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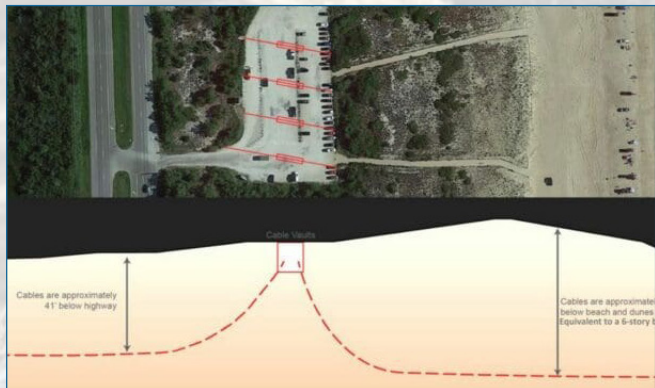


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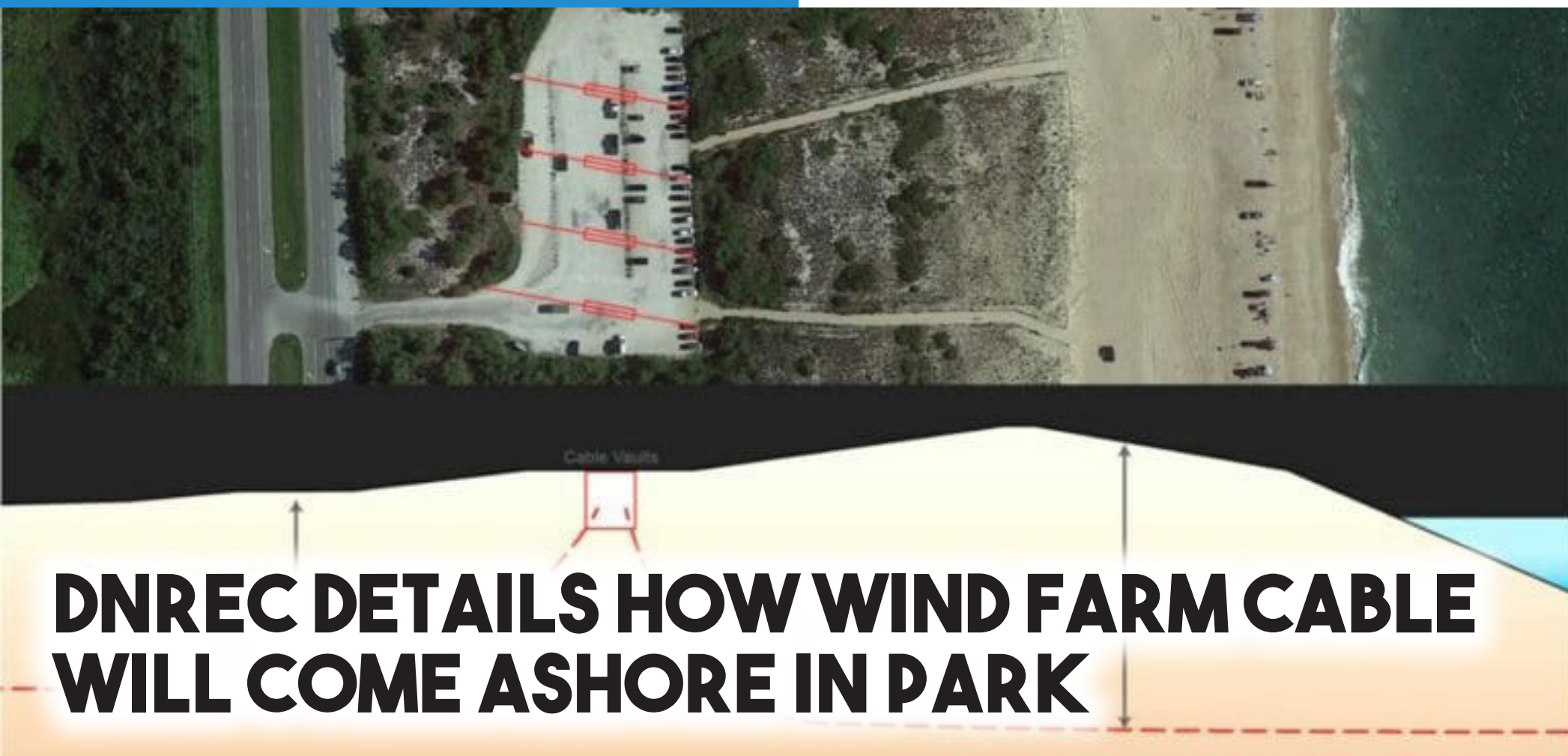
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Headlines

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DNREC DETAILS HOW WIND FARM CABLE WILL COME ASHORE IN PARK

BY KATIE KAZIMIR

State officials this week laid out the way they expect transmission lines from an offshore wind farm to be installed under the 3Rs Beach in Delaware Seashore State Park.

During an information open house at Bethany Town Hall Tuesday, DNREC representatives displayed posters around the room loaded with information. One said four cables will be bored 60 feet under the 3Rs Beach to the parking lot. Each cable will be installed in an underground vault with buried electrical transmission lines. The cables will be 40 feet before the wetlands into the Indian River Bay.

Ultimately the electrical cables will be connected to

the existing Delmarva Power & Light Indian River substation facility adjacent to the Indian River Power Plant.

Ray Bivens, director of DNREC's Division of Parks and Recreation, would not talk about the boring process or anything other than "the impact on recreational activities at the park and, specifically, the parking lot where construction is anticipated to be taking place."

To put the depth of the boring in perspective, the nearby Fire Control Tower 3 is six stories tall, Bivens said. A story is generally considered 10 feet. The parking lot will have an excavation in its center that will 233 feet long, 60 feet wide and 15-feet deep. Each concrete vault would be 47 feet long, 12 feet wide and 11 inches

deep and capped with sectional concrete roof covers. Each would have two manhole covers, meaning eight will be visible in the parking lot. Manhole accesses are capped with 36-inch recessed covers. They will rarely need to be accessed, Bivens said.

The vaults will include cable, joints and fiber optic lines. All necessary components will be insulated and there will be no additional high voltage equipment inside the walls. Construction would be done in the off-season, likely between Sept. 15 and May 15, he said. Only construction personnel will be allowed there during that time, a poster said. During construction only, markers and buoys would be visible to support construction and installation of cables on the Atlantic Ocean and bay sides.

"Temporary disturbances would remain within limits of the parking area," one poster said. "There will be no disturbance of the dunes, wetland habitats or the beach."

Excavated material will be repurposed as cover material, with any extra transported elsewhere after consultation with DNREC. The site will be restored to its original grade, elevation and material, a poster said. The parking lot most likely will remain a sand lot, Bivens said. If it was paved, he said, sand would blow across it anyway, he said.

Asked if boring the cables through would affect the park or wildlife, Bivens said no.

Bivens said the offshore wind land lease and construction would be treated like any other utility, such as cell towers, power lines and water pipes. The presentation noted there already is a T-Mobile cell tower at Delaware Seashore State Park and a Verizon cell tower at Cape Henlopen State Park.

[READ MORE HERE](#)

GIRL SCOUTS SELL NEWARK HEADQUARTERS, CAMP SANDY PINES

BY KEN MAMMARELLA

The Girl Scouts of the Chesapeake Bay have sold their Newark headquarters and Camp Sandy Pines in Maryland as part of their controversial plan to downsize. The headquarters on Old Baltimore Pike was sold to a limited liability company. Camp Sandy Pines near Fruitland was sold to a former Girl Scout and her husband.

The Scouts in August of 2022 announced the decision to sell four properties, “due to rising operational costs and deferred maintenance over the past decade.” They announced the decision to sell and the two sales on a page called “long-range property planning.” CEO Claudia Peña Porretti was asked to update the long-range property planning.

The headquarters was sold for \$1.925 million, according to [Redfin](#). The buyer, according to county records, is Owls Nest Properties LLC Silver Spring Series. When the headquarters — which the Scouts call their Newark

Resource Center — opened in 2016, Stephen M. Mockbee, founder of the Bancroft Construction Co., [called](#) it a \$6.5 million project with a 17,000-square-foot building on seven acres. It includes trails, a store, storage areas, offices and spaces that can be used by families and community partners. Porretti said in an email, posted on their [website](#), that the Scouts will work out of the Newark office through the end of June.

The 48-acre camp was sold to Gina Gargeu and Jim Yannatelli, who plan to continue to operate it as a camp. The outdoors “gives children the chance to detach, come to nature, be with themselves, look at the person in front of them, instead of what’s on their computer screen,” she told WMDT. The camp, which is zoned residential, was listed for \$815,000.

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26 AMENDMENTS LATER, PERMIT TO PURCHASE BILL GOES TO CARNEY

BY KATIE KAZIMIR

After 26 proposed amendments and about nine hours of discussion, the permit to purchase bill has passed both the House and Senate and is on its way to Gov. John Carney for signature to become law.

Senate Substitute 1 for Senate Bill 2, sponsored by Senate Majority Whip Elizabeth “Tizzy” Lockman, D-Wilmington, would require most Delawareans to obtain a permit to purchase a handgun only if they have completed an approved firearm training course in the last five years. It would exempt qualified active and retired law enforcement officers and anyone permitted by the state to carry a concealed weapon from that requirement because they already would have been required to complete a firearm training course.

It comes with a multi-million price tag in a year the budget minders are warning the legislature to take it easy because of the leveling off of revenues. The fiscal

note with the bill says costs will range from about \$3 million in 2025 to \$4.6 million in 2027. The fiscal notes only detail three years.

Chipping away at gun control issues has been a focal point for Democrats in the last eight years. Roughly 600 Delawareans have been killed by gun violence since 2019, and almost every gun used in a crime was at one time purchased legally, they say.

The Delaware State Sportsmen’s Association vowed before the bill ever hit the Senate the first time to take it to court. As the Senate was starting, it posted on its Facebook page “The good guys in the Senate have amendments placed with the bill. Let’s see if they can lessen the sting while we litigate. Maybe some of the Dems in the Senate will wake up to the loser that this bill is.”

It included a list of the amendments. In Thursday’s Senate hearing, all the proposed amendments came from Republicans and all were rejected.

“Our caucus offered 13 amendments during the discussion, all of which were deemed ‘unfriendly’ by the Senate majority,” the Senate Republican leadership said in a statement Thursday evening. These amendments included language that would clarify no firearm registry could be implemented, require prompt issuance of a permit if certain criteria were met, allow for a longer period in which individuals could acquire legal counsel should a permit be denied and more.

“We are disappointed that none of the common sense amendments presented passed. We are confident, however, whether the legislation was further amended today or not, the judicial system will find the permit to purchase law unconstitutional.”

House Republicans also weren’t thrilled.

“This is a deeply flawed piece of legislation,” said Joe Fulgham, director of Policy & Communications for the House of Representatives Republican Caucus. “Not only do recent federal court decisions strongly indicate it is unconstitutional, but the bill contains unaddressed errors and shortcomings.

“This has become a pattern of a General Assembly controlled by one party, enacting legislation the majority knows is unsound, but being too preoccupied with the need to declare victory than taking accountability for the consequences of their actions.”

The four amendments to the bill that were passed came courtesy of the House last week. Eleven amendments to the bill were heard on the House floor last week, with the House voting to approve three amendments sponsored by House Majority Leader Melissa Minor-Brown, D-New Castle, and one sponsored by Rep. Jeffrey Spiegelman, R-Clayton.

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photo link: Delaware Ballet

Culture

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POTHOLES AREN'T THAT BIG A DEAL IN DE, BUT THEY COST A LOT

BY KEN MAMMARELLA

Delawareans use Google a lot less than the rest of America to find out about potholes and new number crunching has concluded that means potholes are less of a problem in the First State.

“Pothole data from each state isn’t available, but on-line searches for pothole-related terms can shed some light on where drivers are most frequently victimized by them,” according to [Blueprint](#), which calls itself an independent publisher and comparison service.

They looked at [Google Trends](#) reports from January 2020 to October 2023. Searches for “pothole,” “potholes,” “pothole repair,” “pothole damage” and “pothole complaint” were each given a search index number from zero to 100. That number was then used to generate a composite score. Delaware was ranked 45th, with an index of 12. That’s far below No. 1 Washington, with an index of 69.25.

A casual observer might think that northern states “where winter precipitation and temperature fluctuations wreak havoc on roadways” would all be at the top, but that’s not the case. Cold Minnesota is No. 2, but Alaska is No. 32, and Wyoming and Nevada have the fewest searches of all the states.

In 2022, [Stacker](#) used a different proxy — pothole complaints registered on Twitter per 1,000 kilometers of roads via the [Clunker Junker](#) — to come up with a similar ranking. Delaware had two complaints per 1,000 kilometers every state, putting it 10th from the bottom. Rhode Island, Hawaii and New York topped the list, with more than 20 complaints. Idaho, Wyoming, Montana and New Mexico were nestled at the bottom with less than one.

Spring is prime time for potholes, the Delaware Department of Transportation writes in a friendly [FAQ](#).

DelDOT maintains a separate page to [report](#) potholes and other problems. Wilmington also invites pothole reports to its [Wilmington 311](#) service.

Blueprint also looked at the cities with the most pothole-related Google searches. No. 1 was New York, with Los Angeles — where the temperature is moderate most of the year — at No. 2. Wisconsin has six cities in the top 50, followed by Minnesota with five and California with four.

Americans average \$3 billion per year to repair pothole-related damages to their vehicles, AAA concluded in a 2016 survey of members. They [averaged](#) \$306 each to repair pothole-related damages.

“Potholes don’t just leave you shaken, they’re a serious safety hazard and often lead to costly repair bills” Jana L. Tidwell, a manager at AAA Mid-Atlantic, said in a 2018 [release](#) on potholes. “You can easily lose control of your vehicle if you hit a pothole, possibly leading to a crash and it’s just as dangerous to swerve to avoid it. Slow down and stay alert, especially as road crews continue to work to patch potholes throughout the region.”

Potholes can obviously damage tires, but they can also damage rims, wheels, wheel weights, struts, shock absorbers and exhaust systems. AAA and Blueprint offer these tips on avoiding pothole damage:

- Ensure that tires are properly inflated and have adequate tread depth. Underinflated or worn tires are more vulnerable to pothole damage than those that are newer and properly inflated.
- To avoid striking a pothole, remain alert, scan the road ahead and drive at least three seconds behind the vehicle ahead.

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NINE APPOINTED TO NEW CASTLE COUNTY ARTS COMMISSION

BY BETSY PRICE

An artist, a landscape architect, the head of the Delaware Art Museum and a downtown nonprofit exec who's led the installation of outdoor art, are among nine people who have been appointed to the New Castle County Arts Commission. The new county board was inspired by the Philadelphia's **1% for Art** program, which requires new city construction or major renovation projects to include site-specific public art in the amount of up to 1% of the total budget.

Championed by New Castle County Council members Dee Durham and Valerie George, the commission is designed to enable all community members to actively engage in development and promotion of public art activities.

"I couldn't think of a more passionate group of individuals to compose New Castle County's first Arts

Commission," said Matt Meyer, the New Castle county executive, in a press release. "We are excited to get this group's work underway to help us explore the possibilities of public art in New Castle County."

THE FOUNDING ARTS COMMISSION MEMBERS

Molly Giordano, executive director of The Delaware Art Museum. She joined the museum in 2010 as the manager of Marketing and Public Relations, where she directed the 100th Anniversary "Art is..." rebranding campaign. Her role involves building alliances with similar-sized arts and cultural non-profits to strengthen opportunities and collaborate with joint and diverse exhibitions showcasing at the museum.

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Business

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MATT HALLS TOILET TABLE: 'YOU DIDN'T KNOW YOU NEEDED' IT

BY KEN MAMMARELLA

Matt Hall has an idea that is so unusual that Amazon has to create a category for his invention. Yet it's an idea that might appeal to the 90%-95% of people who bring cellphones into the bathroom. It's Matt Halls Toilet Table, which [ToiletTable.com](https://www.toilettable.com) describes as "the table you didn't know you needed."

That's not a typo in the name, said the inventor, a Brandywine Hundred resident. It's branding. He originally wanted to call it just the Toilet Table, but the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office rejected that as being too generic. There's no apostrophe because "I didn't want to take possession of it, since I'm going to sell it."

Matt Halls Toilet Table is now available in only one color (white) and style, but it's designed to have interchangeable tops to be created in the future, and Hall is working on a design that could hold weightier items, such as a leg being shaved. It is \$45 on ToiletTable.com,

two for \$80.

The two-pound gadget (ABS, the plastic mostly commonly used in 3-D printers and recycled PVC) attaches to either side of most toilets and could hold up to five pounds. Enough to hold cellphones out of harm's way. A quarter of all cellphone damage is from being dropped in the toilet, he said. Of course, it could hold other items, like tissues, a drink, decorations or a tablet that could entertain toddlers being toilet-trained. "Any use you want," he said.

HOW THE TOILET TABLE CAME TO BE

The idea came to him in 2021 when he was sheltering in place during the pandemic, with many sources for Forever Treasure, his eBay jewelry store, shut down.

"I've always had ideas, but never followed them up before," he said. "I was doing investing in website domain names and I typed in 'toilettable.com.' And that popped

up for sale, and I said to myself that this device has never been made before. This has to be created."

Amazon does have a "toilet accessories" category, but not a subcategory that accurately includes Matt Halls Toilet Table. The retail giant is working on it, he said.

Hall received his patent in November of 2023 and sold his first one in March to a neighbor. Of course, it's in both bathrooms of the Hall house. Between the idea and the sale was a lot of paperwork for the patent, prototyping, a commitment to produce it domestically, a lot of investing to produce the five molds needed and manufacturing.

It's made at Schubert Plastics in Lenni, PA. Brian Schubert, a principal in the family-owned firm, plays darts with Hall and Hall's father, Bob.

"Brian Schubert has gone out of his way to make this happen," Matt said. Matt worked there for a few months, and Bob still does.

Bob said that members of the darts team are all excited about the table. "It's a great idea," he said. "Give it to someone who has everything, but they don't have this."

The Halls are also excited about heading to Chicago for the upcoming Inspired Home Show, North America's largest housewares trade show. Matt has been vetted to get a booth in the inventors section.

"I watch 'Shark Tank' like crazy and I did apply," Matt said, adding that he has not heard back. The hit TV series about entrepreneurs and their inventions scouted last year's show in Chicago and he hopes they'll be there this year and give him a chance to showcase his creation.





DO MORE 24 BREAKS DONOR, DONATION TOTAL RECORDS

STAFF WRITER

More than 20,000 donors gave more than \$2.3 million to Delaware nonprofits during Do More 24 Delaware, which ran for 24 hours, ending at 6 p.m. March 8. The number of donors and the total amount of donations both broke records. Every zip code in Delaware was represented, the organization said Friday evening.

Organized jointly by United Way of Delaware and Spur Impact, the 24-hour fundraising marathon invited the public to support the nonprofit organizations that mean the most to them by donating at [DoMore-24Delaware](#). By setting up individual giving pages, participating nonprofits were able to take advantage of more than \$350,000 in matching gifts, cash prizes and incentives donated by more than two dozen sponsor organizations from across the state.

“Delaware’s nonprofit organizations serve as the backbone of our communities, bolstering our economy, uplifting individuals and extending a helping hand to those in need,” said Dan Cruce, chief operating officer of United Way of Delaware. “Today, through the collective power of giving, the people of Delaware once again demonstrated just how much the nonprofits of our state are valued.”

Since the March 2020 event, when United Way and Spur Impact joined forces, Do More 24 Delaware has raised more than \$9.5 million for Delaware nonprofits.

“Today was a great reminder of the incredible impact nonprofits have on communities throughout Delaware,” said Charlie Vincent, executive director of Spur Impact. “Thousands of people returned the favor by giving their

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financial support to their favorite causes and sharing their social capital as well.

“We are appreciative to be able to play a small part in applying the work of these nonprofits and growing the culture of philanthropy in Delaware for the next generation of leaders and volunteers.”

Do More 24 Delaware was supported by sponsors across the state, including Barclays US Consumer Bank, Discover Bank, Carl M. Freeman Foundation, the Delaware Division of the Arts, Crestlea Foundation, Delaware Community Foundation, Laffey-McHugh Foundation, Longwood Foundation and Welfare Foundation.



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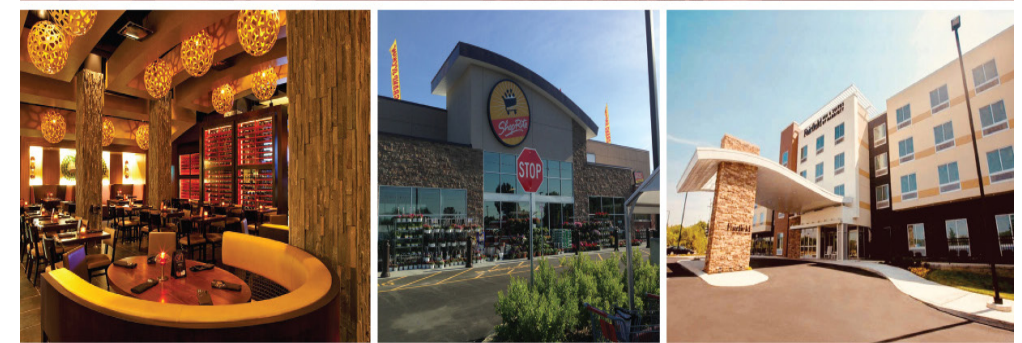
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Food & Dining

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ULYSSES AMERICAN GASTROPUB CLOSED, KILLED BY WORK FROM HOME

BY PAM GEORGE

After 13 years, [Ulysses American Gastropub](#) in Brandywine Hundred has closed. The beer-friendly restaurant is in the Shoppes at Graylyn on Marsh Road. A notice posted today on the door reads:

“It is with great sadness that we write this letter. After much consideration, we made the difficult decision to close Ulysses American Gastropub. We want to thank all of our wonderful guests and employees, past and present, for supporting us over these past 13 years.

“We have had many good times and made many great friends since 2011. We have been a part of so many birthdays, anniversaries, bridal showers, baby showers, fundraisers, rehearsal dinners and celebrations of life.

“We are extremely humbled that so many embraced our restaurant and that we were able to provide a welcoming neighborhood restaurant for all.”

Steve and Mike Lucey also own [Six Paupers Tavern](#) in Hockessin, which remains open. “It’s doing great,” Steve Lucey said.

ULYSSES’ LUNCH TRAFFIC

Keeping Ulysses afloat was tough after the work-at-home trend took hold during the pandemic. The dinner service returned to normal in the years following COVID-19’s arrival, but the daytime traffic remained sluggish and it was hard to recover with many area workers only in the office a few days a week. The 2023

opening of a second [Kid Shelleen’s Charcoal House & Saloon](#) in nearby Branmar Plaza only briefly affected Ulysses, he noted.

“I’m a big believer that having a lot of restaurants in one area is a good thing,” he said. Trolley Square and Kennett Square are examples, he noted.

In 1997, the brothers opened [Dead Presidents Pub and Restaurant](#) on North Union Street in Wilmington’s Little Italy. They later sold that restaurant. The Wilmington natives followed with Six Paupers in 2014. The name comes from Hockessin’s first handwritten census, which reported six paupers in the city limits.

Ulysses opened with Sean McNeice as executive chef. He already had made a name for himself at Washington Street Ale House and Mikimotos when Darius Mansoori owned them.

Ulysses quickly became popular for its burger nights, mussel dishes and craft beer selection. While families dined in the striped dining room, friends and coworkers gathered around the U-shaped bar in the front.

Lucey said Ulysses is currently for sale through Joe Latina at LMT Commercial.

Meanwhile, Brandywine Hundred residents who want their Chicken Nixon fix must travel to Hockessin.





AVALANCHE OF COMMENT DELAYS ALCOHOL SHIPMENTS BILL

BY JAREK RUTZ

A lengthy discussion in the state legislature Tuesday led to a delay in a bill allowing direct-to-consumer alcohol shipments. **House Bill 259**, sponsored by Rep. Jeff Spiegelman, R-Townsend-Clayton, would allow farm breweries, microbreweries and craft distilleries to conduct direct-to-consumer sales of wine, beer, spirits, mead and hard cider. Spiegelman’s bill also would allow state liquor stores to conduct home deliveries, while requiring the licensing and training of delivery workers, and mandating that those receiving the order are identified and at least 21 years old.

In the House Economic Development/Banking/Insurance & Commerce Committee meeting, Spiegelman pointed out that 98% of the country’s population is able

to get alcohol to their door in some fashion, either shipping or delivery. Only Delaware, Mississippi and Utah outlaw the process.

“This is meant for the small guy, this is meant for the small business owner,” he said. “This isn’t really meant for the big guys.”

The bill had a ton of support, but because there were so many that testified in the public comment portion — including local alcohol distributors and breweries/wineries — the committee decided to continue the discussion at their meeting next week before voting whether to release the bill to the entire House.

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Government

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BILL ADDING ASEXUALITY, PANSEXUALITY INTO LAW MOVES TO HOUSE

BY BETSY PRICE

A move to add asexuality and pansexuality to the state definition of sexual orientation led to conversations about what those terms mean and a warning that adding them could one day lead to adding pedophiles, too.

Rep. Eric Morrison, D-Newark/Bear, said the idea for [House Bill 275](#) came from a member of Delaware's LGBTQ+ community who identifies as pansexual. State law now defines sexual orientation as heterosexuality, homosexuality or bisexuality. That definition provides legal protections for those groups that would not exist for someone who identifies as asexual or pansexual, Morrison said.

Asexuality refers to individuals with little to no sexual attraction to other individuals, although asexual individuals may desire emotionally intimate relationships with other individuals. Pansexuality refers to individuals who are attracted sexually or romantically, or both, to

another individual regardless of that individual's sex or gender identity.

"That's a lot of words," Morrison said in Wednesday's House Administration Committee. "But one example is that you may have someone who's heterosexual or heterosexual male, who of course is interested in women. However, they would not be or want to be with a trans woman."

"A pansexual individual is open to anyone. They would be willing to date someone or see someone who is trans."

Morrison, who said he's been active in LGBTQ+ groups for 31 years, believes the numbers of people who identify as asexual or pansexual are increasing as they feel more comfortable and safe about being honest about who they are. By adding them to the sexual orientation definition, the state reinforces that discrimination or

hate crimes based on those orientations receive the same protections under the law as heterosexuals, homosexuals and bisexuals.

SENDING MESSAGE ABOUT SEXUALITY

It also sends a message to asexual and pansexual state residents that they are valued every bit as much as heterosexual, gay and bisexual people.

"Representation matters and words matter, and it also matters seeing yourself represented," Morrison said.

He also hopes the legislation will help educate his fellow Delawareans about asexuality and pansexuality "and let them know that whether or not they know it, they have fellow Delawareans in their everyday lives who are asexual and pansexual."

House Minority Leader Mike Ramone, R-Pike Creek/Newark, noted that homosexuals have faced abuse that heterosexuals have not. But, he said, he was not sure why asexual people and pansexual people needed to be broken out of the current umbrella definition.

Morrison responded that all LGBTQ+ people still face a lot of discrimination and abuse. Ramone asked whether changing the state definition made it worse by breaking it out even more.

"You're this, but you're in that part of this, so you're going to be treated differently," he said. "Are we making it worse?"

Morrison said state law now "kind of pretends" that the three sexual orientations listed are the only ones.

"Someone who is asexual cannot identify as heterosexual, homosexual or bisexual," Morrison said. "And somebody who is pansexual would not identify as any of those."

[READ MORE HERE](#)



NEAL INTRODUCES NEW BILL TO PROTECT GENDER-AFFIRMING CARE

BY BETSY PRICE

A day after killing her first bill dealing with protections for medical professionals dealing with gender-affirming care, Rep. DeShanna Neal introduced a new version Wednesday. The Elsmere/Newport representative's [House Bill 346](#) would expand protections for individuals seeking, receiving and providing gender-affirming health care.

“As a mother to two beautiful transgender daughters, I’ve witnessed firsthand the transformative impact of gender-affirming care. Beyond its manifold mental and physical health benefits, this care unquestionably saves lives,” Neal said in a press release.

“When I fought for my daughter’s gender-affirming care, I promised that one day I would ensure all transgender people, whether from Delaware or not, would be able to get the gender-affirming care they need. With this legislation, I’m keeping that promise.”

One reason Neal filed the revamped bill is that a number of states across the country have enacted [laws](#) limiting access to this type of care, particularly for minors, even though many major medical organizations [support](#) gender-affirming care.

The new bill includes legal protections for providers, organizations and patients, including out-of-state residents receiving gender-affirming care in Delaware.

Gender-affirming care consists of an array of services that may include medical, surgical, counseling and non-medical services for transgender and nonbinary people. Among them:

- Protects privacy during civil actions. HB 346 would protect communications and records concerning gender-affirming health care, with limited exceptions.
- Shields providers from civil actions. Those providing gender-affirming healthcare would be protected from civil actions in another state.

- Protects professional licensees. The bill clarifies that medical professionals who provide legal gender-affirming health services in Delaware are not subject to other states’ gender-affirming care provider regulations.

- Binds insurance companies. The legislation would also prohibit insurers from increasing premiums or taking adverse actions against providers and organizations for providing legal gender-affirming health care.

- Provides a cause of action. HB 346 would allow someone sued in another state for allegedly providing gender-affirming care services that are legal in Delaware can recover related costs, damages or attorney fees.

HB 346 would not change or update any laws regarding parental consent.

“This legislation serves both as an affirmation of the belief that gender-affirming care is life-saving care, and as an assurance that Delaware lawmakers trust in our medical practitioners to use evidence-based practices to care for all patients,” said Sen. Kyle Evans Gay, Claymont/Talleyville. She is the Senate sponsor of HB 346.

“Not unlike bad-faith attempts to criminalize and limit abortion access, lawmakers across our nation are hell-bent on passing any kind of legislation that restricts bodily autonomy,” she said. “In Delaware, we stand with our patients and our providers — and we will always prioritize access to care.”

HB 346 has been assigned to the House Health and Human Development Committee. It is not scheduled to meet soon, according to the General Assembly [website](#).

[READ MORE HERE](#)



BIPARTISAN BILL WOULD SEE INSPECTOR GENERAL AT WORK BY 2025

BY BETSY PRICE

A much-debated Office of Inspector General would be up and running by early 2025, if a new bill passes the Delaware Assembly by the end of June. Sen. Laura Sturgeon, D-Hockessin, would create the Office of Inspector General, an independent watchdog agency empowered to investigate waste, fraud and abuse in the executive and legislative branches of state government with [Senate Bill 21](#), which has bipartisan support.

“A responsible government is an accountable government,” said Senate Minority Whip Brian Pettyjohn, a co-prime sponsor of SB 21. “We must do all we can to ensure public officials are held to the high standard that all Delawareans expect. Creating the Office of the In-

pector General would do just that. Having an official agency free from electoral politics to help keep the government in check is necessary and long overdue.”

“House Republicans have proposed creating an Office of the Inspector General in previous legislative sessions,” said Joe Fulgham, director of Policy & Communications for the House of Representatives Republican Caucus. “While I have not polled our membership on this particular incarnation, I believe it will find significant support among our people, who have a history of backing measures to improve the accountability and efficiency of government operations.”

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NEW 'FIREARM' DEFINITION BILL HEADS TO HOUSE

BY JAREK RUTZ

The Delaware House of Representatives will be the first to take a look at a new bill that will redefine Delaware's legal description of a firearm.

The Firearm Definition Task Force, responsible for evaluating the state definition and its ramifications in lawmaking and criminal code, had a quick, 10-minute meeting Tuesday to take one last look at their work. The focus was on confirming additions suggested at last week's meeting.

"We have a final draft legislation of redefining firearm in Delaware Code, adding this new definition of projectile weapon," said task force chair Rep. Jeffrey Spiegelman, R-Clayton.

He thanked the Department of Justice, who worked with the task force to create an appropriate definition.

Part of the issue with the current definition is it created challenges for lawmakers, especially with the influx of bills relating to guns and weapons. Spiegelman has said it can create unintended consequences.

For example, the existing definition includes nail-guns, so technically someone with a former felony conviction would be breaking laws if they used one on a construction job. That's not the goal of some of the gun laws passed.

The task force has also added equipment like bow and arrows and spear guns, which have become more popular items of choice for hunting and fishing. "Projectile weapon" has been added to the definition. The bill, redefines "firearm" as any weapon from which a shot, projectile or other object may be, is designed, or may



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readily be converted to be discharged by force of combustion, explosive, gas and/or mechanical means, an explosive, whether operable or inoperable, loaded or unloaded. It says that a "deadly weapon" includes a firearm, bomb, knife of any sort, a switchblade knife, a billy, a blackjack, a bludgeon, metal knuckles, a slingshot, a razor, a bicycle chain or an ice pick.

"Covert firearm" means any firearm that is constructed in a shape or configuration such that it does not resemble a firearm. Here's the draft bill. It is unclear when it will be introduced to the House because first it will be circulated for sponsors.

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photo link: Sussex Central High School



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DSU WIDENS GLOBAL PRESENCE WITH UNIVERSITY OF BELIZE ALLIANCE

BY JAREK RUTZ

Delaware State University has created a partnership it hopes will lead to future opportunities in Belize, a nation on the eastern coast of Central America.

“It opens the door to collaborative activities,” said Carlos Holmes, DSU’s director of news services. “This could range from anything from joint events, joint presentations, joint research, joint studies, it could indeed involve possible student exchange, all these things are possible.”

Earlier this week, DSU President Tony Allen and **University of Belize** President Vincent Palacio signed a memorandum of understanding affirming the intentions of both institutions to engage each other in collaborative activities. One of the programs the University of Belize is interested in, among others, is DSU’s nursing program.

BELIZE AND JAMAICA

There’s no direct connection between the two, or the

state of Delaware and Belize, but DSU has its fingerprint on many places around the globe. Also this week, DSU announced that Jamaican Prime Minister Andrew Holness will be the keynote speaker at this year’s graduate commencement ceremony. Holness will be the first prime minister to speak at a DSU commencement event. His appearance reflects the university’s academic relationship with the country.

“That memorandum of understanding, which I believe was signed in 2018, opened the door to academic programs down there,” Holmes said. “Now we offer master’s degrees and doctoral degrees in education leadership and a master of business administration degree down there as well as associate degree programs.”

Holmes noted that DSU also offers accounting degrees at a Chinese university.



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BY JAREK RUTZ

Three schools sharing the same building in downtown Wilmington are eagerly awaiting the hoped-for completion of an \$18 million project to build a gym, theater and early learning center.

Kuumba Academy Charter School, **Great Oaks Charter School** and **High Road School of Delaware** share the **Community Education Building**. Formerly a MBNA office building, the Community Ed building is meant to ensure that all Wilmington children have access to high-quality education and it also houses other services to help the students and their families.

The building already has \$14.2 million of the \$18 million needed from foundations, grants and private donations to complete the project, said Linda Jennings, chief executive officer of the Community Education Building.

“The proposed gym, theater and early learning center will have a significantly positive impact on our students and families,” said LaRetha Odumosu, executive director of Great Oaks.

SCHOOLS AWAIT FINAL \$3.8M FOR DOWNTOWN GYM, LEARNING CENTER

Sally Maldonado, head of Kuumba Academy said her arts-integrated charter school is focused on the whole child. “It is critical that we provide our students with access to state of the art facilities to support our phenomenal arts and sports programming,” she said.

Kuumba’s talented and hard-working students deserve a safe, dedicated space to use on a daily basis to work and learn, and their parents are supportive of the project, she said. “Our parents are also very supportive of this project and what this will mean in preparing our students for high school and beyond,” Maldonado said.

Jennings hopes to have the remaining funds in September. After that, it should take about one year for everything to be open for use, with the goal of a fall 2025 launch.

“The idea of the building is to provide increased access and give students and families whatever they may need,” Jennings said.

The three new spaces are essentially filling in some of the gaps in support services that the Community Education Building seeks to offer. Jessica Amiss, associate director at the High Road School of Delaware, said the school looked forward to the future improvements.

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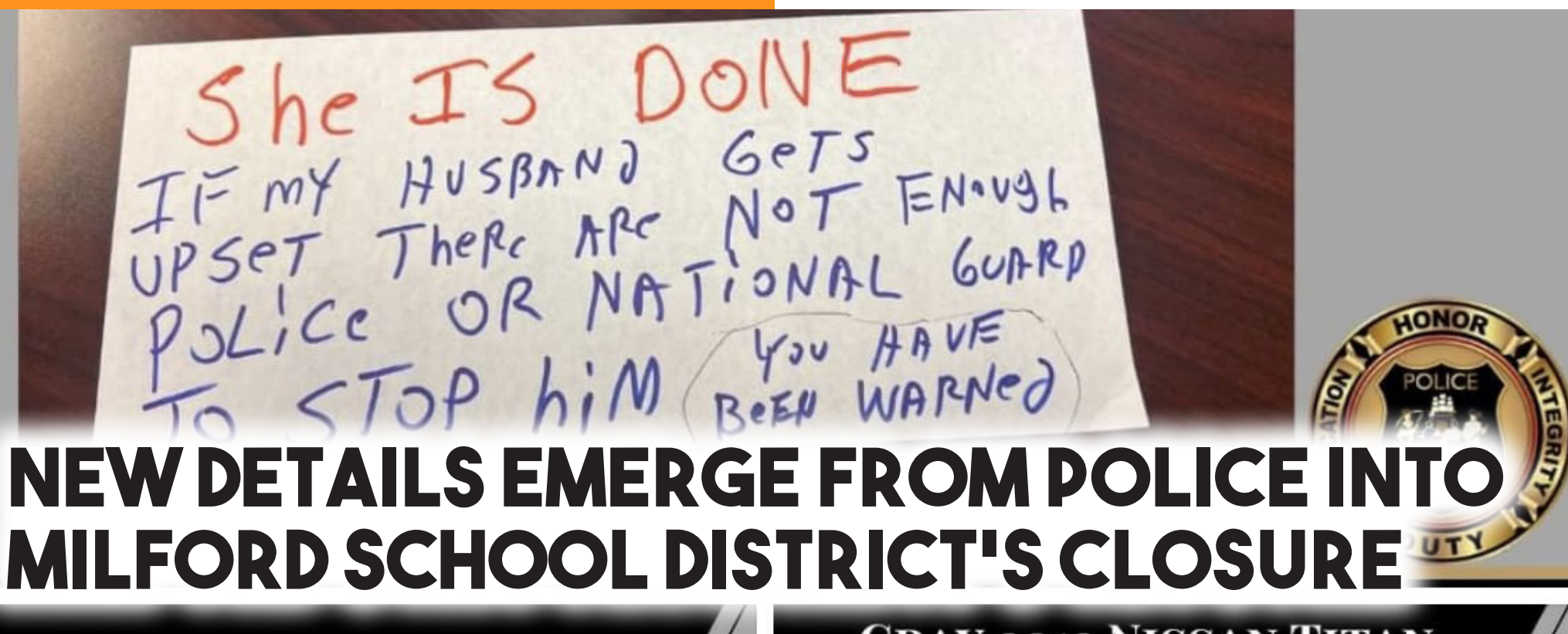
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NEW DETAILS EMERGE FROM POLICE INTO MILFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT'S CLOSURE

BY JAREK RUTZ

Milford Police Department Chief Cecilia Ashe shed some light on an ongoing investigation that was linked to Milford School District closing schools Thursday, March 7.

Last Thursday, several schools in the Milford School District were placed on “low-level” lockdown after a “credible threat was made toward Milford School District schools and offices.” The entire district was closed Friday, but opened back up Monday.

In a seven-minute press conference with Ashe and Bridget Amory, superintendent of Milford, Ashe confirmed the online speculation that the school closures were related to the Milford Police last Thursday asking for public assistance in its attempt to locate Thomas Caffrey, a 59-year-old male from Lincoln, who investigators say they want to speak with regarding a terroris-

tic threatening incident that occurred within Milford city limits.

According to Ashe, at approximately 1:20 p.m. last Thursday, Caffrey came to the Milford School District office at 906 Lakeview Avenue, to drop off a concerning letter for the school district.

“Contained in this letter was a district key access key card and building key for a previous employee of the school district,” she said.

The Milford Police Department was contacted by district administration at that time and an investigation into the concerning letter began. Police were advised that Caffrey appeared to be agitated when he dropped off the letter to the district office.

“It is important to know that Caffrey is a former employee of the Milford School District,” Ashe said.




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As a safety precaution, Milford High School and Milford Central Academy were placed on a heightened awareness or as many have referred to, she said, a low-level lockdown. There was a subject matching Caffrey’s description allegedly banging on the side door of the academy. This resulted in a full lockdown occurring at the high school and the academy.

Milford police school resource officers already at the school immediately responded to the area and it was determined that the subject was not Caffrey. Milford Police then worked with school staff to organize a plan to safely dismiss the two schools because the location of Caffrey was unknown.

[READ MORE HERE](#)



CAESAR RODNEY HS: 5X STATE CULINARY COMPETITION WINNERS

BY JAREK RUTZ

The young cooks from **Caesar Rodney School District** are state champs once again. **Caesar Rodney High School**'s culinary team took home its fifth straight state title in the 11th Annual Delaware ProStart Student Invitational, which was hosted at the **Chase Center** in Wilmington. The **Delaware Restaurant Foundation** hosts the statewide competition featuring 17 culinary and management teams who were judged on teamwork, culinary expertise and restaurant industry management skills.

“Success is not just about winning competitions, it’s about the dedication, teamwork and passion that drive us towards our goals,” said Meg Gardner, director of the foundation. “These teams showed those skills throughout the day.”

Students from Caesar Rodney High School took home first place honors for the culinary competition, something they’ve become accustomed to, with a win streak

that spans back to 2019. The team is made up of students Melia Stamper, Shannon Powell, Ralph Figueroa, Carys Raber, Zoe Rowe and Grey Bendel.

Cape Henlopen High School’s team took home the silver followed by Paul M. Hodgson Vocational Technical High School’s team. In the management competition, Odessa High School’s team was awarded first place, followed by Laurel High School and Glasgow High School.

“Odessa High School’s win in the Delaware ProStart Student Invitational Management Competition is a wonderful representation of what the Appoquinimink School District values most: creativity, communication, collaboration, critical thinking and engagement,” said Lindsay Baker, culinary arts educator and ProStart coach. The team demonstrated great cohesiveness and coachability as they prepared their business proposal for the Green Leaf Cafe, she said.



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“Chef Karen Miller and I are extremely proud of their efforts and are incredibly grateful to our community for their continued support as we prepare to take on Nationals in Baltimore at the end of April,” she said.

That team is made up of students Cierra Smith, Adalynne Evans and Ruby Wall.

“This year we hosted student competitors and observers to network, showcase skills, and explore what this industry has to offer,” Gardner said. “Congratulations to all the participants. Your hard work and commitment are truly inspiring. Huge thanks to the students, educators, mentors, exhibitors, judges, volunteers, and sponsors who continue to support this work.”

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photo credit: Dover High Facebook



SAFETY CONCERNS SURROUND BILL OKING JAVELIN AS DIAA SPORT

BY JAREK RUTZ

A new sporting event could be adopted into track and field competitions across the state. [Senate Bill 211](#), sponsored by Sen. Darius Brown, D-Wilmington, makes the Delaware Interscholastic Athletic Association adopt javelin as an approved event for all DIAA-sponsored track and field competitions.

In presenting the bill to the Senate Education Committee Wednesday, Brown pointed out that javelin has historical roots in the Olympic Games of Ancient Greece and is a recognized event within the rules and regulations found within the National Federations of State High School Associations. According to the Wall Street

Journal in July 2022, Brown said, at least 22 states within the country have adopted the javelin as a throwing event within their high school track and field programs. The NCAA also has sponsored a javelin event since 1921 for men and 1982 for women.

Sen. Laura Sturgeon, D-Hockessin, and chair of the Senate Education Committee, asked Brown about the safety of the sport.

“The javelin throw can be practiced safely with appropriate safety precautions and rules, such as the use of a rubber-tipped javelin,” Brown said.

The single public commenter, Robert Overmiller said this was concerning. He pointed out that historically there have been deaths of young people goofing around and playing catch with the javelin. Overmiller said boys will be boys, and said even with the rubber tips, if young athletes are playing around, the objects are still dangerous and could cause serious harm.

Sen. Eric Buckson, R-Dover, who’s been involved in athletics for decades as his time as an educator, said he was concerned that schools not offering javelin will be at a disadvantage at interscholastic competitions.

Brown clarified that just because the bill would require the DIAA to approve the javelin as an event, not every school has to offer it.

“These are the same challenges most high schools have in our state with most of the field athletic options within track and field,” he said, “from high jump, to pole vault and everything else.”

Having points docked in competitions for not having athletes to field certain events is something schools have been dealing with forever, and while it is true that schools not offering javelin might miss out on a higher score, this isn’t a new concept, Brown pointed out.

Buckson suggested that many schools don’t even have the facilities in place to practice javelin.

Senate committees do not take a public vote. Rather, the senators sign the back of the bill with their vote, and the outcome is posted on the bill tracker, typically within an hour or two. If released by the education committee, SB 211 will go to the Senate floor for a vote.





DOVER STAYS THE COURSE TO WIN STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

BY JOE SINGLES

Coming on the heels of their upset victory over St. Elizabeth in the semifinals, Salesianum looked to be the more comfortable team early. Good team defense by the No. 6 seed forced Dover High School out of their offense as the basket appeared to have the proverbial lid on it for the Senators. The No. 2 seed from Kent County missed half a dozen point blank lay-ups including multiple second chance looks. It wasn't until the 3:24 mark that Dover got on the scoreboard with a 15-footer by Denim Perkins. Sallies on the other hand looked comfortable at the offensive end, knocking down a number of shots at all three levels, getting out to a 13-4

lead with 1:46 to go in the quarter. The Senators Coach Stephen Wilson would attempt to change the dynamic, switching to a 2-2-1 press with 1:25 to go, with the hopes of bringing some positive energy to his squad. 13-6 Sallies at the end of the quarter.

As Dover continued to struggle from the field, Sallies was right back at it, finding the open shooter for high percentage looks. Sallies ability to get offensive contributions from all five players on the court regardless of their line up made it extremely difficult for Dover to keep up after trying to recover out of their aforementioned 2-2-1 press. However, with Sallies' Justin Hinds

and Kareem Thomas on the bench, the Senators would go on a 7-2 run to pull within six. Two free throws at the end of the half would pull Dover within four, 27-23. Isaiah Hynson led Sallies with 11 points while Dover's Dorell Little led his squad with 11 points going into halftime. Dover's inability to convert around the basket was the story of the half as the Senators out rebounded Sallies 25-15, including 19 offensive rebounds.

Back and forth they went early in the third quarter as Dover's Little attempted to bring his team back from the four-point deficit. Sallies would not relent however, as their ability to creat good looks for their teammates continued. Still, the Senators found themselves only down two points with 2:11 to go in the quarter. Dover would break through with one minute to go on a tough, up and under layup by their point guard Perkins, giving them its first lead. Dover would score again just before the buzzer to take a 40-39 lead heading into the fourth.

Thomas for Sallies would make his presence felt once again early in the fourth. Relentlessly attacking the basket, scoring from the field and the foul line to give Sallies a two-point lead. At this point, both teams were operating on all cylinders. Dover was scoring under the basket on almost every possession while Sallies' individual talent worked together to play their style of basketball. 50-48 Dover with 3:09 to go. After trading baskets, Dover would secure a loose ball with 56.2 seconds to go and call timeout. Dover held the ball out of the timeout forcing Sallies to foul. Tarrance Williams for Dover made one of two free throws to give them slim three-point lead with 17.5 to go.

[READ MORE HERE](#)



BANKS CARRIES URSULINE TO STATE TITLE

BY JOE SINGLES

After a slow start and a feeling out process by both teams, the girls' state championship game between the Ursuline Raiders and the Caravel Buccaneers heated up. Larry Banks' Caravel squad demonstrated patience and strong work on the glass to score in a variety of different ways by multiple players after the first two minutes. Coach John Noonan of Ursuline on the other hand, seemed to be content with allowing GiGi Banks to play 1-on-5 basketball at the offensive end, resulting in a number of bad looks and coupled with low energy on the part of the Raiders. Despite their struggles, Ursuline found itself down by only two points at the end of the first quarter. 14-12 Caravel.

After Caravel senior Anaya Price knocked down her third three-point shot of the game, her teammate Jasiyah Price made another three-point shot on the very next possession, extending the top seed's lead to 20-16. Coach Noonan continued to play "Banks ball" and the sophomore didn't disappoint. Banks would make three three-point shots in under 45 seconds, pulling the Raiders even, 24-24 with 2:10 to go in the half. The play of Caravel's Price and Janiyah Crawford were the story of the first half. Beating the Ursuline zone with three-point shots and penetrating the gaps for layups. Ursuline seemed content however to stick to the zone as long as it was able to get out in transition and put pres-

sure on the Caravel defense. The Caravel backcourt combined for 23 points in the half while Banks and Brown for Ursuline combined for all 28 points for the No. 2 seed. The half ended 28-28.

Both teams came out of halftime with strong defensive adjustments. Ursuline remained in its 2-3 zone, but tightened up the gaps and rebounded the basketball, which is more difficult to do in a zone defense. Pushing the ball on after every rebound, the No. 2 seed took their biggest lead of the game, 37-34, with 2:45 to go in the quarter. Caravel's hot shooting cooled off due to the Ursuline defensive adjustments but they still manage to remain within one possession throughout the quarter. The Caravel low post players, Brycelyn Stryckning and Jordin Tate, willed their squad to within one at the end of the quarter securing tough rebounds and giving their teammates second chance shots. It was 39-38 with one quarter to go.

Ursuline looked content to place the ball in Banks hands as much as possible as she continued to knock down deep three pointers and attack the basket. Her ability to see the floor and made strong decisions with the ball in her hands didn't deter Caravel however, as the Buccaneers hung tough, making a number of shots in the lane to finally regain the lead, 48-46 with two minutes to go in the game. With one minute to go, Caravel chose to run down the clock for the last shot with the game tied 48-48. After securing an errant pass, Ursuline would have possession with 5.6 seconds to go and put the ball in the hands of Banks once again. On her way to the basket, Banks would be fouled and earn a trip to the free throw line with 1.9 seconds to go.

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