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October 8, 2023

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photo link: Lums Pond State Parks



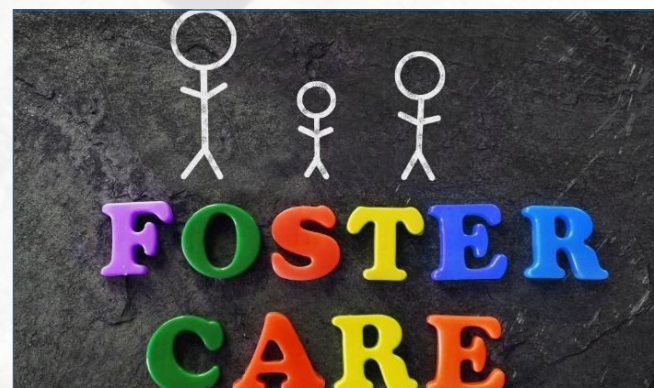
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photo link: Brandywine Creek State Park

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NERDIT Cares Opens



DE to Explore Federal Program



Middletown Defense Instrumental in Harvest Bowl Win

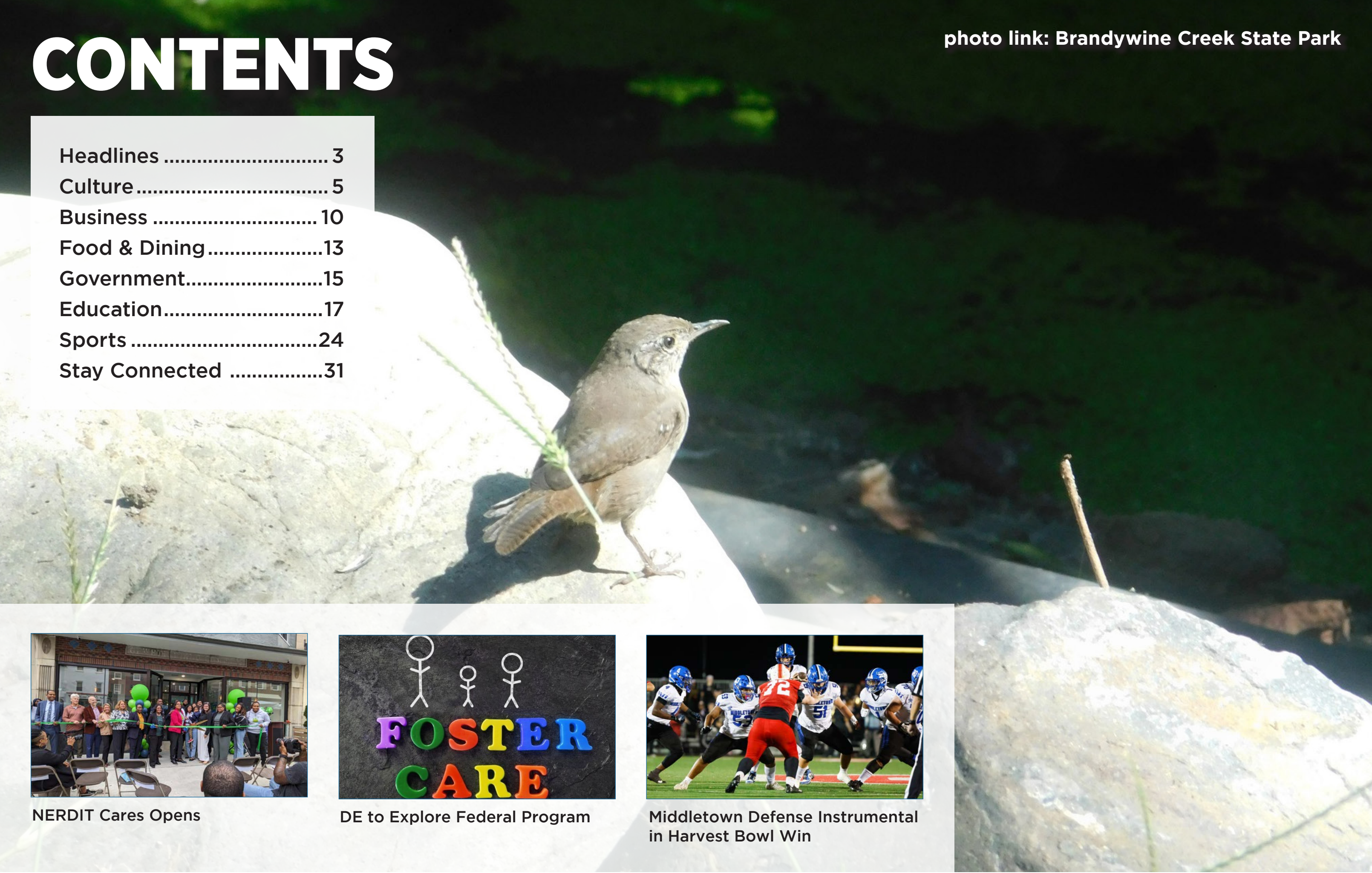


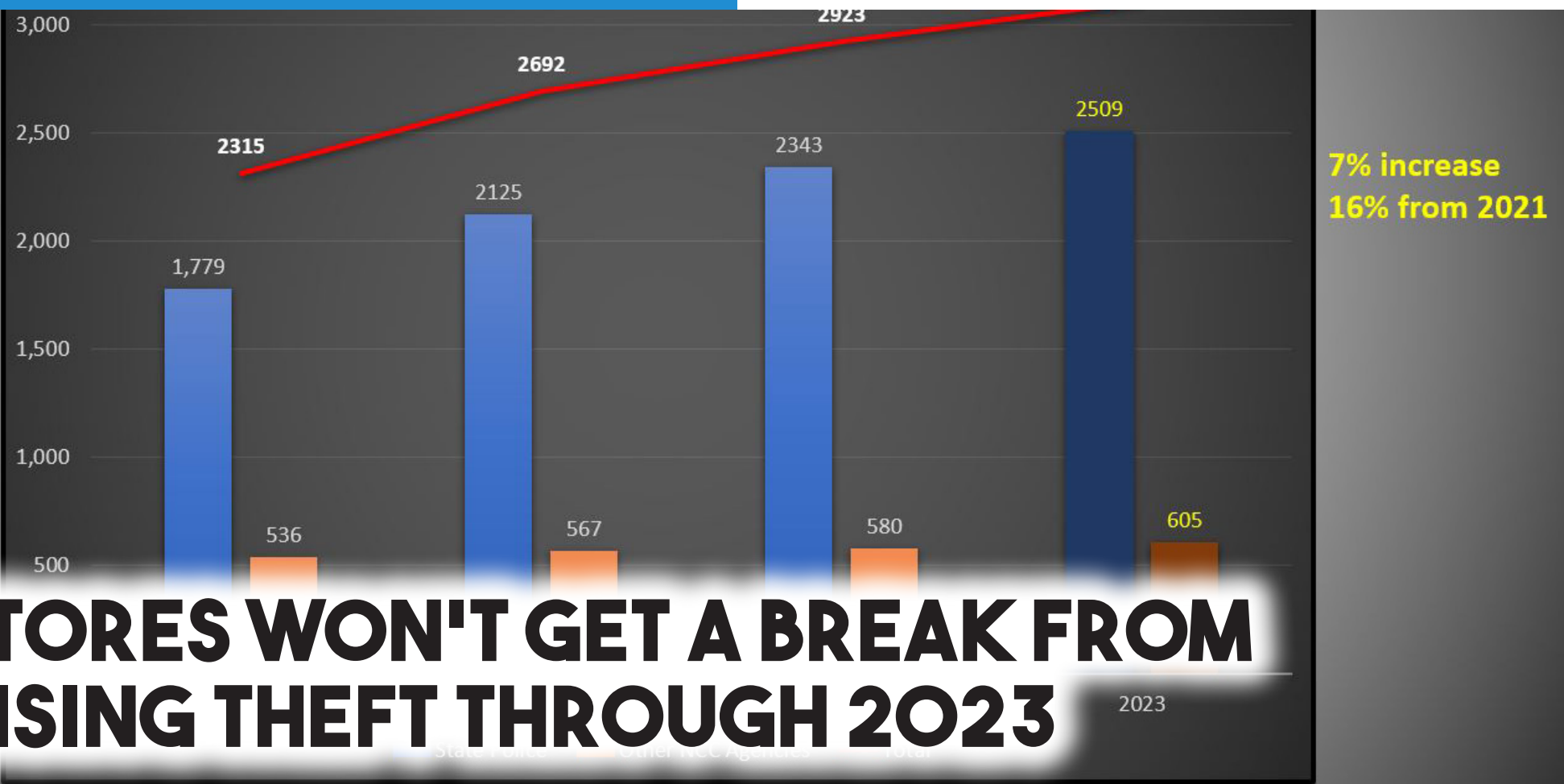
photo link: Delaware Greenways



Headlines

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STORES WON'T GET A BREAK FROM RISING THEFT THROUGH 2023

BY BETSY PRICE

Retail theft in Delaware is causing concerns among local families and business owners. The economic impact, according to industry experts, could result in store closings. One mom posting recently in a Delaware moms’ Facebook group described how outraged she was as she stood in a store and watched people grab merchandise and run.

A deluge of comments followed with dozens of moms talking about how they were flabbergasted to see the same thing in stores they were in and almost all the stores were different. Many talked about how it frightened them and made them feel unsafe to be there when it was happening. They’re likely to see more.

The number of retail thefts reported in New Castle County—including theft by people working together or targeting specific items—is expected to rise 16% over last year and it’s been rising since the middle of 2020, according to a Delaware State Police analysis. From January through August, more than 10,000 cases of retail theft were reported in New Castle County alone, the analysis said.

“If the level of theft continues increasing, I would not be shocked or surprised to see retailers close in Delaware,” said Julie Miro Wenger, executive director of the Delaware Food Industry Council, which represents grocery and drugstores with a total of 12,000 employees. Miro

Wenger said she couldn’t be certain who might close. “But I would not be surprised if we saw a general retailer close,” she said.

Finding an estimated dollar value to put to those thefts is near impossible, but the numbers land in the millions in lost revenue and products and put a staggering pressure on store staff and management, industry members say. It also affects shoppers.

The average customer has seen the byproducts of retail theft: increased security, some items locked up, entrances closed in the evening to force all traffic in and out through one door. Giant Food, CVS, Acme and others have locked up popular items and closed secondary entrances in the evening and at night.

Theft at department stores make up the highest category of thefts, according to Delaware State Police statistics. In New Castle County, those stores include Target, Old Navy, Boscov’s, Kohl’s, Ulta, Walmart, Lowe’s, The Home Depot, Walgreens, Wawa, Macy’s, Dick’s and JCPenney, according to a recent State Police presentation at Food Industry Council Retail Theft Symposium.

These aren’t kids stealing a candy bar or a mom down on her luck stealing a can of infant formula. Organized retail theft—groups of people who target specific stores or items—is a growing problem in Delaware, retailers, police and prosecutors say, although everyone says it’s not at the level of last week’s mass looting in Philadelphia. Some organized groups are essentially taking orders for products that will be resold, police said.

[READ MORE HERE](#)



photo credit: Rockwood Park & Museum

Culture

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BLUE MASS OFFERS PRAYERS FOR PROTECTION OF FIRST RESPONDERS

BY JAREK RUTZ

Dozens of police officers, firefighters, EMTs and military personnel gathered in Wilmington’s **St. Elizabeth’s Church** Friday morning for the Blue Mass.

Started in 2008, the Blue Mass honors local, county, state and federal law enforcement, as well as fire, emergency medical and military personnel who live and work in the **Catholic Diocese of Wilmington**, which includes Delaware and Maryland’s Eastern Shore.

“We’re especially joyful to be with the emergency and rescue personnel who serve our cities and towns in our state so wonderfully during the year,” said Bishop William Koenig. “We join in prayer and gratitude to God for the ways that he has blessed us through your service, asking God to continue looking over in inter-

vention for your own safety and your own goodness.”

The mass lasted about an hour. Many of the prayers related to God providing protection, safety and love to service members and their families. A reception followed in Grant Hall, beneath the church.



Halloween at Hagley

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IT'LL BE A BARBIE WORLD FOR HALLOWEEN (PLUS CATS, TOO)

BY KEN MAMMARELLA

Barbie is the most popular pop-culture character in Delawareans' Google searches for Halloween costumes. And a cat is the most-searched traditional costume in the state. It's also the most popular in Utah. All the most popular pop-culture characters are female, but all the most popular traditional costumes can be worn by both boys and girls (and young-at-heart adults).

Barbie has been a familiar figure since 1959, but her popularity exploded with the summer movie hit. She is the most popular pop-culture costume in America this year, with 14 states searching for it the most. No. 2 is Wednesday Addams, first seen in The New Yorker in 1944 and the title star of a new hit show on Netflix.

The rest of the most popular pop-culture characters: Princess Peach from Super Mario Bros., Harley Quinn

from the Batman universe, Weird Barbie from the new movie, Cruella de Vil from "101 Dalmatians," Wonder Woman, Catwoman from the Batman universe, Gwen Stacy from the Spiderman universe and Poison Ivy from the Batman universe.

A skeleton is the most popular traditional Halloween costume in America, with the 14 states searching for it the most. Number two is a ghost. The rest of the most popular traditional ideas: vampire, zombie, witch, dog, pirate, angel, clown and scarecrow.

The rankings came from **Boohoo** looking at Google Trends.



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HIGHMARK GIVES TO GROUPS FOR BETTER HEALTHCARE

- **Lori's Hands, Inc.:** \$50,000 to connect Newark residents with chronic conditions with college student volunteers enrolled in health-focused studies in service learning partnerships.
- **Nemours Foundation:** \$542,769 for pediatric asthma project, supporting three community health workers.
- **Springboard Collaborative:** \$100,000 for second phase of its Georgetown Pallet Shelter Village, for care coordination and access to wraparound services, with the goals of achieving permanent housing while reducing reliance on emergency services.
- **SL24 UnLocke the Light Foundation:** \$50,000 to hire mental health professionals focused on crisis intervention for youth.

BluePrints is a grants program of the Highmark Delaware Fund, a donor-advised fund at the Delaware Community Foundation. Since BluePrints launched in 2007, the Highmark Delaware Fund has invested more than \$37 million in initiatives to improve health outcomes across the state.

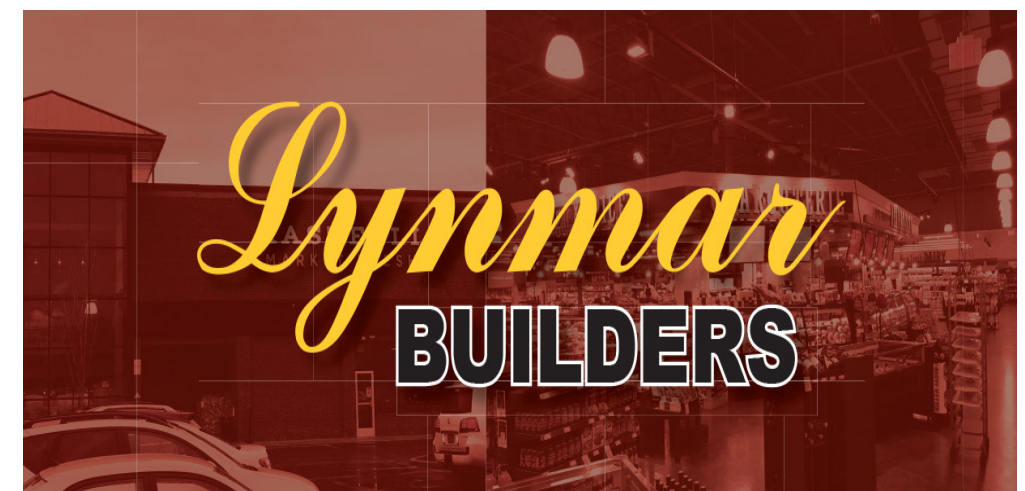
“We remain resolutely dedicated to advancing our mission of addressing the root causes of health disparities in Delaware,” Rita Landgraf, chair of the BluePrints for the Community Advisory Council and former secretary of the Delaware Department of Health and Social Services, said in the announcement.



BY KEN MAMMARELLA

Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield Delaware is giving out \$898,169 in **BluePrints for the Community** grants. BluePrints aims to increase access to care and reduce health disparities throughout Delaware. Programs typically focus on healthcare access, economic stability for families and individuals, social and community context, neighborhood and built environment and health workforce. BluePrints grants for third quarter:

- **Delaware Adolescent Program, Inc.:** \$45,400 to support pregnant and parenting teens.
- **Delaware Regional Dream Center:** \$45,000 for Restoring Community Hope Outreach Program, for data collection to ensure the provision of nutritious food and culturally sensitive staples.
- **First State Squash:** \$65,000 for free squash programming for Wilmington youth, emphasizing first-generation college students, families and Title I schools.



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ANOTHER NEW RECORD FOR STATE'S LARGEST BLUE CATFISH



BY KEN MAMMARELLA

If it's starting to sound like a broken record, that's what it is: For the second time in less than a month, Delaware has a new state record blue catfish. Sydney McBroom of Bridgeville landed the 53-pound whopper, which measured 46.5 inches long and is believed to be the largest freshwater fish caught since the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control began keeping recreational fishing records.

It was midmorning Sept. 22 on the Nanticoke River when McBroom caught the big catfish from his boat, using a whole bluegill as bait and landing it after a 20-minute wrestling match. His catch eclipsed a **record** that lasted just 20 days, a 47-pound, eight-ounce specimen taken by another Bridgeville angler, Chris Andrews, and another fish, which, like the three most recent blue catfish state records, was caught from the fertile catfishing waters of the Nanticoke.

"You use a big fish to catch a big fish," McBroom said of landing the catfish, which stands as the fifth state record of the 2023. "I don't fish for attention, I fish for fun. I fish for me. You have to go onto the water and put your time in. We'd see a mess of nice catfish [every time we went out]. That was just our day."

His blue catfish catch shattered Andrews' state record caught Sept. 2 by more than 4.5 pounds after Andrews had surpassed the previous record (set in April 2022) by four ounces. A **list** of all Delaware fishing records for freshwater and saltwater species can be found on the DNREC website. McBroom's record catch was certified by Cpl. Kyle Wharton, Delaware Natural Resources Fish and Wildlife Police, at Lewes Harbour Marina in Lewes.





photo link: Delaware Division of Small Business

Business

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NERDIT CARES OPENS STOREFRONT FOR WORKFORCE TRAINING

BY BETSY PRICE

A Wilmington nonprofit devoted to widening access to tech devices and IT careers among the underserved by teaching practical, emotional and technical skills has opened an office downtown.

NERDiT CARES, part of the **NERDiT Now** brand that offers tech repair and recycling of tech devices, held a ribbon-cutting at 212 W. Ninth St. This new space will be home to the NERDiT Cares Workforce Development Program.

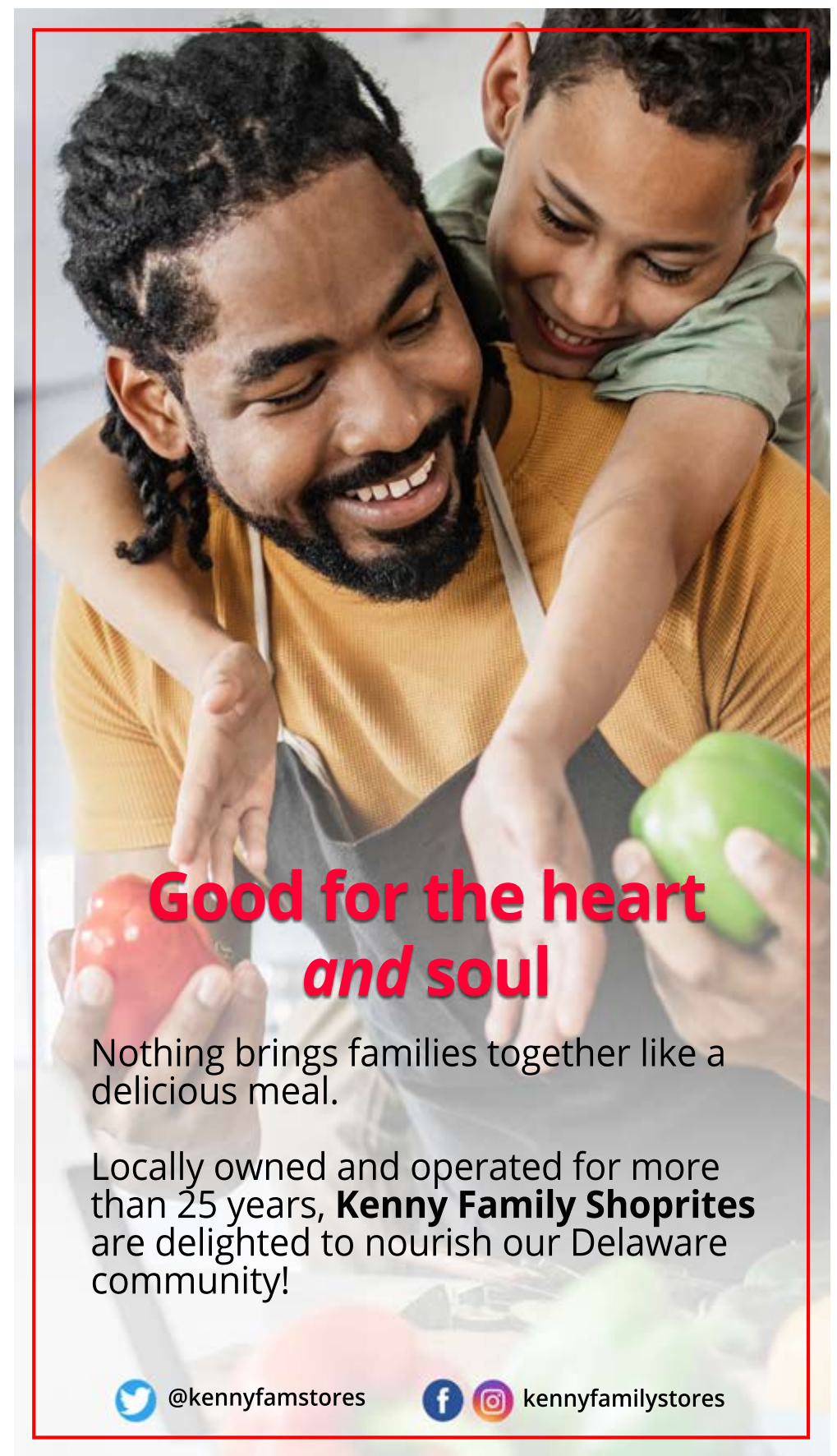
In addition to training, the location will offer a storefront where trainees can immediately put their skills to use. The store will offer repair services for the community from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monday through Friday. It will also accept device donations.

NERDiT CARES apprentices will refurbish tech items. Then, through the organization's technology-donation

program, they will be delivered to children, families and community organizations in need of computers, smart devices and electronics training and support.

“We must close the digital divide and eliminate barriers for underserved communities,” said NERDiT CARES Executive Director Jess Gibson-Brokenbaugh. “In this new location, we can better serve our community.”

Youth 16 and older are invited to apply for the programs, with or without any tech experience. “They will be given a unique on-the-job opportunity to learn in a safe, dynamic environment that will help set them up for success as a certified IT support professional,” she said.



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Food & Dining

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HAMILTON'S ON MAIN GOES PINK TO FUND BREAST CANCER RESEARCH

BY PAM GEORGE

The “Barbie” movie put pink in the spotlight. But the color had a special significance even before Barbie and Ken took a road trip into the real world. October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month and pink ribbons are the international symbol for the campaign.

Inspired by the color’s popularity and meaning, Anthony and Jeremiah Brooks decided to create a Pretty in Pink popup in the upstairs room of their restaurant, **Hamilton’s on Main**, in downtown Newark. Partial proceeds from the sale of specialty cocktails and a bar menu will benefit the **Delaware Breast Cancer Coalition**.

They have transformed the restaurant’s 1776 Bourbon Lounge into an adult-size Barbie playhouse with shim-

mery pink curtains, salmon and rose-colored flowers, pink lightbulbs and shell-pink shades, and area rugs. “It’s pink-a-palooza up there,” said Anthony, who runs the dining room while chef Jeremiah handles the kitchen.

FUN FUNDRAISERS

The Pretty in Pink promotion is the first of many events to leverage the space, which was primarily booked for special occasions. Each month will have a different theme and beneficiary, Anthony said. (The exception is May, when the room is booked for UD graduation events.)

A Harry Potter motif will help raise money for testicular cancer research in November and a winter wonderland in December will include Champagne and oysters.

Charities will receive 25% of the proceeds from the specialty cocktail menu designed by mixologist Patrick Boyd, who recently joined the restaurant staff. “He really has an excellent knowledge of wine and craft cocktails,” Anthony said.

Current libations include the Barbie Dream Shot, made with Stateside Vodka, raspberries, lime juice and coconut. As for wine, Hamilton’s partnered with **Stella Rosa**, which has a line of blush wines, including Rosa Berry, Rosa Watermelon and Strawberry Rose.

MORE WAYS TO FIGHT BREAST CANCER

Hamilton’s on Main is not the only food-related fundraiser helping to support the fight against breast cancer. **Grotto Pizza** created a special pizza and boli menu for October, with \$2 from the sale of each item going to the DBCC. Last year, the chain raised \$12,474 for the non-profit. On Saturday, Oct. 7, **Dewey Goes Pink** hit the beach. Spearheaded by Steve “Monty” Montgomery of **The Starboard**, the race included a post-event spread from **Bethany Blues BBQ**, live music and pink grapefruit crushes.

On Oct. 12, DBCC’s **Great Stuff, Savvy Resale & Home** will have an after-hours sip-and-shop from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. On Oct. 22, it’s the **Deer Park Tavern’s** turn to go pink with a **walk/run**. Also on Oct. 22, **Making Strides Delaware’s** walk will take place at Bellevue State Park. Jaimie Watts is staking it one step further with a guest bartender night on Thursday, Oct. 12 at **The Nomad** in Wilmington to benefit her team. The bartenders will take shifts from 5 to 8 p.m.

The Hamilton’s on Main Pretty in Pink popup hours are Wednesday-Saturday, 4 p.m. to close, and Sundays, 2 p.m. to close.





photo credit: Delaware State Police

Government



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PURZYCKI WON'T RUN FOR THIRD TERM AS MAYOR

BY KEN MAMMARELLA

Wilmington Mayor Mike Purzycki announced Wednesday that he will not seek re-election to a third term in 2024.

In a letter to “the people of Wilmington,” he gives

his age as a big reason for the decision. “My difficulty in committing to another term that would begin 15 months from now is in continuing to undertake such a demanding job at the age of 78,” he wrote.

Before Purzycki was elected as the 57th mayor of Delaware’s largest city, he served as executive director of the Riverfront Development Corp., which led the efforts to transform an industrial wasteland along the Christina into the thriving Wilmington Riverfront. The city has a three-term limit for mayors.

Mayor Purzycki’s Letter to the People of Wilmington

Dear Friends,

As I reach the end of my second term as your mayor, I am of course confronted with the question of whether or not to seek a third term. I have been ambivalent recently; the answer largely depends on the day I am asked. But make no mistake, I love this magnificent job of managing and growing Wilmington each and every day and making it the very best version of itself possible.

This administration can be so proud of its successes. We have enjoyed unparalleled economic development throughout the city, some of the best crime statistics in decades, and we have made tens of millions of dollars in parks and infrastructure investments. Along with DelDOT we have resurfaced over 46 miles of streets. We have made massive investments in affordable housing, funded clean teams in our neighborhoods, all as we enjoy an excellent financial condition. And if that is not enough, our HBCU college fair has opened the door to college for over 6,000 of our children and provided over \$35 million in scholarships so they can attend historically black colleges and universities. No objective observer of Wilmington would ever suggest that things have not dramatically improved under this administration’s watch.

My difficulty in committing to another term that would begin 15 months from now is in continuing to undertake such a demanding job at the age of 78. While my health is generally good, I am, for the first time in my life, aware of my age. True, I can take some time away from the job—but people should understand that the job of mayor never lets you go. ...

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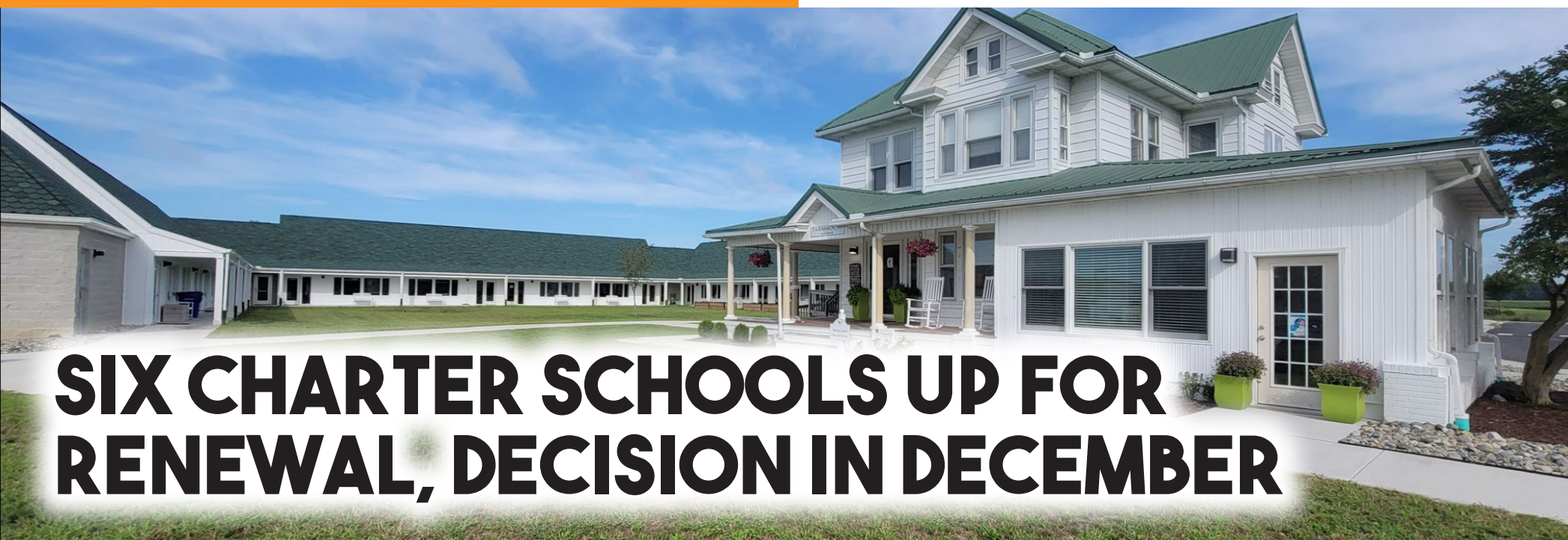
photo link: Wilmington Friends School



Education

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SIX CHARTER SCHOOLS UP FOR RENEWAL, DECISION IN DECEMBER

BY JAREK RUTZ

Six of the First State’s 23 charter schools are up for renewal this year and will have their futures decided at the State Board of Education’s December meeting. First State Military Academy, Freire Charter School Wilmington, Great Oaks Charter School, Kuumba Academy Charter School, Positive Outcomes Charter School and Sussex Montessori School are the six that submitted their renewal application Monday.

Charters are required by state law to apply for renewal every five years. Renewal applications contain basic information about the school like leadership personnel, contacts, enrollment, district of residence, mission statements and more. They also include more complex details like trends in enrollment, academic performance, graduation rates and proficiency rates.

Schools had until Monday to submit their application, so none of them are currently published on the Department of Education website, but here is Academia Antonia

Alonso Charter School’s [application for renewal](#) from last year for an example.

Some of the most recent examples of charters not being renewed are the Academy of Public Safety and Security in 2018, the Delaware College Preparatory Academy in 2016 and Reach Academy for Girls in 2015. Financial viability, academic performance and low enrollment are prominent reasons why charters have not been renewed in the past, said Kendall Massett, executive director of the Delaware Charter Schools Network.

“The number one reason that charter schools fail is lack of governance at the board level and that then usually shows up in your financials,” she said.

She said a big reason why renewals happen after a five-year period is so the state can judge any trends rather than only judging a school based on one year of data points.

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GREAT OAKS CAN CITE NOTABLE PROGRESS AS IT FACES REVIEW

BY JAREK RUTZ

A year after being put on formal review by the state, Great Oaks Charter School has made strides in student achievement as it seeks to keep its doors open. In seven months of turnaround efforts, the Wilmington charter has:

- Reduced the number of suspensions by 20%
- Increased school testing participation rates increased by 21%
- Increased Math Smarter Balanced Assessment scores by 6%
- Made sure 100% of administrators are certified and have leadership experience
- Reduced chronic absenteeism—defined as missing 10% or more of school days throughout the school year—by 31% (72% to 41%), the lowest it's been in four years
- Increased new high school student applications by 100%
- Increased new applications overall by 52%

The state placed the charter on formal review last fall after it submitted an enrollment of 236 students for 2022-2023 school year, 37% below its authorized enrollment of 325 students. Student enrollment affects how much funding a school receives from the state. According to Laretha Odumosu, executive director of Great Oaks, the school is still working on three of the state's conditions and has made good progress with them. Two of the three relate to the authorized enrollment of 200, which the school is about 50 students short of. The third unmet condition pertains to testing participation rates, which requires 95% participation for all mandated state tests. All were supposed to be met by Sept. 30.

Great Oaks is one of six charter schools up for routine renewal this year and Odumosu said she assumes the list of conditions will be part of that process. The school's first public hearing for renewal is Nov. 6 and can be watched [HERE](#). School leaders last year said one of the reasons the enrollment was lower than expected was because recruiting efforts were halted during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Great Oaks, which is located in the Community Education Building in downtown Wilmington, serves a student body that's 97.24% minority students. The state announced in December 2022 that it would allow the school to continue operating with 22 **conditions**. Some of those conditions were:

- Setting an authorized enrollment of 200 students, rather than 325, for the 2023-2024 school year.
- Submitting a revised budget for the school year that aligned with its enrollment of 236 students.
- Meeting 90% of its authorized enrollment by April 1, 2023. That is 180 students.
- Submitting a plan to build cash reserves back up and meet the state's financial framework performance metrics.
- Creating a detailed plan for the six teachers that were currently not licensed and certified for the area that they're teaching.
- Creating evaluations for administrators and teachers.

Angela Perry, Great Oaks' board president, said the key to turning the school around is frequently deeply personal interaction with students. Having a low teacher to student ratio helps with this, she said. The charter, which has 140 students, has a staff to student ratio of 10 to one.

[READ MORE HERE](#)

HOWARD T. ENNIS SCHOOL

INDIAN RIVER TEACHER ARRESTED FOR CHILD ENDANGERMENT

BY JAREK RUTZ

A 22-year-old female teacher in the **Indian River School District** has been arrested on charges of endangering the welfare of a child. The teacher, who the district and **Delaware State Police** have not named, teaches at the **Howard T. Ennis School** in Georgetown and has been placed on unpaid leave. The incident involves a student with a developmental delay who was left on a playground unattended for hours.

Delaware State Police have confirmed the three-year-old student was left on the playground after several children ran away as the teacher was lining up students to re-enter the building after recess. The three-year-old, who was left behind, hid under a piece of playground equipment.

The charges come less than a month after another Indian River school—Sussex Central High—had one of its students sue the school, district and administration for circling a meme photo of her exposed breast that resulted from a fight at the school.

“The Indian River School District is aware of an incident involving a student at the Howard T. Ennis School that occurred on Sept. 18,” the district said in a statement.

The district initiated an investigation and is working with the family. “State and federal laws protecting the privacy rights of students and staff prevent the district from commenting further,” the statement read.




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FOSTER

DE TO EXPLORE FEDERAL PROGRAM SUPPORTING FOSTER CHILDREN

BY JAREK RUTZ

Gov. John Carney has signed a law requiring a state agency for child services to explore joining a federal program that aims to find permanent housing solutions for foster children. **Senate Joint Resolution 1**, from Sen. Eric Buckson, R-Dover, and Rep. Kim Williams, D-Stanton, directs the **Department of Services for Children, Youth & Their Families** to consider participating in the federal **Title IV-E Guardianship Assistance** program. Delaware is one of nine states in the country that are not currently involved in the program.

In 2008, Congress passed the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act, which established the guardianship assistance program. It

distributes a formula grant that helps states provide guardianship assistance payments to relatives of foster children who assume legal guardianship of that child. To be eligible for these payments, the relative guardian's home must either be licensed or approved as meeting the licensure requirements as a foster family home.

Delaware must determine that specific criteria have been met, including that the relative guardian has a strong commitment to caring permanently for the child, the child demonstrates a strong attachment to the relative and for children who are 14 or older, that the child has been consulted regarding the kinship guardianship arrangement.

“Providing assistance and encouraging relative guardianship is a win for both the child and the state of Delaware,” Buckson said in a statement. “Children thrive in a permanent, healthy family environment and the federal Guardianship Assistance Program supports this.” Buckson said since the funding is available, the First State should at least explore how to acquire and utilize the money.

The law requires the Department of Services for Children, Youth & Their Families to provide a report to the General Assembly by Nov. 30, describing its findings and recommendations.

According to the resolution, Delaware's Division of Family Services received 21,579 reports of abuse, neglect and dependency in fiscal year 2020 and of all cases investigated, 863, or 20% were substantiated. Also there were 902 children who spent at least one day in foster care in Delaware during that year.

Williams said joining the program would be the right thing to do for Delaware families, adding the payments would provide a lifeline for many devoted relatives who are providing stable, loving homes for children.

“The funds would also bridge critical gaps in our child welfare system,” she said, “expediting the journey towards permanent, nurturing homes for children in foster care.”





HODGSON VO-TECH BREAKS GROUND ON NEW BUILDING

BY JAREK RUTZ

School and government leaders broke ground Sept. 29 on the new Hodgson Vocational Technical High School. The school is one of four in the [New Castle County Vocational Technical School District](#) and its new home has a price tag of \$217.5 million, with about 60% funded by the state and the remaining portion paid for by the district via tax dollars.

Hodgson High was originally constructed as a shared-time school with Newark High School. This meant students would spend half the day learning academics at their “home” high school and spend the other half in

the shared building learning technical skills with on-hand training. Hodgson became a traditional stand-alone school in 1985.

“Despite outgrowing its original purpose as a shared-time school, Hodgson Vo-Tech has functioned incredibly well for many decades,” said Joe Jones, district superintendent. “We are excited that some Hodgson students will have continued opportunities to participate in the construction process, leading up to a grand opening in a few years.”

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BY JAREK RUTZ

Increasing awareness and decreasing partisanship are two of the most important factors to improve education in Delaware, attendees at the inaugural Education Freedom event learned.

“The first step in creating Delaware-led solutions is to have open, honest and transparent conversations about the challenges and opportunities facing our schools,” said Julia Keleher, executive director of First State Educate, which had a representative at the Sept. 28 event in Wilmington.

Keleher said First State Educate seeks to promote collaboration among all Delawareans because the group understands the power of collective action and is always encouraged to see events unite people who care about improving public education.

“Research has shown that bipartisan efforts to advance accountability have had positive effects,” Keleher said. “When Delawareans choose to set aside differences in the interest of sharing ideas and working towards common goals, our children benefit.”

EDUCATION FREEDOM EVENT HIGHLIGHTS IMPORTANCE OF BIPARTISANSHIP

The [Caesar Rodney Institute](#) and the [Americans for Prosperity Foundation](#) hope to sponsor similar events in the future to inform families about their students’ education and to give them concrete steps to evoke change.

A lot of the meeting consisted of encouraging the audience to get in touch with state legislators to support three bills: the [Single-Digit Proficiency Bill](#) to require a plan to improve the lowest-performing schools; the [School Profile Bill](#) to make information to compare schools more accessible to parents; and the [Education Right to Know Act](#) to give parents easier access to the curriculum and materials being used in their students’ classes. The organizers also emailed all attendees a [sample template](#) on how to get in touch with local legislators.

Other topics discussed include student absenteeism, teacher shortages, discipline, bullying, violence, the need for greater parental involvement and having a plan to improve outcomes and making information about schools more accessible to families.

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MIDDLETOWN DEFENSE INSTRUMENTAL IN HARVEST BOWL WIN

BY GLENN FRAZER

Middletown continued its dominance over Smyrna in the regular season at Charles V. Williams Stadium Friday night but it wasn't easy. The underdog Eagles had the ball with a chance to win, but Middletown's Jacobi Rodgers intercepted a pass in the end zone on the game's final play to preserve the Cavaliers' 14-12 win.

Both defenses played extremely well forcing eight punts and causing five total turnovers in the contest. In the end, the difference came down to Middletown kicker Austin Hamm's two extra points and the Eagles not being able to convert either of their conversion attempts.

Middletown scored the game's first touchdown on a seven-yard run by Makai Walker late in the opening quarter. Smyrna answered on the very next possession with Tim Yancey racing 27 yards to the end zone, but the Cavaliers held Kahmaj Kearney from adding the

two-point conversion. Kearney was stopped just short as Tristen Graham made a strong tackle for the Cavs. Middletown increased its lead to 14-6 with 1:58 left in the half on an eight-yard pass from Austin Troyer to William "BJ" Garrett.

In the first half, Austin Troyer completed nine of 12 passes for 142 yards, but Smyrna held the Cavaliers to just nine yards rushing. Conversely, the Eagles' balanced offense gained 71 yards on the ground and 95 yards through the air.

The second half was a scoreless battle until the home team Eagles put together a seven-play, 45-yard drive culminating in a three-yard touchdown run by Kearney with 1:51 left in the game. The big play in that drive was a 19-yard run by Dior Mackey. Once again Middletown would thwart Smyrna's conversion run as Kearney was hit by Ronnell Davis and Malachi Stewart short of the

goal line. Smyrna's inside kick attempt went out of bounds, giving the ball to the Cavs at their 41-yard line. The Eagles had all three timeouts remaining and the defense forced a Middletown punt as Brandon West sacked Troyer on third down. Following the punt, Smyrna started at its 34 with 1:24 to go. Senior quarterback Jacob Tiberi completed five consecutive passes (four to Phoenix Henriquez) and scrambled for 31 yards to set up the final play from the Cavaliers' 14 with under two seconds. Tiberi looked to his right then threw across the field to Kearney in the corner of the end zone, but the pass was picked off by Rodgers to end the game.

The capacity crowd was treated to an awesome game as both teams left everything they had on the field. The top-ranked Cavaliers improved to 4-1 with the win, while Smyrna fell to 1-4. Middletown has dominated the Harvest Bowl which began in 1985. The last time Smyrna won was 1993.

Troyer finished the game passing for 171 yards while the Cavs could manage just 25 net yards rushing. Smyrna finished with a 357-196 advantage in total yards, rushing for 179 and passing for 179. Yancey gained 70 yards on the ground while Drew Marks passed for 99 yards and Tiberi added 80. The Eagles were intercepted three times in the end zone as Ronnell Davis accounted for two of the "picks". Davis was named the First State Ortho player-of-the-game with those two interceptions, goal line stops on conversion attempts plus he caught two passes for 63 yards.

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KAM'REN JOHNSON HELPS WOODBRIDGE SCOOP UP DISTRICT VICTORY

BY BENNY MITCHELL

A humid and hazy early October night set the stage for an upset victory for the Woodbridge Blue Raiders on homecoming. Two first quarter defensive scores gave the Blue Raiders an early lead and a 24-8 victory over the number two ranked Laurel Bulldogs in a Class AA District 3 game.

On the game's first play, the Blue Raiders Kam'Ren Johnson penetrated the Laurel offensive line, batted down a pitch attempt from quarterback Koby Shockley intended for Shakai Parker and then scooped up the ball racing to the end zone for a defensive touchdown. Traci Johnson converted the run as the Blue Raiders jumped out to an 8-0 lead just 14 seconds into the game.

Later in the first quarter, Laurel had a handoff exchange fall to the ground and Johnson was there again for his second scoop and score of the game this time a 14-yard fumble return giving Woodbridge a 16-0 lead.

"Coach told us in a game against a tough team to be ready to get punched in the mouth, we punched first. I saw the ball and reached out hit it and it bounced right up to me," Johnson said.

While the field conditions were good following a late afternoon rain, the offensive output of both teams was uncharacteristically sloppy. Both teams known for strong run offenses combined for a mere 71 yards of total offense. They also combined for just six first downs compared to five turnovers.

"Last they beat us on Rocket Toss, so we put in what we call a bump. When the back went in deep motion we bump everybody down on the line so basically we are running with the pulling tackle. It worked tremendously, it puts one extra guy over there that they couldn't block," Woodbridge head coach Marvin Dooley said.

The Blue Raiders held on to the 16-0 lead going into a long homecoming halftime. On the opening drive of the third quarter, Woodbridge drove 61 yards on 13 carries chewing up 7:30 off the clock. Traci Johnson carried the ball all but one play, capping off the scoring drive with a three-yard touchdown run. He added the conversion run and Woodbridge stretched its lead to 24-0.

"I told the team at halftime that the first drive of the second half could be a game ender. Laurel is like us, they are not a big passing team so I felt being up 24 points would be good for us," Dooley said.

Laurel answered on the ensuing drive marching 53 yards with Shockley scoring a one-yard touchdown run on a fourth and goal. Shockley converted the run, cutting Woodbridge's lead to 24-8.

Following a Woodbridge punt Laurel drove to the Blue Raiders 18-yard line with three minutes left in the game. Shockley's fourth down pass to Xavier Limehouse was incomplete, turning the ball over on downs.

[READ MORE HERE](#)



ARCHMERE HOLDS ON FOR VICTORY

BY NICK HALLIDAY

The Archmere Auks were able to hold off the Delaware Military Academy (DMA) Seahawks for their second victory of the season at Fusco Stadium. DMA was coming off a commanding victory putting up 54 points in its home opener against out-of-state opponent Elkton (MD).

Even though the Seahawks jumped out to an early lead, the Auks were able to take the lead and sustain the comeback from DMA.

Late in the first quarter, DMA got the scoring started after forcing an Archmere punt after a three and out that gave the Seahawks the ball on its 48-yard line. Quarterback Odell Teel took the snap, turned around

and handed the ball off to Edwards Emmens who did the rest. Emmens broke through the line of scrimmage then bounced it outside down the sideline untouched for a 52-yard touchdown for six points.

The extra point was good, but saw a flag and moved the extra point attempt back 15 yards. On the retry, the extra point was kicked wide left giving DMA the 6-0 lead.

Archmere then went on to score two times in the second quarter to take a 14-6 lead into the half. On a fourth and six from the six-yard line Archmere quarterback Miles Kempiski took the snap, rolled to his right and connected with a wide open Cole Fenice in the cor-

ner of the end zone for the touchdown with a successful extra point.

Kempiski, now on defense, was able to pick off a Teel pass a few minutes later to set up the Auks in scoring position. Kempiski threw for his second touchdown with three seconds left in the half. He took the snap, dropped a few steps then threw it down the sideline hitting Gavin Lee for a 40-yard touchdown to take a two score lead into the half.

It wasn't until midway through the fourth quarter that DMA scored to pull the score within two points. On a third and goal, Josh Roy took a hand off up the middle from one yard out to make it a 14-12 game. On the initial two-point try the snap was dropped and Archmere was able to tackle the quarterback Teel for a loss. However, there was a flag on the play to give DMA a second chance on the two-point conversion.

Teel went up under center. He took the snap and handed it off to Roy who was lined up in the fullback position, but he was stuffed at the goaline preserving a two-point lead for the Auks. Archmere did all it could to run out the clock, but DMA was able to get the ball back for a last-chance effort to win the game.

The Seahawks got the ball back with less than a minute in the game. After a few plays, they found themselves with an opportunity to win the game. With five seconds left in the DMA lined up for a 43-yard field goal attempt with a chance to kick the game winner. The snap was good as well as the hold, but Archmere was able to get penetration and block the field goal attempt for the 14-12 victory.

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ON THE PITCH: WEEK 4 BOYS SOCCER TOP 10 RANKINGS

BY NICK HALLIDAY

Last week saw a lot of great action and for St. Georges Tech it was quite a week, in fact quite the season. The Hawks won three matches to remain undefeated. The Hawks finally gave up a goal, but have outscored their opponents 18-1 this year in their six matches. The Hawks are in the loaded Blue Hen Flight A Conference looking to win the conference for the first time.

DIVISION 1

No. 1 Sallies (6-1-1) (LW No 1.) The Sals played a couple of 3-2 matches last week beating Saint Mark's in overtime, but lost to the Phelps School (PA). It hosted nationally ranked St. Benedict's Prep (NJ) Saturday.

No. 2 Wilmington Charter (5-1) (LW No. 2) The Force picked up a pair of wins including 2-0 over Caravel. They traveled to Archmere on Thursday.

No. 3 Cape Henlopen (5-0) (LW No. 3) The Vikings picked up a pair of wins in North Carolina over the

weekend. They have a pair of big Henlopen North matches this week hosting Caesar Rodney on Tuesday before traveling to Milford on Thursday.

No. 4 Delcastle (7-0-1) (LW No. 4) The Cougars went 3-0 last week outsourcing their opponents by the score of 15-0. They traveled to Newark on Tuesday before hosting Saint Mark's on Friday.

No. 5 Milford (6-0) (LW No. 6) The Bucs picked up another big win, this one over Sussex Academy 3-2. The Bucs traveled to Smyrna on Tuesday before hosting Cape Henlopen on Thursday.

No. 6 Appoquinimink (1-2-2) (LW No. 5) The Jags picked up their first win of the season over William Penn. They hosted Christiana on Tuesday before the big conference match at St. Georges on Friday.

No. 7 Sussex Central (4-1-1) (LW No. 7) The Golden Knights beat Smyrna 3-0. They traveled to Polytech on

Tuesday before hosting Brandywine on Thursday.

No. 8 St Georges Tech (6-0) (LW No. 8) The Hawks picked up three wins last week over DMA, Newark and Brandywine. They hosted MOT Charter on Tuesday and Appoquinimink on Friday.

No. 9 Newark (4-2) (LW No. 9) The Yellow Jackets had a tough week losing a pair of matches to ranked teams 3-2 to Conrad and 2-0 to St. Georges. They hosted Delcastle Tuesday and traveled to Caravel on Thursday.

No. 10 Polytech (4-2-1) (LW No. 10) The Panthers tied Sussex Tech 3-3 last week. They hosted a pair of matches this week: Sussex Central on Tuesday and Delmar on Thursday.

DIVISION 2

No. 1 Caravel (3-2) (LW No. 1) The Bucs lost to Wilmington Charter last week, making both their losses coming to the No. 1 and No. 2 teams in Division 1 this year. They have a busy week as they traveled to Newark Charter on Tuesday. They hosted Newark on Thursday before traveling to the Westtown School (PA) on Saturday.

No. 2 Indian River (4-0-1) (LW No. 3) The Indians beat Archmere 3-2 in overtime last week. They hosted No. 3 Sussex Academy on Tuesday and Caesar Rodney on Thursday.

No. 3 Sussex Academy (6-1) (LW No. 2) The Seahawks picked up a win over Seaford before suffering their first loss 3-2 vs. No. 5 Milford. They traveled to No. 2 Indian River on Tuesday.

No. 4 Friends (4-1-1) (LW No. 4) The Quakers beat conference foe Tower Hill 1-0. They hosted Sanford on Tuesday and St. Andrews on Thursday to complete their opening eight match homestand.

[READ MORE HERE](#)



BY SHANNON TIMMONS

The headline news of the week comes from the Smyrna Eagles. The Eagles met the Delmar Wildcats who came into the matchup with a 120-game win streak, three Henlopen Conference titles and seven D2 state titles. The last time Delmar lost a game was Oct. 22, 2016, to Cape Henlopen; the Cubs and Dodgers were playing to get to the World Series (Cubs would go on to win the series for the first time in 108 years, Kyle Schwarber was playing for the Cubs); Clemson was the top NCAA football team; and “The Closer” by the Chainsmokers was atop the Billboard Music Charts. Although the streak came to an end, it is something to be celebrated and congratulations to Delmar Coach Jodi Hollamon and her teams for their continued success. Make no mistake, the Wildcats are still a force to be reckoned with in high school field hockey.

THE CORNER SCOOP: WEEK 4 FIELD HOCKEY TOP 10

Week 4 has some teams with equal records facing each other and the ties of the top 10 spots will be broken. After Tuesday, there will be two undefeated teams left in the state. Can anyone keep up the pace of perfection? ...stay tuned! *Games of the Week:* D1 Smyrna vs. Milford @ Milford Tuesday Oct. 3, 4 p.m. D2 Newark Charter @ Caravel, Tuesday Oct. 3 6:15 p.m.

DIVISION 1

No. 1 Smyrna 6-0 Smyrna remains in the one spot after defeating the Delmar Wildcats, ending a 120-game win streak. The Eagles soared into week four with games at Milford Oct. 3 and home vs. Caravel Oct. 6.

No. 2 Cape Henlopen 7-1 The Vikings continue to sit behind Smyrna as their only loss is to the Eagles. The game with Indian River was postponed due to poor field conditions and rescheduled for Oct. 13. Upcoming this week for the Vikings was just one game at CR on Oct. 3. A homecoming of sorts for the Windetts of Cape as Deb coached at CR and Kate played her high school career there.

No. 3 Milford 6-1 The Bucs are playing well, but fell to a tough Cape team this week leaving them ranked third again. They had a tough week with Smyrna at home on Tuesday Oct. 3.

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BY JASON WINCHEL

We're headed back to the Henlopen Conference North this week on the Baseline, where another program is making noise. This time, it's Caesar Rodney, which has slipped into the top 10 after a 2-0 week that included a sweep of Dover on the road. The Riders are 5-2 entering this week, with both losses coming to top-5 teams in Smyrna and Newark Charter. Both of those went five sets. CR had top-ranked Smyrna down two sets to zero before the Eagles stormed back and they followed by taking the No. 5 Patriots to the wire.

Caesar Rodney is senior-heavy. The outside hitters include Melissa Eddy, Elianna Dyer and Zoe Thomas, all seniors, as are setters Alyssa Diem and Allison Hemberger. Coach Jake Bluhm and assistants Cherise Franlin and Jon Bollman have things trending up in

VIEW FROM THE BASELINE: WEEK 4 VOLLEYBALL TOP 10 RANKINGS

Camden-Wyoming. The Riders are road warriors this week, traveling to Cape Henlopen on Tuesday, then heading to No. 9 Middletown on Thursday.

Matches to watch this week: Wilmington Charter at Archmere, Tuesday, 6p.m.; Middletown at Concord, Tuesday, 4:45 p.m.; CR at Middletown, Thursday, 6p.m.; Saint Mark's at Newark Charter, Thursday, 6:15 p.m.

No. 1 Smyrna kept it rolling last week with a pair of sweeps. The Eagles traveled to Caravel on Thursday and can't look past the Buccaneers with Saint Mark's on the horizon.

No. 2 Saint Mark's has lost only two sets all season, but Ursuline battled the Spartans before the Spartans swept. They are on the road for their next three matches, none of which will be a cakewalk.

No. 3 Archmere is riding a six-match win streak, but there is no room to celebrate. Diamond State Conference rival Wilmington Charter was at Moglia Fieldhouse on Tuesday and the Auks had a Saturday matinee at Appoquinimink.

No. 4 Ursuline went 2-1 last week, including a sweep at Cape Henlopen after five straight home matches. C.C. DeCaro has been a force for the Raiders all season and she—along with her teammates—had to be on top of their game when Paul VI came to visit from New Jersey on Thursday.

No. 5 Newark Charter is one of four unbeaten teams left and the resumé includes a win over CR. The sched-

ule got more difficult beginning this week, when they traveled to Padua and hosted Saint Mark's. The Patriots have shown remarkable balance this season.

No. 6 Wilmington Charter's lone loss came on the road at Saint Mark's. Coach Mary Pat Kwoka has her team playing well. They may not be as tall as in past years, but hitters Miranda Ting and Seraphina Pabian can jump through the roof.

No. 7 Tower Hill enters the week on a four-match win streak, three of those against Independence Conference foes, along with former conference mate Wilmington Christian. The Hillers' week included a bus ride to Delmarva Christian.

No. 8 Padua fell to No. 4 Ursuline before winning at Delmarva Christian. The Pandas are winning the matches it has to and are looking solid for a state tournament berth. They began a run of four straight at home on Tuesday against No. 5 Newark Charter.

No. 9 Middletown is 6-0 entering the week, including a win Sept. 29 against Appoquinimink that puts the Cavaliers in the driver's seat in Blue Hen Conference Flight A. Seniors Adrianna Davidson, Cortne Chaney and Kaylee Stenvik have led the way. The team had two tests this week.

No. 10 Caesar Rodney enters the top 10 this week. The Henlopen North is putting together another strong collective season.



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