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PAST MILFORD HOLIDAY TRADITIONS



CHRISTMAS MARKET OPENS



MEET ASHLEY LOCKWOOD

HEADLINES



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NEW CONDITIONAL USE APPROVED FOR KEIR BUILDING

BY TERRY ROGERS

The former Josephine Keir LTD Building which has also been known as the Derrickson Building at 27 South Walnut Street was recently approved for a new conditional use. The building was approved for a conditional use when it was purchased by the Parker Group several years ago, but it has recently been sold again to Zack and Marissa King.

“It was purchased by the Parker Group, and they had a plan in place as you all know and approved to renovate the building, putting retail downstairs and residential upstairs,” King said. “We considered that option and decided to go with all commercial mainly because of the cost to bring new water lines and sewer lines and upgraded electrical services to the building for residential. We also have some office tenants in the Penney Square building currently that are going to be

relocated into the upstairs of this building which will open up retail space on the ground floor of Penney Square which is important to the downtown, to bring in more retail, make it more visible in the first floor area.”

King explained that he already had tenants for the upstairs offices and most of the downstairs spaces of the Keir Building and they also had retail tenants going into Penney Square, which led to the need to move the offices to another location.

“Everything we are doing is kind of geared to bring retail to Walnut Street,” King said. “The goal is to have people walk in, be able to purchase an item and walk out, which as everyone knows is important to growing downtown. We do have a food service business going into this building and also a couple of retail type busi-

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nesses. We've already done some demo work there as we already had a demo permit."

Councilman Dan Marabello praised King for the work he and his wife have done in the downtown area. He asked if the second floor would be several small tenants or one large tenant. King explained that it would be one tenant and that they already had a letter of intent. The tenant operated a medical billing business in Penney Square.

"We plan to split Penney Square into three or four small retail spaces, two of which already have prospective tenants," King said. "For those of you who don't know, our fondue restaurant will open the end of January, beginning of February. The rest of that building is all retail. We've got two different boutique stores, a new salon and then we'll have more spaces available for retail. We are turning down tenants who are not retail. I've got about four or five tenants who want real estate offices, insurance offices, other types of businesses that we don't believe are good for that building or for Walnut Street."

King hopes to have the Keir Building completed in late spring or early summer. He explained that the biggest hurdle was the Historic Preservation Office as meeting the historic requirements of older buildings took time. The plan was to add four new retail locations each with their own entrance on Walnut Street. Their Penney Square restaurant, fondue., was nearing completing with drywall finished in early December and flooring, kitchen equipment, tabletops and finish work planned for the next few weeks. Councilman Andy

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Fulton asked if adding the additional entrances would change the historic look of the Keir Building or if it would take it back to an original historic look.

“The federal historic preservation office who the Parker Group went through to get approvals for their façade design, approved additional entrances,” King said. “They approved two additional entrances. We’re asking them for a third. If they decline, we will have a vestibule area and split the entrances inside. We are keeping the doors, windows, all that as simple as possible. They did make some revisions and changes to the storefronts themselves to make them more simple and more historic, but I think this will be a benefit for the town.”

Councilman Jason James asked if there was any information about the hours of operation for the various businesses who may go into the Keir Building.

“The Village is a café with an event space in the back and a patio,” King said. “It’ll be a smaller event space, but they will be specifically catering toward like kids’ parties and smaller corporate events. They’re going to be a five to six day a week business. We also have a charcuterie business interested in going in. They’ll be a three to five day a week business. The two tenants I mentioned specifically, we are helping them from an operational standpoint of how to start a business, build a business and operate it from a financial standpoint as well. We’re doing a lot of the build out and making it possible for them to bring these businesses to Milford. They’re people we either know or believe in enough to make those decisions and it’s kind of what it takes these days to get people motivated and open stuff up which is what

we need. They’re all going to have hours just kind of dependent on their schedules, but we’re encouraging people to be open at least Thursday through Sunday. The fondue restaurant we are opening is going to be open only Thursday, Friday and Saturday to start. But we are pushing people to be open those days and at least have downtown Milford alive a few days a week on key important weekend days and, as it grows, obviously business will naturally grow and people will open more days as they realize they can make more money the more days they are open.”

Councilman Brian Baer asked if the regulations for bathrooms for apartments, including the cost of water and sewer lines, was a significant deterrent to adding more apartments on the second floor of the Keir Building. King explained that it was actually fire suppression systems that would have been more costly.

“Doing commercial, we just need a two-hour barrier between floors,” King said. “To give you a ballpark of a \$500,000 construction budget, which is around what we have, it would have increased to \$1 million putting apartments up there. And \$200,000 to \$250,000 would have just been fire suppression alone and our rents wouldn’t have gone up very much more. So, just as I would have loved to put apartments up there like our Penney Square apartments which do phenomenally and we have short-term tenants up there that bring business and money to the town, it just didn’t make sense here. Not only that the timeline would have extended at least four to five months where now we can get this done by summer, it was also cost prohibitive.”

Council approved the request unanimously. Councilman Fulton pointed out that the Kings had done an excellent job with historic properties downtown, while Councilman Todd Culotta stated that the couple had become a very important part of the business community, bringing investment into downtown with a desire to improve the area.

“This project and projects like it really add fuel to the efforts of economic development for the city of Milford,” Councilman Jason James said. “Specifically, downtown and brings opportunity to have more foot traffic downtown during the weekend when some of the businesses are currently closed. It would be a great way to spur activity in the downtown area.”

Councilman Katrina Wilson applauded the Kings efforts to bring more retail to the downtown area as well.



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PAST HOLIDAY TRADITIONS IN MILFORD

BY TERRY ROGERS

With the Christmas season underway and children lined up to give Santa their Christmas wishes, it is a great time to remember the Santa Houses in Milford from years gone by. Around 1939, Al Humes, owner of Humes Hardware, built a small house that was designed specifically for Santa in downtown Milford. The house was known as the “Storybook House” and resembled a gingerbread house. It was set up on the Plaza, in front of where the city of Milford Customer Service Office and the Jesus Love Temple now stands. The home was surrounded by a fence and there were evergreens, a sleigh and a sign depicting when Santa was taking requests. At one point, there were even reindeer on the lawn of the house. It is unclear when this Santa house was removed.

For many years, this home was located behind Gooden’s Flower Shop on North Walnut Street. Recently, the

building was sold to a private citizen who moved it to their property.

In 1984 or 1985, John Eustis, who was president of the Milford Plaza Merchants Association, decided that the Plaza needed a Santa house. He is unsure whether the association purchased a shed or whether the shelter was built by members, but it was placed in a vacant area between where Ames and Leggett’s were located at the time. Today, the Ames Department Store has been divided into several different stores while Harbor Freight is planning to open a store in the former Leggett’s building.

“I hired a Santa, Bill Dillinger, who was awesome with the kids,” Mr. Eustis said. “We had entertainment when he was there. We had the Milford High School Jazz Band

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perform, other local groups who sang Christmas carols.” Mr. Eustis said that the Santa House at the Plaza ended when Mr. Dillinger passed away suddenly. Not long after that, Mr. Eustis said he believes the downtown merchants took over the Santa House project, moving it to Walnut Street.

Many long-time residents of Milford and the surrounding area remember other Christmas traditions downtown when they were young.

“My fondest memory of Christmas when I was young was the Coffman-Fisher store on the northwest corner of North Walnut and the river,” Carolyn Humes said. “After Thanksgiving, they decorated their second floor into a Christmas toy land. We had never seen so many toys! I am sure there was a Santa there as well. It was a child’s paradise and a wondrous experience.”

Barbara Jones of the Milford Museum didn’t recall a lot of activity or decorations when she was young in Milford. She recalled that there were choruses and bands who performed in an empty lot on Walnut Street before W.T. Grants expanded. Today, the area is where Davis, Bowen & Friedel’s offices are located. Ms. Jones said that much of the holiday celebrations downtown were at churches, many of whom held cantatas and Christmas Eve services that were well attended each year.

Many people recall the downtown area being filled with shoppers. Stores like J.C. Penney were full on Saturdays right before Christmas and many recall it being a joyful time. Those who recall the 1950s and 1960s recall several ladies’ clothing stores, shoe stores and more. Christmas cards were often purchased at Milford

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HOLIDAY from page 8

Pharmacy and it was not unusual to see people at Woolworth's lunch counter enjoying their famous milkshakes. Randy Warnick, who grew up in Greenwood, also remembers shopping in Milford at the A&P, Woolworth's, Grants and Penney's during the Christmas season.

According to Charles Gray of the Milford Community Parade, in the 1990s, there was a decision to create a Christmas parade in Milford as almost every town in the area had one.

"I believe it was Owen Brooks who mentioned he would like to see one in Milford," Mr. Gray said. "Milford Community Parade organized one for three years and tried to make it stand out. It was held on the Saturday after Thanksgiving with no commercial floats. I believe the church consortium was on the committee as was Councilwoman Katrina Wilson. We had horse-drawn carriages, floats created by churches and attendees voted on who had the best float. We did not have Santa in the parade." Mr. Gray said that the parade walked the Riverwalk to Bicentennial Park where a chorus sang Christmas carols. Church participation dwindled and the Saturday after Thanksgiving had a small turnout, so the decision was made to discontinue the parade.

Mr. Gray explained that the parade was held at night in order for people watching to enjoy the Christmas lights downtown. He mentioned that he would be interested in creating an exploratory committee to bring the parade back, possibly combining the parade with Santa's arrival downtown on Small Business Saturday, which is held the Saturday after Thanksgiving.



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There are ways to save money on postage, however. Postage to ship gifts is based on size, weight and distance. Smaller, lighter packages shipped in-state or to an adjacent state will be the less expensive shipping option. Other tips include using Priority Mail Flat Rate boxes, free at your local Post Office. Take a box when shopping and only purchase items that can fit in the box. Adopt a letter from your state, or a nearby state and look at the dimensions of the gift very carefully, paying special attention to size and weight. Consider a gift card instead of purchasing larger, heavier items. Gift cards need to be sent in a Priority Mail envelope, 4-by-6 or larger, to accommodate the shipping label.

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More information can be found at www.USPSOperationSanta.com and usps.com/holidaynews. The Postal Service generally receives no tax dollars for operating expenses and relies on the sale of postage, products and services to fund its operations.

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PRESS RELEASE

Are you in a position to give a child or family some extra magic this season? If so, you can now adopt a letter written to Santa at www.USPSOperationSanta.com.

USPS Operation Santa relies solely on random acts of kindness and the generosity of strangers. The program is 110 years old this year. It allows people to help children and families have a magical holiday when they otherwise may not.

Since Sep. 15, the Postal Service has been receiving letters from all across the country and delivering them to Santa's workshop at 123 Elf Road, North Pole, 88888. Letters sent with accurate postage and complete return addresses have been posted on USPSOperationSanta.com, and today is the day customers can begin reading and adopting them.

If you are interested in adopting a letter as part of USPS Operation Santa, visit the website, click on the registration link and follow the prompts to register and have your identity verified. If you are unable to get their

MILFORD MUSEUM SELECTED TO PARTICIPATE IN CAP PROGRAM

PRESS RELEASE

The Milford Museum announced recently that it is one of 56 institutions in the United States selected to participate in the [Collections Assessment for Preservation](#) (CAP) program.

CAP helps museums improve the care of their collections by providing support for a general conservation assessment of the museum's collections and buildings. The museum will work with a team of preservation professionals to identify preventive conservation priorities. The final assessment report will help the museum prioritize its collections care efforts in the coming years.

"We are so excited to be selected for this program," Nicole Rogers, operations manager for the Milford Museum said. "This is going to help us develop better systems for protecting our collections and understand

how we can better preserve our collections in the future. With our new addition project, this could not have come at a better time as we are planning an overhaul of our storage and collections management area in the new addition."

The CAP program is administered by the Foundation for Advancement in Conservation through a cooperative agreement with the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

The Milford Museum, established in 1983, works to preserve the history of Milford and the surrounding area. The museum houses several permanent as well as rotating exhibit spaces in its building located at 121 S. Walnut Street.

See MUSEUM on page 12

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MUSEUM from page 11

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STUDIO YOU TO OPEN IN PENNEY SQUARE

BY TERRY ROGERS

One of the things Marissa King realized that Milford needed was a spa designed to pamper both men and women in the Milford area. When she and her husband, Zack, purchased Penney Square, her goal was to bring businesses to the building that Milford did not already have and a spa was at the top of her list.

“It is one thing Milford needs,” King said. “We continually try to add things to bring people to town. It’s also something I have always wanted to do, so what better time?”

The spa will open closer to April, but the salon will open on Dec. 6. A grand opening is planned for Dec. 16. The salon will offer full services although King is still looking for two or three stylists. Anyone interested in joining the team can reach out to King directly.

“I am still looking for a massage therapist for the spa,” King said. “We hope to offer a little bit of everything including facials, waxing, sauna, steam rooms, massages and we also hope to get into medical aesthetics down the road.”

King has been traveling to Seaford to visit a spa and it is something that she says provides multiple benefits. “It’s just a way to relax my brain,” King said. “I’m always going 100 miles per hour and never get a minute for myself. Plus, I carry all my stress in my shoulders. There are also many health benefits in the use of infrared saunas and steam rooms.”

King believes her biggest challenge will be staffing the spa, something she says is “sad, but true.” An open house is planned on Dec. 16 to introduce everyone to the salon although the spa will take a few more months to open.

“I am so excited for everything,” King said. “As usual, I am designing the space and just love my visions coming to life so quickly.”

Anyone interested in massage therapy or who would like to join the team as a stylist can reach out to King at 302-858-1875. Studio You will be located in the Penney Square building located at 39 North Walnut Street, easily found on the corner of Northeast Front Street and North Walnut Street.



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BY TERRY ROGERS

Milford City Council recently approved a conditional use for a self-storage business, operated by First State Self Storage, on South Dupont Boulevard. The conditional use included changes from an initial plan whose approval had expired. The changes made required the owner to return to council for additional approvals. City Planner Rob Pierce explained that the Board of Adjustments approved an adjustment for encroachment into a wetland buffer in order to allow for a steep slope on the southern end of the site and to allow the owners to install a stormwater outfall.

“The Planning Commission did review this application and voted to approve the application with a vote of six to zero,” Pierce explained. “They added conditions that the site have a continuous secure security border around the improvements and that the applicant would provide directional lighting to limit any lighting of adjacent properties. Another condition was that the applicant maintain the visual screening indicated on the plans for the property to the east which is the only abutting residential property.”

COUNCIL APPROVES SELF-STORAGE FACILITY

Councilman Dan Marabello pointed out that the plans included use as a medical facility to which Pierce state that wording was a carryover from the previous application and could be removed. He suggested removing the language in the motion. Councilman Jason James asked what changes were made that warranted the new approvals.

“In the original plans, there was a 1,200 square foot manager’s office or residence and there is no longer a manager’s residence,” David Hutt, an attorney with Morris James, said. “It became apparent that the site had some challenges and there used to be a building that was partially located in this area. So, the owner and the developer went back to the drawing board to see how else the site might be able to be configured. After careful thought and consideration, an attractive alternate plan was designed and that is the application we have in front of you this evening.”

The new plan included approximately 90,000 square feet with eight single-story buildings in the rear. The larger building in the front of the property which would be visible from Dupont Highway would be a single-story self-storage unit. In 2020, council approved five buildings, but the new proposal included nine buildings although the actual footprint of the buildings was smaller. The rear building would actually be two stories

See STORAGE on page 17



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but because it would be built into a slope, both levels of the building would essentially be ground floor. They would also be climate-controlled storage, which, according to Hutt, was becoming a growing need in the area. Because the buildings were built into a slope, they would not look as if they were two-story buildings.

“The tentative hours of operation when there’s going to be someone on site to assist customers who want to lease a unit or close out a unit is Monday through Friday from nine to five and on Saturday from nine to one,” Hutt said. “Of course, access to this facility would be 24/7. If you have a key code and you actually own a unit within it, no matter what hours of operation, hours you work, you could access your things that are stored there.”

Kenneth Usab, an engineer with Morris and Richie Associates, explained that they had made a few other minor changes, including combining two buildings to create open space and adding a pond amenity. There were also plans to secure a fence boundary around the entire property and a dumpster that was originally planned for the rear of the property was moved closer to the front and away from the residential property. The fence will also prevent headlights from impacting the residence as well.

“These are short trees,” Councilman Marabello said. “There’s no adverse effects on the other side there? The few houses that you have on the east side, do you have high shrubbery so that the backdrop for those houses is screened off better than six feet? I hear you have a pond in there or something. One of the things, I’m concerned about and I think some of my fellow council people were thinking now and in the future, more beautification.

Not necessarily a lot of money, but if you look across the street, they put in a lot of money to beautify it, even though it is just a storage unit. Are you going to add some shrubbery by the pond, so it looks nice when you approach it?”

Hutt explained that the Planning Commission had addressed some of those concerns adding conditions that included visual screening for the property. There are plans for shrubbery and small trees on the property. The other condition was that the landscaping shown on the plan be maintained through the final site plan and approval process. Mayor Archie Campbell asked if there would be storage of outside trailers and RVs on the property. Hutt stated that there was no plan for that type of storage and that all storage would be inside the buildings.

“I did my own survey of the area for climate-controlled storage available in the Milford area in June,” Greg Cirino, part of the Acquisitions and Development team for Morris Ritchie, said. “I just got a call last week that a 10×20 unit was available. So, that’s about a six-month wait for one unit that is climate controlled. So, we put an emphasis on climate controlled here. There are also going to be ADA compliant drive up units. The two types of storage have different demographics. Women are the primary users of climate-controlled storage. They want something that is safe, clean and where they feel secure. Men primarily use the drive up, non-climate controlled units, such as contractors and such.”

No one spoke at the public comment portion of the meeting. However, Pierce read an email into the record

See STORAGE on page 18



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STORAGE from page 17

from Tom Passwaters who lived in the residence adjacent to the property.

“We have concerns with the new application and whether the applicant still agrees with the previous application that was approved in 2020,” Passwaters wrote. “And those conditions where the site shall include unobtrusive lighting, security fencing shall be provided around the entire perimeter. Customer service security gate access hours are limited to 6:30 a.m. to 9 p.m. and buildings are limited to one story. A 15-foot landscape buffer shall be maintained between the subject parcel and the residential parcel to the east.”

Mayor Campbell clarified that anyone who was going to access the gate will have a key or code so that they can get to their unit at any time. Hutt confirmed that access would be 24/7 as that was typical for a self-storage unit. The Planning Commission did not place conditions on the hours anyone who rented a unit could access the property. Council approved the request unanimously.

“It’s a very attractive building,” Councilman Todd Culotta said. “Self-storage units sometimes get a bad rap, but this one looks like a higher end one and it adds to our business community. I think it’s a nice trade off. It is in the commercial corridor on the highway and it is what should be there. The residences that are close by should be minimally impacted even at a 24-hour access.”

Councilwoman Katrina Wilson stated that this was something that has been needed for a long time and was something people didn’t talk about until they needed additional storage space.



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CHRISTMAS MARKET OPENS ON NORTHEAST FRONT STREET

BY TERRY ROGERS

The outside of Fur Baby Pet Resort has been transformed into a beautiful Christmas Market with Christmas trees and other greenery provided by Fresh Connection offered for sale. The market opened on Black Friday with fresh cut Christmas trees, wreaths and other handmade greenery available.

“We thought this would be a great beginning to the Christmas season,” Kyle Strickland of Fresh Connection, said. “We have all types of decorations, Christmas trees, wreaths, cemetery blankets and something for every budget. We can also custom make anything.”

The Christmas Market is open rain or shine at 301 NE Front Street with “naked” wreaths starting at \$10. The market offers all the decorations to customize the wreath yourself or one of the Holiday Elves can assist. Fully decorated wreaths start at just \$25. Christmas trees include Fraser, Balsam, Canaan and Douglas with nine-foot trees priced between \$55 and \$100, while 10 to 14 foot trees are \$100 and up. Each tree is priced individually so you are sure to find one that is perfect for your family and that fits in the budget.

“I have to give a shout out to the power couple, Paige and Connor,” Strickland said. “They are out there every day from 9 a.m. until 7 p.m. making it happen. This would not be possible without them. Be sure to stop and say hello to them and their dogs who are there with

them every day.” Strickland also stated that things were selling out fast so shoppers should stop in soon for their unique Christmas decorations.

In addition to the Christmas Market, children are invited to drop letters to Santa in the special mailbox located at Fur Baby. Letters can be placed in the special Santa mailbox Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. or on Saturday from 7 a.m. until 5 p.m. Be sure to include a return address and stamp as Santa will be writing back to every child who sends him a letter.

“Santa is looking for a few volunteers to help him write the letters back to the children,” Shupe said. “If you would like to help, come to Arena’s on Tuesday, Dec. 13 at 6 p.m.”

Fresh Connection’s Christmas Market is open at Fur Baby from 9 a.m. until 6 p.m. and at their 9598 Coastal Highway location from 9 a.m. until 7 p.m.

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PHOTO BY BEN MULDROW

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COMMUNITY BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM SEEKING APPLICANTS

PRESS RELEASE

At a recent City Council meeting, Brandy Nauman, director of Sussex County Community Development and Housing Department, spoke about the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), a program offered to low income residents for home repairs. Nauman explained that the program would award more than \$2 million to Kent and Sussex counties on a competitive basis.

“One requirement of the program is to hold a public hearing which gives us the opportunity to explain the program and to provide an update. Most importantly, it gives citizens and local leaders a chance to have input on the upcoming application,” Nauman said. “The Delaware State Housing Authority governs the grant process and through their Consolidated Plan lists the activities that are eligible for funding. Eligible activities include housing rehabilitation, sewer and water, hookups, demolition and infrastructure projects. For infrastructure

projects, the benefits must be predominantly low to moderate income. This is realized through a door to door survey. All projects that we apply for must benefit persons of low and moderate income, defined as households with incomes at or below 80% of the area median income. For example, for two individuals in Sussex County, you must make less than \$53,800 as a household. I believe in Kent County, it’s slightly lower than that for households historically.”

Nauman explained that the majority of funding was used for owner-occupied housing rehabilitation in both counties. This helps maintain existing housing stock and often includes repairs to roofing, windows, electrical and plumbing upgrades as well as energy upgrades. In order to qualify, the property must be owner-occupied and the primary residence. The household must be low to moderate income and the property must be insured

See GRANT on page 22



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or insurable. All county taxes and utilities must be current.

“When we do rehab on a home, we are required to put a lien on the property to protect the funding,” Nauman said. “For less than \$15,000, it’s a five-year zero interest prorated lien while for \$15,000 to \$40,000, it is a 10-year zero interest prorated lien and so at the end of the term, it’s considered satisfied. And this is just to protect the funding so that if we do improvements, the homeowner doesn’t turn around and flip the property for a profit. And if for some reason they sell the home within the term, we just reuse that funding for another homeowner in need.”

In the last five years, Nauman stated, Milford has received \$420,000 in CDBG funding and about 18 households have been assisted by the program. They expect to assist up to five properties again this fiscal year. However, the program has exhausted their waiting list for Milford in Sussex County, so they are looking for applicants. The program must demonstrate a need in an area they service and must have four or five properties on their waiting list. They prefer to have at least six each year. They will need to have applications in place before the first week of January in order to comply with grant deadlines. Councilman Jason James asked if rehabilitation was the only project covered by the grant.

“Historically, homeowners have always applied for housing rehabilitation,” Nauman said. “The funding can be used for small infrastructure projects like sidewalks or water-sewer infrastructure. However, those projects typically require a lot of planning and engi-

neering and a match from the city. So, I’m not saying it’s impossible, but for this grant year, it’s likely not enough time to turn around a plan for February.”

Councilman James questioned who applied for the grant programs and Nauman explained that her office as well as her counterpart in Kent County applied on behalf of the city. Councilman Katrina Wilson asked if the funds could be used for demolition.

“That is another specific activity request that we would need to consider doing,” Nauman said. “So, it’s either housing rehab, demolition or infrastructure. We would just want to make sure we have sufficient demand to be able to spend the funding on if you have some select properties you are interested in. We can certainly have a conversation about that. We also have funding for water and sewer hookups, but typically that is something we address for unincorporated properties when they are connecting to a county expansion. But certainly, if there is a property in city limits, we have funding that would be available to help the homeowner connect to the city water and sewer if they qualify.”

Anyone who believes they qualify for the CDBG program should contact Sussex County at 302-855-7777 or Kent County at 302-744-2480, depending on which county the property is located. The office will assist with the application process in order to qualify the property owner for the funding.



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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.



BY TERRY ROGERS

Milford City Council approved a bid award to Thompson and Sons Construction to install upgraded handrails with lighting along the Riverwalk. The new handrails would be placed on the Mispillion Greenway in the area of the Riverwalk between North Walnut and North Washington Street.

“This is a much needed project,” Brad Dennehy, director of Public Works, said. “It has been identified in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and funded in part by electric reserves. Grant awards have sharply reduced the city funding needed for this project. We’ve received \$75,000 from the state of Delaware through the IRPT program and another \$275,000 from the bond bill Community Reinvestment Fund.”

The bid from Thompson and Sons was for \$301,000 with a contingency allowance and an estimated engineering cost of \$75,000. The city would use \$75,000 from electric reserves with the balance from Community Reinvestment Funding in the amount of \$242,000. The total bid award would be for \$301,504.

BID APPROVED FOR NEW HANDRAILS

The new lighting and handrail system will replace the current post and galvanized system that currently exists along the Riverwalk. The new system will prevent any accidental falls into the river but would have clear barriers that would allow a view of the river below the walkways.

“The lighting will be actually in the top handrail itself,” Dennehy said when the project was approved in January. “The idea is to be LED lighting so it is energy efficient, but it would be lighting for pedestrians on the Riverwalk. We have lighting in the park, but the reasoning for putting lighting in the handrail was to offer greater visibility at night that isn’t going to be intrusive. We don’t want to put up search lights, so to speak. Just a nice, subtle type of lighting, particularly when people come downtown in the summertime or to the Santa House or while walking between restaurants. We really want to take the ambiance to another level with the whole feel of the Riverwalk.” At the time, Dennehy stated that he felt the new lighting would bring the Riverwalk into the 21st century.

The city hopes to eventually expand the handrails throughout the Riverwalk, with the next phase across Walnut Street and along the section of the Riverwalk by Second Street Players. The bid for Thompson and Sons was approved unanimously.



Yes2Health
A free community health outreach program

NEW GROUPS START IN JANUARY!

Registration is required to receive meeting details and materials. [Join for free!](#)

This program is brought to you by the Delaware Breast Cancer Coalition with generous support from:

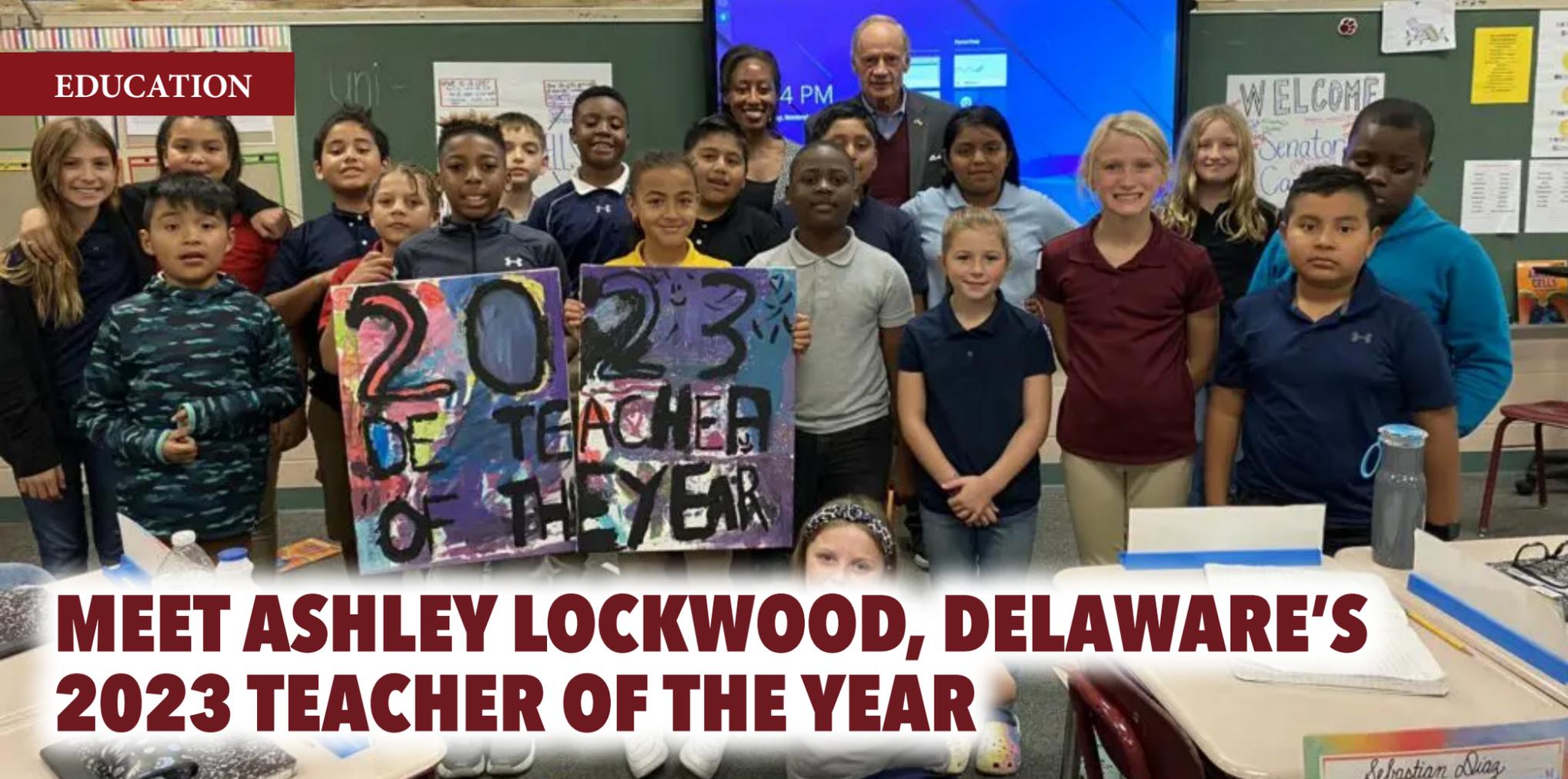
School Choice is Open!

The families of 18,223 students made the charter school choice for the 22/23 School Year! Next year's choice window is open through Jan 11, 2022.

Want to know what your choices are? Or how to apply for School Choice? Check out www.DECharterNetwork.org/school-choice/

EDUCATION





MEET ASHLEY LOCKWOOD, DELAWARE'S 2023 TEACHER OF THE YEAR

BY JAREK RUTZ

Delaware's teacher of the year didn't set out to be an educator. Ashley Lockwood chose to earn a bachelor of arts in sociology from the [University of Delaware](#) in 2010. She planned to focus on how children interact with each other and develop.

After graduation, she returned home to Seaford without a job and was trying to decide what her next steps would be. "It was definitely a period of transition," she said.

After her mom suggested she try substitute teaching, Lockwood returned to the Seaford School District, subbing in several schools.

"That's when I decided that I wanted to become a

teacher," she said. "That's what I wanted to do. There was no other career that could connect you with students the way that teaching does."

Lockwood believes her passion for educational equity is why she took home the 2023 Delaware Teacher of the Year award.

"I teach in a classroom with a lot of students from multilingual backgrounds," Lockwood said, "so all of those experiences definitely lend to my platform of wanting to close the gap for underserved populations of students."

She handles the English portion of a Spanish immersion program for fifth-graders at LuLu Ross Elementary

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School and also leads the Ethnic Minority Affairs Committee for the Milford Education Association.

The Milford teacher also serves on the state teacher's union's Ethnic Minority Affairs and Milford's Equity Action Committee.

"Those committees that I lead or am involved with are all centered on that one special thing, closing the gap for students of color," she said. "I think for teachers, it's important for us to find what it is we're most passionate about in the world of education."

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LIVE HEALTHIER IN 2023

BY TERRY ROGERS

Delaware Breast Cancer Coalition (DBCC) reminds everyone that one of the best ways to prevent and fight breast cancer is to live a healthier lifestyle. It is one of the reasons they created the Yes2Health program which is gearing up for the new year with new sessions that include new kitchen classes. There are three different time slots open this winter so even the busiest schedule can be accommodated. The program is offered via Zoom and at no cost which removes even more barriers to starting the new year living healthier.

“Our January Yes2Health groups are now open for registration,” Amanda Perdue, Yes2Health program manager, said. “Our January groups are a great way to get back on a healthy track after holiday parties and goodies while learning new tips and tricks that will last all year long!”

The program is open to anyone, male or female, who has a risk for breast cancer, risk for other cancers, cardiovascular disease, hypertension, high cholesterol, diabetes or pre-diabetes and/or a body mass index of 30 or above. The programs are 12 weeks and classes are held weekly, covering such topics as fitness, health and wellness, education that encourages an active and healthy lifestyle.

“You just choose one session that is convenient for you,” Perdue said. “All classes are via Zoom and offered Wednesdays from Jan. 11 through March 29 from 9:30–10 a.m.; Thursdays from 3–3:30 p.m. starting Jan. 12 through March 30; or Thursday from 7–7:30 p.m. starting Jan. 12 through March 30.” Once you RSVP for the time that works best for you, we will send you the Zoom link and materials for the program.”

One of the most common New Year’s resolutions that many people make is to begin a healthier lifestyle, whether it is to lose weight, live longer or simply feel better. The Yes2Health “In The Kitchen” program is designed to teach how to create healthy meals that taste delicious and will fit into any busy schedule. The interactive online cooking class covers such topics as Taco Tuesday in 30 minutes, Perfect Chicken Breast 2 Ways, Quick and Health Breakfast plus much more. Classes are led by Chef Dee Iraca, founder of Eat Well Chef, who is a registered dietitian nutritionist and professional chef in North Carolina. These classes are offered via Zoom on Friday, Jan. 13 from 12–1:15 p.m.; Thursday, Jan. 26 from 6–7:15 p.m.; Tuesday, Feb. 7 from 12–1:15 p.m.; Wednesday, Feb. 22 from 6–7:15 p.m.; and Thursday, March 9 from 12–1:15 p.m. Anyone interested in signing up for the In the Kitchen classes can reach out to Perdue at aperdue@debreastcancer.org.

“This group gets together to inspire each other and focus on our health,” Iraca said.”

There is ample evidence that being physically active, achieving and maintaining a healthy weight, limiting alcohol, not smoking as well as eating fruits and vegetables are linked to a lower risk of breast cancer as well as helping to prevent other types of cancer. The Yes2Health program is designed to address all of these risk factors and help you develop a more active lifestyle while also providing information on diet and other factors that may increase your risk of illness.

To sign up for any Yes2Health Program, including In the Kitchen, visit DBCC at <https://debreastcancer.org/programs/yes2health/>.

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I would love the opportunity to meet with you for 10-15 minutes to see how we can help. You can click the link to set up a meeting with me in our virtual office: <https://meetings.hubspot.com/shupe1>

CEO, Bryan Shupe / 302-542-9231 / shupe@delawarelive.com

