

"It is amazing what you can accomplish if you do not care who gets the credit."

~ Harry S. Truman



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Armstrong Cable is offering the opportunity to 'Zoom With Santa' this holiday season. This one of a kind event will take place from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Monday, December 14th as Santa Claus will be doing virtual 1-on-1 sessions with children. Each session will last 3 minutes and the overall event will host 40-50 children over the 3 hour period.

Fierce Video
[The average U.S. consumer now uses 7 streaming services](#)

"Many places weren't able to host Santa and give the children an opportunity to see him. I remember that Christmas Spirit/Magic of meeting Santa each year growing up and how important it was to tell him I've been good," said Seth Prentice, Community Marketing Manager for Zelienople Armstrong Office. "I wanted to make sure we could still find a way to provide an opportunity for families in our local communities."

CNN
[Streaming is about to get a lot more expensive](#)

Children can come prepared to tell Santa what they want for Christmas, ask him any questions or just explain why they deserve to be on the "nice" list! This is a FREE event but reservations are a requirement! To reserve a spot please email: zoomsanta@zoominternet.net and request a time slot (5-6 p.m., 6-7 p.m., 7-8 p.m.)

TV Answer Man
[Roku Removes Spectrum TV App In Fee Fight](#)

You will receive an email link from Armstrong to the Zoom meeting for December 14th. Each person will be placed in a waiting room until it is your time to come into the Zoom session. Armstrong will offer Tuesday, December 15th as a second date. The Monday session has SOLD OUT.

Reuters
[Google's YouTube, Gmail recover after global outage](#)

"We've heard from parents already that their kids wouldn't have gotten to see Santa if it wasn't for this opportunity this year," said Prentice who is on the Board of Directors for the Ellwood City Chamber and other community organizations. "This might be something we keep for 2021 if events are not back to normal but for now, we're hoping to provide that Christmas Spirit when everyone needs it the most!" A podcast episode to promote the event can be found here: <https://www.buzzsprout.com/510037/6758044> – Ellwoodcity.org

Philadelphia Inquirer
[Wealthy towns outside Pittsburgh went big for Biden. Can Democrats count on them again?](#)

The FCC has granted Cox and Comcast petitions for "effective competition" determinations in a number of Massachusetts counties, citing over-the-top service AT&T Now as the effective competitor. In October 2019, the FCC made its first determination that over-the-top streaming video service was a competitor to cable systems in local markets, granting an effective competition petition from Charter in Massachusetts also citing AT&T Now (formerly DirecTV Now).

Philadelphia Inquirer
[Pat Toomey is ready to work with Joe Biden. A little.](#)

A finding of effective competition lifts basic-cable price regulation, which has now been eliminated in all but a handful of systems thanks to the ubiquity of satellite service. Cable operators deemed subject to effective competition also do not have to provide broadcast TV signals on the basic tier, though they still do.

Comcast and Cox then followed suit with their own petitions, citing the Charter precedent. "Comcast and Cox, however, have reasonably demonstrated that AT&T TV NOW can and does reach consumers in the Franchise Areas either with their affiliated broadband Internet access service or that of a competitor," the Media Bureau said in granting the petitions.

The Charter decision did not stop the State of Massachusetts [from opposing the Cox and Comcast petitions](#). Classifying as 'effective competition' a non-facilities-based video service like AT&T TV Now, which requires the broadband facilities of a third party like Cox to get its video to its customers, would undermine the commission's policy goal of encouraging facilities-based investment and limiting regulation of the internet," the state argued.

Following that logic Disney Plus and Netflix and others would not meet the definition of video service competition to traditional cable, even though they are clearly pulling eyeballs away from both day-and-date and VOD cable content. Netflix certainly doesn't see it that way. In a 10-K filing it said its

competition includes MVPDs, and points out that it has more than 167 million paid subscribers.

While the FCC prefers facilities-based competition, it does not exclude non-facilities-based competitors from the regulatory conversation in other areas. For example, it approved the T-Mobile-Sprint deal in part because Dish gets to run the companies' spun-off prepaid wireless business, which still requires Dish to use the Sprint and T-Mobile facilities, as part of the effort to create a competitor to the merged wireless providers.

To avoid a return to basic cable regulations, cable operators are looking to establish the precedent that OTT video maintains the effective competition status of almost all systems today, and do so now, as cord-cutting continues to cut into subscriber counts for traditional competitors and as over-the-top becomes the video delivery system of choice for former satellite customers.

Cable companies fear that if the subscriber counts for DirecTV or Dish Network go south, local franchise authorities could cite that as a reason they were no longer subject to effective competition and reinstate basic rate regulations. The item raises the issue of just how the FCC should define OTT services beyond effective competition, and the specter of subjecting them to the same regulatory regime, such as program-access and program-carriage rules.

– **Next TV**

Dr. Carol Fox is worried about the holidays.

She watches the rising coronavirus caseload in Westmoreland County and keeps daily tabs on the numbers that are impacting Excela Health, where she is chief medical officer. As the toll from family visits over Thanksgiving becomes more clear, she said she is expecting Christmas to be "Thanksgiving on steroids." "It's just important that we stand our ground and remain at home," she said.

Meanwhile, Dave Peach is encouraging people to visit their families for Christmas through a sign in front of Peaches 'N Cream, his Hempfield ice cream stand on Route 30 — despite state and federal health officials recommending the opposite. "It seems like we're being told to isolate completely, and I don't agree with that," he said. "I don't like this lack of social interaction. They can tell us how to be safe, but they can't tell us how to live."

Gov. Tom Wolf enacted several measures Dec. 10 meant to slow the virus' spread — restrictions that will encompass the entire holiday season. His announcement came as the number of cases had increased steadily since mid-October, putting a strain on health care systems across Pennsylvania. Both Allegheny and Westmoreland counties have been setting new records with the number of cases in recent weeks since the pandemic hit locally in March.

In Allegheny, the overall positivity rate was 6.37% Nov. 1 compared to 10.37% Thursday, according to state health statistics. In Westmoreland, the rate was 7.02% Nov. 1 and 12.86% Thursday. Allegheny remains under a stay-at-home advisory issued Nov. 18. Health department director Dr. Debra Bogen asked then that residents cancel travel plans ahead of Thanksgiving and refrain from gathering and having house guests or parties. Her recommendations remain the same.

On Nov. 17, state health Secretary Dr. Rachel Levine instituted a requirement that anyone traveling into or returning to Pennsylvania must have a negative test within 72 hours. If not, a 14-day quarantine period must follow. State officials are again asking citizens to find alternate way to celebrate the holidays, said Nate Wardle, department of health spokesman. "We know that one of the best parts of the holiday season is spending time with those we love, but this year, we must rethink what that looks like," he said.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is recommending that holiday celebrations are restricted to those in the same household. If members of more than one household do gather, the agency suggests limiting time together, requiring the wearing of masks and spending time outside, if possible, among other recommendations. Avoiding travel and opting for virtual gatherings is a good way to steer clear of the virus, according to the CDC. Hanukkah started Thursday and ends Dec. 18. Kwanzaa starts Dec. 26 and ends Jan. 1.

Fox said with Christmas falling on a Friday this year, it could be more appealing for family visits because of the longer weekend. Wanting to be together is understandable, but it also has the potential to send more sick patients to the area's hospitals, further straining the health care system. "The more that happens, the more difficult it is for us to get everything turned around," she said.

Opting for a video visit or some other type of virtual gathering is much safer. "It's a very fickle disease," Fox said of covid-19. "It's very difficult to predict who's going to have a very serious course and who's going to do relatively well."

State House Majority Leader Rep. Kerry Benninghoff, R-Centre/Mifflin, asked Wolf in a statement to not "cancel Christmas." Instead, let Pennsylvanians decide how to safely celebrate the holiday, he said. "I appeal to each person in this commonwealth to follow common sense and listen to the advice of health care professionals to protect friends, loved ones, those in our communities who are most vulnerable, and those on the front line of this pandemic," he said.
– **Pittsburgh Tribune-Review**

