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photo link: Alapocas Run and Wilmington State Parks



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Wilmington WWII Heritage City



US Wind Offers Millions



Courtside View—Week 3 Girls' Basketball Top 10



Community

TOWN SQUARE LIVE



WILMINGTON NAMED WORLD WAR II HERITAGE CITY

BY BETSY PRICE

Wilmington has been named an “American World War II Heritage City” for 2023 by the National Park Service. The city’s ship-building and other military history isn’t on display as much as it was then, but one place to see it is at Dravo Plaza on the riverfront where one piece of equipment remains.

While the official announcement doesn’t say exactly why Wilmington was honored, it does say contributions by a city to World War II included defense manufacturing, such as ships, aircraft, uniforms and equipment; production of food and consumer items for Armed Forces and home consumption; volunteer participation; and civil defense preparedness.

Only one American World War II Heritage City can be designated in each state or territory.

HERITAGE SITES

Wilmington was one of 11 cities or jurisdictions added to the heritage list in 2023. Others included Foley, AL; Tempe, AZ; Richmond, CA; Waterloo, IA; Baltimore County, MD; Johnson County and Warrensburg, MO (nominated jointly); Hastings, NE; Boulder City and Henderson, NV (nominated jointly); Yonkers, NY; and Bedford County, VA.

Delaware’s largest city joins the other Wilmington in North Carolina, on the list. That Wilmington was the first city named a World War II Heritage City on Sept. 2, 2020.

“Wilmington certainly played a played a critical role throughout the course of the Second World War,” said Wilmington Mayor Mike Purzycki. “Wilmingtonians

enlisted in the military, conserved at home, raised funds through massive Bond Drives and worked in our City’s shipyards and other factories among their many other contributions.”

Evidence of the city’s history at that time, include Dravo Plaza along the Christina River, the Walnut Street YMCA, the former E.I. du DuPont Nemours Co. headquarters and Timothy Duffield’s World War II Memorial in H.B. du Pont Plaza.

“My own office window overlooks the Holocaust Memorial that has graced Freedom Plaza since 1979 and which serves as a somber reminder of that human tragedy and the lessons it has bequeathed us,” he said. “Those lessons, sadly, need to be revisited today as much as they ever have.”

Purzycki and the city’s Land Use and Planning Director Jeff Starkey credited Wilmington’s Historic Preservation Planner Debra Martin for her hard work and dedication in preparing Wilmington’s heritage application. You can see it [HERE](#).

Among other things, she cited the Dravo Corp.’s ship-building in the city. It employed thousands of men and women to build landing ships for tanks, destroyer escorts and landing ships for soldiers and equipment.

“During the course of the war many sailors and soldiers wrote to the company thanking the workers for their efforts,” said an article in Urban. “The government awarded the yard numerous distinctions for efficiency and safety.”





READ HOUSE'S DISPLAY OF MINIATURE ROOMS ENDS JAN. 6

BY BETSY PRICE

And, now, for something a little different. And by little, we mean miniature. And by miniature, we mean recreations of period rooms that could fit into shoeboxes, including a “street” depicting four shops mentioned in Jane Austen books.

The 20 displays, created by and on loan from the First State Mini Club, are spread throughout the **Read House & Gardens** in Historic New Castle and are meant to call attention to the house’s own Archibald Alexander dollhouse, a miniature recreation of a real home.

Read House is raising money to send the dollhouse to the University of Delaware for conservation. The work will be done for free, but the house has to be crated to be moved and that process is spendy.

The miniatures also add interest and cheer to the house’s holiday decorations, which include a ginger-

bread house by Joe Daigle that offers a deconstructed look at the house’s architecture.

This focus on the holidays is part of the efforts of the Read House & Gardens to raise the profile of the historic home, which was the largest in the state for 100 years. It was built from 1797 to 1804 by George Read II. His father signed the Declaration of Independence and Constitution and served as governor, chief justice and U.S. senator in Delaware.

The house on the Delaware River was lavishly appointed for a home for that time. Read II even bought the property across the street from his so that his house would always have an unobstructed view of the river.

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TURN YOUR CHRISTMAS TREE INTO RICH SOIL BY DOING THIS

BY JAREK RUTZ

Keep the holiday cheer alive while transitioning to 2024 and help conserve and improve Delaware’s soil by recycling your Christmas tree. The **Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control** (DNREC) and the Delaware Center for Horticulture (DCH) are asking First Staters to give their real trees to a yard waste recycling site rather than dumping them off in landfills.

The two agencies are hosting a free “TreeCycle” event Saturday, Jan. 6, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the DCH parking lot, located at 1810 N. Dupont Street in Wilmington. If the weather isn’t jolly, the rain check date will be Sunday, Jan. 7.

According to DNREC, 176,000 tons of grass, leaves, brush, trees, and other lawn and landscape materials were recycled last year. Recycling these scraps sequesters carbon that fertilizes the soil and helps it retain moisture. Philadelphia’s **Davey Tree Expert Company** will be onsite to chip the trees using its commercial

chipper/grinder to make wood chips that will be used in DCH gardens, the Shearman Street community garden and other public landscapes throughout the city of Wilmington.

No artificial trees will be accepted and all ornaments, tinsel, fake snow, light strings and other decorations must be removed for safety.

WHERE TO RECYCLE YOUR CHRISTMAS TREE

New Castle County has five recycling sites, Kent County has three and Sussex County has 16. **Find** one close to you. Depending on the site, you might have to pay a fee, but many locations accept the trees at no cost. There’s also different criteria of what each site will accept and recycle, so click the link above to find the right site for you. Most sites will accept trees through the end of January.

More information can be found at de.gov/yardwaste.



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Business

TOWN SQUARE LIVE



FLORIDA FINTECH COMPANY NOVO TO EXPAND IN WILMINGTON

BY BETSY PRICE

A Miami-headquartered fintech company has opened a Wilmington office. **Novo**, a two-time member of the *Forbes* Fintech 50, has built a platform for small businesses that combines a checking account with an ecosystem of financial applications. It's designed to help small businesses access their revenue faster, save time on business-critical tasks and manage their money any time on any device.

Novo's decision to choose Delaware for its expansion further confirms the state's status as a hub for financial services and fintech companies, says a press release

from the **Delaware Prosperity Partnership**. Wilmington continues to be the site of significant growth for existing businesses in the financial services and fintech sector while also attracting new firms to the area.

Companies with recent Delaware expansions include Ally Financial, City National Bank, Goldman Sachs and JPMorgan Chase.

"Small businesses make up more than half of Delaware's workforce—an incredible testament to the work Delaware has done to make small business creation and growth as accessible as possible," said Grant Sahag, vice

president of operations at Novo. "The Novo team is honored to be a part of Delaware's thriving small business community."

Since launching in 2018, Novo has surpassed \$20 billion in small business transactions and was named to the *Forbes* Fintech 50 list, which highlights "the top private companies that are transforming finance through technology," in both 2022 and 2023.

NOVO'S NEW PRODUCT

In Delaware, Novo is operating from the Stat International space on Orange Street. Novo has hired a dozen employees since May and will continue to grow the office in the coming years.

One of Novo's recently developed offerings is Novo Funding, a fast and flexible way for small businesses to access working capital. Since its launch, Novo Funding has issued more than \$70 million in working capital.

"Novo's decision to expand to Wilmington is great news for the First State," said Gov. John Carney. "We want to be the place companies consider when starting and growing their businesses. Novo's move to Wilmington shows that our efforts to make Delaware inviting to corporations are working and that the Delaware Prosperity Partnership is making a difference."





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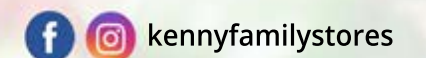
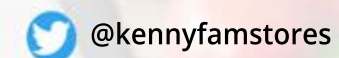


photo link: Alex Munsell / Unsplash



Food & Dining

TOWN SQUARE LIVE



BRANDYWINE HUNDRED MAN RATES DELAWARE CHEESESTEAKS

BY BETSY PRICE

It is a regional debate that has lasted for generations— which restaurant has the best cheesesteak? After meeting a date at Claymont Cheese Steak in Claymont, Jim Pappas took that question to heart. She shared his love of Philadelphia’s—and therefore Delaware’s—iconic sandwich, and they decided to ask friends and family to reveal their favorite spots.

An Uber driver, Pappas also began asking customers and the responses became passionate. The Brandywine Hundred resident realized that finding the best cheesesteaks was a quest, not just a pastime to share with a friend, and he embarked on the Philadelphia Cheesesteak Adventure.

Over the past five years, Pappas has tried more than 1,100 different cheesesteaks and his calories are your

gain. He created a sortable spreadsheet of establishments, now available on his recently revamped [website](#). The list includes 100 Delaware locations, from Wilmington to Dover to the beaches.

LONGTIME CHEESESTEAK AFFAIR

Pappas’s fascination with restaurant cheesesteaks began in 1979 at Concord High School. One day, he and his cousin ditched class to visit [Claymont Steak Shop](#), the iconic restaurant on Philadelphia Pike. Unfortunately, his uncle was also buying lunch. He overlooked their cutting school and paid for their meal. Although the trio was distracted by a bank robbery next door, Pappas was hooked.

Fast-forward to the 21st century. Once Pappas got serious about his cheesy quest, he created a five-category,

100-point scoring system and a spreadsheet to track his visits. You can search the sheet by place, town, county and state. (Get out your readers; there is fine print.) Pappas also includes rows for his comments.

There is also a column with the price, which might shock those who just want to go to the place with the best product; cost be damned.

“OK, the best cheesesteak is at Barclay Prime,” Pappas tells them.

It better be good. The most recent price for the hand-cut beef wagyu with black truffle foie gras—served with half a bottle of Champagne—is \$140 on the Philadelphia restaurant’s website.

NO TWO ARE THE SAME

Cheesesteaks have as many variations as burgers and to prove it, Pappas’ homepage shows several examples, along with notes about the main ingredients: the roll, the meat and the cheese.

According to Pappas, Amoroso’s rolls are the most well-known but not necessarily the best. He wrote that a good roll should have a crisp crust and soft interior. And it must keep the meat, cheese and fried onions from exploding out the back when you bite it.

The type of meat—sirloin, ribeye or wagyu—has become a hot topic, but Pappas focuses on whether the beef is a slab or ribbon versus chopped. The latter is more prevalent in the suburbs, he noted.

As for the cheese, the original Philly stalwarts—[Geno’s Steaks](#) and [Pat’s King of Steaks](#)—use Cheese Whiz. Many local shops use American. However, Pappas is currently fond of provolone.

[CLICK TO READ MORE](#)

photo link: Town of Middletown, Delaware



Town of Middletown
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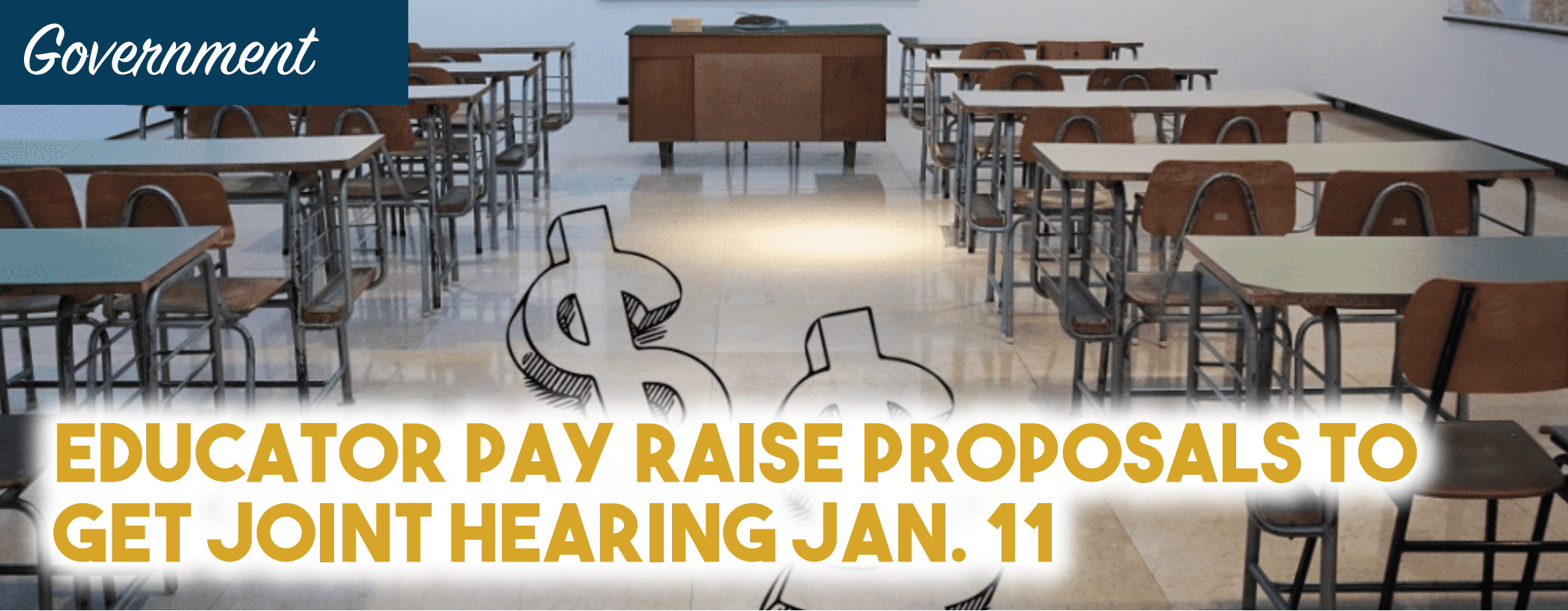
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Government

TOWN SQUARE LIVE



EDUCATOR PAY RAISE PROPOSALS TO GET JOINT HEARING JAN. 11

BY JAREK RUTZ

Delaware’s General Assembly will have its first public look and discussion about proposed educator pay raise recommendations next week. At 12:30 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 11, the House and Senate education committees will come together to listen to a presentation on the final report from the [Public Education Compensation Committee](#). Watch the meeting [HERE](#).

The 15-person compensation committee—made of school leaders, educators, government officials and financial experts—has spent the past year evaluating the pay scales for the state’s various educator groups. It recommended raises that will total hundreds of millions in the next four years, if enacted as suggested. Those groups include teachers, custodians, nurses, bus drivers, administrators, secretaries, information technology workers, paraprofessionals and food service workers.

The purpose of the committee is to make Delaware regionally competitive in order to strengthen its educator pipeline and ensure the recruitment and retention of school employees. Added pressure came notably from neighboring Maryland, which passed a law that would bump teachers’ starting salaries to \$60,000 by 2026.

Sen. Eric Buckson, R-Dover, who is on the Senate Education Committee, said one of his concerns about the raise recommendations stems from that fact.

“The challenge with the committee’s findings is that it chases a fictional starting salary number of \$60,000 a year that was generated by neighboring states whose revenue comes from higher taxation of its citizens and a sales tax,” Buckson said. A spike in taxes is something Delaware has stayed away from, he said.

“My concern is the only way to meet the recommen-

dations will be to ask for more money from the middle class,” he said. “That’s a real challenge in a budget year where inflation and other economic challenges are impacting everyday Delawareans.”

Hefty salary raises proposed by the committee are going to the legislature at a time when the state isn’t raking in the same massive surpluses it has in recent years. The effect of the raises on the state budget came up several times in compensation committee discussions.

Members like Sen. Laura Sturgeon, D-Hockessin, who is the chair of the Senate Education Committee, has said the job of working recommendations lies within the Joint Finance Committee, while the job of the compensation committee is strictly to make recommendations on educator salaries to make the state more competitive.

Others, such as compensation committee member Cerron Cade, who is the director of the Office of Management and Budget, argues that the recommendations are essentially pointless if they are not realistic for the state to achieve and work into the budget.

Here’s what the committee recommended for each employee group:

- 1,305 – teachers and professional staff: a 2% increase plus a \$1,875 stipend (state cost = \$212,658,997 over next four fiscal years).
- 1,308 – secretaries: a 2+ increase plus a \$500 stipend and condensing the scale from five positions to three (state cost = \$1,407,799 for fiscal year 2025).
- 1,311 – custodians: a 2% increase, stipends ranging from \$439 to \$1,105 and condensing the scale from six to four positions (state cost = \$2,472,787 for fiscal year 2025).

[CLICK TO READ MORE](#)

SEXUAL TOUCHING CHARGES LEAD TO SUSPENSION OF MASSEUSE LICENSE

BY JAREK RUTZ

A Sussex County masseuse has been charged with multiple counts of unlawful sexual contact after his clients complained and police continue to seek any other people who were affected.

Secretary of State Jeffrey Bullock announced Wednesday his suspension order of Robert D. Leech of Sussex County. According to the order, the establishment was named Fusion Wellness and Spa and was located at a “detached structure behind a residence at 34361 Bookhammer Landing Road in Lewes.” From 2018 to 2021, Leech also was operating a massage parlor named Fusion Massage and Wellness at 34005 Westcoats Road in Lewes.

Leech has been charged with eight counts of unlawful sexual contact and one count of operating a massage establishment without a license. In suspending Leech, Bullock considered a complaint filed by the Delaware Department of Justice, that stated Leech used his position to impose unwelcome sexual acts upon numerous

clients. Four victims filed reports with the Delaware State Police following the incidents.

The order suspending Leech’s license was signed by Bullock Dec. 29, 2023, with the concurrence of the president of the Delaware Board of Massage and Bodywork.

Delaware Code enables a temporary suspension pending a hearing to be issued upon the written order of the secretary of state if the activity of the licensee presents a clear and immediate danger to public health, safety or welfare. Leech’s suspension will remain in effect for a period of 60 days, during which time disciplinary hearings will be held or the final disposition for this individual will take place.

As the result of a hearing, the Board of Massage and Bodywork has the authority to impose disciplinary sanctions up to and including revocation of a practitioner’s license.





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US WIND OFFERS FIVE DELAWARE BEACH TOWNS \$2 MILLION EACH

BY JAREK RUTZ

A national offshore wind energy development company is making its case to Delaware’s coastal towns. **US Wind, Inc.** recently presented a package of community benefits for Delaware’s coastal residents to the Delaware Association of Coastal Towns.

The community benefits package includes a stream of annual payments over 20 years, worth \$2 million to each town. The payments would begin if and when US Wind begins construction on its first project, MarWin.

Those payments are just peanuts, said David Stevenson, director of the Center for Energy & Environment at the **Caesar Rodney Institute**.

“The visual blight of industrial size offshore wind turbines will dominate the horizon, especially blinking lights at night, according to federal agencies responsible for approving projects,” he said. That will result in lost tourism and lost property values, Stevenson said.

“US Wind is offering a \$100,000 per year payment to five Delaware beach towns to encourage tourism, apparently to offset potential lost tourism,” he said. “The Delaware Tourism Report estimates beach tourism was about \$2.7 billion in 2021. Just a 1% loss totals \$27 million a year. Fifty New Jersey Beach towns successfully fought back to stop a similar project.”

He questioned why “Delaware beach towns are rolling over for peanuts.”

“We expect to deliver clean offshore wind power to the Delmarva region for a long time,” said Jeffrey Grybowski, chief executive officer of US Wind. As a member of this community, he said, the company believes it’s important to do what it can to help it thrive.

That association of coastal towns includes the communities of Henlopen Acres, Rehoboth Beach, Dewey Beach, Bethany Beach and South Bethany.

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- URSULINE ACADEMY

photo credit: Cab Calloway School of the Arts



Education

TOWN SQUARE LIVE



MEET CORY HAFER, DELAWARE'S 2024 TEACHER OF YEAR

thing that really allows him to be voted for teacher of the year,” she said, “because he gets students involved and it’s more exciting when everybody has something to say instead of just directly following rules after rules and there’s no real open space where you can feel like you can connect with a teacher.”

Hafer said he draws motivations from his students’ curiosities and those connections have helped drive his work. But that doesn’t mean there aren’t challenges.

“It was shocking to win and I felt so much like an impostor,” he said. “I feel like an impostor up here because I really do, and every day I get up and I’m still struggling to find ways to connect with every student and manage the workload.”

Hafer really humanized what goes into moments of success in any job.

“It’s ups and downs,” he said. “Some days, you’re just like, ‘I can do this and I’m really inspired’ and other days, it’s exhausting and hard to keep that perspective.”

He’s getting this remarkable achievement, but doesn’t feel good all the time, he said.

[CLICK TO READ MORE](#)

BY JAREK RUTZ

Newark’s Cory Hafer entered the University of Michigan in 2005 planning on becoming a marine biologist or doctor. Nearly two decades later, he’s making an impact in a different way: educating the youth in such an excellent manner that he was named the Delaware 2024 Teacher of the Year.

“Mr. Hafer is very open to new ideas and making things better for the environment so that way, it’s better for you as a student and also him as the teacher,” said Erin Hendricks, a sophomore at **Appoquinimink School District’s Middletown High School**, where Hafer has taught engineering and science since 2019.

Hendricks said his class is a lot about compromise, and rather than arguing about grades or wasting time being confused on certain assignments, production and growth is the focus.

“He’s really open to what everybody thinks is going to move the class forward, and I think that’s the main

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SCHOOL CHOICE WINDOW CLOSES NEXT WEEK

BY JAREK RUTZ

Parents have eight days to submit applications if they wish to send their children to a school outside of their residential district or assigned school. Delaware is one of the 13 **states** in the country that allows families to apply for their children to attend any public school—district or charter—rather than sending them to the neighborhood school associated with their addresses.

There’s no limit to the amount of applications a family can fill out and there are about 25,000 school-choice applications submitted each year. To apply to a district or charter school, visit the state’s **school choice portal** and follow these steps:

- Register a student in the school of residence, which is where a student attends based on their home address, using the **school locator map**.

- Visit school websites and attend school-choice meetings to learn more about available programs, upcoming informational meetings and application requirements.
- Complete the standard **application form**. This link will also show families if a school has spots available or if its near capacity, at capacity, has a lottery or has a waitlist.
- Choice selection: After the choice window closes families will be notified of their application status by Feb. 29.

It is important to remember that families must register their student first in the residential-based school, even if they have no intent to send them there. Some parents have said this added step has been an annoyance and

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waste of time. Parents have also said this step has sometimes led to school staff inappropriately questioning them as to why they are trying to send their child to a school outside of their assigned residential one.

With the implementation of the online registration process, parents can complete the registration application and submit required application documents with minimal interaction with the district of residence.

While the initial registration process requires documentation, the electronic submission will be part of the student’s electronic cumulative file and will be transferred to any attended school as part of the student’s file for alleviation of any future requests from the parent.

[CLICK TO READ MORE](#)



TAYLOR SWIFT ECONOMICS WORKSHOPS LAUNCHED AT UD

BY JAREK RUTZ

The Swiftie lore has reached the **University of Delaware**. The largest university in the First State has recently introduced a Taylor Swift-themed data visualization course for undergraduate students.

“Data Enchanted: Transforming Numbers Into Knowledge” is taught by **Kathryn Bender**, an assistant professor of economics who wasn’t a huge Taylor Swift fan herself until doing research for the class.

“So I am a similar age to Taylor Swift, I grew up riding horses in a barn,” she said, “I’ve always liked her music, but I’ve never been like ‘Oh my gosh Taylor Swift!’ until I started researching things for this project and then I completely became a Swiftie over the past few months.”

Bender said the course is structured like a workshop series, to which students can earn a certificate and a

special **LinkedIn badge**, which is a digital representation of skills and expertise that can be added to a résumé, social media profiles and online portfolio.

There was a gap in UD’s economic curriculum, Bender said. “I taught this class in the spring called ‘Introduction to Econometrics’ and that’s where students first start learning about how economists do data analytics,” she said. “And I noticed in that class that a lot of students were really confused just about handling or working with data, just in the most basic ways.”

This includes understanding necessary data structures, different variables, programs besides Excel that can be used to handle large amounts of data efficiently and more.

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photo credit: Nick Halliday



Sports

TOWN SQUARE LIVE



COURTSIDE VIEW – WEEK 3 GIRLS' BASKETBALL TOP 10 RANKINGS

BY JASON WINCHELL

The girls' basketball season entered the final week before the Christmas holiday and the holiday tournaments start next week. I am looking forward to seeing how these teams fare in their conference in January.

Ursuline freshmen Jezelle Banks scored a career-high 29 points in their 79-67 win over Bonita Vista High (CA) over the weekend. Banks had a great season last year as an eighth grader and continues to shine in the Raiders first six games this season.

The Conrad Red Wolves are off to a 4-0 start after a pair of wins last week. Junior Eva Walker is averaging 14 points a game to start the season. They faced their toughest test this year when they traveled to Saint Mark's on Dec. 19.

Here is the new top 10 for this week, voted by our DelawareLive Crew.

No. 1 Ursuline (7-1) (LW No. 1) The Raiders, the highest-scoring girls team in the state, went 2-0 at the Diamond State Classic over the holiday. They do not play until Sunday, when they meet Archbishop Carroll (D.C.) in a showcase event in the nation's capital.

No. 2 Caravel (6-1) (LW No. 2) The Bucs picked up two convincing wins at the Diamond State Classic last week. They'll host Tatnall on Thursday evening.

No. 3 Sanford (3-4) (LW No. 3) A visit to the Governor's Challenge resulted in a split for the Warriors. Just one of their first seven games has come against a Delaware foe. That changes this week when undefeated and fifth-ranked Dover travels to Hockessin Saturday.

No. 4 St. Elizabeth (5-1) (LW No. 4) The Vikings' winning streak reached five with two wins at the Viking Invitational. St. E's gets going in Diamond State Athlet-

ic Conference play on Thursday when they host First State Military.

No. 5 Dover (6-0) (LW NR) Dover, with the second-stingiest defense in the state, won two games at the Governor's Challenge. The Senators play Henlopen North foe Polytech on Thursday before heading to No. 3 Sanford on Saturday.

No. 6 A.I. DuPont (7-2) (LW No. 6) The high-scoring Tigers have been off since before Christmas. Their lone game this week is Thursday at home against Hodgson. They played more games before Christmas than any other team in Delaware.

No. 7 Saint Mark's (6-1) (LW No. 7) Saint Mark's kept the good times going over the holiday at the Viking Invitational, earning a pair of victories. The Spartans are home Friday night vs. Tower Hill.

No. 8 Padua (5-2) (LW No. 8) It was all business at the beach for the Pandas during their Christmas holiday. They won a pair of games at the Wildwood (N.J.) Boardwalk Classic. The Pandas host Tatnall on Saturday at 12:30 p.m.

No. 9 Cape Henlopen (2-4) (LW No. 4) After a loss at Slam Dunk to the Beach, the Vikings get back to the court this Friday at home against Caesar Rodney.

No. 10 DMA (4-3) (LW 10) The Seahawks lost a trio of games in Florida over the break. They are home for seven of their next eight games, beginning Thursday at 6 p.m. against Wilmington Charter.





COURTSIDE VIEW – WEEK 3 BOYS' BASKETBALL TOP 10 RANKINGS

BY JASON WINCHELL

The boys' basketball season heads into the 2024 portion of its schedule this week as teams start getting into their heavy part of the schedule. Lots of big games on tap the next few weeks of the season.

The Blue Hen Fight A conference opener for both William Penn and Appoquinimink kicks off Thursday night at Appoquinimink. That's a tough opener for both teams as last year they split with each winning on their home court.

St. Elizabeth and Caesar Rodney both won titles at the Viking Invitational last week as Caesar Rodney defeated MOT Charter in the boys two pairing while the Vikings beat Appoquinimink to win the boy's three group.

Sallies and St. Elizabeth meet on Sunday afternoon in a battle of the top two teams in the state. The game will be livestreamed by DelawareLive, but if you are thinking of being in the building I would get your tickets in a hurry as they will sell out fast. I would love to see more Sunday games moving forward.

Here are the new top 10 for this week, voted by our DelawareLive Crew.

No. 1 Sallies (3-4)(LW No. 1) The Sals went 1-2 in the holiday tournaments including a tough 67-60 loss to nationally ranked Dematha (MD). They have two tough road games in a 16-hour span against Malvern Prep (PA) Saturday and No. 2 St. Elizabeth on Sunday.

No. 2 St. Elizabeth (5-0)(LW No. 3) The Vikings won the Viking boys three bracket over the break. They host FSMA on Thursday and No. 1 Sallies on Sunday afternoon.

No. 3 Dover (4-1)(LW No. 4) The Senators went 2-1 during the Holiday week. They host Poytech on Thursday and travel to Sanford on Saturday.

No. 4 Middletown (2-3)(LW No. 2) The Cavs went 0-2 losing to two great teams from Pennsylvania. They're at St. Georges Tech on Friday.

No. 5 Appoquinimink (3-2)(LW No. 8) The Jags lost to No. 1 Sallies and No. 2 St. Elizabeth this season. They host William Penn on Thursday on DelawareLive and Concord on Saturday.

No. 6 Sanford (4-2)(LW No. 6) The Warriors went 1-1 during the break last week. They host No. 3 Dover on Saturday.

No. 7 William Penn (2-2)(LW No. 5) William Penn went 1-1 in Maryland last week. They travel to Appoquinimink on Thursday and host Tower Hill on Saturday.

No. 8 Howard (5-1)(LW No. 7) The Wildcats went 2-1 in South Carolina over the break. They travel to Glasgow on Thursday.

No. 9 Odessa (7-0)(LW No. 9) The Ducks enjoyed a nice break over the holidays but returns to action on Thursday. They travel to Newark for their first conference game.

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SALESIANUM FALLS SHORT AT SLAM DUNK TO THE BEACH

BY JOE SINGLES

Salesianum basketball team traveled to Cape Henlopen High School Dec. 27 to play the College Achieve Public Charter Phoenix at the 2023 Slam Dunk to the Beach. After suffering a tough out of state loss last weekend to Archbishop Wood in Warminster, PA, the Sals bounced back with a 74-71 win over in-state rival Apquinimink HS exactly two weeks ago. Their opponent at Slam Dunk came into the game ranked 12th on the NJ.com’s list of top boys’ basketball program in the state of New Jersey despite this being their inaugural season. The squad out of Asbury Park tried its best to send a message early, pounding the ball inside to try to take advantage of their size but Sallies was not having it.

The Sals ran out to an early 8-2 lead on back to back three-point shots just before the 5:30 mark of the first quarter. Sallies continued to rain down threes through-

out the quarter making 4-of-9 from behind the arc, but lost the rebounding battle underneath. The inside-out play of College Achieve provided them multiple opportunities on the offensive end, securing a 23-16 lead after one quarter.

What seemed like a manageable deficit after the first became increasingly larger as the Phoenix received contributions from multiple players, none more noticeable than freshman Anthony Mauro, who dropped nine in the quarter and served as the catalyst for their 17 point lead with 2:35 to go in the half. With RJ Johnson serving as the sole inside presence for the Sals, College Achieve stayed in a 2-3 zone for the entire half, forcing the Delaware team to settle for outside shots. Sallies trimmed the lead to 43-32 going into halftime. Mauro led all scorers with 12.

Sallies came out in the third quarter with some fight. Turnovers and good shooting from Isaiah Hinson helped the Sals cut the lead to 52-48 with 1:20 to go in the quarter. The 2-3 zone that gave Sallies fits in the first half became a non-factor as the Sals pushed the pace. They forced turnovers and scored in a number of different ways on the fast break, but College Achieve was able to hold a 52-50 lead with one quarter left to go.

With 5:30 to go in the game, Sallies tied the game on a three-point field goal by Luke Brown. Back and forth they went for most of the fourth quarter with sloppy play from both squads. College Achieve held a 65-60 lead with 1:18. The well-coached College Achieve ran down the shot clock on the ensuing possession until Sallies was forced to foul. Mauro knocked down two free throws with 16.7 to go, giving the Phoenix a seven-point lead. Sallies came down and made a quick two with 9.7 left and regained possession with 7.6 to go. College Achieve chose to foul and force Sallies to earn it at the line. After Hinds missed the first free throw, he chose to miss the second on purpose, but failed to hit the rim which caused a free throw violation and gave the ball back to the Phoenix.

College Achieve Public Charter held on to win by a score of 68-65 due in large part to the 32 points off turnovers by Sallies in the game. Mauro and Jebron Harris scored 15 apiece to lead the Phoenix team to victory.





LOFTON'S IMPRESSIVE DEBUT HELPS BLUE COATS EARN THE WIN

BY PATRICK GARYANTES

The Blue Coats returned home to begin their regular season schedule on Dec. 27. The Capital City Go-Go visited the Chase Center after the annual G-League Winter Showcase wrapped up two weeks ago in Orlando. The Winter Showcase is a unique concept that is focused on giving the over 200 G-League players as much exposure to NBA executives as they can in hopes of landing a call-up or 10-day contract as the NBA season progresses. Here's how it works.

The opening 14-games of the season are exclusively for the Winter Showcase. The G-League is separated into four regional pods and a round robin schedule is

played. The top four teams in each pod, as well as the next top four teams from any region qualify for the tournament for a field of 20 teams. The remaining teams each get two games at the Showcase so they too can have their players highlighted.

The Blue Coats finished Showcase play with a 9-7 record after defeating the Texas Legends 133-129 in game one, before falling to the South Bay Lakers 128-126 in Orlando.

Game one of the 34-game regular season came heavily anticipated, as recently acquired Kenneth Lofton Jr. made his Blue Coats debut. The 6-6, 275-pound 21-year-

old comes to the Coats with NBA experience after playing 39 games for the Memphis Grizzlies the past two seasons. He joins a loaded rotation that includes fellow two-way players Terquavion Smith and Ricky Council, as well as standouts Javonte Smart, Darius Bazley, Melvin Frazier Jr. and Patrick McCaw.

The first half of this game was tight with six ties and six lead changes before the Coats went on a 7-0 run in the final 80 seconds of the half to take a 58-49 lead into the break. Smith led Delaware with a dozen at the break while Council and Bazley netted 11 points for the Coats. Former Kansas standout Devon Dotson, impressed for the Go-Go, scoring 12 first half points and hitting two threes.

The third quarter was a quarter of runs. The Go-Go started the half off on a 14-2 run to take a brief 63-60 lead in the first three minutes. Dotson once again sparked Capital City scoring seven during the run.

The Blue Coats immediately answer with a 9-0 run themselves to retake the lead and only extend it from there. After a timeout, the Coats extended their lead to a dozen after another 7-2 run. When all was said and done after three quarters Delaware led 97-80 after three quarters of play. Five Delaware players were in double figures led by Lofton's 18 points, he netted 10 in the quarter.

The Go-Go would erupt for 46 fourth quarter points, but it wasn't enough as the Blue Coats would come away with a 134-126 victory.

Dotson and Hamidou Diallo led the Go-Go with 30 and 28 points respectively.

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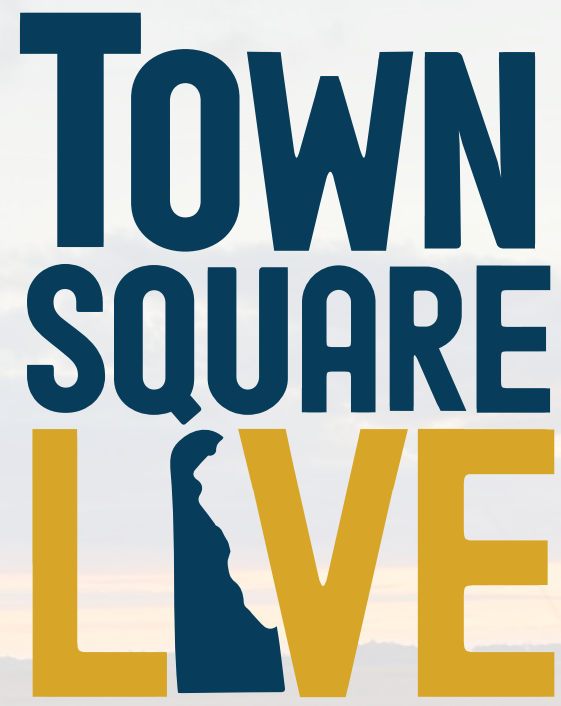
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