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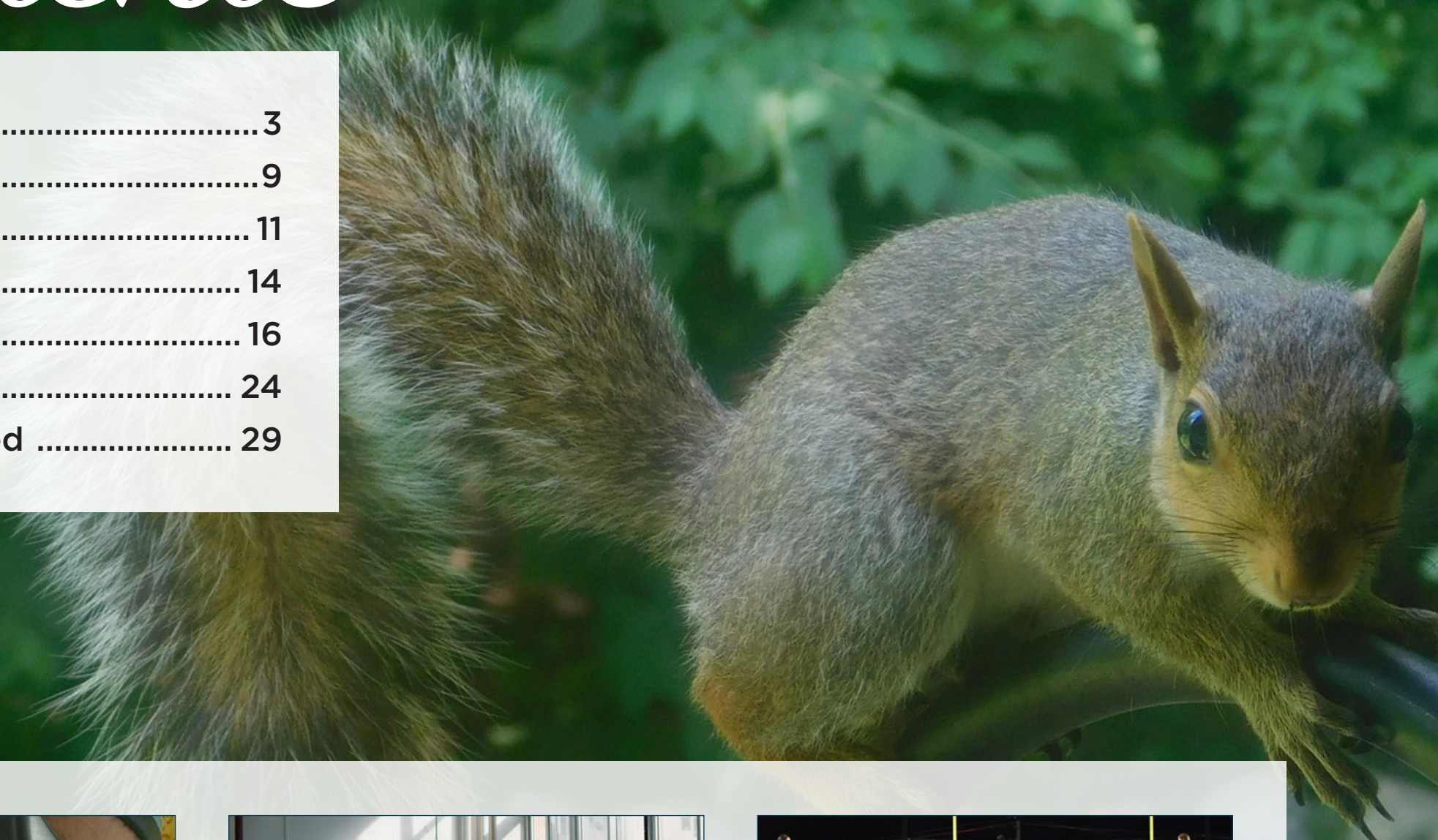
photo link: Delaware Art Museum

Catherine A. Fusco Grand Hall



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Lyme Disease Documentary



Want to Better Understand Your Child's Test Scores?



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Community

TOWN SQUARE LIVE



LYME DISEASE DOCUMENTARY, EVENT SET FRIDAY AT SCREENING ROOM

BY BETSY PRICE

When Delaware native Gregg Kirk’s health declined sharply in 2002, he embarked on a years-long medical journey to deal with Lyme disease and the ramifications of it. Kirk, who now lives in Connecticut, will be back in Delaware Friday, Aug. 11, for a special event he hopes will help those coping with Lyme disease, as well as their family and friends.

The centerpiece of a movie showing, discussion panel and book-signing at The Screening Room at 1313 is the film “The Quiet Epidemic: As Close as Your Backyard.” A documentary that’s been winning awards at festivals across the country, it was made by one of Kirk’s friends.

Kirk has two central messages.

One point is that while Lyme disease is strongly associated with tick bites, it also can be spread by spiders and other biting bugs. The other point is that many

people are able to shake the symptoms of the bacteria-caused disease with a blast of antibiotics, but Kirk is among those who have had to cope with co-infections and other problems that he finally was able to shake with both traditional medicine and herbal remedies.

He’s not alone in advocating people get checked for Lyme disease. Singer/Actor Kris Kristofferson was diagnosed with dementia before tests showed he was suffering from Lyme disease. Model Bella Hadid has been all over social media in the past week talking about her lengthy battle with Lyme disease. Justin Bieber, Avril Lavigne, Kelly Osbourne and Shania Twain are among others who have come forward to talk about Lyme disease and treatment.

Tickets to the Friday screening are \$10 and include a 6 p.m. meet-and-greet cocktail hour, 7 p.m. movie, 8:45

p.m. Q&A/panel discussion, book signings by Kirk and Fred Diamond and treatment giveaways by **Nutramedix (Cowden Protocol)** & **CellCore**.

A tick biologist from the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control will be on hand to talk about how to avoid ticks and how to remove them.

KIRK’S LYME JOURNEY

Kirk, whose father worked for du Pont, was born in Delaware and grew up here until his dad was transferred to Iowa. Kirk went to high school there, but returned to the First State to earn a degree in English education from the University of Delaware. He spent a couple of years teaching at Christiana High School, but decided that wasn’t for him.

Kirk founded and published “Big Shout Magazine,” which he sold in in 1996 before going to work for *The News Journal* where he helped launch Delaware Online. He remembers those days as exciting.

He moved to Connecticut in 1999 to work in New York City-area media. It was there that he contracted Lyme disease, which was discovered in the 1970s in Lyme, Connecticut.

The advocate says he was one of the many patients who don’t get Lyme disease from a tick bite or have a bullseye reaction to a bite that’s considered a specific marker for exposure. He believes he was bitten by a spider in his own bed at home. Kirk’s main symptom wasn’t a headache and fatigue. It was becoming ill whenever he ate.

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SAINT MARK'S INSPIRING CAREERS IN GAMING WITH ESPORTS CENTER

BY JAREK RUTZ

Video games are no longer just a source of entertainment, but a multibillion dollar industry that is becoming increasingly ingrained in schools with some students clamoring to pursue a career in the field.

“Almost everyone in the world is connected to a video game somehow, on their mobile phone or on their console,” said Chris Ruffini, esports manager at [Saint Mark's High School](#). “A lot of people say they're not a gamer, but you could probably find them playing Candy Crush or Wordle on their phone or something like that.”

Saint Mark's is one of the first schools in Delaware to create an esports program, as they unveiled their state-of-the-art esports center and began competing this past

school year. There are about 20 students on the varsity team that compete and around 50 that participate in the club. More are expected to join as the program develops and more schools start to adopt esports.

Kareem Ward, a student Saint Mark's, wants to pursue a career in game writing. Many video games have a storyline and plot to it, as well as pre-programmed scenes and Ward would be responsible for putting that all together.

“There are things that you don't think of as careers in video games, but like writing dialogue, a lot of people don't realize there's literally thousands of people that do that for a living where they just write dialogue,” Ruffini said. “These words aren't just made up when you play a

game, like the cutscenes in Call of Duty—people write that.”

SAINT MARK'S ESPORTS SCHEDULE

Ruffini used plenty of analogies to football when describing the esports program. The team has a three-week preseason followed by about 10 weeks of competition. It's split between Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays with the team of 20 divided into smaller groups that compete on the corresponding day. Each day is a different game and participants lock themselves into that game for the semester—or season—but can switch to a different game the following season.

This past semester, the team was divided into four games: Mario Kart, Super Smash Bros., Overwatch 2 and Valorant. Ruffini said the teams are locked into their specific game for a semester because just like a quarterback, if someone is missing, the whole team suffers. The team also studies film to prepare for their next match.

“In the club, a day will mostly consist of after school practice where the teams will get together and work on their game, which includes reviewing their videos to see mistakes they might have made, or what they did well to start doing more,” said Ethan McIntire, president of Saint Mark's esports club.

He wants to work with computers in some capacity as a career, perhaps designing video games, he said.

“Computers have always fascinated me and the things that you can do with them,” he said.

Members of the club typically spend a couple hours after school in the esports center. They usually spend some time in the games' practice modes, and then run different scenarios.

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DELAWARE ART MUSEUM: NEW RESIDENCY BRIDGES PAST AND PRESENT

BY JAREK RUTZ

From now until Aug. 13, the [Delaware Art Museum](#) is partnering with contemporary visual artist Charles Edward Williams and the [Wilmington Alliance](#) for an artist residency focused on linking history with the present.

“We are thrilled to welcome Charles back to the Delaware Art Museum for this inaugural residency,” said Margaret Winslow, chief curator and curator of contemporary art for the museum. “Charles excels at weaving history and social justice together to create powerful imagery.”

Much like Williams’s own art practice, which he describes as, “excavating history, taking the past and bringing it into the present,” this new residency builds on the Delaware Art Museum’s previous partnership

with the artist and established commitment to uplifting local community voices in the arts.

The museum invites the public to contribute to Williams’s artwork for the residency by visiting the [Art-O-Mat](#) on Aug. 4, 7 and 8. Wilmington Alliance’s Art-O-Mat, which opened a few weeks ago, is located on the corner of 7th and Washington Street. The former liquor store and laundromat is now a multi-use space benefiting the residents of West Center City with art programs, art exhibits, meetings and community workshops.

Created in August 2019, the Wilmington Alliance partners with community, civic and business leaders to prioritize the city’s highest needs to drive economic opportunity and social vitality.

Williams’s residency echoes his own artistic practice of “excavating history, taking the past and bringing it into the present.” He continues his excavation of history and undertakes one of his largest projects to date, using multicolored wax and black paint to reinterpret the famous 1940s photo “Negro Boys on Easter Morning,” shot by Russell Lee. The effect will mimic the “magic” scratch pads kids use to create rainbow art.

“[The work] is designed to evoke the nostalgia of childhood, while taking inspiration from the local community he’s hoping to reach,” said Zoe Akoto, education initiatives coordinator for the museum.

Residents of the West Center City neighborhood and museum community members are invited to visit the community space and participate in creating the multi-colored wax layer of the project. Williams hopes to have young members of the Wilmington community play an active part in creating the work.

“My interest in having teens and kids involved in this residency stems from my own passion for teaching and inspiring students to pursue creative arts—not simply as a pastime, but as something you can build your life around,” Williams said.

A professor of drawing and painting at North Carolina Central University, Williams said “there are career paths in the arts and I want to model that for them.”

Williams earned a BFA from Savannah College of Art and Design in Georgia and an MFA from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

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FAITHFUL FRIENDS: 50% MORE PETS SAVED IN FOUR YEARS WITH NEW HQ

BY JAREK RUTZ

Faithful Friends Animal Society is hoping to have the capacity to save 25% more animals in the next two years with its new headquarters, its founder said after a ribbon-cutting ceremony July 2.

“When we started Faithful Friends [in 2000], publicly-funded shelters in Delaware had a 90 percent kill rate, and today, Delaware is one of just three no-kill states in the country,” said Jane Pierantozzi, founder and executive director of the animal welfare nonprofit.

The organization moved from its previous location at 12 Germy Drive in Wilmington to 165 Airport Road in New Castle.

“We have space for about 65 dogs and about 200 cats and kittens, plus our foster care system which we support is another 300 animals,” Pierantozzi said. “We hope that the lifesaving will increase by 25% in two years because of the new location...and hopefully a 50%

increase in four years.” Based on the current numbers of animals being helped by the shelter, Faithful Friends wants to expand its services to about 140 more animals in the next two years and 280 more in the next four.

One challenge the shelter is facing, she said, is a slowdown in dog adoptions across the country, which she says is largely because of the struggling economy.

The shelter has an annual operating budget of \$3.9 million. “We rely on individual donors mainly for running this facility,” Pierantozzi said.

Construction on the new \$11 million facility began in May 2017 and was supposed to be done in 2021, but delays were inevitable with the pandemic. Through the legislature’s Bond Bill, the shelter received about \$1.4 million from the state over a few separate allocations for the new headquarters.

During the ceremony, three pet owners who adopted

from Faithful Friends shared their stories on the importance of saving animals and how their pets have become an integral part of their families.

One was a police officer, Rick Jones, in Pennsylvania who trained his adopted dog to become a certified police dog. He said his dog Jack is the first rescue police K-9 in Pennsylvania and he predicted that more rescue dogs will become members of the police force.

“Pets are essential to human mental health and sometimes physical health,” said New Castle County Executive Matt Meyer, who is running for governor next year. “This piece of land makes a tremendous statement about the values of our community.”

Among a slew of gratitude for individual and group donors, construction workers, designers and more, Board President Bob Wasserbach thanked Colonial School District for gifting the land to the shelter.

Some of what Faithful Friends has done since its inception to protect animals in Delaware include:

- Working with state officials on Delaware’s first spay/neuter legislation, which created a public spay/neuter fund for pet owners on public assistance and required all shelters to spay/neuter pets before adoption.
- Opening Delaware’s first free pet food and supply bank, which became a model for other organizations throughout the state.
- Leading the creation of Delaware’s Animal Shelter Standards Law, which overhauled how shelters manage animals that are in their care and required shelters to publish their animal outcomes.

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PLEIN AIR ARTISTS DESCEND ON HAGLEY FOR A DAY OF PAINTING

BY BETSY PRICE

On July 2, plein air artist **Denise McDaniel** was scoping out just the right setting for her work at Hagley Museum and Library. Location is key, said McDaniel, a Columbus, NJ, resident who was part of 50 artists with the American Impressionist Society visiting Hagley and Winterthur Museum, Gardens and Library this week as part of their 24th Annual National Juried Exhibition.

The national exhibition, on display at **Somerville Manning Gallery** just up the road from Hagley, rotates through states including Colorado, Utah and New York.

Plein air painters are dedicated to painting directly from life, usually landscapes and nature scenes.

“Finding the right place to paint is actually one of the biggest parts of my art,” McDaniel said. “One of the reasons I love plein air is I love to work inside my sub-

ject. I will frequently walk around for hours and look at things from all different angles. I also take photographs and try to pick out the best composition.”

McDaniel and the other painters are free to choose their locations, but Hagley did help by sending out a map of the site of the property with potential scenic locations marked.

Katie Dobson Cundiff of Sarasota, FL, said she was looking for strong contrast with light, shapes and color. “That’s how I design my work, by the light and shadow shapes,” she waid. “I just walk around and look...Today is kind of an overcast day so the light is more even and there’s less light, but you can still find contrasting color.”

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EPA PUBLIC NOTICE

EPA to Host Community Meeting EAST BASIN ROAD GROUNDWATER SUPERFUND SITE

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will host an in-person public meeting on Tuesday, August 22, 2023 at the Route 9 Library and Innovation Center from 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Participants may attend the meeting in person, online, or via phone. To attend online or via phone, please visit the East Basin Road Groundwater website listed below for instructions on how to join. This meeting will provide residents with an overview of EPA’s community involvement resources and the development of the East Basin Road Groundwater Superfund Site’s Community Involvement Plan.

To access site information, please visit:

www.epa.gov/superfund/eastbasin

To access the QR codes above, please open the camera app on your smartphone. Move your camera so the QR code is in the frame and able to be scanned. Hold the device steady until the camera app can read the code

For questions, please contact:

John Brakeall, EPA Community Involvement Coordinator
215-814-5537 or brakeall.john@epa.gov



photo link: Longwood Gardens



Business

TOWN SQUARE LIVE



AVELO TO ANNOUNCE SERVICE EXPANSION

BY BETSY PRICE

Where will Avelo Airlines go next?

We'll know Thursday when the airline makes an announcement about two new tropical destinations from the Wilmington Airport.

The airline now serves the airport with two Boeing Next-Generation 737-800 aircraft, with nonstop flights to 13 destinations in five Southeast states.

Avelo officials will gather with Delaware politicians and Delaware River and Bay Authority representatives at 10 a.m. Thursday at the airport to announce where the airline will be flying next.

Guesses on social media include Cancun, Puerto Rico and St. Thomas.



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photo by Engin Akyurt / Pexels



Food & Dining

TOWN SQUARE LIVE



BY PAM GEORGE

There are no dog days when it comes to dining in Delaware. For instance, the state's brewing scene is hopping, and there are plenty of opportunities to sip new wines. A festival will showcase a dinner created by television competition winners and a well-liked brewery is closing.

Meanwhile, a local favorite has overhauled its menu, and Mission BBQ is finally open in north Wilmington.

IRON HILL REVAMPS MENU

Iron Hill Brewery & Restaurant, which has three Delaware locations, has overhauled its menu. Since opening in 1996, the restaurant chain has emphasized food and beer equally. The new menu, which has more than 30 new items and returning hits, is designed to unite

NEW IRON HILL MENU; LE CAV WINE DINNERS; MISSION BBQ OPENS

the two—the food enhances the beer and vice versa.

Consider peel-and-eat shrimp with Vienna Red Lager, one of 19 dishes incorporating an Iron Hill beer. Others include calamari with sriracha IPA ranch and pretzel-crusted salmon with IPA mustard. Don't worry, the Philly cheesesteak rolls are still on the menu.

A health selection category includes the ever-popular black bean burger, which is under 500 calories.

Iron Hill also introduced a brunch menu on Saturday and Sunday until 2 p.m. in all Iron Hill locations. Iron Hill also has restaurants in Pennsylvania, New Jersey and North Carolina.

LE CAV WINE DINNERS

Le Cavalier in the Hotel du Pont, the French brasserie led by chef-partner Tyler Akin, is hosting two wine dinners in August to celebrate summer.

On Wednesday, Aug. 23, at 7 p.m., Le Cav will partner with **Swigg**, **SIW Vegetable Farm**, and **Ouro Wines** to highlight the Brandywine River Valley's end-of-season bounty. The five-course dinner will feature such dishes as stracciatella with grilled peach, confit tomato and Bigorra ham; gnudi with blue crab, corn consommé and fresh chickpeas; and profiteroles with sweet corn gelato and blueberry compote.

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BORO: NEW CAFÉ BRINGS TASTE OF EUROPE TO TALLEYVILLE



BY BETSY PRICE

Colin Dyckman and his wife, Kendal Reynolds, arrived in Italy just in time for a heat wave. “Like the natives, we just strolled from gelateria to gelateria,” he recalled.

Spooning the silky frozen confection was a sweet alternative to sipping alcoholic beverages—and the experience was just as relaxing, he maintained.

“It allows people to chill, literally,” Dyckman said of eating what Italians simply call “ice cream.” “You can’t eat gelato and be angry at the same time; it’s physically impossible.”

Brandywine Hundred residents can see for themselves at **Boro Café** in Talleyville, which Dyckman opened on July 7. The menu includes more than gelato, which has more milk than American ice cream. For instance, the

café serves scones, cookies, salads, sandwiches and quiche. But around Labor Day, the café’s lunch and dinner menu should be in full swing to highlight Dyckman’s impressive pedigree.

THE CALL TO COOK

To be sure, the Delaware County native knows his way around a commercial kitchen. He cooked in restaurants to pay for his tuition at Drexel University, where he studied political science.

“I wanted to join the foreign service, but I took the exam three times and failed it miserably three times,” he said.

He excelled, however, at cooking. So, he earned a degree at The Restaurant School at Walnut Hill College and spent 18 years working in Philadelphia-area restau-

rants, including the Wayne Hotel with Jean-Francois Taquet and Cuvee Notredame, which specialized in Belgian cuisine.

Dyckman’s wife is a Chadds Ford native who’s worked in the Wilmington area, so the couple moved south.

The chef helped open the short-lived Vault in downtown Wilmington and worked at The Gables in Chadds Ford. He also worked in a Key West establishment.

Not all his work was in restaurants. For 20 years, he had many jobs with Costco, including positions at the King of Prussia, Christiana and Concord stores. But the pull of the restaurant industry kept tugging at this imagination, and the trip to Italy was the spark.

BORO’S FLAVORS OF EUROPE

Boro is a teeny tiny municipality in Italy and Boro Café occupies a nook in **The Concord**, the new live-work-play community from **The Buccini/Pollin Group**. **El Camino Mexican Kitchen** and **Taverna**, owned by Platinum Dining Group, are Boro’s neighbors. Like those restaurants, Boro also fronts Silverside Road. There are 36 seats inside and 24 on the doublewide sidewalk.

Dyckman hopes the restaurants’ customers will impulsively stop for a sweet dessert or after-dinner drink on their way to their cars. (A liquor license is in the works.) Meanwhile, breakfast bowls, smoothies and coffees should attract members of the gym on the building’s opposite side.

Dyckman is broadening his breakfast and lunch items, and as the menu expands to include dinner, expect dishes with French, Italian and Swiss flair.

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photo link: Town of Middletown, DE



Government

TOWN SQUARE LIVE



DELDOT SEEKS BIDS TO BUILD ELECTRIC CHARGING STATIONS

BY BETSY PRICE

The Delaware Department of Transportation is now accepting bids for the construction, operation and maintenance of electric vehicle charging stations along Route 13, Route 113, Route 1 and Interstate 95. The new direct-current charging

stations must be located within one mile of these roads with no more than 50 miles between each location, the DelDOT press release said.

The state’s primary goal is to ensure that affordable, reliable and consistent electric vehicle charging reaches every Delawarean as these vehicles become more prevalent, a DelDOT press release said.

David T. Stevenson, director of the Center for Energy & Environmental Policy, doesn’t think the new stations are needed.

“The US Department of Energy has an Alternate Fuel website that allows a calculation of how many public chargers are needed by state based on how many EVs are in the state,” he said. “Delaware has enough chargers for the few existing in the state.”

There are currently more than 10,000 electric vehicles registered in the state, but many are not private vehicles.

“A free market would build chargers to meet demand if it existed,” Stevenson said. “The current Delaware Administration is determined to shove these expensive vehicles down our throats.”

The Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control is finalizing regulations that will mean that fewer and fewer gas-powered vehicles are available for sale in Delaware, until none are in 2035.

If huge government subsidies disappeared, almost no one would buy an EV, Stevenson said.

“Even with the subsidies nationwide, EVs on lot inventory is approaching a 100-day supply when normal stocking is about 30 days,” he said. “Polls show 60% to 85% of Delawareans do not want gas powered car bans. State policies should follow that obvious public mandate.”

The state’s request for proposal for the charging station construction notes that the state has successfully administered two DC fast-charging grant programs already using money from the Volkswagen emission scam settlement. The construction of the new charging stations will be paid for by \$17.5 million that Delaware expects to get over five years from the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Plan.

Referred to as NEVI, the plan is part of President Joe Biden’s Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and is designed to put half a million new charging stations along major travel routes across the country.

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Education

TOWN SQUARE LIVE

HIGHEST, LOWEST TEST SCORES NOT AVAILABLE IN STATE DATA...YET

BY JAREK RUTZ

Despite the data on state test scores being released Tuesday, parents might not be able to see how their child's school is performing. The [Department of Education](#)'s data release shows that just 40% of students in grades three through eight meet grade level expectations in English language arts and 32% of students in that grade range scored at or above their grade's proficiency level in math.

However, the [dataset](#) on student assessment performance in the [Delaware Open Data](#) portal does not show proficiency rates at the school level. That information is listed as "redacted," which means it's been removed for publication in the case of the dataset for 2023 state assessments. Not even the schools have it yet, said one Delaware school district superintendent.

According to the Department of Education, if the proficiency rate is lower than 5% or higher than 95%, it's redacted for student privacy. This policy has been in place for at least 15 years, according to Alison May, the department's public information officer.

The lack of information makes it impossible to compare individual school performance. Last year, though, 20 schools across the state had single-digit proficiency rates in either English language arts or math. Eighteen of the schools were single-digit in math, while two were in English language arts.



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Wilmington Friends  School

BAQIR CONTINUES TO CHALLENGE UD VIDEO, STUDENT ARREST STORY

BY JAREK RUTZ

A member of the Christina School board is making sure an incident involving **University of Delaware** police arresting Mohammed Sanogo on his graduation night is not swept under the rug. In a board meeting Tuesday night, member Naveed Baqir, who has been leading the charge in ensuring Sanogo gets justice and in holding UD police accountable, once again brought up the June 15 arrest.

BODYCAM FOOTAGE

In late July, UD finally released a video of the incident which included bodycam footage from multiple police officers involved. The university reiterated that its police officers acted appropriately in addressing behavior that posed a risk to public safety, using appropriate de-escalation techniques.

Baqir called UD's **video** "carefully crafted and edited," and had problems with their **official account** of what took place.

"The first eight minutes of the video, you see only one car and that is a car not owned by this student, not driven by this student, this student was nowhere near that car for eight minutes," he said Tuesday. "Their focus on that particular car makes me believe that they are trying to connect the actions of another person to justify the arrest of [Sanogo] which is an absolute falsehood."

He pointed out that UD has stated that a car was driving through the parking lot carelessly with multiple passengers having their feet out the window.

"All I can see is that there was one person hanging out of the window of that particular car, but that was not Mohammed's car," he said. "It was not Mohammed hanging out of the window and it was not Mohammed driving that car."

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CHRISTINA FIRST TO OK EXTENSION OF WLC PLANNING PERIOD

BY JAREK RUTZ

Christina School District’s board on Tuesday became the first to vote to extend the planning period for the Wilmington Learning Collaborative. Planning was supposed to have ended with the 2022-23 school year, but because it took a longer time than expected for the 15-person governing council to form, find an executive director and get school assessments moving, the board asked for an additional planning year.

Christina, Brandywine and **Red Clay** school districts are the three that make up the **Wilmington Learning Collaborative**, which is focused on improving social and academic outcomes for city students across nine elementary schools in Wilmington.

All three districts must approve the amendment. Red Clay is expected to vote on it in its Aug.16 board meeting, followed by Brandywine being the final vote in its Aug. 21 meeting.

Laura Burgos, chosen as the Collaborative’s first executive director, spoke at the meeting. She officially signed her \$170,000 contract Monday and attended the board meeting Tuesday night.

“This is my first meeting so I’m carefully taking notes and seeking to better understand the priorities, aspirations and concerns of the community,” Burgos said. “I look forward to leading the charge of the council and certainly accelerating teaching and learning outcomes for our students.”

Christina’s board president Don Patton, who sits on the collaborative’s governing council, said the extended planning period gives Burgos the opportunity to gain some foundational knowledge of the community and the challenges that it faces.

The collaborative was created in November 2022 and the council wasn’t filled until February 2023. With Burgos not starting in her role until this week, the collaborative lost about 10 months of its initial planning year.

“It’s going to be a challenge for her but everybody’s up to it,” Patton said, “she’s up to that challenge.”

If the boards of Red Clay and Brandywine approve the amendment, the collaborative will use the 2023-2024 school year as a planning year.



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child is academically successful?*





BANCROFT SCHOOL'S NEW NAME MAY BE MAURICE PRITCHETT SR. ACADEMY

BY JAREK RUTZ

The first new school in Wilmington in 50 years is expected to officially receive its highly anticipated naming in September. The board announced Tuesday that the naming committee's final recommendation for what is now known as **Bancroft School** is Maurice Pritchett Sr. Academy, in honor of a former Bancroft principal. On Sept. 12, Christina's school board will officially vote on the committee's recommendation, members announced Monday night.

The \$84 million school in the Christina School District will cover several blocks in Wilmington and is expected to open for students by fall 2024. An eight-person committee of stakeholders, including a parent, school principal LaChante Collier-Bacon and a teacher, was tasked with coming up with a name for the school.

At a May 25 topping-off ceremony, Gov. John Carney suggested naming the new building the Maurice Pritchett School, after the principal of the Bancroft School from 1975 to 2005. Pritchett died in April.

"Of all the leaders who've worked to improve the lives of the children on the East Side...Mr. Pritchett was on top of that list," said Christina Superintendent Dan Shelton during the topping-off event.

The public had until July 14 to submit name recommendations to the naming committee.

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“
We saw a boost in website referrals from Delaware LIVE during our admission season.
”
 - URSULINE ACADEMY

URSULINE ACADEMY

REGISTER TO ATTEND A FALL OPEN HOUSE!

Upper School | October 3
 Lower & Middle | November 11

WANT TO BETTER UNDERSTAND YOUR CHILD'S TEST SCORES? HERE'S HELP

BY BETSY PRICE

If you are a parent of a school-aged child and worried about your child's test results, make an appointment with your principal to discuss them. Don't contact the child's teacher or school counselor, said Theresa Bennett, director of the Delaware Department of Education's Office of Assessment.

"Each school is different in how they handle you know parent concerns," she said. "Sometimes the principal wants to have that conversation, depending, I think, on what grade the students are in. I know when I've had a concern with my own child, I've talked to the principal first and the principal then had a meeting with some of the teachers and the principal so we could all have a conversation."

Parents likely have been receiving reports in the mail about their children in the last week or two, with different subjects—language arts, math and science—arriving on different days, along with material about how to learn more about the results.

This is the last year parents will receive the information in the mail, Bennett said. Next year parents will be asked to go online to see the results, which will enable them to see scores more quickly instead of having to wait until the end of the summer.

"We're one of the last states that are still sending them home. We were told we're behind the times by our own parents because they use home access and they have for years," Bennett said. "Students don't get printed report cards any more. They go on home access and get the report. So we're trying to get with the times, per se."

The Department of Education on Tuesday released aggregate state testing results, which were mostly dismal.

TESTING INFO

State officials stress that standardized testing is only one measure of a student's success. Other measures include grades in school, mastery of class assignments and district assessments. The standardized scores can be an indicator of a child's readiness for the next grade.

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CHILL OUT

SCHOOL TEST SCORES DISMAL AGAIN DESPITE NEW MATH, READING PLANS

BY JAREK RUTZ

There was little cheering news Tuesday when Delaware released its 2023 state assessment results. The numbers are still grim, with the majority of students across the board failing to reach proficiency in math and reading.

“I can’t imagine anyone looking at these test results and saying they are good enough,” said Julia Keleher, the new executive director of [First State Educate](#), a Delaware education advocacy group. “Education is about more than test scores, but these scores present a troubling picture that is inconsistent with our aspirations for Delaware’s young people.”

In English language arts, 40% of students in grades three through eight scored at or above their grade’s proficiency level, a decrease of 2% from last year. Scores among those grades in math increased 2% from last year, with a rise to 32% from 30% of students scoring proficient.

Rep. Ruth Briggs King, R-Georgetown and a member of the House Education Committee, said the test results are very sad.

“They try to spin the report, but fail to highlight the dismal performance,” she said. “Chronic absence from students and faculty worsen the situation.”

Officials from the [Department of Education](#) acknowledged Tuesday that the scores are not where they need to be.

“We’re still looking to make significant improvements in those scores,” said Michael Saylor, director of educator excellence at the department. “We’re in no way content with the current scores.”

The data for those grade levels is based on the state-administered Smarter Balanced Assessment, an end-of-the-year summative test that measures the abilities of students in grades three through eight in math and

reading. The scores have four achievement levels: 1 means the student does not meet standards, 2 indicates a student nearly meets standards, 3 means the student meets standards and 4 means the student “exceeds standards.”

“Delaware educators are dedicated, passionate professionals who work hard, but the results signal the need for change,” Keleher said. “If we keep doing what we’ve always done, we won’t get different results.”

The state shares a collective responsibility for student outcomes, she said, and First State Educate is focused on helping parents and community members engage with Delaware’s educators and political leaders to ensure schools consistently produce better outcomes.

“We must come together and collaboratively seek new solutions for our students,” she said.

Delaware’s high school students take the SAT to test their overall learning. The First State is one of eight that gives the SATs to all 11th graders, saving college-bound students the cost of paying for the test. Giving the test to all students, though, lowers the statewide averages, compared to states where only college-bound students take the test.

This year, 44% of Delaware students scored proficient or higher on the reading test, a drop of 3% from last year. Just 23% of high schoolers scored proficient or higher in math, a decrease of 1% from 2022. On the essay test, 42% scored proficient or higher, which was a 4% improvement from last year.

The Department of Education has consistently pointed to classroom disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic as a major cause of the low test scores. But even before that, most students did not reach the proficient level.

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TIPS FOR PARENTS TO GET CHILDREN READY TO RETURN TO SCHOOL

BY JAREK RUTZ

Most of the 19 school districts in the First State kick off their academic year the week of August 28 and there are several ways families can ensure their children have a smooth transition back to the classroom.

“Parents should slowly start to wean their kids back to go to bed earlier so they wake up early,” said Bridget Amory, superintendent of **Milford School District**. “That helps ensure we aren’t dealing with tardiness and they wake up with enough rest and can be excited and not tired to go to school.” She pointed out that research shows it often takes a minimum of 21 days or more to establish new habits.

“Therefore, there is no better time than the present for our families to begin preparing for the upcoming school year as it will be upon us before we know it,” she said.

Jennifer Massotti, who’s a mother of four and a Milford school board member, said establishing a back-to-school routine can set a predictable and familiar environment for students.

“As a parent, establishing a routine before school can be challenging,” she said. “Don’t give up and be consistent.” She agreed with Amory that sleep is vital to a student’s success.

“Getting enough sleep is very important, and having the appropriate number of hours is very important for our health,” she said. “A proper night’s sleep allows our body’s cells to repair. The **CDC** states that children and adolescents who do not get enough sleep have a higher risk of obesity, diabetes, injuries, poor mental health and problems with attention and behavior.”

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Sports

TOWN SQUARE LIVE



A LOOK AT DMA'S FUSCO MEMORIAL STADIUM

BY NICK HALLIDAY

Delaware Military Academy (DMA) has one of the most intense football stadiums in the state. Fusco Memorial Stadium was donated to the school by majority donor Tony Fusco. Ever since its existence the stadium has been nothing less than a great place to take in a game.

Walking in, you are greeted by the DMA parents checking tickets, working the concessions and cooking on the grill to provide delicious food for fans. Once you enter, the field opens up to the left with an open area where fans love to corral as the home team's locker room is located right in the gathering area.

Fans and parents have a chance to interact with the Seahawks football players. It is a popular spot in the beginning, halftime and the end of the games.

As you enter the home stands it gets extremely intense, with the student section to your left and the cheerlead-

ers to your right on the sideline of the field and the band straight in front of you a little further down the stands.

The students are always out in droves filling the stands and are very enthusiastic. They have theme nights in almost every game that are different, but one that stood out to me was the "Whiteout" game as the group of students were all decked out in white.

The cheerleaders are right there with them as it seems almost as if the stands are over the field. DMA's cheerleading squad is one of the largest and most enthusiastic in the state. They are right in the game with the players since the sideline is so tight it seems to create a crowd feeling with both players and cheerleaders in a tight area.

Just as the sideline seems crowded, so do the stands. There is almost never an empty seat in the large home-

stands, with fans and the band. You will see fans lining the fence around the stadium as well as lining the steps leading up to the press box. They also have fans who tailgate on the far left side of the stadium who line the black iron fence. All the fans are always decked out in their DMA football gear which seems to be plentiful since they are covered head to toe in it.

The opposing teams are sent to the other side of the stadium as soon as they enter, which is a great idea so they don't have to walk through the large home crowd. The opposing stands are not as large as the home stands, so it can get tight over in the darker side of the stadium which lines up near I-95 and the railroad.

The opposing side is an intimidating place to watch a game since you do have to deal with the road noise and a locomotive once in a while, as well as looking at the packed home stands. However, opposing teams always show up because it always seems to be a competitive game and they like to take down DMA since the Seahawks have had consistent success over the years.

Fusco Stadium all in all is a great place to be on a Friday night in the fall. The stadium is in great shape as well as the turf. The atmosphere is very competitive but it is also very inviting if that sounds feasible. Even though the home fans outnumber the opposing fans, there's never any tension between the two.

On the field, that's a different story as you can always expect a competitive game with some sort of chippiness to it, the kind that makes the game fun though.



SATURDAY FOOTBALL AT ARCHMERE'S COACHES FIELD

BY JASON WINCHELL

The next stadium in the Delaware Live stadium series takes us to Claymont, where the 2021 2A champions play. Coaches field on the campus of Archmere Academy is a great place to catch a Saturday football game in the fall.

The multipurpose turf field is located on a beautiful campus that has bleachers on both sides and a hill on the home side where a lot of spectators enjoy the view of the field. The smell of the burgers and hot dogs from the grill you can smell from the field and the little shed that hosts the snack bar is packed with fans.

The team comes out to the field to “Shipping up from Boston” with the cheerleaders cheering them on. As the road team takes the field, the intimidation factor is there as the crazy student section of the Auks cheering on the home team.

The Auks had a 17-game winning streak snapped there last fall, but have won 25 of 28 games since 2017.

The Auks played their first two games and the last two games of the 2023 season at Coaches Field. They host 1A St. Elizabeth to open the season, then face 3A Saint Mark’s the following week. Mount takes the short ride up Philadelphia Pike on Oct. 14, for the Auks’ homecoming.

The Auks host the new district rival Odessa on Nov. 4, before hosting the defending 2A champions and the team that ended the 17-game winning streak, Wilmington Friends, on the Nov. 11.

Those five teams’ fans coming to visit this fall, get there early if you want a parking spot in the lot before they start parking in the neighborhood. After the game if you are hungry, do yourself a favor and stop in to Claymont steak shop.



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DAVID BAYLOR NAMED NEW DIAA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

BY NICK HALLIDAY



David Baylor, a former state trooper, was appointed DIAA's new executive director July 17.

Born and raised in Wilmington, he graduated from Saint Mark's High School before he entered the U.S. Navy. After leaving the military he spent 23 years with the Dela-

Bear YMCA, the Delaware Mentor Program and the Delaware Crime Stoppers Board.

Since he has been in office, Baylor said he's learning how everything works. "It's like starting anywhere new," he said.

When asked what he's liked so far about the position, Baylor said, "I am excited about the relationships with the athletic directors, coaches and principals of the schools so we can come together as one unit."

ware State Police.

Baylor said the job intrigued him.

"I worked up and down the state in a couple of different roles including when I was a state trooper," he said "I thought it would be a good opportunity to help make things better for the student-athletes in our state."

Baylor spent years working closely with the Blue Hen football team, especially with freshmen and new student-athletes, in the areas of community service, personal development, leadership, and social responsibility.

He recently served as director of consumer affairs at N-K-S Distributors where he worked with educational institutions at all levels in the area of alcohol awareness and education and the prevention of underage drinking.

He also has served as a member of the boards of the Catholic Youth Organization, Saint Mark's High School,



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ODESSA DUCKS STADIUM THE NEWEST IN THE STATE

BY JASON WINCHELL

Today I'm looking at the newest football program that enjoys playing at their home stadium. The stadium has some great seating and great sightlines and the atmosphere in the stadium is great. The stands seem right on top of the field but there is plenty of sideline room. The team enters through the crowd to "Enter Sandman" as their ever growing student section sings the song. The team running through the middle of the fans absolutely electrifies the home team stands and is one of the best entrances in high school football throughout the state.

Hardcore Odessa football fans have the option to also purchase a membership to the Touchdown Club. The Touchdown Club offers eight different levels to meet different needs and budgets. The Club offers preferred

parking, seating, meals and even a game day gift. If you are an Odessa fan this club is a great option. It helps support the team by funding, but also becomes a tax deduction for the fan. It is clearly the best option to have a premier time while attending home games for the Ducks.

The turf field is in great shape and the cheerleaders will keep you entertained during stoppage of plays. They always seem to have a theme night and have done a good job of getting crowds to come and enjoy Friday night football. One of the newer nights this year will be their first Senior Night. The Ducks moved up 2A this year and will host Tower Hill on Oct. 27. It will be their chance to start their own Senior Night traditions.



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The Ducks home schedule this fall is a great one this year, so if it fits your schedule head to Odessa and enjoy the atmosphere. They welcome 3A Appoquinimink on Sept. 8 and they host defending 2A champion Friends on Oct. 13. These two games will be their toughest home games of their short existence.

The Odessa Ducks stadium and the whole campus is a great place to catch some Friday night football. It starts early as you arrive at the campus to great views and plenty of parking. The smell is great as they got the grills going with some great food. I would definitely get there early and take a tour of the campus as it reminds me of a college campus.



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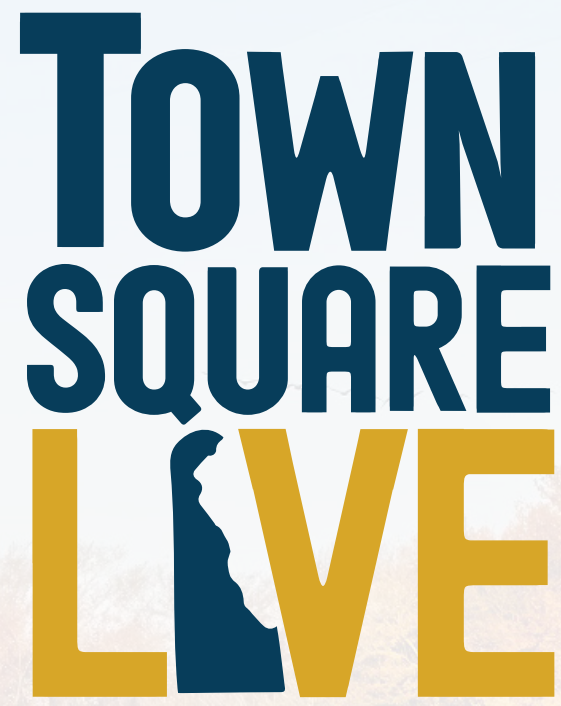
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