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March 3, 2022

Vol. 3, Issue 9

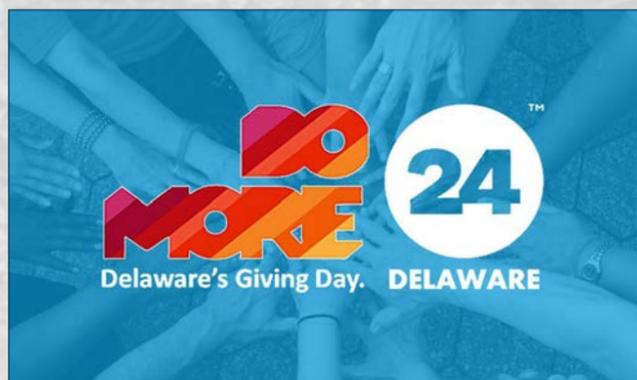
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Photo credit: Delaware Greenways

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DO MORE 24 DELAWARE



INVESTMENT & JOBS IN NEWARK



SPARTAN GAME PLAN PERFECT

TOWN SQUARE LIVE

Photo credit: Delaware Art Museum



Community

TOWN SQUARE LIVE



DO MORE 24 FUNDRAISING DRIVE TO KICK OFF TODAY

across the state do a lot for Delawareans,” Fair said. “These nonprofits really need our help and support to fulfill their missions and this is a way for us to do that and get excited about it too.”

She said the Do More 24 platform is sort of like online shopping. Donors can visit the website and search by organization name or even by category. For example, a donor who is passionate about education might type that into the search bar and give money to their choice of organization—or multiple—within that specific category.

Donations made during the event will be processed through the website, which allows nonprofits and donors to track how much is raised throughout the giving day. To add some excitement, nonprofit organizations also compete for cash and non-cash incentives made available by sponsors, explained Stuart Comstock-Gay, president and CEO of the Delaware Community Foundation.

The Delaware Community Foundation is a nonprofit organization that focuses on partnering with donors to build opportunities for other nonprofit groups throughout the state. That group is one of many sponsors that have donated to a matching pool designed to increase the value of every donation.

“We put some money in so that when people donate to organizations, this big pool of match money will increase the amount every gift is worth,” Comstock-Gay said. “Throughout the event, there will be a variety of times when, for example, the most number of gifts during this hour will get an extra \$500, or the largest total dollar amount this hour will get a \$500 bonus.”

One of the groups that benefited from those supplemental funds last year was The Shepherd’s Office in Georgetown. The Shepherd’s Office is a resource group that aids folks working through challenges caused by homelessness, rejection, addiction, criminal history and socioeconomic status. The group aims to address those challenges holistically, including social, emotional, physical, mental and spiritual approaches to healing.

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE](#)

BY CHARLIE MEGGINSON

Delawareans will have an opportunity Thursday and Friday to donate to their choice of more than 500 nonprofit organizations throughout the state during the annual “Do More 24” fundraising drive.

One of the things that sets Do More 24 apart from other fundraisers is that it includes contests that allow nonprofits to stretch their donations by winning competitions. “What makes it fun is that people could donate \$5 and that \$5 could turn into \$100 because of the stretch funds that are available,” said Jim Martin, founder of The Shepherd’s House in Georgetown.

Do More 24 is a one-day online charitable giving extravaganza sponsored by the United Way of Delaware and Spur Impacts. The event is designed to showcase the work of Delaware’s nonprofit organizations and ignite a culture of community-wide giving. The event will run from Thursday, March 3 at 6 p.m. until Friday, March 4 at 6 p.m. Click [HERE](#) to visit the Do More 24 website.

Last year, 412 nonprofits collectively received more than \$2 million from over 11,000 donors—more than all five previous Do More 24 drives combined. Organizers are hoping to repeat that success this year.

Tierra Fair, senior director of community engagement with United Way of Delaware, said the event gives everyone the opportunity to be a philanthropist. “Nonprofits



Community

THE GRAND LIFTS MASK, VACCINE REQUIREMENTS FOR AUDIENCES

BY BETSY PRICE

Well, you can whoop it up all you like at The Grand Opera House’s performances now that the venue has suspended its COVID-19 mask mandate and other rules.

Following the lead of Gov. John Carney, the Delaware Division of Public Health and Delaware courts, The Grand announced Wednesday that it too will follow the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s new recommendations. They say masks are not necessary in areas that have low to medium spread of cases. New Castle County now is designate a low-spread area as the Omicron variant continues to wane.

The Grand said it would still recommend masks in areas where a lot of people are packed together, such as the concert halls and theaters, but patrons will no longer be required to wear a mask to attend a performance at Copeland Hall, the baby grand or the Playhouse on Rodney Square.

“Although we have removed the requirement, patrons are strongly encouraged to continue to wear masks for

their own comfort and peace of mind,” said Executive Director Mark Fields.

He said the institution was thankful to its patrons who adhered to these policies during the last six months, allowing it to start indoor performances again.

“Your support and patronage throughout this time has kept the arts alive in our theaters and throughout Wilmington’s Market Street arts corridor,” he said. “We have consistently maintained that we would lift these temporary requirements when health authorities assessed it was safe to do so.”

The press release pointed out that The Grand draws a large and diverse patron base from a wide geographic region with differing levels of COVID risk as assessed by the CDC.

Therefore, it said, caution concerning the safety and comfort of its artists, audiences, volunteers and staff is still advisable for the time being.

The Grand reserved the right to adjust the rules again should conditions warrant it. It that happens, patrons will receive an email and text message prior to their scheduled performance.

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE](#)

LET'S DO IT AGAIN! MARCH 3-4

DO MORE 24 DELAWARE Delaware's Giving Day

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PIKE CREEK CHURCH'S DRIVE-THRU ASH ANOINTING RETURNS

“Most of them were talking about how they were unable to get to their church at the times they offered it, but it was still important to them to try and get them,” Turner said.

Their Facebook page shows photos of a police officer and U.S. postal worker who dropped by to get them. It also shows photos of families, including a baby in a carrier with an cross of ash on her forehead.

The practice is a reminder that we all die and should prepare for that death by reconciling with God, Turner said. Those are major themes of the 40 days of Lent, a period of reflection and prayer to prepare the faithful for the joy of Jesus’s resurrection on Easter.

Last year, as the winter COVID-19 surge was waning, the church decided to switch to an evening Shrove Tuesday pancake and ash giveaway to avoid human contact. Shrove Tuesday was typically a three-day period in which believers celebrated and used up things like sugar and lard to clear their pantries for the seriousness of Lenten reflection. Many churches still celebrate that with pancake dinners.

Each Skyline visitor was given two individually wrapped frozen pancakes and a small container of ashes, with instructions on how to apply the ashes.

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE](#)

BY BETSY PRICE

Police do it. Postal workers do. Even punkinheads in pumpkin seats do it. In the five years that Skyline United Methodist Church has offered a drive-thru ash anointing service, hundreds of people have motored through the church lot from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. to be marked with ashes at the start of Lent.

The drive-thru returns today (Wednesday).

“It started as an outreach effort to serve the community,” said the Rev. Ruthann Turner, pastor of the church. Many working people have a hard time making it to an Ash Wednesday church service, she said. The drive-thru started before she became pastor two years ago. When she did, she asked the team to track who came through. Of the 150 who did that day, about one-third were church members. The rest were people from the area, many of them Catholic, Turner said.




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Lower & Middle | November 11

AAUW SEEKS DONATIONS FOR 54TH AND LAST OF ITS USED-BOOK SALES

BY BETSY PRICE

The Wilmington branch of the American Association of University Women is ending its five-decade tradition of used book sales that raise scholarship money for women because of its dwindling membership and inability to find enough volunteers. The 54th and final sale will be April 2 and 3 at its Book Room off Maryland Avenue.

In the meantime, the group is asking for donations of hardback, paperback and audiobooks, as well as CDs, DVDs, vinyl records, games and puzzles.

Book sale chair Tina Gardner said in a press release that the Wilmington branch is ending with sorry, joy and hope. Sorrow because it ends a tradition that began in 1969; joy from knowing the sales have recycled physical media and helped many New Castle County women go to college; hope that the branch finds a way to continue the scholarships.

“A college degree is such an important foundation for a lifetime of financial success and contributing to society, and we are happy to have helped so many

deserving women,” Gardner said. “And we will continue to do so, with your generous support.”

Since the Wilmington Branch began giving scholarships in 1965, it’s helped hundreds of women pay for college, Gardner said. She wasn’t sure exactly how many, but said in recent years, it’s been able to offer about \$100,000 in scholarships to 22 women each year. The average grant is \$4,000, and once a woman receives a scholarship, she is able to apply for more until she graduates.

Interested donors should reach out to the branch at aauwwilmscholars@gmail.com. Donations for the final sale will be accepted Mondays and Thursdays 9:30-11:30 a.m. through March 17, 2022.

Used-book sales have been popular fundraisers at AAUW branches across the country, but branches are increasingly abandoning the sales, the press release said.

The Wilmington Branch’s final sale will be 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday, April 2, and Sunday, April 3, at its Book Room at 8 Germary Drive, off Maryland Avenue,



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west of Wilmington.

From 10 a.m. to noon on Saturday, admission is \$10, and numbers will be given out to accommodate the building capacity. Admission is free the rest of the sale. All day Sunday, customers can fill a bag for \$10.

The latest state and federal coronavirus guidelines will be followed for this final sale.

Paperbacks are priced from 50 cents, and most hardbacks are \$2. Art books and coffee table books are up to \$5. Collectables are individually priced. For this sale, thousands of new items join items that remain from the last sale. Further details can be found at wilmington-de.aauw.net/home/donatebooks.

Information about the scholarships is available at <https://wilmington-de.aauw.net/scholarships>.





DSU CELEBRATES RETURN TO WILMINGTON IN CAPITAL ONE BUILDING

BY BETSY PRICE

Dr. Patrice Gilliam-Johnson, dean of graduate and adult studies at Delaware State University, stood on the sixth floor of the school’s new riverfront building, pointing out the Wilmington train station next door.

“When people get off the train, they’ll see Delaware State University,” she said Feb. 25 as a crowd of officials descended on 1 S. Orange St. to cut the ribbon for DSU’s fifth campus.

The focus of all the attention was a \$4.7 million former Capital One facility that the bank donated in August to Delaware’s only Historically Black College and University.

DSU will move its School for Graduate, Adult, and Continuing Education, which has grown under Gilliam-Johnson from about 250 students to 1,000, into the 35,000-square-foot building.

It also will house an Apple program designed to help

students succeed, a new partnership with the Teen Warehouse, the university’s workforce development center, and an incubation hub for micro and small businesses with a particular focus on minority and women-owned companies.

Ultimately, though, the building is about jobs, said Delaware Congresswoman Lisa Blunt Rochester, who wore DSU Hornet colors in a bright red suit with a bright blue shirt.

“This is about strengthening our economy. This is about making us competitive around the world. This is about building wealth, and generational wealth, and creating businesses,” she said. “But don’t get it twisted. This ain’t just a building. This is our today upskilling, reskilling workforce development, and it starts tomorrow.”

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DIOCESE OF WILMINGTON TO HOLD FIRST-EVER 'RECONCILIATION MONDAY'

to prepare their hearts for a return to Mass at Easter.

“We invite all Catholics—whether it has been months, years, or decades since their last Confession—to take advantage of this diocesan-wide event in which all of our priests will participate,” Koenig said.

According to the diocese, ‘Reconciliation Monday’ was implemented years ago in the Diocese of Rockville Centre, New York, where Bishop Koenig served as a pastor prior to being appointed Bishop of Wilmington by Pope Francis last year.

Over the years it has grown to be a popular annual event in New York, held the day after Palm Sunday.

All parishes offer the Sacrament of Reconciliation on a regular basis. Many parishes offer penance services during Lent. This will be the first time in diocesan history that all parishes will hold concurrent confessions.

While all parishes will participate, it is not possible for every mission church in the diocese to hold confessions due to the limited number of priests. Parishioners are encouraged to check their local parish website or visit this link before heading out.

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE](#)

BY CHARLIE MEGGINSON

The Diocese of Wilmington on April 11 will hold its inaugural diocesan-wide ‘Reconciliation Monday.’

The event is designed to make it more convenient for Catholics to receive the sacrament at the end of Lent and the beginning of Holy Week in anticipation of the celebration of Easter.

Catholics from throughout the Diocese are invited to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation at any of the 56 parish churches in Delaware and Maryland’s Eastern Shore, on Monday, April 11, from 3 p.m. until 8 p.m.

“It is traditional and desirable for Catholics to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation during Lent,” explained the Most Reverend William E. Koenig, Bishop of Wilmington. “By establishing ‘Reconciliation Monday’ in our diocese, we are making it easier for parishioners to experience the loving forgiveness of God.”

Koenig said the diocese is hoping that people who have fallen away from their faith will use the opportunity

PRESCHOOL - GRADE 12

“Friends taught me to think critically, not just in academia, but also as a world citizen.”

- Recent Wilmington Friends School Graduate

[LEARN MORE](#)



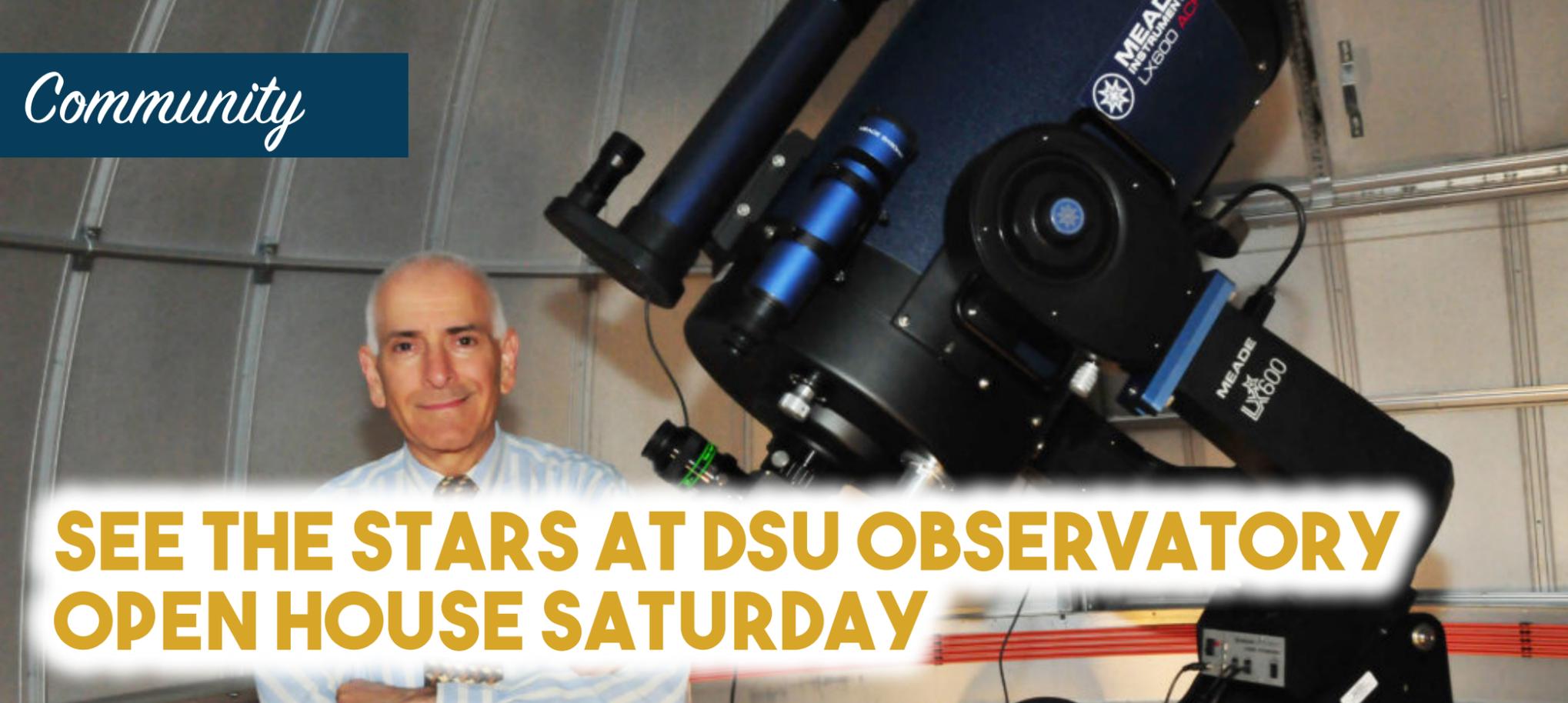
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SHOW UP.
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SEE THE STARS AT DSU OBSERVATORY OPEN HOUSE SATURDAY

BY BETSY PRICE

Delaware State University issued an unusual invitation this week. The Historically Black College and University would like the pleasure of your company Saturday, March 5, for a peek through its 14-inch Meade reflecting telescope.

The 7:30 p.m. event will allow attendees to climb to the university's Astronomical Observatory and, weather permitting, peer at the stars through the telescope.

The event is free. RSVPs are not required. Dress is casual. The evening will begin with an astronomy presentation in Room 223 of the Mishoe Science Center South. After dark, people will be allowed to look through the telescope, which can see solar system sites such as craters on the moon, Jupiter and its moons, Saturn and its rings and other celestial objects.

The school has an elevator to the Mishoe Science Center second floor, but attendees must be able to climb stairs to reach the observatory telescope.

Should cloudy skies prevent seeing into the stars—and Saturday's forecast calls for clouds—attendees will still be taken up to the observatory to see the telescope.

Public participants must show proof of vaccination or proof of a negative COVID test result within seven days of the event. All attendees must wear masks during the entire event. Those attending should park in Lot 12, located between the Price Building and the Mishoe Science Center on DSU's Dover campus.



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Business

TOWN SQUARE LIVE





BY CHARLIE MEGGINSON

A water quality testing supply company will invest \$3.3 million to expand its operations into Newark after receiving \$1.25 million in grants from the state.

The LaMotte Company, based in Chestertown, Maryland, will occupy a 79,000 square foot office space and production facility in the Pencader Corporate Center. The facility will lead to the immediate creation of 50 jobs. The company said in a press release Monday that it expects to employ 100 people at the site within three years. Positions will include skilled technicians, production line and warehouse workers, administrative positions, engineers and chemists.

Gov. John Carney said the announcement is another example of his administration's efforts to make Delaware more competitive "so that we can compete and win every day."

"That means making sure we have the best environment so businesses like LaMotte Company can grow and thrive here in Delaware," Carney said. "We are excited for this expansion and the new jobs it will bring. This investment shows that Delaware remains in demand for manufacturing and innovative development."

Company officials said the site's proximity to the University of Delaware was a key reason for their decision to expand into Newark over other mid-Atlantic locations. LaMotte plans to collaborate with the university's College of Engineering and Lerner

WATER QUALITY TESTING FIRM TO INVEST \$3.3M IN NEWARK PRODUCTION SPACE

College of Business to develop an internship and employee pipeline. It also plans to partner with Delaware's vocational high schools and Delaware Technical Community College to address its needs for technicians and manufacturing personnel.

Founded in Baltimore, Maryland, LaMotte has manufactured specialized pH indicators and other analytical reagents for water-quality analysis worldwide since 1919. Today, the company produces analytical reagents, electronic instrumentation, and complete portable test kits for chemical analysis for hundreds of applications including pools and spas; drinking water; industrial water; environmental science education; food and beverage; laundry and sanitation; water and wastewater and aquarium and fish farming industries.

The company successfully requested a performance-based grant of \$190,440 and a Delaware Lab Space Grant of almost \$1.06 million from the Delaware Strategic Fund. The distribution of grants from the Delaware Strategic Fund is dependent on a company meeting commitments as outlined to the Council on Development Finance, which reviewed and approved the request.

LaMotte president and CEO Scott Amsbaugh said the Newark location will prove to be highly valuable for the company given the skilled and educated local workforce as well as the site's proximity to global shipping hubs.

"This investment is critical in our capacity expansion to meet our customers' growing demands for LaMotte's products," Amsbaugh said. The company has been working with the Delaware Prosperity Partnership since June 2021 on its site selection process.



Photo from Getty Images



Government

TOWN SQUARE LIVE



CARNEY LIFTS SCHOOL MASK MANDATE WHILE TRIAL TO END IT IS UNDERWAY

BY CHARLIE MEGGINSON

A Hockessin mother suing to stop the state’s school mask mandate got most of what she wanted in the middle of trial Monday when the governor’s attorney informed the court that the mandate would be lifted on March 1 at 6 p.m.

Janice Lorrh appeared in the Delaware Court of Chancery at the Leonard L. Williams Justice Center in Wilmington where she argued that the mandate violates state statutes and due process and causes irreparable harm to schoolchildren.

At the end of the proceedings, Vice Chancellor Paul Fioravanti said he would review the case and issue a bench ruling later Monday.

The trial began on a raucous note when a group of several unmasked citizens entered the courtroom demanding to be seated. Court officials tried to explain the facility’s rules concerning masking and social

distancing but the group shouted back at the officials, saying such things as “It’s my human right not to wear a mask,” and “I’ll take your silence as acquiescence.”

In response, Fioravanti cleared the courtroom of everybody except attorneys. He initially ruled that the trial would be held behind closed doors but reversed course after Lorrh implored him to allow the public in with the guarantee that everyone would remain masked.

Some members of the public sat behind attorneys’ tables to accommodate social distancing requirements. Others who refused to comply with the clearly-posted rules were escorted out of the building.

After Lorrh detailed her complaint, the Department of Justice attorney told the court that his client, the governor, had notified him that the mandate would be lifted.

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE](#)

Cancer isn’t waiting for COVID-19 to be over.

One in three Delawareans will get cancer. Unfortunately, many have put off their cancer screenings in the past year. Screenings detect cancer early, when it's most treatable. If you've skipped or canceled a screening due to the pandemic — for breast, cervical, colon, lung, or prostate cancer — don't wait one more day. **Call your health care provider to schedule your cancer screenings today.**

If you don't have a provider, we can help. If you are uninsured or underinsured, you may be eligible for free screenings. To learn more about eligibility requirements and recommended cancer screenings, and other information, please visit HealthyDelaware.org/Cancer.

To schedule your cancer screening by phone:

Call your health care provider, dial 2-1-1, or speak directly with a nurse navigator at the health system nearest you, below.

- ChristianaCare: 302-216-3557**
- Bayhealth: 302-216-8328**
- Beebe Healthcare: 302-291-4380**



JUDGE DENIES MOTION TO STOP SCHOOL MASK MANDATE AFTER CASE BECOMES MOOT

BY CHARLIE MEGGINSON

A Chancery Court judge denied a Hockessin mom’s motion for a preliminary injunction to stop the governor’s statewide school mask mandate after the governor announced the mandate would be lifted Tuesday.

Vice Chancellor Paul Fioravanti late Monday said he could not find sufficient evidence that leaving the mandate in effect until 6 p.m. on Tuesday would cause the plaintiff irreparable harm—the standard that must be met to issue an injunction.

Janice Lorrh, the mother who brought suit against the governor, said she considers the matter “a small loss and a great win,” given that children were able to unmask at schools beginning Wednesday.

Lorrh said. “I went toe-to-toe with the most powerful man in the state—and his army of lawyers—telling him he didn’t have the authority to do what he was doing to Delaware’s children and the State’s response

was to give me everything I asked for, less one day.”

Carney did not cite the lawsuit as his reasoning for lifting the mandate. Instead, he pointed to a Feb. 25 announcement from the Centers for Disease Control that said masking is no longer recommended in areas rated as having either low- or medium-risk of COVID-19 transmission. All three of Delaware’s counties fall into those categories.

Carney’s office declined to comment on the lawsuit specifically.

Lorrh said the governor’s announcement “took the wind out of my sails,” and while she’s relieved that the school mask mandate is going away, she’s still worried about the governor’s ability to take similar action in the future. “There’s not much resolution on that front,” she said.

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Government

AG INDICTS WILM. EX-COP WHO SLAMMED MAN'S HEAD INTO WALL

BY CHARLIE MEGGINSON

The Delaware Department of Justice's Division of Civil Rights and Public Trust has indicted a former Wilmington police officer after internet posts showing the officer using excessive force went viral on social media.

The division opened an investigation into Samuel Waters, 27, after discovering footage of a Sept. 21, 2021 incident during which he repeatedly forced a man's head against a plexiglass window, causing lacerations and bruising.

VIDEO: Wilmington Officer Slamming Man's Face Into Wall, NBC 10 Philadelphia

During the course of its investigation, the division discovered that Waters had failed to activate his body-worn camera when he should have. A Monday press release from the Department of Justice said his failure to turn on the body-cam was a regular practice for him. Waters is also alleged to have lied in the official documentation of the incident.

Just nine days prior to that altercation, Waters was allegedly involved in another excessive force incident

wherein he used his nightstick to repeatedly apply pressure on the back of a victim's neck, pushing their face into the back of a vehicle and causing injuries.

Attorney General Kathy Jennings said the evidence shows a "clear and disturbing pattern of violence and deception."

"The defendant repeatedly abused a position of trust and authority and then subsequently lied about it," Jennings said. "We don't tolerate this kind of misconduct by anyone—let alone from someone who swore an oath to protect his community—and we will prosecute his crimes to the fullest extent of the law."

Waters faces the following charges, carrying a total potential sentence of zero to 13 years in prison:

- One count of Tampering With Public Records 1st Degree, a Class E Felony
- One count of Perjury 2nd Degree, a Class F Felony
- Three counts of Assault 3rd Degree, a Class A Misdemeanor
- Two counts of Official Misconduct, a Class A Misdemeanor
- One count of Falsifying a Business Record, a Class A Misdemeanor



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NEWARK WOMAN PLEADS GUILTY TO ILLEGALLY TAKING COVID-19 MONEY

BY BETSY PRICE

A Newark woman has pleaded guilty to fraudulently obtaining COVID-19 payroll protection money and then illegally spending the \$246,000.

Ana Soto, 41, last week pleaded guilty to one count of wire fraud and one count of money laundering. She faces a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison when sentenced by Chief Judge Colm F. Connolly.

Soto submitted 17 fraudulent loan applications to the U.S. Small Business Administration and its authorized lenders in order to obtain Paycheck Protection Program loans established by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act, said a press release from the U.S. Department of Justice.

The 17 loan applications were made on behalf of five entities controlled by Soto or her close relations, the release said. Each of the loan applications falsely stated the amount of gross revenues, cost of goods sold and

number of employees, the release said. In some instances, the loan applications falsely claimed the businesses were in operation at the start of the coronavirus pandemic, the release said. As a result, Soto obtained about \$246,000, but was denied an additional \$500,000 in CARES Act loans.

“Ms. Soto perpetrated her fraud by taking money from programs established to help the country’s small business owners during the early days of a global pandemic,” said U.S. Attorney David C. Weiss. “At a time of great uncertainty and vulnerability, the defendant sought to enrich herself through criminal acts.”

Weiss said his office remains committed to protecting the integrity of the CARES Act and aggressively pursuing people who took advantage of it.

“Ana Soto used deceit and fraud to obtain loans that she was not entitled to receive,” said IRS Criminal

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Investigation Special Agent in Charge Yury Kruty in the release. “Her guilty plea is a reminder that IRS-CI, along with our partners, remain committed to investigating these types of crimes and holding the offenders accountable.”

Anyone with information about allegations of attempted fraud involving COVID-19 can report it by calling the Department of Justice’s National Center for Disaster Fraud Hotline at 866-720-5721 or via the fraud center’s web [complaint form](#).



Strategic Plan

REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

JANUARY 31, 2022

BY BETSY PRICE

The Delaware courts' new report on improving diversity includes 50 action points that stretch from pre-college years through promoting diversity recruitment for judicial positions in a variety of ways.

It never alludes to the Delaware Way or a good old boy network. Instead, it says the lack of diversity can be linked to several interrelated issues, starting with how the law and the legal profession is taught in schools to bar readiness, professional retention, and the judicial nominating process.

Among its solutions are creating school pipelines for future attorneys, changes to the bar exam, and suggestions for the bench and the bar to add mentors and make sure minority candidates know how to be considered for judicial appointments.

It even throws support behind the idea of a new law school at Delaware State University.

The 101-page "Improving Diversity in the Delaware Bench and Bar: Strategic Plan Report and Recommen-

DELAWARE COURTS' DIVERSITY PLAN SUPPORTS LAW SCHOOL AT DSU

dations" was commissioned by the Delaware Supreme Court in May. Its committee was headed by Delaware Supreme Court Chief Justice Collins J. Seitz Jr. and Justice Tamika R. Montgomery.

Montgomery-Reeves said the plan is believed to be the first of its kind in the nation for a court system that offers "concrete steps to consider to make the Delaware bench and bar more representative of the diversity of our great State."

The National Center for State Courts and the AccessLex Institute participated in the report's creation. A steering committee included representatives from each of Delaware's state courts, Delaware legal aid groups, the Board of Bar Examiners, the Department of Justice, the Office of Defense Services, the Governor's Office, private law firms, Widener University Delaware Law School, the University of Delaware, Delaware State University and community and technical colleges. Dozens more were involved in subcommittee working groups or participated in interviews for the study.

Seitz said the full Supreme Court will consider the report and develop an action plan to work on the recommendations.

"Some of the recommendations are already taking place," Seitz said in a press release detailing the report. Others will require new programs or additional studies to better craft solutions, the press release said.

Chris Coffey, the campaign manager for Citizens for

a Pro-Business Delaware, said, "This report reiterates what we've emphasized for years with national leaders and Delawareans: Delaware's overwhelmingly white legal talent pipeline, elite law firms and courts exclude people of color and it's time to create real, tangible solutions to fix it. Now there are no more excuses."

The business group was founded after a Chancery court decision forced the Shawe family to sell its language translation company, Transperfect, which was sold back to owner Phil Shawe. Since then, members of the Shawe family and the Citizens for a Pro-Business Delaware have worked against Gov. John Carney and been critical of Delaware courts, including their lack of diversity.

The organization, which says it has 5,000 members, has spent millions of dollars lobbying for changes, including more diversity on the courts, and protesting the millions in fees charged by Custodian Robert Pincus' and Skadden Arps during the Transperfect court battle.

Coffey said it was time for the state to take action, from the governor to the legislature to courts that hire overwhelmingly white firms.

"Instead of more hand-wringing and reports, we need the courage and immediate action from Delaware's leaders so that the 'First State' is not the last state when it comes to diversity and inclusion in its courts and legal industry," Coffey said.

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GOP BACKS LAWSUIT CHALLENGING EARLY VOTING

BY CHARLIE MEGGINSON

The chair of the Republican Party of Delaware has filed a lawsuit in the Delaware Court of Chancery challenging the constitutionality of early voting and permanent absentee voting laws in Delaware. Jane Brady, who is a lawyer and former attorney general of Delaware, filed the suit on behalf of Michael Mennella.

Mennella is a Newark resident and off-and-on temporary employee with the Delaware Department of Elections who has served as a polling place inspector during eight elections.

Brady emphasized at a press conference Thursday morning at the Christiana Hilton that she filed the suit in her private capacity as a lawyer, not as the GOP chair.

While Mennella is not presently employed by the

department, the complaint asserts that Mennella's job requires him to ensure that the people who vote in elections are entitled to do so under the law.

"The conflict in the laws requires him to choose between following the law and violating his oath," Brady said during the press conference.

Among other things, that oath says, "I will not knowingly or willfully receive or consent to the receiving of the vote of any alien," and "I will not receive or consent to the receiving of the vote of any person whom I shall believe not entitled to vote, unless my associates shall adjudge such person to be entitled to vote."

The suit specifically challenges a new law that allows voters to cast their ballots at least 10 days before an elec-

tion, including the Saturday and Sunday immediately before the election at certain locations as determined by the state election commissioner. That law was passed by the General Assembly and signed by Gov. John Carney in 2019 as House Bill 38.

Brady argued that the Delaware Constitution says voters must vote in person on election day unless the voter qualifies under "very limited conditions" to vote absentee.

Those who have traditionally taken advantage of absentee voting include out-of-state college students, Delawareans who are serving in the military and their families, U.S. citizens who live abroad, and disabled voters.

"Early voting clearly violates that requirement," Brady said. "In addition, all the provisions related to absentee voting are transitional and temporary."

Attempts to reach Delaware Commissioner of Elections Anthony Albence were unsuccessful.

This suit is being filed in conjunction with the Public Interest Legal Foundation, a conservative legal group that is known for suing states and local governments to purge non-active voters from election rolls.

Noel Johnson, an attorney with that group, said that treating permanent absentee status as an indefinite status that does not require certification or renewed application each election violates the Delaware Constitution.

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Photo by Keina Burton for Pexels

Education

TOWN SQUARE LIVE



DELTECH DROPS VACCINATION, TESTING, INDOOR MASKING RULES



BY BETSY PRICE

Delaware Technical Community College announced Tuesday that it was lifting vaccination, testing and mask requirements for employees, student and visitors, effective immediately. It reserved the right to require masking should a county meet the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s standards for masking.

“After consultation with the Delaware Division of Public Health, I am revising the College’s interim COVID-19 policies as set forth below,” Dr. Mark T. Brainerd, president of DelTech, said in a press release. “These revisions are in accordance with recent guidance and recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the state of Delaware.” The rule change is subject to change, he said.

Delaware officials, including Gov. John Carney, have been lifting indoor mask requirements since the CDC said Feb. 25 that any county that is has a low or medium spread of the COVID-19 virus could drop mask mandates. Areas with high spread of the virus should continue masking, it said. New Castle County is considered a low-spread area, while Kent and Sussex counties are considered medium spread.

Brainerd pointed out that some exceptions exist. While DelTech isn’t requiring student vaccination, being vaccinated may be required by an external site where a student is doing an internship or clinical rotation. Many healthcare facilities, such as hospitals, physical therapy offices or diagnostic centers, continue to ask clients and staff to wear masks.

The press release said staff, students and visitors should wear a face covering if they would like to; when they are immunocompromised or at risk of severe illness; or when they live or have social contact with someone who is immunocompromised or at risk of severe illness.

The release also said that directives regarding self-screening, reporting positive cases/contact tracing, and isolation and quarantine remain in effect until further notice.



SIX NEWARK HIGH STUDENTS ARRRESTED AFTER FIGHT AT SCHOOL

BY JAREK RUTZ

Six Newark High students were arrested after a fight there Monday, and police are seeking more information about it. The first fight broke out about 2:10 p.m. Tuesday at the high school on East Delaware Avenue, a police report said. Officers were already at the school to monitor a dismissal, the report said.

When officers attempted to break up the fight, additional fights began in the same area, the report said. About a dozen Newark police officers were called to the scene for additional help.

The arrested students, ages 14-17, were taken to the Newark Police headquarters. They were all released to a

parent and will appear in Family Court at a later date, the report said.

The students face charges of resisting arrest and/or disorderly conduct, the report said. There were no injuries sustained during the incident, nor were any weapons involved, according to Newark Police.

The department is asking anyone with information about the fights to contact Cpl. A. Pagnotti at (302) 366-7100 x 3406 or apagnotti@newark.de.us.

Efforts were unsuccessful to contact school officials for more information.



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Health

TOWN SQUARE LIVE



Health

NO DELAWARE HOSPITALS PLAN TO LIFT MASK MANDATES SOON

quired in Delaware hospitals. We encourage everyone to be kind and respectful to the health care workers enforcing these policies within the health care setting.”

The state of Delaware doesn’t mandate the masks. While the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services can force hospitals to do things like require employee vaccination because the centers control the cash flow of federal health care programs, in this case, hospitals can choose.

“It’s the hospital policy at the end of the day,” said Christina Crooks Bryant, the association’s public information officer, on Wednesday.

The association just did a survey of its members, and “nobody is planning to change the mask requirement at this time,” Bryant said.

Wearing a mask helps to reduce the spread of COVID-19, both for those who wear the mask and those who spend time around those who are masked, the press release said.

Masking is an especially important mitigation tool since many people who have COVID-19, especially the Omicron variant, do not have any symptoms and may not know they even have the virus and are spreading it to others, the press release said.



BY BETSY PRICE

Delaware hospital still require face masks to work or visit there. The hospitals issued a press release Tuesday to remind the public as state school and court masking rules were lifted this week.

“While COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations are declining, protecting immunocompromised and severely ill patients from COVID-19 exposure continues to be a priority for Delaware hospitals,” said Wayne A. Smith, CEO of the Delaware Healthcare Association.

“For the safety of our patients, and in line with CDC recommendations for universal masking in the health care setting, wearing a face mask continues to be re-

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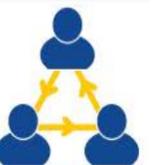
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Sports

TOWN SQUARE LIVE

SPARTANS EXECUTE GAME PLAN TO PERFECTION FOR FIRST ROUND WIN

BY PATRICK GARYANTES

St. Mark's seemed to have a clear game plan heading into its matchup against St. Elizabeth in the first round of the DIAA Boys Basketball Tournament.

It was to slow the game down, take care of the basketball and keep the score low. Reminiscent to the Spartan style that many in the First State have come to know over the past three decades.

The Spartans executed this game plan beautifully. They dictated the pace of play for the entire first half due to two things. Ball control on offense and a shift to a 2-3 zone on defense.

St. Elizabeth was clearly uncomfortable by zone, as the Spartans took away their driving lanes. The Vikings struggled to move St. Mark's off its marks and that led to a 19-17 St. Mark's lead at the break.

Jabri White led the way for the Spartans in the first half with eight points, including a huge transition dunk that erupted the Spartan student section. Prince Dewitt was in complete control of the offense, putting on a dribble frenzy that St. E's had no answer for.

The Spartans would expand their lead out to seven points early in the fourth quarter at 36-29, when St. E's finally turned up the pressure. From the five-minute mark on the Vikings' defense expanded out into the full court and that adjustment paid dividends.

They would force turnovers and get out in transition, eventually trimming the Spartan lead to one, 38-37 with just under two minutes to play. This is when a crucial moment in the game occurred.

Max Coughenour missed two huge free throws for St. Mark's. However, White hustled down an offensive rebound. He would make one of two charity tosses to expand the lead to two points.

After a frenetic back and forth possession, Coughenour would dive on the floor for a loose ball in the Viking backcourt, calling a timeout to save possession with eight seconds left. This was another crucial moment in the game.

Despite missing two free throws the prior possession and a timeout called where he could have been substituted for a better free throw shooter, Coughenour stayed in the game, clearly earning the trust of Coach Wright.

Instead of putting the big fella on the line in the clutch moment, St. E's elected to foul Prince Dewitt who had hit his last four free throws. Dewitt would sink both clutch free throws and push the lead out to the final, 41-37.

White would lead the way for the Spartans on the night with 13 points, while Dewitt added 11. Gavin Marks finished third in scoring for St. Mark's with nine points.

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NO. 21 SEED CAESAR RODNEY KNOCKS OFF ARCHMERE IN FIRST ROUND

With two minutes remaining in the first quarter, Archmere held a 13-6 lead as the Riders look uncomfortable at best at the offensive end.

After a strong defense stand, the Riders' Messiah Antwi secured an offensive rebound with two seconds left and quickly put it back up and scored at the buzzer to put CR within three, 13-10 at the end of the quarter—the last time Archmere would lead on the night.

Despite Archmere's offensive patience, the 2-2-1 zone press that the Riders put on at the beginning of the second quarter appeared to disrupt any flow the Auks had established in the first.

The Riders' success defensively translated to more and more quality offensive possessions in which they knocked down a number of three-point shots while Messiah Antwi's presence around the basket went unchallenged as he scored with his back to the basket and on a number of putbacks after securing an offensive rebound.

Caesar Rodney finished the half on an 11-2 run to finish leading 1-17 with the discipline and toughness of the Rider defense the story of the first half. CR carried its defensive success through the third quarter.

The Riders' defensive intensity made it almost impossible for Archmere to get a clean look at the basket as the Auks turned the ball over without even attempting a shot on approximately half their possessions. The

Riders turned most of these mistakes into easy fast break points as they shared the ball and found the open shooters in transition.

The game's biggest lead came with two minutes to go in the third as CR extended its lead to 41-21 until the Auks were able to score two baskets in the last minute.

The Riders kept the pressure on the Auks as the fourth quarter began. The 2-2-1 press back into a solid 2-3 zone defense left Archmere looking for answers offensively.

The Archmere struggles were not for a lack of effort though. The home team played hard at both ends and despite being down by 21 with six minutes to go worked hard at both ends of the court, diving for loose balls and battling for rebounds under the basket.

The fourth quarter ended up playing out much like the previous two quarters did with the Riders forcing turnovers and subsequently knocking down high percentage shots without much interference.

The game ended with a 57-33 Riders victory. CR visits Sanford Thursday night in the tournament's second round.



BY JOE SINGLES

The first round of the boys' basketball state tournament tipped off Tuesday evening at a number of locations throughout the state. One of the many first round games featured the No. 12 seed Archmere Auks hosting the No. 21 seed Caesar Rodney Riders.

The Auks came out early with their usual brand of halfcourt basketball, making the extra pass and cutting constantly until a quality shot presented itself. The first four quality shots they found were all three-point field goal attempts in which they made three out of four.

BLUE GOLD ALL-STAR BASKETBALL GAMES, ROSTERS ANNOUNCED

BY NICK HALLIDAY



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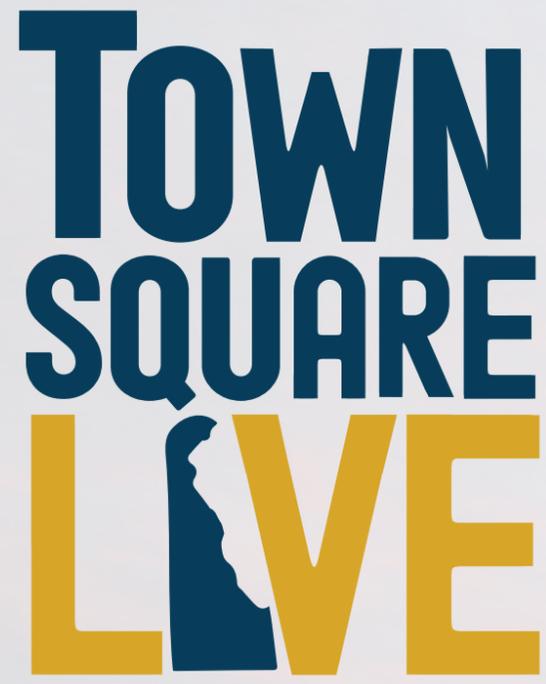


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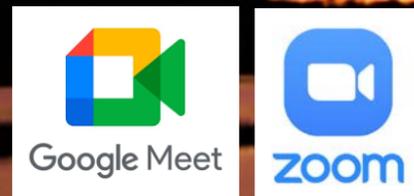


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