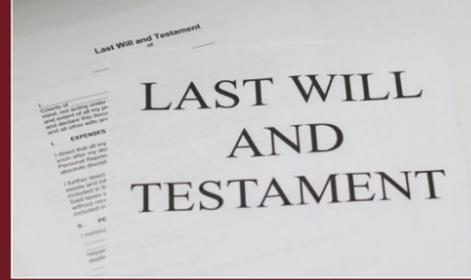


MILFORD LIVE



FEBRUARY LIBRARY PROGRAMS



CITY OF MILFORD SURVEY



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PHOTO BY MARCIA REED

HEADLINES



PHOTO BY LIFECYCLE

NATIONAL FAST-FOOD LOCATION PLANNED FOR FORMER WENDY'S LOCATION

BY TERRY ROGERS

Although not ready to release the name of the fast-food company he is in talks with, Arthur Helmick of Helmick Milford received approval for a conditional use allowing for two fast-food restaurants on the site of the former Wendy's location in Milford. Helmick purchased the former Wendy's after purchasing the former Walmart/Sitel building which he has since converted to a movie theater and a church.

"The current proposal is to redevelop the approximately one-acre property with two tenants in a single story commercial building," Thomas Schreier of Hillcrest Associates, the engineering firm helping develop the property, said. "The uses will be a fast-food restaurant and a drive-in restaurant, both of which are permitted within the underlying zoning district."

Schreier stated that because the name of the tenant could not be released at the present time, he was unable to give details on signage or the number of employees that could be hired. He anticipated, based on the previous tenant on the property, that signage would face the road frontage and that there would be a freestanding sign along Route 113. The number of employees per shift were estimated to be around eight.

"This was a Wendy's earlier and it was unfortunate to see it go," Councilman Todd Culotta said. "Obviously, this is a great use of the property. I do like the developer is using two different options in that same spot. It's just more choices for residents."

Councilman Jason James agreed with Councilman Culotta, stating that he was often approached by citizens

See FOOD on page 4



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FOOD from page 3

about wanting more choices, whether it was fast food or just having more options to eat and shop. Councilman Andy Fulton was concerned that the tenants of the new fast-food location would be businesses that already existed in Milford who were simply moving to a different location.

“The two proposed tenants are not local to the market,” Helmick said. “They are national tenants that we are working with at this moment. We are very close to finishing with one on the south side and it is a name that everyone would recognize immediately and one that everyone would welcome. One other comment I would like to make is that the adjacent property, the Harrington property, I also purchased that as well.” Helmick was referring to the Harrington ERA office, which was also formerly a fast-food restaurant, housing a Long John Silver’s at one time.

Council approved the request by a unanimous vote.



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CULTURE



Photo BY TERRY ROGERS

MUSIC SCHOOL WELCOMES NEW MILFORD CAMPUS DIRECTOR

BY TERRY ROGERS



Mary Jane Vanvestraut has only been the Milford Branch Director for the Music School of Delaware for a few months but she hopes to help the school become a stronger member of the Milford community. Her goals are to guide the Music School in southern

Delaware through events like festivals and other activities in Milford.

“The biggest challenge I think I will face is becoming more visible in the community and creating a face for the organization,” Vanvestraut said. “I also want to prove that music education is a necessity in the lives of children as well as adults. I’ve only been in the position for a little bit so far, and most of it has been heavily training, but I’m hopeful this is the direction we will go into in the near future.”

Vanvestraut grew up in Centerville, Maryland, starting piano when she was around nine or ten. She then began playing clarinet in the school band where her love of music grew. She attended Mansfield, University of Pennsylvania, earning a degree in music business with a focus on management. She laughed that she did not come from a musical family, although she did convince

her little sister to join band for a few years. Vanvestraut moved to Delaware to be closer to her grandparents.

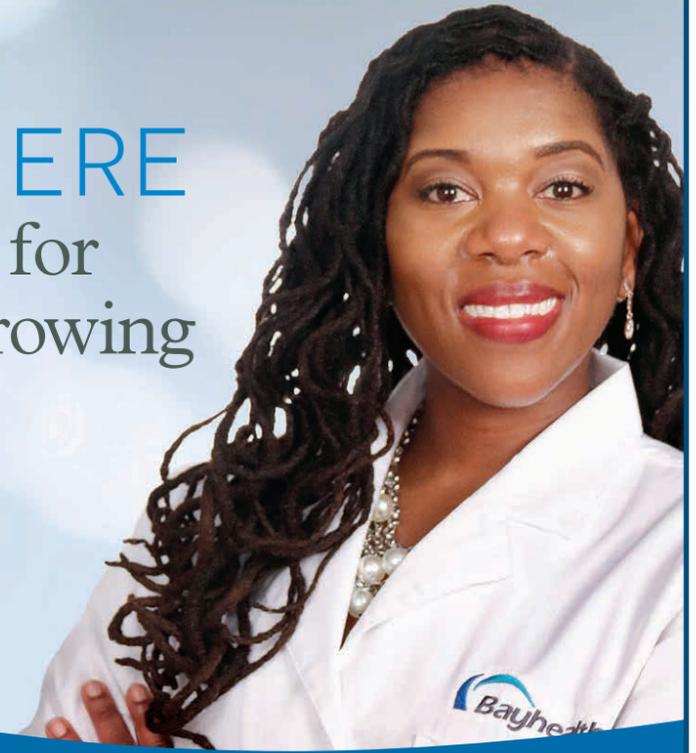
“My husband got a job as the District Executive for Sussex County for the Boy Scouts,” Vanvestraut said. “I got this job about the same time, so it just worked out. I do love Delaware and, growing up on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, we’ve been to Delaware often, basically the Middletown area, but I have always loved Milford and Milton because it is more artsy and cute.”

When she began her studies in music education, Vanvestraut felt she wanted to make music more accessible for children. She felt that she would have more success if she was in arts management or administration. Once she made that decision, she shifted her degree focus with the goal of working for a non-profit organization that would make music more affordable and more accessible to children who may not otherwise be able to play an instrument. She saw the opening at the Music School and laughed that she thinks she applied the second day it was open.

Early music education for children is very critical, according to Vanvestraut. “The Music School offers programs for children as young as 18 months while children can begin violin lessons at three,” Vanvestraut said. “Most children begin learning instruments between six and seven, but the sooner they are involved in

See MUSIC on page 7

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MUSIC from page 6

music, the sooner they will pick up other subjects. There is a lot of math involved. There's a lot of English and language involved in music, so the earlier the better."

It can be difficult to keep children interested in music, Vanvestraut explained. She stated that private lessons are the best way to keep children focused on instruments and music. A child who is suddenly not interested in an instrument may simply be playing at a higher level than other students in band which can lead to boredom. Through private lessons, they can play music they enjoy that is more challenging while still participating in school band at a lower level.

"Children and adults who are already playing an instrument can transition to other instruments," Vanestraut said. "But it does depend on the instrument. For instance, I started on the clarinet and was able to switch to saxophone fairly easily. If you go between instrument families, however, it can be challenging. The clarinet is totally different than the French horn. But, I think if someone is musically inclined and wants to learn, they could do that. It would be easier if they could read music and music notation, things like that."

Reading music is another factor that can determine how far someone goes with an instrument. Vanvestraut explained that most band and orchestral musicians can read music, but not all singers are able to do so. People also teach themselves guitar, ukulele or drums and many never learn to read music.

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LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT

BY TERRY ROGERS

The Milford Public Library has announced several unique programs that are coming up over the cold winter months. These programs are designed to help you battle cabin fever, learn new skills or information or just to have a little fun.

“Many people find the task of developing an end-of-life plan daunting,” Carolyn Tabor, program coordinator, said. “In order to ensure that your end-of-life wishes are carried out in the manner you designate so that your family and friends can grieve your death without financial burdens while also helping to alleviate discord among family, we are offering the Heirloom Estate and Legacy Preservation program in a fully virtual format. The seminar will also introduce participants to a broader course designed to assist individuals in developing a comprehensive end-of-life plan in an engaging, encouraging, judge-free, and supportive setting.” The program will be presented by Angelyn C. Frazer -Giles on Feb. 2 starting at 6 p.m.

MILFORD LIBRARY OFFERS FEBRUARY PROGRAMS

On Feb. 15, from 6 to 7 p.m., the library will present Delaware Twin Poet Laureates, Nnamdi O. Chukwuocha and Albert Mills as part of their Black History Month celebration. The program will be held in the Lion’s Room and masks are required for those in attendance. This program is sponsored by the Delaware Division of Arts.

“Looking for a way to get some exercise in a fun way?” Tabor said. “Join us for Jazzercise, one of the world’s leading dance fitness companies. Led by Glenenise, the program will be offered on Saturday, Feb. 19 starting at 10:15 a.m. at the library. The program costs \$10 cash per person.”

For anyone looking for a unique way to celebrate Valentine’s Day, join the Milford Library for Valentine Bingo Night on Feb. 10 from 5:30 to 6:45 p.m. in the Smith Room. Masks are required.

Anyone interested in signing up for the Heirloom Estate and Legacy Preservation program can register at <https://heirloomestateplanning101.eventbrite.ca>.

Registration and payment in advance for Jazzercise is available at <https://delawarelibraries.libcal.com/event/8798562>.



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BUSINESS



PHOTO BY ANN LEBENGOOD

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LEGACY COFFEE OPENS IN MILFORD



BY TERRY ROGERS

UNITED Church has a goal to become a place where people can gather, a space where people feel like family when they walk in the door. According to Pastor Kenneth Wagner, the church wants to be a place where anyone feels welcomed and included. For this reason, the church recently opened Legacy Coffee Co., a boutique coffee shop just inside the doors of their church which is located by the Milford Movies 9 on Dupont Highway.

“Legacy is just one more environment where you can experience that feeling of family,” Wagner said. “We wanted to create a place where you can walk in and say “Man, I belong here, I can hang out here, have coffee with co-workers or friends. It has great, great vibes with a relaxed atmosphere.”

Profits from the coffee shop will be used to support

the church’s three lanes of impact, including missions locally as well as around the world, UNITED University which is the development piece of the church and to help the church continue to grow and share the love of Jesus throughout the state of Delaware. The tagline for the coffee shop is, “Drink Coffee, Leave a Legacy” in order to promote the fact that the coffee shop is designed to support not only the church but the local community as well.

The coffee shop is open to the public and offers coffee from Ceremony Coffee Roasters out of Annapolis, Maryland, as well as teas from Brandywine Roasters. They are proud to serve fresh baked goods from local bakery, Flour Power Duo, including cinnamon rolls, coffee cakes, muffins, chocolate chip cookies, Reese’s

See **COFFEE** on page 11

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COFFEE from page 10

brownies and more. They also offer a gluten-free strawberry granola bar.

“The cinnamon rolls are out of this world,” Wagner said. “We get two deliveries a week and they sell out before we even get the next delivery, so that’s a good problem to have.”

Wagner pointed out that the main goal of the coffee shop is to be about the community and the assistance UNITED Church offers in the area. He stated that no one will push faith on members of the public who come in to enjoy coffee or tea. There is no requirement to attend their worship experience even though the coffee shop is open during worship hours. He stated that it was simply a coffee shop where people could gather and grab an amazing cup of coffee.

Legacy Coffee Co. is open Monday through Saturday from 7 a.m. until 3 p.m. and on Sunday from 9 a.m. until 12 noon.



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PLETCHER TO PRESENT AT MILFORD CONVERSATIONS

BY TERRY ROGERS

The next Milford Conversations meeting will be held on Thursday, Feb. 3, from 8:30-9:30 a.m., in the fellowship hall of the First Presbyterian Church of Milford, located at 101 S. Walnut St. in Milford. The speaker will be Sara Pletcher, Milford's Economic Development and Community Engagement Administrator, and former convener of the Conversations group. She will discuss city happenings and her role in them.

This administrative position was newly created in spring of 2021. Pletcher proved to be uniquely qualified for the position. A 2008 graduate of Milford High School with a master's degree from Wilmington University in Marketing Management and over 10 years' experience in business, publishing and as a civic volunteer in Milford, Pletcher is invested and committed to Milford's success on every level.

Milford Conversations is open to all interested community leaders in Milford, including those representing business, civic, nonprofit, environmental, arts, education, health and government sectors. Speakers vary and opportunity is given at each meeting for participants to announce upcoming events or points of interest in the organizations they represent. The meeting will be held in the church's fellowship hall. Entry through the back door, off of Pearl St., is recommended. For questions, please call 302-381-6620.



MILFORD YOUNG PROFESSIONALS ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND CHAMBER GROUP

BY TERRY ROGERS

The Chamber of Commerce for Greater Milford (CCGM) wants young professionals to dip their toes into networking with like-minded people while also helping them add some volunteer experience to their resume. In an effort to help young people in business achieve these goals, they have created the 3oh2 YP group.

"In the words of Wayne Gretzky, you miss 100 percent of the shots you do not take," Joie Morgan, who leads the group, said. "3oh2 YP encourages young professionals in the Milford and surrounding area to get involved in their local chamber and further their professional growth."

The group is open to professionals between the ages of 18 and 40 with the goal of helping them develop a young workforce through business networking and personal growth, volunteer opportunities and guest speakers.

"We are currently working on a pet event which will require volunteers, sponsors and your ideas," Morgan said. "If you are a young professional, call us. Wait. Don't, because if you are a young professional, you and I both know phone calls are the worst. Text or email instead."

Anyone interested in the 3oh2 YP group can learn more by texting Morgan at 302-265-0091 or emailing her at jmorgan@atozinsuranceonline.net.



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MILFORD RESIDENTS TO RECEIVE SURVEY

BY TERRY ROGERS

City of Milford officials are pleased to announce they will be conducting a comprehensive quality of life survey this month. The survey will be available online for randomly selected residents and soon after, all residents will be able to complete the survey by visiting www.cityofmilford.com.

“We’re very excited to be conducting this survey,” says Mark Whitfield, city manager. “This survey will help city staff and Council identify priorities for the community and improve the quality of life in Milford.”

For the past few weeks, ICMA Fellow Melody Barger has been working with independent consultant, Polco to develop the survey. The instrument, known as The National Community Survey™, allows the city to compare results and benchmark residents’ opinions against other communities across the country. The survey will include questions about quality of life, important characteristics of community, services provided by

See SURVEY on page 16



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SURVEY on page 15

Milford and priorities for the future. The survey will be available online in English and Spanish.

Mayor Archie Campbell hopes all residents will participate in this survey saying, “Milford is a great community and the results will help to create a better city. I encourage everyone living in Milford to take the survey and help us chart our community’s future.”

Residents with questions about the survey may contact the city by phone at 302-422-1111 ext. 1215, by email at mbarger@milford-de.gov or by visiting www.cityofmilford.com.

The NCS was among the first scientific surveys developed to gather resident opinion on a range of community issues, and has been used in more than 350 jurisdictions across 46 states. The NCS is a cost-effective survey of resident opinion and an important benchmarking tool that allows for comparison among communities. Communities using The NCS have reported that the tool improved service delivery, strengthened communications with community stakeholders and helped leaders identify clear priorities for use in strategic planning and budget setting. The NCS is the only resident survey endorsed by the International City/County Management Association and the National League of Cities.

Polco was developed to quickly deploy and analyze surveys online, providing the agility to gather critical information from community stakeholders throughout the nation. It have created tools for governments, economic development organizations and nonprofits to

See SURVEY on page 17



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AS REVENUES RISE, REPUBLICANS SAY TAXPAYERS SHOULD GET SOME MONEY BACK

BY CHARLIE MEGGINSON

Republicans in the House of Representatives have introduced six new bills to return surplus state revenue to Delawareans. With a windfall of cash from federal stimulus bills and the bipartisan infrastructure bill, Republican lawmakers say there's no better time to give Delawareans some needed relief.

The nonpartisan Delaware Economic and Financial Advisory Council, or DEFAC, has twice increased the state's revenue projections for both fiscal years 2022 and 2023 since the 2022 fiscal year began. The council now says the state will collect around \$820 million more than previously expected.

In response, Republicans have filed six bills aimed at slashing Delaware's income tax, gross receipts tax and corporate tax; decreasing the real estate transfer tax; adjusting taxes with cost-of-living increases and giving Delaware's lowest income earners a tax credit.

While tax cuts and rebates can't be directly funded by the American Rescue Plan Act, Republicans say the state's rosy economic forecast means there is room for adjustment elsewhere.

Rep. Rich Collins, R-Millsboro, called it "an embarrassment" that the state government failed to enact tax cuts last year. "After the bills are paid, and appropriate reserves are set aside, I believe government has a duty to return money to the people from whom it was taken," Collins said. "That was an obligation the legislature failed to honor last year."

Income & gross receipts tax cuts

House Bill 191, sponsored by Collins, would make a 10% across-the-board cut to the state's personal income tax rates, reduce the corporate income tax by nearly 30% and slash the gross receipts tax by 50%.

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See **MONEY** on page 19

A gross receipts tax is a tax applied to a company's gross sales without deductions for a firm's business expenses, like costs of goods sold and compensation. The gross receipts tax is paid on both business-to-business transactions and final consumer purchases, leading some to refer to it as Delaware's "hidden sales tax."

Collins said in an interview with Delaware/Town Square LIVE News that by reducing that burden, "prices should go down immediately."

"If you go back to 2007 forward, we have increased income taxes, gross receipt taxes, the realty transfer tax, liquor tax and cigarette tax," he said. "It's just been a whole great list of tax increases and we have never given a dime of it back, so I just thought with all this money coming in, we ought to share some of that with our citizens."

According to the bill's fiscal impact statement, the proposal would allow taxpayers to collectively retain more than \$282 million in the upcoming fiscal year and more than \$321 million the following year.

"This is an economic development bill," Collins said. "In recent years, Delaware has had one of the worst economic growth rates in the nation." Allowing people and businesses to keep more of their own money, Collins said, will "jumpstart investment, increase employment and raise starting wages."

Collins said he expects Democrats to characterize his proposal to cut corporate taxes as an attempt to benefit the super-wealthy at the expense of the poor.

"Where do people get their jobs from," he asked. "Unless it's from the government—now in Delaware, the

government is the largest employer. But if you work for an employer that's not the government, their costs are going up and up and they need relief too."

He said people often incorrectly associate the word "corporate" with the wealthy, when in reality most corporations are small businesses just trying to make ends meet.

Real estate transfer tax

House Bill 172, sponsored by Rep. Lyndon Yearick, R-Dover, would temporarily eliminate the state's portion of the realty transfer tax for certain first-time home buyers.

The real estate transfer tax is paid at the time of a property's purchase and is currently set at 4% of the purchase price. Typically, the buyer and seller split the tax and pay 2% each. Of the total, the state collects 62.5% and the municipality or, in unincorporated areas, the county, gets to keep the remainder.

Yearick's bill would only eliminate the 62.5% of the tax that ordinarily goes to the state.

Buyers of homes that cost \$250,000 or less would not pay the state portion of the real estate transfer tax so long as they earn a gross income of less than \$45,000 for individuals or \$75,000 in combined income for joint purchasers. The bill will be amended to sunset, or expire, on Dec. 31, 2024.

In an interview with Delaware/Town Square LIVE News, Yearick said he included the sunset clause to try and attract support from Democratic legislators. That's worked with at least one member, Rep. Paul Baumbach,

a Democrat from Newark. Ten Republicans have also signed on as sponsors and cosponsors.

Yearick said the bill is meant to benefit first-time homebuyers. "It's really looking at first-time homebuyers—their first home, not a million-dollar house at the beach, with all due respect," he said. "But this is especially important with the rising cost of homes. Since 2020, the average sale price for homes went up 15 to 20% whether it was new or used."

According to a fiscal note completed by the Controller General's office, the bill would return \$1.6 million to beneficiaries annually.

House Bill 71, sponsored by Rep. Mike Ramone, R-Pike Creek, would decrease the realty transfer tax from 4% to 3%. The tax was previously set at 3% of a property's purchase price, but in 2017 was effectively raised to 4%.

If implemented in fiscal year 2024, House Bill 71 is projected to collectively save homebuyers \$83 million. The bill cleared the House Revenue & Finance Committee last June and is now pending the consideration of the House Appropriations Committee. Attempts to reach Ramone for comment were unsuccessful.

House Bill 71 has not attracted any Democratic co-sponsors.

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EDUCATION




BY BETSY PRICE

By 5:30 a.m. on school days, Jeffory Gibeault is already up and wrestling with how to man his classrooms.

The principal of Southern Elementary School in New Castle has had to cover as many as 25 classes in one recent day because teachers were out coping with COVID-19 in some way. Wednesday was a good day. He only had to find people to cover seven classes.

Gibeault said he's afraid he'll jinx himself if he says that makes him hopeful, even coming one day after a state announcement that new cases seemed to have plateaued and were maybe starting to drop a bit.

"You know, I was feeling that way around Thanksgiving," he said. "Two weeks later, we really started to see the beginning of the surge...But, yeah, we're starting to recover and catch our breath a little bit. I hope we keep this direction for a while but to be a realist, I think this is just the lull in the many storms that are probably to come."

Finding someone to handle classes during the winter surge of COVID-19 has proven to be a challenge for schools up and down the state. Teachers are having to

A PERFECT STORM FOR SCHOOLS, TEACHERS: NO SUBS, BUS WOES, COVID

stay out mostly because of COVID. They may have COVID themselves, have been exposed to COVID or have symptoms and need to be tested before they can return. Sometimes, their own children have COVID, have been exposed and are quarantined, or their child care provider is closed because of the spread of the virus there.

Substitutes are almost nonexistent and nobody is sure why. Some point to a reluctance to come into schools, given that they're known to be cauldrons of illnesses such as colds, flu and stomach bugs in the best of times, and perhaps serious illness now with the coronavirus continuing to circulate.

Schools are turning to paraprofessionals, administrators, tutors, student teachers and central office workers such as instructional coaches to lead classes.

Teachers upstate and down have been vocal about needing help and telling stories about classes that are doubled up or put in auditoriums to watch movies because there's no one available. Some are missing lunch and planning schedules while they're dealing with children who are coming into schools without mandated masks, and sometimes coming in late because bus systems are dealing with the same issues.

They've also said that schools are not being cleaned as they were because of COVID hitting custodial crews, too, causing them to feel unsafe.

Some teachers want schools to return to virtual classes. Others want schools to institute asynchronous days when kids would stay at home and study there to give teachers a chance to catch their breath. Others have even mentioned closing schools for a week or two.

But the state and school systems are reluctant to do any of that, partly because parents have made it clear they want kids in class and partly because school systems think children learn better in the classroom.

Even so, some schools have been forced to go virtual. Gibeault had to make special needs classes virtual for a few days because he didn't have the workers to keep the students in class. His school district, Colonial, made William Penn High School virtual for a week because of the shortage of teachers and substitutes.

"That's a last-resort situation and the principals and staff are working really hard to try to figure out how do we put this puzzle together every day because every day it's a little bit different dynamic," said Pete Leida, deputy superintendent of the Colonial School District.

A.I. du Pont High School last week gave students the options to stay home after so many teachers and students were out because of COVID.

Senior Eileena Mathews, the student member of the Red Clay School Board, told the board Wednesday night that neither she nor her fellow students wanted to go back to virtual classes like last year.

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HEALTH



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BAYHEALTH OFFERS VIRTUAL URGENT CARE

BY BETSY PRICE

Bayhealth recently announced that it was offering Bayhealth@Home, a virtual urgent care option that allows you to get medical care sitting at home on your sofa, even in your pajamas. According to Kevin Snyder, Vice-President of Marketing and Communications, the hope is that this option will help reduce wait times. In addition, the healthcare system is offering a coupon code for one free virtual urgent care visit for the next 30 days.

“Right now, longer wait times are the result of several factors which include higher than normal patient volumes, which includes people who are visiting our

emergency department for services they should seek elsewhere, like a COVID-19 test,” Snyder said. “We are encouraging patients who are not sick or only experiencing minor symptoms to see a primary care physician, visit our walk-in or utilize virtual urgent care.”

Proper use of emergency services right now is critical, Snyder explained. In addition, the community can do its part to keep people out of the emergency department by wearing a face mask, social distancing, frequently washing their hands and staying up to date on vaccines as well as booster shots.

See **BAYHEALTH** on page 25



NEW FACILITY. MORE SERVICES.

Nemours Children’s Health System at the Bayhealth Sussex Campus is open!

Nemours and Bayhealth are working together to bring comprehensive care for all ages to one convenient location on the Bayhealth Sussex Campus. Just steps away from the new Bayhealth Hospital and Outpatient Center and easily accessible from Route 1, this brand new location will provide a variety of services closer to home for the diverse, growing communities we serve.



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“Virtual urgent care is quite simple,” Snyder said. “Patients can see a doctor in as few as 10 minutes in most cases simply by downloading the Bayhealth@Home app and creating an account or logging on with a desktop link. Users ‘request an appointment’ and, within 15 minutes, they are seeing a physician on a laptop, desktop or mobile device via a secure portal.”

Although Snyder stated that the app was designed to take pressure off the healthcare system during the pandemic, Bayhealth felt this was an extension of what they have been doing for over 100 years, making sure the community has access to the healthcare resources it needs.

“We launched this service and are offering the 30-day coupon code for a free visit to ensure the community gets the care it needs when healthcare resources are limited due to the surge in COVID-19 cases,” Snyder said. “Long term, Bayhealth@Home will be there to help ensure Bayhealth meets families where they are which is often in the comfort of their own home. We understand life is busy for working professionals and parents. The last thing you want to do is leave your home when you do not feel well. Bayhealth@Home is the answer to those challenges.”

Snyder did caution that Bayhealth@Home is not suitable for all medical conditions. The app is designed for minor illnesses, including colds, flu, fever, rash, abdominal pain, sinusitis, pinkeye, ear infections and other easily treated illnesses. However, anyone experiencing shortness of breath, chest pain, feeling faint or any serious pain should call 9-1-1 and head straight to the nearest emergency department.

“Please never put off care if you feel you need immediate medical attention,” Snyder said. “Bayhealth is here for you even during this busy pandemic.”

The Bayhealth@Home app is available for mobile devices through the App Store or Google Play. Access the desktop or laptop link at www.bayhealth.org/virtual-urgent-care. After using the coupon code or after Feb. 11 at 11:50 p.m. when the free visit offer expires, virtual visits are just \$64. When you check out for your first visit, enter BETTERSOONER in the coupon code section to waive the fee.



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WRESTLING FALLS TO C.R.

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BY KEVIN EICKMAN

Last Wednesday, Milford and Caesar Rodney competed in what was expected to be a close wrestling match. The annual battle between the Bucs and Riders is always highly anticipated, due to the familiarity between the two programs. Former Milford coach Dan Rigby is now at the helm for Caesar Rodney, but more importantly, given the geographic proximity between the two schools, most of the wrestlers have known each other for most of their lives. While wrestling is a close and friendly community, when it comes to being on the mat it is all about winning. Unfortunately for Milford, it would come out on the wrong end of a 43-28 score. “Obviously, this was not the result we were looking for, but you have to give them [C.R.] credit. They came in here tonight and took care of business, they were very focused and got the win,” Milford coach Don Parsley said.

The meet started out well for Milford as junior Ryan Mejia won by fall at 152 pounds. That was quickly followed by a 7-0 decision win by fellow junior Averi Copes. From there, the momentum of the match would turn rapidly as Caesar Rodney flexed its muscle in the upper weights. The Riders would reel off five consecutive wins by fall, another by technical fall before Milford junior Vincent Jenkins stopped the bleeding with a win by fall at 113. The damage had been done however, and there was no way that Milford would be able to come back. “We have younger guys at our upper weights, they aren’t bad wrestlers, they are just inexperienced. I can

say that they are getting better with every practice and every match, like anything else, it is a process,” Parsley said.

The loss was the second consecutive defeat for the Buccaneers, having lost a heartbreaker at second-ranked Smyrna by a single point. It was a meet that came down to the final match, which Milford would lose at 285 pounds. It was a good sign for Milford however, demonstrating that when it is at its best, it can compete with the top teams in Delaware. With Sussex Tech and currently undefeated Cape Henlopen coming to Milford over the next two Wednesday evenings (7 p.m.), Parsley is hoping to get the Bucs back on the winning track. “As we are getting closer to the end of the season, it’s about preparing for the State Duals, Conference Championship and state individual meets. We just have to keep working hard and we should be ready. This is the part of the season where it really begins to show who has heart and I know that our team has it. As long as we do our best, we should be fine,” Parsley said.

As for qualifying for the state tournament, a win this Wednesday over Sussex Tech should guarantee Milford a spot in the field. The seeding however will be open, and Milford will likely end up facing a tough opponent if it is seeded fourth or fifth. A win over Cape, would go a long way to raising Milford’s seeding, but right now that may be a tough ask for the Buccaneers. “We can’t

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worry about seeding or anything like that, we just have to worry about our next opponent, Sussex Tech. If we lose to them, we probably won't even be in the tournament, so it's like I constantly say, one step at a time. Just keep your focus on your next opponent and don't look beyond that. If we remain focused, we should be fine," Parsley said.



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DELAWARE

DIVISION OF PARKS & RECREATION

SURF FISHING TAGS, ANNUAL PARK PASSES
GO ON SALE IN FEBRUARY

BY BETSY PRICE

The avidly sought Delaware State Parks surf fishing permits and state park annual passes go on sale next month. The surf fishing permits allow people who fish to drive on designated beaches and park there while fishing. They will be limited to 17,000 sold.

The state again this year will sell off-peak permits that allow fishing only on weekdays from Memorial Day through Labor Day, and then on any days during the off-peak months. Annual passes allow people to pay one fee to enter all state parks from March 1 through Nov. 30, when admission becomes free. This year, [Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control](#) is recommending that people apply for both online if possible.

The surf fishing permits will go on sale at 10 a.m. Tuesday, Feb. 1 and annual passes at 10 a.m. Tuesday, Feb. 15. Both usually go on sale much earlier, but this

year the sales were delayed because of nationwide supply chain disruptions. To buy online, go to www.de-stateparks.com.

If you want to buy permits or passes in person, you should expect long wait times and must wear a mask inside the building. Park office locations are listed at www.destateparks.com/FindPark. Neither permits or passes are available at DNREC's Dover office.

Annual passes costs \$35. Delaware residents 62 and older receive a discounted rate of \$18. A \$65 lifetime pass is available for Delawareans 65 and older. Reduced rates are also offered to Delawareans who receive public assistance, or who are active duty military or veterans. Active duty military personnel with an out-of-state license plate can purchase an annual pass at the in-state rate.

Those seeking a surf fishing permit for the first time also must obtain a surf fishing plate on which to affix

their surf fishing permit decal. The decal also enables the vehicle to enter state parks without paying the daily entrance fee.

Surf fishing permits are sold on a first-come, first-served basis. They are limited to protect against overcrowding park beaches and ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for all visitors. The surf fishing permit fee for Delaware residents is \$90; for out-of-state residents is \$180. Delaware residents 62 and older receive a discounted rate of \$80.

In 2021, 77% of surf fishing permits were held by Delaware residents and 23% were held by residents of other states.

The off-peak surf fishing permit will return for 2022, and there is no cap on the number that may be sold. Off-peak surf fishing permits may be used seven days a week during the off season, which runs from Feb. 1 to May 29 and again from Sept. 6 through Dec. 31. From Memorial Day through Labor Day, off-peak permits may only be used Mondays through Fridays; Memorial Day, July 4th and Labor Day are excluded. The off-peak permit also allows entry into all Delaware State Parks without paying the daily entrance fee.

The off-peak permit fee for Delaware residents is \$70, while the fee for out-of-state residents is \$140. Delaware residents age 62 and older will receive a discounted rate of \$60.

Delaware firefighters and emergency medical technicians can obtain an annual pass or surf fishing permit for free. Those who qualify must first obtain an application form from the president of their fire company or

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the Delaware Volunteer Firefighters Association and then visit a park office to receive the pass or permit.

Delaware's state parks are primarily self-funded, with 65% of revenue to operate and maintain the parks generated by park users. This revenue is used for trail maintenance, environmental and recreational programs, visitor amenities, guarded beaches, management of campgrounds, cabins and more.

For more information about surf fishing permits and annual passes, go to www.destateparks.com/Know/PassesTagsFees.



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