



## SHORE IN SEPT.

SEPTEMBER IS A GLORIOUS MONTH TO VISIT THE JERSEY SHORE, NOTES PETE GENOVESE, WHO LISTS “23 LOCAL SUMMER” ATTRACTIONS TO ENJOY MINUS THE MADDENING CROWDS. **F1**

PHILADELPHIA

## All aboard for Eagles home opener as FanDuel gets train going



Passengers board a SEPTA West Trenton line train at 30th Street station in Philadelphia. *Larry Higgs, for South Jersey Times*

Eagles fans received good news Thursday when sports betting company FanDuel agreed to fund free SEPTA Sports Express service for the team’s home opener against the Cowboys at Lincoln Financial Field. SEPTA’s Sports Express Service was among the cuts approved in July to close a \$213 million budget gap. The Eagles announced that FanDuel “stepped up” to provide resources to help fully restore Sports Express service on SEPTA’s Broad Street Line for Thursday night’s home opener against the Dallas Cowboys at the Linc. FanDuel paid \$80,000 to fund the Sports Express trains for fans, Bloomberg reported, which includes free fares. “The FanDuel partnership is just for tonight, but we are talking to sponsors about other games,” said Andrew Busch, a SEPTA spokesperson. The discussion may be moot. A judge ruled later Thursday SEPTA must restore all services that were cut last month, and halt any plans for new cuts; the ruling also allowed the agency to move ahead with a fare hike of 21.5%, according to local news network 6ABC. See game coverage in Sports. *Photo and reporting by Larry Higgs, for South Jersey Times*

FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP, GLOUCESTER COUNTY

## Residents near fire at Superfund site advised to stay inside

Matthew Enuco *For South Jersey Times*

Residents of Franklin Township in Gloucester County were told to seal their windows and stay indoors as firefighters worked to extinguish a wildfire at the site of a contaminated property that’s been burning since Saturday. Authorities released a fact sheet for residents living near the fire that’s burning on Coles Mill Road behind the Pioneer Metal Finishing Inc. site, which is a former electroplating facility. The property is among the 115 sites designated by the Environmental Protection Agency as a Superfund site. Franklin Township police said in a social media post Wednesday evening that area residents should do their best to seal windows and doors to keep smoke out of their home.

Authorities also advised residents to set their air conditioning units to recirculate air rather than pulling air from outside to avoid pulling smoky air into their homes. Using HEPA-grade air filters and ventilating homes when the air clears can also help area residents avoid the impacts of contaminated air, authorities said. Coughing, wheezing and difficulty breathing are common symptoms associated with smoke inhalation, officials said, and residents should seek medical attention if the symptoms worsen. Between 1950 and 1970, Pioneer Metal Finishing discharged wastes into an unlined trench leading to a nearby wetland area, according to the EPA. Some of the materials reported to be discharged at the property are metallic salts, untreated process sludge, cleaning solutions and plating wastes, according to the



A wildfire is burning near an EPA-designated Superfund site in Gloucester County and officials continue monitoring air quality conditions while offering guidance for area residents. *NJ DEP*

EPA. Soil testing of adjacent wetland areas found unhealthy levels of chromium, copper and nickel as well as Polychlorinated biphenyls, the EPA said. NJDEP officials requested help from the EPA in 2018 to address the contamination at the site. Between 2018 and 2019, over 100 tons of hazardous waste and cyanide-contaminated debris, including 20,000 gallons of liquid waste, were removed from the facility, according to the EPA. The fire threatened to close Delsea Regional High School and the middle school on Tuesday after initial air quality readings in the direct area of the fire registered as hazardous, authorities said in a social media post Tuesday. Officials from the Environmental Protection Agency and Gloucester County Office of Emergency Management have said air quality in the area of the schools has remained safe. Authorities continued fighting the blaze Thursday morning while county hazmat officials continue monitoring air quality, officials said. *Matthew Enuco, NJ Advance Media, menuco@njadvancemedia.com*

STATEHOUSE

## Governor, state workers in accord on health care costs

*Compromise reached to spare public employees \$100M cut in insurance benefits, a source of labor fury.*

Susan K. Livio *For South Jersey Times*

After two months of contentious negotiations, Gov. Phil Murphy and public labor union leaders have agreed to scrap a plan that would have required public workers in New Jersey to pay much more for their health insurance next year, NJ Advance Media has learned. In a compromise announced by the union on Thursday, the outgoing Democratic governor said he would sign legislation repealing a law that required the unions accept a \$100 million cut to the State Health Benefits Program, said a spokeswoman for the Communications Workers of America, the largest union for state workers. In exchange, labor leaders agreed that costs would still be cut by \$75 million, with the burden born by union members, according to an administration source who requested anonymity until the announcement was released. Labor leaders and administration officials did not immediately share the details of how the \$75 million in savings would be achieved, including how much more workers would be expected to pay. The compromise includes “a mix of deductible changes, co-pay increases and prescription drug changes,” the Murphy source said.

According to administration officials, the compromise includes higher deductibles for in-network and out-of-network care. Individuals will pay \$110 and families \$220 in-network for plans if they pay less than that now. Individuals seeking out-of-network care will pay \$750, and families will pay \$1,500 for all plans that currently have lower deductibles. The agreement steers patients to lower-cost, in-network ambulatory surgical centers for a dozen common procedures, including colonoscopies, lumpectomies and arthroscopies, union and administration officials said. Members will also pay higher co-pays on weight loss GLP-1 drugs, and generic, brand, non-preferred brand, and specialty medications across all plans, although neither side shared specifics. The typical co-pay for drugs now is \$16. Murphy, appearing at an unrelated press conference in New Brunswick on Thursday, said he had remained optimistic throughout the negotiations. “I give everyone credit, particularly a shoutout to my brothers and sisters in labor. They may not have liked where the budget had landed, but everyone has had a spirit of goodwill to find common ground,” Murphy told NJ Advance Media. CWA spokeswoman Anna-Marta Visky described the compromise as “a huge victory for workers.” **SEE STATEHOUSE, A3**

NATION & WORLD

## RFK Jr. on hot seat

Democrat Senators Thursday peppered the Dept. of Health and Human Services Secretary with pointed questions during his appearance on Capitol Hill. **C1**

OBITUARY

## Fashion legend dies

Giorgio Armani, the iconic Italian designer who revolutionized the shape of fashion, has died, his fashion house confirmed Thursday. He was 91. **C6**