



Friendships flower and wellness blooms here.

You don't have to be a gardener to watch life bloom at The Vero. Friendships, activity, and connection grow here every day. Our mission of wellness nurtures your mind, body and spirit, helping you flourish.

Schedule your visit today and we'll treat you and a guest to lunch. 610-936-9848

THE VERO
AT BETHLEHEM

4700 Bath Pike
Bethlehem, PA 18017
A Residence of Legend Senior Living®
TheVeroAtBethlehem.com

PERSONAL CARE & MEMORY CARE

THE LEHIGH VALLEY'S FIRST SOURCE FOR NEWS

THE MORNING CALL

\$4.00 | WEDNESDAY, MAY 6, 2026 | THEMORNINGCALL.COM

Report: Hotel Hampton lacked inspections

Federal agency details February blaze at Easton rooming house that injured firefighter

By Chris Dornblaser
THE MORNING CALL

The Hotel Hampton rooming house in Easton had not been inspected in years before a fire broke out there in February, seriously injuring a firefighter, according to a recently released federal report.

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health released a report on the Feb. 20 fire in which Wilson firefighter Bobby Lewullis was injured. Investigators wrote that inspections of the building had not been done since 2017 because of limited staffing in

the code enforcement and planning office. The rooming house, originally a hotel, was built in the 1900s. Dozens were displaced in the blaze.

The report outlined a number of recommendations for the responding entities following the fire.

Easton city administrator Luis Campos did not respond to messages seeking comment.

According to the report:

Firefighters were called to the building at 462 Northampton St. the morning of Feb. 20 for a report of a fire. When the blaze reached a second alarm, Wilson firefighters arrived to

help. Lewullis and another firefighter entered the building and found multiple victims, whom they directed to the stairs.

The two firefighters split up to help others, and Lewullis went to another area to search for a reported victim on the fourth floor. While there, Lewullis realized he did not have enough air in his breathing apparatus to get out of the building. He went into another room, broke the window and hung his head outside of it.

He made multiple radio transmissions



Firefighters battle a fire Feb. 20 at the Hotel Hampton in Easton. DENNIS WETHERHOLD JR./SPECIAL TO THE MORNING CALL

See HOTEL on Page A3



Traffic is backed up April 23 on West Third Street near the Hill to Hill Bridge in south Bethlehem. APRIL GAMIZ/THE MORNING CALL

Highway headaches

20 worst Lehigh Valley traffic bottlenecks and what's being done to fix them

By Evan Jones
THE MORNING CALL

Traveling on Route 222 through Allentown's western suburbs or trying to traverse Bethlehem's South Side during a workday requires a bit of patience for even the most seasoned commuter.

It shouldn't be a surprise that those areas were identified by the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission as among the region's top bottlenecks — a point of congestion that slows down traffic because the area doesn't have the capacity to handle it on a typical day.

The LVPC compiled a 140-page Congestion Management Plan that was released in April. It identifies several high-traffic areas in the

Valley, using methods including traffic counts, academic formulas and public comments. Those comments pointed out common causes such as badly timed traffic lights, a lack of designated turning lanes, and outdated or complex intersections.

The report compiles a list of top-priority bottlenecks in Lehigh and Northampton counties. It said an effective plan addresses both recurring — regular congestion — and nonrecurring, caused by such things as accidents or bad weather.

"An effective CMP addresses both types using operational improvements and long-term planning strategies," the LVPC said. "In the Lehigh Valley, the main contributors to congestion are traffic incidents and other/unclassi-

fied disruptions, which account for most delays."

Solutions to some of these problems are identified through items already included in the Transportation Improvement Program compiled by the Lehigh Valley Transportation Study as a federally required list of prioritized projects, while others are in the FutureLV, the LVPC's master plan.

Here are the top 10 priority bottlenecks in Lehigh County:

ROUTE 222 WESTBOUND NEAR MILL CREEK ROAD, UPPER MACUNGIE TOWNSHIP

The issue: Congestion increases where Grange Road merges into Route 222

See TRAFFIC on Page A2

US: Gulf ceasefire intact

Pentagon calls recent strikes by Iran not 'major combat'

By Adam Schreck, Ben Finley and Elena Becatoros
ASSOCIATED PRESS

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — U.S. military leaders said a ceasefire remains in effect a day after Iran was blamed for new attacks in the Strait of Hormuz and against the United Arab Emirates. The key American ally later said it came under Iranian drone and missile attack again Tuesday.

The United States and Iran have made competing claims over which side now controls the strait, which remains effectively closed.

Still, the fragile truce reached nearly a month ago appeared to be holding as U.S. forces pressed ahead with efforts to reopen the strait, a vital waterway for global energy. On Monday, the U.S. said it had opened a lane and sunk six small Iranian boats that had threatened commercial ships.

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth and Gen. Dan Caine, the U.S. military's top officer, told a news conference Tuesday that Iran's renewed attacks hadn't reached the threshold of what Caine called "major combat operations." He said Tuesday marked a "quieter" day in the strait.

"No, the ceasefire is not over," Hegseth said, affirming Caine's assessment. They spoke before the latest attacks on the UAE.

Iran has said the new effort does violate the ceasefire. Iran's parliament speaker and chief negotiator, Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf, signaled that Iran has yet to fully respond to the U.S. attempt to reopen the waterway.

"We know full well that the continuation of the status quo is intolerable for America; while we have not even begun yet," he said in a post on X. His statement did not mention negotiations with the U.S. that involve passing messages via Pakistan.

Disputing Washington's claim of sinking six boats, an Iranian military commander

See IRAN on Page A16

PennDOT to share I-78 plans

Public meeting to reveal widening project in Upper Macungie Township

By Laurie Mason Schroeder
THE MORNING CALL

Residents who are interested in the changes coming to Interstate 78 in Upper Macungie and Weisenberg townships can take a look at PennDOT's vision for the project Wednesday.

A meeting and virtual display of the reconstruction plan will be held 6-8 p.m. at Fogelsville Elementary School in Upper Macungie.

The plans will also be posted online, with public comment and questions accepted Wednesday through June 5.

The three-phase project will affect a roughly

5 1/2-mile stretch of I-78 from Route 100 to the Berks County line. It is still in the design phase, with construction predicted to begin in 2030.

The project includes the creation of an interchange at Adams Road over I-78; the reconstruction of the I-78 and Route 100 interchange; and the reconstruction of I-78 from the Berks/Lehigh County line to the I-78 and US 22 split, including making it six lanes, three in each direction, from the Route 863 interchange eastward.

The plan calls for reconfiguring the Route

See I-78 on Page A3



An aerial view of Interstate 78 at Route 100 in Fogelsville. The interchange is planned for an overhaul as part of a reconstruction of the interstate through western Lehigh County. RICH ROLEN/SPECIAL TO THE MORNING CALL

SUBSCRIPTION

Visit myaccount.mcall.com or call 610-820-6601 to sign up for a subscription. To place an ad, visit placeanad.mcall.com.

WEATHER FORECAST

Showers, breezy, cooler.
High 67° | Low 44°
Weather, NEWS 6

INDEX

Business A7 Games A9 Nation/World A13
Classified C6 Horoscopes A11 Obituaries A16
Comics/TV A11 Life A12 Opinion A5

