

TOWN SQUARE LIVE

photo link: Delaware State Parks

 Town Square LIVE

 @TownSquareLive

SUBSCRIBE 

February 29, 2024
Vol. 5, Issue 8



Contents

Community	3
Business	6
Government	11
Education.....	15
Sports	19
Stay Connected	26



Finalists Named for Music Director Job



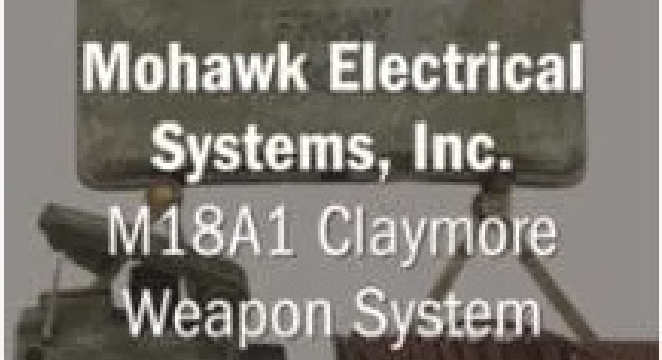
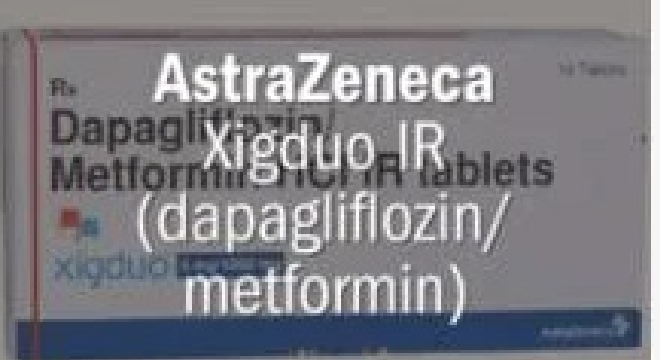
Poetry Out Loud Title



Mount Pleasant Wins in OT

Community

TOWN SQUARE LIVE



COOLEST THING MADE IN DELAWARE OFFERS 50 CHOICES FOR VOTERS

BY BETSY PRICE

A contest meant to highlight the diversity of Delaware’s manufacturing — and raise the business sector’s profile — has opened its first round of voting. Fifty items including candles, Dogfish Head beer, doggie doughnuts, eco-plastic tables and an outer-space habitat, have been entered in [The Coolest Thing Made in Delaware](#) contest. It received more than 100 nominations.

“This contest provides an exciting window into Delaware’s manufacturing sector,” said Mike Quaranta, president of the [Delaware State Chamber of Commerce](#). “From space suits and treatments for type 2 diabetes

that push the boundaries of innovation, to consumer goods like personal care products and chicken wings, the sheer variety of entries showcases the depth and breadth of our state’s production capabilities.

“It’s a testament to the ingenuity and dedication of Delaware’s manufacturers and a reminder that ‘cool’ can come in all shapes, sizes and purposes.”

The chamber is cosponsoring the contest with the [Delaware Manufacturing Association](#). Tournament-style voting will help reduce the field until the final products go head-to-head in late March. The first-round

choices can be found [HERE](#), with voting ending Thursday, Feb. 29. Votes can be cast once a day.

Quaranta said at the chamber’s annual dinner that business leaders want to raise interest in manufacturing as a career path while increasing awareness of Delaware’s advantages for manufacturing.

Many experts think companies that once moved to China for less-expensive manufacturing will soon be seeking other locations because China’s population isn’t growing due to its one-child-per-family policy. While China has rescinded that rule, many young people aren’t interested in having a bigger family, reports say.

About 28,000 people now work in Delaware manufacturing businesses. Delaware is well positioned for transportation alone, among other qualities, Quaranta said, to compete for future manufacturing.

The 2024 Coolest Thing Made in Delaware will be revealed at the Delaware State Chamber of Commerce’s [Spring Manufacturing & Policy Conference](#) March 28 at Delaware Technical Community College in Dover.

COOLEST VOTING SCHEDULE

- March 7 Top 16 Announced
- March 7 – March 13 1st Round of Bracket Voting
- March 14 Top 8 Announced
- March 14 – March 20 2nd Round of Bracket Voting
- March 21 Top 4 Announced
- March 21 – March 28 – Final Round of Voting
- March 28 – Winner Announced at the Spring Manufacturing & Policy Conference





FOUR FINALISTS NAMED FOR DELAWARE SYMPHONY'S MUSIC DIRECTOR JOB

BY BETSY PRICE

The Delaware Symphony Orchestra has invited four finalists to conduct the orchestra next year before it chooses a new music director from them in spring 2025. Up for consideration are Mélisse Brunet, Filippo Ciabatti, Michelle Di Russo and Taichi Fukumura.

The search, which began in July 2023, drew 150 applications from around the world. A 13-member search committee, including community leaders and symphony musicians and board members, spent 20 hours interviewing candidates throughout the fall. After each performance, audience members will be surveyed.

“I was astonished and impressed by the caliber and quantity of applications we received for the music director position,” says Frank Clowes, president of the Delaware Symphony Association. “I’m looking forward to

seeing our finalists join us on stage next season to demonstrate their musical skill and their ability to inspire and connect with our audiences, musicians and community.”

THE FINALISTS

Mélisse Brunet

American conductor Mélisse Brunet, a native of Paris, France, lives in Philadelphia. She is gaining attention on both sides of that Atlantic as a “skilled and polished conductor with panache” (ClevelandClassical.com). She is in her second season as music director of the Lexington Philharmonic in Kentucky, and in her fourth season as the Music Director of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Philharmonic.

A dynamic advocate of contemporary music, she also is a conductor of opera and music theatre. She’s conducted “Dead Man Walking” by Jake Heggie and Puccini’s “Gianni Schicchi,” Mozart’s “Die Zauberflöte,” Bernstein’s “Trouble in Tahiti,” Menotti’s “The Old Maid and the Thief,” Sondheim’s “Sweeney Todd,” Strauss II’s “Die Fledermaus” and Verdi’s “La Traviata.”

As a Pops conductor, Brunet has been programming pops concerts for Holiday Pops, Independence Day, Halloween, Valentine and other thematic programs, indoors and out for up to 6,000 people. She also conducted orchestras during live movie projections.

Filippo Ciabatti

Praised for his “sensitive and nuanced” musicianship, Filippo Ciabatti is a dynamic and versatile conductor. Amid a robust calendar of guest conducting engagements, in October 2023 he was named assistant conductor of Boston Baroque, the first in the prestigious ensemble’s history.

He is the founding artistic director of Upper Valley Baroque (New Hampshire), a professional orchestral and choral ensemble, which after only two seasons has already received critical acclaim and regularly performs to sold-out houses. Ciabatti also is active on the opera stage. He was recently named music director of the Opera Company of Middlebury (Vermont), where he made his debut with a production of “Fidelio” in June 2023. Ciabatti serves on the faculty of Camerata Bardi Vocal Academy and Opera Viva (Italy).

[CLICK TO READ MORE](#)



Business

TOWN SQUARE LIVE



AGILENT, INCYTE SEEK WAY TO PREDICT EFFECTIVENESS OF DRUGS

BY BETSY PRICE

Agilent Technologies and Incyte have begun working together to create tests that will help a patient understand how good a candidate he or she may be for Incyte’s immunotherapy treatments.

Incyte, a biopharmaceutical company headquartered in Delaware, specializes in drugs that treat unusual and rare cancers. **Agilent**, headquartered in Santa Clara, CA, with a campus near Greenville off Lancaster Pike, specializes in “companion diagnostics,” which are tests that can be used to check potential patients; cells and see how likely it is that Incyte’s drugs will help.

It often comes down to whether or not the patient has a lot or a little of the proteins that Incyte’s drugs want to activate. In many cases, the drug needs to essentially lock

onto those proteins to manipulate the body’s immune system into attacking the cancer. Therefore, the more protein, the better for the patient. The fewer proteins there are on the surface of a molecule, the less likely it is the treatment will work for that specific patient.

Agilent’s tests often require a biopsy — or taking a tiny piece — of a patient’s tumor so its cells can be checked for things like the production of proteins.

Companion diagnostics are a hot topic in the biopharmaceutical business and are predicted to expand to nearly \$14 billion in U.S. sales by 2030, partly because these tests help doctors target treatment decisions for a growing range of cancers and some chronic diseases. Ultimately, said Paul Beresford, vice president and gen-

eral manager of Agilent’s Companion Diagnostics Division, the point of companion diagnostics is to help both pharmaceutical companies and doctors “select the right patient for the right drug at the right time.”

AGILENT AND KEYTRUDA

Former President Jimmy Carter credits the immunotherapy drug **Keytruda** with destroying the brain tumors he was diagnosed with in 2015. That raised the profile of immunotherapy. Agilent worked with Keytruda maker Merck on companion diagnostics for that drug, focusing on a patient’s antibodies.

“It was one of the biggest companion diagnostics ever brought to market,” Beresford said.

Agilent’s and Incyte’s scientists will work together and separately on those diagnostics for drugs under development.

“So when their drug comes to market, the diagnostic comes to market and then we go commercialize a drug and diagnostic together,” Beresford said.

Neither company revealed the financials of the deal. It will allow Agilent to expand its companion diagnostics portfolio with novel biomarkers and Incyte to leverage Agilent’s expertise in the test development, global regulatory approvals and commercialization to support clinical trials as well as the potential registration and commercialization of the diagnostics in the United States and Europe. Ultimately, Beresford said in a press release, the companies hope to speed up the development of precision medicine products, and help improve patient outcomes in the precision oncology sector.

“I’m a big believer in immunotherapies,” said Beresford, who has a PhD in immunology.

[CLICK TO READ MORE](#)



DECARBONIZATION, HYDROGEN COMPANY EXPANDS IN KENT COUNTY

BY BETSY PRICE

An international company has chosen a site in Kent County to base its operations to support global decarbonization and the hydrogen economy. FFI Ionix will move from its 15,000-square-foot site in Harrington to 60 Starlifter Ave. in Dover. More than 22,000 square feet of the new facility's \$57,000 square feet will be lab space.

The site will be the first Central Delaware location to benefit from the state's Graduated Lab Space Grant funding, which was established in 2021 to help companies find and outfit the laboratory space they need. It's part of the state's move to attract and keep high-tech and biotech companies interested in Delaware. FFI Ionix will receiving up to \$1.6 million for lab space; a Jobs Performance Grant of up to \$70,400; and a Jobs Retention Grant of up to \$42,500 from the Delaware Strategic Fund.

A press release from the Delaware Prosperity Project did not specify how many Delaware employees the company has or plans to increase. It did say the move and expansion has the potential for new professional and semi-skilled positions, including engineers, lab technicians, chemists, quality control personnel and production and warehouse associates.

"This is very exciting for Dover and the greater Dover community," said Dover Mayor Robin R. Christiansen. "Developing here reassures more jobs and more opportunities for our younger generations, in an industry with the potential to grow, all while decreasing our carbon footprint."

[CLICK TO READ MORE](#)



DON'T WAIT. APPLY FOR FREE TUITION.

Cost doesn't have to keep you from going to college. Delaware's Student Excellence Equals Degree (SEED) Scholarship provides FREE tuition for Delaware high school graduates of any age to attend Delaware Tech.* The scholarship applies to associate degree, credit diploma, credit certificate, and workforce training programs.

SEED SCHOLARSHIP
dtcc.edu/SEED



*Students must meet eligibility requirements. Course fees and books are not covered by the SEED Scholarship.



BLOOM ENERGY PLANS TO MOVE SOME DELAWARE JOBS TO MEXICO

BY KARL BAKER

Bloom Energy, the fuel cell producer that a decade ago promised to revitalize the state’s manufacturing sector, announced last week that it will move a slice of its Newark operations to Mexico at the end of 2024. The decision is one part of the California company’s plan to restructure amid increasing debt and continuous financial losses, according to its annual report to investors published last week.

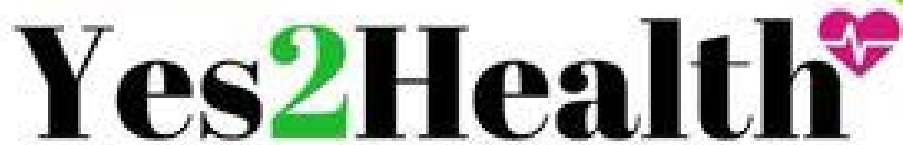
Also in the investor report, Bloom stated that it lost more than \$300 million last year, even while bringing in record revenue of \$1.3 billion, primarily from the sale of its signature product — natural gas-powered fuel cells which are manufactured or assembled in factories in Newark, California and South Korea.

Bloom has not revealed the number of Delaware employees that could be impacted by the move to Mexico, but noted that they will come from the department that repairs and refurbishes its fuel cells, which it calls Bloom

Boxes. Neither officials from Bloom Energy nor from Gov. John Carney’s office responded to requests to comment for this story.


Although the move to Mexico will likely impact only a small portion of its more than 750 Delaware workers, and none reportedly at its plant on the University of Delaware’s STAR Campus, Bloom’s announcement may prompt renewed skepticism from critics of a generous incentive package that state officials used to lure the company to Newark a decade ago. It included millions of dollars in direct grants and, more importantly, a guaranteed stream of customers in the form of Delaware electricity ratepayers, who to this day are mandated to purchase more expensive Bloom electricity.

[CLICK TO READ MORE](#)



Yes2Health
A free community health outreach program

- Health Education Classes
- Live in the Kitchen Cooking Classes
- One-on-one Nutrition Counseling
- Active Cooking Series (Cookbook club)
- Health & Movement Retreats



Register for free today >



DELAWARE LIVE
OUR STATE. OUR NEWS. OUR HOME.

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



SIX NAMED 2024 SUPERSTARS IN EDUCATION & TRAINING WINNERS

BY JAREK RUTZ

Six institutions in Delaware have been recognized by the **Delaware State Chamber of Commerce** as 2024 Superstars in Education & Training winners. Since 1989, the awards program has recognized educational programs for innovative and impactful programming.

The Chamber and its affiliate, The Partnership, Inc., stated that all of this year’s winners exemplify creativity and efficacy in workforce development initiatives. An award is given to one independent training and certificate provider, a higher education program and a Delaware high school. Awards of Excellence are also granted to deserving programs.

Here are this year’s winners as well as the programs or initiatives that the chamber highlighted:

Delaware Skills Center

The Delaware Skills Center’s Electrical Training Program, the most popular of their many skilled trade offerings, caters to a limited enrollment of 30 individuals per year. A 12-week program emphasizes hands-on experience and technical skills essential for entry-level positions in the electrical field.

Utilizing the National Center for Construction Education Research and Development’s curriculum approved for Delaware’s Apprenticeship Program, participants gain proficiency in electrical systems, wiring, and installations, as well as important interpersonal skills.

The Electrical Training Program not only bridges the gap between unemployed and underemployed individ-

uals and industry shortages, but also equips graduates with the skills and knowledge to seamlessly transition into in-demand electrical careers.

Charlton Roads to Success at Delaware State University Downtown Campus

The Charlton Roads to Success Program at Delaware State University’s Downtown Campus is dedicated to equipping adult-aged students from 18 to 22 with the skills essential for successful integration into the community as they transition into adulthood. Students gain tailored, hands-on experience through skills assessments, workplace exposure, job coaching and mentoring.

They also participate in activities such as monthly YMCA activities, annual play productions, inclusivity events and a student-run card company.

By nurturing vocational skills, fostering independence, and creating a sense of belonging, this program equips young adults with valuable skills while also fostering a sense of inclusion and empowering them to lead fulfilling lives.

Brandywine School District

The Empathetic Engineering: Bridging Innovation for Special Needs program transforms lives through student designed solutions.

This Level 3 Design and Engineering program, offered in all three Brandywine School District high schools, focuses on Human-Centered Design to empower students to create inclusive solutions for individuals with special needs.

[CLICK TO READ MORE](#)

photo link: Town of Middletown, Delaware



Town of Middletown
Incorporated 1861



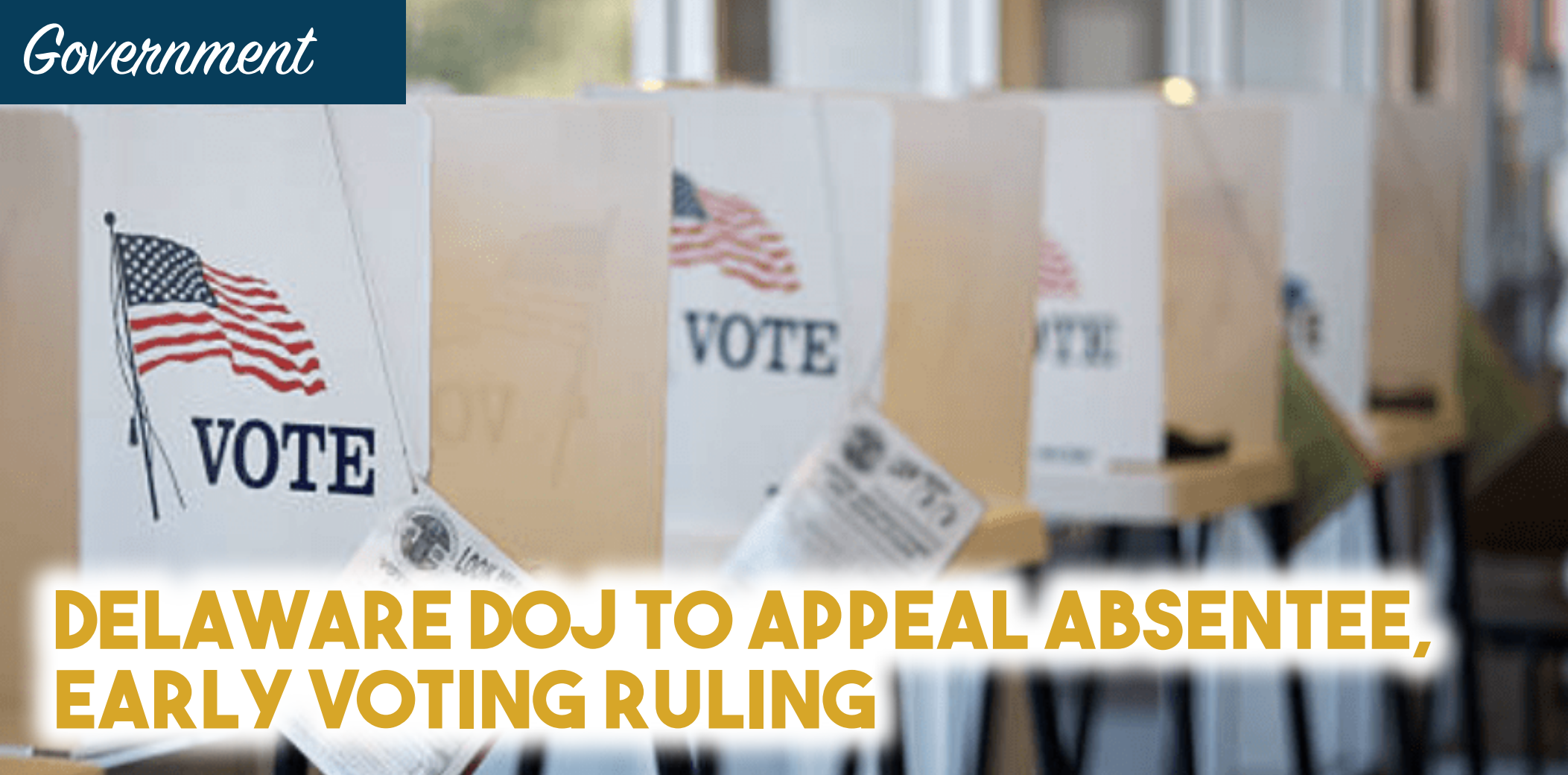
Town Hall



Mayor •	Kenneth L. Branner, Jr. •		
Vice Mayor •	James Reynolds •		
Town Council •	Robert McGhee •	Andrew Chas •	Aaron Blythe •
	Robert E. Stout •	Jim Royston •	
Town Clerk •		Town Manager •	Morris Deputy •

Government

TOWN SQUARE LIVE



DELAWARE DOJ TO APPEAL ABSENTEE, EARLY VOTING RULING

BY JAREK RUTZ

The Department of Justice announced Tuesday it will move to appeal a Superior Court judge’s ruling on absentee and early voting. Judge Mark Conner ruled last week in favor of former state attorney general Jane Brady’s suit that laws passed by the General Assembly — over objections that they were not constitutional — were indeed “inconsistent with our Constitution and therefore cannot stand.”

His ruling both denied the state’s motion to dismiss a partisan challenge to Delaware’s early voting law and issued a judgment striking down early voting and the state’s 14-year-old permanent absentee voter law. The permanent absentee statute passed the General Assem-

bly unanimously, including with the support of then-Rep. Gerald Hocker, the plaintiff in the Superior Court case.

Attorney General Kathy Jennings, in addition to appeal of Superior Court ruling, vows support for constitutional amendment. A statement from the Department of Justice pointed out that there were 21,000 permanent absentee voters — overwhelmingly the sick, disabled and military servicemembers — are set to lose permanent absentee status, and 56,000 Delawareans voted early in 2022’s general election.

Conner’s ruling only applies to general elections. The ruling does not impact the April 2 presidential primary.

“We respectfully but fundamentally disagree with this ruling and will appeal,” Jennings said. “No idea that requires silence to survive has any place in a democracy. But that is precisely the fight we’re having: in statehouses and courthouses alike, extremists are trying to empower losing ideas by eroding the right to vote itself.”

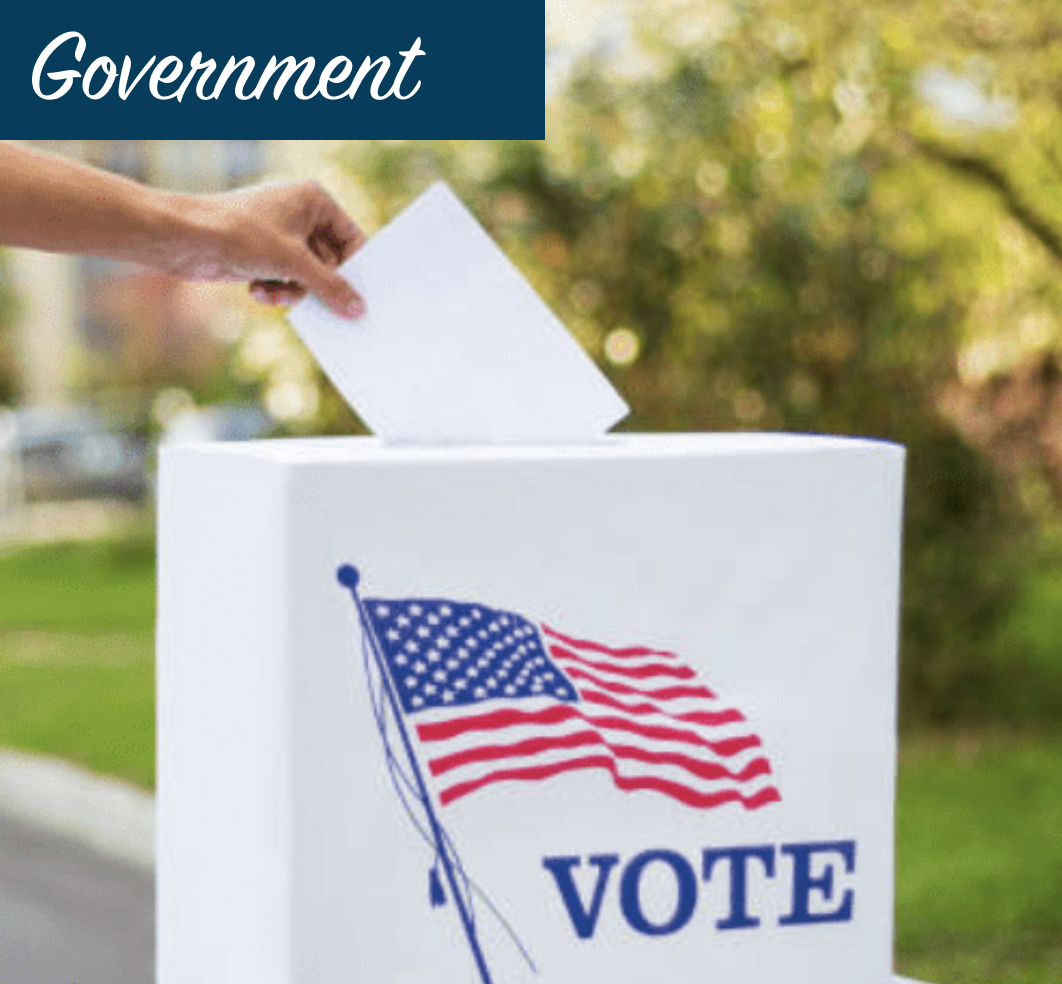
Jennings had a press conference Tuesday, in which she emphasized three messages:

“First, we respectfully but fundamentally disagree with this ruling. After our own legal analysis and speaking with Commissioner Albence, I have directed the Department of Justice to take all necessary steps to appeal the Superior Court’s ruling. We will file our appeal quickly and intend to request a decision from the Delaware Supreme Court so that voters have final clarity in time for the September primaries.

“Second, it is critical for the state to have one policy on elections. There is an unambiguous solution to this problem, which is for the General Assembly to address voting rights through a constitutional amendment in the next three months and to confirm it next year. I urge Democrats and Republicans alike to start by voting for Senate Bill 3, sponsored by Sen. Darius Brown.

“Third, to voters: here’s what you need to know. This ruling does not affect the upcoming presidential primary on April 2. Ballots will go out to permanent absentee voters soon and early voting locations will be open.”





POLITICIANS REACT TO COURT STRIKING ABSENTEE, EARLY VOTING LAWS

Bill 38, sponsored by former Rep. David Bentz, D-Christiana. Passed in 2019, it established in-person early voting in Delaware beginning Jan. 1, 2022.

It also empowered the state’s election commissioner to determine whether in-person early voting would be by voting machine or paper ballot.

Bentz, who is no longer in office, could not be reached for comment Monday.

“This decision is not made lightly and it should be noted that the spirit and goals of the challenged legislation are not what are being ruled on today,” Conner’s opinion said. “Nothing in this opinion and order should be read to suggest that policies intended to support the enfranchisement and inclusion of voters in Delaware are per se unconstitutional.”

The lawsuit, originally brought in the Court of Chancery, was transferred to the Superior Court last fall.

REPUBLICAN RESPONSE

“I am very satisfied with the Court’s analysis,” said Brady, the attorney representing Senate Minority Leader Gerald Hocker, R-Ocean View, and Michael Mennella.

The ruling follows the guidance of the Delaware Supreme Court in the decision regarding mail-in ballots and same-day registration, she said.

[CLICK TO READ MORE](#)

BY JAREK RUTZ

A ruling by the **Delaware Superior Court** that restricts early and absentee voting — a highly contentious aspect of the 2020 Presidential Election — has state leaders reacting on party lines. **Judge Mark Conner** ruled Friday in favor of former state attorney general Jane Brady’s suit that laws passed by the General Assembly — over objections that they were not constitutional — were indeed “inconsistent with our Constitution and therefore cannot stand.” He also denied a request by the state Election Commissioner Anthony J. Albence and the Delaware Department of Elections to dismiss the complaint. Conner’s 25-page opinion can be read [HERE](#).

It rules that Delaware’s early voting law is in violation of the state Constitution. The law in question is **House**

GBC 1886 **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/



LEGHALL PARKING DECK DESIGNERS RECOMMEND STREET CROSSING

BY BETSY PRICE

Architects designing the proposed parking deck at Delaware Legislative Hall today recommended using a raised street crossing rather than tunnel or pedestrian bridge for legislators to cross the street there. A raised street crossing would be more economical than the tunnel, which is budgeted at \$2 million, but could cost \$3.7 million, or a skywalk, which could cost \$3 million and would be hard to blend into state capital’s Colonial architecture, said Philip Conte with **StudioJAED** during Monday’s meeting of the **Legislative Building Committee**.

The tunnel is not budgeted as part of the \$22 million deck, but as part of any LegHall expansion that may take place. It — or a skywalk above Martin Luther King Boulevard — would only be open to legislators and staff members so they could park and enter leave the build-

ing without having to encounter any members of the public. Jesse Chadderdon, chief of staff of the Delaware State Senate Majority Caucus, said the street crossing offers “a lot of exposure.”

“Would the recommendations be to take care of any security concerns with live police or security personnel, or are we not at that part of the conversation yet,” he asked.

Conte said he would agree that someone using the raised table top intersection would be more exposed. He said that ground testing is still underway and that designs now have room for a security office of some kind. Designers are about to embark on a round of meetings with Dover, state and legislative stakeholders.

[CLICK TO READ MORE](#)




Celebrating National School Choice Week

DELAWARE FUTURE'S FEST
DISCOVER YOUR PATHWAY

Goldey Beacom College

 27 January, 2023

 10am-2:30pm

[Click here for more information.](#)

photo credit: Cab Calloway School of the Arts



Education

TOWN SQUARE LIVE



WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU'RE WAITLISTED FROM SCHOOL OF CHOICE?

BY JAREK RUTZ

After wading through the process of school choice, Erin Exelby found herself waking up in the middle of the night worrying what would happen if her children were waitlisted from their top selections.

School districts sent parents and children emails about a month ago saying whether they were accepted, denied or waitlisted for their preferred schools. Waitlisting essentially means that a student has to wait and see whether slots are left after students formally accept seats they are offered. Many do not. How many will, and where a student is on the waitlist can determine whether they actually can go to their desired school.

“It’s so stressful,” Exelby said. “As you’re even waiting after you fill out the application, you’re going through all these scenarios in your head even if they aren’t wait-listed.”

Her two daughters are heading into sixth grade and eighth grade next school year, while her fiancé’s son is

heading into second grade — all in the Red Clay Consolidated School District.

“You are thinking, well what if they get into the second option, but they’re number four on the waitlist at their number one choice,” Exelby said. “Are they going to have four slots open, and then in the meantime you’re thinking if they’re waitlisted at number four, you run the risk of losing your spot at the other school.”

The First State is one of 13 in the **country** in which families are free to apply to any public school, district or charter, they wish to send their children to rather than sending them to the neighborhood school associated with their addresses. Over the past month or so, districts have been presenting their school choice data for the 2024-2025 school year at their board meetings. Some are experiencing more applications, and some less.

[CLICK TO READ MORE](#)

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/

URSULINE

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

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

12 FINALISTS WILL COMPETE FOR 2024 POETRY OUT LOUD TITLE

BY JAREK RUTZ

Twelve of the finest high school poets Delaware has to offer have been picked to take the stage at the Smyrna Opera House Thursday for this year's Poetry Out Loud finals. Last year's winner was Maiss Hussein from Paul M. Hodgson Vocational Technical High School, who was crowned the First State champion with her recitation of Tarfia Faizullah's "The Poem You've Been Waiting For."

Poetry Out Loud is a national arts education program that encourages the study of great poetry by offering free educational materials and a dynamic recitation competition for high school students across the country. The program helps students master public speaking skills, build self-confidence and learn about literary history and contemporary life.

This year's finalists will compete for the opportunity to represent Delaware and advance to the national finals in Washington, DC, from April 30 to May 3, where \$50,000 in awards and school stipends will be distributed.

At their school, students selected and recited works from an anthology of more than 1,200 poems. Their teachers or facilitators ran their school's local Poetry Out Loud competition that then selected a winner to be moved on to the state finals.

Thursday's state finals, which start at 6 p.m. and will last about three hours and several rounds, are free to the public, but be sure to get there early because the limited seats fill up quickly. It will also be livestreamed [HERE](#).

[CLICK TO READ MORE](#)



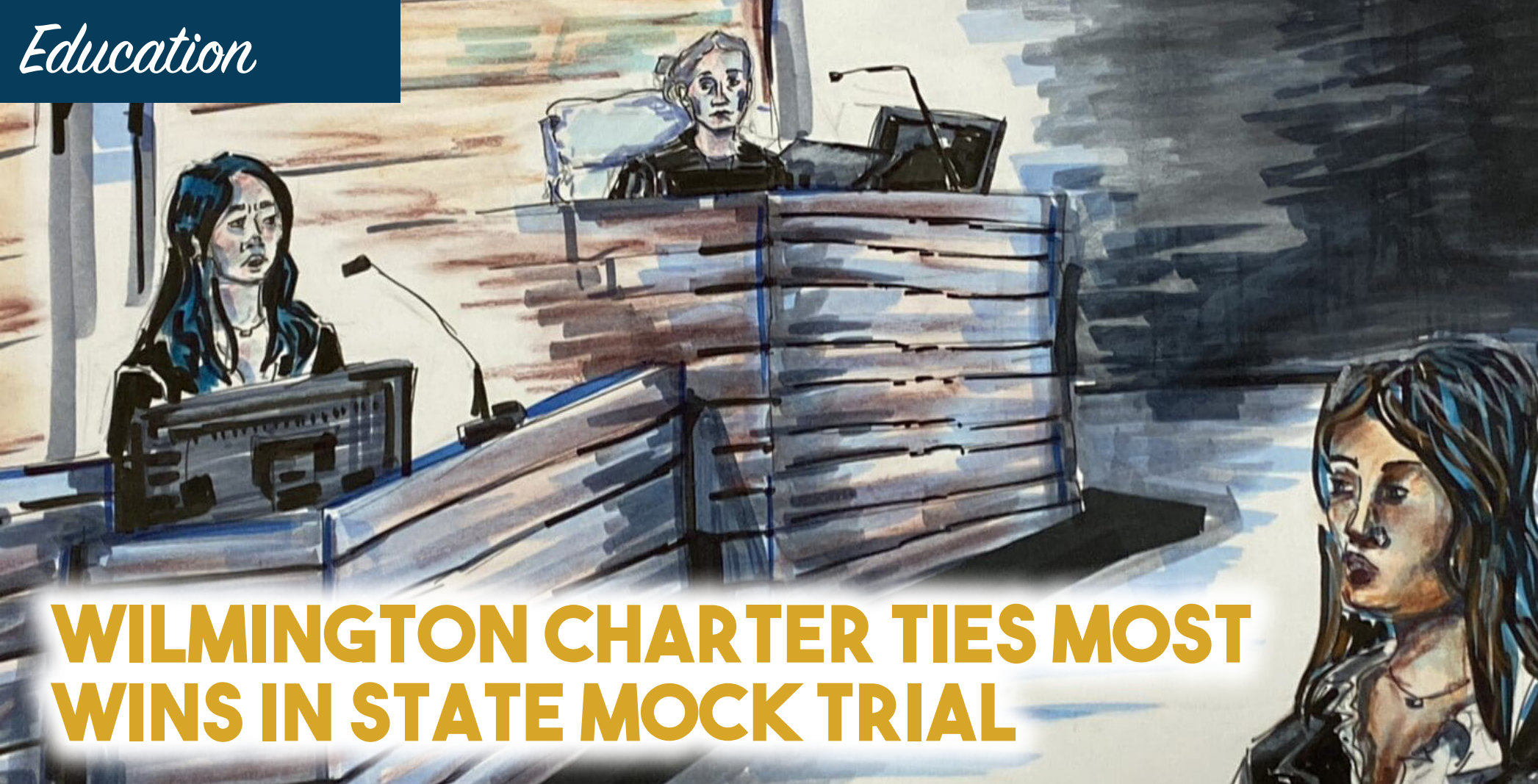
SUPPORT OUR SCHOOLS

Elevate Education: Support Delaware Referendums

- Empower Teachers: Our educators deserve the best tools and support to nurture the next generation of leaders.
- Invest in Students: Every child deserves high-quality education regardless of background or zip code.
- Foster Innovation: By investing in education, we're investing in innovation, creativity, and a brighter future for Delaware.

Vote YES for high-quality teaching and learning conditions in Delaware!





WILMINGTON CHARTER TIES MOST WINS IN STATE MOCK TRIAL

BY JAREK RUTZ

After the state’s young prospective lawyers battled it out in the courtrooms for five rounds of competition over two days, the **Charter School of Wilmington** has gone back-to-back, winning the 2024 Delaware High School Mock Trial.

With March Madness creeping up, the mock trial is structured like a tournament bracket, with round-robin style knock-out rounds. This year, Wilmington Charter beat **Newark Charter School** in the final round, marking Newark Charter’s first time ever making it to the championship round.

Teams earn points for a variety of factors such as witness believability, trial composure, time management,

knowledge of the case and courtroom procedures and more. Each round takes place in a different courtroom in the **Leonard L. Williams Justice Center** in Wilmington.

With its win, Wilmington Charter is now tied with **St. Mark’s School** for the most wins in the Delaware competition’s 33-year history, as both now have 11 titles. The competition typically includes about 200 students, 50 coaches, and 115 Delaware bench and bar members, who serve as presiding judges or scoring judges throughout the two days.

[CLICK TO READ MORE](#)

THE Independence SCHOOL
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 • 302.239.0332

photo credit: Ben Fulton



Sports

TOWN SQUARE LIVE



COURTSIDE VIEW – GIRLS' BASKETBALL FIRST ROUND PLAYOFF PREVIEW

BY JASON WINCHELL

The first round of the girls' state basketball tournament kicks off tonight. The eight first round games all tip off at 7 p.m. as we get the 2024 tournament started. Here is a look at the eight games.

No. 24 Smyrna (13-7) at No. 9 Archmere (12-8) The Auks have had a challenging schedule this year and it will be a tough matchup for them tonight when they host the Eagles. The Auks have averaged 47 points offensively while only giving up 36 points a game. The Eagles came in after beating conference rival Dover 53-50 last Monday. They average 57 points a game while only giving up 39 points a game. The winner will play at No. 8 Appoquinimink (12-8) on Friday night.

No. 23 Wilmington Charter (11-9) at No. 10 Dover (16-4) The Force had one of the toughest schedules in state including playing No. 1 seed Caravel in the last few weeks. They only score 42 points a game while giving up 34. The Senators were the Henlopen champion this year ending the Cape Henlopen run. They average 56 points a game while only giving up 38 points a game. Can the Force pull off the road win tonight or will Senators advance to meet No. 7 Delmarva Christian (18-1) on Friday night.

No. 22 Early College (ECHS) (14-5) at No. 11 Woodbridge (16-4) The Blue Raiders and ECHS both are Henlopen South members and will meet for the third time this season tonight. The Blue Raiders won 66-38 on the road on Jan. 18. They also won at home 60-42 on

Feb. 15. The Blue Raiders had another 15+ win season and looks to sweep ECHS tonight and head to No. 6 Sanford (14-5) on Friday.

No. 21 Friends (12-8) at No. 12 Seaford (14-6) These two teams played in the championship game of the Quaker Classic on Jan. 6. The Quakers won 57-49 behind seven three-pointers as a team. The Blue Jays hit six three-pointers in that loss and have won 10 straight heading into tonight's game. The winner travels to No. 5 A.I. DuPont (15-5) on Friday night.

No. 20 Hodgson (14-6) at No. 13 Howard (14-5) The Silver Eagles returned to Blue Hen Conference Flight B this year and their rivalry game with Howard was now a big conference game early in the season. Howard won 42-34 on Dec. 13 at home and will host the Silver Eagles again tonight. The Silver Eagles have won six of the last eight with one of those losses to Padua. The Wildcats have also won six of their last eight. The winner will play at No. 4 Padua (16-4) on Friday night.

No. 19 Conrad (15-5) at No. 14 DMA (13-7) These two Diamond State Conference members meet tonight to see who advances in the tournament. The Seahawks won the first meeting 58-35 on the road on Feb. 15 and have won six of their last eight games. The Red Wolves have won three straight since the loss to the Seahawks. Which conference foe will head to No. 3 St. Elizabeth (17-3) on Friday night?

[CLICK TO READ MORE](#)



MOUNT PLEASANT WINS OPENING ROUND THRILLER IN OT

BY GLENN FRAZER

The Mount Pleasant Green Knights hang their hat on defense to keep them in close, low-scoring games. Eight times this season they have been involved in games decided by five points or less. In the opening round of the DIAA boys basketball tournament Tuesday night, the ‘Knights were again involved in a close-defensive ball game with Odessa. Neither team led by more than four points as there were a multitude of lead changes in the final quarter. Odessa held a 20-17 advantage at the half, but Mount outscored the Ducks 24-21 in the second half to send the two into overtime.

In the extra frame, the ‘Knights patiently held the ball to run clock, eventually winning at the foul line as Jayden Lawrence scored six of his teams seven points in “OT” for a dramatic 48-45 victory. Lawrence was named our First State Ortho player of the game with 30 points including 8-for-10 at the line.

Mount Pleasant has a “knack” for holding their opponents below their scoring average. Odessa came into the tournament averaging 62 points per game. We asked Coach Brian Hines about his approach to the game. “We practiced nothing but defense the last two days. Defense has kept us in every game we’ve played and when you look at our season, we hold teams below their average.”

The Green Knights’ defensive effort was on full display in the third quarter as they held the Ducks scoreless for the first seven minutes. The exciting fourth quarter featured several lead changes as both teams came up with “clutch” shots. With 1:09 to go, Jordan Earl calmly drained a corner “three” to put the Ducks up 40-39. Following an Odessa free throw by Henry Nysagare, Jaden Lawrence was fouled with 18 seconds left and he made both shots to send the game into overtime. The Knights then leaned on the ball-handling ability of junior Cyril Stewart to “shorten” the game, as they edged Odessa 7-to-4 to get the win and advance to the second round. Thursday night the Green Knights will face top seed St. Elizabeth. It will be a return for the Lawrence twins to their former school as Justin and Jayden played for the Vikings before transferring to Mount Pleasant.

Odessa finished an historic season by qualifying for the school’s first tournament under first-year coach Andre Wilburn. Jordan Earl led the Ducks with 14 points, Nysagare added 13 and Jaylen Bernikow finished with eight points.





DMA RALLYS FOR COMEBACK WIN TO ADVANCE

Early on, however, DMA could not find the range at all, trailing, 20-10, until Amir Massey hit a three-point-er with 13 seconds remaining in the half.

Smyrna, however, scored the first two buckets of the second half, the first on an alley oop to Obi Coleman, the second on a steal and stuff for Coleman. They held a double-digit lead with 5:20 to go in the third after a three by Logan Shaw, but DMA's Antonio Allin answered immediately with an NBA-range triple.

DMA got it to 30-28 late in the third, but the Eagles responded with the next four points. Allin hit again from distance with about 30 seconds left in the third, cutting the Eagles' advantage to 34-31. Smyrna, hurt by turnovers in the final minutes of the third, could not add to the lead.

Lennon got free underneath to open the fourth with a layup, and a defensive rebound led to yet another Allin triple to put the home team on top, 36-34, sending the student section into a frenzy. The Eagles needed a little more than three minutes for their first points of the fourth, but they were big ones. Marice Kilgoe drained a corner three to put them back on top by a point, and the teams were off to the races.

[CLICK TO READ MORE](#)

BY JASON WINCHELL

Delaware Military Academy's boys basketball team averaged nearly 61 points per game this season, but at halftime of the 13th-seeded Seahawks' opening-round DIAA tournament game against No. 20 Smyrna on Feb. 27, they had just 13 points and trailed the Eagles by seven.

But in front of a spirited and emotional crowd inside the dome, DMA mounted a fourth quarter comeback and moved on to the second round with a 49-48 victory. The last time the Seahawks reached the tournament was 2021, the COVID-shortened season, when just two spectators per player were allowed in the building. That certainly was not the case on Tuesday.

TOWNSQUARE 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





BLUE COATS KEEP IT CRUISING WINNING THREE STRAIGHT

BY NICK HALLIDAY

The Delaware Blue Coats (15-6) played three games in the last four days and won each contest coming back off the All-Star break. They defeated Grand Rapids Gold twice and the Motor City Cruise Sunday to complete the three game winning streak.

In game one against the Gold, Terquavion Smith led the way for the Blue Coats finishing with 33 points, four rebounds and four assists. Smith had a huge second quarter, scoring 15 points going 6-for-10 from the floor and 3-6 from the three-point line. Jarron Cumberland finished with 19 points which is a new season-high and a season-high in steals with seven. Darius Bazley (22) Kenneth Lofton Jr. (22) and Pat McCaw (14) joined Smith, and Cumberland also scored in double figures in the game.

In game two against the Gold, Kenneth Lofton Jr. scored a game-high 43 points and pulled down nine boards to lead the way for Blue Coats. The Coats trailed by as many as 20 points in the first half, but Lofton's (13) big second quarter behind some good defense allowed the Coats to climb back out of the deficit.

Then in the third quarter, the Coats outscored the Gold 42-27 taking a 19-point lead over Grand Rapids. In the third quarter, Jared Brownridge drained four three-pointers to score all 12 of his points to help lead the Coats to a sweep over the Gold.

In game three against Motor City, Brownridge continued his hot shooting, scoring a personal season-high and team-high 24 points, which included 7-of-13 shooting from three-point line. However, the Coats had a very



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

balanced scoring attack as the whole starting five scored in double figures with Smith (23), Kenneth Lofton Jr. (23) Cumberland (20) and Melvin Frazier Jr. (18).

The bigger story of this game was not the win, but the celebration of Delaware Blue Coats mascot Coaty who celebrated his fifth birthday with a lot of his friends. He had YoUDEE and baby Blue from UD, Rocky Bluewin-kle from the Blue Rocks, Hooter from Temple and a few more A List mascots from the area there to celebrate.

The Coats will be on the road for their next game as they visit Greensboro, NC, to take on the Greensboro Swarm this Wednesday night at 7 p.m. The game will be aired on ESPN+ for those who want to watch and see if the Blue Coats can continue their winning streak.





COURTSIDE VIEW – BOYS' BASKETBALL FIRST ROUND PLAYOFF PREVIEW

BY JASON WINCHELL

The first round of the boys' state basketball tournament kicks off tonight. The eight first round games all tip off at 7 p.m. as we get the 2024 tournament started. Here is a look at the eight games today.

No. 24 Mckean (16-4) at No. 9 Howard (13-7) These two Blue Hen Flight B teams meet again to decide who moves on in this tournament. These teams met at McKean on Feb. 7 and the Wildcats took home a 80-57 win. Nick Baysha scored 16 points to lead the Wildcats in that win. RJ Matthews added 15 points. The Wildcats average 63 points a game and will look to push the pace like they did on Feb. 7. The Highlanders only allow 45.5 points a game and will look to keep the score in the 50s in this game. The winner will play at No. 8 William Penn (16-4) on Thursday night.

No. 23 Glasgow (13-7) at St. Georges Tech (13-7) The Hawks had a great year including a eight-game win streak from Jan. 12 through Feb. 12. They average 59 points a game while only giving up 48 points a game. The Dragons got off to a 5-1 start and finished the season 7-5 on the road. Can they pull off another road win tonight or will the Hawks advance to meet No. 7 Seaford (18-2) on Thursday night.

No. 22 Woodbridge (9-11) at No. 11 Appoquinimink (13-7) The Blue Raiders are the only team with a losing record in the tournament but they played one of the tougher schedules in the state. They have lost five of their last six against teams with a winning record. The Jags also had a tough schedule with all seven losses coming against teams seeded higher than them. They

average 64 point per game and will look to push the pace in front of the home crowd tonight. The winner will play at No. 6 Saint Mark's (16-4) on Thursday.

No. 21 Cape Henlopen (10-10) at No. 12 Sussex Central (13-7) These two teams play in the Henlopen North conference and will meet for the third time this season. The Vikings went to Sussex Central on Dec. 14 and pulled out a 48-47 win. The Vikings also won 56-43 at home on Feb. 8. Can the Vikings make it a sweep with a second road win tonight or will the Knights win on their home court and punch their ticket to face No. 5 Sanford (16-4) on Thursday night?

No. 20 Smyrna (11-9) at No. 13 DMA (12-8) The Eagles had a big turn around from last season when they only won three games. They won nine of their first 11 games this season, but needed to win two of their last three games to make the tournament. They average 53 points a game while giving up 49 a game. The Seahawks also make the tournament after a tough few seasons. They average 60 points a game while giving up 55 points a game. They are 5-3 on their home court this year. The winner will play at No. 4 Sallies (12-8) on Thursday night.

No. 19 Conrad (12-8) at No. 14 MOT Charter (16-4) These two Diamond State Conference members meet tonight to see who advances in the tournament The Red Wolves won the first meeting 58-49 on the road on Jan. 29. They have won nine of their last 10 games while the Mustangs have won five of their last six since the loss to the Red Wolves. Which conference foe will head to No. 3 Middletown (15-5) on Thursday night.

[CLICK TO READ MORE](#)



DIAA TO FOCUS ON HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETES SELLING NAME, IMAGE IN MARCH

BY NICK HALLIDAY

The Delaware Interscholastic Athletic Association punted on taking action on name, image and likeness (NIL) regulation at its monthly meeting this week.

The board had been scheduled to consider language that could make it permissible for student-athletes to capitalize financially, but the first move among the board members was a motion to table the vote until March 21. That motion was eventually approved after a 20-minute discussion.

Ted Laws, president of the Colonial School District board of education and a DIAA board member, suggested waiting until action is taken on legislation pending on the federal level. That gave the board a month to do more research as well, he said. Laura Makransky, the assistant attorney general assigned to the DIAA, said federal law supersedes any state regulation or statute should anything happen on that front.

Lenny Richardson, a public member of the DIAA board from Sussex County, said he is not comfortable with NIL despite the fact that 30 states and the District of Columbia currently allow it.

“I’m terrified of NIL,” he told the board.

The board needs to address the issue, and soon, said board member Dorrell Green, superintendent of the Red Clay Consolidated School District. “We’re going to have to confront it at some point,” he said.

He acknowledged that there will be inequities with NIL, as there are with other aspects of high school athletics. Athletes are leaving colleges and universities for greener pastures elsewhere and that has trickled down to the high school level. There are Delaware residents who play in neighboring states because they can strike NIL deals. Others are rumored to be headed out of state if NIL is not in place for the 2024-25 school year.

Still, he supported tabling the vote for another month.

“I think it’s worth a deeper dive,” he said. Salesianum School principal Father Christian Beretta said he has gone out of his way to explain to people that what Delaware is considering is not the same as what has happened at the college level. Many universities have NIL coordinators and have formed collectives to raise money in an effort to keep athletes from transferring. The DIAA proposal, he said, clearly spells out that anything coming through a school is prohibited.

“That is not what is sitting before us here,” he said. “What we’re talking about is more restrictive.” DIAA executive director David Baylor told the board that in his discussion with colleagues in other states, he has found that NIL regulations are “all over the place.”

The model that Delaware is looking at, which is in place in Oklahoma, “seems to be the one that is more manageable right now. Everyone agrees that whatever you implement, you’re going to have to constantly monitor and tweak,” he said.

The board approved that a survey of member schools be taken before the March 21 meeting. Baylor told the board NIL will happen and the DIAA should get in front of it or expect to react later to something they may not like. “We’re naïve if we think that this isn’t coming somewhere down the road,” he said.



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
To Advertise With Us: SHUPE@DELAWARELIVE.COM**



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



twitter.com/townsquarede



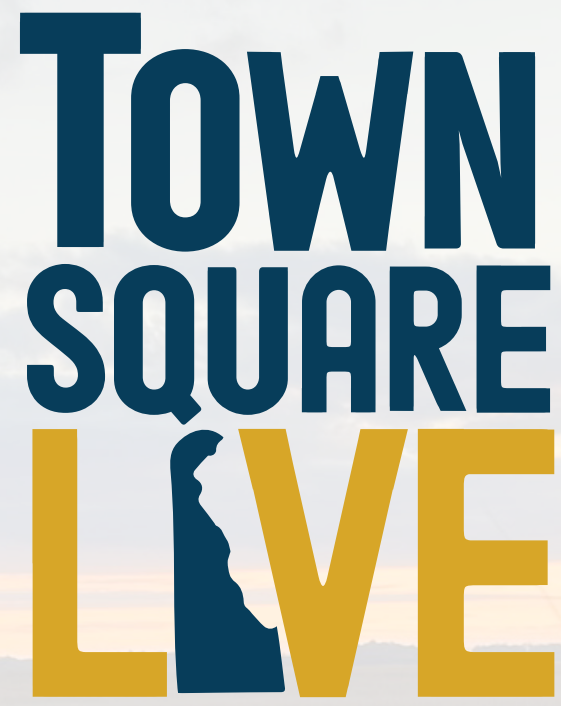
[facebook.com/townsquarelive/](https://www.facebook.com/townsquarelive/)



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 2024 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

