# Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

ONE OF AMERICA'S GREAT NEWSPAPERS

\$3.00 236 YEARS OF SERVICE WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19, 2023

VOL. 96, NO. 261, 4/19/23

FINAL.

## 'Tranq' called 'a serious threat'

Shapiro initiates tighter controls for animal drug

By Ford Turner Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

HARRISBURG — Seeking to curb a dramatic rise in deaths from a powerful nervous system de-

pressant typically used to sedate large animals, Gov. Josh Shapiro is ordering that the drug xylazine be temporarily classified in Pennsylvania as a Schedule III controlled substance.

The move, Mr. Shapiro said Tuesday, will allow for tighter controls, record-keeping and security around manufacturing and delivery of the drug, sometimes called "tranq." It will also give police and prosecutors more tools to crack down on illicit use, he said.

Mr. Shapiro said xylazine

contributed to about 90 deaths in Pennsylvania in 2017 and more than 620 last year, an increase of about 700%.

"As governor, I have the authority through my secretary of health temporarily schedule

SEE **DRUG**, PAGE A-2



Groups of people protest two conservative speakers Tuesday evening at the O'Hara Student Center on the University of Pittsburgh campus, prompting a large law enforcement response. Numerous other campus buildings were closed as a result of the protest.

## PROTEST ERUPTS AT PITT

Transgender rights debate prompts 'public safety emergency'

By Maddie Aiken Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Protests over two conservative speakers at the University of Pittsburgh on Tuesday night prompted the university to issue a public safety emergency as crowds blocked off the area around the O'Hara Student Center and jammed surrounding roadways, spurring a large law enforcement response.

lic safety alert just after 7:30 p.m. as the debate – "Should transgenderism be regulated by law?" - between Daily Wire commentator Michael Knowles and libertarian journalist Brad Polumbo was ongoing.

Pitt advised people to stay away from the area around the student center, and numerous other campus buildings were closed as a result of the protest.

to those with proper identification, and guests who were not affiliated with the university were not allowed to enter.

Thaw Hall. Thackery Hall. Old Engineering Hall, Gardner Steel Center, Benedum Hall, University Club, Allen Hall and the Space Research Coordination Center were all closed as of

8:30 p.m. After the debate ended about 9

The university issued its pub. Residence halls remained open n m attendees waited 30 min. utes to safely exit the building as protests continued. Officers formed two lines barricading the building as attendees were escorted out a back door. By about 10 p.m., the protesters had dispersed after law enforcement officials told them they would face arrest if they continued to block the street.

SEE PROTEST, PAGE A-8

## settles suit for \$787M

Dominion OKs deal in defamation case

> By David Bauder, Randall Chase and Geoff Mulvihill **Associated Press**

WILMINGTON, Del. — Fox and Dominion Voting Systems reached a \$787 million settlement Tuesday in the voting machine company's defamation lawsuit, averting a trial in a case that exposed how the toprated network chased viewers by promoting lies about the 2020 presidential election.

"The truth matters. Lies have consequences," Dominion lawyer Justin Nelson said in a news conference outside the courthouse after a judge announced the deal.

Dominion had asked for \$1.6 billion, arguing that Fox had damaged its reputation by helping peddle phony conspiracy theories about its equipment switching votes from former President Donald Trump to Democrat Joe Biden. Fox said the amount greatly overstated the value of the Colorado-based company.

The resolution in Delaware Superior Court follows a recent ruling by Judge Eric Davis in which he allowed the case to go to trial while emphasizing it was "CRYSTAL clear" that none of the allegations about Dominion aired on Fox by Trump allies was true.

In a statement issued shortly after the announcement, Fox News said the network acknowledged 'the court's rulings finding certain claims about Dominion to be false." It did not respond to an inquiry asking for elaboration.

Inquiries to Dominion and Fox Corp. were not immediately returned.

Records released as part of the lawsuit showed how Fox hosts and claims by Mr. Trump's allies but aired them anyway, in part to win back viewers who were fleeing the network after it correctly called hotly contested Arizona for Mr. Biden on election night.

The settlement, which does not need the judge's approval, will end a case that has proven a major embarrassment for Fox News. If the case

SEE **LAWSUIT**, PAGE A-4

### **Shapiro reaffirms commitment** to boost region's tech industry

By Michael Korsh Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Gov. Josh Shapiro delivered remarks Tuesday at the Pittsburgh Aviation and Robotics Summit, where he reaffirmed his administration's commitment to stimulating innovation and economic development in Pennsylvania.

Speaking at The Vision on Fifteenth in the Strip District, Mr. Shapiro pointed to industries such as robotics and artificial

SEE **TECH**, PAGE A-2



Gov. Josh Shapiro spoke at the Pittsburgh Aviation and Robotics Summit in the Strip District Tuesday.

### Airport, British Airways partner on innovation

By Mark Belko Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

When British Airways resumed nonstop flights to London from Pittsburgh International Airport last year, the region was thankful just to have the service back after a 27month hiatus.

Now the parent company of

the famous airline is further cementing its presence in the Steel City — with the region's robust tech community at the forefront.

Under an agreement announced Tuesday, the airport and International Airlines Group will work to find ways to make travel easier through the

SEE TRAVEL, PAGE A-8



**ONLINE TODAY:** 

Get real-time breaking news and much more at post-gazette.com

Weather

Partly sunny and warmer. Daytime high, 65; tonight's low, 50. Page B-6

Comics.

**Fditorials** High Schools Horoscope.. Local News

Magazine Obituaries Scoreboard . Sports .....



Mike Spohn

ke Spohn, General Manager o

Falconi's-Where Friends Send Friends!

5802 University Blvd, Moon Twp. PA, 15108 888-511-7614 • MoonHonda.com

## Gov. Shapiro speaks at robotics summit, reaffirms commitment

TECH, FROM A-1

intelligence as drivers of growth within the region and commonwealth, and highlighted multiple initiatives to target economic redevelopment his administration has already enacted since his tak-

'Aside from all the plans, the policies and proposals and grants and budget investments, most importantly, I believe in you. And I believe that the future success of our commonwealth depends on what happens in rooms like this,' Mr. Shapiro said.

Shortly after taking office, Mr. Shapiro signed an executive order to create an Office of Transformation and Opportunity, which he called a "one-stop shop" for emerging businesses looking to grow or expand in Pennsylvania.

Last month, he unveiled a budget proposal that included increases in funding for government initiatives geared toward scientific innovation, such as the Manufacturing PA Innovation Program and PA Smart Program. In his speech, Mr. Shapiro called on lawmakers in the General Assembly to pass his proposed budget as part of the commonwealth's continuing support of the indus-

Outgoing Allegheny County Executive Rich Fitzgerald also spoke at the summit's opening event, highlighting the need for innovation within aviation and the potential of a burgeoning robotics industry.

"Years ago, when the National Football League was starting up a franchise, it really made sense that the name of the team that played here was called the Steelers, after the industry that we had. Well, the next time we get a franchise, we're going to be calling it the Robots," Mr. Fitzgerald

Mr. Fitzgerald praised Mr. Shapiro's ongoing efforts to support emerging industries in southwestern Pennsylvania and the funding from the federal Economic Development Administration that subsidized the summit.

In September, the EDA awarded \$63 million to the Southwestern Pennsylvania New Economy Collaborative group of university, philanthropic and private entities based in the region — through the Build Back Better Regional Challenge.

A competitive grant program designed to "supercharge" struggling local economies, the Build Back Better Regional Challenge is considered an anchor of the Biden administration's American Rescue Plan initiatives.

"These are the kinds of investments that send a signal to the world that Pennsylvania understands economic development. And I must tell you, it also sends a clear signal that we are open for business," Mr. Shapiro said.

The invite-only event brought hundreds of senior executives in the aviation industry to Pittsburgh—advertised as "the robotics capital of the world" - for a three-day summit that includes workshops, facility tours and networking opportunities.

The program is being hosted by the Robotics Factory, a collective of robotics programs also funded by the EDA's federal grant pro-

In a region that has seen a dwindling population and stagnating economy since major industrial declines in the 1970s, Pittsburgh has already become an emerging hotbed for the robotics industry, according to a report from the Pittsburgh Robotics Network.

More than 100 robotics companies have taken root in Pittsburgh, creating almost 15,000 jobs and attracting billions in capital investment within the past five years, the report found.

Mike Harding, vice president of business investment for the Pittsburgh Regional Alliance, said collaboration between government officials and the private sector has become crucial to southwestern Pennsylvania's development.

'We're fortunate to have a friendly public-private partnership here in the region, where we're able to try things like autonomous vehicles on our roadways, because we also have a state that supports that type of deployment. So we have that opportunity to use the city as our living laboratory," Mr. Harding said.

## Chatham names new president

By Megan Tomasic Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Chatham University on Tuesday named a new president, choosing Rhonda Phillips, Purdue University Honors College Dean, as the 10th woman to lead the school in its 154-

Ms. Phillips was introduced as the university's president during an event at the Campbell Memorial Chapel on the Shadyside campus. Ms. Phillips, who will serve as the university's 20th president, will start this summer and succeed David Finegold, who announced his resignation last year after spending  $\ensuremath{\operatorname{six}}$  years in the position.

"I think one of the things that strikes me about Chatham is the sense of community that's already here," Ms. Phillips told a crowd of more than 100 people, five of whom were on the university's president search committee. "You've already accomplished so many wonderful things here at this university and I hope to help you continue to lead forward and go forward in the future, confidently facing any challenge that comes your way.

Ms. Phillips has several goals as she heads into her new position, which she will start by July 1, such as creating sustainable financial models, enrollment numbers and programs. She also plans to refresh some programs while building on strong course offerings like health sciences and liberal arts.

"I am just so excited and thrilled to be a part of the Chatham community," Ms. Phillips told the Post-Gazette. "I believe there are so many opportunities and they've done such good work and they're in Pittsburgh, my goodness. Pittsburgh is such an exciting, creative city.'

In addition to her presidency, Ms. Phillips will also serve as a member of Chatham's teaching faculty.

Ms. Phillips spent the past decade as the inaugural dean of the John Martinson Honors College at Purdue University in West Lafayette, Ind., a 3,000-student residential honors college. Under her leadership the school was named one of the Top 20 Honors College in the nation.

Before her role at Purdue, Ms. Phillips served as associate dean for Barrett, The Honors College at Arizona State University. While there, she was also a professor and director of the School of Community Resources and Development, and a senior sustainability scientist at the



Courtesy of Chatham University Rhonda Phillips

Wrigley Global Institute of Sustain-

She was also a professor in the Agricultural Economics Department and a faculty liaison with local food system development.

Ms. Phillips—who has more than 30 years of experience as an academic administrator, scholar and author - also held faculty and administrator roles at the University of Florida and the University of Southern Mississippi.

Prior to joining academia, Ms. Phillips worked as an economic developer with the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce and other nonprofit, private and public organizations.

She has a Ph.D. in city and regional planning from Georgia Tech, the first woman to graduate with that degree from the Atlanta-based school. Additionally, Ms. Phillips has a masters in economics from Georgia Tech and a masters in economic development from the University of Southern Mississippi, where she also received her bachelor's degree.

Ms. Phillips is a three-time Fulbright recipient including serving as the 2006 Fulbright UK Ulster Policy Fellow in Northern Ireland. She wrote and edited more than 30 academic books, and has focused research on community and sustainable well-being studies and on economic and technology-based devel-

She was previously considered for a presidential position at New College of Florida.

Ms. Phillips plans to lean heavily into her background as she starts her new role at Chatham.

According to Ms. Phillips, her commitment to sustainable development principles is brought forward "in ways with leadership and with my own way of looking at opportunities and how that fits into things that we want to do as an institution, as an organization.'

Additionally, she plans to use her work in community development to build a sense of connection and place

through community partnerships. T've worked in colleges that are relatively small ... and we were always about having a strong sense of place and making things better," Ms. Phillips said. "To me, that's community well-being and you've got that here and you've got that willing-

The university began searching for a new president in November. The Chatham community was later asked to complete an online survey where they could give input on what makes the institution special, their vision for the future and attributes sought in the next president. The school also held input sessions.

By February, the university had received over 100 applications from across the nation.

David M. Hall, chair of Chatham University's Board of Trustees, said during Tuesday's announcement that the university was seeking a president who could help Chatham expand its undergraduate education, leverage and re-envision the university's academic offerings with a focus on graduate and online programs and elevate Chatham as a national leader.

"You can imagine why we picked Dr. Phillips," Mr. Hall said. "The connectivity, the ties to the uniqueness of Chatham, she represents all of that for us. It was not a difficult decision at the end of the day."

Mr. Hall in a news release also applauded her previous work focused on sustainable development making "her the right leader to help continue Chatham's historic, undergraduate growth since going all-gender in 2014."

That year, when the formerly women's undergraduate college voted to begin admitting men, the number of undergraduates surged. Last year, there were 1,196 students, up from 587. Graduate students at the time accounted for 947 of the university's 2,143 students.

Ms. Phillips said she now plans to meet with students, staff and community partners as she prepares to lead the university.

'I can't wait to get started," she said, "and [I] look forward to the next chapter that we'll write together."

## Shapiro acts as animal sedative deaths surge in Pennsylvania

DRUG, FROM A-1

substances that pose imminent hazards to public safety for at least one year," Mr. Shapiro said in the Kensington neighborhood of Philadel phia, often seen as ground zero of the urban opioid crisis in the northeastern U.S.

"This drug is a serious threat," he added.

State Rep. James Struzzi, R-Indiana, applauded the move by Mr. Shapiro, a Democrat. Legislation sponsored by Mr. Struzzi and signed into law last year by then-Gov. Tom Wolf decriminalized possession of test strips for fentanyl, a deadly synthetic opioid often found in stashes of illicit drugs.

"I have heard absolute horror stories about what this drug does to people," Mr. Struzzi said of xylazine.

Mr. Shapiro, who served as state attorney general before being sworn in as governor in January, said drug dealers are cutting supplies of illicit drugs, including the synthetic onioid fentanyl, with xylazine. The result, he said, is a mix that 'extends the high" but makes the dangerous drugs even more deadly.

Unlike fentanyl, there is no "test strip" that can detect the presence of xylazine in a mixture of drugs, Mr. Shapiro said. And overdose-fighting drugs like naloxone don't work against xylazine because it's not an opioid. "It causes painful wounds

and skin lesions that can actually require amputation if it goes untreated," Mr. Shapiro said. "It is heartbreaking, truly heartbreaking. And this crisis is growing.'



Commonwealth Media Services

Gov. Josh Shapiro announced the reclassification of xylazine Tuesday in the Kensington neighborhood of Philadelphia.

Mr. Shapiro also announced that nitazines, a class of synthetic opioids that have never been approved for use in the U.S., will be listed as a Schedule I drug. He said five overdose deaths in the

state have been connected to nitazines, but "the number is likely much higher because we don't routinely test for them.

The governor's announcement came less than a week after the White House Office of National Drug Control policy designated xylazine an "emerging threat" when mixed with fentanyl, clearing the way for more efforts to ston its spread. It was the first time the office used that designation since the category for fast-growing drug dangers was created in 2019.

Dr. Rahul Gupta, director of the drug policy office, said xylazine has become increasingly common in all parts of the country. Nationwide, it was involved in more than 3,000 deaths in 2021.

Mr. Shapiro on Tuesday said the only market for xylazine should be veterinarians, and those professionals had been made aware that the new controls were coming.

Specifically, he said, acting Secretary of Health Dr. Debra Bogen has submitted a notice

to add xylazine to the list of Schedule III drugs under the state's Controlled Substance, Drug, Device, and Cosmetic Act—an action that requires manufacturers and distributors to not only verify that a practitioner, like a veterinarian, is licensed, but that they are also authorized to receive a controlled substance.

"By scheduling it, we are putting restrictions on who can buy it, how it needs to be stored, and if that is violated. people can be charged and prosecuted," Mr. Shapiro said. "I am not in any way shape or form accusing any veterinarian of doing anvthing wrong. What we know is these drugs are making their way out onto the street."

Ford Turner: fturner@post-gazette.com

#### **Corrections & clarifications**

If you have a correction and cannot reach the responsible reporter or editor, please call the office of Stan Wischnowski, executive editor, at 412-263-1890.

#### Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Sun-Telegraph/The Pittsburgh Press

Copyright 2023, PG Publishing Co. Published daily and Sunday by PG Publishing Co. Pittsburgh Post-Gazette is a federally registered trademark and sensing mark. ourgh Post-Gazette is a federally registered trademark and service All-access digital plus 2-day home delivery for \$8.50 a week; All-access digital plus Sunday home delivery for \$7.50 a week Call 1-800-228-NEWS (6397) or go to post-gazette.com/help

#### PG connections

FOR HOME DELIVERY AND DIGITAL SUBSCRIPTION SUPPORT Call 1-800-228-NEWS (6397) or visit post-gazette.com/help

#### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

• Switchboard: 412-263-1100. Operator assistance Mon. - Fri. 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. and Sundays 8 a.m. - 12 p.m. Automated assistance 24 hours • Web: post-gazette.com

• Mailing address: 2201 Sweeney Drive, Clinton, Pa. 15026 **ADVERTISING** 

To receive help in placing an ad: •Retail business ad: 412-263-1385 • Classified ad: 412-263-1201 • Legal ad: 412-263-1440

• Help Wanted ad: 412-263-5627 • Email:

**PG STORE** 

#### advertising@post-gazette.com

post-gazette.com/pgstore (Pittsburgh skyline, Steelers, Penguins, Pirates and local college merchandise

#### **ALMANAC**

#### On this day, April 19

1775 The American Revolutionary War began with the battles of Lexington and Con-1865 A funeral was held at the White

House for President Abraham Lincoln, assassinated five days earlier; his coffin was then taken to the U.S. Capitol for a private memorial service in the Rotunda. 1897 The first Boston Marathon was held:

winner John J. McDermott ran the course in two hours, 55 minutes and 10 seconds. **1912** A special subcommittee of the Senate Commerce Committee opened hearings in New York into the Titanic di-

1977 The Supreme Court, in Ingraham v. Wright, ruled 5-4 that even severe spanking of schoolchildren by faculty members did not violate the Eighth Amendment ban against cruel and unusual punishment. **1993** The 51-day siege at the Branch Davidian compound near Waco, Texas,

ended as fire destroyed the structure after federal agents began smashing their way in; about 80 people, including two dozen children and sect leader David Koresh, were killed. 1995 A truck bomb destroyed the Alfred P.

Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, killing 168 people. (Bomber Timothy McVeigh, who prosecutors said had planned the attack as revenge for the Waco siege of two years earlier, was convicted of federal murder charges and executed in 2001.)

2013 Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, a 19-year-old college student wanted in the Boston Marathon bombings, was taken into custody after a manhunt that had left the city virtually paralyzed; his older brother and alleged accomplice, 26-year-old Tamerlan, was killed earlier in a furious attempt to escape police.

2018 Raul Castro turned over Cuba's

presidency to Miguel Mario Diaz-Canel Bermudez, the first non-Castro to hold Cuba's top government office since the 1959 revolution led by Fidel Castro and his younger brother Raul. Walter Leroy Moody, age 83, was executed by lethal injection in Alabama for the mail-bomb slaying of a federal judge in 1989; Moody became the oldest prisoner put to death in the U.S. in modern times.

Today's birthdays: Actor Elinor Donahue, 86. Rock musician Alan Price (The Animals), 81. Actor Tim Curry, 77. Pop singer Mark "Flo" Volman (The Turtles; Flo and Eddie), 76. Actor Tony Plana, 71. Former tennis player Sue Barker, 67. Motorsports Hall of Famer Al Unser Jr., 61, Actor Tom Wood, 60. Former recording executive Suge Knight, 58. Singer-songwriter Dar Williams, 56. Actor Kim Hawthorne (TV: "Greenleaf"), 55. Actor Ashley Judd, 55. Singer Bekka Bramlett, 55.

#### Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

John Robinson Block, chairman Tracey DeAngelo, president and general manager William A. Southern, director of finance Allison Latcheran, director of marketing Florence Shaulis, director of audience Robert Weber, director of operations Rob Anders, associate director of advertising - operations Lindsay Bacci Pardoe, associate director of advertising - sales