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photo link: Delaware DNREC Division of Fish and Wildlife

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State Moves to Control Hospital Budgets



Could Congress Hinder Middletown Pharma Campus?



Big Fifth Inning Leads to Cape Win

photo link: Delaware Botanic Gardens at Pepper Creek



Headlines

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STATE MOVES TO CONTROL HOSPITAL BUDGETS TO LOWER HEALTH COSTS

BY BETSY PRICE

Delaware's hospitals soon could be governed by a politically appointed state board charged with examining and approving hospital budgets and invested with the power to demand changes and punish those that don't meet its guidelines.

House Bill 350 would create the Diamond State Hospital Cost Review Board under the Department of Health and Social Services. It will try to keep hospital budgets at or below increases of a state spending benchmark. Established in 2018, it was 3% to 3.8%, the amount tied to the state's gross domestic product.

Until that board is up and running, it will immediately prevent hospitals from charging more than 250% of what Medicare allows, a move described as a temporary price control measure by Brian Frazee, CEO of [Dela-](#)

[ware Healthcare Association](#), a trade organization of hospitals and other organizations.

"Make no mistake, this would limit access to care, especially with a \$360 million cut across the entire system," he said. At a minimum, it will mean shorter staffing hours and longer waits for some services consumers can now easily access, he said.

Speaker of the House Valerie Longhurst, D-Bear, main sponsor of the bill, now styled as House Substitute 1 for House Bill 350 because of changes, said the board is needed for a long list of reasons, including:

- Hospitals represent 42% of all healthcare costs in Delaware;
- Hospitals never met that benchmark, except for that first year of the pandemic;

- Inpatient and outpatient costs at Delaware hospitals totaled \$3.5 billion in 2021, although hospitals tie that to patients seeking care they put off because of the pandemic;

- Delaware hospitals profit \$2,006 per patient, a full 40.5% higher than the national average of \$1,331.

"These costs are unsustainable for working families in Delaware," she said in a statement announcing she was moving forward with the bill.

Frazee said Longhurst's bill will give the state and a five-member board appointed by the governor, speaker of the house and senate president pro tempore, the ability to override the hospital systems' local board of directors. It's short-sighted because it singles out one group of healthcare deliverers and doesn't consider the effect of webs of partnerships, the influence of insurance companies, other government programs, the rise for the demand in care after the pandemic and the shock of inflation, all while being based on a benchmark he says is flawed.

"We think there are better ways, better paths forward in terms of addressing all of our shared concerns around health care costs," Frazee said, "without really threatening the very foundation of our healthcare system here in Delaware."

HOSPITALS PROPOSE ALTERNATIVES

Earlier this week, the association and others met with Longhurst, representatives of the governor's office and other supporters of the bill and offered three alternatives for their consideration. He declined to detail any of the plans, in order to give the supporters time to consider the choices.

[READ MORE HERE](#)



BY JAREK RUTZ

The vice president of [Appoquinimink School District](#)'s Board of Education warned the community that disaster will ensue if the district's second attempt at a referendum fails this month.

"We have to cut 91 positions. That's about 5% of our staff," said Vice President Richard Forsten, who describes himself as a fiscal conservative.

The district is hoping to raise about \$77.8 million in local revenue: \$11,126,000 for operating costs and \$66,663,550 for capital costs.

"It's a significant percentage, and we have to make \$5 million in cuts, starting with the budget that begins July 1 if the operational ask fails," he said.

The district will need to accommodate an additional 3,000 students next year and classroom student numbers could swell to 45 in some cases, he said. "That's not a threat," he said. "Just look at the numbers."

Appo's first try at a referendum failed in December 2023. It was a tight decision. Here are the votes:

APPO VP: 'UGLY CUTS,' 45 KIDS IN CLASS IF REFERENDUM FAILS

- Section I: 3,243 votes against; 2,989 for. Raising taxes 43 cents per \$100 of assessed property value for operating expenses, including educator compensation and technology.
- Section II: 3,303 votes against; 2,963 for. Raising taxes three cents per \$100 of assessed property value for capital projects, including a Summit middle school and high school and Green Giant Road elementary school.
- Section III: 2,583 votes against; 2,577. Raising taxes one cent per \$100 of assessed property value for safety and a bus lot at A.G. Waters Middle School.

The average assessment in Appo is \$92,700, so for the average homeowner, if both the capital and operating components of the referendum pass, their tax bill would go up \$396 per year, \$33 per month or about \$1.08 a day.

Using Appo's [tax impact calculator](#), a home value of \$150,000 will result in a \$53.63 per month tax hike for the family, a \$250,000 value equates an \$89.38 per month increase and a \$400,000 home value will result in a \$143 per month tax hike.

Appo's second and final attempt to have a successful referendum is Tuesday, April 23, with polls open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

[READ MORE HERE](#)

PUBLIC NOTICE REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FREIRE CHARTER WILMINGTON

ATTENTION: Student Transportation Service Providers

Freire Charter School Wilmington (201 W. 14th Street, Wilmington, DE 19801) is accepting bids from Student Transportation Service Providers to provide bus services to students in the 2024-25 school year.

Freire Charter School Wilmington's Full Transportation Request for Proposal is available at www.freirewilmington.org.

To respond to this RFP, please ensure you bid includes:

- Appendix A-H of the RFP Document, completed;
- A list of references and their contact information;
- A list of all schools currently under contract;
- A bank credit reference;
- Resume(s) of company's principal management
- Accident record reports from the previous 3 years in Delaware;
- A list of any lawsuits or administrative proceedings against the company in any state during the last 5 years;
- Sample or copy of the company's certificate of insurance;
- Proposed location(s) for bus parking, dispatch office, and maintenance facility locations.

SUBMISSION DEADLINE

All bids must be received no later than
May 17th, 2024 at 5 P.M.

SUBMIT BIDS TO

Johnny Mills, Operations Manager
(johnny@freireschools.org)
1617 JFK Blvd., Suite 580
Philadelphia, PA 19103

Please reach out to Johnny with any questions and/or concerns regarding this RFP and Freire's current transportation practices. Note that Freire Charter Wilmington is open to the option of splitting routes between more than one company.

Freire Charter School Wilmington's Board of Directors reserves the right to reject any and all bids or accept the bid that it finds to be the most responsive and responsible bid submitted.



photo link: The Delaware Contemporary

Culture

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LONGWOOD'S TULIPS WILL HIT PEAK BLOOM NOW THROUGH NEXT WEEK

BY JAREK RUTZ

Ahoy, tulip lovers.

Now is the time to steer your ship toward Kennett Square, PA, where **Longwood Gardens'** waves of tulips are heading into their peak bloom for spring 2024.

Seeing their 90 varieties of tulips—single blooms, double blooms and fringed—along the 600-foot Flower Garden Walk is a favorite spring outing for many. The walk features more than 150,000 tulips and other seasonal bulbs, with plantings arranged in flowing colors from pinks and purples to shades of red and yellow to soft white blooms. Also on display there are flowering magnolias, cherry trees and dogwoods. In nearby Peirce's Woods, native spring ephemerals such as Virginia bluebells and trillium are in flower.

The cascade of blossoms is expected to end the first week of May.

MORE THAN TULIPS

Longwood also offers a refreshed layout in the Ornamental Kitchen Garden. It features more accessible pathways, additional seating and new display areas. Recently planted and expect to mature and flourish throughout the summer months, the expanded Ornamental Kitchen Garden will support the growth and production of more than 200 fruit and vegetable crops annually.

“Kitchen gardens have a unique ability to connect guests of all ages with plants and cultivated spaces,” said Associate Director of Landscape Architecture and Program Design Erin Feeney. “Their intriguingly patterned rows entice exploration; their structures showcase craft of the human hand; and their beautiful and unusual cultivars of familiar crops sustain us and display the

variety of the natural world.”

In the Conservatory, guests are greeted with the fragrances of blooming freesias, lilies and stock while hanging baskets of trailing jasmine infuse the surroundings with rich aromas. Seasonal favorites such as hydrangeas, pansies and foxgloves color pathways while April blooms of *Echium wildpretii* ‘tower-of-jewels’ add a touch of magnificence.

The flowering spring attractions extend into the Meadow Garden where Carolina silverbells, Eastern redbuds, flowering dogwoods and sweet azaleas unfold with natural beauty. Longwood's Café also has reopened with a refreshed layout and tasty seasonal offerings.

The Gardens are open Wednesday to Monday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Timed admission tickets are required through May 8.

JOHN MOLLURA
- PHOTOGRAPHY -
BEAUTY PORTRAITS - HEAD SHOTS
- FAMILIES -
302.222.6308





JAMIE WYETH: BACK ON THE WALLS AT THE BRANDYWINE

BY VICTORIA ROSE

As you walk into “Jamie Wyeth: Unsettled” at the [Brandywine Museum of Art](#), you are greeted by an experience designed to let you know immediately that this is not a typical Wyeth exhibit. An automaton, a hidden music box spreading sinister tinkling tones and a taxidermied doglike critter on a vintage flotation device stand across from a projection portraying the automaton in full motion in all its grotesque glory.

Wyeth didn’t create them, but he did collect them and the assemblage is the first hint that the exhibit will ask visitors “Are your perceptions trustworthy?” said Amanda C. Burdan, senior curator at the Brandywine Museum of Art and curator of this exhibition. In more than 50 works, the celebrated artist shows a side many would never expect. Each invites closer inspection.

WYETH PSYCHE

What may look like a traditional oil painting in the Brandywine Tradition has unnerving elements, sharp shards of a fallen tree or the wingtip of a threatening bird. It is presented in the vein of a haunted house, Burdan said. As the viewer moves through the spaces, they become “nervous about what comes next in the narrative.”

Carrion is displayed in all its visceral clarity and walls in shades of gray and green with mullion-overlaid text panels highlight the shadows of both the natural world and the mind.

With other pieces from Wyeth’s own collection, this exhibition not only shows Wyeth’s perspective, but “introduces you to the mysterious world in which Jamie lives on a daily basis,” Burdan said.

[READ MORE HERE](#)

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ROCKWOOD PARK AND MUSEUM ASKS WHAT IT SHOULD BE AND DO

BY KEN MAMMARELLA

Rockwood Park and Museum, for the first time in its five-decade history as a New Castle County park, is developing a strategic plan.

“This plan is helping the museum to visualize a new mission to be of service to a wider variety of our neighbors,” said Ryan Grover, who’s been directing Rockwood for just over two years.

When interviewing for the job, he said that he was aware of Rockwood’s “quality programming” but concluded that “part of the interpretation and the stories we were telling about the past here at Rockwood weren’t really connecting with a big portion of the population.”

That’s why Rockwood has cut back on costumed interpreters and is devoting less effort to “venerating”

the families that lived there for more than a century. A **survey** that’s part of the plan asks if Rockwood should prioritize a wide-ranging list that includes birdwatching, farming, contemporary art and “fun, welcoming and accessible” interpretations of history.

“They’re all happening in small quantities now,” he said. “We probably will do them all in some measure, but the survey will help us to define and rate what would be the most important.” And the survey “hopefully also leaves the door wide open enough that we can get other ideas that we hadn’t even conceived of.”

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HERE'S THE BUZZ: NO BIG CICADA DEAL FOR DELAWARE

Periodical Cicada



Annual Cicada



BY JAREK RUTZ

While parts of the country will be swarmed with the convergence of two periodical cicada broods, it's a regularly scheduled appearance for the insect in Delaware. "The double brood this year involves 13-year cicadas and 17-year cicadas," said Chris Wade, the pesticide section administrator at the [Delaware Department of Agriculture](#).

The closest brood to Delaware will be in southern Maryland with Brood XIX cicadas, which come around every 13 years. Illinois will be hit the hardest with both the 13-year and 17-year bugs migrating from their burrow underneath trees. The next periodical cicada emergence in the First State will be Brood X — one of the 15 types of periodical cicadas — in 2038.

"So a normal year for Delaware is the annual cicadas. Those are the ones that are green and brownish colored," Wade said. "The periodicals are black with the red eyes. They're a little bit smaller but their colors are brighter so people can see that, and they get more excited than the regular ones."

A normal cicada season involves an ascension of the insects in late June or early July. Their arrival will be almost impossible to miss with their clicking mating sound and their exoskeletal shells left on trees and the ground. The female cicadas make slits at the end of tree branches to lay their eggs.

"Then those larvae emerge and fall into the soil beneath the tree," Wade said, "and they burrow into the ground and they feed on the tree roots and other plant roots in the area." By September, the larvae are all buried, the adults have died off and the cicada season is over. "The adults can feed a little bit, but they don't really feed a lot," Wade said. "Their main purpose is to reproduce, and then they pass away."

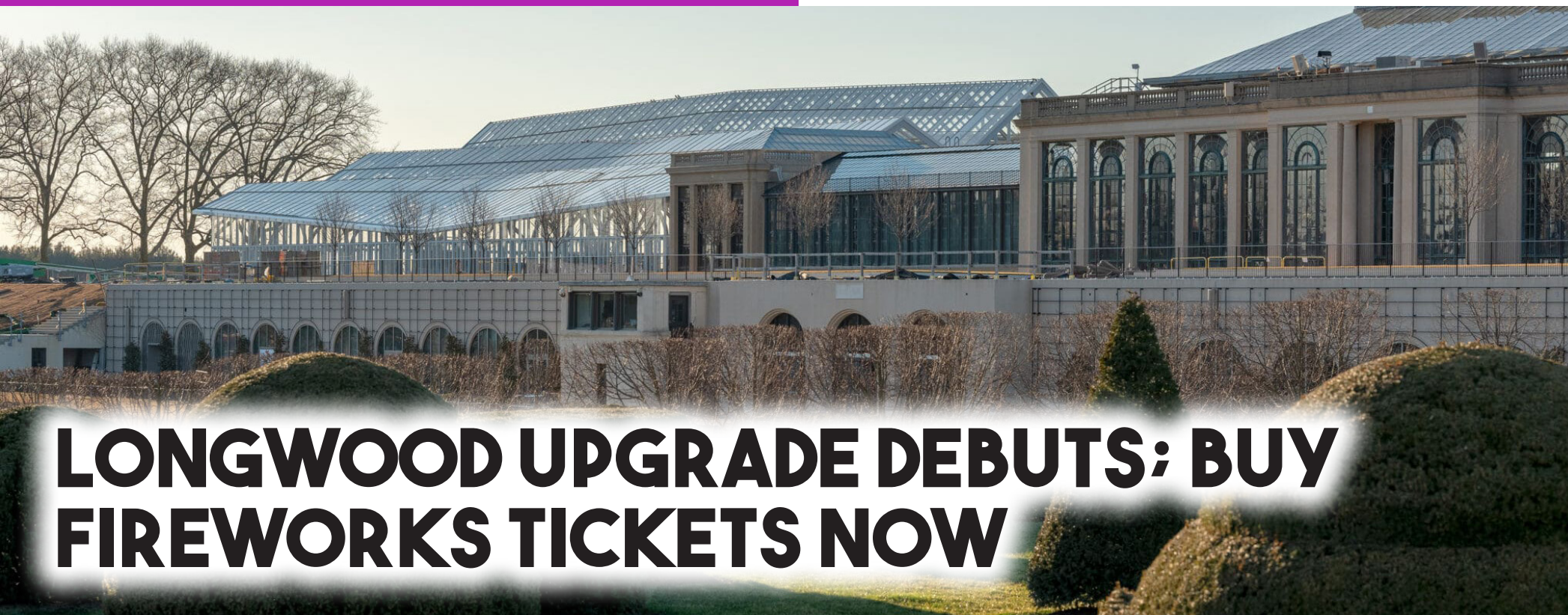
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

For the parts of the country experiencing a double brood, Wade said there are not real concerns or negative impacts, but excessive egg laying can damage the tips of some trees.

"We're not going to have that problem here, but they are considered beneficial because they do produce a lot of food sources for pretty much anything that eats insects," he said. "When the cicadas emerge, especially with the double brood, there's an extra supply of food for all the wildlife so animals anywhere from birds, squirrels, racoons and more feed on these cicadas." He said tree damage or death is only a real issue if a bunch of cicadas decide to place their eggs in a small sapling or freshly planted trees.

While the insects spend most of their time on Earth in the ground, they're still productive members of society. They aerate the soil while they're digging through to get to roots, and the aeration helps with water flow and drainage through the trees.

[READ MORE HERE](#)



LONGWOOD UPGRADE DEBUTS; BUY FIREWORKS TICKETS NOW

BY BETSY PRICE

Longwood Gardens has announced an early holiday present for its fans: Its \$250 million revitalization project — announced in 2021 as the most ambitious of its upgrades — is expected to open to the public Nov. 22, just in time for A Longwood Christmas and its deluge of visitors.

It also started selling tickets for its popular Fireworks and Fountain Shows starting Tuesday, April 9, and — new this year — they come with designated seat numbers. The shows, which feature illuminated water displays choreographed to classical and popular music start during the July 4 holiday weekend and end Oct. 13.

LONGWOOD CHANGES

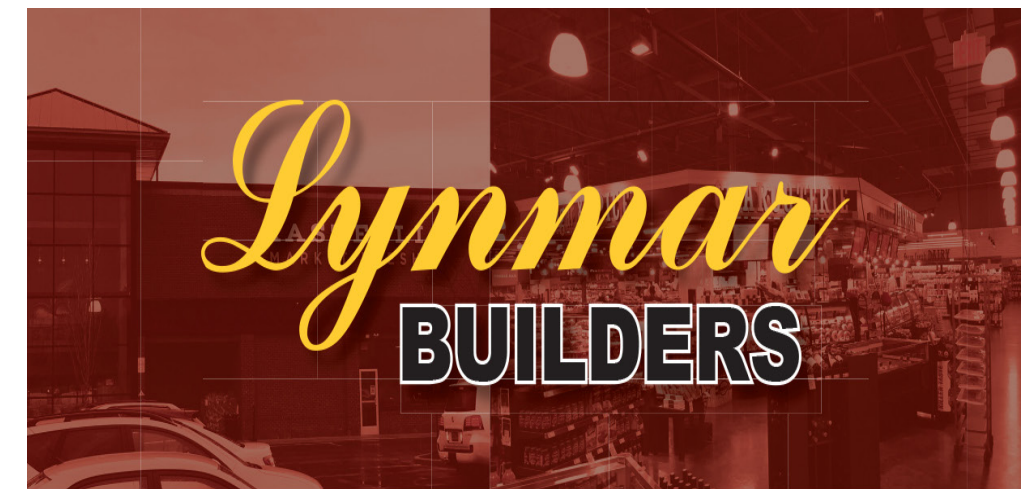
A former du Pont estate, Longwood has not hesitated to spend big bucks on additions to its offerings, often with a focus on better stewardship of the natural world.

It added a meadow garden in 2014, partly as a message about providing habitat for native plants, insects and animals which thrive in the nontoxic environment instead of manicured and chemically support turf.

It's not afraid to have fun, either. The five-year, \$90 million restoration of its formal fountains was the largest in the United States and draws huge crowds to its illuminated fountain shows, sometimes accompanied by fireworks in the summer.

The shows, which went on sale at 10 a.m. Tuesday, often sell out, particularly the July 4 ones. The new reserved seating plan means you choose your seat when you buy a ticket, so there's no need to haul your own chairs to the gardens and jockey for a sightline.

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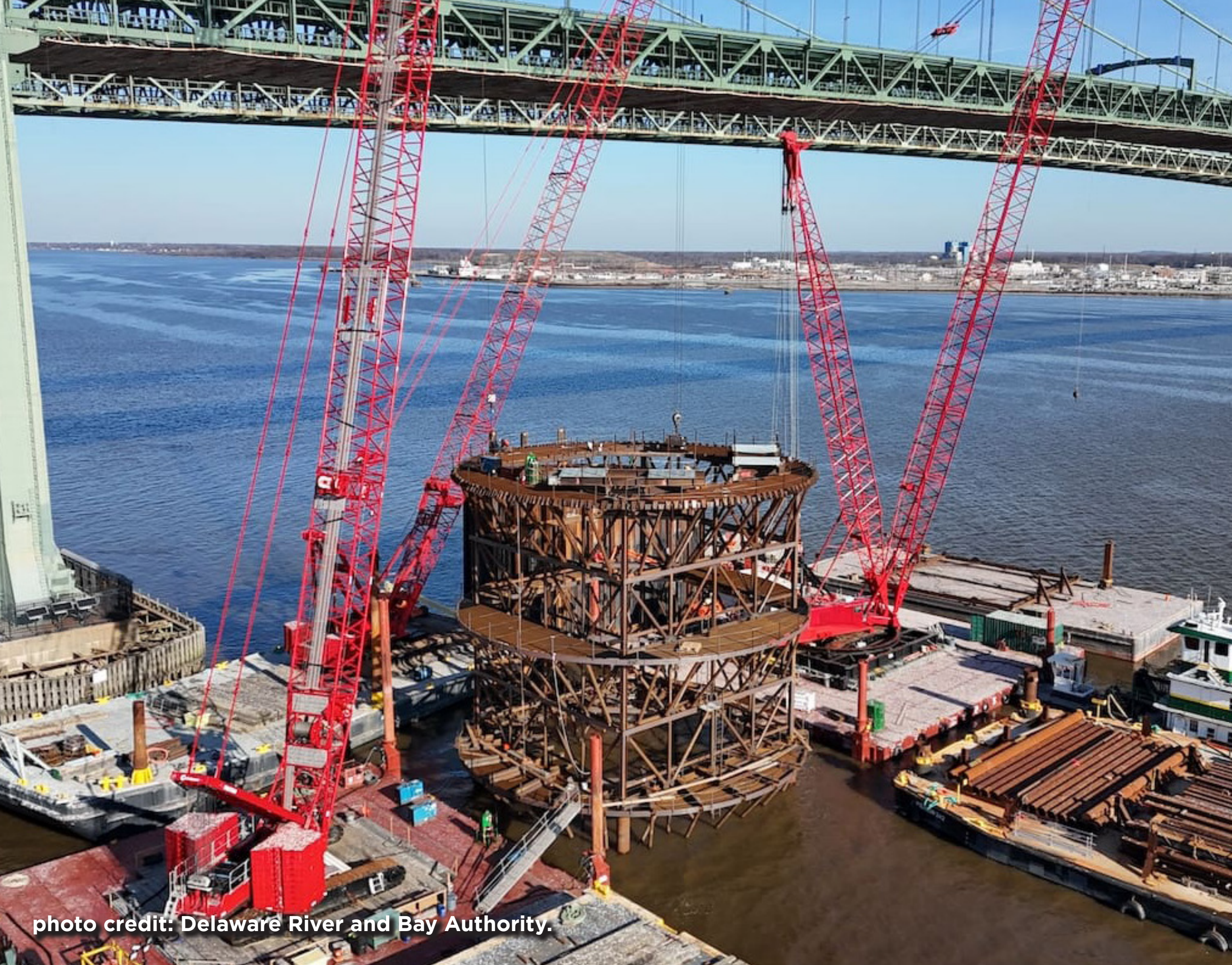


photo credit: Delaware River and Bay Authority.

Business

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COULD CONGRESS HINDER FUTURE MIDDLETOWN PHARMA CAMPUS?

BY JACOB OWENS

The Congressional committee that **pushed** for a ban on sale of the social media platform TikTok is now scrutinizing a Chinese pharmaceutical company that happens to be developing a major taxpayer-supported manufacturing campus in Middletown.

In January, the committee’s leadership introduced legislation that would prohibit the company called WuXi AppTec—as well as certain other Chinese-owned firms—from receiving federal contracts. If passed, the bill could threaten the company’s success in the United States, including at its site in Middletown, which is expected to employ more than 475 people.

“The BIOSECURE Act is intended to block foreign adversary biotechnology companies from accessing federal funds and exploiting the American bioeconomy,” Rep. Mike Gallagher, R-Wisconsin, said in a statement.

A month after introducing the bill, Gallagher, who chairs the House Select Committee on the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), sent a letter to the heads of several federal agencies, including the Department of Defense, urging them to investigate WuXi AppTec, claiming it threatens U.S. intellectual property and has “worked at the behest” of the Chinese government.

Meanwhile, WuXi AppTec has **adamantly denied** the accusations by the House select committee, and a company spokesperson told Spotlight Delaware that “it relies on misleading allegations and inaccurate assertions against our company. We continue to closely monitor the proposed legislation as it proceeds through additional steps in the legislative process, where it could be subject to further review and modification.”

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photo link: Governor John Carney

Government

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DRUG TAKE BACK DAY: FREE, RESPONSIBLE DISPOSAL SYSTEM

BY KEN MAMMARELLA

Delawareans can discard their expired or unused medications at locations statewide between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Saturday, April 27, during the 26th National Prescription Drug Take Back Day. The biannual event, aimed at reducing the risk of prescription medications being diverted for misuse, has collected nearly 120,000 pounds of medications in Delaware since 2010.

Medications to be disposed must be in a container such as a pill bottle, box, blister pack or zipped plastic bag with personal information removed. Liquid medications must be in their original containers. Vape pens and e-cigarettes will be collected if batteries are removed.

DRUG TAKEBACK SITES

About 20 sites will be participating, according to a Drug Enforcement Administration [list](#), noting that the lineup is updated daily. The sites are scattered around Delaware, but there are no sites in the Brandywine Hundred, Hockessin or Pike Creek area.

- Blades Police Department, 204 W. Fourth St.
- Camden Police Department, 1783 Friends Way
- Camden Walgreens, 2480 S. du Pont Highway
- Christiana Care Surgical Center, 4755 Ogletown Stanton Road
- Frawley Stadium, 801 Shipyard Drive, Wilmington
- Laurel Police Department, 205 Mechanic St.
- Lewes Police Department, 129 Schley Ave.
- Lewes Ferry Terminal, 43 Cape Henlopen Drive
- Middletown Police Department, 130 Hampden Road
- Milford Police Department, 401 N.E. Front St.
- New Castle County Airport, 151 N. du Pont Highway, New Castle
- New Castle County Police Department, 3601 N. du Pont Highway, New Castle
- Newark Police Department, 220 S Main St.
- Newport Police Department, 15 N. Augustine St.
- Ocean View Police Department, 201 Central Ave.

- Rehoboth Beach Police Department, 229 Rehoboth Ave.
- South Bethany Police Department, 402 Evergreen Rd.
- University of Delaware Police Department, 413 Academy St., Newark
- Veterans Administration Hospital Police Department, 11601 Kirkwood Highway, Elsmere
- Warner Elementary, 801 W. 18th St., Wilmington

The event is operated locally by the Delaware Division of Public Health. The drop-off points are staffed by the named police departments, plus the Delaware River and Bay Authority Police, Delaware State Police, the Red Clay School District public safety department and the Wilmington Police Department.

[Help Is Here Delaware](#), a division initiative, lists other spots where old and unwanted medications may be disposed of year-round. They include pharmacies and libraries with Deterra bags, which release carbon after water is added, making the drugs inactive. Drop boxes are also available at police departments and pharmacies year-round.

Officials want people to use these methods because meds flushed in the toilet or rinsed down the sink can become part of groundwater, which may end up in drinking water. And meds just left in medicine cabinets offer disturbing temptations. “Over half of teens say that they can easily obtain prescription drugs from their parents’ medicine cabinets,” according to Help Is Here.



ENVIRONMENTAL BILL WOULD BAN SIX-PACK PLASTIC RINGS IN 2025

BY JAREK RUTZ

As cities and states across the county have been taking measures in recent years like banning plastic bags and styrofoam to help prevent waste and sustain the environment, Delaware has a new bill to consider that would further that effort. **Senate Bill 263**, sponsored by Sen. Trey Paradee, D-Dover, would prohibit the sale of beverages packaged in rings or other plastic connectors in Delaware, starting July 1, 2025. The bill would not impact aseptic containers, such as juice boxes.

“As a mountain of evidence continues to pour in about the harmful effects of plastic in our environment and in our bodies, we simply cannot afford to keep doing things the same way and hope this problem solves itself,” Paradee said.

There is no fiscal impact on the state if the bill becomes law.

In 2019, Delaware passed and enacted House Bill 130 which banned single-use plastic bags from being used at the largest retailers across Delaware—those 7,000 square feet or larger and those with three or more locations of at least 3,000 square feet.

But, originally after the ban, stores found a loophole and would give out thicker plastic bags, since HB 130 stated that plastic bags had to be at least 2.25 millimeters thick and designed to be used at least 125 times. A law enacted in 2020 banned the thicker ones as well. Stores have transitioned to reusable bags since.

Delaware also bans polystyrene (styrofoam) food containers and restaurants in the state have until July 1, 2025, to phase out those containers.

[READ MORE HERE](#)



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*Students must meet eligibility requirements. Course fees and books are not covered by the SEED Scholarship.

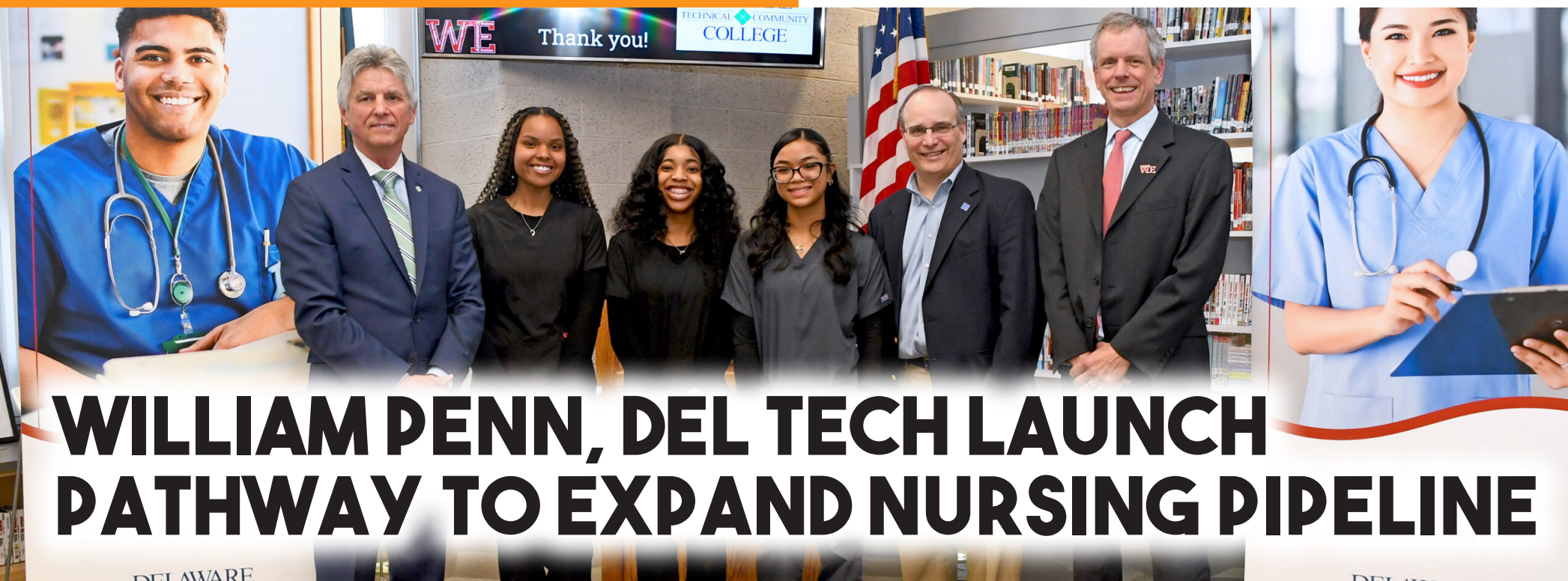
photo link: Delaware Department of Education



Education

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WILLIAM PENN, DEL TECH LAUNCH PATHWAY TO EXPAND NURSING PIPELINE

BY JAREK RUTZ

A newly-funded career pathway partnership between a state college and a high school aims to tackle the national nursing shortage while giving students college credits to advance into a career in health care. **Delaware Technical Community College** and William Penn High School in the Colonial School District announced Monday the launch of the Patient Care Technician/Nursing Pathway Program. The partnership gives up to 15 sophomores at William Penn the opportunity to earn college credits before they receive their high school diploma.

“We have 15 current sophomores, going to be juniors next year, who will be traveling to Del Tech campus every other day for half of their school day,” said Jordan Hudson, who’s a teacher for the **Allied Health** program at William Penn.

Allied Health is a major designed to be a springboard for students to develop the skills and behaviors necessary to enhance their knowledge and practice of general health and wellness. With a focus on Health Care Technician, students explore and prepare for several medical professions. The partnership with Del Tech bolsters that program.

“They will be taking about 12 college credits between junior and senior year, and they will be able to earn certifications in CNA [certified nursing assistant], patient care technician, as well as the current phlebotomy and EKG [electrocardiogram] certifications that are programs here on campus that William Penn already offers.”

The selected students will earn those workforce credentials that will allow them to start jobs in the health care industry while they are completing their college degrees.

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ST. MICHAEL'S: \$1M FOR CONSTRUCTION, MORE AFFORDABLE CHILD CARE

BY JAREK RUTZ

A \$1 million federal allocation puts a Wilmington nursery and early childhood education center serving vulnerable families on the doorstep of its \$6.5 million in capital projects. **St. Michael's School & Nursery** now has \$5.5 million raised for its construction needs, which the school started on about a year and a half ago in late 2022.

The most recent funding source came last week, a \$1 million allocation through **Community Project Funding**, which are federal grants that invest in many unique projects like housing, homelessness prevention, workforce training, public facilities, parks, resilience planning and other critical infrastructure and service.

“We are in construction and have been for over a year, we’re almost done and in June, we will have the first phase of our construction done,” said Lucinda Ross,

executive director at St. Michael’s, “and that’s the point of which we will have two new classrooms, we will have six classrooms totally renovated on one half of the building and then they’ll start on the other half of the building.”

The school has not closed during the ongoing construction, largely due to the demographics that it serves. “80% of our families come from subsidized households,” Ross said, “and they struggle day to day, so we did stay open.”

At the beginning of the projects, the school was serving 100 students. After the construction is done — which Ross hopes will be by this October — St. Michael’s will be able to serve about 185 students.

[READ MORE HERE](#)

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Sports

photo credit: Nick Halliday

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SMYRNA'S DIXON TAKES DOWN NO. 9 GATORS

BY NICK HALLIDAY

On a partly cloudy, 82 degree Tuesday night in Gainesville, FL, Payton Dixon, a two-time State Champion softball pitcher from Smyrna, earned the biggest win of her collegiate career. The Bulls put up a 7-4 win over the ninth-ranked Florida Gators who are 37-4 this season. This is the first time the Bulls have defeated the Gators since 2012. Earlier this season these two teams faced off at USF, where Dixon only pitched in the sixth inning in relief of Belle Sardja. That game ended 12-3 in favor of the Gators.

Tuesday night, the tables would turn. Payton throws consistently in the mid to upper 60s (mph), has a nasty changeup and a backdoor curveball that kept Florida's hitters off balance all night. Dixon recorded a complete game win against the Gators, allowing seven hits, four runs, two walks, hitting three batters and striking out five, while throwing 133 pitches.

Speaking with Dixon after the game, she said "my curveball was just on tonight, but I had to adjust as they backed off the plate. That allowed me to use the backdoor curve and changeup later on in the counts." Going into tonight she said she was "very aware of Skylar Wallace", a lefty shortstop with speed. Dixon's approach was to keep her off the bases, but a HBP would put Wallace on in the bottom of the fifth. Wallace would make it to third base in the inning, but did not score for Florida. Payton said "this is a great win and to have the

offensive production of my team tonight was great. It's so much easier to pitch when you have runs on the board." She said she feels good and is healthy. "This win proves we can play with and beat anybody," but she looks at this as "just another game" and "we are on to face Wichita State in a weekend series at home."

USF Head Coach Ken Erikson has made Dixon (15-5) the ace of his staff this season. Dixon is a redshirt sophomore this season after missing her freshman year with an injury and missing part of last season to injury. This season she has matured and is in control in the circle for the Bulls.

Prior to taking down the Gators last night, the Bulls came off a weekend sweep against the Memphis Tigers, after which Dixon was named American Athletic Conference Pitcher of the Week (Apr. 8) for her performance against the Tigers.

Dixon continues to prove to be one the strongest pitchers in the AAC. She currently leads the conference in six categories and ranks in the top 40 in the nation for eight.

Nationally, Dixon is ranked 18th in victories (15), 21st in games started (19), 24th in shutouts (4), 24th in earned run average (1.30), 26th in innings pitched (124), 32nd hits allowed per seven innings (4.52), 36th in pitching appearances (26) and 38th in strikeouts (114).

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BIG FIFTH INNING LEADS TO CAPE WIN

BY NICK HALLIDAY

No. 2 Cape Henlopen Vikings hosted the No. 3 Caravel Buccaneers Tuesday for a top five baseball matchup. Cape used a big fifth inning after trailing for the first four to hold off the Buccaneers.

Caravel jumped out to a 1-0 lead in the top of the second inning. After Aiden Alston reached on an error, John Bujnowski connected on a ball and drove it to center field for a double driving in Alston. The Bucs held on to that lead for another two innings before the big fifth inning from Cape.

Jaxon Clampit led off the inning with a walk. Trey Hitchcock followed with putting down a sacrifice bunt, but he reached first safely. Then Aaden Johnson followed him with a walk to load the bases for the Vikings.

The next batter, Brady Kosc, fouled off the first pitch, watched the next for a strike, and on the third pitch Caravel pitcher Tim Tyler threw a wild pitch that got away, allowing Clampit to score while both Hitchcock and Johnson also advanced a bag. Kosc then hit a hard ground ball into left field which scored both Hitchcock and Johnson for a 3-1 lead. However, they were not done.

Isaac Terhune walked to put him on first and advance Kosc to second. Kosc then advanced to third on another wild pitch from Tyler, which gave Cape runners on first and third. Terhune then attempted to steal second which forced Caravel to try to throw him out, which they did, but Kosc stole home on the throw down to score, giving Cape a 4-1 lead.

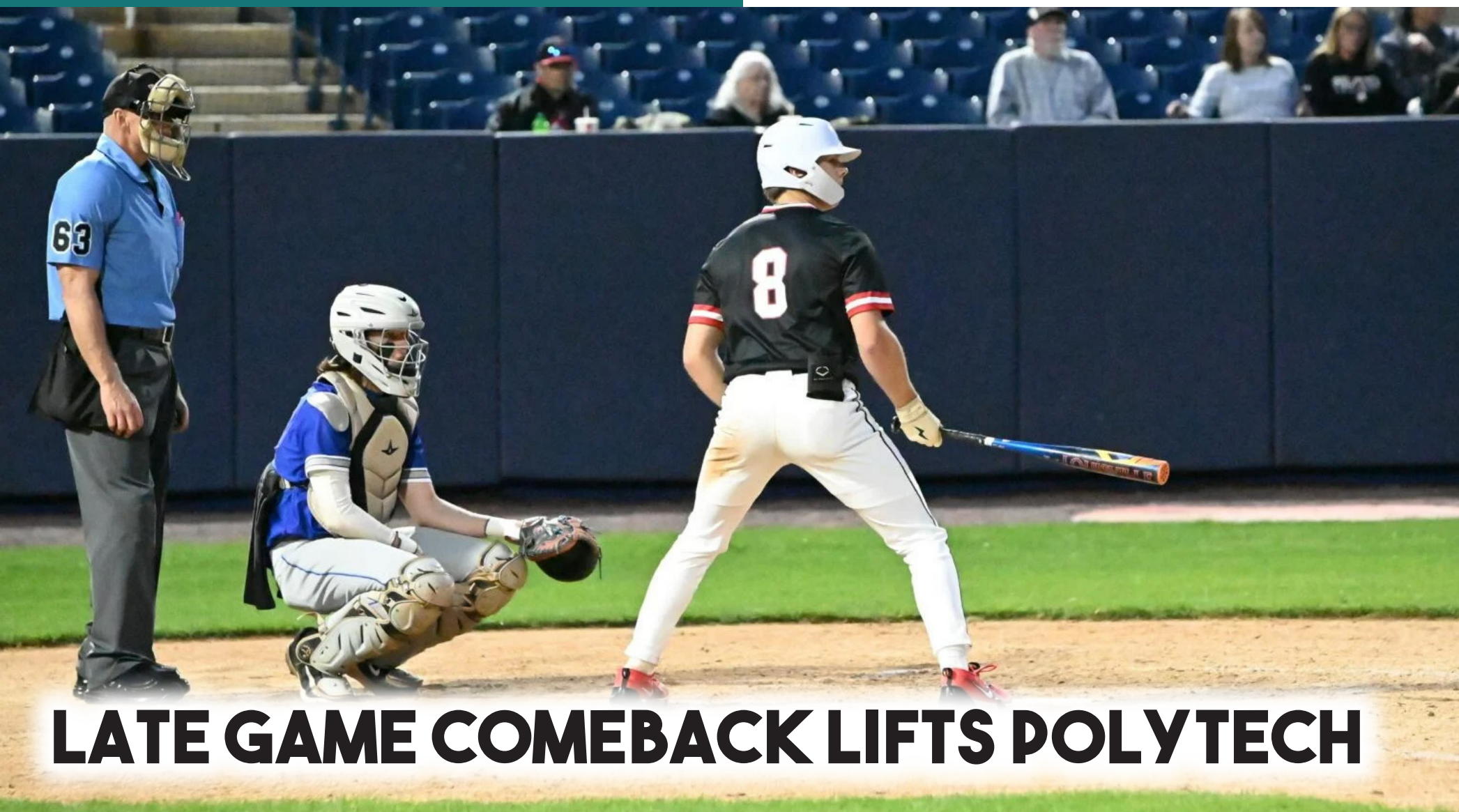
Cape was able to keep Caravel off the board for the rest of the game and take a 4-1 victory. Cape's Bard Marks got the victory, his fourth of the season for the Vikings going five and two thirds of an inning allowing six hits, four walks and one run. Jacob Smith closed the game out while striking out three batters and not allowing a hit.

Cape had five different players all with one hit in the game. Caravel actually outhit the Vikings, with six total hits. Tim Tyler took the loss for the Buccaneers.

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LATE GAME COMEBACK LIFTS POLYTECH

BY NICK HALLIDAY

Finally, a good weather day allowed two downstate teams to come north to play at Frawley Stadium, home of the Wilmington Blue Rocks. The Polytech Panthers hosted the Woodbridge Blue Raiders in a back and forth game that Polytech eventually prevailed.

The Panthers got the scoring started in the bottom of the first inning as Asher Grubb singled to drive in Will Harvey who drew a leadoff walk. Woodbridge then tied it up at 1-1 when Austin scored after singling earlier in the inning on an error by Polytech.

The Blue Raiders broke the tie in the top of the fourth inning off of two bases loaded walks by Polytech to push two runs in for a 3-1 lead. Polytech answered right back in the bottom of the inning to tie the game again. Elijah Benton drew a lead-off walk and was followed by Blake Knight who blasted a shot to the center field wall for a triple to score Benton. Knight was then knocked in on a fielder's choice to bring the score to 3-3.

In the top of the sixth inning, Woodbridge again took the lead-off of four straight walks by Polytech pitching

that forced in a run for a 4-3 lead. But the Panthers had an answer of their own in the bottom of the sixth.

Knight started the inning off by continuing to crush the ball, driving a pitch into right field for a double and his second extra base hit of the day. Mike Brubaker sacrificed him to third while reaching base safely on an error by Woodbridge. Joshua Frederick followed Brubaker with a sacrifice of his own that scored Knight from third to tie the game.

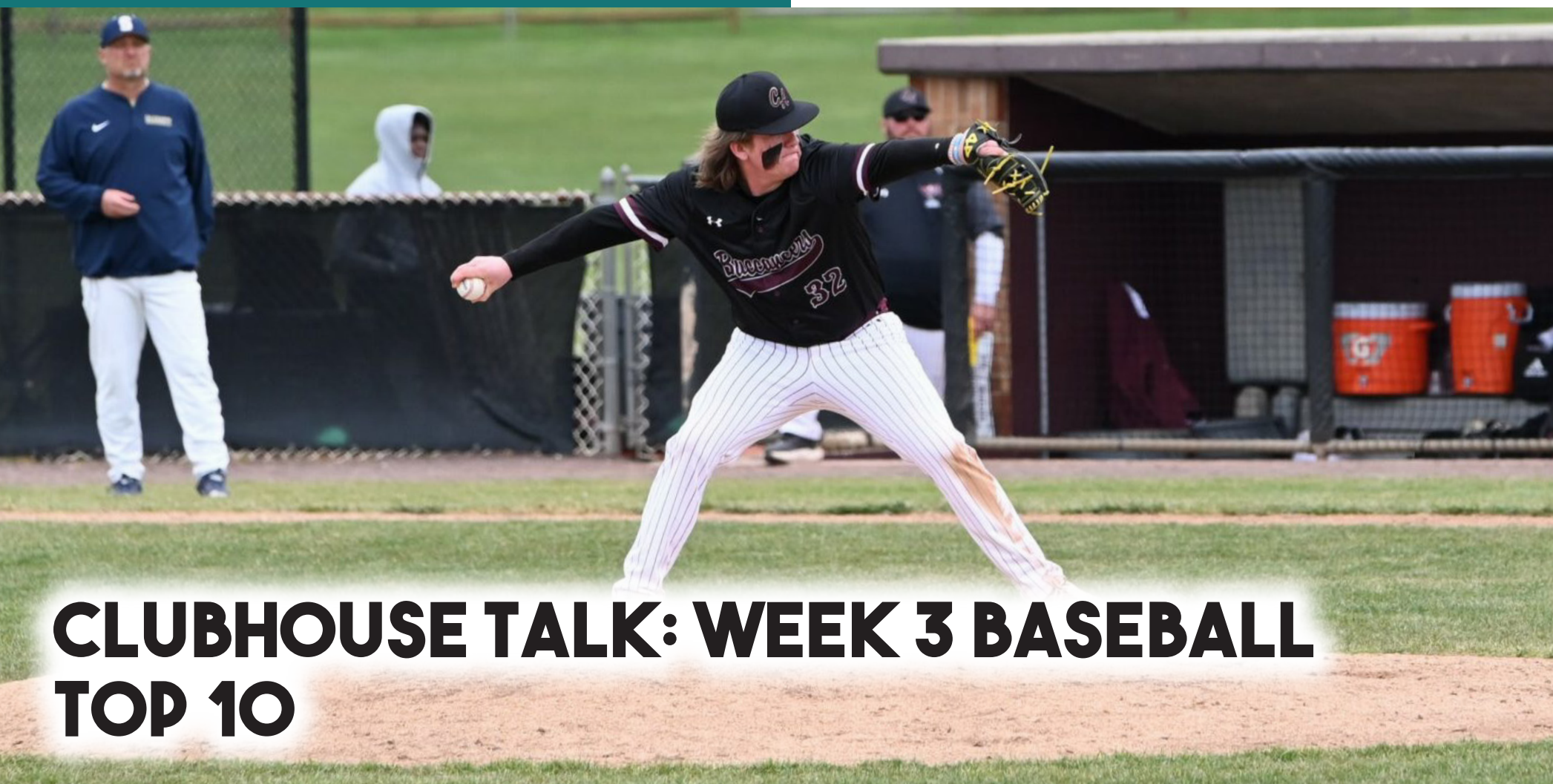
With Brubaker at third and two out, Ryan Zimmerman came through with a clutch single through the infield that scored Brubaker for the go ahead run, giving the Panthers their first lead since the first inning at 5-4.

Woodbridge did threaten in the top of the seventh inning, but was unable to get a run across. WHS had the bases loaded and two outs with Sam Schroeder at the plate. Zimmerman did not start on the mound, but he was in for the close of the game and that he did. He struck out Schroeder on three straight strikes to close out the game.

Zimmerman did get the win on the mound for the Panthers. Knight led the Panthers at the plate going 2-for-2 with two runs and an RBI. For Woodbridge, William Hague took the loss on the mound. Austin Griffith led the offense going 2-for-2 with one run and an RBI.

Watch the game replay [HERE](#).





CLUBHOUSE TALK: WEEK 3 BASEBALL TOP 10

BY NICK HALLIDAY

Rain, rain, rain and rain was what we saw last week. Four straight days of rainouts that rescheduled a lot of games this last week. There were a few games played over the weekend, including our No. 1 team who finally saw the field.

No. 1 DMA finally got a game this week and picked up where they left off in their championship run last season. The bats were hot for the Seahawks who totalled 11 hits and scored nine runs. Charlie Porter and Tyler Leech provided the power as Porter hit two home runs including a grand slam, while Leech added a triple and a home run.

Cape, Sussex Central and Saint Mark's all are still undefeated. Sussex Tech and Sanford each suffered losses last week. So we will have some changes in our top 10 from last week.

This week a lot of games that we should get in with the weather finally looking like springtime. We have some more top 10 teams in action and a big top five matchups that could shake up our top 10 rankings. Now let's take a look at weeks' top ten rankings.

No. 1 Delaware Military Seahawks (DMA) (1-0) finally hit the field last week and made a splash. They defeated Conrad 9-3 to get their first win of the season.

They scored nine runs off of 11 hits while Hunter Dicarantonio picked up his first varsity win on the mound. The Seahawks had three games this week and they hit the road for all of them. They headed to Newark Charter Tuesday, Dover on Thursday and No. 6 William Penn on Saturday which was a top 10 matchup. This game was streamed live on our [channel](#).

No. 2 Cape Henlopen (6-0) two wins last week and another shutout. The Vikings defeated Dover and blanked Appoquinimink 10-0. Transfer Brad Marks got his third win for the Vikings. Cape hosted all three games this week. They faced Indian River on Tuesday, No. 3 Caravel on Wednesday in a top five matchup, then Conrad on Saturday.

No. 3 The Caravel Buccaneers (3-0) got a win last week over the Shipley School out of Pennsylvania. Timothy Tyler got his second win of the season. They traveled to No. 2 Cape Henlopen on Wednesday for a big top five matchup. Then on Saturday they traveled downstate to play Laurel. Wednesday's matchup was the first matchup of the top five teams.

No. 4 Sussex Central Golden Knights (6-0) defeated Milford and Salesianum last week making a statement with a 15-2 victory over the Sals. Joaquin Rodriguez got his third win of the season for the Golden Knights while the offense continued to stay hot. Central had two games this week and both are away. They traveled to Lake Forest on Tuesday and Stephen Decatur (MD) on Thursday for an out-of-state game.

[READ MORE HERE](#)



ON THE PITCH: WEEK 3 GIRLS' SOCCER TOP 10

BY JASON WINCHELL

The weather doesn't look good again this week as the girls' soccer resumes play for the final four week sprint to the state tournament.

This week we have a Division 2 semifinal rematch as Saint Mark's traveled to Friends on Tuesday. These teams split the two matches last season as Friends won 3-0 at Saint Mark's on May 8. Then these two teams met in the semifinals on May 31 at Saint Mark's. The Spartans won 4-2. This is the rubber match in the last 12 months as the Quakers host the Spartans.

The Padua Pandas tough schedule continues this week as they face two more ranked teams. They opened the season at Division 1 No. 2 Appoquinimink, then played Division 2 No. 2 Saint Mark's. Now this week they have a pair of road matches against ranked teams.

They play No. 3 Wilmington Charter and No. 6 Smyrna.

Here is the week 2 Delaware Live Rankings after the third week of competition.

DIVISION 1

No. 1 Middletown (3-0)(LW No. 1) The Cavs return from the break with two home games, as they hosted Christiana on Tuesday and DMA on Friday.

No. 2 Appoquinimink (3-1)(LW No. 2) The Jags had a road match at Newark Charter on Monday night and they hosted No. 8 Odessa on Wednesday.

No. 3 Wilmington Charter (3-1)(LW No. 4) The Force hosted No. 7 Padua on Tuesday and MOT Charter on Thursday.

[READ MORE HERE](#)



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INSIDE THE CIRCLE: WEEK 3 SOFTBALL TOP 10

BY GLENN FRAZER

The old saying goes, “April showers, bring May flowers”. For the softball teams in the state it means postponements and rescheduling games. Many teams will be adjusting schedules in the coming weeks. Here is our “week 3” Top 10.

No. 1 Caravel (3-0) The Buccaneers got one game in last week, winning 9-1 at Sussex Tech as Kasey Xenidis threw a no-hitter through the first four innings. She also had a double and a triple at the plate. Catcher Zayda Rocke homered in the win. Caravel hosted last year’s finalist Indian River on Monday and played No. 8 Cape on Saturday.

No. 2 Sussex Central (4-0) The Golden Knights picked up two wins last week versus Milford and Nandua (VA). In the Milford game, Madge Layfield recorded 17 strike-

outs including the 800th of her career. The Knights had two games scheduled this week vs. Delmar and Stephen Decatur (MD).

No. 3 St. Marks (5-0) The Spartans improved to 5-0 with a 6-3 win over Indian River. Gabby Saggione and Liv Datillo combined for the win in the circle. Chloe Bedwell scored three runs to lead the offense. Brandywine was up next for Saint Mark’s, then Saturday against No. 5 Laurel.

No. 4 Appo (3-0) The Jags have only one game until April 16, as they were supposed to meet Red Lion under the lights Tuesday. Appo alum Tayler Vitola (Class of 2020) was honored as the CAA female Scholar-Athlete of the year for the 2023-24. Vitola plays infield for the UNCW Seahawks.

No. 5 Laurel (3-1) The Bulldogs defeated No. 10 DMA by a score of 5-1 last week. They will be tested this week with games against No. 9 Smyrna and No. 3 Saint Mark’s.

No. 6 Lake Forest (5-0) The Spartans improved to 5-0 and made a slight jump over Polytech in our poll. Those two met at Lake Thursday, however (guess what?) rain was in the forecast. Carah Sumpter is at it again as she not only picked up the win, but went 3-for-4 at the “dish” versus St. Georges Tech. Lake was scheduled to face CR and Polytech this week.

No. 7 Polytech (2-1) The Panthers only scheduled game was rained out last week. Polytech had four games this week against Caesar Rodney, Seaford, Lake and SGT.

No. 8 Cape Henlopen (1-0) Coach Mike Tkach and the Vikings can’t catch a break in the weather with just one game played this season. The Vikings will make up for the lack of play with four games this week starting with Dover, then Sussex Academy, IR and Caravel.

No. 9 Smyrna (3-2) The Eagles’ only losses have come at the hands of No. 1 Caravel and No. 2 Sussex Central. The Eagles’ game Saturday, April 6, at Red Lion was postponed. The No. 5 Laurel Bulldogs are the next opponent for Smyrna.

No. 10 DMA (1-1) The ‘hawks fell to No. 5 Laurel 5-1 last week and took on Newark Charter, Sussex Academy and Conrad this week.

There are some teams hoping to break our top 10 like last year’s finalist Indian River (2-2) with losses to No. 3 Saint Mark’s and No. 5 Laurel. The Middletown Cavaliers (2-1) are also on our radar, with their lone defeat at the hands of No. 3 Saint Mark’s.



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