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Last Light on Key Rte. 1 Section Going Away



DelState Students Named White House HBCU Scholars



Post One Wins 3rd Consecutive Legion Championship

photo link: Brian K. Leonard



# Headlines

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# DELAWARE FARM GROWS PUMPKINS TO HELP SAVE COLORADO BUSINESS

BY BETSY PRICE

The Great Pumpkin would approve.

Torrential rains and hail in Colorado have sparked a pumpkin pay-it-forward act of kindness from the owners of Poplar Hall, a historic farm near Newark.

Brian Santiago of Colorado Springs has had his heirloom pumpkin crops wiped out three times by storms and hail as big as a quarter or half dollar. No pumpkins means no seeds for his [Blue Pumpkin Seed Co.](#), which mails seeds for rare, heirloom, organic and hybrid varieties around the world.

Greg and Dawn Shelton, who own Poplar Hall, have been buying seeds from Santiago, with Greg and Brian bonding over their love of the blue varieties so much that they talk about once a month. After hearing about Santiago's plight, Greg Shelton volunteered to plant a larger patch than he originally planned and send seeds back from every one of the 25 varieties that they plant.

"It helps us stay in business," Santiago said last week from Colorado, in the middle of the 12th hail storm

this summer. In the background, ice could be heard plinking off the ground, roof and concrete steps.

Santiago said Blue Pumpkin wholesales some seeds, but he and his wife grow their own heirloom pumpkins to package and sell.

"There's some rare kinds that I have none left of," Santiago said. "If my pumpkin plants don't make it, he's kind of my insurance policy. He's gonna grow those and then I'll be able to carry that line on since they're so difficult to get ahold of."

The Sheltons had added a pumpkin patch to Poplar Hall, which is on the National Registry of Historic Places, partly because they love Halloween and harvests events so much. The two-story house was built in the mid-1700s in Pencader Hundred, and the property includes six other buildings. The Sheltons are only the fourth owners.

Not just any pumpkin would do, Greg Shelton decided when he put in his patch. He likes pumpkins that are a

bit off-center, with unusual textures or colors. An ad showing a muted gray blue pumpkin led Shelton to Blue Pumpkin Seed Co.

"I realized he was going for a different style and different look and had knocked it out of the park because he has a really amazing collection of seeds from all over the world," Shelton said.

## FROM INSURANCE TO PUMPKINS

Santiago founded the company in 2020. He had been working at a Progressive Insurance call center for 11 years when he decided to take a break. He and his wife started selling vegetables and pumpkin seeds from their garden.

"It just started to take off and so I was able to quit my job," Santiago said.

They started an Etsy site that went well and then launched their own website. Seeds come in small clear plastic bags and seem to sell for \$4 a bag.

Blue Pumpkin last year sold 122 varieties of pumpkin seeds and Santiago still hopes this year to be able to push that up to 150. Pumpkins were a kind of natural crop for him. Fall and Halloween are two of his favorite things.

"I would decorate the house with my mom, and then I've just always loved pumpkins," he said. "So when we found our property in 2018, I started a little pumpkin patch and over the past few years we have just kind of dedicated our entire front and back lot to them."

On a normal year, he and his wife will clean and dry the seeds through January. A lot of the people who buy his seeds are small farmers, Santiago said.

[READ MORE HERE](#)



BY NICK HALLIDAY

Back in June, Brian Perry of Frederica got the call of a lifetime. The Special Olympics informed him that he would be representing the USA in the World Games in Berlin, Germany, this summer.

“We were shocked but also thrilled,” said his parents, Christine and Manny Perry. “It took us months to absorb that we were all going to Berlin. “It was surreal. Words cannot describe how proud we are of Brian and his accomplishments.”

Brian qualified for the 50-meter freestyle Olympic finals. The final heat is also known as the championship heat, which meant he was competing against the top qualifiers from around the world.

“Every day in Germany I wore the red, white, and blue Special Olympics USA uniforms, which made me very proud,” he said. “I got to bond with my swim team members and coaches for over two weeks and it was

# FREDERICA'S BRIAN PERRY DEFIES ODDS, BECOMES AN OLYMPIAN

fun. We cheered each other on during swim events and celebrated each other’s successes.”

Swimming in the international 50-meter freestyle was a challenge.

“The competition was tougher than I have ever had,” Brian said. “These were world class swimmers, and I am very proud to have won the fifth-place medal. It was an amazing adventure that I’ll remember forever.”

Brian’s love for swimming started at a young age. “My mom had me in the water at the YMCA when I was six weeks old to teach me to float and to love the water,” he said.

## PERRY’S SWIMMING START

Christine and Manny Perry recalled that 43 years ago, a doctor told them Brian wouldn’t have the mental capacity to be very successful in life and that they should consider institutionalizing him. They refused.

“We raised him with two younger siblings and gave him all the opportunities available to him,” they said. “We believed having strong social skills and keeping Brian in the community would get Brian places and look at him now!”

Brian said meeting new people and making new friends is important to him. He defied the odds and

competed in many Special Olympic sports.

“I like swimming because I feel the water makes me free,” he said. “When I am with my swimming trainer, I learn the strokes better and I increase my stamina. I also love the muscles I developed and the weight I lost with all the training.”

Brian was happy with his finish, but he’s not done.

“Right now, I am taking a break from swim training but I will be back at the Y pool soon to be ready to swim for the Kent Wild Kats for the **DE Special Olympics**,” he said.

He would like to compete in the 2025 Special Olympics, which will be held in Canada, and wear red, white, and blue again for his country. But the real goal is to bring home another medal, hopefully a gold one.



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# SHOULD VO-TECHS DO AWAY WITH THE SAT TESTS?

BY JAREK RUTZ

Delaware Secretary of Education Mark Holodick wondered aloud Thursday night about whether it's effective for Vo-tech students who are focused on a pathway to a job to have to take the Scholastic Assessment Test. **The State Board of Education** was discussing assessments and accountability when Holodick began talking about the SATs.

The SATs have been around for almost a century and are typically taken in high school with scores sent to prospective colleges and universities as part of a student's application. In Delaware, the state has been using the test each spring since 2016 to assess high school juniors' abilities in critical reading, mathematical reasoning and writing skills, students and if they have developed over time and that they need to be successful in college and career. More than two million students in the country take it every year.

In a July 20 meeting, Holodick pointed out that the First State is one of eight that gives the SATs to all 11th

graders, saving college-bound students the cost of paying for the test. The other states that require it are Colorado, Connecticut, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, New Hampshire and Rhode Island.

"One of the obvious pros is many students see it as a relevant assessment and try really hard on it," Holodick said.

When the students were taking the Delaware Student Testing Program or the Smarter Balanced Assessment "they didn't take it very seriously because it's really not relevant to them," he said. "So it's easier to get the kids sort of charged up and excited about doing well on the SAT."

The state-administered Smarter Balanced Assessment is an end-of-the-year summative test that measures the abilities of students in grades three through eight in math and reading.

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# Culture

photo link: Delaware Art Museum  
photo by S. Woodloe



# CANDLELIGHT'S 'SOUND OF MUSIC' IS SELLING OUT SHOWS

BY BETSY PRICE

Apparently, seeing a live production of “The Sound of Music” is among [Candlelight Theatre](#) fans’ list of favorite things. The current production at the Arden theater, which ends Aug. 26, had the largest opening weekends of any show at Candlelight since the COVID-19 pandemic started.

“The Sound of Music,” which tells the story of the Von Trapp family and their escape from Nazi Austria, features faces familiar to the dinner theater’s audiences, with the added bump of two sets of children who swap out the roles of the seven Von Trapp children.

The 1959 Broadway show led to the filming of the Oscar-winning movie, includes classic tunes such as the eponymous title song as well as “Climb Ev’ry Mountain,”

“The Hills Are Alive,” “So Long, Farewell,” “Edelweiss,” and, of course, “My Favorite Things.”

In addition to a new musical, the Candlelight has introduced a new menu to reflect the show’s German and Austrian traditions.

Paul McElwee will play Captain Von Trapp to Sophie Jones’ Maria. It’s the third time they’ve been paired in a Candlelight performance. He’s played King Arthur to her Guinevere in “Camelot” and they played the parents of con artist Frank Abagnale in “Catch Me If You Can.”

“It’s really nice to have the opportunity to play this role opposite someone I have a kind of a theater history with,” McElwee said. “We have good chemistry and we have a great time together. Maria is really the star of the show, and Sophie is just wonderful.”

McElwee said his favorite moment in the show is when the children are called on stage. “If you remember from the movie, the Captain is very strict at the beginning, and he sounds a whistle to get all of his kids to come when he wants them,” McElwee said. “So the first time I blow that whistle and the kids just come running onto stage, it’s a fun moment and the audience gets a kick out of it, too.”

## CANDLELIGHT’S RED BLUE CREWS

The two crews of children will each perform 14 times. The Red crew includes Landyn Pollard as Friedrich, Brooke Bishop as Louisa, Owen Ahlmer as Kurt, Ivy Jackson as Brigitta, Sophie Hirwe as Marta and Natalie Cross as Gretl. The Blue crew includes Dominic Traini as Friedrich, Kylie Barden as Louisa, Gavin DeGeorge as Kurt, Natalie Paynter as Brigitta, Amanda Cusick as Marta and Charlotte Spak as Gretl.

McElwee, who worked as director of education for a children’s museum for a dozen years, really enjoys working with younger actors. “I’m an educator at heart,” he said.

His day job now is working for a public health non-profit developing theater-based outreach programs, first with sexual health programs and now for a nutrition theme.

In many ways, McElwee says, he really likes the process of putting together a show more than he actually likes the long string of performances.

“I really love building a show, building a character, building relationships,” McElwee said.

[READ MORE HERE](#)



# LAST LIGHT ON KEY ROUTE 1 SECTION GOING AWAY

**KEN MAMMARELLA**

An overpass now under construction near Milton will eliminate the last traffic light on Route 1 between Dover and Nassau. When the interchange with Route 16 (also called Broadkill Road) is expected to be completed in late 2025, Route 1 should be able to more safely handle more traffic.

The work is part of the **Corridor Capacity Preservation Program**, piloted in 1991 on that 31-mile stretch from the southern end of the toll portion of Route 1 (also called the Relief Route) to the bridge at Nassau that thematically defines the northern end of Delaware's beaches. The \$40 million **project** is also part of the Delaware Department of Transportation Hazard Elimination Program.

It includes elevating Route 1 over Route 16 with new dual bridges, entrance/exit ramps to and from Route 16, turn lanes on Route 16 at the ramp intersections, realignment of the intersection at Route 1 and Deep Branch

Road, construction of stormwater management facilities and roadside swales and installation of lighting.

“Since 2009, we have completed seven grade-separated interchanges along Route 1 south of Dover,” Secretary of Transportation Nicole Majeski **said**, “and this project is another step in our work to limit the number of access points where vehicles enter and exit the highway to improve safety and reduce congestion.”

Congestion, though, is still a much-discussed issue on Route 1 from Nassau down to Rehoboth Beach. A sign just south of Nassau notes there are 13 traffic lights in the next five miles, heading south. One of those lights is at Old Landing Road. DelDOT's Coastal Highway Intersection Improvements page calls for extending the southbound Route 1 U-turn at Old Landing by converting the existing double left-turn lanes at Rehoboth Mall Boulevard into one left turn lane. Construction is expected to start in September, with completion at the end of November.



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The portal has a broader name because two other locations were previously included: a new U-turn lane at Route 1/Route 9 and a modified island to reduce speeds on Route 1 northbound at Kings Highway, the page says. “Those other projects will now be pursued separately.”

DelDOT also lists multiple intersections it's watching in its **Delaware Strategic Highway Safety Plan**. Designs are underway for three Route 1 intersections in South Bethany—at Layton Drive, Evergreen Road and York Road/Logan Street—to get signal rebuilds and flashing red arrows.

**READ MORE HERE**

# NEW REP SEASON ANNOUNCED

BY BETSY PRICE

The Resident Ensemble Players' 2023-24 season will include a look at the power of words; a stage version of "In the Heat of the Night;" a mash-up of "Waiting for Godot" and "Exodus;" and the crowd-pleasing "Deathtrap." The season is designed to reflect our lives.

"As theater fans you know this, but I never get tired of saying it, these plays are the stories of us, inquiring into what it means to be human whether that inquiry is humorous, thrilling or political," said Steve Tague, producing artistic director for the University of Delaware's professional acting troupe. "Join us for more of these stories."

The new season will open Sept. 21-Oct. 1 with Dame Eileen Atkins's "Vita & Virginia." It is adapted from letters and diaries to weave the story of the enduring friendship between aristocratic novelist and poet, Vita Sackville-West, and aloof literary icon, Virginia Woolf. The play also is meant to stand as a lyrical rebuke to today's culture of hastily sent emails and tweets, illuminating an age when people wrote profusely and frequently, though few were as adept at correspondence as Vita and Virginia.

Suspense and intrigue will arrive Nov. 2-19 with "John Ball's In the Heat of the Night." It was adapted for stage by Matt Pelfrey from the book that inspired the Oscar-winning film of the same name. Set in 1962, it revolves around what happens when the body of a white man is discovered in a small town of Alabama. Local police arrest the only stranger in town, a black man named Virgil Tibbs. Little do they know, their suspect is a detective from California. Left with no witnesses, no motive, and no clues, Tibbs becomes this racially-tense community's only hope of solving the brutal murder.

## SEASON ENDERS

REP returns in the new year on Feb. 8-18 with Antoinette Chinonye Nwandu's groundbreaking play, "Pass Over," a mashup of Beckett's "Waiting for Godot" and the Biblical "Exodus" story. It focuses on two young black men, Moses and Kitch,



stand on the corner—talking trash, killing time and dreaming of the promised land. Emotionally charged with poetic and humorous riffs, this play asks, "What is the value of a young black man's life?"

Ira Levin's dark comedy thriller, "Deathtrap" closes the season April 11-28. The story: Once famous playwright, Sidney Bruhl is fresh out of ideas with a string of failures and a shortage of cash. A change in fortune seemd to arrive in the form of a script, sent by a former student, with all the makings of a Broadway hit. The opportunity to steal the script and pass it off as his own may be too tempting for Sidney to ignore. Mayhem ensues.

A four-show subscription package goes on sale to the public Aug. 1. Prices range from \$54 to \$104 depending on night and seat location. Single tickets are on sale Aug. 22. Tickets can be purchased online at [www.rep.udel.edu](http://www.rep.udel.edu), by contacting the REP box office at (302) 831-2204, or by visiting in person at the Roselle Center for the Arts located at 110 Orchard Road in Newark Tuesday–Friday, noon to 5 p.m.

REP, as the troupe is known, is the professional theatre company in residence at UD. Its mission is to engage audiences throughout the tri-state region and beyond with outstanding classic, modern and contemporary plays performed in a wide variety of styles that celebrate and demonstrate the range, breadth and diversity of an ensemble of nationally respected stage actors.



# PLAN TO DRAIN DELAWARE CITY POND UPSETS SPORTSMEN'S GROUP

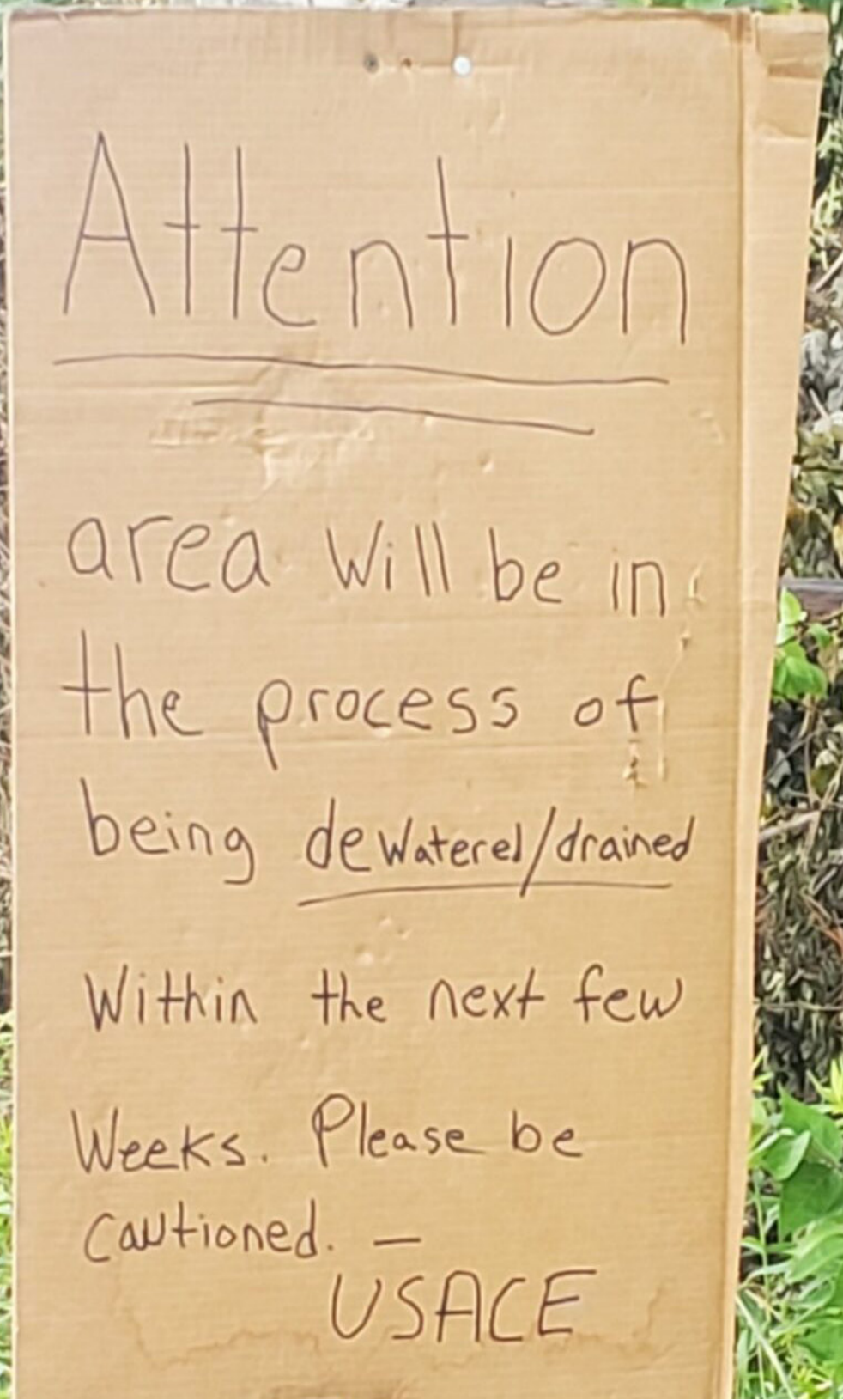
BY KEN MAMMARELLA

A pond just outside Delaware City is scheduled to be drained and eventually filled with dredging spoils, eliminating a popular spot for fishers and hunters. The **Delaware State Sportsmen's Association** says that people learned about the plan in June from a handwritten cardboard sign stating: "Attention: area will be in the process of being dewatered/drained within the next few weeks. Please be cautioned. -USACE."

USACE is the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the federal agency that owns the pond and the land around it. The Corps is responsible for maintaining America's waterways, including the nearby Chesapeake & Delaware Canal and the Delaware River. It plans to use the site to dispose of dredging material from the canal and the river.

The association has appealed, without satisfaction, to multiple elected officials and bureaucrats. "No one really knows what's going on," Steve Kendus, hunting and fishing chair for the association, said in an interview. "Everyone is still trying to get details."

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## WE ARE NO. 1! AT LEAST, IN GOOGLING THE NFL

BY KEN MAMMARELLA

Delaware is the most NFL-obsessed state in the country, judging by Google searches. It had 60,582 searches per 100,000 people, even though it isn't home to an National Football League team. But it does have a long history of betting related to the NFL, going back to 1976. That's more than three times as high as the searches in Alabama, No. 50 on the new list. Like Delaware, Alabama does not have a resident National Football League team.

Google Keyword Planner was used to find the 50 most Googled terms relating to NFL in the US and then each state's number of searches for each term. There are 616,974 searches for the top 50 NFL-related terms on average every month. Delaware, then, represents almost 10% of these searches. Out of the 50 terms that were used, the most common nationwide were "NFL," "NFL scores" and "NFL schedule. The most common in Delaware: "NFL score."

"The true scale of the country's love for NFL becomes even clearer when you consider that those 50 search terms don't even include any team-specific searches," said a representative for [onlinecasinos.com](https://www.onlinecasinos.com), which announced the results.

Nevada, a state with an even longer history of gambling and the site of the 2024 Super Bowl, was No. 2, averaging 58,899 searches per 100,000 people. Maryland took third place, at 56,892, and Pennsylvania fourth, at 54,403.

Alabama registers the lowest level, at 19,348, with the website speculating because it's "one of the country's college football hotbeds, and home to the all-conquering Alabama Crimson Tide—winners of six national championships in the past 15 years." Four other states without NFL teams—Oklahoma, Arkansas, Kentucky and Louisiana—rounded out the bottom five.

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# Business

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photo link: Delaware Division of Small Business





## EDGE FUNDING GOES TO 10 MORE DELAWARE STARTUPS

BY KEN MAMMARELLA

Delaware has given grants to 10 small businesses, as winners of the seventh round of the Encouraging Development, Growth and Expansion competition. Five STEM-based companies will each receive up to \$100,000 for eligible expenses, while five Entrepreneur Class businesses will each receive up to \$50,000. Specific amounts to each company were not released.

**EDGE** is a matching grant program. The Delaware Division of Small Business matches a winning business's investment on a 3-to-1 basis. Including this round, \$5 million has been awarded to 80 promising Delaware small businesses since EDGE was launched in 2019.

This round drew 130 applications. Applications for the eighth round open Sept. 1. Businesses that are less than seven years old and employ no more than 10 staff are eligible.

### RECIPIENTS

**Connect2Co** is a business-to-business startup software tool. Its all-in-one platform integrates external solutions, eliminating the need for toggling between various applications. The grant money enables Connect2Co to ramp up its initial operations by funding co-working space at the Mill in Wilmington, along with marketing and speeding the platform's development timeline.

**Doubly** is a minority and women-owned startup founded in 2023 in Middletown. Doubly's application integrates with enterprise messaging platforms like Teams and Slack to help boost productivity, and connectedness as a result of remote work conditions.

[READ MORE HERE](#)

# Providing Big Support For Delaware's Small Businesses



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DIVISION OF SMALL BUSINESS

[business.delaware.gov](https://business.delaware.gov)

photo credit: Rachel Park/ Unsplash



# Food & Dining

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# ZAVA CAFÉ BRINGS THE ZA-ZA-ZOO TO MILTON

BY PAM GEORGE

Some maintain that Milton is like Lewes before the tourists arrived. Both are small towns with centuries-old buildings and rich histories. Heavy tourism only came to Lewes in mid-1960s, when the fish factories—and the aroma of menhaden—departed. A Friday stroll through Milton's historic section gave credibility to the claim.

Located on the Broadkill River, the former shipbuilding town was favored by sea captains, who selected an inland homesite because it was safe from enemy attacks by sea. Some of the Victorians and old buildings that still stand once belonged to the captains and the four governors' families who lived here.

But that Friday, the destination was not the riverside Governor's Walk. It was **Zava Café**, a new coffee shop at 102 Federal St. that now serves dinner Wednesday

through Saturday. The slim space previously housed Cantina Ultima and Kristen Latham's Fox Hole restaurant. (Latham still has the **Dough Bar** on the Broadkill River, which specializes in pizza.) Zava Café moved in late last year.

## ZAVA'S IMPRESSIVE PEDIGREE

The Milton location is the second for **Zava Café**. Danio Somoza and Thaina Bittencourt opened in the first in downtown Rehoboth Beach in 2022. They were inspired by the coffee shops serving healthy fare in the Washington, D.C., area.

The Rehoboth café is only open until 3 p.m., but adding dinner to the Milton restaurant is smart. The town needs more restaurants, and the café is within walking distance of the **Milton Theatre**.

On that Friday night, Somoza was in the kitchen, which was a treat. The well-known area chef and family owned **Coastline Restaurant Group**, which includes Harvest Tide Steakhouse in Lewes, Bethany Beach and D.C., and Zoca Modern Mexican Restaurant in Bethany Beach and D.C.

Somoza, a native of El Salvador who came to the U.S. at 19, started his culinary career as a line cook at Big Fish Grill and worked his way up to the opening chef at 99 Sea Level in Bethany Beach. He has described his style as French-inspired farm-to-table, which was on full display that evening.

## STARTING AT THE TOP

For instance, the meat-and-cheese board was a work of art. Tissue thin pieces of dry-aged prosciutto nuzzled DeLallo black pepper salami coins with glistening flecks of fat. The plate also included Goat Rodeo Bamboozle Cheese, truffle honey, whiskey pear chutney and Birchrun blue cheese. The blue cheese made another appearance on a refreshing iceberg lettuce salad with red pickled onion, bacon bites, heirloom tomato and cucumber.

Given Somoza's tenure at Big Fish, it's unsurprising that the starters include middle-neck clams—a meatier size more available at the beach than up north—Prince Edward Island mussels and Blue Point oysters. Thick slices of meaty ruby red tuna got a coating of espresso and a topping of whipped goat cheese and diced mango.

[READ MORE HERE](#)



## PIZZERIA MAKI OPENS SECOND SITE; STATE FAIR RIBBON WINNERS

BY PAM GEORGE

As Delaware slides into August, our appetite for fresh produce and easy meals expands. Enter restaurants and food festivals, which offer a place to eat and socialize. Here's the skinny on Delaware's dining scene.

### Beefsteak tomatoes, burgers & blueberry pies

The [Delaware State Fair](#) continues through July 29, and while the fair boasts a heavy roster of entertainment, it also offers a lineup of culinary contests.

Once again, Amy Bish, aka "That Pie Girl," from Wilmington, has nabbed many ribbons. The Wilmington resident won first place for her apple-brown sugar crumb (a repeat winner), Mexican street corn quiche and blueberry lattice pies. Her peach-raspberry-pecan crumb took second place and her Atlantic beach pie and baked 9-inch shell came in third.

The Friday "Pie Day" contest is at the end of the week.

Bish also got a second-place nod for her brownie, and other culinary competitions include cupcakes, peach recipes, ice cream and bar cookies.

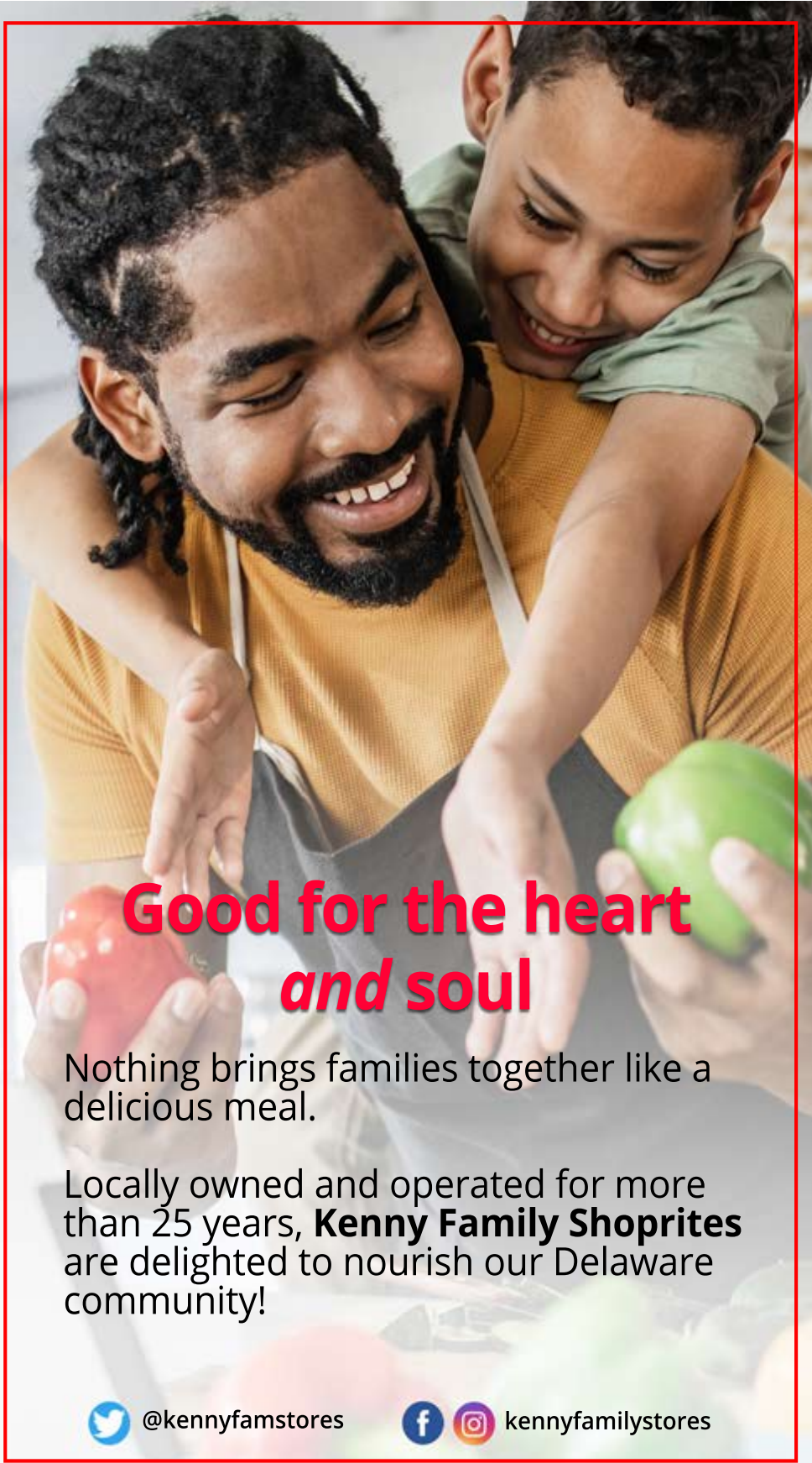
There will also be contests at the [Historic Lewes Farmers Market's](#) annual Tomato Festival on Aug. 5 at George H. P. Smith Park in Lewes. Home gardeners can enter their largest homegrown tomatoes in the Biggest Tomato contest, and customers can also guess the number of tomatoes in a jar.

If you were planning on going to the [Delaware Burger Battle](#) on Aug. 26 but hadn't bought your ticket, you're out of luck. The event is sold out.

### Pizza for breakfast

[Nick's Pizza](#) is opening a store on Newport Gap Pike in fall, but until then, owner Nick Vouras is popping up all over the place with pizza specials. For instance, this Saturday, July 29, he's selling breakfast pizzas at the family business, [Kozy Korner](#) in Wilmington. Options include scrapple, egg and cheese or sausage and gravy. Order a day ahead at 302-547-0380 and pick up between 7 a.m. and 11 a.m. You can also message him on Instagram.

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# Government

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August 1,  
2023

6-8 pm

# COPS, COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES SET FOR AUG. 1 NATIONAL NIGHT OUT



BY JAREK RUTZ

The camaraderie between Delaware's police and communities in the First State will be celebrated Tuesday, Aug. 1. For the eighth straight year, the First State will participate in National Night Out where citizens throughout the state and across the nation are asked to turn on their front porch lights and spend the evening outside with neighbors and law enforcement. The event will be from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

The community-building campaign promotes strong partnerships between police and the communities they serve, as well as building neighborhood trust and friendliness to make Delaware a safer, more caring place to live and work.

In addition to socializing, the night is a chance for the public to learn about what local first responders do on a

daily basis. Agencies will be showcasing some of their equipment and specialized units.

### Newark Night Out

Newark's festivities will take place on Academy Street. From 6:30 p.m. to 7 p.m., Newark Police Department is putting on a K-9 Unit demonstration. At 7:15 p.m., Aetna Hose, Hook & Ladder Co. will hold fire prevention and vehicle extrication demonstrations. Throughout the night, the Police Athletic League will have trailers with games and activities for children. Guitarist, singer and songwriter Sam Capolongo will be performing, and food and drinks are free.

The University of Delaware Creamery Truck will be selling its locally made ice cream to satisfy the community's sweet tooth, and there will also be food from Wawa.

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State of Delaware  
**RETIREMENT  
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 FISCAL YEAR 2022

**STAFF WRITER**

A state Human Resources report says that Delaware hasn't seen a spike in employee retirements in the last several years. It's important information in guiding plans to recruit and retain employees, said Claire DeMatteis, secretary of the Department of Human Resources.

It's also important information to members of the Statewide Employees Benefits Committee and subcommittee, who are trying to hammer out a new deal for **health insurance** for government retirees.

Delaware, like every other employer, has had trouble hiring workers. The report, DeMatteis said, will help the department determine the best ways to make state salaries more competitive, invest in employee training and career advancement and promote a healthy work-life balance.”

# STATE HR RELEASES EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT REPORT

The State of Delaware Retirement Eligibility Report report looked at the number of state employees eligible to retire by June 30, 2027. It looked specifically at Executive Branch agencies, such as the governor's office and the various cabinet level departments, excluding the judicial and legislative branches.

It found:

- 23% of state employees are eligible to retire by June 30, 2027, which is significantly lower than the average number of 32.5% of eligible state employees who retire annually.
- The rate of state employees retiring has remained steady over the past 16 years, even during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic from 2020-2022.
- 12% of state agency employees are eligible for immediate retirement, while 23% can retire within the next five years.
- The four largest agencies with the potential of 30% or more staff eligible to retire in the next five years include the departments of Health and Social Services; Transportation; Correction; and Services for Children, Youth and Their Families.
- The Department of Safety and Homeland Security, one of the state's larger agencies, has the lowest percentage of employees eligible to retire in the next five years at only 8%.

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# STATE GIVES \$6 MILLION TO GROUPS HELPING WITH HOUSING

**STAFF WRITER**

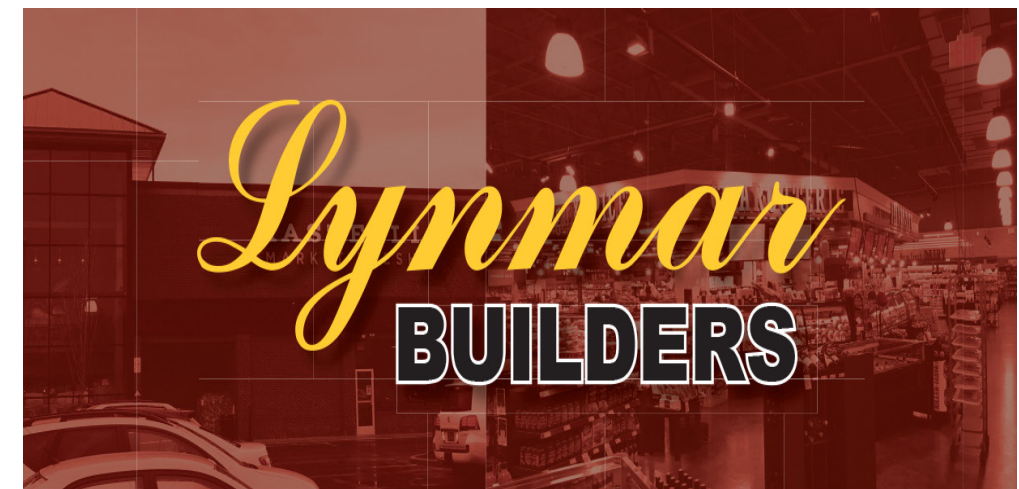
Four Delaware nonprofits that focus on housing problems in Delaware will split \$6 million of the state’s federal COVID-19 funding. That includes:

- \$350,000 to the **Home of the Brave** in Milford to renovate the facility to serve more homeless veterans and provide services to homeless veterans in Delaware including individual case management, mental health counseling, life skills training and educational services.
- More than \$2.4 million to **The Springboard Collaborative** to support this nonprofit organization’s initiatives to build shelter villages for homeless adults in southern and central Delaware in low-income areas hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- \$470,000 to the **Delmarva Clergy United in Social Action Foundation** in Ellendale for renovations to expand the number of beds to keep homeless off the streets in Sussex County, in a safe, socially distant physical space.
- \$2.5 million to **Children and Families First** to support an extensive renovation of their Seaford House Transitional Residence. Seaford House serves youth in foster care who receive round the clock support from

specialty trained staff who provide ongoing intensive therapy, case management, and life skills training. Planned expansion and upgrades include adding bedrooms to allow for single-occupancy rooms, improving HVAC systems to support appropriate ventilation, building outdoor spaces to accommodate services and recreation, and more.

The money is part of the American Rescue Plan Act’s capital projects funding. These capital funds are already at work to build a better future for the next generation of Delawareans. You can see it in our libraries and community centers across the state,” said Gov John Carney. “The projects announced today will assist some of our most vulnerable neighbors—those dealing with lack of safe and affordable housing.”

Delaware submitted its Capital Projects plan to the U.S. Treasury on Jan. 14, 2022, and the first batch of projects were approved on May 1, 2023. Delaware’s Project Plan for housing projects was approved July 19, 2023. Here is the full list of Delaware’s **ARPA allocations**.



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# Education

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# TWO DEL STATE STUDENTS NAMED WHITE HOUSE HBCU SCHOLARS

**STAFF WRITER**

Delaware State University students Jordan Spencer and Imani Wulff-Cochrane have been named to the 2023 White House HBCU Scholars. They are two of 102 students from Historically Black Colleges and Universities appointed by the White House Initiative on Advancing Educational Equity, Excellence and Economic Opportunity.

Spencer and Wulff-Cochrane were selected for their accomplishments in academics, leadership and civic engagement from a competitive pool of more than 300 students. The group represents 70 of the nation's HBCU and will serve as ambassadors for the White House

Initiative on HBCUs, the U.S. Department of Education and their respective HBCUs.

Spencer, a graduate student studying Public Administration from Harrisburg, PA, served as the vice president of the 2022-2023 Student Government Association. He worked this summer for Congresswoman Lisa Blunt Rochester through the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation and serves on the Student Affairs Committee of the University's Board of Trustees. He is a member of the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity. Mr. Spencer was also a White House HBCU Scholar in 2022.

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# POST ONE WINS THIRD CONSECUTIVE LEGION CHAMPIONSHIP

BY NICK HALLIDAY

Post One defeated Stahl Post 30 to win its third consecutive American Legion Baseball state championship. Post one was able to hold off Stahl by a score of 6-3 at Wilson Field Tuesday afternoon.

Post One jumped out to an early lead, scoring two runs in the second inning then adding three more in the third inning. They scored five runs on just three hits as Stahl Post 30 pitcher Peyton Brannock struggled with his command by walking six batters.

Post went on to score one run in the fourth, then two more in the sixth as walks continued to take their toll on the Stahl Post pitchers. Post scored six runs on six hits and was led by Tyler Satterfield with two.

Stahl Post 30 scored three runs on three hits with

Brannock, Brandon Crygo and Shawn Roy totalling one each.

Steven Mann got the win for Post One, going five innings, striking out six while allowing three runs. Zach Czarnecki got the save, closing out the last two innings retiring six straight batters.

Brannock took the loss for Stahl Post 30 allowing five runs in three innings while striking out three. Crygon came in relief of Brannock going four innings while striking out one.

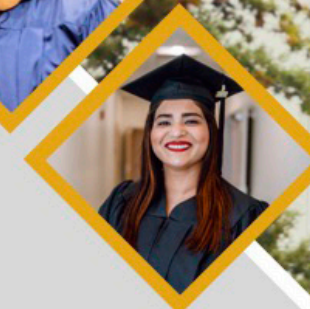
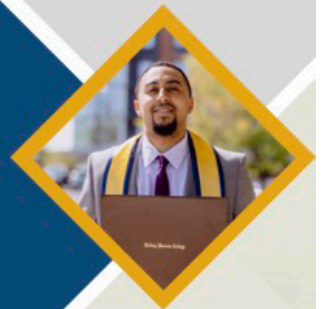
Post One will now advance to play in the Mid-Atlantic regional tournament in Asheboro, NC. Their first game is **scheduled** for Wednesday Aug. 2 at 7:30 p.m.



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## FRIDAY NIGHTS AT CAVALIERS STADIUM

BY GLENN FRAZER

This summer, the 302 Sports staff discussed the opportunity to feature some of the high school football venues where we have been fortunate to broadcast, and view games over the years. Since I am the “senior” sportscaster (by far), I thought about taking the lead with my alma mater, Middletown High School. Today, one of the most enthusiastic fan bases supports a very successful program with eight total state championships. However, winning didn’t come too often in the beginning. From its first season in 1953 until 1962, the Cavaliers had an overall record of 14-54-3 and never had a winning season. Things changed in 1962 when Bill Billings was hired. Middletown defeated Caesar Rodney 19-6 on Sept. 14, 1962. The Cavaliers would not lose again until 1967, falling to Coach Bob Hoffman’s Newark Yellowjackets. The 53-game winning streak is

the longest in Delaware history and was ended by a Newark program that had a record of 137-32 dating back to 1947!

During the 53-game winning streak, Middletown upset the heavily-favored Salesianum Sals 14-13 in 1966. The Sals team out-weighted the Middletown players by an average of 30 pounds per man. Seating capacity at Middletown was 3,500 but police estimated a crowd upwards of 8,000 that night.

The stadium is still situated behind the Everett Meredith Middle School at 504 S. Broad Street as it was in 1966. That was the location of the one (and only) high school in a district that now boasts two other high schools (Odessa and Appo) with another building coming soon. On any given Friday night, the stands are full with standing-room around the fences behind both end

zones. Oh yes, don’t forget the cowbells and a crowd that can be heard throughout most of the town when the Cavaliers score.

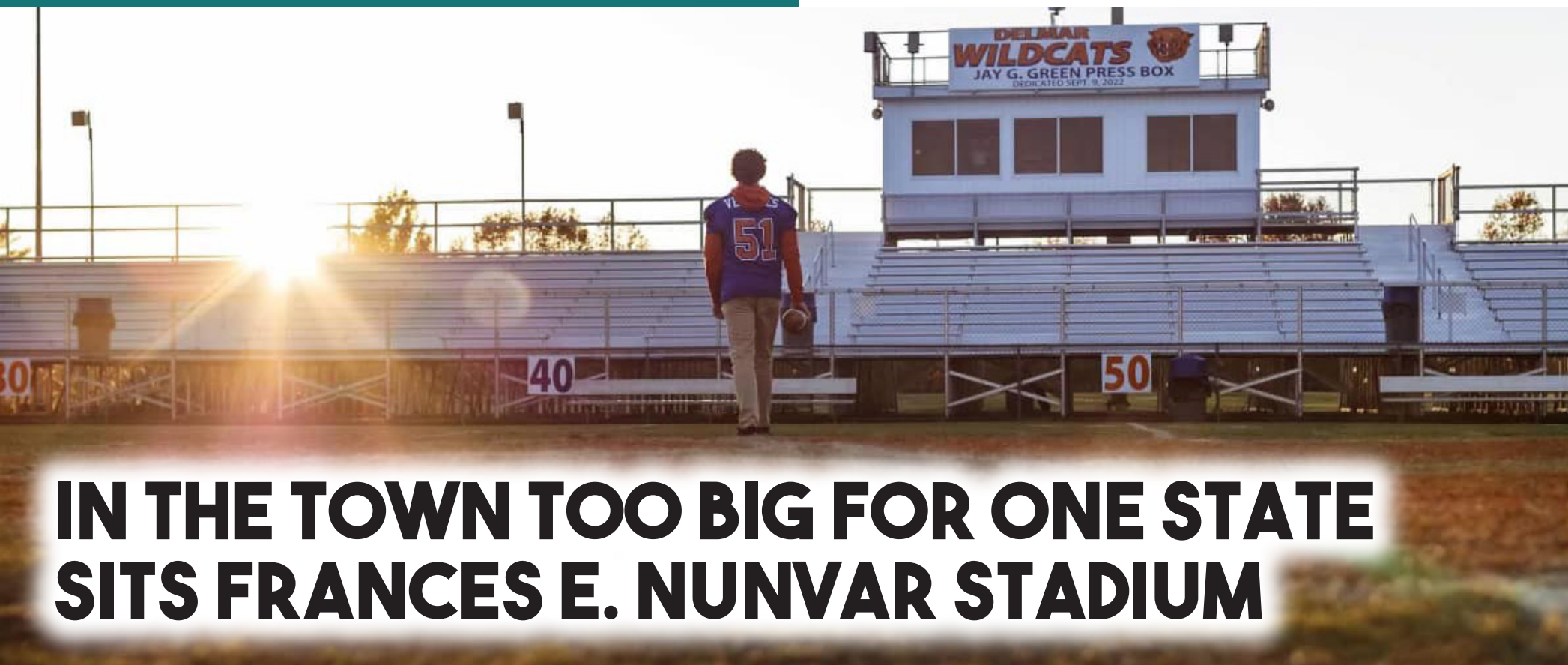
The entrance to the stadium was remodeled a few years ago that included upgrades for rest room facilities and concessions. Parking between the stadium and the Middle School does not accommodate the large crowds, so fans utilize S. Broad Street, the streets near the stadium including the development of Sharondale...just like they did in 1966.

It is a very intimidating atmosphere for any visiting opponent. In Cavaliers Stadium, Middletown certainly enjoys a “home field” advantage.

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## IN THE TOWN TOO BIG FOR ONE STATE SITS FRANCES E. NUNVAR STADIUM

BY NICK HALLIDAY

*This is a series looking at Delaware stadiums and gyms, and the experience gamegoers will have at them.*

We told you about the best stadium atmosphere upstate, now we head to the furthest school south in Delaware and the cozy confines of Frances E. Nunvar Stadium, where the Delmar Wildcats play.

Many know how tough a road trip to Delmar can be. The field has no track so the fans seem to sit right on top of the action. The fans who arrive late can be equally intimidating as they line the fence of the end zone.

When you drive down Line Road (literally the state line) houses on your left are in Maryland and to the right are the Delaware residents. That's when you start to get the small town feeling. It might be a small town, but too big for just one state.

This fall will be the 95th anniversary of organized football in Delmar. In 1928, teacher/coach Frances Nunvar began removing trees to make way for what would become the first football field in the town.

With a new school in 1998 came a new field and the Frances E. Nunvar Stadium was officially dedicated. What happened to the old field you ask? The current Delmar Middle/High School now sits on that site.

The community has seen 20 Henlopen South championships and seven Division II state titles. Faithful fans young and old still turn out for a 7:30 kickoff on Friday nights.



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