Maine's seabirds suffer through tough year. B7



DC comic books goes PC

Superman will no longer use his 'American way' motto. A7

Standard-Speaker

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Biden plans

Scranton on

Wednesday

BY BORYS KRAWCZENIUK STAFF WRITER As President Joe Biden visits the city of his birth Wednesday for the first time as president, he will arrive at a pivotal time for him and one of Scranton's long-

With slumping polling numbers reflecting an administration struggling in the eyes of many, Biden wants Congress to pass, so he can sign, a massive infrastructure bill targeted at rebuilding the nation's roads, bridges, airports

Local officials want to revive passenger train service between Scranton and

The shortest path to that runs

Biden will likely make the connection during his visit, something he first did

"It's a distinct possibility," U.S. Rep. Matt Cartwright, D-8, Moosic, said Mon-

The Scranton stop is part of Biden's

latest push to get the infrastructure bill passed and promote his Build Back

Better agenda. The size and scope of

the infrastructure bill and another

spending bill that addresses climate

change, child care and other matters

remain the subject of great debate in

the U.S. Congress. Nonetheless, it

seems likely Biden will bring up the

Scranton-to-New York City passenger

train as part of what could happen if

any details from anybody," said attor-

ney Larry Malski, president of the

Pennsylvania Northeast Regional Rail-

Please see VISIT, Page A5

"I would hope so, though I don't have

when he celebrated Amtrak's 50th anniversary earlier this year in Philadel-

through the infrastructure bill.

term goals.

and other infrastructure.

New York City.

day.

to stop in

Colin Powell dies at 84

Powell, who spent four decades in public service as a diplomat, national security adviser and one of the country's top soldiers, passed away from COVID-19 complications.

BY ROBERT BURNS, ERIC TUCKER complications. He was 84. **AND EILEEN PUTMAN**

the trailblazing soldier and diplo-

A veteran of the Vietnam War, Powell spent 35 years in the Army WASHINGTON — Colin Powell, and rose to the rank of four-star general before becoming the first mat, died Monday of COVID-19 Black chairman of the Joint Chiefs

of Staff. His oversight of the U.S invasion of Kuwait to oust the Iraqi army in 1991 made him a household name, prompting speculation for nearly a decade that he might run for president.

Please see POWELL, Page A5

Former Secretary of State Colin Powell looks on during a ceremony for the Alexis de Tocqueville prize, a French literary award, in 2006.





Police from the area learn the best way to collect and preserve crime scene evidence from Robert Johnson, a latent print examiner for the Cumberland County District Attorney's Office Crime Lab, pictured standing in the back with a red shirt.

BY AMANDA CHRISTMAN STAFF WRITER

A program to ensure crime victims get closure and police have the right tools debuted last month at the Butler Twp. police station.

Called the Latent Evidence Improvement Project, it trains officers to handle, collect and preserve evidence without contamination.

Police who don't specialize in forensics are taught the best practices for evidence collection, which will increase the quantity and quality of evidence submitted to crime laboratories, said Ken Zipovsky of the Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Association. That means justice will be brought to more crime victims.

an evidence collection kit worth approximately \$250 for their department.

The program is geared toward offi- Plains, Whitehall, Wright, Bethlehem

cers on patrol investigating crimes for which they normally wouldn't call a forensic services unit, such as minor assaults, change stolen from a vehicle, prescription medication theft and lower-level burglaries. Major crimes would still require officers with specialized training.

Zipovsky said the police chiefs association obtained a \$500,000 Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency grant to introduce the program around the state. The grant also pays for forensics training for police chiefs and prosecutors and encompasses many of the topics identified as best practices in the pillars of 21st century policing, he said.

Butler Twp. police hosted 16-hour from their department, Hazleton, Sugarloaf, Fairview, Hanover, Kidder,



Officers receive a crime scene evidence collection kit after completing the training.

The association offers each attendee trainings Sept. 21 and 22 for 18 officers and Dallas townships and Weatherly, Emmaus and Forty Fort boroughs.

Please see TRAINING, Page A5

the bill passes.

road Authority.

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Lehigh Valley Heart and Vascular Institute

Bognet to announce run for Congress today

BY KENT JACKSON

STAFF WRITER Jim Bognet plans to

announce Tuesday morning that he will again campaign for Congress.

A Republican who lives in Hazle Twp., Bognet scheduled "a major announcement" at Public Square, Wilkes-Barre, at 11:15 a.m., according to a release.

Two years ago, Bognet lost an election to incumbent Matt Cartwright, a Democrat who has been in Congress gress.



ly represents ed five challengers. the 8th District.

since 2012

Currently the 8th Dis-**BOGNET** trict includes

Wilkes-Barre and Scranton, but new district boundaries haven't been drawn since United States during the results of the 2020 census indicated that Pennsylvania will lose one seat in Con- High School and holds a law

To win the Republic priand current- mary in 2020, Bognet defeat-

Before campaigning for himself, Bognet worked as a consultant to other candidates and office holders, including former California Hazleton, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger. He also served with the Export-Import Bank of the Trump administration. He is a graduate of Hazleton Area degree from UCLA.

At least one other Republican, Teddy Daniels, who narrowly lost to Bognet in the primary, has been campaigning so far this year. A former law enforcement worker, Daniels founded a security transport company after being wounded and receiving the Purple Heart while serving with the United States Army in Afghanistan.

Contact the writer: kjackson @standardspeaker.com; 570-501-3587



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Carleen Fiolich James G. Sabatella



Hazleton

WEATHER Breezy, sun High of 62

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President George Bush and first lady Barbara Bush pin a Medal of Freedom on Gen. Colin Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, during a White House ceremony

POWELL: Four decades of service

Powell instead joined George W. Bush's administration in 2001 as secretary of state, the first Black person to represent the U.S. government on the world stage. His tenure, however, was erate with the United States ance, the U.S. succeeded in New York City were among that the Build Back Better marred by his 2003 address to in going after the Afghanithe U.N. Security Council in which he cited faulty information to claim that Saddam where bin Laden was later Hussein had secretly stashed killed. weapons of mass destruc-Iraqi leader was removed, the war devolved into years of military and humanitari-

In announcing Powell's death, his family said he had been fully vaccinated against the coronavirus. Peggy Cifrino, Powell's longtime aide, said he had also been treated over the past few years for multiple myeloma, a blood cancer that impairs the body's ability to fight infection. Studies have shown that the COVID-19 vaccines as healthier people.

At the White House, Presi-"embodied the highest ideals of both warrior and diplomat."

Noting Powell's rise from a childhood in a fraying New York City neighborhood, Biden said, "He believed in his career, although he had the promise of America removed some elements from because he lived it. And he devoted much of his life to making that promise a reality for so many others."

Flags were ordered lowered at government build- tal dictator. But the power tagon chief, said the news of ings, including the White vacuum and lawlessness that Powell's death left "a hole in House, Pentagon and State followed unleashed years of

of state was largely defined civilians, sparked a lengthy ever witnessed," Austin said

11, 2001, terror attacks. He ally tilted the balance of powwas the first American offi- er in the Middle East toward cial to publicly blame Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network. He made a lightning trip to Pakistan to demand that then-Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf coop- Associated Press that on balstan-based group, which also had a presence in Pakistan,

tion. Such weapons never for war in Iraq deepened, materialized, and though the Powell sometimes found himself at odds with other key figures in the Bush administration, including Vice President Dick Cheney and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld. Rumsfeld also died this year.

was dubious of the military tured large swaths of territoand intelligence communities' conviction that Saddam possessed or was developing and former first lady Laura weapons of mass destruction. But he presented the administration's case that those cancer patients don't Saddam posed a major vant" and "widely respected get as much protection from regional and global threat in at home and abroad," Bush a strong speech to the U.N. Security Council in Febru- Colin was a family man and ary 2003. The following a friend. Laura and I send dent Joe Biden said Powell month, Bush gave the goahead for the invasion.

with Powell's display of a man." vial of what he said could have been a biological weapon, was seen as a low point in the remarks that he deemed to have been based on poor very challenging times." intelligence assessments.

dam ended the rule of a brusectarian fighting and chaos

a U.S. rival, Iran. No Iraqi weapons of mass destruction were ever found.

Still. Powell maintained in a 2012 interview with The

"I think we had a lot of successes," he said. "Iraq's terrible dictator is gone."

Saddam was captured by But as Washington's push U.S. forces while hiding out in northern Iraq in December 2003 and later executed by the Iraqi government. But the war dragged on. President Barack Obama pulled U.S. troops out of Iraq in 2011, but he sent advisers back in 2014 after the Islamic State group swept into the Powell's State Department country from Syria and cap-

> Bush said Monday that he Bush were "deeply saddened" by Powell's death.

"He was a great public sersaid. "And most important, Alma and their children our sincere condolences as they The U.N. speech, replete remember the life of a great

> Condoleezza Rice, Powell's successor at State and the department's first Black female secretary, praised him as "a trusted colleague and a dear friend through some

Defense Secretary Lloyd The U.S. overthrow of Sad- Austin, a retired Army general and the first Black Penmy heart."

"The world lost one of the Powell's time as secretary that killed countless Iraqi greatest leaders that we have

by the aftermath of the Sept. insurgency, and unintention- while traveling in Europe. Train riders held up phones as woman was raped, police say

BY CLAUDIA LAUER

ASSOCIATED PRESS PHILADELPHIA — A woman on a commuter train rape and related offenses. just outside of Philadelphia

people held up their phones to seemingly record the assault without intervening, authorities said. stops passed as the man harassed, groped and eventually raped the woman, the police chief for the South-

news conference Monday. Police do not believe a single witness on the train dialed 911. They are investigating whether some bystanders filmed the

eastern Pennsylvania Trans-

portation Authority said at a

Both the man and woman got on the train at the same stop Wednesday night in North Philadelphia. Officers pulled the man off of the woman at the last stop. They responded within about three minutes of a 911 call from a transportation authority employee, authorities said.

'What we want is everyone to be angry and disgusted and to be resolute about making the system safer," SEPTA Police Chief Thomas

conference. Arrest records show Fiston an being attacked," he said. man charged with raping a Ngoy, 35, was charged with

The affidavit of arrest for harassed her for more than Ngoy detailed times of the 40 minutes while multiple assault, including that during those 40 minutes the the train and someone woman appears to repeatedly push Ngoy away.

Nestel would not give an More than two dozen train approximate number of witnesses and it was unclear from the affidavit how many passengers were present for those 40 minutes. Authorities have not released the surveillance video.

"I can tell you that people mine.

J. Nestel III said at the news were holding their phone up in the direction of this wom-

> **Superintendent Timothy** Bernhardt, of the Upper Darby Police Department, has said surveillance footage showed other riders were on "should have done some-

thing." The New York Times reported that Bernhardt said that people who recorded the attack and failed to intervene could possibly be charged, but that would be up to the Delaware County District Attorney's office to deter-

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VISIT: Likely to discuss Amtrak

FROM PAGE A1

The White House did not announce the location in Scranton or time for Biden's remarks, and local officials declined to confirm a location. Malski said Secret Service agents scouted locations in and around the Lackawanna Transit Center and nearby Electric City Trolley Museum in downtown Scranton. If built, the passenger train would likely stop near the transit center where New York City-bound locals already park before boarding buses to the Big Apple.

If the bill passes, Amtrak the top corridors for project-plan addresses," he said. will get tens of billions of dollars to carry out the proposed upgrade and expansion of its nationwide passenger railroad service. Biden's only topic, Cart-Amtrak officials have wright said. The Build Back already highlighted the Better agenda includes more times, most recently in a conference call last month.

developed in our national services linking Reading, Allentown and Scranton to

FROM PAGE A1

"The idea is to get this out to every part of the state,"

So much can be found in a fingerprint, blood droplet or piece of hair wedged

Feissner. Investigation of others. A patrol officer may unknown reason, smashing

Bill Flynn said. Trains likely won't be facturers and restaurant and Gebhardt Cognetti said the

City of Scranton traffic control repairmen, from left,

Gene Reed, Chris Farrell and Dave Medici replace the

Spruce Street signs with Biden Street signs Monday.

Scranton train multiple money for child care and workforce development. With employers short of "In fact, as we analyze skilled workers, many potential routes that could be employees can't go back to work because child care confluence of infrastructure strategy, the new proposed remains unaffordable, he stories," Cognetti said.

ed ridership and financial

performance," Amtrak CEO

"That's another big thing

"You know they want to call it social services but who's it helping? Employers, manuretail employers." Scranton Mayor Paige

city has plenty of infrastructure-related issues, including remnants of its coal-mining past and flooding.

"So Scranton is sort of a

Contact the writer: bkrawczeniuk @timesshamrock.com; 570-348-9147; @BorysBlogTT

TRAINING: Focus on small crimes

departments to host a session statewide.

Zipovsky said.

lead police to a suspect.

Many times it's patrol offi-

from the aggressor and use

A lot of times, though, fintaken due to a lack of training or access to equipment, Feissner said.

The evidence can also help determine if a crime even took place. Feissner recalled between carpet fibers and Butler police responding to a reported break-in years ago. A window was found cers who respond to smaller- smashed, but nothing was scale burglaries, said Butler taken from the home. Police Twp. Police Chief William obtained DNA evidence showing a human never those crimes are important, broke in. Instead, the homenot only to the victim, but to owner's dog had a fit for an

find blood at a crime scene the window from the inside.

When evidence is taken, it Butler was the first of nine that information as evidence. can take weeks, or sometimes months, for samples to gerprints and samples aren't be analyzed, unlike the forensic timeline often displayed on popular television

"We sometimes call it the 'CSI effect,'" Feissner said. "The things people see on TV leaves people with unrealistic expectations of how crime is solved and how quickly, and it's especially the case with DNA evidence," which takes a while to study.

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