

# MILFORD LIVE



WATER TRUCK PRICE INCREASE



MILFORD COMMUNITY GARDEN



MILFORD STUDENTS BRING HOME GOLD

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**PHOTO BY SUSAN MCLEAN**

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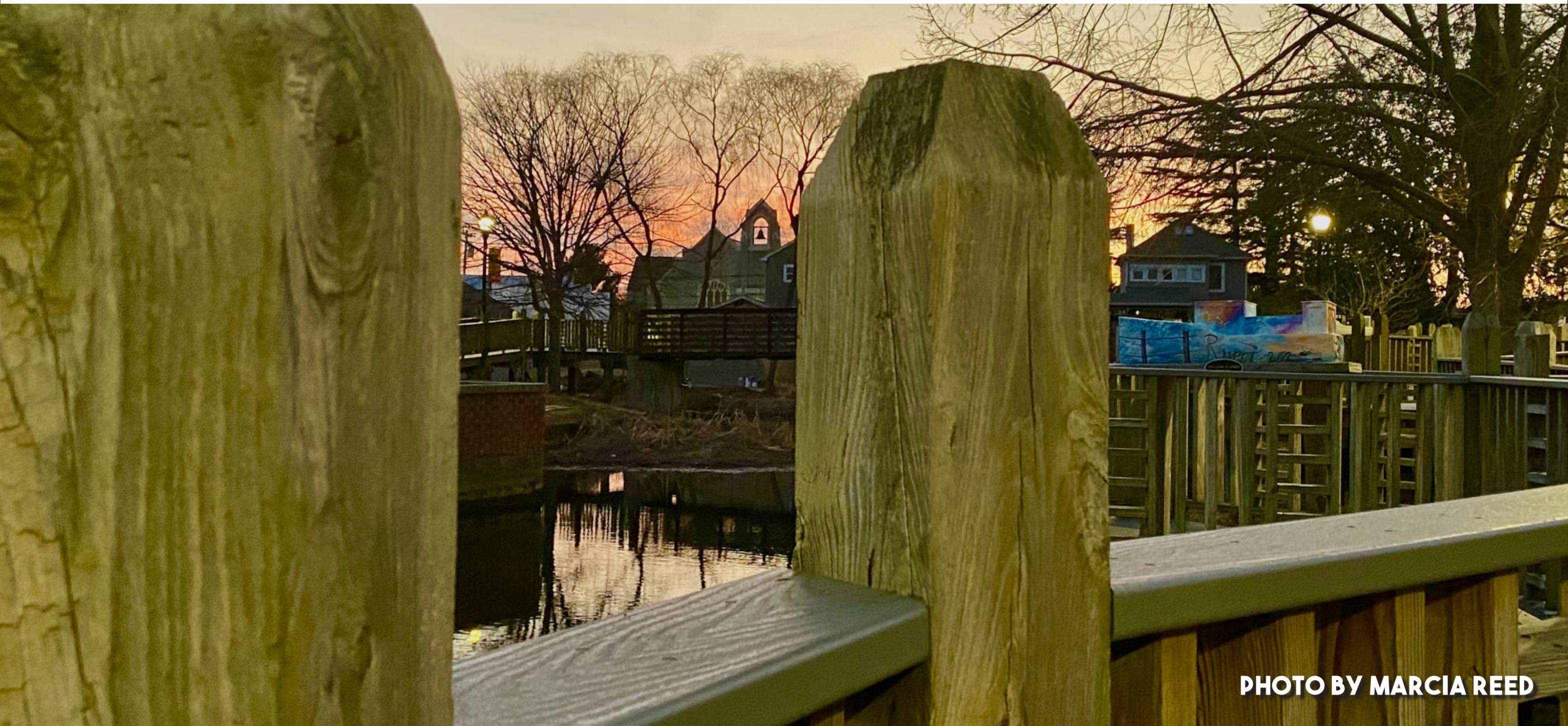


PHOTO BY MARCIA REED



# COUNCIL QUESTIONS WATER TRUCK PRICE INCREASE, RESERVE TRANSFER

BY TERRY ROGERS

At a recent meeting, Milford City Council spent considerable time discussing the purchase of a replacement truck in the water department. The truck was included in the approved Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) which was approved several months ago.

“The vehicle is Public Works Unit W-8,” Mike Svaby, director of Public Works said. “It is a 2011 Ford F450 that met the 10-year replacement cycle effective the latter part of 2021. When we put the expectation into the capital budget, it was an estimate and those prices now are revised, probably monthly, but at the time revised twice a year. We put in \$52,000 going into the CIP submission when it originally hit the replacement schedule. But a recent update that’s valid through the end of March is that it’s \$71,927. So, Public Works and finance staff worked together on funding sources and

recommend that an additional \$20,000 be supplemented to the purchase from water reserves.”

Councilman Andy Fulton questioned what the truck was used for and Svaby stated that it served multiple purposes, but primarily was used by the water department. It was heavier duty than a pickup and included a flatbed with a box that could haul heavy items.

“I know we had we had a funding request in the last meeting, I think it was from water reserves and the water reserves were pretty flat at that point, I believe,” Councilman Jason James said. “Now if I have the wrong account, wrong reserve accounts, please correct me. So once again, do we have adequate reserves available in the water reserves, what additional funding can come from there? I know this is where we say it’s primarily used from but do we have adequate funding to support

See TRUCK on page 4



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### TRUCK from page 3

this from the water reserve?”

Finance Director Lou Vitola explained that Councilman James was correct in his recollection that, in January, he reported water reserves of only \$120,000 and \$110,000 was earmarked for engineering costs at the business campus. He stated that, in short, there was adequate funding in water reserves as the February report includes areas where reserves were freed up, indicating that there was now more than \$200,000 in water reserves presently.

“So, what we’re doing is kind of the opposite of what you suggested rather than commit an expenditure from operating cash to be dumped into the reserves, we correctly parsed out the MCR, to show that there is more funding availability in the water from reserves,” Vitola said. “The only reason we like to use the reserves as the source of funding for those items is because the reserves are intended to be put away and invested to meet future capital needs. And we would need an operating budget amendment, I think, in addition to this or as part of this to make it happen in the reverse direction. And then, at the end of the day, even though water reserves were thin, they’re still at \$200,000 uncommitted reserves. It was still the best place to make direct recommendation for the last \$20,000 for the truck. Plus, we like to fund assets from the same funding source.”

Councilman James also questioned the invoice as the original budget included \$52,000 for the truck, the printed invoice from Hertrich showed \$62,927 and, handwritten on the bottom was “plus \$9,000.” Svaby explained that when the initial amount was placed in

the CIP, it was a previous budget cycle. When the time comes to replace the truck, his department reaches out to the dealership to get an actual estimate and, when it came in, it was at \$62,927. However, because they have not ordered the truck yet, the cost continues to rise.

“It is an inflationary adjustment to the price of the vehicle,” Svaby said. “There was no additional equipment. It’s just a change in the price of the vehicle from when we got our first quote which I believe was in the late fall.”

Councilman James questioned why Hertrich did not provide a new invoice and Svaby stated that they usually call to get updated pricing once the original invoice is received. He explained that he could provide council with an updated invoice once the order was placed. Councilman James asked if there was still an issue with vehicle production even though COVID seemed to be loosening up and Svaby confirmed that this was the case.

“There is such a shortage of vehicles right now at every level, but it’s definitely the heavy-duty ones that, you know, if you are lucky to get your hands on them that’s great,” Councilman Todd Culotta said. “The dealers can put whatever markup they want, and they still sell very quickly.”

Councilman Fulton asked if once the order was placed for the truck, the cost would be locked in and Svaby confirmed that was true. Council approved the transfer of \$20,000 from water reserves as well as the \$71,927 cost of the truck unanimously.



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# CULTURE



BY TERRY ROGERS

# MILFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY TO PRESENT "MURDER BY THE BOOK"

BY TERRY ROGERS

Milford Public Library will present a live production of "Murder by the Book" on Saturday, March 26 at 2 p.m. The production will include performers that have appeared on stages with the Second Street Players and the Possum Point Players as well as other venues.

"What happens when some of the world's greatest writers get together?" Carolyn Tabor, program coordinator, said. "Murder, that's what! This is part of our Broadway @ the Milford Public Library series."

The play is based on the annual gathering of the Raven Society where one mystery book will be chosen to receive the Smoking Gun Award. Membership in the club is secret and each member attends the three-day meeting disguised as a famous author. The play features writers dressed as William Shakespeare, Emily Dickinson, Edgar Allan Poe and more. However, the meeting takes a dark turn when a letter is read stating that each of the

members will die. Terror stalks the attendees as, one by one, the letter's prophecy comes true, making it appear that one of the authors is trying to kill off the competition.

The play will be presented in the Lion's Club Room. Reservations are required and can be made at <https://delawarelibraries.libcal.com/event/8879691>.

In addition to the play, the Milford Library will present "10 Warning Signs of Alzheimer's," a virtual presentation on Wednesday, March 30 at 2 p.m. Registration is required by calling 800-272-3900 or visiting <https://action.alz.org/mtg/79664687>.

On Thursday, March 31, Milford author Bob Tjaden will present "Beneath the Canopy Part II," a historical view of forestry in Delaware. The presentation will take place in the Lions Room at 6 p.m.

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# SECOND STREET PLAYERS OF MILFORD ANNOUNCES AUDITIONS FOR CHILDREN'S STAGE SHOW



**PRESS RELEASE**

Second Street Players is excited to announce auditions for the upcoming Children's Stage show, Sally Cotter and the Quest We Follow. Director Michael Forrest and Co-Director Guy Crawford along with Assistant Director Deana Forrest, are looking for (7-8) males and (12-13) females between the ages of 10-85 for the upcoming Children's Theater show. Auditions are March 20 and 21 at 6:30 p.m. at Riverfront Theater at 2 S Walnut Street, Milford, DE. Auditions will consist of a cold read from the script. Show dates are May 20-22.

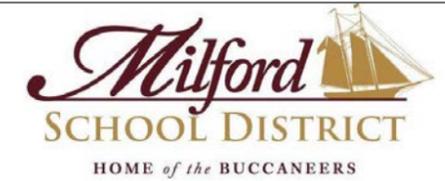
Sally has just bought a copy of the final book in her favorite series of novels. But if she finishes reading it, will the magic all be...over? As she sleeps on it, Sally once again dreams she's a student at Frogbull Academy of Sorcery. With the help of Professor Albatross Underdrawers and pals Dave and Harmonica, she must uncover the secret of the MacGuffix and face the evil

Lord Murderdeath in a final showdown. Whether you've visited Frogbull before or this is your first time in one of Sally's dreams, this wild satire of fandom, fantasy, and a certain magical book series is the loopy comedy for you.

Please check the SSP website for any audition/show restrictions prior to attending auditions and for more information go to [www.secondstreetplayers.com](http://www.secondstreetplayers.com). The presentation is possible through special arrangements by playscripts.com and additional questions can be sent to the director at [thebus1968@yahoo.com](mailto:thebus1968@yahoo.com).

Second Street Players values diversity and inclusion in casting, and in all other areas of production.

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# COMMUNITY GARDEN IS ENTERING ITS FIFTH SEASON

## PRESS RELEASE

Each year, the Milford Community Gardens has become increasingly popular. From the impacts of inflation, shortages on fertilizers, and supply chain issues, MCG expects to be very busy this growing season. While it has always been the vision to be a place of retreat and sanctuary, it is becoming apparent that it is also a place of necessity.

Rather than being a spot to use in pursuit of a hobby, the organization is focusing on the greater picture of food production. It would like to ramp up the amounts of food donated as well as engage a wider range of age groups.

“Last year, we had many gardeners that had just moved to the area wanting something to do, which is wonderful that we could provide a space for them,” Nancy Wagamon, coordinator, said. “I would like to see more interest from the younger people, those who would possibly gain employment in environmental studies or become pivotal in the agriculture industry.”

The community garden does not charge a fee, which is its most enticing aspect. It also provides seeds and tools; however, the participants are required to spend at least three hours a week tending to their plots as well as helping with other tasks around the site.

“There are times when we need all hands on deck, when wood chips need to be spread, mass plantings need to be done, tomato plants have to be pruned or harvesting is needed for donations,” Wagamon said. “Our gardeners are expected to pitch in with that. That is their payment.”

Out of 22 raised beds, there are only four now available. To reserve yours, please contact the Milford Community Gardens through its Facebook page or email Wagamon at [nansaxon513@gmail.com](mailto:nansaxon513@gmail.com). The deadline is March 19, 2022.



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# BUSINESS

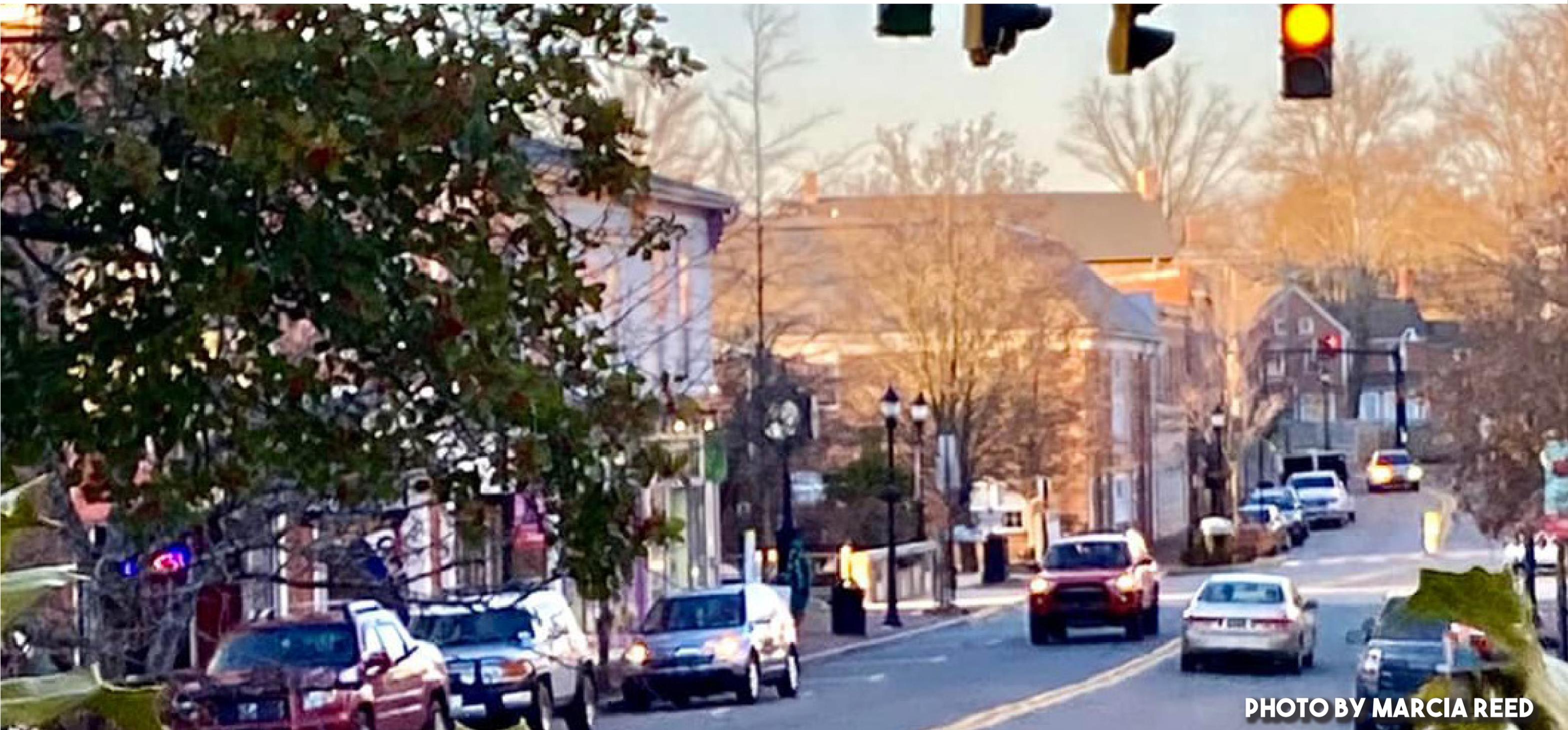


PHOTO BY MARCIA REED

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# MILFORD GROUP DISCUSSES TOURISM OPTIONS

BY TERRY ROGERS

Bonnie Hall, chairperson of the Board of Directors for Southern Delaware Tourism (SDT) recently spoke at a gathering of organization leaders and business owners about tourism in the area. After providing a background of what SDT's goals and missions are, Hall provided some details on tourism in the first state.

"Tourism is the second-leading economic engine in Sussex County with agriculture the first," Hall said. "So, when you look at what organizations or businesses or industries are bringing money into our county, agriculture is number one and tourism number two. 85 percent of SDT's budget goes into marketing southern Delaware. In 2021, SDT distributed \$498,980 in funding grants to Chambers of Commerce in Sussex County for local tourism promotion. Those grants generated \$2.3 billion in visitor spending while supporting approxi-

mately 19,750 jobs and counting. That significant tourism spending helps us diversify and stabilize our local economy and contributes to the state and local tax base. It also helps us as individual citizens because households save \$1,564 in taxes annually. Many folks don't realize that tourism does offset our own taxes. The impact of travel and tourism brings new money into our communities. For every one dollar spent directly by a visitor, another \$1.20 is generated in indirect sales to the local economy."

Hall also explained that SDT produced three videos highlighting outdoor recreation in the county, one of which was featured at the recent Ocean City Film Festival. Rob Walker, a videographer, along with Hall worked with the Zwaanendael Museum to identify black beaches

See **TOURISM** on page 11



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in Delaware. Hall explained that she worked with Nanticoke elders to discover information about beaches that were predominantly African American, including Rosedale and Jimmy Walker beach. The video highlights some of the national entertainers who visited those beaches, including Ray Charles and Stevie Wonder.

“Noah Harmon was one of our Nanticoke elders who owned all of that land,” Hall said. “Under his leadership, it had been a park where churches would go to have their picnics. He had a carousel there. He had an ice cream stand and I love hearing my elders talk about the wonderful times that family spent after church on that beach.”

One area where Hall felt Milford could capitalize on visitors to the Delaware was through ecotourism which is growing in the area. She suggested that the town look at paddling and canoeing on the Mispillion as a way to draw tourists. Jo Schmeiser, executive director of the Chamber of Commerce for Greater Milford, stated that the chamber had been working with DuPont Nature Center, Abbott’s Mill and Milford Parks and Recreation to create ecotourism opportunities.

“We’ve been talking about doing tours with Delmarva Discovery Tours,” Schmeiser said. “Unfortunately, we have hit a bit of a snag as the Mispillion drawbridge was damaged in an accident and DelDOT is talking about not fixing it, which means it will not be able to open and close. This could impact how we offer tours as a section of the river will now be inaccessible by boat.” Claudia Leister, executive director of the Milford Museum, pointed out that there were people whose livelihood was fishing who wintered their boats on the wrong side of

**See TOURISM on page 12**



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**TOURISM from page 11**

the bridge and that this was presenting a significant problem to them as well.

Hall also discussed the Culinary Coast, an initiative that partners with restaurants and other organizations in the food service industry. Through that initiative, SDT has been able to obtain coverage in national publications, including *Travel Leisure*, *Food and Wine*, *National Geographic Traveler*, *Forbes*, and more. John Huntzinger asked if there were any plans to capitalize on that in Milford.

“Something we have been working on for a few years before COVID hit was a Culinary Passport,” Schmeiser said. “One of my biggest pet peeves is when people say there is no place to eat in Milford. I am like, are you serious? We have Asian, we have American, we have Italian, and I am talking right off the boat Italian, we have Puerto Rican, Haitian, Japanese, Tex Mex, the new Surf and Turf and Benvenuto. We’re working on a project that will even make locals more aware of the many food options available as well as getting folks from out of town to realize that Milford has so many diversified options.”

Huntzinger pointed out that he was surprised at the Irish options provided at an Irish dance festival held at the First Presbyterian Church a few years ago.

“We’re beginning to see a lot of pent-up travel ambitions and demand with our visitors,” Hall said. “We’re seeing some changes. We’re getting back to a little bit of normalcy. All of us are anxious to get back visiting with our friends, our relatives to do some travel. And we’re beginning to see that demand increase already. I live in Millsboro and it’s hard for me with all the development

**See TOURISM on page 13**

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**TOURISM from page 12**

that is going on in our town, Millsboro is one of the fastest growing towns in the county, in the state, basically, but the traffic is horrific. It is horrific. So when you look at promoting tourism, and balancing it with the quality of life, it's hard. It's very challenging. But even so, we're seeing this pent-up energy and demand for travel, we know it's coming. It's beginning to materialize. That's good news, but it also presents our industry with more unprecedented challenges and by-products of the pandemic. We're seeing severe labor shortages. We're having a difficult time maintaining quality controls as it relates to our services and our guest experiences. Our shoulder seasons are the festivals that many of our chambers and towns promote and support. And those events have extended what we call the 20 earning weeks window because it helps to draw vacationers and guests to our areas to supplement that offseason revenue. But one of the most important questions we have got to ask ourselves is how do we maximize this industry without necessarily risking our quality of life?"

It is important to look at several factors when it comes to tourism, Hall stated. Organizations, municipalities and businesses must look at how much economic activity can be generated, how much local tax revenue tourism can generate and how much local spending may be generated by tourist activity. According to Hall, 58 percent of American travelers are beginning to change their plans because of changes related to the pandemic. Approximately 89 percent of Americans plan to travel in the next six months while 26 percent plan to

**See TOURISM on page 14**



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**TOURISM from page 13**

visit friends and relatives in the next year. Over 70 percent of Americans are actively engaged in travel planning and many hope to take at least three trips over the next year.

“It sounds like a lot of this is going after small groups, individuals, family groups, to encourage them to come and visit,” Huntzinger said. “When I travel, I am usually part of a tour like over to Europe or wherever. Is there any of that type of thing going on? Because when we go places, usually they have somebody with local knowledge that comes in and talks to us about the history or whatever the tour is about.”

Hall stated that a lot of towns are doing walking tours, like one in Lewes that focuses on the African American heritage of the town. Leister stated that the Milford Museum offers walking tours in the fall but that they were considering adding spring tours as well. Mitch Edmondson explained that if you travel overseas, the tour guides are licensed and they must undergo considerable training to provide the service, suggesting that small towns in Delaware could benefit from a similar program,

“If you get a call from DMI or the Chamber of Commerce who’d like to bring over a group,” Mr. Edmondson said. “If you had a list of tour guides that really knew their stuff, they could conduct the tour and I am sure people would pay for them. So, not necessarily a volunteer, but somebody who would be responsible for doing that, I think that would be a tremendous asset.”

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## WINE, DINE WITH ITALIAN COUNT AT MILFORD'S BENVENUTO

ents lived in Italy for 11 months. Subsequent generations have continued to visit each other and stay in touch.

Count Manfredo has a similar story. He met Matt Haley, founder of Rehoboth Beach-based SoDel Concepts, when Haley was lost in the Italian countryside.

Haley knocked on the count's door to ask for directions. The two became fast friends, and Haley spearheaded the effort to bring Conti di San Bonifacio wines to the United States.

Despite Haley's death in 2014, Manfredo has continued to visit the Delaware coast, but this is the first time he's attended a wine dinner in Milford.

Manfredo is thrilled to return to the state. "It's been nearly three years since I've been able to travel outside of Italy and Europe, and I can't tell you all what it means to be back in Delaware," he said. "For so many reasons, I see you all as family, and the friendships I've made in this last decade couldn't mean more to me and my wife and boys."

At the heart of the trip is his opportunity to share "something of Italy and critically newly released vintages of wines from Tuscany and Treviso," he said. "Being here in person to meet you, taste the wines together and spend a few days telling the stories of our terroir is a personal pleasure for me."

Lascano made the trip extra special by inviting him to Benvenuto. "The fact that this amazing restaurant celebrates the food and wine culture of Tuscany makes

this [visit] resonate all the more," Manfredo said.

Executive chef Jesus Zeus Gordiany will prepare five courses to complement Conti di San Bonifacio wines.

Since the menu is influenced by seasonal ingredients and availability—a concern given supply chain issues—Gordiany won't release details until the event.

"Our guests know the food is going to be fantastic, and the wines are excellent," Lascano said.

**If you go:** Five-course dinner featuring Conti di San Bonifacio wines with Manfredo di San Bonifacio; 6 p.m., March 18; \$100; Benvenuto at 249 NE Front St., Milford. Call 302-265-2652 for reservations.

MILFORD  
LIVE

BY PAM GEORGE

It's not every day that Milford-area diners get to dine with a count. But on Friday, March 18, Conti Manfredo di San Bonifacio will be showcasing his wines at Benvenuto, a Milford restaurant.

The count and the restaurant are a perfect pairing, said Diego Lascano, the restaurant's wine and beverage director. "We are a Tuscan-inspired restaurant, and his winery is in Tuscany," explained Lascano, who previously worked for the wine distributor that sells the count's products in this area. "His wine and our food make perfect sense."

Benvenuto, which means welcome, was inspired by a family friendship that started in 1955 when owner's par-

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## CITY OF MILFORD RESIDENTS TO RECEIVE SURVEY

### PRESS RELEASE

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](http://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 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](mailto:mbarger@milford-de.gov) or by visiting [www.cityofmilford.com](http://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

See SURVEY on page 19

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**SURVEY from page 18**

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 has created tools for governments, economic development organizations and nonprofits to measure community livability. Respondents to The NCS are asked to join the city's Polco panel to see the survey results and continue to engage with the city on future research.

The city of Milford, incorporated in 1807 and located in Kent and Sussex counties along the Mispillion River, is home to 10,000+ year-round residents, 500+ retail businesses and non-profits, local restaurants, parks, trails, small town events, major healthcare providers, an historic shipyard, and its own school district. Known throughout the state as River Town, Art Town, Home Town, the city celebrates the beauty of its natural resources, the ingenuity of its people and its commitment to quality of life.



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# CANNABIS LEGALIZATION MAY RETURN FOR A VOTE IN 2022, SPONSOR SAYS



BY CHARLIE MEGGINSON

It may not be the end of the line for recreational marijuana legalization in Delaware.

While Rep. Ed Osienski's **House Bill 305** was defeat-

ed in the House of Representatives after a stunning series of events March 10, the Newark Democrat said he's still hopeful that cannabis prohibition could come to an end in 2022. "I hope there's still a path forward," he said in an interview with Delaware LIVE News. "I've got to be optimistic."

One way he said it could happen is with a bill that would only require a simple majority, or 21 votes, to pass.

Thursday's bill needed 3/5 of the 41-member House because it sought to establish new fees on potential marijuana sales and licenses. That comes out to 25 votes—23 representatives voted yes, 14 voted no, and 4 did not vote. No Republican supported the bill.

Two Republicans—Rep. Mike Smith, R-Pike Creek, and Rep. Jeff Spiegelman, R-Clayton—had both signaled support for legalization. Smith had even told colleagues and advocates that he planned to vote for the bill.

Then, Smith introduced four amendments at the last minute. The amendments, among other things, sought

to make changes to who would be eligible for growing, selling and testing licenses depending on their criminal history. Only one of the four amendments passed, prompting Smith to say Democrats would be to blame for the bill's demise.

"I came here today to vote for the legalization of marijuana," Smith said. "I went to roll call on those amendments just to prove that you guys do not care about bipartisanship—and this state needs to change."

"I hope people remember this moment because you killed the legalization of marijuana."

Osienski said he was surprised that Smith decided to move forward with the amendments. Other legislators had approached him and asked if the changes Smith was proposing could be made.

"I explained that they could be problematic in my caucus, but I've always been willing to work to come to some sort of compromise so I could get the legislation passed," Osienski said. "Naturally, I said I would be supportive if it would get this bill over the finish line."

At some point before the vote, word got to Osienski that Smith planned to go "not voting" on the bill. Osienski assumed that meant Smith would drop his amendments, too.

See **CANNABIS** on page 21

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## CANNABIS from page 20

When the amendments surfaced “out of nowhere” on March 10, Osienski said he went to colleagues in his caucus to try and gather support for them with the sole focus of trying to pass the bill.

“Some felt it took steps back from the social equity part of the bill,” he said. “If those amendments were attached, I was going to lose much-needed votes in my own caucus.”

“It’s one of those things where if I address their needs, then I lose support in another direction,” he said. Osienski knew at that point that the bill faced an uphill battle to pass in the House.

“But I insisted that all the advocates and Delawareans that have been supporting the passage of HB 305 deserved to know where my colleagues—their legislators—stood on this bill,” he said. “Even though I kind of knew it didn’t have the support, you never know what could happen when somebody’s name is called.”

He said he doesn’t think Smith was trying to play any type of political trick.

“I don’t think he was fully aware of some of the conversations that were going on,” Osienski said. “Maybe he just didn’t get all the information from his colleagues in his caucus, so I understand his frustration, because he may have been misled on where we were with this and I think he’s starting to understand that now.”

Smith could not be reached for comment March 11.

Osienski said he’s going to start working immediately on other ways to get a bill passed.

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# EDUCATION





# MILFORD STUDENTS BRING HOME GOLD AT DELAWARE EDUCATORS RISING EVENT

BY TERRY ROGERS

Three Milford High School Students brought home a gold medal at the Delaware Educators Rising Conference held Feb. 24 and 25 at the Rehoboth Convention Center and Atlantic Sands. Anna Hatfield, Haley Thompson and Mystery Villa won the medal in the K-3 Children's Literature event.

"These aspiring educators have consistently earned a gold medal in the Children's Literature category for three consecutive years," Molly Chorman, MHS Teacher and advisor for Educator's Rising, said. "Any student involved in Educators Rising are eligible to compete which is made up of students in our Teacher Academy Pathway."

The three young women wrote a children's book about diversity and inclusion with a version that was translated into Spanish. All three of the students are classroom interns at Lulu Ross Elementary School.

"The Teacher Academy pathway offered at MHS is a three-course pathway starting with Human Growth and Development," Chorman said. "A key feature about this course is child development around major theorists and milestones. Many students find this class to be reflective and meaningful in their own journey of development. Teaching as a Profession follows as Level II with a focus on the role of the teacher in various settings. Foundations of Curriculum and Instruction is our third-level course centering around lesson and unit design as well as serving the diverse learner with accommodations in today's technology."

Educators Rising works with aspiring educators who reflect the demographics of their communities and are passionate about serving those communities through education. The organization works to create a new generation of highly skilled educators by guiding young people on their path from high school to college and into their teaching careers.

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# MILFORD FFA CHAPTER WINS AT DELAWARE FFA STATE CONVENTION

**PRESS RELEASE**

The Milford FFA Chapter brought 23 students to participate in the 92nd Delaware FFA State Convention that was held at Delaware State Fairgrounds on March 8-9, 2022. Milford FFA students competed against over 700 other FFA members from all across the state in Career Development Events and Leadership Development Events as well as were involved in leadership workshops and community service projects while attending the convention.

Hannah Haigh was elected to serve as a 2022-2023 Delaware FFA State Officer in the role of state sentinel. Hannah is our current FFA Chapter president and has competed in countless FFA events, community service opportunities and contests. As a Delaware FFA State Officer, Hannah will be traveling across the state working with more than 4,000 Delaware FFA members in facilitating workshops and advocating for our organization and agricultural education. Hannah is the

first Delaware State Officer from Milford FFA in 12 years!

Four FFA members from Milford FFA were awarded their Delaware FFA State Degree which requires FFA members to participate in a wide variety of state and chapter FFA events, complete at least two agriculture classes, and take part in over 25 hours of community service. The following Milford FFA members received this high award: Natalie Armstrong, Beau Davis, Hannah Haigh, and Sundene Lodge.

Miranda Walker, a 2021 graduate of Milford, received approval to continue to submit her application to receive her American FFA Degree from the National FFA Organization. As the highest degree achievable in the National FFA Organization, the American FFA Degree shows an FFA member's dedication to his or her chapter and state FFA association. We wish Miranda good luck as she submits her application to the National FFA and Organization.

See FFA on page 25



Milford School District  
Morris Early Childhood Center  
Kindergarten Registration Information

2022-2023 School Year

March 10 (Thursday)	4:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.
March 14 (Monday)	8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
March 29 (Tuesday)	4:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.
April 6 (Wednesday)	4:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.
April 12 (Tuesday)	4:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.
May 4 (Wednesday)	4:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.
May 19 (Thursday)	4:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.
June 1 (Wednesday)	4:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.
June 7 (Tuesday)	4:00p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

Important notes:

- Please call 422-1650 to schedule a date and time
  - Please indicate if you will need an interpreter
- Child must be 5 years old by August 31, 2022 to begin kindergarten
- You must bring your child for screening on your scheduled date and time to assist

Documents required for registration include:

- State Issued Birth Certificate (with raised seal)
- Proof of Residency (utility bill, lease agreement, mortgage papers) within the Milford School District
- Guardianship/custody information if applicable
- Immunization (shot) record
- Physical Exam
- Tuberculosis Risk Assessment or PPD results
- Lead test result

\*Please note: Any family who is interested in being considered for the 2022-2023 Spanish Immersion Program lottery will need to register on or before June 7<sup>th</sup>. Any late registrants will be added to the waiting list.

## FFA from page 24

Alexis Wright from the Milford FFA served as the Nominating Committee member for the Delaware FFA Association State Officer Selection Committee. She was tasked with spending countless hours interviewing and listening to State Officer Candidates and selected the 2022-2023 Delaware FFA State Officers. Thank you Alexis for your hard work at the convention!

Four Milford FFA members helped with the Day of Service Project for the Delaware FFA State Convention. Julia Popelas, Mikayla Hinson, Tabitha Lenhart and Sabrina Kadow helped pack meals for Delaware Veterans and Brae's Brown Bags.

The Milford FFA had 17 FFA members compete in either Career Development Events or Leadership Development Events which are various competitions within the FFA. The following list is all of the FFA members placed from each competition.

*Prepared Public Speaking:* Anya Phillips, 1st place (Anya will be traveling to the Big E and National FFA Convention this fall to compete regionally and nationally.)

*Employability Skills:* Natalie Armstrong, 1st place (Natalie will be traveling to the Big E and National FFA Convention this fall to compete regionally and nationally.); Matthew Sacks, 4th place

*Extemporaneous Speaking:* Veronika Moore, 2nd place; Mason Foxwell, 5th place

*Farm Business Management:* 3rd place team; Kolin Thompson, 8th place individual; Ezra Sharp, 9th place individual; Amber Potter; Victoria Wilson

*Milk Quality and Products:* 6th place team—Elizabeth Geyer, Jacob Wilkins, Austin Burgholzer, Austin Wilson

*Agricultural Sales:* 7th place team—Colin O'Connor, Nathan Fausnaught, Sofia Lopez, Beau Davis

Overall, FFA brought home many awards and is excited to continue all of their hard work in the future. The FFA advisors are Caitlin Rozell, McKenzie Hardy and Joshua Bethard.



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# HEALTH



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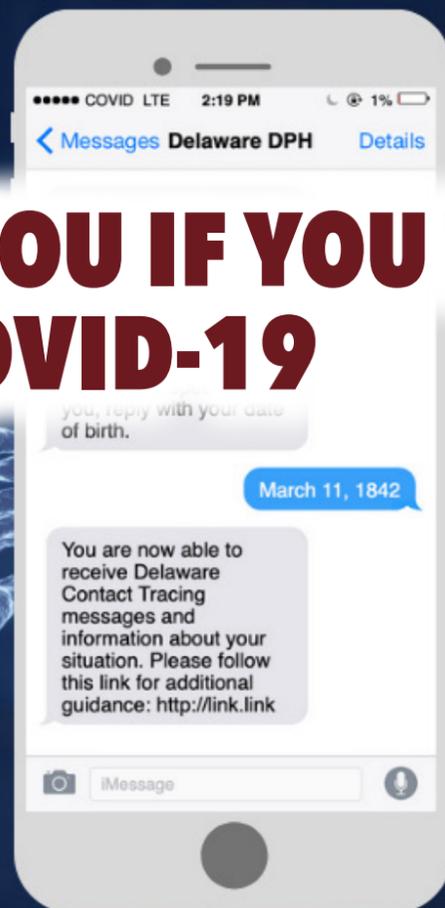
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# DPH WILL TEXT YOU IF YOU TEST POSITIVE FOR COVID-19



BY CHARLIE MEGGINSON

The Delaware Division of Public Health now plans to text you if you have COVID-19.

The DPH Contact Tracing Team has launched a pre-call text messaging initiative to individuals who test positive for COVID-19. It involves sending a text message to COVID-positive individuals and providing initial isolation guidance and recommendations through a secure web platform before they receive a call from the Contact Tracing Team.

It serves as an early notification system, getting people to isolate themselves more quickly instead of

having to wait for a call from a member of the Contact Tracing Team for instructions. A pilot program that tested the service on a small number of individuals launched on March 1, 2022.

DPH uses a unique identification number that will appear as the sender of the text on the receiver's mobile device or cellular phone. Texts coming from the number 37821 are legitimate SMS messages from DPH.

The initial message lets the individual know that DPH has critical information for them and asks them to reply with their date of birth. If the information matches

DPH's records, the person will receive a return message that they can now access messages from the Contact Tracing Team. If the date of birth does not match DPH's records, the person will be asked to call the Contact Tracing Team with a reference number provided in the return text.

The initial message also provides a link to the Contact Tracing page on the coronavirus website to help individuals verify that the initiative is legitimate. DPH will not ask you for additional personal information through text message.

Once the person's identity is confirmed, they will be able to access isolation guidance on an internal DPH webpage via a separate link.

"We wanted to improve speed and efficiency with contacting positive cases," said director of the DPH Contact Tracing Team Tracey Johnson. "Our team has worked on the project for months to develop a delivery service that is both easy to use and secure. Mail or email may be too slow in alerting a person of their status concerning the virus. With the national increase in spam calls and a tendency for people to ignore unfamiliar phone numbers, we felt it was important to develop a safe, least intrusive way to get in touch with them. Early notification and guidance for COVID-positive persons can lead to earlier isolation, and a reduced chance of spreading the virus."

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE](#)

# BILL TO GIVE UNDOCUMENTED KIDS FREE HEALTH INSURANCE MOVES FORWARD

BY CHARLIE MEGGINSON

Delaware could soon guarantee health insurance for undocumented children if a bill released from committee March 9 passes in the General Assembly.

**House Bill 317**, sponsored by Rep. Krista Griffith, D-Fairfax, would require the Department of Health and Social Services to develop and operate a medical coverage program for children who are not eligible for either Medicaid or **CHIP** because of their immigration status.

According to the bill's fiscal note, it would cost Delaware taxpayers just over \$2 million in 2023, \$6.95 million in 2024 and \$7.31 million in 2025.

The fiscal note assumes that by 2025, 2,000 children will be enrolled in the program at a rate of \$3,780 per child per year. That would require more than half of the state's 5,000 undocumented immigrant children not to participate in the program. The proposal has been dubbed the "Cover All Delaware Children Act."

The bill was unanimously voted out of the House Health & Human Development Committee and will proceed the House Appropriations Committee, where it is expected to receive a full, public hearing as the governor did not include funds for the program in his proposed budget.

"Essentially what this does is it will provide health insurance coverage by the state to children who are undocumented, whose families cannot afford to purchase health care," Griffith said. "Many of us take health insurance and its life-saving benefits for granted, but for hundreds of Delaware children, there is no viable option for them to get covered."

According to Griffith, there are approximately 5,000 undocumented children in Delaware. Many undocumented children have parents who earn low wages and are not offered employer-based health insurance.

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