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photo by Peter Zale

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Indian River Admin Breaks Silence



ASPIRA Shows Off New High School



Rider Stadium: Where is Began for DE Live Reporter

photo link: Delaware Art Museum

photo by S. Woodloe



Headlines

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BACK TO SCHOOL: TEACHER RAISES, MENTAL HEALTH HELP, FUNDING

A few students will see changes. It may be getting to break in a new school, as Appoquinimink students will do with Crystal Run Elementary when it opens Aug. 31. Or it may be something more dramatic, such as William Penn High School students having a new schedule for daily classes.

COLONIAL'S NEW SCHEDULE

Colonial Superintendent Jeff Menzer said the district administrations hope that change will improve student success partly by strengthening the relationship between students and teachers. William Penn will have black, cherry and Colonial days. They are named for the colors in the school's logo. The black and cherry days both will allow four classes that are 72 minutes long, standard for many high schools. Colonial days will contain eight periods, allowing students to see all their classroom teachers for 39 minutes per period.

“Coming off of the pandemic, many teachers and students found that every other day wasn't great and they really wanted to see their teachers consistently, like every day,” Menzer said. The first six days of William Penn's school year, which begins Aug. 29, are going to all be Colonial days, “every period, every day,” Menzer said, “so people get used to that because they've never done it.”

MATH AND SCIENCE CURRICULUM

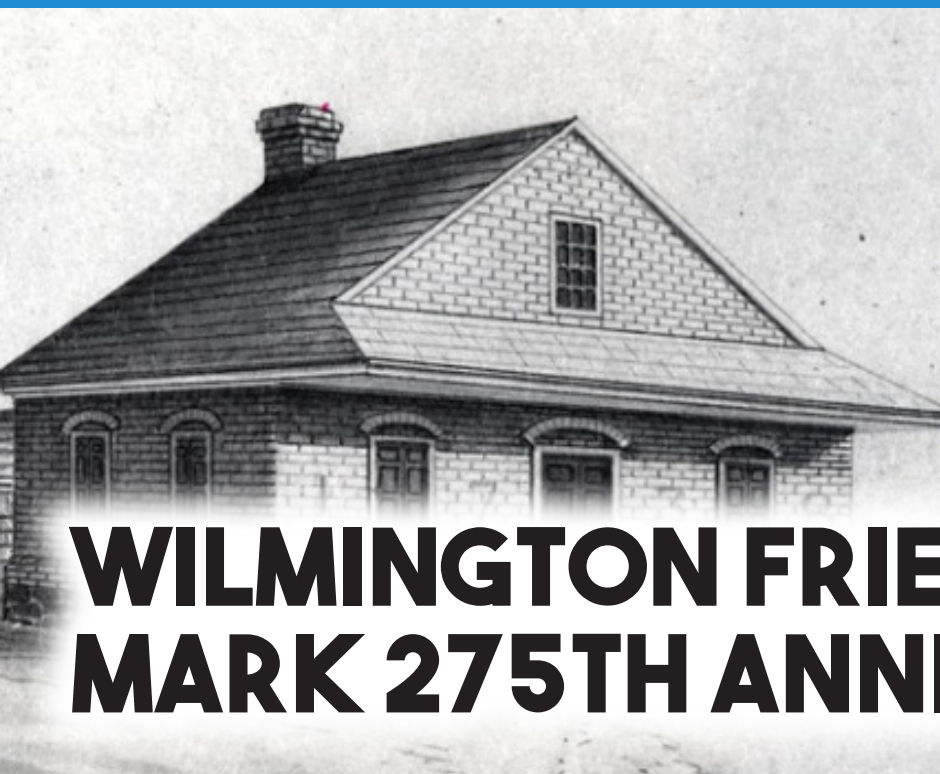
The state is in the process of rolling out its new math framework and integrating the science of reading, but the state is unlikely to see big testing gains for years. The science of reading curriculum is based on brain research that shows how students learn to read and is focused on phonics—or sounding out letters, syllables, words and sentences. With nearly half the state unable to meet proficiency scores on tests, educators hope a new reading program, in unison with its [2019 Literacy Plan](#), will help.

[READ MORE HERE](#)

BY JAREK RUTZ

As First State public schools reopen next week, most students won't see much difference in the day-to-day workings of the classroom. But there's a lot going on in the background. Many districts will be adopting new science and math curriculums designed to help counter the state's dismal test scores—and continue the battle against COVID-19 learning loss. More mental health programs and people will be in schools, thanks to the multiple pieces of legislation passed in the last few years, including allowing students to take days off for anxiety or behavioral reasons and adding therapists and psychologists to schools.

Schools will be spending the rest of their federal COVID-19 funds, which must be used by the end of September 2024. Those funds can be used for student programs, hiring staff, or virtually all education expenses, but not capital ones. Teachers and other educators will start being paid more, one arrow in the state's and districts' quiver to attract more people to the classroom and keep them there. And state officials are awaiting a report from a Virginia consultant that will compare the state's 80-year-old method of funding schools to other states and make recommendations for improvement.



WILMINGTON FRIENDS SCHOOL TO MARK 275TH ANNIVERSARY



BY JAREK RUTZ

For Ellie Alexander Poorman, attending **Wilmington Friends School** means much more than just education—it means family, and generations of it.

The historic school, founded in 1748, is older than the **country**. Friends will start celebrating its 275th anniversary Sept. 5 when it opens its doors for the 2023-2024 school year. Poorman, 88, sent all four of her children and several grandchildren to Wilmington Friends, which is Delaware's oldest existing school.

“You feel a great kinship with the school and its values, which are important to you and ones that you want to pass on to your children and grandchildren,” she said.

Those Quaker values the school is founded on—simplicity, peace, integrity, community, equality and stewardship—prepare people to connect with others and live a life of service while building confidence in young people, Poorman believes.

Over the centuries, those values created a nursery of sorts for leadership in the Wilmington community and beyond, according to “**A Gift in Trust: Wilmington Friends School, A Celebration of our first 250 years**”, written in 1998. The school's alumni include nationally notable journalists, politicians and government officials.

Poorman family members are among the 40,000-plus students who have attended the school since 1879, records show.

WILMINGTON FRIENDS VALUES

Wilmington Friends was among the Quaker schools founded around the country and in the British Isles in the 1700s, embracing the philosophy of **George Fox**. He was an English dissenter and a founder of the Religious Society of Friends, commonly known as the Quakers.

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STUDY LAUNCHED TO FIND WAYS TO REDUCE FLOODING ON BRANDYWINE

BY BETSY PRICE

A study designed to find ways to reduce flooding along the Brandywine River will look at an area stretching from Honey Brook in Pennsylvania through a wedge of New Castle County that ends in Wilmington. The Brandywine Flood Study will begin with \$199,500 from **Chester County** government and \$25,000 from the **Delaware County Council**. An additional \$150,000 is expected to be announced soon.

“The flooding study will be a coordinated effort to better understand where and why flooding occurs and identify the best approaches to protect our communities from future severe flooding events,” said Grant DeCosta, director of community services for the **Brandywine Conservancy**. “Given the increasing likelihood of future severe weather events, the Brandywine Flood Study is key to our community’s health and safety.”

The project, expected to be completed by June 2024, will be overseen by the conservancy, **Chester County Water Resources Authority** and the **University of Delaware Water Resources Center**. Neither the city of

Wilmington or New Castle County have been approached for funding, organizers said, but may be as the project goes on.

Officials speaking at the launch announcement Tuesday at the Brandywine River Museum of Art, said the study was prompted by the devastating Sept. 1, 2021, ride of **Hurricane Ida** through the area. The deluge from that storm caused the Brandywine River to rise 21 feet, nearly four feet higher than it ever had.

Flooding caused \$100,000 million in damage in the region and \$10 million on the Conservancy’s 15-acre campus, which includes the museum and nine other buildings, DeCosta said.

The water from Ida rose quickly, at 49,000 cubic feet per second according to Chadds Ford gauges run by the United States Geological Survey, said Gerald Kauffman Jr., director of UD’s Water Resources Center. The previous record was 27,000 cubic feet in 1972, he said.

“This was the most serious flood that happened on the Brandywine in 200 years,” he said. “No one’s ever

lived through a flood like this...hydrological records just don’t get broken by that much.”

Kaufman said he had studied flooding for a climate report for the state of Delaware.

“The projections were that a flood like that wasn’t going to happen until at least 2030, maybe 2050,” he said. “But you know that with regard to climate, the future is now; I’m convinced of that...We don’t have to argue about the causes, but let’s get together and work together for the solution.”

The study will not only look at technical information, but also hold a series of public meetings, Kaufman said. “The public and the Public Work crews in both states know where it flooded better than any model could,” he said.

There will be a range of solutions, he said. They may be as simple as signs on waterways that point out what the high mark for water is so the public is aware. They are likely to include some infrastructure problems.

[READ MORE HERE](#)

SUSSEX CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL

INDIAN RIVER ADMIN BREAKS SILENCE AFTER SECRETIVE SUSPENSION

BY JAREK RUTZ

The suspension of Sussex Central High School's principal was politically motivated and followed after a fight at the school during which a student's breast was exposed, his lawyer says. Bradley Layfield appears to have been suspended because he showed a video of the fight to multiple teachers, school officials and state police officers that day. All of those viewings were common school practice after any fight, for a variety of reasons, said Thomas Neuberger, Layfield's lawyer.

"If the district believes it somehow was an abuse of discretion for my client on four occasions to show this video that day, warn him and put a letter in his file and return him to his duties," Neuberger said. "Clear his good name. STOP THE RUMORS!" the statement said.

Little public information was released about a police investigation into the district's decision to place multiple staff members on administrative leave May 22.

"After dealing with five decades of employment and civil rights disputes with public officials here in Delaware, I suspect that this is politically motivated either internally at the school or at the central office," said Neuberger, a civil rights attorney.

David Maull, the district's public relations specialist, said Monday the district has no additional comments on this issue. "The Indian River School District continues to cooperate with law enforcement in the completion of their investigation," he said.

The Delaware State Police also did not have additional information. "This is still an ongoing investigation on our end, and our troopers are working diligently to make sure that they investigate the case thoroughly," said Leonard DeMalto public information officer.

At the time of the incident, Indian River School District did announce that suspensions had occurred and



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Delaware State Police confirmed an investigation was ongoing, but offered no details.

Indian River's school board voted Aug. 16 to have Judith Brittingham serve as the acting principal of Sussex Central.

On Monday, Neuberger said it was time to "defend Layfield's good name" and he was releasing the results of his firm's investigation.

Two black female seniors started a fight with a white female junior in the crowded main school hallway just before the opening bell on May 17, the statement read.

The junior was yelling at a white male whom she had videotaped deflating the tires of another student's car in the parking lot, the statement said.

[READ MORE HERE](#)



Culture

photo link: Delaware Art Museum
photo by S. Woodloe

LOCAL BARBER HIKES APPALACHIAN TRAIL

BY TERRY ROGERS

Norman Smith, owner of Norman's Deluxe Barber-shop and Shave Parlor, recently completed a hike of the Appalachian Trail. According to Smith, he thought the idea of hiking the trail sounded "cool."

"I can't really recall when that was, but it's always been one of those 'I'd like to do that someday' kind of things," Smith said. "Back in November, I went on a solo hike on a section of the trail in Pennsylvania where I hurt my legs hiking too fast. I began to worry that my legs might be starting to go bad and if I did not do this soon, I may never be able to do it."

Born and raised in Milford, Smith also worked at Baltimore Air Coil for 20 years and has owned the barbershop for the past six years. He and his wife, Megan, have four children.

"I started the trail at Amicologia Falls State Park in Georgia," Smith said. "There is an 8-mile approach trail from there to Springer Mountain, the southern terminus of the AT. I completed the trail at its northern terminus on Mount Katahdin in Baxter State Park in Maine."

This was the longest hike Smith had ever taken. Prior to this, he had never hiked more than two nights and three days with an average range of 30 miles. He began hiking about 18 years ago on a family vacation in Acadia National Park in Maine. He only did day hikes up until about three years ago when he and his family began backpacking. Shoes were one of the biggest challenges he had on his hike.

"Some wore out, some hurt my feet, but overall, it was a challenge to find the right footwear," Smith said. "Shoes I liked didn't last very long and shoes that promised to be more durable hurt my feet. Getting enough calories was a challenge as well. You just can't carry enough food. I lost over 20 pounds, returning home very thin for a man who is 6'2" at 151 pounds. Finally, the weather in New England was a challenge. The hiking gets harder as you head north. This was compounded this year with nearly non-stop rain. My feet were wet from Vermont to Baxter State Park in Maine. Days were cut short due to storms and other days were just miserable because of the rain and mud."

The highlights of the trip were the epic views Smith saw along the trail.

"Just lots of beautiful scenery," Smith said. "But, for me it was the people I got to meet and spend time with along the way."

If he hiked the trail again, there are things Smith would do differently.

"I did this hike fast. My goal was 120 days. That's about four months to accomplish something that most people take five to six months to do. I am happy that I hiked the way I hiked," Smith said. "That being said, if I did it again, I would want to do it with my wife and take a full six months to do it. It's a different kind of hike. My hike was more of an athletic endeavor. If I ever do it again, it would be to really enjoy the trail and the hiking culture."

[READ MORE HERE](#)





BY KEN MAMMARELLA

Two recent social media posts about purses being stolen or ransacked offer timely warnings to avoid becoming victims of crime. Both posts on nextdoor.com were secondhand, but they resonated with dozens of people who made comments.

“WARNING,” Sarah Brase-Davis began her [post](#), noting that her aunt had her credit and debit cards stolen after shopping at the Costco in Christiana.

“3 reportings of friends close to me getting purses stolen off of the back of their chairs in restaurants in the north Wilmington area,” Linda Marshall [wrote](#). Marshall was asked to name the restaurants, but another

DISTURBING CRIMES: RANSACKED AND STOLEN PURSES

person commented “Doesn’t matter, protect your purse at all times.”

Brase-Davis recounted the rest of the crime: “She unloaded her groceries & her purse was on passenger side of car. While returning her cart a guy stopped her asking questions. She left & went to Starbucks but realized her debit card was missing. When she tried calling the police her phone didn’t work. THEY STOLE HER SIM CARD too.”

“Thefts from/of purses are more commonly committed when the purses are left unattended,” said Cpl. Amina Ali of Delaware State Police. “The suspects will often leave the bag there and rifle through it just for the wallet, all the while the victim is unaware their wallet is missing until they go to pay for something or notice fraudulent charges on their account.”

Multiple people chimed in about how they or people they knew had been victims of similar incidents.

“As with any crime patterns like thefts from purses, phone scams, and thefts from vehicles, we urge the public to be cautious,” Ali said. “A ‘purse snatching’ is reported as a theft and the owner is the victim. If the suspect then uses the victim’s credit cards before they’re canceled, then a charge for unlawful use of a credit card or an additional charge of theft is added.”

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'AMERICAN IDOL' TO SEEK CONTESTANTS FROM DELAWARE

BY BETSY PRICE

Delawareans have a shot at auditioning for 'American Idol' on Wednesday, Sept. 6. The show, which just crowned Iam Tonga as the series' first winner from a Pacific Island, is seeking contestants for its 22nd season and the first step is a Zoom audition with producers.

To participate, hopefuls who will be 15 or older by Feb. 15, 2024, must [sign up](#) for a time slot from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. That may allow that producers want to see more of who will be invited to sing face-to-face in front of producers via Zoom and receive real-time feedback for a chance at making Idol history.

The new season will begin taping in December, and for the fourth year, "Idol Across America," will offer audition days for all 50 states plus Washington, D.C. Here's more from the show's [Frequently Asked Questions](#):

- Auditions are free.
- Registration does not guarantee you an audition. All information concerning registration and Virtual Audition locations, dates and times is tentative. There will be updated information for each audition date as the date nears.
- If you are younger than 18, you must have a parent or guardian present during your Zoom audition.
- If you are a Delaware resident, you aren't restricted to signing up for a Delaware slot. You can sign up for any state.
- You may use Zoom on a phone, tablet, desktop or laptop.

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READING ASSIST: 89% OF KIDS GAINED READING SKILLS THIS YEAR

BY JAREK RUTZ

A nonprofit focused on improving literacy rates says that 89% of the students it helped in the last year met standards for at least one early foundational reading skill. Reading Assist said that's a nearly 20% improvement from the 2021-2022 school year, during which 70% of students reached at least one benchmark.

“Our students exceeded our expectations this year with their reading growth,” said Caroline O’Neal, chief executive officer of the group. “As we add more students and expand our reach, our program continues to yield strong gains among struggling readers, which is a real testament to the effectiveness of high-dosage tutoring.”

Reading Assist credits high-dosage tutoring, stronger attendance and a return to in-person learning for the massive increase in performance.

The results are based on assessments of 470 students in kindergarten to third grade who received at least a month of tutoring from Reading Assist during last school year. In total, the group serves about 1,200 students. Reading Assist also helped the young readers accelerate their learning, with students outpacing expectations for growth in some measures by a factor of seven. That represents 17 months of learning gained during the school year which lasts just over nine months.

During what was the group’s third year of summer programming, 87% of students showed improvement after just four weeks of tutoring.

A lot of the lessons incorporate materials and instruction that is aligned with the **science of reading**, research that shows how students learn to read using phonics and other techniques. One method has students “drumming” words to the beat of each syllable.

The curriculum that Reading Assist uses is based on **Acadience Learning** tests, which focus on foundational reading skills. About 100 tutors from the organization are sent to dozens of schools in Delaware to help children who are struggling to learn.

Reading Assist is also expanding its programming. Following a spring 2022 pilot, it rolled out an after-school program to 10 sites during the 2022-23 school year, in which tutors supported 114 students.

“We look forward to further strengthening our partnership with the Delaware Department of Education through the Accelerate Program this fall,” O’Neal said. “Delaware’s state leaders have taken important steps to address the literacy gap, and we are proud to play an integral role in those plans to improve literacy rates.”

The Accelerate Program is an education grant program that supports high-dosage tutoring in schools. In May, Delaware was selected along with four other states to receive a \$1 million grant and Reading Assist will be the state’s partner to provide high-impact reading tutoring to students through this grant during the upcoming school year.





Business

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photo link: Delaware Division of Small Business



GROCERY DELIVERY CHANGES BEHIND GIANT CLOSING MILFORD WAREHOUSE

BY BETSY PRICE

Changes in customer demand for grocery delivery is the reason the **Giant Co.** is closing its Milford warehouse, a company spokesman said. Giant, which operates six grocery stores in Delaware, will be closing the Milford site, which was opened to guarantee grocery delivery in three hours, starting Oct. 21.

“Our ambition is to meet the changing needs of our customers who are increasingly looking for faster delivery, more delivery time slots and a broader assortment and we are adapting to better serve these needs,” spokesman Jonathan Arons told Delaware LIVE.

Milford joins two other sites—one in Hanover, MD, and one in Manassas, VA, that will be closed.

“We look forward to continuing to serve our customers and all the ways they want to shop,” Arons said. “We will provide updates over the next several weeks with respect to the localized delivery options that will best

serve our customers going forward.”

The chain intends to meet all the needs all of its customers in store and online for delivery or pick up, he said. Arons declined to comment on whether retail theft played any role in the decision, limiting his comments to a statement he read.

WTOP, a Washington, D.C., radio station reported this week that operating costs were another reason given for the closures. Hundreds of employees are set to lost jobs, but will have a chance to move to other jobs in the company, WTOP reported.

Headquartered in Carlisle, PA, the Giant Co. operates 165 stores, with about half located in the Washington, D.C., area. Stores in Delaware are in Bear, Middletown, Millville, Millsboro, Rehoboth Beach and Wilmington.



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Food & Dining

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BY PAM GEORGE

The dining scene has been so active in August that autumn promises to bring more openings, closings, fundraisers and special events. This week, menus have expanded, new eateries opened and a brewpub pays tribute to a beloved member of the hospitality industry.

On Saturday, Aug. 26, **Stitch House Brewery** will hold the second FrankaPalooza to honor director of operations Frank “The Tank” Kaszeta, who died in 2021. “He was one of my best friends,” said Dan Sheridan, who owns Stitch House. “We were together for business and nonbusiness, basically 24-7.”

Sheridan said the first FrankaPalooza raised about \$6,000 for the Ronald McDonald House of Greater Delaware, which named a room for Kaszeta. This year’s event, which starts at 7 p.m., will feature food, music by Richie D and Kris V, giveaways and a passel of raffle items, including gift cards from **Tonic Seafood & Steak**

AS SUMMER WANES, AUTUMN DINING PROMISES MORE FUN

and a tasting menu for two from **Bardea Steak**.

“The amount of donations and people attending is a tribute to how unforgettable Frank was,” Sheridan said.

ARGH, TIME FOR BEER AND GROG

Beach Time Distilling in Lewes was among the first to offer local craft spirits in the state. Now, owner Greg Christmas has jumped on the brewing bandwagon. The addition is not surprising, considering Christmas previously was a plant engineer at **Dogfish Head Craft Brewery**.

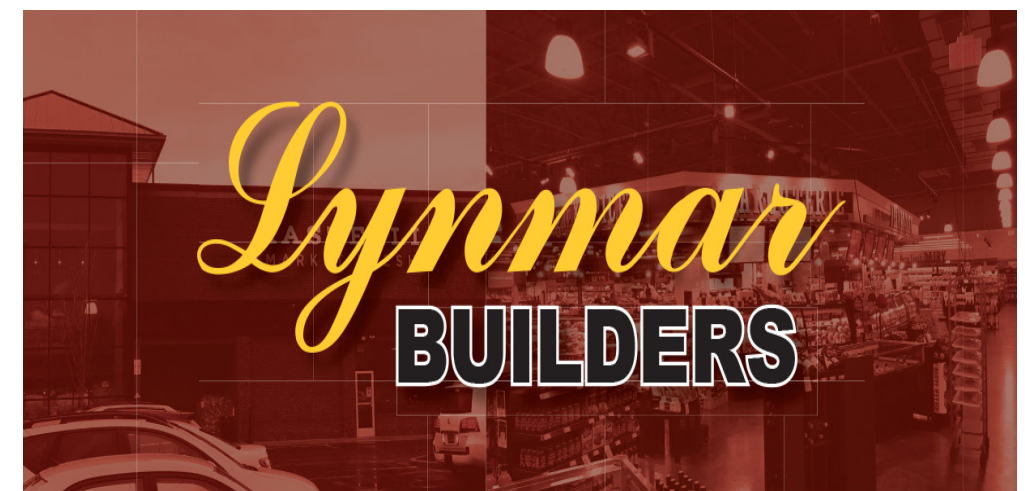
Christmas began selling canned cocktails featuring his spirits about six years ago. Canning beer was the next natural step. Dog Pirate Brewing Co.’s first offerings include chocolate porter and extra-special bitter.

AUTUMN PIZZA BRAWL

The sold-out Delaware Burger Battle is on Aug. 26, and yours truly will be a judge. But if you missed out on some tasty patties, tuck into pizza on the first day of fall, Sept. 23, from noon to 5 p.m., when **Bellefonte Brewing’s** Old Capitol Trail location is holding the **Delaware Pizza Brawl**.

Area restaurants will compete for bragging rights and a \$1,000 order, which will go to the staff of **Nemours Children’s Hospital** in Delaware. Ticketholders will judge the participating pizzas on taste, style, ingredients and appearance.

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Government

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NCCO WORKING TO REQUIRE FIRE SPRINKLERS IN NEW HOMES

BY KEN MAMMARELLA

New Castle County is moving forward with a plan to require fire sprinklers in new townhouses and one- and two-family dwellings. Its [planing document](#) cites lots of support, including the Delaware State Fire Marshal's Office, the New Castle County Fire Chiefs Association, the New Castle County Firefighter's Association, the New Castle County Fire and Ambulance Advisory Board, the Fire Sprinkler Coalition, the National Fire Protection Association and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

There's one prominent opponent: the Builders and Remodelers Association of Delaware. A [page](#) on the association website, titled "balancing safety and affordability," argues that the move will price "2,713 Delaware households out of the market" and that "smoke detectors are proven protection."

The ordinance will be introduced at the Aug. 29 [meet-](#)

[ing](#) of County Council's land use committee, said Brian P. Cunningham, director of strategic communications for New Castle County Executive Matt Meyer. It would then be voted on at the Sept. 12 council meeting.

Fire sprinklers are one of 20 "significant changes" headed for a vote in the land use package, but it's the only one that gets a "deep dive" in the county's outreach document to explain the changes. The 20-page document covers four recently updated codes from the International Code Council: the International Building Code, the International Residential Code, the International Existing Building Code and the International Swimming Pool and Spa Code. It also "recognizes" four international codes that have been adopted by the state: the mechanical, plumbing, fuel gas and energy conservation codes. All the codes are from 2021. The energy conservation code is from 2018, with the "2021 version

under review."

The requirement for fire sprinklers would go into effect on Jan. 1, 2025. All other codes would go into effect on Jan. 1, 2024.

The county and the builders' association disagree on how much fire sprinklers would cost. The county document, for instance, hypothesizes examples costing \$3,150 and \$3,700. The association puts the cost at \$8,000 to \$10,000 in full-page ads published in the *Sunday News Journal*. DelawareLive asked both how they came up with their figures.

"The cost of sprinklers does not end at the settlement table," the association says, listing six costs, including "additional monthly costs for separate water hookup."

Some of the association's points are rebutted by the county as myths. For instance, the association cites "repairs to frozen or burst pipes." The county: "With proper installation, sprinklers will not freeze."

The association cites "water damage incurred by mistakenly activating a sprinkler system." The county: "Leaks are rare and are no more likely than leaks from a home's plumbing system."

The association: "The best ways to save the largest number of lives in the most cost-effective manner is to ensure the attainability of newer, safer homes and to educate owners of older homes on the importance of working smoke detectors."

The county: "Smoke alarms are necessary devices that alert occupants to a fire, but do nothing to suppress a fire. In a fire, sprinklers can control and may even extinguish a fire in less time than it would take the fire department to arrive," the county says.

[READ MORE HERE](#)

photo link: Delaware Museum of Nature & Science



Education

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ASPIRA SHOWS OFF NEW HIGH SCHOOL SERVING LATINO STUDENTS

BY JAREK RUTZ

After years of leasing a warehouse from a local church to operate a school, Las Américas ASPIRA Academy celebrated having its own home Wednesday. Margie López Waite, chief executive officer of the school, said the completed high school building will help more students become multilingual, a highly-valued skill in today’s workforce.

The high school, located at 750 Otts Chapel Road in Newark, is now the second property **ASPIRA** owns, along with its existing kindergarten through eighth grade school at 326 Ruthar Drive. Two of the school’s founding commitments are to identify and dismantle systemic inequities within education that contribute to opportunity gaps for our students, and to create a culture of caring that embraces all the identities of our school community members and provides a sense of belonging

for all. ASPIRA’s students are 71.22% are Hispanic or Latino, 32.44% are English language learners and 25.88% are low income.

“It’s our calling card and the reason we exist to support that highly-concentrated group of Latinos,” López Waite said. “We’re able to do things in the curriculum and in the courses and the staffing to really support them.” Language bridges and creates relationships, and she wants her students to have two languages in their arsenal by the time they graduate, she said.

ASPIRA opened in August 2011 with just over 300 students in kindergarten through fifth grade. In 12 years, the charter has expanded to serve more than 1,300 students in kindergarten through 11th grade across two campuses in Newark.

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URSULINE ACADEMY

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- URSULINE ACADEMY



WILMINGTON ELEMENTARY WINS GARDEN TO STUDY NUTRITION

BY JAREK RUTZ

Forwood Elementary in Wilmington will have a garden installed on its school grounds next month as part of a national initiative to help children learn about nutrition. It is one of 24 schools across the U.S. to get a new or refreshed learning garden as part of the “24 Gardens in 24 Hours in 24 Communities” contest, run by **The Sprouts Healthy Communities Foundation**. Volunteers will create the garden Sept. 23 at the Brandywine School District elementary.

The contest, launched in April to celebrate Earth Day, drew more than 3,000 nominations by Sprouts customers. After a three-month process involving interviews and vetting, 24 schools were selected for a \$500,000 total investment from the foundation.

“Sprouts is committed to providing children with hands-on educational experiences that shape how they think about food,” said Nick Konat, chief operating officer of Sprouts. “We believe that our foundation’s efforts to make these connections will play a pivotal role for children to develop an understanding of the importance of healthy eating.”

The donation also will support training educators at each school on how to effectively incorporate the garden into teaching practices across all grade levels.

The winning gardens will team up with **KidsGardening**, a national nonprofit, to become part of a learning community in which teachers responsible for the gardens will receive ongoing technical assistance and mentoring.

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Since its inception in 2015, the Sprouts foundation has given \$18 million to more than 400 nonprofit partners focused on advancing children’s nutrition education and school-based gardening programs. Sprouts predicts that in 2023 more than three million students across the U.S. will benefit from programs supported by the foundation.



WLC GETS ANOTHER PLANNING YEAR AFTER BRANDYWINE VOTE

BY JAREK RUTZ

The **Wilmington Learning Collaborative's** governing council got its wish and will now have an additional planning year after the final vote to amend the signed memorandum of understanding was approved Monday night. The Collaborative, made up of nine city of Wilmington elementary schools across Christina, Red Clay and Brandywine school districts, was waiting on Brandywine's board to approve the 2023-2024 school year as a planning year. Red Clay and Christina's boards voted for the amendment earlier this month.

According to the amendment, the next school year will be the "initial phase for implementing initiatives, policies and programs by the collaborative." The year will also consist of the group conducting a needs assessment and root cause analysis, which will include evaluating district practices, school practices and community and partner supports impacting city students.

One of the main reasons the collaborative asked for another planning year was because it took them about

eight months in its initial planning year to hire an executive director—Laura Burgos—to help direct the 15-person governing council.

The amendment also pushed back when performance requirements for the collaborative will need to be set, which will now be March 31, 2024.

The signed agreement states that the group will be accountable to each district for improving student outcomes, and goals will be set collaboratively through mutual written agreement by the participating districts and the governing council. Originally, those were to be set by March 31, 2023, but now the collaborative has another year to create metrics to measure its success and the improvement of student outcomes.

Brandywine's board also voted to approve the district's budget for this upcoming year. The 2023-2024 budget is \$228.8 million, an increase of \$11.8 million, or 5.4%, over last year's.

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TOP 10 FOOTBALL GAMES YOU SHOULD WATCH LIVE THIS FALL

BY BENNY MITCHELL

We will have 35 high school football games on our Delaware Live Sports livestream schedule this fall. Here is a look at the top 10 games you can watch from the comfort of your home. All of our regular season games are free to watch on our [YouTube channel](#). These games happen to fall on Friday night, but our full schedule will also feature some Thursday night and Saturday games.

No. 10 Delaware Military Academy at Caravel Academy, Friday, Nov. 3–7 p.m.

A game that already will peak fans interest between two New Castle County powers. This game is more important this year as Caravel moves to Class AA District 1. A District championship could be on the line in week 9.

No. 9 Archmere Academy at Caravel Academy, Friday, Sept. 29, 7 p.m.

The Auks and the Bucs met in the state tournament two years ago with Archmere going on to win a Class

AA state title. The Bucs bounced back last year to play in the title game. This is an interesting inter-district match up that will have state tournament implications.

No. 8 Wilmington Charter at Delcastle, Friday, Oct. 20, 7 p.m.

Last season it was the Force of Wilmington Charter that was on the rise, but talk around Wilmington, watch out for the Delcastle Cougars in 2023. The day and time is not a typo, it will be Friday Night Lights at Delcastle on this night. Portable lights will be brought in for this contest between former Diamond State Conference foes.

No. 7 Lake Forest at Milford, Friday, Nov. 10, 7 p.m.

The Battle of the Bell is back where it belongs on week 10. A rivalry for over 50 years, this game features two downstate communities where possession of the bell in mid-November sets the tone for the year.

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BY JASON WINCHELL

The calendar says it's mid-August which means we are getting closer to the start of the DIAA volleyball season that kicks off on Sept. 6. Mike Lang and myself are working on finalizing the Delaware Live volleyball livestream schedule for this fall, but wanted to take a quick break to bring you some of the volleyball matches to check out this year.

Tower Hill @ Padua, Sept. 6: The defending champions head on the road and face a team that is looking for a bounce back season. The Pandas bring back a good core and we will see early if this team can compete for a championship again.

Cape Henlopen @ Smyrna, Sept. 14: The Henlopen North title could be decided when these two rivals meet.

Ursuline @ Saint Mark's, Sept. 26: The Spartans lost a bunch to graduation, but also return a solid defensive nucleus. The Raiders look to rebound after a tough season and their schedule is tough. These rivals always put on great matches and this late September clash will be a match to watch

Tower Hill @ Wilmington Friends, Sept. 28: First meeting between the two teams without a Sachs (Tower

MUST-SEE FALL VOLLEYBALL MATCHES

Hill) or Nathan (Friends) on the court since 2012. The Quakers graduated just one senior from last year's team.

Appo @ Middletown, Sept. 29: This game seems to decide the Flight A champion more years than not. The teams played a five-set classic last season. Both schools' football teams have the night off.

Wilmington Charter @ Archmere, Oct. 3: This match could give one of these two teams a leg up in the conference. I have seen a bunch of five-set matches between these two teams and I wouldn't be shocked if we have another one on Oct. 3.

Smyrna @ Caravel, Oct. 5: These two teams knocked on the door last year. Smyrna reached the quarters, and Caravel the semis. Both lost to Tower Hill. Caravel took a five-setter at Smyrna last season.

DMA @ Caravel, Oct. 12: This is a big non-conference match in mid-October, with two weeks left in the season. This match could determine seeding as both teams are poised to make a state tournament run.

Delmarva Christian @ Ursuline, Oct. 14: How is DCS without several key seniors from last season? How has Ursuline rebounded from a disappointing 2022? By this game each team will have figured out how their seasons have gone, but this could line up for a great match.

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FOOTBALL NIGHTS AT BOB PEOPLES STADIUM

BY NICK HALLIDAY

Caravel Academy's Bob Peoples Stadium was one of the first premier stadiums in the state. The turf field, lights, large scoreboard and two large bleachers that match in size on both the home and away side of the stadium. Not to mention tons of room along the fence that surrounds the track where fans can take in the game as well.

Both teams enter the stadium from the home side where there are two large locker rooms located under the bleachers. For an away team, this can be a little intimidating since they have to hear the band and the cheers for the home team right over top of their heads

when they are in their locker room.

The band takes up the near side of the home bleachers while the student section takes the far side. Then the rest of Buccaneers faithful fill in the middle and the fence surrounding the track. The cheerleaders are right in front of the stands on the track. The home side of the stadium is always packed with Buccaneers fans, which creates a great cheering section for the home team.

Like I mentioned in the opening, Bob Peoples Stadium has one of the largest visitors side bleachers. If you are coming in as an opposing team it's a great place to take in the game with more than adequate seating than most

stadiums. The only reason you would have to go over to the home side of the stadium is for concessions, which Caravel does a great job with. When you walk in you can see the lights on in the concession stand, which has two large serving areas and smoke coming front the grills. The front of the concession stand is always packed with customers, but also fans who take in some of the heat on colder nights. It still is a good spot for both teams to congregate and grab some good food as well as hot chocolate.



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RIDER STADIUM: WHERE IT BEGAN FOR THIS DELAWARE LIVE REPORTER

BY GLENN FRAZER

Our series of stories on high school football stadiums continues with Rider Stadium, home of Caesar Rodney's football team. I must admit, this story is as much about my broadcasting career as it is about Caesar Rodney Rider Stadium.

My dream job of providing "play-by-play" on the radio started in 1979, as I called the Riders' games on a small AM station in Dover with Bill Satterfield. The radio station, then WKEN 1600 AM, carried all of the Riders games and I handled play-by-play every year from 1981-2001 with many analysts including good friends Chuck Williams, Mark Lewis and the late Terry Lovell.

Back then one had to climb up two ladders to enter the press box while carrying equipment. Today, the stadium is much different. It has an all-weather surface, a picturesque entrance complete with benches and a tree-

lined walkway. The press box is easily accessible from the spacious stadium bleachers and there is ample parking all around the school on Old North Road.

Caesar Rodney High dates back to the early 1900s and was the first consolidated district in Delaware when schools from Camden and Wyoming joined together in 1916. Until 1967, the high school was located where Fred Fifer Middle now stands. Then the building on Old North Road was opened. My father's construction company built the new school and I recall him taking me on a tour before the building opened.

RIDER RIVALS

Caesar Rodney's biggest rival is Dover and the two first played against each other in 1935, with the Riders coming out on top 14-13. There have been 72 games in the series, nicknamed "The Civil War." Dover has won

the last five times and holds the series advantage, with 38 wins with four ties, while the Riders have collected 30 wins, the last coming in 2017. Of the 72 games played, 27 have been decided by one score or less.

Caesar Rodney has hosted the state championship trophy three times including 1975 under coach Joe Purzycki, 1990 with coach Tom Leonard and 2008 under the tutelage of the late Mike Schoenwolf.

Although a state title eluded him, John Coveleski is one of the most successful coaches at Caesar Rodney, compiling a record of 138-48-2 the most wins in school history. This season a Rider alumni takes over as head coach of the football team with Shaun Strickland, Class of 2001, leaving Milford to take the position. He is the first graduate of Caesar Rodney to take over the football program since at least the 1960s.

On a personal note, I have broadcast more games for CR football than any other school, including the first 252 of my career that now stands at 1,014. Rider Stadium will always be a special place for me. It was my home-away-from-home for more than 20 years. I made many friends during that span from 1979-2001 including coaches, players, parents, fans and co-workers.

If you have a chance this season, stop by and take in a game on Old North Road, and make some memories like I did.



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