

MILFORD LIVE

photo link: Marcia Reed

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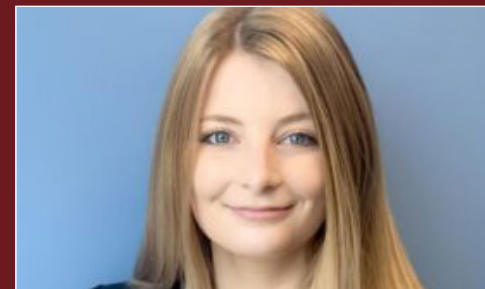
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October 24, 2023
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Thousands Visit for Milford Parade



Aquacare Welcomes Pelvic Floor Therapist



Bucs Tame Bulldogs 15-6

HEADLINES



photo link: [Milford Police Department](#)



THOUSANDS VISIT MILFORD TO WATCH PARADE

BY TERRY ROGERS

One of the most anticipated events in Milford, the Milford Community Parade kicked off from Milford Middle School and made its way through downtown, ending at Milford High School on Wednesday, Oct. 18. Thousands lined the streets of the city, many marking their territories with chairs as early as 7 a.m. that day.

“We live in Felton and come to watch the parade with friends every year,” Leigh Ann Embleton, who watched the parade from North Walnut Street, said. “We fix crockpot dinners and just enjoy each other’s company before the parade. We love to see the bands and the really cute floats people put together. We look forward to it every year.”

This year’s parade theme was “The Great Outdoors” with Sen. Dave Wilson serving as grand marshall. Sen. Wilson was chosen as he embodies the true statesman and community leader. Parade organizers said that Sen. Wilson serves his community with a smile and offers events geared toward first responders.

“You can still find him on the weekend calling the auction at the business he has owned for 35 years,” Charles Gray, parade chairperson, said. “He also calls auctions for non-profit organizations he supports. He has supported the parade for many years and we are honored to have him join us as our grand marshall. He represents a true leader, servant to the community and friend. There is only one Dave Wilson and we are lucky to have him in our community.”

Marching bands from as far away as North Carolina and Stephen Decatur entertained the crowd with both schools winning Best Appearing in their division. Sussex Tech won Best Appearing in their division for bands with Smyrna High School placing second. The Greater Milford Boys and Girls Club won the Best Appearing Vehicle with Kona Ice and First State Party Bus taking second and third.

see page 4

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Delmarva Chapter of American Mustang and Burro Association won Best Appearing Equestrian Group with Delaware State Police Mounted Patrol and Watkins Wonders Petting Zoo earning second and third place. Milford Central Academy's Student Council won Best Appearing Concert Group and Milford Parks and Recreation won Best Appearing Costume Single.

In the Under 18 Civic Float category, Trail Life USA received first place, TADA Performance second place and Milford High School International Club third place. In the Over 18 category, Elks Lodge #2401 won first place, Rising Dawn Redner's received second while Carlisle Fire Company Ladies Auxiliary won third. In the Business Floats category, Southern States of Milford won first place, The Lab@Seascape took second while Dirt Road Patriots took third.

Lowered Habits Cars took first in the Group Decorated Vehicle category with Lowered Habits Trucks taking second and Dirt Road Patriots taking third. Yianna Wilson took first place in the Antique Car category, with Milford Music Center taking second. Milford Central Academy's Dancing Bucs took first in the Performance/Cycle Group category with Tripple D's Dance Team taking second.

"I just love the parade," Linda Green said. "Living on Walnut Street all these years, I think I have watched all of them and it is so nice to have friends and family here to enjoy the festivities with me. It is always such a fun night and I look forward to it every year."

The Milford Community Parade is already hard at work planning next year's event. Volunteers are always needed to bring the parade to Milford. Anyone interested can visit the parade website at www.milfordparade.com.



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CULTURE



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KSI RECEIVES TWO GENERATION DONATIONS

STAFF REPORT

KSI received a generous donation from the Knights of Columbus, Brother Vincent Council #7517 in Smyrna. The Brother Vincent Council Knights donated \$2,054.10 to KSI as a result of their annual Tootsie Roll drive, where they solicit donations to help those with intellectual or physical disabilities.

In addition to the generous donation from the Knights of Columbus, KSI was also the recipient of a Community Service Grant from Kent County Levy Court in the amount of \$1,000. This grant is in support of KSI's Pre-Vocational Training and Life Enrichment Programs. This donation will enable KSI to continue providing quality programs and services to adults with various abilities.

KSI is a not-for-profit agency providing vocational training, employment, community integration, transportation, day habilitation, life enrichment and nutritional services to individuals with disabilities throughout Kent and Sussex Counties. KSI is committed to making all reasonable accommodations in order to ensure that its programs and services are as accessible as possible to as many people as possible. If you would like to make a donation or get more information about KSI, contact Alicia Hollis, KSI Director of Community Relations at 302-422-4014 ext. 3015, or email at hollisa@ksiinc.org or visit their [Facebook](#) page.

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MILFORD MUSEUM PRESENTS "THE MAYFLOWER"

STAFF REPORT

With the Thanksgiving holiday approaching, the Milford Museum will sponsor a program titled "The Mayflower" on Saturday, Nov. 11, at 1 p.m. at the Milford Public Library. Presented by Bill "Hutch" Hutchison, this program will tell the iconic story of one of the most recognized ships in American history. It's one lone voyage to America landed a group of Pilgrims on the shores of Cape Cod, opening a chapter in American history which includes the Mayflower Compact, the first Thanksgiving and descendants that number in the millions.

Hutchison began teaching social studies in the Capital School District in Dover in 1969. He became an associate principal in 1999 and retired in 2004. He was the Capital School District's Teacher-of-the-Year in 1989. He also taught adjunct classes at Delaware State University, Wilmington University and the University of

Delaware. Upon retiring, he worked for Prestwick House Publishing, creating social studies teaching materials. Since 2003, he has volunteered with the Kalmar Nyckel Foundation (KNF), where he crews on the official Tall Ship of Delaware, the Kalmar Nyckel. At KNF, Hutch has been the Interim Education Director, Education Coordinator and currently is Lead Educator Emeritus.

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. The Milford Public Library is located at 11 S.E. Front Street, Milford. For more information, please call (302) 424-1080 or email tom@milforddemuseum.org. These programs are offered through a generous grant from The Delaware Heritage Commission.



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STAFF REPORT

Second Street Players is delighted to present the joyful family production, “A Christmas Carol: The Musical”, at the Riverfront Theater in Milford. Performances will take place Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, Nov. 24, 25, 26 and Dec. 1, 2, 3. Friday and Saturday shows begin at 7 p.m.; Sunday matinees begin at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$25 for adults, \$24 for seniors, students and members.

“A Christmas Carol: The Musical” provides a wonderfully fresh look at Charles Dickens’ unforgettable classic story of Ebenezer Scrooge and the ghostly visits he receives one Christmas Eve. Music and lyrics are provided by Broadway veterans Alan Menken (Disney’s Beauty and the Beast, Disney’s The Little Mermaid, Little Shop of Horrors) and Lynn Ahrens (Ragtime, Sussical, Once on This Island). The book was written by Lynn Ahrens and Mike Ockrent. Originally produced at the Madison Square Garden Theater in New York City, this beloved Christmas tale of redemption and

A CHRISTMAS CAROL: THE MUSICAL SET TO OPEN NOV. 24

hope is sure to provide a festive afternoon or evening of entertainment for the whole family!

Ebenezer Scrooge is portrayed by Chuck Rafferty. The musical’s ensemble cast includes Abigail Aleman, Haley Atallian, Francisco Brizuela, Melissa Brown, Angelina Chituck, Marcie Clark, Allyson Crane, Colby Crawford, Halie Davis, Mickenzie Davis, Jakob Faulkner, Karen Fitzpatrick, Ben Foust, Cheryl Graves, Minor Hardin, Cam Harris, Len Hodges-Goettl, Lori Ann Johnson, Dulcena Kemmerlin, Kendall Lynch, Levi Marine, Ashlynn McDevitt, Susan Newark, Ralph Peluso, Charli Rhine, Parker Rhine, Benjamin Rose, Xavier Ruark, Lorenzo Skye, Cheyanne Story, Pamela A. Taylor, Justin Truitt, Lily Truitt and Dana Willens.

Directed by John H. Hulse, the production team includes Ann Nichols, producer; Diane Trautman, musical director; Julianna Markel, choreographer; Steve Manuel, assistant director; Dawn Nickerson, stage manager and set artist; Len Willens, stage manager and show photographer; Lezlie Eustis, Alan Lane, Alex Shaw, lights and sound; Heather Marine, assistant to the directors; Julie Gleason, Lorraine Leavel, Carol Torrey, costumes; Becky Craft, special FX makeup; Donna Flomp, Janice Hall, props; and Ed O’Connor, set design and construction.

To purchase tickets or learn more, visit www.secondstreetplayers.com. Patrons who have questions or need assistance with the ticketing website may email [info@](mailto:info@secondstreetplayers.com)

secondstreetplayers.com or leave a message at 302-422-0220.

“A Christmas Carol: The Musical” is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI). All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI. www.mtishows.com

Second Street Players values diversity and inclusion in casting and in all other areas of production. Productions are supported, in part, by a grant from the Delaware Division of the Arts, a state agency, in partnership with the National Endowment of the Arts. The Division promotes Delaware arts events on www.DelawareScene.com.



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BUSINESS



photo link: [Marcia Reed](#)

BENVENUTO TO HOLD 16TH ANNUAL TOY DRIVE

BY TERRY ROGERS

Sixteen years ago, Poncho and Lisa Johnson wanted to teach their son Colby that Christmas was about more than getting gifts. Colby, only five years old at the time, was like most children, looking forward to the gifts under the tree. The Johnsons' decided that he needed to learn what the true spirit of Christmas was. That year, they started an annual toy drive in partnership with the Milford Police Department. This year, they will celebrate their 16th year helping the Milford Police Department Toy Drive at Benvenuto on Friday and Saturday, Dec. 8 and 9.

"We, along with Take My Hand Ministries, worked together on this project," Mrs. Johnson said. "For every \$25 wrapped gift someone brings in with gender and age noted, or if they bring in a \$25 or above Walmart gift card, they will get a \$25 Benvenuto gift card in return. It is only for those two days and during our regular hours at the restaurant."

Teaching their son the true meaning of Christmas at a young age, the toy drive began at the Johnson home. Initially, the Milford Police Department did not have a toy drive, so the Johnsons did all the work themselves. Eventually, they invited friends and family to join and it grew into a huge event with police escorts guiding a wagon full of people to the police station to deliver the toys. Afterward, everyone returned to the Johnson home for pizza and fellowship.

"It grew so big, we ended up having to get school buses to carry people to the police station," Mrs. Johnson said. "We had more than 100 people at our house and Santa would make an appearance. We had a bonfire where we roasted marshmallows and had hot chocolate."

Like most children, Colby and his friends outgrew the wagon rides and fewer people began attending the celebration. Gifts continued, however, and the Johnsons

see page 13



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from page 12

began offering a free Sunday brunch. Management of the toy drive was handed to Take My Hand Ministries. After opening Benvenuto, the Sunday brunch was held there.

“We were not even open when we held the first brunch at the restaurant,” Mrs. Johnson said. “There were not even booths installed yet. The Bridge radio station set up tables for us the night before and we held a blessing of the restaurant party with the ministry handling the cost of the food.”

After the COVID pandemic cancelled the brunch in 2020, the Johnsons knew they wanted to continue the event. They decided to begin offering the gift cards in exchange for wrapped gifts and it was a huge success.

“People liked it so much that we figured we might as well keep that going,” Mrs. Johnson said. “For each toy or gift card donated, you receive a \$25 gift card that you can save and use yourself or give as a gift.”

Over the years, Mrs. Johnson said that people have donated bicycles, scooters, hoverboards and more. Because so many of the gifts are for younger children, the gift cards are used to take parents shopping for children who are 12 and older.

Benvenuto will celebrate its Kickoff to Christmas starting Nov. 17 when it hosts an Opera Delaware gala event. The next day it will hold its “Merriest Sweater Contest,” which will have prizes available for the merriest sweater. Mrs. Johnson explained that they held an ugly sweater contest last year, but she preferred that people wear their merriest sweaters for the event.

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MY BAMBINO HOLDS RIBBON CUTTING

BY TERRY ROGERS

The Chamber of Commerce for Greater Milford, friends and family recently celebrated a ribbon cutting with the owners of My Bambino at their location at 973 E. Masten Circle, Milford.

My Bambino has been a trusted source for quality personalized gifts. It is their mission to celebrate loved ones with thoughtful, timeless gifts that will be loved and used. They are dedicated to providing a wide array of unique gifts that welcome new baby and celebrate the many milestones that follow, from birth to graduation. Every order is created just for you and delivered quickly. They are a family-run company and appreciate your support and welcome all feedback. Their caring staff is happy to assist you.

The company began in 1991 when Michele, at the time just 21 and fresh out of art school, merged her love of children, art and beach living into a business. She opened her first store in Rehoboth Beach, debuting just a handful of children's products that were hand-painted

and personalized. With only \$52 in sales the first day, half of which were from her own friends and family, Michele, with the support of her parents, was determined to make her dream a success.

In the fall of 1991, she created her own hand-drawn catalog, a suggestion from an out-of-town customer who wanted to place orders when they returned home. This began a popular mail order business that continues today. After 30 years, Michele still loves to help customers create one-of-a-kind gifts like classic piggy banks, tables and chairs as well as jewelry boxes similar to one she had as a child. The store became so popular it was featured in *O magazine*.

For more information on how My Bambino can assist you, please call 800-927-0707 or visit www.mybambino.com. For information concerning the Chamber of Commerce for Greater Milford call 302-422-3344, visit www.milfordchamber.com or find us on Facebook.



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GOVERNMENT & POLITICS



photo link: [Marcia Reed](#)

TWO STATE REPS. WANT DEATH PENALTY REINSTATED FOR SOME CASES

Randon Wilkerson, 32, was charged for the killing of Heacock. Wilkerson was convicted of 16 charges, including two counts of Murder 1st Degree and 11 other felonies. He will serve the rest of his life in prison. Several community members commented on social media platforms in response to this week's sentencing saying that the death penalty should be reinstated.

In 2016, the Delaware Supreme Court struck down Delaware's capital punishment statute. Before that, there were 22 aggravating circumstances that, when linked to the commission of a murder, could have warranted capital punishment.

The new bill will mirror legislation that was drafted by Rep. Short in 2020, but had not been officially introduced. The revamped measure will be focused on addressing the constitutional issues cited by the High Court in order to restore the current capital punishment law and to reserve the death penalty for only murders committed under the following aggravating circumstance: killing a police officer or public safety official.



BY JAREK RUTZ

Two Delaware lawmakers are looking to reinstate the death penalty for criminals convicted of the murder of a law enforcement or public safety officer.

State Reps. Tim Dukes, R-Laurel and Danny Short, R-Seaford, announced Thursday that they are planning to introduce legislation in the new year that would reinstate the death penalty under those conditions. The bill, known as the "Law Enforcement and First Responders Protection Act", comes in response to this week's life-in-prison conviction of the man who savagely murdered Delmar Police Corporal Keith Heacock in April 2021.

"Corporal Heacock didn't die in vain and we continue to address this issue, hoping to bring it to the House floor for legislators to make that decision," Dukes said. "I think people just want to know that we won't forget. We'll remember Corporal Heacock and his service to the community and that he didn't die in vain."

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DELAWARE SEEMS DESTINED TO HAVE HARD BUDGET CHOICES NEXT YEAR

BY BETSY PRICE

Delaware budget forecasts show that revenues and expenditures for 2025 are running at almost the same level as this year, which had a budget of \$6.1 billion. Even so, Dover politicians may have to scramble to figure out how to accommodate an additional \$400 million in expenses for 2025.

That's what **Cerron Cade**, director of the state **Office of Budget and Management**, said he expected would need to be added to the state budget. It will be needed to cover expected hikes in Medicaid needs, salaries for state employees, particularly those in education and hikes in higher healthcare costs for employees and retirees, among other things.

That information led Monday to a couple of brief discussions from members of the **Delaware Economic and Finance Advisory Council** about whether Delaware—which relies on income tax, corporate taxes and real estate tax for the majority of its budget—would ever

consider raising income tax rates or instituting a sales tax. The council has no authority to suggest or support a tax or tax hike.

Delaware's budget years run from July 1 to June 30, and the state currently is in the middle of fiscal year 2024. If needs outstrip revenue, the state has several funds—\$316.4 million in its Rainy Day fund and \$402.6 million in its Budget Stabilization Fund—that could be accessed for help. That money came in handy in 2020 when the COVID-19 pandemic messed with the state's proposed budget.

DEFAC has been warning for more than a year that the heady days of nearly \$1 billion surpluses for 2022, 2023 and 2024, would end this year. The surpluses were a result of COVID money plowed into the state, unexpected but massive real estate transfer taxes and a rise in corporate taxes and capital gain taxes.

see page 19

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The money allowed Delaware to rebuild its emergency funds. start new programs that are now included in every state budget and invest \$100 million into the massively underfunded account that pays for state retiree benefits such as healthcare.

Now a new state law requires the state to put 1% of the previous year's General Fund operating budgets into the OPEB fund, which in fiscal year 2025 will be \$56 million.

Medicaid budget expenses

One of the state's biggest financial concerns is Medicaid. It required an additional tens of millions last year as the federal government stopped paying for a pandemic program that allowed the state to increase its roles without checking whether or not people qualified. But when the feds stopped paying for those people, the state was only allowed to reduce the number of people on the program by 10% a month, but still had to pay for the rest.

DEFAC members noted that the number of people on Medicaid in September—about 305,882—is 27% of the population and no lower than it was last year, but much higher than the 205,000 in March 2020 before the pandemic began.

The state is continuing to roll people off the program, said Josette Manning, secretary of the Delaware Department of Health and Social Services, but they are not the high-cost members of Medicaid.

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EDUCATION



photo link: Milford High School Band

RECORDING

MOVE TO BAN MILFORD STUDENT PHONE RECORDINGS DEEMED REDUNDANT

BY JAREK RUTZ

A proposed policy to prohibit **Milford School District** students from taking audio and video recordings in school buildings turned out to be redundant and was tabled at the school board meeting Oct. 16. Tabling the policy means the board took no action and it won't be revisited unless a board member asks for it to be.

The idea of addressing recordings was proposed by Laura Manges, the district's director of human resources, during the board's September meeting. Board member Matt Bucher expressed concern about the proposal and said he was against its adoption.

"I'm inclined not to support this policy and my reasoning is pretty simple," he said. "We already have it in the code of conduct that electronic devices of any kind are not to be used by students during the school day within the school properties within the buildings."

"So the argument is not per se that this is an unreasonable policy, it's that it's a duplicate policy and we don't want to clutter?" asked board member Adam

Brownstein, to which Bucher confirmed his position.

Bucher said adopting this new policy would be redundant. "I can't see a peripheral reason to have an additional policy," he said. "If we just enforce the policies that we already have on the books, there's no need to do an additional policy saying the same thing and saying 'Well, this time we really mean it.'"

Bucher said there wasn't any particular event or incident that led to the policy proposal. But the district has every right to exercise a recording ban during the school day within its buildings. Students have the responsibility of reading and understanding the code of conduct, he said, and school staff have the responsibility of enforcing it.

Other board members acknowledged the proposal is somewhat of a duplicate policy. "Let's not bother with the policy," Bucher said. "Let's just enforce the policy we already have, which is many years old."

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HEALTH



photo link: [Bayhealth Medical Center](#)

AQUACARE WELCOMES PELVIC FLOOR THERAPIST

BY TERRY ROGERS

At the young age of 20, Abby Huggenberger, OT, faced issues rarely seen in young women, including incontinence. Dealing with such an embarrassing medical issue at a young age, Huggenberger found herself taking the same medication her grandmother was taking to try and deal with the issue.

“I just thought, ‘Am I going to be on this for the rest of my life and why is this happening to begin with?’ My urologist recommended I go to pelvic floor therapy and I think like a lot of people I said, ‘What is that?’” Huggenberger said. “I showed up at my first day just nervous as all get out.”

However, after several weeks of going, she started to feel better, and her issues began to resolve. “After going through that experience, I knew I wanted to help other women dealing with similar issues,” she said.

Huggenberger grew up in Nebraska and earned her degree in occupational therapy at Nebraska Methodist College, focusing her study on women’s health and pelvic floor dysfunction. She moved to Cincinnati to do her clinical work and begin practicing, falling in love with the city. Eventually, she became a traveling therapist which brought her to Aquacare Physical Therapy in Milford.

“I was too young to face the problems I was facing. And the more I work with people, the more I realize this doesn’t differentiate by gender or age. My clients range from teens to seniors,” Huggenberger said. “When I started talking about my experience with pelvic floor therapy, a lot of the people who were asking me more questions were my mom’s friends and I developed this heart for pelvic floor therapy based on wanting to create a more dignified aging experience for their generation.”

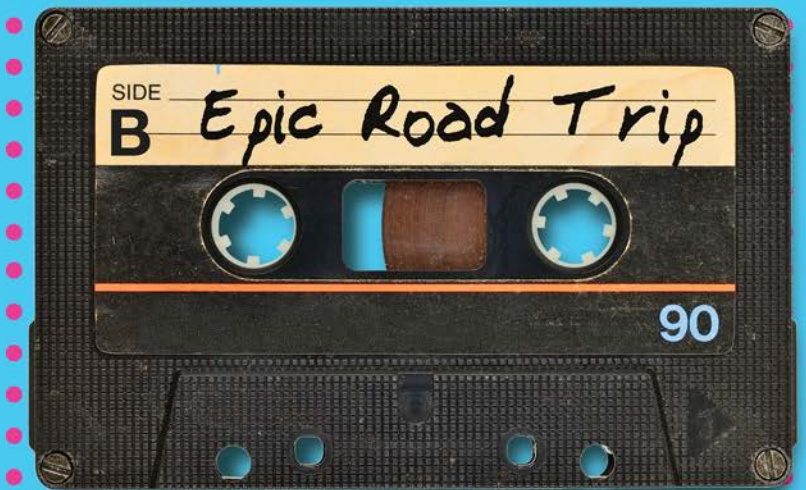
According to Huggenberger, pelvic floor therapy treats more than just incontinence. It focuses on bladder, bowel, sexual and pain dysfunctions that may be related to the pelvic floor, including the reproductive system and the musculature of the hips.

She explained that someone may need pelvic floor therapy for many reasons, including urinary leakage, constipation or chronic diarrhea, pain with sex, prolapse that can occur after pregnancy or simply the aging process.

“Pelvic floor therapy is one of the most conservative treatments available, offering a way of looking at muscles and lifestyle factors to develop solutions. Pelvic floor therapy sessions are a mix of exercise and strengthening certain muscle groups, correcting hip alignment and creating an environment where our back, our core,

see page 25

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our hips and our pelvic floor muscles all function properly together,” Huggenberger said. “It’s also a tremendous amount of education. This can be an area of our bodies we simply don’t think about much until we must.”

Clients who see Huggenberger and the pelvic floor team at Aquacare Milford find it is helpful to learn about the pelvic floor, the group of muscles and ligaments that support your bladder, uterus and bowel, because then they can better understand why issues arise with that part of the body.

“From the way we breathe to the way we sit and stand, there are a plethora of ways these can affect our bladder and bowel function. Pelvic floor therapy sessions are a mix of massage and myofascial techniques, exercises, education and modalities like electrical stimulation, and vibration tools,” Huggenberger said.

In addition, there are products and tools available. Huggenberger can make recommendations based on the needs of each individual and what might benefit them.

Often, clients who come to Huggenberger have been dealing with issues for a very long time, something she thinks comes with the stigma of people not wanting to talk about it.

“There is a stigma surrounding what happens with our pee or poop, our sex lives, those types of things. And our primary doctors aren’t necessarily asking for specifics,” Huggenberger said. “I ask questions of folks that they’ve never been asked before. And we get so much information from that and in re-evaluating our default settings when it comes to peeing and pooping.”

Huggenberger explained that urinary leakage is not normal, although it is very common. She also stated that those issues do not go away and often get worse over time. It can be difficult, however, Huggenberger stated, because people often commiserate about symptoms of pelvic floor problems. Aging women often joke about not being able to sneeze or cough due to urinary leakage as if they are “in it together,” but Huggenberger wants everyone to know it isn’t something they have to live with. When symptoms are affecting your daily life, it is time to get help.

“For people who have medical issues that could cause certain conditions, like IBS which can lead to chronic diarrhea or a back injury, I would say like a perfect storm is a stiff, lower back, a weak core, rounded shoulders. I mean, something’s going on in your pelvic floor, whether it is immediately apparent to you or not,” she explained.

With the shortage of primary care providers in Delaware, often residents may not see the same doctor on a regular basis. Many may use urgent care locations or even an emergency room as their primary healthcare service. It is because of this that many residents do not have a good, working relationship with a healthcare professional, leading to pelvic floor and other issues to be missed.

It is important for all residents to advocate for their healthcare needs. If you notice issues that could be related to your pelvic floor, call Aquacare to get evaluated.

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The advertisement features a large, warm-toned image of a long-haired orange cat sitting on a grassy field at sunset. A circular inset shows a woman with blonde hair smiling, with a dog in the background. The text is overlaid on a dark blue background with faint pet-related icons like a bowtie, a paw print, and a dog's head.

SPORTS



photo credit: Kevin Eickman



BUCS TAME BULLDOGS 15-6

BY KEVIN EICKMAN

In a game that was a battle from the start, full of big hits and big plays, it would be the Milford Buccaneers who would emerge with the 15-6-win last Friday at Briggs Stadium. The visiting Laurel Bulldogs, moving up from Division 1 following two state titles, came ready to play. It was evident early on this was not going to be a walkover for Milford as Laurel set the tone with hard-hitting defense and an offense that always looked on the verge of breaking the Bucs.

With Laurel electing to take the ball, it started the game's first series at its 24. From there, the Bulldogs proceeded to march straight down the field, with a good push from their offensive line they found themselves poised to take the lead. It was there that the Milford defense would stiffen, a pattern that would repeat itself for most of the game.

After Milford stopped Laurel after the Bulldogs' opening drive, the Buccaneers had some early success with their running game. After a pair of first downs however, the Milford drive would stall and the Bucs would be forced to punt the ball away. The amazing part of the two possessions was that they used up the entirety of the first quarter as both teams were dedicated to the running game.

Milford would take over at midfield following a Laurel punt and proceeded to put together the first of what would be two solid offensive drives of the evening. Mixing in a little passing, the senior running back combination of Charles Shorts and DenNare Horsey

would score the game's first points as Horsey would take it in from 10 yards out with 5:39 remaining in the first half. With the extra point kick from senior Neysen Legros, Milford had a 7-0 lead and looked to be ready to take control of the game. Laurel, however, had other ideas.

Starting at its 45, Laurel proceeded to march straight down the field. While Milford tried all it could, the speed and elusiveness of the Bulldog running backs was on full display as they answered the Buccaneers' touchdown with 1:29 remaining in the first half. A failed two-point conversion attempt would loom large throughout the remainder of the game as Milford still held a 7-6 advantage.

While most teams would have been happy going into the locker room with a 7-6 lead, this year's version of the Buccaneers has thrived in the up-tempo offense. The efficiency of that offense was on full display as after Milford took possession of the ball on its 35 and in hurry-up mode it moved the ball effectively. As they had worked their way to the Laurel 30 and 40 seconds remained in the half, the stage was set for some Milford magic. On second down, Milford sent its wingman in motion to the right side. While this was nothing new for Milford, when running out of the same formation earlier in the game, Milford offensive coordinator Quinn Abbott had noticed that the Laurel free safety followed the motion man across the formation. Abbott

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promptly put a \$ sign on his play card.

Milford ran the same play again and the Laurel safety followed as expected, the result would be a wide-open Jaleel Freshwater, senior tight end streaking uncovered on a go route. All that was left for Milford was for senior quarterback John Hudson to put the ball on target, which he did. Following the two-point conversion, Milford had made it a two-score game as the teams headed to the locker room. "It's a play we always practice and to see it come open like that was really awesome," Hudson said. "I just had to make sure I put the ball where it needed to be and I knew that Jaleel would do the rest."

While a scoreless second half might sound uneventful, the Bulldogs would not go away. While the Milford offense occasionally moved the ball, Laurel always seemed to be moving the ball. Laurel would miss a pair of short-range field goals after driving into Milford territory on two separate occasions. The best last chance for Laurel came with about five minutes remaining in the game as it drove to Milford's eight. The Buccaneers would come up big however, as, senior Elijah Lake would record a crucial sack for an eight-yard Bulldog loss.

Following three straight Laurel incompletions, Milford would take possession on downs and run out the clock from there. "This game was not about stats tonight, it was about heart and both teams had it. We didn't put up big numbers and we had our back up against the wall a few times it really just came down to a couple of plays," Bucs coach Jed Bell said. "We knew Laurel was going to leave it all on the field, you really

have to tip your hat to them. They are a team that will give any team fits."

After a crazy schedule to begin the season, including three noon games north of The Canal and a short week Thursday night loss at Woodbridge, Milford (5-2) is looking forward to a normal Friday night slate for the rest of the season. "I believe with a regular prep schedule the rest of the way out we can get into a rhythm and compete against some tough teams," Bell said.

Milford will host Sussex Tech Friday with a 7 p.m. start.





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