



SPORTS | B1

## BOLTS BEATDOWN

Lightning strike down streaking Flyers



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## DOUBLE TROUBLE

Abington girls and boys cruise in playoff games

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# Horsham man pleads guilty, faces death

By Jo Ciavaglia  
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Sullivan

Sullivan had entered a guilty plea to first-degree murder, rape, kidnapping and other offenses in connection with the 2016 death of Grace Packer in a rural Upper Bucks County home.

Bucks County Judge Diane

an ambulance was called after he complained of a headache and his blood pressure spiked. Earlier Tuesday,

Gibbons stopped the hearing before she could decide whether to accept the plea, and announced it would resume Wednesday morning. Gibbons also issued an order to the Bucks County prison to make sure that Sullivan gets his prescription medication for anxiety and high blood pressure before he is transported to the Bucks County Justice Center.

Earlier Tuesday, Sullivan told the judge that he had not taken his prescribed medication before he was taken to

the hearing, but that it wasn't affecting his ability to make decisions.

The medical emergency was only one of several unanticipated twists in the high-profile murder case Tuesday.

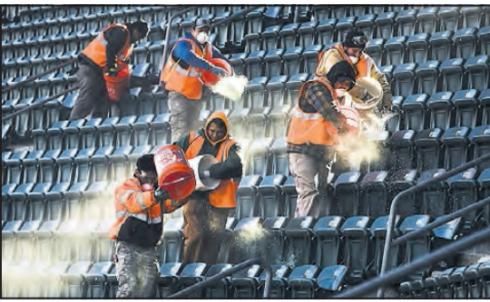
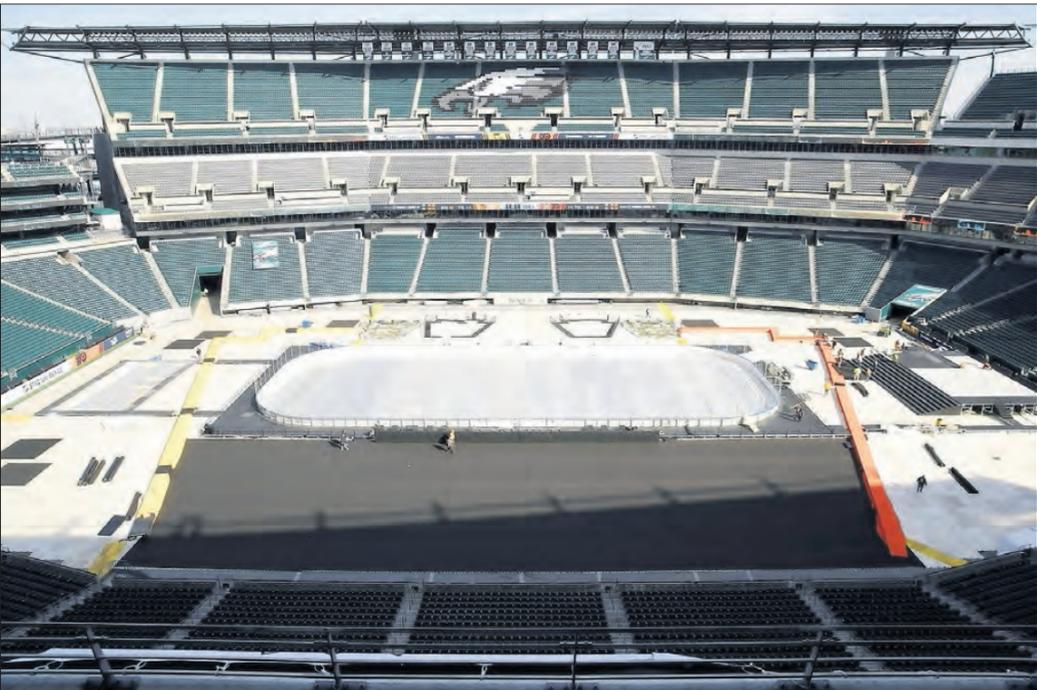
Sullivan entered a guilty plea to first-degree murder and 18 other original charges including rape and kidnapping in a deal that will let a jury decide if he is sentenced to life in prison or receives the death penalty. The sentencing phase

of the trial is expected to start March 14, if the court accepts the guilty plea.

The terms of the agreement also revealed that his co-defendant, Sara Packer, 44, of Abington, has struck her own agreement with prosecutors where she also will plead guilty to first-degree murder and received an anticipated life sentence in prison for her role in the death of her adopted daughter. Prosecutors said

See PLEADS, A2

## A RINK AT THE LINC



On Tuesday, preparation continued at Lincoln Financial Field for Saturday's NHL Stadium Series game between the Flyers and Penguins. The ice was laid down on the field, while workers spread ice melt in the stands. MORE FLYERS | B1 [MATT ROURKE / ASSOCIATED PRESS]

## Fair Districts PA panel looks at redistricting reform

By Thomas Friestad  
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When it comes time to redraw Congressional and state voting districts, some lawmakers opt for "cracking," or breaking apart a majority coalition across boundaries to render it irrelevant.

Other lawmakers prefer to "pack" large groups into singular districts to dilute their influence, or even to reach a 50:50 "sweetheart deal" — "I'll give you this district if you'll give me that one."

But regardless of the gerrymandering strategy, or the political party enacting it, redistricting reform is pivotal for remedying the "tight knot of dysfunction" in our political climate, said Carol Kuniholm, chair and co-founder of Fair Districts PA.

About 65 area residents listened Tuesday evening

at the Northampton library as Kuniholm held a panel, sponsored by the League of Woman Voters of Bucks County, and discussed both policy measures her non-partisan group is pursuing and some history as to how those measures became important.

The state Supreme Court sided with Fair Districts PA in January 2018, when it struck down the state's previous 2011 congressional map for weighing partisan Republican gains over criteria including eliminating municipal-county splits and keeping districts compact. But the group's lawsuit was a "partial and temporary" solution that could be undone if legislation were not passed, Kuniholm said.

"It makes me angry that there are communities that have been blocked from any kind of representation by the gamesmanship of those

See REFORM, A2

## Hatboro voters to decide on proposed new library tax

By Chris Ullery  
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(File) The historic Union Library in Hatboro is the second-oldest library in the state operating under its original charter. [ART GENTILE / PHOTOJOURNALIST]

Celec said Monday the library received \$83,000 in the 2019 and 2018 general fund budgets, but that amount doesn't reflect the costs to maintain the library at 243 S. York Road.

The committee's website states

See TAX, A2

Hatboro voters will have to decide whether the Union Library of Hatboro will get its own tax fund when they go to the polls in May.

The measure seeks to establish a dedicated tax to fund the historic library on York Road. If approved, the .55-mill tax referendum would create a fund specifically for the library, and raise more than \$212,000 annually for operations, officials said. Currently, the library is funded through annual, and varied, contributions from the borough's general fund.

Campaigners for the referendum, organized as the Yes Hatboro Library Committee, said Hatboro's library is among the lowest funded in Montgomery County.

Committee spokesman Michael

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