

# TOWN SQUARE LIVE

 Town Square LIVE

 @TownSquareLive

**SUBSCRIBE**

**November 16, 2023**

**Vol. 4, Issue 46**





# Contents

- Community ..... 3
- Business ..... 7
- Food & Dining ..... 11
- Government ..... 15
- Education..... 18
- Sports ..... 25
- Stay Connected ..... 29



Black Friday Shoppers and Tanger Outlets



Appo Referendum Dec. 12



Delmar Beats Newark Charter



# Community

TOWN SQUARE LIVE







# ON THIS DAY OF CHRISTMAS: HOLIDAY EVENTS TO MARK ON YOUR CALENDAR

BY KEN MAMMARELLA

Here are some memorable events to celebrate Christmas in Delaware. These events run only a day or two. There's a separate list of events that run more often.

**Caroling on the Circle and the Georgetown Christmas Parade:** Caroling at 6 p.m. Dec. 7, followed by the tree lighting and parade at 7. Main stage in front of the Sussex County Courthouse on the circle in downtown Georgetown. The singalong started in 1984 and is run by the county; the parade started in 1989 and is run by the Greater Georgetown Chamber of Commerce.

**Caroling on The Green:** 5:15 p.m. Dec. 6 on The Green in downtown Dover.

**Christmas in Odessa:** Self-guided walking tour of homes and public buildings, decorated for the holidays. Plus tea and cookies, musicians, singalong and Santa.

Basic admission \$30, with discounts for advance purchases and children. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Dec. 2, downtown Odessa.

**Claymont Christmas Parade:** Decorated vehicles and the decoration of the Christmas Weed. 10 a.m. Dec. 2 along Philadelphia Pike, from Maple Lane Elementary to Darley Road.

**Dashing Through Downtown Dover Parade:** 6:30 p.m. Dec. 16, Loockerman Street, downtown Dover.

**Harrington Christmas Parade:** 7 p.m. Dec. 1, downtown Harrington. Organized by the city.

**Holiday House Tour of Lewes:** Tour of 10 decorated homes in Lewes. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Dec. 2. A Lewes Historical Society event for 50 years. \$35.

**Lewes Christmas Parade:** The 91st annual event is organized by the city and Lewes Chamber of Commerce and features bands and floats. 5 p.m. Dec. 2, Lewes.

**Light Up the Square:** Tree lighting at 6 p.m. Dec. 5 in Rodney Square, 10th and Market Streets, includes sing-along, performances by the 287th Army Band, Jea Street Jr., Rachel Schain and Orisha Watson. Plus appearances by Santa Claus and Rudolph, free refreshments, children's book giveaway and face painting. Pre-party starts at 4:30 at DE.CO Food Hall 111 W. 10th St., with music by Son of Sinatra.

**Milton Christmas Parade:** Organized by the Milton Volunteer Fire Company. 6 p.m. Dec. 6, Milton.

**Rehoboth Beach Tree Lighting and Holiday Singalong:** Music by Cape Brass ensemble at 6 p.m. Nov. 24, singalong at 6:30. Rehoboth Beach bandstand, end of Rehoboth Avenue.

**Rehoboth Beach Christmas Parade:** 6 p.m. Dec. 4, organized by the Rehoboth Beach Volunteer Fire Company in downtown Rehoboth, with a party afterwards at the Rehoboth Beach Volunteer Fire Station Museum.

**Rockwood Park and Mansion:** Holiday open house includes self-guided tours of the decorated mansion, plus Santa, crafts, entertainers, costumed characters and mounted patrol. Free admission. 5-9 p.m. Dec. 1-2. The grounds of the New Castle County park are also lit up during the season. 4651 Washington St., North Wilmington.

**Seaford Christmas Parade:** 7 p.m. Dec. 2, with the theme "the magic of Christmas" in downtown Seaford Sponsored by the Downtown Seaford Association.

[CLICK TO READ MORE](#)





# FESTIVAL OF TREES STARTS FRIDAY IN NEW CASTLE; DEC. 1 IN MILFORD

BY BETSY PRICE

Delaware Hospice elves will be scurrying around Brantwyn Estate this week ahead of the opening Friday of the 36th **New Castle County Festival of Trees**. Downstate, an entirely different group of dedicated volunteers are heading into final stretch of preparation for **Kent & Sussex County Festival of Trees** at the Delaware Hospice Center in Milford.

Proceeds from both benefit Delaware Hospice programs up and down the state. The events make money off the sponsorship for trees, sales of home decor such as wreaths and table centerpieces and food and entertaining items.

Here's a look at some items from previous years, but not this year. The New Castle County one won't be put up until Wednesday and Thursday.

The trees are decorated by volunteers in different themes, including one featuring snow white doves, each

representing a Delaware Hospice patient who died during the year.

The home decor and food are handmade by volunteers, who try to appeal to a variety of tastes so everybody who visits the free event can find something they want to take home.

The New Castle County festival runs Friday, Nov. 17, at the Brantwyn Estate at 600 Rockland Road, Wilmington. The Kent & Sussex County Festival of Trees will run Friday, Dec. 1, through Sunday, Dec. 3, at the Hospice Center at 100 Patriots Way, Milford. The doors will be open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday; 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday; and noon to 4 p.m. Sunday.



DELAWARECAN

# DID YOU KNOW?

Only **34%** of Delaware students can read on grade level.

[CLICK HERE to see how your school measures up.](#)





# FIRE TRUCKS GOING TO HELP SUSSEX COMPANY PELTED WITH ROCKS

BY BETSY PRICE

Several fire trucks responding Monday to help the Greenwood Volunteer Fire Co. were damaged by people throwing rocks at them, the Ellendale Fire Co. said in a Facebook post.

It said two of its three Ellendale trucks were damaged, including broken windows, in the area of Market Street and the Greenwood Post Office in Greenwood. Trucks belonging to three other fire companies also were hit with rocks, the post said.

It asked anyone with information about the rock throwing to contact Greenwood Police Department at 302-349-4822, the post asked.

Commenters on the post said they were shocked and particularly saddened that violence would be aimed at first responders.

One suggested that whoever started the fire at 12655 First Street probably was throwing the rocks.

“Please don’t think that all residents of Greenwood are like this,” wrote Fonda Swartzentruber. “We are actually good people.”



NOVEMBER 16 2023 SHE'S GOT GAME CHASE CENTER ON THE RIVERFRONT KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Join Us!

GUEST SPEAKER SARAH JENKINS WOMEN'S BASKETBALL HEAD COACH UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE

CHRIS RAWAK DIRECTOR OF ATHLETICS, COMMUNITY, AND CAMPAIGN RECREATION, UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE

EXPAND YOUR NETWORK. EMPOWER YOUR WORKPLACE. BUILD CONNECTIONS AMONG AN INTERGENERATIONAL GROUP.

- ✓ LEVEL UP YOUR PERSONAL BRAND
- ✓ BUILDING THE BENCH
- ✓ HOW TO WORK WITH PEOPLE YOU DON'T LIKE
- ✓ ADVANCING WOMEN IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP
- ✓ INSPIRE YOUR TEAM WITH GREAT COACHING

FEMALE LEADER OF THE YEAR AWARD IMPACT AWARD YOUNG WOMAN PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR AWARD STUDENT LEADERSHIP AWARD

DR. COLLEEN PERRY KEITH GOLDY W. AUSTIN COLLEGE, PRESIDENT ASHLEY CHRISTOPHER JESON HIGH PERFORMANCE CENTER, COACH RAYCHEL SHANNON UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE, COACH SCOTTE ROUSSEAU HUNTER DONNELL SCHOOL, HEAD COACH

CITY Fare

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED (302) 293-0008

ON MEALS WHEELS DELAWARE

TWO HOURS TO BRING A SMILE



photo link: Visit Delaware



*Business*

**TOWN SQUARE LIVE**





## BLACK FRIDAY SHOPPERS WILL FIND TANGER OUTLETS DIVERSIFYING

BY KATIE KAZIMIR

Turkey dinner and pumpkin pie aren't the only Thanksgiving traditions for Sue Hall of Hummelstown, PA. Once the holiday dishes have been washed, she and four female relatives will make their annual pilgrimage to Delaware's shopping mecca, the **Tanger outlets** at Rehoboth Beach.

They will be among the hundreds to descend on the beaches with a singular mission in mind: Finding the best Black Friday deals they can find.

"I get 95 percent of my Christmas shopping done that week and it's tax free," Hall said.

The biggest draw for Hall, her daughter, niece and two sisters, though, is the variety of stores along the two-mile stretch of Rehoboth Beach's Coastal Highway. This year, Hall and her fellow shoppers will find they have some new stores to explore, including some that are not outlets.

### TANGER ADDITIONS

The Rehoboth Beach has added Ulta Beauty, Salt Life and Huk in the last year. Marketing Director Michele Doucette said shoppers also will find a mix of local hyperlocal retail brands at the centers, including Super Fanz, Fur Baby Pet Boutique and Coffee Rendezbrew.

The new non-outlet stores not only will appeal to a variety of niches, but also keep the space in the shopping centers occupied as outlet shopping suffers from online competition.

The additions extend beyond shopping venues. Diversifying Tanger's portfolio of outlet offerings nationwide and establishing their open-air style shopping centers as community gathering places were main objectives in Tanger's 2023 strategic plan.

"These new stores expand options for our shoppers in the popular beauty and lifestyle categories, a key prior-

ity for Tanger as we continue to elevate the retail experience and bring more diversification to the center," Doucette said.

This past spring, Tanger also added a Microtel Inn & Suites by Wyndham Rehoboth Beach. "The first hotel affiliate in the Tanger portfolio offers guests additional amenities to make their visit with us even more memorable," Doucette said.

Jab & Flow, a boxing studio that opened in early summer, grew the shopping center operator's portfolio even more.

Michelle Rawley of Smyrna said the outlets are a place she also shares quality time with her loved ones, even when the calendar isn't heading into the holidays.

"I love going with friends and family," she said. "I used to love to take my niece back-to-school shopping when she (was younger) and would...visit from Philly."

Rawley, a realtor with Bryan Realty Group, said she also enjoys shopping before or after appointments near the beach, but has been known to make the 55-mile drive just to shop. Becoming a new mother left her with less time to do that. "I prefer in store shopping for myself so I can see and feel the clothing," she said. That's a tangible experience online shopping can't provide, she said.

The outlets also benefit her as a realtor because they are a great selling point for southern Delaware home buyers. "My clients love them," she said.

[CLICK TO READ MORE](#)



# WILMINGTON CONTINUES TO SEE WEAK DEMAND FOR OFFICE SPACE

BY PETER OSBORNE

Weaker demand for Wilmington office space coupled with rising interest rates and continuing corporate cost-cutting efforts is painting a dismal picture for the immediate future, according to a new [3Q 2023 Office Market Overview](#) by Newmark.

“Chief financial officers are looking at their remote and hybrid workers and thinking they can cut costs by downsizing,” said Newmark Senior Managing Director Wills Elliman.

Downtown’s vacancy rate of 31.3% particularly shocked him when he first reviewed the raw data, he said. “But are they cutting costs at the expense of the culture and soul of the firm? How do you advance in your career if you never see people—except behind a screen?” Elliman said. “There’s so much good about an office—conversation, collaboration and collegiality—that’s being lost.

“One of the reasons we’ll go back to the office is especially young people...they’re worried about their jobs. They have FOMAP: Fear Of Missing A Promotion.”

Elliman said the Wilmington Central Business District Class A market having 1.4 million square feet of available office space against a base of 4.6 million square feet base is completely out of bounds for where a normal office market should be.

“You normally see vacancy rates in the low teens when a market is in balance and landlords can gamble with concessions such as free rent and tenant improvements to entice tenants,” Elliman said.

“Landlords would love to have you, but the rising costs to upfit the space and higher interest rates can push rates from the mid-\$20s to the mid-\$30s” per square foot to make deals pencil out.

Wilmington’s downtown vacancy rate has steadily increased since the onset of the pandemic. Other statistics from the report include:

- Wilmington South (New Castle, Bear, Glasgow, Newark, etc.) had the biggest block of vacant space in the Wilmington MSA at 739,000 square feet.
- Wilmington West (Greenville, Hockessin, Pike Creek, etc.) had the lowest vacancy rate at 6.8%.
- Wilmington North (Highlands through Claymont) had the highest average Class A average asking rent at \$31.33, compared with the lowest Class A rate vs the lowest in Wilmington South at \$23.36 per square foot.

## OFFICE SPACE GIVEBACKS

Footprint reductions and space givebacks by some of the area’s largest office-using employers such as Capital One have created a large void difficult to backfill in a period of weaker office demand. There has only been one lease over 100,000 square feet completed in the past five years in downtown and that was the renewal for a law firm, with 133,000 square feet. Therefore, there was no associated absorption. Absorption is the rate at which commercial space is sold, leased or vacated over a specific period in a given market, described as positive or negative.

While that was happening, eight vacant blocks of space of at least 80,000 square feet were added to the downtown inventory. Those eight blocks combine to total more than 1.2 MSF of negative absorption.

[CLICK TO READ MORE](#)





**WE PROVIDE** *big support*  
**FOR** *small businesses.*

 **Delaware**  
DIVISION OF SMALL BUSINESS  
[business.delaware.gov](http://business.delaware.gov)

# TOWN SQUARE LIVE

*Let us build your marketing team!*

Develop a strategy. Implement interactive platforms and get your name out there for all to see!

## LOCAL BUSINESS EXPOSURE!

Effectively expand customer reach & exposure!



## LOCAL BUSINESS EXPOSURE!

enhance community engagement and interaction



## LOCAL BUSINESS EXPOSURE!



generate sales, customer retention and loyalty



*it's more than just advertising-  
it grows your business!*

Contact Bryan Shupe  
302-542-9231  
[Bryan@MilfordLive.com](mailto:Bryan@MilfordLive.com)





photo link: Visit Delaware

# Food & Dining

TOWN SQUARE LIVE







## REVISITING HEIRLOOM IN LEWES, JUST IN TIME FOR HOLIDAY SEASON

BY BETSY PRICE

When **Heirloom** opened in 2015, some wondered if Lewes could support a fine-dining, farm-to-table concept. The town rolls up the streets by 10 p.m., even in summer, and Rehoboth Beach had claimed culinary bragging rights.

Not only did Heirloom prove them wrong, but Meghan Lee's restaurant remains fresh and inventive. Clearly, customers haven't suffered from a seven-year itch.

Indeed, although Heirloom has good company—**Lewes Oyster House**, **Bramble & Brine at The Buttery** and **Harbour at Canal Square**—it remains one of the most eagerly sought reservations in town. And if you're look-

ing for a restaurant that will impress out-of-town guests this holiday season, Heirloom checks all the boxes.

### A DREAM REALIZED

The Lewes restaurant on Savannah Road is in a white Victorian built in 1899. However, the elegant façade did not shape Lee's concept, which incorporates vintage china and botanical prints. The Chadds Ford-area native had dreamed of owning a restaurant since she was 22, after starting her career in her teens, and she'd created her business plan years before buying the house.

The University of Lynchburg graduate cut her teeth working at Sovana Bistro in Kennett Square and later

moved to Talula's Table in Philadelphia, where she was the opening manager. She also spent time in Nantucket establishments. Her heart, however, was in Lewes, where she'd summured as a child. Rehoboth was never an option for Heirloom and despite the Victorian's poor condition, she knew it was the right site.

### MAKING A HOUSE A HOME

The house at Savannah Road and Third Street was built for dentist J.B. Robinson from a catalog design, but it's hard now to imagine it as anything but Heirloom.

After Lee settled on the property in December 2014, workers added a kitchen and expanded the front for restrooms. They left the Victorian woodwork—and charm—intact. The entrance hall gives guests a peek at the nest of dining rooms beyond, including the front dining room's angled fireplace. The bar is tucked into a room that opens into the foyer and a back dining room. Throughout the space, hardwood floors gleam.

In warm weather, many guests sit outside on the brick patio overlooking the Zwaanendael Museum, a view that firmly places you in the state's first town. But it was 7:45 p.m. when we arrived, and the back dining room was fine for our table of four.

### A SEASON OF FLAVOR

Heirloom has always switched the menu with the seasons; autumn was evident during our visit. For instance, a blushing rectangle of steak tartare (\$22), studded with cornichons and shallots, rested on a drizzle of maple gastrique. It was dressed with bacon fat-Dijon dressing and served with house-made rippled potato chips.

[CLICK TO READ MORE](#)





# HERE'S WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE BRANDYWINE RESTAURANT

BY PAM GEORGE

Nothing gets Wilmington residents quite as excited as a new restaurant—unless it’s a celebrity sighting. I recently experienced both thrills on one evening.

**The Brandywine Restaurant** at 2000 Pennsylvania Ave., which many call “the old Michael Christopher’s building,” had an invitation-only preview and Brent Celek, a former Philadelphia Eagles tight end, was in attendance. I don’t follow sports, so I relied on a friend to fill me in and Celek graciously posed for photos with his enthusiastic fan.

However, I follow restaurants and I am as giddy about the eatery as my friend was about Celek.

The Brandywine Restaurant officially opens to the public on Tuesday, Nov. 14, and Bill Irvin, a partner at Snuff Mill Restaurant, Butchery & Wine Bar in Independence Mall, is the owner. Not surprisingly, expectations are high, and here’s a peek at what to expect.

## THE 21ST-CENTURY BRANDYWINE

Despite the name, The Brandywine Restaurant has no connection to the wainscoted Brandywine Room in the other than the shared salute to the river and valley that define this area. There are no Andrew Wyeth paintings on the new eatery’s walls. Instead, cranes fly across salmon-colored wallpaper from Asia, European mirrors and a barrel ceiling painted a metallic shade of steel blue.

It’s a narrow room with just over 40 seats until outdoor dining is available. Suffice it to say that you’ll get cozy with your neighbors. For more elbow room, consider the underlit bar stretching down one side of the room that boasts handsome tweed-covered chairs. A banquette runs down the other side and the tufted back has a mid-century modern vibe, as do the drum shades on the pendant lights.

Between the appointments and the dining room’s size, I felt like I was in the dining car of the Orient Express in the late 1930s. But there’s also a Parisian bistro sensibility, complete with white table linens and custom-made French napkins featuring a fox with glasses, a restaurant mascot. In short, the place shimmers with retro glamor.

## DREAM TEAM

It’s a sumptuous space thanks to **Stephen Mottola**, a well-known realtor with a flair for design. To be sure, Irvin—a hospitality veteran who previously worked for Ruth’s Chris Steak House and Phillips Seafood Restaurant group—has a knack for finding good, local talent. Consider that Robert Lhulier is his partner at Snuff Mill and a consultant for the new project.

For The Brandywine, Irvin recruited Chris Unruh, who has decades of area experience and previously worked for **Bardea Food & Drink** and **Bardea Steak**. Unruh handles the beverage program. Glennon Travis, the general manager, comes to Delaware from the Hamptons and he’s opened Soho Houses in the United States and abroad. The front-of-the-house crew is polished, no easy feat given the shortage of industry workers. Chef Andrew Cini, a native Delawarean, has worked in Philadelphia and fine-dining establishments in Wilmington.

Irvin drew inspiration for the restaurant from the upscale eateries of the past, including posh lunch spots in tony department stores. It was up to Cini and Lhulier to turn that vision into a menu—or “Bill of Fare.”

[CLICK TO READ MORE](#)





## MEXICAN RESTAURANTS, AVONDALE CLOSURE, THANKSGIVING IN/OUT

BY PAM GEORGE

Delaware can't get enough of Mexican restaurants, or so it seems. Along with the new spots listed below, more are reportedly on the way.

And First State families are also eager to reduce Thanksgiving stress.

The number of places offering to-go and in-restaurant dining keeps growing, and we've added some to the list.

### NEW MEXICAN RESTAURANT RUNDOWN

**Roja & Verde Taqueria** is up and running next to Drip Café at 60 N. College Ave. in Newark. Greg Vogeley owns both. The new restaurant's signature dishes include gordita—spicy masa cake stuffed with chicken, queso fresco, pico de gallo, cilantro, shredded lettuce and sour cream—and tamales, which are corn husk-wrapped masa cakes packed with salsa verde and either chicken or peppers and onions.

The restaurant has counter service and limited seating, and a scene-setting mural by **Kent Krech**.

**Taco Reho's** Middletown location—the former Steak & Shake—at 100 Sandhill Drive quietly opened and like the original Rehoboth Beach restaurant, a former Burger King, there is a drive-thru, although it's not always open. The second restaurant, however, has a more extensive bar.

The chipotle-and-tomato-braised chicken tinga filling is perhaps the most popular and you can get burritos or bowls. The concept is the brainchild of Billy Lucas, who once catered for touring musical acts. As a result, the concept sports a rock 'n' roll theme and has a Southern California vibe—it's best not to compare it to a mom-and-pop taqueria.


[CLICK TO READ MORE](#)



## Good for the heart and soul

Nothing brings families together like a delicious meal.

Locally owned and operated for more than 25 years, **Kenny Family Shoprites** are delighted to nourish our Delaware community!

 @kennyfamstores



  kennyfamilystores



photo link: City of Newark, Delaware



*Government*

**TOWN SQUARE LIVE**





# SENATE REPUBLICANS ASK CARNEY TO OUST AG SEC. MICHAEL SCUSE

BY BETSY PRICE

Six Delaware State **Senate Republicans** on Nov. 9 asked Gov. John Carney to immediately remove Delaware Agriculture Secretary Michael Scuse following an ethics report that said he violated state bidding processes.

The **Public Integrity Commission** released a report saying Scuse improperly used \$100,000 in taxpayer money to employees of the department to house seized farm animals without public notice or a public bidding process, said a statement from six Republicans.

One employee, referred to as “her” in the report, took in nearly 500 chickens rescued from an alleged neglect case. That employee was paid over \$90,000 for boarding the birds but none survived beyond 30 days.

Contracts involving existing employees are supposed to be open to public bidding if they are for more than \$2,000, the commission said. The commission employees had exclusive access to the contracts with the department they already worked for.

A state deputy attorney general advised the secretary not to pay his employees to house the animals, but Scuse did it anyway, the statement said. This was all discovered only after complaints were made to the integrity commission, it said.

“This behavior and apparent nepotism are unacceptable and further sows the seeds of public mistrust of its government,” said Republican leader Gerald Hocker, R-Ocean View; Republican Whip Brian Pettyjohn, R-Georgetown; Sen. Dave Lawson, R-Marydel; Sen. Bryant Richardson, R-Seaford; Sen. David Wilson, R-Lincoln; and Sen. Eric Buckson, R-Dover.

“Agriculture is Delaware’s number one economic industry and it is vital that the department overseeing it has the trust of those within the industry,” their statement said. “Quotes in media reports from those interviewed and personal conversations we have had with farmers display a great level of concern with the DDA



**Garrett B. Lyons** D.D.S., P.A.  
Cosmetic & Family Dentistry  
*Where extra is ordinary*  
Montchanin, DE • 302.654.1765

and its current leadership.

“We urge you to take immediate action and remove Secretary Scuse from his position.”

The commission held a closed-door meeting July 24 to weigh the validity of the complaints. Minutes of the meeting made public in September show that the Commission substantiated the allegations against at least three Delaware state employees for taking state funds not associated with their government roles.

The employee who took on the 500 chickens received checks in the amount of \$74,410 and \$15,655, respectively, for contracted services outside the employee’s official responsibilities.





# FOUR-YEAR GANG PROSECUTION ENDS WITH 100% CONVICTION RATE

BY BETSY PRICE

Twenty people have been convicted on charges of murder, shooting and other felonies following a four-year prosecution of a Wilmington gang that resulted in a 100% conviction rate. The push helped reduce the number of shootings in Delaware 30% since 2020, according to a statement from the [Delaware Department of Justice](#).

In essence, the press release said, the [Wilmington Police Department](#) and state Attorney General's office went undefeated in the efforts to convict every one of the 20 members of MGS—"M-Block Grimy Savages"—and reduce the loss of life in the city. The defendants were given more than 100 years of confirmed prison time and several defendants yet to be sentenced face

multiple potential life sentences.

"This is an exclamation point on a case that our team has lived and breathed for more than four years," said Attorney General Kathleen Jennings. "These gang members are responsible for unthinkable violence in our city, for losses of lives that can never be restored, and for the pain and suffering of the victims' families and every city resident who has borne the cost of gun violence."

Wilmington Police Chief Wilfredo Campos called the results "nothing short of remarkable." He said it encompassed four murders, a six-person shooting incident, six additional shooting incidents, a robbery and a number of gun offenses.

"This investigation has undoubtedly saved lives and prevented shootings and other violent crime, and we hope that this serves as a strong reminder to others engaged in gun violence in our community that we will not stop until they are held accountable," he said.

The state's case against MGS began in September 2019 as an effort to address gang violence in Wilmington through a newly formed task force, which consisted of personnel from the Delaware Department of Justice, U.S. Department of Justice, Wilmington Police Department, the ATF and the FBI. Traces on crime guns recovered in and around Wilmington helped the Task Force identify MGS as a major driver of violence in Wilmington.

The ensuing investigation identified 19 defendants—17 adults and two juveniles—involved with MGS or aligned gangs and numerous violent felonies, as well as a non-MGS member who contracted a Dover killing.

The crimes included the killings of Shiheem Durham, Naithan Grzybowski, Tommier Dendy and Eddie Green; a six-victim mass shooting at the intersection of 10th and Pine Streets in April 2019; six additional shooting cases; a robbery; and numerous gun offenses.

The 20th member to be convicted was Dante Robinson, 22. He was found guilty of Murder 2nd degree, gang participation, conspiracy 1st degree, and conspiracy 2nd degree and faces 15 years to life at sentencing.

[CLICK TO READ MORE](#)



photo credit: Christina School District



*Education*

TOWN SQUARE LIVE



REFERENDUM

YES

# APPO REFERENDUM DEC. 12; WOULD INCREASE TAXES \$435 YEARLY

BY JAREK RUTZ

Appoquinimink School District residents will have the opportunity to vote for or against a tax increase via a referendum on Tuesday, Dec. 12. In its board meeting Tuesday night, Superintendent Matthew Burrows explained the revenue would be put towards a bus lot, educator recruiting and retention efforts, technology and safety initiatives. He said the referendum is divided into a capital piece and an operational piece.

Just like other districts going through referendum have stated, Burrows repeated that the growth of the district has led to district expenses outpacing district revenue.

“We’re over 13,000 kids, almost 2,000 employees and we have 21 school buildings,” Burrows said. “We are the fastest growing school district in the state. Our growth surpasses any other school district, but with that we’re

in a unique situation here in New Castle County because our property assessment values are the lowest in the county.”

In the past five years, Appo has grown 17% and Burrows said the district is projected to have an increase of about 20,000 more residents over the next decade. The average property assessment value in the district is \$92,000. If the referendum is successful, the average homeowner would have their taxes increased by \$36 a month, or \$435 per year.

“A district to the north of us, which is not even 500 students greater than we are, brings in about \$90 million of local revenue, where we bring in about \$37 million in local revenue,” Burrows said, “and that’s who we’re competing against for teachers and for resources.”

[CLICK TO READ MORE](#)



Inspire. Dream. Achieve.



*Are you a parent to a current 4th or 5th grader?*

The Independence School’s unique Middle School curriculum helps students build their foundations to be exceptional citizens and leaders.

**Scan the QR code to learn more!**



[TheIndependenceSchool.org](http://TheIndependenceSchool.org) • 302.239.0332



# BRANDYWINE BOARD SPLIT ABOUT TRANSITION TO YOUTUBE

BY JAREK RUTZ

Some debate ensued in **Brandywine School District's** board meeting Monday night as members weighed whether creating a better viewing platform for audience members is worth limiting public participation.

While the majority of school districts in Delaware have a virtual option for their monthly board meetings, most of them operate through Zoom. There are often technical difficulties and if a parent misses the meeting, they have to wait days—sometimes weeks—for the recording to be uploaded to the district page.

Some districts, though, like **Red Clay** and **Colonial**, livestream their board meetings on YouTube. Not only does this allow students to gain some media skills, but Youtube automatically saves and publishes the live feed. Instead of being a separate recording file from Zoom that the district then has to upload later, the video of the

meeting is immediately available. That allows a busy parent who can't tune in to board meetings which usually run from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. or later, to watch it as soon as they have the chance rather than waiting several days to find out what happened.

“Anything we can do to bring our meetings to the public in a high quality format is to our advantage,” said Ralph Ackerman. He said content sharing such as powerpoint presentations is much better on YouTube. “I would love to see the quality that YouTube can bring to our board board meetings and to bring that to our public,” he said.

Monday's meeting demonstrated the problems that can occur during live streaming. The first 20 minutes or so were mute for those tuning in virtually because of audio difficulties on the Zoom meeting.

DCSN Delaware Charter Schools Network

## School Choice is Open!

The families of 18,455 students made the charter school choice for the 23/24 School Year! Next year's choice window is open through Jan 10, 2024.

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

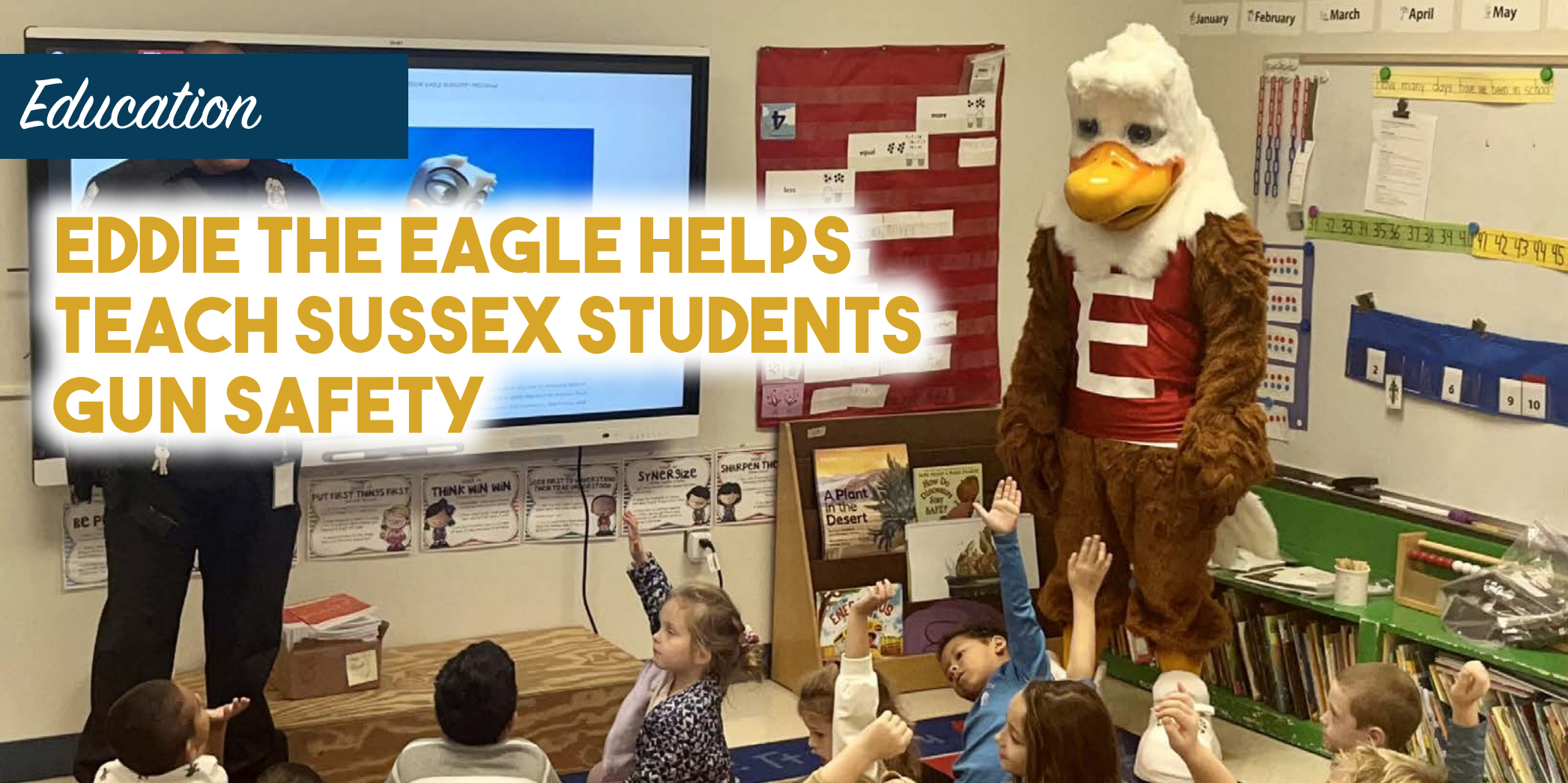
Board member Kimberly Stock was concerned that students would not be able to stay engaged, which is a huge goal, because certain websites are blocked on their district-issued Chromebooks. Other board members confirmed that YouTube is not blocked and students could still view the meetings in school and on their laptops if the district leaves Zoom.

The board was split on whether to move to a new platform, with those opposed worrying about virtual attendees not being able to comment or speak, defeating the purpose of an open public forum. Those for the move pointed out there's usually only a few, at most, virtual comments each meeting. The majority are in person.

[CLICK TO READ MORE](#)



# EDDIE THE EAGLE HELPS TEACH SUSSEX STUDENTS GUN SAFETY



BY JAREK RUTZ

Eddie the Eagle swooped into **Lord Baltimore Elementary School** in Ocean View Tuesday to help teach children about gun safety. Lord Baltimore, part of the **Indian River School District**, started teaching gun safety to students last year and the program has taken flight. Now every class in the school, kindergarten through fifth grade, attends the presentation, which lasts about 20 minutes.

“We wanted to bring some type of safety program into the school for the kids because unfortunately, accidental shootings...is one of the leading causes of severe injury or death in elementary kids,” said Officer Rhys Bradshaw of the **Ocean View Police Department**.

Bradshaw is the school resource officer at Lord Baltimore.

Many people incorrectly assume that teaching gun safety is teaching children how to safely use guns, he said. This is far from the truth, he stressed. Gun safety presentations like his explain how to act in a situation where one unexpectedly finds or comes into contact with a firearm.

It was a lively class Tuesday. The students ran up to hug Eddie the Eagle, the mascot for the national program.

Bradshaw asked the class of kindergarteners basic safety questions such as what they do when they get into a car, or what they put on when riding a bike. After the

**DELAWARE LIVE**  
OUR STATE. OUR NEWS. OUR HOME.

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

- URSULINE ACADEMY

students shouted out “seatbelt” and “helmet,” Bradshaw showed them an eight-minute animated video. The video featured playful young birds who were hanging out on the basketball courts when they stumbled upon a backpack with a gun in it.

One of the characters said, “I dare you to touch it,” while another suggested taking the backpack to her mom, who would know what to do.

Bradshaw explained that those were two big no-no’s. It’s never okay for a child to be touching a gun or carrying a gun to their parents, he said.

[CLICK TO READ MORE](#)



## GET TO KNOW THE STATE'S EDUCATION ADVOCACY GROUPS

BY JAREK RUTZ

Delaware pours billions of dollars into education each year, only to receive stressful news like some of the lowest standardized test scores in the country. A number of Delaware nonprofits devoted to improving education in the state want to see more impact for the state in jobs, test scores and another areas.

Some have specific focuses such as encouraging more public participation in school boards. Others have broader interests that range from classroom matters to helping grads find good jobs for life.

Here's a look at some of the most active groups; Rodel, DelawareCAN, First State Educate, Literacy Delaware and the Caesar Rodney Institute for Education Excellence. This list omits groups such as the Redding Consortium for Educational Equity and the Wilmington Learning Collaborative, both of which were created by

state government to focus on specific areas.

**Rodel**, founded: 1999

**Leadership:** Paul Herdman is the president and chief executive officer.

**Mission:** Rodel's mission is to strengthen Delaware's public education system and workforce by connecting partners to advance and implement sustainable solutions.

**Vision:** An excellent and equitable public education system that supports all Delawareans to achieve success in school and life.

**Employees:** 13 full-time employees. The **Tech Council of Delaware** is an LLC under Rodel so the three staff that work there are officially Rodel staff as well.

**Operating budget and funding:** Core expenses last year were about \$2.4 million. Rodel raised about \$5 million from a mix of national, federal and local resources,

and about \$500,000 from Rodel's endowment. While no longer a traditional grantmaking foundation, it gave about \$3 million in subgrants and contracts to the state last year.

**Immediate goals/actions:** Rodel has four priorities: strengthening career pathways for students; modernizing Delaware's school funding system; improving the early care and education landscape/serving more families with deeper state investments; and ensuring Delaware has a robust, well-trained, diverse teacher workforce.

**Accomplishments:**

- Helped secure over \$300 million in federal, national and local dollars to support Delaware schools and students.
- Has been the backbone organization for the **Vision Coalition**, one of the longest standing public-private coalitions working to improve public education in the nation.
- Worked to build Delaware's nationally recognized career pathways effort from just 27 students in one pathway in 2014 to the system we have today with over 20 pathways and over 30,000 students.
- Worked with the Department of Education and district partners to bring the pathways work to the middle school level. Rodel has been a partner with the state and districts to support the state's "Grow Your Own" strategy when it comes to building a strong and diverse teaching force.
- Has been a leader in the coalition that has been advancing the work to ensure the state's earliest learners get the funding and support they need.

[CLICK TO READ MORE](#)



# SCHOOL CHOICE

## HERE'S WHAT PARENTS SAY DEALING WITH SCHOOL CHOICE IS LIKE

BY JAREK RUTZ

As Mia McIntyre navigates her first rodeo of school choice for her daughter, she's found it fairly easy, but with some surprisingly stressful points in Delaware's process. Xavia Davis finds the process burdensome and said she was treated rudely by district employees who seemed entitled to know why she wanted to choice her children away from the district. Nicole Kowal, a teacher at **Providence Creek Academy** in Clayton, also thinks the process isn't easy.

"But I don't think it was as cumbersome for me as it would be for a lot of parents who don't work in a school setting," she said.

Working your way through the state's school choice system is an annual tradition for thousands of Delaware parents trying to get their children into one of Delaware's 200-plus public schools they think will most benefit them. At least, they say, parents are no longer

required to fill out forms and deliver them to schools they'd like to choice into. Now the entire process is **online**.

The window for school choice is from Nov. 6 to Jan. 10, 2024. First, though, parents must register their children for the school they are assigned to through their district's feeder pattern. Many parents question the need for that when they have no intention of sending their child to that school and several parents said it allows the home district to grill them about why they are choicing out.

Parents also find it irritating that it's hard to track when schools have open houses or information nights. McIntyre was stunned to find out that some schools do it at the start of a new school year, rather than waiting until October or November.

[CLICK TO READ MORE](#)



URSULINE

November 10th  
Lower & Middle School Open House  
Upper School Shadow Days in  
November & December

Mark your calendar & register today! Private tours also available.

18 SERV



FIRST STATE ACTION FUND

**New School Year.  
New Teacher.  
New Chance to Learn.**

*Ask Your Child's Teacher:*  
How can you and I ensure that my child is academically successful?



# TRANSPORTATION REPORT COMING, ASKS MORE DRIVER PAY, BENEFITS

BY JAREK RUTZ

The Public School Transportation Committee once again said it would recommend a raise in bus driver salaries, along with measures for bus safety and security, insurance and benefits. The 13-person committee's purpose is to make yearly suggestions by April 1 for improvements related to the state transportation formula.

In Monday's committee meeting, the group confirmed again it wants bus drivers to make \$25 an hour, up from the state standard of \$22.50. This recommendation has already been suggested by the Public Education Compensation Committee. The compensation committee was charged with evaluating educator pay and making recommendations that would keep workers from abandoning Delaware for more lucrative jobs in Maryland and New Jersey.

"I would say maybe put a pin in salaries until the governor's recommended budget comes out in January,"

said Kim Klein, who is the associate secretary of operations support for the [Delaware Department of Education](#). "Because if he puts forth a plan to get \$25 an hour then it wouldn't make sense to include it."

If the state adapts the suggestion, it will cost Delaware just under \$4.4 million. Because the state funds 90% of Delaware educator's pay, local districts will pay \$484,734.78 collectively.

Kelly Shahan, manager of transportation at [Red Clay Consolidated School District](#), brought up safety and security on buses. Several committee members pointed out that safety concerns and lack of disciplinary consequences for students misbehaving on buses is a deterrent for bus drivers, which adds to the shortage.

Shahan recommended having evaluations of transportation yards, which will help detect potential threats. For example, some districts have been hit with catalytic

converter thieves, who might hop or cut through the fence of a bus yard to steal the parts. This creates operational and financial challenges to districts.

Schools should consider investing in cameras for all buses, two-way radios, GPS, student-tracking systems to ensure safety, she said, acknowledging that Red Clay is in a fortunate position of being such a large district and able to afford these safety features.

Red Clay uses an app that scans each student onto the bus, so the driver can be sure all his or her assigned students have entered the bus, are accounted for and are ready to go to school or return home.

There were also suggestions to offer more benefits, such as healthcare, dental and vision to all bus drivers, whether they work for a district or a private contractor. In previous meetings, some committee members called for benefits and increases in pay for other transportation workers, such as bus aids and mechanics.

There were also some requests to evaluate the idea of the state potentially paying more for insurance for buses below the C&D Canal. The average insurance this year for a bus last year was \$3,031.44 south of the canal, but the state funds \$2,104 per bus. [The Delaware School Bus Contractors Association](#) has asked for that gap to be filled, especially with insurance costs rising pretty regularly.

"We expect to see a tightening of funds available this year," Klein said, adding there's a lot of competing demands for a limited pool of state funds.

[CLICK TO READ MORE](#)



photo credit: Nick Halliday



*Sports*

**TOWN SQUARE LIVE**





## DELMAR BEATS NEWARK CHARTER FOR EIGHTH STRAIGHT CHAMPIONSHIP

BY SHANNON TIMMONS

Fans were treated to a great day of championship field hockey from Rullo Stadium on the campus of the University of Delaware. The weather was fantastic and fans packed the stadium as the Division 2 finals, No. 1 Newark Charter vs. No. 2 Delmar faced off at noon and the Division 1 finals No. 1 Smyrna vs. No. 2 Cape Henlopen got started a little after 2 p.m. It was a day where the second-seeded teams would both prevail and upset the number ones to claim their spot as the 2023 DIAA state champions.

Newark Charter, in its home white uniforms, starkly contrasted by Delmar in its away navy uniforms, a tournament sight I haven't seen before as Delmar usually is the one seed. In first quarter action, Delmar wasted no time settling into its game plan and creating havoc for the Patriots' defense in the circle. Delmar scores a lot of goals on penalty corners and with impeccable stick skills and a quick pace of play, forces them regularly.

Just three and half minutes into the game, Jordyn Hollamon would score on the inserted pass from Emily Bitters on a penalty corner. Delmar 1, NC 0. Amanda Rattay would wheel and deal her way through traffic to get a shot at the 5:50 mark with a reverse stick, but hit the side of the cage.

That was really the only offense the Patriots would generate that quarter. Delmar would score again after a flurry of shots on goal (seven to be exact) when Hollamon would take a reverse stick shot with 4:04 left in the quarter. Delmar 2, NC 0.

The second quarter would play out much the same as the first. Delmar created seven penalty corners. Unfortunately, early in this quarter, Rattay, the Patriots leading scorer, would catch a back swing of a Delmar stick to the face and suffer an injury that would sideline her for the rest of the game. It was a next man up mentality for the Patriots as freshman Genevieve Walch entered

the game. She, Addison Nelson, Audrey Nelson and Ella Miller would try to thwart the midfield attackers for the Wildcats.

A tall task to stop Jordyn Bunting, Emily Smith, Regan Wells, Hollamon and Bitters. The Bitter/Hollamon connection would prove successful on the sixth penalty corner at 7:18 to put Delmar up before the half 3-0. Credit to Newark Charter's goalkeeper, junior Riley Redding, who at this point had a lot of action with nine saves in the first half to keep this game in reach.

Coming out of halftime, the Delmar Wildcats found another gear. They would have five penalty corners and convert with 6:30 on the clock. Again, Bitter to Hollamon.

The 5:40 corner was almost a goal, but Nelson made a big play, stepped in defensively for a save and a clear outlet pass. With 4:09 left, Delmar was on the attack again.

This time, Smith would score on a centering pass from Laela Brown. Delmar would go up 5-0. Newark Charter, a season long offensively dominated team, just couldn't get anything going in the quarter.

Second half action continued into the fourth quarter, Delmar scoring early on a goal by Bitters, unassisted. Delmar 6, NC 0. Charter would put together a few runs and have another shot on goal but to no avail.

Delmar would come out on top with a final score of 6-0 for its eighth straight Division 2 field hockey state championship. They have not lost in the finals since the inception of the D1/D2 split.

Delmar goals were scored/assisted by: Q1-Hollamon (Bitters) D 11:42; Hollamon, D 4:04

Q2-Hollamon (Bitters) D, 6:45

Q3-Hollamon (Bitters) D 6:30; Smith (Brown) D 4:09

Q4- Bitters, D 12:20







# BLUE COATS FALL IN OPENER AFTER BEING REWARDED CHAMPIONSHIP RINGS

BY PATRICK GARYANTES

The 2022-2023 Delaware Blue Coats were awarded with their G-League Championship rings prior to their season opener against the Westchester Knicks on Nov. 10.

Charlie Brown, now a Westchester Knick, Pat McCaw, Aminu Mohammed, Derek Culver and Jared Brownridge were all rewarded with their rings pre-game and a nice championship banner now sits along the wall behind their bench in the Chase Fieldhouse.

Only four players have returned to Blue Coats from that championship team, mainly due to the objective of the G-League. Develop players to advance their careers to the NBA, something the Blue Coats have been very successful at doing in recent years. Players like the aforementioned Brown, “B-ball” Paul Reed, Justin Champagne and Jaden Springer have all made the jump from the Blue Coats to the NBA in the past few seasons.

This year’s team has a few players that have the potential to jump into the NBA in the coming years with first-year players Ricky Council IV (Arkansas) and Terquavion Smith (NC State). Both players would make their mark in what was a competitive opener through one half of play. Council was in the starting lineup for the opener, alongside Chris Clarke, Brownridge, Melvin Frazier Jr. and Javonte Smart. Smith was utilized off the bench for the opener.

As mentioned, this game was competitive through two quarters of play, as the Knicks led the Blue Coats 66-59 at the break. Council had eight points at the break, while Smith led Delaware with 19 first half points off the bench. Council’s athleticism and defensive potential popped, while Smith’s speed and shooting ability was eye-popping.

[CLICK TO READ MORE](#)



**Goldey-Beacom**  
COLLEGE

## NEW GRADUATE CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

- Certificate in Marketing
- Certificate in Human Resource Management
- Certificate in Health Care Management
- Certificate in Entrepreneurship
- Certificate in Information Technology







LOCATION	CONTACT	WEBSITE
4701 Limestone Road Wilmington, DE 19808	302-225-6248 Admissions@gbc.edu	www.gbc.edu/





## SALESIANUM DOMINATES SAINT MARK'S IN RENEWED RIVALRY

BY JASON WINCHELL

They started arriving on the Saint Mark's campus early, fans eagerly awaiting the renewal of the Holy War, the football game between the Spartans and longtime rival Salesianum. The outcome wouldn't change much as far as tournament seedings were concerned, but that is normally secondary in this series.

The Sals scored early, building up a 26-0 halftime advantage on the way to a 47-12 victory on a chilly and foggy night at The Graveyard. They improved to 9-1 and were the top seed in Class 3A when the brackets were

announced on Sunday. Saint Mark's finished 4-6 in the program's first year at 3A.

The tone was set early, as two turnovers pushed the Sals into the lead. R.J. Johnson recovered a Saint Mark's fumble on the first play from scrimmage. After a 15-yard pass from Brady McBride and a personal foul put the ball inside the Spartans' three, McBride found an open Hunter Balint in the end zone for a 7-0 lead just 16 seconds into the game.

The Sals would add six to that lead within a matter of plays. Saint Mark's started a drive at its 29, and on third down, the Sals' Nick Strusowski intercepted an Aidan Lehane pass and returned it 31 yards to the house.

The Spartans moved the ball at times on the Sals' defense, primarily on the ground, but they were unable to score in the first half. Salesianum, meanwhile, added two more touchdowns in the second quarter to pull away on the chilly, foggy evening. B.J. Alleyne scored his first touchdown of the game with 5:49 to go in the half, taking a direct snap and running nine yards on a fourth down and three. The Sals got the ball back with 1:07 to go before the intermission, and McBride returned to the air.

He hit Bill Neumann over the middle on the only play of the drive for a 50-yard score that put the Sals up at the half, 26-0.

The second half was marked by a number of personal foul calls as the longtime rivals went at it. In between the extracurriculars, the Sals managed to add two more scores in the third. Alleyne ran 59 yards on the first play of the second half and Aiden Lego ran one in from five yards out as the lead grew to 40-0.

Logan Klein scored both of St. Mark's touchdowns, one on a six-yard run and the other on a 14-yard reverse. Andrew Ransome answered for Sallies for the final margin.

TOWN  
SQUARE  
LIVE



# Stay Connected

**TOWN SQUARE LIVE IS  
YOUR SOURCE FOR NEWS  
AND INFORMATION IN  
THE NEW CASTLE AREA  
OF DELAWARE. STAY  
CONNECTED WITH US BY  
PHONE, EMAIL OR  
SOCIAL MEDIA BY  
CLICKING ON THE LINKS.**



**PHONE: 302-542-9231**



**For News & Information: [NEWS@DELAWARELIVE.COM](mailto:NEWS@DELAWARELIVE.COM)  
To Advertise With Us: [SHUPE@DELAWARELIVE.COM](mailto:SHUPE@DELAWARELIVE.COM)**



**[instagram.com/townsquaredelaware/](https://www.instagram.com/townsquaredelaware/)**



**[twitter.com/townsquarede](https://twitter.com/townsquarede)**



**[facebook.com/townsquarelive/](https://www.facebook.com/townsquarelive/)**

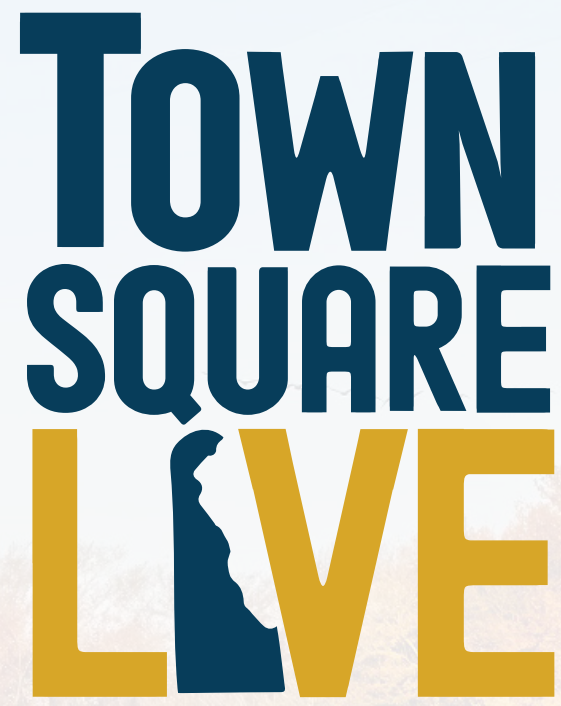


**Watch Delaware Live on YouTube!**



**[linkedin.com/company/delaware-live-news](https://www.linkedin.com/company/delaware-live-news)**





 Town Square LIVE  @TownSquareLive

Without these collaborators,  
this outlet would not be  
possible:

Bryan Shupe, CEO

Betsy Price, Editor

Sonja M. Frey, Publisher

*John Mollura Photography*

# *Design your 2023 through Intentional Business and Marketing Planning*

As a locally-owned company, Delaware LIVE News takes pride in working alongside regional businesses to develop digital marketing campaigns, through our daily news platforms.

From large corporations like Christiana Care, Delaware Tech Community College, and Delaware Department of Health to small shops like Fur Baby Pet Resort, Dolce Coffee Shop, and Benvenuto Tuscan Restaurant, we customize each plan to optimize the needs of each of our marketing partners.

I would love the opportunity to meet with you for 10-15 minutes to see how we can help. You can click the link to set up a meeting with me in our virtual office: <https://meetings.hubspot.com/shupe1>

*CEO, Bryan Shupe / 302-542-9231 / shupe@delawarelive.com*

