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Futuristic Addition to Historic Register?



Odyssey Teacher Finalist for \$1M Prize



LaMons and Stamper Lead Tatnall to Victory

photo link: Delaware Seashore State Park



Headlines

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53 SCHOOLS ON IMPROVEMENT PLANS TO BE RE-EVALUATED NEXT YEAR

BY JAREK RUTZ

The First State has 53 public schools on support and improvement plans due to consistent underachievement. They are divided into three categories, determined by factors such as whether the whole student body or only a student subgroup are underachieving and whether there's a pattern of underperformance from year to year.

Schools on support and improvement plans receive extra funding for programs designed to improve student success, which is usually an extra few hundred thousand dollars. That cash flow ends when the designated improvement period ends. It's usually three years, but the pandemic lengthened the term for some. Evaluations will take place after the 2023-24 school year ends.

Here are how the schools are classified:

Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI)

CSI schools either score in the lowest 5% of all Title I schools' performance as measured by the statewide [accountability system](#), or the school's graduation rate

is below 67%. The accountability system takes into consideration test scores, proficiency rates, graduation rates, student attendance and more.

Title I schools are those in which at least 40% of the student population lives below the poverty line. There are 147 [Title I](#) schools in Delaware, according to the [Delaware Department of Education's](#) most recent data.

CSI schools are identified every three years. Delaware's were identified in 2018 and 2022, since the pandemic caused some disruptions. There are 10 CSI schools in Delaware: AI DuPont Middle School (Red Clay); Bancroft Elementary School (Christina); Bayard Middle School (Christina); East Side Charter School; Edison Charter School; Harlan Elementary School (Brandywine); McCullough Middle School (Colonial); Newark High School (Christina); Shortlidge Academy (Red Clay); Stanton Middle School (Red Clay).

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School

WANT TO CHOICE YOUR KIDS INTO A SCHOOL? PROCESS OPENS NOV. 6

BY JAREK RUTZ

Applications for school choice in Delaware will open to parents in less than two weeks and districts and charters are trying to make sure families have an easy time navigating through the process. **Red Clay Consolidated School District** hosted a virtual school choice information session Oct. 24 to share the timeline of the school choice window, tips to remember and new changes.

Most districts and charters have some sort of school choice information night at the end of October or early November, so check into a school of interest's website or social media pages to find dates and times.

Delaware is a school-choice state, which means families can apply to send their children to a school outside of their regular feeder pattern. The First State is one of 13 in the **country** in which parents are free to apply to any public school—district or charter—they wish to send their children to rather than sending them to the neighborhood school associated with their address. There

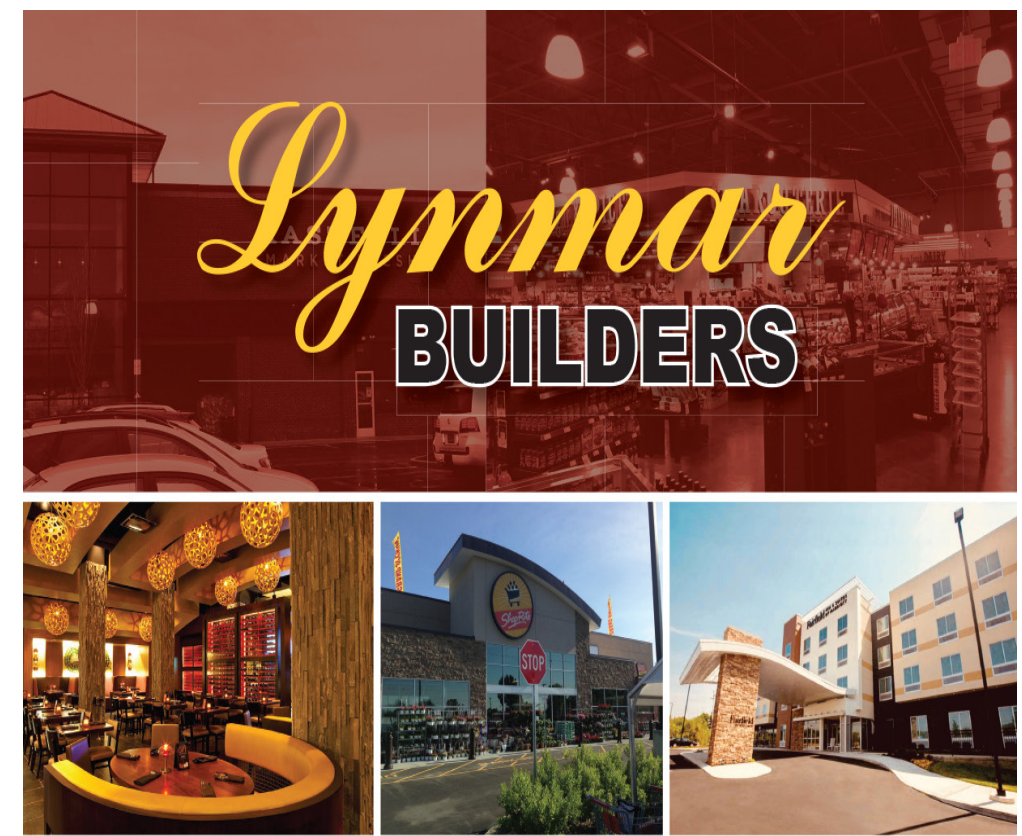
is, however, no guarantee of acceptance at that school. Districts use various methods to fill their classes and many students are put into a lottery or on waitlists.

The application process has recently gone digital to allow parents to submit information online and ease the burden of having to deliver paperwork to a school. Applications for the 2024-2025 school year open Nov. 6 and close Jan. 10, 2024.

“Kindergarten is that one exception and kindergarten choice is open until the first day of school,” said Kristine Bewley, who oversees the Red Clay’s Office of School Choice and is the district’s director of information systems.

Bewley said she recommends parents of rising kindergarteners apply during the school choice period because after a lottery has been completed, it’s first-come, first-served so students would be further down the waitlist the later they apply.

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Culture

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IN KENT, A FUTURISTIC ADDITION TO HISTORIC REGISTER?

BY KEN MAMMARELLA

A saucer-shaped house built in 1969 and located outside Houston since 1977, looks like something out of the future. And it might soon be included on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Delaware State Review Board for Historic Preservation recently voted to move forward with a nomination for the Futuro house owned by Barney and Carol Vincelette. The 30-page nomination form calls the 500-square-foot home “startling [and] otherworldly.”

“It’s kind of inspiring, with that high ceiling,” said Stephanie Holyfield, who helped prepare the [nomination](#) with her daughter, Valarie Shorter. Their work on the nomination came out of a public history class Holyfield had been teaching at Wesley College in 2018.

“We need to save these the same as we would preserve old films,” Barney told WBOC.

If approved—which Holyfield expects in a few weeks—it would be the second Futuro on the register, following one in California. Being listed on the register “shows that it has value where it is,” Holyfield said.

That’s a huge contrast to the reception that Barney got when he bought it, paying \$16,000 for the fully furnished structure, using his Air Force severance and working off the rest to owner Joe Hudson “because no bank would finance such an unusual house,” he wrote in Nest Egg magazine, reposted on the From Moon to Moon blog. Various jurisdictions and his new neighbors didn’t want a Futuro, either.

Barney did not respond to requests for comment.

BEING ON THE HISTORIC REGISTER

“Being on the register also opens up the ability to get grants for restoration,” Holyfield said, “but it doesn’t

stop you from doing what you want to it.” By contrast, buildings in historic districts do have to follow some guidelines, she added.

The Futuro “consists of a central fiberglass and polyester resin layer that sandwiches a core of polyurethane foam between an outer and inner layer of polyester plastic,” the nomination says. It has 18 windows and a five-step retractable staircase that flashes green or blue.

The Futuros began in the Space Age of the late 1960s, designed first as a ski chalet by Finnish architect Matti Suuronen. The 1973 oil embargo tripled the price of the polymers needed to create the 5,500-pound structure, and that was essentially the end of the Futuros, Claudia Colaprete [writes](#) in “Secrets of the Eastern Shore.”

Less than 100 were made and Delaware has a second one, near Eagle Crest Airport, north of Lewes.

The Vincelettes’ Futuro “retains many original character-defining features supporting its period of significance,” the nomination says, including the original layout, most kitchen appliances and the bedroom and bathroom furnishings. The original fireplace has been removed and the house uses geothermal heat and adjacent solar panels. The property also has four sheds (made by Polytech students, so they’re not historic), used for laundry, exercise and storage. The Vincelettes’ Futuro is “the best example of a surviving Futuro with exceptional integrity,” the nomination says.

[READ MORE HERE](#)



CRAFTERS RACE TOWARD DEADLINE FOR FESTIVAL OF TREES WREATHS, DECOR

BY BETSY PRICE

T-minus 23 days until the New Castle County Festival of Trees opens Nov. 17, and Kris Hable is calmly gluing berries on a tiny wreath in the basement of a Parkwood home. The chairman of the festival's Marketplace, which offers wreaths, decor and gifts for sale, Hable is one of a handful of designers and crafters who make the bulk of the items for the store.

"We are without question the best Christmas decorations secret anywhere because we try to make everything as original as we can," said Hable, who's surrounded by piles of holiday materials waiting to be made into another wreath lining the walls of the basement. "Don't even try to organize anything," she said. "It just doesn't work."

The bonus for Festival of Trees shoppers is that each item is individually made and almost all are one of a kind. "So you're not going to see these wreaths and decorations in any store," she said. "You're not going to see 50 of the same thing or anything of that nature. And quite frankly, our prices are fantastic."

The most popular size for wreaths, she said, is 24 inches. Those will fit well on doors and over fireplaces and go for \$30 to \$50, she said.

Marketplace sales account for about a quarter of the festival's total profits, with the majority coming from its decorated trees. Most of those are sponsored by businesses or philanthropists and decorated by volunteers

before they go to those companies or a nonprofit for the holidays.

This year's New Castle County festival will take place Friday, Nov. 17, through Sunday, Nov. 19, at Brantwyn Estate. Admission is free. In addition to shopping, the weekend features musical entertainment and the fun of seeing all the trees.

Hable got involved with the Festival of Trees about a decade ago helping create gift baskets for the Marketplace. "A friend of mine said, 'Kris is good at putting baskets together,' so I went to help them," Hable said.

She liked the operation, the people and the cause and gradually became more involved. In the last decade, she said, the number of crafters supporting the event has fallen, mostly because of attrition.

FESTIVAL OF TREES CYCLE

Now a core group of about six, mostly retired, starts meeting in March to create the majority of the wreaths in the basement of Tom and Linda Brennan Jones' home. "They lock us in," Hable jokes. "They don't even feed us."

They try to make items in a variety of holiday styles, so everyone who walks in can find something they like, Hable said.

"Every year we start the day after Thanksgiving, right after the festival ends and we go everywhere and start purchasing our supplies for next year." That's when Christmas decorations, ribbon and other materials start doing on sale for 50% off.

"We buy right through February," she said. "Sometimes we're lucky enough to get bulk items because the store purchases too many of them or something of that nature."

[READ MORE HERE](#)



BIG IVE'S GOT BIG PLANS AS HE TAKES ON WILMINGTON TURKEY DRIVE

BY BETSY PRICE

Ivan Thomas wants to more than double the size of Stormin' Norman's 40-year-old Thanksgiving turkey giveaway for senior citizens and needy families. The event is now dubbed "Big Ive's Turkey Drive and Give-A-way," and Thomas hopes to be able to give away 3,000 turkeys in 2023 in Wilmington, Dover and other state locations. Last year's total was 1,400.

That number should feed about 24,000 people, said Thomas, executive director of DETV, during an information session Tuesday with partners.

"We have to do right," he said. "We all believe that no one should be going hungry, right, so we can start with saying no one should be going hungry on a holiday."

Thomas was tapped by Oliver last year to take over the turkey drive as he retired after a tenure that saw 250,000 turkeys into grateful hands during his four decades at the helm.

Plans for the Nov. 21 distribution—only 26 days away as of Wednesday morning—already involve help from D.A.R.T., police, firefighters, the Chase Fieldhouse, the Delaware Blue Coats and more.

TURKEY DRIVE NEEDS

Among the things Thomas and his organizing committee told its partners Tuesday during an informational session:

- The organization will continue Oliver's agreement with Food Lion in which the grocery chain will give them a certain number of turkeys and a cash donation. Big Ive's will take the donation and any other cash donations they receive and use the money to buy turkeys at a low bulk rate from Food Lion. Last year, they were Butterballs.
- Big Ive's would like to find a way to add sides to the turkeys. Right now the Black sororities and fraterni-

ties that belong to the National Panhellenic Council of New Castle County provide 11 sides for 150 people, which covers one senior housing development.

- The drive's big needs are cash donations of any size, which will be put toward buying less-expensive turkeys, and volunteer help upstate and down. Unloading and reorganizing the turkeys when they arrive from Food Lion and delivering several hundred turkeys in one senior highrise takes bodies.

Michelle Fidance of Multiplying Good worked with Oliver and is heading the logistics efforts for Big Ive's Turkey Drive. Food Lion came on as a corporate sponsor because its **Food Lion Feeds** program has a goal of providing 1 billion meals by 2025, she said. Oliver's turkey giveaway was a cause that could help them reach that goal.

Being able to buy the turkeys are a low cost per bird helps the organization avoid problems that can occur when someone promises 25 turkeys but then is only able to provide five, she said. It's also impossible to walk into any grocery store and just buy 2,500 birds at once, Fidance said, and that's what they hope to do.

Big Ive's Turkey Drive will accept donations of any kind, she and Thomas said. Even little amounts—such as \$1 per employee for a company— an add up to buy a lot of turkeys, they said.

The drive has set some sponsorship levels on their website, with a variety of price points, to give interested organizations the ability to choose one that suits their group.

[READ MORE HERE](#)

ROCKFORD TOWER LIGHTING GETS KICKOFF EVENT FOR SEASON

BY BETSY PRICE

When Rockford Tower in Wilmington was lit up for the holidays last year, it was the first time it ever had been and it delighted fans of the Wilmington park.

This year, the moment the lights go on will be celebrated at the end of Happy Hour at the Tower kickoff Nov. 4 that will include food trucks, drinks and artists showing off paintings of Wilmington scenes.

The point, said Wilmington City Councilman Nathan Field, is to help establish a dynamic new community tradition that is celebrated annually with a seasonal festival. The event also will double as a fundraiser for [Friends of Wilmington Parks](#) and the [Brandywine River Restoration Trust](#).

Tickets for those 13 and older are \$10, with a \$2.51 fee. Those 12 and under admitted free. The party will

last from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m., ending with the lighting.

ROCKFORD HISTORY

Last year, 14 of the tower's 16 arched windows were lit with gold lights. At the kickoff, the tower will be open for the Happy Hour, allowing people to climb up to the floor. The iconic tower was built in 1903 during the Industrial Revolution to hold water and was designed to look old. It sits on a hill in Rockford Park, near the Brandywine River.

Then, the park was meant to offer mill and quarry workers a break from the noise and grime of their jobs. Today, it's part of an upscale neighborhood that includes the Delaware Art Museum.



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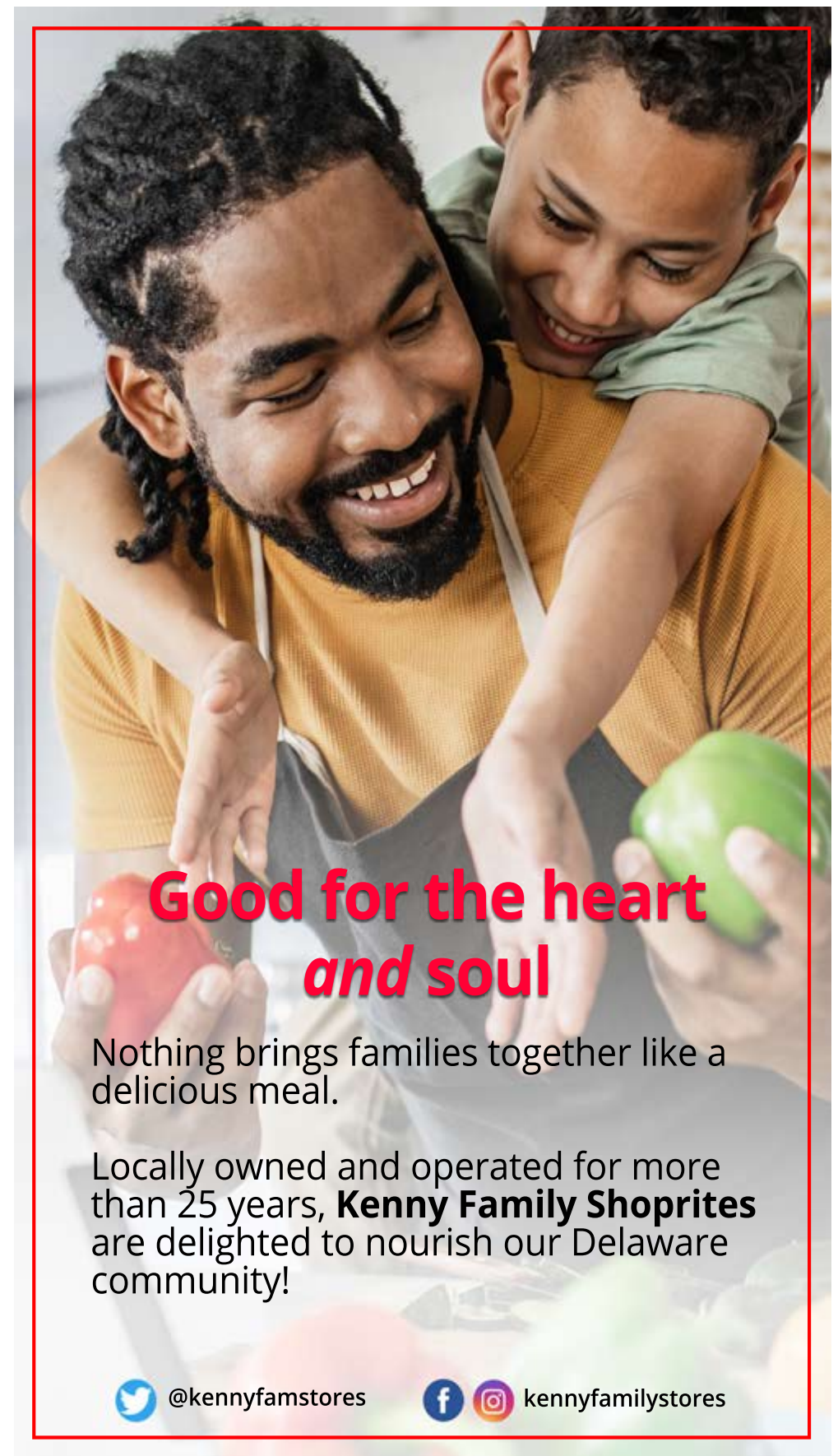


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Food & Dining

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DELAWARE'S BOOMING DINING SCENE: PIZZA, TACOS, ON TAP TRAIL

BY PAM GEORGE

There's no business like the food business. At least that was the case on Oct. 23 when the Delaware Restaurant Association held its Cornerstone Awards. And there's much to celebrate.

Despite several years of hardships, new spots are opening. The industry continues to give back to the community and seasonal specials are tempting diners to venture out during the week.

The **Delaware Restaurant Association** knows how to throw a party. Industry movers, shakers and supporters gathered at the **Lighthouse Cove Event Center** on Oct. 23 for the 21st Annual Cornerstone Awards.

Nicola Pizza and the Caggiano family received the 2023 Cornerstone Award, and the family was on hand for an emotional tribute. The **Lewes Oyster House's** Sean Corea, Tim Bartley and Tom Little received the Restaurateurs of the Year Award. In just over a year, the

downtown establishment has become a destination that has increased the historic town's culinary appeal. The Industry Impact Award was split between the **Food Bank of Delaware** and three food writers: Patricia Talorico, Bob Yesbek—aka the Rehoboth Beach Foodie—and yours truly.

More than 20 DRA members had food stations with tempting tidbits. For instance, **Curry & Spice** offered chicken tikka, **Dogfish Head Brewings & Eats** served red wine risotto, **Home Grown Café** presented beef sliders, and **DiFebo's Market** featured olive oil cake.

ALMOST TACO TIME

Roja & Verde Taqueria in Newark is putting the finishing touches on its College Avenue space, which should open in November. The restaurant is owned by Greg Vogeley, who has **Drip Café** next door and the flagship Drip Café in Hockessin.

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Government



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BY BETSY PRICE

The Delaware Division of Motor Vehicles is now taking registration for residents who would like to enter a drawing to win low-digit car tags. The beloved and much-sought-after blue-and-gold tags will feature numbers only.

Delaware is one of the few states that allow speciality tags like the low-digit ones to be sold, sometimes for incredible amounts of money for a piece of metal and then considered an investment.

The DMV giveaway, called Tag-A-Palooza is an annual event. Those interested must register at dmv.de.gov/taglottery by Thursday, Nov. 2, for the daily drawings that start Monday, Nov. 6, and run through Friday, Nov. 10. You may register only once per driver license or identification card and you must specify which type of tag you are interested in receiving:

REGISTRATION ON FOR DMV'S LOW-DIGIT TAG GIVEAWAY

- PV – 5 Digit – Numbers Only (under 10,000 lbs. registered vehicle weight)
- C – Commercial
- PC – Passenger Car (under 10,000 lbs. registered vehicle weight)
- T - Trailer (regular trailers, utility, flat-bed or non-camping trailers)
- MC – Motorcycle (above 55cc's)
- RT – Recreational Trailer (camping trailers 5,000 lbs. and over, not regular trailers, see above)
- RV – Recreational Vehicle (car or truck under 5,000 lbs. or a motorhome)

If you would like to register to win a five-digit, numbers-only tag and your vehicle is under 10,000 lbs., please select tag type PV.

From Monday, Nov. 6, through Friday, Nov. 10, the DMV will randomly select (530) PV, (55) C, (145) PC, (406) T, (381) MC, (33) RT and (35) RV winners for each of the five days. Drawings will be held at 9 a.m. each day.

Registration does not guarantee you will receive a low-digit tag, the DMV stressed in an email but is required to be entered into the drawing.

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POLICE, COMMUNITY GROUPS CELEBRATE ONE YEAR OF WALKS

BY JAREK RUTZ

Wilmington Police, social service and public health partners celebrated their first year of community outreach walks Oct. 26 at 7th and Washington Streets. This initiative had the goal of addressing unmet social service and public health needs in Wilmington neighborhoods.

Every Thursday from 1 to 2 p.m., police officers are joined by a number of social service, public health and community service partners at a different location in Wilmington. The walks consist of a team of officers and outreach workers establishing a stationary location to distribute information to residents, another team walks through the surrounding neighborhood to share resources and make contact with residents.

“We know well that many challenges that face our residents are not best met by a traditional law enforcement response, and these walks are a prime example of the type of outreach that can provide our residents with the

resources they need to improve their quality of life,” said Police Chief Wilfredo Campos.

The community partners in the outreach walks include the [Wilmington Police Department](#), the Community Partner Support Unit Impact Team at the Winder Laird Porter State Service Center, the Porter Center Public Health Clinic, New Castle County Mobile Health Unit, Delaware Community Response Teams, the Wilmington Police Department Youth Response Unit, Westside Family Healthcare, Henrietta Johnson Medical Center and the Delaware Department of Services for Children, Youth and their Families, Division of Prevention and Behavioral Health.

There have been 42 walks thus far, with the following outreach successes:

- 1,512 contacts and referrals made by the Community Partner Support Unit at the Porter State Service Center
- 1,042 contacts made by the Porter Center Public Health Clinic

- 440 individuals provided with Narcan and given training on how to administer the life-saving medication
- 552 contacts made by Westside Family Health
- 811 contacts made by the Henrietta Johnson Medical Center
- 288 contacts made by the Delaware Department of Services for Children, Youth and their Families

Each week, residents have been connected with referrals to social service and public health partners, as well as COVID-19 and flu vaccinations, lead testing and other health services.

The series has also included the distribution of fresh fruits and vegetables, food, health and hygiene supplies, school supplies, children’s books and awareness materials related to public health and social services.

[READ MORE HERE](#)



BY JAREK RUTZ

Delaware has joined a bipartisan coalition of attorneys general suing Meta in federal and state courts, alleging that the company knowingly designed and deployed harmful features that purposefully addict children and teens on Instagram and its other social media platforms.

As it did, Meta falsely assured the public that these features are safe and suitable for young users, said Attorney General Kathy Jennings Tuesday in a press release.

The attorneys general say Meta's business practices violate state consumer protection laws and the federal Children's Online Privacy Protection Act.

These practices have harmed and continue to harm the physical and mental health of children and teens and have fueled what the U.S. Surgeon General has **deemed** a "youth mental health crisis" which has ended lives, devastated families, and damaged the potential of a generation of young people, the press release said.

"As the case will reveal, Meta is aware of the unsafe and addictive nature of its products, yet consistently

DELAWARE AMONG STATES GOING AFTER META FOR TARGETING KIDS

chooses not to implement fundamental safety measures, opting instead to deceive the public. Companies prioritizing profits over the safety of Delawareans will be held accountable, irrespective of their size," Jennings said.

The complaint, joined by 33 states and filed in U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California, alleges that Meta knew of the harmful impact of its platforms, including Facebook and Instagram, on young people. Instead of taking steps to mitigate these harms, it misled the public about the harms associated with use of its platform, concealing the extent of the psychological and health harms suffered by young users addicted to use of its platforms.

The complaint further alleges that Meta knew that young users, including those under 13, were active on the platforms and knowingly collected data from these users without parental consent. It targeted these young users noting, as reported in a 2021 Wall Street Journal **article**, that such a user base was "valuable, but untapped."

While much of the complaint relies on confidential material that is not yet available to the public, publicly available sources including those previously released by former Meta employees detail that Meta profited by purposely making its platforms addictive to children and teens. Its platform algorithms push users into descending "rabbit holes" in an effort to maximize engagement.

META FEATURES

Features like infinite scroll and near-constant alerts were created with the express goal of hooking young users. The press release said these manipulative tactics continually lure children and teens back onto the platform.

As Aza Raskin, the original developer of the infinite scroll concept, **noted** to the BBC about the feature's addictive qualities: "If you don't give your brain time to catch up with your impulses...you just keep scrolling."

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HUMAN TRAFFICKING OF MINOR IN DELAWARE RESULTS IN ABUSE, FORCED LABOR

BY BRYAN SHUPE

The Department of Justice and the Elsmere PD secured Delaware's first-ever Forced Labor conviction. An Elsmere man will serve a lengthy prison sentence after pleading guilty to multiple felonies, including Delaware's first conviction under a Forced Labor statute originally passed in 2014.

On Oct. 13, Martin Ortiz-Lozano, 34, was sentenced to 15 years in prison after pleading guilty to two counts of Child Abuse in the First Degree and one count of Human Trafficking a Minor–Forced Labor.

In September 2021, Ortiz-Lozano had his minor child brought to Delaware from Mexico and forced them to work hard labor, seven days a week. The child was not sent to school and was assaulted on a daily basis, resulting in facial fractures, a collapsed nasal passage, displaced teeth and other injuries. Ultimately, the victim underwent an extremely long and complex surgery to

repair the damage that was caused by the repeated abuse.

“Every child needs love and support,” said Attorney General Kathy Jennings. “Instead, this victim was exploited by the person they needed the most. The violence and abuse that this child suffered were unthinkable; and while the child is now safe, there is still a long path to healing from this kind of trauma. I’m proud of the work that our team and our law enforcement partners did to bring the defendant to justice.”

This case was investigated by Det. Scott Sowden of the Elsmere Police Department, along with the Department of Justice. This conviction and sentence were secured by Deputy Attorney General Nikki Warner, Nurse Analyst Lauren Welling, Paralegal Jayna Quillen, Social Worker Bettina Jones, Investigator Guillermo Santiago and Legal Assistant Luz Zermeno, with support from Investigation Coordinator of the Office of the Child Advocate Michael Cooksey.



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DELAWARE CITY

DE CITY FIRE TRAINS FOR SHOOTINGS, INVESTS IN BALLISTIC GEAR

BY JAREK RUTZ

Delaware City Fire Co. wants to make sure the town's 2,000 residents are protected in the case of an active shooter emergency. The fire company has been collaboratively training with other state law enforcement agencies, fire departments, Emergency Medical Services and emergency management groups. The first responders said in a press release that additional training is in response to a recent local incident that highlighted the need for rapidly accessible trauma supplies.

Earlier in the year, Delaware City and surrounding first responders were dispatched to a shooting with multiple victims. One patient was located on scene suffering from critical injuries requiring a significant amount of trauma supplies. An additional patient reported to be at the scene had been transported to a hospital by private auto.

"While this was not a 'mass casualty incident,' it easily could have been," the press release said.

The unit has purchased more trauma supplies to be stocked on each ambulance and also bought more trauma kits from **North American Rescue**. It's a national group that provides combat and trauma care.

Jeff Sands, assistant chief of the fire crew, said the company bought a total of nine kits: two for each of the two ambulances and one each for the fire apparatus and command vehicles. That cost the fire company \$2,600. It's also buying ballistic armor and helmets.

Last year, the **Delaware State Fire Chief's Association** distributed some equipment to fire companies courtesy of funding from the **Delaware Emergency Management Agency**, which has also provided funding for recent statewide training initiatives.



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The Delaware City press release came Oct. 26 after yet-another U.S. mass shooting, this time in Lewiston, Maine.

A 40-year-old male suspect, Robert Card, who's a fire-arms instructor and believed to be in the Army Reserve, had shot and killed 18 people. The suspect, Robert Card, was found dead Friday night in Lisbon, Maine, from a self-inflicted gunshot wound.

"In years past, it was unheard of for firefighters, EMTs and paramedics to need to wear ballistic armor and ballistic helmets," the Delaware City Fire Co. said in a press release. "But as threats continue to change, we need to be prepared to save lives in high-risk environments."

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LIVE


photo link: Wilmington Friends School



Education

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NEW CASTLE LEADERS CELEBRATE 'EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION'

BY JAREK RUTZ

A stunning sunset shone through the glass walls of the Community Education Building in downtown Wilmington Oct. 23 as community leaders celebrated the state's educational advancements.

The "Excellence in Education" event brought together heads of schools, executives of local community organizations, education advocates, state politicians, teachers and more.

Those in attendance—some of whom gave brief speeches—included Sarah Baker, head of school at [Tower Hill School](#); Desa Burton, executive director of [Zip Code Wilmington](#); Aaron Bass, CEO of [EastSide Charter School](#); Julie Keleher, executive director of [First State Educate](#); Kendall Massett, executive director of the [Delaware Charter Schools Network](#); Linda Jennings, CEO of the [Community Education Building](#); and Matt Meyer, executive of New Castle County.

Speakers shared the belief that cross-collaboration between schools, districts and community organizations is paramount to academic and social success.

"What I really hope is that you come away knowing a little more about the broader community," said Ben duPont, board chair of Tower Hill.

Education can be subject to the same problems that occur in many industries, he said. "One school worries about itself and another school worries about itself and there's not much cross learning," he said.

duPont said he hopes the event can become a regular one so schools and community organizations can bounce ideas off one another and collaborate to make progress for all students, regardless of where they live or what school they attend.

"I began teaching when I was 16 years old in Germantown because I realized that the community around me

wasn't able to have the same access and the same investment as my school," Bass said. "My high school had 100% graduation and the high school where I should have gone had 10%, just five blocks away from each other."

Government officials must invest in social and academic services and create public places for the community to gather, Bass said. It's also crucial that parents are actively engaged in their child's education, he said. That education should be structured in a way that takes into consideration a student's past trauma and mental health.

Leaders of the Community Education Building which is home to [Kuumba Academy](#) and [Great Oaks Charter School](#), repeated that equitable education is the equalizer for students coming from underprivileged backgrounds.

Zip Code Wilmington's Burton said her organization has provided access to quality technology training that many Delawareans previously would have needed to travel to Maryland to get. Her organization started in 2015 as a software coding bootcamp designed to be accessible and affordable to all with the talent and desire to attain a high-demand software programming career. It primarily trains adults around 30 years old in a 12-week program that consists of 80 to 100 hours of activity a week, Burton said.

"The mission is to help develop the economy of this region by training people who are talented, who have the ability but maybe didn't have the opportunity to become software developers and data engineers," she said. "We help folks go from average salaries of let's say \$20,000 to \$30,000 to salaries after they received the training of \$80,000 to \$90,000."

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DELAWARE STUDENTS STEERED TO CYBERSECURITY TRAINING PROGRAM

BY JAREK RUTZ

Cybersecurity is one of the hot, hot, hot areas of study and for employment. Delaware high school and college students can now apply for a national cybersecurity program, with scholarship money and advanced training up for grabs. **CyberStart America** and **Cyber Fast-Track** provide participants with the opportunity to explore their potential cybersecurity talent and assist in gaining problem-solving skills for a career.

The programs are split between high school students from freshman to senior level and college students. Any participant has the chance to win scholarship prizes as well as statewide recognition and further training.

“All Delawareans need to understand the potential of cybersecurity both for their professional and personal development,” Gov. John Carney said in announcing the program. “Whether cybersecurity is a potential career pathway or learning about self-protection against cyber criminals, it’s on all of us to learn more to keep Delaware secure.”

During the previous competition, Delaware had 261 high school student participants with six award winners in CyberStart America and 76 college students with five award winners in Cyber FastTrack.

Both programs offer a series of online challenges that allow participants to act as cyber protection agents to solve cybersecurity-related puzzles and explore related topics such as code-breaking, programming, networking and digital forensics. At the high school level, the program can be assigned as part of homework, form the basis of an extracurricular club or students can simply try it on their own. Participating students and their teachers do not need knowledge or experience in information technology or cybersecurity to take part.

“With cyber-attacks happening every day to well-secured, high-profile organizations, the need for this next generation to fill the skills gap in cybersecurity is essential,” said Gregory Lane, Delaware’s chief information officer.

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DSU'S INVESTMENT CLUB GETS \$150,100 GIFT TO PUT TOWARDS STOCKS

BY JAREK RUTZ

The students in Delaware State University's Investment Club are getting \$150,100 to put into the stock market. Part of DSU's College of Business, the club's newfound pot of investment money comes courtesy of a \$125,000 pledge from the Graham Family Sustainable Investment Fund and a \$25,100 donation from the Markel Corporation. The Graham Family Sustainable Investment Fund was established by Tom S. Gayner, who is also the chief executive officer of Markel.

Dr. Michael Casson, Dean of the College of Business, said these recent gifts grants its students a tremendous learning opportunity.

"This financial support provides an innovative vehicle for students to learn the techniques and benefits of long-term investment strategies," said Casson, "and ultimately apply this knowledge to advance the growth of the College of Business' endowment."

Over the next 25 years, the club will receive \$5,000 annually for purchasing stocks.

Gayner visited DSU Oct. 11 to watch a club event in which members presented the stocks that they have decided to purchase and explained the rational that led them to invest in those companies.

The club has 43 student members, according to Greg Coverdale, who helps supervise the club and is the director of financial planning programs at DSU's Financial Literacy Institute.

For the first year of this investment initiative, the students have invested in the following stocks: **Boston Scientific**, **Exxon Mobil** and **Texas Instruments**.

"They wanted to use a mix and they wanted to find stocks that were growth oriented, as well as value oriented," Coverdale said. "They were trying to pick long-term picks and they're used to short term trading, so it was good learning a different strategy and also just having fun with it."





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ODYSSEY TEACHER IS AMERICAN FINALIST FOR \$1M PRIZE

BY JAREK RUTZ

Melissa Tracy, a social studies teacher at **Odyssey Charter School** in Wilmington, is one of 10 finalists—and the only U.S. one—

for the \$1 million **2023 Global Teacher Prize**.

“I just feel so privileged to even be in the company of the other educators from all around the world,” Tracy said Thursday.

Tracy seemed to still be stunned Thursday to discover she is not only one of the finalist, but the only American. She read the biographies of the other nine finalists and was in awe to be in the company of such educational excellence. “To be honest, I was shocked to even be a top 50 finalist,” she said.

Tracy has already garnered national recognition with an award for combating hunger with Odyssey’s Hydroponic Learning Lab, which she oversees after helping to create. The native Californian is also the first educator in Delaware to teach the Advanced Placement African American Studies. It’s a new class from the College Board that will have a national rollout throughout 2024.

Tracy said the Global application process was exhaustive and involved interviews and questions on community contributions, impact on student achievement, impact on colleagues and more.

The other nine finalists are from Ghana, India, South Africa, United Kingdom, France, Pakistan, Canada, Chile and Ukraine. The winner will be announced Nov. 8, in Paris, France, as part of the general meeting of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

“I’m not expecting to win, but if for some reason I were to win, I plan on sharing some of the award money with some of the other finalists,” Tracy said. She also plans to spend some of the reward money to help spread Odyssey’s hydroponic programming to other schools.

One of Tracy’s core mantras is that administrators and community members need to be open to saying “yes.”

“We need to create spaces by which educators can innovate and be creative,” she said. “There are so many phenomenal educators out there that are prevented from experimenting, from pursuing personal interests that would ultimately benefit students.”

Tracy said the hydroponic program, which had its greatest impact during the pandemic, would not be possible if the school administration, board, facilities team and students were not supportive of her passion and vision.

“Sometimes we forget what the focus should be on, and the focus should be on our students,” she said. “We need to create more opportunities for educators to simply be creative and try new things, and I feel like our program is a testament to that.”

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LAMONS AND STAMPER LEAD TATNALL TO VICTORY



BY NICK HALLIDAY

Rahshan LaMons and Micah Stamper led the way for the No. 1 ranked 3A Tatnall Hornets in a commanding victory over St. Elizabeths. LaMons and his fellow Hornets teammates spoiled the Vikings' homecoming by winning by a margin that forced a running clock.

LaMons and Stamper accounted for all six touchdowns in a 41-6 route over the Vikings. Ironically, both players scored two offensive touchdowns and one defensive touchdown.

On the game's opening kickoff, the Vikings returner fumbled the ball and Stamper picked it up and returned 25 yards for a touchdown. He then went on to score two

offensive touchdowns on four- and 10-yard runs.

LaMons' defensive touchdown came late in the third quarter when he picked off a pass attempt from the Vikings and returned it 59 yards for a pick six. His two offensive touchdowns were on a four-yard run and an 80-yard run that he kept on a quarterback keeper and just outran the Vikings defense.

Rahshan finished with 228 yards on 10 carries, to go along with his three touchdowns. After the game we asked head coach Brendon Ireton what Rahshan means to his team.

"Rahshan is our point guard, he makes everyone around him better and the guys around have stepped up and made plays to compliment what he does. Stamper, Moore, Gordon, Maycole and Minor have all made plays to go along with what he does. Our line (Boothe, Hoggard, Glazier, Martire, Henly and Homer) has done a tremendous job learning and buying into our scheme. We are also doing some great things defensively, that allows us to play with confidence on offense. Very proud of all our players and assistant coaches, they have done a great job building something special this season."

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BY SHANNON TIMMONS

It's hard to believe we are entering the last week of regular season play already. What a season of field hockey it has been. Smyrna continues to dominate, remaining undefeated all season. Cape and Smyrna knocked off Delmar and D1 teams that have been a pleasant surprise are Milford and Odessa. I hope Odessa has enough strength of schedule to get the young Ducks into the tournament. Despite losses to D1 teams, Delmar is still a favorite for tournament time. Caravel and Newark Charter have made a name for themselves this season too. After watching them play and tracking their progress this season, I believe Caravel has one of the best defenses in hockey and Newark Charter has one of the best offensive fronts. But they will have to contend with Delmar in the D2 tournament. Games of

THE CORNER SCOOP: WEEK 7 FIELD HOCKEY TOP 10 RANKINGS

the Week were: D2 St. Mark's at Sussex Academy Oct. 23; D1 Polytech at Milford Oct. 26.

DIVISION 1

No. 1 Smyrna 12-0 The Eagles will round out their regular season with two games this week before going to Delmar on Saturday to play for the Henlopen Conference title—Oct. 24 at Polytech and Oct. 26 Senior Night vs. Dover at home. Congrats on capturing the Henlopen North Division title.

No. 2 Cape Henlopen 12-1 Cape is coming off a big win over Delmar and had two home games last week. They saw Sussex Tech Oct. 24 and then Sussex Central Oct. 26.

No. 3 Milford 11-2 The Bucs picked up a forfeit win against Laurel at the Turf Bowl and traveled to CR on Oct. 24 and finished up at home for Senior Night Oct. 26 vs. Polytech. What an exciting season for the Bucs who will look to make some noise come tourney time.

No. 4 Middletown 10-3 They looked to cap off a great season with Senior Night Oct. 23 vs. DMA and then traveled to Newark Oct. 24. We will see the Cavs in the tournament this year.

No. 5 Polytech 9-4 The Panthers have been on the move late in the season, but had its work cut out for them this week facing No. 1 Smyrna Oct. 24 and No. 3 Milford Oct. 26.

No. 6 Odessa 9-4 There are so many good things to say about the Ducks. The four losses they have are all but just one goal. I'll be interested to see how they fare this week as we head to tournament time. They went on the road Oct. 25 to Brandywine and then Oct. 30 to DMA.

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VIEW FROM THE BASELINE: WEEK 7 VOLLEYBALL TOP 10 RANKINGS

BY JASON WINCHELL

We've reached the final week of the regular season. The next edition of the Baseline will include a look at the state tournament bracket, but a lot will happen between now and then.

The focus this week will be, for many teams, fine-tuning as the state tournament approaches. For others, however, whether they play past this week depends on how they play this week, along with how other teams finish up the season. It's a 24-team tournament, and as of Sunday night, 29 teams were .500 or better, so obviously that is not enough to guarantee a postseason bid.

The other activity that will be popular among coaches and volleyball enthusiast this week is counting bonus points. Those can play a significant role in tournament seeding. Entering the week, there were 19 teams whose

week will affect the number of bonus points they provide opponents.

Matches to watch this week: Padua at Saint Mark's, Oct. 24; Wilmington Charter at Smyrna, Oct. 26; Wilmington Friends at Newark Charter, Oct. 27; Ursuline at Saint Mark's, Oct. 28.

No. 1 Saint Mark's has not lost a set since its five-set win over Smyrna. The Spartans wrap up the regular season with two tough matches against their longest-standing rivals, although both are at home. They have the inside track to the top seed in the state tournament.

No. 2 Smyrna keeps on rolling against an impressive schedule. Of the Eagles' 13 opponents, just four are currently below .500.

No. 3 Ursuline traveled to Padua on Oct. 26 for its

first match in nine days. The Raiders finish the regular season on Saturday at Saint Mark's in what has become a tradition in Delaware high school volleyball.

No. 4 Tower Hill has won 10 straight since losing to Ursuline in early September. Only Saint Mark's has a longer winning streak.

No. 5 Padua continues its solid play against one of the toughest schedules in the state. The Pandas have a pair of tough matches to close out the regular season as they continue to push for a first-round bye in the tournament.

No. 6 Caesar Rodney jumps a few spots as the Riders continue to impress. Last week included wins over a resurgent Delmarva Christian and Henlopen South champ Sussex Academy. CR will be favored in its final two matches, both on the road.

No. 7 Newark Charter has rebounded with four straight wins following a three-match losing streak in the middle of the season. The Patriots have a busy week, but should be hosting a first-round tournament match.

No. 8 Dover keeps motoring along, likely to earn a first-round bye. The Senators' three losses have come against opponents with a combined record of 32-7.

No. 9 Wilmington Charter has become the masters of five sets, having gone the distance in three of its last four matches. The Force have a brutal non-conference schedule, which continues in the regular-season finale Thursday at Smyrna.

No. 10 Middletown/Archemere sit in the final spot. The Cavaliers will have an extra match to prepare for the tournament as they face Concord in the Blue Hen Conference championship. The Auks had a tough week, which runs into this week on Tuesday at Tower Hill.

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