

# THE MORNING CALL

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\$2.00

OCTOBER 18, 2019

**FRIDAY**

BREEZY 58° | 34° FORECAST NEWS 17

## NIGHT OF CHAMPIONS



DAVID GARRETT/SPECIAL TO THE MORNING CALL

## Soccer, field hockey league titles decided

Liberty's Chris Schray (10) controls the ball in front of Emmaus' Eric Johnson (8) during the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference boys soccer championship match at Whitehall High School on Thursday night. Emmaus won 1-0 to claim its first conference title since 2014. It was a night for championship games, with Parkland winning the EPC girls soccer title and Emmaus winning in field hockey. In the Colonial League, Southern Lehigh won in field hockey, Northwestern Lehigh won in girls soccer and Moravian Academy won in boys soccer. **For coverage, see Sports 4-5.**

## EDUCATION FUNDING

## Plan to slash property taxes in the works

State Sen. David Argall says group nearing proposal to use income, sales taxes instead

By FORD TURNER

A bipartisan group of lawmakers is likely to recommend cutting or eliminating school property taxes by raising state income and sales taxes, the group's leader said Thursday. State Sen. David Argall was

asked earlier this year by Senate Majority Leader Jake Corman to lead the group, which has met repeatedly since midsummer seeking a plan to eliminate or reduce the much-despised school property levy. The Schuylkill County Republican said the group wants to

get a plan before the full Senate or House this year to avoid the intense political feelings that will come with next year's presidential election. His comments came during a Thursday luncheon of real estate professionals in his home county and in an interview afterward.

Although the group is still working, Argall said a likely result would be a recommendation to raise both sales and

income taxes.

The recommended sales tax increase would likely be less than 1 percentage point, meaning the current rate of 6% across much of the state would go to a level of less than 7%, Argall said. Philadelphia's rate is 8%.

He said Philadelphia's bloc of seven senators likely would oppose an increase of 1 percentage

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## PRIEST SEX ABUSE

## Diocese to pay \$5.3M to 30 victims

103 people file claims, says administrator of compensation fund

By EMILY OPILO

The Allentown Diocese so far has agreed to pay \$5.3 million to 30 victims of sexual abuse by priests, and 73 others have put in claims to a compensation fund set up in the past year, the fund's administrator told The Morning Call on Thursday.

The fund was one of five created by Pennsylvania dioceses in response to a statewide grand jury report, released in August 2018, that detailed the abuse of more than 1,000 chil-

dren by 300 Pennsylvania priests. The report named 37 priests from the Allentown Diocese, and the diocese has since added 20 names to the list, including one that came to light when the victim applied for compensation.

A five-month window for victims to apply to the fund closed on Sept. 30. Matt Kerr, spokesman for the Allentown Diocese, said the diocese would release no information about the fund until offers were made to applicants and each had made a decision about whether to accept the offer.

However, Camille Biros, business manager from the

Please see DIOCESE NEWS 4

## IMPEACHMENT INQUIRY

## Trump aide shifts on quid pro quo

Mulvaney admits, denies remarks on Ukraine military aid

By LISA MASCARO AND MARY CLARE JALONICK  
 Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The White House acknowledged Thursday that President Donald Trump's decision to hold up military aid to Ukraine was linked to his demand that Kyiv investigate the Democratic National Committee and the 2016 U.S. presidential campaign, a

shifting new explanation about events at the heart of the impeachment inquiry that shifted again a few hours later in an attempt to walk back the assertion.

The earlier admission from acting chief of staff Mick Mulvaney undercut the president's position that there was no quid pro quo during Trump's phone call with the Ukraine president that sparked the House investigation.

The turn of events had immediate fallout.

Please see AIDE NEWS 2

## TRUMP IMPEACHMENT PROBE

## How time in Ukraine shapes Pa. congressman's view



MARK MAKELA/GETTY

U.S. Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick, R-Bucks County, served briefly in Ukraine during his FBI days.

U.S. Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick, a former FBI agent, spent 3 months in country

By LAURA OLSON

WASHINGTON — Months before launching his bid for Congress in 2016, Brian Fitzpatrick was in Ukraine, training prosecutors for a new anti-corruption unit getting rolling in that country.

The roughly three-month assignment was part of his work with the FBI's international corruption unit, and came amid a growing drumbeat from U.S. and other western leaders that the country needed to crack down.

That experience gives Fitzpatrick, a Republican now representing Bucks County in the House of Representatives, perhaps the most relevant background in Congress for assessing the saga that has unfolded since President Donald Trump's phone call pressing Ukrainian leader Volodymyr Zelenskiy to investigate former Vice President Joe Biden and his son Hunter Biden.

He doesn't defend Trump's comments to Zelenskiy in that July phone call, which Fitzpatrick says showed "very poor

judgment."

"I don't understand why he did it. He shouldn't have done it," Fitzpatrick told The Morning Call in an interview on Capitol Hill, saying decisions on whether to open or close a law enforcement investigation should be left to law enforcement.

But that doesn't mean Fitzpatrick, who frequently has sided with Democratic colleagues in floor votes, will cross the aisle on impeachment.

Please see UKRAINE NEWS 2

# Dementia IMPROV

Teaching Care Partners  
How to Roll With It

7:00 pm  
Monday, October 21

Fellowship Community  
Zentz Community Center

FellowshipCommunity.com | 610.799.3000  
3020 Fellowship Drive, Whitehall, PA

