

# TOWN SQUARE LIVE

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photo link: Caravel Academy



# Contents

- Community ..... 3
- Business ..... 9
- Food & Dining ..... 13
- Government ..... 15
- Education ..... 22
- Sports ..... 26
- Stay Connected ..... 30



Students Won \$125K and Help the Community



State Needs Food Desert Map



Caravel Stays on Top





# Community

TOWN SQUARE LIVE



# WAR MEMORIAL NEAR BRIDGE TO BE RENOVATED, EXPANDED

BY KEN MAMMARELLA

The **war memorial monument** next to the approach to the Delaware Memorial Bridge near New Castle is getting a nearly \$5 million update and renovation. The work will add the names of servicemen and women from New Jersey and Delaware who died serving the United States in all wars and conflicts from World War II to the present. The massive project also includes:

- Expanding the monument to display nearly 20,000 names on metal plaques. The memorial wall now contains about 15,000 names.
- Reintroducing the circular plaza design.
- Increasing the plaza area and the lawn.
- Removing the reflecting pool to accommodate space for programming.

- Replacing the underlying concrete structure.
- Replacing all existing flagpoles, plus adding one for Space Force.
- Upgrading lighting, drainage and landscaping.

The project is expected to start about June 1 and be finished by Memorial Day of 2025. Construction will be suspended to allow for the annual Veterans Day service on Nov. 11. As usual, a Memorial Day Service will take place at the park at 10:30 a.m. May 30, which is Memorial Day 2024.

During construction, the public will not be able to access portions of the memorial.

### COMPLETE NAMES ON MEMORIAL

**The Delaware River and Bay Authority**, which operates the memorial, is seeking the public’s input to ensure

that all soldiers from Delaware and New Jersey who perished in conflicts after the Korean War “are properly honored and represented” on the new war memorial wall.

That six-sided Wall of Remembrance, with close to 15,000 names of troops from Delaware and New Jersey who lost their lives in World War II and the Korean War, is considering the centerpiece of the park. All of the names are alphabetically listed by state for each war. Those interested in checking for a loved one can go [HERE](#) to find the name. The bottom of one [webpage](#) of the memorial’s site has a link for omissions, misspellings and other input. The authority is asking that all reviews be received by June 30.

The bridge, which opened in 1951, is “a lasting memorial to those soldiers who gave their lives in World War II, the Korean Conflict, Vietnam and Operation Desert Storm,” the authority said. The monument was dedicated on Oct. 20, 1956, honoring soldiers “who gave the ultimate sacrifice for our country in World War II and the Korean War,” the authority said.

In 1996, the memorial grounds were modified from the original circular form to its current octagonal form, with service branch flags and a reflecting pool added as well.

The memorial can be seen on the right, when heading on Interstate 295 north to the bridge into New Jersey. People who want to visit the memorial should use 163 Cherry Lane, New Castle, in their GPS.

The 40-acre site now has seven monuments and nine additional military memorials.

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# STUDENTS WON \$125K BUT SAY REAL PRIZE IS HELPING COMMUNITY

BY JAREK RUTZ

Four **Brandywine High School** students have won \$125,000 for their district by creating computer versions of popular games for students with disabilities. They've been surprised and pleased to discover that their team project has been embraced by the wider community.

"We're already getting requests from teachers," said Isabella Chermak, a senior at Brandywine High School, "and not just teachers, schools outside of our district as well."

In addition, assisted living facilities have asked for the games, expanding the impact from children to people of all ages.

Chermak and classmates Malti John, Olivia Erskine and Katherine McDerby won first place in the 14th annual national **Samsung Solve for Tomorrow** competition April 30 with their games.

A different team from Brandywine High took home the top national prize last year for an affordable alternative to assistive-tech devices for people with independent living disabilities.

The competition is for any STEM-related products, John said. Creations don't have to be related to helping people with disabilities or disadvantages, but keeping that the focus was rewarding for this year's team.

"It's really exciting because games are something I love to do, I love to play a lot of board games," John said. "So being able to make those games and have people who are actually able to interact with those games and be able to experience the same things I've experienced and have that amount of joy, it was really incredible seeing all these students."

The team created alternatives to the popular games "Connect 4" and "Chutes and Ladders." They designed their games to be controlled by adaptive and interchangeable buttons, adding audiovisual feedback and color schemes that make it easier for the visually impaired or colorblind to see.

For example, in Chutes and Ladders, the specially-designed game uses two button inputs on one side and two button inputs on the other side, so it's a two-player game.

"One of the buttons you use to roll a dice and it's kind of like a virtual dice, there's tiles on the board from one to six," John said. "You click a button, it'll roll that dice, and you'll have a number appear." The next button is to move a game element throughout the board.

"We didn't have to go through any copyright policies, but if we are selling these games, we cannot use their copyrighted names," John said, "so we would use something like 'Snakes and Ladders' and 'Four-in-a-Row'."

Created with a computer-aided design (CAD) program along with 3D printers and laser cutters, the games were meant to have a small carbon footprint. Using retail prices and factoring in the cost of labor, John said the games come to \$83.91 with the plan to sell them for \$150 each.

"Once we scale up to mass-manufacturing, all these prices decrease," she said.

No games have been sold yet, mostly because the legalities of it aren't completely fleshed out at this point, but once they figure that out, the team plans to put them on the market.

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# LONGWOOD'S NEW CONSERVATORY OVERLOOK OPEN FOR SUMMER

BY BETSY PRICE

A big chunk of Longwood Gardens' renovation is open now at the Kennett Square botanical gardens. The conservatory overlook and the lower conservatory plaza, both between the conservatory and the fountain complex, will allow patrons a broader view of fountain shows, which have begun. The work includes a new allée of yellowwood trees and new stone steps.

## CONSERVATORY SITES

The illuminated fountain shows—dancing fountains set to music and a blaze of color—will run through October on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights. They are included with admission and seats are not assigned. You can find a schedule of the performances and the music they will include [HERE](#). Seats are assigned for the Fireworks and Fountain shows, which require addi-

tional tickets. Many already are sold out. See that schedule [HERE](#).

The full [Longwood Reimagined: A New Garden Experience](#) is expected to open Nov. 22, in time for A Longwood Christmas. It's been underway since 2021. The work is designed to enhance visitor experience and create a 32,000-square-foot-conservatory designed by WEISS/MANFREDI as a living and breathing glass house, with walls and roofs that open and close in response to the weather. It will feature gardens, pools and fountains designed by Reed Hilderbrand.

Word to the wise: If you don't already have tickets for Mother's Day, which is Sunday, it's too late. Longwood is sold out already.

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# SOUTHBRIDGE RESIDENTS AWAIT REMEDIATION OF CONTAMINATED PARK

BY JOSE IGNACIO CASTANEDA PEREZ

*This story was originally published on Spotlight Delaware.*

Regular visitors of Barbara Hicks Park in Wilmington’s Southbridge neighborhood face potential health risks stemming from contaminants in the soil that were discovered nearly two years ago. Despite the discovery, city officials have not yet made a decision on remedial action or established a timeline to clean up the park.

Frequent park visitors face risk of cancer-causing agents if they’re directly exposed to certain quantities of soil for extended periods of time, according to a Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) investigation report.

The park’s soil contains elevated concentrations of **polyaromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs)** that generally have carcinogenic, or cancer-causing, effects. As one of the few green spaces that’s accessible to Southbridge residents, however, the park remains popular with locals.

The low-lying neighborhood has long been plagued by perennial flooding and incessant mosquitos. It’s also one of seven New Castle County communities at greater risk for cancer and respiratory illness.

“Everybody that grew up with it is contaminated with whatever that is—all my kids,” said Rick King, a born-and-raised Southbridge resident, about the park contamination. “Dig it up and get it out of here and then let us move on.” King recalled growing up in the neighborhood when the park used to just be a dirt mound with a basketball court and a couple swings.

Today, neighborhood residents often use the grassy park to play basketball, romp on the playground or swing on the pair of swing sets available. Community barbecues have also taken place at the space, which spans more than an acre.

Visitors enjoying outdoor activities at the park, who

are directly exposed to shallow or deep soil, for 75 days a year may be exposed to contaminants of potential concern (COPCs), including chemicals, metals and glass, the report estimated. Direct exposure includes inhalation, ingestion and touching.

“We were very concerned about the contamination, very concerned about residents having access to the park,” said Russell Zerbo, an advocate for the Clean Air Council, a Philadelphia-based environmental nonprofit.

Simply being at the park for 75 days a year, however, doesn’t “necessarily” mean a person would be at risk based on the exposure values calculated during the DNREC risk assessment report, according to Michael Globetti, DNREC media relations manager.

The estimation was in addition to children being exposed to 200 milligrams of soil per day and adults being exposed to 100 milligrams per day through inhalation, ingestion or touching. Only the ingestion pathway was found to pose “significant carcinogenic and non-carcinogenic” risk for the park visitor exposure scenario in the report.

## SOUTHBRIDGE PARK SOIL CONTENT

The discovery of the contaminants was expected, as the metals and PAHs are typically found in urban environments that have had fill material or industrial uses, according to Globetti. The soil contamination dates back to filling at the site that occurred between 1940 and 1965, according to Timothy Ratsep, director of DNREC’s Division of Waste and Hazardous Substances. The filling process is typical of low-lying properties in Wilmington, Ratsep added.

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## IMPROVEMENTS IN RECONSTRUCTION ONE FOCUS OF DBCC BREAST CANCER UPDATE

**BY BETSY PRICE**

The mechanics of breast reconstruction after cancer was one of the issues focused on Wednesday during **Delaware Breast Cancer Coalition's** annual Breast Cancer Update.

The free event, held for the 26th time, is designed to update Delawareans about new treatments and services, as well as bring together patients, healthcare workers and others interested in the topic. About 170 people signed up to participate in the online event, with some gathering at Goldey-Beacom College for an in-person watch party. This year's theme was Conquering the Unknown While Rising Above a Breast Cancer Diagnosis.

Other topics discussed at the update included hospice and palliative care, advances in mammograms, mental health and survivorship therapy.

The update began as a small scientific meeting to update physicians about the latest trends in breast cancer diagnosis and treatment. The coalition widened the audience to help empower the community.

### **BREAST RECONSTRUCTION**

**ChristianaCare's** Dr. Dr. Dorothy Bird, a reconstructive microsurgeon, and Dr. Stephanie A. Caterson, a reconstructive plastic surgeon, walked participants through various choices for breast reconstruction. They range from nothing to using silicone implants or tissue from a patient's own body. The surgeons said that they are often asked whether a patient must have a reconstruction and it's not required. But it is possible to have reconstruction years later, they said, and insurance often will pay for that.

Sometimes patients don't want or aren't ready for a reconstruction, or they may not be well enough to have one, Caterson said. Sometimes, young women who are working and involved with the care of their children don't want the longer recovery of reconstruction, she said.

When a patient doesn't want reconstruction, surgeons can tailor the skin on the chest to create a flat closure that allows the patient to wear a prosthetic breast inside of their bra, Bird said. That can be done on one or both sides. If the patient chooses to have it done for one breast, Byrd said they often will do a lift on the other breast so they more closely match. A prosthetic often is ready about six weeks after surgery, she said.

The most common kinds of reconstruction involve having an implant or using the patient's own fat. Patients who decide to use an implant face a two-step procedure. The first step involves the doctor putting in a tissue expander, which can be filled with fluid to stretch the surrounding skin, and then putting in the implant itself.

The patient and her doctor will make decisions about what she wants based on the patient's breast size and what their size goals are after surgery, as well as the type of mastectomy they plan to have. It involves the doctor cutting tissue, often from the abdomen and containing skin, fat, blood vessels and sometimes muscle, and connecting the flap's blood vessels to the blood vessels in the chest wall or armpit.

Some patients who may have damaged blood vessels, maybe from various treatments or other issues, are not candidates for that because the surgeon can't connect the blood vessels.

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photo credit: Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce



*Business*

TOWN SQUARE LIVE



# WIDENER LAW, DSU NURSING MAY JOIN \$57M WILMINGTON EDUCATION HUB

BY BETSY PRICE

Longwood Foundation, Bank of America and area governments plan to invest \$57 million in an education hub that will go into one of the former MBNA buildings near Rodney Square.

The hub, to be called The Bridge, is expected to bring the Widener University Delaware Law School, University of Delaware Associates program and Delaware State University nursing to the building now known as Bracebridge II, which lies along Walnut Street, by 2027. It's expected to have 2,000 full-time students, faculty and staff by then and have an economic impact of more than \$250 million.

The project has several goals. One is to expand the city's waning job base. Another is to bring students and others to downtown Wilmington to study, as well as to move into the rapidly increasing number of downtown

apartments and help revitalize the city at a time when it's suffering from businesses reducing office space and leaving the city, and fewer people downtown because many employees work from home at least parttime.

Planners hope the project will provide more opportunities for people of color in Wilmington—through education and hub-associated jobs, and thus help improve their health and lifespan by reducing the cycle of poverty, say says a presentation dubbed "Catalyzing Wilmington's Revival" presented to city leaders Wednesday morning.

Yet another goal is to use The Bridge, its students, instructors and supporters to "incubate community solutions, creating new products, services, businesses and organizations."

The Bridge is contingent on city, county and state sup-

port for requested funds, and funders on Wednesday asked city leaders to advocate for it.

According to the presentation, the project needs to be funded through many sources: The state of Delaware will contribute \$22.7 million, Bank of America \$20 million in the project, which may include the donation of the building, Longwood Foundation will put in \$10 million, the city of Wilmington \$10 million and New Castle County \$5 million.

Longwood and Bank of America are committed, but the legislature, city council and county council will need to approve the funds.

Bank of America, which took over MBNA in 2006, owns the building and is expected to donate it as part of its support.

## EDUCATION CORRIDOR

The Bridge will sit near the Community Education Building at 12th and French Streets, which houses four schools and was founded with Longwood Foundation money and guidance after Bank of America donated the building in 2012, and Longwood's planned Youth Development Center at 1223 Clifford Brown Walk, which was announced last year.

If Incyte Corp. follows through with plans revealed Tuesday to expand into a downtown building, the one-two punch could be the largest boon in decades for the future of Delaware's largest city.

The Bridge is expected to be part of a "Campus Corridor" extending from Rodney Square to the Riverfront Center and including Del Tech, DCAD and Delaware State University's riverfront building.

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# INCYTE IN LINE FOR \$14.8M STATE GRANT TO EXPAND IN WILMINGTON

BY BETSY PRICE

**Incyte Corp.**, which gave up on a bid to build a five-story building near Wilmington Friends School, is in line for a \$14.8 million grant from the state to expand in Wilmington. The agenda for the Council on Development Finance’s meeting on Monday, May 20, says Incyte is requesting a Delaware Strategic Fund grant in that amount.

Usually, by the time a request reaches the council it’s been explored and vetted enough by others that it sails through. The agenda doesn’t say where the biopharmaceutical company plans to expand, but it’s believed to be in downtown Wilmington. Efforts were unsuccessful to reach an Incyte Corp. spokesperson for comment.

“The state and city have had recent discussions with Incyte as the company seeks to expand its operations,” said a statement from Gov. John Carney’s office. “We are hopeful that everything will continue to come together so we can talk more about this in the near future.”

Incyte, which specializes in drugs for rare and hard-to-treat diseases, including cancer and those caused by inflammation and autoimmunity, was founded in Delaware in 2002. It now has 2,500 employees, with 1,500 of them based in Delaware.

Hervé Hoppenot, chairman and chief executive officer of Incyte, told the Delaware State Chamber of Commerce in January that the company’s revenue has risen 600% from \$511 million in 2014 to \$3.4 billion in 2022. The company plows 44% of its revenues back into research and development, he said.

## INCYTE AND ALAPOCAS

Incyte had announced in 2019 that it planned to buy Wilmington Friends’ lower school for \$50 million and build a five-story, 400,000-square-foot building to expand. Neighbors in the Alapocas neighborhood, which surrounds the Wilmington Friends campus, fought the plan, saying the size and lighting would disturb the

neighborhood, as would a stream of cars driven by hundreds of employees to and from the structure.

Incyte was particularly interested in that site because it’s close to their nearby headquarters in the old Wanamaker Department Store building. Although courts ruled that Wilmington Friends had every right to sell the property, Incyte decided not to go ahead with the project.

The state has a variety of grants it gives state companies to expand, bases largely on the ideas that those expansions will keep or bring in more jobs and those workers will be buying homes, paying taxes and otherwise stimulating Delaware’s economy. One of the big grants is for lab space and a lot of Incyte’s work takes place in laboratories. The agenda doesn’t mention those grants, but they are often awarded separately.

If Incyte did move a lot of its employees to offices or labs downtown, it might also help fill downtown apartments and those residents are likely to patronize nearby residents and entertainment spots.

Hoppenot said it takes about three years to develop a workable drug and another six years or so to test it and get it approved by the Federal Food and Drug Administration. Incyte’s scientists spend years looking for just the right molecule, he said, to make a drug work.

As a sign of Incyte’s pride in being a Delaware company, Hoppenot pointed to the last four letters in the name of one of its drugs: ZYNYZ, used to treat a certain kind of skin cancer by working with the body’s immune system. Its technical name is retifanlimab-dlwr.

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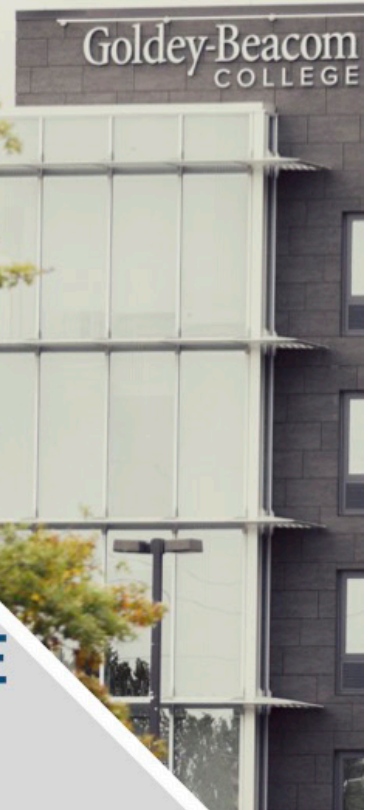
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# *Food & Dining*

TOWN SQUARE LIVE





# ROBBIE JESTER AIMS TO INFUSE NEW LIFE INTO KITTY KNIGHT

BY PAM GEORGE

Robbie Jester has come home. Sort of. Raised in Galena, MD, the chef is partnering with **Jamestown Hospitality Group**, owner of **Deep Blue at Kitty Knight**, an inn and restaurant in Galena, to infuse new life into the old establishment.

“Ironically, my dad owned Kitty Knight in the 1980s, and I was conceived there,” said Jester, a Culinary Institute of America graduate.

If Jester’s name sounds familiar, it’s because the skilled chef won the grand prize on Netflix’s “Pressure Cooker” series. He also successfully competed on “Guy’s Grocery Games” and “Beat Bobby Flay.” On May 28, he will join the “Chopped Battle Italiano” contestants.

Even if you haven’t watched the shows, you’ve likely tasted his food when he worked at **Piccolina Toscana**, the Stone Balloon Ale House or **Limestone BBQ &**

**Bourbon**. He is also the owner of **Pizzeria Mariana** in Newark.

### KITTY KNIGHT: AN ICON

Jester and Paul Bouchard, Jamestown’s chief operating officer, met while working at Toscana.

“We’ve always kept in touch,” said Bouchard, who oversees Jamestown’s impressive portfolio, including **Tonic Seafood & Steak** in downtown Wilmington, **Park Café** in Wawaset Park, and **Giordano’s** in Kennett Square.

The hospitality group purchased Kitty Knight in 2021 and changed the name to Deep Blue after Tonic’s predecessor. Bouchard had always loved the name, which suited the Sassafras River location.

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*Government*

**TOWN SQUARE LIVE**



# SENATOR: STATE NEEDS FOOD DESERT MAP, GROCERY STORE AID

BY JAREK RUTZ

A senator representing Wilmington wants the state of Delaware to crack down on food scarcity and hunger. **Senate Bill 254**, sponsored by Sen. Darius Brown, D-Wilmington, creates the Delaware Grocery Initiative. That group would direct the **Office of State Planning Coordination** to study food insecurity in urban and rural food deserts.

Per the bill, “food deserts” are census tract that meets one of the following poverty standards and one of the following population density and food accessibility standards:

- A census tract has a poverty rate of at least 20%.
- A census tract is not located within a metropolitan

statistical area and has a median family income that is less than or equal to 80% of the statewide median household income.

- A census tract is located within a metropolitan statistical area and has a median family income that is less than or equal to 80% of the greater statewide median household income or the metropolitan area median family income.

## FOOD AND HUNGER STATS

A hearing on the bill Wednesday came as Feeding America released its annual Meal Cap study, which the Food Bank of Delaware said showed a sharp increase in the number of food insecure Delawareans in 2022

The Meal Gap is the only one that looks at local-level estimates of food insecurity and food costs for every county and congressional district in the U.S, using the USDA’s latest report of national and state data. That info showed a sharp increase in food insecurity in 2022 amid historically high food prices and the expiration of many pandemic-era programs. It said that in Delaware:

- 125,370 individuals were food insecure, which is one in eight Delawareans (12.6% of the population)
- 40,620 children were food insecure, which is one in five Delaware children (19.7% of the population)

A county breakdown shows:

- New Castle County: 12% of the population was food insecure (68,260 individuals); 18.3% of the child population was food insecure (22,280 kids)

- Kent County: 13.7% of the population was food insecure (25,060 individuals); 22.9% of the child population was food insecure (9,540 kids)
- Sussex County: 13.3% of the population was food insecure (32,050 individuals); 20.2% of the population was food insecure (8,800 kids)

Brown’s bill would task the Office of State Planning Coordination to expand access to healthy foods in food deserts by providing financial assistance to grocery stores, independently owned for-profit grocery stores, cooperative grocery stores, non-profit grocery stores as well as grocery stores owned and operated by local governmental units. The office would have authority to enter into contracts, grants or other agreements to administer grants and other financial support, including technical assistance.

If passed, SB 254 would have about a \$500,000 operating budget cost to the state. In the Senate Elections & Government Affairs Committee meeting Wednesday, Brown explained that there’s 16 Senate districts and 25 House districts that have census tracts of high poverty where food deserts could exist.

Senate committees do not hold a public vote, so the outcome of the bill will be posted on the General Assembly’s website a couple hours after the meeting. If released, SB 254 will make its way to the full Senate body.







# SCHOOL ENTRYWAYS MAY BE REQUIRED TO USE BALLISTIC RESISTANT GLASS

BY JAREK RUTZ

The state legislature is looking for more ways to increase the safety and security of school buildings. In Wednesday’s Senate Education Committee meeting, a look at the entryways of buildings and how schools—especially new ones or those making upgrades—could be safer was the heart of a new bill.

**Senate Bill 279**, sponsored by Sen. Jack Walsh, D-Wilmington, requires that when a new school is constructed or a major renovation is undertaken, the construction or renovation must include certain safety features. These include a secured vestibule and the installation of ballistic resistant glass in certain areas of the school.

Under the bill, the school district and the **Department of Safety and Homeland Security** would engage before a certificate of necessity is submitted, which is a

document asking for state money to complete capital projects and improvements. This will ensure the safety requirements are met and allow school districts to have a better idea of how much money is needed to successfully complete the project without having to later reallocate funds from another source.

Schools undergoing a major renovation if the certificate of necessity is submitted before the enactment of this bill would be exempt from the bill’s requirements.

If there is disagreement about a construction plan’s compliance with school safety requirements, the school district may request an additional review be conducted by the secretary of the Department of Safety and Homeland Security. The secretary would review the construction plans and make the final determination about the construction plan’s compliance.

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There wasn’t much discussion and all senators seemed to appreciate and support the bill, especially with the number of school safety concerns over the past couple of years.

Senate committees do not hold a public vote, so the outcome of the bill can be found on the **bill-tracker** of the General Assembly website, typically within a few hours. If released by the committee, SB 279 will make its way to the Senate floor for debate.





# GOT (RAW) MILK? SENATORS, FARMERS PUSH TO LEGALIZE SALE

BY JAREK RUTZ

While the sale of raw milk in America is either illegal, restricted to on-farm purchases, or other limitations, a handful of states have it completely legal for retail sale and a new bill could add Delaware to that group.

Some concerns of possible diseases and health defects might put that in jeopardy, although a couple legislators swore by the unpasteurized milk.

“I was raised on raw milk...and sitting here, I’m wondering if that’s why I’m so healthy today,” said Senate Minority Leader Gerald Hocker, R-Ocean View, “In my 53 years of being in business I missed one day and my 22 years up here I missed one day, and I’ll give the credit to being raised on raw milk.”

**Senate Bill 273**, sponsored by Sen. Eric Buckson, R-Dover, legalizes the sale and distribution of raw milk and products derived from raw milk by dairy producers directly to consumers for human consumption. Buckson called it a farm-friendly and consumer-friendly bill.

It was brought before the Senate Agriculture Committee Wednesday.

The sale of raw milk, which is unprocessed, unpasteurized, and unhomogenized, is currently prohibited by Section 9 of the current United States Department of Health and Human Services’ Grade “A” Pasteurized Milk Ordinance.

Buckson pointed out that the demand for raw milk has been increasing in recent years, and this would be a way to eliminate the need to travel to other states in the country that permit raw milk sales. There’s also economic benefits, he said. The bill details that the **Raw Milk Institute** estimates that raw milk producers can earn a profit nearly 10 times what they earn for regular milk sales. That institute also lists benefits of raw milk consumption, which mainly hone in on a higher presence of healthy enzymes, probiotics, proteins, vitamins and more.

To achieve the economic benefits and meet consumer demand, SB 273 creates a raw milk permit to be issued and enforced by the **Department of Agriculture**. Under the bill, no raw milk or product derived from raw milk may be sold in Delaware other than by a raw milk permit holder or an individual under the direct supervision of a raw milk permit holder, such as an employee. The sale or distribution of raw milk and products derived from raw milk must be made directly by the permit holder or individual under the supervision of the permit holder to the consumer and not for purposes of resale.

The Department of Agriculture, in consultation with the Department of Health and Social Services, would be responsible for promulgating regulations to administer the raw milk permit program and for ensuring compliance with the bill.

“Many consumers right now in your districts, in mine, throughout the state, are receiving raw milk by way of Pennsylvania and other states,” Buckson said. “They just are.”

Sen. Stephanie Hansen, D-Middletown, said her main concern is the bird flu, which is a strain of the influenza virus that primarily infects birds, but can also infect humans. She said her worry stems from “the widening number of outbreaks that there are now in nine states that have 42 dairy cattle herds that have been tested positive.”

The bird flu isn’t necessarily a concern for human health, she said, but that its pathogens could mutate and affect other living beings.

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# HOSPITALS, LEGISLATORS REACH DEAL ON STATE REVIEW BOARD

BY BETSY PRICE

State hospitals and legislators have reached a deal that will see **House Bill 350**, a bill to set up a state board that could review and force changes to hospital budgets, become law. Based on expected amendments, “the Delaware Healthcare Association stands neutral on HB 350 and will no longer actively oppose the bill at this time,” said Brian Frazee, president and CEO of the hospital trade group, in an early afternoon press release.

“While these amendments reduce the immediate harm to our state’s hospitals and healthcare systems, and their employees and patients, we have been consistent and unequivocal with the sponsors and others on our opposition to other components of this legislation,” the hospital statement said.

The association said it remains “deeply concerned

about the remaining provisions in HB 350, including creating a politically-appointed oversight board with the potential to modify and approve hospital budgets” and said it was reserving its rights “to remedy this legislation if passed.”

### HOSPITAL BILL CHANGES

The changes that the hospitals says were important to them include:

- Swapping a plan to force hospitals to reduce existing costs by measuring them against Medicare prices for a plan that would use the area’s consumer price index. **House Bill 395**, which would do that, already has passed a committee hearing and is headed toward the House floor.
- Allowing flexibility in the healthcare spending

benchmark that hospitals will be measured against.

- Requiring the state to clarify the process and important factors to be considered in the performance improvement plan process.
- Removing the board’s ability to seize hospital assets.

But the amendment to the bill goes further, according to a later Democrat press release. It also:

- Specifies that there must be at least one member of the Board from each county.
- Provides clarification regarding submissions of hospital financial information.
- Requires the Board to promulgate regulations clarifying the process and factors to be considered for performance improvement plans.
- Adds clarifying provisions regarding the manner and timing of public hearings for each hospital to present its budget, and performance improvement plan where applicable.
- Removes the penalty provision for hospitals who fail to adhere to a budget that was approved or modified by the Board. Requires that the Delaware Economic and Financial Advisory Council (DEFAC) Health Care Spending Benchmark Subcommittee, which sets the spending benchmark, consider revisions to its methodology and make a report recommending any changes to DEFAC by Dec. 31, 2024.

Carney thanked the hospital systems, legislators and Delaware Department of Health and Social Services for collaborating on legislation he said will combat rising health care costs.

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# GOP'S SHORT: BUDGET NEEDS OVERSIGHT, TOO, IF HOSPITALS MUST HAVE IT

BY BETSY PRICE

A Sussex County state representative plans to introduce a bill that will hold lawmakers to the same rules its Democrat members want to set for hospitals: Holding budgets to benchmark.

State Rep. Danny Short, R-Seaford, and other Republicans have repeatedly said during House and Senate hearings and debates that the state wants to hold hospitals to a rule it won't meet itself. Two years ago, the legislature approved a state operating budget exceeding the state spending growth benchmark by 53%, Short said in a press release. Last year, spending was 62% higher than the setpoint. Lawmakers are on track for the upcoming FY 2025 to be at least 42% over the budget growth target, he pointed out.

"The arc of our state spending growth is unsustainable," Short said, "and the state has been unsuccessful

in adhering to advisory spending growth limitations."

**House Bill 350**, now awaiting a slot on the Senate floor agenda, would create a board that could review and demand changes in hospital budgets to make them meet a benchmark set by the state, usually somewhere around 3%.

Dems and teachers say hospitals account for 42% of state spending on healthcare and Delaware hospitals charge the most in the region. Republicans, hospitals, nonprofit and business leaders say the state has no right to insert itself into a private business.

A benchmark in this case is a specific percentage that a budget is allowed to grow. In Delaware, that number is based on the state's gross domestic product—the annual value of goods and services produced in a year and other financial data.

Since 2018, Delaware's benchmark has ranged from 3% to 3.8%. It's set by a subcommittee of the Delaware Economic and Financial Advisory Council, called DEFAC. HB 350 supporters maintain hospital have only met that benchmark in 2020, the first year of the pandemic. But under a deal cut in 2018, hospitals agreed to keep it in mind, but they were not required by law to meet it.

Short is a member of DEFAC, a nonpartisan group that tracks the state's expected revenues and expenditures to advise the governor and General Assembly. By law, the state is limited to spending no more than a percentage of its anticipated revenues under Gov. John Carney via Executive Order 21. Carney issued the order after a Republican move in 2018 to set a spending limit that Democrats refused to support.

"The current limitation on state budget growth has two critical problems," Short said in a press release. "First, it isn't binding. It's a guideline that has been repeatedly ignored. Second, because it was established by executive order, it will cease to exist after the Carney administration comes to an end in January."

**Senate Bill 270**, sponsored by Sen. Trey Paradee, D-Dover, would codify part of Carney's executive order, which requires money to be put into a budget stabilization fund that proved useful in 2020 when state revenues crashed. A chunk of it was needed to keep the fiscal 2021 budget whole.

Paradee is chair of the Joint Finance Committee, which writes the state budget based on the governor's suggestions. His bill would not make the benchmark binding.

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# STATE FORFEITURE LIMITS BILL GETS BIPARTISAN APPRECIATION

BY JAREK RUTZ

A new bill that would limit the power of the state to seize assets from Delawareans was applauded in the House Public Safety & Homeland Security Committee Tuesday.

**House Bill 280**, sponsored by Rep. Kim Williams, D-Marshallton, prohibits assets from forfeiture if they are near controlled substances or with trace amounts of such. The bill points out that legal presumption is that money, negotiable instruments or securities that are close to or with small amounts of controlled substances are forfeitable. Under the bill, the controlled substance can still be admissible and considered by the court in a forfeitable proceeding, but it puts the burden of proof on the state to prove all elements of a forfeiture case by a preponderance of the evidence.

Under the existing statute, it is the burden of an inno-

cent owner to prove that they did not have knowledge of or consent to the use of their property in an unlawful act. The bill also prohibits the forfeiture of currency less than \$500, and prohibits forfeiture unless a criminal charge is brought.

“It is difficult for individuals to contest low-dollar forfeitures,” Williams said. “According to the Institute of Justice, hiring an attorney to fight a relatively simple state forfeiture can cost up to \$3,000.”

### 3,000 FORFEITURES

Almost 3,000 forfeitures happened from 2018 to 2022, and at least 22% of these cases have individuals apply to retain their seized assets, and 67% of those individuals represented themselves in court. The majority of the forfeitures were against Black individuals, Williams said.

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TOWN SQUARE LIVE

# 2024 DELAWARE SCHOOL BOARD ELECTION RESULTS

## Colonial School District — Robin Crossan

| District G                      |               |             |                  |            |              |               |
|---------------------------------|---------------|-------------|------------------|------------|--------------|---------------|
| VOTE FOR 1                      |               |             |                  |            |              |               |
|                                 | Robin Crossan | Tanya Kerns | Total Votes Cast | *Overvotes | **Undervotes | Contest Total |
| Castle Hills Elementary School  | 16            | 11          | 27               | 0          | 0            | 27            |
| Eisenberg Elementary School     | 7             | 9           | 16               | 0          | 0            | 16            |
| Kingswood Community Center      | 1             | 1           | 2                | 0          | 0            | 2             |
| McCullough Middle School        | 8             | 6           | 14               | 0          | 0            | 14            |
| Pleasantville Elementary School | 27            | 29          | 56               | 0          | 0            | 56            |
| Southern Elementary School      | 25            | 16          | 41               | 0          | 0            | 41            |
| Wilbur Elementary School        | 33            | 33          | 66               | 0          | 0            | 66            |
| William Penn High School        | 70            | 69          | 139              | 0          | 0            | 139           |
| Absentee Votes                  | 0             | 1           | 1                | 0          | 0            | 1             |
| <b>Totals</b>                   | <b>187</b>    | <b>175</b>  | <b>362</b>       | <b>0</b>   | <b>0</b>     | <b>362</b>    |

## Red Clay Consolidated School District — Susan Sander

| District E                       |                 |              |                  |            |              |               |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|--------------|------------------|------------|--------------|---------------|
| VOTE FOR 1                       |                 |              |                  |            |              |               |
|                                  | Jason P. Casper | Susan Sander | Total Votes Cast | *Overvotes | **Undervotes | Contest Total |
| Activity Center at Hockessin PAL | 67              | 186          | 253              | 0          | 0            | 253           |
| AI Dupont High School            | 51              | 137          | 188              | 0          | 0            | 188           |
| Baltz Elementary School          | 27              | 22           | 49               | 0          | 0            | 49            |
| Cab Calloway School of Arts      | 44              | 105          | 149              | 0          | 0            | 149           |
| Dickinson High School            | 92              | 144          | 236              | 0          | 0            | 236           |
| Forest Oak Elementary School     | 24              | 39           | 63               | 0          | 0            | 63            |
| Joseph E Johnson School          | 32              | 302          | 334              | 0          | 0            | 334           |
| Marbrook Elementary School       | 35              | 79           | 114              | 0          | 0            | 114           |
| McKean High School               | 59              | 105          | 164              | 0          | 0            | 164           |
| North Star Elementary School     | 113             | 158          | 271              | 0          | 1            | 272           |
| Warner Elementary School         | 19              | 178          | 197              | 0          | 0            | 197           |
| Absentee Votes                   | 7               | 18           | 25               | 0          | 0            | 25            |
| <b>Totals</b>                    | <b>570</b>      | <b>1,473</b> | <b>2,043</b>     | <b>0</b>   | <b>1</b>     | <b>2,044</b>  |

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**BY JAREK RUTZ**

The preliminary results for the 2024 Delaware school board elections are in, and there will be five new faces sworn into their seats this summer.

Across state's 19 school districts, 16 candidates campaigned for seven open seats in seven districts. Here are this year's winners:

**New Castle County**

**Appoquinimink School District** — Incumbent Norman A. Abrams Jr.

| At-Large                        |                      |                   |                 |                  |            |              |               |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|-----------------|------------------|------------|--------------|---------------|
| VOTE FOR 1                      |                      |                   |                 |                  |            |              |               |
|                                 | Norman A. Abrams Jr. | Candace M. Jusino | Britney Mumford | Total Votes Cast | *Overvotes | **Undervotes | Contest Total |
| Bunker Hill Elementary School   | 62                   | 11                | 41              | 114              | 0          | 0            | 114           |
| Cedar Lane Elementary School    | 101                  | 26                | 58              | 186              | 0          | 0            | 185           |
| Loss Elementary School          | 67                   | 15                | 54              | 138              | 0          | 0            | 136           |
| Marion Proffitt Training Center | 67                   | 15                | 46              | 129              | 0          | 0            | 128           |
| Middletown High School          | 72                   | 33                | 30              | 138              | 0          | 0            | 135           |
| Old State Elementary School     | 70                   | 11                | 29              | 110              | 0          | 0            | 110           |
| Townsend Elementary School      | 32                   | 5                 | 19              | 58               | 0          | 0            | 56            |
| Absentee Votes                  | 8                    | 2                 | 6               | 17               | 0          | 0            | 16            |
| <b>Totals</b>                   | <b>479</b>           | <b>118</b>        | <b>283</b>      | <b>890</b>       | <b>0</b>   | <b>0</b>     | <b>880</b>    |



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# REDDING VOTES TO REMOVE CHRISTINA FROM WILMINGTON

BY JAREK RUTZ

The members of the **Redding Consortium for Educational Equity** voted May 9 to remove the Christina School District from the city of Wilmington in a redistricting plan.

Those for the move said that removing Christina's three schools inside the city that don't connect to the rest of the district will allow the consortium to better focus its efforts on the needs of city students and families. Those opposing the move said the plan didn't have enough details to support the vote, that it would mean teachers and families had to deal with a long period of uncertainty about schools and that would not help with teacher shortages.

Even with the yes vote, there's a period of more than a year for the Redding Consortium to hold town halls,

engage with stakeholders and receive feedback that could spark changes. The group must present a final redistricting plan to the State Board of Education by October 2025. After that, it could take around three to five years to implement the plan, meaning the dust could be settled around the turn of the decade.

Wilmington now has schools in its city limits that are overseen by three different school districts and some children are bussed out of the system to Colonial District schools. The city's schools and students were split up as part of a desegregation plan in the late 1970s.

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# THE 5 CANDIDATES FOR GOVERNOR TALK EDUCATION IN DELAWARE

BY JAREK RUTZ

The five candidates vying to replace Gov. John Carney in November’s gubernatorial election took the stage May 8 to give their thoughts on the state of education in Delaware. The three Democrats and two Republicans agreed that the need for reform in First State schools transcends politics.

The forum, hosted by **Polytech High School**, was organized by the **Vision Coalition of Delaware**, a public-private partnership of Delawareans working to improve public education. It includes education, community and legislative leaders, and it developed the **Vision 2015** plan in 2006. Ten years later, with Delaware adopting more than 75 percent of its recommendations, Vision Coalition helped create a new 10-year plan.

Bettina Tweardy Riveros, chair of the Vision Coalition’s leadership team, asked the questions to the five


candidates: Republican Mike Ramone, state representative; Democrat Matt Meyer, executive of New Castle County; Democrat Bethany Hall-Long, lieutenant governor; Democrat Collin O’Mara, chief executive officer of the National Wildlife Federation; and Republican Jerry Price, former NYPD and Rehoboth Beach police officer.

The typical questions were thrown their way on topics like low student achievement, reform to the funding formula, mental health in schools, equity for minorities and disadvantaged students, and more questions, some from Riveros and a few from students.

Along with the theme of bipartisanship sprinkled throughout the speakers, all of them agreed that there is a real problem in Delaware schools.

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TOWN SQUARE LIVE



# XENIDIS AND ARROWSMITH COMBINE TO KEEP CARAVEL ON TOP

BY SHANNON TIMMONS

In their second matchup this season of non-conference teams Caravel and Cape Henlopen, Caravel stayed red hot at the plate. In the first matchup between these two teams, the game went six scoreless innings before Caravel plated five runs to win 5-0.

The Caravel bats came alive in the second inning, but they left the bases loaded when a ground ball hit the runner for the third out. Caravel began plating runs in the third inning and never looked back.

The Bucs put up 12 hits, six runs, walked once and only struck out three times. Haley Grygo went 2-for-4, scoring two runs, one double and one RBI, Zayda Rocke launched a solo home run and Paige Richardson went 2-for-4, scored a run and had two RBI.

Kasey Xenidis was stellar in the circle for the Bucs, only giving up one hit which didn't come until the fifth inning when Ava Calciano roped a double to center field. Kasey walked three, struck out six and gave up two runs.

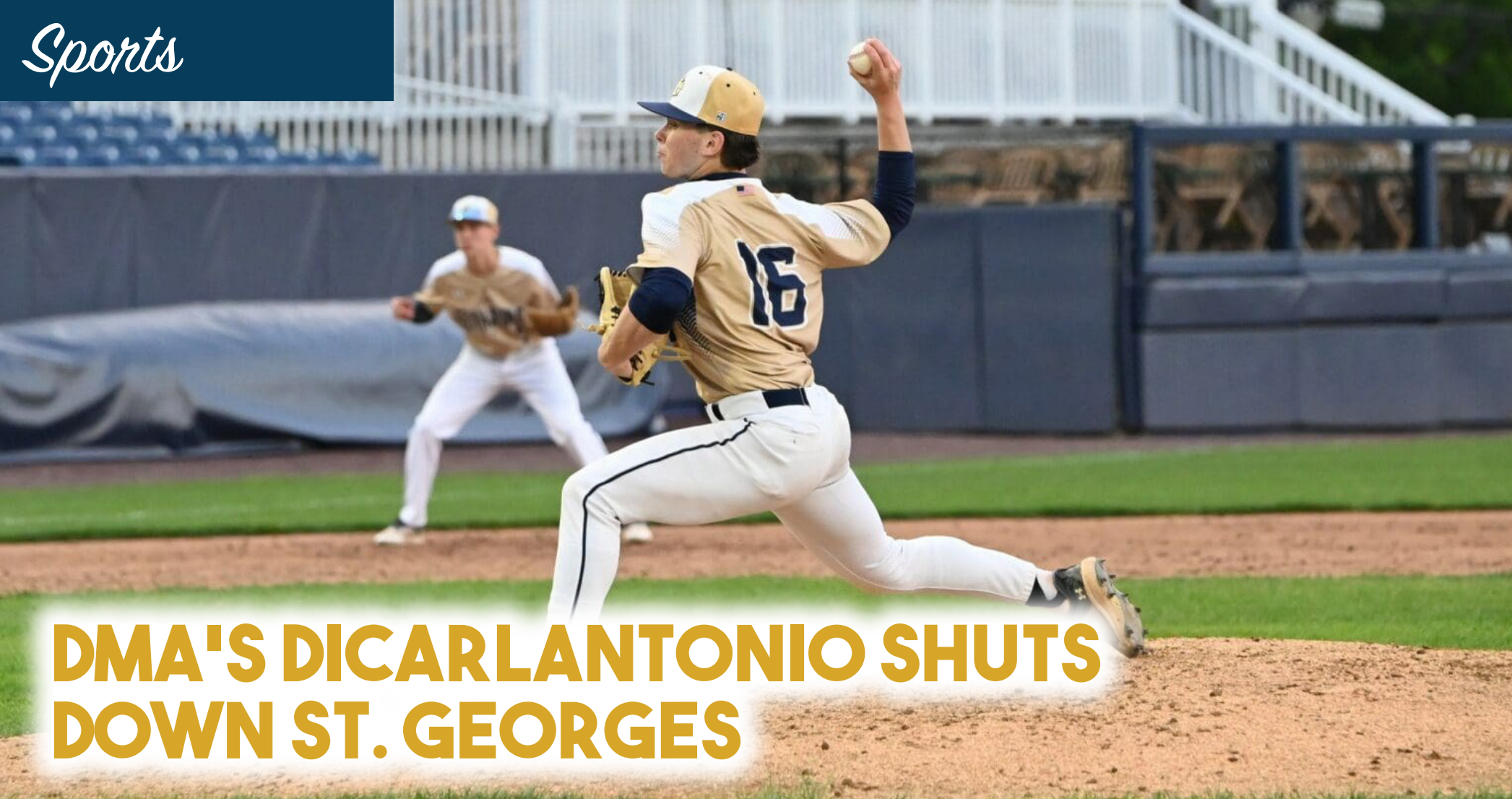
Xenidis gave way to eighth grader Kaley Arrowsmith. She pitched two innings in relief facing 11 batters, striking out four, giving up five hits and allowing one run.

Cape combined for six hits and Jay'Lyn Slater walked twice. Alivia Longo, Slater's courtesy runner, scored in the fourth, Kenna Justice scored in the sixth after being walked, and Eden Frederick scored in the bottom of the seventh as Cape tried to mount a comeback, only to fall short, leaving two runners on base.

Up next: Cape and Delmarva Christian on Thursday, May 16. Caravel vs. CR Thursday, May 16, and Laurel Saturday, May 18.




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# DMA'S DICARLANTONIO SHUTS DOWN ST. GEORGES

BY NICK HALLIDAY

Fourth-ranked Delaware Military Academy (DMA) Seahawks hosted the No. 9 St. Georges Hawks Saturday night at Frawley Stadium, home of our Wilmington Blue Rocks. The Seahawks got the 2-0 win behind a strong performance from pitcher Hunter DiCarlantonio.

DiCarlantonio only allowed two hits in seven innings to earn the win over the Hawks. The DMA offense got him the only run he needed for the victory in the top of the first inning. The 1-0 lead proved to be the winning run after a full seven innings. Hunter had five strikeouts in the game to go with two walks on just 86 pitches.

DMA defeated the Hawks by a 2-0 score. The Seahawks scored their second run in the top of the second inning on a Sammy Diaz-Martinez triple to left field that went all the way to the wall. Kellen Roberts scored on the triple after he led off the inning with a single.

Diaz-Martinez and Roberts each had two hits to lead the Seahawks. Joey Russo and Garrett Overby each had a hit a piece for St. George's.



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# MIDDLETOWN GIRLS' SOCCER REMAINS UNDEFEATED

BY JOE SINGLES

On a rainy Friday evening, the 11-1 St. Mark's girls' soccer team visited Cavalier Stadium and the 12-0 Middletown squad in what many considered a potential state final matchup of days gone by before most Delaware sports switched over to a multi-division format. Back and forth they went early, as both teams seemed content to kick and chase despite having talent up and down the field. St. Mark's Lily Phillips found Emma Manley multiple times early, but was unable to secure any quality scoring opportunities while the Cavaliers found their own offense rhythm 15 minutes into the first half that culminated with a goal in the 18th minute as Gabby Riley found the back of the net off a Cavalier corner kick. The goal seemed to energize the Cavaliers. Riley and company pushed forward with run after run, putting pressure on the Spartan defense who found themselves on their heels until the seven minute mark when Lily Holcroft found the ball at her feet from about eight yards out. Holcroft turned and fired a left-footed shot back across the goal mouth into the far side netting to put Middletown up 2-0 with time left to spare in the half. For the first time this season, the visiting Spartans found themselves with little to no answers for the opposing team's offensive attack.

The Cavalier offensive pressure continued into the second half, as the Middletown passing continued to keep the Spartans off balance despite the wet conditions. Then just four minutes into the half, the home team secured a free kick from 25 yards out. Riley sent a low shot skipping off the wet turf past a diving Marissa Cirillo to give the Cavaliers a 3-0 lead. St. Mark's did not go away quietly however. In the 50th minute, St. Mark's Ava Frohn Apfel, who coincidentally gave up the foul that lead to Middletown's third goal, redirected a St. Mark's corner into the back of the net for their first goal of the match. With 16:06 to go in the game, the Spartans struck again. Manley drove a shot past a diving keeper as her momentum drove her out of bounds and to the ground, but not before making the score 3-2. St. Mark's continued to put its own pressure on the Cavalier defense, but was unable to pull even on the scoreboard as the Cavaliers held on for their 13th win of the season. A win that should surely give the Middletown squad a boost of confidence as it heads into state tournament play coming up in less than two weeks.



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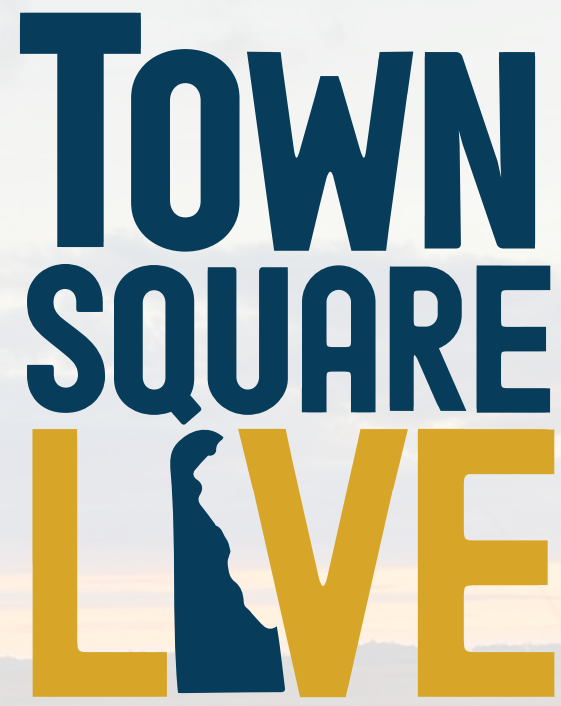
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