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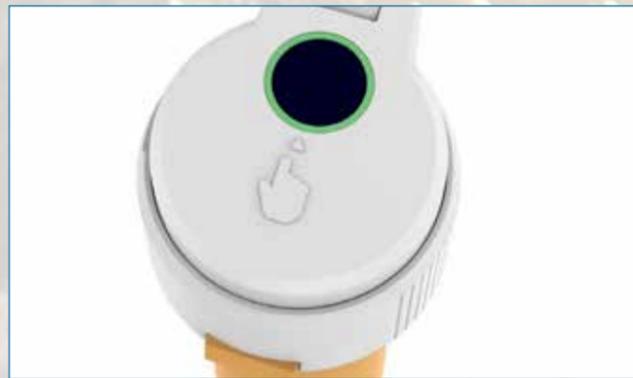
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PHOTO BY SCOTT EVERS

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2022 Legislative Agenda



Pill Bottle That Uses Your Thumbprint



Dover Comeback



HEADLINES

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MAIL-IN BALLOTS, PAID LEAVE, POLICE REFORM TOP 2022 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

BY CHARLIE MEGGINSON

In five weeks, Delaware’s 151st General Assembly will kick off its 2022 legislative session with many Democratic legislators looking to advance progressive causes that have previously struggled to gain traction.

Democrats control both chambers of the General Assembly by wide margins. There are 26 Democrats in the House of Representatives, compared to just 15 Republicans. In the Senate, Democrats hold 14 seats while Republicans hold seven seats.

Some of the issues likely to come up during the next session, which begins Jan. 6, include cementing the permanent use of mail-in voting, recreational cannabis legalization, paid family and medical leave, police review boards and changes to the law enforcement

officers’ bill of rights.

Lawmakers are also expected to learn more about their role in removing or suspending indicted Auditor of Accounts Kathy McGuiness. One proposal that has earned support in the wake of the McGuiness arrest is a push to create a statewide inspector general’s office.

After a few years of contentious gun control bills, only one has been filed as of now and it’s sponsored by a Republican.

Technically, the General Assembly is only in recess at the moment. Each session lasts two years, with the current one spanning from 2020 to 2022.

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DEM. LEADERSHIP STOPS SHORT OF INVITING PUBLIC TO IN-PERSON HEARINGS

BY CHARLIE MEGGINSON

When the General Assembly reconvenes in January, it will begin to hold all of its committee hearings in a hybrid fashion, with legislators attending in-person and members of the public having the opportunity to watch and provide comments online.

But in a press release announcing the move, House and Senate leaders stopped short of inviting members of the public to attend committee hearings in-person. That, they said, “will depend on the public health guidance as of early January.”

Democratic leaders framed the press release to suggest that hybrid meetings were the subject while implying that members of the public may not be allowed to return to Legislative Hall in January.

“Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic,” the press release said, “committee meetings held outside of the legislative chambers have been conducted exclusively via Zoom, giving the public an opportunity to fully participate in the legislative process, despite Legislative Hall being closed to the public.”

Virtual committee hearings resulted in record participation rates. Meetings conducted on Zoom routinely drew more than 50 members of the public, while several drew more than 100, and a few surpassed 500 participants.

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APPO, CHRISTINA FAMILIES COPE WITH BUS STRIKE; VOTECH SCHOOLS GO VIRTUAL

BY BETSY PRICE

Appoquinimink Schools were working Thursday morning to get all their students into classes after some bus drivers went on strike.

Appo schools planned to stay open, although spokeswoman Lillian Miles said that New Castle County Vo-Tech high schools had chosen to go to virtual classes as did Christina for Delcastle and Hodgson students affected by the strike.

“We reviewed the option of remote versus long delays with families in November and they were very clear that they didn’t want remote,” Miles said. “But that was our community. Vo-Tech only deals with high schools. They’re a different bird.”

The school system told parents in an email Thursday night that it expected First Student Bus Co., which

handles 26 routes for the district, to strike and would be sending affected families notes about what to do. All schools were affected, Miles said, because most drivers run two routes during the day.

Efforts were unsuccessful to reach First Student, headquartered in Ohio, for comment.

“This is the last thing we wanted to do, OK? Nobody wants to be on strike,” Leonard McCartney, vice President of Local Teamsters 326.

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DELAWARE BUS PAYMENT SYSTEM, DRIVER SHORTAGE COMPLICATE STRIKE SITUATION



BY BETSY PRICE

While the state of Delaware provides most of the money for school buses, it does not designate pay or benefit packages for drivers. That's left up to the transportation company that hires the drivers and means the Appoquinimink, Christina and Vo-Tech schools hit by a driver strike Thursday cannot step in to solve the disagreement between the drivers and First Student Transportation of Ohio. "We really don't have any control in this situation," said Matt Burrows, superintendent of education for the Appoquinimink School District.

The strike occurred as 60 members of Local Teamsters 326 negotiated with First Student Transportation of Ohio for better pay and health care plan, as well as a pension plan in addition to a 401K plan. The company and the drivers had reached agreement on pay, but not on healthcare or a pension when the drivers voted 27-23 to strike.

The decision led the VoTech schools to turn to virtual classes. Appo had buses running three routes instead of two, meaning some students had to get to schools early and stay much later than normal so everybody could be in class. Delcastle and Hodgson students in Christina were expected to follow their normal schedule whether they could get to school on their own or had to work from home.

The strike comes as Delaware schools already are having trouble finding enough bus drivers, partly because the current drivers are aging and retiring and no one is stepping up to take their place. The Department of Education has asked for bus driver compensation to be raised, and a state Senate Democratic spokesman said he expects the legislature to push for it.

Districts handle busing differently, Burrow said. Some own their buses and others contract with companies to handle transportation. Some downstate schools contract with individuals who drive buses to supplement their income, Burrows said.

"The state provides a set hourly driver rate for all contracts, which represents the funding that the state will cover," according to the Delaware Department of Education. "Contractors, as independent employers, make decisions around salaries for their privately employed staff." That means the state and districts don't know what drivers for contractors are paid.

However, job search site ZipRecruiter said school bus drivers are paid from \$13 to \$19 an hour, according to its survey. In comparison, Salary.com said the average city bus driver in Wilmington is \$44,101 as of Nov. 29, 2021, but the range falls between \$38,601 and \$49,401.

The state provides funding for buses through the state budget. Basically, Burrows said, the state bases pay for contracts—which cover equipment, maintenance and driver pay—on the mileage of a route. The state pays 90% of the cost of a route while the district picks up the other 10%.

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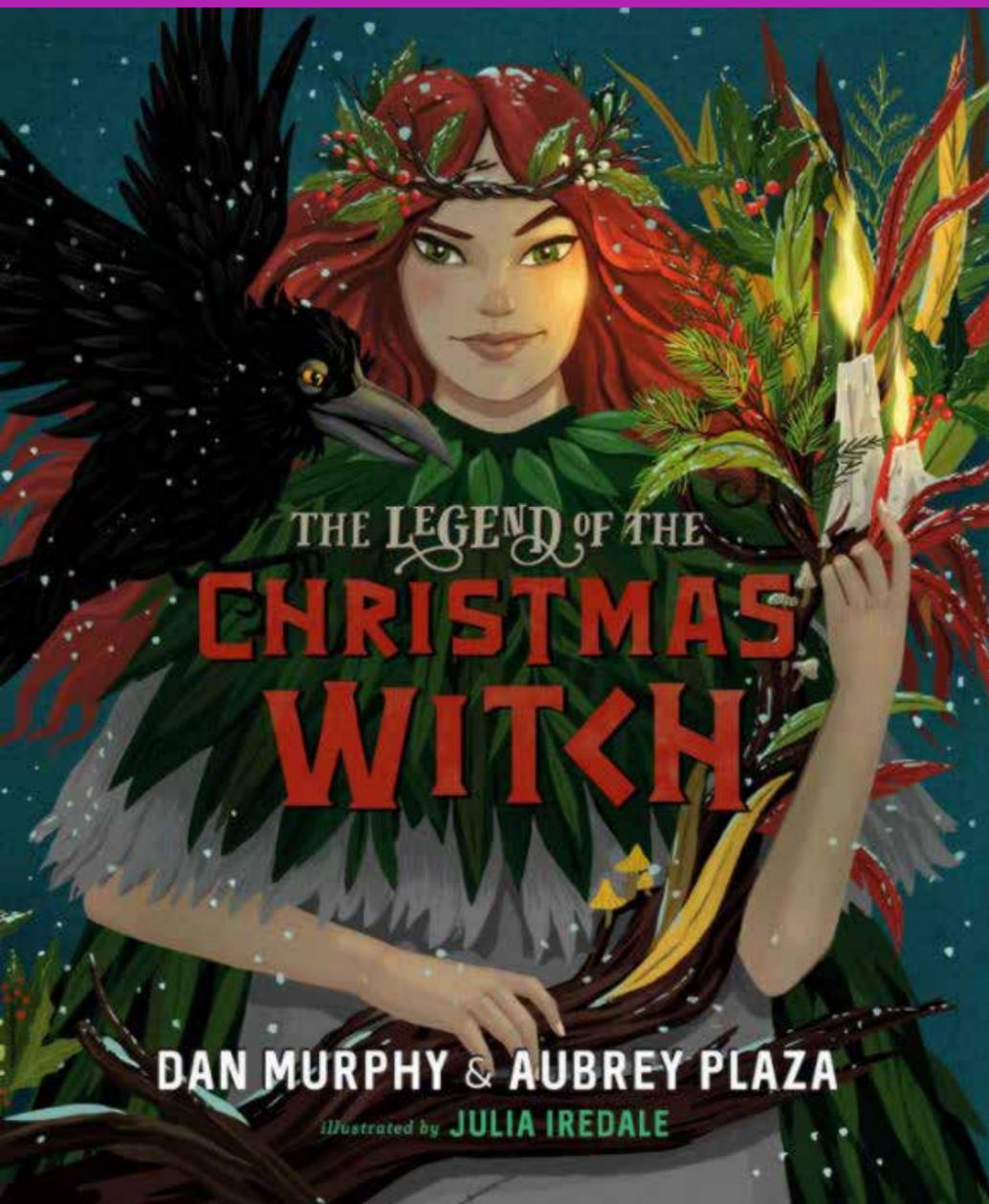


PHOTO BY SCOTT EVERS

CULTURE

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BY BETSY PRICE

New Castle County natives Aubrey Plaza and her creative partner Dan Murphy will read from their new Christmas book Dec. 15 at Brandywine Hundred Library.

The pair, who have known each other for 15 years including at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts, will read "The Legend of the Christmas Witch" at 10:30 at the library. The event is free and for ages 5 and older. Seats will be limited to 150 adults and 30 floor seats

AUBREY PLAZA, DAN MURRAY TO READ THEIR BOOK AT BRANDYWINE LIBRARY

for kids. They were filling up rapidly. Reserve one [here](#).

The picture book, published by Penguin Young Readers and Viking Children's Books, is the first the pair has written. It follows the tale of Santa's misunderstood twin sister, and is illustrated by Julia Ireland.

In the tale, the two siblings are separated as children and the sister, Kristtörn, is raised alone by a witch of the woods. As her power grows, so does her temper.

Determined to find her twin, she sets out on a perilous journey across oceans. But what she finds is a deep-seated fear of her powers and a confrontation that could threaten the celebration of Christmas.

"Dan and I are looking forward to bringing 'The Legend of The Christmas Witch' to life," Plaza said in a press release. "Growing up here, we spent a great deal of time in our New Castle County libraries exploring our love of reading with our families and we're thrilled to be returning to read from our book."

She said she and Dan has been working on the story for some time. "We can't wait to introduce a character as fierce, independent and headstrong as Kristtörn to readers this holiday season," she said.

Plaza was last seen starring in "Ingrid Goes West," which she also produced, and won the 2018 Independent Spirit Award for Best First Feature. On television, Plaza she recently starred in Noah Hawley's FX series "Legion" and is known for playing April Ludgate on "Parks and Recreation" opposite Chris Pratt. She next

will star with Michael Caine in "Best Sellers" and is in production on Guy Richie's film opposite Jason Statham.

Originally from Wilmington, Dan Murphy is a writer and producer. At Tisch he directed several short films. He and Aubrey founded Evil Hag Productions in 2016 and are developing documentary and narrative projects, including an animated series for Amazon. He served as an associate producer on the 35th Film Independent Spirit Awards, which Aubrey hosted.



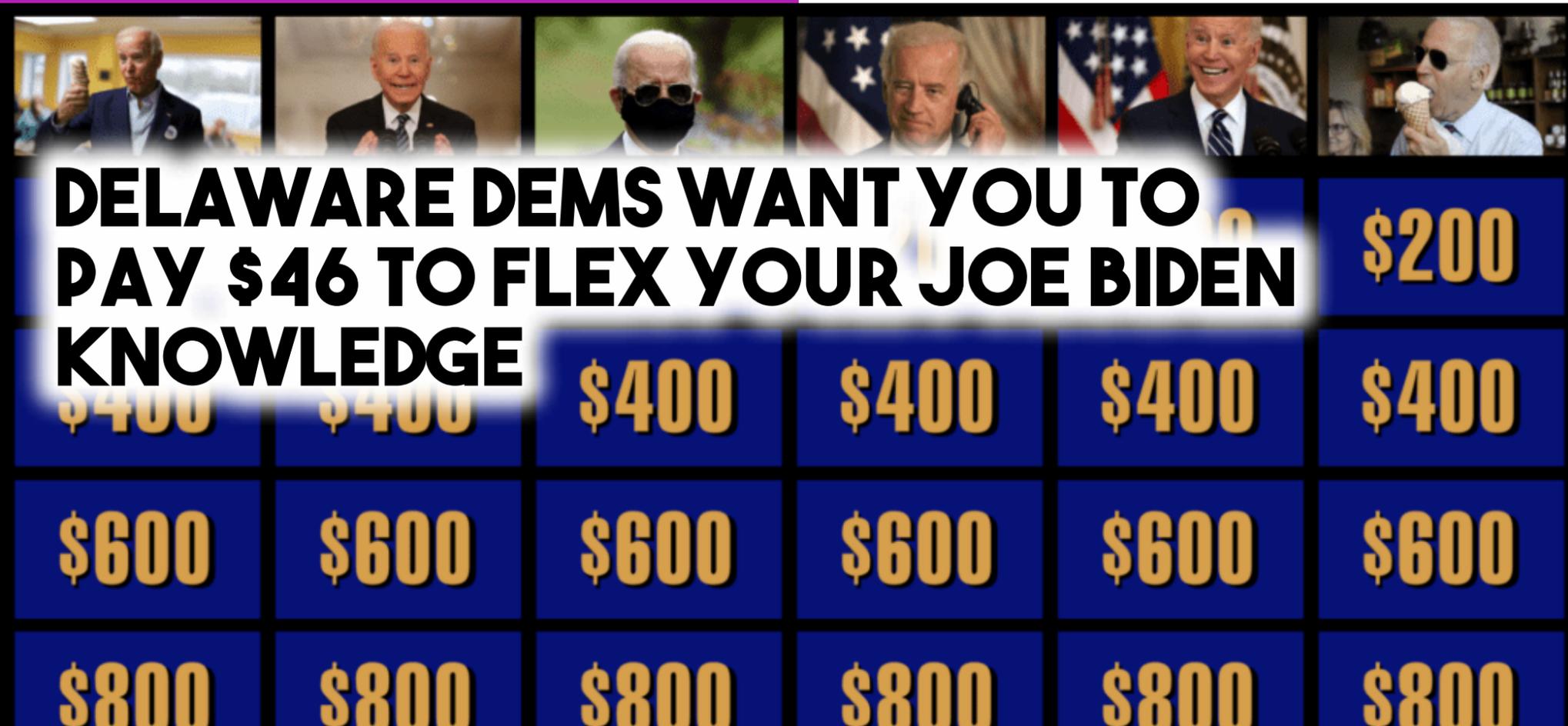
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BY CHARLIE MEGGINSON

Everybody in Delaware seems to have a Joe Biden story. After all, voters in Delaware have had 52 years to get to know the current U.S. president. You might have even seen him strolling down the boardwalk in Rehoboth with a chocolate chip ice cream cone in hand. That is, after all, his **favorite flavor**. Now, you may be able to cash in on all that knowledge.

The Delaware Democratic Party hosted a virtual Uncle Joe trivia night on Zoom Wednesday evening as a fundraiser. Bottom entry price: \$46 to play. Or \$200 for a team of five.

If you wanted to play along AND you thought an hour and a half of Biden-themed Zoom trivia is worth much

more, you could have become a sponsor. Individuals or companies who donated \$300 “were recognized at the event,” according to a promotional email.

Those who donated \$500 got—wait for it—TWO shout outs during the event; once before and once during.

And for those generous souls who are itching for a two-minute video or live spot during the Joe Biden trivia match, they had to fork over \$1,000 to the Delaware Democratic Party.

If that’s a little more than pocket change for you 20-somethings, the Dems offered a “young professional” discount for players under the age of 30: Play for \$25.

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE](#)

Cancer isn't waiting for COVID-19 to be over.

One in three Delawareans will get cancer. Unfortunately, many have put off their cancer screenings in the past year. Screenings detect cancer early, when it's most treatable. If you've skipped or canceled a screening due to the pandemic — for breast, cervical, colon, lung, or prostate cancer — don't wait one more day. **Call your health care provider to schedule your cancer screenings today.**

If you don't have a provider, we can help. If you are uninsured or underinsured, you may be eligible for free screenings. To learn more about eligibility requirements and recommended cancer screenings, and other information, please visit HealthyDelaware.org/Cancer.

To schedule your cancer screening by phone:

Call your health care provider, dial 2-1-1, or speak directly with a nurse navigator at the health system nearest you, below.

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ODESSA HOLIDAY TRADITION RETURNS AS FOUNDATION BEATS ENDOWMENT GOAL EARLY

BY BETSY PRICE

The Historic Odessa Foundation has two things to celebrate this holiday season. First, Louisa May Alcott's "Little Women" will be the basis for the return of the historic houses' Christmas tradition of recreating scenes from classic literature to celebrate the season.

Second, but perhaps most important, the foundation this week met its \$3 million goal to create an Independence and Perpetuity endowment fund one year earlier than expected. The fund will enable the foundation to sustain the preservation of its six historic museum properties and 72-acre site, its collection of more than 7,000 decorative art objects and its Living History educational programming.

The early goal was particularly gratifying to Debbie Buckson, executive director of the foundation, who once feared the whole site would be lost.

"Our goal was to raise \$3 million in three years, and

we exceeded that by \$70,000, a year ahead of schedule," she said Thursday. "This is going to make all the difference in securing the future of the foundation in perpetuity."

The site has made tremendous progress since 2005 when the foundation was established. "It's stunning how supportive and generous the MOT community and the people of the state of Delaware have been, in addition to all the donors who have a connection to us. We can't thank our community enough," she said.

"Historic Odessa was nearly gone. It came so close to disappearing as a museum...a public site. It took a lot of effort from a lot of people and now we have a secure future, which was our goal from the beginning."

The foundation will celebrate with a ceremony Monday, Dec. 13, to unveil a donor plaque.

Historic Odessa was forced to skip its customary Christmas festivities last year because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Instead, it installed thousands of white lights along the roof lines of the old buildings to brighten the December nights.

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE](#)

Holidays at Hagley

"Home for the Holidays: A Celebration of Family"

Gingerbread House Contest – November 26 to January 2

Santa Days - December 4 & 11

Twilight Tours – December 14, 15, 21, 22, 28 & 29.

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BUSINESS

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DELAWARE MEN CREATE PILL BOTTLE CAP THAT USES THUMBPRINT TO OPEN



BY BETSY PRICE

Your bottle of prescribed pills may soon come with a cap that requires your thumbprint to open. The cap also will be able to scan the inside of the bottle to see how many pills remain and will be equipped to recognize any openings or removals that are unusual.

FortisKap, the brainchild of two Delaware men who created the concept as college sophomores, is designed to keep medicines safe, track usage data, and prevent abuse both by the person for whom the pills are prescribed and by people who should not be taking the drugs.

Alexander Colton and Joseph W. White came up with the idea while students at The College of William & Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia.

Colton, a Delaware native who attended Salesianum School, had watched family and friends sink into addiction. He also worked at First State Pharmacy while in high school and saw the issues that drug stores deal with.

“After the prescription medication left the pharmacy, nobody had any understanding of what was going on with it,” Colton said. “It was gone from the whole medical world.”

White’s family lives in Winchester, Virginia, about 20 minutes from West Virginia, which has been hard hit by the opioid epidemic. During his senior year in high school, a nearby town had 20 overdoses in 24 hours.

The two men were sitting talking about the epidemic one day when they came up with the idea of having a lock on a prescription medication device that used a biometric signature, such as a fingerprint.

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE](#)

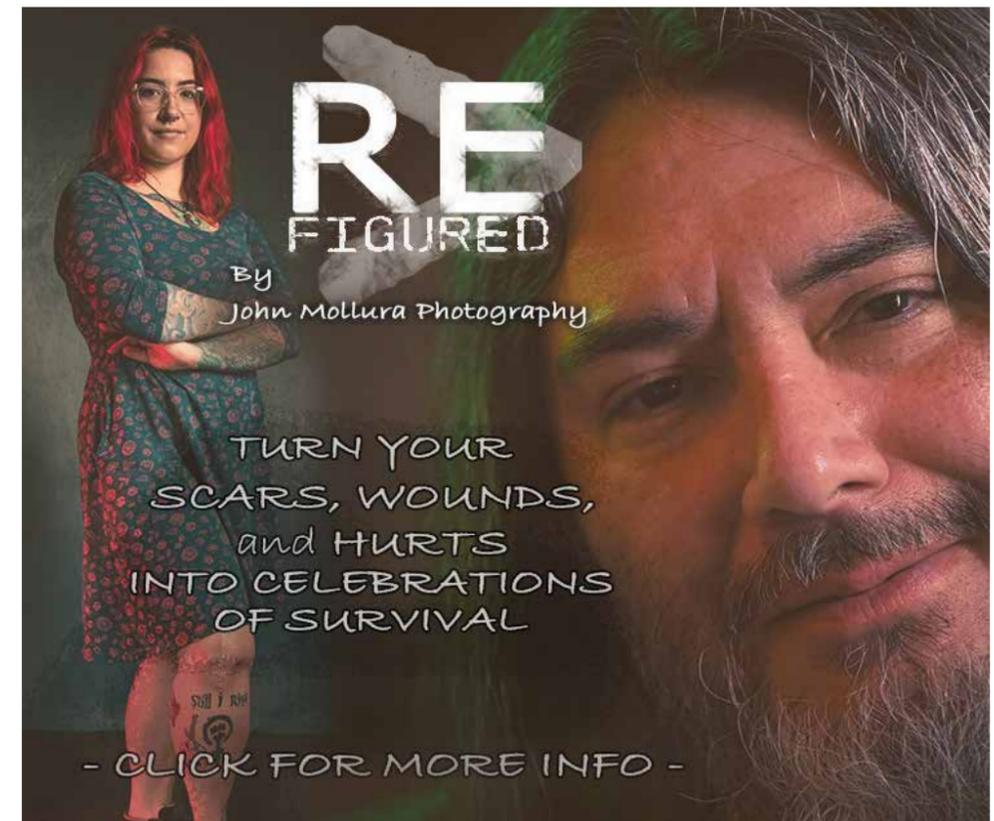


PHOTO BY LISA FROM PEXELS



FOOD & DINING

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REBRANDED NEWARK PIZZA RESTAURANT OFFERS DISH THAT BEAT BOBBY FLAY

However, the pizzas that made the shop famous are still stars. “We knew they had fantastic pizza—we didn’t want to change all that,” said Jester. “We wanted to add some dishes, so we didn’t just get people on ‘pizza night.’ If people want pasta or a meat-and-cheese board, they can have it.”

Appetizer selections include meatball bruschetta, fire-roasted arrabiata shrimp, caprese pasta salad and garlic monkey bread. In addition to Jester’s scampi, there is pasta Mariana (fresh basil, mozzarella and tomato sauce with roasted garlic) and rigatoni Bolognese.

Like to buck the norm? Order the hearty Bolognese on a pizza. Or how about ziti with meat sauce as a pie topping. Traditionalists can relax—tamer pizza options include “Just Cheese” or pepperoni.

The restaurant has a full bar, which patrons often overlooked in the past. To play it up, the partners have displayed the wine and spirits on freshly built shelves.

Other modern touches include a contemporary charcoal gray and fire engine red color scheme, tile and tasteful pizza-oriented accents. The refinished patio boasts new furniture and twinkle lights. Pizzeria Mariana now seats about 26 inside at various tables sizes and 30 outdoors.

Jester, previously executive director of High 5 Hospitality Group, and Bolt are building a culinary empire. They also own Great Big Jerk, a takeout-and-delivery eatery in Landenberg that sells jerk and barbecued chicken, and Full Circle Foods, which delivers prepared meals to the home.



BY PAM GEORGE

If you want to taste the dish that took down celebrity chef Bobby Flay, now is your chance. Former “Beat Bobby Flay” champion and local chef Robbie Jester has put his shrimp scampi on the menu of [Pizzeria Mariana](#) in Newark.

Don’t recognize the East Cleveland Avenue restaurant’s name? It’s a rebranding of Wood Fired Pizza Shop, which Jester and partner Tim Bolt bought into last August. The new brand debuted Tuesday, Dec. 7.

Operating partners Jester and Bolt—who own the restaurant with Reds Ferris and Matt Janes—decided to rename the business to put their stamp on the establishment. Bolt’s youngest daughter is named Mariana.

But the fresh take also emphasizes the enhanced menu. For example, Pizzeria Mariana goes beyond mozzarella sticks, pizza and one salad choice. For instance, the menu includes pasta, charcuterie boards and additional appetizers.



PHOTO BY MARY ELIZABETH PHILLIPS

GOVERNMENT

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WILMINGTON TERM LIMIT RESOLUTION COULD ALLOW OFFICIALS TO SPEND 36 YEARS ON COUNCIL

BY CHARLIE MEGGINSON

UPDATE: Councilwoman Shané Darby has informed Delaware LIVE/Town Square LIVE that she will not be in attendance at Thursday's City Council meeting. The resolutions will now be heard during the Jan. 6, 2022 meeting.

Wilmington's city council will vote on two contentious resolutions next month, both sponsored by Shané Darby.

The first resolution asks the Delaware General Assembly to amend the city's charter to impose term limits on council members.

The second resolution presented by the Democrat from the city's Second District urges the General Assembly to give all incarcerated people, including felons, the ability to vote in Delaware.

Term limits

The tiered term limit system proposed in Darby's resolution would allow an individual to serve a maximum of 36 years on the city council.

If passed by the Wilmington City Council and approved by the General Assembly, an individual could serve no more than three four-year terms as a district

representative, three four-year terms as an at-large candidate, and three four-year terms as Council President. There are eight district-elected seats in the city council and four citywide-elected at-large seats.

Darby said during a Dec. 1 Intergovernmental Committee meeting that she was inspired to draft the resolution because data shows the majority of Americans want elected officials to have term limits.

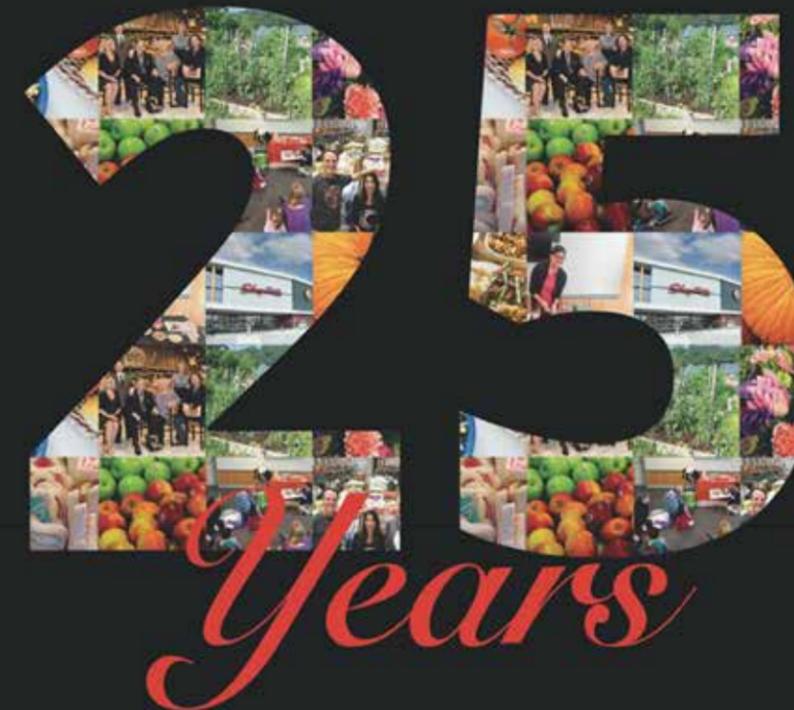
Term limits, she said, are necessary because "politicians have self-serving interests in maintaining the status quo and maintaining power and control over who maintains and who remains in the seat."

Efforts were not successful Monday to reach Darby for comment.

"Having term limits allows for younger people to run," she told the committee. "So a lot of times you see a lot of older people who stay in these positions for decades and it creates a barrier or a block for younger people to be able to enter into the political scene—especially in Delaware, where we have a Delaware Way where based off of name, based off of status, people remain in positions."

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DESPITE CHARGES, MCGUINNESS RANKS SECOND NATIONALLY ON TRANSPARENCY REPORTS

BY CHARLIE MEGGINSON

Auditor Kathy McGuinness's office currently ranks second nationally in the number of reports shared publicly on the federal government's Oversight [website](#).

The site contains publicly accessible reports, investigations and recommendations from state and local inspection offices and is managed by the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency.

Shiji Thomas, spokesperson for the National Science Foundation Office of the Inspector General, said McGuinness has been one of the most active participants since the inception of the Oversight.gov state and local page.

"Kathy McGuinness and her team provided critical support right from the start," Thomas said. "Through the development and pilot phases, McGuinness' team worked closely with the Oversight.gov team to make the page a reality."

Alongside McGuinness, the top six agencies include Oregon's Secretary of State Audits Division, Indiana Office of the Inspector General, Chicago Office of the

Inspector General, Arlington County Auditor, and Florida's Office of the Chief Inspector General.

A total of 381 reports have been submitted with Delaware's Auditor's Office accounting for 115 of those reports.

"My office works diligently, with a fixed determination, to provide independent, objective oversight of the state government's use of taxpayer dollars," McGuinness said in a press release. "It is a proud moment when you see the difference your efforts have made. I'm excited to keep with this momentum and continue serving the great state of Delaware."

The announcement comes as McGuinness faces numerous felony and misdemeanor corruption charges alleging conflict of interest, felony theft, non-compliance with procurement law, official misconduct and felony witness intimidation.

She's accused of arranging public payments to a campaign consultant to avoid regulator scrutiny, firing workers in her office to hire her daughter, who she allowed to use a state car and kept paying while the daughter was in college and not working, and attempting to intimidate employees who might help investigators looking into her conduct.

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NEWARK MAN INDICTED FOR POSSESSING, DISTRIBUTING CHILD PORN

BY BETSY PRICE

A 34-year-old Newark man has been indicted by a federal grand jury in Wilmington for distributing and possessing child pornography.

Melvin Janvier III has been in state custody since his arrest on July 20, 2021, according to a press release from David C. Weiss, U.S. attorney for the District of Delaware.

“The production, distribution and collection of child pornography is a heinous shadow industry that targets the most vulnerable among us—our children,” Weiss said. “Our office is dedicated to combatting this abhorrent industry and bringing those who lurk in its shadows to justice.”

If convicted, Janvier faces a mandatory minimum penalty of 15 years in prison, with a maximum penalty of 40 years incarceration. Actual sentences for federal crimes are typically less than the maximum penalties. A federal district court judge will determine any sentence after taking into account the U.S. sentencing guidelines and other statutory factors.

The case was investigated by the Crimes Against Children and Human Trafficking Squad of the FBI Maryland Child Exploitation Task Force and will be prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Briana Knox.



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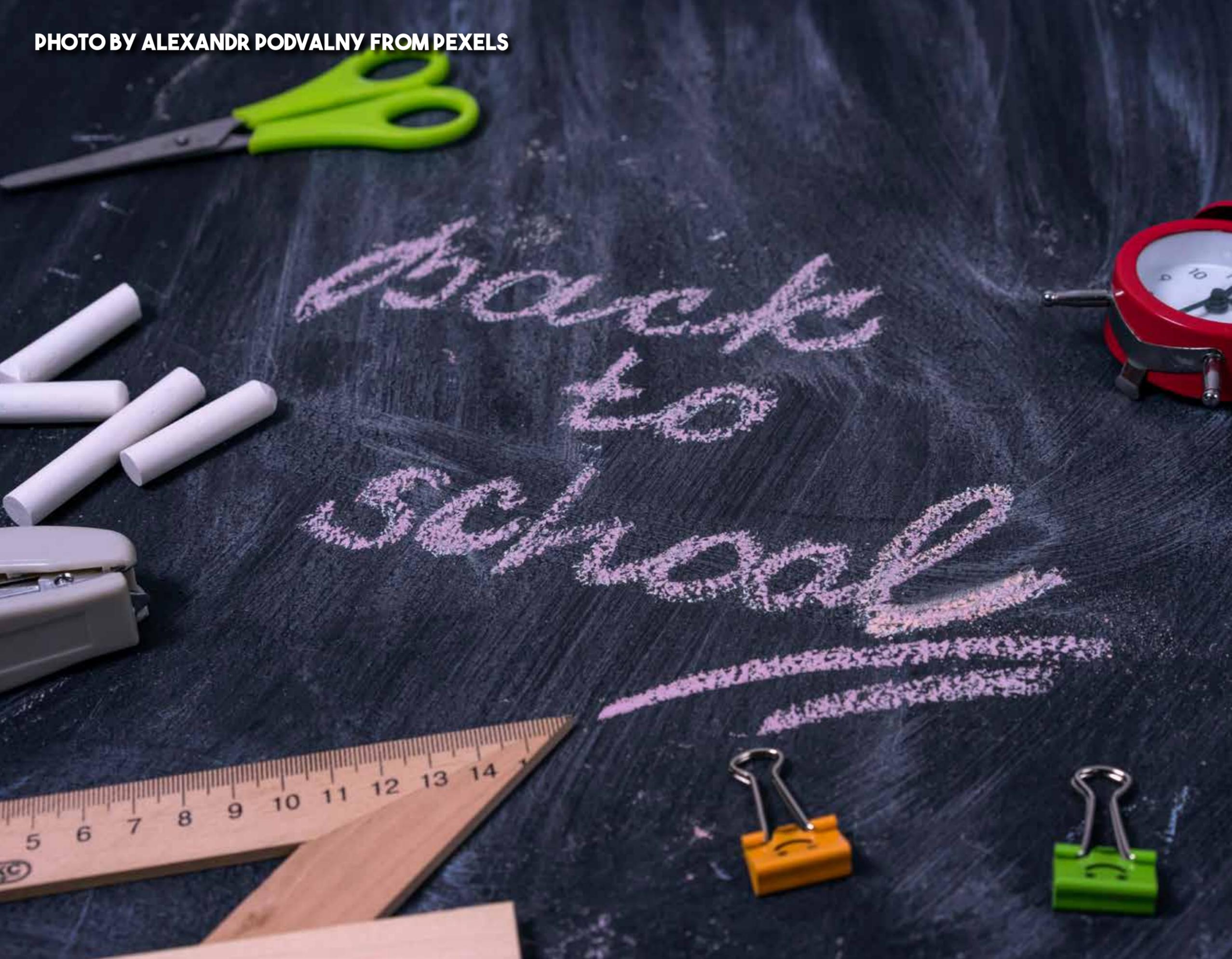
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EDUCATION

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SCHOOL BUS DRIVERS RETURN WITH NEW CONTRACT VOTE NEXT WEEK

BY BETSY PRICE

Christina and Appoquinimink school district buses ran as normal Friday morning as drivers returned to work after a one-day strike with a new contract to vote on next week.

They were among the systems disrupted when Teamsters Union 326 bus drivers went on strike Thursday after contract negotiations with First Student Transportation failed.

The move had Appoquinimink, New Castle Vo-Tech, Christina Districts and some charter schools—which had about a month notice about a possible strike—moving fast to get kids into class.

The drivers had negotiated better pay, but wanted better healthcare and a pension plan in addition to their 401K. Late Thursday, 326 Vice President Leonard McCartney said the company has improved its offer and

that the drivers would vote on the contract next week. In the meantime, they were to report to work Friday.

The strike led the VoTech schools to turn to virtual classes. Appo had buses running three routes instead of two, meaning some students had to get to schools early and stay much later than normal so everybody could be in class.

Delcastle and Hodgson students in Christina were expected to follow their normal schedule Thursday, whether they could get to school on their own or had to work from home.

Lilian Miles called the tentative agreement “better than a cooling off period,” which the company had said they would try to institute before drivers walked off the job.

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE](#)

No backyard garden? No problem.

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APPO SUPERINTENDENT: HICCUPS IN STRIKE PLAN, BUT WE HAVE A LOT OF HEROES

BY BETSY PRICE

By the end of the school day Thursday as the Appoquinimink system coped with the first day of a school bus driver strike, Superintendent Matt Burrows said the situation wasn't ideal, but that the system had a lot of heroes that day.

"We will have to give a huge thank you to a lot of people," he said. "I'm going to miss people but I've been all the way from all of our staff, our transportation staff, our community, our parents for giving us grace and understanding as we go through this to our contractors and bus drivers who picked up these extra runs to make sure that our kids are getting to school and not missing instructional time."

Thomas Poehlmann, director of Safety, Security and Operations, pointed out that three women who work in the transportation department drove buses Friday and will continue to as long as the strike is on.

"I just wanted to highlight that we're doing everything, including having our own people here hop on a bus, and I hope this will be resolved quickly," he said.

The strike occurred as 60 members of Local Teamsters 326 negotiated with First Student Transportation of Ohio for better pay and health care plan, as well as a pension plan in addition to a 401K plan. The company and the drivers had reached agreement on pay, but not on healthcare or a pension when the drivers voted 27-23 to strike. The drivers handled 26 of Appo's bus runs.

It is true that in order to make sure students are in all classes, some bus-riding students were having to arrive at schools an hour before they open and stay up to two and one-half hours after they close, the administrators said.

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE](#)



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Lower & Middle | November 11



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“We saw a boost in website referrals from Delaware LIVE during our admission season.”

- URSULINE ACADEMY

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HEALTH

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DELAWARE COVID-19 CASES, HOSPITALIZATIONS JUMP; STILL NO OMICRON

BY BETSY PRICE

The number of new daily COVID-19 cases in Delaware has risen to 603.9, up dramatically from 432.9 last week. That's fueling a rise in hospitalizations, which hit 317, up 51 from last week.

In turn, that's one of the reasons that ChristianaCare announced this week it would begin postponing elective surgeries. The hospital also cited non-COVID-related hospitalizations. That includes the flu, which had 84 cases reported in the most recent week. As of Dec. 4, there have been 125 laboratory-confirmed cases for the current season—but only a fraction of flu cases are laboratory confirmed. Many are diagnosed by rapid test kits in a doctor's office or through the if-it-quacks-like-a-duck method, meaning there's likely hundreds to thousands more circulating.

The flu cases involved 79 people from New Castle County, 12 from Kent County and 34 from Sussex County. Public health officials blame the rise in respiratory diseases on the return of cold weather and more indoor activities, as well as the easy spread of the Delta variant, even in the face of rising vaccinations.

So far, the state has not detected a case of the Omicron variant, which has moved across the world from Africa and is said to be more infectious than Delta, but not more deadly.

To combat COVID-19, the state is recommending people be vaccinated if they are five or older, and get a booster shot if they are eligible. Everyone over the age of 16 is now eligible.

This week, the state will launch a new program that will send pharmacy employees and other into people's home to give them COVID-19 vaccines in an effort to help people with mobility or transportation issues be as protected as possible.

The state also recommends flu vaccines, which are widely available.

The Delaware Division of Public Health reported Friday that the seven-day average for the percentage of total positive tests also rose to 9.2%, up from 8% last week. Of those hospitalized, 33 are critically ill, up only one from last week. The state has seen 2,211 deaths reported, including 17 in the last week.

At the same time, the percentage of Delawareans who are fully vaccinated continue to creep up to 62.6%, up from 61.8% last week, according to the Centers for Disease Control.

In other vaccination numbers, those five and older who have received at least one dose of vaccine is 78.8%, up from 77.7%; those 12 and over with one dose is 84.6%, up from 83.7%; and those 18 and older is 86.6%, up from 85.6%.

The number of breakthrough cases also continue to rise, with 8,341, or 1.5% of fully vaccinated individuals. That's caused 132 hospitalizations and 102 deaths.



STATE OF DELAWARE
DATA UPDATE**572.7****New Cases**

7-day Average

8.7%**Positive Tests**

7-day Average

**CARNEY SAYS HE WON'T IMPOSE
INDOOR MASK MANDATE**View more COVID-19 data: de.gov/healthycommunity**BY BETSY PRICE**

It's just a matter of time before the Omicron variant of COVID-19 shows up in Delaware, state officials say. The virus strain has been found in surrounding states, but has not yet been detected in Delaware, said Dr. Karyl Rattay, director of the Division of Public Health.

And they've looked.

The state lab routinely pulls random samples of positive tests to see what type of COVID they are. With all the ballyhoo surrounding Omicron, the lab went back four weeks and pulled extra samples to test and still found no Omicron, Rattay said.

The Omicron variant, first found in Africa, preys on the unvaccinated, she and others said. It is believed to be highly infectious but not necessarily more dangerous.

Omicron is the latest worry in a 20-month-old pandemic that has seen a surge of cases caused by the

Delta variant, a drop in massive testing as more people are vaccinated, and a big increase in cases among the unvaccinated school-aged—and yet no real spread in schools, where a mask mandate is in place.

The state also is seeing more flu circulating, which also threatens to fill hospital beds.

“We’re going to struggle to get out of this pandemic if we don’t get more people vaccinated, fully vaccinated and boosted,” Rattay said.

While Rattay and Gov. John Carney urged people to wear masks indoors to avoid being infected or infecting others, Carney said he was not going to issue a mandate demanding indoor use of masks.

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DOVER DEFENSIVE EFFORT KEYS COMEBACK

BY GLENN FRAZER

An early season matchup of two top five teams did not disappoint as fourth-ranked Dover outlasted No. 2 Middletown 58-53 in boys basketball Thursday night.

The Cavaliers dominated the opening eight minutes, shooting at a torrid pace to take a 24-5 lead at the end of the first quarter. Junior forward Jaiden McGhee nailed his first two three-point shots and finished with a game-high 20. Christion Simms, Jehiah Eldridge also drained long-range shots for the Cavs in the first half. Down by 19, Dover went on a 12-0 run to start the second period to get back in the game. Late in the half, Amir Hite made a spin move in the paint for a layup that cut Middletown's lead to four and had the Dover gym rocking. The Senators were paced by Jaheim Harrell (seven points), Tyrone Tolson (six points) and Hite (six points) in the half, as they outscored the Cavaliers 18-5 in the second quarter to head into the break down by six.

The entire second half was extremely competitive as neither team led by more than six points. Dover tied the game at 37-all with 2:18 left in the third quarter fueled by the play on both ends of the floor by Kendall Abrams. He made two free throws, a "foul-line" jumper and a baseline layup, plus he collected a defensive rebound in that three-minute stretch. Middletown responded as McGhee made a corner "trey" (his fourth of the night) and the Cavs held on to a 44-41 advantage after the third quarter.

Dover's Abrams opened the final period by following his own miss, getting two offensive boards before hitting a shot off the glass while drawing a foul and completed the traditional three-point play with a foul shot to tie the game at 41-41. Moments later, Dover forced a turnover and Denim Perkins made a perfect outlet pass to Kenyon Scott who "kissed" the glass with a layup to give his team its first lead of the game at 46-44. That lead was short-lived as McGhee scored in the paint and Jaden Rogers converted both ends of a one-and-one opportunity with 5:41 to go.

The play over the next three minutes was dictated by both teams' "hustling" defense, forcing several turnovers. With Middletown up 50-48, Tyrone Tolson made a long-range shot giving Dover the lead at 51-50. The next trip down the floor, Scott stole the ball near mid-court and laid it in to give the Senators their largest lead at 53-50 with two minutes left. After Harrell drew a charge, Dover's Hite hustled to save a loose ball on the other end, and from the floor, passed to Scott who made another layup and it was a 55-50 game with just over a minute to play. It was a game played at the foul line the rest of the way with both teams scoring three points each over the final minute.

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2021 ALL CLASS FOOTBALL TEAMS ARE ANNOUNCED

BY NICK HALLIDAY

[CLICK HERE TO SEE THE TEAMS](#)

DON'T MISS THE ACTION!

Check www.delawarelive.com for the late-breaking high school football championship stories. The two late games are Division 3 Smyrna vs. Middletown and Division 1 Laurel vs. St. Elizabeth.

CAESAR RODNEY GRAPPLERS MOUNT COMEBACK



BY BENNY MITCHELL

Cody Waski went out onto the mat at 145 pounds with the weight of his Riders teammates on his shoulders in the final bout of the night. Caesar Rodney was trailing 34-31 with criteria not in their favor, Waski knew he needed a bonus point win for the Riders to prevail in their Henlopen Conference Northern Division opener.

Waski won a 10-0 major decision over Andrew Long, giving Caesar Rodney a 35-34 victory over Sussex Central.

“Honestly I just knew the team had made a comeback and I needed to go out and finish it off, I have been looking forward to being in a moment like that for a long, long time,” Waski said.

Caesar Rodney trailing 34-16 with just four bouts left in the match, the Riders needed to win out and win out with at least seven bonus points.

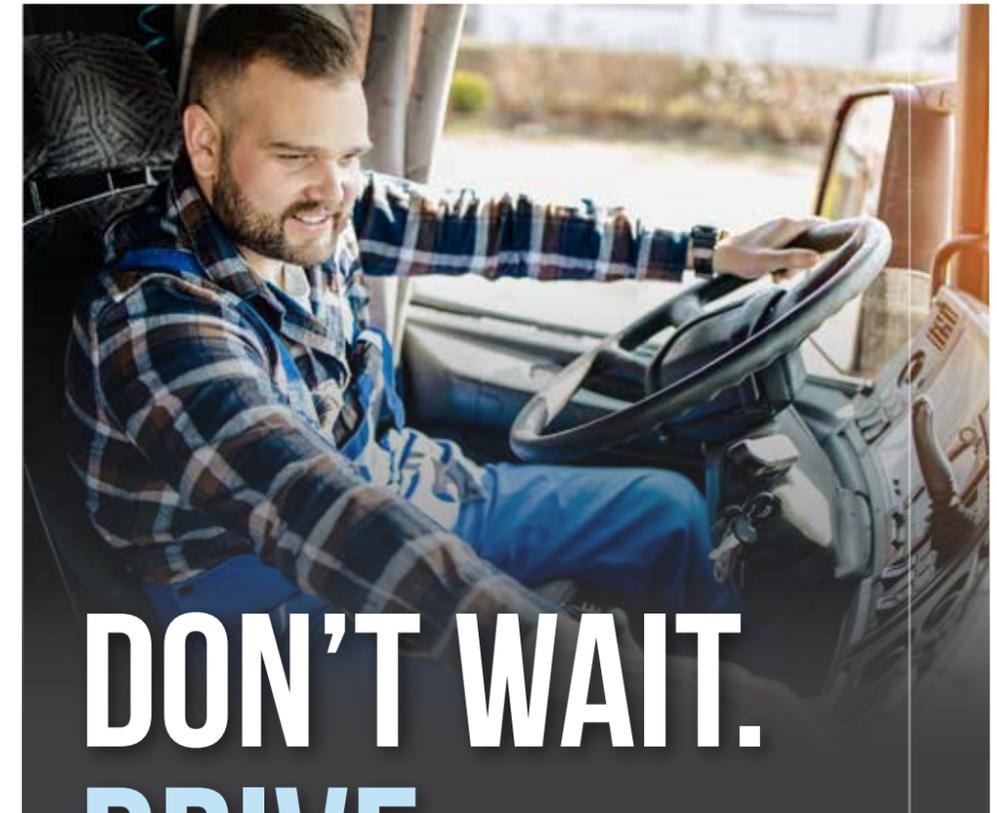
Dylan Bennett got the Riders comeback started with a pin at 126 pounds in 1:23. In one of the night’s most exciting bouts M’Ja Smith trailed Evan Broomall 3-2 at the start of the third period. Smith scored a takedown and then locked up a cradle and settled in for the pin in 5:16 closing the score to 34-28.

“We have been working hard and during the break before the third period I looked over at my teammates and knew I had to go out and get it done for them. We call it cradle crazy at practice and work on it all the time,” Smith said.

Cameron Cataldi won a 14-8 decision at 138 pounds, setting the table for Waski in the final bout.

Caesar Rodney head coach Dan Rigby praised his wrestlers total team performance in the Riders’ victory.

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 DELAWARE TECH



ARCHMERE WINS BIG IN FIRST EVER 2A STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

BY NICK HALLIDAY

Archmere Auks won the first ever Class 2A state championship with a big win over the Woodbridge Blue Raiders. In front of a big crowd at the University of Delaware, Archmere shut out Woodbridge by a score of 27-0.

Both teams had unsuccessful first drives that led to punts. On the second possession for the Auks, they would drive down the field for their first score of the game as Declan Pearson plowed his way into the end zone from five yards out giving Archmere a 7-0 lead with a successful PAT kick from Chris Albero with 4:22 in the first quarter.

Archmere's defense would get the offense the ball right back. The Auks defense forced the Blue Raiders into another punting situation. A high snap on the punt

forced the Woodbridge punter back about five yards which allowed Cole Fenice enough time to come in and block the punt, which gave Archmere great field position. With 12 seconds left in the first quarter, Pearson got into the end zone again this time from two yards out, giving Archmere a 13-0 lead after a failed PAT attempt from Albero. That score would conclude the scoring for the first half.

Late in the third quarter, the Auks extended their lead. Johnny Kim took a handoff on a misdirection, breaking it down the sideline for 81 yards, giving Archmere a 20-0 lead with 2:40 left in the third quarter. They then tacked on another touchdown midway through the fourth quarter as quarterback Albero scored on a six-yard

keeper solidifying a 27-0 victory for the first-ever Class 2A football state championship.

Archmere's defense was dominating all day anchored by their leading tackler-lineman Scott Lucarelli, Kevin DiGregorio, and Conor Udovich. They kept Woodbridge out of the end zone coming up big in the third quarter with two fourth down stops deep in the red zone. They held Woodbridge to just 39 yards in the first half and held them to under 150 yards total in the game.

Kenny Newton led Woodbridge with 97 rushing yards on 24 carries, and six yards receiving.



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