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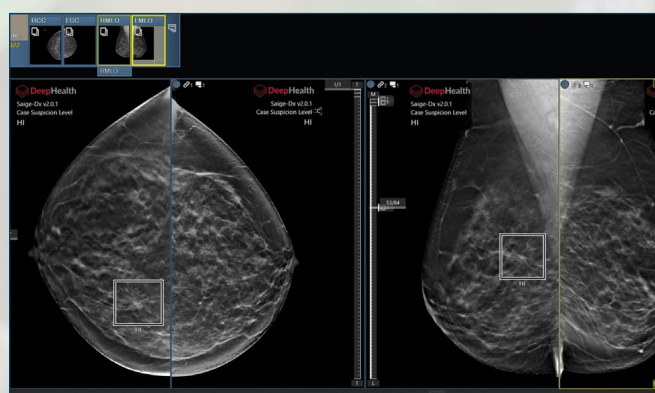
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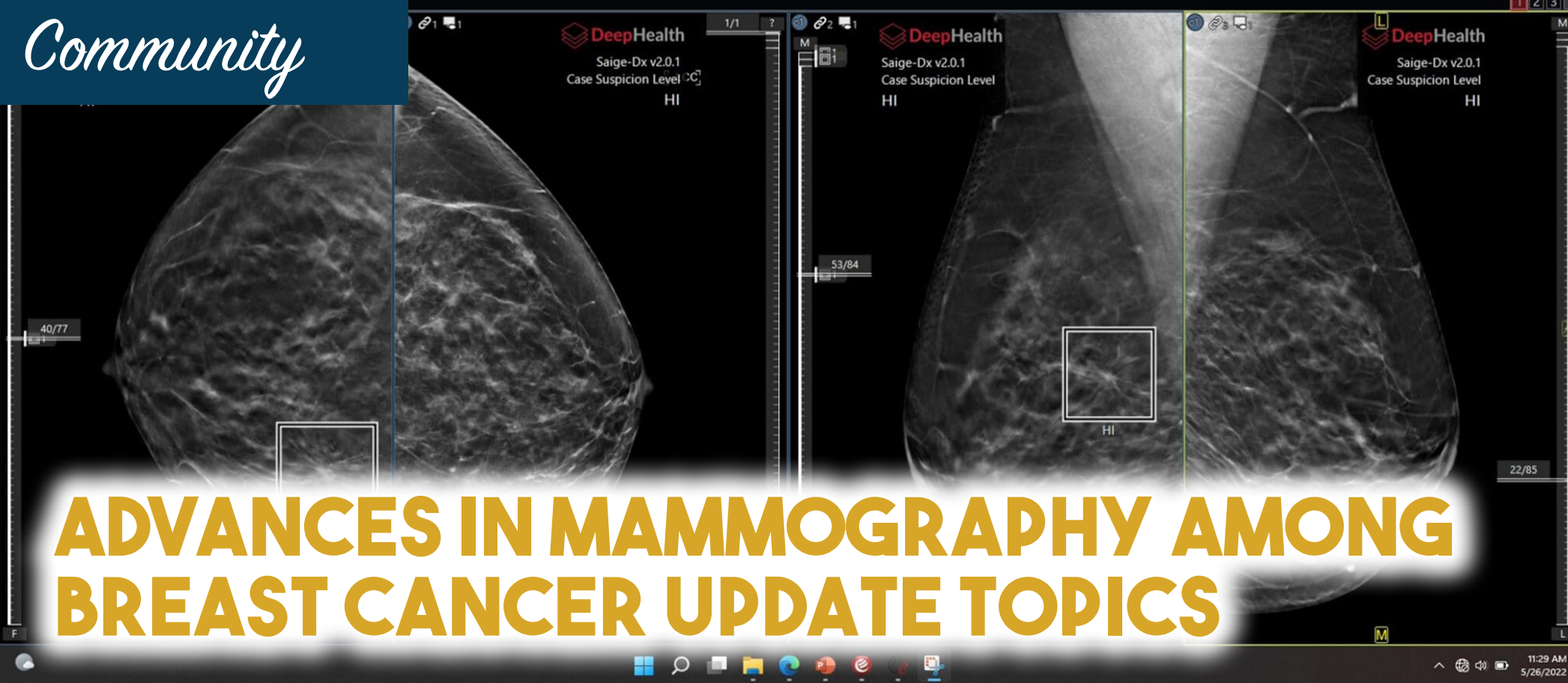


Inside the Circle



Community

TOWN SQUARE LIVE



ADVANCES IN MAMMOGRAPHY AMONG BREAST CANCER UPDATE TOPICS

BY BETSY PRICE

The use of artificial intelligence in screening for breast cancers and a little used technique that can efficiently and economically find cancers in women at high risk for that cancer are among the topics to be tackled during the Delaware Breast Cancer Coalition’s annual update in May. Dr. Jacqueline Holt, medical director of the Delaware Imaging Network, says that AI has helped radiologists find more cancers when they are smaller and more curable.

AI software trained on millions of images of breast scans is spotting and flagging subtle cancers for radiologist to review, and helping reduce the number of patient callbacks for additional imaging.

Dr. Diana Dickson-Witmer, a breast surgical oncologist with Beebe Healthcare, plans to continue spreading the word at the update about a screening technique

called contrast enhanced mammography that can help find breast cancer in high-risk patients at a cost far less than the current typical MRI scan now used to look. The technique has been approved by the Federal Food and Drug Administration for 12 years, but is not routinely used simply because there’s not a single billing code to use for it, she said. Contrast enhanced mammography also has the potential to expand access for screening for women who need it, she said.

What’s new in mammograms and advanced breast cancer detection is one of five focus topics in the 16th annual **Breast Cancer Update**, which will revolve around a theme of conquering the unknown while rising above a breast cancer diagnosis. Other topics will include the differences between post mastectomy options of reconstruction or no reconstruction; hospice

and palliative care support options for patients and their loved ones; the benefits of mental health and cancer survivorship therapy programs; and alternatives available for breast reconstruction, nipple creation, and artistic expression with tattooing.

The update will take place from 7:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. May 15, online and in person with a viewing party at Goldey-Beacom College in Pike Creek. It’s free. To attend, register [HERE](#). The update typically draws breast cancer patients and survivors, their families, physicians, nurses, students and allied health professionals.

“Our goal is to have programming that empowers our community in the fight against breast cancer,” the coalition website said. “The Annual Breast Cancer Update allows us to bring nationally renowned speakers in the breast cancer field and allows us to educate the community about the innovative research, treatment and programs that are available in Delaware.”

AI AND MAMMOGRAMS

Finding cancer when it’s small pays off in lives saved, Holt said.

“When a breast cancer is found early, the survival is 99% in Stage 1,” meaning it has not started spreading. Holt said. “Even when there’s a lymph node positive or regional disease, the survival rate approaches 90%,” she said. “And it’s not just the survivability, but the hope is to decrease the amount of surgery, such as lumpectomies instead of mastectomies, unless chemotherapy or sometimes no chemotherapy at all is needed.”

The use of artificial intelligence has risen dramatically since the COVID-19 pandemic started, breast cancer specialists say.

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GOVERNOR'S RACE IS SEEING BIG MONEY – FROM THE CANDIDATES

BY KARL BAKER

This story was originally published on Spotlight Delaware.

The three-way race to become Delaware’s Democratic candidate for governor is gearing up to be among the most expensive and competitive in recent history and much of the money is flowing from the candidates’ own personal bank accounts.

In December, **Collin O’Mara**, Delaware’s former chief environmental regulator, loaned his fledgling **campaign** \$750,000, a massive amount for a political campaign in little Delaware, even surpassing any of former Gov. Jack Markell’s individual contributions to his famously self-funded campaigns of the 2000s.

O’Mara’s contribution allowed him to gain ground on other candidates who had been fundraising for months—or years. But, a day after he made the loan, his competitor New Castle County Executive **Matt Meyer** added another \$200,000 loan into his own gubernatorial

campaign account, bringing the total he has lent it to roughly \$580,000.

In separate interviews, O’Mara and Meyer each said they transferred hundreds of thousands of dollars of their own money into their campaigns to demonstrate to potential donors that theirs was the serious candidacy in the race to become Delaware’s highest elected official.

“I’m asking them to make a bet on me,” Meyer said. “If I don’t bet on myself, how can I expect them to?”

The two candidates also each stressed that their contributions were loans, which they hope their campaigns will pay back with money raised elsewhere.

“We wanted to signal that we’d be competitive from the beginning as a way also to instill confidence,” O’Mara said.

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SYMPHONY READIES FOR A SEASON OF MUSIC DIRECTOR TRYOUTS

BY BETSY PRICE

Audiences attending the Delaware Symphony Orchestra’s 2024-25 season will have a say in who is chosen as its new music director. The symphony’s 119th season will showcase the four finalists for the job: **Mélisse Brunet**, **Filippo Ciabatti**, **Michelle DiRusso**, and **Taichi Fukumura**. Each will conduct a classical concert and audience members will be surveyed afterward about how they thought the program went.

The season also will feature guest soloists new to the symphony and a series of performances featuring the symphony’s principal musicians, formerly referred to as chamber concerts.

J.C. Barker, executive director of the symphony, said he’ll be excited to see each of the candidates and soloists. “And the reason is that they’re all just completely fresh, in so many ways,” he said.

The pool of applicants for the music director job held for 20 years by David Amada started with 147, was whittled to 17 and then to nine.

“These four rose to the top,” Barker said. “I think what’s most exciting about this season is just the newness of it all. It’s exciting. It’s kind of like watching the Olympics. We’ve got some great talent coming here next season.”

The season will include the symphony’s traditional five Classics Series concerts, three Musicians’ Series concerts including a holiday performance at the Hotel du Pont and two concerts in Sussex County.

SYMPHONY CLASSICS

Opening the Classics series Sept. 20 will be music director candidate Mélisse Brunet in Brunet Conducts Tchaikovsky, with guest violinist Melissa White. The

program will feature works by Anna Clyne, Florence Price and Tchaikovsky’s Symphony No. 5.

Next, candidate Filippo Ciabatti takes the podium with the Nov. 15 and 17 Ciabatti Conducts Beethoven, in Wilmington and Lewes. It will include Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony, Fate Now Conquers by Carlos Simon and guest cellist Tommy Mesa performing the First Concerto of Shostakovich.

A Jan. 24 program will feature candidate Taichi Fukumura in Fukumura Conducts Dvořák, including Dvořák’s Symphony No. 8, works by Brian Nabors and Korngold. The guest artist will be violinist Oliver Neubauer.

The final candidate, Michelle di Russo, will helm Di Russo Conducts Brahms. It will include a new work by Gabriela Ortiz, Prokofiev’s Third Piano Concerto featuring guest pianist Janice Carissa, and Brahms’ Symphony No. 4.

Music Director Laureate David Amado will close the season with Amado Conducts Stravinsky April 18, featuring The Rite of Spring, and works by Takemitsu and Debussy.

A new music director may not live in Wilmington, and likely will have another job, Barker said. It’s a common arrangement now. Amado also was music director of the Atlantic Classical Orchestra in Florida while working at the Delaware Symphony. Many music directors now live in a central location that makes it easier for them to travel to and from jobs, Barker said. Some of the Delaware candidates are on short lists for other jobs.

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LIFE SKILLS OLYMPICS HELP TEACH REAL WORLD, PRACTICAL CRAFTS

BY JAREK RUTZ

Feeding off the positive energy, flashing of cameras and fast-paced competition, Mia Rooks helped her team bring home a trophy in the third annual Life Skills Olympics. At the same time, the competition will help the 17-year-old with her transition plan of attending a four-year university to pursue a degree in social work.

“It was an exciting energy, this is my second year going but my first year participating in it last year, I went and I cheered the team on,” Rooks said, “and this year, it was exciting. It’s very loud, but it’s a great energy and it’s nice being there with them.”

The junior at High Road School of Sussex County is one of a few dozen that competed in the event involving six **High Road Schools** across Maryland and Delaware.

Southern Delaware was the year’s winning team composed of students from the **High Road School of Sussex County** in Georgetown and the **High Road School of Southern Delaware** in Felton.

“Our transition team all comes together and we throw our ideas for what we think would be sufficient for life skills training,” said Dan Jones, transition coordinator at both the Georgetown and Felton High Roads Schools. “We went with some old competitions and then we tried to spice it up a little bit because students could get used to certain things and then it was too easy, so we want to make it a little bit challenging.”

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photo credit: Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce



Business

TOWN SQUARE LIVE



UD BREAKS GROUND ON \$150M SABRE BIO-PHARMA CENTER

BY JAREK RUTZ

The **University of Delaware** hopes that on the other side of the COVID-19 pandemic, a brand new \$150 million building will lead to the next monumental biopharmaceutical innovation.

“It was a near miracle that a global pandemic was unleashed on the world, shut down the global economy, took millions of lives and yet the bio-industry identified, developed and delivered a life-saving, world-saving vaccine in record time, not in 10 years, but in one year,” said Sen. Chris Coons, D-Delaware, at a groundbreaking event Monday.

The Securing American Biomanufacturing Research and Education (SABRE) Center will be a 70,000-square-foot facility, funded primarily by federal and state dollars. In it will be training for workers in manufacturing

biopharmaceuticals. The space allows for biopharmaceutical companies to test their innovations in an FDA-regulated environment, complementing research and development work at **NIIMBL** (National Institute for Innovation in Manufacturing Biopharmaceuticals).

Kelvin Lee, director of NIIMBL, said the amount of funds the university currently has for the project is undisclosed. But, there have been several funding pools, such as an \$8 million allocation for UD and NIIMBL for a biopharma manufacturing center in September, 2022 as part of a congressionally-directed allotment from the **National Institute of Standards and Technology** and the **Department of Health and Human Services**.

“This is the next phase in Delaware being at the cutting edge,” Coons said, “not just regionally but globally

of innovation in bio and pharma, manufacturing and development.”

UD hopes the SABRE Center will result in manufacturing innovations in a production-relevant environment on a wide variety of cutting-edge biopharmaceuticals, such as gene therapies, mRNA vaccines and other biopharmaceuticals. The goal is to provide a collaborative space for biopharmaceuticals in order to accelerate the development of new manufacturing technologies and approaches into widespread commercial adoption.

UD President Dennis Assanis said the center will spawn thousands of new manufacturing jobs to boost the state economy.

“Groundbreakings like this are always very inspirational and full of hope and promise of new endeavors and exciting achievements to come,” he said.

As a training ground for students, the new building will help develop a future workforce with relevant technical skills, hands-on training and expertise with equipment and processes that most closely mirror biopharmaceutical manufacturing facilities.

Rep. Lisa Blunt Rochester, D-Delaware, said this new center boils down to two things: jobs and supply chains. Mapping and monitoring the success of the SABRE Center with those two elements will ensure that Delaware stays competitive and maintains a healthy economy, while also leading the nation in innovation.

Sen. Tom Carper, D-Delaware, said this is another example of Delaware being the “little state that could.”

It is unclear when the SABRE Center is expected to open, but Assanis said the new building will be a place where brilliant ideas become realities.



HOME DELIVERY OF WINE, BEER, COCKTAILS CLEARS ANOTHER HURDLE

BY BETSY PRICE

A Delaware Senate bill that will allow state residents to have home delivery of alcohol in the form of wine, beer and mixed cocktails from restaurants, brewpubs and taverns is one step closer to becoming a law, despite opposition from Delaware’s liquor stores.

Senate Bill 166, sponsored by Sen. Jack Walsh, D-Wilmington, blew through the House Economic Development/Banking/Insurance & Commerce Committee Tuesday. It would allow third parties like DoorDash and Uber Eats to bring limited quantities of wine and beer—and as-yet unlimited quantities of mixed cocktails—to customers, as long as they are accompanied by an order of at least \$10 for food of some kind.

Edward Mulvihill, a fourth-generation owner of Peco’s Liquor Store in North Wilmington, argued that the arrangement would hurt liquor store sales that are now experiencing historic sales declines and would facilitate underage drinking. Delaware’s liquor licenses include

one for restaurants for on-site consumption and one for retail package stores to sell products for off-site consumption, he pointed out.

“In the years since COVID, we’ve seen this line become more and more blurred,” Mulvihill told the committee.

During the lockdown, the state Legislature changed Delaware’s laws to allow customers to take out alcohol with food, a key measure designed to keep the state’s restaurants afloat in the early part of the economy-roiling pandemic.

While Mulvihill said he was pleased that under the bill deliveries of wine would be limited to only two bottles, he was unhappy about the unlimited number of cocktails, as was Rep. Paul Baumbach, R-Newark. Before voting for the bill, Baumbach asked Walsh to consider amending the bill by putting a limit on the number of mixed drinks that could be ordered under the law.

DOORDASH DELIVERY RULES

A DoorDash rep said that company already delivers alcohol in 32 states and its system has been working well. It hires only drivers older than 21 to deliver drinks. To order alcohol for delivery, a customer must upload a license showing they are old enough to order it.

When the alcohol is delivered, it does not have to be delivered to the person who ordered it, but must be delivered to someone with a license or ID showing they

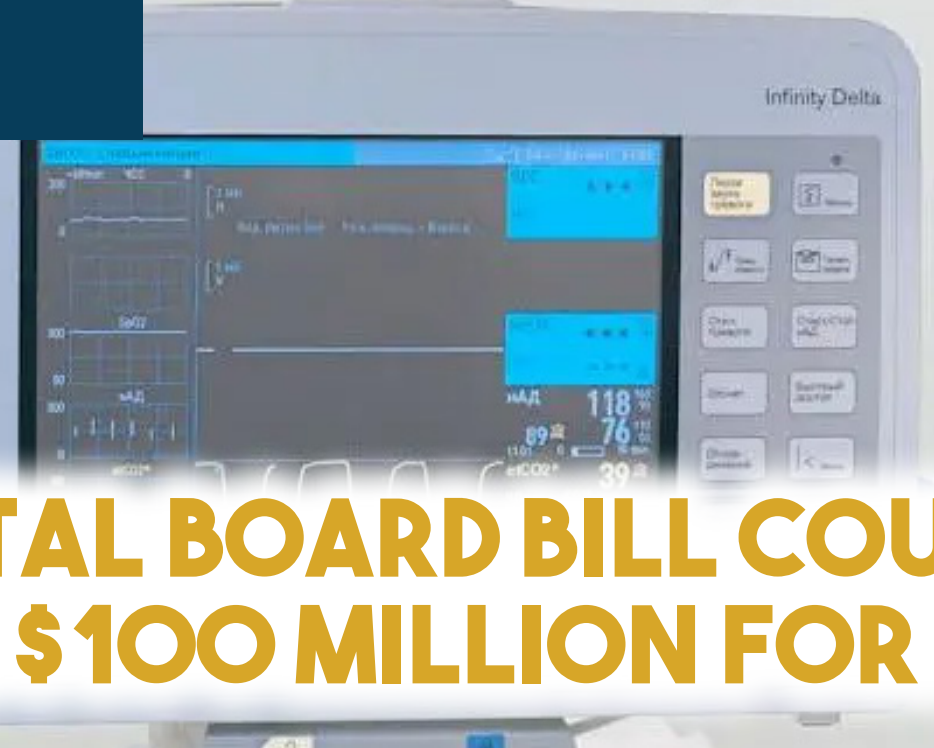
are old enough to receive it. The other person often is the spouse or partner of the person who placed the order, the rep said. The company does not allow alcohol to be left on a doorstep, as food can be, he said. If no one answers the door, the delivery person is paid by DoorDash to return the alcohol to the restaurant from which they picked it up, the rep said.

The company monitors its orders for unusual activity and deliveries looking for red flags, he said. In addition, the company trains its delivery personnel in laws about possessing, purchasing and consuming alcoholic beverages; acceptable forms of identification; how to detect fake and altered forms of identification; signs of intoxication; and reasons to refuse delivery, including that a consumer failed to provide valid identification, was underage, or displayed signs of intoxication.

The bill would allow bottles of cider to be delivered, because they are defined as wine, but not bottles of mead, because they are made with honey and are not counted under the law as a wine, said Delaware Alcohol Commissioner Jacqueline Paradee Mette. However, under the bill, cider could not be delivered in cans, noted Rep. Jeff Spiegelman, R-Claymont.

“I think that would be a very literal interpretation of that provision, yes,” Mette answered him.

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HOSPITAL BOARD BILL COULD HURT EXTRA \$100 MILLION FOR MEDICAID

BY BETSY PRICE

If a bill establishing a state board to oversee hospital budgets passes as is, it could alter or kill the deal cut with those hospitals to pay a provider tax unlocking another \$100 million for Delaware’s Medicaid program. Brian Frazee, president of the Delaware Healthcare Association, warned the House Appropriations Committee that the requirement in **House Bill 350** to immediately limit hospitals to charging no more than 250% of the Medicare rate for procedures put the Medicaid deal in danger.

Enacting that restriction would cause state hospitals to lose \$360 million in revenues, he has said repeatedly. If HB 350 passes, it would cause hospital to overspend the model by \$80 million the deal they came up with to get more federal money for Medicaid, Frazee said April 18.

“It would make our model unapproveable because we worked with the sponsor to come up with that,” Frazee said. “That’s the negotiation we had over the last year.”

Frazee said the hospitals had been talking to HB 350 sponsor and Speaker of the House Valerie Longhurst,

D-Bear. Things are moving quickly, he said, with productive conversations leaving the situation in a better place, he said, but he declined to share any specifics.

Dropping the 250% requirement would solve the hospital’s problem in the Medicaid deal, he said.

HOSPITAL ASSESSMENTS

Sen. Sarah McBride, D-Wilmington, the sponsor of Senate Bill 13, which would authorize the hospital revenue assessments that would trigger additional money for Delaware Medicaid, said Thursday she was aware of the talks, but not the specifics, and is prepared to alter her bill to help. She is not listed as a sponsor on HB 350, but does not see it as competing with her bill in any way.

“I believe that health care spending in Delaware is way too high,” McBride said. “We have to adopt policies that address the crisis of health care spending in Delaware.”

That crisis includes the state having to pay healthcare premium increases of 27% of for its own employees, which means the state will need to pump another \$39.5

million into its budget just to pay its share of those premium increases.

HB 350 is based on Vermont’s Green Mountain Care Board, which oversees hospital budgets and much more. McBride said she had been in contact with legislators who felt like it was helping to reduce costs.

“I am without question sympathetic to the need to rein in health care spending in Delaware, and this proposal is one that’s been utilized in other states,” she said.

Hundreds of bills are introduced each year, McBride said. “Our job as legislators is to make sure that the bills that we pass seamlessly interact with one another and both of these bills remain in a fluid legislative process,” she said. “I’m confident that we can ensure that SB 13 is able to be passed in a world where HB 350 passes as well.”

McBride said she is more than willing to have conversations with all relevant groups and stakeholders about the two bills.

“If we need to update the language and SB 13 to reflect a world where HB 350 has passed, I’m confident we can we can do that, and I’m certainly willing to do that,” she said.

The proposed hospital assessment in SB 143 is set at 3.58% on hospital net revenues to get the \$100 million from the feds. The more the state can show in assessments, McBride said, the more federal money it qualifies for.

“That’s one of the conversations we’re gonna have to have over the course of the next several weeks as 350 makes its way through the legislative process,” she said.

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A promotional graphic for the Boys & Girls Clubs of Delaware. At the top is the organization's logo, a stylized blue and white geometric shape. Below it, the text 'BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF DELAWARE' is written in a clean, sans-serif font. The main title 'GREAT SUMMERS START HERE' is rendered in large, bold, bubbly letters, with 'GREAT' in white on a blue background and 'SUMMERS' in green on a blue background. Below the title, the text 'Field Trips | SWIM4LIFE Weekly Themes | Caring Mentors' is written in a smaller, orange font. Underneath that, 'POC Accepted | Financial Assistance Available' is written in a blue font. A prominent orange button with the text 'Learn More' in white is centered below the text. At the bottom of the graphic are two photographs: one of a young girl smiling at a table, and another of a young boy holding a small dog.

photo link: SoDel Concepts

Food & Dining

TOWN SQUARE LIVE





DELA-BRITY CHEF ROBBIE JESTER IS BACK ON TV

BY PAM GEORGE

If you peruse the list of upcoming Food Network programs, you might see a familiar name on the list of “Chopped” contestants. Wearing a red chef’s coat, Robbie Jester of **Pizzeria Mariana** in Newark stands behind the signature basket of mystery ingredients.

Jester is one of the 16 chefs competing on “**Chopped Battle Italiano**,” which will debut on Tuesday, May 28. Chefs Scott Conant, Alex Guarnaschelli and Gabe Bertaccini—Italian cuisine specialists—will judge the tournament.

Jester can’t comment on his participation yet; contestants are under strict orders to stay mum until the network’s legal department gives them the thumbs up.

However, given the photo, it’s all but assured that he’s in the running and based on his experience with culinary contests, he’d certainly be a contender.

JESTER EXPERIENCE

You may remember that Jester won the grand prize of \$100,000 on “**Pressure Cooker**,” which aired in 2023 on Netflix. The cutthroat culinary battle was part “Survivor” and part “Top Chef”—the 11 contestants judged each other and there was no host. However, the highly rated show was not his first experience with reality TV and cooking competitions.

The Culinary Institute of America graduate’s shrimp scampi dish beat gave him the winning edge on the Food

Network program “**Beat Bobby Flay**”. He competed on “**Guy’s Grocery Games**” twice. Although he lost the first time, he won the show’s redemption competition.

AND YOUR TIME STARTS NOW!

If you’ve been living under a “Chopped” basket, the regular show format has appetizer, entrée and dessert rounds. Chefs must use the mystery ingredients for each course. However, they can add pantry items to their dishes, which must be completed in a set amount of time. There are four contestants, and one is eliminated in each round. During special tournaments, such as Battle Italiano, each episode is a heat that whittles the contestant pool to the finalists.

In 2022, Reuben Dhanawade appeared on the “Chopped” special “**Desperately Seeking Sous Chef**”. The prize was a job offer from chefs Maneet Chauhan, Scott Conant or Chris Santos. Dhanawade did not win, but he still worked for Chauhan. He now lives in Charleston.

BITTEN BY THE BUG

The eight-episode “Pressure Cooker” was filmed in 2022 in Los Angeles, which kept Jester away from his family and businesses. After filming the show, Jester split from his business partner. It was a stressful time. But the pleasure must outweigh the pain because Jester can’t seem to stay away from the camera. And for his Delaware fans, that is a good thing.





MEET BOBBY PANCAKE, CELEBRATING HIGH 5 HOSPITALITY'S 20 YEARS

HANGING WITH THE COLONEL

As a child, Pancake never considered leaving West Virginia, where his family owned a 1,500-acre dairy farm.

“I was busy being a farm kid with chores every day—milking cows and slopping hogs and feeding chickens,” recalled Pancake, who has an older and younger sister.

By the time he was a high schooler, he figured he’d be a truck driver like his cousins. The senior then got a job at KFC as a cook and chicken cutter. (In those days, workers broke down chickens in the restaurant.)

“Once I got a paycheck, I was good; I didn’t even consider college,” he said.

Pancake liked making money so much that the 18-year-old opened a country store while working at KFC. In West Virginia, small stores could sell alcohol—unless that is, the owner was underage. For a while, Pancake used his KFC paycheck to buy the eggs and milk to put on store shelves. It was unsustainable, he said. “I tucked my tail between my legs and said: ‘I can do this some other time,’” he said.

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BY PAM GEORGE

Bobby Pancake has heard it all. The CEO of Newark-based **High 5 Hospitality** is accustomed to people commenting on his last name, especially since High 5 operates **Eggspectation**, a Christiana-area restaurant famous for breakfast and brunch.

How does he handle it?

“I deal with it the same way Kevin Bacon deals with it,” he said. “So, I’m Bobby Pancake and he’s Kevin Bacon. We’re good.”

Now, that’s food for thought.

So is Pancake’s success story, which began in a KFC franchise and ended up in Delaware, where he and Steve Wheat opened a Buffalo Wild Wings location in 2004. Now celebrating its 20th anniversary, High 5 also has **Jersey Mike’s Subs** franchises and the independent **Limestone BBQ and Bourbon**. If it’s true that the restaurant industry offers a ladder to success without a college degree, Pancake is the poster child.

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Government

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UPDATED STATE LANDLORD/TENANT GUIDE COULD BECOME LAW

BY JAREK RUTZ

After some healthy discussion, a bill creating a one-stop guide for both tenants and landlords is on its way to the House floor. **House Bill 381**, sponsored by Rep. Kim Williams, D-Marshallton, requires the **Delaware Real Estate Commission** to create a comprehensive, statewide rights and responsibilities guide for landlords and tenants. The seven representatives present in the House Housing Committee all voted to release the bill from committee.

The guide will reference responsibilities that a tenant or landlord must follow, including federal, state, county and municipal requirements. It will be created with input from other housing-related organizations if needed, and the commission may amend the guide, including to update it and to add additional information that is relevant to landlords and tenants.

Debra Burgos, vice president of property management at **Evergreen Apartment Group**, said this guide is important because the landlord/tenant code has not been updated since 2019.

“So what I’m giving out to residents doesn’t include the updates regarding declawing cats or right to representation or the bedbug legislation,” she said. “They don’t have that information in front of them which is an issue since we worked really hard to get these things passed and residents may not be aware.”

Some landlords may also not be aware if they don’t have this information right in front of them, she said. A lot of the information in individual town-by-town guides is redundant. Burgos noted that the city of Wilmington has a guide while New Castle County also has a guide.

“All of them have similar information, but I can tell you as a landlord when you’re going through this with a resident, their eyes glaze over,” she said. “So we want to make sure that the most important things are front and center and easy to read.”

Rep. Stell Parker Selby, D-Milton, agreed and suggested a tweak in the bill to ensure that landlords literally highlight the most important parts of the guide. Williams, who used to hold a real estate license, said that’s something she used to do and hopes all landlords do, but realizes not all do.

Brian Pomije, director of property management for **Patterson Schwartz**, said the bill will help provide clear and easy-to-understand information for both landlords and tenants.

“A balanced and well-defined guide can foster fair and transparent interactions between landlords and tenants, ultimately leading to a more harmonious landlord-tenant relationship,” he said.

HB 381 would require a landlord or real estate service provider to provide the guide to prospective tenants entering into a landlord-tenant relationship. Williams pointed out that if a tenant resigns a lease five times in the same property, their landlord must provide five guides, whether information has been updated or not. The guide may be provided in electronic or paper format and real estate service providers could be disciplined for misrepresenting the availability or content of the required form. Failure to provide the guide when required is deemed an unlawful practice.

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SAFE SCHOOL ZONE LAW MOVES ON DAYS AFTER DSU FATAL SHOOTING

BY JAREK RUTZ

Just days after a fatal shooting of an 18-year-old woman on [Delaware State University](#)'s campus, the state General Assembly moved on with a bill creating felonies for people with guns in Safe School Zones.

[House Bill 311](#), sponsored by Rep. Cyndie Romer, D-Newark, adds post-secondary colleges and universities to the [Safe School Zone](#) criminal offense. That means any person who knowingly possesses a firearm while in or on a college or university facility or campus may be charged with an additional offense outlined in Delaware Code, which is class E felony. Class E felonies result in up to five years incarceration.

HB 311 also adds commissioned security guards to the categories of individuals who may possess a firearm while acting in their official capacity within a Safe School Zone. The others permitted to carry a gun are:

- A police officer.
- A constable employed by a school or school district who is acting in an official capacity within a Safe School Zone.
- An active-duty member of the United States Armed Forces or Delaware National Guard who is acting in an official capacity within a Safe School Zone.
- A holder of a valid license to carry concealed deadly weapons but only if the firearm is in a vehicle.
- Employees of the Department of Services for Children, Youth, and Their Families who are authorized by the Secretary of the Department to carry a firearm while acting in the employee's official capacity.
- Probation and parole officers acting within the officer's official capacity.
- A qualified retired law enforcement officer who is employed or contracted by a school or school district to assist with security or investigations and who is acting in an official capacity within a Safe School Zone.

In Wednesday's House Judiciary Committee hearing, Republicans said making this a law is unnecessary legislation since it's already in school policy.

Expanding the campus law to a state law, Romer said, would allow more than just campus security and officers to get involved—it would enable county police and state police to take action.

She also noted that the state's institutions of higher education said they supported the bill.

Rep. Jeff Spiegelman, R-Clayton, had a main concern of this bill when it comes to concealed carry rights.

Many of the state's institutions of higher education have residential housing very close to the college campus and even bordering it.

"I could be walking down the streets of Dover just walking down the streets with a concealed carry on," he said, "and as soon as I hit the sidewalk out in front of DSU campus, I instantly run afoul of this law."

He then abides by the law the instant he steps off of a sidewalk owned by the university, he pointed out.

That is one of the minor aspects of the law that are wishy-washy and need to change, and Spiegelman said Rep. Pete Schwartzkopf, D-Rehoboth Beach, promised to address when the "parent bill" of this law was introduced, which he did not.

The bill was released by committee and now heads to the House floor for debate.





TOW COMPANIES WITH PREDATORY PRACTICES UNDER HEAT

BY JAREK RUTZ

A bill aimed at cracking down on predatory practices from towing companies flew through the House Public Safety & Homeland Security Committee meeting Tuesday. **House Bill 351**, sponsored by Rep. Ed Osienski, D-Newark, creates the following requirements for the towing and storage of vehicles without the consent of the owner or operator:

- Photographic evidence must be taken to document the unauthorized parking of a vehicle before it can be towed.
- Tow companies and storage facilities must publicly display their rates.
- Towing and storage rates must be reasonable, with reasonableness calculated in relation to the fees imposed by the companies for consensual towing and storage or based on average rates in the county.
- A maximum total towing and storage rate of \$500 can be imposed.

- Tow companies must decouple or drop vehicles that have not been removed from parking areas if the owner returns before removal. The drop fee may not be more than 50% of the tow fee.
- Storage facilities must be open or accessible to the public from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. five days a week, and tow companies must make reasonable accommodations to redeem vehicles after-hours.
- Individuals must be allowed to retrieve at no cost personal belongings from vehicles held in storage.
- Tow companies and storage facilities must accept credit cards.

If a tow is completed in violation of the bill, the owner or operator is entitled to both reimbursement of the tow and storage fees as well as damages incurred to retrieve an illegally towed vehicle. Tow companies would be liable for property damage sustained due to a non-consensual tow or storage.

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STATE COMMITTEE ENDORSES PRICEY, PRIVATE GARAGE TUNNEL

BY BETSY PRICE

A state building committee voted Friday to build a private tunnel from a planned parking deck into Legislative Hall to allow elected officials to safely walk from secured parking spots into the building without interaction with the public. Right now, the legislators park in marked parking spots with their names clearly marked on them around the capital building. The tunnel was one of three choices, including a marked crosswalk and a pedestrian bridge.

The **Legislative Building Committee** vote passed despite warnings from **StudioJAED** designers that the tunnel likely would cost about \$3.7 million even though it had been budgeted at \$2 million. It would be narrow and likely to bother people who don't like small spaces, would require existing utilities to be moved and could face water problems because the tunnel floor would be

only six feet above sea level in an area that deals with rising water, the designers have said.

TUNNEL = SECURITY

Jesse Chadderdon, chief of staff of the Delaware State Senate Majority Caucus, noted several times in recent months that private tunnel had been recommended by Capital Police.

“I don't think we should gloss over the fact that we have a recommendation from Capitol Police about creating secure access, and I think it'd be a shame if we move forward with the project and didn't address that in a meaningful way,” Chadderdon said Friday. “I think at a minimum, if we are talking about pivoting back to an above surface crosswalk, we should ask Capitol Police to talk about how they might provide a security plan for that.”

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ASSISTED SUICIDE FINALLY PASSES HOUSE, DESPITE GOP CONCERNS

BY JAREK RUTZ

A unique method of death by self-administered medication that has been discussed by the General Assembly for several years has once again made it into this year’s legislative session. And once again, the Republicans pushed back in full swing with a myriad of concerns with both logistical and moral concerns.

The concept made Rep. Rich Collins, R-Millsboro, question the religious morality of legislators in a House hearing April 18. **House Bill 140**, sponsored by Rep. Paul Baumbach, D-Newark, permits a terminally ill adult resident of Delaware to request and self-administer medication to end the individual’s life in a humane and dignified manner.

Under HB 140, both the individual’s attending physician or advanced practice registered nurse (APRN) and a consulting physician or nurse would have to agree on an individual’s diagnosis and prognosis and believe the individual has decision-making capacity, is making an

informed decision and is acting voluntarily. This method is often referred to as “assisted suicide” or “assisted dying.”

“I know there are some people in this room that say they’re Christians,” Collins said. “I’d suggest you think about what you’re going to say to God when you get there, if you do.”

Doctors will typically give patients medications to treat nausea before giving them the solution to ensure it works as it’s supposed to, with a painless death a few hours later and the heavy majority of patients dying within one hour.

Collins said the state enacting this bill would create a slippery slope. He said many people who have lost hope for whatever reason, “maybe because of some things we do here,” are going to seek a way out to die and this bill provides a pathway for that.

The same bill was heavily debated in May 2023, in which a few dozen community members gave public comment. Last year, it was released by committee “on its merits” which meant the House committee members didn’t necessarily want to vote “yes” or “no” on the bill, but wanted it to be discussed in the full House body with all the other state representatives.

But the bill was not picked up again until Thursday, where it was discussed on the full House floor and passed with a vote of 21 “yes” and 16 “no.” Every voting Republican was against the bill, except Rep. Kevin Hensley, R-Odessa.

Under the bill, the individual’s attending physician or attending APRN must provide specific disclosures to the individual to ensure that the individual is making an informed decision, including the presentation of all end of life options which include comfort care, palliative care, hospice care and pain control. The individual must be evaluated by a psychiatrist or a psychologist if either the attending or consulting physicians or APRNs are concerned that the individual lacks decision-making capacity.

Also, the individual would need to complete a witnessed form requesting medication to end life and there are limitations on who can witness the signing of the form.

Rep. Mike Smith, R-Pike Creek, said this bill is an example of the best intentions with the worst outcomes and consequences.

“In this building, we like to define life and death for people a lot,” he said, adding that there needs to be a level of consistency in the legislature.

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photo credit: Appoquinimink School District



Education

TOWN SQUARE LIVE



APPO'S REFERENDUM SUCCESSFUL ON SECOND ATTEMPT

Appo's first attempt at referendum failed on Dec. 12, 2023 in a very close vote. Burrows also acknowledged those that voted against the referendum.

"We do have some of our community that we need do a better job of connecting with and showing the great things are happening in our schools," he said, "and that will be one of the tasks that I look to carry out as we move forward."

Leading up to the second attempt, Appo's board warned that if the referendum fails, not only will the district miss out on \$233 million in state funding, it will have to make hefty job cuts, drastically increase the amount of students in each classroom, will have to move classes to modular trailers and more.

Unofficial results via the **Delaware Department of Elections**:

Section I: 7,412 votes FOR (56.6%); 5,674 votes AGAINST (43.4%)

Approval to raise local taxes (\$0.399 per \$100 assessed value) for current operating expenses (teacher and staff compensation, safety and security, operating expenses due to growth, maintaining student devices).

[CLICK TO READ MORE](#)

BY JAREK RUTZ

This is a developing story. Please check back for updates.
Take two—**Appoquinimink School District's** second stab at a referendum has passed. The district will raise about \$77.8 million in local revenue: \$11,126,000 for operating costs and \$66,663,550 for capital costs. The average homeowner will see an increase of \$435 per year on their tax bill. The influx of funds will help the district maintain its operations as well as help finance capital projects such as new building construction.
"It wouldn't have been possible without the community support and without the efforts of all the people that are in this room and people that aren't in this room," said Superintendent Matt Burrows. "It took a team effort to get this through and I'm excited to see that our community sees the need and supports our kids and staff."

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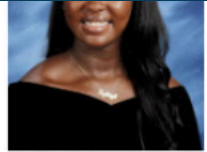
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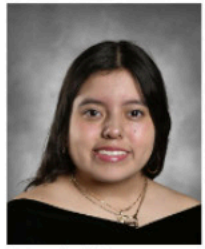
- URSULINE ACADEMY



Kyleigh Pernell
McKeen High School



Alyssa Potter
Caesar Rodney High School



Adilene Quezada



Josselyn Reader
Odessa High School



Nicholas Riggi
Lake Forest High School

93 HONORED AS 2024 SECRETARY OF EDUCATION SCHOLARS



BY JAREK RUTZ

The head of Delaware’s Department of Education has named his 93 scholars for 2024. Secretary of Education Mark Holodick selected the students based on their continued academic achievement and involvement in the community.

“This represents one of the highest academic achievements a student can earn in a Delaware public school,” Holodick said at a dinner in Dover honoring the students Tuesday night.

The state has named the Secretary of Education Scholars every year since 1984. The number of scholars from each school is based on enrollment, and school principals nominate the students based on their academic records, school leadership and community service.

“Every scholar here has achieved incredible success in and out of the classroom—ranging from extraordinary accomplishments on school athletic teams to community service and school leadership positions,” Holodick said. “These students balance all of these demands of

their time and still are able to study and excel academically.”

Here are this year’s Secretary Scholars:

Appoquinimink

- Tejasvi Gottipati – Odessa High School
- Aarush Goyal – Appoquinimink High School
- Adithi Jonnagadla – Middletown High School
- Ananya Kambhampati – Middletown High School
- Josselyn Reader – Odessa High School
- Meghan Virani – Appoquinimink High School

Brandywine

- Osman Baig – Mount Pleasant High School
- Olivia Erskine – Brandywine High School
- Malti John – Brandywine High School
- Katelyn Khov – Mount Pleasant High School
- Emily Lynch – Concord High School
- Evan Mo – Concord High School

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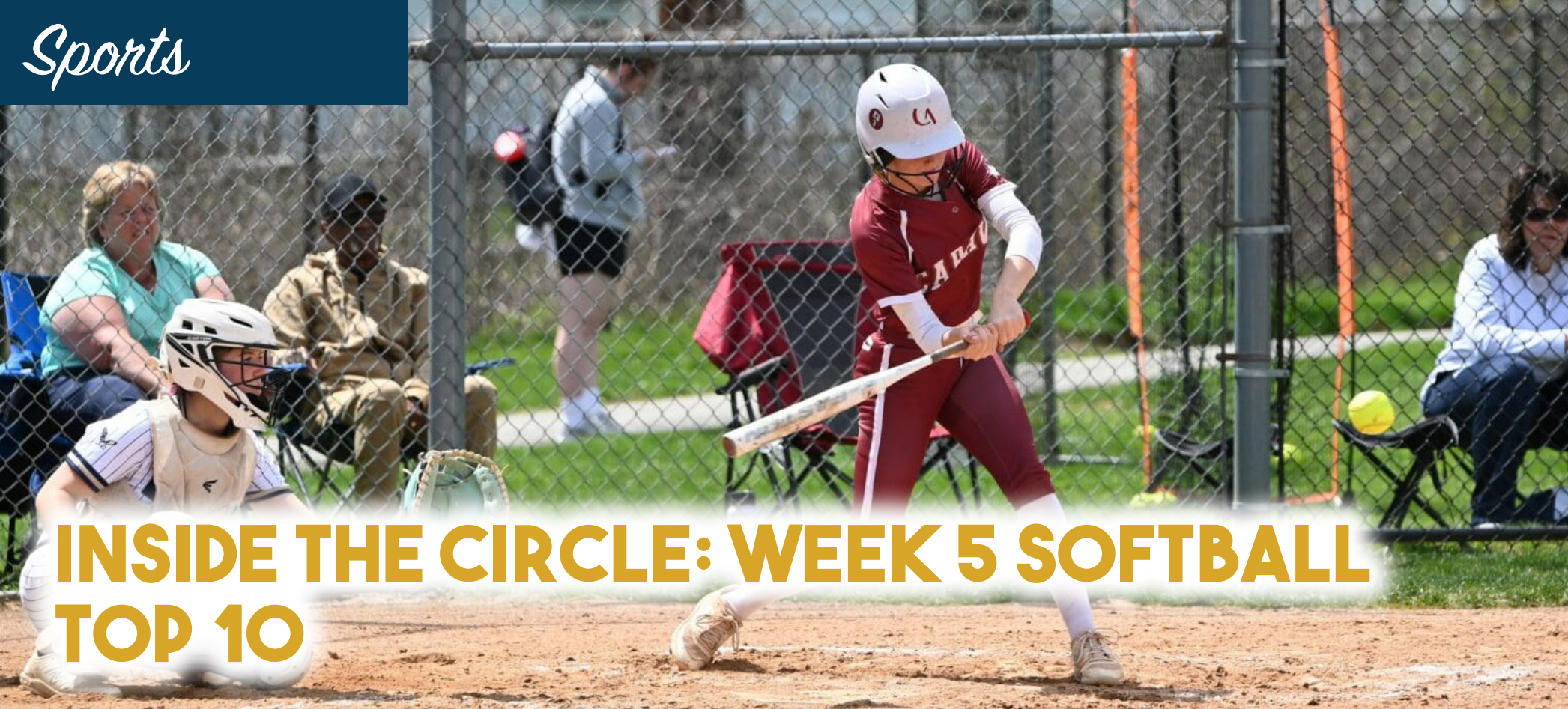


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Sports

TOWN SQUARE LIVE



INSIDE THE CIRCLE: WEEK 5 SOFTBALL TOP 10

BY GLENN FRAZER

Caravel remains on top of our rankings despite a loss to undefeated Rising Sun (MD). There is movement after the Buccaneers while things stay the same from the fifth spot to No. 10. There are plenty of good matchups this week including 302 Sports live broadcast featuring No. 10 Cape at No. 4 Sussex Central.

No. 1 Caravel (6-1) The Buccaneers suffered their first loss of the season to “out-of-state” power Rising Sun (MD) last week by a score of 5-4 in eight innings. The Tigers are 7-0 on the season and will meet No. 2 Appo in Middletown this week. Katrina Baran doubled home two runs in the top of the seventh to give the Bucs a 4-3 lead, but the Tigers tied the game in the bottom of the seventh and won it in the eighth. Caravel plays four games this week versus Delmarva Christian, Newark

Charter, Oxford (PA) and No. 3 Laurel on the road Saturday.

No. 2 Appo (7-0) The Jags move up a spot this week with Central falling to Laurel. Coach Brian Timpson picked up his 250th victory last week as Appo scored 39 runs in wins over Delmarva Christian, Charter School of Wilmington and Delcastle. Ayla McCathern was the winning pitcher in all three games while Brooke Widdoes and Lauren Foltz both homered. The Jags travel to Christiana before it hosted Rising Sun Tuesday and entertains rival Middletown Thursday.

No. 3 Laurel (7-2) Laurel had an interesting week that began with an 8-5 loss to Caesar Rodney. The Bulldogs rebounded with wins over Delmar and a 1-0 pitching duel over previous No. 2 Sussex Central. Kylee Hill scat-

tered three hits and retired eight batters via strikeouts in the close victory over the Golden Knights. Baylee Lynch tripled and scored the game’s only run. The Bulldogs face Woodbridge, Sussex Tech and Sussex Academy this week.

No. 4 Sussex Central (7-2) The Golden Knights pulled away from No. 6 Lake last week by scoring three runs late in a 6-2 win. Madge Layfield homered plus recorded 15 strikeouts in the hard-fought victory. Madge also retired 15 Laurel batters by strikeout in the loss to the Bulldogs. Central hosted No. 10 Cape on a 302 Sports live broadcast Tuesday before traveling to No. 9 Indian River and Newark Charter this week.

No. 5 St. Mark’s (7-1) The Spartans only played one game last week posting an 11-1 win versus Archmere. The Saturday game against Lake was postponed. Cam McIlvain picked up the win against the Auks. Morgan Hall collected two RBI on two hits, while Kimorah Neal also knocked in two runs for the Spartans. St. Mark’s faced Red Lion before a top 10 game at Piedmont Thursday versus No. 8 DMA. They finish the week against Sussex Academy.

No. 6 Lake Forest (8-1) Lake lost for the first time this season in Georgetown last week 6-2 to Sussex Central. The Spartans closed to 3-2 in the top of the sixth, but the Knights added three insurance runs in the home half of the inning. Carah Sumpter recorded nine strikeouts in the loss. Lake got back in the win column, scoring 10 runs in the first inning in a 15-0 win over ECHS last Thursday. The Spartans face No. 9 Indian River, Smyrna and Odessa this week.

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CLUBHOUSE TALK: WEEK 5 BASEBALL TOP 10

BY NICK HALLIDAY

Well it wasn't the best spring weather, but it was the best we have seen this spring so far. We saw a new No. 1 last week and we will see a new No. 1 this week.

Cape Henlopen took over as the new No. 1 last week, but suffered their first loss of the season this week. However we still have three undefeated teams throughout the state.

We had a few top 10 matchups that are going to shake up the order of the rankings this week as well. No. 9 Concord, who entered the top 10 last week, got a big win over then No. 7 Archmere. No. 3 William Penn also got a big road win over then No. 8 Saint Mark's.

Lets see how the top 10 rankings align after a good week of baseball.

No. 1 Sussex Central Golden Knights (10-0) defeated Delmar and Dover last week to remain one of the undefeated teams in the state on Thursday. Jaquin Rodriguez got his fourth win of the season, while Noah Burroughs continues to swing a hot bat totaling seven hits in their two games last week which included a triple as well as a home run. The new No. 1 will now face last week's No. 1 team Cape Henlopen, now the No. 5 team Tuesday. Then travel to Indian River on Thursday.

No. 2 William Penn Colonials (6-0) moves up again this week with a win over then No. 8 Saint Mark's. The Colonials got the win with their bats this week led by Colby Gilbert who connected for a three-run home run

for one of his two hits. They also had Shawn Roy and Mikey Baker add two hits apiece. Penn hosted Salesianum on Tuesday and entertains Odessa on Thursday.

No. 3 Sussex Tech Ravens (8-1) defeated Indian River and then No. 1 Cape Henlopen last week to put them at No. 3 this week. Jeremy Vest got his fourth win of the season for the Ravens. The Raven have three games this week as they traveled north to play at Frawley Stadium as they hosted Caesar Rodney on Tuesday, then travels to Laurel on Thursday. Their third game of the week will be on Saturday as they host St. Georges.

No. 4 Cape Henlopen (10-1) shut out Laurel last Tuesday, but fell to now No. 3 Sussex Tech for their first loss of the season. Brad Marks went the distance, but was outdueled by Tech's Jeremy Vest. The Vikings turned right around and played No. 1 Sussex Central on Tuesday. Then they will travel to Lake Forest on Thursday.

No. 5 Delaware Military Seahawks (7-1) played three games last week defeating Wilmington Charter, Middletown and Wilmington Friends. Three different starters got wins for the Seahawks, Charlie Porter, Tyler Leech and Chase Snavelly. DMA will have three games this week as well. They played First State Military on Tuesday, then play Red Lion at Wilmington University Thursday. They travel to Caesar Rodney on Saturday for their third game of the week.

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QUICK STICK: WEEK 5 BOYS' LACROSSE TOP 10

BY JASON WINCHELL

The boys' lacrosse season heats up this week and we are hoping the weather is nice as it was on Saturday. The season has four weeks left as teams are trying to make their state tournament push.

This Friday all eyes will be on the showdown at Abinseno Stadium as No. 1 in Delaware and No. 17 (USA Lax) Sallies host No. 2 (USA Lax) Lawrenceville (NJ). The Sals come into this one 10-0 on the season including wins over St. Mary's (MD) and Chaminade (NY) who were both ranked by USA Lax when the Sals played them. The Sals have outscored their opponents 152-39 on the season. Game time is 6 p.m. on Friday night.

There are four undefeated teams left in the state: Sallies (10-0), Smyrna (8-0), Caravel (7-0) and Friends (6-0). This could be the week we lose a few more. Sallies plays the second ranked team in the nation on Friday and then the third ranked team in the nation on the following Saturday. Smyrna plays No. 2 Cape Henlopen and No. 5 Caesar Rodney this week. Friends has a meeting with No. 6 Tatnall this week, then host No. 2 Cape Henlopen next week.

Here is the new Delaware Live rankings heading into the sixth week of competition.

No. 1 Sallies (10-0)(LW No. 1) The Sals beat Radnor (PA) on Saturday in a matchup of nationally ranked

teams 17-3. The Sals host the No. 2 team in the nation according to USA Lax on Friday night when Lawrenceville (NJ) comes to town.

No. 2 Cape Henlopen (6-2)(LW No. 2) The Vikings went 2-0 last week after defeating No. 5 Caesar Rodney and Dover. The Vikings are road warriors this week with trips to Milford on Wednesday, Smyrna on Friday and Broadneck (MD) on Saturday.

No. 3 Archmere (4-4)(LW No. 3) The Auks went 2-0 last week with a conference win over Conrad and No. 7 Appoquinimink. They hosted Sanford on Tuesday and then Wilmington Charter on Thursday.

No. 4 Friends (6-0)(LW No. 4) The Quakers defeated conference rival Sanford last week to remain unbeaten, They hosted Tatnall on Wednesday and travel to DMA on Friday.

No. 5 Caesar Rodney (5-1)(LW No. 5) The Riders went 1-1 last week falling to No. 2 Cape Henlopen and then getting a win against Sussex Central. They traveled to Smyrna on Wednesday and host Sussex Tech on Friday.

No. 6 Tatnall (5-3)(LW No. 6) The Hornets went 1-0 last week with a win over Sanford on Thursday. They hosted Sussex Academy on Monday and traveled to No. 4 Friends on Wednesday.

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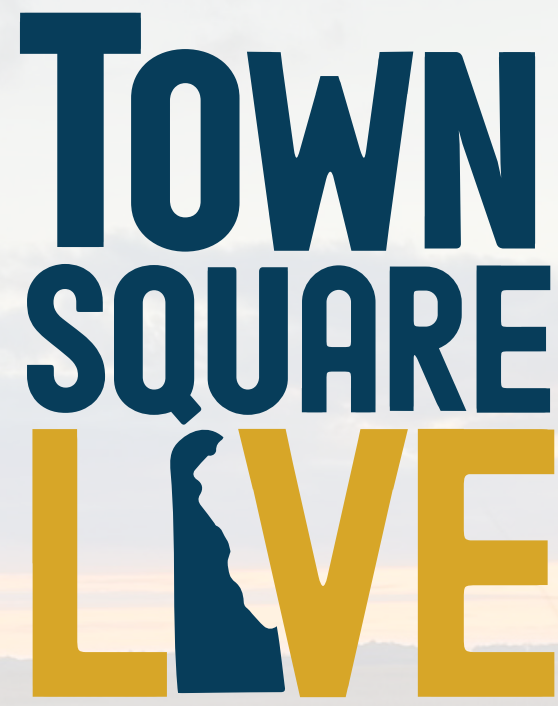
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