

**LIFESTYLE**  
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**STOCKS**  
**DOW JONES**  
 114.67  
**NASDAQ**  
 157.46  
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# THE NEWS-ITEM

## SATURDAY

**COUPONS**  
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**\$75**  
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 INSIDE TODAY

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August 1, 2020

\$1.50

# Lourdes teacher completes PSU Center for Science and the Schools research program

**BY MARK GILGER**  
 THE NEWS-ITEM  
 mark\_g@newsitem.com

COAL TOWNSHIP — Pennsylvania STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) Ambassador Ann (Polites) Czeponis, a faculty member at Our Lady of Lourdes Regional School, has completed the seven-week Penn State University CSATS (Center

*“The curriculum that I build out of this will have students engaging in meaningful scientific or engineering research.”*

**Ann Czeponis, teacher, Our Lady of Lourdes Regional School**

for Science and the Schools) Research Experiences for Teachers program. Through a competitive application

process, Czeponis was among 11 educators from across Pennsylvania who were virtually embedded in

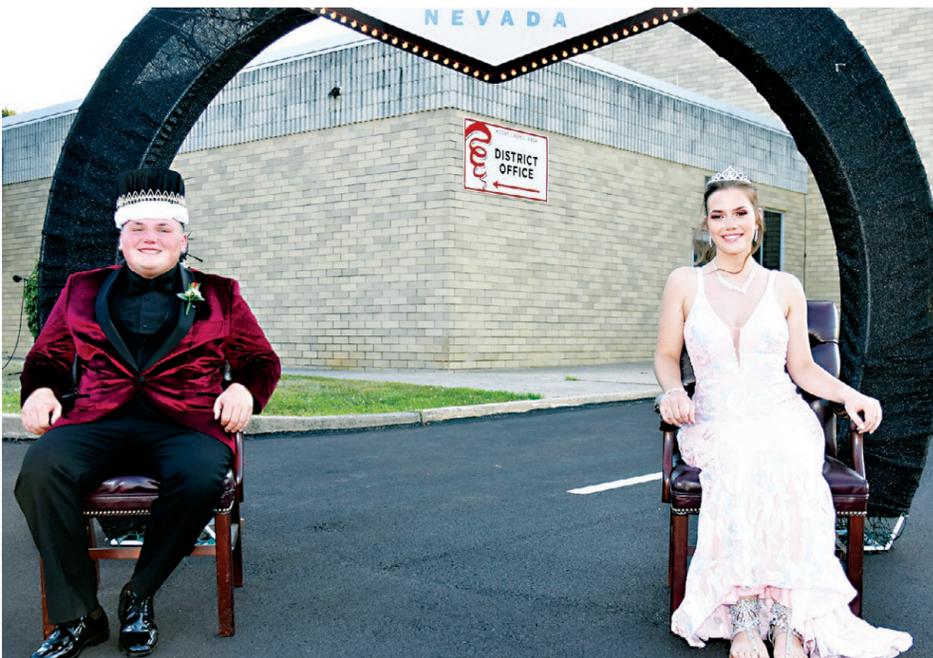
Penn State University (PSU) research labs. During the seven-week, full-time online research experience, which started June 15 and concluded Friday with a symposium, teachers worked alongside a faculty member to design sustainable building systems that promote environmental health and energy efficiency for existing structures.



**ANN CZEPONIS**

Czeponis, Page A7

## ROYAL DISTANCING



Seated a socially distant 6 feet apart on Friday evening are Mount Carmel Area High School's prom king and queen, Elijah Watkins and Peyton Galitski. They are the children of Amy and Walter Watkins and Lori and Jim Galitski, respectively, all of Mount Carmel.

## Verilife plans ribbon-cutting ceremony on this Monday

**BY MARK GILGER**  
 THE NEWS-ITEM  
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SHAMOKIN — A ribbon-cutting ceremony will be held at 10 a.m. Monday at Shamokin's first medical marijuana dispensary known as Verilife.

Officials from the City of Shamokin, Verilife and its parent company PharmaCann will be among the participants at the ceremony outside the facility at North Shamokin and East Independence streets.

Renee Straup, outreach representative for Verilife, said the medical marijuana dispensary will officially open Tuesday morning. Business hours will be from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday.

Straup said Verilife offers application assistance, medical marijuana education workshops, a quick-service session for providers and staff and an affiliate partnership benefit program.

Straup said more information about the services can be obtained by contacting her at 215-388-5276.

When Verilife opens for its clients — all of whom must have a state-issued medical marijuana card — plenty of products will fill the shelves and cabinets inside the structure, and several employees will be on-hand to assist



Ceremony, Page A7

## State to pay for mail-in ballot postage in fall general election

**BY MARC LEVY**  
 ASSOCIATED PRESS

HARRISBURG — Pennsylvania will foot the cost of postage for voters to mail in ballots in November's general election, officials said Friday, a move that Gov. Tom Wolf has made a priority as the coronavirus pandemic unexpectedly fueled high interest in voting by mail under a new state law.

The administration plans to use money from federal emergency coronavirus aid to foot the bill, which could run to several million dollars to cover 55 cents for millions of ballots.

Wolf's top elections official, Secretary of State Kathy Boockvar, said paying for the postage is a way to make voting more accessible, safer and easier during the pandemic. Advocates also said it should help people get their ballots in faster and on time.

Under the plan, voters who apply for and receive a mail-in or absentee ballot in the mail will also get a postage-paid ballot-return envelope. Each county will have options on how to carry that out, whether using stamps, a metered machine or a business-reply mail account linked to the state's,

*“It will quicken the turnaround time and make it easier for voters to participate in this election in November.”*

**Rep. Kevin Boyle, D-Philadelphia,**

Boockvar said.

The step by Wolf, a Democrat, comes as his administration and lawmakers discuss legislation to help counties deal with the expected avalanche of mailed-in ballots in a premier presidential battleground state.

It also comes as the push to expand voting by mail ahead of the November presidential election has become increasingly partisan.

President Donald Trump has made clear he believes widespread mail-in voting would benefit Democrats. He has alleged — without citing evidence — that it will lead to massive fraud, and the Republican National Committee has budgeted \$20 million to fight Democratic lawsuits in at least 18 states aimed at expanding voting by mail.

Seventeen states cover postage for mail-in ballots, according to

the National Conference of State Legislatures, including in states under Republican governors such as Arizona, Maryland and Missouri, and under Democratic governors, including California, Minnesota and Virginia.

Covering ballot postage is also the subject of a push in statehouses and courts in several other states with Republican governors, including Ohio, Florida and Georgia.

While the U.S. Postal Service has said the post office delivers every piece of election mail to its destination — with or without adequate postage — advocates for postage-paid ballot envelopes argue that most voters are unlikely to trust that a ballot without postage will get delivered.

Advocates also compare the cost of

Postage, Page A7



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**WEATHER**  
 Partly sunny and humid  
 84° / 69°  
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vol. 52, no. 301



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