since then, he has been held in detention at Belgrade Central Prison.

An appeals court in early March overturned a decision by the Higher Court in Belgrade, which had ruled that the legal prerequisites for his extradition to Belarus had been met. But the appeals court returned the case to the Higher Court for reconsideration, saying there had been violations of procedures.

Hniot left Belarus in 2020 after criticizing the staunchly pro-Russian regime of authoritarian President Alexander Lukashenko and participating in protests following that year's disputed presidential elections.

Hniot said at one of the court hearings that Lukshenko's regime wants to punish him for his activism. "We openly opposed the dictatorship, human rights violations, and electoral fraud in Belarus in 2020," he said.

On the eve of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, Serbian independent media reported that Serbia's secret service wiretapped a Belgrade meeting held by members of the Russian opposition and handed them over to the authorities in Moscow. Shortly afterwards, most of those who attended the meeting in Belgrade were arrested in Russia and later convicted to lengthy prison terms.

Serbia, which formally seeks European Union membership, has been drifting away from its EU path and toward traditional Slavic ally Russia, as well as China.

Rare twin elephants in Thailand receive monks' blessings a week after their tumultuous birth

By NAPAT KONGSAWAD
Associated Press

BANGKOK — Buddhist monks in Thailand on Friday blessed twin baby elephants, one male and the other female, a week after their rare birth came close to being a tragedy.

Their mother, Chamchuri, gave birth to the pair on the night of June 7 at a camp in Thailand's ancient capital Ayutthaya, a popular tourist destination 80 kilometers (50 miles) north of Bangkok.

Twin elephant births are rare and male-female twins even more so. The Ayutthaya Elephant Palace & Royal Kraal, home to the newborns, says that it was a first for the province, while a statement from the Thai government said they were the third such pair in the world.

The two are the 30-year-old mother elephant's fourth and fifth offspring.

Caretakers at the elephant camp had been expecting to help deliver a baby, but when a second offspring dropped from her mother's womb 18 minutes afterward, they were shocked.

The elephant caretakers, who are called mahouts in Asia, had to act quickly to prevent the equally startled mother from accidentally injuring her new daughter.

One of the mahouts, Charin Somwang, broke his leg when he stepped between the mother and her offspring to prevent the tragedy. He told Thailand's Daily News newspaper that it is normal for a mother elephant to step on and gently prod after birth to check if it is alive. But the second baby, the female, appeared too weak to sustain that kind of treatment, he said.

On Saturday, Charin was discharged from the hospital and was thrilled to discover that both babies were healthy.

Monks from Wat Traimit in Bangkok came to bless the twins on Friday as part of merit-making ceremonies for the occasion. Afterward, the calves were presented with a tray of bananas and cartons of milk.

Elephants are a big part of Thailand's national identity and have been officially proclaimed a symbol of the nation. Thai kings rode elephants into battle and a white elephant, considered a sacred symbol of royal power, adorned the Thai flag until 1917.

Once essential to the logging trade, deforestation left many elephants without jobs, and while a shrinking population of wild ones roam the remaining forests, many are kept at animal shelters or used as living props at tourist sites.

PUBLIC INPUT HEARING NOTIFICATION

For FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company's Rate Increase Request

Docket No. R-2024-3047068

The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC) will conduct 18 Public Input Hearings concerning FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company's request filed on April 2, 2024, to increase electric rates by $502 million per year. The Commission will conduct a series of Public Input Hearings, totaling eighteen (18) in total, with fourteen (14) Public Input Hearings to be conducted in-person at seven (7) different locations within the territory of FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company. An additional four (4) Public Input Hearings will be conducted by telephone using the Commission's conference bridge technology.

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Greensburg Garden and Civic Center (Laurel Room & Iris Room), 951 Old Salem Road, Greensburg, PA 15601

Friday, July 12, 2024 at 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Double Tree by Hilton (Junior Ballroom), 340 Racetrack Road, Washington, PA 15301

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Telephonic Public Input Hearings

Presiding: Administrative Law Judge Katrina L. Dunderdale, **Dates: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 & Wednesday, July 17th, 2024, Times: 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM**

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Toll-free Bridge Number: 1.866.675.4411

PIN Number: 23464163

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TTY-based Telecommunications Relay Service number for persons who are deaf or hearing-impaired is: 711.

EU leaders weigh top job nominees after an election shakes up Europe's political landscape

By ELLA JOYNER, LORNE COOK AND SAMUEL PETROQUIN
Associated Press

BRUSSELS — Leaders of European Union countries on Monday praised the record of the bloc's chief executive, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, as she appeared on track to secure their endorsement later this month for a second term in office.

At an informal dinner summit in Brussels, the EU's 27 leaders were weighing the fallout from the recent European elections and how to take those results into account as they nominate candidates to a series of top jobs.

The June 6-9 elections saw the European Parliament shift to the right and dealt major blows to mainstream governing parties in Paris and Berlin.

The Franco-German motor that usually propels EU politics along was notably weakened, and hard right parties there gained ground.

Under the EU's complicated division of powers, the presidents and prime ministers get to nominate the next president of the commission, which is responsible for drawing up EU policy on everything from climate to the colossal shared budget.

"I'm positive about Ursula von der Leyen," Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte told reporters.

Over the last five years, Von der Leyen led a huge drive to secure billions of COVID-19 vaccine doses during the pandemic, set up an economic recovery fund and drummed up support for Ukraine in its war with Russia, including by backing Kyiv's future EU membership.

But, Rutte said, "I'm not saying that we support her. There is a big possibility that we will, but it will be of course a question of how the whole package will emerge."

That package involves three other top jobs: European Council president, currently Belgian centrist Charles Michel; EU foreign policy chief, currently Josep Borrell of Spain, from the center-left; and president of the European Parliament, currently the conservative Roberta Metsola from Malta.

The council president's job is to broker deals between the 27 member states, while the top diplomat represents the EU on the world stage. Under the EU's treaties, the leaders' choice of candidates should reflect the results of the election, sharing the posts among the winners.

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz dodged questions about whether he personally endorsed von der Leyen for a second term, but underlined that his backing would depend on her working with mainstream parties rather than right-wing parties.

Ahead of the election, many socialist and Green lawmakers criticized von der Leyen for trying to win the support of Italian Prime Minister Georgia Meloni, who is from the right-wing populist Brothers of Italy party.

"What is clear is that there cannot be a commission presidency based on the support of right-wing and right-wing populist parties," Scholz said.

Several leaders said they did not expect a final agreement on the nominees on Monday night, but they did insist that the process should not drag on, and held out hopes for an agreement when they hold their next summit in Brussels on June 27-28.

"It's important that we bring clarity quickly to these matters," Irish Prime Minister Simon Harris said.

"I don't think there'll be any gratitude from Irish citizens or European citizens if politicians here in Brussels are talking for weeks on end about who's going to do what role when there are so many pressing issues on a European and global level," he said.

German conservative von der Leyen, who did not speak to reporters as she arrived at the summit venue, is well placed after a strong showing for her center-right European People's Party (EPP) parliamentary group.

But nothing is guaranteed. Von der Leyen's presidential style has at times riled her commission colleagues, and she is deeply unpopular in some corners of the EU Parliament, where she will need the support of 361 of the 720 lawmakers to hold on to her job.

In Brussels, names for the big posts have circulated for months.

Former Portuguese Socialist Prime Minister António Costa is frequently mentioned for the role of council president. Estonian Prime Minister Kaja Kallas, well known for her tough line on Russia, has been floated as the bloc's potential top diplomat. Metsola wants to lead the parliament again.

Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk said mainstream parties — like the EPP he hails from, the center-left Socialists and Democrats, and the pro-business liberals — still hold a majority in the assembly, despite hard right successes in France and Germany.

"My feeling is that it's enough to arrange the whole new (job) landscape, including the president of the commission," he told reporters ahead of the meeting.

But Tusk did call for some "public clarification, what is the legal situation" surrounding Costa and the corruption scandal in Portugal that forced him out of office. Costa stepped down after eight years as head of government. He has not been accused of any crime.

Von der Leyen's own path to power in 2019 shows that top job tussle can be unpredictable. Then a German defense minister somewhat tainted by scandal in her ministry, von der Leyen was a relative unknown in Brussels when her name was raised by leaders in closed-door discussions.

Dozens of boats cruise the Seine river in a rehearsal for the Paris Olympics' opening ceremony

By JEROME PUGMIRE AND TOM NOUVIAN
Associated Press Writers

PARIS — Curious onlookers gathered on bridges as dozens of boats snaked along the Seine river on Monday in a rehearsal for the Paris Olympics' unique opening ceremony next month.

A total of 55 boats made the journey from Pont d'Austerlitz, named after a French military victory in 1805, to Pont d'Iéna, a stone's throw from the Eiffel Tower, the nation's most striking and best known landmark.

Officials are confident that the near four-hour ceremony will run like clockwork on July 26.

"Six months ago we had like 10 minutes delay on the timing and today we are very close, almost to the second to our targets," Thierry Reboul, the executive director for ceremonies said. "So it is very satisfying. We've respected an extremely precise level of timing."

On the day of the eagerly-awaited event, around 200 Olympic delegations will join the parade on more than 80 boats. They will make the journey from east to west, along a six-kilometer (3.7-mile) route which has become a major talking point — for its audacity as a unique open-air event and for its exposure to potential danger.

Security concerns led French President Emmanuel Macron to say in mid-April that the ceremony could shift to Stade de France if the threat level was too high. But Reboul said Monday that authorities are preparing for the big day as originally planned, with no alternatives being prepared at this stage.

There will be a final rehearsal, involving the full armada of boats, before the opening ceremony — one which is expected to bring 100 world leaders to the city's embankments, where more than 300,000 people will watch.

"We will give our heart and souls to make it a great success for the French people," France's Sports Minister Amélie Oudéa-Castéra said Monday. "They deserve it."

The rehearsal saw 10 police speedboats shadowing the convoy, as well as speedboats equipped with television cameras. There were armed police officers stationed at various points along the way. The boats crossed 16 bridges, passing by iconic landmarks such as the green-tinged Grand Palais — where fencing and Taekwondo events will be held.

On each bridge, a few dozen people watched attentively.

"Fifty-five? That's a lot of boats," said 49-year-old Rosa Gabriel. Taking a break between walking from the Louvre and Notre Dame Cathedral, she watched it from the Pont des Arts bridge — fondly known as Love Lock Bridge, with its thousands of personalized locks attached to the railings.

One tourist even mistook the scene for something else.

"Maybe they are making a movie," said Driss El Kaoutari, a 42-year-old from Morocco who was on vacation in Paris with his daughter.

What people actually saw were empty vessels bobbing slowly by. But they will be full of life, color, sound and movement next month.

"You will have many delegation members on the boats with their uniforms and their flags," Reboul said. "Around them there will be many other things, as you can imagine."

The water itself has become a sensitive and thorny topic for the organizers and politicians heading into the July 26-Aug. 11 Paris Games. A whopping $1.5 billion investment has already been made to improve the Seine's water quality, with Macron and Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo both promising to take a dip.

This time, it was Oudéa-Castéra's turn to give assurances about the river — where marathon swimmers and triathletes are set to compete during the Olympics.

She bristled a little when answering.

"Regarding the quality of the Seine's water, we are confident. You shouldn't ask us to be ready ahead of time," Oudéa-Castéra said, adding that a new center for collecting waste will be opened next week.

US, Cyprus embark on strategic dialogue that officials say demonstrates closest-ever ties

By MENELAOS HADJICOSTIS
Associated Press

NICOSIA, Cyprus — Cyprus-U.S. relations have reached their highest level yet after the two countries embarked on a strategic dialogue on key issues including defense, security, energy, crisis management and the fight against terrorism, officials said Monday.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken hailed the development as a "powerful evidence of the strengthening, deepening (and) broadening of the relationship between our countries acting together in so many areas."

"It's a reflection of the fact that Cyprus is an important player in the region, and a partnership for the United States that we deeply value," Blinken said ahead of talks with Cypriot Foreign Minister Constantinos Kombos in Washington.

Kombos hailed the start of the dialogue as a hallmark for the east Mediterranean island nation's closest-ever ties with the U.S. in a tumultuous region where Cyprus can be relied on as a credible partner.

"The message is very simple. Cyprus is part of the solution. Cyprus is part of the answer," Kombos said.

The U.S. has embarked on similar strategic dialogues with 30 other countries, 13 of which are European Union member states.

To illustrate the added value that Cyprus can bring to such a partnership with the U.S., Cypriot officials have pointed to the Cyprus-Gaza maritime corridor from which hundreds of tons of humanitarian aid has been shipped to the Palestinian territory through a U.S.-built pier and causeway.

All aid is security screened in Cyprus with Israeli and U.S. oversight. Assisting in the overall security of the initiative is a U.S.-funded center that helps train Cypriot and other personnel from neighboring countries on issues of maritime safety and security.

Kombos said Cyprus is no longer just viewed through the political lens of its ethnic division that has remained unresolved since 1974 when Turkish troops invaded in the wake of a Athens junta-engineered coup aimed at union with Greece.

Cyprus, an EU member since 2004, has in recent years made a clear strategic policy shift toward the West — and in particular the U.S. — after decades of close relations with the former Soviet Union and later the Russian Federation. The Cyprus-Russia rift became more clearly defined following Moscow's 2022 invasion of Ukraine.

The annual strategic dialogue, that will be held this year in September, will also touch on cultural and education issues as well as investment opportunities.

Among the Cypriot government's key priorities through the dialogue is to fully lift a U.S. embargo on military arms sales to Cyprus without the need for annual Congressional approval. It also hopes to expedite the development of a natural gas field off Cyprus' southeastern coast that's licensed to U.S. energy company Chevron.

Another priority is to be admitted into the U.S. visa waiver program as Cyprus, Bulgaria and Romania remain the only EU member states that aren't included.

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Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

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_____

Region

Watchdog: EPA should conduct garden crop tests

Toxic garlic found near derailment site

By Josh Funk
Associated Press

The Environmental Protection Agency should conduct additional soil studies near the site of a toxic train derailment in Ohio and warn people it might not be safe to garden there after independent testing showed high levels of chemicals in locally grown garlic, a watchdog group said Thursday.

In a petition filed with the federal agency, the nonprofit Government Accountability Project argues that the EPA should have already followed up on the tests of gardens and crops in the city where the Norfolk Southern derailment took place.

"It is unconscionable that the EPA has not conducted its own testing on garden crops in East Palestine, nor have they sampled for dioxins in the home produce," the nonprofit group's senior environmental officer, Lesley Pacey, told The Associated Press in advance of the petition filing. "Yet, the EPA has told residents to garden and eat home produce as usual."

The Associated Press sent emails to EPA officials seeking comment about the petition Thursday.

The agency has been telling people it's safe to garden since nearly three months after the February 2023 derailment, based on tests conducted by state agriculture officials at 31 locations around town and on surrounding farms. The officials tested winter wheat, malting barley, pasture grasses and rye from area farms.

"Residential soil sampling results are within typical ranges for the area, and garden plants are generally considered safe to eat," the EPA said to the community.



Gene J. Puskar/Associated Press

East Palestine, Ohio, resident Marilyn Figley, right, talks with Scott Smith in her garden on Wednesday. Ms. Figley planted the garden this year in the aftermath of the Norfolk Southern train derailment near her home. She used one of her husband's tractors to remove the top three inches of soil, replacing it with fresh dirt.

In the past, agency officials have dismissed the independent tests cited by the Government Accountability Project, pointing to their concerns with quality control. The tests were performed by Scott Smith, a businessman and inventor who, since his own factory was inundated by tainted floodwaters in 2006, has been on a crusade to help communities affected by chemical disasters.

EPA officials say they can't tell if his data is valid without reviewing all of the reports detailing his methodology and results. Mr. Smith offered last summer to share his files with the agency but only if it would share its information with him. They never reached an agreement.

The EPA has said that previous testing conducted by contractors hired by the railroad did not show high levels of dioxins or other chemicals outside the train derailment site after the initial evacuation order was lifted, and therefore, additional tests in individual yards and gardens weren't needed.

The only place the EPA reported finding high levels of cancer-causing dioxins was in the area immediately around the derailment about two weeks after the crash. That soil was included in the nearly 179,000 tons of material dug up and disposed of last year.

But some residents aren't taking any chances.

Marilyn Figley didn't dare plant a garden last year after the derailment even though she and her husband do everything they can to be self-sufficient, including gardening and raising chickens for meat and eggs. She did harvest some garlic after the derailment that she had planted previously, however. Some of it had levels of dioxins more than 500 times higher than a sample of garlic grown and harvested from someone else's yard the year before the derailment, according to Mr. Smith's tests.

Ms. Figley said they decided to plant a garden again this year after using one of her husband's tractors to remove the top 3 inches of soil and replace that with fresh dirt.

"I'd rather eat dioxins than die of starvation I guess," Ms. Figley said. "I'm pretty worried, but what can you do?"

Dioxins have been a key concern for East Palestine residents ever since officials decided to blow open five tank cars of the derailed train and burn the vinyl chloride contained within them. The chemical is used to make a variety of plastic products, including pipes, wire and packaging materials, and is found in polyvinyl chloride plastic, better known as PVC. Thousands of residents had to evacuate their homes temporarily after the derailment and during the venting and burning of the vinyl chloride, which sent an enormous toxic plume of black smoke over the town.

EAST PALESTINE

Last summer, the local farmers market made a point of bringing in produce from several states away because of all the worries about anything grown in the area.

"I certainly didn't eat anybody's tomatoes or cucumbers," said Tamara Lynn Freeze, whose freshly grown garlic was also tested by Mr. Smith and showed dioxin levels five times higher than what was found in garlic she still had sitting in her garage from a year before the derailment.

Ms. Freeze says she developed a chronic sinus infection and joint pain after the derailment — symptoms that seem to ease any time she's away from the area for more than a few hours.

Mr. Smith has visited East Palestine more than two dozen times since the derailment to test soil and water for dioxins and other chemicals. He is not a scientist by training but has traveled to chemical disaster sites for years. His testing is reviewed by a team of scientific advisers, including a former top Ohio EPA expert, and he sends all his samples to a laboratory that the EPA and others agree is reputable.

Mr. Smith is also an inventor and holds 25 patents, including for a specialized foam that repels water and absorbs oil, which he developed at his former company, Cellect Technologies. He has offered to sell the product in some of the affected communities he has visited, but he says he isn't making a profit on his work in East Palestine.

Mr. Smith got his start with disasters when floodwater contaminated with chemicals swept into a Cellect factory, destroying equipment and forcing the business to shut down for months. Since then, he has conducted investigations of dozens of environmental and health emergencies, including the BP Gulf oil spill and the Flint, Mich., lead water crisis.

In Flint, some of Mr. Smith's results were used by a nonprofit group affiliated with actor Mark Ruffalo that questioned whether it was safe to bathe in the city's water. Mr. Smith's actions put him in conflict with scientists who were conducting their own tests and with EPA Response Coordinator Mark Durno, the same agency representative overseeing the cleanup in East Palestine.

Despite their disagreements, Mr. Durno did remark that Mr. Smith "certainly understands how to use appropriate laboratories both for the chemical work that he's doing and the biological work that he is doing."

"From that perspective, he seems qualified to collect samples and collect and share data," Mr. Durno said in a video interview he gave for an unfinished documentary about Mr. Smith's work.

But in East Palestine, Mr. Durno has consistently questioned the quality of Mr. Smith's testing. Since last summer, he has refused to meet with him or test alongside him.

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Presiding: Administrative Law Judge Katrina L. Dunderdale, **Dates: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 & Wednesday, July 17th, 2024, Times: 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM**

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National

Ten Commandments must be displayed in Louisiana classrooms under requirement signed into law

By Sara Cline
Associated Press

BATON ROUGE, La. — Louisiana has become the first state to require that the Ten Commandments be displayed in every public school classroom under a bill signed into law by Republican Gov. Jeff Landry on Wednesday.

The GOP-drafted legislation mandates that a poster-sized display of the Ten Commandments in "large, easily readable font" be required in all public classrooms, from kindergarten to state-funded universities.

Opponents question the law's constitutionality, warning that lawsuits are likely to follow. Proponents say the purpose of the measure is not solely religious, but that it has historical significance.

In the law's language, the Ten Commandments are described as "foundational documents of our state and national government."

The displays, which will be paired with a four-paragraph "context statement" describing how the Ten Commandments "were a prominent part of American public education for almost three centuries," must be in place in classrooms by the start of 2025.

The posters would be paid for through donations. State funds will not be used to implement the mandate, based on language in the legislation.

The law also "authorizes" — but does not require — the display of the Mayflower Compact, the Declaration of Independence and the Northwest Ordinance in K-12 public schools in Louisiana.

The law also "authorizes" — but does not require — the display of the Mayflower Compact, the Declaration of Independence and the Northwest Ordinance in K-12 public schools.

Not long after the governor signed the bill into law, civil rights groups and organizations that want to keep religion out of government promised to file a lawsuit challenging it.

The law prevents students from getting an equal education and will keep children who have different beliefs from feeling safe at school, the American Civil Liberties Union, Americans United for Separation of Church and State and the Freedom from Religion Foundation said in a joint statement Wednesday afternoon.

"Even among those who may believe in some version of the Ten Commandments, the particular text that they adhere to can differ by religious denomination or tradition. The government should not be taking sides in this theological debate," the groups said.

Similar bills requiring the Ten Commandments be displayed in classrooms have been proposed in other states including Texas, Oklahoma and Utah.

However, with threats of legal battles over the constitutionality of such measures, no state besides Louisiana has had success in making the bills law.

Legal battles over the display of the Ten Commandments in classrooms are not new.

In 1980, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that a similar Kentucky law was unconstitutional and violated the establishment clause of the U.S. Constitution, which says Congress can "make no law respecting an establishment of religion."

The high court found that the law had no secular purpose but rather served a plainly religious purpose.

Louisiana's controversial law, in a state ensconced in the Bible Belt, comes during a new era of conservative leadership in the state under Mr. Landry, who replaced two-term Democratic Gov. John Bel Edwards in January.

The GOP also has a two-thirds supermajority in the Legislature, and Republicans hold every statewide elected position, paving the way for lawmakers to push through a conservative agenda during the legislative session that concluded earlier this month.



Al Behrman/Associated Press

In this June 2003 photo, workers remove a monument bearing the Ten Commandments outside West Union High School in West Union, Ohio. Louisiana public schools are now required to display the Ten Commandments in all classrooms, after Republican Gov. Jeff Landry signed the requirement into law Wednesday.

NOTICE OF PROPOSED SETTLEMENT AND RIGHT TO OPT-OUT

A Court authorized this Notice. This is not a solicitation from a lawyer.

The Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, in the actions titled *Christopher Grabovski, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated v. Realty Income Corporation; CoGo's Co.; and Brian Haenze d/b/a Auto Gallery & Accessories and as Tag Towing and Collision*, GD-18-012294 and *Christopher Zimmerman, Corey Mizell, Stephanie Dawson, and Mike Lewis individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated v. Sonya Lazarevic, Zoran Lazarevic, Sylvia Duda, CoGo's Co., and Brian Haenze d/b/a Auto Gallery & Accessories and as Tag Towing and Collision*, GD-18-012068, has preliminarily approved a class action settlement. You are a Settlement Class Member if you were non-consensually towed from the parking lots located at 1709 Saw Mill Run Boulevard, Pittsburgh, PA 15210; 925 East Carson Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15203; 2401 East Carson Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15203; 20 Bailey Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15211; 304 Virginia Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15211; and/or 3439 W Run Road, Homestead, PA 15210 between September 2012 and December 27, 2015 and were charged in excess of $110 total for the return of the towed vehicle **or** between December 28, 2015 and the date of Final Approval and Judgment (estimated to be October 7, 2024) and were charged in excess of $135 total for return of the towed vehicle. Vehicles subject to these amounts include passenger cars, light trucks, motorcycles and scooters.

This notice is a summary of your legal rights. You should visit: www.CoGosTagTowingSettlement.com for full details. If you qualify as a Settlement Class Member you have the following choices which you must select by the deadlines below:

OPTION	DEADLINE	DESCRIPTION
SUBMIT A CLAIM FORM	August 19, 2024	If you timely file a valid claim form, you are eligible to receive a *pro rata* cash payment of the Settlement benefits. See www.CoGosTagTowingSettlement.com for details and claim form.
DO NOTHING	N/A	If you do nothing, you will remain in the class and be bound by the Court's orders but will not receive a cash payment.
EXCLUDE YOURSELF	August 19, 2024	You may exclude yourself from the Settlement Class. You will not receive a cash payment. You will not be bound by the Court's orders. You will retain any claims you may have. ***You must deliver timely notice to exclude yourself as described at* www.CoGosTagTowingSettlement.com.**
OBJECT (AND YOU MAY ATTEND HEARING)	August 19, 2024	You may object and explain to the Court why you think the class action settlement should not be approved. ***You must file and serve objections to the Settlement as described at* www.CoGosTagTowingSettlement.com.**

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For FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company's Rate Increase Request

Docket No. R-2024-3047068

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PROOF OF INSERTION

Name of Publication: The Daily Press

City, State: St. Marys, PA

Client/Advertiser: First Energy

Insertion Order #: 1684

Date[s] of Insertion: 6/15, 6/18

Caption: First Energy Notice Rate Hearing - June

Ad Size: 4X13

Total Number of Insertions: 2

My signature verifies that this ad was inserted as scheduled according to the above specifications.

Signature

6/20/2024

Date

Christie Gardner

Name [please print]

Dozens of boats cruise the Seine river in a rehearsal for the Paris Olympics' opening ceremony

By Jerome Pugmire and Tom Nouvian
Associated Press Writers

PARIS (AP) — Curious onlookers gathered on bridges as dozens of boats snaked along the Seine river on Monday in a rehearsal for the Paris Olympics' unique opening ceremony next month.

A total of 55 boats made the journey from Pont d'Austerlitz, named after a French military victory in 1805, to Pont d'Iéna, a stone's throw from the Eiffel Tower, the nation's most striking and best known landmark.

Officials are confident that the near four-hour ceremony will run like clockwork on July 26.

"Six months ago we had like 10 minutes delay on the timing and today we are very close, almost to the second to our targets," Thierry Reboul, the executive director for ceremonies said. "So it is very satisfying. We've respected an extremely precise level of timing."

On the day of the eagerly-awaited event, around 200 Olympic delegations will join the parade on more than 80 boats. They will make the journey from east to west, along a six-kilometer (3.7-mile) route which has become a major talking point — for its audacity as a unique open-air event and for its exposure to potential danger.

Security concerns led French President Emmanuel Macron to say in mid-April that the ceremony could shift to Stade de France if the threat level was too high. But Reboul said Monday that authorities are preparing for the big day as originally planned, with no alternatives being prepared at this stage.

There will be a final rehearsal, involving the full armada of boats, before the opening ceremony — one which is expected to bring 100 world leaders to the city's embankments, where more than 300,000 people will watch.

"We will give our heart and souls to make it a great success for the French people," France's Sports Minister Amélie Oudéa-Castéra said Monday. "They deserve it."

The rehearsal saw 10 police speedboats shadowing the convoy, as well as speedboats equipped with television cameras. There were armed police officers stationed at various points along the way. The boats crossed 16 bridges, passing by iconic landmarks such as the green-tinged Grand Palais — where fencing and Taekwondo events will be held.

On each bridge, a few dozen people watched attentively.

"Fifty-five? That's a lot of boats," said 49-year-old Rosa Gabriel. Taking a break between walking from the Louvre and Notre Dame Cathedral, she watched it from the Pont des Arts bridge — fondly known as Love Lock Bridge, with its thousands of personalized locks attached to the railings.

One tourist even mistook the scene for something else.

"Maybe they are making a movie," said Driss El Kaoutari, a 42-year-old from Morocco who was on vacation in Paris with his daughter.

What people actually saw were empty vessels bobbing slowly by. But they will be full of life, color, sound and movement next month.

"You will have many delegation members on the boats with their uniforms and their flags," Reboul said. "Around them there will be many other things, as you can imagine."

The water itself has become a sensitive and thorny topic for the organizers and politicians heading into the July 26-Aug. 11 Paris Games. A whopping $1.5 billion investment has already been made to improve the Seine's water quality, with Macron and Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo both promising to take a dip.

This time, it was Oudéa-Castéra's turn to give assurances about the river — where marathon swimmers and triathletes are set to compete during the Olympics.

She bristled a little when answering.

"Regarding the quality of the Seine's water, we are confident. You shouldn't ask us to be ready ahead of time," Oudéa-Castéra said, adding that a new center for collecting waste will be opened next week.

California firefighters gain ground against big wildfires after hot, windy weekend

By Ryan Sun
Associated Press

GORMAN, Calif. (AP) — Firefighters increased their containment of a large wildfire in mountains north of Los Angeles on Monday after a weekend of explosive, wind-driven growth along Interstate 5.

The Post Fire was 8% surrounded after scorching nearly 23 square miles (60 square kilometers) and forcing the evacuation of at least 1,200 campers, off-roaders and hikers from the Hungry Valley recreation area on Saturday.

"That 8% is good because it means we are increasing and bolstering our containment lines," said Kenichi Haskett, a Los Angeles County Fire Department section chief.

Firefighters hoped to hold the fire at its current size, but further growth was possible, Haskett said.

The fire broke out as weather turned hot and windy in a region where grasses spawned by a rainy winter have long since dried out and easily burn.

The massive columns of smoke that marked the fire's initial rampage were gone by Monday morning.

In Northern California, a wildfire sparked Sunday prompted evacuation orders and warnings for a sparsely populated area near Lake Sonoma. Known as the Point Fire, it was 20% surrounded Monday after charring nearly 2 square miles (5 square kilometers) about 80 miles (130 kilometers) north of San Francisco, and destroyed at least one structure.

Ben Nicholls, division chief of the Cal Fire district in area covering the Point fire, said Monday morning that fire activity subsided overnight.

"Forecasted winds are supposed to be less than we experienced yesterday, which should allow the resources assigned for this operational period to build and strengthen the control lines that were put in place yesterday," Nicholls said in a video briefing.

The Southern California fire erupted Saturday afternoon near I-5 in Gorman, about 60 miles (100 kilometers) northwest of Los Angeles. Two structures burned within the evacuated recreation area.

To the south, popular Pyramid Lake was closed as a precaution on Father's Day. Officials also warned residents of Castaic, home to about 19,000 people, that they should prepare to leave if the fire pushed farther south.

"If you're in a warning area, be prepared with a 'go bag,' with overnight clothes and your cellphone, your medicines, your glasses. Have your car fueled up," said Haskett. "Be ready to evacuate."

About 75 miles (120 kilometers) to the east, the nearly 2-square-mile (5-square-kilometer) Hesperia Fire was 30% contained after no overnight growth. The fire erupted Saturday and forced road closures and evacuation warnings in San Bernardino County.

Aircraft

Continued from Page 2

Videos of flight operations from the bridge and images of sailors eating cookies in the captain's chair are constant staple. After one false Houthi claim, Hill responded by posting images of cinnamon rolls and muffins in the bakery on board the Eisenhower — a subtle jab at the claims.

"The whole intent of the social media outreach was to connect with families, to bring them closer to the ship," Hill said. "So if I can post pictures of sons and daughters, husbands and wives out here, or even fathers and mothers, get it out there, it just kind of brings the family closer to us. And again, that's our support network. But it also took on another role because everyone else was watching to see what we're doing."

Then there's the "Star Wars" memes and images of Captain Demo, the Labrador-golden retriever mix who roams the ship as a support animal for sailors. And as far as the Houthi forces watching his postings, Hill takes special pleasure in writing about "Taco Tuesday" on the ship.

"We're going to celebrate 'Taco Tuesdays' because it's my absolute favorite day of the week. That will never end," the captain said. "If you call that an information warfare campaign, you can. It's just who I am, you know, at the end of the day."

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Princess of Wales says she's making 'good progress' in cancer treatment, will attend a public event

By Jill Lawless and Danica Kirka
Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — The Princess of Wales said Friday she is "making good progress" in her cancer treatment and will attend King Charles III 's ceremonial birthday parade on Saturday, Kate's first public appearance since her diagnosis.

The 42-year-old wife of Prince William has not made any public appearances this year. She announced in March that she was undergoing chemotherapy for an unspecified form of cancer.

"I am making good progress, but as anyone going through chemotherapy will know, there are good days and bad days," Kate said in a statement released Friday, adding that she faces "a few more months" of treatment.

"I'm looking forward to attending The King's Birthday Parade this weekend with my family and hope to join a few public engagements over the summer, but equally knowing I am not out of the woods yet," Kate said. h

The announcement is a significant milestone, but does not mark a return to full-time public duties for Kate. The palace issued a new photo of Kate, taken in Windsor earlier this week, showing her next to a tree, dressed casually in jeans and a blazer.

The palace said the king was "delighted" that Kate will attend Trooping the Color, also known as the King's Birthday Parade. It is an annual military parade that marks the monarch's official birthday in June. Charles, who also is being treated for an undisclosed form of cancer, is due to oversee the ceremony, in which troops in full dress uniform parade past the king with their ceremonial flag, or "color."

Kate is expected to travel in a horse-drawn carriage from Buckingham Palace with the couple's children — Prince George, 10; Princess Charlotte, 9; and Prince Louis, who is 6 — before watching the ceremony from a building beside the parade ground. She may also join other royals for a traditional Buckingham Palace balcony appearance.

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak said the princess' statement was "wonderful news."

"I thought it was brave, I thought it was honest and I'm sure it will bring an enormous amount of comfort to so many other people who are grappling with similar health challenges," Sunak said at a Group of Seven summit in Italy.

Kate's announcement in March came after speculation proliferated on social media about her well being and absence from public view. She has revealed few details about her illness, which was discovered after what she described as major abdominal surgery in January.

In a March video message, Kate said the diagnosis had come as "a huge shock, and William and I have been doing everything we can to process and manage this privately for the sake of our young family."

On Friday, Kate thanked members of the public, saying she had been "blown away by all the kind messages of support and encouragement."

"I am learning how to be patient, especially with uncertainty. Taking each day as it comes, listening to my body, and allowing myself to take this much needed time to heal," she said. "Thank you so much for your continued understanding, and to all of you who have so bravely shared your stories with me."

Charles, 75, disclosed his cancer in February, and has recently eased back into public duties. He attended commemorations this week for the 80th anniversary of D-Day, the invasion of Nazi-occupied Europe on June 6, 1944.

Charles is likely to travel to Saturday's event by carriage with Queen Camilla and is expected to watch the ceremony seated on a dais, rather than on horseback as he did last year.

Kunselman's song released Friday

By Bob Parana
Staff Writer



Photo submitted
2021 Ridgway graduate Jake Kunselman's song "Thinkin' Bout You" was released Friday by United Masters across all major streaming music platforms.

"Raw and from the heart" is how 2021 Ridgway High School graduate Jake Kunselman describes his song "Thinkin' Bout You," released Friday on all major streaming platforms, including Spotify and Apple Music.

The former Elker athlete hopes the release aids his journey toward earning a living creating music.

"My goal is to pay my bills by playing. I'd love music to be my job. It doesn't have to be rich and fame by any means, but I'd love to be able to at least get by with my music as a career."

An athlete in high school, Kunselman represented the Elkers at the 2021 Frank Varischetti All-Star Football Game and received a scholarship to wrestle at Div. II Davis & Elkins College in West Virginia. He admits to having had his struggles, which he worked through by focusing on music.

"Back when I first started college, I was struggling with my weight. I was up to 325 pounds," said the now 255-pound singer/songwriter. "Then I got injured and couldn't wrestle the entire season, and I just didn't feel good about myself."

According to Kunselman, the school changed policies regarding scholarships which affected him due to the injury. That led to a move to Penn College in Williamsport, where he gave grappling, another shot while studying Business Management.

At the time, the singer was taking a more serious approach to music which led to an epiphany about wrestling and school.

"I was like, what the heck am I doing? I was on the team but couldn't wrestle until January, and it just wasn't working out. School wasn't the challenge I thought it would be for what it cost, and honestly, I was pretty down and struggling to be proud of myself."

While practicing countless hours, Kunselman found clarity and happiness and realized music could be more than a hobby. Receiving positive encouragement along the way helped him gain confidence. This led to performing at last year's Taste of Talent in Franklin and a and a more serious approach to playing.

"Right now, music is a part-time job, but it's not just an hour a day here or there," said the singer employed at American Axle in Ridgway. "It's a lot of work, and honestly, practicing long hours can be a struggle. Like everybody, I'm my worst critic, so I can be tough on myself trying to perfect things. Five years ago, I never thought I'd still be picking up a guitar, but I'm determined to make this happen."

That said, Kunselman takes a realistic approach.

"My plan is to pay off my student debt, save money, and move to Nashville in the next couple of years. I know things don't happen overnight. I'm happy with life. I've got a good job and more confidence, but I realize a move will be necessary."

"Thinkin' 'Bout You"

The local singer admits the song involves a personal tale.

"It's about driving to clear my head and getting an adrenaline rush to make me forget what's happening in my life. There is a reference to speeding in the song, but that's what makes it interesting."

Released by United Masters to over 50 music platforms, the tune was recorded with an Audigo mic set atop a fence post in his front yard.

"The production quality might not be the greatest, but it's the first song, and I'm proud of it," he said. "Hopefully, it will help people overcome a difficult time and bad feelings. I've been down the road where things don't make sense, but I've worked through it like I hope it will help them do."

To book Kunselman to perform or to learn more about his journey, you can email him at – jakekunselman1@gmail.com.

PUBLIC INPUT HEARING NOTIFICATION

For FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company's Rate Increase Request

Docket No. R-2024-3047068

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Greensburg Garden and Civic Center (Laurel Room & Iris Room), 951 Old Salem Road, Greensburg, PA 15601

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PROOF OF PUBLICATION

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

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

Central Pennsylvania Newspapers, LLC./ Herald-Standard

BY: Sharon K Wallach

STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA,
COUNTY OF FAYETTE, } SS:

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

Sworn to and subscribed before me
this 18 day of June 2024

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

By Amanda M Kisko

GARDENS

Continued from C4

While the home has been remodeled twice, the garden has undergone several changes since 2005.

Noting her 101-year-old mother, Francis Aloe, loved floral arrangements, Cashman planted annuals. She cut them weekly, placed them in a vase and presented them to Aloe, who now resides in Providence Point.

Cashman also had a vegetable garden, and she once once planted some 200 tulips in the cutting garden.

"Deer candy," she said. "I learned my lesson."

The animals also ate the vegetables, and Cashman's mom started to use a walker. Cashman explained, this made it difficult for her mother to also handle a vase of flowers and maneuver the walker as well.

Hence, three years ago, Cashman transitioned to a perennial garden with the help of Claire Schuchman. A master gardener, Schuchman was featured on last year's garden tour.

"Fifteen years ago, I was still willing to get on my hands and knees and plant things," Cashman said. "I don't do it anymore.

"Having a cutting garden was all annuals all the time. A ton of work. I prefer perennials now. They don't require that amount of work.

"I am grateful that I have the ability to have pretty things around me and not be personally responsible for every bit of it." she added.

Throughout her estate are several well-manicured garden plots featuring trellises, pots, an ornamental sculpture and fountain. However, the highlights are a Moon Gate and a Wizard. The former is a recently placed iron trellis, while the latter is a wooden figurine carved out of a diseased elm tree, pruned back in 2005.

"Between them, the plants get lost," Cashman said jokingly.

Plants are indeed aplenty.

There are a variety of tree specimens, including a white birch and magnolias, as well as an herb garden featuring basil, parsley, oregano, thyme, chives and cilantro. Additionally, there are hydrangea, Russian sage, allium, cypress, juniper, hellebores, clematis, variegated rose of Sharon, climbing roses, begonia, creeping Jenny, as well as Cashman's favorite, hibiscus.

"When they bloom, they are really spectacular. The contrast is amazing between the foliage and flower. Lights up wherever it is and goes all summer," Cashman said.

Overall, she added regarding gardening, "I like the beautiful results."

Proceeds from the garden tour benefit the library. Tickets are $20 in advance ($25 the day of the event, and available on the library's website.

"The garden tour helps the library," Cashman said. "I am a big supporter of the library.

"It takes me back to when I was growing up and my mother told the six of us, 'Readers are leaders and leaders are readers.' She encouraged us to have a book in hand. My grandchildren use the library now, and I am delighted with that. I am happy to help with the tour. It works for me."

HESS

Continued from C1

sawdust from wood products used in his auto plants was not being utilized, but hauled away or burned by the ton.

Ford's friend and distant relative, Edward Kingsford, on an outdoor trip with Ford, devised a plan to turn the wood waste materials into charcoal briquettes that would provide fuel for outdoor cooking. Ford enlisted another friend, Thomas Edison, to design and build a plant to make the briquettes and other items.

There was, at that time, little market for the briquettes. Then the Great Depression hit. Folks cooking outside were cooking in scrap wood fires, not for recreation, but survival.

After navigating his companies through the lean years, Ford expanded his footprint in the outdoor cooking and camping market by producing Ford brand charcoal bricks and outdoor cook stoves. In the beginning, Ford's charcoal briquettes and stoves were only sold at Ford dealerships, but eventually were offered publicly.

The innovative industrialist could have been the farthest thing from our minds in the early 1960's when with our two little daughters we would steal a few hours of relaxation from a very busy business schedule.

With our homemade Chevy Corvair conversion van, we would find a remote location, pull off the road, set up the charcoal grill and load it with Kingsford briquettes. With hot dogs and burgers, we would enjoy what industrialist friends Ford and Kingsford had hoped middle class America would discover.

We especially enjoyed the picturesque road between Dunbar and Ohiopyle, then the winding trek from Ohiopyle to Confluence. Both roads had pull offs with picnic tables, and with a short forest walk, magnificent Youghiogheny River or mountain valley overlooks. An hour or so at the falls made a great family outing.

We think of the genius of our early industrialists as totally focused on ways to accumulate more wealth. That was certainly an objective. But some, like Henry Ford and Edward Kingsford loved the outdoors, loved nature and detested material waste.

Roy Hess Sr. is a retired teacher and businessman from Dawson.

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Mountain Watershed gets $30K state grant

Fayette County is among counties receiving state Departmenty of Environmental Resources education grants.

The funding totaling $980,256 for the Environmental Education Grants Program prioritizes proposals that engage youth or adults who live in environmental justice communities, which are described as neighborhoods disproportionately burdened by pollution and social vulnerabilities.

"These projects help connect people to the ways we can protect the air we breathe and the water we drink, and many of them encourage learning at any age whether you're a kid or an adult," said Jessica Shirley, DEP acting secretary. "Nearly every grant we are awarding will support people in environmental justice communities and people's connections to their environment."

Funding for 48 of the 56 projects chosen supports educational activities that will benefit people living in environmental justice communities.

Mountain Watershed Association was awarded $30,000 to conduct "Expanding Outdoor Education in the Youghiogheny River Watershed" in Fayette, Somerset and Westmoreland counties.

The project will facilitate a wide range of activities for all ages to promote watershed education and environmental stewardship. Programming includes monthly after-school and community-based programs, four professional development trainings, and two high school service-learning field trips.

Pennsylvania Resources Council Inc. was awarded $27,060 for hosting "Stormwater Equity: Increasing Access to Rain Barrels for Overburdened Communities" in Allegheny, Fayette and Delaware counties. The project will host high education workshops focused on watershed protection, stormwater management, and environmental literacy.

California Area School District in Washington County was awarded a $30,000 state Environmental Education Grant for a "Bringing Biology to Life" project to create a high school biology curriculum aligned with the new Pennsylvania State Science Standards.

Tips for staying sober

Dear Annie: I wanted to offer a few thoughts for your readers regarding alcohol awareness. The truth is that any method that helps someone reduce their alcohol consumption has to be commended. People with alcohol dependency come from all walks of life and demographics.

These phrases are the basis of Allen Carr's "Easy Way to Quit" and Holly Whitaker's "Quit Like a Woman" (based in part on the first program). They have been my mantra for more than two years. The two methods helped me to cut my alcohol dependency completely. I have them written on an index card. At first, I read it every day. While that became less necessary after the first year, I still occasionally reread them and maintain my commitment to being a non-drinker.

Fundamentals to Abstinence:

■ Make a vow to quit forever.

■ Define yourself as a non-drinker.

■ Take away the desire to drink.

■ There's no such thing as one drink.

■ One drink is all it takes to hook you.

■ Never doubt your decision to quit.

■ To stop feeling the need, stop use.

Definition of Alcohol:

■ It's not a weakness; it's a trap.

■ It doesn't bring pleasure or a crutch.

■ You cannot control alcohol; it controls you.

■ It's an addiction, not a habit.

■ The tendency is to drink more, not less.

■ Cutting down results in drinking more.

■ It's a poison.

Advantages to Quitting:

■ Choose a life of health/happiness.



Annie Lane

■ You have everything to gain.

■ Start with a feeling of elation that you have quit.

■ You have improved self-respect.

■ Rejoice to not be enslaved.

■ You have more money, time and clarity.

Drinking Disadvantages:

■ It removes your ability to know when you're dull, rude, obnoxious.

■ It takes away your power.

■ It impairs your sleep.

■ It makes you more stressful and fearful.

■ It causes a deterioration of looks.

■ It causes horrendous hangovers.

■ It causes arguments/violence.

■ It causes dread.

■ It is your worst enemy.

■ Your ability to deal with stressful situations is reduced.

— Alcohol Awareness

Dear Alcohol Awareness: Thank you for sharing some of the teachings that have helped you stay sober for two years. Other readers have used different messages, particularly the 12 steps from Alcoholics Anonymous. As you say, any method that helps an alcoholic get sober is good for that person.

Send your questions for Annie Lane to dearannie@creators.com.

Get HeraldStandard.com delivered to your inbox.
Call 724-439-7530

HONOR ROLLS

Mapletown Junior-Senior High School announces honor roll

The following students at Mapletown Junior-Senior High School were named to the honor roll for the fourth nine weeks of the 2023-24 school year.

Grade 12

Highest Honors: Morgan Franks, Zachary Nash, Erin Richmond, and Gabriella Taylor.

High Honors: Zachary Brewer, Devan Clark, Elizabeth Henderson, Hannah Knutsen, Makenzie Moats, Alexis Perry, Nicholei Rieder, Andrew Vanata, Ethan West, and Merrill Young-Lacich.

Honors: Dominick D'Amico, Evan Griffin, Aliza Pecjak, Jasmine Rockwell, Noah Wilson, and Trevor Wilson.

Grade 11

Highest Honors: Brock Evans, Zachary Gyorko, Maura Margita, Tanner McCormick, Parker Ponzoo, Marley Seward, and Zachary Welda.

High Honors: Mason Allen, Daniel Fox, James Gantle, Isabella Garnek, Joshua Howard, Lucas Kiger, Alexa Lagos, Caleb Landers, Hailie Pattison, and Spencer Yeager.

Honors: Sophia Bernat, Dakota Carey, Jordan Cline, Zander Hall, Tyler Howard, Trevor Johnson, Timothy Mayle, Tarissa Orndoff-Jenkins, Tyler Salosky, Lucas Stevenson, and John Vanata.

Grade 10

Highest Honors: Nicole Barrera and Makenna Lotspeich.

High Honors: Damien Conn, Addison Halbert, Blake Nash, Marley Shiflett, Colton Spitznogle, Chase Taylor, Treslee Weston, Alexander Wilson, and Emma Zalar.

Honors: Meah Branham, Anna Danko, Coltin Halbert, Isaac Henderson, Heavan Kisner, Jacob Mauser, Reagan Rankin, Katie Rhome, Mackenzie Self, and Mya Self.

Grade 9

Highest Honors: Emma Clites, Michael Ross, and Leah Williamson.

High Honors: Owen Griffin, Ella Menear, and Peyton Ponzoo.

Honors: Helena Cumpston, Cooper Franks, Alexis Glassman, Sophia Jennings, Leona Ligget, Kaeden Lotspeich, Carson Vanata, and Ashton Walker.

Grade 8

Highest Honors: Lillie Barnum, Augusta Deter, Leah Pattison, and Allison Pecjak.

High Honors: Joseph Danko, Haylee Fisher, Isaiah Garnek, Brinley Pincavitch, and Jacob Welda.

Honors: Jayden Cutlip, Brian Gray, Lily Rudman, and Julianna Sechrengost.

Grade 7

Highest Honors: Matthew Dulaney-Halbert, Bryson Shaffer, Colton Taylor, and Sophia Vanata.

High Honors: Devin Bennett, Isabella Greenwood, Lily Hawk, Lillian Landers, Jorja Lowery, and Brynlee McKnight.

Honors: Joshua Debolt, Aiden Finn, Brooklyn Hunnell, Keira Kelley, Hunter McDonald, Ernest Morris, Noah Rose, Nathan Salisbury, Jordan Stoneking, Blake Switalski, Cayne Vanata, Kirill Zmija, and Brayden Zybell.

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Presiding: Administrative Law Judge Katrina L. Dunderdale, **Dates: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 & Wednesday, July 17th, 2024, Times: 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM**

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OBSERVER-REPORTER
Washington, Pennsylvania
Proof of Publication

In compliance with the Newspaper Advertising Act of July 9, 1976, P.L. 877, No. 160, as amended COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, COUNTY OF WASHINGTON SS:
Before me, a Notary Public in and for said County and State, personally appeared

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

June 16 and 18, 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 18th day of June, 2024

Eleanor B Smith

First Energy Media
154 East Aurora Road, #174
Northfield, Ohio 44067
June 18, 2024
Ad #ORW0066450

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania - Notary Seal
Eleanor B. Smith, Notary Public
Washington County
My commission expires June 18, 2028
Commission number 1207780
Member, Pennsylvania Association of Notaries

Trolley Museum dedicates new park

On Friday, the Pennsylvania Trolley Museum dedicated the Senator J. Barry Stout Park, with family and friends of the late state senator on hand, as well as Washington County elected officials.

Stout was a longtime friend, supporter and advocate for the Pennsylvania Trolley Museum and helped secure federal and state grants for many of the museum's projects. The park includes the Christopher Golofski Memorial Gazebo, custom-built playground equipment, a mural of Cascade Trolley Park, which was located in New Castle, and a brick wall embedded with Harmony Freight Station stones from Beaver Falls.

Scott Becker, the museum's executive director, said the project "is a major piece of our effort to have a family-friendly venue and appropriately is named in memory of Sen. J. Barry Stout, who worked tirelessly to make our community a better place for all to live."

Photos courtesy of Pennsylvania Trolley Museum





ABOVE: Senator J. Barry Stout Park, which was dedicated Friday, is pictured. AT LEFT: Scott Becker, executive director of the Pennsylvania Trolley Museum, gives a museum lifetime achievement award to Bill and Sandy Stout. Pictured with them is Ed Morascyzk, president of the Pennsylvania Trolley Museum.

California Area gets $30,000 state grant

California Area School District was awarded a $30,000 state Environmental Education Grant for a "Bringing Biology to Life" project to create a high school biology curriculum aligned with the new Pennsylvania State Science Standards.

That grant is among $980,256 awarded by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

The Environmental Education Grants Program prioritizes proposals that engage youth or adults who live in environmental justice communities, which are described as neighborhoods disproportionately burdened by pollution and social vulnerabilities.

"These projects help connect people to the ways we can protect the air we breathe and the water we drink, and many of them encourage learning at any age whether you're a kid or an adult," said Jessica Shirley, DEP acting secretary. "Nearly every grant we are awarding will support people in environmental justice communities and people's connections to their environment."

Funding for 48 of the 56 projects chosen supports educational activities that will benefit people living in environmental justice communities.

Also, Fayette County is included in two multi-county projects that received grants.

Mountain Watershed Association was awarded $30,000 to conduct "Expanding Outdoor Education in the Youghiogheny River Watershed" in Fayette, Somerset and Westmoreland counties.

The project will facilitate a wide range of activities for all ages to promote watershed education and environmental stewardship. Programming includes monthly afterschool and community-based programs, four professional development trainings, and two high school service-learning field trips.

Pennsylvania Resources Council Inc. was awarded $27,060 for hosting "Stormwater Equity: Increasing Access to Rain Barrels for Overburdened Communities" in Allegheny, Fayette and Delaware counties. The project will host high education workshops focused on watershed protection, stormwater management, and environmental literacy.





CHARLEROI OFFICES CLOSED

Borough offices in Charleroi will be closed Tuesday and Wednesday.

Tuesday's closure is the result of a planned power outage by West Penn Power between 7 a.m. and 2 p.m.

"With temperatures reaching into the 90s (Tuesday), I viewed this as a safety issue regarding our staff," said Kristen Hopkins-Calcek, council president. "With no power, no lights or internet the staff would be extremely limited as to what services it could perform for the public. So, it seemed the only logical thing to do was to close the building for the day."

Borough offices will be closed Wednesday in observance of Juneteenth, a federal holiday.

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Honeycutt delivers another last at-bat win for Tar Heels

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — Vance Honeycutt's single brought home Jackson Van De Brake from third with two outs in the bottom of the ninth, and North Carolina pulled out yet another win in its last at-bat, a 3-2 walk-off victory over Virginia in the College World Series opener on Friday.

The Tar Heels (48-14) advanced to play Sunday against the winner of Friday night's Bracket 1 game between Florida State and Tennessee. Virginia (46-16) meets the Florida State-Tennessee loser in an elimination game Sunday.

Four of North Carolina's six wins in the NCAA Tournament have come in its final at-bat. Virginia has lost five straight CWS games since 2021, each of the last three by one run.

Van De Brake, a .194 hitter whose last hit came on May 23, pinch hit for Alberto Osuna to start the bottom of the ninth and punched a liner inside the right-field line for a double off Chase Hungate.

Van De Brake moved to third on Alex Madera's sacrifice bunt, and Colby Wilkerson fouled out to the catcher to bring up projected first-round draft pick Honeycutt.

Virginia coach Brian O'Connor elected to have Hungate (7-2) pitch to Honeycutt rather than intentionally walk him. Honeycutt drove a 2-1 pitch just over shortstop Griff O'Ferrall's glove into left field, bringing Van De Brake home and prompting the rest of the Tar Heels to pour out of the dugout to mob Honeycutt behind second base.

Honeycutt accounted for a walk-off win in the super regional opener last week against West Virginia, homering in the bottom of the ninth.

Dalton Pence (5-1) came on for Matt Poston after Virginia went up 2-1 on Griff O'Ferrall's sacrifice fly in the sixth. Pence (5-1) allowed no hits over 3 1/3 innings and stretched his NCAA Tournament shutout innings streak to 12 1/3.

Virginia came to Omaha batting .336, second nationally, and averaging 9.4 runs per game. The Cavaliers matched their season low with five hits, left 10 runners on base and were 1 for 9 with runners in scoring position. Twelve of the Cavaliers last 13 batters failed to reach base.

BRIEFS

In college football

Three people were arrested Friday and charged with capital murder in the death of Southern Mississippi defensive back Marcus "MJ" Daniels Jr., police said.

Daniels, 21, was killed Tuesday at an apartment complex in Hattiesburg.

Hattiesburg Police Chief Hardy Sims said those charged are Orlando May, 18, of Hattiesburg; Allen Marcus Gardner, 17, of Houston; and Samir Green, 16, of Hattiesburg. Sims said the two juveniles are charged as adults.

May is also charged with one count of attempted carjacking, one count of felony eluding and two counts of grand larceny auto. Gardner and Green are also charged with one count each of attempted armed carjacking.

Daniels was starting cornerback last season for Southern Miss. He tied for the team lead in interceptions with three and had 29 tackles in 12 games.

In auto racing

NASCAR's inaugural Cup Series practice at Iowa Speedway turned into a test for tires and created questions about the quality of race Sunday will produce.

There were five separate tire problems Friday, the first day Cup cars have ever turned laps at the track located 30 minutes outside Des Moines.

"It is very concerning," said Christopher Bell of Sunday's 350-lap Cup Series debut.

Bell hit the outside wall in Turn 4 after a right front tire blew. Austin Cindric made contact with the wall in Turn 2 after his right front tire went down. Ross Chastain and Ty Gibbs had tires go down on the track, but didn't suffer any damage. And, Tyler Reddick also suffered a flat tire, with no damage to the car.

"It's strange," said Bell, who along with Cindric will have to go to a backup car for Saturday's qualifying and Sunday's race. "It's very, very strange."

All of the issues came around the 20-lap mark on the set of tires, which further perplexed Bell. Bell, Kyle Larson and Brad Keselowski participated in the Goodyear tire test at the .875-mile oval on May 28, when temperatures were approximately 15 degrees cooler than Friday.

In Olympic sports

The first Olympic Esports Games are set to be added soon to the IOC's portfolio of events as it seeks to attract and retain young audiences.

The International Olympic Committee said Friday it will ask members to approve a proposal to create a video game Olympics when they meet next month in Paris on the eve of the Summer Games.

The Olympic body said it was in "advanced discussions with a potential host" that should be announced soon after the July 23-24 meeting in Paris.

In golf

Nelly Korda missed her second straight cut after winning six of seven events, rallying Friday but falling a stroke short of advancing to weekend play in the Meijer LPGA Classic.

The top-ranked Korda followed an opening 4-over 76 in windy conditions Thursday with a 67 to get to 1 under at Blythefield Country Club, where she won in 2021 at a tournament-record 25 under.

Ally Ewing and Grace Kim shared the lead at 11-under 133. Eighty-one players at 2 under or better advanced.

Ewing had a 63. She chipped in for eagle on the par-5 eighth and closed with consecutive birdies.

In the NFL

Jayden Daniels signed his rookie contract with the Washington Commanders on Friday, the next step in becoming the team's franchise quarterback.

The Heisman Trophy winner out of LSU was the second pick in the NFL draft. As a result, the contract is worth $37.75 million for four years with a $24.3 million signing bonus and a fifth-year team option for the 2028 season.

In baseball

Major League Baseball plans to discipline umpire Pat Hoberg following an investigation into a potential violation of sports gambling policies.

In a statement Friday, the commissioner's office said Hoberg has decided to appeal the penalty. MLB did not disclose the nature of the violation or the extent of the punishment.

"While MLB's investigation did not find any evidence that games worked by Mr. Hoberg were compromised or manipulated in any way, MLB determined that discipline was warranted. Mr. Hoberg has chosen to appeal that determination. Therefore, we cannot comment further until the appeal process is concluded," the statement said.

MLB said it began investigating Hoberg during spring training this year and he was removed from the field while the probe was ongoing.

Astros release Abreu, on hook for $30.8M

Associated Press

MAJOR LEAGUES

The Houston Astros released José Abreu on Friday, cutting ties with the former AL MVP less than halfway through a three-year, $58.5 million contract.

General manager Dana Brown said this was an extremely difficult decision considering how much money he is still owed.

"It's always tough when the deal doesn't work out, but it just didn't work out this time," Brown said.

The 37-year-old Abreu was batting .124 (14-for-113) with two homers and seven RBI this season, during which he spent time in the minors trying to fix his swing. The Astros still owe him $30.8 million from the deal he signed before last season.

Brown and manager Joe Espada met with Abreu on Friday afternoon to deliver the news.

"I have nothing but good things to say about him," Brown said. "I thought he was very graceful. He handled it well. He understands baseball and he understands that he wasn't producing and that he ran out of time."

Espada raved about Abreu's professionalism and said releasing him was difficult.

A three-time All-Star during his nine years with the Chicago White Sox, Abreu was named MVP during the pandemic-shortened 2020 season. He was the AL Rookie of the Year in 2014 after defecting from his native Cuba the previous year.

Cole strikes out 10 in rehab start: Gerrit Cole struck out 10 in 4 1/3 innings for Triple-A Scranton-Wilkes Barre Friday night, the reigning AL Cy Young Award winner's third rehab start and the latest step toward returning to the New York Yankees' rotation.

The 33-year-old right-hander allowed a double in the first inning and an unearned run on a single in the fourth. He opened by striking out the first, third and fourth Rochester batters he faced.

Cole added a strikeout in the second inning and struck out the sides in the third and fourth innings. He opened the fifth inning with his 10th strikeout before being lifted. He finished by throwing 46 of 70 pitches for strikes against the Red Wings.

Cole made two previous rehab starts, both for Double-A Somerset.

He was diagnosed during spring training with nerve inflammation and edema and told to rest, and then began throwing bullpens on May 4.



Associated Press

Chicago's Pete Crow-Armstrong is tagged out at home plate by St. Louis catcher Pedro Pagés during the eighth inning Friday at Wrigley Field.

Cole's earliest possible return to the Yankees would be the home series against Baltimore from June 18-20.

National League

St. Louis 3, Chicago Cubs 0: Kyle Gibson pitched two-hit ball over seven innings, Pedro Pagés broke a scoreless tie when he led off the eighth with his first career homer and the St. Louis Cardinals beat the Chicago Cubs 3-0 on Friday.

Pagés, who had just three hits in 28 major league at-bats, picked the perfect moment to go deep. With his family on hand, the 25-year-old Venezuelan gave the Cardinals the lead with a drive to the left-field basket against reliever Hayden Wesneski (2-4).

Chicago starter Jordan Wicks left the game in the second inning because of a strained right oblique and will likely be placed on the injured list, manager Craig Counsell said. The left-hander walked off the field accompanied by a trainer after giving up a two-out single.

Dodgers get Herandez from Pirates: The Los Angeles Dodgers acquired pitcher José Hernández from the Pittsburgh Pirates in exchange for cash.

Hernández was designated for assignment Tuesday after appearing in seven games for the Pirates. The 26-year-old left-hander was 1-1 with a 3.38 ERA and four strikeouts in 5 1/3 innings.

He pitched in parts of two seasons with the Pirates, going 2-4 with a 4.82 ERA in 56 innings with 66 strikeouts.

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Acct# 1184641
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Presiding: Administrative Law Judge Katrina L. Dunderdale, **Dates: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 & Wednesday, July 17th, 2024, Times: 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM**

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AFFIDAVIT

State of New Jersey
County of Hunterdon

Loretta Doran, being duly sworn, says that (s)he is connected with The Express Times, a newspaper circulating in Lehigh and Northampton Counties, Pennsylvania, and that a notice of which the annexed is a true copy was published on the following dates in said newspaper:

June 16, 2024.

Loretta Doran

Sworn to before me this 18th day of June, 2024.

NOTARY PUBLIC

JEANETTE KRYZYMALSKI
NOTARY PUBLIC OF NEW JERSEY
Commission # 50033947
My Commission Expires 3/8/2026

Acct# 1184641
Ad# 10878924

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For FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company's Rate Increase Request
Docket No. R-2024-3047068

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ELECTION

Biden and Trump: A tale of two campaigns in Pennsylvania

Continues from A1

city of Reading on Wednesday, outside of the three visits he has made to the state so far this year.

Some political analysts suggest Trump may be playing a waiting game or relying on his style of retail politics: stadium-size rallies, like the one he held in the Lehigh Valley in April.

WAITING FOR RALLIES?

Dan Mallinson, an associate professor of public policy and administration at Penn State Harrisburg, said the dearth of activity so far from the Trump campaign might just reflect the candidate's preferred approach.

"Trump has, traditionally, loved the big events, the rallies and those types of things," he said.

The Biden camp was quick to pounce on Trump's lack of visibility in a key battleground state he won in 2016 by 40,000 votes before losing to Biden by 80,000 votes in 2020.

"With just over five months until Election Day, Donald Trump's campaign is nowhere to be seen in Pennsylvania," Nikki Lu, the Pennsylvania campaign manager for Biden told PennLive, "and with each passing day, he alienates more and more voters with his MAGA extremism and plans to ban abortion nationwide, including here in the Commonwealth."

Meanwhile, Lu said, the Biden campaign "is committed to reaching voters in every corner of the Commonwealth and highlighting the contrast between Joe Biden and Kamala Harris' work to cap the cost of insulin at $35 a month for seniors and create 500,000 good paying jobs in Pennsylvania alone with Donald Trump's threats to repeal the Affordable Care Act and cut Social Security and Medicare, raising costs for families and making it harder to get by."

An email to the Trump campaign was answered by a spokesperson from the Republican National Committee (RNC), which is now headed by Lara Trump, a daughter-in-law of the former president.

Karoline Leavitt, the Trump campaign's national press secretary, said, "We have paid staffers and volunteer-powered field programs in every battleground state, including Pennsylvania, and they are expanding daily," although she did not identify where.



Former President Donald Trump, left, and President Joe Biden are, so far, waging very different ground campaigns in Pennsylvania. Biden has opened 24 offices across the state, including in several counties that he lost in 2020, while Trump just opened his first one in Philadelphia, a Democratic stronghold. *AP file photos*

Chris LaCivita, a Trump campaign senior adviser and the RNC chief of staff, said, "By combining forces and operations, the Trump campaign and RNC are deploying operations that are fueled by passionate volunteers who care about saving America and firing Joe Biden."

LaCivita then added, "We do not feel obligated, however, to discuss the specifics of our strategy, timing, and tactics with members of the news media."

The RNC spokesperson did not respond to PennLive questions about the number of Trump campaign offices in Pennsylvania and their locations, or a request for a campaign contact in the state.

Spectrum News, a New York City-based outlet, took a look at the two campaigns in late April and Lehigh County Republican chairman Joe Vichot said that Trump was relying on his rallies to motivate his voters.

"We don't have an official ground game, as of yet," he told Spectrum. "We have the motivation and the grassroots passion for a ground game."

Mallinson said the apparent difference in the number of offices and staff members in Pennsylvania might also be the result of the fundraising advantage that Biden has had over Trump and a hesitancy to spend money too early.

According to CNN, Biden had a $40 million cash advantage in March that dipped to $35 million in April after the president's fundraising dropped from $90 million in March to $51 million in April.

Trump reported raising $53 million in the 24 hours following his conviction on 34 felony counts in New York City, which brought his May numbers to over $140 million, reported NBC News.

'SO MUCH CAN HAPPEN'

"It very well could be that that's a wise use of resources," Mallinson said of the Trump campaign waiting to set up offices in Pennsylvania. "So much can happen between now and October."

At the opening of Trump's first Pennsylvania office in Philadelphia earlier this month, the city's Republican Party Chairman Vince Fenerty told the Pennsylvania Capital-Star that Trump will be opening other offices across the state.

"Someone else said there's a lot more Joe Biden offices than there are Donald Trump offices," he said. "Well, people are going to jump on the Trump train and that locomotive is going to run them over. We're going to open offices."

Cumberland County Republican Committee Chairman Lou Capozzi echoed Fenerty's assurances and insisted that he has not noticed a Biden campaign presence there even though the president's campaign has had an office in Carlisle for several weeks.

Capozzi also said that Trump workers have been in contact with him and shared a list of offices in Pennsylvania, but Capozzi did not know the status of them. Capozzi did not provide the list to PennLive, but said the Trump campaign is "very organized in Pa."

Even if the Biden campaign might be running ahead of Trump in structure, Capozzi said he has no concerns about Trump's prospects, saying GOP voters are enthusiastic and the nomination was wrapped up by the time of the April 23 Pennsylvania primary and there was no need for much campaigning.

"I think they're saving their gunpowder for the general," Capozzi said of the Trump campaign.

Matt Roan, the chair of the Cumberland County Democratic Committee, said the Biden office at 46 West Louther St. has been the base of canvassing efforts in recent weeks.

Trump won Cumberland County in 2020 with 54.5% of the vote, but Democratic Gov. Josh Shapiro took 53% of the county's vote in 2022, boosting Democratic optimism.

"We've been doing the groundwork to win this election in November," Roan said. "Cumberland County is not going to be a red county for very much longer."

Coordination between the county party and the Biden campaign "is at a different level" and the president's campaign has staff on the ground "to keep things organized," Roan said.

"Nobody will look at this campaign after the fact and say that the Trump campaign out-organized us," said Roan, "because they're just not at the level that we're already operating at and will continue to operate at."

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HEAT

It's hot and will get dangerously hotter all week

Continues from A1

weekend," the weather service said.

In New Jersey, a heat advisory will be in effect for 17 counties today, including Hunterdon and Warren, while a more serious excessive heat watch starts Wednesday and runs through Saturday for much of the state, the National Weather Service said.

In his Monday video forecast for EPAWA Weather Consulting, meteorologist Bobby Martrich said the heat of summer is arriving early. "This is going to get to the point where it's very oppressive. This is a little earlier in the season, in that you don't normally see this at this point in June. This is something you see typically if you're going to have it in a year, any given year, it's usually mid-July, mid-to-late July or August. But we are starting early with this, this year. We're not even at peak heating yet. We're getting this very strong, anomalously strong ridge moving over the region today."

The unusually long-duration heat wave began to expand and intensify Monday before it dominates today through Friday. On Saturday, the core of the heat may shift south back into the Mid-Atlantic, including the nation's capital, which could hit 100 for the first time since 2016. The lengthy spate of heat will itself be a problem, exacerbating heat stress.

Even more impressive is the strength of the instigating "heat dome," which models indicate will reach a key atmospheric threshold never observed before.

Unsurprisingly, the National Weather Service is highlighting multiple consecutive days of "extreme" heat risk across the Ohio Valley, Mid-Atlantic and Northeast, representing a top-tier level 4 on their 0-to-4 scale.

"This level of rare and/or long-duration extreme heat with little to no overnight relief affects anyone without effective cooling and/or adequate hydration," the Weather Service wrote.



Workers take a break during hot weather Monday in Wheeling, Illinois. Oppressive heat will bear down on the Northeast this week. *Nam Y. Huh, Associated Press*

THE HEAT DOME

Spawning all the heat is a massive heat dome, or ridge of high pressure, that will stagnate for days across the northern U.S. Heat domes are akin to force fields in the atmosphere, deflecting inclement weather. Sinking air warms and dries out, squashing potential cloud cover. The result? Hot, sun-baked air that's usually cloud-free, which allows for even more dramatic heating.

Warm air expands. If you warmed a balloon, its volume would grow. The same is happening with the atmosphere. The extreme heat is causing the atmosphere to bulge vertically - to a record extent.

Atmospheric scientists look to the "500 millibar level," or halfway point of atmospheric mass, to see how much an air column has expanded. As far back as records go, that level has never reached 600 dekameters, which is 6,000 meters or 19,685 feet. But that's probably in the cards this upcoming week.

The American GFS model is indicating that 500 millibar heights could reach 600 dekameters over New York City on Wednesday evening. There has never been a weather balloon launched from New York City/Long Island that has encountered a 500 millibar height greater than 598 dekameters.

There exists a firm link between human-induced climate change and the frequency, intensity and duration of heat events. Heat domes, like this one, are projected to continue becoming more frequent, stronger and more expansive as Earth's climate warms.

The U.S. last year saw the most heat waves, consisting of abnormally hot weather lasting more than two days, since 1936.

STAY SAFE

Combined heat and humidity can be life-threatening. "Heat-related illnesses increase significantly during extreme heat and high humidity events," the weather service said as it offered the following tips for staying safe during a heat wave.

- Stay hydrated: Make sure to drink plenty of fluids.
- Find cool shelter: Stay in an air-conditioned room.
- Avoid sun exposure: Avoid direct sun exposure, protect yourself and check on vulnerable relatives and neighbors.
- Child and pet safety: Do not leave young children and pets unattended in vehicles when car interiors can reach lethal temperatures in a matter of minutes.
- Caution outdoors: When working or spending time outside, take extra precautions.
- Optimal timing: When possible, reschedule strenuous activities to early morning or evening.
- Recognize heat-related issues: Know how to recognize the signs and symptoms of heat exhaustion and heat stroke.
- Dress for comfort: Wear lightweight, loose-fitting clothing to stay comfortable.

These NWS heat safety directives are essential for safeguarding your well-being when facing high temperatures. Stay well-informed and take the necessary precautions to shield yourself and others from the potential hazards of extreme heat.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) recommends the following tips for outdoor workers.

- Take regular rest breaks in shaded or air-conditioned areas.
- If someone is overwhelmed by the heat, swiftly relocate them to a cool, shaded location.
- In emergencies, call 911 for immediate assistance.

Summer officially starts Thursday with the arrival of the summer solstice at 4:50 p.m., according to the National Weather Service. That is the moment the earth's tilt toward the sun is at a maximum, making for the longest day of the year, with more than 12 hours of daylight.

The Associated Press, Washington Post and Advance Local contributed to this report.

WHITEHALL

Harbor Freight moving into former A.C. Moore space

Pamela Sroka-Holzmann
For The Express-Times

After about five years of sitting idle, the building that once occupied the now defunct arts and crafts chain A.C. Moore is finally getting a new tenant in Whitehall.

Tool and equipment retailer Harbor Freight Tools sometime in late July or early August is slated to move into the 23,000-square-foot space at MacArthur Commons shopping center, 2647 MacArthur Road, Donna Walker, the chain's publicist, told lehighvalleylive.com.

A.C. Moore ended all operations after a fall 2019 announcement the chain would be closing all stores and selling selected leases and other assets to competitor, Michaels Arts and Crafts. The region's other A.C. Moore location, at Airport Road Shopping Center in Hanover Township, Lehigh County, last year became occupied by Wren Kitchens.

Calabasas, California-based Harbor Freight is known for its inventory of about 7,000 tools and accessories. This includes anything from hand tools and generators to air and power tools — from shop equipment to automotive tools.

The Whitehall site is hiring 25 to 30 new workers to staff the new location, Walker said. Ads show current positions available in retail sales and retail stocking, as well as seasonal help. Full-time benefits include medical, vision and dental coverage; a company matched 401(k) plan; associate discounts; and some holidays off.

There are more than 65 Harbor Freight stores statewide. Regionally, there are more stores in Wilson Borough; South Whitehall; and Westgate Mall in Bethlehem.

Harbor Freight will join a large lineup of other big box retailers and smaller businesses at MacArthur Commons, situated in a bustling retail corridor. These include anchors Dick's Sporting Goods; Big Lots; PetCo; Walmart; Giant Food Stores; and Burlington.

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AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

Kathy Alexander
First Energy Media
154 E Aurora RD # 174
Northfield OH 44067-2053

STATE OF WISCONSIN, COUNTY OF BROWN

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06/16/2024, 06/18/2024

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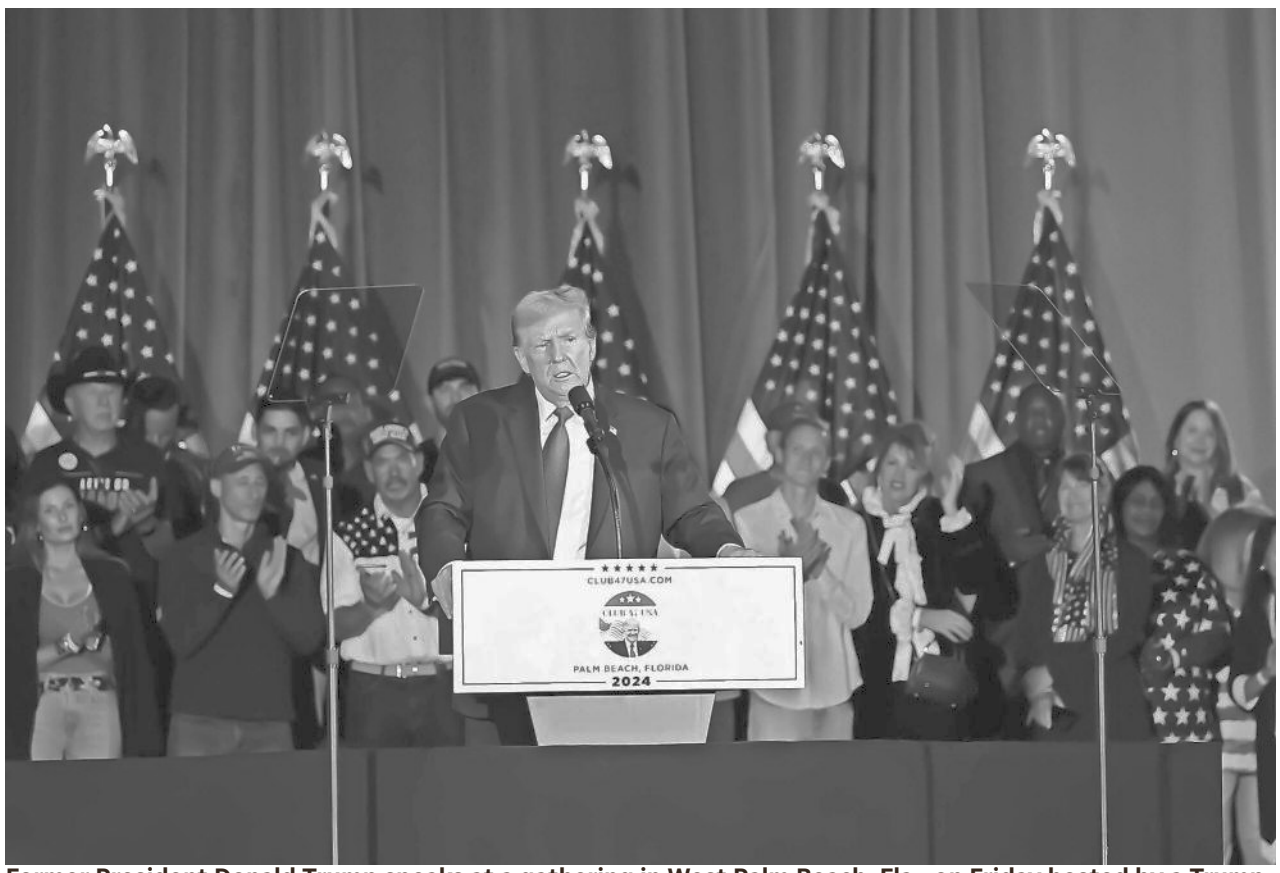
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Showmanship muted at Trump event

Speech retains signature rhetoric on immigration

Antonio Fins
Palm Beach Post
USA TODAY NETWORK



Former President Donald Trump speaks at a gathering in West Palm Beach, Fla., on Friday hosted by a Trump support group that celebrated both Flag Day and the former president's 78th birthday. MAX CURRAN/THE PALM BEACH POST

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. – Former President Donald Trump's post-primary, post-trial return to the stage in his home county was kicked off by a chorus of "Happy Birthday" and punctuated by his trademark dark, dystopian view of "a failing" America.

The presumptive Republican presidential nominee spoke at a gathering in West Palm Beach on Friday evening hosted by a Trump support group that celebrated both Flag Day and the former president's 78th birthday. Trump decried the state of the nation, which he said is crippled by inflation, high interest rates and Washington's eroded prestige on the world stage evidenced by, he said, a Russian military vessel docking in Cuba.

His harshest assessment, as usual, dealt with immigration and the border with Mexico. Trump again claimed millions of people are coming into the country straight out of prisons and mental institutions, and employed terminology critics said harks back to Nazi rhetoric.

"They come from Africa. They come from Asia. They come from South America. They come from the Middle East," he said to the gathering of Club 47. "What's happening to our country is unbelievable. They are poisoning our country. They are destroying our country, and we're not going to let it happen."

Trump spoke for about an hour, far shorter than his standard stump speeches. The rhetoric was sharp, but he omitted much of the showmanship characteristic of his performative rallies, such as skits ridiculing President Joe Biden and a transgender weightlifter.

Trump recited "The Snake" lyrics, a 1960s song he repurposed into an allegory for the immigration crisis. But there were fewer audience chants and Trump did not muse about Hannibal Lecter, the fictional character from the 1990s movie "Silence of the Lambs," while dwelling less than he usually does on his personal grievances, such as indictments and costly civil cases.

The speech at times rambled as Trump repeated key positions while checking off talking-point criticisms of electric vehicles, boasting about his 2017 tax cuts and the defeat of the ISIS terrorist organization. In a second term, he promised to end the policy of taxing tips for restaurant workers, deny federal funds to school districts with vaccine mandates – though he again did not specify for which diseases – and make Florida a cryptocurrency hub, but offered no details.

And, of course, he concluded with a promise to make America great again.

"Our country is going to hell, but we're going to stop it, we're going stop it fast," he said. "We will bring our country back. We will bring it back quickly."

Trump's speech at the Palm Beach Convention Center was delivered on the heels of the New York conviction last month on felony charges of falsifying business records to conceal what prosecutors said was a hush money payment to cover up an alleged sexual encounter with an adult film star, which he denies.

But for those attending the gathering at the convention center Friday, it was again a festive occasion.

Among the few thousand in attendance was Barry Rosenberg. The Vietnam War veteran said he is confident Trump will win the White House again and deliver on "the big things" – making permanent the 2017 tax cuts and securing the southern border.

"When Trump came around I started following him, I really appreciated all that he did in the time he had in the White House," Rosenberg said. "I really do believe that he can make America great again."

Speech toned down

In Las Vegas on June 9, Trump riffed about the choice he might have to make if on a sinking electric-powered boat, sunk by its own wake, and mused about whether it would be preferable to be electrocuted by the boat's battery or eaten by a shark.

The soliloquy, which Trump has spoken about in other rallies, drew ridicule and sardonic commentary.

"The fact that he sounds like a crazy person when he talks, I am actually glad, I have to say, to have Trump back in the limelight and out of the courtroom," said Sarah Longwell, founder of Republican Voters Against Trump, during a cable news program on Thursday.

Longwell added that she hoped the more the U.S. public hears Trump talk – whether it's comparing his legal prosecutions to those of 20th-century mobster Al Capone or making outlandish claims about offshore wind turbines killing whales – the more he reminds voters of why they have grown to "dislike" him.

"When they see Trump and they see him behaving this way, they remember, 'Oh yeah, he is a global embarrassment to the United States. He's not a smart person.' This person shouldn't be within 1,000 feet of the White House," Longwell said. "So, good, Donald Trump get out there, be Trump, remind America who you are and let's hope that America rejects you again like they did last time in 2020."

But one pollster said Trump's eyebrow-raising statements may not dissuade voters as much as his detractors might desire.

"Trump's opponents say, 'You want more of this chaos. Go ahead,' " said Tim Malloy, a polling analyst for Quinnipiac University. "We've all known Trump for a long time now, so ... how much more surprising can anything get?"

Possible running mates speak

Before Trump spoke, various members of Florida's GOP-dominated congressional delegation stepped up to the podium, including a pair of lawmakers some consider to be potential running mates, Rep. Byron Donalds and Sen. Marco Rubio.

Both echoed Trump and MAGA clarion calls and slogans.

"You're all ready to go to make sure that on Nov. 5 we fire Joe Biden for a terrible job," Donalds said.

Rubio spoke longer and sounded MAGA crowd favorite themes, including blasting Biden for the consumer price increases of the past three years and the chaotic withdrawal from Afghanistan. He even ridiculed Biden, saying he "would get lost on this stage."

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Black support for Democrats slipping

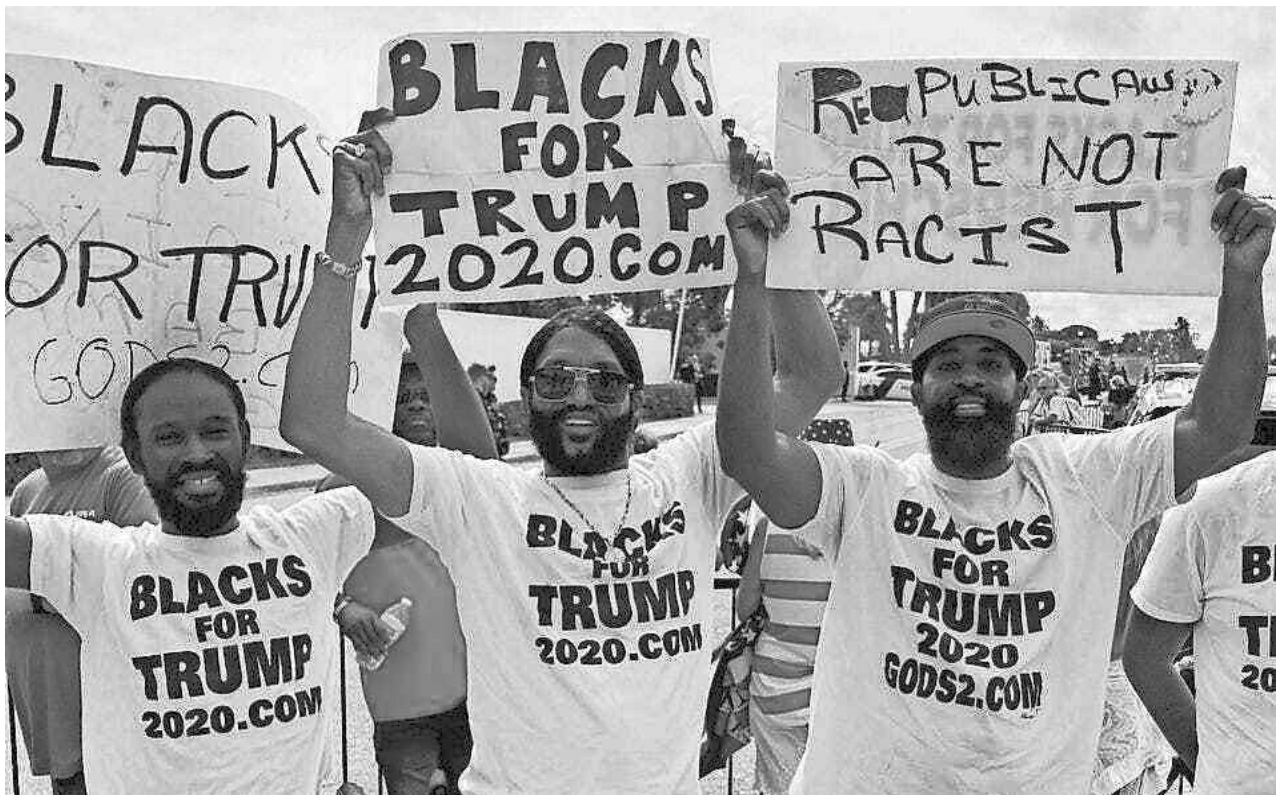
Third parties making inroads with voting bloc

Susan Page
USA TODAY

President Joe Biden's sagging support among Black voters has set off alarm bells among Democrats and raised hopes among Republicans that Donald Trump could score historic gains with a key part of their opposition's base.

But exclusive USA TODAY/Suffolk University polls of Black voters in Michigan and Pennsylvania, two crucial swing states, show a more complicated dynamic within a demographic group that is unexpectedly in play in November's election.

The surveys of 500 Black voters in each state, taken by landline and cell phone from June 9 to 13, have margins of error of plus or minus 4.4 percentage points.



A poll found that Donald Trump drew more support from Black men than Black women – by 22% to 9% in Michigan, and 16% to 6% in Pennsylvania. WILL GREENLEE, TREASURE COAST PALM FILE

Biden has a problem

The president has suffered significant losses among Black voters who supported him in 2020.

Seventy-six percent of those surveyed in each state said they voted for Biden four years ago. Now, his support has fallen 20 percentage points in Pennsylvania (to 56%) and 22 points in Michigan (to 54%).

Exit polls in 2020 showed Biden received 92% of the Black vote in each state, making his decline now even more precipitous.

The top reason volunteered by respondents in the survey was discontent with the job he's done in the White House, followed by worries about his age and mental acuity. Third was concern about wars, including his support for Israel in the conflict in Gaza.

Biden was viewed favorably by 61% to 31% in Michigan and 59% to 33% in Pennsylvania.

Black voters aren't sold on Trump

Biden's big losses have resulted in small gains for Trump.

In the poll, the presumptive Republican nominee was backed by 15% of Black voters in Michigan, compared with 9% who said they voted for him in 2020, and by 11% in Pennsylvania, compared with 8% in 2020.

Exit polls in the last election showed Trump received 7% of the Black vote in each state.

Even limited shifts in support could make a difference in a close contest.

By more than 2 to 1, Trump drew more support from Black men than Black women – by 22% to 9% in Michigan, and 16% to 6% in Pennsylvania.

Overall, he was viewed much more negatively than Biden. In Michigan, Trump was seen unfavorably by more than 3 to 1, 72% to 23%.

Harris is less popular than Biden

Kamala Harris made history in 2020 when she was the first woman, the first Black person, and the first Asian-American to be elected vice president.

Despite that groundbreaking status, she is viewed less favorably than Biden among Black voters in these two states, although her unfavorable rating is also a bit lower: 60% to 24% in Michigan and 55% to 30% in Pennsylvania.

If for some reason Biden wasn't running for president, Harris was preferred for the nomination over several other Democrats, including 2016 nominee Hillary Clinton, California Gov. Gavin Newsom and Georgia Sen. Raphael Warnock.

Harris was the second choice in Pennsylvania and the third in Michigan, where home-state Gov. Gretchen Whitmer was second.

Rated first in both states: former first lady Michelle Obama, who by the way has made it clear she has no interest in running for office.

For Trump, choosing a Black running mate could backfire

A majority of Black voters, with percentages ranging from 55% to 59%, said they would be less likely to vote for Trump if he chose any of three Black men frequently mentioned as potential vice-presidential candidates: former Housing and Urban Development Secretary Ben Carson, South Carolina Sen. Tim Scott and Florida Rep. Byron Donalds.

That negative reaction swamped the number saying those potential running mates would make them more likely to support the GOP ticket – 17% for Carson, 10% for Scott and 7% for Donalds.

Trump as a fellow victim of injustice? Not so much

Trump has speculated that his legal troubles, including his conviction on 34 felony counts in New York and three other pending criminal indictments, have increased his support among Black Americans because they see him as a fellow victim of an unfair justice system.

That argument didn't ring true in this poll. By a 5 to 1 margin, 79% to 15%, Black voters in Michigan disagreed. In Pennsylvania, they disagreed by a margin of 7 to 1, 84% to 12%.

What's more, 55% of those in Michigan and 64% in Pennsylvania said they personally found Trump's comments offensive.

That's not to say those surveyed believed the criminal justice system was fair. More than 7 in 10 in each state called it unfair.

Third parties have new appeal

In 2020, just 1% of those surveyed said they voted for a third-party candidate. Now the drift from Biden has swelled that number to 15% in Michigan and 16% in Pennsylvania.

In Michigan, independent candidate Robert F. Kennedy Jr. was backed by 8% and Cornel West by 6%. In Pennsylvania, West was supported by 8% and Kennedy Jr. by 7%. Green Party candidate Jill Stein was supported by 1% in each state.

A fair share of third-party supporters identified their second choice as some other independent candidate. Backers of West in both states were most likely to choose RFK Jr., for instance.

In both states and with every independent candidate, supporters were more likely to pick Biden than Trump as their second choice.

Kennedy's supporters in Pennsylvania picked Biden over Trump by 27% to 11%, for instance. In Michigan, the margin was 48% to 13%.

The question ahead: Can Biden win them back?

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AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

Kathy Alexander
Not specified
154 E Aurora RD # 174
Northfield OH 44067-2053

STATE OF WISCONSIN, COUNTY OF BROWN

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Report: $1M in coins left at US airports

TSA figures renewing debate about eliminating pennies from circulation

Jay L. Zagorsky
Boston University
THE CONVERSATION



A decreasing amount of change left at Transportation Security Administration checkpoints would suggest fewer people have coins in their pockets, while a steady or increasing amount indicates people are still carrying coins.
GETTY IMAGES

Should the U.S. get rid of pennies, nickels and dimes? The debate has gone on for years. Many people argue for keeping coins on economic-fairness grounds. Others call for eliminating them because the government loses money minting low-value coins.

One way to resolve the debate is to check whether people are still using small-value coins. And there's an unlikely source of information showing how much people are using pocket change: the Transportation Security Administration, or TSA. Yes, the same people who screen passengers at airport checkpoints can answer whether people are still using coins – and whether that usage is trending up or down over the years.

Each year, the TSA provides a detailed report to Congress showing how much money is left behind at checkpoints. A decreasing amount of change would suggest fewer people have coins in their pockets, while a steady or increasing amount indicates people are still carrying coins.

The latest TSA figure shows that during 2023, air travelers left almost $1 million in small change at checkpoints. This is roughly double the amount left behind in 2012.

At first glance, this suggests more people are carrying around and using coins. But as a university researcher who studies both travel and money usage – as well as a keen observer of habits while lining up at airport checkpoints – I know the story is more complicated than these numbers suggest.

What gets left behind?

More than 2 million people fly each day in the U.S., passing through hundreds of airport checkpoints manned by the TSA. Each flyer going through a checkpoint is asked to place items from their pockets such as wallets, phones, keys and coins in either a bin or their carry-on bag. Not everyone remembers to pick up all their items on the other side of the scanner. About 90,000 to 100,000 items are left behind each month, the TSA estimates.

For expensive or identifiable items such as cellphones, wallets and laptops, the TSA has a lost-and-found department. For coins and the occasional paper bills that end up in the scanner bins, TSA has a different procedure. It collects all that money, catalogs the amount and periodically deposits it into a special account that the TSA uses to improve security operations.

That money adds up, with travelers leaving behind almost $10 million in change over the past 12 years.

The amount of money left varies by airport. JFK International Airport in New York City is consistently in one of the top slots for most money lost, with travelers leaving almost $60,000 behind in 2022.

Harry Reid International Airport, which serves Las Vegas, also sees a large amount of money left behind. Love Field in Dallas, headquarters of Southwest Airlines, is often near the bottom of the list, with only about $100 lost in 2022.

People lose money while going through security for a few reasons. First, some cut it close getting to the airport, and in their rush to avoid missing their plane, they don't pick up everything after screening. Second, sometimes TSA lines are exceptionally long, leaving people to again scramble to make up time. And finally, TSA checkpoints are often confusing and noisy places, especially for new or infrequent travelers. Making it more confusing is that some airports have bins featuring advertisements, which distract travelers who only quickly glance to check for all their items.

How much is lost?

TSA keeps careful track of how much is lost because the agency is allowed to keep any unclaimed money left behind at checkpoints. TSA records show people left behind half a million dollars in 2012. This rose to almost a million in 2018. The drop in travel due to the COVID-19 pandemic reduced the figure back to half a million in 2020. In 2023, people left $956,000.

These raw figures need two adjustments to accurately track trends in coins lost. First, the numbers need to be adjusted for inflation. From 2012 to 2023, the consumer price index rose by 33%. This means a dollar of change in 2012 purchased one-third more than it did 12 years later.

Second, the number of people flying and passing through TSA screening has changed dramatically over time. In 2012, about 638 million people went through the checkpoints. By 2023, that had risen to 859 million people, which is about 1,000 people every 30 seconds across the entire U.S. when airports and checkpoints are open.

Adjusting for both inflation and the number of people screened shows no change in the amount of money lost. My calculations show back in 2012 about $1.10 in coins was lost for every 1,000 people screened. In 2023, about one penny more, or $1.11, was lost per 1,000.

The peak year for money being lost was 2020, when $1.80 per 1,000 people was left behind. This was likely due to people not wanting to touch objects out of misplaced fear they could contact COVID-19. During the pandemic, people in general carried less money.

The world is increasingly using electronic payments. The data from TSA checkpoints shows people are carrying coins at roughly the same rate as back in 2012. This suggests Americans are still using physical money, at least for making small payments – and that the drive to get rid of pennies, nickels and dimes should hold off a while longer.

The Conversation is an independent and nonprofit source of news, analysis and commentary from academic experts. The Conversation is wholly responsible for the content.

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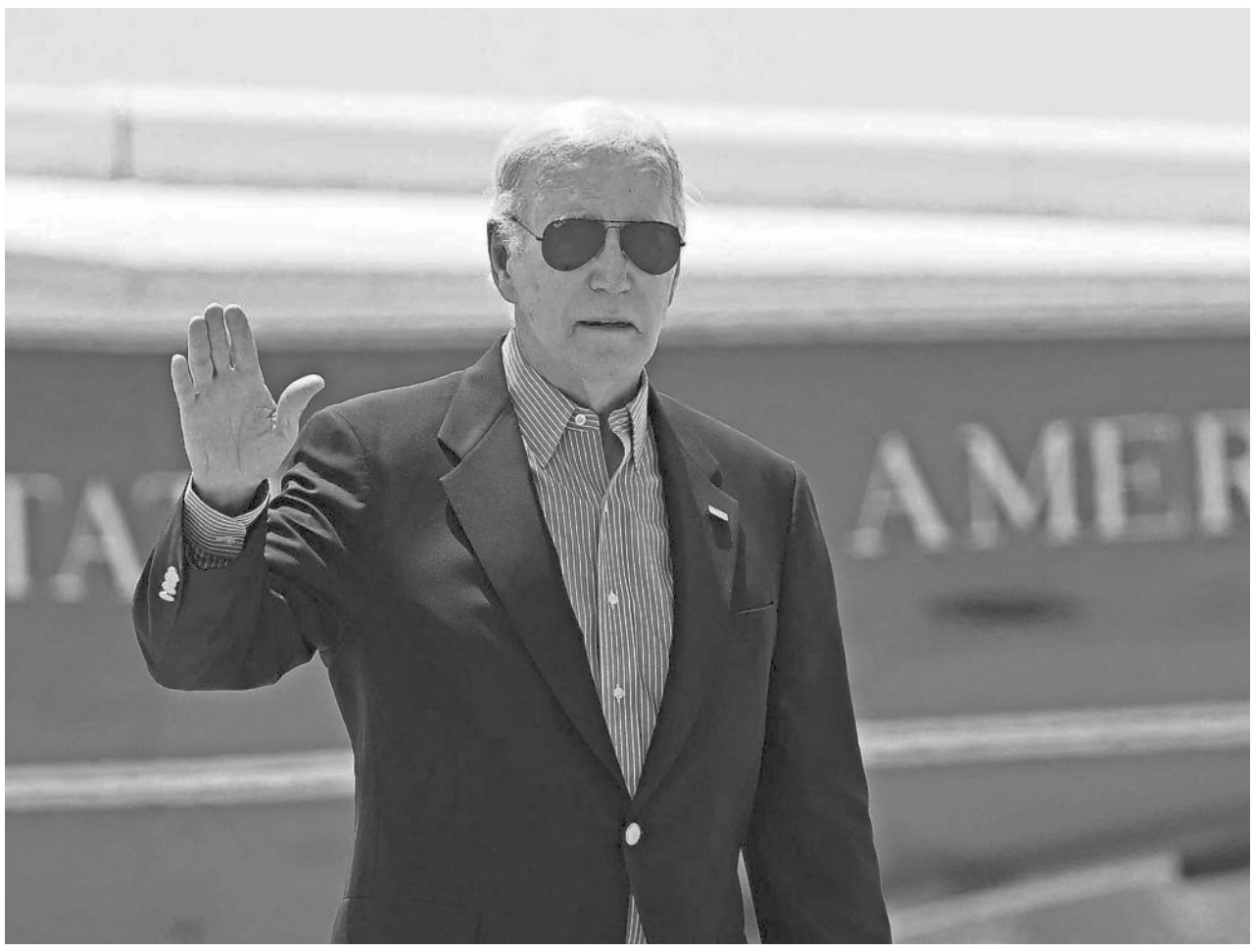
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Biden attacks Trump as 'convicted criminal' in ad

Joey Garrison
USA TODAY



The ad is President Joe Biden's first that tries to seize on former President Donald Trump's conviction last month. MANDEL NGAN/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

WASHINGTON — President Joe Biden's reelection campaign is escalating attacks against Donald Trump over the former president's recent guilty verdict and other legal troubles, launching a new television ad Monday as part of a massive $50 million paid media campaign that slams Trump as a "convicted criminal."

The 30-second spot, which will air in battleground states and on national cable television, marks the Biden campaign's first ad that tries to seize on Trump's conviction on 34 felony counts in his New York criminal hush money trial last month.

"In the courtroom, we see Donald Trump for who he is: He's been convicted of 34 felonies, found liable for sexual assault, and he committed financial fraud," a narrator says in the ad, which shows clips of Trump in court. "Meanwhile, Joe Biden's been working."

The ad touts Biden's efforts to lower health care costs and make "big corporations pay their fair share."

"This election is between a convicted criminal who's only out for himself and a president who's fighting for your family," the ad concludes.

The ad's rollout comes 10 days before the first presidential debate of the 2024 campaign, set for June 27 on CNN.

By hitting Trump over his conviction, the Biden campaign risks inviting attacks from Republican critics who argue Trump's prosecution was motivated by politics and the 2024 election.

"Crooked Joe Biden and the Democrats weaponized the justice system against President Trump and this new ad once again proves the sham trial was always meant to be election interference, but Americans see through it," Trump campaign spokeswoman Karoline Leavitt said in a statement.

The ad shows the Biden campaign plans to remind Americans of Trump's conviction even after Biden's son, Hunter Biden, was found guilty on three felony gun counts last week.

"Character matters," Biden campaign communications director Michael Tyler said in a statement. "And the president of the United States should be someone who understands that the highest office in the land is about you and your family – not a vehicle to enrich yourself. That is the ethos Joe Biden puts into the job every day."

Trump was convicted of falsifying business records. His sentencing date is July 11.

CDC: Salmonella outbreak linked to bearded dragons

Mary Walrath-Holdridge
USA TODAY

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is investigating a multistate salmonella outbreak linked to pet bearded dragon lizards.

While bearded dragons are popular pets, they are also prone to carrying germs that can easily cause illness in humans, especially children, the CDC said in a warning Friday. As of June 14, the ongoing investigation has found a total of 15 people in nine states who have gotten salmonella illnesses in the outbreak, the agency said. Nearly 60% of cases have been found in children under the age of 5, the CDC said. No deaths have been reported.

Twelve of the fifteen impacted people were interviewed and the CDC found 58% reported direct contact with a bearded dragon before getting sick.

In at least one instance, a child did not directly touch the bearded dragon but may have been exposed via indirect contact, the CDC said. Most people had close contact with their pets at home.

Though they are generally considered easier to keep than other reptile species, the CDC does not suggest bearded dragons be kept as pets for children younger than 5, adults 65 or older, or people with weakened immune systems.

Bearded dragons can carry salmonella germs in their droppings even if they look healthy and clean, according to the CDC. Touching your lizard or anything in its environment and then touching your face, mouth or food can lead to the ingestion of germs that can lead to salmonella poisoning.

Symptoms include bloody diarrhea for more than three days, excessive vomiting and stomach cramps, and most commonly occur between six hours and six days after exposure. Though most people recover in four to seven days, those with weakened immune systems, including children younger than 5 and adults over 65, may experience more severe symptoms that require medical treatment or hospitalization.

The CDC suggests the following safety tips when interacting with your pet reptile:

- **Wash your hands:** Anyone who touches or feeds your bearded dragon should always wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water right after that. This is especially important before someone holds or feeds a baby or child under the age of 5.
- **Play safely:** Don't kiss or snuggle your bearded dragon, and don't eat or drink around it. This can spread salmonella germs to your mouth and make you sick.
- **Keep things clean:** Clean your bearded dragon supplies – such as feeders, toys, and food and water containers – outside of the house, if possible. If you must clean the supplies indoors, don't clean them in the kitchen or other areas where you eat or prepare food. Use a laundry sink or bathtub, and thoroughly clean and disinfect the area afterward.

The CDC says related cases were reported in California, Georgia, Iowa, North Carolina, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Tennessee and Texas. New York is home to the most cases with four, followed by Ohio with three and California with two. All other states reported only one case.

As with most outbreaks, the actual number of cases is likely higher than those recorded by health officials, as many people recover at home without testing.

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FACEBOOK SCREENSHOT

PA Economic Growth PAC board members (from left) Don Yoder, John Davis, Kristin Rohrbaugh and Matt DeRose pose for a photo that was posted onto the PAC's Facebook page on May 10, 2022.

➤ PAC

Continued from A10

PAC will share the "roadmap" with others, including other states. He contributed the flip to social media, knocking on doors, mailers and events.

Gemma also interviewed with Epoch Times and confirmed the PAC flipped 12 school boards to conservative majorities. She said the group is trying to combat diversity, equity and inclusion and what she described as the "transgender movement."

According to the PAC, 48 of its 51 endorsed candidates were elected last November. The group also endorsed the successful campaigns of Wheeler; Commissioner Scott Burford, who ousted Ron Smith in the earlier GOP primary; and Common Pleas Judge Kelley Margetas.

The PAC, Gemma said, trains board members on governing and offers "support on how to enforce their authority over the superintendent and the solicitor." She said the board's major responsibility, as the governing body, is policy.

Enter the ILC and more donations: Davis also has ties to the ILC.

State campaign finance records show that Davis donated $1,000 to the PA Family PAC in 2020. The PA Family PAC is a part of the Pennsylvania Family Institute, a nonprofit that represents families with a "three-fold strategy of impact." The institute established the ILC in 2006 as "a pro-bono law firm that litigates and advocates on behalf of the sanctity of life, marriage and family and religious liberty."

At a 2005 conference sponsored by the Pennsylvania Family Institute, Wenger spoke candidly about how Dover Area school officials could've better positioned themselves to overcome legal challenges to the intelligent design curriculum. For example, Wenger said school board members shouldn't mention religious motivations during meetings.

"Give us a call before you do something controversial like that," Wenger said, according to a 2005 Lancaster Online article about the event.

He added: "I think we need to do a better job at being clever as serpents."

The nonprofit ILC doesn't just provide free legal advice on these policies; it's even written speeches that local school board members read nearly verbatim at meetings.

Others who donated to the PAC included Jones who donated $250 in May 2021. In 2023, his PAC, Jones for PA, donated $3,500. He also donated $750 himself in the same year.

The other adviser, Keefer, did not appear to donate anything to the PAC, according to state reports.

In 2023, Phillips-Hill donated $500 and the Wheeler for PA PAC donated $1,500. A year before that, DeRose donated $10,000. Jim and Jean Ream, owners of Ream Printing, donated $3,500. Treasurer George and her husband, Doug, donated $5,000 each in 2022. The Georges also donated a combined $5,500 in October 2023 and another $10,000 in April 2024.

Themi Saccarellos, the owner of the Round the Clock Diner, donated $5,000 in 2021. Yoder donated $1,000 to the PAC that year and $10,000 in 2023.

PAC Board member Rohrbaugh, owner of Rohr + Design, has also made in-kind donations. In one report, she donated $9,977.51 in 2023 for marketing and design.

Over the past three years, the PAC donated $650 to Dover ABC's PAC, $500 to the 1776 Project PAC and $1,100 to Dave Sunday for DA PAC. The PA Economic Growth PAC donated $1,250 in April 2023 to the SYC PAC.

Some local board candidates and school board PACS, also noted the PAC contributed with in-kind donations for mailers and campaign materials. Northern York Citizens for Excellence in Education and Government PAC documented the other PAC made an in-kind donation of $1,897 in 2021 for handouts, signing and mailers. PA Economic Growth PAC also recorded donating $1,400 on May 2023 to the Northern York PAC. The York PA Conservatives received $650 from the PAC in April 2023, but it also contributed in-kind donations for mailers five times in 2023.

The Dover ABC's also listed three in-kind contributions from the PAC that equaled $2,762. One of the donations was labeled for campaign mailers.

The ripple effects of all this political activity surrounding the PAC and "The Warehouse" are now being felt in many York County school districts.

As is the spotlight shone on the secret meetings.

In recent weeks, parents and community members confronted some of the elected school officials named in the now-public emails.

Conley, the Dover Area school board president, said he believes it's permissible for board members to attend the PAC's events.

"Our objective wasn't to hear from PAC leadership but to participate in the discussion," he said. "It's good for school board members ... to engage frequently with various community groups and stakeholders."

➤ PLEAS

Continued from A1

year of credit for time already served at York County Prison in the case.

However, Orr also pleaded guilty in a separate firearms case, adding to his time. And Jones still faces charges in two drugs and weapons cases.

Jones was also a suspect in a separate homicide until a first-degree murder charge against him was withdrawn in that case on a judge's order last year.

In Banks' death, an investigative grand jury recommended the charges against Jones, Orr and a third man in March 2023.

Jones was implicated as the one who pulled the trigger and shot Banks multiple times on a sidewalk along North Franklin Street the afternoon of May 21, 2018, court documents show.

The 20-year-old Banks had been on parole from prison for three weeks before he was shot.

While he was out, investigators alleged that Orr had fronted him some marijuana to sell to help him get back on his feet.

But Banks didn't repay the loan and was accused of stealing the pot, according to grand jury witness testimony outlined in court documents.

A witness also alleged that Orr and Jones both told them they killed Banks, the grand jury documents show.

The charges against the third man in the case were withdrawn a few months after they were filed. The D.A.'s office didn't disclose why.



DISPATCH FILE PHOTO

York City Police investigate a shooting death in the first block of North Franklin Street on May 21, 2018. Two men have admitted to the shooting and entered pleas last week.

The move left Jones and Orr as the sole suspects for the past year.

Their attorneys filed motions challenging evidence as the case moved toward trial. One argument challenged a detective's ability to identify Jones from security camera video and challenged the use of rap videos on YouTube to identify Jones.

They won some challenges and lost others, court documents show.

The plea offer then came, and Jones and Orr took it for the 2½- to 5-year sentences.

Court documents show Orr was given 371 days of credit for time already served at York County Prison.

His attorney, Nenner, noted Orr also pleaded guilty On June 11 to a separate illegal possession of a firearm charge, and he was sentenced to 3 to 6 years of confinement on that. The two sentences will run together.

Jones, meanwhile, racked up 463 days of credit for time served in the murder case and for two other cases he's still involved in, according to court documents.

He faces multiple illegal gun possession, drug possession and drug dealing counts across both cases, with one of them involving a group of four other co-defendants, court documents show.

He's due back in court for hearings in those cases in September.

Jones also beat a first-degree murder charge in October 2023.

He was originally one of three men accused of firing 100 bullets to shoot and kill Shaheim Carr while the 27-year-old was on a sidewalk along West Philadelphia Street in July 2022.

Diamondstein, Jones' attorney in that case as well, challenged a detective's eyeball ID of Jones from security camera video though the man in the video wore a mask and hood. Diamondstein also disputed mobile phone data and information on Jones' whereabouts after the homicide that was used as evidence.

Judge Maria Musti Cook sided with the arguments, ruling the circumstantial evidence didn't rise above speculation and conjecture, and that the identification of Jones could have been "any number of Black males in York County."

She struck down the murder charge, ordering it dismissed without prejudice.

The decision meant prosecutors could re-file the charge at a later time, though no new action has been taken since, according to court documents.

— Reach Aimee Ambrose at aambrose@yorkdispatch.com or on Twitter at @aimee_TYD.

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AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

Kathy Alexander
Not specified
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Health experts give tips on swim hygiene

Water-based pathogens can cause illnesses

Ken Alltucker
USA TODAY



Cora Stofan, of Pittsburgh, tosses stones into Lake Erie on Wednesday while visiting Presque Isle State Park's Beach 8 with her mom, Amanda, and her father, Eric. No swimming was permitted at Beach 8 and three other park beaches due to 30-day levels of E. coli bacteria. DAVID BRUCE/ERIE TIMES-NEWS FILE

An alarming spate of infections at a Virginia lake during Memorial Day weekend offers a stark reminder for summer enthusiasts to use caution and good hygiene at outdoor water spots.

Virginia state health officials said 20 people who visited Lake Anna, a recreational site south of Washington, D.C., were diagnosed with an E. coli infection and came down with stomach illness. Of those, five people developed a serious complication called hemolytic uremic syndrome, a rare condition that damages kidneys, said Katherine McCombs, deputy director of surveillance and investigation at the Virginia Department of Health Office of Epidemiology.

The Virginia case highlights the need for visitors to lakes and recreational water spots to be cautious about bacterial diseases and other potential dangers lurking in the water.

"Water can have bacteria in it – and certainly not just for E. coli, but for lots of other things," said McCombs.

As we careen into summer, USA TODAY is highlighting some key water-borne threats that may not be visible to the naked eye.

How often do people get sick from lakes?

Swimming in lakes, rivers and oceans can expose people to a variety of pathogens.

Since 2009, more than 2,700 people have become ill in more than 100 outbreaks at outdoor water spots that had not been treated with chlorine or did not have filtration systems, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Dozens of people were hospitalized after falling ill from stomach bugs or other illnesses at these sites.

People are especially vulnerable to lake and water-based pathogens in the summer months, likely because hotter weather prompts people to seek cool water. June, July and August are the most common season for people to become sickened at lakes and other outdoor water spots, according to CDC data.

A CDC study said outbreaks from germs in recreational water often stem from pathogens such as norovirus and E. coli. These pathogens can come from human feces, vomit, stormwater runoff, sewage or septic system malfunctions. Animal waste in recreational hotspots can carry pathogens if people swim or play in contaminated waters.

Beware of brain-eating amoebas

Another rare but often fatal risk involves the amoeba *Naegleria fowleri*, a brain-eating amoeba. Last August, a Travis County, Texas resident died after becoming infected during a swim at Lake Lyndon B. Johnson, outside of Austin.

Brain infections, called amoebic meningitis, can occur in freshwater lakes with this amoeba when water is forced up the nose during an activity such as diving or water skiing. Such infections generally do not occur in salt water or properly maintained and chlorinated pools.

Watery diarrhea and crypto

Generally, filters and chlorinated water in swimming pools and hot tubs generally make them safer than watering holes. But germs can still lurk, depending on how well they are maintained. One study from the CDC noted that the U.S. lacks national standards for recreational water spots such as pools, hot tubs and splash pads.

In one case in 2005, more than 2,300 people were infected at a New York splash pad rife with the germ *Cryptosporidium*, a parasite that causes watery diarrhea. In response to the outbreak, New York passed public health regulations that mandated splash pads have ultraviolet light systems to kill these microscopic germs, according to the CDC.

In the case of this germ, chlorine is not enough to kill it off. The microscopic "crypto" germ, spread through the fecal matter of an infected person, can survive a week in water that's been disinfected with chlorine or bromine. Kids, pregnant women and people with weakened immune systems are especially vulnerable to this common public swimming pool bug, according to the National Institutes of Health.

Virginia lake outbreak probe continues

McCombs, of the Virginia Department of Health, said the state was awaiting the results of water test samples drawn from Lake Anna on Tuesday. The tests typically take about 48 hours to complete.

Health officials also interviewed the 20 people infected with E. coli to ensure there wasn't a common cause for the illness, such as eating the same type of contaminated food or exposure to an infected person.

She said E. coli outbreaks are often linked to consuming contaminated and undercooked foods, such as the outbreaks linked to romaine lettuce, but contaminated water can also be a source of infection.

"We're used to it (E. coli) being more of a foodborne thing, but it certainly can be transmitted through water as well," McCombs said.

Take these steps to stay safe when swimming, boating

People swimming or boating in lakes and other natural waters should avoid swallowing water, McCombs said.

McCombs also advised people to avoid swimming with cuts or wounds that could be exposed to bacteria in the water. People with a stomach or another type of illness that causes vomiting or diarrhea should also avoid the water because they can expose others to germs in their system. McCombs also suggested hand washing before eating or preparing food or after using a restroom.

Some other tips:

- Avoid swimming near storm drains;
- Avoid swimming if you are ill;
- Do not enter water if there is a green film on the water;
- Shower after swimming;
- Avoid swimming for three days after a heavy rain;
- Dispose human and dog waste properly.

PUBLIC INPUT HEARING NOTIFICATION

For FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company's Rate Increase Request

Docket No. R-2024-3047068

The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC) will conduct 18 Public Input Hearings concerning FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company's request filed on April 2, 2024, to increase electric rates by $502 million per year. The Commission will conduct a series of Public Input Hearings, totaling eighteen (18) in total, with fourteen (14) Public Input Hearings to be conducted in-person at seven (7) different locations within the territory of FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company. An additional four (4) Public Input Hearings will be conducted by telephone using the Commission's conference bridge technology.

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Graduate Palo Alto (Coaly Ballroom A/B), 125 S Atherton Street, State College, PA 16801

Tuesday, July 9, 2024 at 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Erie County Public Library (H.O. Hirt Auditorium – Museum Entrance), 160 East Front Street, Erie, PA 16507

Wednesday, July 10, 2024 at 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Butler County Community College (Founders Hall – Parking Lot #6), 107 College Drive, Butler, PA 16002

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Greensburg Garden and Civic Center (Laurel Room & Iris Room), 951 Old Salem Road, Greensburg, PA 15601

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Double Tree by Hilton (Junior Ballroom), 340 Racetrack Road, Washington, PA 15301

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‘Spaving’ is common retail sales tactic

Daniel de Visé
USA TODAY

Anytime you buy two of something and get a third item for half off, or add a few dollars to an online order to secure free shipping, you are “spaving.”

Spaving is a mashup of “spending” and “saving”: Spending more to trigger savings. But don’t fool yourself, experts say: Spaving is mostly spending.

“It’s always more spending. It’s not always more saving,” said Jeff Galak, an associate professor of marketing at the Tepper School of Business at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh.

Here’s the basic concept: A merchant entices a customer to spend a little more, or a lot more, by offering a discount as a reward. Buy a third item, or a fourth, or a fifth, and get the last one free. Add another $10 to your cart and that $5 shipping fee goes away.

Customers may be seeing a lot of spaving offers this summer.

Inflation has been pushing up prices. A dozen eggs cost about twice what they did in 2019. Overall, consumer prices rose by nearly one-fifth between 2019 and 2023, federal data show.

So retailers are rolling out deals.

Fast food chains are reviving the value meal in the wake of consumer backlash against reports of $15 Big Macs. Target and Walgreens have announced summer price cuts.

More customers are choosing discounted store brands.

Spending less for the same Happy Meal you bought a week ago is a no-brainer. Spaving, by contrast, can quickly spiral out of control.

The term isn’t in the online Merriam-Webster dictionary and it has seldom appeared in this publication. Type it into your word processor and watch your spellchecker erupt in protest.

The concept behind spaving, however, goes way back.

“Spaving, besides being a terrible word, is not a new idea,” Galak said. “These promotions have been around forever.”

Who needs a gallon of extra-virgin olive oil? Maybe you do, at the right price.

The problem with spaving, experts say, is that it can lead a shopper to overspend on something they did not want, do not need and will not use.

“It’s always good to save money. The problem is when you’re spending money you wouldn’t have spent otherwise,” said Kimberly Palmer, a personal finance expert at NerdWallet.

Palmer herself recently succumbed to a spaving offer.

“It was a buy one, get one free,” she said. “I never intended to get a second shirt. It was for my daughter. I went ahead and bought two.”

The second shirt was free, so Palmer got a great deal, right? Well, maybe not. She paid full price for the first shirt. Absent the spaving deal, she would have looked for a discount. In the end, she said, “I did spend more than I wanted to.”

There is really only one kind of spaving offer that guarantees a good deal, experts say: One that has you spending less money in the end.

“Say you’re going to check out, and your cart is $5 short of the minimum to save you $30 on shipping,” said Cassandra Happe, an analyst at WalletHub. “Then, maybe spending the $5 to get the free shipping is a good idea.”

Most of the time, though, spaving makes you spend more: That’s what the retailers want.

$50M case highlights police abuse

Michael Loria
USA TODAY

CHICAGO – Four teenagers confess in 1995 to murders during grueling interrogations by city cops. Now, after growing up in prison, they’re getting $50 million for the decades they wrongly spent behind bars.

The payout for the “Marquette Park 4,” as they became known after the infamous murder case, is the largest since at least 2008 for reversed convictions in Chicago, a city that’s racked up nearly $329 million in lawsuit settlements for wrongfully convicted people, according to a USA TODAY review of documents from Chicago’s Department of Law.

The Marquette Park 4 settlement is bigger than any in the published records.

Illinois has been dubbed by the Innocence Project, a nonprofit legal organization that’s helped to successfully overturn over 300 convictions nationwide through DNA-based exonerations, as “the wrongful conviction capital of the country.” Illinois’ 540 exonerations of wrongfully convicted people tops the ranking of states, followed by Texas, with 474 exonerations, according to the Innocence Project.

Cook County, Illinois – with its population over 5 million people, including about 2.7 million in Chicago – ranks number one in the nation in terms of wrongful convictions, according to the National Registry of Exonerations.

Of the wrongful convictions in Cook County, 121 came as a result of false confessions, according to the exonerations registry.

The exonerees in the latest case – LaShawn Ezell, Charles Johnson, Larod Styles and Troshawn McCoy – said in a joint statement they’re grateful the city has recognized the hurt that police did to them. But millions of dollars can’t replace what was taken away.

“No amount of money can ever return the years we lost due to Chicago Police misconduct that caused our collective 73 years of wrongful imprisonment,” they said in the statement. “The City of Chicago must take steps to protect our teenagers from police abuses like those we endured.”



Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson said police reform is “ongoing” with “a lot of work that obviously has to be done.” ALEX WROBLEWSKI/GETTY IMAGES

Ezell, Johnson, Styles and McCoy were charged in 1995, when they were between the ages of 15 and 19, for the murders of Khalid Ibrahim and Yousef Ali, owners of a used car lot near Marquette Park on Chicago’s South Side.

Chicago police coerced the teens into making false confessions and inculpatory statements and withheld evidence that would have proven them innocent, according to the lawsuits. No physical evidence linked the teenagers to the murders.

DNA evidence analyzed in 2009 proved none of the four were connected to the murders, and in 2017 the Cook County State’s Attorney’s Office dismissed the charges.

Fair

Continued from Page 1A

$2 admission per person, $2 Strates Show rides and $2 food specials all day.

Wednesday, July 24:*Weis Markets Day*: Free admission all day with a Weis Markets card. Includes the holder and up to three guests.

Friday, July 26:*Froggy 107.7 Pre-School Pals Day*: Free admission from 11a.m. to 3 p.m. for one adult with a preschooler. Kiddie Kingdom ride bands cost $15. They can be purchased until 3 p.m. and the children can ride until 4 p.m.

Who will be performing on the grandstand and the free stage

Big name entertainers, including Lainey Wilson, Ludacris and Halestorm, will be performing on the Bobcat of York Grandstand Stage. Tickets are on sale for the concerts.

For those looking to enjoy free entertainment, here’s the lineup for the Froggy 107.7 stage:

Friday, July 19: 5:30 p.m. Kopper and Kash; 6:30 p.m. Runaway June

Saturday, July 20: 4:30 p.m. Blank Page; 5:30 p.m. The Bobby Law Band; 6:30 p.m. Ashley Cooke

Sunday, July 21: 4:30 p.m. Christian Yeager; 5:30 p.m. Chris Woodward; 6:30 p.m. George Birge

Monday, July 22: 5:30 p.m. Cody Tyler; 6:30 p.m. Guitar Pull with Conner Smith, Tigirlily Gold, Drew Baldridge and Josh Ross

Tuesday, July 23: 5:30 p.m. Jake Mach; 6:30 p.m. Dillon Carmichael

Wednesday, July 24: 5 p.m. Faith Noel; 6 p.m. Dylan Marlowe; 7 p.m. Locash

Thursday, July 25: 5:30 p.m. Wyatt Becker; 6:30 p.m. Restless Road

Friday, July 26: 5:30 p.m. Gillian Smith; 6:30 p.m. Dalton Dover

Saturday, July 27: 4:30 p.m. Dezzie Renae; 5:30 p.m. Cody Ross Smith; 6:30 p.m. John Morgan

Sunday, July 28: 5:30 p.m. Elly Cooke; 6:30 p.m. Anne Wilson

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Name of Publication: Gettysburg Times

City, State: Gettysburg, PA

Client/Advertiser: First Energy

Insertion Order #: 16660

Date[s] of Insertion: June 15 + June 18

Caption: Rate Hearings

Ad Size: 4 col. x 13

Total Number of Insertions: 8,500

My signature verifies that this ad was inserted as scheduled according to the above specifications.



6- -24

Signature Date

Harry Hartman

Name [please print]

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania - Notary Seal
HARRY J HARTMAN - Notary Public
Adams County
My Commission Expires August 28, 2025
Commission Number 1276679

Hub

(Continued from Page A1)

Brian Leatherman and Laurie Crown.

"It's a hidden gem for sure," Leatherman said. "I think people are missing out if they don't investigate this place."

Participants are welcome to use the business's equipment throughout the paranormal investigations with some of the products sold in the retail store, according to Leatherman.

The Estes Method involves someone wearing a pair of headphones, which are plugged into a spirit box that scans radio stations at a high speed, Leatherman said.

"Spirits can speak through it," Leatherman said. "There is no 100% way of knowing."

Leatherman asks questions while the person wearing the headphones shares if anything is said to them over the headset.

A group from Missouri allegedly heard "bad words" spewed from the headset, which Leatherman believed could have been Jennie Wade's father James.

While many know Jennie's story, her father supposedly had mental health issues after serving in the military that would now be referred to as post-traumatic stress disorder, Leatherman said.

On July 3, 1863, Jennie became "Gettysburg's only civilian fatality of the fighting" when she "was killed by an unknown Confederate sharpshooter" during the Battle of Gettysburg while in the kitchen of her sister, Georgia Wade McClellan's home, located at 548 Baltimore St., the information outside the building reads.

Crown, too, had an eerie encounter at the new business. She brought her grandmother's doll that is 90 years old to the site and noticed it has "a different feeling" there. The face had changed, she said.

"The hair stood straight on my arm. It never looked so sad," Crown said of the doll.

At that moment, an electromagnetic field (EMF) device "went crazy" when used around the doll, she said.

"I'm the skeptic in the group," she said.

Leatherman is more into the paranormal side, while Crown handles the store operations. Leatherman's daughter, Zoie, said she's "a bit of both."

Zoie recalled communicating through an Ovilus device, which has a word database, to what she believed to be a five-year-old spirit named Tim.

"I asked him if he was in the closet and he said, 'Am not,'" Zoie said, adding that it seemed to be a "child-like" response.

The structured light sensor (SLS) Connect is one tool that gets everyone "excited" during investigations, showing stick figure type displays in the room that could potentially be spirits, according to Leatherman.

While there are other paranormal haunts in Gettysburg, Leatherman said the business is "just as active of any of the other places."

"This place hasn't garnered that much attention, but it definitely deserves it," Leatherman added.

In October, Randy Inskip, an Adams County native who has owned the property for 40 years, and painter Nelson Leiphart discovered a small space in the home. The space, which was 3-and-a-half feet tall and about eight feet long, showed layers of wallpaper as well as a stovepipe hole near the chimney, they said at the time.

Inskip is no stranger to paranormal experiences at the property.

Inskip and his wife Judy were in town during a snowstorm many years ago and needed to stay at the place. When Judy went to take a shower, she said she saw someone walking downstairs, Inskip said.

A paranormal society from Pittsburgh investigated the place in 2000 and saw a soldier walking back and forth in the hallway, according to Inskip.

When living at the place for a year, Inskip said he recalled doors closing and covers being pulled off him at different times.

Inskip said he was "thrilled" about the new business in the building.

"I want to share this experience with other people. I know it is real," he said.

Crown said people should try something new "at least once."

"It could take a nonbeliever and make a believer out of them," added Crown.

In addition to the tours and investigations, the retail store has paranormal equipment, jewelry, wax melts, pendulums, crystals, incense, incense burners, and handmade candles as well as other creations from family members, including wood carved signs and other unique decorations, according to Crown.

"We didn't want to have things other people have. We wanted to have a handcrafted, one-of-a-kind made piece they can remember their trip from," Crown said.

Gettysburg Spirited Treasures & Tours is open 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Sunday with appointments and walk-ins accepted. History tours are any time during the day, ghost tours start at 7 p.m., and paranormal investigations begin at 8 p.m.

History tours are $8 per person, ghost tours are $12 per person, a two-hour paranormal investigation is $45 per person, a three-hour paranormal investigation is $60 per person, and a three-hour investigation of Jennie's birthplace, plus the Langdon Hill House is $75 per person, according to Crown. People can sign up on the business's social media pages, call at 223-255-4039, or walk in.

Readers may contact Vanessa Sanders at vsanders@gettysburgtimes.com.

High orange juice prices may be on the table for a while due to disease, weather

By Dee-Ann Durbin And Tatiana Pollastri
Ap Business Writer

MOGI GUACU, Brazil (AP) — Orange juice prices have always been volatile, falling when bumper harvests create an oversupply of oranges and rising when frost or a hurricane knocks out fruit trees.

But the record-high prices the world is seeing for OJ right now may be on the table for a while, since the diseases and extreme weather ravaging orange groves in some top-producing countries aren't easily resolved problems.

This year's harvest in Brazil, the world's largest exporter of orange juice, is likely to be the worst in 36 years due to flooding and drought, according to a forecast by Fundecitrus, a citrus growers' organization in Sao Paulo state.

"The concern isn't just that the price of juice is going up. The concern is not having the juice," Oscar Simonetti, an orange farmer in Mogi Guacu, Brazil, said.

In the U.S., Florida's already diminished orange production fell 62% in the 2022-2023 season after Hurricane Ian further battered a crop that was struggling due to an invasive pest. Drought also cut Spain's orange production last year.

Scarce supplies have sent prices soaring. In the U.S., a 12-ounce can of frozen orange juice concentrate cost an average of $4.27 in April, 42% more than during the same month a year earlier, according to government figures.

In the United Kingdom, where the British Fruit Juice Association says supplies are at 50-year lows, the price of fresh orange juice rose 25% over the past year, according to consumer research company Nielsen.

Those price increases are turning off inflation-weary consumers. Orange juice consumption has fallen 15% to 25% in major global markets — including the U.S. and the European Union — over the last year, according to Rabobank, a Dutch bank that focuses on food and agriculture.

Jonna Parker, a principal for fresh food client insights at market research company Circana, said consumers are increasingly getting their morning fruit intake from energy drinks, smoothies and other beverages besides orange juice.

"The price gets high and people consider other alternatives," she said.

Global orange juice consumption was already declining before the current price hikes due to competition from other drinks and public concern about the amount of sugar in fruit juices. If that trend continues, it should help balance supply with demand and keep prices from rising much further, Rabobank said. But it expects limited supplies will keep prices elevated for some time.

In some markets, orange juice is disappearing from shelves altogether.

Late last year, McDonald's in Australia removed orange juice from its menu in favor of an "orange fruit drink" that contains 35% orange juice. The company cited short supplies.

Tokyo-based Morinaga Milk Industry Co. expects to stop shipping its Sunkist brand orange juice – which uses juice from Brazil – by the end of June because of low juice supplies from Brazil, a company spokeswoman said. In April 2023, Megmilk Snow Brand Co., based in the northern Japanese city of Sapporo, stopped shipments of 1-liter (about a quart) and 450-milliliter (15.2-ounce) packs of orange juice, which it sells under an agreement with Dole. Sales haven't yet resumed.

Some companies are considering using alternatives to oranges in their products. Coldpress, a British juice company, introduced a mandarin juice product in February, citing the high price of regular juicing oranges.

But others are tight-lipped about their plans. Several major orange juice makers – including Dole, Tropicana, Florida's Natural, Uncle Matt's and Coca-Cola, which makes the Simply and Minute Maid brands – declined to comment or failed to respond to inquires from The Associated Press.

The roots of the current supply troubles stretch back decades. In 2005, an invasive bug called the Asian citrus psyllid arrived in Florida, injecting bacteria from its saliva into the state's orange trees. The bacteria slowly kills the tree by destroying its root systems. There's no known cure once a tree is infected.

The impact has been devastating. In 2004, before the disease – called citrus greening – hit Florida, the state produced 200 million boxes of oranges. This year, it will produce less than 20 million.

Michael Rogers, a professor of entomology and the director of the University of Florida's Citrus Research and Education Center, said no type of orange tree is totally resistant to greening, but scientists have been trying to breed trees that are more tolerant of it.

Citrus greening arrived in Brazil around the same time as Florida, but it has progressed more slowly there because Brazil has much larger orange groves. Bugs spread the disease by flying from tree to tree, Rogers said.

Still, the disease is spreading. Fundecitrus estimates that 38% of Brazil's orange trees had citrus greening in 2023. Simonetti, the orange farmer, estimates that 20% of his production is affected by greening. Oranges on affected trees don't ripen properly and fall off early, affecting the quality of their juice, he said.

Shifting production to other locations isn't necessarily an option. California grows oranges, for example, and the citrus psyllid doesn't fare as well in the state's climate. But California also doesn't get the rainfall needed for juicing oranges; its oranges are usually sold for eating, Rogers said.

Another issue impacting orange harvests is extreme weather, which is becoming more common as the world warms due to climate change.

Last year, nine heat waves swept across Brazil, resulting in lower output and poorer fruit quality. This year, the impacts of El Niño have been particularly dramatic, with a historic drought in the Amazon and devastating floods in the southern state of Rio Grande do Sul.

"The temperatures are high during the day. At night the temperature drops. The plant can't stand this temperature difference," Simonetti said.

Brazil's 2024-2025 harvest is expected to yield 232 million boxes of oranges, down 24% from the prior year.

"We have never seen a harvest like this," Vinícius Trombin, the coordinator of Fundecitrus' crop estimates survey, said.

To make up for the anticipated smaller yield, some producers are considering blending oranges with tangerines to make juice, Trombin said. But he's skeptical.

"The consumer wants an orange juice made up 100% out of oranges," he said.

Parker, of Circana, isn't so sure. She thinks blends with other fruits might help hold down costs and revive consumer interest in orange juice.

"The idea of multiple flavors is very popular and is a way to stand out," she said. "You've got to keep people engaged. Once you lose that interest, it's really hard to get people back."

Maine opens contest to design a new state flag based on an old classic

By Ap

AUGUSTA, Maine (AP) — Mainers are going to decide in November whether to adopt a new flag, but the state needs to settle on a design first.

Anyone can submit a design proposal as long as it's based on the state's original flag, which featured a simple pine tree and blue star against an off-white background. Secretary of State Shenna Bellows announced the flag contest Friday. The deadline is July 19.

A modern version of that flag used from 1901 to 1909 took the state by storm during the Maine's bicentennial in 2020, and has appeared on hats, sweatshirts and soon license plates. This popularity played a role in lawmakers' approval of a bill last year to let Mainers vote on replacing the current flag, which features the state's official seal, a lumberjack, a sailor and the state's motto, Dirigo. That's Latin for "I lead," a reference to the north star.

The design process was without controversy until news reports of a similar-looking flag flown at the vacation home of Supreme Court Justice Samuel Alito. The flag featuring a pine tree and the words "AN APPEAL TO HEAVEN" dates to the Revolutionary War, but has recently been associated with the Christian nationalist movement and the false claim that the 2020 presidential election was stolen.

Bellows brushed aside a reporter's question about the flags' similarities at a news conference. "This is a debate delightfully free of partisan politics, and one that every Maine voter can weigh in on at the ballot box this fall," she said in a statement.

The law requires Bellows to present the final design. "This duty bestowed upon me by the Legislature is not a job I can do alone. That's why today I invite every Mainer to consider submitting a design for consideration," she said.

PUBLIC INPUT HEARING NOTIFICATION

For FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company's Rate Increase Request

Docket No. R-2024-3047068

The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC) will conduct 18 Public Input Hearings concerning FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company's request filed on April 2, 2024, to increase electric rates by $502 million per year. The Commission will conduct a series of Public Input Hearings, totaling eighteen (18) in total, with fourteen (14) Public Input Hearings to be conducted in-person at seven (7) different locations within the territory of FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company. An additional four (4) Public Input Hearings will be conducted by telephone using the Commission's conference bridge technology.

Different processes will be used for the in-person hearings than will be used to the telephonic hearings. Individuals wishing to testify at either the in-person or telephonic hearings will only be permitted once. Time limitations may apply to how long individuals may testify, if a large number of other individuals wish to testify at the same session.

In-Person Public Input Hearings will take place at the following locations:

Tuesday, June 25, 2024 at 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
VFW Post #2540 and Canteen, 546 Fawn Road, East Stroudsburg, PA 18301

Wednesday, June 26, 2024 at 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Reading Public Museum (Ground Floor Auditorium), 500 Museum Road, Reading, PA 19611

Thursday, June 27, 2024 at 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Graduate Palo Alto (Coaly Ballroom A/B), 125 S Atherton Street, State College, PA 16801

Tuesday, July 9, 2024 at 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Erie County Public Library (H.O. Hirt Auditorium – Museum Entrance), 160 East Front Street, Erie, PA 16507

Wednesday, July 10, 2024 at 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Butler County Community College (Founders Hall – Parking Lot #6), 107 College Drive, Butler, PA 16002

Thursday, July 11, 2024 Time: 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Greensburg Garden and Civic Center (Laurel Room & Iris Room), 951 Old Salem Road, Greensburg, PA 15601

Friday, July 12, 2024 at 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Double Tree by Hilton (Junior Ballroom), 340 Racetrack Road, Washington, PA 15301

Requests for Interpreters: If you require an interpreter, please contact Judge Dunderdale's office at (412) 565-3550 or via email at mswarner@pa.gov, as soon as possible. If you contact the office too close to the hearing date, we may not have enough time to arrange for an interpreter. If you request an interpreter, we will make every reasonable effort to have one present.

Telephonic Public Input Hearings

Presiding: Administrative Law Judge Katrina L. Dunderdale, **Dates: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 & Wednesday, July 17th, 2024, Times: 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM**

If you wish to testify at one of the telephonic public input hearings, you are encouraged to pre-register by 4:00 p.m. on Friday, July 12, 2024. If you do not pre-register and provide the information listed below, you may not have an opportunity to testify.

To pre-register by email, please email Judge Dunderdale's Legal Assistant, Mary Swarner, at mswarner@pa.gov, and provide: (1) your first and last name, (2) the date and time of the hearing at which you wish to testify, (3) the phone number you will be using to call into the public input hearing, and (4) if you require an interpreter to participate in the hearing, the language of the interpreter.

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If you do not wish to testify but want to listen to the public input hearing(s), please contact Judge Dunderdale's office by email at mswarner@pa.gov or phone at (412) 565-3550 and provide your name and the hearing(s) you want to listen to so we can ensure we have adequate caller capacity on the conference bridge to accommodate all callers.

To participate in the Telephonic Public Input Hearing:

- You must dial the toll-free number listed below
- You must enter a PIN number when instructed to do so, also listed below
- You must speak your name when prompted
- The telephone system will connect you to the hearing

Toll-free Bridge Number: 1.866.675.4411

PIN Number: 23464163

HEARING EXHIBITS: If you have any hearing exhibits to which you will refer during the telephonic hearing, please email them to Judge Dunderdale's Legal Assistant, Mary Swarner, at mswarner@pa.gov. The legal assistant will forward the exhibits to the Judge and all parties. Exhibits must be received by: **Tuesday, July 9, 2024**.

QUESTIONS? The Pennsylvania Office of Consumer Advocate (OCA) represents the interests of utility customers before the PUC. If you have questions about the public input hearings or the Company's requested rate increase, please contact OCA at its toll-free number (1-800-684-6560) or by email (consumer@paoca.org). Additionally, OCA can help customers pre-register for the Public Input Hearings.

OTHER WAYS TO BE HEARD: If you want to be heard about the proposed rate increase but will not or cannot testify at the Public Input Hearings, you may file a formal complaint or comment to the proposed rate increase. Please visit the PUC's website to use the applicable form available at https://www.puc.pa.gov/complaints/formal-complaints/.

TTY-based Telecommunications Relay Service number for persons who are deaf or hearing-impaired is: 711.

Prison

(Continued from Page A1)

Balancing mitigating and aggravating factors presented by the defense and prosecution, Adams County Court of Common Pleas Judge Shawn Wagner imposed a standard range sentence for each charge, which will run consecutively.

Wagner handed down an aggregate sentence of 7.5 years to 17.5 years for Nazario to serve in a state correctional institution.

On Monday, mothers of Deyton and Nazario spoke emotionally about the impact of the case, before Wagner imposed the sentence.

Deyton's mother described her son as a "very religious" man, who would carry a Bible everywhere.

"Michael had a tattoo of the crucifixion on his back that would put tears in your eyes," his mother said.

Deyton left a note in a Bible for his mother that she found a few months ago.

In the note, Deyton expressed his love for her and prayed she would have "a blessed day."

"You have no idea the lives God blesses by using the kindness of your heart when you speak to people," Deyton wrote in the note. "Anyone who has the opportunity to speak with you is blessed, because the lord speaks through you with grace and love. You are a blessing to all."

Deyton's mother shared how her son was the kind of father to help his child if he got a "B" to ensure he got an "A" on the next test by working on his homework right alongside him.

The mother said she did not agree "to this plea deal."

The victim's son and ex-wife were in the apartment when Nazario banged on the door and window on April 14, 2022, according to the mother.

"We also had a witness that heard Michael yell to Nick, 'Don't shoot, don't shoot,' but he shot four times, hitting Michael twice," the mother said.

Initially, the defendant claimed to not be involved, but now he is saying it was "self-defense," the mother said.

"I didn't believe him then and I don't believe him now. Michael did not shoot his gun," the mother said.

The mother asked for the judge to impose the "maximum" sentence possible in the case.

She said she did not believe they were getting justice for Deyton or that the district attorney's office did "a thorough job."

Adams County District Attorney Brian Sinnett sought 17 to 34 years of jail time for Nazario.

One of the aggravating factors mentioned was that three of Nazario's children were present when he shot Deyton, according to Sinnett.

Adams County Chief Public Defender Scott Harper sought time served or 2.5 years to five years for the sentence.

Harper said he thought the charges should run concurrently since it was one offense, and his client did not intend to shoot Deyton.

"I'm extremely sorry for what happened," Nazario said in open court.

Nazario said his actions were a response because he felt his children were in danger.

"Mr. Deyton did point a gun at me," Nazario calimed, adding that he was trying to protect his children.

Nazario asked for the "court's mercy."

"I'm so sorry for my role in this," Nazario said.

Nazario's mother also spoke, saying her son was "never a violent person."

His mother described Nazario as "a wonderful father" who "was not looking for any trouble."

"He's a good person," she said.

On April 14, 2022, Deyton called the police to report he was shot and was later pronounced dead at 6:44 p.m., at WellSpan York Hospital with results of an autopsy showing the cause of death to be "gunshot wounds to torso," according to the York County coroner's office. He was flown to the hospital for treatment, according to the affidavit.

Dispatched at 4:37 p.m., Bevenour found Deyton, who was unable to speak, "was armed with a handgun, which he put down, and which was later secured in a patrol vehicle," according to the affidavit. Bevenour noticed two wounds, placed a bandage on one, "and kept it there until EMS (emergency medical services) arrived," according to the affidavit.

A neighbor found a bullet had passed through the window of her house while little girls, ages 3 and 5 at the time, were inside, neither of whom was struck, according to the affidavit. The neighbor told Bevenour she was in her garage when she heard gunshots and looked outside to see a red car parked in front of a black SUV near Deyton's residence, and saw Deyton run toward the intersection as a male wearing black shot at him, according to the affidavit.

The woman claimed, "the male dressed in black then got into the car and fled the scene," according to the affidavit. The neighbor said, "she then saw Michael Deyton lay on the ground and call 911," according to the affidavit.

The two "appeared to be arguing and one person was holding what appeared to be a phone in the other person's face. He then saw his neighbor, Deyton, attempt to grab the phone and a physical altercation began. He then heard three to five gunshots as his neighbor ran out of the driveway towards the street," the witness claimed, according to the affidavit.

This man alleged the person with the gun went back to a car and left the scene, according to the affidavit.

Around 5:30 p.m. on April 14, West Manheim Township Police Department Patrolman First Class Justin Seibert found a vehicle and man matching the descriptions provided in an alert, according to the affidavit. The township is south of Hanover.

Seibert identified Nazario by his Pennsylvania driver's license, according to the affidavit.

Bevenour met Seibert, who claimed Nazario "initially advised that he was not involved" in the shooting, but "then advised he shot Deyton in self-defense," according to the affidavit.

Nazario had three children with him in the car, and one of whom said Nazario "had thrown a gun into Lake Marburg," according to the affidavit.

Readers may contact Vanessa Sanders at vsanders@gettysburgtimes.com.

Talks

(Continued from Page A1)

Association of Boroughs on the matter.

The update would avoid email attachments for FOIA requests and as policy avoid email from unfamiliar sources or originating from outside the United States. Action could take place at the upcoming July meeting.

Council President Chris Warner introduced updating the borough calendar of holidays to conform with the list of federally recognized holidays.

After noting the difficulty of remaining open when many businesses are recognizing the day, the council voted 6-0 to add June 19 (Juneteenth) to the list of days the borough office will be closed.

Borough Administrator and Treasurer Cindy Smith said she would also update the current list to reflect the name change of Indigenous Persons Day for the traditional Columbus Day.

Stipend Increase

Smith discussed issues around the stipend for council members, emergency coordinator and mayor.

"Tts been a very long time since the council and mayor have had an increase in the stipend. I'm not included in this, but I think you should have an increase," said Smith.

Council members seemed open to the idea, but Battersby reminded the council about limitations in the state code for boroughs and suggested it would also be important to see what is available in the budget. In the code, ranges for stipends are governed by borough size. Smith said she did not anticipate action at this meeting but would place it on the agenda for the July meeting.

Bark Park

Mayor Stephanie Haley confirmed the completion of fencing for a new dog park section at the East Berlin Community Park. Designated as the "Bark Park," the new feature was completed and publicly marked June 7 with "a good turnout."

Expecting the new feature to be popular, the mayor said there are two sections to the park, one designated for larger dogs 30 pounds and above, and another area for smaller dogs under 30 pounds.

She expressed thanks to supporters of the project and indicated the borough website has both a map of the park and a list thanking those supporting the project.

In other action, the council unanimously appointed James Zerfing as the borough's building code official (BCO). The appointment comes at the retirement of current BCO Wilbur Slouthour and the closure of his inspection service Land & Sea. Smith noted Zerfing lives near the town and "formerly worked with Wilbur Slouthour" before taking a position with Middle Department Inspection Agency in York.

"He seems to be a team player," Smith said.

The council's next meeting is July 10 at 7 p.m.

John Spangler may be contacted at jrspanglerjr@outlook.com.

PUBLIC INPUT HEARING NOTIFICATION

For FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company's Rate Increase Request

Docket No. R-2024-3047068

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Aid

(Continued from Page A1)

August at Hoffman Homes for Youth (HHY) near Littlestown.

Fantashia Robinson, who was 17 at the time, was accused of choking a HHY staff member, stealing and crashing a pickup truck, and fighting with Pennsylvania State Police (PSP) on Aug. 20, 2023.

Robinson, now 18, was charged with one felony count each of strangulation, theft and conspiracy to commit robbery, three felony counts of robbery, and two felony counts of aggravated assault, according to the court of common pleas docket. She was also charged with one misdemeanor count each of terroristic threats, simple assault, recklessly endangering a person; and one summary count each of driving at unsafe speed, driving without a license, careless driving, accident damage to unattended vehicle or property, and reckless driving, according to the docket.

Harper said Dattilio will assist with Nicholas Nazario's case, which was set for sentencing Monday, according to court records.

Dattilio's services will help the public defender's office "with providing essential support in our representation of the clients," Harper said.

In January, Nazario, 41, of Gettysburg, entered guilty pleas to voluntary manslaughter, a first-degree felony, and discharge of a firearm into an occupied structure and carrying a firearm without a license, both third-degree felonies, according to a court of common pleas docket.

Nazario was accused of killing Michael Deyton, 42, of the 600 block of Linden Avenue in Conewago Township on April 14, 2022, and then fleeing the scene and throwing a gun in Lake Marburg, according to the affidavit of probable cause filed by Detective Burnell Bevenour of the Conewago Township Police Department. The lake is in Codorus State Park east of Hanover.

The guilty pleas were open, without an agreement on the sentence, according to the docket. A criminal homicide charge was changed to voluntary manslaughter, according to the docket.

Readers may contact Vanessa Sanders at vsanders@gettysburgtimes.com.

Students

(Continued from Page A1)

Freedom High School, said she signed up for AEP because she's only been to Arizona and California.

"It just sounded like a cool and fun experience," Alvizo-Gonzalez said. "I don't get to travel much."

Traveling by herself to the area was "nerve-wracking," as it was only her second time flying on an airplane.

"I am already afraid of heights. The turbulence always gets me," she said.

The location selection was done randomly for her, but she knew Gettysburg was "a small town and very green," she said.

Alvizo-Gonzalez said she was looking forward to learning about the Battle of Gettysburg and the history here.

Keirston Molloy of Mission, Montana, also went through a selection process at random to come to Gettysburg, but she was "very happy."

"I wanted to be on this side of the country," Molloy said.

Coming from the Flathead Reservation, Molloy said she is not Native American but has grown up in that area and graduated from St. Ignatius High School.

"My town has 1,000 people. It is a big difference. We have a lot of countryside," Molloy said.

So far, Molloy has enjoyed meeting the people here and seeing the differences.

"I am usually the shy and quiet girl at home. I am excited to make connections here," Molloy said.

Kristin Bechtel, AEP exchange manager, said this is the biggest group she's had come here, including 10 visitors and 14 locals assisting throughout the experience.

Will Mathis, a 2024 Gettysburg Area High School graduate, said this is his second year hosting students for a week, along with his mother, Rhonda. Casillas is staying with them this year.

Will and Casillas have bonded really well so far, they said. Will still has relationships with the people who visited Gettysburg last year through AEP.

"This has been an amazing program. Will has been good at getting me involved," Rhonda said.

Living in Gettysburg his whole life, Will said he felt the itinerary encompassed much of Adams County as well as the nation's capital in the short time the students are visiting.

From icebreaker games at the Gettysburg Rec Park and free time in downtown Gettysburg to exploring the Gettysburg National Military Park and Washington, D.C., the students learned a lot about the area and one another throughout the experience.

On Monday, students assisted with community service for about three hours at South Central Community Action Programs (SCCAP) and street clean up with From the Ground Up.

Recent Gettysburg Area High School students will soon travel to other areas of the country, just like the students who visited here.

AEP Founder David McCullough III said the program centers on "the deep understanding that, come what may, we're all in this together."

"Today, though, we've nestled our lives into dangerously homogeneous communities. Consequently, our social groups too often define themselves on a narrow-minded view of 'the other.' We're better than this," McCullough said.

AEP is giving the next generation "an extraordinary coming of age American adventure that will help them connect with people, hometowns and ways of life very different from their own," according to McCullough.

"We've already seen it change the lives of our alumni, and we plan to scale it up so it can collectively change the future of our country," said McCullough.

Readers may contact Vanessa Sanders at vsanders@gettysburgtimes.com.

PA MEDIA GROUP

Patriot News

LEGAL AFFIDAVIT

AD#: 0010878731

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania,) ss
County of Cumberland)

Tashell Harris being duly sworn, deposes that he/she is principal clerk of PA Media Group; that Patriot News is a public newspaper published in the city of Mechanicsburg, with general circulation in Cumberland and Dauphin and surrounding counties, and this notice is an accurate and true copy of this notice as printed in said newspaper, was printed and published in the regular edition and issue of said newspaper on the following date(s):

Patriot News 06/16/2024

Principal Clerk of the Publisher

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 17th day of June 2024

Notary Public

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania - Notary Seal
Crystal B. Rosensteel, Notary Public
Dauphin County
My commission expires June 27, 2028
Commission number 1299212
Member, Pennsylvania Association of Notaries

PA MEDIA GROUP

Patriot News

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My commission expires June 27, 2028
Commission number 1299212

Member, Pennsylvania Association of Notaries

FORGIVENESS

Shooter, victim forgive and start a nonprofit

Continues from A1

in 2022. "You're shooting people, people [are] getting shot ... you don't realize the effects it has on you when the bullet is in you or is in and out of you."

Nerve damage nearly cost Hollman the use of one of his feet years ago. He can feel the bullet with every move he makes, and lives in constant fear that a shift could leave him paralyzed again.

Peppers served less than a decade in jail in connection to shooting Hollman. Hollman said he didn't testify against him, but eyewitnesses placed Peppers at the scene.

After his release, Peppers was arrested again, on federal drug and gun possession charges. Because of his lengthy criminal history, he was handed a hefty prison sentence — 342 months, nearly 29 years, in prison.

Looking for a way to ease the burden of anger and hurt, Hollman wrote to Peppers in prison in 2008.

He was the last person Peppers expected to hear from.

"Is someone playing a [expletive] game?" Peppers said of his reaction after opening Hollman's letter. The letter kickstarted years of letters and phone calls between the men.

The only thing Peppers ever asked Hollman to send him was a dictionary so Peppers could improve his reading and writing skills. Peppers studied prenatal health care while serving time and told Hollman about his dream of opening a nonprofit clinic.

Late last year, without Peppers asking him to, Hollman mailed an 11-page letter to federal Judge Sylvia Rambo. He told the story of that fateful day in 1991 and how his and Peppers' lives had intertwined. He knew Peppers as a changed man and asked for his release.

In early December, Peppers called Hollman. The letter had worked — he was out. Without the letter, Peppers may not have come home until 2032 or 2033.

"I'm one of the worst people in this city," Peppers said of his disbelief. "They did not want to let me come home."

The men had been speaking for years by then, but seeing Peppers face-to-face for the first time since the shooting brought up complicated emotions for Hollman.

"It starts a whole new recovery [process] in me," he said.

The in-person interactions were an adjustment for Peppers, too. For the first time, he had to come face to face with the injuries he inflicted.

One day he saw Hollman struggling with nerve damage in his feet. Peppers said seeing him in pain brought tears to his eyes.

Peppers has also struggled with trying to adjust to life on the outside after watching more than two decades pass behind bars. He's had to apply for new government identification and try to find work that accepts convicted felons. He barely knows how to use a cellphone, let alone any other technology invented since the early 2000s.

Hollman has continued to support Peppers as he navigates the newness of life outside a prison.

"When I need someone to cry tears to, I call him," Peppers said, vowing not to let Hollman's compassion be wasted on him.

"I'm not afraid to say something to him most people wouldn't," Hollman responded.

In July, a dream that grew while Peppers was in prison will become a reality. He and Hollman will oversee a nonprofit prenatal health clinic at 99 S. Cameron St. in Harrisburg.

Licensed practical nurses (LPNs) will work at the clinic.

Once the clinic is up and running, Peppers and Hollman want to help men and women reenter society after prison.

The men said they want their story of redemption to be seen as an example for Harrisburg's youth that not all conflict has to be lifelong.

"I want to let them know there's a better way to be," Peppers said. "I don't want to see them spend most of their lives in prison."

"Our relationship is special because we've grown. We love each other," he said. "[A lot of] people don't ever get to this level. They stay enemies for the rest of their lives."



Cal Hollman, left, and Maurice Peppers on the corner where Peppers shot Hollman in 1991. Peppers was jailed for nearly 25 years for another incident and Hollman wrote a letter to the court asking for his release. *Sean Simmers, PennLive*

HARRISBURG

Suspect wears cast in court, matching shooter's injury

Police say the gunman shot himself in the right hand as he killed a 27-year-old city native.

Jonathan Bergmueller
jbergmueller@pennlive.com

It is rare for a defendant to bring a piece of incriminating evidence into the courtroom with them.

But Jerome Coleman Jr. walked from his cell into the central courtroom attached to Dauphin County Prison wearing a cast around his lower right arm, while his left wrist was handcuffed to his waist.

Coleman is accused of walking into Antonio's Grocery on North Sixth Street around 2:30 p.m. May 3, exchanging words with and later shooting Christian Watts, 27, of Harrisburg.

During the shooting, which was recorded on surveillance video, the gunman, who held a pistol in his left hand, shot himself in the right hand, police said.

Coleman's right hand was in a cast due to a gunshot wound, according to medical records from a hospital police found him at this month.

Forensic pathologist Wayne Ross said Watts died from six gunshot wounds to the body as a consequence of homicide. Police charged Coleman with murder and possession of a firearm while prohibited.

Coleman was appearing at a preliminary hearing. The purpose of a preliminary hearing is to find out if a crime occurred and if the person accused of that crime is most likely the person who committed it. It acts as a filter to Dauphin County Court, the court in which a defendant may face trial.

At the hearing, District Judge Matthew Pianka ruled the charges against Coleman could head to Dauphin County Court.

PUBLIC INPUT HEARING NOTIFICATION

For FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company's Rate Increase Request

Docket No. R-2024-3047068

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Different processes will be used for the in-person hearings than will be used to the telephonic hearings. Individuals wishing to testify at either the in-person or telephonic hearings will only be permitted once. Time limitations may apply to how long individuals may testify, if a large number of other individuals wish to testify at the same session.

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• You must speak your name when prompted

• The telephone system will connect you to the hearing

Toll-free Bridge Number: 1.866.675.4411

PIN Number: 23464163

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TTY-based Telecommunications Relay Service number for persons who are deaf or hearing-impaired is: 711.

CAMP HILL

Borough surrenders yard sign fight, but taxpayers still might have to pay

A plaintiffs' motion for municipal coverage of more than $400,000 in legal fees is pending.

Charles Thompson
cthompson@pennlive.com



The Camp Hill Borough Council has conceded defeat in a court case challenging a borough ordinance limiting the posting of temporary signs such as election yard signs.
Jonathan Bergmueller, PennLive, 2022

Camp Hill officials have conceded defeat on their costly battle to protect a 2021 ordinance that sought to limit the duration and number of temporary signs residents can post on their lawns and properties.

The court's ruling means those limits are now null and void for the upcoming campaign season.

But borough taxpayers could still be on the hook for hundreds of thousands in legal fees racked up over the last two years.

In separate motions last week, the council voted unanimously against pursuing any further appeals in the sign limits case and to authorize solicitor Lee Stinnett to try to reach a negotiated settlement on the plaintiffs' pursuit of borough payment of more than $400,000 in legal fees.

Plaintiffs can go after the borough for those costs under a provision in federal civil rights laws crafted specifically to protect private residents' access to courts to challenge actions they see as government infringement of their rights.

In court filings, plaintiffs' attorney Marc Scaringi said his team's total costs have reached $400,253.

BOROUGH DEFENDS PURSUING CASE

Before Wednesday's votes that effectively ruled out asking the U.S. Supreme Court to weigh in, council President Jennifer Hoover read a statement defending the borough's decision to take the case as far as it did.

"Legal issues surrounding First Amendment rights are far from settled. Based on recent case law trends, the borough had a legitimate and good faith belief that its appeal (to the U.S. 3rd Circuit Court of Appeals) could be successful," Hoover said.

"What's more, the potential to save public funds was central to borough council's motivation," Hoover said. "Had the borough's appeal been successful in whole or in part, the borough would have been able to either eliminate or significantly reduce the inflated attorney fee petition to the public's benefit."

Now, that fee battle will depend on negotiations.

"Given the shared concerns between us and the plaintiffs about fiscal impact of the litigation, we are hopeful that the plaintiffs will act in the best interests of the taxpayers, and work with us toward reaching an agreement," Hoover said.

"Otherwise, borough council will be obligated to contest opposing legal counsel's exorbitant fees."

THE CASE SO FAR

In its unanimous ruling May 9, a three-judge appeals court panel called the ordinance's provisions limiting display of non-commercial temporary signs, including political signs, to two per property and the time of display to no more than 60 days before an event they pertain to as unconstitutional limits on residents' free speech.

The sign ordinance was challenged after borough officials gave warnings in 2022 to two homeowners deemed to be in violation before that year's midterm elections.

Wednesday night's vote was not a surprise. Borough officials had already let a deadline to petition for reconsideration by the circuit court lapse, but their option to ask the Supreme Court to consider taking up the case was still on the table.

Scaringi, the attorney representing the plaintiffs, was pleased with the council's move, calling it the correct, if overdue, decision for all Camp Hill residents.

A handful of residents, however, excoriated the council and Stinnett Wednesday for their handling of the case.

Greg Pearson, husband of case plaintiff Katherine Pearson, accused the borough's mostly Democratic leaders of pursuing a political vendetta against residents who supported former President Donald Trump and other conservative candidates in a town where Republicans have slipped into the minority in recent years.

Resident Anita Burton said that, at the least, the council should get a second opinion from an outside legal firm about how to handle any future suits "before proceeding and making this type of mistake again."

The sign case started after two borough residents, Caroline Machiraju and Pearson, both ran afoul of the rules in the 2022 midterms.

Machiraju posted three signs in her yard. Pearson had put two signs up in midsummer. Both are Republicans.

The residents won an initial round in the case in 2023, when U.S. District Judge Jennifer Wilson ruled in their favor. But the council voted to appeal last spring to the higher court.

In a brisk 11-page opinion issued last month, Judge Stephanos Bibas found the ordinance as written failed to meet any compelling public interests that would justify a regulation of yard signs based on their content.

Camp Hill had argued its interests were community aesthetics and traffic safety.

But the borough missed the target, Bibas writes, when it was unable to show its code served either interest effectively and then placed no such limits on the scope of temporary holiday displays that could be far more distracting to a motorist than a series of campaign signs.

"Unchecked, residents filled their front lawns with gardens of illuminated Halloween creatures, tree-sized plastic skeletons, and large reindeer. These spooky spirits and skeletons may startle drivers, and Rudolph with his nose so bright may blind them. So, this arrangement cannot be the least restrictive way to protect drivers and pedestrians," Bibas wrote.

"While trying to preserve aesthetics and promote traffic safety, Camp Hill stitched together a crazy quilt of a sign ordinance. Because it discriminates against some messages, the ordinance is unconstitutional on its face."

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The undersigned Richard L. Crowe, being duly sworn the he/she is the principal clerk of Reading Eagle, published in Berks County for the dissemination of local or transmitted news and intelligence of a general character, which are duly qualified newspapers, and the annexed hereto is a copy of certain order, notice, publication or advertisement of:

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06/15/24

See Attached

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Notary Public, State of Pennsylvania
Acting in County of Delaware

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania - Notary Seal
Mary D. Allison, Notary Public
Delaware County
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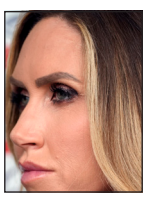
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ELECTION 2024

GOP launching massive effort to monitor voting

By Joey Cappelletti and Ali Swenson
The Associated Press

BLOOMFIELD HILLS, MICH. » The Republican National Committee on Friday launched a swing state initiative to mobilize some 100,000 polling place monitors, poll workers and attorneys to serve as "election integrity" watchdogs in November.


Trump

The RNC has said its new effort will focus on stopping "Democrat attempts to circumvent the rules." The party will deploy monitors to observe every step of the election process, create hotlines for poll watchers to report perceived problems and escalate those issues by taking legal action.

RNC Chairman Michael Whatley said Friday that the committee will place election integrity directors and counsels in 15 states, including the most hotly contested battlegrounds, and work with state parties to set up similar programs in the other states.

Whatley said Friday that the RNC is focused on three priorities this cycle:

- pushing for election security laws such as voter ID requirements,
- ensuring there are observers monitoring the voting process, and
- speaking up about what it calls "election integrity" issues.

"What we need to ensure is integrity in our electoral process," RNC Co-chair Lara Trump, the former president's daughter-in-law, said during the kickoff event in Bloomfield Hills, in a suburban county that is crucial for winning Michigan. "We can never go back and repeat 2020, but we can learn the lessons from 2020."

She said most of the RNC is currently focused on the committee's election integrity program, which she called "one of its kind."

Both parties have a long history of organizing supporters to serve as poll monitors, and the Democratic National Committee said it plans its own volunteer recruitment effort. Several election officials in presidential swing states said they feel this kind of transparency and engagement is one of the best ways to help skeptics feel confident in the many safeguards baked into the electoral process.

The RNC says its plan will help voters have faith in the electoral process and ensure their votes matter.

Democratic National Committee spokesperson Alex Floyd said the DNC, "alongside our partners at the state and local level, won't let MAGA Republicans get away with these baseless attacks on our democracy, and we will continue to use every tool at our disposal to ensure that all Americans can make their voice heard at the ballot box."

The DNC said it has invested tens of millions of dollars into expanding its "I Will Vote" initiative, which includes funding efforts to support mail voting and other voting access issues in swing states.

The RNC's kickoff event took place at the headquarters of the Oakland County GOP, one of Michigan's most influential local parties. Oakland County is an affluent Detroit suburb that for decades was one of Michigan's premier bellwether counties.

While the county holds the largest number of Republican voters in the state, it has shifted increasingly Democratic in recent years, and Donald Trump has lost the county in both of his previous campaigns.

The RNC has focused many of its challenges ahead of the election in Michigan, a state Trump narrowly won in 2016 but lost to Biden in 2020.

A review by Republican lawmakers found there was no widespread fraud in that year's election and that Biden legitimately won the state. That aligns with reviews, recounts and audits in the other battleground states where Trump disputed his loss, all of which affirmed Biden's victory.

Concerns raised

The effort immediately drew concerns that it could lead to harassment of election workers and undermine trust in the vote.

As former President Donald Trump and his allies continue to spread baseless claims that the 2020 election was marred by widespread fraud, the effort also sets the stage for a repeat of Trump's efforts to undermine the results — that ultimately led to the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol.

Trump allies already have signaled that they might not accept the results if he loses to President Joe Biden.

The language surrounding the RNC's effort and how it's being implemented could present broader concerns should it evolve beyond normal political party organizing, said David Becker, a former U.S. Justice Department lawyer who serves as executive director of the Center for Election Innovation and Research.

"To do it in a way that feeds your voters with the idea that the election is going to be stolen, that prepares them to be angry if their candidate loses — that can be very dangerous," Becker said.

Trump pushed baseless claims of election fraud in 2016 and 2020 and has continued to predict a rigged election if he loses this year. During a rally in Las Vegas on Sunday, he said of Democrats, "the only way they can beat us is to cheat."

"Don't let them cheat," he said. "Don't let them do anything."

RNC leadership — which Trump handpicked in a major overhaul of the committee earlier this year — has followed his lead in forecasting the potential for foul play in this year's election. Lara Trump qualified her answer on CNN earlier this month when asked if she'd accept the results.

"I can tell you, yes, we will accept the results of this election if we feel that it is free, fair and transparent," she said. "And we are working overtime to ensure that indeed that happens."

CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS

No contempt prosecution for Garland

By Alanna Durkin Richer
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON » Attorney General Merrick Garland will not be prosecuted for contempt of Congress because his refusal to turn over audio of President Joe Biden's interview in his classified documents case "did not constitute a crime," the Justice Department said Friday.


Garland

In a letter to House Speaker Mike Johnson, a Justice Department official cited the department's longstanding policy not to prosecute for contempt of Congress officials who don't comply with subpoenas because of a president's claim of executive privilege.

The House voted Wednesday to hold Garland in contempt of Congress for refusing to turn over the audio recordings of Biden's interview with a special counsel, which the White House has accused Republicans of wanting only so they can chop them up and use them for political purposes.

On the last day to comply with the Republicans' subpoena for the audio, the White House blocked the release by invoking executive privilege.

The 216-207 vote fell along party lines, with Republicans coalescing behind the contempt effort despite reservations among some of the party's more centrist members. Only one Republican, Rep. David Joyce of Ohio, voted against it.

Garland is the third attorney general to be held in contempt of Congress. He has defended the Justice Department, saying officials have gone to extraordinary lengths to provide information to the committees about special counsel Robert Hur's classified documents investigation, including a transcript of Biden's interview with him.

HUNTER BIDEN LAPTOP

Texas man is accused of threatening FBI agent

By Matt Kyle
The Dallas Morning News

A Texas man was arrested Thursday after he allegedly called an FBI agent earlier this week and left messages threatening to kill the agent and his family due to the agent's involvement in the Hunter Biden laptop investigation, according to a news release from the U.S. Department of Justice.

Timothy Muller, 43, was arrested outside his Fort Worth home without incident and charged with interstate threatening communications and influencing, impeding or retaliating against a federal official. According to federal court documents, Muller allegedly placed a call to the Baltimore-based FBI agent around 5 p.m. Tuesday.

The release said the agent participated in the investigation into a laptop belonging to "H.B." and said Muller placed the call shortly after news outlets reported "H.B.'s" conviction on federal gun charges.

Hunter Biden was convicted Tuesday of federal gun crimes after a weeklong trial in Delaware.

According to court documents, Muller said "Hey" and said the agent's first name before the agent disconnected the call. Muller allegedly called back and left a 1-minute, 5-second, expletive-filled voicemail. Muller allegedly threatened the agent and his family, and said if "T" won "re-election," "we" would start arresting FBI agents, court documents said.

In the message, Muller accused the agent of covering up "child pornography" and crimes allegedly committed by Hunter Biden. He then said T's "going to win the reelection, and we're going to (expletive) go through the FBI and start throwing you (expletive) in jail," court documents said.

"Or, you can steal another election, and then the guns will come out, and we'll hunt you (expletive) down and slaughter you like the traitorous dogs you are in your own (expletive) homes," Muller allegedly said in the voicemail.

Muller then threatened to kill the agent's wife and children and lynch them, according to court documents.

The documents go on to say Muller sent several text messages to the agent's FBI-issued cellphone about an hour later. In the messages, Muller again threatened the agent's family and said the agent was "covering up for pedophiles" and was "going to jail," the documents said.

PUBLIC INPUT HEARING NOTIFICATION

For FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company's Rate Increase Request

Docket No. R-2024-3047068

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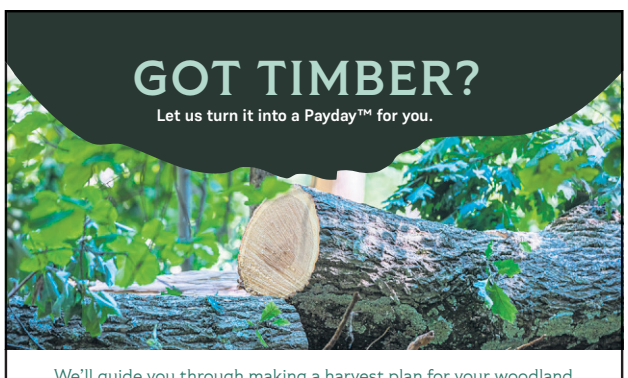
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Reading 6/18

WAR IN ISRAEL



DAVID GURALNICK - VIA TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

Graffiti on the exterior of the Goodman Acker law firm, in Southfield, Mich., on June 3. A member serves on the board of regents at the University of Michigan, which has been the target of pro-Palestinian protests.

U.S.: Universities failed to assess if protests had made environment hostile

By Collin Binkley and Annie Ma
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON » The University of Michigan and the City University of New York did not adequately investigate complaints about antisemitic or anti-Palestinian harassment linked to campus protests over the Israel-Hamas war and other incidents, according to the results of investigations by the U.S. Education Department announced Monday.

These are the first investigations to reach a conclusion among dozens launched by the Education Department since Oct. 7, the day Hamas launched a surprise attack on Israel. Hamas has been designated as a terrorist organization by the United States, Canada and the European Union.

The department's Office of Civil Rights investigated 75 instances of alleged discrimination and harassment at the University of Michigan based on shared Jewish ancestry and shared Palestinian or Muslim ancestry. The investigation found that the university's responses did not meet its Title VI requirements to remedy the hostile environment.

In one instance, when a Jewish student reported being called out for viewing a graduate student instructor's social media post about pro-Palestinian topics, the university told the student that "formal conflict resolution is not a path forward at this time," because the incident occurred on social media.

In another instance, when a student who participated in a pro-Palestinian protest was called a "terrorist," the university said it held "restorative circles" to address the incident but did not take further action.

What they'll do

In its resolution agreement, the University of Michigan agreed to administer a climate assessment, implement additional training and revise its policies as necessary. It also agreed to monitoring by the Office of Civil Rights through the end of the 2026 school year, reporting its responses to future incidents of discrimination to the department.

The department also announced the resolution of nine pending complaints against schools in the City University of New York system, dating back to the 2019-20 academic year.

Those incidents include harassment and disparate treatment of students based on shared Jewish, Palestinian, Arab, Muslim or South Asian ancestry.

The university system agreed to reopen or initiate investigations into discrimination complaints and provide the Office of Civil Rights with the results and report any remedial action the university would take. The resolution also included increased training for both employees and security officers on campus, as well as a climate survey and third-party review of non-discrimination policies.

"Colleges serve as beacons of free speech and expression, but the safety of our students, staff and faculty is paramount," CUNY Chancellor Félix V. Matos Rodríguez said in a statement. "CUNY is committed to providing an environment that is free from discrimination and hate and these new steps will ensure that there is consistency and transparency in how complaints are investigated and resolved."

The University of Michigan did not immediately respond to requests for comment on the investigations' results.

Complaints of antisemitism and Islamophobia have led to inquiries at more than 100 universities and school districts, including Harvard and Yale, community colleges and public schools from Los Angeles to suburban Minneapolis.

The complaints vary widely but all accuse schools of violating Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination based on race, color or national origin. Colleges and schools are required to protect students from discrimination, and when they don't, the Education Department can invoke penalties up to termination of federal money.

Protests over the Israel-Hamas war upended the final weeks of the school year at many campuses across the country, with some canceling graduation ceremonies or moving classes online after Pro-Palestinian protesters set up encampments in campus spaces.

The protests have tested schools as they aim to balance free speech rights and the safety of students. The Education Department has issued guidance detailing schools' responsibilities around Title VI, but the results of the agency's investigations could provide a clearer line showing where political speech crosses into harassment.

Finding that boundary has been a struggle for colleges as they grapple with rhetoric that has different meaning to different people. Some chants commonly used by pro-Palestinian activists are seen by some as antisemitic, including, "From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free," and, "intifada revolution."

Meanwhile, some complaints say Arab and Muslim students have faced abuses only to be ignored by campus officials.

EID AL-ADHA

Muslims celebrate with sacrifices, feast

By Niniek Karmini
The Associated Press

JAKARTA, INDONESIA » Muslims in Asia on Monday celebrated Eid al-Adha, or the Feast of Sacrifice, with food and prayers for people in Gaza suffering from the Israel-Hamas war.

One of the biggest Islamic holidays, the occasion commemorates Prophet Ibrahim's test of faith through slaughtering livestock and animals and distributing the meat to the poor. It's a joyous occasion for which food is a hallmark where devout Muslims buy and slaughter animals and share two-thirds of the meat with the poor and it's a revered observance that coincides with the final rites of the Hajj pilgrimage in Saudi Arabia.



MANISH SWARUP - THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Devout Muslims offer Eid al-Adha prayers at the Jama Masjid in New Delhi, India, on Monday.

Much of Asia, including Indonesia, Malaysia, India and Bangladesh, observed Eid al-Adha on Monday, while Muslims in other parts of the globe, including Saudi Arabia, Libya, Egypt, and Yemen, celebrated the holiday on Sunday.

On Monday, worshippers shoulder-to-shoulder joined in communal prayers in Indonesia's capital, Jakarta. Preachers in their sermons called on people to pray for Muslims in Gaza and Rafah.

"Our prayers and thoughts are with our brother and sisters who are now suffering in Palestine," worshipper Adi Prasetya said after praying at a field in southern Jakarta. "There are many opportunities for us now to channel our help through charities."

"May Allah give strength to those ravaged by war ... may those who are divided can live in peace again," said another devotee, Berlina Yustiza.

Hamas has been designated as a terrorist organization by the United States, Canada and the European Union.

Indonesian traditions

Although Indonesia has more Muslims than any other country in the world, its traditions to mark Eid al-Adha have been influenced by other religions.

Residents in Yogyakarta, an ancient center of Javanese culture and the seat of royal dynasties going back centuries, believe that if they manage to catch the crops arranged in the form of a cone-shaped pile called "gunungan" that is paraded from the royal palace to the Kauman Grand Mosque, it can bring them good luck. They scrambled to grab various food offerings, made of fruit, vegetables and traditional snacks.

A day before the sacrifice festival, people in East Java's Pasuruan city expressed their gratitude and respect for the sacrificial animals by dressing them as beautiful as a bride. The sacrificial cow is wrapped in a seven-fold garland, a shroud, turban and prayer mat and paraded in a tradition called "manten sapi," or bride cow, before being handed to the sacrificial committee.

Villagers in Demak, a town in Central Java province, celebrated the holiday with a procession of livestock called "apitan" as a form of gratitude for the food and harvest.

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The undersigned Richard L. Crowe, being duly sworn the he/she is the principal clerk of The Mercury, The Mercury Digital, published in Montgomery, Chester Counties for the dissemination of local or transmitted news and intelligence of a general character, which are duly qualified newspapers, and the annexed hereto is a copy of certain order, notice, publication or advertisement of:

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BERKS COUNTY

$15 million human services budget approved

Expected to cover cost of services for nearly 15,000 people

By Karen Shuey
kshuey@readingeagle.com

A spending plan that steers state funds to several human services programs was approved Thursday by the Berks County commissioners.

The board was presented with the preliminary budget for the Berks County Human Services Block Grant — a program that allows local officials to decide how to spend money on programs for the homeless, those battling addiction, those who are intellectually disabled or otherwise vulnerable residents.

Berks has been participating in the block grant program since 2012. It was designed to give counties more flexibility to spread out its state aid to the local agencies with the most need.

Pamela Seaman, administrator of mental health and developmental disabilities programs for the county, told the commissioners that the nearly $15 million plan is expected to cover the cost of services for about 15,000 people.

Seaman outlined the proposed block grant budget to commissioners:

- The Mental Health Fund: $9,594,551; people served in 2022-23: 8,068.
- The Developmental Disabilities Fund: $2,946,672; people served in 2022-23: 1,667.
- Human Services Development Fund: $322,352; people served in 2022-23: 769.
- Homeless Assistance Program: $455,873; people served in 2022-23: 1,103.
- Behavioral Health Services Initiative & Drug and Alcohol: $1,489,071; people served in 2022-23: 3,080.

Seaman highlighted a few strengths from the previous year.

She noted the county is fortunate to have a robust network of service providers and a strong relationship with local hospitals to divert patients from seeking treatment in emergency rooms.

But, she said, there is room for improvement.

Seaman said the county needs to focus on bolstering its workforce development to fill positions, advocating for better wages for those who work with individuals who have intellectual developmental disabilities and increasing capacity at community programs held during the day for those who may be looking for activities.

Justices

FROM PAGE 1

The 6-3 majority opinion written by Justice Clarence Thomas said a semiautomatic rifle with a bump stock is not an illegal machine gun because it doesn't make the weapon fire more than one shot with one pull of the trigger.

"A bump stock does not alter the basic mechanics of bump firing, and the trigger still must be released and reengaged to fire each additional shot," he wrote in an opinion that contained multiple drawings of guns' firing mechanisms.

He was joined by his fellow conservatives. Justice Samuel Alito wrote a short separate opinion to stress that Congress can change the law to equate bump stocks with machine guns.

Changing the definition of a bump stock through regulation rather than legislation took pressure off Republicans in Congress to act or justify inaction in the face of the Las Vegas massacre during Trump's presidency.

In a dissent joined by her liberal colleagues, Justice Sonia Sotomayor pointed to the Las Vegas gunman. "In murdering so many people so quickly, he did not rely on a quick trigger finger. Instead, he relied on bump stocks," she said, reading a summary of her dissent aloud in the courtroom. Sotomayor said that it's "deeply regrettable" Congress has to act but that she hopes it does.

Former President Donald Trump's 2024 campaign team said it respects the court's decision in a statement that quickly pivoted to politics, touting his endorsement by the National Rifle Association. President Joe Biden did not have an immediate comment.



STEVE HELBER, FILE - THE AP

A bump stock is displayed in Harrisonburg, Va., on March 15, 2019. The Supreme Court has struck down a Trump-era ban on bump stocks, a gun accessory that allows semi-automatic weapons to fire rapidly like machine guns.

The ruling came after a Texas gun shop owner challenged the ban, arguing the Justice Department wrongly classified the accessories as illegal machine guns.

The Biden administration said that the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives made the right choice for the gun accessories, which can allow weapons to fire at a rate of hundreds of rounds a minute. The

It marked the latest gun case to come before the high court. A conservative supermajority handed down a landmark decision expanding gun rights in 2022 and is weighing another gun case challenging a federal law intended to keep guns away from people under domestic violence restraining orders.

The arguments in the bump stock case, though, were more about whether the ATF had overstepped its authority than the Second Amendment.

Justices from the court's liberal wing suggested it was "common sense" that anything capable of unleashing a "torrent of bullets" was a machine gun under federal law. Conservative justices, though, raised questions about why Congress had not acted to ban bump stocks, as well as the effects of the ATF changing its mind a decade after declaring the accessories legal.

The high court took up the case after a split among lower courts over bump stocks, which were invented in the early 2000s. Under Republican President George W. Bush and Democrat Barack Obama, the ATF decided that bump stocks didn't transform semiautomatic weapons into machine guns. The agency reversed those decisions at Trump's urging after the shooting in Las Vegas and another mass shooting at a Parkland, Florida, high school that left 17 dead.

Bump stocks are accessories that replace a rifle's stock, the part that rests against the shoulder. They harness the gun's recoil energy so that the trigger bumps against the shooter's stationary finger, allowing the gun to fire at a rate comparable to a traditional machine gun. Fifteen states and the District of Columbia have their own bans on bump stocks.

The plaintiff, Texas gun shop owner and military veteran Michael Cargill, was represented by the New Civil Liberties Alliance, a group funded by conservative donors like the Koch network. His attorneys acknowledged that bump stocks allow for rapid fire but argued that they are different because the shooter has to put in more effort to keep the gun firing.

Government lawyers countered the effort required from the shooter is small and doesn't make a legal difference. The Justice Department said the ATF changed its mind on bump stocks after doing a more in-depth examination spurred by the Las Vegas shooting and came to the right conclusion.

There were about 520,000 bump stocks in circulation when the ban went into effect in 2019, requiring people to either surrender or destroy them, at a combined estimated loss of $100 million, the plaintiffs said in court documents.

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Docket No. R-2024-3047068

The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC) will conduct 18 Public Input Hearings concerning FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company's request filed on April 2, 2024, to increase electric rates by $502 million per year. The Commission will conduct a series of Public Input Hearings, totaling eighteen (18) in total, with fourteen (14) Public Input Hearings to be conducted in-person at seven (7) different locations within the territory of FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company. An additional four (4) Public Input Hearings will be conducted by telephone using the Commission's conference bridge technology.

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Telephonic Public Input Hearings

Presiding: Administrative Law Judge Katrina L. Dunderdale, **Dates: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 & Wednesday, July 17th, 2024, Times: 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM**

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Toll-free Bridge Number: 1.866.675.4411

PIN Number: 23464163

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TTY-based Telecommunications Relay Service number for persons who are deaf or hearing-impaired is: 711.

Churches

FROM PAGE 4

Cedarville UMC

NORTH COVENTRY — Join us Sunday at 1092 Laurelwood Road for services at 8:00 AM & 11:00 AM (Traditional), and 9:30 AM (Contemporary) led by Pastor Pat Goshert. Visit www.cedarvilleumc.org for resources and live-streamed worship (also on FB) or recorded services after Sunday. Children age 4 to 6th grade are dismissed from the 9:30* and 11:00* services for Sunday School and Nursery* care is available. The Father's Day project this year is a donation to Operation 143, which provides supplemental food to children over the summer and on weekends during the school year. Sign up online for Vacation Bible School "Get Lost in a Fantasy World with Jesus", held July 8-11 from 6-8 PM with dinner served 5:30-6 PM. Congratulations on the recent Baptisms of Gracie Elizabeth Vega, Ella Bozenhard and Luka Burkholder. Join us for the Women's Retreat at Kenbrook Bible Camp, Lebanon, PA, Friday thru Sunday, September 20-22, 2024. The Men's breakfast meets Thursdays at 7:30 AM at the WQ Diner. Camping scholarships honoring the memory of Amy Murphy are available for Camp Innabah. Mission First (Cedarville Church's outreach at 414 E High Street) is in need of Clothing: men's shirts and T-shirts, women's underwear sizes 5 & 6, men's underwear size large, footpowder and Chapstick. To help or donate (weekday assistance welcome) stop by or email clare@missionfirstpottstown.org or call her at 610-326-0560.

Coventryville UMC

SOUTH COVENTRY — This Sunday, join us for our traditional worship service at 10:30 AM led by Rev. Dr. Jeffrey Raffauf. Happy Father's Day to all the dads in our congregation and community. We are lucky to have you and happy to celebrate you on Sunday! You can find us at: 1521 Old Ridge Rd, Pottstown, PA 19465

Christ Lutheran

BARTO — The community is invited to the Community Cookout that will be held in the parking lot of the church on Saturday, June 15 from 3 — 7 p.m. We will be serving up hamburgers and hot dogs, a baking contest, games for all ages, entertainment and much more! Christ Lutheran Church will worship on this the Fourth Sunday after Pentecost on Sunday, June 16, at 9 a.m. with the Rev. Matthew Finney leading the congregation in the worship service and he will present the sermon for the morning. During the service, we will be blessing the quilts that were made by members and friends of the congregation. Coffee & Conversation will be held at 8:30 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. in the Welcome Center. The church is located at 222 Niantic Road between Routes 663 and 100 about a mile east of Bally.

Augustus Lutheran

TRAPPE — "Twists and Turns" Vacation Bible School at Augustus Lutheran Church Augustus Lutheran Church, 717 W. Main St., begins Monday, June 24, and will run from 9-12 every day until Thursday, June 27. Register now at augustustrappe.org

Butter Valley Community

BALLY — "Twists and Turns: Following Jesus Changes the Game" at Butter Valley Community Church, 2600 Old Route 100, Bally, June 24-28, from 6:15 — 8:45 PM Children Pre-K through those entering 6th grade in the fall. Register at https://vbspro.events/p/bvcc or by calling 610-845-2429 or emailing office@buttervalleycc.org

SUBMIT NEWS: Area houses of worship are invited to share their news for our free weekly listings. Email information to Mercury Editor Tony Phyrillas at tphyrillas@pottsmerc.com. Submissions will run on a space-available basis and are subject to editing. The information must be submitted before Noon on Thursday for publication in that Saturday's edition. Please use the words "Church News" in the subject line of the email.

6/18 Pottstown Mercury

Chance

FROM PAGE 1

those financially difficult times. He said, "But they were still donating to Little Leagues, softball groups and other charities."

His proposed legislation also seeks to raise the weekly chance game prize limits to $250,000 and include some additional types of games not currently allowed in Pennsylvania.

Rep. Marci Mustello, R-Butler County, has introduced a separate bill that along with raising prize limits and upping the amount of proceeds organizations can keep to 60% would allow volunteer fire, ambulance, rescue or conservation organizations to raffle off prizes of up to $500,000 a year as well as increase other prize limits. Her bill awaits action in the House Gaming Oversight Committee.

Her concern rests heavily on helping volunteer fire companies from closing their doors particularly in communities that could not afford a paid fire department.

"We're just trying to make it easier," Mustello said. "It's state government prohibiting them from making the money they need to survive."

Jerry Ogoz, executive director of the Pennsylvania Fire Emergency Services Institute, said his organization that represents the interests of emergency responders supports any change that would encourage more people to play the games, increase prize limits, and clear up confusion surrounding the legality of online fundraisers. He also is watching legislation related to taxing and regulating games of skill, which is a separate form of gambling from small games of chance.

"Everybody is going to want a chunk of that funding' from skill games, he said. "We would anticipate a chunk of that for emergency services companies."

To illustrate the need for money for emergency services, he said a basic fire engine that cost $500,000 about five to seven years ago now costs $1 million. He said that leaves many smaller fire companies only able to afford used fire trucks.

Funding community needs

Not only are fire trucks expensive so are new fire stations — and that is another community project that The Mechanicsburg Club has pledged to support from proceeds from its members' play on its chance, lottery and skill game offerings available at its establishment.

Among the others beneficiaries of their proceeds are the Arc of Cumberland and Perry counties, Meals on Wheels, the Simpson Library, Wildcat Foundation which supports Mechanicsburg School District, and several local fire and police departments.

Club officers are confident they would be able to generate more money from higher prize limits if the law were to allow it. They aren't that enthused about other changes lawmakers seek such as allowing members to use credit cards or other mobile payment methods to play the games or live streaming raffles.

They describe most of their members as "old school" who prefer simpler ways to test their luck while giving back to the community.

If the club were able to generate more money from changes in the law, Gabrielson of the Eagle Foundation would welcome it.

She said, "We never turn away a bigger check, that's for sure."

Hearing changes might be coming to expand that law that originated in 1988 was welcomed by the Eagle Foundation, a nonprofit affiliated with Cumberland Valley School District.

The foundation's executive director Bobbi Jo Gabrielson said The Mechanicsburg Club for years has donated small games of chance proceeds to support it in various ways including scholarships — 22 of them this year totaling a combined $47,500 — and other projects and programs in the district.

"We consider The Mechanicsburg Club a valued community partner," Gabrielson said. "Not only do they fund some of our core annual services like the classroom learning grants, the mentoring program, scholarships, and summer reading booster sessions, but they are involved in attending events and serving on committees. What they do to assist students in furthering their education beyond high school is invaluable."

Cat

FROM PAGE 1

duct renovations when he heard "a moaning noise" and discovered the sickly cat lying on the basement floor of the home and called police.

The animal control officer immediately transported the "gravely ill" domestic short haired cat to the SPCA where a veterinarian determined the cat was emaciated, had shallow respiration and was suffering from numerous ailments that resulted in the cat having to be euthanized. A necropsy on the cat "revealed that starvation and dehydration were the likely causes of the presenting concerns," according to the criminal complaint.

Authorities said the cat was microchipped and the investigation determined the cat's name was "Opal" and that she had been adopted, along with a second cat named "Pearl," by Kidd from a local rescue agency in June 2020, according to court documents. Authorities investigated the incident as a case of animal abandonment.

Police eventually made contact with Kidd who allegedly reported he had been in the process of moving from the Pottstown residence in March 2023, was looking to "rehome" the cat but that he "figured that she had gotten out of the house" through an open door during the moving process. Kidd told police his last day at the residence was on April 1, 2023, according to the criminal complaint filed by Pottstown Police Corporal Todd Istenes.

When police asked Kidd about the whereabouts of the second cat, "Pearl," Kidd allegedly replied the cat had escaped about three weeks prior to his moving out.

"I asked Jonathan Kidd if he advised his landlord that he couldn't locate his cat or if had had done anything to look for either of the cats and he stated that he had not," Istenes alleged. "I asked Jonathan Kidd if he had ever contacted the rescue in which he adopted these cats from and he stated that he did not."

By pleading guilty to the neglect charge, Kidd admitted that he failed to provide "necessary sustenance and potable water" for the animal to which he had a duty of care.

A charge of cruelty to animals was dismissed against Kidd as part of the plea agreement.

Defense lawyer Edward Joseph Rideout III represented Kidd during the court proceedings.

UKRAINE

Record number of NATO allies expected to hit defense spending

By Ellen Knickmeyer
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON » A record more than 20 NATO member nations are expected to hit the Western military alliance's defense spending target this year, NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said Monday, as the war in Ukraine drives worldwide concerns.

The estimated figure, announced by Stoltenberg during a talk at the Wilson Center in Washington, marks a nearly fourfold increase from 2021 in the ranks of the 32 NATO member nations meeting the alliance's defense spending guideline. Only six nations were meeting the goal that year, ahead of Russian President Vladimir Putin's full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

"Europeans are doing more for their collective security than just a few years ago," Stoltenberg said in a speech at the Wilson Center research group before meeting with President Joe Biden later Monday at the White House.

The surge in spending reflects the worries of Western allies about the war in Ukraine. Some countries also are concerned about the possible reelection of former President Donald Trump, who has repeatedly characterized many NATO allies as freeloading on U.S. military spending and said on the campaign trail that he would not defend NATO members that don't meet defense spending targets.

Stoltenberg's visit is laying the groundwork for what's expected to be a pivotal summit of NATO leaders in Washington next month. The mutual-defense alliance has grown in strength and size since Russia's invasion of Ukraine two years ago, with both Sweden and Finland joining.

Defense spending by many European countries fell after the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union seemed to neutralize what was then the prime security threat to the West.

But after Russia seized Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula in 2014, NATO members unanimously agreed to spend at least 2% of their GDP on defense within a decade. The full-scale invasion that Putin launched in 2022 spurred European countries newly on the front line of a war in the heart of Europe to put more resources into meeting that target.

Much of the focus of the summit is expected to address what NATO and NATO member governments can do for Ukraine as it faces unrelenting air and ground attacks from its more powerful neighbor. They so far have resisted Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's appeals to take his country into the bloc as long as the war is still on.

Aiding Ukraine

Stoltenberg pointed to efforts to bolster Ukraine in the meantime. That includes NATO streamlining the eventual membership process for Ukraine, and individual NATO nations providing updated arms and training to Ukraine's military, including the U.S. giving it F-16s and bringing Ukrainian pilots to the U.S. for training on the advanced aircraft.

"The idea is to move them so close to membership that when the time comes, when there is consensus, they can become a member straight away," Stoltenberg said.

However Russia's offensive concludes, only taking Ukraine into the alliance will dissuade Putin from trying again in the future to conquer Ukraine, the NATO chief said.

"When the fighting ends, NATO membership" for Ukraine "assures that the war really ends," he said.

The prospect of Ukraine joining NATO has long been an anathema to Putin, and it was one of his stated motivations for seizing Crimea. He offered last week to order an immediate cease-fire if Ukraine renounced plans to join the alliance, an offer that was dismissed by Ukraine.

A weekend conference held in Switzerland was billed as a first step toward peace and ended with pledges to work toward a resolution but had few concrete deliverables. It was attended largely by Western nations and Russia was not invited. China sat it out and then India, Saudi Arabia, South Africa and Mexico did not sign the meeting's final document Sunday.

Kyiv's outgunned and outnumbered forces are battling to hold back the bigger Russian army, which has taken over chunks of territory after political squabbles led to delays in delivering U.S. and European military aid. Ukraine has been short of troops, ammunition and air defenses in recent months as the Kremlin's forces try to cripple the national power supply and punch through the front line in eastern parts of the country.

PUBLIC INPUT HEARING NOTIFICATION

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MORE THAN 40,000 PEOPLE DIE EACH YEAR IN VEHICLE ACCIDENTS. Another 3 million suffer injuries from these types of accidents.

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PHILADELPHIA GROUP

AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

390 Eagleview Boulevard • Exton, PA 19341

First Energy
154 E Aurora RD #174
Northfield, OH 44067-2053
Attention:

STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA,

The undersigned Richard L. Crowe, being duly sworn the he/she is the principal clerk of Daily Local News, Daily Local News Digital, published in Chester County for the dissemination of local or transmitted news and intelligence of a general character, which are duly qualified newspapers, and the annexed hereto is a copy of certain order, notice, publication or advertisement of:

First Energy

Published in the following edition(s):

Daily Local News, Daily Local News Digital
06/15/24

See Attached

Sworn to the subscribed before me this 6/18/2024

Mary D Allison

Notary Public, State of Pennsylvania
Acting in County of Delaware

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania - Notary Seal
Mary D. Allison, Notary Public
Delaware County
My commission expires October 7, 2025
Commission number 1406447
Member, Pennsylvania Association of Notaries

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390 Eagleview Boulevard • Exton, PA 19341

First Energy
154 E Aurora RD #174
Northfield, OH 44067-2053
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First Energy

Published in the following edition(s):

Daily Local News, Daily Local News Digital
06/18/24

See Attached

Sworn to the subscribed before me this 6/18/2024

Mary D. Allison

Notary Public, State of Pennsylvania
Acting in County of Delaware

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania - Notary Seal
Mary D. Allison, Notary Public
Delaware County
My commission expires October 7, 2025
Commission number 1406447
Member, Pennsylvania Association of Notaries

Advertisement Information

Client Id: 373954 **Ad Id:** 2612909 **PO:** **Sales Person:** 067501

County

FROM PAGE 1

created to draw attention to and show appreciation for the volunteer firefighters and emergency medical technicians who selflessly serve the Main Line and surrounding areas.

The event marked the third presentation of the WSFS Cares Foundation Leaders of Tomorrow Award, which recognizes an individual who exhibits leadership qualities within the volunteer firefighter/EMT community. The recipient of this $5,000 scholarship was Lindsay Baker from the Llanerch Fire Company.

A tradition that began in 2011 was continued as three Thomas J. Hays Memorial Scholarships were presented in honor of a young firefighter with the Merion Fire Company who died in the hours following going out on a call.

The three $5,000 memorial scholarships were awarded to Weena Doyle from Narberth Ambulance, Matthew Hand from the Brookline Fire Company, and Preston Tyrrell from the Newtown Square Fire Company.

"We are so thankful for our volunteer emergency responders, who are often the first to arrive during a crisis," said Maureen McAleer, chair of The Main Line Chamber Foundation Board of Directors. "Everyone at the Main Line Chamber Foundation is honored to celebrate their service and distribute scholarship awards that will enable these deserving recipients to pursue their academic goals."

The 2024 scholarship recipients, listed alphabetically by last name, are:

- Lindsay Baker, Llanerch Fire Company, Havertown
- Matthew Becket, Bryn Mawr Fire Company, Bryn Mawr
- Sean Boyer, Brookline Fire Company, Havertown
- Elizabeth Brown, Radnor Fire Company, Wayne
- Margaret Mary Cooper, Upper Darby Fire Company, Upper Darby
- Brooke Cutler, Berwyn Fire Company, Berwyn
- Katie Denney, Aston Township Fire Department, Aston
- Levi Dentel, Paoli Fire Company, Paoli
- Matthew Gabriel Dobbins, Broomall Fire Company, Broomall
- Weena Doyle, Narberth Ambulance, Ardmore
- Matthew Hand, Brookline Fire Company, Havertown
- Sophia Hartley, Good Will Fire Company, West Chester
- James Philip Heller, Gladwyne Fire Company, Gladwyne
- Madison Jones, West Whiteland Fire Company, Exton
- Chandeep Kaur, Llanerch Fire Company, Havertown
- Kenneth M. Keagy, Merion Fire Company of Ardmore, Ardmore
- Michaela Kent, Bon Air Fire Company, Havertown
- Olivia Klara, Good Will Fire Company, West Chester
- Megan Kozar, Narberth Ambulance, Ardmore
- Tiffany Lan, Narberth Ambulance, Ardmore
- Jordan Lichy, Berwyn Fire Company, Berwyn
- David Marein-Efron, Narberth Ambulance, Ardmore
- Ryan Marsh, Merion Fire Company of Ardmore, Ardmore
- Alexis M. McElhone, Bon Air Fire Company, Havertown
- Kevin Mitchell, Jr., Bon Air Fire Company, Havertown
- Jack Francis Nudy, Berwyn Fire Company, Berwyn
- Andrew Payne, Manoa Fire Company, Havertown
- Marcie Romberger, Berwyn Fire Company, Berwyn
- Ethan Tartaglio, Berwyn Fire Company, Berwyn
- Preston A. Tyrrell, Newtown Square Fire Company, Newtown Square
- Luke Willette, Narberth Ambulance, Ardmore
- Noelle Zeller, Narberth Ambulance, Ardmore

A majority of the scholarships were presented by members of the foundation's directors, who are themselves volunteers. Foundation board members represent a variety of businesses that are members of The Main Line Chamber of Commerce, which houses and staffs the foundation.

"The Hometown Heroes event shines a light on the contributions of all our volunteer emergency responders. Through these scholarships, the business community and residents come together to honor and thank men and women who show up to help their fellow human beings in times of need," said Bernard Dagenais, president and CEO, The Main Line Chamber of Commerce. "We are proud to support these dedicated individuals."

The primary source of scholarship funds is the annual Main Line Run/Walk, a 5-kilometer run and a popular 1.5-mile walk, which opens up the event to non-runners and family participation. The course passes through the streets of Wayne. Lancaster Avenue and neighborhood streets are temporarily closed for safety.

The 2024 Main Line Run/Walk, presented by the Haverford Trust Company, will be held on Sunday, Sept. 8. Registration for the event is open at www.mainlinerun.org. Sponsorships for the Run/Walk and donations to The Main Line Chamber Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, are welcome and are now being accepted.

Visit www.mlcc.org/your-chamber/chamber-foundation for more information.

Guilty

FROM PAGE 1

they took a lot of time deliberating," Ruth reacted to the verdict afterward.

"We will be asking for a significant sentence," said Ruth, who characterized the killing as "horrific." "This never should have happened. He instigated a fight and then shot an unarmed man."

Ruth praised the work of county and Pottstown detectives who investigated the crime, calling it "thorough."

The jury also rejected a lesser charge of voluntary manslaughter, which defense lawyer John Han had urged the jurors to consider.

Voluntary manslaughter occurs when a person causes the death of another person while acting under a sudden heat of passion following serious provocation. A conviction of voluntary manslaughter carries a possible maximum sentence of 10 to 20 years in prison.

Han declined to comment on the verdict as he left the courtroom.

During the trial, Ruth argued Morgan had the specific intent to kill, a requirement for a first-degree murder conviction, when he fired a single gunshot at Mayo, mortally wounding him in the chest.

"He used a deadly weapon to the vital part of the body. He chose to murder an unarmed man in front of his 12-year-old daughter," Ruth argued during her closing statement to jurors, adding the "specific intent to kill" can be formed in an instant. "This can happen quickly."

The fatal shooting occurred in the area of May and Hale streets, a short distance from Morgan's home in Pottstown, as Morgan was transferring custody of his 12-year-old daughter to her mother, Kelsay Love-Sheller. Mayo, who was dating Love-Sheller, was a passenger in Love-Sheller's vehicle and a confrontation erupted between Mayo and Morgan at that time.

Ruth and McMonagle argued Morgan not only intended to kill Mayo but put others' lives in danger too, referring to two children and two other adults who were present during the shooting. Morgan's 12-year-old daughter and a child shared by Mayo and Love-Sheller were also in Love-Sheller's vehicle at the time of the shooting.

But Han suggested Morgan believed Mayo was armed and that Morgan acted in self-defense when Mayo charged at him while stating, "You want some of this?" and grabbing at his waist area as if he had a gun. Han argued Morgan acted to stop Mayo from doing harm to his family, referring to Morgan's pregnant wife, Julise, who also was present during the custody transfer.

"This isn't about ill will or hatred of Derek Mayo. His focus was on protecting his family," Han argued during his closing statement to jurors.

When Morgan testified in his own defense on Wednesday, he claimed he believed Mayo was reaching for a gun at his waist and he reacted by pulling out his gun and shooting one time during the altercation.

"The actions of Mr. Morgan were of someone who was overwrought by sudden fear and terror," Han argued.

Morgan testified he didn't expect Mayo, with whom he had heated exchanges in the past, to be accompanying Love-Sheller to the custody transfer. Morgan claimed Mayo had threatened him in the past.

Han explained Morgan had a license to carry a firearm legally and carried one since experiencing a "traumatic, horrific event" in January 2012 when he witnessed the fatal shooting of his childhood friend after a night out at a West Chester bar.

Morgan, who cooperated as a prosecution witness against the person convicted of that homicide in Chester County Court in 2013, testified he suffered Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and anxiety after that incident and lived with a fear that somebody was going to harm him. Morgan told the jury that he carried a gun ever since.

"He never left the house without the gun. Having the gun was his only sense of security," Han argued.

Ruth argued Morgan's involvement in the 2013 Chester County case and his self-professed fear afterward were not relevant to the killing of Mayo.

"That's not a defense to murdering an unarmed man a decade later," Ruth argued.

The investigation began about 7:13 p.m. June 27 when Pottstown police responded to a report of a shooting in the 500 block of May Street. A 911 call was made by Love-Sheller, who reported that her boyfriend, Mayo, had been shot, according to a criminal complaint filed by county Detective James Lavin and Pottstown Detective Adrian Stead.

Arriving officers found Mayo lying in the roadway on Hale Street just south of May Street, between the curb and the passenger side of Love-Sheller's Kia Optima vehicle, "suffering an obvious gunshot wound to the chest," Lavin and Stead wrote in the criminal complaint.

Detectives noted that Mayo "was not armed with any type of weapon."

Lavin testified that no fired cartridge casings were recovered at the scene. Lavin added there were no weapons found in Love-Sheller's vehicle during a search.

Love-Sheller approached police at the scene and pointed to Morgan's May Street home and said, "My baby dad just shot him, he's in that house," according to the criminal complaint.

Love-Sheller testified there was a history of tension between Morgan and Mayo. She said that when Morgan approached her vehicle and placed their daughter in the rear passenger seat during the custody exchange he observed Mayo in the front passenger seat and immediately began berating Mayo.

Love-Sheller testified Morgan refused to close the rear passenger door so she moved her vehicle forward in order to distance Morgan from her vehicle so the door could close. Mayo then asked Love-Sheller to stop the vehicle and he exited the vehicle, according to testimony.

"Derek stood outside the car and two seconds later he got shot," Love-Sheller testified.

A witness to the shooting told detectives the victim did not make any motion during the argument that warranted "that response by the shooter," according to court documents.

Morgan retreated to his residence after the shooting.

Morgan complied with police commands to come out of his residence and when he was asked "Where is the gun?" Morgan replied, "In the house," according to the arrest affidavit.

During an initial search of the home, police found two semi-automatic handguns in a second-floor bedroom.

After a search warrant was obtained, police found a total of six guns in the house, five of them semi-automatic pistols, according to the affidavit of probable cause.

Detectives testified one of the guns, a Taurus G2C, was found with an empty cartridge jammed in the barrel. Authorities alleged the Taurus was the murder weapon.

PUBLIC INPUT HEARING NOTIFICATION

For FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company's Rate Increase Request

Docket No. R-2024-3047068

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Erie County Public Library (H.O. Hirt Auditorium – Museum Entrance), 160 East Front Street, Erie, PA 16507

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Butler County Community College (Founders Hall – Parking Lot #6), 107 College Drive, Butler, PA 16002

Thursday, July 11, 2024 Time: 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Greensburg Garden and Civic Center (Laurel Room & Iris Room), 951 Old Salem Road, Greensburg, PA 15601

Friday, July 12, 2024 at 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Double Tree by Hilton (Junior Ballroom), 340 Racetrack Road, Washington, PA 15301

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Presiding: Administrative Law Judge Katrina L. Dunderdale, **Dates: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 & Wednesday, July 17th, 2024, Times: 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM**

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TTY-based Telecommunications Relay Service number for persons who are deaf or hearing-impaired is: 711.



West Chester
6/18

WEST CHESTER

Addition and wall-breaking held at Barclay Friends

MediaNews Group

WEST CHESTER » Barclay Friends, a Kendal Affiliate at 700 N. Franklin St., West Chester, recently marked the beginning of renovations of its memory care residences with a ceremonial wall-breaking at the community.

The project involves a significant expansion of the senior living community's memory care residences, allowing Barclay Friends to welcome new residents and continue to create a positive impact on the local aging population.

The Barclay Friends memory care expansion will introduce brand new, state-of-the-art residences, specifically designed to cater to the unique needs of those with memory impairments.

The new residences will feature cutting-edge amenities tailored to promote comfort, safety, and cognitive engagement.

The development represents a milestone in Barclay Friends' commitment to providing enhanced care and support for individuals living with memory-related conditions.

"With this expansion, we will be able to offer residential care opportunities for twice as many older adults who have dementia as we are able to today," Ellen Gilbert, board chair at Barclay Friends, said. "We are focused on creating a safe, engaging, and supportive environment, to serve the growing demand within the community."

Through this expansion, Barclay Friends' offerings will expand to include specialized programs and activities to support residents' mental and emotional well-being.

Barclay Friends aims to foster a sense of community, encouraging social interactions and connections among residents utilizing the new residences.

"We are excited to celebrate this new chapter for the community as the memory care expansion begins. These new residences will help serve the growing need in the Barclay Friends and the greater West Chester community," said Maria Santangelo, CEO of Barclay Friends. "Our mission has always been to provide exceptional care, and this expansion is a testament to our unwavering commitment to that goal."

For more information about Barclay Friends, visit https://bf.kendal.org/community-life/community-overview.

Barclay didn't specify when the project will be completed.



COURTESY PHOTO

Barclay Friends executives gathered for a ceremonial wall-breaking for renovations at the memory care facility at 700 N. Franklin St, West Chester. They are, from left, Ellen C. Gilbert, board chair; Jennie Bury, chief financial officer and vice president of strategic planning; Laura Smith, senior director of health services; and Maria Santangelo, chief executive officer.

SLEIGHTON FARM SCHOOL

Multi-alarm incendiary fire burns up former dorm

By Pete Bannan
Pbannan@Mainlinemedianews.com

An incendiary fire at the long abandoned Sleighton Farm School for Girls in the 400 block of Valley Road in Middletown and Edgmont townships kept county firefighters busy Sunday night into early Monday.

The greater-than-two-alarm blaze required many western Delaware County stations to help control it.

Edgmont Township Fire Marshal Al Mancill said the first call came in at 10:14 p.m. from a neighbor on Forrest Lane who saw flames. Firefighters arrived and found a 100-year-old abandoned dorm on fire and called for additional assistance.

It eventually went to two or more alarms, he said.

Since the building was abandoned with no threat of a loss of life, firefighters took a defensive approach.

Edgmont Assistant Chief Ron Gravina and Rocky Run Assistant Chief Mike Johnson directed units, stretching over 3,000 feet of hose and placing aerial streams in place.

"Water is always an issue here," Mancill said.

There is limited water supply in the complex. He added crews remained at a safe distance from the walls in case of collapse.

Nobody was injured in the blaze, which took 90 minutes to control.

Edgmont, Rocky Run, Concordville, Middletown, Newtown Square, Rose Tree, Media, and Goshen assisted. EMS from Riddle Hospital and Media Fire Company stood by on the scene.

There had been a report of fireworks set off in the area as a possible cause but that is not likely as the structure had a slate roof which minimizes that threat, Mancill said.

The cause of the blaze is under investigation by the Pennsylvania State Police fire marshal and the Edgmont Township fire marshal, he said.

"The fire is listed as incendiary. Further investigation is ongoing," said Jay Stewart, of the state police.

He added it was undetermined whether the fire was intentional or not, but it was lighted by flames.

Mancill said the property is known as a spot that local youth trespass on, as well as a known location for enthusiasts who explore abandoned buildings on the more-than-25-acre site.



COURTESY OF BILL GRIECO

A Rocky Run firefighter attaches a hose during the height of the blaze Sunday night at the long abandoned Sleighton Farm School for Girls in the 400 block of Valley Road in Middletown and Edgmont townships.

GAS PRICES

Still slipping in Philly market but hardly in free fall

MediaNews Group

The average price of regular gasoline fell 2.4 cents in the Philadelphia market in the past week to $3.51 per gallon on Monday, according to GasBuddy's survey of 979 stations.

The cheapest station in the market was priced at $3.19 per gallon and the most expensive was $4.49, a difference of $1.30. The $4.49 was also the highest price in Pennsylvania.

Check the price in your neighborhood at www.gasbuddy.com/gasprices/pennsylvania/philadelphia.

The average price in the Philadelphia market is 13.9 cents per gallon lower than a month ago and 11.9 cents per gallon lower than a year ago. However, it is still the fourth-highest on record for a June 17 behind $5.06, $3.71 and $3.63 in 2022, 2014 and 2023, respectively, according to GasBuddy.

And, it is well ahead of the No. 5 June 17 which is $3.16 in 2021.

Prices in neighboring areas were oddly mixed, with the New Jersey average down 4.5 cents per gallon to $3.36, and the Wilmington average up 10.0 cents per gallon to $3.51, tied with the Philadelphia market, GasBuddy says, a rare occurrence.

The national average price of gasoline increased 1 cent per gallon in the past week to $3.41, which is down 18.0 cents per gallon from a month ago and 13.8 cents per gallon lower than a year ago, according to GasBuddy.

The national average price of diesel was down 1.6 cents to $3.73 per gallon, which is good news for the price of goods.

"Since the national average price of gasoline fell to its lowest June level since 2021 last week, we've seen the drop in prices take a break, with some states seeing a small rise over the last week. Thankfully, I expect this to be more like a short timeout, with an eventual return to falling gasoline prices in most states," said Patrick De Haan, head of petroleum analysis at GasBuddy. "The decline in diesel prices continues, with the national average price of diesel now at its lowest level since January 2022. Both gasoline and diesel prices remain below their year-ago level, which is music to the ears of the Federal Reserve, as fuel prices are a significant component of the Consumer Price Index. Also factoring in gasoline demand that has been running a bit weaker than expected, market fundamentals look pretty good right now if you're a motorist."

Academy

FROM PAGE 1

ipal Police Officers' Education and Training Commission. Training and coursework take place at the College's Marple Campus.

The MPA has been serving the community since 1977 and conducts mandatory Act 180 in-service training for current municipal police officers. The next Police Academy class starts in July.

Interested individuals should visit www.dccc.edu/mpa for more information.

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AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

Kathy Alexander
Not specified
154 E Aurora RD # 174
Northfield OH 44067-2053

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The Pocono Record, a newspaper printed and published in the city of Stroudsburg, and of general circulation in the County of Monroe, State of Pennsylvania, and personal knowledge of the facts herein state and that the notice hereto annexed was Published in said newspapers in the issues dated on:

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Absenteeism

Continued from Page 1A

Chronic absenteeism – when students miss at least 10% of the school year – has become an epidemic in America's schools. Though educators and advocates hoped attendance would improve after the instability of the pandemic, in many cases it has become more pervasive and intractable. From 2018 to 2023, the rate of chronic absenteeism nearly doubled, from 15% to 26%.

The problem, which has contributed to lower performance even among students who aren't chronically absent, became one of the most pressing challenges this past school year. The American Enterprise Institute, a right-leaning think tank, has described it as "the biggest problem facing schools right now." And it's not just low-income kids who are missing class time: Students across the socioeconomic spectrum are skipping school at record-high rates.

Why has the problem become so grave? The causes are usually complex and multidimensional. Here are five key explanations:

Kids are bored and disconnected

McCoy, the Baltimore teen, loved math when she was little. She appreciated its simplicity, the fact that it's a universal language.

But as she got older, she says, she started "slacking." The instruction became boring, zapping her energy and will to put in effort. In eighth grade, she decided math was no longer for her. By the time she got to high school, she began failing some of her classes.

"We barely had any activities," said McCoy, who added she learns best when she gets one-on-one support. "When I started getting worse at math, I just stopped coming."

A nationally representative poll published in April found that nearly 2 in 3 teens say school is boring. Just 2 in 5 of the roughly 1,000 respondents said they liked going to school, and almost a third said going is a waste of time. Such disengagement leads to absences. And sometimes, schools' strategies for handling absenteeism – like fines for truancy – exacerbate rather than solve the problem. In her junior year, McCoy started getting tutored and mentored through a company called Concentric Educational Solutions, whose staff also occasionally visited her home to check in with her. Her attendance began to improve, as did her grades. She appreciated the personalized attention she got from her tutors, especially a mentor named Raiana Davis. Davis would come to get her on days she had slept in, McCoy explained. "It just made my energy change."

McCoy graduated earlier this month, and she wants to become an engineer. She plans to enroll in college or pursue her career through the Navy.



The chronic absenteeism epidemic has meant more empty desks in America's classrooms.

MIKE CARDEW/AKRON BEACON JOURNAL FILE

They're struggling with mental health

Many children decide not to attend school because of poor mental health. These challenges, especially among adolescents, have worsened in recent years: More than 4 in 10 teens reported in 2021 that they felt persistently sad or hopeless. One analysis in Los Angeles found anxiety and depression were the top health-related reasons kids missed class.

School avoidance – when children refuse to attend or struggle being in school for the entire day – is a growing problem. USA TODAY has reported on this type of refusal becoming pronounced since the COVID-19 pandemic.

One student, Anna, described the heart palpitations and body shakes she felt in the mornings as she approached her high school campus. It wasn't that she didn't want to go to school, she told USA TODAY, but that she couldn't.

"It's scary because it's not voluntary at all," said Anna, who asked to be identified only by her first name because of stigmas faced by people with mental illness. "It's just kind of happening to you."

They're being bullied

Bullying, which is pervasive in many schools, prompts kids to avoid school, too. Just a third of teens in the April EdChoice poll said they felt their school was adequately addressing bullying. Separate research reveals students who are bullied are more likely to miss class.

In a recent segment, NPR's "Morning Edition" featured a sophomore in Colorado named Neomi who has been chronically absent. Asked what was behind the absences, Neomi cried as her mother explained she had been bullied and taunted after a breakup. Her peers laughed and talked behind her back. "I don't have friends," the sophomore said. "I don't have any people."

When students have limited connections with adults, their odds of missing school are greater. Surveys have found that fewer than a quarter of teens and preteens say many or all of their teachers try to understand what their lives are like outside school.

They're confused about the rules

During the pandemic, families were instructed to keep kids out of school at any sign of illness. The rules evolved as society gained a better understanding of COVID-19. The ever-shifting protocols fueled confusion over what to do when a child has the sniffles or complains about a headache.

Hedy Chang, founder and executive director of Attendance Works, says such puzzlement has persisted among parents. "We were pretty dramatic about quarantining and staying home, and I still think there's a lot of confusion," she said. "At the same time, we said to people: 'If you're worried about being ill, shift to online learning. ... That's just as good as learning in person.' "

Those messages have had "lasting effects," according to Chang, and many schools no longer have a virtual option for sick days.

USA TODAY regularly visited a pair of elementary schools in Virginia last year to understand, among other questions, why chronic absenteeism has persisted. One school distributed thermometers so parents could check if children who said they weren't feeling well were truly too sick to attend class. It also hosted educational coffee hours and published a checklist on its homepage to help families determine what to do when a child appears symptomatic.

The other school discovered higher absenteeism rates on Mondays – a day many students' parents had off work. Perhaps parents were keeping their children home that day because it was the only time they could spend together, school officials concluded. That finding hinted at another ripple effect of the pandemic: the perception among some families that school is optional.

During quarantines and closures, kids learned through their computers at home. Daily in-person attendance has felt less crucial to certain parents ever since. That attitude plays out in different ways for different families. A single mom who needs her high schooler to care for her 2-year-old while she is at work might request the teen skip school. An affluent family that wants to go on a two-week vacation might choose to do so during school days to avoid the crowds.

"Whatever your chronic absenteeism level was pre-pandemic, it tended to double," said Chang, alluding to the problem's impact across income levels.

As absences have worsened across the board, they've also exacerbated disparities, according to Chang. High-income families are more likely than lower-income ones to be able to afford resources – such as summer test prep and tutoring – to make up for lost time.

They're navigating family, safety or transportation challenges

Some kids aren't showing up for school because of family hardships or fears about campus safety. Housing insecurity and poverty continue to disrupt low-income students' routines.

Many schools have made it more difficult to enter buildings over fears of active shooters and other dangers, Chang said. These well-intended policies have, in some cases, created divisions between families and educators.

Logistical problems are another obstacle. USA TODAY shadowed during some home visits with Concentric in Baltimore this spring. The company's staff stops by the residences of families whose children have been flagged by their schools as chronically absent. At one home, a mom named Lynetric Brightful was parking just as the Concentric van pulled up. Her adolescent son hadn't been showing up for school, the Concentric engagement specialist and driver noted. "What resources can we help you get?" asked Aaris Johnson.

Brightful explained that she works two jobs and has to leave the house early – before her son wakes up. It's difficult to ensure he attends class by the 7:45 a.m. start time, especially since he has to take a couple of city buses to get there, trekking through dangerous neighborhoods often before sunrise. Her husband recently died, and she has no one else to rely on for help. She had lost another job because she was staying home in the morning to drive her child to school.

School transportation options are limited in Baltimore, a problem that has hit more and more districts across the country. Nationally, school bus ridership is in decline, in part because of staff shortages, service changes and delays.

Brightful began to cry when Johnson told her his organization would try to provide support. She had been desperate for a solution, and it seemed as if no one was willing to help. Without better transportation, she feared her son would continue to miss school.

"I have to do what I have to do to live," she said. "I'm trying my best."

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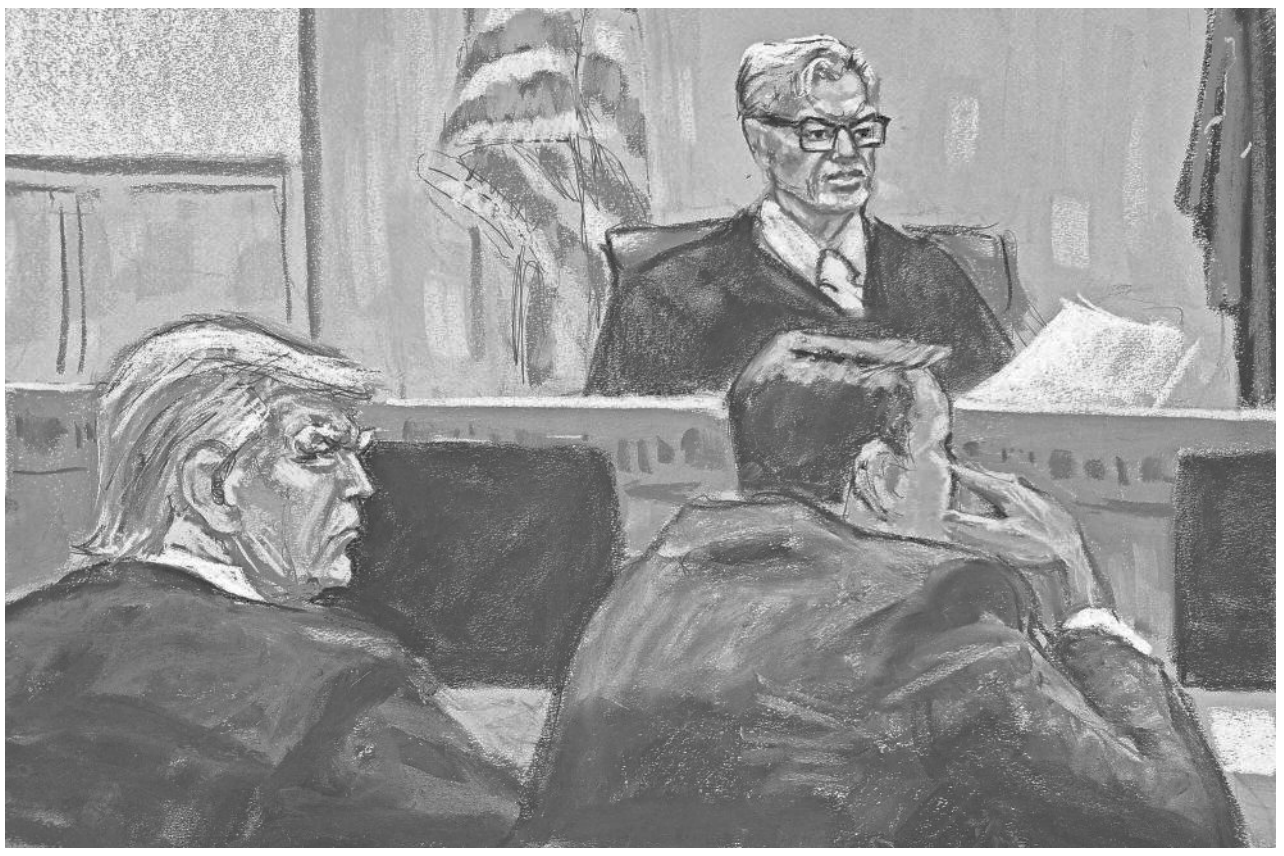
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Trump has several possible angles of appeal

Focus could be on judge, testimony, type of crime

Aysha Bagchi
USA TODAY



Trump's team has previously argued that Judge Juan Merchan should have recused himself because Merchan's daughter has provided marketing services for Democratic political candidates. JANE ROSENBERG/REUTERS FILE

Since even before his recent New York criminal trial began, former President Donald Trump has inveighed against his prosecution as unfair, and now that he is expected to appeal his felony conviction, he'll finally get a chance to make that argument to a higher court. That appeal could raise significant legal arguments, even if there's no slam dunk for the presumptive Republican presidential nominee, according to legal experts.

Trump was convicted on all 34 counts of falsifying business records in order to hide a conspiracy to unlawfully interfere in the 2016 presidential election. The business records characterized payments to former Trump lawyer Michael Cohen as 2017 legal expenses. In reality, a Manhattan jury concluded, the payments were reimbursing Cohen for hush money paid to keep adult film star Stormy Daniels quiet about an alleged affair with Trump.

Lawyers for Trump didn't respond to a request for comment about his expected appeal.

Here's a preview of what legal experts said are the stronger arguments for Trump to raise:

• **The shadow of Harvey Weinstein:** In Weinstein's appellate win, New York's highest court said the trial judge improperly allowed testimony from other women whose stories weren't part of the charged crimes, and that the judge undermined Weinstein's right to testify by ruling he could be cross-examined on those "untested allegations."

The decision overturned the 2020 rape conviction of the former Hollywood Oscar-winning producer.

In Trump's case, Merchan's pretrial rulings on what evidence was allowed to be presented could be grounds for appeal, said Mitchell Epner, a former prosecutor and longtime New York litigator.

Merchan likewise made rulings that allowed testimony or evidence stretching beyond the charged crimes, such as the transcript of the infamous "Access Hollywood" tape in which Trump described kissing women without waiting for consent and grabbing their genitals. Merchan said the prosecution could bring in the transcript to make the case that Trump wanted to pay Stormy Daniels to prevent her from publicly discussing their alleged affair after fallout from the tape's release endangered his standing with female voters. But Merchan ruled that playing the tape itself would go too far.

Merchan ruled during the trial that Trump could be cross-examined about court determinations in civil cases that Trump defamed New York writer E. Jean Carroll and fraudulently inflated his assets to get loan and insurance breaks, but not that Trump sexually abused Carroll. (Trump publicly pledged to testify in his defense in the criminal case before the trial, but he backed out.)

Epner said the Weinstein decision could mean Trump has a shot, because it "demonstrated that there are a core group of people on the Court of Appeals who think that this issue is so important that even in the most high-profile case, they will overturn it if they think the trial court has done it wrong."

But, he added, Merchan's rulings could very well be upheld. "If I had to bet on one side versus the other on that, I think that they would be affirmed," Epner said. "But I don't think it's a slam dunk."

• **Non-unanimous jury verdict?** The legal instructions to jurors in Trump's criminal case weren't simple. Jurors were told that a guilty verdict required finding Trump falsified business records. Furthermore, a guilty verdict required finding that the purpose of the falsification was to hide a conspiracy to unlawfully interfere in the 2016 election through one of three potential criminal avenues: violating federal campaign finance laws, violating tax laws, or violating business records laws.

In addition, Merchan told jurors a "guilty" or "not guilty" verdict needed to be unanimous, but that a "guilty" verdict didn't require them all to agree on which of the three options for unlawful election interference Trump committed.

Trump could challenge that last jury instruction on appeal, arguing jurors should have been required to be unanimous about what kind of unlawful behavior was involved in the election conspiracy.

Karen Agnifilo, a former prosecutor in the Manhattan District Attorney's Office, told USA TODAY she doesn't expect Trump to win that argument on appeal, but she also doesn't think it's frivolous.

• **State conviction based on a federal crime?** Trump could also challenge whether Merchan was right to allow an underlying federal crime to give rise to a state criminal conviction.

Merchan said the violation of federal campaign finance laws or federal tax laws could be the basis for the unlawful election conspiracy.

Shane Stansbury, a Duke Law School lecturer and former New York federal prosecutor, told the BBC ahead of the trial that it was "unclear if a state prosecutor can invoke a federal election crime, as it appears Mr. Bragg intends to do."

However, Epner didn't expect Trump to win on this argument given that New York law doesn't place any restriction on the crime prosecutors can point to.

• **Issues with the judge:** Trump's legal team could also argue that the verdict should be tossed out because Merchan had no business presiding over the trial.

Trump's team has previously argued that Merchan should have recused himself because Merchan's daughter has provided marketing services for Democratic political candidates, and because he made a $35 contribution to a Democratic-aligned entity in 2020, ActBlue, with $15 of that contribution designated for the 2020 Biden campaign.

A New York commission that reviews judicial conduct dismissed a complaint against Merchan regarding the donation, although it did still caution the judge.

However, long before the trial the New York State Advisory Committee on Judicial Ethics' determined that Merchan's impartiality couldn't be reasonably questioned based on either issue. The committee said Trump's criminal case didn't involve the daughter's work. The committee characterized the contribution as "modest" and and said it "seldom" requires disqualification or disclosure based on political contributions that are more than two years old.

That conclusion suggests Trump is unlikely to get the conviction tossed out based on Merchan's role in the case, said University of Texas law professor Lee Kovarsky.

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AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

Kathy Alexander
Not specified
154 E Aurora RD # 174
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Authorities say what caused I-95 bridge collapse in Philly last year

Hannah Edelman
Delaware News Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

One year after a commercial truck-tanker caught fire under a Philadelphia overpass and led to the partial collapse of I-95, federal investigators have released new details about the crash.

According to the National Transportation Safety Board, the blaze — which led to the death of 53-year-old driver Nathan Moody — was likely caused by gasoline escaping from an uncovered "manhole" on top of the tanker.

Moody, who was following the posted speed limit, lost control of the vehicle as he was exiting I-95 onto Cottman Avenue on the morning of June 11, 2023.

The tanker overturned onto its right side, according to reports, and slid along a concrete barrier. Gasoline spilled out onto the road, according to investigators, and friction caused it to catch fire. Some of the burning gasoline entered nearby storm drains, leading to small explosions that "violently ejected" manhole covers along the path of the system.

The vehicle was carrying about 8,500 gallons of gasoline from Buckeye Terminal in Wilmington to a Philadelphia Wawa for Penn Tank Lines Incorporated, according to reports.

Surveillance video from Buckeye Terminal showed that the 16-inch cover over the forward fuel tank compartment was open when the truck arrived, and remained open when it left. Investigators said it was likely that, when the driver lost control of truck, the gas spilled out of the opening and ignited.

It is also possible that the impact breached another fuel tank, but the National Transportation Safety Board said that was "less probable."

Send story tips or ideas to Hannah Edelman at hedelman@delawareonline.com. For more reporting, follow them on X at @h_edelman.

Federal Reserve appears to bow out of election cycle

REUTERS

The Federal Reserve may have just ducked out of the presidential campaign spotlight with a fresh set of forecasts showing no interest rate cuts are likely until after Election Day.

Central bank policymakers on Wednesday kept their benchmark interest rate unchanged at 5.25%-to-5.50%, where it has been since last July.

They also issued projections showing greater hesitance than before about starting reductions in high borrowing costs that have made it more costly for Americans to buy anything on credit from a washing machine to a car to a house – a dynamic that has contributed to consumers' persistently poor view of the economy and Democratic President Joe Biden's management of it.

As recently as March, Fed officials were forecasting interest rates would fall by three-quarters of a percentage point this year, an outlook that would have meant cuts beginning this summer and continuing through the run-up to the Nov. 5 presidential election.

Now, though, amid stickier-than-expected inflation and a still-strong job market, officials have scrapped that forecast for one that foresees just a single quarter-point cut this year.

Jawboning

Investors for their part have not fully abandoned hope for an earlier start, which would keep the Fed in the election limelight. Interest rate futures markets still assign a roughly 6-in-10 chance of a rate cut in September.

A rate reduction then might improve consumer moods to the benefit of Biden, a prospect Trump had already begun taking aim at earlier this year.

"I think (Fed Chair Jerome Powell is) going to do something to probably help the Democrats, I think, if he lowers interest rates," Trump said earlier this year in a Fox Business interview.

A delay until after the election could now be a headwind for Biden, who polls show receives low marks for his handling of the economy despite near-record low unemployment, record-high household wealth and above-trend growth.

Elections and the Fed

Election year rate cuts are not unheard of but are relatively unusual. The most recent occurred in 2020 when, with Trump as president, the Powell Fed cut rates to near zero in response to the sudden onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Trump still lost the election to Biden that November. The next most recent occurrence was when the Fed under Ben Bernanke cut rates repeatedly in the fall of 2008 as the financial crisis was erupting and Democrat Barack Obama and Republican John McCain were battling for the White House.

In 1992, Alan Greenspan's Fed cut rates several times in the months before Election Day in the face of rising joblessness. Republican George H.W. Bush bemoaned what he saw as a too-little-too-late response from the Fed and blamed it in part for his loss to Democrat Bill Clinton.

Road work

Continued from Page 1A

southbound I-95, possibly a retaining wall to lessen property impacts, new signals and signs to accomodate traffic changes and new drainage structures where necessary, the website adds.

Why is the Street Road exit of I-95 being reconstructed?

The project is mainly for safety impovement, but the website also says the changes should also improve the "operational effciciancy of the interchange."

The website includes the following list of reasons for the improvement project:

- The I-95/Route 132 (Street Road) interchange has severe capacity and operational problems that create extensive AM and PM peak hour traffic backups causing gridlock on Route 132 (Street Road) and U.S. 13 (Bristol Pike), as well as on the ramps to and from I-95.
- Traffic volumes on eastbound Route 132 (Street Road) at the I-95 interchange create an extensive queue and would be aided by diverting traffic from the intersection of the I-95 Ramps/Street Road by allowing direct access to I-95 Southbound.
- The ramp from U.S. 13 (Bristol Pike) onto Westbound Route 132 (Street Road) does not have a proper acceleration lane onto a high-speed road, creating a hazardous merging area.
- The loop ramp from U.S 13 (Bristol Pike) onto eastbound Route 132 (Street Road) backs up due to the traffic signal for the intersection of the I-95 ramps/Street Road and makes it a difficult and dangerous merging area for the traffic that is looking to go north onto I-95.
- The ramp from the interchange onto southbound I-95 does not have a long enough acceleration lane onto a high-speed roadway creating a dangerous condition.

How long will it take to fix the Street Road exit to I-95 and how much should it cost?

While PennDOT's website doesn't provide an expected end date for the new ramp, a projet budget timeline shows construction might not begin until after the 2026 fiscal year.

Altogether, the project should cost a total of more than $9.1 million under a 12-year plan.

The preliminary engineering phase happening this year is budgeted at about $895,000, followed by a final design phase set for the 2024 fiscal year at a budget of $634,000.

PennDOT will begin right-of-way acquisitions in 2025 for $68,000 before moving on to construction. The project's long-term plan doesn't include any work in 2026.

The construction phase is execpted to cost about $6.33 million over four years, though timelines are subject to change.

What do I need to know before the meeting?

All of the current plans will be on display at the meeting later this month, but those documents are also available at the I-95/U.S. 13/Route 132 Interchange Improvement Project page.

If you have questions, need additional information or have special needs requiring assistance prior to the upcoming meeting, please contact PennDOT Project Manager Judith Arena.

Information about infrastructure in District 6, including completed work and significant projects, is available at www.penndot.pa.gov/D6Results. Find PennDOT's planned and active construction projects at the PennDOT Projects page.

Chris Ullery is the Philadelphia Hub Data Reporter for the USA Today Network. Reach him at cullery@couriertimes.com or find him on Twitter at @ulleryatinell.

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TTY-based Telecommunications Relay Service number for persons who are deaf or hearing-impaired is: 711.

Upscale Oxford Valley Mall apartments now renting

Katherine Cressman
Bucks County Courier Times
USA TODAY NETWORK



Construction underway at Atlee Square apartment complex. KATHERINE CRESSMAN/BUCKS COUNTY COURIER TIMES

Construction continues at the site of luxury apartments at the Oxford Valley Mall in Middletown, but its first residents could move in as early as next month, according to the developer's website.

Applications are now being taken for units at Atlee Square, the 391-unit complex now under construction on the site of the former Boscov's at the mall off Route 1 and Woodbourne Road.

Move-in dates, which are available as soon as July 6th, photos and virtual tours of the apartments are also available on the project's website. Developers Bozzuto and CornerstoneTracy did not respond to requests for comment on the progress of the construction, but the project is scheduled to be completed by March 2025.

Apartment layouts on the website are listed with rental prices, ranging anywhere from $1,980 to $3,305 per month, while the measurement of the spaces range from 595 to 1,196 square feet per design.

The building will offer several apartment designs, including a single bedroom studio apartment, five differing 1bed/1bath layouts, and five 2bed/2bath options.

The project's website also advertises a swimming pool, a pet friendly community with a "bark park" and a pet wash, a fitness center with a spin and yoga studio, golf and sports simulators, and a resident lounge with a bar and billiard spaces.

The project is set to finish apartments with GE appliances, 9 foot ceilings, and 6-foot windows.

Atlee Square, as it has been named, is also working to target Green Globe certifications through the construction of energy-efficient features and two acres of exterior amenity space, according to the project's website.

Simon Properties, which owns the 1.3-million-square-foot Oxford Valley Mall, and township officials hope the apartment project will revive the mall, built in 1973 and once one of the largest in the United States. Ultimately, the project could have 600 apartments.



The CDC has reported 15 salmonella illnesses linked to bearded dragons across nine states. GETTY IMAGES

CDC: Salmonella outbreak linked to bearded dragons

Mary Walrath-Holdridge
USA TODAY

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is investigating a multistate salmonella outbreak linked to pet bearded dragon lizards.

While bearded dragons are popular pets, they are also prone to carrying germs that can easily cause illness in humans, especially children, the CDC said in a warning Friday. As of June 14, the ongoing investigation has found a total of 15 people in nine states who have gotten salmonella illnesses in the outbreak, the agency said. Nearly 60% of cases have been found in children under the age of 5, the CDC said. No deaths have been reported.

Twelve of the fifteen impacted people were interviewed and the CDC found 58% reported direct contact with a bearded dragon before getting sick.

In at least one instance, a child did not directly touch the bearded dragon but may have been exposed via indirect contact, the CDC said. Most people had close contact with their pets at home.

Though they are generally considered easier to keep than other reptile species, the CDC does not suggest bearded dragons be kept as pets for children younger than 5, adults 65 or older, or people with weakened immune systems.

Bearded dragons can carry salmonella germs in their droppings even if they look healthy and clean, according to the CDC. Touching your lizard or anything in its environment and then touching your face, mouth or food can lead to the ingestion of germs that can lead to salmonella poisoning.

Symptoms include bloody diarrhea for more than three days, excessive vomiting and stomach cramps, and most commonly occur between six hours and six days after exposure. Though most people recover in four to seven days, those with weakened immune systems, including children younger than 5 and adults over 65, may experience more severe symptoms that require medical treatment or hospitalization.

The CDC suggests the following safety tips when interacting with your pet reptile:

- **Wash your hands:** Anyone who touches or feeds your bearded dragon should always wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water right after that. This is especially important before someone holds or feeds a baby or child under the age of 5.
- **Play safely:** Don't kiss or snuggle your bearded dragon, and don't eat or drink around it. This can spread salmonella germs to your mouth and make you sick.
- **Keep things clean:** Clean your bearded dragon supplies – such as feeders, toys, and food and water containers – outside of the house, if possible. If you must clean the supplies indoors, don't clean them in the kitchen or other areas where you eat or prepare food.

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PUBLIC INPUT HEARING NOTIFICATION

For FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company's Rate Increase Request

Docket No. R-2024-3047068

The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC) will conduct 18 Public Input Hearings concerning FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company's request filed on April 2, 2024, to increase electric rates by $502 million per year. The Commission will conduct a series of Public Input Hearings, totaling eighteen (18) in total, with fourteen (14) Public Input Hearings to be conducted in-person at seven (7) different locations within the territory of FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company. An additional four (4) Public Input Hearings will be conducted by telephone using the Commission's conference bridge technology.

Different processes will be used for the in-person hearings than will be used to the telephonic hearings. Individuals wishing to testify at either the in-person or telephonic hearings will only be permitted once. Time limitations may apply to how long individuals may testify, if a large number of other individuals wish to testify at the same session.

In-Person Public Input Hearings will take place at the following locations:

Tuesday, June 25, 2024 at 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
VFW Post #2540 and Canteen, 546 Fawn Road, East Stroudsburg, PA 18301

Wednesday, June 26, 2024 at 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Reading Public Museum (Ground Floor Auditorium), 500 Museum Road, Reading, PA 19611

Thursday, June 27, 2024 at 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Graduate Palo Alto (Coaly Ballroom A/B), 125 S Atherton Street, State College, PA 16801

Tuesday, July 9, 2024 at 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Erie County Public Library (H.O. Hirt Auditorium – Museum Entrance), 160 East Front Street, Erie, PA 16507

Wednesday, July 10, 2024 at 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Butler County Community College (Founders Hall – Parking Lot #6), 107 College Drive, Butler, PA 16002

Thursday, July 11, 2024 Time: 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Greensburg Garden and Civic Center (Laurel Room & Iris Room), 951 Old Salem Road, Greensburg, PA 15601

Friday, July 12, 2024 at 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Double Tree by Hilton (Junior Ballroom), 340 Racetrack Road, Washington, PA 15301

Requests for Interpreters: If you require an interpreter, please contact Judge Dunderdale's office at (412) 565-3550 or via email at mswarner@pa.gov, as soon as possible. If you contact the office too close to the hearing date, we may not have enough time to arrange for an interpreter. If you request an interpreter, we will make every reasonable effort to have one present.

Telephonic Public Input Hearings

Presiding: Administrative Law Judge Katrina L. Dunderdale, **Dates: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 & Wednesday, July 17th, 2024, Times: 1:00 PM & 6:00 PM**

If you wish to testify at one of the telephonic public input hearings, you are encouraged to pre-register by 4:00 p.m. on Friday, July 12, 2024. If you do not pre-register and provide the information listed below, you may not have an opportunity to testify.

To pre-register by email, please email Judge Dunderdale's Legal Assistant, Mary Swarner, at mswarner@pa.gov, and provide: (1) your first and last name, (2) the date and time of the hearing at which you wish to testify, (3) the phone number you will be using to call into the public input hearing, and (4) if you require an interpreter to participate in the hearing, the language of the interpreter.

To pre-register by phone, please contact Judge Dunderdale's office at (412) 565-3550 and leave a message providing: (1) your first and last name, (2) the date and time of the hearing at which you wish to testify, (3) the phone number you will be using to call into the public input hearing, (4) a phone number where you can be reached prior to the hearing if we need to contact you, (5) your email address, if you have one, and (6) if you require an interpreter to participate in the hearing, the language of the interpreter.

If you do not wish to testify but want to listen to the public input hearing(s), please contact Judge Dunderdale's office by email at mswarner@pa.gov or phone at (412) 565-3550 and provide your name and the hearing(s) you want to listen to so we can ensure we have adequate caller capacity on the conference bridge to accommodate all callers.

To participate in the Telephonic Public Input Hearing:

- You must dial the toll-free number listed below
- You must enter a PIN number when instructed to do so, also listed below
- You must speak your name when prompted
- The telephone system will connect you to the hearing

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