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LAWSUIT FILED OVER BRIDGE REPAIRS



JOB FAIR MARCH 22



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HEADLINES



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BY TERRY ROGERS

On December 28, 2021, a dump truck pulling an excavator on a flatbed truck struck the overhead portion of the Mispillion drawbridge causing extensive damage to the machinery, support members and some of the mechanical components. As a result, the bridge cannot be lifted to allow larger boats to travel under the bridge. Over the past few months, DelDOT has indicated that the cost to repair the bridge and make it operable again may be prohibitive and there have been talks of leaving the bridge stationary. This has led to a lawsuit filed by Joan and Sudler Lofland, Russell Brown, Kevin Beam and Jason Watson requesting that the bridge be opened.

“This action arises out of Delaware Department of Transportation’s refusal to perform its statutory duty of repairing or replacing the bridge that spans the Mispillion River in Milford, Delaware, which was damaged when it was struck by an excavator towed by a dump truck operated by Juan Elias Diaz for JD’s & Sons Masonry & Home Improvement, Inc.,” the lawsuit reads. “DelDOT

LAWSUIT FILED OVER BRIDGE REPAIRS

alleges the significant damage sustained by the bridge prevents it from being opened, or if opened, then closing again, thereby preventing commercial fishing and recreational boats owned by Plaintiffs from traveling the Mispillion River and gaining access to the Delaware Bay where they are able to engage in crabbing and fishing to support their livelihoods and to engage in recreational activities.”

The lawsuit then demands that DelDOT open the bridge by April 1 so that the plaintiffs can access the bay. It also seeks an injunction to repair or replace the bridge so that it remains operational once it is open.

The Loflands own the Vinyard Shipyard and have restored three yachts originally built in the shipyard in the 1920s and 1930s. The Loflands use the yachts for recreational purposes and display them at boat shows around the area. Because the boats are permanently docked at the shipyard, they now have no access to the Delaware Bay due to the closure of the bridge. The other three plaintiffs: Brown, Beam and Watson are commercial fishermen who docked their boat at the shipyard during the winter for repairs and maintenance. During the season, Brown docks his boat in Leipsic while Beam and Watson dock their boats in Slaughter Beach during the summer.

“Founded in 1896 by Wilson M. Vinyard, the Vinyard Shipbuilding Company was the first Milford Shipyard to build motorized vessels,” the lawsuit reads. “The shipyard built numerous ships for the government during World War II including Navy subchasers and Coast Guard

patrol boats. From 1927-1951, the company, led by Sonny Vinyard, also build world class yachts. Afterwards, the shipyard was used primarily for the maintenance and repair of wooden boats. In 1995, Joan and Sudler Lofland purchased the historic shipyard and have refurbished buildings to a museum-like quality with hopes of one day having it publicly operated while maintaining the facility as a functional and operational shipyard.”

Since purchasing the property, the Loflands have used the property as one of the last remaining wood boat repair facilities and have provided services to fishermen, assisting them with maintaining and repairing their commercial vessels during the winter. The boatyard has a unique rail system that allow them to remove boats from the water and work on them under cover during the winter months. Once spring arrives, the boats are then taken from the shipyard and travel down the Mispillion River to the Delaware Bay.

“Plaintiffs Brown, Beam and Watson fish for crabs, conch, oysters and fin fish,” the lawsuit reads. “If the boats do not make it out to the Delaware Bay by April 1, the fishermen will miss the spring run of the crabs and lose a significant amount of money. In the past, commercial fishermen have grossed as much as \$100,000 solely during this spring run.”

The lawsuit also alleges that Alister Probst, South District Maintenance Engineer, told Mr. Lofland that DelDOT was considering renting a crane to lift commercial boats, transport them over land and place

See BRIDGE on page 4

BRIDGE from page 3

them in the water at Slaughter Beach. He also indicated there was consideration of leaving the bridge open and detouring traffic until it could be repaired. There was no discussion of transporting the historic yachts nor were these options discussed with Brown, Beam or Watson. The lawsuit states that the three plaintiffs do not want their boats lifted and transported over land.

“The value of the Shipyard is the use of the facility to maintain, store and use it as a home port for classic wooden yachts that were built in the shipyard,” the lawsuit reads. “There is no other place in Delaware that can accomplish this function and allow for the preservation of these boats. Without the ability to travel the Mispillion River, the yachts and the shipyard have no commercial value to the Loflands.” The lawsuit states that the historic yachts cannot be removed and trucked over land. If the bridge does not open again, the yachts would be permanently captured in the upper Mispillion with very little value other than as museum pieces.

Neither DelDOT or the plaintiffs in the lawsuit responded to requests for interviews.



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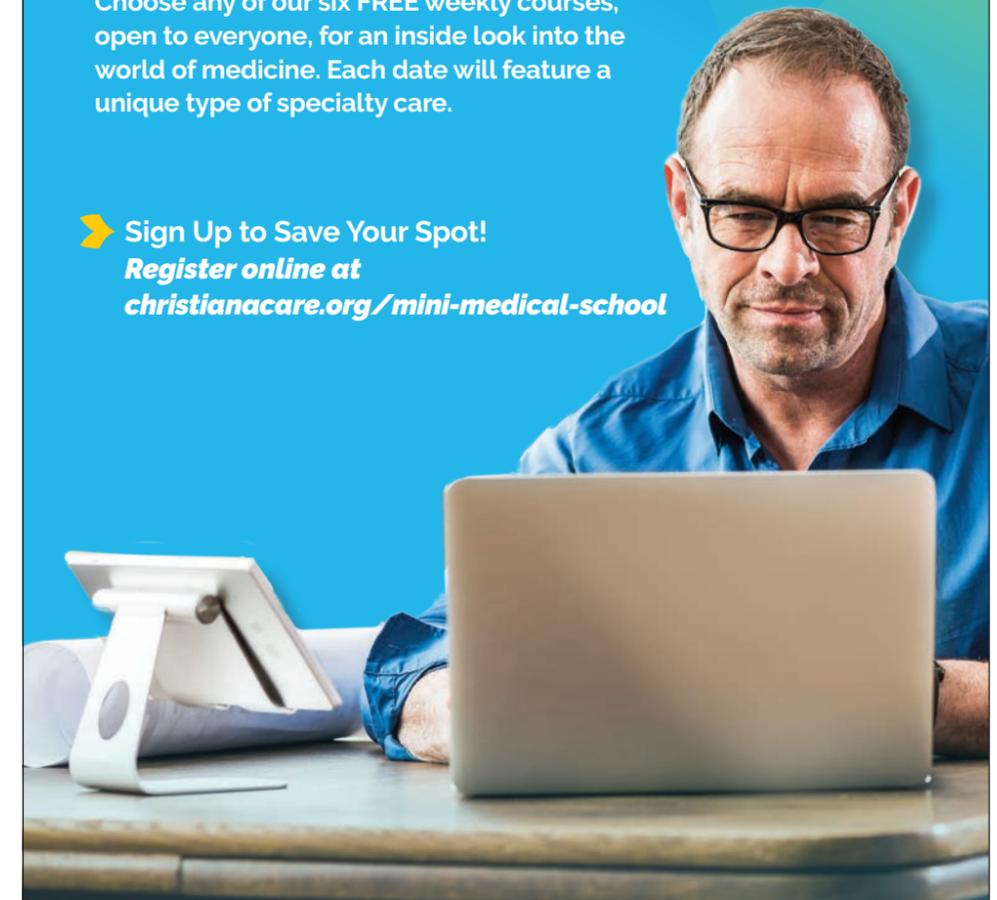
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CULTURE



PHOTO BY MARCIA REED

SECOND STREET PLAYERS: AUDITIONS FOR SUMMER MUSICAL, OLIVER



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PRESS RELEASE

Second Street Players is announcing auditions for Lionel Bart’s Musical *Oliver!* This award-winning musical adaptation of the classic Dickens novel “Oliver Twist” springs to life with some of the most memorable characters and songs ever to grace the stage.

Directors Steven Haber and Melissa Brenner have announced open auditions for performers from age eight and up for a variety of roles. Please come on time as we will be auditioning people in groups. Be prepared to move and have an appropriate song prepared to sing either a Capella or with CD accompaniment. Auditions will be held Sunday and Monday, March 27 and 28 at 7 p.m. at the Riverfront Theater (2 S. Walnut Street, Milford).

Performance dates will be Fridays through Sundays, July 8 through 24. Additional information will be

posted on our website at www.secondstreetplayers.com. Contact the directors at sc_haber@verizon.net or melissabrenner9@gmail.com for additional information.

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

For a synopsis of the show *Oliver!* and parts or other information about Second Street Players, visit www.secondstreetplayers.com. The show is supported, in part, by a grant from the Delaware Division of the Arts, a state agency, in partnership with the National Endowments of the Arts. The Division promotes Delaware arts events on www.DelawareScene.com.



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MILFORD COMMUNITY CLEAN-UP PLANNED

BY TERRY ROGERS

Downtown Milford Inc., the Chamber of Commerce for Greater Milford, and Milford Parks and Recreation have joined together for the Second Annual Milford Community Clean-Up planned for Saturday, April 9, 2022, from 8:00 to 10:30 a.m.

“We will begin in Bicentennial Park, picking up litter and other items throughout the park and downtown Milford,” Jo Schmeiser, executive director of the Chamber, said. “We can also provide any group who needs volunteer hours with a community service or volunteer hour letter.”

Morning refreshments are provided by the Milford Church of God and all supplies necessary to pick up trash will also be provided to volunteers.

“We have been doing this for several years,” Schmeiser said. “We missed 2020 due to the pandemic but did do a social-distanced event in 2021. This event is a lot of fun and helps us keep our city looking beautiful.”

The event is a great way for clubs and organizations to earn volunteer hours. Schmeiser stated that it is also a great family event, encouraging young people to keep the environment clean.

Gov. John Carney champions the Keep DE Litter Free initiative and DelDOT reports that in 2021, after the initiative began, over 51,000 bags of trash had been collected along Delaware roadways. In addition, more than 6,800 tires, 3,500 signs and 250 appliances were removed through the cleanup efforts.

Registration is suggested and the first 200 who register will receive a free t-shirt. Anyone interested in participating in the clean-up event can visit <http://cityofmilford.com/537/community-clean-up> or call 302-422-3344 or 302-839-1180. The event is rain or shine.



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BUSINESS

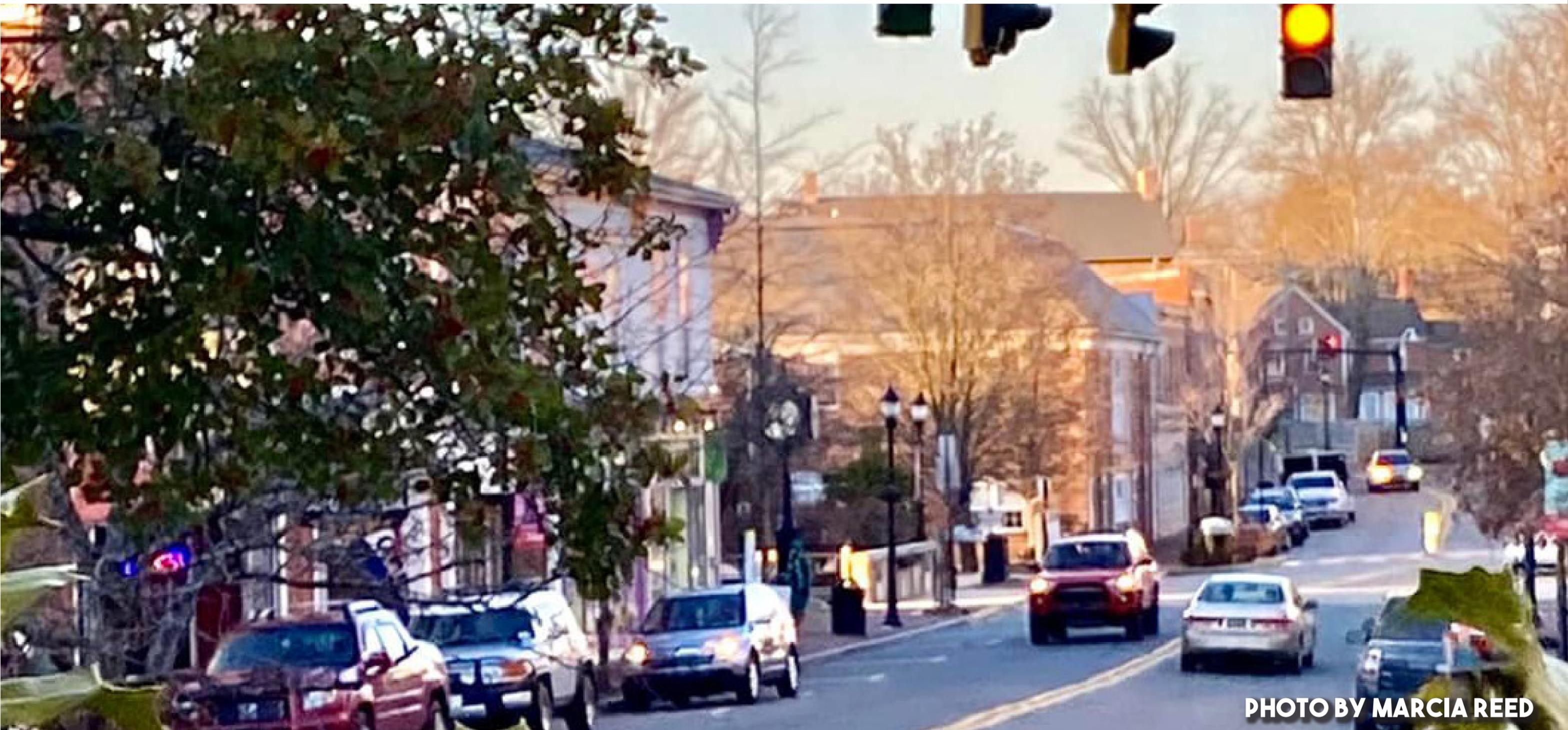


PHOTO BY MARCIA REED

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MILFORD WELLNESS VILLAGE TO HOST JOB FAIR

“We will be offering employment opportunities for positions that include counseling, housekeeping, nursing staff, rehab specialists, clerical and more,” Brian Dries of Nationwide Healthcare Systems, said. “Participating employers include Polaris Healthcare & Rehabilitation Center, La Red Health Center, Nurses ‘n Kids, Kidz Ink, Banyan Treatment Centers, PACE Your LIFE, WeCare, The Lab at Seascape, Compassionate Care Hospice and the Village Café.”

Milford Wellness Village, which is owned by Nationwide Healthcare Services, is an innovative, multi-use development initiative committed to delivering integrated health, education and other services to the city of Milford, Kent and Sussex counties, and the state of Delaware. Coordinated services are being provided by a mix of like-minded organizations and tenants who equally share the desire to improve the health and well-being of area residents and reduce overall costs.

The conference center is located off King’s Highway. There will be snacks and light refreshments provided at the job fair. For more information, visit <https://milfordwellnessvillage.com>.



PRESS RELEASE

Milford Wellness Village is seeking candidates for several positions, including RNs, LPNs, CNAs, housekeeping, maintenance and more. As a result, they will hold a campus-wide job fair on Tuesday, March 22, from 10:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. in the campus conference center located at 21 West Clarke Avenue in Milford.

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KISS MY AXE PLANS EARLY APRIL OPENING

and say “You’re standing in it.” But the lights came on one day when I was here with Zack (King) when this spot was occupied by the gym. I said to Zack that the Kiss My Axe logo would look great in that window and he said they were looking for a tenant.” King and his wife are the owners of EasySpeak.

Kiss My Axe got its start when Harris was visiting a friend and the friend’s wife wanted to go axe throwing. It was late at night so they could not find a location that was open. When Harris woke up the next day, he decided to build something in his backyard. A few days later, he purchased a trailer and they began creating Kiss My Axe. The owner of Delmarva Powder Coating and DPC Fabrications, Harris and his friend, Brandon Henderson, spent nights and weekends creating a trailer interior they felt would make everyone feel comfortable, using burnt woods and bright colors rather than cold industrial designs they were seeing in other axe-throwing venues.

“On one end of the wall we will have five traditional target boards that are drawn on,” Harris said. “They will be lit with LED lighting and the entire space will have a club-like atmosphere. At night we can lower some lights and bring others up. There is video equipment, DJ system and speakers. The other end will have our digital target boards, something no one else in Delaware does. We have a duck hunting game where ducks fly around, and you try to hit them. We are still using the

See AXE on page 11

BY TERRY ROGERS

What began as a backyard activity that eventually grew into a thriving mobile business, Kiss My Axe will open its first brick and mortar location in Milford. Owner Scott Harris hopes the new location, next to EasySpeak on Milford-Harrington Highway, will be open the first week of April if all goes to plan.

“The mobile trailer’s success took me by surprise,” Harris said. “I just didn’t realize how accepted it would be. We’ve been all over Delaware, in DC a few times, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Maryland. But everywhere we went, people asked “Where is your shop?” I would laugh



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AXE from page 10

same axe, but this has a higher quality. We have a Zombie Attack and Tic-Tac-Toe axe-style is amazing. It just takes it to a whole other level, and it is probably the game my family plays at home the most. We have our Christmas tree games because I love themed games.”

Individuals are welcome to come in and try their hand at axe throwing and Harris plans to make the location available for parties as well. He explained that it is a great team building exercise. Outside food can be brought in for private parties or can be ordered from EasySpeak whose staff will bring it to the shop. Although they are a BYOB facility, they are not allowing outside alcohol but it may be purchased at EasySpeak and brought over to the axe-throwing shop.

“It doesn’t take a lot of power to throw the axes,” Harris said. “People think you really need to be winging it, but you don’t. The axes are sharp but not razor sharp. We are using cottonwood which is a much easier for axe throwing. We are also using kiln-dried pine because cottonwood is not readily available around here. You can’t just go to Home Depot and buy it. There is a saw mill that does cottonwood in New Jersey and I am working with him. He gathers it up as lots are cleared so that it is still wet and soft when I get it. We keep it wet by spraying it every hour with water and a special solution that kills mold and mildew.”

In addition to the axe throwing games, Harris plans to install a few video games, including a punching bag game which he felt fit with the theme of his shop. He does plan a grand opening celebration once Kiss My Axe is open.



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PHOTO BY ANN LEBENGOOD

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DEMEC PROVIDES MILFORD WITH RENEWABLE PORTFOLIO PLAN

BY TERRY ROGERS

The Delaware Municipal Electric Corporation (DEMEC) provided the city of Milford with its Renewable Portfolio Plan as required by the Delaware General Assembly. This plan provides members with details on the organization’s approach to achieve renewable energy on behalf of members. Milford, along with Newark, Middletown, Seaford, Lewes, Smyrna, New Castle and Clayton are members of DEMEC.

“DEMEC is a public power utility incorporated in 1979 as a not-for-profit political subdivision of the state,” a memorandum provided to City Council and signed by Kimberly A. Schlichting, president and CEO of DEMEC, read. “DEMEC provides joint services to its members including, but not limited to wholesale electricity from

a portfolio of member-owned generation assets and purchased electricity from other generators through staggered short, medium and long-term power contracts to meet the full requirements of its member municipal utilities. Also, identifying and developing renewable sources of electric generation to reduce carbon emissions and diversify power supply sources as well as to manage the compliance obligation created by the Municipal Renewable Portfolio Standards.”

The Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) is state-mandated and obligates retail sellers of electricity to include in its resource portfolio annually increasing amounts of electricity from Qualifying Renewable

See DEMEC on page 16



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 7th. Any late registrants will be added to the waiting list.

DEMEC from page 15

Energy Resources through 2035. In 2010, DEMEC along with its members, voluntarily joined the Delaware RPS bill which required an increase in the RPS target to 25 percent by 2025 with at least 3.5 percent provided by solar sources. In addition, the bill required municipal electric companies to develop a comparable program beginning in 2013 and provided a method to freeze the RPS compliance obligations if costs exceeded three percent of the total cost of purchased power for Renewable Energy Credits and one percent for Solar Renewable Energy Credits.

“In February 2021, new legislation was enacted that changed the RPS statute,” Schlichting wrote. “The most significant changes were an increase in the RPS target to 40 percent by 2035 with at least 10 percent from solar sources as well as revising the RPS limits from a total cost-based trigger to a product availability trigger and a requirement for municipal electric companies to develop a comparable program by 2022.”

In 2011, DEMEC committed to purchase all the renewable energy and associated RECs from the Laurel Hill wind farm in north central Pennsylvania under a 25-year agreement. Laurel Hill can generate enough electricity to power more than 20,000 homes. There is only one significant wind generation system in Delaware, the turbine located at the University of Delaware Hugh R. Sharp Campus in Lewes. RECs generated by that turbine are purchased by DEMEC in an agreement with the University’s College of Earth, Ocean and Environment.

“DEMEC is a leader in the deployment of Solar Renewable Energy Resources in Delaware,” Schlichting

See DEMEC on page 17



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DEMEC from page 16

wrote. “DEMEC has fostered over \$7.8 million in overall investment in renewable energy with over \$2.5 million in grants for residential and commercial solar installations. In Milford, there have been 178 installations of residential and commercial installations, generating 2,095 kW PV capacity. In addition, DEMEC has invested in several medium and large scale projects in Clayton, New Castle and Newark. Milford’s Solar Farm went commercial in the fourth quarter of 2012 and produces enough energy to power 1,300 homes.”

Based on documents provided by DEMEC, the organization plans to provide non-solar energy at 21.5 percent, solar energy at 3.5 percent with a total of green energy production of 25 percent by 2025.



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MILFORD MAY RECEIVE UP TO \$500,000 FROM SUSSEX COUNTY



BY TERRY ROGERS

In early March, Sussex County Council voted to earmark more than \$12 million in realty transfer taxes (RTT) to assist municipalities throughout the county. Milford was notified that they were eligible for between \$100,000 and \$500,000 that may be used for public safety, economic development, infrastructure and capital projects.

“The county’s finances are very strong. When you’re lucky enough to be in that position, you should do what you can to help those around you and do some good,” County Council President Michael H. Vincent was quoted as saying in a press release. “This is revenue that’s above and beyond, and by setting aside some to protect more open space and the rest for our towns, we are making an investment in the future.”

Sussex County will use the funds for land preservation in an effort to promote more open space, although Milford will not be restricted in using the funds solely for that purpose. There is a match component with the funding. Any amount over \$100,000 will require the city to match the amount received by Sussex County.

The city must apply for the funds by May 31 and the request must include what project the funds will be used for and which category it fits into, as well as the amount of the grant and where the city will pull the match funds. Approval is expected on June 30 and, once the project the funds were used for is complete, a full report detailing what was done, the final cost and an accounting of all funds must be provided to the county.

Council was presented the information at the March 14 meeting, but there was no discussion and no indication whether they would be applying for the funds.



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EDUCATION





DELAWARE SCHOOLS TO TURN TO SCIENCE OF READING TO IMPROVE LITERACY RATES

BY JAREK RUTZ

Delaware's once highly-ranked reading scores are worse than those in Mississippi. Much worse.

In 2002, Delaware fourth graders outperformed Mississippi's by 21 points on national scores, with the First State well above the national average. Today, after a decade of emphasizing training teachers in the science, Mississippi students handily outperform Delaware's, which has dropped below the national average.

Less than half of Delaware's students can read at their grade level, including about one-quarter of White students and half of Black and Brown students, attendees at the Delaware Reading Summit heard March 17. That struggle follows them into their adult years, speakers said. Eight University of Delaware football stadiums could be packed with the 160,000 Delaware adults who can't read.

Legislators and education nonprofits want to change that by integrating the **science of reading** into public schools. The science of reading is defined as cognitive brain research that shows how students learn to read, said Monica Gant, chief academic officer for the Delaware Department of Education.

Senate Bill 133, signed into law in June 2021, was the first of several pieces of planned legislation that focused on the science of reading, Gant said. Sponsored by Sen. Laura V. Sturgeon., D-Hockessin, SB 133 created a literacy plan that would train teachers to be able to engage students in the essential components of evidenced-based reading

instruction. Many current teachers were trained under out-of-date materials, or programs that since have been proven not to work and may even be counterproductive, said several speakers at the summit.

SB 133 requires elementary school, early childhood education or special education teachers or reading specialists to provide instruction aligned with the science of reading by July 1, 2023.

Among other things, the science of reading says that nearly all children learn to read in the same way no matter their ethnicity or background; that one in five kids is dyslexic; and that fundamentals such as focusing on phonics, are key to success and later performance.

SB133 specifies the number of hours of professional development that teachers must complete to be considered proficient in teaching using the science of reading. Since SB 133 became law, more than 700 teachers and educators have taken part in that training, Gant said.

"We know reading is a complex process, more than just saying words out loud," said Mark Holodick, Delaware secretary of education, who supports both the shift in reading instruction and making it universal. "We need evidence-based research on how to promote language development."

Sturgeon announced during Thursday's Delaware Reading Summit that she will introduce an additional three pieces of legislation to address Delaware's literacy rate.

A former teacher and chairman of the Senate Education Committee, Sturgeon says she plans to introduce one resolution and two bills.

The resolution would strengthen the certification requirements of teachers applying to Delaware schools. Educators would be required to be well versed in the science of reading and able to construct lessons that closely align.

See **LITERACY** on page 21

LITERACY from page 20

The University of Delaware produces about one-quarter of Delaware's teachers, and they already have studied the science of reading, said Dr. Gary T. Henry, dean of the school, told the summit. But other schools may not teach it, he said.

The first of Sturgeon's bills, which she plans to file this week, calls for the Department of Education to curate a list of high-quality materials and resources related to the science of reading. Schools across Delaware then would have five years to implement materials from the curated database.

The second bill, which Sturgeon hopes to file in coming weeks, focuses on screening children and instructors' ability to identify any learning delays in their students' reading, such as dyslexia or autism.

Kathleen Seeman, a reading specialist at the University of Delaware, said that one in five kids are dyslexic, but more than half do not know they are and just think they are dumb. She also said that illiterate people are 67% more likely to go to prison and be on welfare.

The ability to read can help children overcome trauma more than any other metric, while an inability to read can add to that trauma, she said.

Seeman said a literacy rate of 95% would reduce the number of people who go to prison and end up in court systems and social welfare programs, as well as improve the state economy, send more people to college, help the state attract businesses and improve the quality of life in Delaware.

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GRANTS ALLOCATED TO BRING HIGH-SPEED INTERNET TO EVERY DELAWARE HOME

BY CHARLIE MEGGINSON

Every Delaware home will have access to high-speed wired broadband internet thanks to \$56 million in federal infrastructure grants. Grants were awarded to Comcast, Verizon and Mediacom—Delaware’s three largest service providers. Comcast will receive \$33.1 million, Verizon will receive \$11.8 million and Mediacom will receive \$11.1 million.

With those funds, the three companies will extend their existing coverage areas to serve more than 11,600 Delaware homes and businesses that do not have access to high-speed broadband service. Construction is expected to begin in the next few weeks.

“Stable, high-speed internet connection is important for all Delaware families, students, and businesses,” Gov. John Carney said in a press release. “Now, with the availability of federal funds, we are on our way to giving Delawareans across the state access to connect to school, work, health care, and more.”

Over the next 36 months, Comcast, Verizon and Mediacom will build out and extend current infrastructure to deliver fixed, wireline internet access with transmission speeds that, at a minimum, provide 100 megabits per second download speed and 20 megabits per second upload speed.

Delawareans can find out if their area has internet access and report addresses that don’t have internet access to Delaware’s [Broadband Hub](#). The Delaware Department of Technology and Information plans to update the interactive map with expansion project updates and real-time data. Addresses reported as lacking service during the construction phase will be included within the current project.

The broadband infrastructure grants are part of the \$110 million commitment to broadband infrastructure Carney announced in Aug. 2021.

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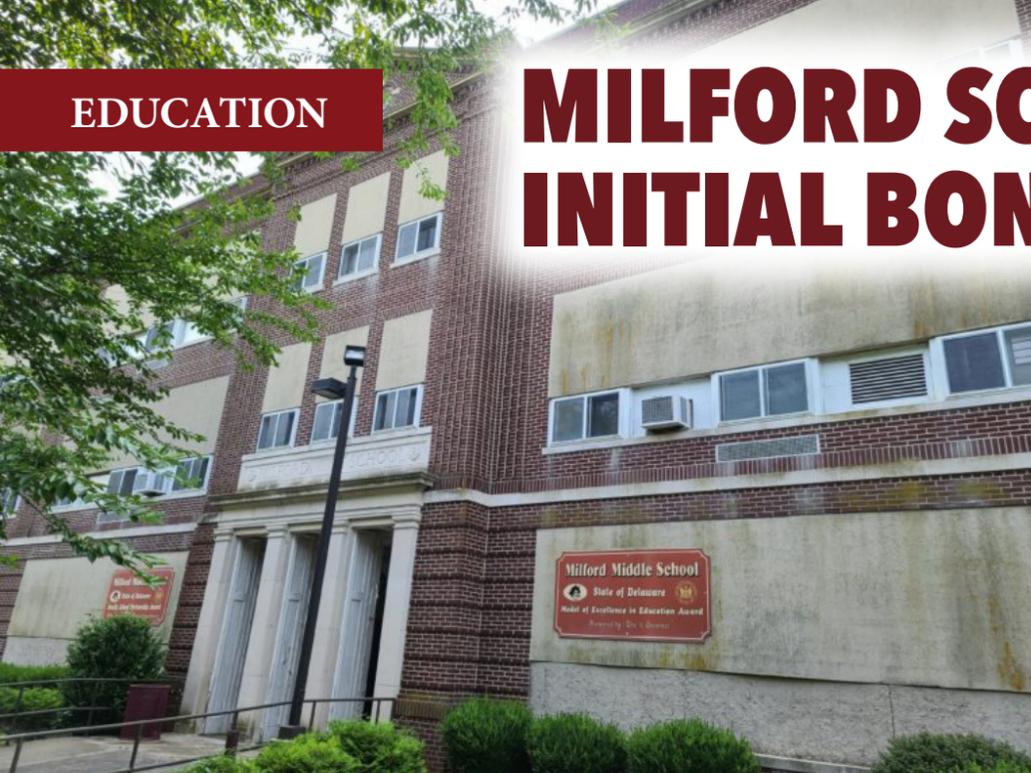
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Funding for the initiative comes from the federal American Rescue Plan Act and Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. The grants cover up to 75 percent of the capital construction costs, with the internet service providers contributing a minimum 25 percent match.

Selections were made based on an efficient edge-out strategy extending the services of current vendors to close broadband gaps as outlined in the Delaware Broadband Strategic Plan.

MILFORD
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MILFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT ISSUES INITIAL BONDS FOR RENOVATIONS



BY TERRY ROGERS

Milford School District Board of Education voted unanimously to approve the sale of a 20-year bond issued to the state of Delaware in the amount of \$1,743,900 at a rate of 2.28%. This is the local share of the estimated costs for the renovation of the former Milford Middle School.

“Delaware Code Title 29 Chapter 75 provides in part that the Board may issue bonds for the purpose of raising money to pay the local share set forth in such school construction bond Authorization Act for the purpose of school construction,” Dr. Sara Croce, chief financial officer, read from the proclamation presented to the board. “Now therefore, be it resolved that the Milford School District Board of Education authorizes the sale of a 20-year bond issued to the state of Delaware in the amount of \$1,743,900 at a rate of 2.28% per annum. This amount represents the local share of the fiscal year 2022 Bond and Capital Improvements Act allocation to revitalize Milford Middle School authorized by the

October 27, 2021, referendum.”

School Board President Jason Miller reminded the board that he had expressed concerns about material costs at a previous meeting.

“I had expressed concerns about material costs and our ability to complete the project with continuing escalation of material costs,” Miller said. “And at that time, you had said that should material costs go up that we would simply go to the state and they would adjust and therefore all those extra funds would essentially be coming from the state and I just want to clarify that that is still the case.”

Croce stated that the finance office is in discussions with the Department of Education as well as the construction management firm regarding applications for market pressure funds that will be issued in June as part of the bonding capital improvements process. She explained that those discussions will continue, but the district was already in the process of proactively applying for the market pressure funds.

“And that was one of the reasons why we got that group on board as early in the process that we did so that they could help us through navigate and make these excellent recommendations and get us the market pressure funds,” Miller stated.

Croce explained that this was the first of three bond issuances the board would need to approve. The board approved the sale of the bonds unanimously.



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RANDY HOLLAND, RETIRED DELAWARE SUPREME COURT JUSTICE, DIES AT 75

BY CHARLIE MEGGINSON

Retired Delaware Supreme Court Justice Randy J. Holland has died. He was 75.

Holland was appointed and reappointed to the Delaware Supreme Court by three different governors and served with four different chief justices during his tenure on the bench. At his appointment to the state's Supreme Court in 1986 by Gov. Mike Castle, Holland became the youngest person ever to serve on the state's highest court. He would go on to become the court's longest-serving justice at his retirement in March 2017.

Throughout his 30 years on the bench, Holland wrote more than 700 reported opinions and several thousand case dispositive orders.

"The Delaware Judiciary mourns the loss of one of our greatest public servants," said Chief Justice Collins J. Seitz, Jr. who served with Justice Holland from 2015 to 2017. Holland "wrote cogent and authoritative opinions in all areas of the law that have withstood the test of time," Sietz said. "He championed the highest ethical standards for Delaware lawyers and judges."

Holland was born on Jan. 27, 1947, in Elizabeth, New Jersey, the oldest child of James Holland and Virginia Holland. Shortly after his birth, Holland's family moved to Milford, Delaware. He attended Milford High School, where he was quarterback and captain of the football team and a catcher on the baseball team. While in high school, he met his future wife, Ilona E. Holland.

Justice Holland graduated from Swarthmore College and the University of Pennsylvania Law School, where he received the Loughlin Award for legal ethics. He later earned a Master of Laws in Judicial Process from the University of Virginia Law School and was awarded honorary Doctor of Law degrees by the Delaware Law School and Swarthmore College.

Justice Holland taught corporate governance, appellate practice and state constitutional law and frequently focused on business ethics.

After leaving the Delaware Supreme Court, he became Senior of Counsel in the Wilmington office of Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati.

In 2018, the Randy J. Holland Family Law Endowment was created in his honor for the Combined Campaign for Justice to fund a full-time fellowship position to serve the family law needs for low-income families.

U.S. Sen. Tom Carper reappointed Holland to his second term on the bench when he was governor.

"His longevity on the bench was a result of his broad knowledge of the law and of our state, and the respect and professionalism he upheld on and off the bench," Carper said. "Delaware—and its judicial system—is a better place because of his service on the bench."

Gov. John Carney called Holland's passing a "tremendous loss for our state."

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HEALTH



PHOTO BY ROBERT J. NEARY PHOTOGRAPHY

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BY TERRY ROGERS

The Jazzercise group that meets at the Milford Library on Saturdays came together with a goal of getting fit using the well-known exercise program. Over time, however, the members have created a group that not only supports each other, but provides support to the local community as well.

“So, there’s a community within Jazzercise. We like to do a lot of things together. There are lunches, there’s coffees and book clubs,” Glenenise Parks, who leads the Jazzercise class each Saturday, said. “I think that’s testament to how you know how wonderful the program is, is that it’s been over 50 years, you know, it’s been going, I mean, how many programs can you say has been going on that long? And the question is why, right? And a lot of it has to do with what you see within our group, which is it’s a diverse group of women that get together to have fun. We support one another.”

JAZZERCISE GROUP PROMOTES MORE THAN EXERCISE

Parks explained that the group has a strong desire to support the local community. Over the past few years, they have raised \$3,505 for the Delaware Breast Cancer Coalition and a recent Jazzercise Glow Party held at the Milford Senior Center raised \$652.

“I had talked to someone at the Milford Senior Center about some things they were doing and they reached out to me explaining they were trying to raise money,” Parks said. “And the only way that I know I can contribute is with Jazzercise. We can do a glow party as a Jazzercise fun day. You know, we all work out, have a great time. And for every \$10 contributed, I matched that.”

The group held a coat drive for South Dover and were able to purchase 100 coats valued at \$3,000. They donated toys, food and clothing in Milford and Dover to Code Purple with a value of \$850. Members knitted scarves, hats and gloves for Caring Hearts Helping Hands. The Jazzercise group has donated funds to Girls on the Run and every year instructors do warm up routines prior to that 5k. Parks gives a free 45-minute Jazzercise class to children on Monday nights at the Boys and Girls Club. Their support is not just limited to outside organizations, however.

“I’m the featured artist at Peninsula Gallery for the month of March,” said Rosemary Connelly, who attends the class. “And when I told someone, she organized a carpool and about 14 women came down. It was like a

Jazzercise field trip. We had lunch and it was just a really fun.”

Parks pointed out that all the people in the class have a strong need to give back, explaining that not only did she volunteer at the Boys and Girls Club, but that Connelly volunteered at the Mispillion Art League.

“So that’s all the things that you see and I mean, we support one another and enjoy each other,” Parks said. “But also, I mean, unfortunately, there’s things that happen where we need support, with deaths, illnesses, that kind of thing. We get together for that as well. Cards are given out, emails just to see how you’re doing, phone calls. It’s a full support system. It goes beyond the health aspects of Jazzercise. It’s full circle. Mind, body and soul.”

Jazzercise is held the third Saturday each month from 10:15 to 11:00 a.m. in the Lion’s Room at the Milford Library. The cost is \$10 cash per person or search www.Jazzercise.com for Milford Library to pay in advance.





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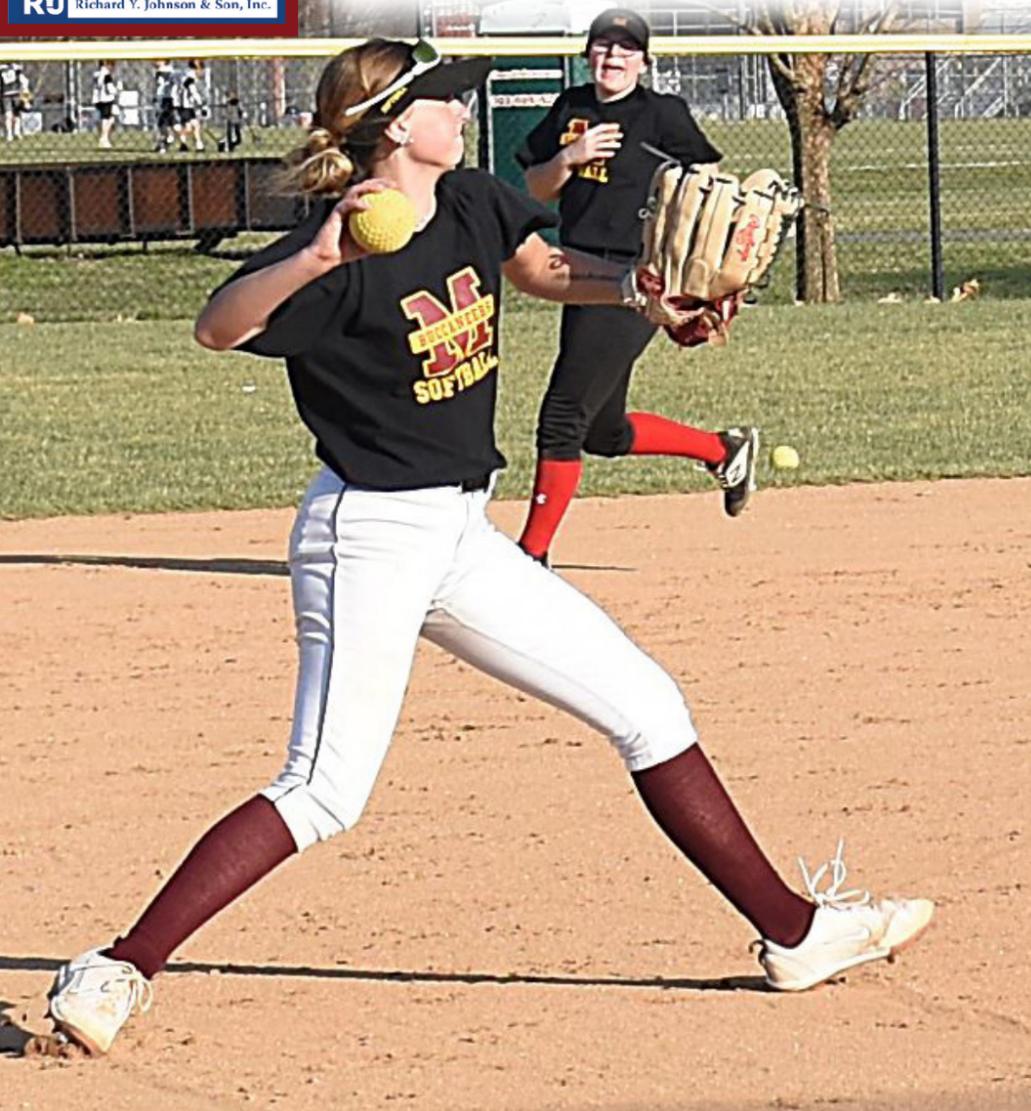
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PHOTO BY KEVIN EICKMAN

SOFTBALL LOOKING TO IMPROVE

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BY KEVIN EICKMAN

A 2-16 record is simply not the standard that Milford softball has set for itself over its history. One thing to understand is that when you play a sport long enough, seasons like that happen. That was just the case last season for Milford, but it is something that third-year coach Mackenzie Reed believes will help the team grow this season. “If you just look at the season, you really have to doubt how bad we were. I get it, your record is what it is. However, if you look at how close we were in

so many games, it was amazing how well this team hung together. Then, to have one of your two wins actually be a tournament win tells you everything you need to know about their spirit,” she said.

Watching the Buccaneers practice on a crisp early fall afternoon, it was easy to see that Milford is very enthusiastic about the upcoming season. Players were communicating, during batting and fielding practice. The ball was coming off the bat lively and the defense was just as stout, making for some good intrasquad competition. As Reed addressed her players following practice, she explained to them the philosophy that they will need moving forward. “Every pitch, every play is a challenge. While you may not win every challenge, as long as you learn from your failures, the number of successes you will have grows.”

One of the more interesting aspects of the team is while they are not young, they have some players that have not played for a year or two, so it is easy to understand that it may take some time for them to mesh as a unit. “I really can’t call them young, it’s just that when you add players that haven’t been a part of your program for a while, there are going to be some growing pains. Saying that though, everyone is getting along great, it’s very encouraging to see,” Reed said.

Pitching and defense are always key elements in softball. Milford is looking forward to junior pitcher Khyliah Reynolds taking the next step in her development. With her sophomore season behind her, Reed thinks that

See **SOFTBALL** on page 30



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SOFTBALL from page 29

Reynolds could be in for a solid season. “You can’t teach experience; it is something that has to be learned. Last year, you could see with every game that passed, Khyliah was improving, I have high hopes for her this season.”

Milford will have two captains this year with seniors Ashley Bullock and Abigail Justice providing the cornerstone of what Reed hopes will be a productive team on both sides of the ball. This will be the second year that Bullock will be a captain with Reed being surprised at how well the senior took to her leadership role last season. “I wouldn’t say she was quiet, but when she realized she was expected to be a leader, she took to it right away. Abigail is a natural leader too, so I am very excited about the leadership we have.”

The schedule does not do Milford any favors to start the season. The first four games will be on the road, with three of those contests at Smyrna and north of it. “It’s not the ideal way to start the season, traveling early in the year can be a bit taxing, but we will be ready for it,” Reed said.



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BASEBALL READY FOR SEASON

Mason Morris, Aydin Zimmerman and Shawn Saxon are expected to produce both offensively and defensively this season. “It’s great to have those guys back for one final season. These guys are all quality players and can be an example to some of our younger guys that will be pressed into playing. I have high hopes for this core group both as players and leaders, we really need them to step up this season,” Brannan stated.

While the four players are very accomplished as position players, they can pitch as well and will be crucial to how far Milford can go this season. “I know that we are asking a lot from these players, but they are the type of quality people that can fill those roles,” Brannan said.

Juniors Nick Hurd and Evan Gregg will be expected to contribute more this season. While there have yet to be any games this season, Brannan has really liked what he has seen from the pair so far. “Both of them have looked good in practice and in the cage, I really have a lot of faith in them and believe they will be key contributors this season.”

The further down the lineup you go, the younger players will be asked to step up and do more this year. Sophomores Jack Hudson, Reid Lofland and Josh Miller will be counted on as well this season to try and step up. “They have the talent, they just need the experience, and they are going to get plenty of that this season,” Brannan said.

One of the issues that Milford has seemed to have a problem with was the team lacking a sense of urgency at the start of the season. Over the last few years, it has been a question that Brannan has been trying to find the answer to. He believes a big part of it falls on the players. “At the end of the day, it’s my job to instruct them and guide them. However, I can’t give focus to them, that is something that they have to do for themselves. I really believe they understand that and hope we can get out of the gate quickly this season,”

Getting out of the gate quickly might be a bit tough for Milford this season as it starts the season against three tournament teams from last season. The Buccaneers will open at Smyrna Thursday, before hosting St. Georges Saturday at noon.

MILFORD
LIVE

BY KEVIN EICKMAN

With COVID seemingly in the rearview mirror for now, the Milford Buccaneers baseball team is gearing up for a “normal” season. “Last year was pretty crazy, but at least we played. It will be nice to have full crowds back and have the real feeling of a normal season,” Coach Nick Brannan said.

Milford finished last season with a 10-8 record and a first-round tournament 3-2 loss at the hands of Caravel Academy. Having graduated a pair of starting pitchers with the graduation of Alex Mergner and Dale Osterman, it will be all hands on deck when it comes to taking the mound for Milford this season. “While we may not have some of the big arms we have had in the past, we have some very smart pitchers who we will be asking to eat innings for us,” Brannan said.

One area of strength that Milford will have to turn to is that of senior leadership. The Buccaneers will have four seniors who will be starters for them. Trent Lofland,

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