

SHOPPING SAVINGS INSIDE

Battle against book bans
Meet the Pine-Richland student fighting to keep access to books in her school. **Local, C-1**

Sunday

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Shapiro faces key budget decisions

Political and financial hurdles pose big test for a governor with growing national profile

By Ford Turner and Mike Wereschagin
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

HARRISBURG — When Gov. Josh Shapiro takes to the podium in the ornate House chamber for his state budget address Tuesday, he'll face the daunting task of charting a course for Pennsylvania in a rapidly evolving political environment shaped by the most pressing financial challenges his administration has confronted.

It will be Mr. Shapiro's third budget address, and the first since he emerged last summer as a top-tier

contender for vice president on the Democratic ticket. His status as one of just three finalists cemented his place as a national leader in a party that's searching for a new direction.

With a re-election campaign looming, and a potential White House run in 2028, Mr. Shapiro's viability on the national stage will be tested over the coming months as the state confronts a series of challenges that the governor is expected to address Tuesday.

In a major court decision two years ago, the state's basic education funding system was declared unconstitutional. The needs of mass transit systems in urban areas and aging transportation infrastructure are pressing. At the same time, communities statewide — including Pittsburgh — are clamoring for economic development aid to counter the lingering effects of

SEE **BUDGET**, PAGE A-3



Gov. Josh Shapiro

Lucy Schaly/Post-Gazette

CHINA, CANADA, MEXICO TARIFFS TAKE HOLD

By Josh Boak, Zeke Miller, Rob Gillies and Christopher Sherman
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump on Saturday signed an order to impose stiff tariffs on imports from Mexico, Canada and China, drawing swift retaliation and an undeniable sense of betrayal from the country's North American neighbors as a trade war erupted among the longtime allies.



The Republican president posted on social media that the tariffs were necessary "to protect Americans," pressing the three nations to do more to curb the manufacture and export of illicit fentanyl and for Canada and Mexico to reduce illegal immigration into the U.S.

The tariffs, if sustained, could cause inflation to significantly worsen, threatening the trust that many voters placed in Trump to lower the prices of groceries, gasoline, housing, autos and other goods

SEE **TARIFFS**, PAGE A-7

TWO YEARS AFTER DERAILMENT



Lucy Schaly/Post-Gazette

Almost two years since the train derailment in East Palestine, Ohio, signs indicating that cleanup work was continuing remained in place, such as this one alongside a creek last week on Sumner Street. No cleanup equipment, however, was evident at the creek.

UNEVEN ROAD TO RECOVERY

E. Palestine residents still struggle with a mix of hope, helplessness

By Jordan Anderson
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

EAST PALESTINE, Ohio — Tracy Hagar tries not to think about the derailment anymore. East Palestine has returned to some semblance of normalcy, with cleanup crews largely confined to the derailment site now.

She doesn't obsessively scan social media for updates like she once did, and

the community events she attended to get information about progress on chemical testing and the cleanup stopped. But still, the presence of the disaster lingers over everyday life.

"Sometimes, I still can't believe it happened," she said. "But here we are. It's just a whole other way of living."

On Feb. 3, 2023, part of a Norfolk Southern freight train carrying hazardous chemicals, including the known carcinogen vinyl chloride, derailed and spewed its toxic cargo into the air, soil, water and groundwater.

A fire burned for days, and about 2,000 people were evacuated. Fearing

SEE **RECOVERY**, PAGE A-4



Melissa Smith via AP

A fire resulting from the 2023 train derailment rages out of control, as seen from Melissa Smith's farm in East Palestine. About 2,000 people were evacuated from the area.

POWERING UP THE GRID

The race is on to fend off Pa. energy crunch

By Anya Litvak
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Running an electric grid is essentially a math problem.

"And it's not calculus. It's just arithmetic," said Tim Gallagher, president and CEO of Reliability First, a Cleveland-based organization that audits utilities and advises on grid reliability efforts.

"The supply of electricity has to exactly match the demand for electricity at all times, no exceptions."

On the morning last month that Mr. Gallagher spoke inside Acrisure Stadium at an event organized by Pittsburgh Works Together, the city was a snow globe. Classes at public schools were canceled.

Already, grid wonks buzzed with predictions for an upcoming nor'easter that

SEE **GRID**, PAGE A-5

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