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STEELERS 29, LIONS 24



Matt Freed/Post-Gazette

Steelers running back Jaylen Warren celebrates with running back Kenneth Gainwell after scoring a touchdown during the second half as the Steelers held off the Detroit Lions for a 29-24 win Sunday at Ford Field. The pair combined for 279 of the Steelers' 481 yards. Baltimore's loss to New England put the Steelers closer to a division title. More coverage in **Sports, B-1**.

CLUTCH VICTORY

How they won the game matters as the playoffs near

By Brian Batko
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

COMMENTARY

So what was your favorite part of Steelers 29, Detroit Lions 24? Was it DK Metcalf taking a swing at a Lions superfan wearing a blue wig and hanging over the railing in the front row? Was it Kenneth Gainwell turning into Kenneth Catchwell and somehow sandwiching a

pass between his forearms as he lay horizontal on the Ford Field turf, rolling over and then popping back up to run the final 6 yards for a 45-yard touchdown? Or was it that Mr. Gainwell's score only foreshadowed an even more confusing, even more controversial, even more surreal final play? Lions quarterback Jared Goff scored a touchdown on a pass

that he threw himself, with a lateral in between, and that wasn't the most absurd part of the sequence. That would probably be the head official telling the crowd the ruling on the field is a touchdown — met with a triumphant chorus of cheers — but ... there was an offensive pass interference penalty on the Lions, so the game is over. Still, plenty of the Detroit faithful kept roaring in celebration (perhaps including that guy who trolled Mr. Metcalf from the

stands) because they didn't realize the flag negated that magical SuperGoff moment. It was all quite climactic and anticlimactic at the same time. But for the Steelers, Sunday wasn't just their wildest game of the season. It also was their best win, their most impressive performance given the stakes. "We had to win against a team with a lot of pride that has played in an NFC championship

SEE **STEELERS**, PAGE A-2

Downtown's \$600M face-lift takes shape

By Madaleine Rubin
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Heading into 2026, Downtown Pittsburgh remains in flux. But the key projects that are part of a historic bid to revamp the corridor are beginning to take shape. Gov. Josh Shapiro last year visited the Cultural District to announce a landmark \$600 million investment in the Golden Triangle, heralded as the third major effort to upgrade the city's center in its history. Following a spike in office vacancies during the COVID-19 pandemic, the plan promises to breathe new life into Downtown, converting aging

skyscrapers into new apartment buildings and renovating several public spaces. Many of the plan's flagship projects faced critical setbacks this summer amid rising construction costs and routine delays. But progress is moving along, reshaping the area as it prepares to welcome hundreds of thousands of visitors when Pittsburgh hosts the NFL draft in the spring. Major components of the governor's plan include: • Seven residential projects, including multiple office-to-apartment

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Alexandra Wimley/Post-Gazette

Beacon Communities expects to break ground inside the 118-year-old May Building at 111 Fifth Ave., Downtown, within the next few weeks, increasing the number of affordable units and modifying apartments to meet accessibility standards.

CITY OF PITTSBURGH

COUNCIL APPROVES 20% TAX INCREASE

Cites a 'very precarious financial position'

By Hallie Lauer
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

After a contentious process with competing narratives regarding the city's financial health, Pittsburgh City Council approved a budget for 2026 that includes a 20% tax increase. Facing dwindling revenue sources and increased prices on expenses, council members said they saw a need to increase the property tax rate. "We have been told under no uncertain terms ... that we are in a very precarious financial position," Councilwoman Barb Warwick said Sunday morning. She introduced a 30% increase earlier this month, which was lowered to 20% Sunday. "This has been made loud and clear to council members, so I felt that it was imperative that we act on that information." That increase will bring in an extra \$28 million in revenue. A resident with a home assessed at \$100,000 will pay an extra \$8.73 a month, or about \$105 annually. Throughout the budgeting process and still on Sunday, as council met in Downtown's City-Council building to vote on the 2026 budget, members have been

SEE **BUDGET**, PAGE A-12

EPSTEIN FILES

DOJ official stands by decision

Democrats cry foul over records' partial release

By Aamer Madhani
and Adriana Gomez Licon
Associated Press

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. — Deputy Attorney General Todd Blanche on Sunday defended the Justice Department's decision to release just a fraction of the Jeffrey Epstein files by the congressionally mandated deadline as necessary to protect survivors of sexual abuse by the disgraced financier. Mr. Blanche pledged that the Trump administration eventually would meet its obligation required by law. But he stressed that the department was obligated to act with caution as it goes about making public thousands of documents that can include sensitive information. Friday's partial release of the Epstein files has led to a new crush of criticism from Democrats who have accused the Republican administration of trying to hide information. Mr. Blanche called that pushback

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Increasing cloudiness.
Daytime high, 40;
tonight's low, 34.
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