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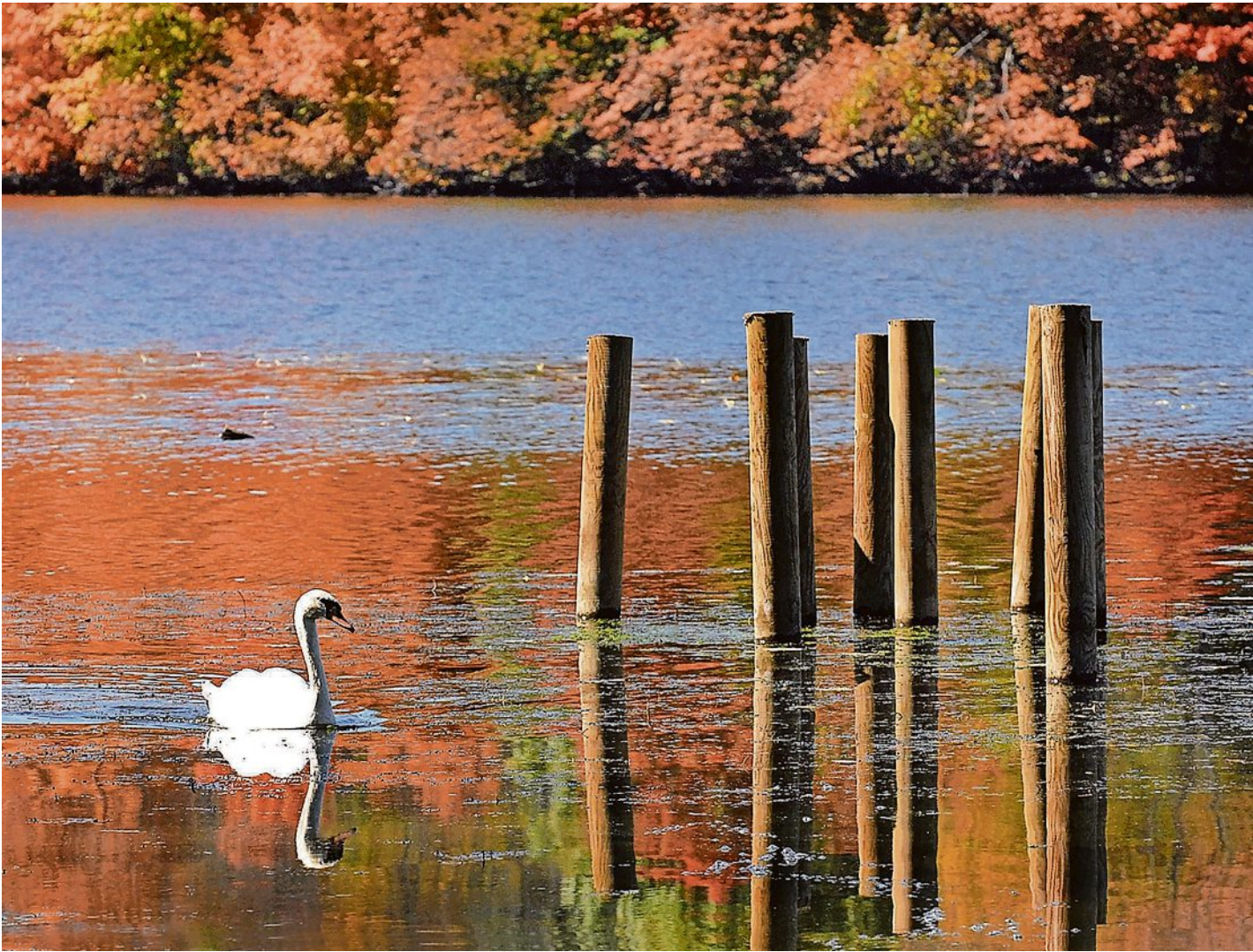
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VIEWS OF HUES



A brief but vibrant fall foliage season is expected this year. COURIER TIMES FILE

Track peak fall foliage in PA and Bucks County

JD Mullane
Bucks County Courier Times
USA TODAY NETWORK

Leaf peeping season has arrived in Pennsylvania, and you can plan those sweet afternoon drives with help from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

The DCNR and the Shapiro Administration unveiled a revamped fall foliage page, and will give you a “heads up” each Thursday about when to expect to see vast swaths of the changing landscape around the state.

The first report was issued Sept. 25. The DCNR’s leaf map shows Pa.’s upper tier changing, with Potter County already at peak leaf color. Most of state is listed as “just starting.” And us in Southeastern Pa?

Two words: No change.

Tell that to the Eastern Redbuds turning buttery yellow throughout Bucks County.

Clearly, predicting leaf changes is not an exact science. On the other hand, we aren’t even close to peak color, so there’s time to set aside a sunny afternoon for a drive on River Road, perhaps the prettiest place in Bucks to enjoy the change of season.

If you want ideas on where to travel in Pennsylvania for leaf watching, check out VisitPa.com.

As for the leaf season forecast, the DCNR pre-

dicts a short but brilliant autumn.

“Cool nights during late August and early September jumpstarted noticeable color changes throughout Penn’s Woods,” the DCNR said in a statement. “The long period of dry weather that accompanied the late summer cooldown has accelerated the transition to fall color across the Commonwealth. Fall foliage viewers should expect vivid colors that arrive sooner, but a shorter season overall. Please read on for regional coverage.

“Foresters in William Penn State Forest (serving southeastern PA) said most foliage is still dark green and unchanged in the region. Some species, like tulip poplars and maples, are showing some signs of drought stress. In Northampton County, black gum, birch, and some maples have begun to change color. At French Creek State Park, black gum and water-stressed maples are showing similar coloration. For a look at some early autumn tones, fall foliage enthusiasts should visit the Goat Hill Serpentine Barrens in Chester County.”

Bucks County is the No. 1 pick of national destinations for leaf peeping in 2025, according to Priceline.com.

“Bucks County is the ideal fall getaway, offering cozy small towns, scenic drives, and a variety of seasonal experiences,” said VisitBucksCounty.com.

JD Mullane can be reached at jmullane@gannett.com.

Decision expected this month in lawsuit

Judge to rule on 287g, agreement allowing officers to enforce immigration laws

Jo Ciavaglia
Bucks County Courier Times
USA TODAY NETWORK

A Bucks County judge is expected to decide later this month if the sheriff can implement a controversial program that grants county deputies the power to act as federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers.

Following a second four-hour hearing Friday, Sept. 26, Common Pleas Court Judge Jeffrey Trauger indicated that he hoped to issue an order before the end of October, ahead of the Nov. 4 general election.

Bucks County Sheriff Fred Harran, a defendant in the lawsuit, is seeking reelection. The Republican incumbent, a retired Bensalem director of public safety, is running against Democratic challenger Danny Ceisler, an attorney and a U.S. Army veteran.

The hearing Friday was a continuation of a Sept. 16 proceeding regarding a lawsuit filed earlier this year seeking to prevent the implementation of the ICE program, known as 287g, which gives local law enforcement agencies authority to enforce immigration law while performing routine duties.

The ACLU of Pennsylvania and the Community Justice Project sued Harran and Bucks County on behalf of immigrant and civil rights organizations. They’re seeking a preliminary injunction to halt implementation of 287g until the court decides the lawsuit’s merits.

Defendant Bucks County has also filed a cross claim against Harran seeking to nullify the 287g agreement on the grounds that Harran applied for the program without approval from the county commissioners.

The Pennsylvania Sheriffs’ Association, a professional organization, has also filed a claim as an interested party. Bucks County is among 10 county sheriff offices with approved 287g programs, according to the latest federal data.

In a surprise development Friday, Harran’s attorney, Wally Zimolong, produced ICE paperwork that Harran signed July 3. The paperwork appears to limit the scope of powers that

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Senior housing from Norton Avenue First Baptist Church nearly ready

Lacey Latch
Bucks County Courier Times
USA TODAY NETWORK

Tucked toward the back of a cluster of quiet streets in Bristol Township, the final touches are being made on a new affordable housing project for seniors.

The Lighthouse on Norton Avenue is to create 51 affordable one- and two-

bedroom apartments specifically for seniors ages 55 and older at 1230 Norton Ave.

The Rev. James Evans III, longtime leader of the Norton Avenue First Baptist Church next door, was integral in making the project a reality.

After spending years navigating the township’s land development process, Evans now regularly walks through the

nearly completed building, chatting with the builders as he checks on their progress.

While the walls are still bare, the floors coated in dust, Evans can already visualize what this building could become for its future residents.

Each unit is to have a small balcony, and each of the three floors are to have gathering spaces for the residents

where they can host meetings, movie nights and more. The building is also to provide on-site medical care five days a week from by local health care providers.

“It’s amazing what God can do,” Evans said as he looked down from the second floor onto the area that’s to

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