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Veterans wanted

Schuylkill's America250 parade organizers want vets as grand marshals

By Ron Devlin RDEVLIN@REPUBLICANHERALD.COM

POTTSVILLE — Attention veterans!

The Schuylkill County America250PA Parade Committee is extending an invitation to veterans to be grand marshals of the county's parade honoring the nation's semiquincentennial.

"We're welcoming all veterans to lead our parade on this historic occasion," said Savas Logothetides, parade committee chairman.

Interested veterans should report at 10:30 a.m. June 27, a half-hour before the start of the parade, to the CAFL Federal Credit Union parking lot at 1800 W. Market St. in Pottsville. Transportation will be provided during the parade.

The committee met Thursday morning at Alvernia University Pottsville CollegeTowne campus to discuss details of the parade, Schuylkill County's official America250 celebration.

"We're in a good spot to run the parade," Logothetides said.

Currently, there are 75 units, including 46 floats, registered. The committee expects 100 units will have registered by parade day.

D. G. Yuengling & Son Brewery has entered a float, as has the City of Pottsville. The Mahantongo Branch of the Daughters of America will ride in a unit pulled by draught horses from Leiby's Carriage Service.

The Warke Reenactor group, a living history unit, will portray Colonial figures representative of the era of the American Revolution.

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THE NEPA 30

Why America went nuts for an ad icon born in W-B

By Donnie Collins DCOLLINS@SCRANTONTIMES.COM

For nearly half a century, Bartholomew Richard Fitzgerald-Smythe was considered Wilkes-Barre's favorite son — even though very few knew his name.

He was more legume than human. His creator, a child named Antonio Gentile, originally sketched him in crayon, and won a cool \$5 for having done so. An area illustrator whose identity remains somewhat of a mystery dressed him in white gloves and a top hat, gave him a cane to support his gait and a trademark monocle to see his fandom better. Perhaps it was all pretty nutty.

See NUTS on Page A10



ABOUT THE SERIES

No. 14: As the nation approaches America250, we are counting down ways NEPA has powered American history. Missed a day? Read the full countdown as it unfolds at republicanherald.com

DATA CENTERS IN AMERICA

PLUGGING IN

Federal regulators backing Trump's plan to speed power to nation's energy-hungry AI data centers



Meta's Stanton Springs Data Center is seen Jan. 13 in Newton County, Ga. ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE PHOTOS

By Matthew Daly and Marc Levy ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — Federal regulators on Thursday agreed to let large energy users connect more quickly to the nation's inefficient and aging electric transmission system to accommodate surging demand from power-hungry artificial intelligence data centers.

Energy Secretary Chris Wright had urged the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to act in an effort to help the United States better compete with China for superiority in the fast-growing AI sector. Tech companies and data center developers have welcomed the chances for faster connections to the country's power supply.

But utilities, states and regional grid operators worried that the Republican administration's plan would remove their authority to manage the process. Clean energy advocates want the agency to advance, rather than undermine, state-level efforts to require the use of renewable energies.

The commission's actions come as a backlash grows against data centers over fears about rising electricity prices and concerns about the massive amounts of energy and water they use, polluting communities across the country and straining water resources and the electric grid.

The commission's actions come as a backlash grows against data centers over fears about rising electricity prices and concerns about the massive amounts of energy and water they use, polluting communities across the country and straining water resources and the electric grid.

UNANIMOUS VOTE AND AFFORDABILITY

FERC members voted unanimously to direct six regional grid operators to ensure that AI data centers and other large power users are "able to connect to the transmission system in a timely and orderly manner."



The xAI data center is seen, May 7, 2025, in Memphis, Tenn.

Laura Swett, an appointee of President Donald Trump who chairs the commission, called the vote historic and said it would push the country's electricity market into the future while also protecting ratepayers from shouldering the costs of connecting big

power users to the grid. "I know that Americans across the country are concerned about affordability, and so are we," Swett said, referring to the five-member commission.

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Schuylkill PrideFest returns to Pottsville

Open-to-all event comes back for its 7th edition this weekend

By Brian Bingaman BBINGAMAN@REPUBLICANHERALD.COM

After experimenting with holding Schuylkill County PrideFest at the county fairgrounds last year, the LGBTQ+ Pride Month celebration is coming back to the City of Pottsville for its seventh edition this weekend.

Specifically, the open-to-all event that promotes visibility, awareness and education for the LGBTQ+ community and allies will be held at Barefield Outdoor Recreation Complex, 823 Terry Reiley Way, from noon to 6 p.m. Saturday. Admission is free.

"It brings awareness to a larger swath of people. We're focused on educating a community that perhaps is not exposed to this kind of information."

— MIKAELA GAVALETZ, PrideFest founder

After fielding feedback that many potential attendees were unable to make it to Summit Station in 2025, a decision was made to return PrideFest to the city, said festival founder and executive

director, Mikaela Gavaletz.

"Pottsville's where it was born... Barefield is a wonderful park," she said, noting that the park's recreational facilities will be used to add playing volleyball, basketball and cornhole to PrideFest's activities.

Gavaletz expressed gratitude for the City of Pottsville's support, including making its municipal parking lot behind Union Station, at the corner of Union Street and Progress Avenue, available for PrideFest visitors. Parking will also be available at the Alvernia University Pottsville College-Towne campus.

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Bri Rogers, left, and Jaden Ebert, right, watch a drag performance during the annual Schuylkill PrideFest on June 7, 2025, held at the Schuylkill County Fairgrounds. FILE

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