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Mike Ramone to Run for Governor



St. Edmond's Dedicates Arena



Goldey-Beacom Eliminates Wilmington

photo link: Lewes In Bloom



Headlines

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GOP'S MIKE RAMONE TO FILE MONDAY TO RUN FOR GOVERNOR

BY BETSY PRICE

Rep. **Mike Ramone** plans to file Monday to run for governor of Delaware as a Republican. Ramone, 62, who's represented the Newark and Pike Creek area in the Delaware House of Representatives for 16 years, has an extensive list of platform issues, largely revolving around efficient government, taxes, education and the failure of the Democrats, who he says have controlled state government for 32 years.

"We've had 32 years of one-party rule and you know that party owns tax increases that have gone up and up and up, the incredible increased cost of food and insurance for your car or your health insurance or your gas every time you walk," he said Friday.

"That's a byproduct of oversized government spending, overzealously spending, rather than taking a real

strong look at your government like you would have businesses and know you've got to make each one as tight as possible."

Ramone, who serves as House minority leader—the top Republican there, is expected to run for the Republican nomination against **Julianne Murray**, chair of the Delaware State Republican Party. She said via text Friday that she plans to announce her candidacy on May 8.

"I don't really believe I'm running against anyone," Ramone said. "I believe I'm running for Delawareans."

He's tired of toxicity and labeling out of hatred, he said, pointing to the national race for U.S. president. He's sick of the candidates constantly throwing nasty barbs at each other instead of running on their records, strengths and ideas, he said.

"I'd rather campaign from, look, we're all good people, Republicans and Democrats running," he said. "We're all trying to help the state. We just have maybe different ways of doing that."

RAMONE HOUSE SEAT

State law prohibits Ramone from running for both governor and his House District 21 seat. Ramone said he planned to give that up because he's building another home in Sussex County.

"I just wasn't comfortable representing my district and not being in the district all the time," he said. "I didn't want people to question my ability to represent my district appropriately."

He repeatedly won his seat in a district he calls the bluest of any represented by a Republican. It has 4,000 registered Republicans, 5,000 registered independents and 8,000 registered Democrats among its 20,000 voters. His last race was close, though. He beat Democrat Frank Burns with 4,381 votes to 4,346, or 50.2%.

"I don't think that had anything to do with politics or red or blue or whatever," he said. "I think it had to do with the people who support me because I'm there for them when they need me regardless of if they're in a party, if they aren't registered, whatever. My job is to represent them."

He believes he will offer a clear choice for votes.

"I'm intrigued and excited to go through the process of seeing if people are receptive to that type of a person who would be a governor, a person who likes helping people, a person who has been running businesses for a very long time, a person who enjoys and is fairly successful and good at problem solving," he said.

[READ MORE HERE](#)



PLAN COULD REMOVE CHRISTINA, COLONIAL SCHOOLS FROM WILMINGTON

BY JAREK RUTZ

Some students residing in the city of Wilmington who attend Christina and Colonial school district schools would be transferred mostly to Red Clay and a few to Brandywine, if a redistricting plan championed by the Redding Consortium comes to fruition. The move would essentially remove Christina and Colonial from the city.

“We believe this is a big first step,” said Rep. Nnamdi Chukwuocha, D-Wilmington, and a member of the Redding Consortium. “Our biggest challenges that we have... We created these high-need, high-poverty schools that are racially-identifiable, so we have a magnitude of needs within our schools.”

The interim plan posted front and center on Redding’s website has not been officially voted on. It is being

considered by the consortium and was proposed by Chukwuocha and Councilman Jea Street. The Redding Consortium is continuing its process of developing a plan and the proposed interim plan could be significantly changed before making its way to the state Board of Education.

Splitting the city schools up into different districts occurred in the aftermath of desegregation in the 1970s.

The Redding Consortium for Educational Equity, created in 2019, recommends policies and practices to the governor and legislators to improve education equity and outcomes in the city of Wilmington and northern New Castle County. The consortium defines educational equity as something that “requires safe, secure and student-focused learning environments where every

student is intentionally provided access to the support, resources and opportunities they need to reach their full academic and social potential, in and out of the classroom.”

A final redistricting plan will be presented to the state Board of Education no later than October 2025. Until then, the plan will be adjusted with feedback from the state board, public hearings and stakeholders like those directly impacted by the redistricting like school boards, the teacher’s union, parents and parent organizations, local elected officials and more.

The report will contain boundary shifts, immediate support for city schools, a timeline and engagement process to develop a final redistricting plan, and ideas to address systemic and systematic change for Wilmington students. It is not expected to affect the Wilmington Learning Collaborative.

“In order to begin to concentrate and focus our efforts on the needs of our students in our schools, we believe that having one or two district partners to support our city will be better,” Chukwuocha said, “and then we can greater align in having a true urban education model that meets the needs of these students.”

He said that includes before-school and after-school programming, intense reading and math supports inside of the school’s and parent councils where parents are involved and given a role to play in their students’ education.

“And the biggest thing, I really believe that, is again having the city of Wilmington itself be an investor partner in this process,” he said, noting that the city lost its school district in the late 1970s.

[READ MORE HERE](#)



KAYLA KOSMALSKI SHATTERS BARRIER BY WINNING MISS DELAWARE TEEN

BY BETSY PRICE

No one was more surprised than Kayla Kosmalski to hear her name called as Miss Delaware Teen USA 2024 Sunday night. Now the Middletown cheerleader, swimmer and honor student will become the first contestant with Down syndrome to participate in the national pageant when it's televised Aug. 1 on the CW Network.

She said Tuesday that she's wearing the crown for everyone with Down syndrome and disabilities. "Everyone can do anything if they dream big and achieve goals," she said.

Despite this year being a busy one—Kosmalski turns 18 next week, will graduate from Middletown High, is participating in the spring musical, going to prom and making plans to attend Wilmington College, one of the 11 colleges including Penn State who accepted her—she was determined to participate in the pageant, too.

A pageant veteran, she had participated in the pageant once before, but wasn't able to last year. Her family was too involved in the care of her grandmother, Nancy Baker, who has battled two different cancers and then had a stroke. But Kosmalski's mom, Amy, had promised Kayla they would make time for her to compete again this year. She and her husband, Rick, and grandma Nancy were in the crowd when Kayla made it to the top 6.

"It was down to Kayla and the first runner-up, and I thought, well, first runner up. This is fantastic. No one

with Down syndrome has ever been able to do anything like this," Amy said.

Then the other teen was named first runner-up and Kayla was crowned. Amy said she couldn't speak, she couldn't scream, she couldn't even stand up.

"My legs were shaking," she said.

Kayla hadn't been able to spot her parents during the pageant, but as she walked across the stage wearing her crown, she found her sobbing mother in the audience and with a dazzling smile pointed at her. Her mom, Kayla joked, "has been crying my entire life."

Also crowned Sunday night was Alysa Bainbridge, Miss Delaware USA 2024.

Bainbridge is a speaker, host and social media specialist who founded the non-profit "Tyler's Triumph," which provides support for people in recovery from mental illness and addiction. It's named for her brother, Tyler. She will compete for the national title of Miss USA in the televised pageant Sunday, Aug. 4.

KAYLA AND THE SPOTLIGHT

When Kayla was born, Amy said the diagnosis of Down syndrome crushed all of her dreams for her little girl. "I would cry in the shower for the first couple of weeks," she said.

All of the books she read about the syndrome basically said what her child would not be able to do.

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photo link: The Delaware Contemporary

Culture

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Polly Drummond Yard Waste



- Prone to fires
- Traffic issues
- Dumping
- Funding should not come from parks rehab



CHANGES AFOOT FOR POLLY DRUMMOND YARD WASTE SITE

BY KEN MAMMARELLA

Changes are in the offing for the Polly Drummond community yard waste site, a popular site east of Newark for residents to drop off yard waste for free. Maybe it will close, with a nearby replacement. Maybe it will close, with a replacement further away. Maybe it will get dedicated funding. And for two out of those three alternatives, people will pay for the service.

The **disposal site**, on Polly Drummond Hill Road, across from the Judge Morris Estate entrance to White Clay Creek State Park, “has also been abused by contractors, non-residents and illegal dumping,” the park’s **master plan** says. “Sediment and aesthetic concerns have increased.”

“We’re still in very productive discussions right now with the [Delaware Solid Waste Authority] on how we

can relocate that out of the park and have DSWA take it over,” Shawn M. Garvin, secretary of the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control, on May 1 told the Legislature’s Joint Capital Improvement Committee, which is often called the bond committee. But the issue is where.

“Yes, we can open a new facility once we can find a place to put it,” said Michael D. Parkowski, spokesman for the DSWA, estimating it would take 15 to 20 acres.

The authority has offered to accept yard waste at its **Newark recycling center** on Corporate Boulevard, a 20-minute drive to the southwest of the Polly Drummond facility.

“That option didn’t work with legislators” who toured the site, said state Sen. Jack Walsh, noting it wouldn’t

provide “an equal level of service,” with, among other things, different rules about bagging.

Another issue is money. DNREC estimates it will cost \$500,000 to run the Polly Drummond facility by the end of fiscal 2024 (that’s June 30). “We only have \$5,000 left in the fund that we pulled out of park rehab to fund it, and that is with a \$20,000 bill coming our way from our contractor,” Garvin said.

That’s why he is asking, in the future, for a separately funded line item for the facility. It’s been funded in the past through Joint Finance Committee.

At the bond committee meeting, Garvin displayed a slide with photos showing yard waste dumped outside the entrance, when it’s closed; and a line of vehicles, when it’s open. The text says the site is prone to fires (it was closed a bit in 2023 by suspicious fires), traffic issues and dumping.

Garvin’s opening comments about the site generated laughter, Walsh said, because it’s been an issue that’s gone on so long, which is why the Legislature has tasked DNREC and DSWA to come up with a long-term resolution. “Until they do, our goal is to keep it open,” Walsh said.

HANDLING YARD WASTE

“Yard waste is banned from all Delaware landfills,” DNREC writes in a page that suggests that “the best way to handle most yard waste is to compost or mulch it on-site. Larger items may need to be handled at a commercial composting site.” The page goes on to list two dozen places statewide where yard waste can be dropped off. All charge for the service except for Polly Drummond.

[READ MORE HERE](#)



BRANDYWINE VILLAGE PROMOTES ITSELF WITH NEW WELCOME CENTER

BY KEN MAMMARELLA

Brandywine Village, a community just north of downtown Wilmington that traces its European roots back to about 1640, is boldly doing something about its future: running its own welcome center.

“We hope through history that we will encourage economic development,” said Brandywine Village resident Peg Tigue, who’s orchestrating the effort. “There’s so much to be proud of here.”

Welcome centers and visitor centers are most commonly run by governments and large nonprofits, such as chambers of commerce, and convention and visitors bureaus. The Brandywine Village Welcome Center, at 1883 Superfine Lane, hosts an open house 4-6 p.m. May 23, featuring the Choir School of Wilmington, Gov. John Carney, Wilmington Mayor Mike Purzycki and a food truck.

After the open house, the center will be staffed by volunteers 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. four days a week, Tigue said, either Wednesdays-Saturdays or Thursdays-Sundays.

The center is run by **Brandywine Partners**, which four years ago sprang out of Old Brandywine Village, which dates back to 1964. Both nonprofits promote the area to people and businesses. The center is also run by W3R-DE, a nonprofit that promotes the Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route National Historic Trail, which basically passes by the center’s front door.

Brandywine Village will get extra attention for the **200th anniversary** of the Marquis de Lafayette’s Guest of the Nation tour.

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BROADWAY IN WILMINGTON: WOMEN, WOMEN, WOMEN, AND 'EVAN HANSEN'

BY BETSY PRICE

Women, women and more women are the focus of the 2024-15 Broadway in Wilmington season, which will count “Tina—The Tina Turner Musical,” Mean Girls” and “The Cher Show” among the titles heading to the Playhouse on Rodney Square.

Skip Pennella, executive director of The Grand, said the season will be one of the most exciting in years, with all five making their Playhouse debuts. Among them, they’ve won 17 Tony Awards and two Grammy Awards.

Here’s a look at what’s coming:

Broadway’s ‘Tina’

Opening the season Oct. 11-13, the musical follows the life of singer Tina Turner as she breaks barrier and be-

comes the Queen of Rock n’ Roll, set to the soundtrack of her most beloved hits.

One of the world’s best-selling artists of all time, Turner won 12 Grammy Awards and her live shows were seen by millions, with more concert tickets sold than any other solo performer in music history.

“‘Tina’ is a smash West End and Broadway hit that has electrified audiences all over the country—and we know audiences in Wilmington will love it,” Pennella said. “The book is written by Pulitzer winner Katori Hall, and the show features dozens of Tina’s most popular songs. I can’t think of a better way to celebrate the late, great Tina Turner.”

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DELAWARE ENJOYING HOME STAGE IN NATIONAL MOCK TRIAL

BY JAREK RUTZ

Having the 2024 National High School Mock Trial competition in the First State has certainly created a home field advantage for the two Delaware teams competing this weekend.

“I don’t know how many differences there are in the rules, but we are confident that we know the Delaware rules, which helps a lot,” said Molly Shay, a senior at [Newark Charter School](#), one of two schools representing Delaware in the competition along with the [Charter School of Wilmington](#).

Wilmington Charter won the state championship in February and because the national competition ended up with an odd number of teams, the host state, Delaware, had its runner up, Newark Charter, added.

Shay joked that even little things like not having to stay in a hotel, home-cooking, knowing the layout of

the courtrooms and even just knowing where water fountains are gave the two Delaware teams a bit of an advantage.

For just the second time in 33 years, Delaware is hosting the national competition while also having a team compete. The competition hosts about 48 teams and more than a thousand people from state winners and teams from the Northern Marianas Islands, Guam and South Korea.

“I think it went really well, especially considering we’ve never been to nationals before and we never even placed in the top five before this year,” Shay said after round one of the competition Friday, in which Newark Charter faced the state champs from Alabama.

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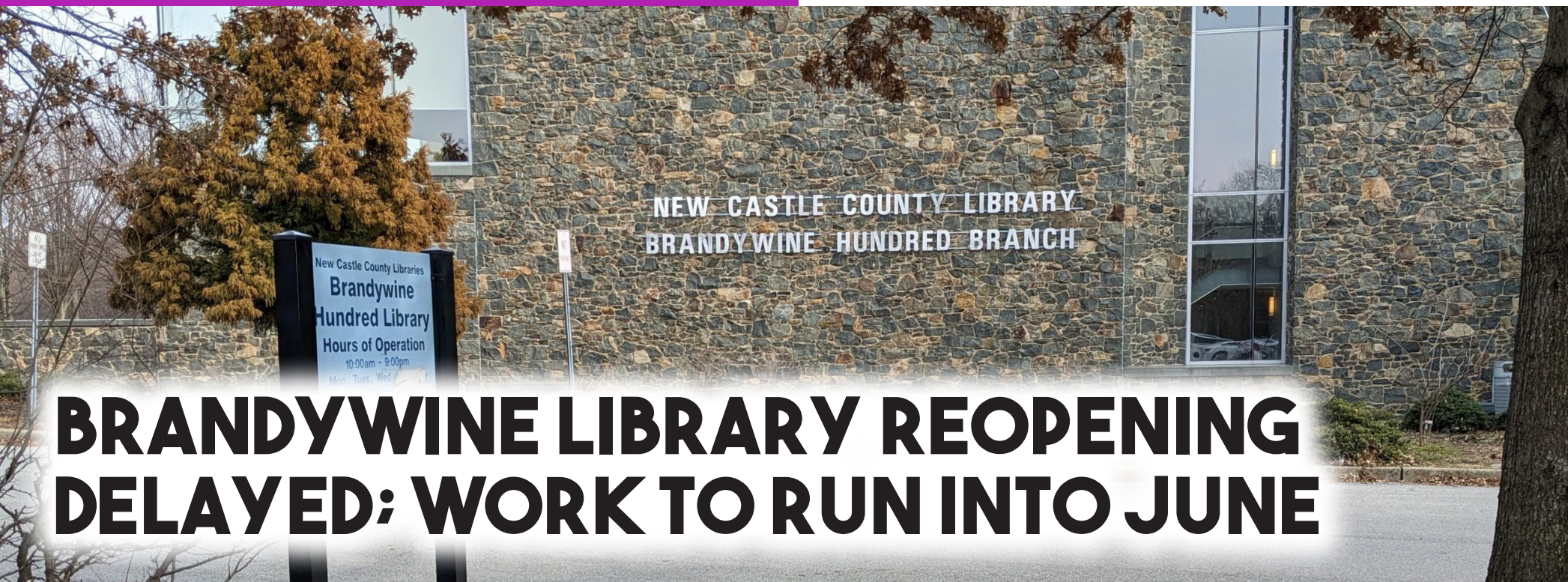
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BRANDYWINE LIBRARY REOPENING DELAYED; WORK TO RUN INTO JUNE

BY KEN MAMMARELLA

The reopening of the Brandywine Hundred Library, closed since Feb. 1 for repairs, has been delayed, New Castle County announced on Facebook.

“Due to unforeseen circumstances related to the extensive replacement of equipment, Brandywine Library will not be reopening on Monday, May 6,” the county wrote. “As soon as we have a confirmed date, we will let you know.”

“Until then, Claymont Public Library and Woodlawn Public Library will continue with expanded hours to serve your library needs. Thank you for your patience during this renovation project. The Brandywine Library staff misses you too!”

The same wording was repeated the next day on the library’s [home page](#).

The Foulk Road building had been closed to replace its roof and its heating, ventilating and cooling system.

“HVAC repairs are not completed,” a county spokesman said. “Hopefully install complete in early June, with testing, etc., done mid-June.”

“This project has been needed for some time,” the county said on the library’s home page when it announced the closing. “BHL’s current HVAC system, which is over two decades old, is no longer capable of providing adequate heating and cooling. The new system is more energy-efficient and will improve airflow throughout the building. Simultaneously, ductwork will be cleaned and removed where necessary to ensure healthier air quality.”

“The project will also encompass roof replacement; areas that have experienced damage from ongoing leaks will be repaired and repainted.”

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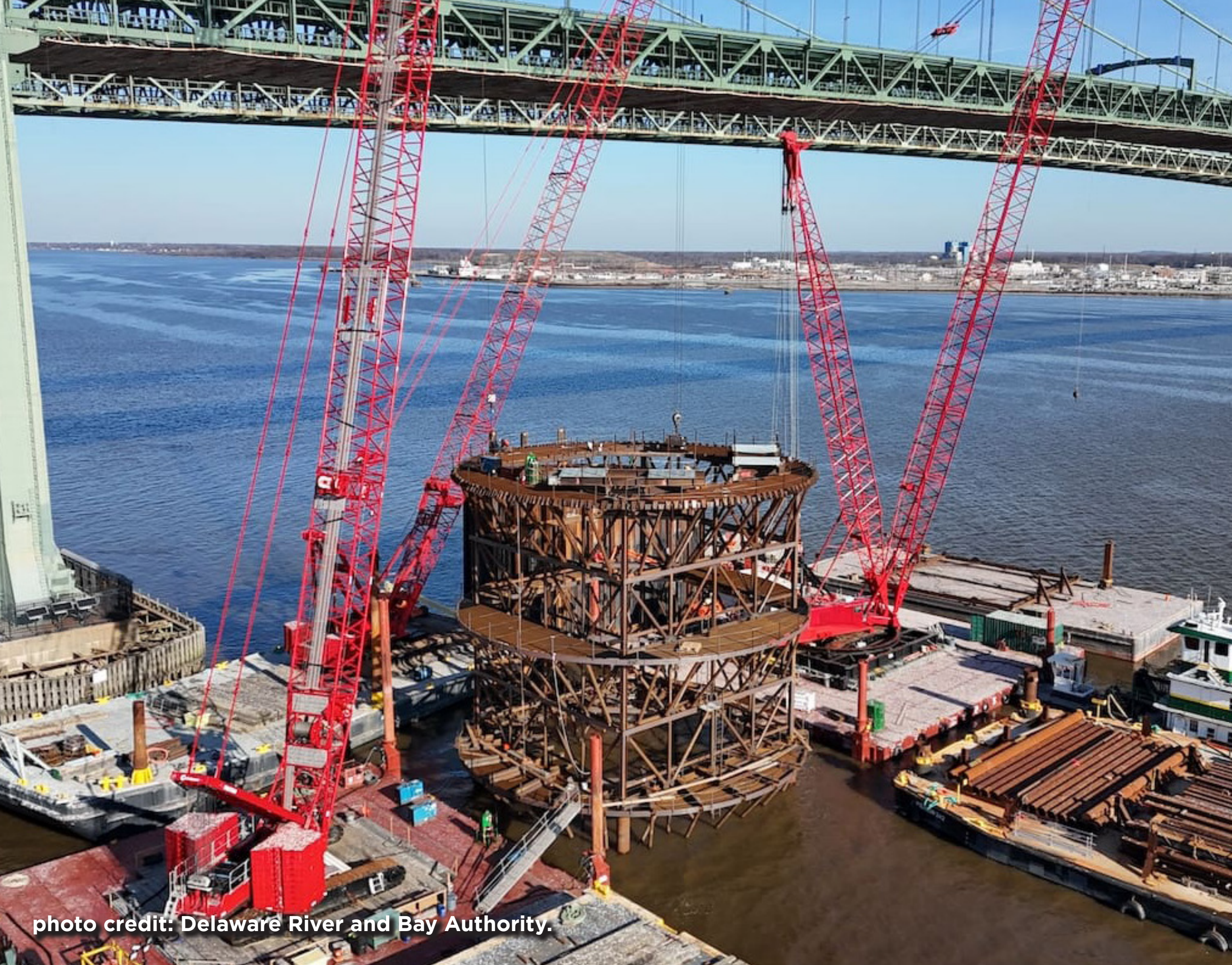


photo credit: Delaware River and Bay Authority.

Business

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DELAWARE LIVE WINS 10 DELAWARE PRESS ASSOCIATION AWARDS

STAFF WRITER

Delaware LIVE reporters won 10 awards, including five first place ones, in the 2024 Delaware Press Association 2024 Professional Communications Contest.

Editor Betsy Price won three first place awards, including feature story for online publications for **“Delaware Wedding: Matt Meyer, Lauren Cooksey marry in Rehoboth;”** arts and entertainment coverage for **“Winterthur’s Ann Lowe exhibit: History, fashion on parade;”** and hobby/crafts for **“They spend weeks lighting houses for Christmas. Here’s why”**.

Education writer Jarek Rutz won first place in education for **“Wilmington Friends School to mark 275th anniversary”**. Freelancer Peter Osborne won first place in business reporting for **“Wilmington’s office-to-housing conversions add energy to city”**.

Delaware LIVE CEO Bryan Shupe said he was proud to see his reporters win awards, but prouder still of the impact their stories make as a recently created news organization.

“We hope that our journalism will help readers understand more about their own communities and inspire them to get involved to make Delaware an even better place to live,” he said.

AWARDS NIGHT

The awards were presented Wednesday night during the Delaware Press Association’s annual dinner, which doubled as a way to introduce its new officers.

Rutz also won an honorable mention in education for **“17 Delaware schools show less than 10% proficiency on state tests”**. Price also won third place in hobby/

crafts for **“Crafters race toward deadline for Festival of Trees;”** fourth place in style for **“Janvier jewelry store’s stunning mural wows customers;”** and honorable mentions in business for **“She wanted to help. Now Wingmom serves 5,00 clients;”** and in arts and entertainment for **“Delaware Symphony starts search for new music director”**.

Founded in 1977, the **Delaware Press Association** includes more than 150 journalists, broadcasters, public relations specialists, graphic designers, photojournalists, educators, authors, poets, and freelancers who are dedicated to the highest standards of excellence in journalism, communication and protecting First Amendment freedoms.

This year’s officers include president President C. Linwood Jackson, founder & CEO of Rockin’ Hot Radio. He’s also a television and radio show host; Vice president-membership Theresa Medoff, who is lead editor for AAA Club Alliance magazines; vice president-programs Mark Fowser, a jack of all trades who also is an award-winning news reporter and anchor for WDEL 1150 AM/101.7 FM; and secretary Katie Tabelaing, who is editor of Delaware Business Times.

Delaware LIVE was founded four years ago as a locally-owned, statewide media company that promises to never have a paywall. Rooted in traditional journalism, its mission is to bring back daily, local media to the First State by focusing on its people, organizations and businesses; not national news and headlines. It has four websites: Delaware LIVE; Town Square LIVE; Milford LIVE and Chadds Ford LIVE.





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Food & Dining

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CHIPOTLE COMING TO CLAYMONT, AS IT THINKS ABOUT ITS FUTURE

BY KEN MAMMARELLA

Chipotle is planning its 12th Delaware restaurant on Philadelphia Pike in Claymont, replacing a Boston Market that closed a year or so ago.

“After months of negotiations with the shopping center owner, Chipotle Mexican Grill has signed a long-term lease and will completely rehab the existing building, which is still very structurally solid,” the Claymont Renaissance Development Corp announced on [Facebook](#).

There will be a pickup window for online orders only on the left side, facing Christiana Care, and that online-only rule is a new concept for fast-casual restaurants, said Brett Saddler, executive director of the CRDC, a nonprofit economic development organization.

“Of course, there will be indoor seating too,” the CRDC said. The timeline to open is the first quarter 2025, “if not before,” the post ended.

Comments were mixed on CRDC’s Facebook page. One of the most interesting came from Carol Derrickson: “WOW!!! Shocked it’s not going to be another warehouse, massage parlor, title loan, smoke shop or liquor store!”

“It’s a good fit for that building,” said Saddler.

“We’re happy to increase the number of food establishments,” said Saddler, exemplifying with La Hermosa, a new Mexican in the Town & Country Shopping on Philadelphia Pike and Harvey Road.

Then there’s Claymont Steak, a Delaware tradition since 1966. “Its owners, Basil and Demi Kollias, plan to tear down the old building and rebuild their restaurant in a brand new one...expanded, spiffier, and maybe even with a patio and a sports bar. If they do it the way they’ve planned it, the steak shop wouldn’t have to close for more than a week,” *The News Journal* reported in January.

That shopping center, in fact, has been part of the conversation in the latest round of discussions to plan the future of the community, which the CRDC calls the “renaissance update.” One suggestion for the center is “mixed used,” often meaning retail and housing. That’s the modern term for an old concept, in which shopkeepers lived above their stores.

The CRDC has heard multiple interesting ideas already, including additional traffic calming and safety measures on Philadelphia Pike and adding similar elements to Harvey and Darley roads. Those measures have included reducing Philadelphia Pike down to one lane, from two.

TWO MEETINGS ABOUT CLAYMONT

Remediation of part of a site on Claymont’s northeastern edge (the eastern side of Philadelphia Pike, across the bridge over the interstate) will be discussed 6 to 7:30 p.m. May 9 at the Claymont library. That site once held operations of the Honeywell Delaware Valley Works, also known as General Chemical,

The federal Environmental Agency plans to address Delaware River shoreline and nearshore sediments and groundwater.

[READ MORE HERE](#)



photo link: Governor John Carney

Government

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JONES-POTTER EXPECTS TO FACE STATUS QUO IN WILMINGTON MAYOR RACE

Purzycki was seen as the pro-developer mayor, laser focused on uplifting the city's central business district. Jones-Potter became known as a counterweight to Purzycki's vision—first by rebutting his office over repayments of a city loan, then by directly challenging the mayor in the 2020 election.

In one debate that year, Jones-Potter said Purzycki had partnered too closely with big developers who placed too much emphasis on downtown at the expense of the city's poorer neighborhoods. Ultimately, Jones-Potter lost the 2020 Democratic primary in a three-way race.

JONES-POTTER V. CARNEY

Today, she is taking her second shot to become Wilmington's mayor and in an interview with *Spotlight Delaware* she said she expects to face off against largely the same vision as she did four years ago. But, instead of running against Purzycki, Jones-Potter will face a peculiar situation of running against the highest elected politician in the state.

Gov. John Carney **announced** his bid for mayor of Wilmington on Monday, with a campaign that aims to bolster city finances, improve public schools and reduce gun crime.

But Jones-Potter argued that Carney's policies at the state have also left many city residents worse off, making him unfit to be mayor. She said the governor's Department of Education has failed local students who

can't pass proficiency tests. She said his management of the Port of Wilmington left the facility without thousands of promised jobs.

And, she said Carney's reluctance to legalize marijuana amounted to a tone deafness in a city where drug laws had been heavily policed. Last year, the Delaware General Assembly passed a bill to legalize marijuana. Carney declined to either sign the bill or veto it. As a result, it became law without the endorsement of the state's top elected leader.

"To not even approve that, to just acquiesce when the city of Wilmington population is probably the single most heavily impacted by that [is disappointing]," Jones Potter said.

Finally, Jones Potter indicated her belief that Carney as mayor would amount to a third term for Purzycki—an apparent reference to their mutual friendliness with the state's biggest developers.

"I perceive it to be a method to just continue and perpetuate the practices, the policies, and the management of the city as it's been done for the last eight years," she said.

NOT ANTI-DEVELOPMENT

Asked about her own policy stances, Jones-Potter said she is not anti-developer or even anti-Buccini/Pollin Group—referencing a key ally to Purzycki and the city's most politically influential development company.

BY KARL BAKER

This story was originally published on Spotlight Delaware.

In 2017, then-newly elected Mayor Mike Purzycki sat on a stage close by to Velda Jones-Potter as she gave her inaugural speech as Wilmington City Treasurer. The two held an amicable relationship at the time, Jones-Potter said, with both of them new to being elected politicians and facing a city that was struggling with crime and a sputtering economy.

But, over the subsequent years that relationship crumbled as a power struggle ensued. Each politician ultimately came to represent in the minds of many Wilmingtonians the opposite poles of city politics.

READ MORE HERE



BY JACOB OWENS

This story was originally published on Spotlight Delaware. Gov. John Carney **filed** Monday to run in the September Democratic primary, but instead of seeking federal office like some of his predecessors, he's running to be mayor of his hometown, Wilmington.

With Mayor Michael Purzycki declining to run for re-election after two terms, citing a desire to spend more time with family as he approached age 78, Carney will face a field that currently includes only former state and city Treasurer **Velda Jones-Potter**.

CARNEY LAUNCHES UNPRECEDENTED WILMINGTON MAYORAL CAMPAIGN

The decision by the governor, 67, was expected after he said last fall that he was interested in the role and has since quietly raised more than \$100,000 in campaign funding, according to records.

While the move is unprecedented by a sitting governor in modern history, Carney said that after more than 30 years serving in public office he believes it will actually be his biggest challenge yet. In thinking about the future, he was energized about the progress made in Wilmington in recent years to address crime, redevelop affordable housing, jumpstart economic development and solve longstanding issues in educational opportunity.

“People say, ‘Oh, that’s a step down, isn’t it?’ It’s kind of more of a step up to me, because the challenges are tougher,” he said.

On Monday afternoon, Carney sat down with *Spotlight Delaware* to share his outlook on city finances, policing, politics and even what he wants to see done with the now statue-less Rodney Square.

CARNEY V. PURZYCKI

After eight years of Purzycki at the helm of Delaware’s largest city, Carney said that there are many accomplishments to be proud of, but that voters should not consider his campaign as an extension of Purzycki’s administration.

“We are different and take different approaches,” Carney said, particularly noting his emphasis on education

issues on which the current mayor has been quieter. “It’s a critical time. I think the city’s on a good positive path, but there are lots of big issues.”

While Purzycki brought an emphasis on economic revitalization of the Market Street corridor, spurred in tandem by significant investments by hometown developer Buccini/Pollin Group, and the redevelopment of affordable housing, along with partners like REACH Riverside and Tomorden Foundation, Carney has a passion for education—his parents were teachers in local city schools.

He championed the Wilmington Learning Collaborative as a way to address the educational disparities in the city that have lingered since schools were desegregated decades ago. While the mayor does not have a formal role on the WLC, Carney said that he would continue to advocate for its necessity in addressing city educational needs.

With some teachers angered by early surveys by the WLC that were critical of the results of local schools, Carney heard their concerns and advised them to stay a part of the process.

“We have to have high expectations,” he said, noting that he’d like to see greater balance given to the concerns of educators though.

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photo link: Delaware Department of Education



Education

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ST. EDMOND'S DEDICATES ARENA FOCUSED ON STEM, GAMING

BY KEN MAMMARELLA

A hamster feeder, a bed ejector and a system that uses a gyroscope and LEDs that turn bubble gum pink to warn a biker that's he riding riskily were some of the interesting STEM inventions shown off Friday by students at [St. Edmond's Academy](#).

The fair was part of a program to dedicate the new Wagner-Szczerba EDGE Arena, which the Brandywine Hundred school called “a state-of-the art engineering, design and gaming [experience] facility designed to give students a hands-on, practical learning experience as they sharpen their STEM skills.”

And it all came about because of a friendship between veteran educator Kathleen Wagner-Szczerba and Domenic J. Maiorano, head of school.

“I said ‘Do something cool,’” said Wagner-Szczerba, an educator for 35 years and supporter of the school. “And Domenic said ‘We’ll be innovative and inspirational.’ She also asked for something that would ‘set the academy apart from its peers.’”

The school, which serves about 165 boys from kindergarten to eighth grade, converted a traditional classroom into the arena, with seating and computers for about a dozen students. The arena—with the name evoking spaces used for e-sports competitions—opened in the fall and is named after Wagner-Szczerba, in honor of her generosity.

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COLLEGES, DOE ASK FOR HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS FOR CAPITAL PROJECTS

BY JAREK RUTZ

The big three institutions of higher education in the First State, along with the Delaware Department of Education, on Thursday asked for a combined \$300 million from the state for capital improvement projects. As the state's General Assembly prepares its budget for fiscal year 2025, which starts July 1, the University of Delaware, Delaware State University and Del Tech all appeared before the Joint Capital Improvement Committee.

As always, the leadership from the schools spent the majority of their presentation with information like student demographics, enrollment numbers and graduation rates, new and successful programs and more, before their big asks. The Department of Education, headed by Secretary of Education Mark Holodick, listed projects going in 19 school districts that involve state funding.

This is a unique year, as six districts have had referendums this school year, four of them successful. Two others will try one more time in the coming months to match grants promised through the certificate of necessity process. That asks districts to apply for money for capital projects. The state can either accept or deny. If accepted, usually the state pays about 65% of the cost of the projects with the district on the hook for the other 35%.

Referendums usually involve tax hikes, which sometimes escalate over a few years, and the state money comes over a period of about three years. That means a district like Christina, which had its certificate of necessity approved last school year, is set to receive state funding for next fiscal year to address its projects.

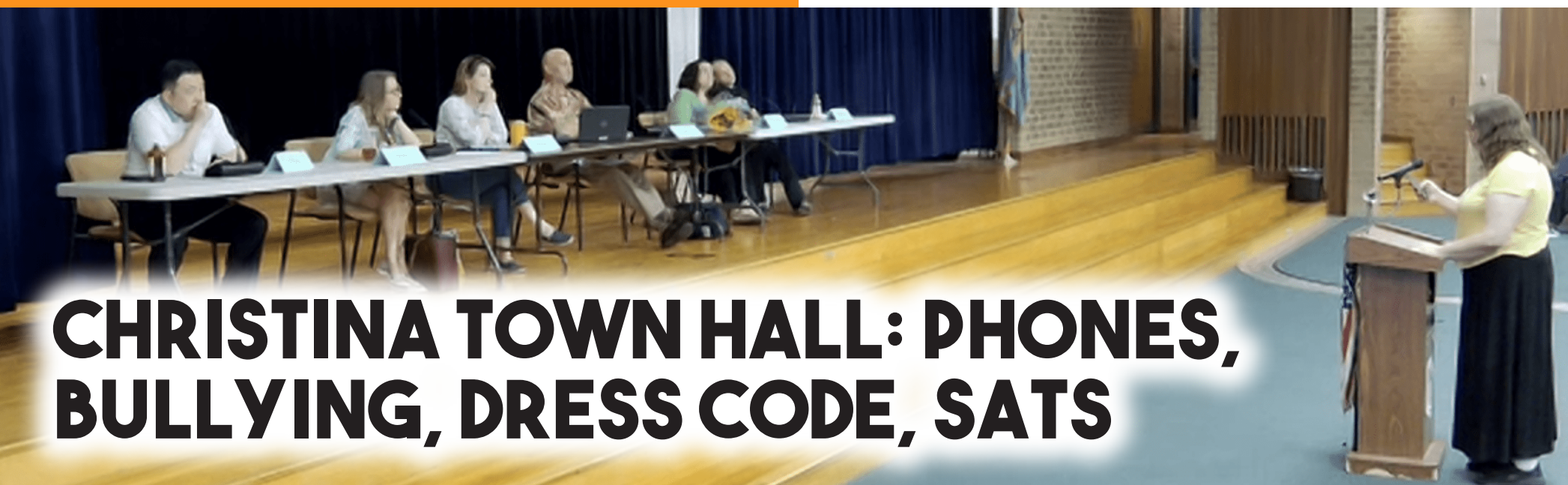
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CHRISTINA TOWN HALL: PHONES, BULLYING, DRESS CODE, SATS

BY JAREK RUTZ

In the **Christina School District**'s second town hall this school year Tuesday night, the handful of community members that showed up brought concerns of cell phone use, school bullying and test prep. The goal of the meetings is to allow Christina residents to interact with the district's board of education.

It's a unique arrangement because in monthly meetings, the board is not allowed to respond or interact with those that give public comment.

DRESS CODE

Lane Carter, a teacher at Newark High School, first spoke about concerns of cell phone usage. She wants to see privacy rules put into place so students cannot video record and share videos of other people in the building.

Carter also said she was concerned about the dress code, mainly with students covering their faces. She said it's hard to identify those that have face coverings and said it makes it hard for attendance reasons and also in the case of an emergency.

"We would recommend a policy that would include no hats, no hoods, no ski masks and no medical masks without a medical note," she said.

PHONES AND GAMBLING

John Schmidt, director of youth prevention services at **Delaware Council on Gambling Problems**, spoke first at the town hall.

In his role, Schmidt goes to schools throughout the entire state and talks to children about developing a healthy relationship with phones, social media, video games and helps them understand how it impacts their lives, mental health, relationships, grades and more.

He's been working with Christina schools for more than five years.

"What I've seen, specifically since COVID, has been a significant deterioration in the attention that is paid in classrooms to active instruction because of the presence of phones in classrooms," he said.

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SCHOOL BEHAVIOR GROUP WANTS MORE FUNDING FOR SPECIALISTS

BY JAREK RUTZ

The state task force dedicated to evaluating the ongoing problems with student behavior and school climate acknowledges that there is a real problem in Delaware schools. The 24-member Student Behavior and School Climate Task Force, made of government and educational officials as well as school behavioral specialists and resource officers, got its first taste of official suspension data Monday night.

Several members said schools need more money for specialists than they now are getting.

Statewide data from 2021-2023 shows that the most common suspension is out of school with no service requirements (33,000 cases, 47.53%), followed by in-school suspensions (29,000, 42.1%) out-of-school with service requirements (5,000, 6.52%) and in-school suspensions with interventions (2,000, 2.8%).

That number is total disciplinary referrals, but changes depending on the incident. For example, 79% of students were disciplined with out-of-school suspensions

without service requirements for fighting. For skipping class, 72% of students received in-school suspensions. The overwhelming majority of infractions also took place in schools within New Castle County.

The task force recognized that certain groups of students, such as Black students and students with disabilities, are punished at a disproportionate rate compared to White traditionally learning students.

For a couple years now, parents have flooded school board meetings to tell disheartening stories of their child being bullied or a victim of bad behavior by classmates. In November 2023, for example, one mom said that students in the Milford School District hold a “fight club” in the school, and videos are circulated through social media.

The task force’s job is to study the needs and options of students and educators to improve student behavior and school climate policies.

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Sports

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LIGHTNING STRIKES TWICE AS GOLDEY ELIMINATES WILMINGTON

BY NICK HALLIDAY

They say lightning never strikes in the same place twice, well it did for Goldey-Beacom. The Goldey-Beacom Lightning beat the Wilmington Wildcats twice in walk-off fashion to eliminate them from the CACC baseball tournament. Goldey hosted the Wildcats in the first round of the tournament in a three-game series. The Lightning only needed two games to eliminate the Wildcats.

In game one, the Wildcats jumped out to an early 4-0 lead in the top of the first inning that chased Goldey-Beacom starting pitcher Justin Jump. In relief, Kevin Dillon and Gage Bendix were able to slow down the Wildcats bats.

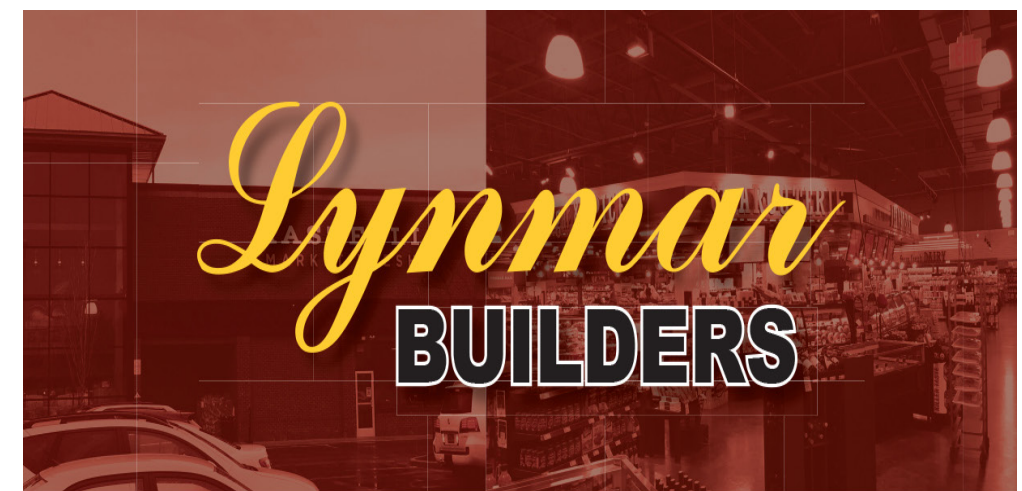
Goldey was able to get those runs back as Gary Mussey homered in the second for a solo home run, then in the fourth Mitch Jolikko tied things up with a three-run home run of his own with the score now 4-4.

Goldey added two more runs in the fifth on a Kyle Walker single to take a 6-4 lead. Wilmington answered in the sixth on a Tyler Pirrung Single and eventually, tied the game up in the top of the ninth on a Matt Warrington sacrifice fly.

Going into the bottom of the ninth inning in a tied game 6-6 it only took one batter for Goldey-Beacom to take the win. Darin Miller stepped to the plate to lead off the inning for the Lightning. He saw a first-pitch strike, then crushed the next pitch over the right field fence for a walk-off home run to take game one.

In game two, the Wildcats again jumped out to an early lead. Jack McDonald singled in Brandon Crygo in the top of the first inning to take the 1-0 lead. They added a second run in the fifth inning when Kory Pritchard singled in Crygo for his second run of the game.

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SAINT MARK'S DEFEATS SALESIANUM IN COMEBACK VICTORY

BY NICK HALLIDAY

Eighth-ranked Saint Mark's defeated the No. 7 Salesianum Sals in comeback fashion Wednesday evening. The Spartans found themselves behind early, but were resilient enough to come back for the victory.

Sals Matt Speicher was hit by a pitch which put him on first base. Luke Steinrock followed with a single to put runners on first and second for the Sals. Matt McSorley followed with a triple to the fence in right-center that scored both runners as the Sals jumped out to an early 2-0 lead in the top of the first inning.

The Spartans did not get on the board until the bottom of the third inning. Aidan Lehane singled with one out, then stole second and went to third on a wild pitch. Lehane then scored when a dropped third strike forced Sallies catcher James Gray to throw it down to first base to get the runner.

The Spartans then tied the game in the bottom of the fourth without getting a hit. Caleb King and Shawn Satterfield were both hit by pitches. Courtesy runner Tyler Sinko came in for King. Sinko and Satterfield pulled off a double steal to move them up to third and second base. Sinko then scored on a fielder's choice ground ball by Brian McDermott as he beat out a throw at home.

Then a two-run bottom of the fifth put Saint Mark's on top. Tyler Mosher drew a one-out walk followed by a

Michael Smyth single down the third baseline that kicked off the bag. Mosher eventually scored on a wild pitch. Then Caleb King knocked in Smyth on an RBI single to give the Spartans a 4-2.

The Sals were able to cut into the lead in the next half of the inning. McSorley got his third hit of the game on a hard ground ball to left field for a single. Then with two outs, Jack Rossi knocked in pinch runner Tai Wu to bring the lead back to one run 4-3.

In the next half inning, the Spartans again answered, scoring two more runs to pull away for the victory. McDermott led off the inning with a single and Aidan Lehane reached on a fielder's choice. Mosher doubled for his first hit of the game to bring both runners home, giving the Spartans a 6-3 lead which proved to be the game's final score.

Ian Keane settled down after the first inning runs to toss a complete-game giving up three runs on seven hits and added three strikeouts for the Saint Mark's baseball team.

Steinrock and McSorley each had two hits for the Sals, while Speicher took the loss.

The Spartans improved to 11-3 on the season with the victory. The Sals fall to 7-4.

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HAMLIN HOLDS OFF LARSON FOR SECOND MONSTER MILE WIN

BY BETSY PRICE

Denny Hamlin won his second career Monster Trophy when he dominated the final stage on his way to a victory in the [Würth 400 NASCAR Cup Series](#) race at Dover Motor Speedway April 28.

Driving the No. 11 Toyota for Joe Gibbs Racing, Hamlin notched his third win of the year and 54th of his career, tying him on NASCAR's all-time wins list with NASCAR Hall of Famer Lee Petty.

"This whole Joe Gibbs Racing team—thank you to them," said Hamlin after waving the checkered flag on the front stretch. "It certainly feels good to win here at Dover.

"I couldn't hold Lee Petty's helmet. I've been blessed with a great team. I'm the lucky one who gets to drive it."

Kyle Larson finished second, while defending race winner Martin Truex Jr. was third, pole winner Kyle

Busch was fourth and Chase Elliott placed fifth.

Truex won Stage One but lost the lead midway through the second stage and then suffered slight front-end damage.

"They all pounced on us and we lost control of the race," said Truex, who led 69 laps. "Then I got the nose damage. Feel like we let one get away today. You can't lose control of these races mid-stage like that. The track changes, you get behind. Overall, a good day. Just keep working on it."

MONSTER STRATEGY

Larson closed to within two-tenths of a second in the final 10 laps, but couldn't get even with the race winner.

"This car was really good on short runs," said Larson, who led 39 laps. "I could pace it and get closer to him. It's so easy as the leader at a place like this to shut the air

off behind you. Nothing could generate enough speed to get close enough to do anything.

"Still a great day. Got another stage win. Good points day. We would have loved to get a win. We'll try to get better."

Hamlin was sixth after Stage One and third after Stage Two, but won the battle off pit road from there. All of Hamlin's race-high 136 laps led came in the final stage.

"I felt like my car was so much better on the short runs," Hamlin said. "[Kyle] certainly made it much more interesting than I wanted. Kyle Larson is a hard guy to beat.

"We're in the groove right now for sure. You feel like you want to celebrate these because you just never know if it's your last or anything like that. I'm just so focused this season on getting a lot of wins, trying to move that tally up as high as I can."

Among other notables, defending NASCAR Cup Series champion Ryan Blaney was seventh, past Dover winner Alex Bowman was eighth, and 11-time Dover champion Jimmie Johnson finished 28th, five laps down.

Hamlin averaged 119.433 mph around the high-banked, one-mile oval, completing the 400 laps/miles in 3 hours, 20 minutes, 57 seconds. Five caution periods consumed 42 laps, with nine drivers leading at least one lap and 17 finishing on the lead lap.



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