



**ULSTER COUNTY IDA hires videographer to livestream meetings**  
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**ELECTION 2020**

## Dems turn focus to minority voters

Biden, others eye surge as campaign heads to Nevada, South Carolina

**By Bill Barrow And Tom Foreman Jr.**  
*Associated Press*

**COLUMBIA, S.C.** » For I.S. Leevy Johnson, the Democrats' search for a challenger to take on President Donald Trump is personal. "There is what I call an 'ABT mood' in the black community: Anybody but Trump," said the

77-year-old who was the first black graduate of the University of South Carolina's law school. "It has people of color very motivated and excited about voting this time because they know how his administration has adversely affected them."

Now, as the election calendar turns to Nevada and South Carolina, states with substantial mi-

nority populations, that "anybody" moves closer to being identified. But the next stage in the nominating fight will test candidates such as Sens. Bernie Sanders of Vermont and Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota, and Pete Buttigieg, the former mayor of South Bend, Indiana. Their success thus far has come in front of

**DEMS » PAGE 8**



Democratic presidential candidate, former Vice President Joe Biden, takes photos with supporters after speaking at a campaign event in Columbia, S.C., Tuesday, Feb. 11, 2020.

GERALD HERBERT—ASSOCIATED PRESS

**MID-HUDSON**

## HEMP ON THE RISE

Area farmers band together to capitalize on new hemp regulations

**By Brian Hubert**  
*bhubert@freemanonline.com*

Several area farmers have banded together under the moniker Hempire State Growers seeking to reap the benefits of hemp-based commerce recently formalized under a new set of regulations passed by state lawmakers.

The new regulations, signed into law by Gov. Andrew Cuomo in December, created a regulatory framework for hemp extract production, processing and commerce and updates the hemp permitting process and regulates the extract industry through production standards, testing and labeling.

"The passage of this legislation is of great importance to New York farmers and to our economy, and creates a nation-leading framework for growing, processing, and selling hemp products in the state," State Sen. Jen Metzger, D-Rosendale said in an emailed statement. Metzger co-sponsored the legislation with Assemblywoman Donna Lupardo, D-Binghamton.

Jason D. Minard, who serves as both Hempire State Growers' in-house attorney and a grower himself, said the legislation creates the most comprehensive legal framework in the U.S. and does what the U.S. Food and Drug Administration has yet to do.

Minard, a fifth-generation farmer, said the new regulations will make New York state a national leader in CBD hemp. Besides growing hemp Minard is co-owner of the Minard Fam-

**HEMP » PAGE 8**



PHOTO PROVIDED

Jason D. Minard, a co-owner of Minard's Family Farms and Hempire State Growers Hudson Valley's in-house attorney, stands in a hemp field in Milton, N.Y. owned by Amy and Gail Hepworth, who founded the cooperative.

**CORONAVIRUS**

## Xi's early involvement in outbreak raises questions

**By Yanan Wang**  
*Associated Press*

**BEIJING** » A recent speech by Chinese President Xi Jinping that has been published by state media indicates for the first time that he was leading the response to a new virus outbreak from early on in the crisis.

The publication of the Feb. 3 speech was an apparent attempt to demonstrate that the Communist Party leadership had acted decisively from the beginning, but also opens up the Chinese leader to criticism over why the public was not alerted sooner.

In the speech, Xi said he gave instructions on fighting the virus on Jan. 7 and ordered the shutdown that began on Jan. 23 of cities at the epicenter of the outbreak. His remarks were published by state media late Saturday.

"On Jan. 22, in light of the epidemic's rapid spread and the challenges of prevention and control, I made a clear request that Hubei province implement comprehen-

**VIRUS » PAGE 8**



ANDY WONG—ASSOCIATED PRESS

A woman wearing a protective face mask receives a temperature check from a security guard as she enters Qianmen Street, a popular tourist spot, in Beijing, Sunday, Feb. 16, 2020.

**KINGSTON**

### Report of shots fired at apartment complex

Police are investigating a report of shots fired Sunday morning at the Rondout Gardens apartment complex downtown. **PAGE A4**



**WRESTLING**

### New Paltz's Palanca wins Section 9 title

Ethan Palanca captured the 145-pound championship in the Section 9, Division 1 wrestling tournament Saturday. **PAGE B1**

**BRITAIN**

### Wales bears brunt of Storm Dennis

Storm Dennis hammered Britain Sunday, bringing a month's worth of rain in just 48 hours to parts of South Wales. **PAGE A4**

**OPINION**

### Democratic primary gets more wild

Columnist Bill Press explains that Dems are feeling anxious and frustrated as the race for the nomination rages on. **PAGE A6**

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