

THE CITIZENS' VOICE



NO CLASS
No players elected to join the Baseball Hall of Fame. **Page B1**

RESTAURANT INDUSTRY FEELING BURNED. C1



We're *All* About It

Wednesday, January 27, 2021

NEWSSTAND 50¢

Governor blames feds for short supply of vaccines

Wolf assumed more vaccines would follow decision to expand eligibility.

BY BORYS KRAWCZENIUK
STAFF WRITER

Gov. Tom Wolf blamed the federal government for a lack of enough COVID-19 vaccines Tuesday and a backlog that worsened as he expanded eligibility last week.

Wolf said he followed federal guidelines when he widened the pool eligible for vaccination last week to include residents 65 and older and 16 to 64 years old with medical conditions that add risk to getting the virus. The eligible pool is known as 1A.

"We've received about 1.5 million vaccines. And since it's a two-shot cycle, that means we have enough for basically 750,000 Pennsylvanians," Wolf said during an online news conference. "There are over 4 million in the 1A category ... That means we need 8 million vaccines. So at this point, we have a need for 8 million vaccines, and we have received



WOLF

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SAFETY FIRST & SECOND

Some health experts believe two masks are better than one

BY DENISE ALLABAUGH
STAFF WRITER

Should you wear two masks? It depends on who you ask but some health experts say double-masking offers more protection against COVID-19.

Infectious disease specialist Dr. Anthony Fauci said Monday that wearing two masks is likely a more effective way to curb the spread of coronavirus.

Although the rate of COVID-19 cases in the U.S. is on the decline, Fauci cautioned everyone not to get complacent and to continue taking safety measures especially now that a faster-spreading strain is circulating throughout the country.

Geisinger spokesman Matt Mattei, however, said there is currently not enough evidence to suggest that wearing two masks protects against COVID-19 transmission better than wearing one mask.

"What's important is that everyone in our community wear a properly fitting, appropriate mask as we continue to slow the spread of COVID-19 together," Mattei said. "Masks should fit snugly and cover the mouth and nose and while some

Please see **MASKS**, Page A5

MARK MORAN / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Wearing two masks, Mark Holton, a Lock Haven student home on break, walks his puppy Bella on Tuesday in Wyoming County.

Senate GOP largely sides against Trump impeachment trial

Senate rejects Republican attempt to dismiss second impeachment trial.

BY LISA MASCARO AND MARY CLARE JALONICK
ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON — All but



PAUL



LEAHY

five Senate Republicans voted in favor of an effort to dis-

miss Donald Trump's historic second impeachment trial on Tuesday, making clear a conviction of the former president for "incitement of insurrection" after the deadly Capitol siege on Jan. 6 is unlikely.

While the Republicans did not succeed in ending the tri-

al before it began, the test vote made clear that Trump still has enormous sway over his party as he becomes the first former president to be tried for impeachment. Many Republicans have criticized Trump's role in the attack — before which he told his supporters to "fight

like hell" to overturn his defeat — but most of them have rushed to defend him in the trial.

"I think this was indicative of where a lot of people's heads are," said South Dakota Sen. John Thune, the No. 2 Republican in the Senate, after the vote.

Late Tuesday, the presiding officer at the trial, Sen. Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., was taken to the hospital for observation after not feeling well at his office, spokesman David Carle said in a statement. The 80-year-old senator was

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Mostly cloudy **B6**

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County council OKs tax break for Hazleton project

\$500M commercial development gets tax abatement.

BY ERIC MARK
STAFF WRITER

Luzerne County Council approved a requested tax break for a proposed \$500 million commercial development project in the Hazleton region on Tuesday.

Council also rejected two proposed ordinances that would have placed ballot



HAAS



GRIFFITH

questions about amending the county charter before voters in the May 18 primary.

Tax abatement

Council voted 7-4 to grant a 10-year abatement of prop-

erty taxes on new construction in a planned commercial development on a 393-acre tract that stretches from Hazleton into Hazle Twp.

Hazleton Creek Commerce Center Holdings LLC plans to build five massive warehouse and manufacturing buildings on the long-vacant mine-scarred tract, near state routes 309 and 924. The commercial space will be marketed to Fortune 100 companies, the developer's

attorney, Raymond Rinaldi, told council.

The tax abatement will be under the state Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance, or LERTA, legislation, which encourages the improvement of deteriorated properties. It only applies to new construction. The county and other taxing bodies will still collect property tax on the land.

Council's approval followed a sharp debate after

Councilman Harry Haas proposed an amendment that would have voided the tax abatement if the developer sold the property during the 10-year period it is in effect.

Haas said he does not want county taxpayers to "get burned" in a scenario in which the developer sells the property and the new owner does not develop the project.

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