

The Citizen

County gives go-ahead

Return of high school sports clears another hurdle. B1



Weedsport perseveres

Column looks at COVID-19 impact. A8

Police probe death

Man found near Auburn bank. A3



SNOW SHOWERS 28 • 15 FORECAST, A2

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EDUCATION

District to explore name change

Auburn board OKs process of possibly renaming AHS for Tubman

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The Auburn Enlarged City

School School District Board of Education voted to start the process of possibly renaming Auburn High School after the iconic abolitionist and former city resident Harriet Tubman.

The board voted at its meeting Tuesday night on a resolution that would explore and possibly start the process of renaming a school building. This move was made in

light of the recent push by students to name the high school after Tubman.

Before the resolution, a number of community members — including several current students — weighed in on the possible renaming. Various people spoke virtually at the public to be heard portion of the meeting, which was held remotely.

“While we do not believe that the name change could ever undo deeply rooted systematic issues, we do believe it is a step in the right direction,” student Emerson Brown said.

Student Ailish Cuthbert also supports the renaming, adding she believed Auburn residents should be proud to live in the area Tubman called home and argued

that the change would yield significant effects.

“It will encourage students to live by Harriet’s example of bravery, hard work, determination and service to others. She is the type of person that the high school student body should look up to and aspire to be,” she said. “It is

Please see **DISTRICT**, Page A2

CAYUGA COUNTY



KEVIN RIVOLI, THE CITIZEN

Auburn firefighter Lt. Ryan Guerrette administers a vaccine during the Cayuga County Health Department’s vaccine clinic at Cayuga/Onondaga BOCES in Aurelius.

COVID-19

Three stores fined for violations

Mask rules weren’t followed; hospitalizations down

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The Cayuga County Board of Health approved \$50 fines for three businesses that violated New York’s COVID-19 mask mandate.

Dollar General in Moravia, Five Below in Auburn and NAPA Auto Parts in Sennett signed consent orders acknowledging the violations and agreed to pay \$50 fines. The penalties stem from what Cayuga County Health Department inspectors observed while at the stores.

An inspector reported that an employee at Dollar General was not wearing a face covering within six feet of customers and other employees. There were also “several patrons” improperly wearing face coverings in the store.

At Five Below, an inspection found that two workers weren’t properly wearing face coverings while within six feet of customers and other employees. Another employee lowered their mask to their chin while working on a display and talking to an employee who was less than six feet away.

Two employees at NAPA Auto Parts weren’t properly wearing face coverings within six feet of customers.

The Cayuga County Health Department has fined 32 businesses for violating an executive order issued by Gov. Andrew Cuomo requiring masks to be worn when social distancing cannot be maintained. First-time offenders are issued consent orders and they agree to sign the documents, they will pay a \$50 fine. Repeat offenders could be called to a hearing and face a stiffer penalty.

In other news:

■ Cayuga County has 339 active COVID-19 cases and 1,624 residents in mandatory quarantine, according to the latest

Please see **FINED**, Page A2

What’s happening with COVID-19 vaccines?

NY State Health Department changed county’s initial plans

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The Cayuga County Health Department had a plan for administering the COVID-19 vaccine. However, state directives have altered the rollout and who the department can inoculate in the initial priority groups.

Cayuga County received 2,400 doses to administer at clinics beginning Jan. 9. The health department hosted its clinics at Cayuga-Onondaga BOCES and vaccinated those eligible in the 1A and 1B priority groups, including health care workers, first responders and residents age 65 and older. But on Jan. 15, the state directed

local health departments to focus on certain essential workers who are eligible to receive the vaccine. Because of the mandate, the health department no longer can administer first doses to older residents. The state’s plan calls for pharmacies and mass vaccination clinics to inoculate residents age 65 and over.

According to a statement released by the Cayuga County Health Department, the state Department of Health has approved mass vaccination sites where people age 65 and older can get their doses. However, none of those locations are in Cayuga County.

There are five pharmacies that have received doses for seniors: Herbst Pharmacy in Port Byron, three Kinney Drugs locations in the county and Rite-Aid on Grant Avenue in Auburn. Each pharmacy received 100 doses last

week. Kathleen Cuddy, the county’s public health director, addressed the state of vaccine administration at the Cayuga County Board of Health meeting on Tuesday. She described the effort to vaccinate thousands of residents as a “huge undertaking” and provided more information beyond what was in the health department’s news release.

The groups the health department are vaccinating, Cuddy revealed, include daycare providers, public transit employees and school personnel. This is due to a directive from the state Department of Health that the local health departments “only vaccinate a subgroup of the 1B eligible population,” she added.

With the new mandate, health care workers will be vaccinated by hospitals and federally qual-

ified health centers. Pharmacies and mass vaccination clinics will handle the older population.

“It’s a challenge — it’s been a challenge, it remains a challenge — the information that we get from New York state and how we get it and whether we get it in a timely manner,” Cuddy said.

The problem with the approach, Cuddy explained, is that it can cause panic in the community, especially among seniors. She, along with the health department, assured older residents who have already received their first dose from the health department that they will be allowed to get their second dose. She said the second doses will be administered at the end of the first week in February.

Before the state’s directive, the county health department

Please see **VACCINE**, Page A2



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OPINION	A4	COMICS	B4
LAKE LIFE	A8	NATION/WORLD	B5
SPORTS	B1	CLASSIFIED	B6

