

# Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

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## Penn State trustees OK plan

New Kensington, Fayette, Shenango impacted by decision to close seven branch campuses

By Maddie Aiken  
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Penn State's Board of Trustees opted to shutter seven of the university's branch campuses during a virtual meeting Thursday evening, despite state-wide outcry that the plan could betray the university's mission to offer an accessible public education, and it could devastate education and economic mobility in the state's rural communities.

Three campuses in Western Pennsylvania — New Kensington, Fayette and Shenango in Sharon — are now slated to close after the 2026-27 academic year. Other campuses impacted by closure include DuBois in Central

Pennsylvania and York, Wilkes-Barre and Mont Alto on the eastern side of the state.

Twenty-five trustees voted in favor of closure and eight voted against. Those who voted against the plan included Jay Paterno, Anthony Lubrano, Ted Brown, Donald Cairns, Lynn Dietrich, Barry Fenchak, Chris Hoffman and Nicholas Rowland.

Prior to the vote, trustees deliberated on the matter for nearly two hours. Penn State President Neeli Bendapudi also provided brief remarks urging trustees to vote in favor of closure.

SEE PENN STATE, PAGE A-2



Sebastian Foltz/Post-Gazette

The Nittany Lion statue at Penn State's Fayette campus on Wednesday. The branch is slated to close after the 2026-27 academic year.

### D.C. SHOOTING

## SUSPECT CHARGED WITH MURDER

Affidavit: Man said he 'did it for Palestine'

By Eric Tucker, Michael Kunzelman and Alanna Durkin Richer  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The man accused of fatally shooting two staff members of the Israeli Embassy in Washington outside a Jewish museum told police after his arrest, "I did it for Palestine, I did it for Gaza," federal authorities said Thursday in announcing charges in the killings they called a targeted act of terror.

### INSIDE

Pittsburgh's Jewish community on edge after Israeli Embassy staffers gunned down in D.C. **Page A-8**

Elias Rodriguez, 31, shouted "Free Palestine" as he was led away after his arrest, according to charging documents that provided chilling new details of the Wednesday night attack in the nation's capital that killed an American woman and Israeli man who had just left an event at the museum. They were set to become engaged.

The stunning attack prompted Israeli missions to beef up their security and

SEE EMBASSY, PAGE A-8

## SOAKING IT IN



Tim Robbiba/For the Post-Gazette

Frank Pizzi, of the Garden Club of Allegheny County, stands in front of "Totem, Lamina, Limbus" (1979) by Jack Youngerman during a rainy Thursday afternoon at the launch of the self-guided audio tour at the Carol R. Brown Sculpture Garden in Hartwood Acres Park. A couple of showers are expected Friday, with a high of 55 and low of 45. **Weather, Page B-6**

## Footprint changes for growing Picklesburgh

Festival to expand for 10th anniversary

By Madaleine Rubin  
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Picklesburgh is returning to its roots.

For the festival's 10th anniversary, the Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership is expanding the footprint to span much of the Golden Triangle, including two of Pittsburgh's Sister Bridges, where the festival was first held in 2015. The new festival map includes the

Roberto Clemente Bridge, Andy Warhol Bridge, Allegheny Landing, Fort Duquesne Boulevard, PPG Plaza, Market Square, Sixth Street and Heinz Hall Garden.

"This event now is bigger than it's ever been from a layout perspective, and we really are looking at how we can continue to make this a fun festival for our patrons and support the local economy," PDP CEO Jeremy Waldrup said Thursday. "That's what you're

seeing with this footprint."

The festival will run July 11-13. Allegheny County Council on Wednesday approved the PDP's plans to use the bridges for the event, which has run every year since 2015, except in 2020 when it was canceled during the pandemic.

In its first year, Picklesburgh attracted just over 20,000 people — a number the PDP saw as "wildly successful" at the time, Mr. Waldrup said.

But last year, around 250,000 attended — a nearly 1,000% in-

crease from year one. Downtown hotel occupancy rose by 27%, with 90% of rooms filled throughout the festival weekend, according to VisitPittsburgh.

### A 'big boost' to local businesses

Fan favorites will return this year, including the pickle chugging and pickle bobbing competitions, held in PPG Plaza.

A 35-foot pickle balloon will fly

SEE PICKLE, PAGE A-12

### TRUMP'S AGENDA

## House GOP passes big bill of tax breaks

By Lisa Mascaro, Kevin Freking and Leah Askarinam  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — House Republicans stayed up all night to pass their multitrillion-dollar tax breaks package, with Speaker Mike Johnson defying the skeptics and unifying his ranks to muscle President Donald Trump's priority bill to approval Thursday.

With last-minute concessions and stark warnings from Trump, the Republican holdouts dropped their opposition to salvage the "One Big Beautiful Bill" that's central to the GOP agenda. The House launched debate before midnight and by dawn the vote was called, 215-214, with Democrats staunchly opposed. It goes to the Senate, with long negotiations ahead.

"To put it simply, this bill gets Americans back to winning again," said Mr. Johnson, R-La.

The outcome caps an intense time on Capitol Hill, with days of private negotiations and public committee hearings,

SEE BILL, PAGE A-6



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**Weather**  
A couple of showers; breezy. Daytime high, 55; tonight's low, 45.  
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