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BULL RIDERS PUT ON A SHOW

Capacity crowd turns out for inaugural Schuylkill Stampede



Jetro Ramirez of Guatemala rides a bull during the Schuylkill Stampede rodeo at the Schuylkill County Fairgrounds in Summit Station on Saturday. PHOTOS BY MATTHEW PERSCHALL — MULTIMEDIA EDITOR



Tristen Bickham of Washington Twp. rides a bull during the Schuylkill Stampede rodeo at the Schuylkill County Fairgrounds.

By Ron Devlin
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SUMMIT STATION — A capacity crowd turned out for the inaugural Schuylkill Stampede bull riding competition Saturday evening at the Schuylkill County Fairgrounds.

Cowboys from as far away as Brazil matched wits with bucking bulls with names like Outlaw, Smokeless Wardance and Laffy Taffy with varying degrees of success.

Hometown boy, Tristen Bickham of Washington Twp., made it into the Southern Extreme Bull Riding Association (SEBRA) Pro Class finals.

Bickham, 17, a senior at Pine Grove High School, has qualified to compete in the SEBRA National Finals on Nov. 14-15 in Lexington, Virginia.

A sold-out crowd filled the grandstands on both sides of the arena, a strip used for tractor pulls during the annual Schuylkill

County Fair.

The event was sponsored by the Foundation for Agricultural and Resource Management (FARM), the nonprofit that owns the fairgrounds, and the Pottsville Area Development Corporation (PADCO).

Redeye Rodeo, a Lebanon County company, provided the bulls and officiated during the competition.

Announcer Dave Mayo led the assembly in a Cowboy’s Prayer so that “all will ride out of the arena safely.”

On horseback, alone in the arena, Jordyn Shalters of Hegins posted the colors during the playing of the National Anthem.

Kyler “BamBam” Collins, a Tennessee entertainer, kept the crowd laughing between bull rides. Now and then, he ducked inside a protective barrel to avoid a charging bull.

Competition was divided into two classes — Crossfire, for novice riders, and

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Maine man dies in crash on I-81

The wreck occurred Sunday night in Frailey Twp.

By Hyun Soo Lee
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A 61-year-old man from Maine was killed in an accident along Interstate 81 in Frailey Twp. on Sunday after his vehicle struck an embankment, state police at Frackville said.

Scott J. McAlpine, of Jay, Maine, was driving north in a 2008 Chevrolet C/K 2500 when the crash occurred around 8:30 p.m. at mile marker 111.7, police said.

McAlpine left I-81 through the left shoulder and drove through the grass median before striking a grass-and-rock embankment. Police said his car went airborne, landing at the underpass of the twin bridges of State Route 25.

McAlpine’s vehicle ended up along the right shoulder of Route 25 beneath I-81, police said.

McAlpine was pronounced dead at the scene.

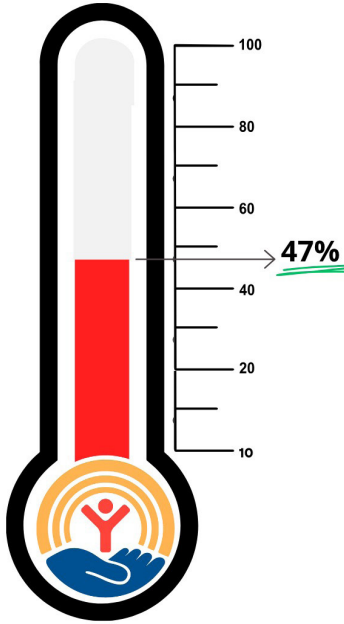
State police were assisted at the scene by the Tremont, Newtown and Donaldson fire departments, Tremont EMS, the Geisinger paramedic squad and Motter’s Towing.

SCHUYLKILL UNITED WAY 47% TO GOAL



The money raised during this campaign will fuel the work of our 15 Partner Agencies and the programs and initiatives of Schuylkill United Way.

2026 Campaign Goal
\$1,190,000



Federal shutdown halts Pennsylvania SNAP benefits for November

By Kent Jackson
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Pennsylvanians won’t get money for food assistance, starting in November, until the federal government ends a shutdown and releases funds, the state Department of Human Services said in a post on its website.

About 1.93 million Pennsylvanians are eligible for SNAP or the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program formerly called Food Stamps.

In Luzerne, Lackawanna, Schuylkill and Carbon counties, 146,644 residents were eligible for SNAP as of September.

The pause in SNAP occurred as food prices continue to increase, more people are using food banks and state food programs are stalled by the Pennsylvania budget impasse.

On Friday, Pennsylvania Department of Human Services said it would not make payments to nearly 2 million recipients through electronic benefit transfers or

EBTs for November. The U.S. Department of Agriculture a week earlier advised states to delay EBT payments to about 42 million Americans until further notice.

“Now if in fact EBT benefits not released, chances are those working families will be pushed toward the charitable food system already under stress,” said Jennifer Warabak, executive director of Commission on Economic Opportunity, which runs a regional food bank in four counties.

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Pennsylvanians won’t get money for food assistance, starting in November, until the federal government ends a shutdown and releases funds, the state Department of Human Services said in a post on its website. FILE PHOTO



Schuylkill United Way honors Chief Professional Officers celebrating decades leading their organizations. PAGE A4

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