



HAPPY NEW YEAR



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In Case You Missed It:

Desmond Tutu Dies: Desmond Tutu, South Africa's Nobel Peace Prize-winning icon, an uncompromising foe of apartheid and a modern-day activist for racial justice and LGBT rights, died December 26, 2021, at 90. South Africans, world leaders and people around the globe mourned the death of the man viewed as the country's moral conscience.

Tutu worked passionately, tirelessly and non-violently to tear down apartheid — South Africa's brutal, decades-long regime of oppression against its Black majority that ended in 1994.

The buoyant, blunt-spoken clergyman used his pulpit as the first Black bishop of Johannesburg and later as the Anglican Archbishop of Cape Town, as well as frequent public demonstrations, to galvanize public opinion against racial inequity, both at home and globally.

Omicron Looms Over New Years Celebrations: After struggling with the coronavirus for far too long, the world understands all too well Belgium's word of the year, "knaldrang!" — the urge to party, the need to let loose. Yet as New Year celebrations approach, the omicron variant is casting more gloom.

Dire warnings abound, caseloads are rising alarmingly fast, air traffic is snarled and several countries are considering more restrictions to add to the patchwork of lockdowns and other measures already in place around Europe.

The top U.S. infectious-disease expert, Dr. Anthony Fauci, warned on Monday that with the rise of the highly contagious omicron, "it's going to get worse before it gets better."

"We don't expect things are going to turn around in a few days to a week. It likely will take much longer than that, but that's unpredictable," he said on ABC.

Harris Gets Key To The City: On the 49th anniversary of the Immaculate Reception, Mayor Bill Peduto awarded the man who made the catch an honorary key to the city.

Peduto called Franco Harris a hero not only for his football career, but also "for how he exemplifies everything that's good about Pittsburgh."

"He's a hero to everyone in the city of Pittsburgh that needs a little bit of help," he said. "He is someone who will always give his time, whether he has it or not."

On Dec. 23, 1972, Harris caught a pass intended for teammate John Fuqua that bounced off Oakland Raiders safety Jack Tatum just before it hit the ground — a play since dubbed the Immaculate Reception.

"This is quite an honor, especially today, on this very special day," Harris, 71, said upon receiving a symbolic key to the city. It's only the second time Peduto has issued a key to an athlete: Roberto Clemente was posthumously awarded the key in September.

Churchill Council Approves Amazon Warehouse, Residents Respond: Appeal Planned

The Churchill Borough Council voted on Tuesday, December 21, 2021, to approve a plan from Hillwood Development to build a sprawling Amazon distribution center at the now-defunct George Westinghouse Research and Technology Park. Five members of the Council voted in favor of the proposal, and two, Norma Greco and Adam McDowell, voted against it.

The results of that vote are causing a group of residents who oppose the Amazon development to move forward with an appeal of the council's decision in court. "The vote is... no surprise. Hillwood knew it had the votes needed in August 2020," said Murray Bilby, a member of Churchill Future who had sent letters to all Churchill residents back in March alerting them to the proposal. "That is why [Hillwood] allowed Council the flexibility to allow so many comments. They played us. Now it is our turn to apply the law and regulations as they should have been from the beginning."

Vacant for many years, the George Westinghouse Technology and Research Park will be redeveloped into an e-commerce distribution and logistics facility ("Distribution Center") for use and occupancy by Amazon. The developer, Hillwood Development of Dallas, Texas, estimated that the total project cost would be \$300,000,000.

However, the property, which is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, contains 100 acres of green space and 1400 mature trees that would be destroyed by the re-development, along with the demolition of the mid-century buildings. There are 450 homes within 1000 feet of the property, as well as two schools.



The Borough of Churchill approved a plan to build an Amazon distribution center at the former George Westinghouse Research and Technology Park.

"My primary concern will always be for the safety and wellbeing of the children who attend Woodland Hills High School, Pace School, and the daycare located directly across Greensburg Pike from the proposed Amazon Mass Distribution Warehouse," said Anthony Wilson at a press conference. A Churchill father of three school-aged children, Wilson believes that introducing a fleet of tractor-trailers estimated to leave the proposed facility every few minutes is a "dangerous recipe for disaster" for the students,

especially for those driving, getting the school bus, and walking between home and school.

The vote on Tuesday night included a number of conditions related to mitigation of potential traffic, sound, lighting, air quality, and other environmental impacts. Those mitigations are leaving Churchill residents unsatisfied, and the group with plans to appeal the decision, collectively called Churchill Future, says that the

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The Pittsburgh skyline will be lit up with fireworks on Friday night to ring in the new year. This is the first year the event is free and open to the public.

Highmark First Night Pittsburgh

Highmark First Night Pittsburgh, a production of the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust, is Pittsburgh's arts-focused New Year's Eve celebration.

Culminating with the city's Countdown to Midnight and raising of the Future of Pittsburgh Ball, the six-hour celebration sprawls downtown Pittsburgh's renowned 14-block Cultural District. Acclaimed national artists and Pittsburgh's vibrant artist community ring in the new year for revelers with live music, dance, theater, visual arts, comedy, magic, kids' activities, and a signature parade along with Pyrotechnico Fireworks

displays at 6 p.m. and midnight.

For the first time ever, this year's celebration is free and open to everyone! Highmark First Night Pittsburgh 2022 will feature an expanded outdoor footprint including four performance stages in addition to indoor galleries and select performance venues that will require free tickets for entry.

This year's celebration is the 28th annual and the 19th year as a production of the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust.

SERVING THE STEEL VALLEY, WEST MIFFLIN, LINCOLN PLACE, AND WOODLAND HILLS COMMUNITIES OF BRADDOCK, BRADDOCK HILLS, CHALFANT, CHURCHILL, EAST PITTSBURGH, FOREST HILLS, NORTH BRADDOCK, RANKIN, SWISSVALE, TURTLE CREEK AND WILKINS TOWNSHIP, DRAVOSBURG, AND GLASSPORT

