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**August 1, 2023**  
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# HEADLINES



photo link: Killens Pond State Park

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# LEADERS TO GATHER WEDNESDAY IN MILFORD TO TALK ARTS

BY BETSY PRICE

Arts, business and political leaders will gather Wednesday, Aug. 2, at the Milford Public Library Amphitheater to talk about the creative economy. The meeting at 10 a.m. will focus on the “Creative Economy and Cultural Tourism Recovery and Growth Plan” that’s been put together by the Delaware Arts Alliance and is expected to include government agencies at local, state and federal levels.

Believed to be the first of its kind in the nation, this effort ultimately will engage hundreds of Delawareans from diverse backgrounds to produce a shared vision, advocacy tools and actionable policy agenda for advancing Delaware’s creative economy.

The event is open to the public. Reservations can be requested [HERE](#).

The alliance chose Milford for the launch of its new project because of its central location and commitment

to the arts. Input at the meeting is expected to help shape it, alliance materials say.

The “creative economy” is defined based on UNESCO’s categories, including performance & celebration, books & press, music recording & publishing, natural and cultural heritage, visual arts & crafts, audiovisual & interactive media and design & creative services.

The alliance is working on the plan with the Delaware Division of the Arts to foster growth in the arts, culture and tourism.

“Our aim is to develop the ‘Creative Economy and Cultural Tourism Recovery and Growth Plan’ as a clear roadmap that outlines the necessary policy changes and investments required for the sector’s success—including nonprofits, for-profit businesses and individual artists,” the alliance website said.

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“Supporting the creative economy is a key strategy for addressing various economic, social, and policy issues within the state, and is crucial for the state’s tourism and economic recovery.”

The alliance points to the strong state and federal support for the arts in Delaware during the COVID-19 pandemic, with many heads of those organizations saying Delaware was far more generous than other states.

“We now have the opportunity to imagine our state beyond recovering from the impacts of COVID-19 and focus on the strategic growth and long-term sustainability of a locally produced creative sector,” the website says. “Through data analysis, policy benchmarking and regulatory review, and thorough community engagement, we are excited to produce a plan that builds upon Delaware’s strengths and successes and removes barriers for creatives.”

The project is expected to include an online interactive asset map; economic impact study; and policy analysis/agenda. That will include a look at the state of Delaware, all three counties and six specific municipal areas: Wilmington, Dover, Georgetown, Smyrna, Middletown and Milford).

To take part in a survey that will help inform the plan, go [HERE](#).

For more information, contact Project Manager Chonnie Blair, at [cblair@delawareartsalliance.org](mailto:cblair@delawareartsalliance.org) or Neil Kirschling, executive director at [nkirschling@delawareartsalliance.org](mailto:nkirschling@delawareartsalliance.org).



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# CULTURE



photo link: [Second Street Players](#)



## MISPILLION ART LEAGUE ENDS SEASON WITH 'SUMMER WINDS'

BY BETSY PRICE

Five minutes ago, everybody was all excited about the start of summer. All of a sudden, people are talking about events for fall including the annual Big Draw Festival.

The Mispillion Art League will end its summer season with “Summer Winds,” a collection of work by its members. C. Mercedes Walls, an Art League founding member, is the featured artist. Her watercolors celebrate arts culture, depicting people sharing joy in music, dance and communal experiences.

Also on display are a selection of photographs by Robert J. Neary, an Art League member who recently lost his battle with cancer. He found artistic inspiration in the beauty of nature and was highly skilled in photographic technology.

The Big Draw Festival, an international celebration of the arts, returns to Milford Oct. 7. for the fifth year.

Adults, kids and families are to come to Park Avenue next to the Art League’s building, between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. for a day of creative activities. This year’s theme is “drawing with the senses.” For more information, contact Rosemary Connelly at [rosemary@connelly.ne](mailto:rosemary@connelly.ne). For more info, follow The Big Draw Festival on [Facebook](#).

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photo link: [Downtown Milford Inc.](#)





# ZAVA CAFÉ BRINGS THE ZA-ZA-ZOO TO MILTON

BY PAM GEORGE

Some maintain that Milton is like Lewes before the tourists arrived. Both are small towns with centuries-old buildings and rich histories. Heavy tourism only came to Lewes in mid-1960s, when the fish factories—and the aroma of menhaden—departed. A Friday stroll through Milton’s historic section gave credibility to the claim.

Located on the Broadkill River, the former shipbuilding town was favored by sea captains, who selected an inland homesite because it was safe from enemy attacks by sea. Some of the Victorians and old buildings that still stand once belonged to the captains and the four governors’ families who lived here.

But that Friday, the destination was not the riverside Governor’s Walk. It was **Zava Café**, a new coffee shop at 102 Federal St. that now serves dinner Wednesday

through Saturday. The slim space previously housed Cantina Ultima and Kristen Latham’s Fox Hole restaurant. (Latham still has the **Dough Bar** on the Broadkill River, which specializes in pizza.) Zava Café moved in late last year.

### Zava’s impressive pedigree

The Milton location is the second for **Zava Café**. Danio Somoza and Thaina Bittencourt opened in the first in downtown Rehoboth Beach in 2022. They were inspired by the coffee shops serving healthy fare in the Washington, D.C., area.

The Rehoboth café is only open until 3 p.m., but adding dinner to the Milton restaurant is smart. The town needs more restaurants, and the café is within walking distance of the **Milton Theatre**.

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from page 9

On that Friday night, Somoza was in the kitchen, which was a treat. The well-known area chef and family owned **Coastline Restaurant Group**, which includes Harvest Tide Steakhouse in Lewes, Bethany Beach and D.C., and Zoca Modern Mexican Restaurant in Bethany Beach and D.C.

Somoza, a native of El Salvador who came to the U.S. at 19, started his culinary career as a line cook at Big Fish Grill and worked his way up to the opening chef at 99 Sea Level in Bethany Beach. He has described his style as French-inspired farm-to-table, which was on full display that evening.

### Starting at the top

For instance, the meat-and-cheese board was a work of art. Tissue thin pieces of dry-aged prosciutto nuzzled DeLallo black pepper salami coins with glistening flecks of fat. The plate also included Goat Rodeo Bamboozle Cheese, truffle honey, whiskey pear chutney and Birchrun blue cheese. The blue cheese made another appearance on a refreshing iceberg lettuce salad with red pickled onion, bacon bites, heirloom tomato and cucumber.

Given Somoza's tenure at Big Fish, it's unsurprising that the starters include middle-neck clams—a meatier size more available at the beach than up north—Prince Edward Island mussels and Blue Point oysters. Thick slices of meaty ruby red tuna got a coating of espresso and a topping of whipped goat cheese and diced mango.

### Works of art

Somoza's love of French cuisine shows in such sauces, which often cover the plate. Espresso-rubbed pork

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tenderloin, for instance, came with an oyster mushroom gravy. A perfectly cooked pepper-crusted prime ribeye (what else would you expect from Harvest Tide's sibling?) lolled in a jus flecked with black pepper. Even striped bass came with a fennel cream sauce.

While the classically inspired sauces added to the impeccable presentation, they did make for some rich food. It would be interesting to see if the kitchen will serve them on the side, given the menu note asking guests not to make substitutions.

**Before and after**

A bar runs along most of one wall, and the cocktail menu is creative, with plenty of Latin-infused flavors. Consider Mexican espresso martini made with tequila, Kahlua and cinnamon, white sangria, mojitos (passion fruit or blackberry) and caipirinha, also available with passion fruit. The wine list is respectable with by-the-glass prices, with most in the \$10-\$12 range.

Desserts, meanwhile, are made in-house, and the chocolate layer cake with a fresh strawberry crown was swoon-worthy.

Expect Lewes and Rehoboth prices. Zava's dinner entrees run from \$30 for salmon to \$45 for the ribeye. Generally, Milton's restaurant prices are lower, but Zava Café combines a comfortable atmosphere with an innovative menu that will undoubtedly appeal to the-atergoers and locals alike.



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# GOVERNMENT & POLITICS



photo link: City of Milford



# MILFORD HOUSING CORP. GIVEN \$940,000 IN FEDERAL FUNDS

BY BETSY PRICE

The Milford Housing Development Corp. has been awarded a federal \$940,000 federal grant that will allow it to build 24 homes benefitting people in Kent and Sussex counties and Worcester County, MD.

The Rural Development Mutual Self-Help Housing Technical Assistance grant from the U.S. Department of will enable the nonprofit to renew its Self-Help Housing Program and build those homes, expected to benefit about 100 people.

The Development Corp. provides technical assistance to families who put in the “sweat equity” earned during the construction of their home as the down payment.

“Safe and affordable housing is a basic necessity, but it’s becoming harder to find here in the First State,” said Sen. Tom Carper. “I’m proud of the federal investments we’ve been able to make to increase the housing supply and put roofs over families’ heads. And

I’m especially proud of the work Milford Housing is able to get done with this funding—working directly with homeowners to help them make their dreams of home ownership come true.”

David Moore, president and CEO of the nonprofit, said it and USDA Rural Development have built more than 250 self-help homes.

“This program combines sweat equity, affordable mortgages and technical assistance,” Moore said in the press release announcing the grant. “MHDC looks forward to continuing our partnership with USDA Rural Development to offer this unique homeownership opportunity in these tough economic times. Homeownership is still the greatest foundation for building wealth.”



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# HEALTH



photo link: Bayhealth Medical Center



BY NICK HALLIDAY

Back in June, Brian Perry of Frederica got the call of a lifetime. The Special Olympics informed him that he would be representing the USA in the World Games in Berlin, Germany, this summer.

“We were shocked but also thrilled,” said his parents, Christine and Manny Perry. “It took us months to absorb that we were all going to Berlin. “It was surreal. Words cannot describe how proud we are of Brian and his accomplishments.”

Brian qualified for the 50-meter freestyle Olympic finals. The final heat is also known as the championship heat, which meant he was competing against the top qualifiers from around the world.

## FREDERICA'S BRIAN PERRY DEFIES ODDS, BECOMES AN OLYMPIAN

“Every day in Germany I wore the red, white, and blue Special Olympics USA uniforms, which made me very proud,” he said. “I got to bond with my swim team members and coaches for over two weeks and it was fun. We cheered each other on during swim events and celebrated each other’s successes.”

Swimming in the international 50-meter freestyle was a challenge.

“The competition was tougher than I have ever had,” Brian said. “These were world class swimmers, and I am very proud to have won the fifth-place medal. It was an amazing adventure that I’ll remember forever.”

Brian’s love for swimming started at a young age.

“My mom had me in the water at the YMCA when I was six weeks old to teach me to float and to love the water,” he said.

### Perry’s swimming start

Christine and Manny Perry recalled that 43 years ago, a doctor told them Brian wouldn’t have the mental capacity to be very successful in life and that they should consider institutionalizing him. They refused.

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“We raised him with two younger siblings and gave him all the opportunities available to him,” they said. “We believed having strong social skills and keeping Brian in the community would get Brian places and look at him now!”

Brian said meeting new people and making new friends is important to him. He defied the odds and competed in many Special Olympic sports.

“I like swimming because I feel the water makes me free,” he said. “When I am with my swimming trainer, I learn the strokes better and I increase my stamina. I also love the muscles I developed and the weight I lost with all the training.”

Brian was happy with his finish, but he’s not done.

“Right now, I am taking a break from swim training but I will be back at the Y pool soon to be ready to swim for the Kent Wild Kats for the **DE Special Olympics**,” he said.

He would like to compete in the 2025 Special Olympics, which will be held in Canada, and wear red, white, and blue again for his country. But the real goal is to bring home another medal, hopefully a gold one.



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# SPORTS



photo by Ben Fulton



## CHARLES V. WILLIAMS STADIUM, HOME OF THE SMYRNA EAGLES

BY GLENN FRAZER

This summer, the 302 Sports staff is proud to feature some of the high school football venues where we have been fortunate to broadcast and view games over the years. Our series of stories continues with Charles V. Williams Stadium, home of the Smyrna Eagles.

The stadium was dedicated in 1994 in the name of a man that served the school district for four decades, as principal, superintendent, athletic director and a multi-sport coach. Mr. Williams also served his country in World War II, receiving the Purple Heart and Bronze Star. He passed away in 2014 at the age of 91 years young—just one year shy of his beloved Eagles’ first state championship in football.

Prior to the opening of the “new” high school in 1970, the John Bassett Moore Middle School building was the

high school. The football field was located between Hamilton Lane and Frazier Street. The modern era of Smyrna high varsity football commenced in 1949 with a four-game slate under coaches Charles V. Williams, Frank Stellatella and Robert Everett. In 1950, lights were erected around the field and soon after that an electronic scoreboard with clock. The Eagles’ record from 1949-1969 was 89-71-6 at the JBM field. In the 60s, Smyrna competed in the original Diamond State Conference, which merged with the Henlopen Conference following the ’68 season.

In 1973, the Eagles won the conference title and in 1975 advanced to the state championship game in the newly-formed Division II, falling to Glasgow 38-30. It

see page 20

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from page 19

would take another 40 years before the Smyrna-Clayton community could cheer on their beloved team in a state championship game. The first of three “back-to-back-to-back” titles was secured in 2015 at Delaware Stadium in overtime against Salesianum, as linebacker Eli Hutchinson tackled the Sals’ Colby Reeder for a loss on fourth and goal. The “sea of red” Smyrna fans in the East stands celebrated the win in one of the most exciting championship games ever.

Smyrna has enjoyed recent success at Charles V. Williams Stadium with capacity crowds in the bleachers and those that fill the fence line around the north end zone. The stadium is located behind the high school off Duck Creek Parkway, an easy ride from the north Smyrna exit off Route 1. The record at home since 2015 is 43-5 including a current streak of 14 wins. The atmosphere is electric on Friday nights, with an assist from the Regiment-of-Red marching band. Early in the season, the sun glare makes it a challenge for a broadcast crew calling the game from the pressbox, but as you can see from our photo, it also can provide an awesome setting.

Recent upgrades over the past few years include the entrance to the stadium, restroom facilities and concessions. The home side bleachers can accommodate many more fans than the visiting side, thus enhancing the intimidating atmosphere for an opponent.



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## FRIDAY NIGHTS AT CAVALIERS STADIUM

BY GLENN FRAZER

This summer, the 302 Sports staff discussed the opportunity to feature some of the high school football venues where we have been fortunate to broadcast, and view games over the years. Since I am the “senior” sportscaster (by far), I thought about taking the lead with my alma mater, Middletown High School. Today, one of the most enthusiastic fan bases supports a very successful program with eight total state championships. However, winning didn’t come too often in the beginning. From its first season in 1953 until 1962, the Cavaliers had an overall record of 14-54-3 and never had a winning season. Things changed in 1962 when Bill Billings was hired. Middletown defeated Caesar Rodney 19-6 on Sept. 14, 1962. The Cavaliers would not lose again until 1967, falling to Coach Bob Hoffman’s Newark Yellowjackets. The 53-game winning streak is

the longest in Delaware history and was ended by a Newark program that had a record of 137-32 dating back to 1947!

During the 53-game winning streak, Middletown upset the heavily-favored Salesianum Sals 14-13 in 1966. The Sals team out-weighed the Middletown players by an average of 30 pounds per man. Seating capacity at Middletown was 3,500 but police estimated a crowd upwards of 8,000 that night.

The stadium is still situated behind the Everett Meredith Middle School at 504 S. Broad Street as it was in 1966. That was the location of the one (and only) high school in a district that now boasts two other high schools (Odessa and Appo) with another building coming soon. On any given Friday night, the stands are full with standing-room around the fences behind both end

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zones. Oh yes, don’t forget the cowbells and a crowd that can be heard throughout most of the town when the Cavaliers score.

The entrance to the stadium was remodeled a few years ago that included upgrades for rest room facilities and concessions. Parking between the stadium and the Middle School does not accommodate the large crowds, so fans utilize S. Broad Street, the streets near the stadium including the development of Sharondale...just like they did in 1966.

It is a very intimidating atmosphere for any visiting opponent. In Cavaliers Stadium, Middletown certainly enjoys a “home field” advantage.

MILFORD  
LIVE



## IN THE TOWN TOO BIG FOR ONE STATE SITS FRANCES E. NUNVAR STADIUM

BY NICK HALLIDAY

*This is a series looking at Delaware stadiums and gyms, and the experience gamegoers will have at them.*

We told you about the best stadium atmosphere upstate, now we head to the furthest school south in Delaware and the cozy confines of Frances E. Nunvar Stadium, where the Delmar Wildcats play.

Many know how tough a road trip to Delmar can be. The field has no track so the fans seem to sit right on top of the action. The fans who arrive late can be equally intimidating as they line the fence of the end zone.

When you drive down Line Road (literally the state line) houses on your left are in Maryland and to the right are the Delaware residents. That's when you start to get the small town feeling. It might be a small town, but too big for just one state.

This fall will be the 95th anniversary of organized football in Delmar. In 1928, teacher/coach Frances Nunvar began removing trees to make way for what would become the first football field in the town.

With a new school in 1998 came a new field and the Frances E. Nunvar Stadium was officially dedicated. What happened to the old field you ask? The current Delmar Middle/High School now sits on that site.

The community has seen 20 Henlopen South championships and seven Division II state titles. Faithful fans young and old still turn out for a 7:30 kickoff on Friday nights.

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