

*Photo link: Mt. Cuba Center*

# TOWN SQUARE LIVE

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*November 24, 2022  
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# Contents

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<b>COMMUNITY .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>BUSINESS .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>FOOD &amp; DINING.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>GOVERNMENT.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>EDUCATION .....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>HEALTH.....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>SPORTS.....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>STAY CONNECTED .....</b>	<b>29</b>



**BOWERS BEACH UNITES FOR WATERMEN'S DINNER**



**CAPE HENLOPEN PARK PROTEST**



**SALESIANUM SOCCER CHAMPS**



*Photo link: Longwood Gardens*



*Community*

**TOWN SQUARE LIVE**



# STORMIN' NORMAN GIVES AWAY 1,400 TURKEYS, PASSES BATON

BY CHARLIE MEGGINSON

After giving away 250,000 Thanksgiving turkeys over 40 years, **Stormin' Norman Oliver** is passing the baton to **DETV** president and founder Ivan Thomas.

Oliver—a locally-famed civic leader affectionately dubbed Stormin' Norman—announced the 2022 Turkey Drive would be his last before distributing more than 1,400 turkeys to Wilmington residents Tuesday.

“God just moved me to do it,” Oliver told Delaware LIVE. “I just like helping people and it’s been a good ride.”

For Oliver, it’s important to know when to let someone else take the reins, he said. “I think that you know when it’s time. After 40 years—just like a good boxer—you know when it’s time to retire.”

To carry the turkey giveaway into the future, Oliver personally selected Ivan Thomas, who founded and runs DETV, a news, community and entertainment broadcast network in Wilmington.

“I’ve known him since he was young,” Oliver said. “I like his drive. I like his energy. By passing the torch on to someone who can carry on a legacy and grow it with his media empire, I thought it would be an easy fit.”

Thomas said the turkey giveaway is all about supporting the community, which he hopes to continue doing even without Stormin' Norman by his side.

“I’ve known Storm all my life and I’ve been with him on this for about seven years now,” Thomas said. “So

this is just what we do.”

Thomas said he was especially touched to be able to deliver Thanksgiving meals to Luther Towers II Tuesday because that’s where his dad lived before he passed away.

“I know the area. I know the people. My father was in this building right here and we used to sit on this bench before he passed,” Thomas said, pointing to a bench by the entrance to the building.

As Stormin' Norman and Thomas were leaving to head to the next drop-off location, a Luther Towers II resident stopped them to express her gratitude.

“Thank you, thank you, thank you,” said resident Patricia Bennett. “This means the world.”

Asked what their efforts mean to her, Bennett said, “The word I want to use is thankful. It’s a blessing for those who don’t have, or who aren’t able. I hope everyone in the building is eating good this Thanksgiving.”

The drive was made possible by donations and support from NOR Enterprises/Our Youth Inc., Food Lion Feeds, Farnan Law LLP, Multiplying Good, New Castle County Pan-Hellenic Council, UnitedHealthcare, United Way of Delaware and 100 Coconuts.





# BOWERS BEACH UNITES TO OFFER WATERMEN'S THANKSGIVING DINNER

**BY KEN MAMMARELLA**

Bowers Beach is uniting this year to ensure the continuation of a decades-long tradition of home-cooked holiday meals for the watermen who work out of the Kent County town of 250.

“Miss Jean’s spirit is willing, but her body just isn’t up to it this Thanksgiving,” Mayor Ada Puzzo wrote in an email seeking culinary assistance for Jean Friend and her husband, Frank “Thumper” Eicherly IV. “Every Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas (and other times as well), they open up a house they own on Hubbard (Avenue) and have dinner together” with “the guys and girls that work on the commercial fishing boats here in Bowers,” Puzzo wrote.

When Puzzo was given two turkeys and all the sides, with the request that they go to someone in need, she immediately thought of Miss Jean and Thumper. They accepted her offer to prepare the full holiday meal for 10 or so, with Friend planning to deliver it to a camper shared by several beneficiaries.

“I’m no baker,” Puzzo wrote, so she asked for help with dessert. Offers poured in. “This doesn’t surprise me,” she said. “That’s how this town is. We saw that during the pandemic. Once I put out the need for anybody or anything, somebody offers to help.”

In less than a day, she had more than a dozen offers—so many that she expected to freeze some desserts for Christmas. Friend and Eicherly plan to host a sit-down dinner in that Hubbard house. People interested in helping Friend and Eicherly can email Puzzo at [mayor@bowersde.gov](mailto:mayor@bowersde.gov).

### TESTIMONIAL TO THEIR SERVICE

“Miss Jean would really take care of the town’s young people,” said Matt Green, a Bowers Beach resident who calls them the only family he knows in town.

“Her door was always open,” with pots of beans and pans of cornbread on their cookstoves, ready to be shared whoever needed it, he added. Or maybe sandwiches: “You’re looking a little thin,’ she would say. ‘I’ll make you a sandwich. You working tomorrow? I’ll make you two.’”

“They hand out pickles on Halloween,” Green said, “because they want to give out something that’s better than a candy bar.” (Some kids might have gotten grilled cheese sandwiches, too.)

“They have left food on people’s doorsteps. That’s the kind of people they are.”

“Their heart has always been open to anybody who needed help,” he said of Friend and Eicherly. “Maybe people reading this article will decide that they can help their neighbors like this and create a Thanksgiving for someone else.”

### BOWERS BEACH GENEROSITY

Eicherly is also known as the captain and owner of the Maggie S. Meyers, an oyster schooner built in 1893 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1983.

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE](#)



# THANKSGIVING 2022 IN THE FIRST STATE: WHAT TO KNOW

BY JAREK RUTZ

With almost 15% of First Staters expected to travel this weekend, here's what to know about Thanksgiving in Delaware this year.

### TRAVEL

**AAA Mid-Atlantic**, a regional travel agency, predicts holiday travel will be comparable to pre-pandemic levels, with 149,504 Delawareans traveling.

More than 10,000 Delawareans will fly somewhere this weekend, which is 7% more than Thanksgiving weekend last year as COVID-19 restrictions on flights are lifted, AAA said.

Around 90% of travelers will drive to their destinations, the agency expects. While inflation has caused gas prices to surge over the past year, the past few weeks have seen a **drop** in the average cost per gallon.

New Castle County's average cost per gallon is \$3.62. In Kent County, the cost is \$3.57, and down in Sussex, the average gallon costs \$3.59. With so many travelers hitting the road, here's when AAA says is the best and worst times to drive this weekend:

Date	Worst travel time	Best travel time
11/23/22	11:00 AM - 8:00 PM	Before 8:00 AM, After 8:00 PM
11/24/22	11:00 AM - 3:00 PM	Before 11:00 AM, After 6:00 PM
11/25/22	4:00 PM - 8:00 PM	Before 11:00 AM, After 8:00 PM
11/26/22	4:00 PM - 8:00 PM	Before 2:00 PM, After 8:00 PM
11/27/22	4:00 PM - 8:00 PM	Before 11:00 AM, After 8:00 PM

### WEATHER

Thanksgiving is supposed to be a clear, sunny day, with temperatures reaching 60 degrees, according to the **National Weather Service**.

Thursday's feast and family time will lead into cloudy skies Friday with rain likely and the temperature nearing 60 degrees again on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. While Saturday morning should be clear, light rain is expected after 1 p.m. and will continue into Sunday.

### SAFETY ON THE ROAD

Delaware has already matched its 2021 number for traffic fatalities, with 139 deaths so far in 2022. The state's **Department of Transportation** offers these tips for driving during the holiday:

- Always wear your seatbelt
- Never drive under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- Obey posted speed limits
- Do not drive distracted
- Do not drive aggressively

"We strongly encourage everyone to slow down, avoid distractions behind the wheel and be on the lookout for people walking and biking," said Safety and Homeland Security Secretary Nathaniel McQueen Jr. in a press release. "It is imperative we all take an active role to protect each other."

### THANKSGIVING EVENTS

**Wilmington's MS Run:** The **National Multiple Sclerosis Society** is having its 44th Annual Thanksgiving Day MS Run in Wilmington. The event includes 10K and 5K runs, a 5K walk and a kiddie fun run. After the run, participants and their families can enjoy refreshments and take photos with Santa.

The organization's goal is to raise \$110,000 to go towards multiple sclerosis research and treatment. So far, the event has raised \$27,259. Register [HERE](#).

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Community

# FINAL DRAFT OF PLAN FOR I-95 CAP PARK RELEASED

BY KEN MAMMARELLA

A final draft is out for a plan to cap Interstate 95 in downtown Wilmington and create a **12-acre park** atop the newly renovated **highway**.

“Can it be done?” regional planner Dave Gula asked rhetorically. “We believe it can.”

“Absolutely,” consultant Mary Margaret Jones said at a public meeting Nov. 17 when asked for her gut feeling about getting the massive funding that the project will require. “I believe there’s enough energy to repair these wrongs,” she added, referring to how the fabric of Delaware’s largest city was split when the interstate was constructed a half-century ago and how the park would enhance the quality of life for its neighbors, downtown workers and folks further afield.

The Wilmington Area Planning Council, where Gula works, for a year has been planning a park. Staff members developed multiple versions and made adjustments

after gathering public input and technical data on things like traffic.

The latest plan will get more reviews and by mid-December will be opened up for public comment for a month on the WILMAPCO **website**. The goal is to have it endorsed in one more key vote by mid-January, when it would then become eligible for government funding.

Funding might take a year or three, said Jones, president of Hargreaves Jones, a firm whose work also includes planning the similar **Park at Penn’s Landing**, crossing over I-95 to connect Philadelphia to the riverfront. Design and engineering would take more than a year, she added, and construction three to five years.

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## School Choice is Open!



The families of 18,223 students made the charter school choice for the 22/23 School Year! Next year's choice window is open through Jan 11, 2022.

Want to know what your choices are?  
Or how to apply for School Choice?  
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[www.DECharterNetwork.org/school-choice/](http://www.DECharterNetwork.org/school-choice/)




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# WINTERTHUR ADDS 150 POUNDS OF SWEET TO YULETIDE

BY BETSY PRICE

A 150-pound gingerbread recreation of the Winterthur mansion will greet guests heading out on its Yuletide tour this year. The gingerbread house, which sits on a 4-foot-by-8-foot base, was delivered Nov. 17 by Bredenbeck's Bakery of Chestnut Hill, PA. Its cakes have been featured on TLC and the Food Network.

Diana Anello, head sugar artist for Bredenbeck's, said she wasn't sure how many eggs or how much flour or sugar went into the creation.

"I can tell you we used 24 sheets of gingerbread which were 18 by 23," she said.

The house, which stands about 3 feet tall, features dozens of windows, as well as a beautiful rendition of a lighted conservatory, complete with a dried flower tree, just like the real house. Winterthur ordered the ginger-

bread mansion to pay homage to its exhibition "Jacqueline Kennedy and H.F. du Pont: From Winterthur to the White House." It's on show through Jan. 8, 2023.

Gingerbread houses have been a part of White House holiday decor at least since Jackie was decorating there, said Jennie Brown, Winterthur's manager of audience development. The Winterthur version will sit in the Montgomery Room off the Galleries reception. Guests heading out on the tour will have to pass it.

This year's Yuletide **tour** decor also is linked to the Jackie-and-Henry exhibit. The tour will feature trees inspired by White House trees over the years. Jackie Kennedy created the first themed White House tree in 1961, using the Christmas ballet "The Nutcracker."

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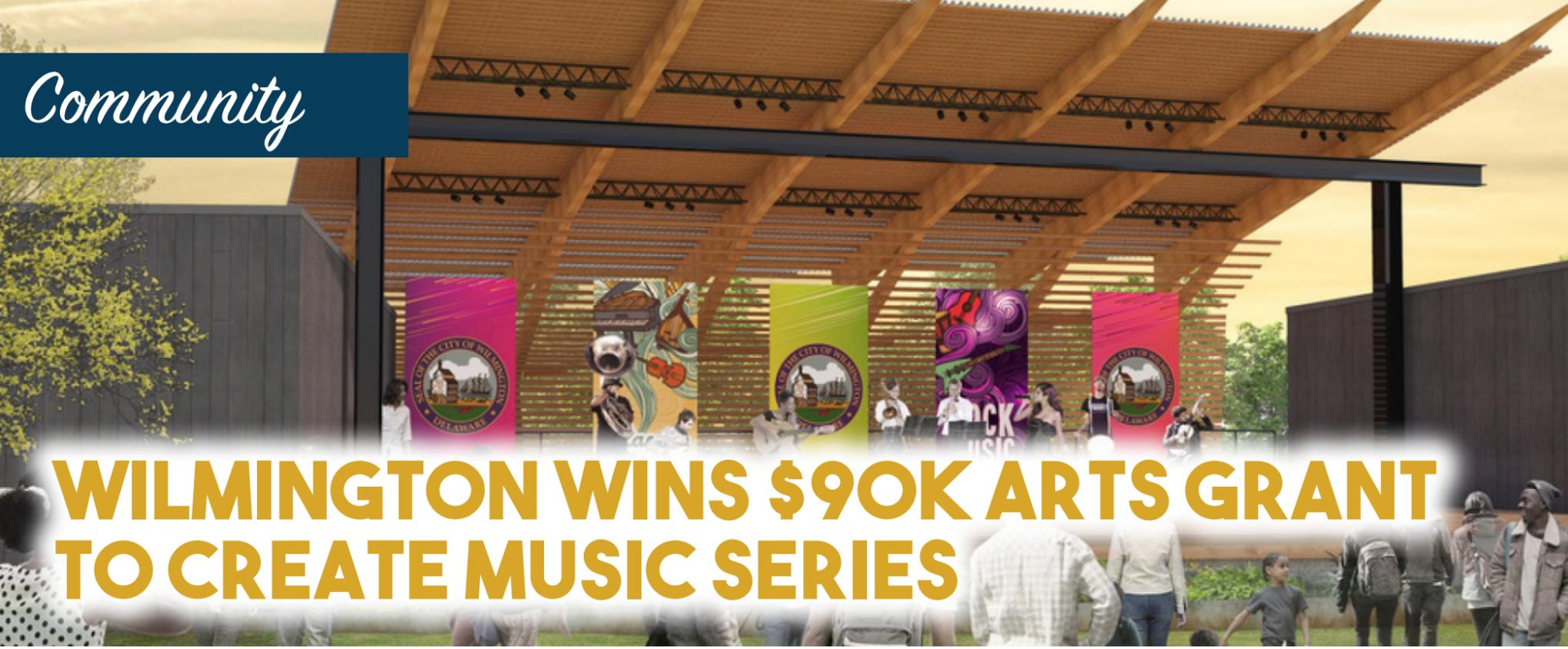
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# WILMINGTON WINS \$90K ARTS GRANT TO CREATE MUSIC SERIES

BY CHARLIE MEGGINSON

Wilmington has been awarded a \$90,000 matching grant to present a free, multi-year outdoor music series. The grant comes from the **Mortimer & Mimi Levitt Foundation**, a social impact group that supports nonprofits throughout the country focused on music, public spaces and community building. The matching funds will be used to present a 10-week live music series in 2023, 2024 and 2025.

Wilmington Cityfest will provide programming at the new Urban Artists Exchange, a studio and amphitheater complex on Wilmington’s East Side that’s expected to be finished by year’s end. The exchange is being created on the site of the police department’s former police stables.

“This multi-year matching funds award from the Levitt Foundation to present a free outdoor music series at the

beautiful new amphitheater just confirms that our original transformational vision was on target, and I, for one, can’t wait to see what the future holds for this site,” said Mayor Mike Purzycki in a news release.

Grant recipients were selected following a **public voting period** and a comprehensive internal review process. Combining 15 new and 18 returning grantees, the Levitt Foundation is awarding **\$3 million** to nonprofits serving small to mid-sized towns and cities across the United States.

Sharon Yazowski, executive director of the Levitt Foundation, said the concert series will strengthen the social fabric of the Wilmington community.

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Business

TOWN SQUARE LIVE



## BRIDGEWATER JEWELRY: FIVE GENERATIONS, 140 DRAMA-STUDDED YEARS

BY BETSY PRICE

An unassuming corner shop in Historic New Castle will start celebrating its 140th anniversary—and its five generations of owners—on Small Business Saturday (Nov. 26).

The colorful history of **Bridgewater Jewelers** starts with an English immigrant who lost a leg in a wood-chopping accident as a child. It goes on to encompass a grandson who committed suicide in the churchyard across the street before leading to today's Mary Bridgewater, the only one of five children interested in the business.

“One of the unique things is no two generations were ever in the store together,” says Mary.

While the store offers all kinds of jewelry, from costume to high end, and services such as repairs and engraving, Mary said the shop's forte is helping customers design the pieces they want.

She is particularly proud of helping people—especially young men buying engagement rings—find a ring in their price range that suits the young woman they plan to propose to.

Many customers walk in and say they've been told that they need to spend several months of paychecks on a ring, or they'll say they have \$1,000 to spend and ask what they can get for that.

“That's not how we're going to start this conversation,” she tells them. “Sit down. Let's talk about what we're looking for. Tell me about her.”

Too many people get caught up in the idea of the expense or showiness of a ring rather than putting thought into what it means and how it suits the person receiving the ring.

She cites the case of a young man from New Jersey who was afraid to tell her that his girlfriend was a bit Goth. She wore black clothes and black eyeliner all the time.

“We ended up with a salt and pepper diamond with black diamonds around it, which was perfect for her,” she said. Those diamonds still have flecks of carbon in them instead of being crystal clear. “We got it into his budget. It's was right for him, and he was elated that I could get something nice in his price range, because they are obviously a little less expensive,” she said.

His fiancée loved it, too.

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE](#)



*Food & Dining*

**TOWN SQUARE LIVE**

# WILL DELAWARE PASTRY CHIEF DRU TEVIS TAKE \$25,000 PRIZE?

BY PAM GEORGE

When we last left Delaware's "Dru-nicorn," he made it through the second episode of "[Holiday Baking Championship](#)" on the Food Network. But could Dru Tevis survive another round?

First State residents, friends, family and his [SoDel Concepts](#) colleagues tuned in last night to watch. Indeed, many gathered at [Thompson Island Brewing Co.](#) in Rehoboth to watch alongside the pastry chef—and taste the dish he prepared on the show.

So, how did he do? Warning: Spoilers ahead.

## BUT FIRST, A RECAP

In case you've been watching other programs, here's the backstory.

Talent scouts recruited Tevis, who oversees the desserts for all SoDel Concepts' restaurants. The interview process was lengthy, and Tevis had only a few weeks to pack his bags and head to Tennessee for the taping.

Tevis knew it would be a challenge in more ways than one. First, he and other contestants face time limits to make unusual dishes. Second, Tevis isn't one to wing it.

"When I was in school, I handed in term papers early," he said. "I studied for all my tests—nothing was ever done at the last minute."

Preparedness paid off. He was the class valedictorian at the French Culinary Institute in New York (now the International Culinary Center).

On the first show, Tevis's pumpkin crunch pavlova with brown butter-pumpkin ganache and then his eggnog pie wowed the judges: Duff Goldman, a reality show veteran who owns Charm City Cakes in Baltimore and Los Angeles; Nancy Fuller, owner of Ginsberg Foods; and Carla Hall, a "Top Chef" alum.

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Holidays at Hagley celebrates "All Creatures Great and Small" Open November 25 through January 1, 2023 DAILY 10 A.M. TO 4 P.M.



  
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# FIVE FESTIVE HOLIDAY PLACES TO DRINK, DINE

Holiday Hummus, for instance, is a mix of green pesto and roasted red pepper hummus, while the Atomic Yule Log is a crisp pile of mozzarella sticks with a “yuletide” marinara sauce. To sip, try Goose Island IPA, Breckenridge Christmas Ale and Breckinridge Vanilla Porter.

However, it’s the venue’s festive holiday décor, not the food, that will have you humming “Jingle Bells.” Picture glittery tinsel Christmas balls, nutcrackers, giant candles and barstool backs wearing Santa hats. The showpiece is the sleigh—the site of countless selfies.

The promotion is the brainchild of special events director Nick Manerchia, who saw similar transformations in New York. Owner Gianmarco Martuscelli felt the concept would attract customers at a time when many students leave college for winter break.

The Sleigh Bar started in 2019. “We experimented that first year, and it was a huge hit,” he recalled. “Every year, we add to it.” The Sleigh Bar appeals to families, friends and moms who brunch—and then gather in the sleigh for a photo opp. “It’s such a melting pot,” Martuscelli said. “You see kids smiling when they come in. People just love Christmas.”

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE](#)

## BY PAM GEORGE

It’s beginning to look a lot like Christmas in these tasty Delaware spaces decorated for a festive holiday.

Klondike Kate’s **Sleigh Bar** in Newark and **Blitzen** in Wilmington have returned to serve a cup of good cheer. To the south, **Above the Dunes** in Rehoboth debuted a Miracle Pop-Up on Nov. 21. **Schellville** in Rehoboth has expanded its food and beer offerings, and **Benvenuto** in Milford has become a lovely Italian village for Christmas.

## SLEIGH BELLS RING

Once again, Klondike Kate’s has morphed into the pop-up Sleigh Bar, which has a special menu in addition to Kate’s regular offerings.



  
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*Government*

**TOWN SQUARE LIVE**



# HOUSE REPUBLICANS PICK NEW MINORITY LEADER, WHIP

BY CHARLIE MEGGINSON

Delaware House Republicans will be led by a new pair of officers when the General Assembly reconvenes in January, and they're both promising to move the caucus in a less divisive and more welcoming direction.

The caucus on Tuesday elected Rep. Mike Ramone of Hockessin as minority leader and Rep. Lyndon Yearick of Camden as minority whip.

"This is an opportunity for us to build a Republican Party and message that is more inclusive and more reflective of our state," Ramone told Delaware LIVE News.

"I will do my best to not disappoint people and not let people down," he said. "As a leader, you lead from the front, you take the bullets for the team, but you support from the back and make sure everybody's got what they

need to guarantee them success in their districts and in the state. So that's my new job and I'll do my best."

The minority leader is the floor leader of the Republican caucus. In this role, he is the principal speaker for the minority party during debates on the House floor and works to coordinate the party's legislative agenda.

The minority whip effectively serves as an assistant leader. Theoretically, the whip is responsible for enforcing party discipline on votes deemed crucial by party leadership, helping to ensure that members vote in accordance with the caucus's legislative agenda.

Ramone, 61, replaces Rep. Danny Short, 61, of Seaford. Short has served as minority leader since 2013.

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Local breast cancer survivor and warrior Taylor Urban shares how DBCC has impacted her journey of healing.

**db** DELAWARE BREAST CANCER COALITION [Read More >](#)

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# CAPE HENLOPEN

## PROPOSED CAPE HENLOPEN EATERY SPAWNS PROTESTS, PUBLIC FORUM

BY CHARLIE MEGGINSON

The agency that runs **Cape Henlopen State Park** is asking for the public’s feedback on a proposal to build a restaurant in the main beach parking lot.

The Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control will hold a public meeting to discuss the proposal Monday, Dec. 5 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. in the Cape Henlopen High School auditorium. With hundreds of residents organized to oppose the change, the meeting isn’t likely to be without controversy.

The restaurant was proposed after DNREC requested bids to manage the park’s main beach area concessions, which include chair and umbrella rentals and the snack shop in the bathhouse. According to the agency, the request for proposals was made after visitors indicated on surveys that they’d like to see a higher level of food service and improvements for visitor amenities.

**La Vida Hospitality LLC**—the company behind Crooked Hammock Brewery, Taco Reho, Big Chill Surf Club and Big Chill Cantina—was awarded the contract to manage the main concessions for one year with exclusive rights to negotiate with DNREC for an extension of up to 24 years.

According to the **Cape Gazette**, a grassroots group called the **Preserve Our Park Coalition** has formed to protest the project. The group has launched a letter-writing campaign and held a protest march on Nov. 13 near the park entrance.

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE](#)



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# DRUG SMUGGLER WITH SECRET BUNKER IN BEAR JAILED FOR 45 YEARS

BY STAFF WRITER

A Delaware man who made \$1 million from smuggling cocaine and built a secret bunker under his house in Bear, was sentenced this week in U.S. District Court to 45 years in prison. Omar Morales Colon, 45, had been convicted of conspiracy to commit money laundering, conspiracy to distribute cocaine, and various other drug and money laundering offenses.

Colon was described as “one of the biggest drug traffickers in the history of the state of Delaware” in a Department of Justice press release. It also said Colon “stood ready to use violence if necessary to protect his drug business.”

His wife, Shakira Martinez, 44, also was convicted of money laundering offenses in July. Her sentencing is scheduled for February 2023.

“Mr. Colon has received a serious sentence that properly reflects his decades of criminality,” said U.S. Attorney David C. Weitz. “Drug trafficking wreaks havoc on

the community and on families. Mr. Colon imported massive amounts of cocaine into Delaware for many years. Those who aspire to a criminal lifestyle should take note that the resulting punishment may be decades behind bars.”

Evidence at the trial said that between 2009 and 2017, Colon and Martinez laundered over a \$1 million in drug proceeds through the purchase of real estate properties in Delaware and Pennsylvania using their company, Zemi Property Management.

They deposited drug money into several different bank accounts—and asked their friends and family members to do the same—and then used those funds to buy cashier’s checks that funded the property purchases.

Colon was arrested on May 6, 2017, shortly after giving his cocaine supplier \$382,045 in cash in a hotel parking lot in Newark, DE.

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*Education*

**TOWN SQUARE LIVE**

# SCHOOL DISTRICT CLASS SIZE WAIVERS MOVING THROUGH

BY JAREK RUTZ

Schools up and down the First State are asking their school boards to allow them to put more than 22 students in elementary school classes. Boards have until Dec. 1 to submit waiver requests to the state **Department of Education**.

The waivers are required by Delaware **law** for kindergarten through third grade students in the core academic subjects of English/Language Arts, mathematics, science and social studies. Seaford, Appoquinimink and Colonial have approved waivers in recent weeks.

It's rare for boards to refuse waiver requests, and the state makes no judgment on their decisions. It simply keeps track of the data. In the last five years, the **data** shows that Delaware schools have made 87 requests.

Allowing schools to expand classes and having the state set what seems like arbitrary class size regulations perturbs some board members. Several believe districts ask for waivers to avoid hiring more teachers.

"I've never seen one rejected," said Donald Patton, a **Christina School District** board member who also served as an assistant principal. "If in fact there's a law

on the books, you should be required to follow the law."

District superintendents, though, say they don't ask for waivers to avoid hiring. Schools naturally try to keep class sizes small, said **Colonial School District** Superintendent Jeff Menzer. Studies show that students learn better in smaller classes, partly because they're able to have more personal attention. Colonial last week approved two waivers for classes to have more than 22 students.

While the state's required ratio is 22 students to one instructor, teacher aides are counted as half a teacher. That means a class with a teacher and a teacher aide would be allowed 33 students in the room.

If a class size waiver is rejected, a school must find another way to meet the class size requirements. That is a local decision and could mean moving kids to meet the requirement or finding another teacher, said a Department of Education spokesperson. The state does not have a public database of waiver requests. The numbers have to be gathered district by district.

Schools may have to ask for a waiver because of students who transfer or enroll in a new school after the last day of October, Patton said. "Generally, it's a minor number. It's not a lot of kids over the threshold, but it may be two or three kids."

That may make a school say, "We don't want to hire additional persons or we can't afford to hire additional folks," Patton said.

If a class size waiver were rejected at Colonial, Menzer said the district's plan would be to find a teacher within the system to handle the extra students by taking on another class. Because the additional students won't bring additional funding if they arrive after the state calculates a school's funding Sept. 30 of each year, Menzer said shifting students around would actually hurt the students who have been settled into their classes for months.

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE](#)

What does a vibrant preschool-12 learning community look like?

[Click here to find out!](#)

Wilmington Friends 1748 School

# UNION TO TEACHERS: PRESSURE COMPENSATION PANEL FOR 'ACTION NOW'

BY JAREK RUTZ

Delaware’s teacher union is calling for educators and specialists to flood the Monday, Dec. 12, meeting of a teacher pay committee to pressure its members into giving raises to teachers this year instead of waiting for two years. The Public Education Compensation Committee voted last week to stick to a timeline that allows it to wait until Nov. 15, 2023, to make recommendations to Gov. John Carney for teacher pay hikes. That would put the first raises into the 2025 state budget, which takes effect July 1, 2024.

“You MUST make your voice heard!” said Stephanie Ingram, president of the Delaware State Education Association, in an email to teachers. “The lack of public comment from educators on this topic led committee members to believe you don’t care about salary increases.”

That meeting will be at 3:30 p.m. Stream it live [HERE](#).

The **compensation committee**, authorized through **Senate Bill 100**, is tasked with evaluating and making recommendations to the state in order to provide teachers with a salary that’s competitive with neighboring states.

Along with evaluating teacher pay, the bill calls for an analysis of salaries for educational support professionals such as bus drivers and custodians.

While teacher in Delaware typically make less than teachers in neighboring states, the First State’s educational support professionals have the second-highest salary in America when comparing their pay in other states, according to the **National Education Association**. Their average annual salary is \$44,044, just \$98 less than Alaska, who pays their support staff the highest average salary of \$44,142.

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# INTEREST RISES IN A.I. DUPONT GOING GREEN TO STEM ENROLLMENT DROP

BY BETSY PRICE

The leader of a Red Clay task force wants to reinvent Alexis I. du Pont High School as a magnet school with a green campus that offers environmental science classes to prepare students for jobs in the eco-industries.

The rebranding move, which has been warmly endorsed by government officials and others, is designed to help stem the shocking decline in A.I. enrollment, which dropped more than 50% in the last decade, by offering something new to attract more students.

“We decided that was a great thing for A.I. High to become the greenest high school campus in Delaware and in Greenville, Delaware,” said Victor J. Leonard Jr., a member of the **Red Clay Consolidated School District** board, in an October board meeting.

The idea was met with support from the public at the

Nov. 16 board meeting—including state Sen. Laura Sturgeon, D-Hockessin, a former educator—but also with fretting by some administrators and board members who questioned Leonard’s committee organization and purpose.

Board member Cathy Thompson warned for the second meeting in a row that the task force was not operating under the board’s rules governing committees.

Instead of a loose group of people interested in the idea running around gathering ideas, the task force should have a defined mission, specifically-named members who include teachers, and an expectation of what it would produce, she said Wednesday and in the October meeting.

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# STATE TO HONOR SCHOOL WORKERS WHO KEEP SYSTEMS RUNNING

BY JAREK RUTZ

The 20 individuals who have been named as Educational Support Professionals of the Year are the “glue that keeps our schools together.”

“Educating kids through teachers is the goal and the mission of schools,” said John Marinucci, executive director of the **Delaware School Board Association**, “but the support folks handle all the things that have to take place around the education they receive.”

Those workers include custodians, paraprofessionals, secretaries, cafeteria workers, bus drivers, aides and information technology staff. Without them, Marinucci said, the school couldn’t function.

For the third year, the Delaware Department of Education will name one as the state honoree on Dec. 7 at the **Modern Maturity Center** in Dover.

“Their work often is behind the scenes and rarely gets the recognition it deserves,” said Education Secretary Mark Holodick.

The event to honor Delaware’s Educational Support Professional of the Year will be livestreamed on the education department’s YouTube and Facebook accounts after the dinner portion of the evening. It’s expected to be shortly after 7 p.m.

The winner will receive \$3,000 from the state and be given \$5,000 to benefit his/her students. Last year’s winner was David Thomas, computer lab/technology paraprofessional at Lake Forest East Elementary School at Lake Forest School.

The 2023 honorees, who all receive \$2,000 from their district or charter school, are:

- Appoquinimink: *Claudine Strawbridge*, paraprofessional at Cantwell’s Bridge Middle School
- Brandywine: *Meg Brown*, senior secretary and registrar at Concord High School
- Caesar Rodney: *Josette Threatts*, service and instructional paraprofessional at George Welch



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## Elementary School

- Cape Henlopen: Brittany Hoeller, paraprofessional at Lewes Elementary School
- Capital: David Hom, operations technician at the Office of Technology
- Charter Network: Eric Winston, nutrition coordinator, facilities manager and assistant athletic director at Early College School at Delaware State University
- Christina: Matthew Stearn, paraprofessional at Networks School for Employability Skills
- Colonial: Joseph Davis, custodian at John G. Leach School

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Photo by Nick Halliday



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Sports

TOWN SQUARE LIVE



# LAUREL GRINDS OUT STATE TOURNAMENT VICTORY

BY BENNY MITCHELL

The Laurel Bulldogs football team is not flashy, but more of a blue collar mentality on both offense and defense. They ground and pound on offense and bring intense pressure on defense.

That was the formula used in their 41-7 victory over St. Andrew's on Friday night at Laurel's Schollenberger Field in the DIAA Class A quarterfinal game.

The Bulldogs amassed 340 yards of total offense with 285 coming via the rush, while the defense forced two early turnovers which both led to touchdowns. The win marked the 14th consecutive for Laurel dating back to the 2021 state tournament first round.

"It was nice to see the kids respond to something we don't see a lot and they throw it pretty well so it's good to see a little bend but don't break," Laurel head coach Joey Jones said.

St. Andrew's initial drive took the Saints to the Laurel 25-yard line. On third down, Saints quarterback Frank Nasta was sacked by Xavier Limehouse and Patrick Belle was there to recover the fumble at the 30-yard line.

On Laurel's third play of the game, quarterback Kaden Shockley went around left end 60 yards for a touchdown. Mike Gonzalez-Perez added the extra point as the Bulldogs jumped out to a 7-0 lead.

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# ST. GEORGES SURVIVES LATE COMEBACK ATTEMPT FROM APPOQUINIMINK

BY NICK HALLIDAY

It was a highly anticipated 2 vs. 7 matchup between the 4-6 St. Georges Hawks and the 6-4 Appoquinimink Jaguars. Both teams rounded into form with strong second halves of the season and were perhaps coming into this game playing their best football.

Appo was riding high coming off an impressive comeback effort against Salesianum last week to earn a District regular season championship and earning the second seed in the DIAA playoffs. They would yet again need to mount a comeback in this game if they wanted to advance.

The game started off with four consecutive fourth down stops by each team's defense and the tone was set that this was going to be a defensive battle. Appo, who

developed a strong pass game in the second half of the season behind freshman quarterback Greg Nielson, reverted back to the Run-DMC (Daniel McConomy) show in the first half, with McConomy carrying the ball 21 times for 64 yards in the first half. Nielson only attempted five passes in the first half, one of which was intercepted. The Hawks had a tremendous defensive game plan, key on McConomy, and stop the inside running game behind Appo's strong offensive line. They did just that.

The only scoring of the half was an opportunistic punt return for a touchdown by sophomore speedster Reggie Lea of St. Georges. With only two minutes remaining in the first half, Jaguar punter Mason Reinhart punted the ball that took a bounce at the 28-yard line of the Hawks, yet nobody seemed to be in a hurry to down the football. Lea recognized that if he ran up and fielded it on a bounce, there was nobody in front of him and he did just that. Lea covered 69 yards in just under eight seconds to break the scoring open, 7-0. The score would stand until halftime.

The second half would begin with a Jaguar possession. On the second play from scrimmage, Nielson was intercepted by Emory Womack which would give St. Georges a short field of only 19 yards. After a strong 18-yard run from Kwame Miller set the Hawks on the doorstep, it was Terry White who would kick the door down. The extra point would be missed, and the score would be 13-0.

Appo would try to surmount a comeback. They would get its passing game going late in the third quarter as Nielson would throw the ball five times on its third possession of the third quarter, completing three of them including a 41-yard touchdown pass to Noah Hoff on a beautifully placed ball. The third quarter would end with a 13-7 score.

Lea would take the following kickoff deep into Jaguar territory and after a few plays, the Hawks were in a goal-to-go situation. Appo would come up with a *huge* defensive stop as District Lineman of the Year, Elijah Husser would stonewall a Hawk attempt on fourth and goal. Appo would have one last attempt to tie this game. They put together a great five minute drive to march down inside the St. Georges red zone; however a strip-sack on Nielson would give the Hawks the ball back with under seven minutes to go in the game. The Hawks would execute clock management beautifully and would pick up crucial first downs thanks to star quarterback, Donovan Brooks. Appo wouldn't get the ball back until only 13 seconds remained on the clock. They then ran a draw play that left many in Jaguar Stadium scratching their heads as time would expire.

The Hawks will move on to play the winner of Sussex Central vs Dover next week. Anything can happen come playoff time, and the Hawks proved just that.



# SOCCER CHAMPS: SALLIES OVER CHARTER, CARAVEL BLANKS SAINT MARK'S

BY NICK HALLIDAY

The Salesianum Sals went on to win their second straight DIAA Division I boys' soccer state championship and 21st overall. Sallies defeated Wilmington Charter by a score of 4-1 at Dover High School.

The Sals scored two goals in each half of the game. In the first half, Jake Ross scored the first goal then assisted Gianluca Marroni for the second goal. In the second half, Brandon Ibarra-Sanchez netted the first goal while Paris Pappas scored the second on an assist from Zachary Bittner. Charter's goal was scored by Davin Lysik.

Caravel shut out Saint Mark's 4-0 in the DIAA boys' soccer Division II state championship. It is the Bucs second consecutive title and sixth overall.

The Bucs were led by Zayd Akhtar who scored two goals in the game. Miles Hood added a goal and an assist with Michael Cooke adding a goal and Finlay Lum adding an assist. Caravel goalie Alejandro Marte made nine saves to keep the Spartans off the scoreboard.



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# DELMAR FIELD HOCKEY DOMINATES, SMYRNA UPSETS CAPE

BY NICK HALLIDAY

The Delmar Wildcats completely dominated the Division 2 DIAA field hockey state championship. They outshot Archmere Academy 50-1 and totaled 23 corners in the game en route to a 7-1 victory to capture their seventh straight state championship.

Macy Bradford led the Wildcats with two goals and three assists. Archmere's goal was scored by Bella Dell'Oso which was the only shot Archmere had in the game. Ava Hughes of Archmere had a phenomenal game making 39 saves as Delmar was just relentless on the offensive side of the game. She was aided by Rebecca Olsen and Kathleen Shaller who also made a few great saves themselves to hold Delmar to just seven goals.

Smyrna upset 12-time state champion Cape Henlopen who had won five straight in dramatic fashion. After

full-time was played with a 1-1 tie the game was forced into OT. With 10:57 to go in the first overtime, Kirsten Johnson made a miraculous goal as Dru Moffett sent a centering pass from the far right side she laid out fully extended to knock the ball in the back of the net to give Smyrna its first-ever field hockey state championship with a 2-1 score.

It was a pretty evenly played game as both teams totaled six shots each. Cape did lead in corners eight to Smyrna's three. Both goalies Halle Geiger of Smyrna and Morgan Newcomb of Cape had four saves apiece. Hannah Maney scored the goal for Cape on an assist from Alexis Tuitt. Reese Nacrelli scored the first goal for Smyrna in regular time on an assist from London Bebout.



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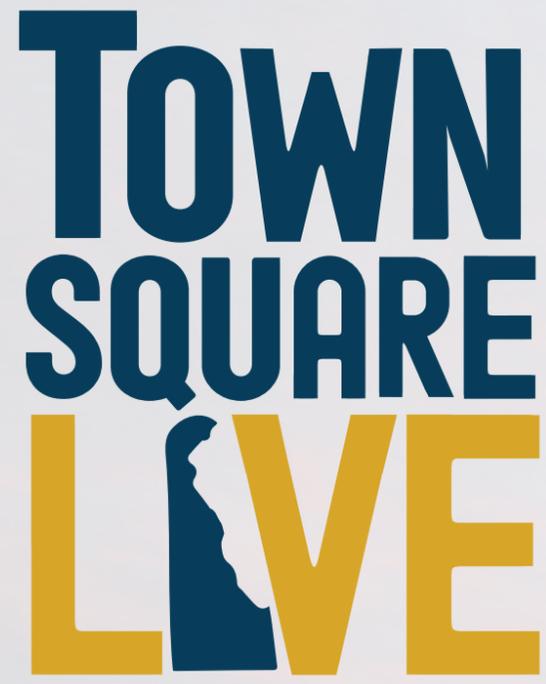


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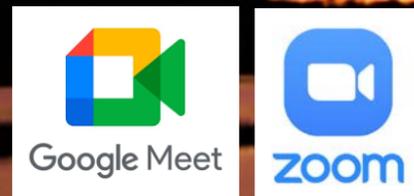
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