

# MILFORD LIVE

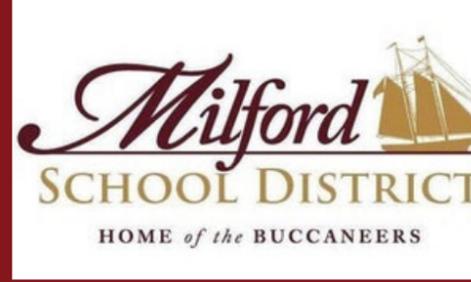
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FUNDING APPROVED FOR LADYBUG  
MUSIC FESTIVAL



MILFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT DRESS CODE



DRUM CIRCLE EVENT

JUNE 29, 2021 · VOL. XI · ISSUE 25

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PHOTO CREDIT: JOANN KINGSLEY

# HEADLINES



PHOTO CREDIT: MARCIA REED

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# CITY COUNCIL APPROVES MILFORD PLAZA SIGN REQUEST



BY TERRY ROGERS

Milford City Council approved a request from Tsionas Management, the company that manages Milford Plaza, to place an additional freestanding monument sign for the Sherwin Williams business within the shopping center. James Grant of Tsionas Management provided details on the need for the sign.

“We are in a catch-22 situation right now,” Grant said. “We have to move the Sherwin Williams store to the old Sears store and one of their requirements is to have a dedicated sign.”

Councilman Mike Boyle commented that there were seven signs, and this would be the eighth. He has also heard that there may be more additions to that shopping center which may require additional signage.

Grant explained that The Plaza is in talks with Aldi who are considering placing a store in the former Sav-A-Lot location. In order for Aldi to have enough of a

footprint, they will take over the Sherwin Williams store that is adjacent, requiring Tsionas Management to relocate Sherwin Williams. According to Grant, if they cannot relocate Sherwin Williams, Aldi will not move to that location. They are also in talks with Marshalls who are interested in the former Peebles/Gordman’s location should Aldi agree to open a store in that shopping center. Grant stated that if Aldi did not locate in The Plaza, Marshalls would not locate there either.

During public comment, Nina Pletcher asked why the company was requiring an additional sign since they were just moving to another location in the same shopping center.

“To give you a brief overview of what has happened,” Grant said. “Sherwin Williams has a lease, and we are asking them to move. There is no clause in the lease for that which means they come to the landlord and ask for

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See SIGN on page 4

### SIGN from page 3

everything. When a store moves into the center, we don't usually touch the façade. However, we are going to redo the entire façade on the front of the former Sears store, do the entire fit out inside the store and they are asking for this sign in order to move. If we don't give them what they want, they can say "we are fine where are" and we cannot make them move. If that happens, you don't get Aldi and you don't get Marshalls. So far, Marshalls is not guaranteed, but we have gotten positive responses from them. They want to be where an Aldi and Planet Fitness is located. There is no clothing store in competition with them. Sherwin Williams wants a sign right in front of the new location. They want a stand-alone sign on 113 and one on the front of the store as well."

Councilman Dan Marabello asked if the two new stores would require additional signage as well.

"They will go on the main board because they are anchor stores," Grant said. "If you look at the sign, it is like a chess game. There are certain spots on the sign where people want to be. Where Gordman's sign was, Aldi's will go there. The placement of those signs on the main board are all spelled out in the lease."

Councilman Andy Fulton commented that having big box stores like Aldi and Marshalls in Milford was something citizens had requested. Councilman Doug Morrow pointed out that there had been a battle to get big box stores into Milford for years and that Marshalls actually saw no competition in the area as a benefit.

"I can barely contain myself just thinking about Marshalls and Aldi coming here," Councilwoman Katrina Wilson said. "I am also happy Sherwin Williams

would agree to be moved so I think because we are agreeing, we should accommodate them for whatever they need. We have been happy to have them all these years and just happy there is going to be some new stores to come and fill those vacant spaces."

Councilman Boyle agreed that it would be very beneficial to have Aldi and Marshalls in Milford but pointed out that he still felt it was important that the shopping center look attractive.

"I think you have to remember with shopping centers, they have a finite life and I think it is ten years," Councilman Todd Culotta said. "Anchor stores are the lifeblood and without them the shopping center dies. They built The Plaza and then the one across the street with Roses and then Walmart further down the road. When you have anchors in there, it is the primary reason why people go. Smaller businesses benefit, too, because they bring in people. We can't say we don't want to see a sign so Sherwin Williams can say 'well, we don't have to move.' I think we are okay. I don't think we are inundated yet. This is in a C3 zone. This is not a residential area, it is commercial. We can show whether we are business friendly or not."

Mayor Archie Campbell commented that the city needed both Aldi and Marshalls and that council did not need to be nitpicking about a sign. Councilman Jason James stated that it did not make sense to sacrifice one sign if it meant economic growth in the form of additional shopping options and job creation.

Council voted unanimously to approve the sign request.



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# CULTURE



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# FUNDING FOR LAYDBUG FESTIVAL APPROVED



BY TERRY ROGERS

In one of her last official duties as DMI President, Peggy Reilly submitted a request to Milford City Council for \$30,000 in funding for the Ladybug Festival, scheduled for Oct. 2 in downtown Milford. Reilly explained that DMI bylaws only allowed a president to serve two years before requiring a two-year break. She has just completed her second year.

“Yanelle Powell will take over as president this year,” Reilly explained. “One of my goals was to bring in some young viewpoints for DMI and I am excited that have been able to do that. I started my tenure in July two years ago and we began working on grants. Then, COVID came. We have spent the last 15 months focused on

COVID and what we needed to do for our businesses. I am pleased to tell council that we did not lose any businesses, in fact, we gained two. Cookie’s Paper Petals, owned by Anastasia Jackson who is now world renowned, as well as a CBD company. Anastasia has also joined DMI.”

Reilly explained that Third Thursdays has returned now that COVID restrictions are relaxed. The Farmer’s Market, the oldest in Delaware, opened again in the spring.

“We are going to have some live music on Third Thursday and are working to get more food trucks,” Reilly said. “We received our Main Street certification. We also have a board member who is experienced with

social media, and they are going to take that over. This is important because that was something the executive director did, and this allows them to focus on other things. As you know, we are looking for an executive director. We had one who retired and then we had Trish who Milford School District snapped up. Cat Perfetti has had to leave due to personal issues at home that keeps her from working with us. We don’t have the salary and benefits to keep someone here long term, so our goal is to find someone who will be with us three to five years.”

Reilly’s main purpose in speaking to council was to request funding of \$30,000 for the Ladybug Festival, a music festival featuring all female artists.

“We are going to have 35 artists, food trucks and vendors,” Reilly said. “We had originally planned to move it to the park where we could spread out, but since we will be completely open as a state on July 13, we are moving it back to Walnut Street. We are holding it during daylight hours this year, but are encouraging restaurants and taverns to offer Ladybug After Party events after the festival ends.”

Reilly said that when she requested the funds two years ago, council was excited since it was just after the festival, and they wanted to bring it back again. Last year’s festival was cancelled due to COVID and DMI refunded all but the deposit paid to Gabel Entertainment who held the funds and will use it toward this year’s festival.

Council approved the funding request unanimously.

MILFORD  
LIVE

# BEAUTY OF POPULAR JUNCTION AND BREAKWATER TRAIL DRAWS LOCALS, TOURISTS



BY JAMES DIEHL

Delaware has been in the top 10 of “bike friendly state” lists for the last decade, and on Friday, one more link in the network of bike paths will officially open.

The \$513,000 Junction and Breakwater Pathway Rehoboth Beach Extension will connect a 10-foot-wide asphalt trail from Canal Street to Rehoboth Avenue, among other enhancements, linking Rehoboth and Lewes.

Along with the newly opened Grove Park Dock near the Rehoboth Beach Museum that allows residents to easily commute by water between Rehoboth and Lewes, the bike path that tracks along an old railroad line gives those in the beach area alternatives to automobiles.

The Junction and Breakwater Trail also ties the resort’s glory days of locomotive travel to a 21st century method of staying in shape and enjoying the beauty of the local area.

It’s also a popular method of staying off area roads and out of what’s often bumper-to-bumper traffic during the summer months.

Running along the western edges of Cape Henlopen State Park, the Junction & Breakwater Trail winds through hardwood and pine forests, coastal marshes and open fields.

“The trail is really beautiful and is a great way for me to get my daily exercise,” says Charlie Cole, a frequent rider of that path. He uses the route about three times a week year-round.

“I really take the trail for the beauty of it, not only the forests and nature but also the people along the way who have spruced up the trail and made it inviting for everyone,” he said.

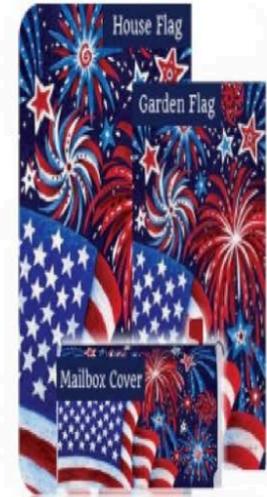
See TRAIL on page 8



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## TRAIL from page 7

The trail includes an old railroad bridge that dates back more than 100 years and crosses Holland Glade, and offers beautiful views of the area marshes located in Cape Henlopen State Park, Delaware's most visited state park.

The Junction and Breakwater Trail runs through Cape Henlopen State Park.

Bike trails have become a premier attraction in Southern Delaware, according to Scott Thomas, director of the Southern Delaware Tourism office. Make shops in the area rent bikes for those who don't bring them along to the beach.

"This trail is a must activity whenever I'm entertaining family and friends who are visiting," he said. "You can bike it at your own pace and stop at some great places to eat, drink and relax. This is one of the best ways to take in the beauty and vibe of coastal Delaware."

The most popular section of the trail runs about six miles, but it does connect to other trails for health enthusiasts and nature lovers who want to continue on to other areas of southern Delaware.

Beginning at Gills Neck Road in Lewes, the Junction & Breakwater connects to the Georgetown-Lewes Trail if you'd like to head a bit further west, as well as to the Gordon's Pond Trail for riders who'd like to try a different path along the coast.

"Taking the trail is a real pleasure and I like to take my time so I can see as much as I can," admits Cole. "I go at a good speed and get my exercise, but I also enjoy looking around and enjoying myself as much as possible."

"I really get the best of both worlds when I'm out on the trail."

See TRAIL on page 9



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In addition to Gills Neck Road, popular access points include Wolfe Neck Road near McDonald's and behind the Tanger Outlets Seaside Center near The Glade Road, according to the website for the Lewes Chamber of Commerce.

The Junction & Breakwater Trail officially opened in December of 2003 and was a length of just three-and-a-half miles until it was expanded four years later to a total of six miles. Now the associated trails add up to about 14 miles.

Friday's ceremony took place in Rehoboth Beach at Canal Crossing and Church Street and featured Sen. Tom Carper, DelDOT Secretary Nicole Majeski and others.



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# DRESS CODE CHANGES DISCUSSED AT SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

BY TERRY ROGERS

On June 21, the Milford School District Board of Education reviewed potential changes to the dress code policy. Dr. Kevin Dickerson, superintendent, pointed out that over the past year the dress code had been relaxed somewhat and some of those changes were being proposed as permanent.

“What we have heard overwhelmingly is that they prefer to call it a dress code rather than a uniform,” Dr. Dickerson said. “We have had several meetings regarding this and we have tried to make it more student focused as we are trying to create a more student-centric environment.”

Dr. Dickerson stated that staff looked at the dress code from an equity lens, especially talking about skirts and shorts. Instead, the code now reads “dress code bottoms” in order to avoid singling out male or female students.

“We would allow jeans to remain as part of the dress code,” Dr. Dickerson said. “We will still uphold the no holes and that kind of thing. We are also offering more colors for the collared shirts. One change we made last year as a pilot for the high school was allowing hooded sweatshirts. We felt this would allow the students to show some pride by wearing Buccaneer logo items or college-related hooded sweatshirts. I would like to see that go forward at the high school because some of our rooms can be very chilly. So far, we would still only permit the hooded shirts at the high school.”

School board member Renate Wiley pointed out that although this was a pilot program at the high school, she understood that it went very well.

“My concern is only allowing it for high school,” Wiley said. “I don’t think that is fair. I think we do all students or we do none. I know we piloted it at the high school for just a short time, but I think all schools should be the same. Young children walk to school as well and we should take that into consideration. You also have kids who live in the same household who may go to both elementary and high school. This would allow one child to wear a hooded shirt and the other not.”

Board member David Vezmar agreed with Wiley’s observation.

“I thought we piloted to see how it worked,” Vezmar said. “I think I heard Mr. Parsley say that it worked and that kids were being respectful by keeping their hoods down.”

Seth Buford, assistant principal at Milford High School, confirmed that the pilot program went very well with students following all the guidelines required with minimal problems.

“I think we can talk to the elementary schools and see how they feel about the hooded sweatshirt issue,” Dr. Dickerson said. “If they feel this would benefit the students, we can make the changes and present a new version at the next board meeting.”



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# MILFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT TO INSTALL MONITORING PROGRAM ON CHROMEBOOKS



BY TERRY ROGERS

Milford School District plans to install the GoGuardian app on all Chromebooks issued to students. The app is provided through a partnership with the Delaware Department of Education which means the program will be provided at no cost to the district.

“We had looked at a program for purchase recently that would keep children safe in a digital environment,” Dr. Bridget Amory, director of Student Services said. “GoGuardian will help us keep students safe and focused on learning in digital spaces, providing us with content filtering, classroom management, a mental health detection tool and electronic device monitoring.”

Dr. Amory explained that the district already had content filtering on the network which blocked access to certain sites, but GoGuardian would provide additional safeguards that the district program may miss.

“An additional benefit that GoGuardian will provide is classroom management,” Dr. Amory said. “If a child is not paying attention in class, I can send a message to them quietly without calling them out in front of other students. None of their peers would even know it is happening.”

Beacon, a tool within the app, is designed to recognize a student who maybe struggling with mental health. Dr. Amory explained that the app would recognize a student who searches for mental health information or suicide prevention. The app would then notify staff that this student may need some additional support.

School Board President Jason Miller asked who at the district would be contacted by the app should a child be showing signs of mental health distress.

“That is still to be determined,” Dr. Amory said. “We are currently working on the system to determine if it will be a school district official, a parent or both. Right now, we are providing you with an overview of what the system can do, but there are still some onboarding sessions that need to be held to develop the protocols. We will work to be sure we support our students.”

Dr. Amory also explained that some of the Chromebooks issued to students have been on quite an adventure over the past year, which is why there is a need for electronic device monitoring. GoGuardian’s feature will not only allow the district to physically

See **CHROMEBOOKS** on page 14

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## CHROMEBOOKS from page 13

monitor the device, but also who logs into the device. Dr. Amory stated that, in most cases, it is the student who is signing onto the device, but there have been instances of someone trying to hack into the system or login through the backdoor. The new app provides increased monitoring based on location.

Miller asked where data collected by the app was stored and Dr. Amory stated that it was stored in the United States and maintained by GoGuardian. Only the district and GoGuardian have access to the data.

Dr. Kevin Dickerson, superintendent, stated that the district does have another app they use for mental health purposes, the Stop It app. Although the app was designed to prevent bullying, there have been instances in the district where a student has been dealing with a mental health issue which was reported through the app. The district was able to intervene in a few cases and get the child help.

“Students will be well aware that GoGuardian is running on their Chromebook at home or at school,” Dr. Amory said. “There is a parent component we will be using as well. In addition, there is the ability to add on some optional programs. We will provide education to both our students and our families about GoGuardian. I can say that an app like this was not only overwhelmingly requested by staff, but also by families.”



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# SUMMER LEARNING, FEEDING PROGRAMS BEGIN AT AREA SCHOOLS



BY TERRY ROGERS

Milford School District began their summer learning programs on June 28, bringing in as many students as they can to help those who may have struggled over the past school year. According to Dr. Laura Manges, director of Student Learning, the biggest issue they faced putting together the summer program was staffing.

“We thank our staff for stepping up to help us provide our students with a rigorous summer school program,” Dr. Manges said. “We do have students that must be provided 12-months of service which means we have to provide them with education even in the summer, along with the Extended Buccaneer Programs and other summer programming. We are offering a sigh of relief that we

are able to provide our students with what they need. Our summer program is more rigorous than in the past. We started talking to around 130 students and I believe our enrollment right now is between 70 and 80.”

Sharron Forrest, director of Child Nutrition, also discussed the Summer Feeding Program that will be available during the summer months. Forrest also provided information on the Child Nutrition Program.

“First, I want to thank my staff, my managers, the directors, the principals and Sara [Croce, chief financial officer],” It has been a trying year for staff because they want to feed everybody. As hard as it was, it was a great

See **SUMMER PROGRAMS** on page 16

# SUMMER MEAL SCHEDULE

June 30 - August 5

## 7-DAY MEAL BOXES

### Wednesdays

Milford High School - 3:30-5:15

### Thursdays

Banneker Elementary 4th Street Bus Entrance - 11:00-12:00

Mispillion Apartments - 11:00-11:10

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## SUMMER PROGRAMS from page 15

year. The Community Eligibility Provision allows for schools with 40 percent or more of students qualifying for free and reduced meals to provide free meals to all students, regardless of their family status. We are reimbursed 76 percent at the free reimbursement rate and 24 percent of the paid reimbursement rate. Over the past year, any child 18 or older, even if they were not enrolled in the school district, received free meals.”

Curbside service began March 18, 2020, providing pickup meals at all Milford schools, in Ellendale, The Learning Center, Houston and Mispillion Apartments initially. The program was eventually discontinued at Mispillion Elementary and Milford Central Academy due to low numbers. In the spring of 2021, Child Nutrition focused on serving students at the schools, suspending curbside service at Morris and in Ellendale.

“As of May 31, 2021, we have delivered 163,864 meals using our curbside program and 181,203 in-house meals,” Forrest said. “Some of the positives that have come out of this is that staff was able to work in other kitchens under different managers which helped with team building. Doing both curbside and in-house was very labor intensive and we also had to deal with increased costs related to products and supplies.”

For the summer, Milford School District will offer in-house food programs at Banneker and Mispillion Elementary, Morris Early Childhood Center, Milford Central Academy and Milford High School. Curbside feeding will be held at Banneker on Thursdays from 11:00 a.m. until 12 noon; Mispillion Apartments on Thursdays from 11:00 a.m. until 12 noon; Mt. Zion Church in Ellendale Thursdays from 11:30 a.m. until 12

noon; Milford High School from 3:30–5:15 p.m. on Wednesdays, and with delivery to The Learning Center Monday through Friday.

“For both in-house and curbside, we must include a meat or meat alternative, grain, fruit, vegetable as well as non-fat or low-fat milk,” Forrest said. “The significance of this is that when kids go through the line, they are only required to choose three out of the five. During the summer program, we must give them all five. Frankly, a lot of the vegetables end up in the trash.”

School Board Vice-President Rony Baltazar-Lopez thanked Forrest and her staff for their dedication to children throughout the pandemic.

“I am on the board for Parks & Recreation,” Baltazar-Lopez said. “Brad Dennehy told us that the district would be providing lunches for the summer camps which I think is awesome. Anything we can do to help children, that is great.”

President Jason Miller also commended the Child Nutrition staff.

“Your flexibility this year has been phenomenal,” Miller said. “The service you have provided to our community has been exceptional. You make the rest of us look good and I know I speak for the entire board when I say we appreciate all that you do for our kids.”

Forrest also took a moment to recognize the late Mariann Morton who was a Child Nutrition manager for the district for many years. Morton died suddenly a few months ago and Forrest wanted to recognize her dedication to the children of the district throughout the years.



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# CODE OF ETHICS POLICY APPROVED FOR MSD BOARD

BY TERRY ROGERS

After a lengthy discussion at their regular meeting on June 21, the Milford School District approved a new Board Member Code of Ethics policy. The policy outlines a wide range of ethics that each board member must follow after taking the oath of office.

The policy was drafted by Board Vice-President Rony Baltazar-Lopez with the assistance of Board member Renate Wiley. After reading the policy, which includes statements such as reminders that the board represents the community, recognition that the board has no legal authority individually outside the board and a commitment to uphold applicable laws and statutes, Baltazar-Lopez explained why he felt this policy was important.

“This policy is quite straightforward and it is quite simple,” Baltazar-Lopez said. “It replaces an outdated board duties policy enacted in 1986. It mentions no ethical beliefs that a board member should subscribe to. In my belief, it does not implicate any board member but, on the contrary, it explicitly establishes the morals and the values this board should hold for itself. I have no doubt all of you follow certain ethics in your lives, but this isn’t about an individual, it is about all of us collectively as the Board of Education who set the policies of the district. This past year, all of us have had to make difficult decisions for the entire Milford School District community. These decisions greatly impacted

every student and family in Milford School District. Those decisions should be guided by ethics that we can all agree on and this is a policy to guide future board members when there is no clarity. In fact, we would not be the lone district that has an ethics policy. Of the 19 districts in Delaware, 15 districts have thorough and comprehensive ethics policies, including our neighboring districts like Lake Forest, Caesar Rodney, Cape Henlopen and Woodbridge. Some school districts go as far as requiring that board members subscribe to those beliefs when they first join the board.”

Baltazar-Lopez went on to point out that Delaware Code and the Department of Education only mention general duties for board members, not the ethics they should hold. After speaking, Baltazar-Lopez motioned to make the policy an action item since it had been read twice before. An action item would require the board to vote on the policy.

“Unfortunately, you have made this motion before we have a chance to discuss it at all,” President Jason Miller said. “I have a few questions and comments after reading it for what I guess is the third time. But the process we have is that there is a motion on the table.” The board voted five to two to move the agenda item to an action item, with Kris Thompson and Jean Wylie casting no votes. Once it was determined a vote would occur, the board discussed the policy in detail.

See ETHICS on page 18

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“In the line that we should “make decisions based on the educational welfare of all children in the district,” it is followed by the statement “regardless of socioeconomic status,” Miller said. “Not that I take issue, but I just feel like “socioeconomic status” is unnecessary considering the previous statement is “educational welfare of all students.” I also find “be inclusive by ensuring that all goal setting, policy making, evaluation and governance is best for all students of the district” is also redundant to the previous statement as if you are doing one, you are most certainly doing the other. I also find that “welcome and encourage active participation by residents, organizations and the media in the district with respect to establishing policy on current building operations and proposed future development” confusing. Does this mean we are only interested in encouraging participation when it is involving policy related to building operations and future development? I would think that simply stating “encouraging active participation” would be more inclusive.”

Baltazar-Lopez pointed out that the board had already discussed the language in the policy at two previous board meetings and that no one had issue with the language during those meetings. He explained that the policy is not restricted to those sentences and that the policy was meant to be flexible.

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# RENATE WILEY RECOGNIZED FOR SERVICE TO MSD

BY TERRY ROGERS

After 10 years on the Milford School District Board of Education, Renate Wiley will step down when Dr. Adam Brownstein takes her seat on July 6, 2021. Wiley, who also spent 19 years as a school nurse at Milford School District, received a Distinguished Service Award for her service.

“We would like to take this moment to recognize Renate Wiley for her dedication and service to Milford School District,” Dr. Kevin Dickerson, superintendent, said. “She served as a board member here from 2011 to 2021, as vice-president from 2013 to 2015 and president from 2015 to 2020. She is a mother, grandmother, just obviously a community asset. We have been very fortunate to have her support in our district.”

Wiley accepted the award and thanked the district for the recognition.

“If any of you know me, you know I get choked up very easily, so I will try to get through this without getting choked up,” Wiley said. “I just want to say a few words, off the cuff, but from my heart. When I was a school nurse, it was the hardest job I ever did, but it was also the best job I ever did. And that is exactly how I feel about being on this school board. It has been hard work, but I am very proud of the work I have done.”

Wiley joked that her 10 years on the school board was not a record by any means, pointing out that Marvin Schelhouse may hold that record.

“Over my 10-year history, I have worked with three superintendents,” Wiley said. “I was involved in the hiring of two of them and I think they were excellent choices. I think we are very blessed as a district to have the superintendent that we do. In that time, I have been involved with 20 different people who have served on this board, including the current board. And that is quite an honor. The most humbling thing I have and the greatest gift I was given was when this community voted me to be on the school board. I have been honored to serve these past 10 years. I’ve been honored to serve with the members I have in the past and with my current members. I do know the one thing that has always rang true with all the members I have served with is that we have all come with the same belief. That is that this district, our students and staff were the most important and that we would do what we had to do even if it was not the best decision at the time or the most popular decision, it was what we felt was in the best interest of the district.”

Wiley promised her fellow board members that it was not goodbye as she planned to be around.

“I have five grandchildren in the district,” Wiley said. “I have a daughter who is a teacher and a granddaughter who wants to be a teacher and come back to this district, so I will be around to still support you with a referendum or anything that comes around. My heart



and soul is with Milford School District and I know that I am leaving you in good hands with Dr. Brownstein as he comes on to take my seat.”

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# BUSINESS



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BY TERRY ROGERS

North Pole Creamery owner David Pickrell loves music as well as the arts and felt it would be a great idea to combine his love of music with his ice cream shop. As a result, a free Drum Circle event will be held on July 17 starting at 2:00 p.m. at the North Pole Creamery, next to the Milford Riverwalk. At this event, parents and children can create their own drum using ice cream tubs used at the creamery.

# NORTH POLE CREAMERY TO SPONSOR DRUM CIRCLE EVENT

“We will show them how to build the drums as we assemble around North Pole Creamery,” Pickrell said. “The kids will be shown how to build and decorate their “drums.” Then, with instruction from the event facilitator, we will all gather in a circle to learn and perform in a group atmosphere. I am hoping to arrange for an accompanying dance group from one of our local dance academies.”

For Pickrell, this is a great way to combine music and art while also building a richer community. He stated that any opportunity to share the love of art and music with others, especially young people, is one that should never be passed up.

The Drum Circle will be led by Mary Knysh, a close friend of Pickrell’s who founded “Rhythmic Connections,” an innovative company advancing education, health and creative development through drum circles and music improvisation.

“Mary is a cutting edge workshop facilitator with specialty in education, a trainer and consultant who uses music as a means for personal and organizational transformation through creativity and non-verbal communication,” Pickrell said. “She is a professional musician, recording artist and international author.

See DRUM on page 23

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**DRUM from page 22**

Mary travels throughout the United States, Europe and Asia performing, offering workshops, training and presenting at conferences.”

Knysh had a rare opportunity to visit Pickrell and his wife, Marcia Reed, owner of Gallery 37, in Milford and, as they talked about her new programs, the creamery and the amazing kids they have met while running the ice cream shop, an idea formed.

“The ‘light bulb’ moment,” Pickrell said. “We both agreed that we have got to do this in Milford and right

here at the creamery. All children and their parents are welcome to the event. We have secured the use of the park area adjacent to the creamery, so we have plenty of room to move.”

Anyone interested in building, learning and playing a drum can stop by to sign up at the North Pole Creamery or email [npcreamery@aol.com](mailto:npcreamery@aol.com).



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# GOVERNMENT & POLITICS



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# GOVERNOR CARNEY VISITS MILFORD TO CELEBRATE DEWINS!

BY TERRY ROGERS



Governor John Carney visited the Milford area on June 25 to speak to business owners who participated in the DEWins! program. The program is designed to encourage people to get the COVID-19 vaccination in an effort to win prizes or receive incentives from a local business.

“We are plugging along, glad to be able to get back to business as usual,” Eric Williams, owner of Mispillion Brewing, told the governor. “This time last year, we did not know where we were going to be. I’ve seen some new faces coming in because people are following the beer trail. I think honestly people are just ready to get out of the house.”

The state provided funding to companies who were willing to provide a service, discount or other benefit to those who could provide proof of COVID-19 vaccination. Mispillion Brewing is selling one of their beers which normally cost \$48 per case for only \$25 to those who provide proof of vaccination. They also receive a free cooler with the purchase. Proof can be with a photo of the vaccination itself or their vaccination card.

“We’ve sold about 40 percent of what we allotted for

the giveaway,” Williams said. “We are all fully vaccinated. We made a day of it, a big deal. We all went together to Dover, and it was one of the smoothest things we’ve ever seen.”

Gov. Carney explained that the state is on track to have 70 percent of its population with at least one vaccination by July 4, which is a goal set by President Joe Biden. He pointed out that the state is at 69.4 which seems very close but stated that is still about 5,000 people. Williams stated that the lower priced beer and cooler giveaway have met with a few negative comments and Gov. Carney stated that he thinks there are about 20 percent who will not get it at all, commenting that it was “fine” if they did not. The DEWins! program ends on July 4.

“During COVID, we did a lot of renovations, just tore stuff down, opened it up and made it more fun,” Williams said about his expanded outdoor space. “We have had live bands come in about once a month. People actually sit out in the parking lot on their tailgates, drink some beer and watch the bands. It is very comfortable for everyone. We added a stage, put in some branded umbrellas. We created an outdoor space that is comfortable, relaxed, a place where you can close off the rest of the world, have a beer, maybe play some cornhole. There is a big dog out here right now and a

little one inside, so we are very dog-friendly.”

Gov. Carney thanked Williams for not only joining the DEWins! campaign, but also partnering with the state for the beer tour.

“They had a bill that would increase the number of locations,” Gov. Carney asked. “Did that pass? Would it effect you?”

Williams explained that, currently, one person could only hold three microbrewery or brewpub licenses. He currently holds one for Mispillion Brewing in Milford and one for Brickworks in Smyrna. He opted out of joining Brickworks in Long Neck as he wanted to hold his third license to possibly open a brewpub in Milford. He told the governor that the bill had come out of the Economic Committee, but that it had not been passed yet.

“It would affect me,” Williams said. “The bill will change the number of licenses from three to five. That would allow me to tell my partners in Long Neck, hey, I want to be involved and still have two licenses available for two more locations. It is very important for the smaller breweries like Revelation, but it will also help the larger ones like Dogfish. Iron Hill is a prime example. They have no more licenses left so they have no issue going to Pennsylvania, Maryland or New Jersey. I don’t want to do that. Right now, restaurants can have as many licenses as they want, like SoDel has about 11

See DE WINS on PAGE 26

restaurants. I don't want to go to Philadelphia. I want to keep my business in Delaware. I don't want to travel to Philadelphia every day. I grew up there, I don't want to be up there."

After talking to Williams at Mispillion Brewing, Gov. Carney traveled to Cookie's Paper Petals on Southwest Front Street in Milford where he met owner, Anastasia Jackson and her husband, Tyrel. Jackson explained that she creates paper flowers from card stock that people use for parties, home décor and more. She also teaches classes on how to make the flowers, to which the governor joked that she was teaching people a skill that could put her out of business. Jackson explained that people have fun in the classes, but most say they would prefer to buy them rather than make them.

"I actually started doing this in 2017 as a creative outlet," Jackson said when Gov. Carney asked her how she got into the business. "I lost my grandmother to breast cancer, and I just kept going. It was therapeutic. I posted pictures on Facebook and people wanted to buy them. A lady in Texas bought 200 paper flowers from me and that was the beginning. Cookie is the nickname my grandmother gave me, and she loved yellow roses, so my logo wall is dedicated to her memory."

Jackson took Gov. Carney on a tour of her location, showing him the back room where she has photos of her various endeavors since she began the business. One shows her with a group of women, and she explained that they were from the Ivory Coast.

"I taught them how to make flowers as a source of income," Jackson said. "I connected with an app called

Clubhouse and a lady asked me if I would teach the girls how to make the flowers. I told her I wanted to teach the moms, so I taught mothers and daughters what I do."

As part of the DEWins! program, Jackson will offer free classes too, as part of the lottery system created by the state. Those who have been vaccinated are entered into a drawing where they could win free classes at her establishment. She has also partnered with Cricut and was recently featured in their global email. She also appeared on Good Morning America, which she said was an "awesome experience" that caused her "phone to ring off the hook." Jackson took Gov. Carney upstairs where he viewed her studio where she creates her Facebook Live events and her husband's studio where he creates podcast related to sports. She then took the governor into another room where she shared her next vision, a co-working craft space for which she has applied for an EDGE grant.

"Have you ever been to The Mill in Wilmington?" Gov. Carney asked. "You need to go there before you dive into this. They have a common area not much bigger than this, but they also have smaller spaces. Members can rent a seat or an office, go there and work without the overhead as they start their business. The idea is that there are people who have ideas like yours, they come here, and they work on them without the overhead. As they grow they graduate to an office. They had people who started there with two and eventually graduated out because they had more than 20 people now."

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A solar light has been installed at the entrance to Matlinds Estates using CTF funds to improve safety in the area.

**BY TERRY ROGERS**

The City of Milford Public Works Department recently partnered with Representative Bryan Shupe and his Community Transportation Funds (CTF) to make the Matlinds Estates neighborhood entrance safer for its residents by utilizing the Funds to purchase a solar light.

In December 2019, the city was contacted by one of the neighborhood’s residents about the lack of lighting at their entrance along Cedar Creek Road. Further investigation led Milford Public Works to the unfortunate conclusion no electric lines existed from which to capture the power for lighting along the road leading to the entrance. Rep. Shupe, however, contacted the City a few weeks later indicating CTF funding from the FY20 Bond Bill could cover the costs.

# CITY OF MILFORD UTILIZES CTF TO PROVIDE NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY

Since security was the main concern but no electricity source existed at or near the location, the Public Works Department utilized the CTF funding to purchase solar lighting equipment from Florida Sol Systems, Inc. On March 15, the solar unit arrived and was installed on a pole erected by the city’s Electric Division at the entrance to Matlinds Estates, and has been in operation ever since.

“The project is quite a ‘feel good’ effort,” said Michael Svaby, Public Works director. “The state’s CTF mechanism worked in the way it was intended and the outcome is a more secure entrance established by the City of Milford Public Works, using an environmentally-friendly lighting fixture.”

A 2018 presentation about the CTF explains it was established in the mid-1980s by Delaware’s Bond Bill Committee to speed up the process of making relatively small local improvements, as well as put decision-making about priorities into the hands of each community through their state representatives. The representatives are given a fixed amount of funds annually and they must be used on projects that have a transportation component, are on public property and benefit more than one individual. The Matlinds Estates entrance project fit the bill.

The City of Milford, incorporated in 1807 and located in Kent and Sussex Counties along the Mispillion River, is home to 10,000+ year-round residents, 500+ retail businesses and non-profits, local restaurants, parks,

trails, small town events, major healthcare providers, an historic shipyard, and its own school district. Known throughout the state as River Town, Art Town, Home Town, the city celebrates the beauty of its natural resources, the ingenuity of its people and its commitment to quality of life.



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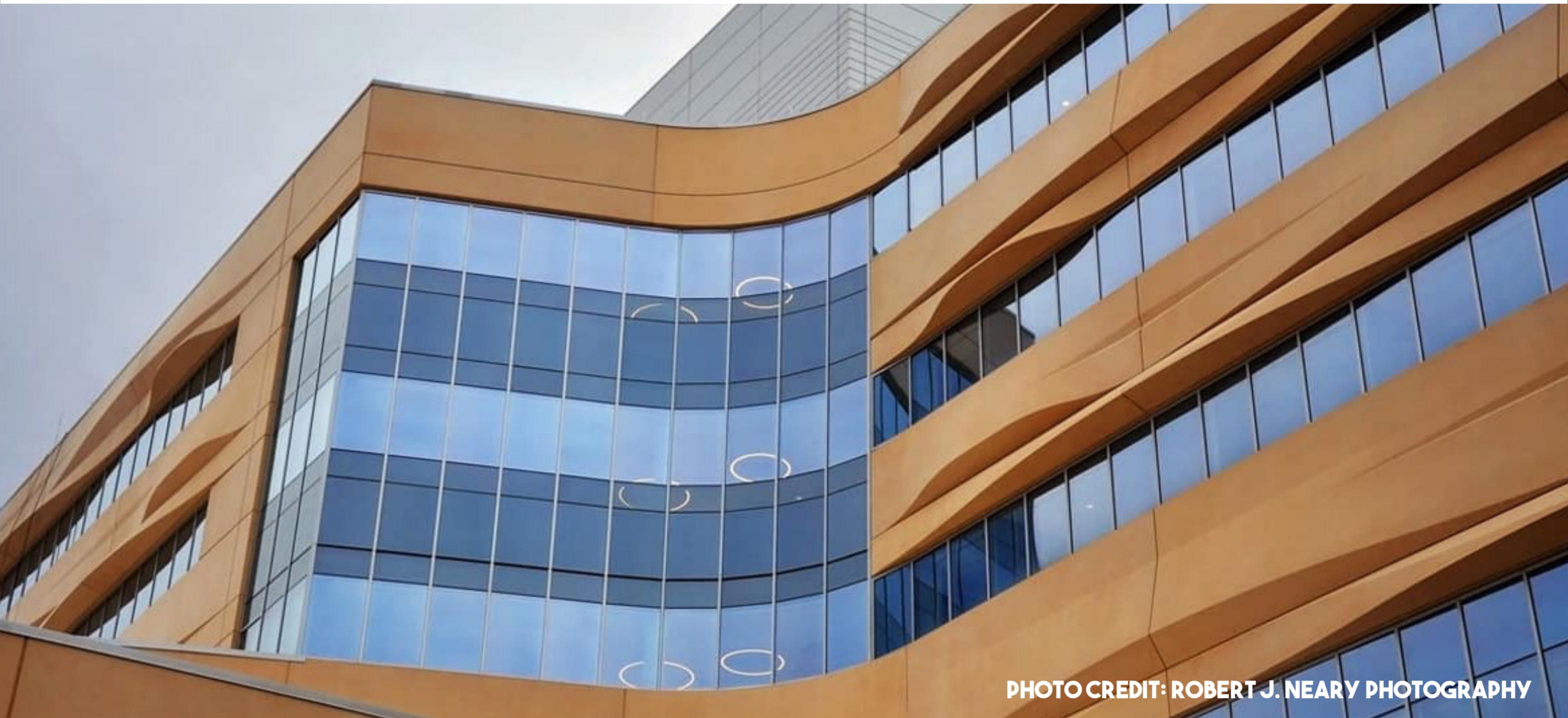


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# COVID NUMBERS SKITTER AROUND AS VACCINATIONS RISE TO 69.4% OF ELIGIBLE



BY BETSY PRICE

Delaware's average of new positive cases dropped to 20.6%, a full 10 percentage points down from last week, as the number of vaccinated people crept closer to President Biden's goal of 70% of those eligible for shots.

The Delaware Division of Public Health also said Friday that 13 deaths were reported last week, 11 of them from a review of vital statistic records. So far, 1,693 Delawareans have died from the virus.

In its weekly summary of case information, the state said 109,636 cases of COVID-19 have been diagnosed among Delaware residents and the seven-day average of tests that were positive rose slightly to 1.1%. There were 23 people hospitalized because of the virus, down four from last week, with six in critical condition.

## Vaccinations

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention data shows 69.4% of Delawareans have received at least one dose of the vaccine. It still leaves thousands to make Biden's Fourth of July goal.

As of Friday morning, 990,742 doses of vaccine had been administered in Delaware. Among Delawareans 12+, 501,422 have received at least one dose and 432,948 Delawareans are fully vaccinated.

## DE Wins!

This week is the final week of the DE Wins! vaccine incentive program weekly drawings. Twelve total winners will be drawn. Prizes offered include tickets to the Grand, State Fair VIP tickets, Wawa catering,

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tuition to Delaware State University, a scholarship to Wilmington University for both graduate and undergraduates, more state park passes, and \$5,000 to four winners. To be entered for a chance to win, get vaccinated as soon as possible before Tuesday, June 29.

The grand prize drawings will take place on Wednesday, June 30. Any Delawarean vaccinated at any time in Delaware is eligible. The prizes include \$302,000 and two low-digit license plates. For information on the vaccine incentive program visit [www.DEWins.org](http://www.DEWins.org).

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PHOTO CREDIT: KEVIN EICKMAN

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# OSPREY PART OF DE TURF RESURGENCE

BY KEVIN EICKMAN

It was a glorious evening June 24, with low humidity and a light breeze offering a brief respite from the almost constant humidity of Delaware summers. This night had just a little more to it at DE Turf, as CAFC Osprey (Women's Premier Soccer League) hosted this season's final home match against Colonial Conference counterparts, Washington Dutch Lions FC.

Speaking with Osprey coach Joe Brown before the contest, he was very excited to be wrapping up the season after last year was wiped out by COVID. "It's just great, that's all I can say. After not getting to play last season, to be able to have a full year this season is fantastic," he said. "People don't really know how hard these players work. They put everything they have to it, most of these girls are college players and this is one thing they do to keep in shape in the off-season."

The crowd began to file in prior to the 7 p.m. start and the buzz was electric as the stands were filling to almost capacity. Coach Brown pointed to the stands and stated. "This is what we love to see, people out enjoying the sport we love. It's a beautiful night against a tough opponent and I can't wait for the game to start."

Except for the goalkeeper, every player on the squad is a Delaware native. These aren't just any players either, they are elite players, including former and current Gatorade Players of the Year, Jessie Prilliman, a Caesar Rodney graduate; Ashley Bretlinger, a Padua graduate who now plays college soccer at Florida Gulf Coast. Catlin St. Leger, who earned this year's Gatorade Player of the Year, will be playing at the University of Delaware, and

Sheyenne Allen who plays for Brown University. "We have quality players up and down the squad that were first-team All-State, who come back to Delaware and play soccer for the only team in the WPSL based in Delaware," Brown said. "Everyone knows that Delaware is a small state, but I will gladly match our top players against anyone else at this level of play."

The first half was tightly contested, with neither team able to find the back of the net. Washington did a good job limiting the Osprey rhythm in the middle of the field, and even when the Osprey looked to have an opening, the Washington defense was quick to shut down the opportunity. "We knew going in that we were going to be battling against a very tough opponent and you have to tip your cap to Washington, they came ready to play," Brown said.

Washington would get on the board early in the second half to take the lead. The Osprey were able to respond and even the game in the final 20 minutes as the teams would end the contest all square at 1-1.

While this is just the second season for the Osprey, who won the Colonial Conference title in their inaugural season back in 2019, the Delaware-based squad has a chance to repeat after posting a record of five wins, one loss, and two ties. "We will have to see how the other teams will finish out, but the worst we can do is finish second," Brown said.

I also took some time to speak with Austin Buongiorno, Delaware Turf's operations and events manager. He is very excited to have events filling up and fans back in



attendance as well. "I just started in March, but without a doubt, we went through a tough year. But we are still on our feet and have some big events coming up this summer," he said. On July 6-8, some of the country's top lacrosse players will be here for the Adrenaline Platinum Lacrosse Cup, featuring over 100 teams. In addition, the USA Men's and Women's National Lacrosse teams will be participating in exhibition matches on July 13 as part of The Top of the Bay tournament.

Besides major tournaments, there are soccer leagues, 7-on-7 football, and lacrosse for all levels of athlete. "We are thrilled to be filling up again and it's great to be a destination again. This is going to be a great summer for the local area," Buongiorno said.

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