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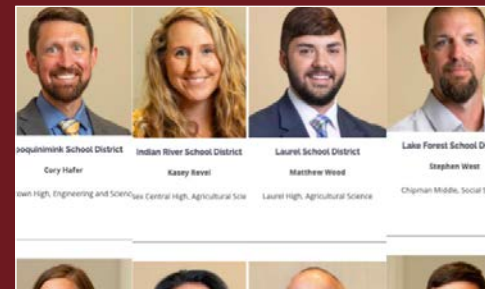
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photo link: Milford Police Department



Dress Code Still a Hot Topic



2024 Teacher of the Year Nominees



Milford Survive Delcastle 14-8

HEADLINES



photo link: Marcia Reed



THE SCHOOL DRESS CODE: STILL A HOT TOPIC IN MILFORD

BY JAREK RUTZ

Some Milford School District parents and students showed up to the district’s board meeting this week to once again express dismay about the student dress code policy.

“My biggest concern is that I feel we are addressing and making our dress code policy bigger than our academic policy and bigger than behavioral policies and that just should not be,” said Melody Mackert on Sept. 18.

Mackert has two children currently in the district and one child who graduated from Milford High School. “There are bigger issues other than the fit of a pair of pants or the material of a pair of pants,” she said, “and that would be the academics and the learning of our children.”

About 10 public comments Monday were directly opposed to the dress code. They came a month after a group of 200 people circulated a petition asking the district to ban uniforms, saying they are an unnecessary and burdensome expense. The district has pointed

out there are no uniform requirements, but there are rules that describe and what children are not allowed to wear.

“We should be modifying this dress code policy to a much simpler one that could address the major concerns that we all probably—as parents, as educators and I’m sure as board members—have,” Mackert said. “None of us want to see children coming to school dressed inappropriately. That is not anybody’s agenda here. I believe the agenda is more so that we want options for our children and not to be so restrictive.”

A junior at Milford High said she’s opposed to the dress code and believes students should be able to wear whatever makes them comfortable so they can focus on learning.

She said last week she, her twin sister and others were cited for dress code violations for wearing leggings and sweatshirts. “I feel as if students should be able to come

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photos by Gervasio Ruiz This organization is supported in part by a grant from the Delaware Division of the Arts, a state agency, in partnership with The National Endowment for the Arts. The Division promotes Delaware arts events on www.delawarearts.com Delaware Division of the Arts

from page 3

to school comfortably instead of wearing collared shirts and khaki pants,” she said. “I believe the uniforms make students feel invisible.” Dozens of students wear the exact same outfit every day, she said. “As children, we’re always told to express ourselves individually and stand out, but with a uniform, we’re sadly unable to do that,” she said.

Nicole Hall, the mother of a sophomore and one graduate, said the dress code policy disrupts not only learning, but the relationships between students and staff.

“My daughter told me about feeling so nervous about what she was putting on in the morning and coming through the building and what was going to be said to her,” Hall said. “That’s something that needs to be factored in, how that is affecting their mental status and absolutely anxiety is going to definitely decrease learning.”

There’s two types of comfort: physical and mental, she said. Both are crucial for students to feel good about themselves and to have a productive day.

“It’s been mentioned a number of times that we’re a Title I district,” Hall said. “I mean, our students qualify for free breakfast and free lunch, and then we’re putting this burden on parents of this restricted and limited dress code.”

Title I districts are those in which children from low-income families make up at least 40% of enrollment. The school district then is eligible to use Title I funds to operate schoolwide programs that serve all children in order to raise the achievement of the lowest-achieving students.

Hall said her son went thrifting to buy some cheap, affordable clothes, and he can’t wear any of them to school because they don’t meet the dress code.

see page 5

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Mackert said the code needs to be simplified. “We’re up to almost 20 stipulations that we now have in our dress code policy,” she said. “It could probably be dwindled down to four or five.”

Sarah Smith said the dress code appears to be open to interpretation, which is problematic.

“It states cotton bottoms are acceptable, but when my child received a written referral on the third day of school, I inquired about why she could not wear elastic bottoms,” Smith said, “and I was told that sweatpants are not allowed, but I didn’t ask about sweatpants. I asked about elastic pants.” When she asked administrators to define sweatpants, she was told. “Well, my opinion of sweatpants is blah, blah, blah.”

“I spoke to three different administrators and I got three different answers, so how can you enforce something when you start with, ‘My opinion is?’” she said.

She noted that some hoodies are acceptable, but if the same material is used for pants, it is unacceptable. “Where’s the allowance for girls that are bloated or menstruating? Where’s the allowance for gassy boys in the morning?” she said. “Kids sit all day and are uncomfortable, and the point of school is to learn.”

The policy is hypocritical, she said.

“When you have [professional development] days, teachers attend those meetings in sweats, leggings, comfortable elastic waist shorts,” she said. “Why? Because they’re seated all day and it’s uncomfortable to sit in pants that have buttons and belts that are fitted. Elastic waists are more forgiving.”

She asked the board members—to no response—how many of them were wearing elastic pants in the meeting because they’re more comfortable.

“I’m pretty sure we have bigger issues to deal with than putting constraints on clothes parents can buy for their children,” she said. “Not to mention the monetary resources that schools are wasting battling dress code issues. These are our tax dollars and you are wasting them on dress code referrals and meetings with parents, which speaks to poor mismanagement of our tax dollars.”

Parent Michael McCain said studies show uniforms don’t improve academic achievement. He cited research from the National Library of Medicine and Ohio State University.

“Many students are unlikely to wear the uniform during summer and weekend seasons, meaning that most parents will have to buy students two different wardrobes for both uniform and non school times,” he said, “which could lead to things such as struggling to buy said uniforms for low-income families.”

By reducing a student’s ability to express themselves through clothing, the policy makes it harder for them to identify common interests with others and make friends.

Members of the board assured the audience that the district is developing a committee to review and potentially make recommendations for the dress code policy.

“Please know that the district hears you and we are going to be working with you on a resolution moving forward,” said Bridget Amory, district superintendent.



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photo link: [Second Street Players](#)



BY TERRY ROGERS

Milford Historical Society has planned its fall Antiques Market for Saturday, Oct. 7, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Dealers from around Delmarva will be selling antiques and vintage collectibles on the lawn of Parson Thorne Mansion, which is managed by the historical society.

“The Antiques Market at Silver Hill dates back over 25 years,” Brooke Clendaniel of the Milford Historical Society said. “We are still accepting vendors for the event as well.”

Admission is \$1 and includes tours of the mansion. Clendaniel explained that the historical society is excited to show the public the renovations that are currently underway and to learn more about plans to make one of the outbuildings on the property into a replica of a late 1700s sharecroppers’ cottage.

“Downtown Milford Inc. and the Milford Historical Society were co-sponsors of Milford Heritage Festival at both the Riverwalk Park and the Parson Thorne Mansion,” he explained. “There were tours of the Mansion, as well as a Civil War encampment on the front lawn. There were horse-drawn carriages providing transportation from downtown.” Clendaniel continued. “I asked

MILFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY PLANS ANTIQUE SHOW

the Trustees to let me try the outdoor antiques show concept with just few dealers along the brick walk. Four antique dealers agreed to participate that day. The idea has now blossomed into a successful semi-annual activity in May and October.”

In addition to vendors, volunteers are also needed. “We are also looking for volunteers to help us at the event,” Clendaniel said. “We need tour guides for the mansion and to help with admission. The Society is hoping to expand and we would love to have some volunteers who are willing to help us with our growth as well.”

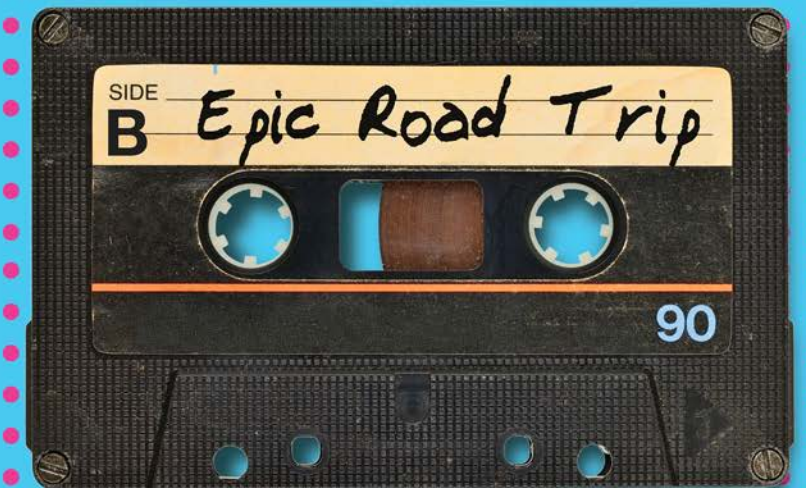
The historical society reached out to the Mispillion Art League to see if there is a way to partner the Antiques Market with the Big Draw Festival which is being held the same weekend. As details emerge, they will be released to the public.

Dealers who are interested in space should email parsonthorne@gmail.com. Space is limited so reach out as soon as possible. Anyone interested in volunteering can also use that email address.

The Parson Thorne Mansion at Silver Hill was the home of Reverence Sydenham Thorne, one of the founders of Milford. It was also the home of Gov. William Burton and was the boyhood home of John M. Clayton, who served as the United States Secretary of State under President Zachary Taylor.

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BY TERRY ROGERS

Fred and Kye Bennett's property has been selected as the "September Garden of the Month" by the Milford Garden Club. Their pristine property is located at 24139 Sugar Hill Road in Milford and has been in the Bennett family since 1839. Mr. Bennett says the family thinks that the front of their eye-catching house is part of the original farmhouse. With about 2,000 acres, Fred has continued the farming tradition. He has also continued to maintain a museum which was started by his father. It consists of farming equipment, some of which dates back to the 1800s, plus other local memorabilia and antiques.

Mr. Bennett stated that he decides what plants he wants in his gardens and orders them from Blessings which is conveniently located across the street from him. This summer he had over 200 red and white vincas delivered which enabled him to totally encircle the foundation of his house. Although the red and white alternating vincas are the most prominent plants of his garden, there are also knockout roses, barberry bushes and arborvitae. The Bennetts have created a simple but beautiful, outstanding garden.

BENNETT HOME SELECTED AS GARDEN OF THE MONTH

The Garden of the Month is chosen by the Beautification Committee. Recommendations are accepted for any garden that someone feels is outstanding.

Milford Garden Club was established in 1966 and became a member of the Delaware Federation of Garden Clubs and National Garden Clubs, Inc. in 1983. They meet on the first Wednesday of the month at the Parks and Recreation Building in Milford. The group maintains some gardens in the town and supports the interests of members through speakers, workshops and field trips.

Although the organization is for those who enjoy gardening, they also promote the preservation of habitats, providing information on how to plant flowers that will attract pollinators as well as those that can provide natural habitats for other wildlife. By recognizing outstanding gardens, the Club hopes to encourage others to create gardens that are not only beautiful, but will help the environment as well.

Any garden in the Milford area is eligible for recognition. The selected homeowner will get recognition for their efforts along with the right to brag for the month, as the club places a sign on the property for a month.

Recommendations can be submitted by email to milfordgardenclubdelaware@gmail.com. Anyone interested in joining the club can email the same address. The Milford Garden Club also has a brochure that can be mailed out to explain the benefits of joining.

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Milford School District Homecoming Week Festivities

SEPTEMBER 26 - SEPTEMBER 30



Monday - Friday:
Each school will send home details about their spirit week dress days



Homecoming Parade
Friday, September 29
Stepping off at 5:30pm from the Old Milford Middle School



Homecoming Game
Friday, September 29
Kick-off at 7pm at Briggs Stadium



Homecoming Dance
Saturday, September 30
7-10pm at MHS Cafeteria
Tickets on sale during lunches



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AMERICAN INDIAN TOWNS OF SUSSEX COUNTY

STAFF REPORT

On Saturday, Oct. 14, at 1 p.m., the Milford Museum will continue its American History Series at the Milford Public Library with a program titled, “American Indian Towns of Sussex County, Delaware”. Presented by archaeologist Daniel R. Griffith, this program will focus on the land in what is known today as Sussex County and how it was contested by competing English, Dutch and Swedish colonies as well as sizable and influential communities of American Indians.

Among the topics covered will be the archival and archaeological research that Griffith’s team used to find the location of significant American Indian towns in Sussex County. This research was based on Captain John Smith’s three-day voyage up the Nanticoke River in June 1608, as well as English and Dutch records of Indian communities. Smith’s map and writings showed three Indian towns: Nause, Nantiquack (now known as the Nanticoke) and Kuskarawaok or King’s Town (where Indian leadership lived). Extensive archaeological surveys along historic maps and accounts have also revealed relevant sites in the Lewes area, where the Siconese and their town of Checonesseck were located.

The principal owner of Griffith Archaeology Consulting, Griffith has been extremely active in Delaware archaeological research for decades. After serving as the director of the Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs with the state of Delaware for more than 15 years, Griffith took on the lead role in the 2005 Lewes Maritime Archaeology Project which focused on the Recovery of the Roosevelt Inlet Shipwreck. More recently, he has served as the director of the Avery’s Rest Archaeological Site Recovery Project. He has been active with the Archaeological Society of Delaware, serving as a board member since 2007.

Sponsored by the Milford Museum, these monthly programs focus on a variety of topics concerning local, state and national history. These presentations are held on the second Saturday of each month, at 1 p.m. in the Milford Public Library, located at 11 S.E. Front Street. For more information, please contact the museum at 302-424-1080, tom@milforddemuseum.org. These programs are offered through a generous grant from The Delaware Heritage Commission.



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STAFF REPORT

Oktoberfest is back! This year St. John the Apostle Church in Milford will celebrate its 30th Annual German Oktoberfest on Friday, Oct. 6, from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. and Saturday, Oct. 7, from noon to 10 p.m. The event will be on the grounds of St. John's Church located at 506 Seabury Avenue. There is no entrance fee and plenty of free live entertainment.

In true Oktoberfest tradition, the festivities kick-off on Friday evening with The Funsters playing from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. Also featured that night will be the 4th Annual Oktoberfest 5K Run/Walk. The race begins at 6 p.m. and day-of registration at 5 p.m. Both races begin on School Place in front of the church. Registration is \$25 until Oct. 1, \$28 race week and \$30 on race day. Sign up at <https://bit.ly/STJOktoberfestrun>.

After running the 5K and dancing to the wonderful sounds of The Funsters, you will be hungry. The ever popular Oktoberfest international food court will be serving up its traditional German entrees, along with Italian, Spanish, Polish, Irish, good old hamburgers, hot

ST. JOHN'S 30TH ANNUAL GERMAN OKTOBERFEST

dogs, French fries, Italian ice, funnel cake and homemade baked desserts. Plus, for the adults, don't miss the very popular beer booth! There is something for everyone's taste.

And of course, for the kids, there will be games galore ranging from the inflatables such as the obstacle course and little fire engine. We will also have the climbing wall back. For the children, there will be face painting, pumpkin painting, a petting zoo, hay rides, little train rides and the big fire truck rides.

Dave Betz and his German orchestra will entertain on Saturday afternoon along with the Enzian (German) dancers and the McAleer School of Irish Dancing. Following that exciting line-up at 4 p.m., there will be Sean O'Reilly singing in Sinatra style! To end the day from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. will be a festival favorite band, The Glass Onion!

This annual Oktoberfest is St. John's and St. Bernadette's (St. John's mission church in Harrington) largest fundraiser of the year. There will be door prizes throughout the event and a raffle on Saturday evening. First prize is \$1,000, 2nd prize is \$500 and four prizes of \$100 each. We guarantee you an entertaining weekend and you will definitely not go away hungry. Please mark your calendar now for the 30th Annual German Oktoberfest. For more information call Bonnie De Mar at 302-236-5296. Everything is cash and best of all, there is no admission fee!

St. John the Apostle/St. Bernadette is a multi-ethnic Parish that has been providing for the spiritual needs of Catholics since 1910. Today we minister to over 1,400 families and provide outreach to those in need in the greater Milford/Harrington area. www.stjohnsmilford.com



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

TAYLOR'D ESTHETICS GRAND OPENING



STAFF REPORT

Downtown Milford Inc., is excited to announce Taylor'd Esthetics grand opening and ribbon cutting will be on Saturday, Oct. 7. Meet Taylor'd Esthetics owner, Kaitlyn, your local licensed esthetician, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Kaitlyn understands what it is like to struggle with finding the right person to help with skin care needs. "After not so good results with a dermatologist, I found a wonderful esthetician that helped me clear up my skin problems," said Kaitlyn, "I was so pleased with my experience that I decided to become an esthetician myself and help others like me!"

"I really love using natural skincare to achieve beautiful results," said Kaitlyn who is also certified in eyelash extensions, brow tinting and teeth whitening. "It's truly a blessing to provide these services especially for people

of color and other ethnic backgrounds. I have worked with all skin shades and skin types." Kaitlyn has been working as an esthetician for more than seven years.

Her shop, Taylor'd Esthetics, is here to serve the people of Milford as an all-in-one beauty spa! "We are so happy to celebrate another great business that has opened in downtown Milford," said Janne Collins, executive director of DMI. "We hope everyone will stop by and welcome Taylor'd Esthetics to downtown Milford and find out more about how Kaitlyn can help them enhance their natural beauty!"

Taylor'd Esthetics is located at 116 N. Washington Ave. Make an appointment with Kaitlyn at <https://www.vagaro.com/taylordesthetics12>.



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U.S. POSTAL SERVICE READY TO DELIVER FOR AMERICA DURING THE HOLIDAYS

STAFF REPORT

The United States Postal Service (USPS) and its dedicated employees across the nation are ready to deliver another successful holiday season of outstanding service.

“Our 2022 peak season was a tremendous success,” said Postmaster General and CEO Louis DeJoy. “We are ready to deliver for the holidays in a superior and routine manner. We have been planning early and leveraging investments in our people, infrastructure, transportation and technology made possible by the Delivering for America plan. And with no holiday surcharges, we are strongly positioned to be America’s most affordable delivery provider this holiday season.”

In 2022, the Postal Service processed more than 11.7 billion mailpieces and packages during the holiday season. On average, it took just 2.5 days to deliver a mailpiece or package to its intended destination.

Throughout 2023, USPS has maintained even stronger service performance while engaging in numerous transformational initiatives across the organization and the country. Due to the ongoing implementation of the Delivering for America strategic plan, 98% of the

nation’s population currently receives their mail and packages in less than three days, with approximately 40% of first-class mail and packages getting delivered a day in advance. That noted, the Postal Service is also working hard to correct service-related issues in limited areas across the nation through hiring initiatives and improving operational efficiency.

The Postal Service also announced it will not levy any additional surcharges for customers this holiday season, offering increased predictability in pricing for customers. There will be no additional fees for residential area delivery, for Saturday delivery or for minimum volumes. USPS will continue to be the most affordable way to mail and ship this holiday season.

Specifically, key Delivering for America investments in the Postal Service’s workforce, package processing, and delivery operations ahead of the 2023 peak holiday season include:

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GOVERNMENT & POLITICS



photo link: City of Milford



CONSORTIUM: EXPAND PROGRAM GIVING PREGNANT WOMEN \$1,000 A MONTH

BY BETSY PRICE

A pilot program that gave 40 pregnant New Castle County women \$1,000 a month for 24 months had greater than expected health and other benefits, the sponsors said.

The program saw a 324% return on investment, organizers said at a press conference announcing the result.

Among its outcomes:

- \$229,520 in reduced hospital stays
- \$21,600 in reduced emergency department visits
- 50% of the monthly stipend went directly toward groceries/food, household items/basic needs, and gas/auto/transportation; 30% of which went directly to groceries/food
- 89% of the participating moms received prenatal care
- 81% of their babies had no complications at birth

Expanding the Guaranteed Basic Income program could help reduce both infant and maternal deaths,

while helping women take better care of themselves and their children, said Delaware House Majority Leader Melissa Minor-Brown, R, New Castle.

“At this time, we are focused on sharing the strong results of this pilot with our partners and the public in the hopes that we can all advocate for supporting sustainability of the program,” Minor-Brown said. “The ultimate goal would be a continuation and expansion of the GBI program throughout Delaware.”

The program was a project of the [Delaware Healthy Mother and Infant Consortium](#), which was created as successor to the Infant Mortality Task Force.

The consortium was tasked with preventing infant and maternal mortality as well as improving the health outcomes of infants and women of childbearing age throughout Delaware.

see page 19



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from page 18

According to the March of Dimes, 68 infants died in Delaware in 2019 before reaching their first birthday, an infant mortality rate of 6.4 per 1,000 live births. In Delaware in 2021, 78% of infants were born to women receiving adequate/adequate plus prenatal care.

Pregnant income rules

Delaware's pilot income program, which began in 2021, was one of many similar programs around the nation. Paid for with state and federal money, the Delaware program chose participants who fell below the federal poverty level threshold, were in their first or second trimester of pregnancy, and lived in a designated high-risk Healthy Women Healthy Babies zip code in Wilmington. The participants received the money in the form of a debit card and could use it for food, transportation costs, education, rent, baby supplies and other essentials.

The women also attended evaluations every three months to offer feedback, which helped organizers understand what was and was not working and why. The participants also were offered wraparound services, such as meeting with a case worker or spending time with a financial coach and career team.

In addition to the 324% return on the investment, the women and babies showed notable improvements in their health, better access to needed resources such as the federal **Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women and Children** (WIC) and **Supplemental Nutrition and Assistant Program** (SNAP, once called food stamps) and increased access to affordable housing and job opportunities.

see page 20

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The women were followed extensively and the data showed outstanding results, including cost savings, said Dr. Priscilla Mpasi, chair of the consortium.

“Giving people the resources they need—money, access to health services before and during pregnancy, mental health care, help with WIC and SNAP benefits, job searches, and affordable housing—both mom and baby thrive,” Mpasi said. “This program shows us that when you empower pregnant women by putting them in driver’s seat for how they utilize resources to meet their needs, they will change the health trajectory of their lives and their babies’ lives for the better.”

The program is not helping anyone outside of Wilmington, pointed out State Rep. Ruth Briggs King, R-Georgetown. “It’s limited by zip code and that means those in Kent and Sussex aren’t getting the same opportunities or benefits in areas that are rural with bigger challenges,” Briggs King said. The state decided to fund doulas and that should help fill the gap, she said.

“Handing out additional money to those with existing benefits is unfair to working families struggling in this unprecedented inflation time,” she said.

Touting the benefits of a program and later introducing legislation to fund it is a familiar route to approval in the current Democrat-heavy state Legislature.

Efforts were unsuccessful to reach Minor-Brown to ask if she intended to do that.



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EDUCATION



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HERE ARE NOMINEES FOR 2024 TEACHER OF THE YEAR

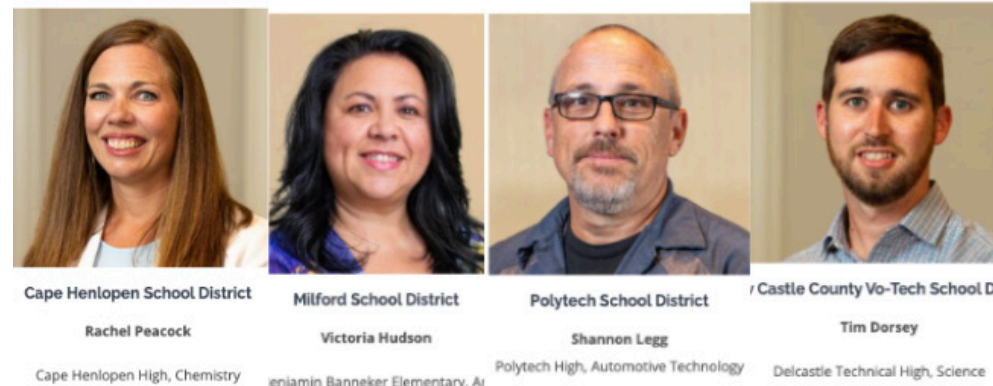
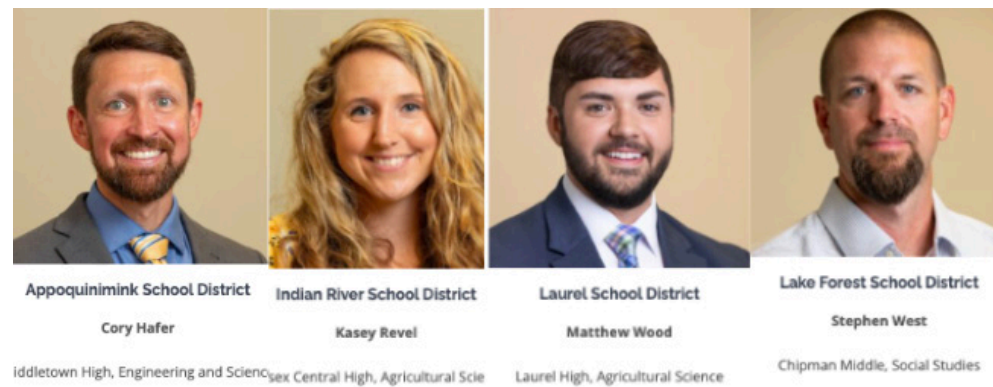
BY JAREK RUTZ

The 20 nominees for Delaware’s 2024 Teacher of the Year have been announced. All 20 will be honored at a celebration 5 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 18, at Modern Maturity Center in Dover. The winner of the title will be announced that night. Every nominee will pocket \$2,000, and the winner will get \$5,000 to use in the classroom and \$3,000 for personal use.

The candidates were nominated by their districts or the Delaware Charter Schools Network during 2023 based on their superior ability to inspire students with a love of learning, exemplary demonstration of professional traits and strong sense of dedication and devotion to teaching.

Each state nominee submitted an application exemplifying his or her teaching philosophy and five Delaware Department of Education staff members independently evaluated each application.

A former Delaware Teacher of the Year and department staff member observe each candidate in the classroom as part of the process.



Taking into consideration the ratings from the application review and observations as well as a recorded presentation by the nominees, another independent panel of non-department judges then will select the winner. That person will become the First State’s nominee in the national program, a project of the Council of Chief State School Officers.

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HEALTH



photo link: Bayhealth Medical Center



MASK MANDATE UNLIKELY IF PIROLA CAUSES COVID CASE SURGE

COVID tracker

The department still **tracks** the number of COVID-19 cases and does expect them to keep rising, Wanner said. Public Health reported 537 new positive cases last week, with 297 of those in New Castle County.

In recent weeks, the state has seen a steady increase in the number of cases and in the detection of Pirola in wastewater, which is an indication that the virus is circulating more than it has been reported.

“When taking that into account and then looking back at the past three years, I think it is very well likely that we’ll see quite a bit more COVID into the fall and winter. but I don’t think we’ll see a surge like we did two years ago,” Wanner said.

The pandemic was marked with a series of surges and one of the worst was during the start of 2022 when highly infectious cases spread during the holidays and came close to closing down businesses and schools in January. So many people were forced to stay home to comply with quarantine and isolation recommendations that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention changed their rules.

[CLICK TO READ MORE](#)

BY BETSY PRICE

It’s unlikely that a new surge of COVID-19 cases would trigger a mask mandate or switch to virtual schools, said the chief physician at the Division of Public Health.

“At this point, we’ve had three years of experience,” said Dr. Greg Wanner, who also is an emergency physician with ChristianaCare. “We have now widespread availability of effective vaccines and treatments, which we really did not have earlier in the pandemic. I think with those advances in vaccines and treatments, I would not expect to see a return to mandatory masking or widespread virtual schooling.”

It takes time to appraise the impact of how variants like **Pirola**, which is said to be more infectious than other strains, will affect a community, Wanner said.

 A silhouette of a woman's head and shoulders in profile, facing left. The background is a light, textured surface. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

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SPORTS



photo link: [Nick Halliday](#)

MILFORD SURVIVES DELCASTLE 14-8

BY KEVIN EICKMAN

“Wake up!” That was the constant chorus being shared from the Buccaneers coaches and staff who had made the trip up to Delcastle to watch this past Saturday’s football game. Yet for the entire first half of the contest, Milford refused to respond. Whether it was one of six first half turnovers or the multitude of mental gaffs, the Buccaneers simply could not get out of their own way. Whether it was an issue of playing down to their competition, or just the fact of another noon kickoff in New Castle County, Milford was not ready to play.

Against most teams these mistakes would have led to an absolute blowout of a loss. However, Milford somehow managed to stay in the game. This was based on a defense that stood up to a constant onslaught and a Delcastle offense that refused to take advantage of the

opportunities handed to them by the Bucs. No matter the reason, somehow Milford found themselves trailing only 8-0 as the teams entered the halftime locker rooms. “There was no excuse for how we came out today, we could barely move the ball and even when we did, we shot ourselves in the foot,” Coach Jed Bell said. “You have to really tip your hat to our defense for keeping us in the game. Without the effort they gave throughout the entire game today, we would have been losers.”

The first half would change for the better slowly in the second half for Milford, as it kept Delcastle pinned in its own territory and enjoyed good field position due to it during the third quarter. While the offense was moving the ball thanks to an offensive line that was beginning

see page 27



to impose its will on Delcastle, MHS still was unable to find the end zone. It wasn't until just nine seconds remained in the quarter that Milford was able to finally score as senior quarterback John Hudson was able to scamper 10 yards for a touchdown, and with the two-point conversion, Milford was able to tie the game at eight. Hudson, who had difficulties in the first half, felt that Milford was ready to take control of the game. "Even though we started slowly, we kept at it. We could have just given up at any time, we just didn't. The fact that I was the one to score the touchdown was just the way the play-calling went," he said.

With momentum in its favor, the Milford defense upped its game another notch, with seniors Charles Shorts and Wilderson Alexandre leading the charge. It seemed as if every time Milford needed a big play, one of them was there to make it happen. Speaking with Shorts after the game, he contributed the strong play of the defense due to preparation. "We were ready to make plays because of film study. The reason some of mine stood out was because of the whole squad being aware of the situation."

It looked as if Milford were ready to run away with the game, as Shorts would return a punt 63-yard punt for a touchdown with just under nine minutes to go in the game. However, another ill-timed penalty would take the touchdown off the board and force Milford to begin the drive at the Delcastle 41-yard line.

It was there that the Milford offensive line would finally take control of the game as the Bucs began to impose their will on the hosting Cougars, running the

ball straight at their hosts and Delcastle unable to stop it. It would be senior DeNare Horsey who would take it in from three yards out with 6:51 remaining in the game to complete the scoring, as a failed two-point conversion attempt left MHS up 14-8.

From there, Delcastle would touch the ball just one more time. While Milford yielded a few yards, the Bucs defense got the ball back with just over four minutes remaining in the game and the Buccaneers would never give it back. "Our offensive line really stepped up their game in the second half and showed what we could do," Horsey said. "This wasn't a pretty win, but we hung in there and got our act together."

While happy to get the win, Bell was hard pressed to feel anything but relieved following the victory. "We can't come out and not play four quarters of football and expect to win. An early wake-up, a long bus ride, a noon kick is no excuse for how we started this game. We have to come up here in two weeks and have to do it again against Saint Mark's. I promise you we won't get away with this again."

Next up on the schedule, the 2-1 Bucs will host a 1-2 Concord Friday at 7 p.m. "I am telling you right now, don't look at their record, they are a good football team who are going to give us all we can handle. If we don't start four quarters of football together and I mean right now, we are going to get left in the dust this season," Bell concluded.



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BY KEVIN EICKMAN

Milford field hockey coach Andrea McPike has her team off to a 5-0 start to begin the season. This past week the Buccaneers played two different games. The first would be a 4-0 victory over a 0-4 Dover team, the second would be a 4-3 win over Sussex Academy. At first glance, the home shutout against Dover would look to be the most solid of the two games. After speaking with McPike, it was easy to come away with a different take on how the week went.

FIELD HOCKEY NOW 5-0

Hosting Dover on Tuesday, Milford came out quickly scoring two first quarter goals off the stick of junior Hannah Zimmerman who would end up with a hat trick on the day. Following that, however, Milford fell into a malaise that would last until Zimmerman would find the back of the net five minutes into the third quarter. “You can take a look at the numbers and say it was a solid victory. We squandered opportunities and did not take advantage of our opportunities. That is not what this team is about, we are about getting better, finishing and defending, and while you will always take a win the fact is that we need to be better,” McPike said.

Traveling down to a much tougher Sussex Academy squad on Thursday, even though the score was close, the effort was better. In a back-and-forth battle, it would be Zimmerman again who stood out. She would net two goals in the game, including one in the fourth quarter which doubled the Milford advantage to 4-2. “Hannah had a great week and has been coming on strongly, game by game. As she has gotten better, so has the rest of the team,” McPike stated.

Milford has a tough pair of games coming up this week, hosting Woodbridge on Tuesday and traveling to perennial power Cape Henlopen on Thursday. While the Woodbridge contest might look like an easy win on paper, McPike understands nothing is a given. “We take everything and everyone very seriously here. It’s not about Cape on Thursday, it’s about every game, every practice. This team is about getting better and playing better with each opportunity.”

Along with a solid week from Zimmerman, seniors Madisyn Hitchens and Erin Dunlap put in solid weeks as well. Also standing out was sophomore Madison Stahl who recorded seven saves at Sussex Academy. “Everyone has been working hard and these players came up big in some key moments for us this week. But it just isn’t them, I think the whole team has been playing their best, with the Dover game just being looked at as a learning experience,” McPike concluded “It’s not just a few players that win a game, it’s a team. And that is exactly what we are trying to build here, at team.”

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