

photo link: White Clay Creek State Park

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March 21, 2024  
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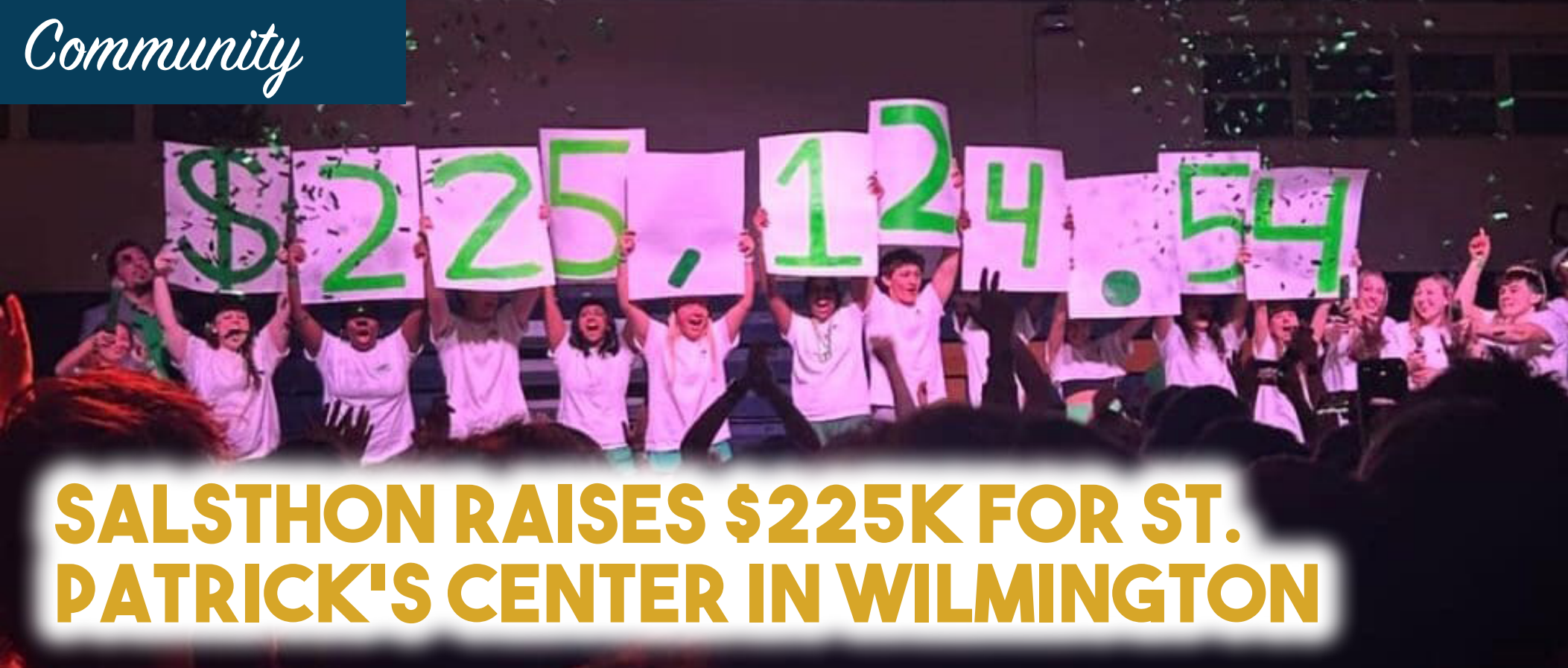


photo link: Delaware DNREC

*Community*

**TOWN SQUARE LIVE**





# SALSTHON RAISES \$225K FOR ST. PATRICK'S CENTER IN WILMINGTON

BY JAREK RUTZ

The **St. Patrick's Center** in Wilmington had quite the St. Patty's Day Weekend. The 12th annual SALSTHON was Saturday night, and about a thousand people from three of the city's Catholic schools — **Salesianum**, **Ursuline** and **Padua** — danced the night away, raising \$225,124.54 for the downtown nonprofit.

In back-to-back-years, the three schools far exceeded their fundraising goal of \$175,000.

"What these schools do each year to make a difference in the greater Wilmington community is amazing and inspiring," said Alison Hildenbrand, a college counselor at Salesianum. "SALSTHON is an excellent example of our students putting into action the values and missions of the three schools."

The dance-marathon event, based on **Penn State University's THON**, which many high schools and univer-

sities have adopted, raises funds for local charities. Last year's beneficiary was the **Ronald McDonald House of Delaware**, which helps families whose seriously ill children are getting care at Nemours Children's Hospital.

Peter Slattery, executive director of St. Patrick's, pointed out that the organization had its annual fundraising event over the weekend too, which raises about the same amount of money that SALSTHON did.

"So we had a very good St. Patrick's Day here," Slattery said. "The SALSTHON event went pretty well for us, and we're delighted."

St. Patrick's provides emergency food, respite for the homeless, clothing, transportation and recreational activities for people in need. It feeds about 150 families every day with a hot breakfast and provides groceries. Last year, St. Patrick's provided about 475,000 meals,

according to Slattery.

"That's sort of the gateway into the other services we provide, and we're one of the few places you can get a shower in town," he said. "We have a clothing closet and we have a pretty thriving Senior Center upstairs which has, in the last couple years, gone from about 40 members to 80 members so everything's growing here and all of our programs have needs."

He said the organization has responded to the increased foot traffic by expanding its social work department.

"If you come in for something as basic as food or clothes, we're going to try and get you connected to all of the public and private resources you might have available," he said, "either with state or federal programs or even, you know, our partnering agencies like Friendship House, West End, Salvation Army, Catholic Charities and more."

The money will be used as operating funds for St. Patrick's, who faced the challenge of having COVID funds, both federal, state and individual donors, run dry.

This year, SALSTHON lasted from 5 p.m. to midnight, whereas in the past it would start late and run through the early hours of the next day. Students seemed to really enjoy the change, said Frank Holodick, a senior and student council president at Salesianum.

"We also got blessed with some beautiful weather, and this combination led to an awesome start of the event where pretty much everyone was outside playing yard games, cards, basketball and eating together while we waited for the live music to start," he said.

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# DELAWARE WON'T HAVE A PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY THIS YEAR

BY KATIE KAZIMIR

A bill to eliminate the 2024 Delaware presidential primary on Tuesday passed both the House and Senate with little opposition and was signed into law by Gov. John Carney, all in a matter of hours. Since Donald Trump and Joe Biden are the sole candidates for their parties, there was no need for a primary, said **Senate Bill 241** sponsor Dave Lawson, R-Marydel. Killing that primary — set for April 2 — would save the state “at least” \$1.5 million, Delaware Elections Commissioner Anthony Albence told the Senate Tuesday.

“For this year’s particular election, we had only two qualified candidates for the Republican presidential primary,” said Delaware Elections Commissioner Anthony

Albence. “We had none on the Democratic side, as you likely know, when we went to qualify candidate Biden.”

Republican candidate Nikki Haley suspended her campaign for presidential nomination March 6, following Super Tuesday. “Since that time, we received a withdrawal...notification from the (Haley campaign) wishing their candidate to be removed from the ballot,” Albence said. “There essentially is no contest.”

The bill received only one no vote, from Sen. Kyle Gay, D-Brandywine Hundred.

### PRIMARY NO VOTE

“I just want to make sure that we are aware that absentee ballots have gone out for this election. It has



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started in a sense,” Sen. Gay said. “I do support the bipartisan work that’s being done. I’m just concerned with voter education. We struggle with voter education. We struggle with disinformation and I just can’t put a value on, you know, clear information,” she explained. “And I think this last-minute change might present some confusing pieces.”

After the no-primary bill passed the Senate 19-1, it immediately went to the House, where it passed 37 yes, two not voting and two absent. It was immediately signed into law by Carney.







# HERE'S WHAT HAPPENS NOW IN DISTRICTS WHOSE REFERENDUMS PASSED

## STAFF WRITER

Now that Colonial, Red Clay and Brandywine have had successful referendums, residents of those school districts may be wondering when they'll have to pony up finances and when they'll see new facilities. Delaware school districts that have had a successful referendum typically phase their spending over three years or more.

The concept of the referendum isn't widespread nationally. Delaware is one of the few states that utilizes them as a part of its policy of local control to raise taxes in order to increase revenue for the district needs such as teacher pay or a new building. In most other states, school boards can automatically increase taxes without holding a public vote as long as the tax hike is below a certain percentage.

In this 2023-2024 school year, six of Delaware's 19 districts have held or will hold a referendum to raise taxes and revenue — the most since the 2009-2010 academic year. All six are among the top 10 districts with the highest student populations.

Colonial, Red Clay and Brandywine school districts have had successful referendums. Smyrna and Appoquinimink school districts saw their referendums fail, but districts get two shots at a referendum to be able to match state funding. Appo's second attempt will be April 23. Smyrna has yet to pick a second date. Cape Henlopen's referendum is March 26.

"Now the real work begins, right, it's not like the referendum passed and now we get to sit back and

relax," said Ted Ammann, assistant superintendent at Red Clay. "In terms of the operating side, the next step will be in July, when we provide the tax warrant to the county and that's when our board votes on the tax rate." The changes to the local tax will be included in the upcoming fiscal year 2025, which begins July 1 and concludes June 30, 2025.

"Then the county will generate the property tax bills in the fall and they go out," Ammann said. "I think they usually go out in August or September and they're due in the fall."

Districts then typically present updates and the phased-plan at board meetings following the successful referendum. This includes what buildings are undergoing projects, and how the funding for each project is broken down by fiscal year. There's no right or wrong way to present this plan, and districts display it differently.

Red Clay, for example, differentiates between design costs and construction costs, and also shows the amount of state funds versus district funds as well as costs for inflation. But the district also has a much more digestible version that shows which years each school building will undergo construction.

"The assumption can sometimes be 'Hey, we voted for it, when are we going to see this, is it going to be in three months?'" Ammann said. "Certainly not, not right away. Some of the stuff has some design time upfront and we're also looking at pre-purchasing some of our things."

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# POTHOLES AREN'T THAT BIG A DEAL IN DE, BUT THEY COST A LOT

BY KEN MAMMARELLA

Delawareans use Google a lot less than the rest of America to find out about potholes and new number crunching has concluded that means potholes are less of a problem in the First State.

“Pothole data from each state isn’t available, but on-line searches for pothole-related terms can shed some light on where drivers are most frequently victimized by them,” according to [Blueprint](#), which calls itself an independent publisher and comparison service.

They looked at [Google Trends](#) reports from January 2020 to October 2023. Searches for “pothole,” “potholes,” “pothole repair,” “pothole damage” and “pothole complaint” were each given a search index number from zero to 100. That number was then used to generate a composite score. Delaware was ranked 45th, with an index of 12. That’s far below No. 1 Washington, with an index of 69.25.

A casual observer might think that northern states “where winter precipitation and temperature fluctuations wreak havoc on roadways” would all be at the top, but that’s not the case. Cold Minnesota is No. 2, but Alaska is No. 32, and Wyoming and Nevada have the fewest searches of all the states.

In 2022, [Stacker](#) used a different proxy — pothole complaints registered on Twitter per 1,000 kilometers of roads via the [Clunker Junker](#) — to come up with a similar ranking. Delaware had two complaints per 1,000 kilometers every state, putting it 10th from the bottom. Rhode Island, Hawaii and New York topped the list, with more than 20 complaints. Idaho, Wyoming, Montana and New Mexico were nestled at the bottom with less than one.

Spring is prime time for potholes, the Delaware Department of Transportation writes in a friendly [FAQ](#).

DelDOT maintains a separate page to [report](#) potholes and other problems. Wilmington also invites pothole reports to its [Wilmington 311](#) service.

Blueprint also looked at the cities with the most pothole-related Google searches. No. 1 was New York, with Los Angeles — where the temperature is moderate most of the year — at No. 2. Wisconsin has six cities in the top 50, followed by Minnesota with five and California with four.

Americans average \$3 billion per year to repair pothole-related damages to their vehicles, AAA concluded in a 2016 survey of members. They [averaged](#) \$306 each to repair pothole-related damages.

“Potholes don’t just leave you shaken, they’re a serious safety hazard and often lead to costly repair bills” Jana L. Tidwell, a manager at AAA Mid-Atlantic, said in a 2018 [release](#) on potholes. “You can easily lose control of your vehicle if you hit a pothole, possibly leading to a crash and it’s just as dangerous to swerve to avoid it. Slow down and stay alert, especially as road crews continue to work to patch potholes throughout the region.”

Potholes can obviously damage tires, but they can also damage rims, wheels, wheel weights, struts, shock absorbers and exhaust systems. AAA and Blueprint offer these tips on avoiding pothole damage:

- Ensure that tires are properly inflated and have adequate tread depth. Underinflated or worn tires are more vulnerable to pothole damage than those that are newer and properly inflated.
- To avoid striking a pothole, remain alert, scan the road ahead and drive at least three seconds behind the vehicle ahead.

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*Business*

**TOWN SQUARE LIVE**





# KENT RANKS 5TH IN COUNTRY FOR YOUNG HOMEOWNERS

BY KEN MAMMARELLA

This Old House, a media empire that for decades has been extolling old houses, just **looked** at how each generation approaches homeownership and what drives the decision to plant roots or seek new horizons. And Delaware makes a prominent appearance.

Dover is No. 5 on a list it compiled of the country's metropolitan areas for the greatest percentage of homeowners who are 34 or younger, with 20%. No. 1 on that list is Jacksonville, NC, at 30.7%, and the last is The Villages, FL, at 2.2%. Philadelphia is somewhere in the middle, at 10.2%.

The **U.S. Census** takes the nation's 3,000-plus counties and organizes 387 metropolitan statistical areas that include a city of at least 10,000 and one or more counties. So "Dover" really means "Kent County." And

"Philadelphia" means "Philadelphia; New Castle County; Cecil County, MD; four counties in South Jersey; and four more counties in Pennsylvania."

One strong reason for large percentages of young homeowners involves military families. Dover, along with No. 1 Jacksonville, NC; No. 3 Clarksville, TN; No. 6 Hinesville, GA; and No. 9, Manhattan, KS; are all smallish towns with large military bases.

### OTHER HOMEOWNER LISTS

• *Homeowners who have been in their homes for 24 years or more:* For Dover, that's 19.2%. For Philadelphia, that's 32.3%. The highest is Johnstown, PA, at 49.7%. The lowest is The Villages, at 6.9%.

• *Homeowners who have been in their homes for five years or less:* For Dover, that's 30.6%. For Philadelphia,

that's 23.3%. The highest is Jacksonville, at 49%. The lowest is Johnstown, at 14.9%.

• *Homeowners who are 75 or older:* For Dover, 28.3%. For Philadelphia, 28.6%. The lowest is Provo, UT, at 18.7%. One more time for The Villages to be at the top or bottom, with 66.1%. The top 10 areas on this list are all in Florida or Arizona.

This Old House studied census data and numbers from the American Community Survey and surveyed 1,008 homeowners for its coverage.

### SURVEY SAYS...

• "37% of homeowners plan to live in their current residence forever. This trend was most pronounced among baby boomers (52%), with 37% of this generation saying it was due to their area's favorable climate."

• "In contrast, Gen X homeowners were most likely to remain in their current homes for family-related reasons (43%). Gen Xers (sometimes called the "sandwich generation") often have more family members to care for, such as aging parents, children who have yet to leave the nest, or both.

• "Younger generations also had distinct motivations. Millennials (26%) and Gen Zers (27%) prioritized local school quality when deciding to stay in their current homes. This was in clear contrast to the 9% of baby boomers who considered good schools a deciding factor.

• "Overall, respondents agreed that the most important reasons for not moving were the affordability of their current homes, connections to the communities and neighborhoods in which they lived and their families.

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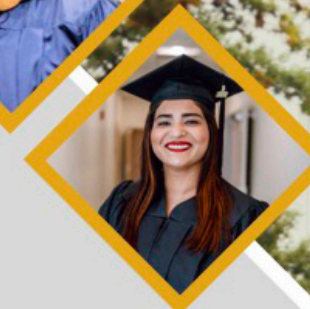
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*Food & Dining*

TOWN SQUARE LIVE





# RESTAURANTS' FOCUS: PROTECTING EXPERIENCE, BRAND AS COSTS RISE

BY PETER OSBORNE

Lee Mikles has a dizzying list of what he thinks about every day. The co-founder of **OMG Hospitality** restaurant group is focusing on the April launch of a new Grain menu that leans into comfort food that reminds guests of their childhood memories. He's also trying to pay more attention to the costs of food and labor while preserving the customer experience.

Some of that is everyday restaurateur mental work. Some of that is new, created during the COVID-19 pandemic, which interrupted and changed a lot of the ways restaurants and customers interact. For example, Mikles frets about losing control over delivery services that may not drop off food for 30 to 45 minutes after it's plated.

"With delivery, you get fed, but that's not our brand so we keep looking for better ways to do things," says Mikles.

He and partner Jim O'Donoghue opened their first of six Grain restaurants — four of them in New Castle County — nine years ago.

"We don't want to lose who we are," Mikles said, "and we hope that our guests understand some of the decisions we have to make." Grain made the tough decision in the wake of decreased late-night traffic to start music earlier and reduce weekday hours. By state law, the kitchen must stay open when the bar is up and running.

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## ALCOHOL DELIVERY BILL FAILS DESPITE DATA SHOWING SUPPORT

BY JAREK RUTZ

A bill that would allow Delawareans to have alcohol shipped directly to their home had its “part 2” Tuesday after the discussion ran long in a House committee last week. Even though legislators cited overwhelming support for the idea, the backlash from public stakeholders was too much to overcome and the bill was not released by the House Economic Development/Banking/Insurance & Commerce Tuesday.

**House Bill 259**, sponsored by Rep. Jeff Spiegelman, R-Townsend-Clayton, would allow farm breweries, microbreweries and craft distilleries to conduct direct-to-consumer sales of wine, beer, spirits, mead and hard cider. Consumers would have to be identified to prove they are at least 21 years old. There’s currently delivery services that deliver tobacco and vape products in which the delivery driver scans the consumer’s ID. The bill was heard in the same committee last week, but an abun-

dance of public comments pushed the vote to Tuesday.

Spiegelman once again touted data indicating strong support for at-home alcohol shipments. A survey shows 85.6% of Delawareans support the ability to legally order alcohol and have it shipped by UPS or FedEx, and 93.1% of people that have at least one drink a month are in support. Advocates for the bill claimed that this would modernize Delaware’s consumer habits and bring the state to the current times.

Only Delaware, Mississippi and Utah completely outlaw the process, and Rep. Mike Smith, R-Pike Creek, pointed out that Mississippi has a bill that has already passed the House that would allow some shipments of alcohol.

Paul Ruggiero, president of N.K.S. Distributor’s and a representative from the Delaware Wholesalers Association said the groups oppose the bill and said it “turns

inside out and runs over the wildly successful distribution of alcoholic beverages.”

A representative from Teamsters Local 326 previously said the union opposes the bill because drivers get paid by the case, so if other services like FedEx are doing shipments, the union’s drivers lose out on cash.

Michael Loiseau from the Division of Alcohol Tobacco Enforcement was against the bill, saying that shifting from the traditional 3-tiered system of alcohol distribution to e-commerce would create a lot of challenges surrounding regulations. The tiers are importers or producers, distributors and retailers. The basic structure is that producers sell their products only to wholesale distributors who then sell to retailers and only retailers may sell to consumers.

There were also concerns vocalized in public comment about delivery drivers not properly verifying the age of consumers, or not checking at all.

Alexis Nunan, a manager at Harvest Ridge Winery, supported the bill.

“How am I supposed to be able to grow as a wine club, grow as a family, without being able to ship to my own state into my own home?” she said.

Another commenter, who works for a distributor, said it doesn’t make sense to make it easier for people to be able to purchase as much alcohol as they want without leaving their own home, as that isn’t conducive to great mental health at a time when the nation is putting mental health at the forefront of discussion.

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*Government*

**TOWN SQUARE LIVE**





# BILL RAISING FINES FOR IGNORING EMERGENCY VEHICLES MOVES ON

“There have been numerous accidents causing personal injury and even death by inattentive drivers,” said bill sponsor Rep. Jeff Hilovsky, R-Oak Orchard. “Hopefully, this will help improve awareness and safety and avoid putting our police, fire, ambulance, paramedics, fire police, DelDOT employees, tow truck operators, utility crews and the distressed citizens broken down on our highways in jeopardy.”

## EMERGENCY CHANGE FINES

The fine for a first offense would more than triple the current one, from \$150 to \$500; a second violation would jump from \$300 to \$1,000; and third offenses bring a \$2,000 fine and a 90-day driver license suspension.

“This change in fines and loss of driving privileges increases the penalty to make this a serious offense,” said Hilovsky.

HB 329 also clarifies that a driver who is unable to safely yield the right of way must slow to at least 20 miles per hour less than the posted speed limit.

“But how do we ensure that this information gets to individuals, especially considering the consequences?” questioned Rep. Kendra Johnson, D-Brandywine Hundred. “I don’t want to hold you accountable for anything, if I have not properly educated you about what the rule is. For a seasoned driver like myself, how would I learn?”

James Woznicki, Kent County executive director of the Delaware Volunteer Firemen Association, told John-

son there already are education initiatives about the move-over law in place.

“There are commercials on television, there’s some vehicles you’ll see on our roadways in the state of Delaware that advertise the move over law right on their vehicles as decals and placards, the fire police have pamphlets that they put out up and down the state and all the rest areas, the Safety Institute does nationwide education and training online, videos online, radio ads, so there’s an educational piece out there, of course,” Woznicki said.

Hilovsky said too many motorists flout the law, drive inattentively and put others at unacceptable risk. “This bill makes an appropriate, dramatic statement that I think will get their attention,” he said.

Mary Anne Edwards with the [DE Campaign to End Debtors Prison](#) said the bill does nothing to increase enforcement. “This just simply won’t work,” she said. “National studies in the United States Department of Justice report: ‘The certainty of being caught is a vastly more powerful deterrent than the punishment.’”

She pointed out that first offenders could potentially pay about \$800 once fees are attached.

“It’ll have a devastating financial impact for many, even most, people,” she said. “The U.S. Federal Reserve reports that 40% of Americans can’t afford an unexpected \$400 expense.”

[CLICK TO READ MORE](#)

BY KATIE KAZIMIR

Drivers who don’t move over for emergency vehicles would face stricter penalties under [House Bill 329](#). The bill passed through the House Public Safety and Homeland Security Committee Tuesday and now moves to the House ready list for a floor vote.

HB 329 addresses the growing concern over the safety of emergency responders by increasing the penalties for drivers that don’t yield the right of way to an emergency vehicle making use of audible or visual signals, or a police vehicle using an audible signal only.





# BILL: STOP FORCING DOCS TO REPORT PEOPLE WHO COULD BLACK OUT

BY KATIE KAZIMIR

State law now requires doctors to report people who have medical conditions that may cause them to lose consciousness to the Department of Motor Vehicles. They can lose their license as a result and end up in a months-long battle that drags the doctor in as they fight to get it back.

**House Bill 314**, which unanimously cleared the House Public Safety and Homeland Security Committee Tuesday, would change that. Sponsored by Rep. Sean Matthews, D-Middletown, the act amends Titles 21 and 24 of state code regarding driver’s license status due to certain medical conditions and blackouts.

If it becomes law, it would no longer be mandated for doctors to report patients who have an illness that could cause them to become unconscious — such as an epilep-

tic or a diabetic — to the DMV. Many doctors say that the law doesn’t take into account people whose conditions are well treated and under control and are unlikely to black out.

“Delaware’s current legislation is discriminatory against individuals with epilepsy,” said the bill’s co-sponsor Rep. Edward S. Osienski, D-Newark.

Fainting due to causes unrelated to the nervous system or other medical conditions that may affect the ability to drive safely are not addressed in the statute as it stands. For example, there is no requirement to report that someone who experiences repeated loss of consciousness from a diabetic episode or cardiac issue, or that someone has severe dementia.

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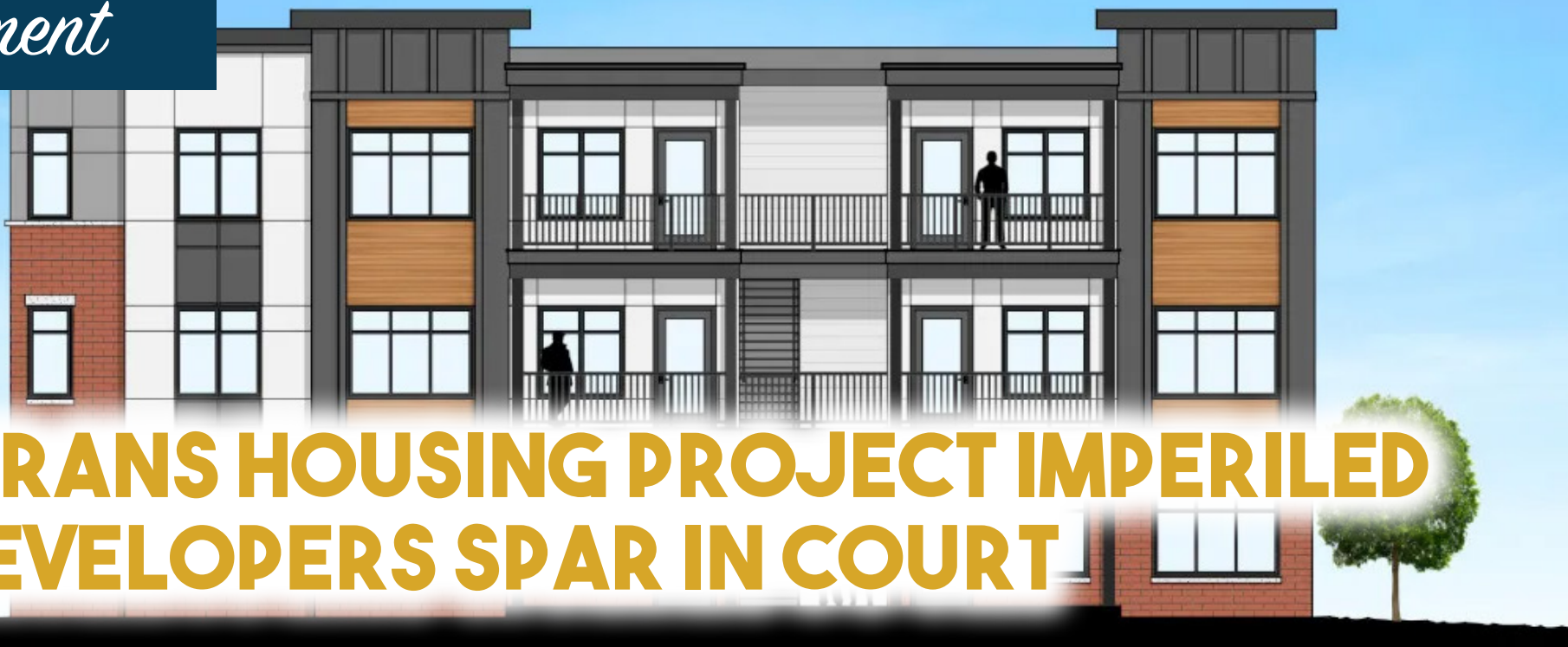
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# VETERANS HOUSING PROJECT IMPERILED AS DEVELOPERS SPAR IN COURT

BY KARL BAKER

In the fall of 2022, David Mosley, the affable but embattled CEO of the Delaware Center for Homeless Veterans, told the New Castle County Council that his plan to build 60 apartments for struggling military Veterans and their families was just a first step in a coming wave of housing construction for vulnerable people.

Mosley’s comments followed the council’s unanimous approval to give his organization up to \$5 million to purchase a blighted property in Edgemoor on which to build the five-building apartment complex for Veterans to be called the Carolyn Center. But, a year and a half later, the taxpayer-funded venture has stalled and could be unraveling as Mosley and his organization face mounting legal claims.

In January, a Hockessin-based development company sued the Delaware Center for Homeless Veterans — its partner in the apartment project — claiming the non-profit broke its promise to give the partnership the deed

to the Carolyn Center property, where a bowling alley once sat. As a consequence, millions of unspent state dollars previously committed to the Veterans apartment project has been put at risk, the lawsuit claims.

“For unknown reasons, DCHV is refusing to honor its commitments,” states the lawsuit, which was filed in Delaware’s Court of Chancery.

In all, the conflict among the development team has delayed the construction of subsidized family housing in a region where Veterans support services are typically tailored to single men, said Stephen Metraux, a University of Delaware professor who studies homelessness.

### ONLY FOR VETERANS?

Instead of turning the property over to the Carolyn Center partnership, the Delaware Center for Homeless Veterans last fall listed the parcel for sale for a hefty \$2 million.

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# DNREC DETAILS HOW WIND FARM CABLE WILL COME ASHORE IN PARK

BY KATIE KAZIMIR

State officials this week laid out the way they expect transmission lines from an offshore wind farm to be installed under the 3Rs Beach in Delaware Seashore State Park.

During an information open house at Bethany Town Hall March 13, DNREC representatives displayed posters around the room loaded with information. One said four cables will be bored 60 feet under the 3Rs Beach to the parking lot. Each cable will be installed in an underground vault with buried electrical transmission lines. The cables will be 40 feet before the wetlands into the Indian River Bay.

Ultimately the electrical cables will be connected to

the existing Delmarva Power & Light Indian River substation facility adjacent to the Indian River Power Plant.

Ray Bivens, director of DNREC’s Division of Parks and Recreation, would not talk about the boring process or anything other than “the impact on recreational activities at the park and, specifically, the parking lot where construction is anticipated to be taking place.”

To put the depth of the boring in perspective, the nearby Fire Control Tower 3 is six stories tall, Bivens said. A story is generally considered 10 feet. The parking lot will have an excavation in its center that will 233 feet long, 60 feet wide and 15-feet deep. Each concrete vault would be 47 feet long, 12 feet wide and 11 inches

deep and capped with sectional concrete roof covers. Each would have two manhole covers, meaning eight will be visible in the parking lot. Manhole accesses are capped with 36-inch recessed covers. They will rarely need to be accessed, Bivens said.

The vaults will include cable, joints and fiber optic lines. All necessary components will be insulated and there will be no additional high voltage equipment inside the walls. Construction would be done in the off-season, likely between Sept. 15 and May 15, he said. Only construction personnel will be allowed there during that time, a poster said. During construction only, markers and buoys would be visible to support construction and installation of cables on the Atlantic Ocean and bay sides.

“Temporary disturbances would remain within limits of the parking area,” one poster said. “There will be no disturbance of the dunes, wetland habitats or the beach.”

Excavated material will be repurposed as cover material, with any extra transported elsewhere after consultation with DNREC. The site will be restored to its original grade, elevation and material, a poster said. The parking lot most likely will remain a sand lot, Bivens said. If it was paved, he said, sand would blow across it anyway, he said.

Asked if boring the cables through would affect the park or wildlife, Bivens said no.

Bivens said the offshore wind land lease and construction would be treated like any other utility, such as cell towers, power lines and water pipes. The presentation noted there already is a T-Mobile cell tower at Delaware Seashore State Park and a Verizon cell tower at Cape Henlopen State Park.

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# 26 AMENDMENTS LATER, PERMIT TO PURCHASE BILL GOES TO CARNEY

BY KATIE KAZIMIR

After 26 proposed amendments and about nine hours of discussion, the permit to purchase bill has passed both the House and Senate and is on its way to Gov. John Carney for signature to become law.

**Senate Substitute 1 for Senate Bill 2**, sponsored by Senate Majority Whip Elizabeth “Tizzy” Lockman, D-Wilmington, would require most Delawareans to obtain a permit to purchase a handgun only if they have completed an approved firearm training course in the last five years. It would exempt qualified active and retired law enforcement officers and anyone permitted by the state to carry a concealed weapon from that requirement because they already would have been required to complete a firearm training course.

It comes with a multi-million price tag in a year the budget minders are warning the legislature to take it easy because of the leveling off of revenues. The fiscal

note with the bill says costs will range from about \$3 million in 2025 to \$4.6 million in 2027. The fiscal notes only detail three years.

Chipping away at gun control issues has been a focal point for Democrats in the last eight years. Roughly 600 Delawareans have been killed by gun violence since 2019, and almost every gun used in a crime was at one time purchased legally, they say.

The Delaware State Sportsmen’s Association vowed before the bill ever hit the Senate the first time to take it to court. As the Senate was starting, it posted on its Facebook page “The good guys in the Senate have amendments placed with the bill. Let’s see if they can lessen the sting while we litigate. Maybe some of the Dems in the Senate will wake up to the loser that this bill is.”

It included a list of the amendments. In Thursday’s Senate hearing, all the proposed amendments came from Republicans and all were rejected.

“Our caucus offered 13 amendments during the discussion, all of which were deemed ‘unfriendly’ by the Senate majority,” the Senate Republican leadership said in a statement Thursday evening. These amendments included language that would clarify no firearm registry could be implemented, require prompt issuance of a permit if certain criteria were met, allow for a longer period in which individuals could acquire legal counsel should a permit be denied and more.

“We are disappointed that none of the common sense amendments presented passed. We are confident, however, whether the legislation was further amended today or not, the judicial system will find the permit to purchase law unconstitutional.”

House Republicans also weren’t thrilled.

“This is a deeply flawed piece of legislation,” said Joe Fulgham, director of Policy & Communications for the House of Representatives Republican Caucus. “Not only do recent federal court decisions strongly indicate it is unconstitutional, but the bill contains unaddressed errors and shortcomings.”

“This has become a pattern of a General Assembly controlled by one party, enacting legislation the majority knows is unsound, but being too preoccupied with the need to declare victory than taking accountability for the consequences of their actions.”

The four amendments to the bill that were passed came courtesy of the House last week. Eleven amendments to the bill were heard on the House floor last week, with the House voting to approve three amendments sponsored by House Majority Leader Melissa Minor-Brown, D-New Castle, and one sponsored by Rep. Jeffrey Spiegelman, R-Clayton.

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# BILL ADDING ASEXUALITY, PANSEXUALITY INTO LAW MOVES TO HOUSE

BY BETSY PRICE

A move to add asexuality and pansexuality to the state definition of sexual orientation led to conversations about what those terms mean and a warning that adding them could one day lead to adding pedophiles, too.

Rep. Eric Morrison, D-Newark/Bear, said the idea for **House Bill 275** came from a member of Delaware’s LGBTQ+ community who identifies as pansexual. State law now defines sexual orientation as heterosexuality, homosexuality or bisexuality. That definition provides legal protections for those groups that would not exist for someone who identifies as asexual or pansexual, Morrison said.

Asexuality refers to individuals with little to no sexual attraction to other individuals, although asexual individuals may desire emotionally intimate relationships with other individuals. Pansexuality refers to individuals who are attracted sexually or romantically, or both, to

another individual regardless of that individual’s sex or gender identity.

“That’s a lot of words,” Morrison said in Wednesday’s House Administration Committee. “But one example is that you may have someone who’s heterosexual or heterosexual male, who of course is interested in women. However, they would not be or want to be with a trans woman.

“A pansexual individual is open to anyone. They would be willing to date someone or see someone who is trans.”

Morrison, who said he’s been active in LGBTQ+ groups for 31 years, believes the numbers of people who identify as asexual or pansexual are increasing as they feel more comfortable and safe about being honest about who they are. By adding them to the sexual orientation definition, the state reinforces that discrimination or

hate crimes based on those orientations receive the same protections under the law as heterosexuals, homosexuals and bisexuals.

## SENDING MESSAGE ABOUT SEXUALITY

It also sends a message to asexual and pansexual state residents that they are valued every bit as much as heterosexual, gay and bisexual people.

“Representation matters and words matter, and it also matters seeing yourself represented,” Morrison said.

He also hopes the legislation will help educate his fellow Delawareans about asexuality and pansexuality “and let them know that whether or not they know it, they have fellow Delawareans in their everyday lives who are asexual and pansexual.”

House Minority Leader Mike Ramone, R-Pike Creek/Newark, noted that homosexuals have faced abuse that heterosexuals have not. But, he said, he was not sure why asexual people and pansexual people needed to be broken out of the current umbrella definition.

Morrison responded that all LGBTQ+ people still face a lot of discrimination and abuse. Ramone asked whether changing the state definition made it worse by breaking it out even more.

“You’re this, but you’re in that part of this, so you’re going to be treated differently,” he said. “Are we making it worse?”

Morrison said state law now “kind of pretends” that the three sexual orientations listed are the only ones.

“Someone who is asexual cannot identify as heterosexual, homosexual or bisexual,” Morrison said. “And somebody who is pansexual would not identify as any of those.”

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photo credit: Cab Calloway School of the Arts



*Education*

TOWN SQUARE LIVE





# THREE APPO HIGH STUDENTS GRANTED PATENT FOR GOLF TEE DESIGN

BY JAREK RUTZ

Golfing season doesn't have to be restricted to warm summer days with perfect weather. A golfing tee designed by three students in the **Appoquinimink School District** is specially crafted to hold up in cold conditions and not break. The seniors at **Appo High** who created it, Dylan Everett, Brodie Neubauer, Lucas Karpinski, were granted a provisional patent this month for their design and they're hoping to cash in.

"We're looking to sell the idea off to somebody else that can manufacture it," Karpinski said. "The money would be used towards things like college, and although we like the product, it's going to be too much of a time commitment for college. So still being a part of it and selling it off."

## DIFFERENT TYPES OF PATENTS

A provisional patent was granted to the students, which is typically a cheaper and quicker process than filing for a non-provisional patent. Provisional patents also expire after a year unless a non-provisional patent is filed to keep the patent rights. A provisional patent is an informal patent application filed with the United States Patent Office, whereas a non-provisional patent application is the formal patent application submitted to the United States Patent and Trademark Office for an invention.

Utility and plant patent applications can be provisional and nonprovisional, but provisional applications may not be filed for design inventions. A design patent



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protects the actual design or external look and appearance of an invention; a utility patent protects inventions like processes, systems or machines; and a plant patent protects a new and unique production of a plant.

"We applied for the provisional patent, which is the intellectual property," Everett said. "We said 'Hey, this is our idea, we were the first ones that came up with this,' and then from there, you sell that off or you apply for the actual patent. So we're just going to wipe our hands clean and kind of sell it off to someone that can take it further than we can with our tiny resources."

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# TEACHER PAY COMMITTEE TO FOCUS NOW ON CAREER LADDERS

BY JAREK RUTZ

The state committee responsible for making recommendations on the pay of educators now turns its focus to creating leadership and career advancement opportunities for teachers. Its last public meeting was in early January, when it presented its suggestions to the General Assembly.

The committee was formed by **Senate Bill 100** to make salary suggestions on each educator employee group to keep Delaware competitive with other states and to combat the ongoing educator shortage.

All of its suggestions except one was included in Gov. John Carney’s proposed 2025 budget. In its meeting Monday afternoon, the committee said it’s now focused on three tasks:

- Determining how educators can achieve additional opportunities for career advancement, taking into account degrees, certifications, competencies and leadership responsibilities while being paid appro-

priately.

- Creating leadership roles that will yield additional pay.
- Creating avenues for more pay if educators have responsibilities that are not generally required in the classroom.

The committee has created a Teacher Career Ladder Work Group that will work on these three tasks and report to the whole committee in June. Committee member Margie López Waite, who is chief executive officer **Las Américas ASPIRA Academy**, is head of the work group.

She said the group has made initial connections with Rodel to focus on teacher leadership, as well as beginning discussion around how the state funding formula could allocate fiscal resources to local districts via a “Career Ladder Supplement.”

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# DSU WIDENS GLOBAL PRESENCE WITH UNIVERSITY OF BELIZE ALLIANCE

BY JAREK RUTZ

Delaware State University has created a partnership it hopes will lead to future opportunities in Belize, a nation on the eastern coast of Central America.

“It opens the door to collaborative activities,” said Carlos Holmes, DSU’s director of news services. “This could range from anything from joint events, joint presentations, joint research, joint studies, it could indeed involve possible student exchange, all these things are possible.”

Earlier this week, DSU President Tony Allen and University of Belize President Vincent Palacio signed a memorandum of understanding affirming the intentions of both institutions to engage each other in collaborative activities. One of the programs the University of Belize is interested in, among others, is DSU’s nursing program.

## BELIZE AND JAMAICA

There’s no direct connection between the two, or the

state of Delaware and Belize, but DSU has its fingerprint on many places around the globe. Also this week, DSU announced that Jamaican Prime Minister Andrew Holness will be the keynote speaker at this year’s graduate commencement ceremony. Holness will be the first prime minister to speak at a DSU commencement event. His appearance reflects the university’s academic relationship with the country.

“That memorandum of understanding, which I believe was signed in 2018, opened the door to academic programs down there,” Holmes said. “Now we offer master’s degrees and doctoral degrees in education leadership and a master of business administration degree down there as well as associate degree programs.”

Holmes noted that DSU also offers accounting degrees at a Chinese university.


A photograph of three young boys smiling and posing together. They are wearing red and blue athletic wear with "INDEPENDENCE" and "ACROSSE" printed on them.

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*Sports*

TOWN SQUARE LIVE





# TOBIASON AND BANKS ARE NAMED DSBA PLAYERS OF THE YEAR

BY NICK HALLIDAY

St. Elizabeth senior Aiden Tobiason and Ursuline freshman Jezelle “GG” Banks have been selected as the 2023-24 Delaware High School Basketball Players of the Year by the Delaware Sportswriters and Broadcasters Association (DSBA).

Tobiason led the Vikings in scoring with 432 points on the season in which he averaged 18 points a game. The Vikings went 19-1 in the regular season and grabbed the No. 1 seed in the DIAA basketball state championship. After two wins in the playoffs, the Vikings fell to Salesianum in the semifinals. Tobiason has committed to Temple University to further his education and play basketball at the next level.

Banks, just a freshman, scored a team-high 29 points to help lead her Ursuline Raiders to a DIAA girls basketball state championship. Banks scored 490 points this season in which she averaged 20 points a game. She was also voted to first team all state in her eighth grade season as well.

See the remaining boys and girls 2024 DSBA all state honors:

### All-State Boys Basketball 1st Team

- Aiden Tobiason, St. Elizabeth, sr. (Player of the Year)
- Jaylin Horsey, William Penn, sr.
- Dorell Little, Dover, sr.
- Denim Perkins, Dover, sr.
- Kareem Thomas, Salesianum, sr.

### All-State Boys Basketball 2nd Team

- Justin Hinds, Salesianum, sr.
- Isaiah Hynson, Salesianum, sr.
- Jayden Taylor, Sanford, jr.
- Kashmier Wise, Seaford, sr.
- JT Wright, St. Elizabeth, sr.

### All-State Boys Basketball 3rd Team

- Ayvion Matthews, Middletown, sr.
- Darius Miller, Lake Forest, jr.
- Alassan N’Diaye, Saint Mark’s, soph.
- Blair Thomas, St. Georges, sr.
- Emmanuel Vonhm, William Penn, sr.

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# ON THE PITCH: PRESEASON GIRLS' SOCCER RANKINGS

BY JASON WINCHELL

The weather outside this week feels like spring which means that the spring sports season will kick off on March 18. Last year we saw Middletown and Archmere take home state champion trophies in girls soccer. The teams have been practicing for almost three weeks and are ready to start the season. The preseason top 10 in girls soccer has never been easy and they won't be this time around, but this is how Delaware Live has them to start the season.

## DIVISION 1

**No. 1 Middletown** The defending champs will have to replace a few key spots including in goal where they excelled last year. They play in the tough Blue Hen Conference plus they have some tough non-conference matches with Archmere, DMA, Padua, Saint Mark's, Smyrna and Wilmington Charter.

**No. 2 Appoquinimink** The Jags made it to the state championship, falling 4-2 to Middletown. The Jags had

a 12-3 record in the regular season. They have a tough conference schedule plus matches with Caravel, Saint Mark's, Padua and Wilmington Charter.

**No. 3 Smyrna** The Eagles had a solid season going 11-4 in the regular season and lost to Appoquinimink in the semifinals. The Eagles' non-conference schedule is loaded this year with Middletown, Padua, Sussex Academy, Saint Mark's and Caravel.

**No. 4 Padua** The Pandas fell to Middletown in the semifinals after a 9-4 regular season and 10-5 overall. They have a very tough schedule with matches against Middletown, Appoquinimink, Caravel, Smyrna, Saint Mark's, Archmere and Indian River.

**No. 5 Polytech** The Panthers had a solid regular season finishing 12-3 and losing to Padua in the quarterfinals. They have a tough conference schedule plus matches with Odessa, Saint Mark's, Sussex Academy and Indian River.

**No. 6 Odessa** The Ducks move up from Division 2 this year and look to continue their strong play. They went 13-2 and lost to Saint Mark's in the quarterfinals. They have a tough conference schedule and then face Archmere and Polytech in key non-conference matches.

**No. 7 Cape Henlopen** The Vikings went 8-6-1 last year and just missed out of the state tournament. They play in the tough Henlopen North and will also take their annual trip to North Carolina this year for a pair of matches.

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# QUICK STICK: PRESEASON BOYS' LACROSSE RANKINGS

BY JASON WINCHELL

The best part about the warm weather is the fact that the boys' lacrosse season is about to kick off. Will this be the year that we don't have a Cape Henlopen vs Sallies championship game to end the season? Those two are the early favorites, but with both playing some national powers could the tournament see them on the same side of the bracket. There are other teams that are ready to challenge those two and it is time to see if they are ready to challenge them. Here are the Delaware Live Preseason Top 10.

**No. 1 Sallies** The Sals won another state championship last year and look to be solid again this year. The Sals finished 10-4 in the regular season, with all losses

coming to teams ranked regionally and nationally. This year's schedule is loaded with national powerhouses plus four in-state teams ranked in the preseason Top 6.

**No. 2 Cape Henlopen** The Vikings had another typical year as they finished 12-3 and lost to Sallies in the championship. They have a few tough out of state opponents plus Sallies, Friends and Archmere.

**No. 3 Archmere** The Auks had another quality year, finishing 12-3 with two of the losses to Sallies and Cape. They fell to Cape in the quarters, but return a lot of good starters from that team. With Sallies and Cape on the schedule again along with some tough out of state opponents.

**No. 4 Friends** The Quakers return a lot of players from a team that went 13-2 and made a trip to the semifinals where they fell to Sallies. The Quakers beefed up their non-conference schedule with Cape, Archmere and Caesar Rodney.

**No. 5 Caesar Rodney** The Riders went 11-4 last season and made it to the semifinals, losing to rival Cape Henlopen. They have a tough schedule with Cape, Sallies, Archmere, Friends and Appoquinimink.

**No. 6 Tatnall** The Hornets had a resurgent season last year, going 12-3 before losing to Friends in the quarterfinals. They play their conference foes twice and non-conference road games at Sallies and Cape this year.

**No. 7 Tower Hill** The Hillers went 11-4 in the regular season and fell in the quarterfinals to Sallies. They play in the tough Independent Conference and play Archmere and Saint Mark's in the non-conference portion.

**No. 8 Middletown** The Cavs won the Flight A title and were 15-0 and lost in the quarters to Caesar Rodney. They have Appoquinimink and Saint Mark's on the schedule.

**No. 9 Appoquinimink** The Jags had a tough year last year, going 8-7 and losing to Friends in the quarterfinals. They play a tough schedule with games against Archmere, CR, Middletown and Saint Mark's.

**No. 10 Saint Mark's** The Spartans had a fantastic season last year as they made the state tournament and a 10-5 record. They play Tatnall, Tower Hill, Appoquinimink and Middletown this season.







# CLUBHOUSE TALK: PRESEASON BASEBALL RANKINGS

BY NICK HALLIDAY

Spring sports season is right around the corner. After being inside all winter for sports, it's always refreshing to get out in the fresh air and see the green grass as spring arrives. Which means America's favorite pastime is about to start—baseball.

Last season, the DMA Seahawks took the state championship behind player of the year Tyler August, now a Blue Hen. The Seahawks graduated a lot of talent from last season's championship team, which included Drew Simpson (West Chester), Payton Brannock (East Stroudsburg), Logan Willey (UMBC) and Jackson Dorsey (Coast Guard).

However, in Seahawks fashion the team is completely reloaded. That is why we have them sitting back at the top of our preseason rankings. They are the defending state champs behind DSB coach of the year Aaron Lewis, who produces talent every year. Let's take a look.

**No. 1 Delaware Military Seahawks (DMA)** This team will look different than the past few seasons, but they have reloaded. They return Nate Golden, Tyler Leech, Sawyer Mezzatesta and Sammy Diaz-Martinez from last year's team who played key roles in last season's championship run. With so much talent last season as starters, they had players on the bench that could have

started on any other team in the state. A few new names to watch are Chase Sanvely (Delaware State), Charles Porter Jr., Dylan Delcollo, JJ Pankowski, Hunter Dicarlantonio and standout freshman Emmett Robinson. Even though they lost some thoroughbreds from last year's team, their backups have now been in training for two years behind last year's seniors.

**No. 2 Conrad Red Wolves** The runner up last season to DMA in the state championship. Conrad graduated some key players from last year's team, but they return a few key players from last year's team which is why they stay at No. 2. They return one of the top pitchers in the state junior Brady Wardell (Maryland commit), along with Kaden Netta, Dylan Pirrung, Seth Strecker and Andrew Stute.

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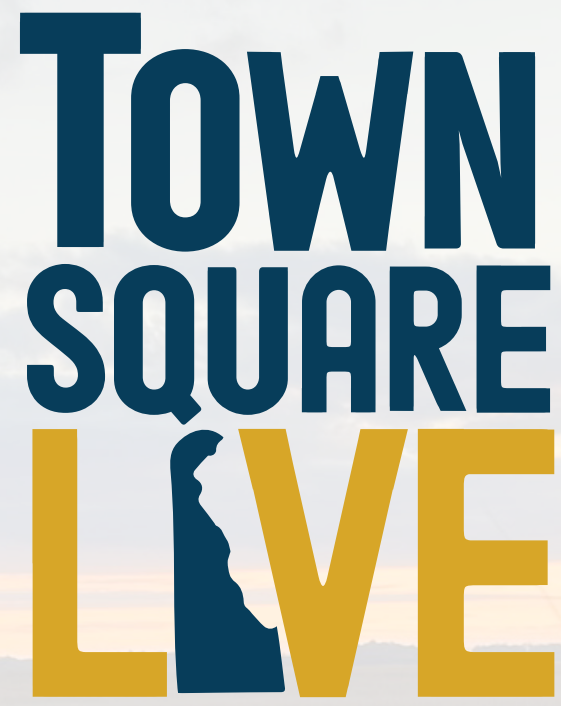


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