

**INSIDE THIS SECTION**

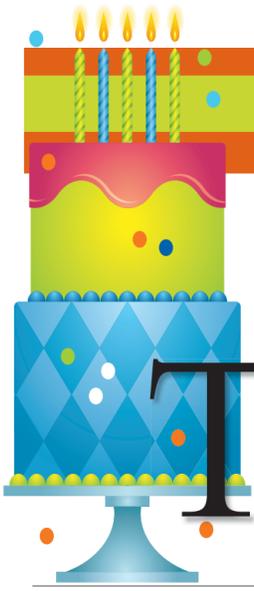
**DUI SENTENCINGS**  
Defendants learn their fate in front of judge. | Page 2

**NATION / WORLD**

**STRIKE UP THE BAN**  
Trump issues new travel rules; lawmakers weigh in. | Page 3

**SPORTS**

**EYE ON SPORTS**  
Area athletes shine in weekly photo spread | Page 11



# THE NEWS-ITEM

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**CSIU OFFERS HOPE**

## Free nursing program to boost income of families

BY SARAH DESANTIS  
THE NEWS-ITEM  
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MILTON — A free program that trains low-income residents to start careers in nursing is gearing up for its seventh year at the Central Susquehanna

Intermediate Unit (CSIU). The WATCH (Work Attributes Toward Careers in Health) Project seeks to lift families out of poverty while helping the health-care industry fill an seemingly endless demand for qualified nurses.

CSIU, Page 6

## YES to the Future program connects adolescents with job

BY SARAH DESANTIS  
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MILTON — The Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit (CSIU) is seeking to smooth the often tumultuous transition of entering the workforce for adolescents.

Young adults struggling to gain employment in an

industry they enjoy are invited to try the YES to the Future program, which combines career coaching and practical experience to connect young adults with careers.

The program is free and open to residents within the CSIU territory between 16 and 24 years of age. Participants can have any level of

YES, Page 6



STEPHANIE BETTICK/STAFF PHOTOS

## SWEET RELEASE



Family and friends of Ava Mae Hauer gather together to release balloons in celebration of what would have been her fifth birthday at the Mother Cabrini baseball field in Springfield Monday. A banner was revealed and will remain at Mother Cabrini field all season in memory of Ava, a baseball player who enjoyed playing at the field as a member of the Challengers League. The daughter of Rebecca and Chadd Hauer passed away Feb. 4. Rebecca said everyone worked together to make the birthday celebration happen. A candle on the cake was blown out by Ava's sister, Haleigh, and floating lanterns were also released. LEFT: The banner hung in memory of Ava is revealed.

## Lourdes kids connect with class in Ireland

Weekly communication part of growing global outreach foundation

BY STEPHANIE BETTICK  
THE NEWS-ITEM  
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COAL TOWNSHIP — Students at Our Lady of Lourdes Regional are learning first hand how technology can take them anywhere and connect them with anyone. Lourdes is one of 36 schools in a global partnership program through the JDO Foundation, through which they are communicating weekly with students at St. Brigid's Primary School in Ireland.

Chromebooks and iPads received from the foundation are advancing the education in Ann Czeponis' fourth-grade classroom and Tara Bregensir's third-grade classroom.

Bregensir said the program has broadened her experience as a



STEPHANIE BETTICK/STAFF PHOTO

**Fourth-grade Lourdes student Blaize Rosini connected with his partner at St. Brigid's Primary School in Ireland on Monday as part of Lourdes' global partnership program through JDO Foundation.**

think technology needs to be incorporated into more classrooms today."

Mountain Dew and Lent

Her students were hard at work Monday learning to do research using the Chromebooks to help them with a paper on someone with which they would like to switch lives.

In Czeponis' classroom, students finished a computer math

program before logging into a Google classroom to connect with their partners in Ireland.

Kids eagerly put on their headphones and sent video chat invitations to their student partners. They excitedly discussed topics ranging from their favorite activities to if they have Mountain Dew in Ireland. Last week, their goal was to learn what their partners were giving up for Lent.

The two schools find common areas in their curricula that allows them to advance their lessons and work with each other. When they learned about writing friendly letters, they were able to exchange both snail mail and email.

Some students have enjoyed the experience so much that they communicate with their Irish partners outside of school, not

only through emails, but by playing PlayStation and Xbox games.

Czeponis loves seeing the connection between her students and those at St. Brigid.

"I hope that kids realize that kids all over the world have the same feelings they have. I hope they realize the blessings they have here, and that different cultural experiences are important," she said.

Chickens in Kenya

The technology has allowed for further global outreach beyond the partnership program. Over the Christmas holiday, Czeponis said her classroom used Kiva, a micro-financing company, to donate \$50 to a man in Kenya who raises chickens to send his kids to school. The kids voted for the

Ireland, Page 6

## Pennsylvania Senate Democrats resist ransom in cyberattack

BY MARC LEVY  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

HARRISBURG — Pennsylvania's top state Senate Democrat said Monday that no ransom has been paid to resolve a "ransomware" cyberattack that shut down the caucus' network and prompted an FBI investigation.

Senate Democrats' computer network, including their email system, remained inaccessible Monday, three days after

the attack was discovered early Friday by information technology staff who received an alert that the network had been breached.

Senate Minority Leader Jay Costa, D-Allegheny, would not say what sort of ransom had been demanded, but he said no ransom had been paid, and he and other Senate Democrats said they were not inclined to pay a ransom.

"Right now we have no intention of dealing with

the demand," Costa said. A ransomware attack is typically aimed at stealing sensitive information in an attempt to be paid for the data's return, often in a digital currency.

For the time being, Costa said, Senate Democrats were focused on trying to restore access to the network, which contains a wide range of documents, from policy work to constituent case files.

Sen. Daylin Leach, D-Montgomery, said the

hackers gave a one-week deadline to pay the ransom, or they would destroy the data. Costa said he could not say whether there was a ransom deadline.

But he also said that the caucus, as a matter of routine, backs up its emails, documents and data, much of it nightly, and that it could be loaded into the network once it is available and safe.

Microsoft was doing a forensic audit to try to fig-

ure out who penetrated the network and how, and Costa said the caucus may know more in the next day or two. Senators and staff who tried logging in initially received a message instructing them to click on a link for information on how to recover the data on their network.

Costa said the Philadelphia and Pittsburgh offices of the FBI were working on the case.

A spokeswoman at the FBI's Philadelphia office

said that, under Department of Justice policy, the agency will not provide any update on an ongoing investigation unless or until charges are filed.

Leach said his office has lost access to all of the paperwork on file for constituent requests and the state grants he was trying to get for his district.

"In the short-term, we can sort of make do," Leach said. "There are some problems long-term."

**WEATHER**  
Rain and drizzle  
56° / 42°  
Page 10



**INSIDE**  
Classifieds ..... 18-19  
Comics/Dear Abby .... 16  
Comm. Calendar ..... 17  
Crossword Puzzle ..... 18

Lottery Results ..... 14  
Obituaries ..... 5  
Opinion Page ..... 4  
Sound Off ..... 2  
Sports ..... 11-15, 20



**BUSINESS**  
Trump cheers Exxon plan to spend \$20B at Gulf Coast.

-51.37

Page 7

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