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**BUCHER WINS SCHOOL BOARD
ELECTION**



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**MAY 17, 2022
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PHOTO BY MARCIA REED

HEADLINES



PHOTO BY RUTH HOUSTON-BEHRENS

BUCHER WINS MILFORD SCHOOL BOARD ELECTION

BY TERRY ROGERS

The Department of Elections has announced that Matt Bucher has unofficially won the At-Large seat on Milford School District Board of Education. Bucher received 1,217 votes (66.83 percent) com-

pared to their challenger, Jalyn Powell, who received 604 votes (33.17 percent). Bucher will be sworn in at the district's reorganization meeting in July.

"We have a victory!" Bucher said. "I want to thank, firstly the Milford School District community, including Ellendale, Houston, Slaughter Beach, Lincoln and all rural points for the trust they have placed in me and my candidacy. Many, many thanks to the dozens of volunteers who joined together to make this campaign possible and successful. Lastly, but in the chief place, I want to thank the parents and front-line teachers who shared with me their many stories and their passion. Your faith in me I take very seriously and will endeavor to serve with humility, but firm in the convictions on which I campaigned."

Powell congratulated her opponent on his win and thanked her team for their hard work and dedication. On social media, she posted that, in her eyes, she had

not lost since Milford saw one of the highest voter turnouts in recent history for a school board election, stating that she felt she showed millennials and GenZ that they had a voice and that they were not too young to make change. Her post stated that although she did not get the seat on the board, people could expect to see her "in the stands."

"School board elections are as important as any other. While my platform was advocating for the students, teachers, families and community members, my mission was to increase voter turnout and show the community that they have a voice and it's important they use it," Powell said. "With almost eight percent voter turnout, I guess we can say mission accomplished but still it is just not enough. Now, it's time we use our voice at the school board meetings. We must get involved. Your age or your background shouldn't be a barrier for engagement or activism, and I believe we showed just that. My experience has been nothing short of amazing and anyone who made their way to the polls should be proud of themselves because they made an impact whether the results went in their favor or not, their voice was heard."

In addition to the election between Bucher and Powell, Scott Fitzgerald was also up for election for District D but ran unopposed. He will be sworn in at the July meeting as well.

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CULTURE



PHOTO BY VINCENT J. DESKIEWICZ SR.



BY TERRY ROGERS

If you have ever wondered about the history of some of the unique buildings found in the northern section of Milford, you can learn more at the “Walk Through the Past” event sponsored by the Milford Museum. Noted historian and author Dave Kenton as well as several other historians are taking a leisurely stroll through the downtown area on Saturday, May 28, starting at the museum at 9 a.m.

“We will make stops at the Old Red Mill and peninsula site on the Riverwalk,” Nicole Rogers, museum operations director, said. “Other stops include the Parson Thorne Mansion and cemetery and the early tannery district on Mill Street. Many people are unaware that Walnut Street was not always the main business district in Milford, so Dave will provide details about the original area where businesses were located.”

Along the route, Kenton will provide information about the interesting people who not only lived in many

WALK THROUGH THE PAST WITH HISTORIANS

of the historic homes along the way, but the businesses some operated out of those homes. Walkers will learn more about the Towers, the Central Hotel, the Pikus Building and more. Kenton will also provide details on some historic buildings that are no longer part of Milford, but were an important part of the town’s history.

“We welcome questions about any of the people or places in Milford,” Rogers said. “Not only will Dave be leading the walk and providing details about the buildings and their architecture, but several other historians will also be along to offer more details about the people who helped shape the town we see today and provide some fun facts about those people.”

Tickets for the event are \$10 each and includes refreshments inside the Century Club during the walk. This is a walking tour and, although the plan is to walk leisurely, it will travel throughout downtown, out to Parson Thorne and back to the museum. Walkers should wear comfortable shoes, a hat and bring bottled water. All proceeds from the event go to support the exhibits and mission of the Milford Museum. Tickets can be purchased at [HERE](#).



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BUSINESS



Q2 PHOTO BY MARCIA REED



MILFORD ARTIST DETAILS TWO YEARS LIVING IN ITALY IN NEW BOOK

“We started thinking, wouldn’t it be really cool if you could spend more time in a place because two or three week vacations just weren’t long enough, right? And we just had this desire to experience life in another culture, and learn what’s it like to live in another country?” Connelly said. “Because my grandparents all, well three, at least were born in Italy. One was born in New York, but her father was born in Italy. So, I’m 100% you know? And so, I wanted to go there. I wanted to experience life, to go to the towns where they were born and take the time to research, find ancestors and look for roots and that sort of thing. So, Italy because we loved it anyway. And it had that that connection to my family roots that it just had to be Italy.”

The Connellys packed up and moved to Italy, spending two years in four different Italian regions. This adventure is now a book, “Two Years in Italy”, created from a blog Connelly kept while they were living abroad. Connelly wanted to have something she could hold in her hand, but she also wanted to provide information to friends, family and others who may travel to the region.

“It was really just something I wanted to have, and I wanted to share it with people who know me and who would be interested in following it and also people who

BY TERRY ROGERS

One of the themes of Rosemary and Bob Connelly’s married life was to “live cheap and make art.” The couple always enjoyed traveling and knew that when they did retire, they would want to visit many exotic places, leading them to live frugally while living and working in Phoenix in order to be able to spend their retirement years making art and traveling. When their children grew up and left home, they traveled to many different places, including England, Ireland, Germany, France and Italy, just to name a few. What they realized was that a two- or three-week vacation was simply not enough time to enjoy an area.

See ITALY on page 8



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are interested in travel,” Connelly said. “It’s just lots of good information in it about places to visit and things that you can do that most people might not even know about, because living there and meeting people, like we had our landlords who were lifelong Italians took us places and showed us things that most tourists probably wouldn’t even know about. It was quite an amazing thing and to be able to share that with people who love to travel and who might get something out of it.”

The couple spent about six months in each of the four regions of Italy. They started their adventure in Umbria, which she said is known as the “Green Heart of Italy.” It is close to Tuscany which most people are familiar with. They lived in a hill town known as Perugia, a place chosen because the Connellys knew they would not immediately have a car. The town had buses and trains that would allow them to explore easily. It is also an area with schools which meant they would be able to find a furnished apartment easily since landlords catered to students. It also meant that language classes were readily available. From Perugia, the Connellys traveled to Sicily as that was where Rosemary’s grandparents originated.

“We found just the most wonderful apartment and landlords; it was right on the Mediterranean Sea. We could just walk across to the beach. It was awesome,” Connelly said. “And so then from Sicily, what we did was we were north in the summers and south in the winters for a couple of reasons. One, it was cheaper to go south in the winters and weather was better in the north, we expected it to be colder, not as good as it would

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ITALY from page 8

be in the south through the winter. It was still cold but not nearly like when we left Perugia for Sicily, it had snowed already and by the time we got to Sicily, we were just in in sweaters.”

Once they left Sicily, the couple then traveled to Verona which is near Venice. Connelly pointed out that although all the places they stayed were in Italy, they were each very different from each other, from the architecture to the food. After Verona, the Connellys went to the Amalfi Coast, staying in a town called Vietri Sul Mare. Although they had always planned to stay just two years abroad, the birth of a new granddaughter helped pull them back to the United States.

“In the middle of our planning, we suddenly became grandparents. So it was really a challenge to say, oh my gosh, what do we do? Do we go?” Connelly said. “We were living in Phoenix at the time and my son and this new baby were in Richmond. So, we thought, you know if we stay in Phoenix, we won’t get to see her that often anyway. And so, we kind of made the sacrifice to go because we’d had this plan for so long and everything was in place. But that was another reason for us to come home. I mean, we have two children. My son had this great new baby and, we still other family back here. Right? We never planned to live there forever.”

Writing the book had its challenges, Connelly explained. Because blogs are usually posted from newest to oldest, she had to completely reformat them into a reverse order. Connelly’s husband, Bob, passed away in 2015, which meant reading some of the passages were

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NOTICE

The Milford School District is again applying for funding, under IDEA B P/T (6-12) and IDEA-B 619 P/T Preschool, to provide special education services to those students identified as disabled. For the period of **July 2022** through **December 2023**, the District proposes to use this funding to assist in their students’ programming.

1. The IDEA B P/T (6-12) funding will facilitate screening, evaluation and service delivery to eligible students ages 6 through 21.
2. IDEA B 619 P/T Preschool funding is requested to facilitate the delivery of services to children with disabilities birth through kindergarten.

We will be presenting information regarding the Child Find Process at the upcoming Federal Programs meeting to be held at the Milford Central Academy on May 19, 2022, at 6:30.



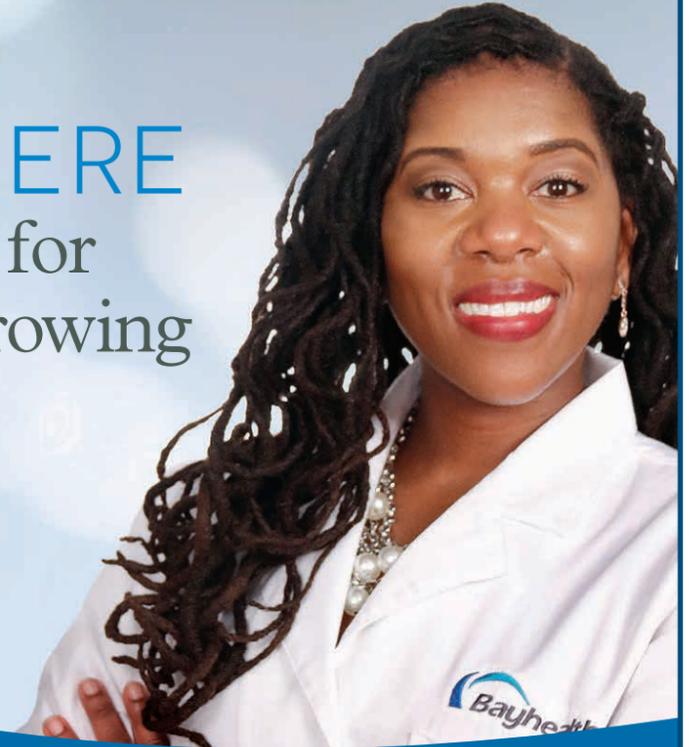
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ITALY from page 9

difficult, but Connelly also felt it was cathartic.

“Just going through that again, and the memories of what we did and, and all the details. I’m so glad that I wrote as much as I did. Because you know how it is later, you don’t remember everything,” Connelly said. “So I’m really glad that I was as prolific as I was. And because it was so immediate, you get a sense of the excitement that I felt just every day. Every day we had the attitude that we were just going to enjoy whatever everyday brought to us. And we said yes to things we weren’t even sure what we were doing. Our landlords and friends would say we’re going to do such and such we’re going to this place, why don’t you come along with us? And we were like sure. We’re not sure exactly sure what, but we’re gonna try it anyway. It was just saying yes and appreciating everything that came in front of us.”

The book is written in a journal format and each passage gives a sense of the excitement Connelly felt as they prepared to try something new as well as the plans made as their adventure unfolded. There is a map of the country with locations pointed out as well as an introduction that explains why they chose to spend two years in Italy. A prelude includes excerpts from Connelly’s handwritten journal with details on planning for the trip and the couple’s excitement about “leaping off that cliff and leaving America for foreign countries.” The book also contains some of Connelly’s original artwork as well as photographs, many taken by her late husband, a talented photographer.

“We weren’t really fluent. We had a little bit of Italian

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ITALY from page 10

in our repertoire you know, in our experience, but weren't really fluent," Connelly said "So we knew we were going to take classes at the school for foreigners there and we knew that that there was a lot of English spoken and that's another reason to start there. There are four chapters, so each of the places is its own chapter."

The book is available on Amazon in both paperback and Kindle eBook formats. Connelly is holding a reading at the Mispillion Art League on Thursday, May 26 at 6:30 p.m. Books will be available for sale at the reading.



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FOIA RULES AND CHANGES DISCUSSED AT COUNCIL



BY TERRY ROGERS

Milford City Council continued to discuss potential changes to the way meetings may be run in the future. City Solicitor David Rutt explained more details on how council could shift to a consent agenda as well as how Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) rules applied to some of those changes. Council also passed one minor FOIA change unanimously.

“The rules and procedures. There are several sets here. This came out of the workshop and identifies first, the order of business. bigger changes so the public hearings will be on Monday. The finance report will be on the second Monday only. And then there will be the breakdown of the different reports,” Rutt said. “Ward reports will be the second Monday only. So those are the primary changes on the order of business for the meetings. Also, then there’s the order of business for the workshops, and then the order of business for the executive committees. Again, these were the results of discussion at the workshop.”

Rutt suggested that council begin allowing him to conduct public hearings and suggested that any applicant who must speak in front of council be told that they must limit comments to 15 minutes. He stated that there may need to be exceptions to that rule if the public hearing was for a complicated matter, but in general, all applicants should keep comments to 15 minutes. Public comment would be limited to a total of 15 minutes with each speaker limited to three minutes to provide comment on agenda items only.

“Under City Council public comment procedures, it says public comment will follow any staff report and any discussion by the city council. That could be read as after every staff report, there’s public comment. And after every discussion by council, there’s public comment,” Rutt said. “I think it just should be reworded that all staff reports, and city council discussion will occur prior to any public comment. But it can be read pretty wide open there. And I don’t think that’s what anybody intended to have at that. But otherwise, this does set forth the guidelines for public comment, which should be made known to the public.”

Councilman Andy Fulton suggested that the rules regarding public comment be sent out to residents in their utility bills and City Manager Mark Whitfield stated that they could put the information into the monthly newsletter. Rutt also pointed out that public comment was not a free flow conversation, meaning

See FOIA on page 15



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council could not respond to the comments. In addition, each person was limited to one time at the podium. When they were finished and returned to their chair, they could not return to add to their comments.

“The other thing is the consent agenda,” Rutt said. “This would be part of the regular meeting. A consent agenda groups items that are not controversial and allows council to only vote one time to approve those items. Executive session will need a motion and then anyone who needs to be in the session will go in. It will be behind closed doors but you have to follow FOIA as to what can be on the agenda. Once the discussion has taken place, you cannot take a vote in executive session. You must go back into regular session. At that point, once the doors are open, is when the motion is made back into open session. The motion is made and any vote that needs to be taken would be.”

Councilman Brian Baer expressed concerns about ward reports only being on the second Monday. He felt that constituents should not have to wait two weeks for their concerns to be brought before council. Councilman Fulton and Councilman Jason James agreed. Councilman James pointed out that they were there to represent the people and that there should be no limits on that representation.

“Here’s my thing. You guys make these motions based on the conversation that occurred in the executive session. So, I don’t know five years down the road, that you’re going to know the conversation was,” City Clerk Terri Hudson said. “I don’t take minutes live. I can’t. I can’t keep up with it during the meetings, so that exec-

utive session recordings can be destroyed once the meeting minutes are done because they are on a separate Zoom.” She pointed out that she sometimes used the recording of executive sessions to confirm what the motion in open session related to.

Rutt pointed out that the current rules were not to record executive session. However, in order to provide Hudson with better information when the motion was made, he suggested that council give a more detailed motion. Hudson explained that the motions often provided no details but simply stated that council was making a motion based on the discussion in executive session. Councilman James stated that it appeared Hudson just needed more details in order to create accurate minutes.

“It could be something like ‘I move to approve the hiring of Joe Smith, electrical director,’ if that was something discussed in that so you don’t have to go into all the details,” Rutt said. “We move to approve the acquisition of land.”

Council will vote on the final changes to their meeting procedures at a future meeting.



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CITIZEN SURVEY RESULTS RELEASED



BY TERRY ROGERS

In January, Milford residents were asked to complete a National Community Survey, a questionnaire created by a nationally benchmarked survey company designed to gauge their satisfaction with municipal services while also learning what residents want to see when it comes to new initiatives. This survey is used by the city of Milford to develop their Strategic Plan.

“We mailed a random sample to 2,400 households in all four wards of the city,” Melody Barger, University of Delaware Fellow, said. “We also sent postcards advertising an online copy as well as a paper copy of the questionnaire. We also put a link on the website to allow other residents to participate. We received 432 responses, 286 online and 146 paper, a response rate of 19 percent. The desired response rate is 15 percent and three percent of mailings were returned due to bad addresses.”

Barger explained that the survey looked at 10 factors throughout the city, including economy, mobility, community design, utilities, safety, natural environment, parks and

recreation, health and wellness, education arts and culture, inclusivity, and engagement. She explained that almost every response showed a downtown since the last survey was completed in 2019, but all results were consistent with national benchmarks.

As for the overall feeling of safety in Milford, only 63 percent of those who responded felt Milford was safe while 76 percent rated police services good, down from 82 percent in 2019. Only 67 percent rated emergency preparedness good or excellent while 68 percent rated fire prevention as good or excellent, down from 75 percent in 2019. In 2019, 94 percent felt fire services were good or excellent and that dropped to 88 percent this year. In addition, crime prevention was rated at 61 percent, down from 65 percent and only 84 percent felt safe in the downtown commercial area of the town, down from 87 percent.

“Overall economic health in Milford was rated good or excellent by 46 percent, but down from 51 percent since 2019,” Barger said. “Milford as a place to work was rated 57 percent, up from 55 percent in 2019. Economic development was rated good to excellent by 43%, just down from 49% in 2019. And the economic impact in the future was considered to be somewhat or very positive by 24%, which is down by 30%. And I think that we can safely say this is related to the pandemic. employment opportunities were considered very good or excellent by 43%, which is up from 34%. A good improvement in the overall quality of business and service establishments were considered good or excellent by 55%, slightly down from 57% in 2019, and variety and service and business establishments was considered good or excellent by 43%, which was a little lower than the benchmark in terms of mobility and infrastructure.

Utilities were also ranked in the survey with 74 percent believing garbage collection, 43 percent affordable high speed internet access, 50 percent drinking water, 75 percent sewer, 62 percent stormwater management and 66 percent power rated good or excellent. Drinking water improved from 45 percent in 2019. Only 48 percent of respondents felt Milford’s transportation system was good or excellent while only 61 percent felt the town was a good or excellent place to walk, a number that was down from 65 percent in 2019. Traffic flow was only considered good or excellent by 67 percent, up from 65 percent and ease of traveling by car was only good or excellent by 67 percent.

See **SURVEY** on page 17

SURVEY from page 16

Only 38 percent felt there was good or excellent options in housing variety while only 31 percent found the availability of affordable housing good or excellent. These were both down from 2019. Only 39 percent found that Milford had good or excellent public places while only 56 percent felt there were good or excellent parks and recreation activities. The respondents also found fewer fitness opportunities, recreation opportunities, city parks, recreation programs or classes and recreation centers. However, walking trails improved by 10 percent since 2019.

“So we also asked in the NCS a couple of custom questions, which we discussed among staff, counsel, what we were interested in asking,” Barger said. “The answers to those interested in additional recreation access points along the Mispillion River were considered essential, important, by 65%. More outdoor public events and festivals by 72%. Organized tours like bike tours and birding 47%, shuttles to Slaughter Beach 41%, additional bike lanes 52% and quality of parks and recreation opportunities was 73%. When residents were asked how they thought about public art in Milford, most of them either liked it or wanted more so, I guess we need to get some more art. When residents were asked how important the following recreation opportunities were, parks and playgrounds, said 81% said they were essentially supportive of trails and pedestrian paths, 74% hardcourt sports, 57% turf and soft court sports, 52% swimming pool and splashpad, 57% indoor recreation, 78% skate park and amphitheater 52%. And when residents were

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SURVEY from page 17

asked, how will they have support for a historic preservation ordinance 95% strongly or somewhat supported the ordinance.”

Mayor Archie Campbell asked if COVID may have been responsible for the lower ratings this year compared to 2019 and Barger stated that she was not sure. She pointed out it could be related to COVID, or it could be economic factors. She also explained that the benchmarks nationally were also lower than they were in 2019. Councilman Andy Fulton stated that if the benchmarks were lower nationwide, it was likely due to the pandemic.

When asked by Councilman Mike Boyle if the 432 were distributed evenly across the city, Barger explained that she was unsure of the exact number, but she recalled that one ward had a higher response than others. Based on the report she provided, 40 percent of the responses were from Ward 1, 28 percent from Ward 2, 19 percent from Ward 3 and 13 percent from Ward 4.

“This is 432 households,” Councilman Jason James said. “So the concern that although we’ve compared to the national benchmarks, but I’m thinking about Milford and I just don’t know if we have enough to really draw conclusions on because of the low participation. And I guess the key thing here is, to the citizens, is that participation is important because those who respond and those who speak and those who participate are the ones who get the initiatives or the things that they desire. It’s what gets the attention of council because those are the ones that are responding and speaking out. It made it because 432 people out of what over

11,000 asked for it. It is not a voice for the people, not the people who are silent. So really, we don’t know what the people want. We know what 432 households want.”

City Manager Mark Whitfield explained that this was designed to get a snapshot of how residents in Milford felt, but that the city would now hold community conversations in the various wards and get additional input from citizens. He did feel that this survey gave council a good snapshot of where the city is today compared to 2019. He even suggested going back to 2016 or 2017 to develop additional benchmarks.

“I agree with everyone,” Councilwoman Katrina Wilson said. “And as I’m sitting here, you know, my first thought was wow, we have a lot of work to do. Are we doing our job? You know, it’s not a great feeling to hear the percentages and how they dropped and a perception of our citizens and the lack of participation. That’s really not a good feeling.”

Sarah Bluhm, Economic Development and Community Engagement administrator pointed out that there were just over 450 responses to the 2019 survey as she recalled. Whitfield commended Barger and Bluhm for their work in putting the statistics together for council’s information.



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A photograph of a woman with dark, curly hair, wearing a bright yellow ribbed sweater. She is smiling broadly and making a heart shape with her hands in front of her chest. The background is a plain, light color.

CITY OF MILFORD HIRES BALOG AS NEW ARBORIST



PRESS RELEASE

The city of Milford recently hired Joseph Balog as the new Arborist/Urban Forestry Coordinator. In this role, Balog is responsible for the overall implementation of a city-wide Urban Forestry Program including tree planting, maintenance, related landscaped areas, and enforcement of tree related policies.

“The arborist/urban forestry coordinator position is a welcome addition to the Department of Parks and Recreation, and a much-needed position within the city of Milford,” said Brad Dennehy, director of Parks and Recreation. “Joe brings a wealth of experience and expertise and will be a valuable member of our staff. We look

forward to him helping make Milford a better place to live with continued beautification efforts.”

Balog joins the city with nearly 10 years of maintenance experience, including beautification and soil conservation, from the state of Delaware, where he most recently served as an arborist for the last three years. He received his aerial and pesticide certifications and formal chainsaw training while in this role.

“There are a million uses for a tree—shade, wildlife habitat, oxygen—and some in our city are historical,” Balog said, “so my goal is to preserve them. I will always strive to prevent taking a tree out completely and prune from the top down. I want to make Milford look good.”

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Balog is the first arborist on city staff in more than 15 years and his expertise will aid the city and its residents in many facets. Continual tree maintenance will prevent power outages and address public safety hazards in a timely manner, while his knowledge will help prevent the spread of invasive species in the area and provide expert advice to Milford residents.

Residents can contact Balog through the MyMilford app or web portal by submitting a Dangerous Tree or Overhanging Trees/Shrubs request.



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BULLYING

BULLYING STATISTICS AND PROCEDURES RELEASED BY MSD

order for something to be considered bullying, it must be repetitive. So there really is no first time kind of events on bullying and there must be an imbalance of power. So, it could be multiple students. Maybe with another student or one student may wield some imbalance over the other and the intention must be to cause harm.”

The district has steps in place to deal with bullying in schools. At the elementary level, they use the Safer-Smarter Kids curriculum that provides definitions of bullying and explains what the types of bullying are. There is also discussion about the difference between conflict and bullying.

“They spend a lot of time on what is conflict versus what is bullying,” Dr. Peel said. “One school counselor described it to me as “someone called me a name.” And so that’s really a conflict. And they try and work through that and how would a student handle that but until it’s repetitive and ongoing, it doesn’t necessarily become bullying.”

In technology classes, Dr. Peel explained that students are provided details on what is cyberbullying, and online safety is promoted.

“In the past, we have had anti-bullying assemblies and schools report they do make announcements on a regular basis in terms of anti-bullying and how to report it and that sort of thing,” Dr. Peel said. “At our middle

BY TERRY ROGERS

Milford School District Vice-President Rony Baltazar-Lopez requested that district staff provide the board with some information regarding bullying in the district. Dr. Jason Peel, director of Human Resources and School Climate along with Dr. Brittany Hazzard, Supervisor of Equity and Support Services, provided the board with information on how the district deals with bullying as well as statistics showing how often bullying was reported in the district.

“We wanted to first start with definition of what defines bullying,” Dr. Peel said. “Based on regulation, in

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See BULLYING on page 22

school level in the help and technology curriculums, they do, again discuss types of bullying. They actually do a poster project in sixth grade that talks about bullying. They hang those around the school to kind of promote bullying prevention. And they use a Common-Sense.org internet safety program in all grades in regards to bullying. That does include information about cyber bullying at the high school, the same type of activities in the health curriculum class. Our technology specialists in the school have worked his year to make internet safety lessons that are able to be used with all grades in the school to promote online safety and really that notion of cyber bullying, which I think is important at that upper level.”

The district also has a tip line which is designed to encourage students to report bullying. Secondary students also have an app called “Stop It” which allows students to anonymously report bullying or any other activity they feel is unsafe. An online report form is generated which is sent in email form directly to Dr. Peel.

“So let’s say someone got home and they didn’t feel like maybe talking to an adult at school or something like that, they could do that form and send it in,” Dr. Peel said. “Reports are also available on the website. Also, in terms of reporting, we do send a letter, even for alleged or unsubstantiated offenses. So even if there’s an alleged offense, we make sure to let the parents of both parties know and we also record those in our data system. And we have a letter that is also sent home.”

According to statistics provided by Dr. Peel, there were 21 elementary and 29 secondary alleged offenses

reported in the past year. Of those offenses, five at the elementary level and one at the secondary level were substantiated offenses. School Board President Jason Miller asked what would qualify as an alleged offense that was then not substantiated.

“So a student may say that another student was calling him a name or picking on him or something like that. So, we would look at that and say, okay, when did this happen? Well, it just happened today during breakfast,” Dr. Peel said. “So, we may mediate those students or get them together to help them solve that conflict. Maybe there was something where that student would have some discipline or have to be out of class or something, meaning the perpetrator. But since the student did report to us it was bullying, we would make that alleged, because if it happens again, because now we’ve told that student not to do that, whether we addressed the student or told them to sit in a different location in the cafeteria or not take this activity, then at that point it becomes ongoing, repetitive and would definitely be bullying.”

When asked if every incident of bullying had to have an intent to cause harm, Dr. Peel stated that they considered it bullying when a student intentionally excluded another, using the example that a student may tell another that one group of students was going to play a game, but one particular student was not allowed to play with them. This allowed the administration to deal with such actions as bullying without there needing to be a physical altercation. He also stated that students are given a definition of cyberbullying, such as posting

a photo that was meant to put another student in a bad light.

“School environments are clearly critically important in allowing open discussion and trustworthiness for students to report bullying. So based on the school climate for the 2019 and 2020 school year, the student version indicated that the Milford Central Academy out of the 794 students who answered the survey, the average responses for bullying school-wide were rated quote unquote unfavorable,” Baltazar-Lopez said. “This correlates to the responses for student to student relations, which is also indicated as unfavorable. So I guess my question is whether this sentiment about bullying and more has it changed in more recent School Climate Survey?”

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SUMMER PROGRAMS ANNOUNCED

BY TERRY ROGERS

Milford School District Board of Education heard from Dr. Brian Clarke, Special Education coordinator, about summer programming for the district. Some of the programs are designed for students with special education needs that require 12 months of education.

“The summer program is for students who are eligible for special education services and those students fall into one of two categories,” Dr. Clarke said. “They are either students that receive Extended School Year services, or students that receive 12-month programming or extended school year services. In order to be qualified for that, it’s based off of IEPs and considers their degree of impairment, regression and recruitment, breakthrough opportunities, vocational opportunities and in some rare opportunities or unusual circumstances like medical conditions or what have you.”

According to Dr. Clarke, there may be students who need additional educational time if they suffer from

traumatic brain injury or they may have cognitive or physical disabilities. For the upcoming summer programs, there are 30 students who will be going to Morris Early Childhood Center while 30 additional students will be served at Banneker and Ross for grades one through five. Between Milford Central Academy and Milford High School, there are an additional 33 students, bringing the total number of children attending summer programming to just over 120.

“This year, we also employed a certified art therapist who is going to offer a unique opportunity for students to do some art,” Dr. Clarke said. “And we’re still in need of a few secondary teachers to support MCA and MHS. And finally like to thank Dr. Peel just for all the work getting the staff to support summer programming.”

Dr. Clarke explained that parents would be notified that their child was eligible for summer school over the next few weeks.



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)	4:00 p.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.



HEALTH



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BAYHEALTH RECEIVES "A" SAFETY RATING FROM LEAPFROG

BY TERRY ROGERS

Leapfrog, an independent watchdog group, recently announced that they had awarded Bayhealth Sussex Campus with an "A" Safety Rating. It is the only hospital in Delaware to receive that high of a rating from the organization.

"Hospitals do not request this review," Elizabeth Harmon, Senior Communications Specialist with Leapfrog, said. "Leapfrog grades nearly 3,000 general acute care hospitals across the country. We are a national non-profit organization driving a movement for giant leaps forward in the safety and quality of American health-care. We work with a panel of experts in conjunction with Johns Hopkins Armstrong Institute for Patient Safety and Quality to assure validity and reliability."

According to the company website, Bayhealth ranked highly in preventing MRSA, urinary tract and sepsis

after surgery infections. They also had fewer errors in surgery, safety problems after certain surgeries and had excellent systems in place to help prevent errors. In fact, the hospital rated 100 out of 100 in the area of practices to prevent errors. In addition, the hospital ranked very highly in the area of staffing. Leapfrog found that they had effective leadership, enough qualified nurses, specially trained ICU doctors, good communication from both doctors and nurses as well as good responses from hospital staff.

By comparison, Beebe Hospital in Lewes was given a rating of "B" while both the Bayhealth Kent Campus and TidalHealth Nanticoke ranked at a "C." Christiana Care Health System also ranked at a "C."

"We are incredibly proud of our Bayhealth caregivers and staff for this achievement. This national recogni-

tion for safe, quality care belongs to them," Terry Murphy, FACHE, CEO of Bayhealth, said. "It's a demonstration of their commitment, courage and compassion for our community."

Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade is the only hospital ratings program based exclusively on hospital prevention of medical errors and harms to patients. The grading system is peer-reviewed and fully transparent to the public at no cost. Grades are updated in the fall and the spring.

"As our health care system continues to feel the strain of the pandemic, I thank the workforce and leadership of Bayhealth Hospital, Sussex Campus for sustained commitment to patient safety, day in and day out," Leah Binder, president and CEO of Leapfrog, said. "An 'A' Safety Grade is an outstanding achievement and one that is not possible without a 24/7 effort by the entire healthcare workforce to protect patients from harm. This community should be proud."

The full safety review can be found at [HERE](#).





MILFORD LIVE SPORTS

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PHOTO BY BRYAN SHUPE


BY TERRY ROGERS

Milford Parks and Recreation is accepting registration for its Summer Fun Club which will begin June 27 and run until Aug. 5 from 8:30 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. There are three age groups which include ages 6 and 7, ages 8 and 9 as well as ages 10 and 11.

“We are accepting 36 participants with 12 in each age group,” Doreen Wrightsman, administrative assistant, said. “The camp will be held at Mispillon Elementary School Mondays through Thursdays and at the Milford Parks and Recreation office on Fridays.”

The cost for Summer Fun Club is \$150 per week per child which includes field trips. The first week, the cost is only \$125 as it is only a four day week. Breakfast and lunch are provided Monday through Thursday by Milford School District, but parents should pack lunch on Friday. There is no refrigeration so Wrightsman explained parents should pack lunch in an insulated lunch bag.

“We have events planned each day so parents should

SUMMER FUN CLUB REGISTRATION OPEN FOR PARKS AND RECREATION

check the calendar of events each day so their child is dressed appropriately,” Wrightsman said. “Please send them in tennis shoes and no open-toed shoes as this is a safety hazard.”

Parents should be sure their child has sunscreen on when they head to Summer Camp as there will be outdoor activities every day. Because there are waterpark trips, children must be able to swim. Because Milford Parks and Recreation is not responsible for lost or stolen items, Wrightsman stated that children should not bring games, phones, toys or electronic gadgets.

“Our Summer Fun Club will provide participants the opportunity to do fun projects, play games and go on awesome adventures,” Wrightsman said. “After registering, please print out your receipt. We will send you the required liability and registration form via email. Please fill out, print and return to our office at 207 Franklin Street. You may also email the form to dwrightsman@milford-de.gov.”

If you have any questions, you can call Parks and Recreation at 302-422-1104. Registration can be completed by visiting www.cityofmilford.com/127/parks-recreation and clicking on “Sign up online” under Summer Fun Camp.



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POLICE & FIRE





BY TERRY ROGERS

After purchasing the former Milford Memorial Hospital on Clarke Avenue, Nationwide Health Services made many changes to the building, updating equipment and reconfiguring some of the hallways to match the needs of their tenants. Now known as the Milford Wellness Village, the campus includes several health-related businesses, including Aquacare, Champions for Children's Health, Polaris and more. As a result, the administration of Milford Wellness Village led members of Carlisle Fire Company on a tour, not only of the interior of the building but also behind the scenes.

"We purchased this from Bayhealth as you know in 2019 and today, we're looking at approximately 210,000 square feet of space with much of it rented out to tenants," Meir Gelley, CEO of Nationwide Health Systems, said. "Bob Musak is our facilities director, and he is the

MILFORD WELLNESS VILLAGE LEADS FIRE COMPANY ON TOUR

guy you are really going to want to get to know. We just want to be sure you have a good view of this campus."

Gelley also explained that there is security in the building 24 hours a day and seven days each week with an office located in the same place it was during the days of Milford Memorial Hospital, in the former emergency room. After a light dinner, the firefighters broke up into several groups in order to tour the facilities.

The men were shown the freight elevator and provided details on how to move it from floor to floor in the case of an emergency. The next stop was in the boiler room where Musak explained the boilers ran on fuel oil, but that they hoped to convert them to natural gas in the future as it was less expensive. He pointed out shut off valves for the boiler should there be an emergency.

"The chillers have been removed as we are putting units on the roof that don't require them," Musak said. "We have two main generators and if we lose power, they will kick on simultaneously and you will know when they do as they are loud. We do weekly and monthly tests as well as monthly load tests on each unit." Musak also showed the firefighters where the shut off switches were for the generators in order to avoid issues if water was in the area.

One issue pointed out by the firefighters was that there was just one lock box located on one side of the building. After the tour, they spoke to Gelley, explaining to him that they needed boxes in multiple locations considering the size of the building. This would allow them to

access the area of the building with a problem much more quickly.

"Many of you recognize this as the old ER," Musak said as they walked into another section of the hospital. "This is still the security office, but this is now the PACE program for adults. They just got all their approvals, and they hope to have people in here at the end of the month."

Inside the area was a small kitchen with steam trays, a refrigerator, microwave, stove and dishwasher. Musak explained that the stove and dishwasher were not operational and were used to help adults who may have mobility issue regain the ability to load a dishwasher or put a pan on a stove. He stated that when the building was at capacity, there could be as many as 3,500 people inside as there were two daycares as well as an assisted living facility. The group also toured the Grier Building which used to house a nursing school and later administration.

"We sometimes have smoke heads going off due to construction dust," Musak said. "But we do test the system regularly. In some areas of the building, there are quite a few detectors and when they go off, it will be very loud in those sections. I can stand in one area and count between nine and 15 detectors in one room."

The tour of the building proved to be timed well. Later that evening, there was an automatic alarm at Milford Wellness Village that required fire company response although there appeared to be no emergency.

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