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THURSDAY, MAY 7, 2026 | PETOSKEYNEWS.COM

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ANALYSIS

Demographic dynamics upending the world



A street vendor carries bouquets of flowers for sale in Hanoi, Vietnam, on Oct. 22. Countries with “demographic dividends” such as Vietnam, with 70% of the population ages 15-64, have the opportunity for impressive growth rates.

NHAC NGUYEN/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

‘Youth bulges,’ graying societies shift economic, political balance

John Rennie Short

University of Maryland, Baltimore County
THE CONVERSATION

Government-shaking protests in Bangladesh, Iran, Nepal and Sri Lanka – to name a few – have all in recent years been linked to what demographers call a “youth bulge.” Meanwhile, the economic slowdown in

China and ballooning public debt in the United States are in part due to the two powers’ aging populations. In contrast, recent economic growth in Brazil, India and Vietnam reflects a “demographic dividend” of the economically active.

Demographic trends are fueling some of the events reshaping the world. But what exactly are these age-related

phenomena, and why are they having such an impact now? I explored these issues in depth in my 2024 book “Demography and the Making of the Modern World.”

Below is a rundown on some of the main demographic dynamics that are changing the world.

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Lincoln students find success at state competition

M. Alan Scott

The Petoskey News-Review
USA TODAY NETWORK

A group of young Petoskey inventors excelled at the Invention Convention Michigan state finals last month in Dearborn, with a few advancing to the national competition.

Lincoln Elementary School fifth grade students Fletcher Cherry and Kylie Alexander were awarded second place in the grades 3-5 category during the competition, which took place at the Henry Ford Museum. They were also awarded the Overall Agriculture Award, qualifying them for the 2026 RTX Invention Convention U.S. Nationals, set for June 3-5. The duo in-

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Pellston airport reopens after closure

Jillian Fellows

The Petoskey News-Review
USA TODAY NETWORK

Commercial air traffic was able to operate at Pellston Regional Airport on Tuesday, May 5 after almost a month of runway closures due to flooding.

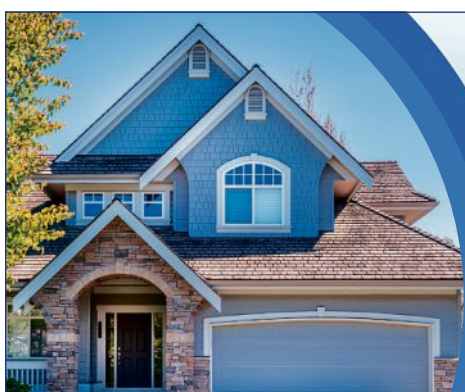
According to a Monday update from the airport, the main runway was open for traffic on Tuesday. A second runway remained closed while water removal continues.

A total of five pumps have been used to reduce the amount of water that inundated the airfield. The airport had been closed for flights since April 11, but airport tenants like Hoppies Landing Restaurant were still open.

“We will continue to fly Delta flights through SkyWest airlines, and then they will be joined by United flights to Chicago starting May 21 again for the summer season,” Pellston airport officials said in the Facebook update.

They also thanked assisting agencies and businesses, like Pellston ARFF, Inc., Ramsby Well Drilling, AIS Equipment, the Pellston Fire Department, Tri County Excavating and the Michigan DNR for their help.

“PLN would like to thank the community for their understanding, patience and support during this extraordinary spring thaw, and we are looking forward to returning to normal operations as soon as it is safe to do so,” the update stated.



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Volume 151 | No. 154
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