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FORMER MIDDLE SCHOOL TO BE RENOVATED



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GARY & DEBBIE
SIMPSON

PHOTO BY MARCIA REED

HEADLINES



PHOTO BY RUTH HOUSTON-BEHRENS



BY TERRY ROGERS

On Tuesday, Jan. 26, voters in the city of Milford passed a bond referendum allowing the city to borrow up to \$20 million to build a new police station. There were 577 votes cast in the referendum with 390 (68%) cast for the bond bill and 187 (32%) cast against the measure.

“I am so enlightened right now,” Mayor Archie Campbell said. “I feel like a brick has been lifted from me and I am walking on a cloud. Finally, the people of Milford will get the police station they need. I want to thank everyone who took the time and came out to vote today.”

Councilman Todd Culotta commented that the people had spoken, and it was clear that they fully support the police. Councilman Culotta stated that it was now up to council to come up with a final cost for the police station and keep it as low as possible for the taxpayer.

“I am pleased the voters have voted to provide themselves with an adequate police station,” Councilman Jason James said. “This station will allow our safety

MILFORD VOTERS PASS POLICE STATION REFERENDUM

officers to do their best to protect and serve. Now, it is the duty of city management and council to ensure that we do the work on behalf of the people that the cost is as minimal as possible to keep the tax burden as low as possible.”

Councilman Mike Boyle was also pleased at the passage of the referendum. He thanked Chief Brown for taking the lead on the initiative, believing that it was the Chief’s hard work that convinced the voters that a new police station was necessary.

Now that the resolution has passed, the next step is for the city to conduct a rating call in early February and they should receive the bond rate in mid-February. It is believed that the bonds will be issued in ranges between one and two percent. The city plans to invite bids for the project at the end of February, price bonds in early March and settle on those bonds by mid-March.

The city hopes to keep the project below the \$20 million limit. It is believed the cost will be between \$12 and \$18 million. A Citizens Police Facility Oversight Committee comprised of community members and city leaders will review plans for the building and work to keep the costs as low as possible.



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BY TERRY ROGERS

After the Milford community voted overwhelmingly for a referendum that would allow Milford School District to renovate the former Milford Middle School building on Lakeview Avenue, the historic structure will receive a much-needed facelift over the next several years. On Oct. 27, over 2,000 Milford residents went to the polls to vote for a referendum that would allow the district to renovate the building, a project that will cost an estimated \$57.2 million with the district paying 27 percent of the cost, amounting to around \$14.8 million. The state will cover the remaining costs.

“The Milford School District is incredibly grateful for the support of the community,” Dr. Sara Croce, chief financial officer, said. “We will begin working with the state of Delaware to prepare for the next stages of the project including the bond sale.”

The passage of the referendum was welcome news for the district whose schools are all at or over capacity. Once the new school is remodeled, it will house fifth and sixth

FORMER MIDDLE SCHOOL BUILDING TO BE RENOVATED

graders which will reduce overcrowding in the three elementary schools as well as the Milford Central Academy.

The district held several informational meetings to present the need for the renovation to the public. The school, which closed permanently in 2013, has historic value in Milford. It was originally built in 1929 as Milford High School. It was where the first black students attempted to integrate public schools in 1954 when the Milford Eleven enrolled. Although that attempt was not successful, seven African American students did integrate the school in early 1960s.

This was the third attempt to address the abandoned school in Milford. In 2014, the district was denied a request to demolish the building and construct a new middle school on the Lakeview Avenue property. The following year, they proposed demolishing or selling the building and constructing a new high school on land where Simpson Crossing now stands. Both options were denied by voters with many requesting that the district come up with a plan that would allow them to use the historic structure.

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THANK YOU!

THE MILFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT WOULD LIKE TO SINCERELY THANK OUR DISTRICT-COMMUNITY MEMBERS FOR THEIR PARTICIPATION IN THE REFERENDUM VOTE. WE ARE VERY EXCITED AND APPRECIATIVE FOR OUR DISTRICT-COMMUNITY'S SUPPORT OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT AND SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME. THIS PROJECT WILL SIGNIFICANTLY BENEFIT OUR STUDENTS, FIRST AND FOREMOST, AND ENTIRE DISTRICT-COMMUNITY. WE LOOK FORWARD TO THE NEXT STEPS LEADING TO THE RENOVATION OF THE SCHOOL AND REVITALIZATION OF THE SITE.

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CULTURE



PHOTO BY TERRY ROGERS



BY BETSY PRICE

Tom Maloney and his commanding officer were the first off their landing craft at Utah Beach during the 1944 D-Day invasion of Normandy.

They dropped into 10 feet of water. Both were forced to ditch their packs and guns to reach the surface again.

Able to climb back on the transport, Maloney's enraged captain grabbed a gun off one of his men and put it to the head of the sailor who had landed the boat.

MILFORD MAN'S WWII SERVICE TOOK HIM AROUND WORLD, INTO D-DAY INVASION

"I'll blow your damn head off," the captain told the sailor. "You back this boat up. Next time she stops, she better be high and dry."

She was, and the troops raced across the sand amid bullets and bombs. The only thing Maloney carried was a hunting knife his daddy had given him before he left for war. He didn't fret.

"You're always going to find somebody dead, and he would have rations and stuff," the 98-year-old Milford resident said. "And I knew guns and stuff like that were plentiful."

Participating in D-Day is one of many dramatic memories that Thomas Andrew Maloney has of his three years overseas during World War II as a member of the 295 Combat Engineers. His crew built roads and bridges for troops to pass over.

He can still reel off his serial number: "32. 75. 48. 48. You never forget that."

Maloney was 19 when he was drafted in 1942. Raised on a farm in Milford Neck, a few miles east of Milford, he had dropped out of high school in 11th grade and was working at a bomber factory in Baltimore, fitting ball turrets into planes on an assembly line.

The oldest of six boys, he was the first of five to go to war. His war would take him to Africa, Italy, the British Isles, Belgium, France and Germany.

He'd help burn wool uniforms in Africa, suffer

through the Battle of the Bulge without winter clothes, single-handedly shoot down a strafing German plane on Utah Beach, blow up a bunny he thought was a Nazi, hunt deer for fresh meat with a Native American sergeant who called him "country boy," and sleep under trucks or in old buildings, but never in a tent, which he called "not much good."

Neither was a chicken coop he chose on the way to Germany. He leaned a board up against a wall so he could sleep on it.

"Within about 15 minutes I had about 1,000 chicken lice on me," he said. "Man, I couldn't stand it."

Maloney's wife of 75 years, Gladys, and son Barry say Maloney didn't talk much about the war for decades. Then about 25 years ago, the child of a neighbor asked Maloney to come to his class at nearby Lulu B. Ross Elementary for show-and-tell.

That seemed to loosen the tide of memories. Now he talks more freely about it.

"They said you had a choice," Maloney said of being drafted. "I told them I wanted to be a sailor. They put me in the Army."

He met other draftees at the Milford train station to travel to Fort Dix, where they were inducted. Maloney was put on a train to Camp Walker in Texas, a former cavalry post turned troop-training camp.

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BY TERRY ROGERS

The Downtown Milford, Inc. (DMI) Vinyard Shipyard Task Force continues to work toward a private-public partnership that would expand the Mispillion Greenway. The task force, which has been working on the project for three years, hopes to create a tourism center for the city.

“Right now, you have to kind of walk from the park through the church and back around to get to the Riverwalk,” Matthew Babbitt, site director at Abbott’s Mill Nature Center and a member of the task force, said. “I know that Parks and Rec has received grant funds that are contingent on the switching of the shipyard from private to public in order to extend the Riverwalk down along the river and through the parcel there which would be great.”

Babbitt explained that the task force has spent a lot of time bringing in constituents and fund raisers to seek funding as well as support for the project. A business

VINYARD SHIPYARD PLANS CONTINUE

plan has been created and an appraisal completed.

“There has been support all the way to the Governor’s office,” Babbitt said. “Recently, we were awarded \$800,000 from the Community Development Fund which is part of the Bond Bill courtesy of Sen. (Dave) Wilson. That money will be used as a starting fund so we can go after larger funding from organizations like the Longwood Foundation and other private foundations. Our goal is to build up to the appraisal price which is \$3 million and that is just to purchase the shipyard. We would still need operating funds as well as a master plan to create a tourism center for the town. It would be a very beautiful event space and the shipyard activities could still continue.”

According to Babbitt, the task force has spoken to several non-profits in the area who would continue the daily activities of the shipyard. There are plans to create an apprenticeship program which would create workforce development opportunities for the community. The group also hopes to use the shipyard for eco-tourism.

“Abbott’s Mill has been partnering with Milford Parks and Rec this whole year, leading four kayaking trips each month on the Mispillion River and the millponds,” Babbitt said. “This was birthed from the shipyard task force. We are seeing tourism coming. We had a young couple who was in town from Cincinnati for Firefly. They ended up joining the kayaking trip just a few weeks ago. We see visitors from DE Turf and the booming beach traffic. Tourism is growing here in Milford and we see the shipyard as a central piece for that. It can really be everything, an event space, workforce development,

tourist area, the expansion of the Riverwalk and public facilities as well as a draw for other economic development in the area.”

Babbitt explained that the task force is working with local colleges, including Delaware Technical and Community College as well as the University of Delaware to build up the workforce development portion of the project. They have also met with leaders in St. Michael’s and are working to bring them to the shipyard to gain an understanding of how to capitalize on the area. The task force has also visited the Riverfront Development Corporation in Wilmington to learn what they did to grow that area.

“Obviously, our Riverwalk is not as industrialized as Wilmington, but it is the same model,” Babbitt said. “We would use the Riverwalk to draw people in and make it an active part of Milford life.”

The Vinyard Shipyard is the last remaining shipyard in Milford, restored by Sudler and Joan Lofland. In the late 18th century, Milford was known for the ships constructed along the shores of the Mispillion. The Vinyard Shipyard was known for building high quality sailing vessels and tugboats. When World War I began, the shipyard created wooden sub chasers for the Navy and during Prohibition, built rum runners for the Coast Guard. During World War II, the shipyard built wooden-hull sub chasers. From 1927 until 1951, Vinyard built luxury yachts.

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BY BETSY PRICE

Peggy Reilly only wears shoes she can run in.

It's a lesson the Milford resident learned in 2001 on the 13th floor of the World Trade Center's North Tower when American Airlines Flight 11 slammed into the building 80 floors above.

Reilly was standing in the office of her friend and Instanet Corp. coworker Barbara Galanaugh at 8:46 a.m., showing Barbara a photo of her new great-nephew Brandon, when the building shook so hard it knocked Galanaugh across the room.

The two women thought there must have been an earthquake. They could see glass and pieces of paper falling outside the windows.

FOR FIRST TIME, MILFORD WOMAN DESCRIBES ESCAPING TWIN TOWERS

Then the tower started swaying alarmingly.

"That building naturally swayed because of the way it was built," Reilly remembered. "It was supposed to naturally sway. But it was swaying way more than I was comfortable feeling."

"We need to get out of here," she told Barbara.

They gathered the other three office early birds—the rest of the staff didn't come in until 9 a.m. or a little later—and headed across the building to the B stairwell. Parts of those stairs are now in the 9/11 Memorial Museum.

Reilly abandoned her purse, assuming she'd be back in the office at some point. She was wearing a company polo shirt, khaki pants and clogs, which were fashionable then, but Reilly realized she was never going to be able to run in them.

She kicked them off.

"I went out barefoot, which was probably the biggest mistake I made the entire day," she said.

This is the first time Reilly has talked to media about that day. While she talks to family and friends, and it sometimes comes up in conversations, Reilly has only talked in public about it once. That was to the Milton Fire Department. There, she kept the story brief and left out a lot of details because there were children in the crowd.

"I've never really talked about it because I feel really blessed," she said. "And I felt really guilty because I was 52 at the time, and I didn't understand why God saved me and not some of those 20- and 30-year-olds. So I had a lot of guilt for a long time."

Sept. 11, 2001, started normally enough for her. She got up early and worked out as she always did. But instead of walking to the Hackensack train station, she was dropped off by her retired husband, Jim, about 7:15 a.m.

Reilly took the train to Hoboken, where she transferred to the Waterways Ferry that took her to the World Trade Center. She stopped at Starbucks for her usual grande black coffee and made the 10-minute walk through the North Tower before arriving at her 13th floor office.

"Not a lot of buildings have No. 13 floors, you know," she said. "They skip it. In New York, they always skipped it. But the World Trade Center did not skip it."

Instanet is an electronic trading company, and Reilly was the vice president of client relations for them.

Reilly was the one who insisted her small group head down the stairs. They stopped on the 10th floor, where there were more Instanet office. No one there could reach the building's command center.

As the group came out of the office, they met firefighters going up. The firefighters told them to return to their own floors.

Reilly refused.

"I remember saying something like, 'You know I'm a kid from the 60s. I just can't listen to you. I feel like we need to get out of the building,'" she said. "It's that fight or flight thing that you go into. I never knew which I would do."

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MILFORD COUPLE TO CELEBRATE 50TH ANNIVERSARY WITH RIDE THROUGH TOWN

BY TERRY ROGERS

Sudler and Joan Lofland, owners of the Vinyard Shipyard and prominent members of the Milford community will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on Dec. 28. According to Joan, the couple decided they did not want a big celebration party to commemorate the event.

“Sudler’s mother died around Christmas last year,” Joan said. “We just weren’t feeling a big party.”

The couple, who married at St. John’s Catholic Church on Seabury Avenue, still own the car they drove away from the church that day, a 1929 Lincoln Town Car. They felt it would be fun to decorate the car as it was after their ceremony and ride through town. On their wedding day, they took the car from the church to their reception at the Blue Coat Inn in Dover.

“We plan to arrive at St. John’s around noon,” Joan said. “We actually still have the original Just Married sign, but Sudler is creating one that says “50” on it to put on the back of the car. We are tying cans to the bumper and riding around town just as we did 50 years ago.”

There is not a set route for the couple to travel through Milford. Joan stated they have been friends with the Dave Burton family for many years so hope to ride past their home. Joan spent many years as a Milford Museum commissioner, and they plan to travel past there as well. They want to ride by the Prettyman house at 210 S.



Walnut Street as well. The Loflands called that house home for many years. They will travel past City Hall where the Vale Mansion was located for many years.

“The Lincoln has only had two owners,” Joan said. “The original owner was Ruby Vale who donated the land where City Hall now sits. Sudler bought it in 1963.”

They are also hoping to ride to Old State Road in Lincoln where Joan grew up.

According to Joan, the couple went on their first date in the car in 1966 and they were married on her 22nd birthday. Both were born in Milford and have lived in the town the entire time of their marriage.

“The route is dependent on weather,” Joan said. “We are not doing any type of reception or gathering because of COVID.”

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BUSINESS



PHOTO BY ANN LEBENGOOD

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BY TERRY ROGERS

Arthur Helmick, owner of the Movies at Milford, announced on New Year's Day that the Milford Movies 9 would open at 5:30 p.m. The new theatre is located in the former Walmart/Sitel building on Route 113 next to Food Lion. The opening of the theatre was delayed due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

"Because the crews have to be smaller, it took much longer to get the theatre completed," Helmick said. "I had hoped for a Thanksgiving opening, then a Christmas Day opening, but we are pleased that we are finally able to bring a state-of-the-art movie theatre to Milford. We are extremely grateful for the overwhelming support we have been shown by such a great community."

MILFORD MOVIE THEATRE OPENS NEW YEAR'S DAY

Helmick explained that because the pandemic regulations were constantly changing, he also did not want to hire new employees until he knew he could keep them on the payroll. He has managed to keep his staff busy in other ways even when there have not been many customers. Business has been slow at his other theatres, Helmick explained, but that has made it easier for him to adhere to strict social distancing requirements.

Tickets for movies showing at the new theatre can be purchased on Fandango, at the Milford Movies [website](#) or at the theatre. Helmick explained that Fandango may say that the theatre is temporarily closed and they are working with the online ticket service to resolve that issue. Opening day movies included *News of the World*, *Pinocchio*, *Promising Young Woman*, *Wonder Woman 1984*, *Monster Hunter* and *The Croods: A New Age*.

"Just got done watching Wonder Woman," Chris Wood posted on the theatre's Facebook page. "Such a nice theatre! Everyone was very accommodating and hospitable. Also, I was the very first patron to buy the first ticket." The theatre is following all COVID protocols. The ticket system they use allows them to block seats so that groups stay six feet apart. The theatre also has a state-of-the-art filtration system that circulates fresh air from outside into the theatre and then out again. Guests are required to wear facial coverings which can be removed inside the auditorium as long as patrons are eating and drinking.

As for the announcement by several studios recently that movies would be released on streaming platforms the same day they are released in theatres, Helmick said he was not concerned.

"This is a complicated issue," Helmick said. "At the highest level of the industry, the view has always been to protect the theatres. What many people may not realize is that when a studio releases a movie to a theatre, even if it is not good and stops making money, the studio requires the theatre to keep that movie showing for a set amount of time. Now, if they release it in the theatre as well as on a streaming platform and it is a flop in the theatre, they can pull that movie quickly and replace it with something else. There are more than 600 movies made each year but only 150 end up in the theatre. This may allow more movies to end up in a theatre."

Helmick also pointed out that there are some movies that need the theatre experience to convey meaning. Movies like "Schindler's List," "Platoon," and others are powerful films that are much better viewed in a theatre setting than at home. He also explained that this was not the first time there have been concerns that theatres were in danger.

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MHS SENIOR OPENS NEXT LEVEL NUTRITION



BY TERRY ROGERS

Austin Adams will not graduate from Milford High School until 2022, but he is already a small business owner after opening the doors to Next Level Nutrition recently. Adams says he felt that the products he used to gain weight so he could play football would benefit others in the area.

“I decided to do this because of my own personal health,” Adams said. “I was below weight, my BMI was really low. I only weighed like 90 pounds. So I found these products that helped me increase my weight and get healthier.”

Adams learned about the products from his mother, Ashley Adams, owner of Delmarva Acupuncture, when

she used them to lose weight. Because the family was so successful with products offered in the shop, they felt others may also find them helpful.

“We are slowly growing,” Adams said. “We offer many different products that can help anyone. We have protein shakes, iced coffee, and lifted teas that are designed to boost metabolism and increase energy.”

Adams has always lived in Milford and, after he graduates in the spring, plans to hold off on college as he grows his business.

“I plan to open a second location in Easton,” Adams said. “I decided on Easton because the environment there lends itself to what I am offering.”



Next Level Nutrition has many specialty shakes available, including the Bucs Tea with blueberry limeade tea, lemon lime liftoff and cranberry aloe. They also offer the Sip-N-Sour, lime liftoff with green apple marg tea and mandarin. As of Oct. 13, they will offer an iced Pumpkin Spice coffee which has 15 grams of protein and is healthier than other pumpkin spice coffee drinks.

The new store is located at 915 N. Dupont Boulevard and is open Monday–Friday from 6 a.m. until 6 p.m. as well as Saturday and Sunday from 8 a.m. until 2 p.m.

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE](#)

FUR BABY HEADS INTO SECOND DECADE WITH NEW BUILDING, SERVICES, LOTS OF HAPPY DOGS

BY TERRY ROGERS

Fur Baby owner Sherry Shupe turned a joy in volunteering at pet shelters into a business now celebrating 10 years.

Sherry Shupe started volunteering at a pet rescue Paws of Tomorrow a decade ago when she was looking for something to help balance her stressful job as a pharmaceutical rep.

She quickly started participating in events and fostering dogs. In the meantime, she increasingly dreaded going to work and began to realize she was looking forward to and doing more for the rescue than her career.

“I decided I needed to find a way to turn my passion into my career,” Shupe said.

The result: Fur Baby, a Milford store she wanted to not only sell doggie-related products but also help foster the relationship between owner and pet.

It celebrates its 10-year anniversary on May 1, in a new building with a party and ribbon-cutting ceremony at 11 a.m. at its new building at 301 NE Front St. in Milford.

The business not only is located for the first time in a space that Shupe and her husband own, but also has expanded during the years to become a full-service Fur Baby Pet Resort. Its team of 16 offers doggie daycare, an overnight pet hotel, a grooming spa, and raw food that mimics the native diet of dogs.

Despite the tribulations of starting a new business and having to move four times to accommodate growth, the last in a pandemic, it’s a satisfying milestone for Shupe.

“It definitely wasn’t a decision made upon financials,” she said. “I had this wonderful career and wonderful benefits that from the outside appeared to be a wonderful

life. And I was depressed, I didn’t want to do it anymore. It was a leap of faith, hoping my passion and my dedication to this would provide.”

As soon as she opened, she started getting customers and callers asking if Fur Baby could provide that grooming and daycare. So she did, starting with groomers first and then daycare.

Peggy Reilly has been taking her Brittany border collie there for nine years, beginning when Maddie was 10 weeks old.

“She had high energy, and I needed to get rid of some of that energy during the course of the day,” said Reilly, who was working from home even then. “I also needed to make sure that she wasn’t getting into trouble and Sherry’s Fur Baby really solved that problem for me by allowing her to go and be with other dogs.”

Because border collies are natural herders, Maddie enjoyed being able to help with the other dogs, Reilly said.

“When she first started out, they used to call her the assistant manager,” Reilly said because if Maddie couldn’t get along with a dog, it likely wasn’t going to do well in daycare.

Maddie used to go to Fur Baby three times a week, but as an older dog, she goes twice a week and sometimes three times, Reilly said.

“It’s a phenomenal business that Sherry has put together and made such a success,” Reilly said.

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BY TERRY ROGERS

On Dec. 16, Marissa and Zack King, owners of EasySpeak and Penney Square, announced that they recently purchased the former M&T Bank building in downtown Milford. The bank, which M&T closed in 2015, has remained vacant since it was purchased by Touch of Italy in 2016 and their plans to open a restaurant in the location fell through.

“We have made Milford our home,” Marissa said. “We invest in Milford continuously, hoping to help make others love the town and people in it as much as we do. Myself & two of my best friends actually toured the bank and really liked it for one of our business plans we had been discussing for a long time. It’s something we all have wanted to do for years, and this just seemed like the right decision.”

In December 2020, the Kings purchased Penney Square and recently were approved for a conditional use to renovate the top floors of that building for five apartments. Recently, the couple announced they “made a decision” about what they wanted to do with Penney Square but were keeping that information under wraps for now.

FORMER M&T BANK UNDER NEW OWNERSHIP

Initially, the building was the location of The First National Bank which opened in 1876 and was founded by Col. Henry Fiddeman. The building was originally built by Abner Dill as a one-story tavern around 1790. After Mr. Dill’s death, Benjamin Washams, a merchant, converted the building to a home and store. When Mr. Washams died, the building was the location of Peter F. Causey and Nehemiah Davis’ business interests. After his election, Gov. Causey sold the building to Col. Fiddeman who lived in one side of the building and operated a business on the other. He added the third floor to incorporate the bank.

In 1912, First National Bank was acquired by Wilmington Trust, a bank founded by T. Coleman DuPont who was then the president of the DuPont company. DuPont opened the bank on 915 Market Street in Wilmington, converting the parlor and dining room of a residence for the bank’s operations. On Nov. 1, 2010, Wilmington Trust announced that it was merging with M&T Bank. When M&T announced the closing of the downtown branch, they explained that banks are moving away from transaction-based locations and were now being used primarily for consultation and advice. All services that were at the downtown location will be moved to the West Milford branch, located on Route 113, which also offered Saturday hours, something the downtown location did not.

“We have big plans for this building which we are choosing to keep quiet until the details are worked out,” Marissa posted on social media. “It will be a few year project, so stay patient!”

**MILFORD
LIVE**



LEWES ENTREPRENEUR TURNS SEA WATER INTO ARTISANAL FOOD COMPANY

BY KIM HOEY

When people think of salt, they usually think of little crystals they shake out of the container sitting on their kitchen table.

Dave Burris thinks they should be thinking of the sea.

Burris is founder of Henlopen Sea Salt, an artisanal salt company hand harvesting sea salt directly from the Delaware Bay.

His product, which in addition to regular salt includes salt blends such as fennel thyme, Sazon and Hatch Green Chile, is more of a gourmet experience than just a simple add on to popcorn, although many customers do say they use it there.

“It’s become a staple at our house,” said Catrina Jefferson of Middletown, who said she uses it on everything—fish, eggs, chicken, Brussel sprouts, cauliflower, and yes, even popcorn. She said it has a subtle flavor.

Another of his clients describes the taste as that first wave that wiped him out as a kid.

It’s the taste of the ocean, said Burris.

The whole idea started as a bit of a lark.

“I saw something on the Internet (about people harvesting salt) and I was like, ‘I have salt water,’” said Burris, a former restaurateur who’s always looking for a new taste. He made his first batch using a gallon of water he dipped off the shores of Lewes beach. “It was not good.”

It inspired him, though, to keep trying. He’s spent nearly the last 10 years perfecting his process.

He hand collects the water, filters it, then hard boils it for eight to 10 hours to create a mineral rich brine. That brine is then left to rest and evaporate until large flakes of salt form, float to the top and then sink to the bottom.

The last step is to put the still wet salt through a slow dehydration process. The production takes at least three days before inspection and packaging. He can get up to three ounces of salt from one gallon of water.

It was just a hobby. He would make small batches and give them as presents to friends and family. Eventually, people started asking for them.

With a little research, Burris found other artisanal salt makers and decided it might be a business.

“I started very small. I didn’t know if people would buy it,” he said.

He opened his first sale in early autumn 2020 and sold out completely. One ounce packets cost \$4 plus shipping.

Then the oil spill happened on Delaware Bay in October, just as he was gearing up for Christmas sales.

While there was never any don’t swim or don’t fish orders, Burris took a cautious approach and waited four weeks before trying to harvest any new salt. His first batch after a month turned the filter black, a week later the filter was clean, but the water turned black in the boil.

“If there’s any oil in the water, salt will tell you,” he said.

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GOVERNMENT & POLITICS



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THIRD WARD COUNCILPERSON SWORN IN

BY TERRY ROGERS

At the regular City Council meeting on Nov. 8, Nirmala Samaroo was sworn in as Third Ward Councilperson. Samaroo will take the seat vacated by Doug Morrow when he resigned his seat earlier this year. Samaroo was the only candidate to apply for the seat which meant no election was necessary.

The Honorable Noel Primos conducted the swearing in of Councilperson Samaroo with one of her children standing next to her. Once Councilperson Samaroo was sworn in, she took her seat on council. She will fill the seat until May 2023.



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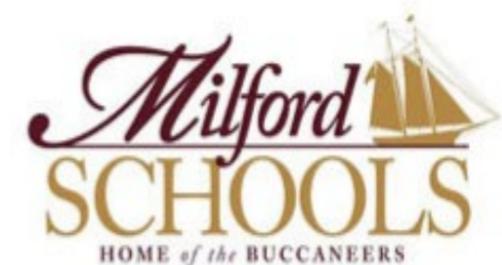
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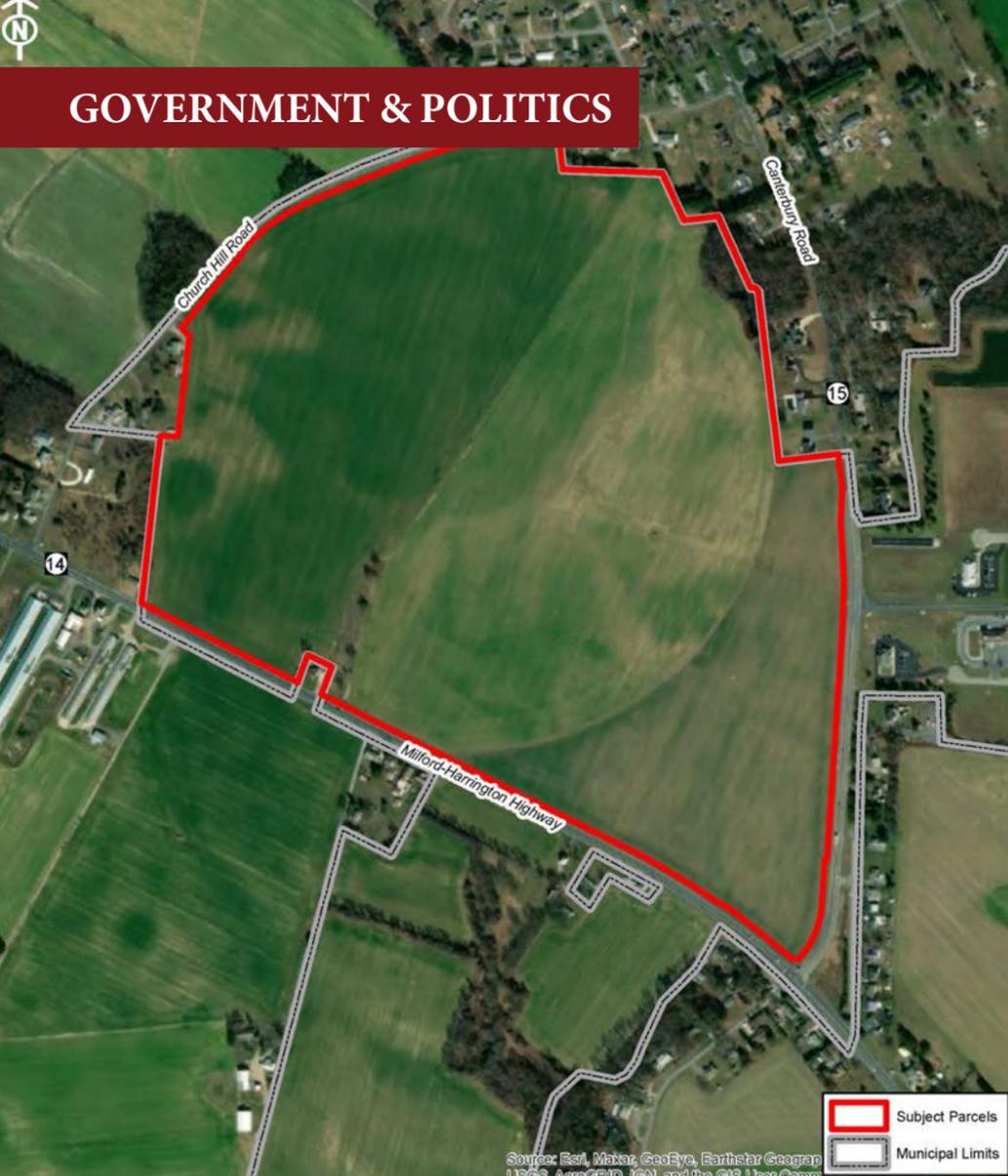
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BY TERRY ROGERS

The city of Milford City Council recently authorized City Manager Mark Whitfield to negotiate the possible purchase of the 182-acre R&C Fry Farms LP on the corner of Rt. 14 and Rt. 15 (Canterbury Road) in the northwest section of the city for the purpose of creating an industrial/business park. A Letter of Intent agreement for the possible purchase has been executed between the city and the Fry family.

The addition of an industrial/business park will centralize such businesses and fulfill the current and

CITY OF MILFORD ENTERS AGREEMENT FOR POSSIBLE PURCHASE OF LAND FOR INDUSTRIAL/BUSINESS PARK

future needs of manufacturing, light industrial, warehousing and employment in the greater Milford area.

“The city’s 2018 Strategic Plan identified the need for an industrial park within the city, to meet the growing demands for light industrial as well as e-commerce warehousing,” said Whitfield. “Milford sits in a strategically good location with good access to Route 1, Route 113 and Route 13, as well as west access to the Bay Bridge from Route 14. Milford is in the center of the Delmarva peninsula, making us a great location for an e-commerce distribution hub. The proposed purchase will allow us to be competitive with other cities in the area, and satisfy the need to create jobs within Milford.”

The addition of a designated industrial area within city limits will provide opportunities to competitively recruit and retain large businesses, as well as create jobs.

“The Kent Economic Partnership has seen an increase in requests for industrial warehousing and manufacturing sites,” said Linda Parkowski, executive director. “With the addition of the Milford industrial area we will be able to increase our limited supply of large industrial tracks.” The vacant land is currently zoned a combination of R-3 (Garden Apartment and Townhouse) and C-3 (Highway Commercial).

The city will be submitting a comprehensive plan amendment request to the state of Delaware Office of

State Planning Coordination for comments before holding public hearings with the Planning Commission and City Council later this summer. If the comprehensive plan amendment is approved, the properties could be rezoned to accommodate industrial and commercial uses. The commercial uses would be primarily located along Route 14 and Route 15, while the industrial uses would fill the remainder of the property.

Funding for the purchase and infrastructure improvements will come from city reserve funds, and possible private investment.

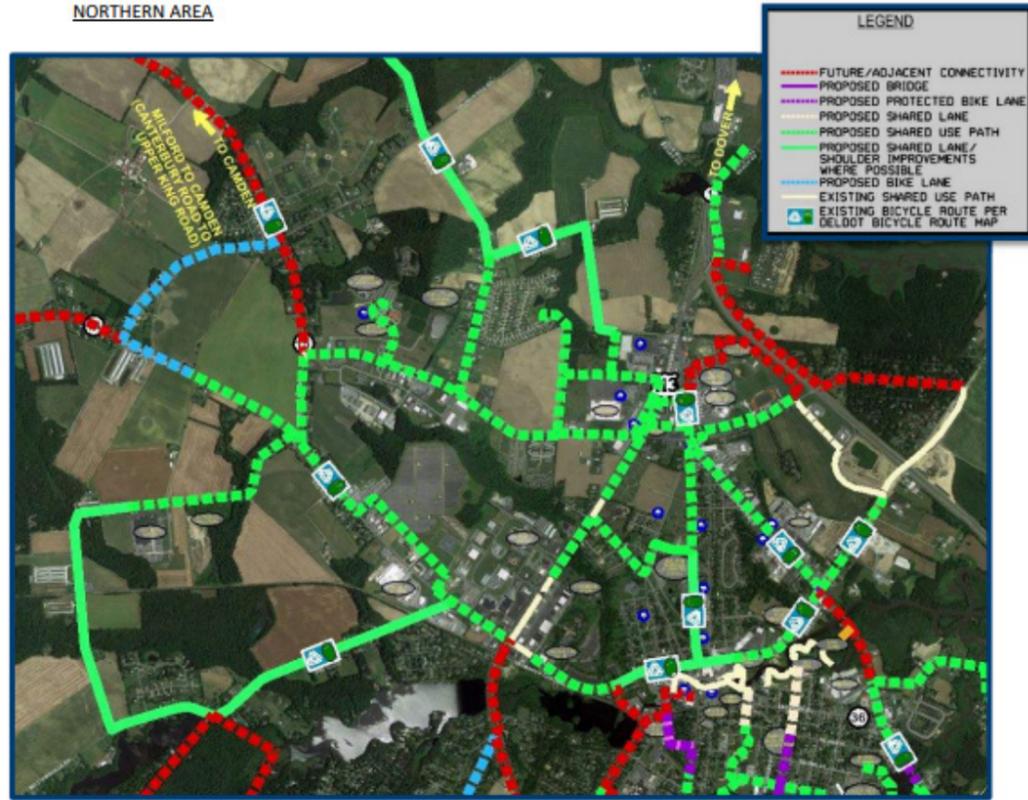
“The city’s accumulation of reserve funds will allow us to invest money back into the community, with the stipulation as lots are sold, the money is put back into the reserve fund it was initially taken from,” said Whitfield.

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.



BICYCLE MASTER PLAN APPROVED BY COUNCIL

NORTHERN AREA



BY TERRY ROGERS

Milford City Council recently adopted a Bicycle Master Plan presented by Sonia Marichic-Goudy, associate vice president of Century Engineering. The was created with input from DelDOT, the Bicycle Advisory Committee and members of the Milford community, including Lifecycle.

“The city of Milford was awarded the Bicycle Master Plan Grant to provide a citywide Bicycle Master Plan,” Marichic-Goudy said. “It builds on the previous studies, in particular the 2011 Bicycle Plan. It’s consistent with the city’s comprehensive plan and it seeks to improve the bicycle level of stress that is generally defined by DelDOT for cyclists within the city. It looks to reduce

the gaps in current infrastructure and ultimately provides recommendations and prioritization of those recommendations to collectively create a comprehensive bicycle network.”

Marichic-Goudy explained that the goal of the plan is to provide the citizens of Milford with a dynamic, active transportation system with trails, roads and paths that are inclusive, safe and functional for all levels of recreation as well as for commuters. The plan includes a comprehensive list of improvement options designed to address gaps in the existing network and create an overall bicycle network within the city. The plan also includes future plan projects as well as projects that are on the books but have not yet been completed.

“The city of Milford is unique in that it lies in both Kent and Sussex County,” Marichic-Goudy said. “So, we wanted to leverage this and make sure we are able to get funding from multiple sources, hopefully at the same time when the project’s going to design. So, we broke down the ultimate master plan into three sub-regions. The Northern Loop, the Southwest Loop and the Southeast Loop. Each of these are connected with each other so you could have standalone projects that ultimately will help connect the entire city.”

Marichic-Goudy provided council with slides that indicated bicycle routes that had been prioritized by DelDOT’s prioritization tool as well as the city of Milford. Green on the maps indicated routes with the highest priority while red were future connections. The planners

also looked at intersections on each route, determining which would need configuration to make them safer for pedestrians and cyclists. The plan also included routes that would connect the city to outlying areas in order to bring economic vitality.

“The last part of our study looked at cost because in order for these projects and these routes to move forward into design and construction, we needed costs,” Marichic-Goudy said. “These were very large as this is a very large-scale plan. So how do you associate cost? What we did is we looked at industry standards, recent bicycle routes that were constructed through DelDOT and we develop a cost per foot. So, for example, a shared use path would be approximately \$350 per foot.” Based on this estimate, costs for the routes in the plan ranged from \$1 to \$5 million.”

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Member FDIC



BY TERRY ROGERS

The city of Milford has several streets projects planned over the next few years, several of which will begin this month, according to City Engineer James Puddicombe. Some of the projects will be performed in partnership with DelDOT while others are city projects that are part of the Capital Improvement Plan.

“We are beginning work on Fisher Avenue as the first of several streets within a larger project which includes water, ADA and other improvements. We are trying to delay some streets which may impact school and bus traffic until after schools let out in the spring to minimize disruption. Our goal is to take some of the older water mains out of service and either replace them or transfer the services over to an existing newer main. These changes should help improve water quality within the city.”

STREET PROJECTS PLANNED IN MILFORD

Puddicombe stated that on Northeast Front Street, crews are finishing up repairs on water pipes and resurfacing will begin in the spring. This Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) project will add new bicycle and pedestrian facilities along Northeast Front Street between North Washington Street and Northeast 4th Street. The city intends to apply for future TAP projects through DelDOT for additional North Front Street improvements between Rehoboth Boulevard and Route 113. According to Matthew Lichtenstein, P.E., Central District Engineer for DelDOT, the resurfacing of Northeast Front Street is not the final condition of the road and there is still considerable work remaining. He explained that the city still had work to do on water mains below the street which would be followed by testing and disinfection plus the installation of services.

“Once the services are installed, they will then conduct final restoration,” Lichtenstein said. “The goal is to complete this before Christmas. DelDOT is being flexible on MOT timeframes to help ensure this goal can be met. DBF (Davis, Bowen & Friedel), the engineer for the town, is coordinating with the TAP designers to ensure final restoration on the waterline project complies with their expectations for work with the TAP limits.

“The city has completed the removal of 70 lead service lines along Southeast 2nd Street and will be removing any lead water service found along Northeast Front Street as part of the ongoing construction work. We will

also be replacing concrete asbestos water mains as part of the ongoing and future street projects. Most of these repairs will be covered by American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding. We are trying to maximize that funding as much as we can. We are also looking at other sources to cover the cost of projects that cannot be covered by ARPA funding.”

The Construction Plans for 2020 Utilities and Street Rehabilitation Projects presented to council also describes other projects currently planned for the city. The city plans to abandon a four-inch water main on Barker Street between South Walnut and South Washington Street which will require removing valves when feasible. If valves are in working order, crews will close them and remove the valve boxes. The area will be backfilled and patched per standard specifications. Once the repairs are completed, the road will be repaved. Other water projects including connecting fire hydrants to new water mains, abandoning water mains and adjusting curbs will be completed on King’s Highway, Plum Street, Foster Street, Mill Street and Northwest 5th Street. These projects are intended to begin this month and will be completed sometime in the summer or fall of 2022.

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EDUCATION



MHS HOLDS CLASS OF 2021 COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY



BY TERRY ROGERS

Despite postponements on both June 10 and 11, Milford High School Class of 2021 celebrated their commencement ceremony at Briggs Stadium on June 12. Principal Jesse Parsley welcomed the graduates and families in attendance, commending the students on completing their education during an unprecedented time.

“To the great class of 2021, on behalf of the Milford School Board of Education, congratulations on your graduation,” Dr. Kevin Dickerson, superintendent, said. “Please cherish this great occasion. We are very proud of each of you for persevering through and overcoming the challenges you have faced during your high school experience to earn your high school diploma. We are very proud of each and every one of you for the person

that you are, and we are looking forward to learning of your many accomplishments in your future endeavors.”

Emma Sekscinski, class president, presented the graduating senior class, reflecting on the past four years they had spent at Milford High School.

“Let’s rewind to freshman year,” Sekscinski said. “All of us sitting in in that freshman auditorium waiting for Mr. Snyder to tell us all about Milford High School and having no idea the experiences we were about to go through. That was the year of firsts, first homecoming, first pep rally. It was all very exciting. As the year went on, we looked back on late night football games and Applebee’s half-price apps. We remember the next year when, as only sophomores, we won the Spirit Stick over the seniors. Junior year was the hardest classwork of all,

however, we cannot forget how we won almost every Homecoming Float competition. As junior year went on, March came around. Rumors started flying about COVID-19 and how no one knows what will happen next. Then, March 13. That was the last day we, the Class of 2021, were all in school together in what was a normal setting. Since that day, nothing has been normal. Our senior year was very different than in year’s past but we were able to make it work. We started to be able to attend spring sports and support our classmates. We were able to pull off a prom which we all know was very successful. Despite the differences in our senior year, every single one of us sitting here today have shown our administrators, our teachers, our families and our community our dedication and passion.”

Salutatorian Kayla Clausen joked about earning the title. “I am the blonde that often confuses her left and her right, but I somehow pulled off becoming salutatorian,” Clausen said. “Upon learning that I received this honor, my first instinct was to turn to Google, our most reliable resource especially now during a pandemic. I found an Urban Dictionary definition that said, and I quote ‘the less important person to give a speech at graduation and the student who missed so many events that people thought she was a hermit to study just to get second place.’ That was not at all helpful. Since this speech is my last homework assignment as a student here at Milford High School, I am going to try my best.”

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE](#)

MSD OFFERS MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES TO FAMILIES

BY TERRY ROGERS

At the regular November meeting of the Milford School District Board of Education, Dr. Brittany Hazzard, supervisor of Equity and Support Services, provided details on the mental health services provided to district students and families. Dr. Hazzard explained that the district not only offers internal mental health supports but also external supports as well as training.

“In September, it was requested that we provide some feedback on mental health services,” Dr. Hazzard said. “In addition, September was Suicide Prevention Month which brought this to light. In each building, we have at least one school psychologist and one school counselor. Some of our schools have more than one counselor. We also have behavioral specialists, school nurses and others who are aware of mental health supports.”

Dr. Hazzard explained that the district has two new behavior interventionists this year as well as behavior support paraprofessionals. At Morris, there is a school psychologist, a counselor and a nurse, as well as a behavior support paraprofessional. Banneker, Ross and Mispillion each have a school psychologist, student and family interventionist, behavior support and school nurse. Banneker has one school counselor while Ross and Morris each have two.

At the Milford Central Academy, there is a school psychologist, student and family interventionist and school nurse. There are also three counselors and two behavior support paraprofessionals. Milford High School has a school psychologist, student and family interven-

tionist and school nurse as well as four counselors and two behavior support paraprofessionals. In addition to these in-house supports, the Visiting Teacher also assists with mental health issues.

“We also have external mental health resources that we can access,” Dr. Hazzard said. “We work with Delaware Guidance Services, People’s Place, Courageous Hearts and Lifelines. Our Wellness Center supports students in grades 8 through 12. We also have access to external family crisis therapists. Recently, we had suicide risk training for psychologists, nurses and counselors. We are always working diligently to be sure our students have the support they need. We recognize mental health as a high priority, and we provide services at the highest level.”

Vice-President of the Board of Education, Rony Baltazar-Lopez, commended Dr. Hazzard on the mental health services offered to families in the district.

“I want to commend you and your staff for all you do, especially after the pandemic, as we have seen a rise in students with mental health problems,” Baltazar-Lopez said. “Do you track the number of calls we get for assistance and has there been a rise in our district?”

Dr. Hazzard explained that they do track the number of students seeking help and noted that it is a concern nationally that more students are seeking mental health assistance. Baltazar-Lopez also asked if HB100, which could increase the number of psychologists in elementary schools in Delaware would impact Milford.

“We believe that HB100 would impact us in a very positive way,” Dr. Hazzard said. “it would allow us to increase our mental health services.”

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SCHOOL DISTRICT

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MSD FIRST DAYS OF SCHOOL SUCCESSFUL

BY TERRY ROGERS

On Sept. 7 and Sept. 8, Milford School District students returned to in-person classroom learning for the first time since March 2020. The district says that only a small number of students are still learning remotely.

“We had a great first day in all of our schools,” Dr. Kevin Dickerson, superintendent, said. “There was much excitement throughout our schools. Our entire staff was excited to see the full return of our students. Most importantly, our students looked and seemed very happy to be back in school with all of their classmates and our staff.”

Beyond the first days of school, Dr. Dickerson explained that the district had a successful first week and are thankful that the students, staff and families were able to come together to make the week go smoothly.

“We all needed a week like this and we are just so elated to be able to have all our students back into school,” Dr. Dickerson said. “We look forward to educating and serving our students and families throughout the school year.”

The district will continue providing remote learning options to students who have specific medical needs or other short-term situations that make it difficult for

them to attend in-person learning. Dr. Dickerson explained that the district is collaborating with families in these unique situations to best serve the student who is impacted.

“We have been fortunate to not have mask issues so far,” Dr. Dickerson said. “Our entire district community has been incredibly compliant with masks and we thank our district community for this. This has immensely helped us to have a great start within our schools.”

MILFORD
LIVE



BY TERRY ROGERS

More than 28 Milford FFA members worked, studied and practiced in preparation for the 2021 Delaware State Fair. Each year, the fair allows for members to compete as a chapter, with a team or as individuals in many different competitions. Some of the competitions are behind the scenes while others are displayed at the Centre Ice Rink.

“The Milford FFA Chapter won the inaugural ‘Fantastic Fair Award’ in the FFA Department,” Trish Gerken, public information officer for Milford School District, said. “This award is based on the amount of points earned for exhibits by a chapter. Points are given for placings first through sixth in a class. The Milford FFA Chapter entered over 100 exhibits in the FFA building, ranging from vegetables, shop projects, grains, plants and flower arrangements. The students worked tirelessly to win this award which was presented by Gov. John Carney on Governor’s Day at the fair.”

Milford FFA’s Chapter Vice President Anya Phillips was awarded the William H. Abbott Sr. Memorial

MILFORD FFA WINS AWARDS AT DELAWARE STATE FAIR

Plaque. This award goes to the student who receives the most points in the department based on the quality of their entries. Anya received the most points in the FFA building for her entries that placed first-sixth. Anya entered a variety of projects such as flower arrangements, plants, vegetables, grains and shop projects. Anya spent countless hours preparing her fair entries. Anya received her award from Gov. Carney at the Governor’s Day ceremony.

Milford FFA received the prestigious Gold Chapter rating from the state of Delaware FFA and just last week received the 3-star ranking from the National FFA Organization which is the highest ranking that can be given. This award recognizes that Milford FFA actively implements the mission and strategies of the organization. These chapters improve chapter operations using the National Quality Chapter Standards (NQCS) and a Program of Activities (POA) that emphasize growing leaders, building communities and strengthening agriculture. Chapters are rewarded for providing educational experiences for the entire membership.

“As a chapter, Milford FFA members built two chapter displays that were both placed in the Delaware State Fair FFA Building: Educational Display, with the theme of ‘Factor in the Tractor’ and the Horticulture Display, with a title of ‘Preserving the Past, Presenting the Future,’ placed fourth,” Gerken said. “FFA members began working on these displays at the end of May and came

into school over the summer to finish them up and get them to the fair on time.”

Milford FFA members represented the chapter in a wide variety of Career Development Events at the fair. In order to prepare for these competitions, students spend hours both in and out of the classroom during the summer studying a range of topics from judging livestock, through identifying weeds, seeds, and plant disorders commonly found in local agronomic crops.

“The Milford FFA Food Science and Technology team placed first in the state,” Gerken explained. “Team members were Hannah Haigh, Beau Davis, Veronika Moore and Colin O’Connor. In the Food Science category, students demonstrate their understanding of food product development, food presentation and food safety. Students will use sensory skills to problem solve. These students will hopefully be traveling to the National FFA Convention in Indianapolis, Indiana, in October.”

The Milford FFA Dairy Cattle Evaluation team placed second in the state. Team members were Jacob Smith (third individually), Miranda Walker (fourth individually), Ashlyn Welch (seventh individually) and Dorothy Bradley (eighth individually). Dairy cattle evaluation includes judging classes of dairy cows or heifers, presenting oral reasons, evaluating cows based on their linear evaluation, and a team activity.

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MILFORD LOWERS SCHOOL TAX FOR FIFTH YEAR IN A ROW

BY TERRY ROGERS

On July 5, Milford School District Board of Education voted to lower school taxes for the fifth year in a row. Chief Financial Officer Sara Croce presented the tax rate for review at a previous meeting, explaining the components that make up the school tax rate.

“There were no changes from the last presentation, and we feel this is rate is what we will need moving forward,” Croce said. “This year, we are proposing a rate of \$1.6995 per hundred dollars of assessed value in Kent and \$4.8028 per hundred in Sussex. Again, the rates are different for each county due to the way assessments are calculated in each county.”

Five years ago, the property tax rate for Milford School District was \$3.5682 in Sussex County and \$1.9077 in Kent County. In FY2016-17, however, the district was forced to increase the tuition tax significantly to cover the cost of children receiving special services. That same year, there was an operations referendum that also increased taxes slightly, raising it to \$5.3913 in Sussex and \$1.2626.

Since that year, the district has begun offering special services for children within the district in order to reduce the tuition cost to send them out of the district for the same services. They have expanded their autism programs as well as others that will help them provide federally required services to children with special needs. Doing so helps reduce the tuition cost and has

allowed them to slowly lower school taxes over the past five years.

The district has also paid down debt service for capital improvement referendums passed several years ago. As debt service is paid down, the tax rate for that portion of the school tax is also reduced.

“I think we need to recognize that we have been able to reduce our tax rate over the past five years,” board member David Vezmar said.



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HEALTH



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POLARIS HOLDS OPEN HOUSE FOR PHASE II



BY TERRY ROGERS

Milford Wellness Village celebrated another milestone on Tuesday, Sept. 28, when Polaris Healthcare and Rehabilitation Center, the long-term healthcare facility operated by Nationwide Health Systems, held an open house for the completion of Phase II of their facility. This adds an additional 60 beds to the 26 already available at Polaris.

“We opened Phase I right before the pandemic,” Josh Gross, director of Admissions and Marketing, said. “We are in the process of adding additional services, including a vent unit which we hope to have open in January. We are also looking for input into needs for another section of the building. We have the opportunity to add other specialty care units depending on the needs of the community. This could be related to long-term cardiac care, a locked unit for dementia patients or other specialties that

could lead to a long-term care need. We have eight beds available in this small unit, so we are open to suggestions.”

The new facility looks nothing like the former Milford Memorial Hospital. The stark tile floors and walls have been replaced with softer carpeting and wallpaper in vibrant colors. The rooms have wood-look furnishings with a softer décor than normally found in long-term care facilities. Artwork on the walls are provided by local artists and all are available for purchase.

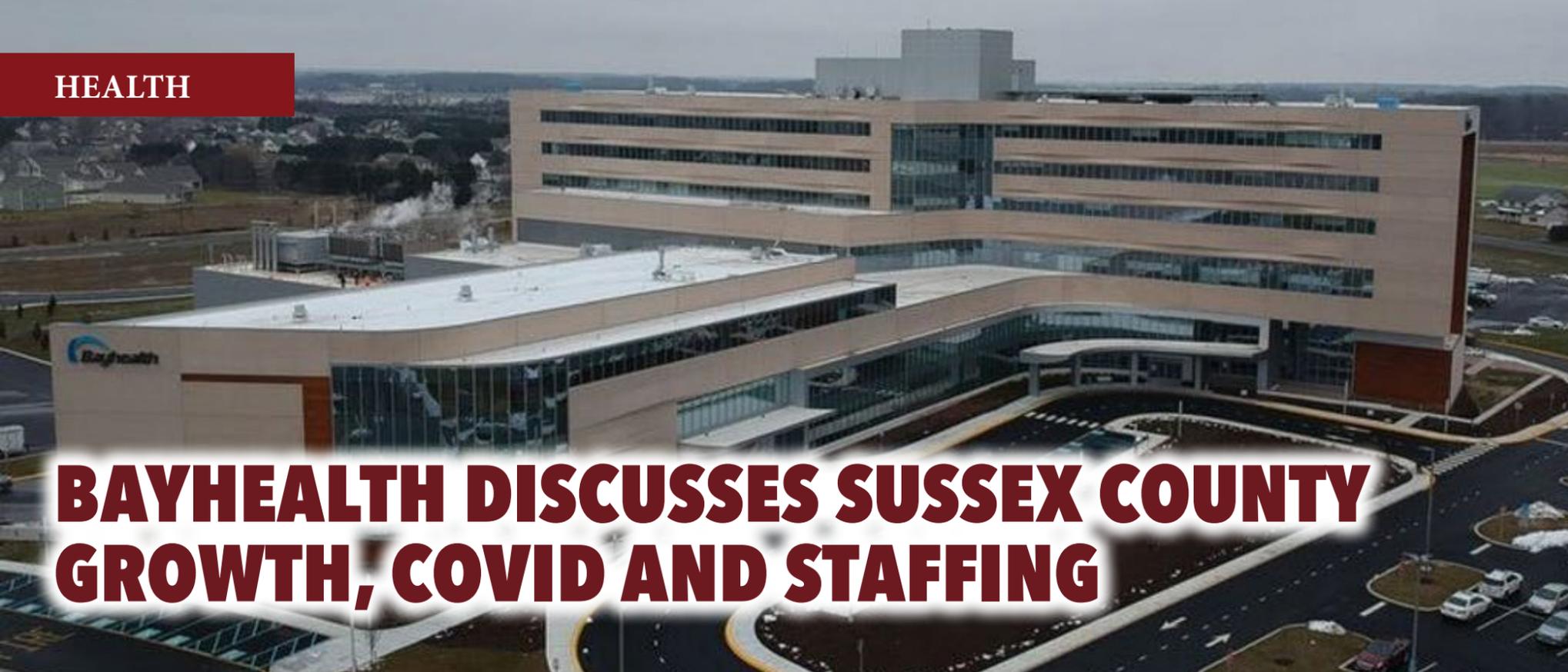
“We offer both semi-private and private rooms,” Gross said. “Each room has its own bathroom. There is also a small dining area that is centrally located for patients and their families to enjoy. We offer PT/OT, speech therapies, 24-hour nursing care, physicians on staff and much more to meet the needs of the population. We also have dialysis patients that we transfer out for treatment.”

Nationwide Healthcare Services purchased the former Milford Memorial Hospital property in 2019. Since that purchase, the company has created a wellness village, renting space in the building to several health-related businesses, including Aquacare Physical Therapy, the Lab at Seascap, LaRed and more.

“We are very excited about the opening of Phase II,” Terry Hollinger, BSN, MBA, NHA, administrator of the facility, said. “This is going to be a great benefit to the Milford area. We hope to have the second phase fully open within three weeks. We had hoped it would be this week, but like everyone else who is not getting things delivered, some of our key items have also been delayed. Our café is open to the public and there is also public bus service to the Milford Wellness Village, making it easy for people to get here.”

Over time, Nationwide hopes to expand health services at the Wellness Village to include doctor’s offices, testing and treatment facilities. The goal since the purchase of the building was to create a “one-stop” location for healthcare needs that would serve the Milford area.

**MILFORD
LIVE**



BAYHEALTH DISCUSSES SUSSEX COUNTY GROWTH, COVID AND STAFFING

BY TERRY ROGERS

At a recent meeting of Milford Conversation, a group of organizations and businesses that gather each month to discuss the Milford area, Stacy Naylor, physician recruiter for Bayhealth, talked about how the medical facility had managed through the COVID-19 pandemic, Milford's growth and staffing in their organization.

"Sussex County is the fastest growing county east of the Mississippi," Naylor said. "We do a needs assessment every three years at Bayhealth and it looks at the community at various stages as well as demographics and the specialists you currently have. It is hugely growing."

When asked about the ages of families moving in as there seemed to be a large influx of retired people, Naylor explained that there was a large mix. She stated that they are seeing a lot of military people, but after the pandemic

began 18 months ago, they noticed a slight change in the demographic.

"Many companies have found that it is better to let employees work remotely," Naylor said. "That means that if you lived just outside of New York, San Francisco or Los Angeles, or any other area with a high cost of living, you could now work anywhere. You will still be making that \$300,000 or \$400,000 salary, but you can sell your million dollar home and purchase a \$200,000 home somewhere more rural where the taxes are lower. You are only giving up a higher cost of living, so we are seeing everything from the 23-year old single person to families to 70-year old retired people. It is definitely a mix."

Bayhealth implemented a residency program this year, creating a learning institution at their two campuses.

Naylor stated that there are still no medical schools in Delaware but the residency opened up more options to encourage doctors to come to the area. Internal and family medicine began July 1 and the residency is three years. Each year, a new class of doctors will begin residency and the hope is those doctors will choose to remain in the area.

"Many hospitals in this area are dealing with staffing shortages, but we have been incredibly fortunate," Naylor said. "We have had some nursing losses and doctors who have moved from the area, but when I started about a year ago, we had 100 physicians in the medical group and now we have 120, so even with some of our losses, we have been able to grow through COVID. The main thing we have seen through the pandemic is that our staff is very tired. When we see our ED docs and nurses in the hallway, they are just exhausted. We still have a lot of support, but when you have been doing this day in and day out for 18 months, it takes a toll. In June and July, we saw our numbers going down and thought we were getting ahead of it, but now they are back up again."

Naylor explained that the Kent campus has around 60 COVID patients while Sussex had around 30.

"People want to blame the beaches, the holiday, Firefly," she said. "What it is, though, is that we get complacent. We start taking off our mask, we start getting a little closer, we start feeling comfortable and it just happens. It is hard to say what is the driving force. Even our doctors and infectious disease doctors, they can't say with certainty."

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BY BETSY PRICE

Diagnosed with breast cancer in 2012 soon after moving to Dover from New York, Purnima Dixit contacted Delaware Breast Cancer Coalition soon after her treatment was determined to see what services they had available.

Since that time, Dixit has worked with the Peer Mentor program to help other women who have received the devastating diagnosis.

“In this program, survivors like myself, after training, can guide and talk to newly diagnosed patients about what to expect when they have to make decisions about treatment,” she said. “I think this tete-a-tete gives hope to them that they can and will survive this.”

DOVER WOMAN SUPPORTS OTHERS DIAGNOSED WITH BREAST CANCER

Born in Mumbai, India, Dixit came from a family that stressed the importance of education. She completed a master’s in chemistry at the Indian Institute of Technology. Her father was a consultant in the field of rubber lining and Dixit worked with him for a few years but did not find the field interesting.

“I decided to change my field to environmental science as that was an up-and-coming field,” Dixit said. “I began working with a consulting engineering firm. In the meantime, my parents set me up for marriage. Yes, it was an arranged marriage, but we did meet before we both agreed to this marriage. We celebrated our 43rd anniversary this year.”

Dixit’s sisters were settled in the United States and the couple decided to move here for better opportunities, arriving in 1983.

They initially lived in New Jersey, but with her background in the environmental field, Dixit began working for the city of New York in their Environmental Protection Department. They moved to New York where they raised two daughters.

After 28 years, Dixit and her husband retired moved to Dover in April 2012. Four months later, she received her diagnosis after a routine mammogram.

“Of course, it was a shock initially,” Dixit said. Coming from a family of doctors, she didn’t need help deciding on treatment.

“I had a total mastectomy,” she said. “With recent research in field gene testing for treatment of breast cancer, I am very happy to report that I didn’t need any chemotherapy or radiation, but only have to take hormone medication treatment. I have to take that medicine for 10 years and I am happy to report I have almost completed nine years of treatment.”

Her breast cancer surgeon introduced her to the Delaware Breast Cancer Coalition.

“I will forever be indebted to her for her care and empathy,” Dixit said.

In addition to her work with the Peer Mentor team, Dixit also volunteers with Delaware Hospice and the Senior Medicare Program. She also enjoys the Nurture with Nature breast cancer discussions offered by Delaware Breast Cancer Coalition as they allow survivors to meet and share stories.

“With all that volunteer work, I am enjoying my retirement,” Dixit said. “I have two grandchildren that keep us alive and happy. We also love to travel and are both voracious readers so there is never a dull moment.”

MILFORD
LIVE



MEDICAL STUDENTS DIVE INTO CLINICAL TRAINING AT BAYHEALTH

BY TERRY ROGERS

As a regional healthcare leader, Bayhealth is an established core clinical campus for training medical students through its Undergraduate Medical Education (UME) program. Now in its third year of hosting cohorts of medical students from the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (PCOM), Bayhealth recently welcomed this year's group at a meet and greet breakfast event. The 15 new and 10 returning medical students had the opportunity to get to know Bayhealth leadership and medical staff members before eagerly beginning their year of clinical training under the

guidance of experienced physicians.

During their time at Bayhealth Kent and Sussex Campuses, the PCOM students will complete 11 core rotations, each lasting one month. These specialty rotations involve following a Bayhealth physician for four weeks. This allows them to gain hands-on learning and broaden their skillset in environments with patients.

“We are thrilled to welcome a new group of talented medical students to our Bayhealth campuses. As they explore a range of specialties and learn from our expert medical staff, they will hone their expertise in providing

thorough and compassionate patient care,” said Undergraduate Medical Education (UME) Program Chair Joseph Rubacky, DO, FAAFP. “We want these students to feel fulfilled by their growth here and connect with our community. It is also our hope that they’ll want to continue their graduate medical education (GME) training at Bayhealth and taking care of our local residents through one of our newly-launched residency programs in family medicine, internal medicine and general surgery.”

MILFORD
LIVE

STATE PAYS \$15 MILLION FOR COVID TESTING COMPANY TO WORK WITH SCHOOLS

BY BETSY PRICE

Delaware will pay \$15 million for the Quidel Corp. to provide routine COVID-19 testing, processing and reporting for Delaware teachers and students who have no virus symptoms.

In many cases, a Delaware Division of Public Health press release said, **Quidel's** rapid antigen tests will provide on-the-spot results in as little as 10 minutes.

The partnership with the Department of Education will immediately identify COVID-19 cases, prevent transmission and keep schools open, the press release said.

As vaccinations in Delaware rose—on Monday 71.6% of those eligible for shots had at least one and 54.4 % of Delaware is completely vaccinated—many expected schools to open with little need for masks and the

intense protocols of the last year.

Then the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention announced that **unvaccinated students** should wear masks, among other things.

Quidel's services, will will be free to schools and staff, will include Quidel providing staff to conduct on-site testing, analyze results and report them to families and the state, relieving schools of that burden. Results are expected to be reported back to families within 24 hours.

“When used alongside other prevention strategies, like distancing and face masks, testing creates an additional level of reassurance that it is safe to keep schools open,” said Public Health's Chief Physician Rick Pescatore. “This program allows schools the best of

both worlds, being able to identify potential cases early while continuing to focus on the business of learning.”

Screening testing continues to be an important mitigation strategy, recommended by the CDC.

“Antigen testing facilitates our quick identification of cases, which in turn will help keep our classrooms open to in-person learning,” said Secretary of Education Susan Bunting.

The Quidel system already has been in place at five pilot schools for summer students and staff. Three participating schools are in the Colonial School District, one in the Christina School District and Odyssey Charter School, the press release said.

Quidel can expand the program to all 350 of the state's K-12 public, private and charter schools when classrooms fully reopen in the fall. Parental permission will be required for students to participate.

The service is meant to provide routine testing for asymptomatic staff and students.

Staff and students who have symptoms of COVID-19 should stay home and seek testing at one of Delaware's available **sites**. Quidel and DPH will coordinate follow-up testing and results reporting for any student who receives a positive result from the rapid antigen test.

“Quidel is proud to partner with the state of Delaware in the development and launch of this comprehensive testing protocol to support the state's safe reopening of classrooms and efforts to protect students and school staff,” said Douglas Bryant, president and CEO of Quidel Corporation.

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FORMER GOVERNOR MINNER PASSES AWAY

BY TERRY ROGERS



Former Gov. Ruth Ann Minner, who served two terms as Delaware's only female governor, died on Thursday, Nov. 4. Minner overcame significant obstacles before being sworn in as governor and she was known for her toughness and strength.

"She was a leader who had a real common touch," Gov. John Carney, who served as Minner's lieutenant governor, said. "Gov. Minner focused on raising up the working families of our state because she knew what it meant to struggle. Having grown up poor in Slaughter Beach, she brought that perspective to her job every day and she never lost her attachment to those roots."

Minner was born the youngest of Samuel and Mary Ann Coverdale's five children. It was on the farm that she developed her work ethic, learning to drive a tractor, milking cows and tending crops. At 16, she quit school, something her father told her to do as it was "expected." At 17, she married her junior high school sweetheart, Frank Ingram, and the two began a business in Milford.

The couple had their first son, Frank, soon after they married. A second son, Wayne, was born four-and-a-half years later and a third, Gary, four-and-a-half years after that. All three sons were planned as the couple wanted to be sure they could attend college. Minner

once said that the boys were spaced apart so they each got their share of attention when they were young and so they would be less likely to compete against each other than siblings who were closer in age. Her husband had political aspirations and Minner found herself stuffing envelopes for his campaign.

However, tragedy struck when her husband, only 34, died of a heart attack, leaving her a widow with three young boys and a mortgage. Minner returned to school, earning a GED, taking classes down the hall from her son, Frank, who was in eighth grade, working as a statistician with the Maryland Crop Reporting Service at the same time. Often, her sons went to work with her as she counted plants and kernels.

"We all did our homework together and that made it a lot of fun," Minner said in an interview in 2001. "One of the reasons I went back was because if the boys knew I didn't have my education, it might give them the idea they didn't need one. I never had any one quit school." The boys learned the same work ethic as their mother at a young age, knowing that if chores were not done, they could not go to the ballpark unless they were.

Times were hard and Minner spoke of needing to purchase a new car in order to keep working but being denied a loan in 1967.

"My 1963 Chevy was dying, but dealers refused to let me take out a loan for a car," Minner said. "They'd say 'Oh, you're single; we need a man to sign for the loan. I turned to banks, but they, too refused, requiring a male signature.'"

After her husband's death, Minner leaned on a family friend, Roger Minner, whose marriage had ended. Roger, a tow-truck operator, let the boys hang out in his shop and Minner often joked that he dated the boys for a year before he asked her out. They married in 1969 and began a towing company. Gary and Wayne joined Roger in the business until Roger died of cancer in 1991. Frank became a teacher at Milford High School.

In 1973, Minner ran for and won a seat in the Delaware House of Representatives for the 33rd District, the first woman to hold the seat. One of the things she remembered was the banks denying her a car because she was a single woman and knowing that she might be able to change those rules prompted her to run. As a representative, she lobbied banks in the state to grant loans to women more freely.

As a representative, Minner served on the Bond Bill Committee and mastered the art of capital spending. She also served as House Majority Whip and chaired the Rules Committee, successfully removing a rule that allowed representatives to table roll call votes. In 1982, Minner was elected to the State Senate where she was credited with the Delaware Land and Water Conservation Act protecting 30,000 acres of land. The act also created the Delaware Open Space Council.

Not long after her husband, Roger, was diagnosed with terminal cancer, Minner was approached about running for lieutenant governor.

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REMEMBERING JERRY THOMPSON

BY TERRY ROGERS

Dr. Gerald “Jerry” Thompson, a beloved educator and band director, passed away on Sept. 28. The news devastated many in Milford who remember him leading the band at Milford High School for many years. Memories of Thompson were shared across social media platforms as the news spread that a Milford icon had passed away.

“I just learned tonight that my number one most favorite teacher and musical mentor, Dr. Jerry Thompson has died,” Mike Burris posted. “As I finish up a record down here in Austin, Texas, I can’t help but give thanks to a guy that started me down this path. Jerry Thompson changed my life. That guy LOVED music and it was infectious. He made me believe that I could do it. I am so thankful I was able to see him last summer when he came out to a Dave and Mike gig and we could bust out some Travelling Willburys for him.”

Chris Kenton remembered that when he was a freshman in high school, he decided he wanted to be in the spring musical.

“I had absolutely no idea what song I’d sing for tryouts, so I just went on stage and sang ‘Take Me Out to the Ballgame,’” Kenton posted. My sophomore year, same song. As I walked on stage my senior year, Mr. Thompson, better known as just T, says “OK, Chris, I’m ready for the best version of ‘Take Me Out to the Ballgame’ I have ever heard. I loved every minute working with that man. He was simply the best!”

Dr. Bob Sutcliffe who worked with Thompson at Milford School District kept in touch with him even after they both retired.

“He left a legacy of service to his country, his community, and most of all his students for whom he cared deeply,” Sutcliffe said. “He and I shared a birthday on the same day. One of us contacted the other almost every year. I’m pleased that we got to do that for the last time this year. Our final conversation was short but meaningful. Thanks, Dr. T., for everything: your service in Vietnam, the Marching Bucs, the pit band of spring musicals, teaching kids to love music, giving some kids a refuge when needed, community band, American Legion and much, much more.”

Dr. Gerald Wayne Thompson was born in Dover, the youngest of the late Carroll and Emma Thompson’s three children. He graduated from Dover High School in 1965 and grew up on Forrest Street. It was his mother’s love of playing the organ that pushed her to start Thompson in piano lessons when he was young. It was not long before he negotiated a drum set and began playing with Dimensions, a band he performed with throughout high school.

After graduation, Thompson entered the United States Army and as his obituary reads, “attended multiple schools in order to learn skills he would need in a world most of us are fortunate not to know.” He served as an 82nd Airborne Ranger LRRP attached to the 173rd Infantry and Americal division in Vietnam. He considered his service in Vietnam a patriotic commitment and those who knew him understood his service “was more than any government should reasonably ask.”



On August 18, 1968, Thompson left Vietnam and met the love of his life, Colleen Ann Connell. He attended Wesley College and Delaware State University, pursuing his love of music. He convinced Colleen to move to Delaware and the couple began their lives in Milford. In 1972, Thompson took a position as a music teacher and band director, joking with his family he had found a “full time gig jamming with other musicians.” Two of his proudest moments were handing his daughters, Gretchen and Shannon, their high school diplomas.

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PHOTO BY KEVIN EICKMAN

SWIMMING HAS SOLID SEASON

BY KEVIN EICKMAN

With uncertainty in the air, Milford began to put together its swim team for this past season. One thing that was certain was that the number of athletes would be smaller than usual, adding to what is always considered to be a sport in which sacrifice is paramount. While swimming is an individual sport, it is scored as a team sport as well. The athletes that compete in this sport spend countless, lonely hours honing their strength and stamina, it simply isn't just a matter of jumping in the pool and letting it all hang out. "The hours upon hours of work that our swimmers put in both in and out of the pool culminated in a very strong season for us," Coach Kelly Wells said.

With a total of eight boy and 13 girl swimmers, it was a bit of a slow start for Milford, but it kept at it. By the time the Henlopen Championships came around, the Buccaneers would finish sixth in both divisions. More of note however is the number of State Meet qualifiers Milford had, totaling seven. "To be able to come up with a number like that with such a small group is very impressive. It's a little different this season in that team relays don't automatically qualify, those swimmers had to earn their spots. I can't tell you how proud I am of them," Wells said.

In the Henlopen Championships, Milford would gain two individual medals. Senior Mason Sauers would earn third place in the 50-yard freestyle, also finishing fifth in the 100 free. Freshman Eryn O'Brien earning bronze in the 500-yard free with a third-place finish. It



was more than the medals that defined Milford, there were several swimmers that finished just off the podium as well. Senior Allison Benton would finish sixth in the 100 free and fourth in the 100 backstroke. Freshman Carley Mackert also logged a fourth-place finish in the breaststroke. "I was thrilled with how our swimmers performed in the Conference Championships. We had so many swimmers put up personal bests, that's what you really want to see, swimmers reaching their peak at the end of the season," said Wells.

Speaking of reaching your peak at the end of the season, Wells wanted to offer a tip of the cap to senior Matt Hague who had never swam at the varsity level before but chose the sport as his winter endeavor. "Matt didn't come in here just to have something to do, he came here to work. He plays football and lacrosse, as well as wrestling in the past. It would have been so easy for him to just try and stay in shape, but that isn't him, He got better with every practice, every meet." Another newcomer was sophomore Sophia Massotti. "Sophia who really never swam before got better as the season

went on, I'm really looking forward to coaching her in the future," Wells stated.

With the current environment, the season was obviously a challenge to pull off. One of the key elements were the parents, who stepped up in a big way. "I can't begin to tell you how obligated and thankful I am for the support of the parents. Along with my assistant coach Trisha Davis, everyone chipped in to make this season happen. Every time we needed something; someone was always there to help," Wells said.

With the State Championships coming up this weekend, Milford will be well represented. For the boys, Milford will see Sauers in the 50 and 100 free, joined by senior Bryce Wells in the 100 free as well. The boys will also compete in two relay events—the boys 200 medley and freestyle with Sauers and Wells joined by sophomore Mitchell Graham and junior Jacob Muir. Graham also qualified in the 200 IM and 400 freestyle. The girls 200 medley relay will feature Mackert and Benton, being joined by senior Summer Davis and sophomore Emmerson Lefever. The girls 400 freestyle relay will include O'Brien and Benton who will be joined by senior Emma Sekscinski and Lefever.

Individual qualifiers are Sauers in the 50 and 100 free. Wells in the 100 free. Benton in the 100 freestyle and backstroke. Mackert in the 100 breaststroke. Senior Emma Sekscinski in the 50 free. Lefever in the 50 free. O'Brien has qualified in both the 500 and 200 free.

MILFORD
LIVE

PARSLEY-BLOCKER LEADS LIBERTY TO NCAA DIVISION I FIELD HOCKEY FINALS

BY KEVIN EICKMAN



On Friday, Nikki Parsley-Blocker, a graduate of Milford High School, led Liberty University to the NCAA Division I field hockey finals. Liberty won in a thrilling double overtime game. The team played Northwestern on Sunday which is ironically

Parsley-Blocker's alma mater, with Northwestern coming out on top with a score of 2-0 to take the championship.

For most people, finding your place in the world can take quite a bit of time. For some lucky people however, you know your calling very early in life. In the case of Parsley-Blocker, she knew very early on that she wanted to be involved in athletics. "I have always loved competing, it runs in my family. By the time I was in high school I knew that I was going to be involved in coaching," Parsley-Blocker stated.

During her field hockey career at Milford, Parsley-Blocker was an All-State selection on multiple occasions. She parlayed her success into an athletic scholarship to Northwestern University. While attending Northwestern, Parsley-Blocker excelled both on the field and in the classroom, earning Big 10 All-Academic honors three years.

It was not just on the college level in which she excelled; Parsley-Blocker also excelled on the international

stage as well. She was part of the U.S. National under-21 team in 2012, after being on the under-19 team the year before.

"It was so fantastic to be able to play on a stage like that, against such high-quality competition," Parsley-Blocker added. "It was great to meet people from all around the world, playing a sport that God gave me the gift to use. It has been my faith that has led me to this point in my life, I owe it all to the blessing's he has bestowed upon me."

It was her strong faith in the Lord which led Parsley-Blocker to make one of the most difficult decisions in her life. A successful assistant coach at Yale University, she was approached by Liberty University to join their staff. The renowned, faith-based college wasn't offering her a promotion, nor a lateral transfer, she was being asked to actually take a step down on the coaching ladder.

"It was one of the most difficult decisions of my life. I was very happy at Yale and there was a lot of hesitancy on taking a step down in the coaching ranks," Parsley-Blocker added. "When it came down to it, I listened to what I was feeling in my heart and what my faith in God was telling me when I made the decision to come to Liberty."

During her first year as an assistant coach Parsley-Blocker felt that she had made the right decision almost immediately. "The staff and the athletes here are very special. We represented the University with pride, dignity,

humility and compassion. I knew right away that this was the place I wanted to coach at."

There was much more in store for Parsley-Blocker and a lot quicker than she expected. Following her first year on staff, the head coaching position opened up. Liberty and Parsley-Blocker felt she was the perfect fit.

"It was pretty incredible the way things unfolded after my first year. I went from being almost at the bottom of the coaching ladder to being in charge."

When asked about the change in duties, Parsley-Blocker was quick to respond, "It was like trying to drink water out of a firehose." She said laughing "There was so much more involved than you know about. It wasn't that I was ill prepared, it was just that it happened so suddenly."

Success has been impressive for the Liberty program under her leadership, as they have been consistently near the top of the Big East standings. While the Big East is an impressive conference on its own merit, Liberty has made it a point to schedule tough out of conference competition. Perennial powerhouses such as Virginia, Duke, North Carolina and Wake Forest are just some of the nationally ranked teams her squad has faced.

"We feel that the only way to get better is to play the best, and that is what we do." Parsley-Blocker continued "There are easier ways to get wins, but there is no easy path to success by avoiding challenges in life just because they are difficult."

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE](#)

FIELD HOCKEY SAYS GOODBYE TO SENIORS

BY KEVIN EICKMAN

The just completed Milford field hockey season was not the greatest in recent memory, if you just look at the record (5-9-1). But if you look beyond the record and look at the effort that Milford put in after a slow start, you can see just how far it came as the season progressed. After an early season blowout of Seaford, it looked as if Milford might have something special this season, but after that initial win Milford would gain a tie and four consecutive losses over its next five games. It was here that senior leadership stepped in, and the Buccaneers began to rekindle their love of the game. “Our senior leadership and some underclassmen as well felt we needed to loosen up a bit, so that’s what we did. We made drills more fun, had some events not related to field hockey and basically pressed the reset button,” Coach Andrea McPike said.

Milford would go 4-5 over the last two-thirds of the season, with every loss except one, coming by a single goal. It was an impressive turnaround and one that that McPike attributes to her entire team, simply refusing to give up. “The season we were very up and down this year. A lot of tough, close losses where we dominated statistically. We had a lot of adversity that hit us which was out of our control but despite it all the girls showed up each day with grace and grit. They never gave up and battled each game no matter what our line up looked like. We still saw a lot of growth from the team and in

individual players. All they went through this season will harden them for next season and our ‘new’ seniors are already planning off season activities to get the team a head start for next year.”

Looking at the five seniors, it is obvious that they all have solid futures ahead of them, be it on the field or in the classroom. These young ladies are a tough and sound group who will continue the long tradition of making Milford proud as they head out into world. The following statements were all provided by Coach McPike.

NATALIE CROMER #10

The growth she made as a field hockey player, leader and young woman this season is amazing! Her ability to self-reflect and focus in on her areas of improvements is truly something to be commended. She set personal goals and crushed them. And her skills really started to take off. We could not be any prouder of her! Her feisty spirit and flying elbows will be missed next year! Good luck in the next chapter of her life!



OLIVIA MUIR #28

Team Captain, 1st Team All-Conference, Blue Gold Senior All-Star

Olivia’s dedication, determination, and hard work over the past four years has taken her game to the next level! She has, again, proven to be one of the top midfielders in our conference, while always striving for constant improvement. Her leadership and commitment to this program will have a lasting affect long after you are gone. We are so excited she will be continuing her field hockey career at the University of Lynchburg. GO HORNETS!



BEAU DAVIS #1

Team Captain

Her lead-by-example and calm demeanor will be missed greatly next year! She was a wonderful role model for the younger players to look up to this season. I’m not sure she realized the impact she truly had on this team. Her dependability, despite whatever the circumstances may have been, was unwavering and we appreciate her so much for that! These assets will carry her far in life, and we wish her nothing but the best next year!



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MILFORD XC SWEEPS MEET

BY KEVIN EICKMAN

The Milford cross country team entered Wednesday's quad meet against Delmar, Lake Forest and Sussex Central having the boys' team winning just one meet, while the girls had yet to tally a win. That all changed at Killens Pond, when both the boys and girls team swept the meet. This could not come at a better time as the postseason meet season is rapidly approaching, the Buccaneers look to be rounding into shape at just the right time. In large part it has been due to the seniors, but Milford also has underclassmen that are pitching in as well.

"This group of seniors are major factors to the success of the team as a group. We have three that are joining the military to serve their country. Angelo Castintino-Air Force, Alexandra Herber-Army and Hunter Mitchell-Coast Guard," Skinner continued "Outside the seniors, Eric Perry and Nate Waydelis offer everyday leadership to the team."

"The championship season should see great individual achievements with faster times across the team. Faith Mitchell continues to strive on the girls' side while junior Brianna Thompson is quickly progressing to being one of our top runners. Eric Perry and Nate Waydelis continue to lead the boys, and we expect both to do very well during the championship season. Be on the lookout for eighth grade sensations Avery Richard (boys) and Sammy Hudson (girls). Both have quietly been dropping times and are consistent varsity runners."

Also coming up is the annual Reindeer Stampede, which is the largest fund-raising event of the year. To sign up or be a sponsor, please visit www.MilfordXC.com.

The group picture is of Milford seniors Haley Thompson, Paige Thompson, Alex Herber, Hunter Mitchell, Angelo Castintino and Taylor Humes.


BY KEVIN EICKMAN

It had been this way all night—two teams evenly matched battling in an old-school slugfest. Time was winding down and Milford was clinging to a 14-7 lead as Red Lion had worked its way deep into Milford territory. As had been the case for both teams all game, it would come down to which team had the moxie to make the big play when it mattered most. While Milford may have squandered more scoring opportunities than RLCA, a great deal of that was due to the visitor's staunch defense with its back to its own goal line where Red Lion rose repeatedly to foil Milford scoring chances.

Now it would be the Buccaneers turn to hold off a charging Red Lion offense. There would be one caveat however as Milford senior Jordan Norman took an inadvertent blow to the head, injuring himself on the play. At first it looked dire as Norman lay

BUCS HOLD OFF RED LION FOR HOMECOMING VICTORY

motionless on the Briggs Stadium turf. A hush fell over the crowd for the first time of the night, with nobody knowing the extent of the injury. Slowly he began to move his extremities as trainers and staffs from both teams attended to Norman, who had recorded two interceptions and numerous tackles during the game. It was determined that he had suffered a neck injury and all precautions were taken, as he was placed in a neck brace and an ambulance was dispatched. As Norman was placed in the ambulance, it wasn't just his Buccaneer teammates that surrounded him, the entire Red Lion team sprinted across the field to offer encouragement and respect to the injured player. "I can't say enough about Red Lion and how they acted tonight. This was an extremely physical game, but both squads would help their opponents up and get ready to do it again. I can honestly see I have never seen a game played that physically, where not one personal foul was called, it was truly a spirited competition tonight," Milford coach Shaun Strickland said.

After the field was cleared and the game resumed, there was 1:45 left on the clock and Red Lion was at the Milford 25-yard line. It was then that Milford made its stand, pushing Red Lion back and refusing to yield. The icing on the cake would come on fourth and long as the Milford defense collapsed upon Red Lion quarterback Mac Krauss to seal the 14-7 Homecoming victory.

Early in the game, it looked as if the Bucs' offense would roll over the visitors as on its second possession, Milford drove 65 yards while throwing only one pass for the game's opening score. Senior Aaron Sivels, who would also be named Homecoming King on the evening, took it in from one yard out and with a successful PAT from senior Alexander Nash, Milford would take a 7-0 lead with 7:45 remaining in the first quarter.

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BY TERRY ROGERS

City of Milford Police Chief Kenneth Brown on behalf of the American Police Hall of Fame and Museum presented Senior Corporal Timothy “TJ” Webb with the Law Enforcement Purple Heart Award on Sept. 27, during the City Council meeting at City Hall.

Webb started with the Milford Police Dept. as a patrolman in 2007. From 2012 to 2017, he partnered with Henk, a K9 officer and in 2018, he was promoted to Senior Corporal and assigned part time to the US Marshal Fugitive Task Force. On Dec. 10, 2020, while serving a warrant in Rehoboth as part of the Task Force, Webb was shot multiple times. He was transported to an area hospital where he underwent surgery and was then listed as critical but stable.

“He spent a week in the hospital and then spent two weeks in a rehabilitation facility,” Chief Brown said. “What impressed me most was his attitude through all of it. His spirit was high, and it was infectious to all of us. There is no doubt that it played a big part in his recovery.”

The Law Enforcement Purple Heart is issued to officers who are injured or disabled in the line of duty. Purple Heart recipients are eligible if they were required to seek professional medical attention and were out of work at least one week. The American Police Hall of Fame has been honoring law enforcement officers and their contributions since 1960.

Webb graduated from the police academy in 2004 and began his career with the Camden Police Department. He is a certified hostage negotiator and joined the special operations group.

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.

MILFORD
LIVE

MPD SEES BENEFITS FROM BEHAVIORAL HEALTH UNIT

BY TERRY ROGERS

Recently, the city of Milford hired two behavioral health specialists to create the first Behavioral Health Unit working with the Milford Police Department. Currently, the unit has one full-time and one part-time member. A second part-time person will join the unit in the next few weeks.

“I just want to point out the number of diversions that have been performed by Jenna, our behavioral health specialist,” Councilman Mike Boyle, chairman of the Police Committee, said. “As a direct result of her work, nine incidents that could have been more serious, people were taken to the emergency room, she was able to calm them down. We are already seeing the benefits of this position and this program.”

According to a document provided by Chief Kenneth Brown at a recent meeting, behavioral health specialists were able to divert four people from arrest, five from the emergency room and assisted 34 people with follow-up visits. The diversions included runaway juveniles, disorderly conduct, welfare checks and other reports that would have been handled by police officers prior to the establishment of the unit.

“I also want to add that what you are seeing in that spreadsheet is only Jenna, the full-time behavioral health person,” Chief Brown said. “It does not reflect the part-time person we have. From now on, it will reflect the whole unit and not just Jenna.”

Councilman Jason James, who suggested the establishment of a behavioral health unit in Milford, commended the chief for its success.

“I’m very happy that from the time I introduced this, it hasn’t been a long time in establishment from introduction,” Councilman James said. “From the chief grabbing it by the horns and getting someone hired to getting it funded. When I looked at the proposal, I can see that the idea was we would free up police time and would cut down the police officers time and the time a police officer had to sit in an emergency room with someone and getting them help quicker. So, this was a proposal for economic benefit as well and I think this is starting to point that out.”

During the meeting, City Manager Mark Whitfield also provided information on an opioid settlement that could result in Milford seeing \$2.1 million in funding that must be used toward preventing opioid addiction or dealing with those who are addicted. During that discussion, Councilman James asked if some of the funds from the settlement could be used to offset costs incurred by the Behavioral Health Unit. Whitfield stated that his understanding was that some funding from the settlement could be used toward behavioral health.



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