

HOW AI IS
IMPACTING
THE JOB
MARKET
BUSINESS | PAGE A7



NEPA MAN'S
OLYMPIC
CURLING
CONNECTION
SPORTS | PAGE B1

**FIND THE
LATEST NEWS**
www.republicanherald.com
Breaking News
Features
Sports

REPUBLICAN HERALD

\$3.00 | TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2026 | REPUBLICANHERALD.COM

MAYOR TO MAKE STATE HOUSE RUN

Palo Alto's John Deatrich announces
candidacy for 123rd Legislative District

By **Hyun Soo Lee**
HLEE@REPUBLICANHERALD.COM

John Deatrich, the Democratic mayor of Palo Alto, recently announced his intent to run for state representative in the 123rd Legislative District.
A lifelong resident of the district,

Deatrich announced his candidacy Monday, pledging to “restore common sense, rely on his practical experiences, and allow himself to be guided by the strong community values that proudly represent the hard-working, blue-collar constituents of this district.”
The 123rd District has been

represented by Republican Tim Twardzik, Butler Twp., since 2021.
“I’m running because I believe the people of the 123rd District deserve a representative who is truly representative of them, one who reflects them,” Deatrich said in a press release. “I understand the struggle of the middle class because I am the middle class. I understand our communities. I haven’t just heard the concerns, I live them, right alongside family, friends and neighbors. I work every day with the same strug-

gles they face. If I earn the right to represent the fine people of the 123rd District, I will work tirelessly to deliver real results.”
A graduate of Pottsville Area High School and the Schuylkill Technology Center, Deatrich lives in Palo Alto with his wife, Danielle, a nurse at Penn State Hershey Medical Center. They have six children.
Professionally, Deatrich considers himself first and foremost an educator.
He started out in the family busi-

ness, Deatrich and Son Automotive, and shaped a local dirt track racing career that led to the creation of his own racing parts and speed shop. Deatrich turned his sights to a career in teaching in 2002. He has taught career and technical education at STC and currently teaches at Berks Career and Technology Center. Deatrich obtained his teaching credentials at Temple University.

See **HOUSE** on Page A8

GROUNDHOG DAY 2026

HOPE YOU LIKE WINTER



Grover the Groundhog and Sweet Arrow Sue at the Groundhog Day program at Sweet Arrow Lake clubhouse on Monday. **RON DEVLIN/STAFF PHOTOS**

Grover the Groundhog delivers bad news, six more weeks of winter

By **Ron Devlin**
RDEVLIN@
REPUBLICANHERALD.COM

SWEET ARROW LAKE — Bad news from the burrow.
Grover the Groundhog, Schuylkill County’s mystical prognosticator, predicted six more weeks of winter Monday in his annual Groundhog Day appearance.
And, Punxsutawney Phil, the granddaddy of all furry prognosticators, was no help either.
Blame it on the sunshine.
As Pennsylvania Dutch tradition would have it, when a groundhog emerges from hibernation on Feb. 2 and sees its shadow, there’ll be six more weeks of winter.
Roger Zimmerman, once a member of the defunct Grund-sau Lodge No. 5 in Pine Grove, was hoping for warmer weather.

Compelled by tradition to honor Grover’s prediction, 78-year-old Zimmerman announced the bad news in Pennsylvania Dutch dialect: “Sechs meh Woche Winder.”
He barely finished the prediction when “boos” and “oohs” erupted from the crowd in the clubhouse at Sweet Arrow Lake County Park, where a foot of snow covers the lake.
Perched on a nearby table, accompanied by companion Sweet Arrow Sue, Grover appeared unmoved by the crowd’s reaction.
Former park superintendent Robert Evanchalk, suitably attired in a black bowler, read the two-page proclamation conveying Grover’s forecast.
“Did you ever wonder how the

See **GROVER** on Page A5



Robert “Bob” Evanchalk with Grover the Groundhog, who predicted six more weeks of winter on Groundhog Day.

Punxsutawney Phil forecasts 6 more weeks of winter



Groundhog Club handler A.J. Dereume holds Punxsutawney Phil during the 140th celebration of Groundhog Day on Gobbler’s Knob in Punxsutawney on Monday. **BARRY REEGER/ASSOCIATED PRESS**

By **Mark Scolforo, Tassanee Vejpongsa and Kathy McCormack**
ASSOCIATED PRESS

PUNXSUTAWNEY — Punxsutawney Phil predicted six more weeks of wintry weather Monday, a forecast sure to disappoint many after what’s already been a long, cold season across large parts of the United States.
His annual prediction and announcement that he had seen his shadow was translated by his top hat-wearing handlers in the

Punxsutawney Groundhog Club at Gobbler’s Knob in western Pennsylvania.
The news was greeted with a mix of cheers and boos from the tens of thousands who braved temperatures in the single-digits Fahrenheit to await the annual prognostication. The extreme cold kept the crowd bundled up and helped keep people on the main stage dancing.
Usually guests can come up on stage and take pictures of Phil

See **PHIL** on Page A5

Polls show Trump faces many challenges this year

Americans growing more frustrated

By **Linley Sanders**
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump might be bragging about his administration’s work on affordability, but recent polling suggests that Americans aren’t buying it as they grow increasingly frustrated with his leadership.
Many Americans say Trump is focusing on the wrong priorities, according to multiple surveys, including a January AP-NORC poll, and they largely think Trump is neglecting the issue of costs at home. Compounding his problems, there are signs that frustration is rising over his approach to immigration, and some of his recent fixations, like taking over Greenland, are downright unpopular.
This has created separate – but related – problems for Trump as his party heads into a midterm year. Americans don’t think he’s paying enough attention to the economy and many want him to focus less on immigration and foreign policy. But those are the issues that dominated the headlines over the past month, thanks to Trump’s aggressive approach.

MANY DON'T SEE TRUMP HELPING COSTS AND WANT HIM TO FOCUS MORE ON THE ECONOMY

Trump was re-elected in large part because of economic concerns, but recent polling shows that the bulk of Americans aren’t seeing benefits from his policies yet, and most don’t think he’s paying enough attention to the issue.
A large share of registered voters see the economy as one of the top issues facing the country, and a recent New York Times poll found that about half of registered voters say Trump’s policies have made life for most Americans “less affordable.”
Similarly, about 7 in 10 registered voters in a new Fox News poll said Trump is not spending enough time focusing on the economy, including about half of Republicans.
Meanwhile, about 4 in 10 voters in the Fox News poll said Trump’s economic policies have “hurt” them personally, while about the same share said the policies haven’t made a difference. Only about 2 in 10 say the president’s economic path has benefited them — and looking ahead, 45% of voters say they expect the economy will “get worse” in the next year.
MOST VOTERS SEE ICE AS TOO AGGRESSIVE
Even though many Americans continue to support Trump’s goal

See **TRUMP** on Page A8

SUBSCRIPTION

Call 570-628-5985 for a subscription.
To place an ad, call 570-628-6054.
Copyright © 2026, Republican Herald
republicanherald.com

WEATHER

TODAY H: 32 L: 14
WED. H: 30 L: 11
THU. H: 28 L: 6
Full weather report A5

INDEX

Business A7
Classified B9-10
Comics B7
Horoscopes B6
Lottery A3
Nation/World A6
Obituaries A2
Opinion A9
Sports B1-4, B10



6 09543 17901 5