

MILFORD LIVE

photo link: Marcia Reed

 MilfordLive

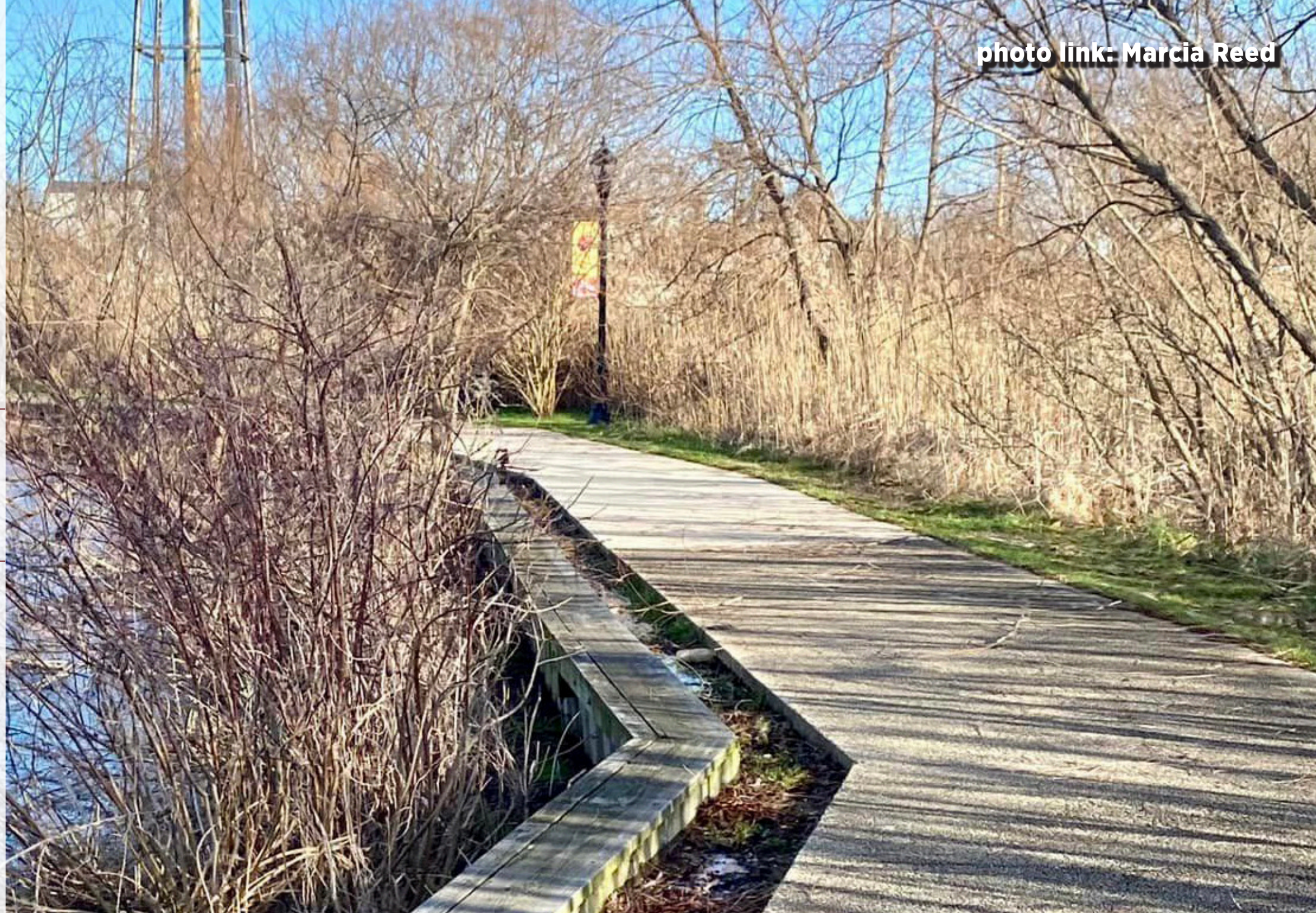
 @Milfordlive

SUBSCRIBE



January 16, 2024
Vol. 14 • Issue 3

Headlines	2
Culture.....	6
Business	10
Government & Politics	16
Education.....	21
Health	24
Stay Connected	27



New Food Bank Officially Opens



Walnut St. Bridge Project Nears Completion



Healthy Lifestyle the Key

HEADLINES

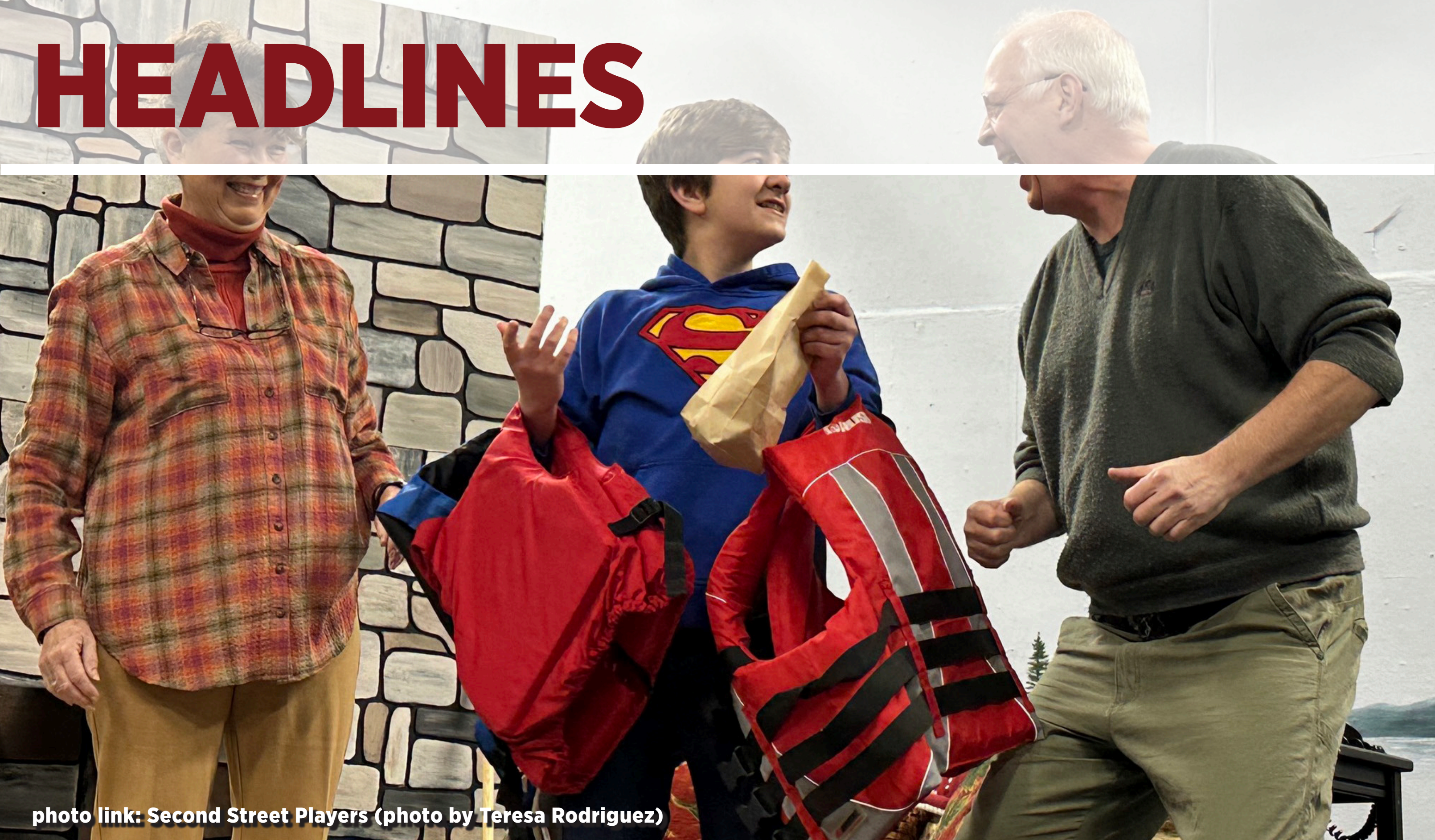


photo link: [Second Street Players](#) (photo by Teresa Rodriguez)



FOOD BANK OF DELAWARE OFFICIALLY OPENS NEW FACILITY IN MILFORD

BY TERRY ROGERS

The Food Bank of Delaware marked the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service holiday by officially cutting the ribbon on its new 70,000-square-foot facility in Milford this morning. The ceremony culminated an almost three-year project to build a new facility to enhance services to residents of Kent and Sussex counties.

“It’s hard to believe we were here just a little over a year ago for our official groundbreaking ceremony and how far we’ve come. It’s incredible to watch this project come to life,” Steve Thompson, chairman of the board for the Food Bank, said. “Most importantly, the ability to open this facility that will really change lives and transform lives in southern part of the state. Changing lives would not have been possible without all of you, our generous donors, our volunteers, the partners that

we work with every day advocates, friends and elected officials that share our vision.”

Thompson thanked the many state and local officials, dignitaries and others in attendance on the cold, blustery day. Sen. Tom Carper spoke, telling a story about a young boy in Alaska whose mother continually sent him outside to play until the boy told his mother he was freezing.

“I know you are all freezing today, but are here to celebrate this glorious, glorious day. I just come from celebrating this day with some of our other elected officials as well, celebrating the life of Martin Luther King Jr.,” Sen. Carper said. “I never met Dr. King, but I believe one of his favorite scripture verses was actually Matthew 25. ‘For I was hungry and you gave me something

see page 4

The Holiday Season Just Got Brighter!



This Christmas, DEC Is Returning \$5.7 Million to Members!



“ Our ads change at the pace of our business needs

- SOUTHERN STATES

from page 3

to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in.' And everybody here is a part of this effort. Raising the money to build this building to provide the staff and the support."

Sen. Carper explained that his "talking points" stated that he and his colleague, Rep. Lisa Blunt Rochester, who was unable to attend the ribbon cutting as she was mourning the loss of her father, provided \$7 million toward the project. He explained they supported the project for many different reasons.

"The number of reasons why we make sure that people have food to eat is we have a moral responsibility to do that. We have, I think, spiritual responsibility to do that. There are other reasons as well. We want kids to have the benefit of nutritious foods that when they go to school, they'll be able to concentrate. And these students will someday support us to make sure that our workforce is healthy and strong. We want to make sure for all kinds of reasons that folks don't have to go into hospital, they have good healthful, nutritious food to help them keep well. There's all kinds of reasons, all kinds of reasons why we do this," Sen. Carper said. "When I travel around the country, I get to talk to a lot of people and one of the things I asked people religiously is 'What gives you joy in your life.' I ask that a lot. What makes you happy? And what I hear more often than not is I like helping people and I don't know if you're the same but when I write a check to Delaware Food Bank and later on get a thank you note makes me happy. My wife says 'why do you send money to all those folks?' Because well it makes me happy but it makes

see page 5

SOUTHERN STATES
Farmer owned since 1923.

Mon-Fri 7am-5pm
Sat 7am-Noon
302-422-8066
info@milfordsouthernstates.com

25% off
in stock clothing
Boots & belts excluded

DRAKE

them happy and there's a lot of other reasons to do it as well."

Delaware Food Bank CEO Cathy Kanefsky thanked all the donors who made the new building possible.

"This facility represents so much more than just a building it's our collective commitment to service to others with respect and dignity. This building symbolizes hope for so many. Hope for the working family who is trying so hard to make ends meet but needs a little extra support. Hope for senior citizen living off his Social Security check who oftentimes has to choose between food and medicine and hope for those looking for a second chance. I stand before you today with immense pride. I've got so much gratitude and so much excitement for tomorrow. Today is so cool. But tomorrow, we're going to open the doors and people are going to walk through here and get food," Kanefsky said. "Think about the lives that will change. We do so much more than provide food. We provide hope for a better tomorrow. This building is a testament to that vision. It will allow us not only to distribute food but to help our neighbors for long-term economic stability through job skills training, financial coaching and more."

Kanefsky explained that the front walkway into the building would contain a pathway they called Building Hope with personalized bricks sold for \$500 to continue raising funds. She thanked the agricultural community who had helped the Food Bank create a community garden on the property.

"To all of our new neighbors in the Independence Commons Business Park especially the Greater Milford Boys and Girls Club, the Delaware Veterans Home and Delaware Hospice. We are so excited about the possibility of providing volunteer opportunities for students, for families in partnership with our neighboring organizations. Independence Commons will be a hub of nonprofit collaboration. Thanks to the increased capacity and enhanced resources, we can expand our outreach, reduce food insecurity and create pathway to a brighter, more sustainable future for all as we prepare to open these doors to our new home," Kanefsky said. "Let this day be a symbol of renewed commitment, collaboration and hope is a testament to what we can achieve when we come together with purpose and passion."

State Sen. Dave Wilson expressed he was thrilled to be in attendance at such a momentous occasion. He commented that he was not there to take credit for his own actions, but to support the many people in the community who brought the building to life.

"I don't have a formal speech. I didn't come prepared to give a speech. I came to Cathy and she's just incredible. Cathy made this happen and the board of directors and I'm not here today to take credit for anything. I want y'all to know that it took six to 10 legislators to make this happen," Sen. Wilson said. "Sen. (Charles) Postles and I serve on bond committee and it took everybody. It was teamwork. And I can't think of a senator or representative that I didn't approach and ask

for support that didn't come forward. So today I'm honored to be here to be a part of this, but we're not done."

After the speeches, Frank Coverdale, the longest tenured employee of the Food Bank cut the ribbon as dignitaries looked on.

The new Food Bank facility features expanded cold storage and warehouse space to distribute upwards of 3.7 million pounds of fresh foods and six million pounds of nonperishable food as well as a Healthy Pantry Center to directly serve those in need of food assistance. The pantry is set up like a mini grocery store so families can select the foods best suited for their households. In addition, there is a volunteer room where volunteers can sort and pack donations, create meal boxes and bags, and more. Classroom and hands-on training space for workforce development programs in culinary and warehousing/logistics as well as space to plant a 3.5-acre garden to grow fresh foods for the community are also features of the new building. Finally, an on-site café to provide employment opportunities to graduates of the culinary training program, while offering a place for members of the public to buy breakfast and lunch.



CULTURE



photo link: [Second Street Players](#)



BY TERRY ROGERS

Even before she deployed to Iraq, Melissa LeGates suffered from depression. The daughter of an alcoholic father, LeGates explained that she was diagnosed with “depression of family origin.”

“My father actually did escape alcoholism at the end of his life, which was a blessing to see. So, I had been going to therapists because I always knew you had to heal yourself in a certain manner of speaking. And I knew that there are people who have better ways of doing things,” LeGates said. “And I wanted to know what those ways were, but unfortunately, they don’t give

RETIRED USAF VETERAN WRITES SUICIDE PREVENTION BOOK

all the clues and all the good tips. It is almost like you have to jump around to multiple therapists.”

According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, over 6,300 veterans died by suicide in 2021, an increase almost 12 percent from the year before. Suicide has been listed as the tenth leading cause of death in the United States and the second leading cause for people aged 15 to 24, according to LeGates.

“I knew it was time to get help when I returned from deployment to Iraq and started asking myself, ‘could I hit that telephone pole hard enough to never wake up again,’” LeGates said. “I just wanted to vanish and experience no more pain. I also know that the holiday season is especially hard for those that struggle with mental anguish.”

In an effort to help others, LeGates has written an autobiographical book that talks about what she calls the “tripod” of mental wellness. Her book “Defeating Suicide: How One Iraqi Vet Healed Herself Through Love, Therapy and the Bible,” focuses on using the mind, body and soul approach to mental health.

“My premise is that God endowed in all of us a method to heal ourselves and you just need to lock into that

see page 8

**DON'T WAIT.
APPLY FOR FREE TUITION.**

Cost doesn't have to keep you from going to college. Delaware's Student Excellence Equals Degree (SEED) Scholarship provides FREE tuition for Delaware high school graduates of any age to attend Delaware Tech.* The scholarship applies to associate degree, credit diploma, credit certificate, and workforce training programs.

SEED SCHOLARSHIP
dtcc.edu/SEED

 **DELAWARE TECH**

*Students must meet eligibility requirements. Course fees and books are not covered by the SEED Scholarship.

from page 7

to do it. I don't agree with modern psychology that you'll be depressed for life. And that you would always be manic depressive, bipolar or clinically depressed," LeGates said. "I totally disagree with that. And I believe God is a healer. And beyond God, I believe that we are mind, body and soul. And what's happening in the modern world is we're cutting out the soul portion. And if we don't treat our spirit, I believe we're actually handicapping ourselves in our recovery although handicap is probably not a good word. But if you're a Buddhist, Christian, Jewish, any religion at all, then you need to stoke up whatever your spirituality is. I liken it in my book to a tripod. If we're mind, body and soul and you cut out the soul part, the tripod can't stand."

LeGates believes this is the reason that mental health is so prevalent today because there is a lack of connection with others. She talks about connections in her book and how they helped her move into a better mental state. LeGates also talks about how difficult it is to find the right therapist as many people feel they can walk into a psychiatrist's office and say, "cure me." Unfortunately, there is not a one-size-fits-all treatment for mental anguish and illness.

"I wanted to have a key on the title of my book because I believe we are all the key to a master lock that will unlock healing," LeGates said. "When Jesus died to get the keys from Satan, that's why I wanted the key on the book. I don't go into it too much, but that's why I like the key imagery and a puzzle imagery because it is a big, gigantic puzzle. It took me what felt like a lifetime. It took me 20 to 30 years to have enough information,

see page 9

AQUACARE

PHYSICAL THERAPY

f AquacarePT

@AquacarePhysicalTherapy

www.AQUACAREPHYSICALTHERAPY.com

**IN YOUR
NEIGHBORHOOD!**

Let us get you moving again
at Aquacare - Milford.

We offer gym-based physical therapy
at the Milford Wellness Village
and aquatic therapy at the
Boys and Girls Club pool.

We also offer a medically supervised
gym membership!



**Learn more and schedule
your FREE 30-minute consultation today:**

Call us at **302-491-4196** or visit us online at www.aquacarephysicaltherapy.com

have enough to say to put it in book form.

LeGates was born and raised in Carlisle, PA. She was stationed at Dover Air Force Base, retiring in 2009. She decided to attend Regent University in Virginia, joking that she hoped to meet a nice Christian boy when actually she met a nice Christian boy who was from Delaware. Although she and her husband loved living in Virginia, the cost of living was much higher than Delaware, so they returned to be closer to her husband's family in Millsboro, settling in Milford. LeGates explained that she loved Milford and the small, hometown feel it has.

"I had been dealing with my depression and anxiety, but I finally realized there's, and I know this is controversial, but there isn't a pill that is going to stave off depression. You can take depression pills and it can be a part of your therapy. But it's not a one-time thing," LeGates said. "There's not anyone who can heal yourself better than you can heal yourself. I believe that with a relationship with Christ, you can heal. I do go into if you're not in a relationship currently, you need to look into your spirituality. That's the big, big thing."

LeGates continued, stating that she does not think "popping yourself or a child in front of a therapist and saying, 'heal me' is the answer," instead believing that although therapy is beneficial, it is not the only tool that can help those suffering from anxiety, depression or suicidal ideology. In fact, she believes that some medications used to treat depression and anxiety may exacerbate suicidal thoughts.

"I'm a proponent of more homeopathic remedies. The first therapist I ever went to and said 'hey, I've got a

problem and I'm stressing and I've got anxiety' what they diagnosed me with was depression for family of origin and general anxiety disorder which is just what they diagnose a million other people. That's all and I was stressing, and I couldn't sit in meetings without having to get up. I couldn't focus on going in to work which was a problem," LeGates said. "And so, the person said, 'I'm going to shut you up. I can give you this prescription and you'll never have to worry about it again.' Well, that didn't happen. But he did do one other thing. He taught me meditation and slowing down your breath. So that was beneficial when you remember, 'Hey, I gotta breathe.' But I always think what a disservice they did to me to just say, hey, take this pill and you'll be set for life. It doesn't work that way."

Another way that LeGates is managing her depression is through exercise.

"I am finding that exercise is empowering. But it's scary, but it's empowering. Knowing that hey, I can go to the gym. And I can get the same effect that I would if I were taking a pill because the endorphins going through your system and everything flowing out that depression," LeGates said. "It is also empowering that I can pick up the Bible and I can read the Bible and renew my mind. And, and I have a chapter, a small chapter, but I do have a chapter on practical advice. Like listen to Christian radio. I also list a bunch of Christian authors that can help."

LeGates book can be purchased at Barnes and Noble. An informational video about the book can be found on YouTube.



GBC 1886 **Goldey-Beacom**
COLLEGE

NEW GRADUATE CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

- Certificate in Marketing
- Certificate in Human Resource Management
- Certificate in Health Care Management
- Certificate in Entrepreneurship
- Certificate in Information Technology

LOCATION | **CONTACT** | **WEBSITE**

4701 Limestone Road
Wilmington, DE 19808

302-225-6248
Admissions@gbc.edu

www.gbc.edu/



BUSINESS



photo link: [Marcia Reed](#)

CONDITIONAL USE APPROVED FOR SOUTHERN STATES MILFORD

BY TERRY ROGERS

City Council approved a conditional use request for a new building they plan to construct across from their current location. The new building will include a retail showroom and storage as well as wash and service bays. Although the wash bays will only be used to clean tractors before they are delivered to a customer or serviced, in order to avoid any issues in the future, Southern States chose to file a conditional use permit as car washes are restricted in a C3 zoning area.

“The applicant did seek a variance from the Board of Adjustment for reduction in the off-street parking requirement, which was approved by the Board of Adjustment on Dec. 14, other than the parking variance request that was approved, the preliminary plans meet the minimum requirements of chapter,” Rob Pierce, city planner said. “The application was reviewed by the Planning Commission, and they recommended approval with a vote of five to zero.”

Cliff Mumford, a civil engineer with Davis, Bowen & Friedel explained that Southern States has owned the

additional parcel of land since 1999 with plans to expand services by building a new retail location on the parcel.

“Earlier this year, a zoning map amendment was approved to change the zoning from Industrial to C3 Highway commercial which is in line with the adjacent zoning parcels on either side. However, this is a diversified business that doesn’t fit neatly inside the C3 zoning box and therefore some flexibility is needed and hence the conditional use approval that we’re applying for,” Mumford said. “Some of the uses here, the new store would include a small landscape nursery, outside bullpen for landscaping and farm supplies, tractor showroom and sales, space for repairing and servicing small tractors and small engine garden equipment. And the store will also contain retail sales for garden supplies with offices on the second store for employees. The existing store on the south side of 14 and Williamsville will continue operations and maintain the agronomy and

see page 12



**MEINEKE
eINSPECTION:**

***If We See It,
You See It.***

***Seeing every step of the process
means you can prepare for what's
next. Skip the surprises and stay
ahead of your maintenance needs
with eInspection.***

Call Today (302) 491-7000

from page 11

energy services, propane tank filling and that sort of thing.”

Mumford explained that when a tractor is sold, Southern States often washes it before it is delivered to a customer as a courtesy. For some repairs, tractors must be washed in order to complete the work necessary. For this reason, wash bays would be included in the new building.

“So, as Rob mentioned in the C3 zoning code, it lists automotive repair and carwash as uses that require conditional use approval. This application doesn’t propose either of these uses however, the service bays and wash bays could be misconstrued to be similar,” Mumford said. “Therefore, out of an abundance of caution and in coordination with the planning director we filed the conditional use application. So, in closing, as stated in the planning staff report, the proposed use is surrounded by similar businesses. It is in conformance with the comprehensive plan that will not detract from neighboring properties.”

Councilman Andy Fulton asked whether propane would be stored underground or above ground. Gary Rhodes, general manager of Southern States explained that there would be a 1,000 gallon tank at the rear of the store that could be used to fill small propane tanks. Councilman Dan Marabello questioned whether the new property would be landscaped similar to the existing property. Rhodes stated that it would. Councilman Jason James asked about the parking variance that was granted.

see page 13



FEEL BETTER SOONER.

WITH BAYHEALTH VIRTUAL URGENT CARE, YOU CAN SEE A BOARD-CERTIFIED DOCTOR IN AS FEW AS 10 MINUTES, 24/7.

Allergies, rashes, infections, sore throat, cold and flu, gout, UTIs. Whatever the symptoms, get the care you need sooner. Download the app and enroll today. [Bayhealth.org/Virtual-Urgent-Care](https://www.bayhealth.org/Virtual-Urgent-Care)

BAYHEALTH@HOME  



We support local because we are local



[mountaire.com](https://www.mountaire.com)

CAREER FAIRS

HAPPENING SOON NEAR YOU

LEARN MORE





“For certain uses, you need certain amount of parking, and this has two stories. And upstairs, they have some offices and meeting rooms, but they will be used by staff who would already be on site, something that was not going to generate additional trips and parking requirements. So, it’ll be somewhere where the staff can get together and meet so no need for too much parking,” Mumford said. “I think there were, we probably overestimated the required number of parking spots there, but we had 175 spaces as being required. It seems like a pretty high number for this type of use, and we provided 119 spaces.”

Councilman Fulton was concerned about foot traffic going between the two buildings as Williamsville Road was not a safe road to cross. Mumford did not feel there would be significant foot traffic between the two locations.

Council approved the request with a vote of 7 to 0 as Councilwoman Katrina Wilson was not present at the meeting.

“It complies with the zoning standards, and it is going to enhance the community,” Councilman Marabello said. “They do everything nicely at Southern States. I feel proud of what you do for the city.”

Councilman Todd Culotta felt Southern States had been an important part of the business community and it was good to see growth.

“I like to see a business expand,” Councilman Brian Baer said. “It’s good to see this business grow in their location and it will be convenient for citizens.”



Application Period Re-Opens: FEB. 1 - MARCH 1, 2024!

EDGE

GRANT COMPETITION

WEBINAR SERIES

Compete for grant funding through our EDGE (Encouraging Development, Growth & Expansion) initiative. It’s a great way to help your small business start or grow!

EDGE Informational Webinar

MON. JAN 22 | 2:00 P.M.



Using SizeUp Delaware To Strengthen Your EDGE Application

TUE. JAN 23 | 10 - 11:15 A.M.



[DE.GOV/EDGE](https://de.gov/edge)





EDGE GRANTS GIVE DE ENTREPRENEURS MONEY AND ADVICE

BY KEN MAMMARELLA

When businesses run by Kathy Collison and Donny Legans won **EDGE grants** from the Delaware Division of Small Business, they got more than a lot of money. They got a lot of good advice.

“The biggest takeaway is that the application process forces you as a new business owner to think through a lot of things that you didn’t even think about,” Collison said. “Even if we had not won it, it was a win-win. We got five years ahead on our business plan.”

Legans was similar in his praise. “Don’t delay,” he said to other entrepreneurs about the program, which is taking applications for the next cycle from Feb. 1 to March 1. “It was the first domino. Other grants knew we were serious, based on the strength of it.”

Encouraging Development Growth & Expansion is a competitive program that twice a year awards up to \$100,000 to five STEM-based companies and up to

\$50,000 to entrepreneurs. The funds are provided as a \$3 (state) to \$1 (business) match. Businesses must have been in operation for less than seven years, employ 10 people or fewer, be majority-located in Delaware and impress the judges.

Collison and her husband Joe co-own **Pink Electrical Services**, a Clayton-based electrical company. Legans and his wife Kim co-own the **Rail Haus**, a beer garden in downtown Dover.

EDGE and Pink Electrical

Joe Collison has been an electrician for more than 25 years, Kathy said, and “he always wanted to be in business for himself. He wanted to have conversations with customers, see their needs, work within their budget and help them make better choices.”

They began the business paperwork for Pink Electri-



OUR VISION
Milford School District students will be prepared with the attributes, knowledge, and skills to fulfill their life pursuits.

OUR MISSION
To provide all learners a comprehensive, individualized education in a safe, supportive, rigorous environment where learners are prepared to grow and thrive in a global society.

 <p>Milford SCHOOL DISTRICT HOME OF THE BUCCANERS</p>	<p>CONTACT US milfordschooldistrict.org 302-422-1600 info@msd.k12.de.us 906 Lakeview Ave - Milford</p>	<p>LET'S GET SOCIAL!</p> <p>f facebook.com/MilfordSchoolDistrict @ instagram.com/milfordschooldistrict X @MSDBucs</p>
---	---	--



Yes2Health
A free community health outreach program

- Health Education Classes
- Live in the Kitchen Cooking Classes
- One-on-one Nutrition Counseling
- Active Cooking Series (Cookbook club)
- Health & Movement Retreats

db DELAWARE BREAST CANCER COALITION

Register for free today >

see page 15

cal in 2020 and booked their first customer in 2022. They now employ two electricians and serve all of Delaware, with Kathy, who retired in 2023 from her state job as a public health administrator, handling the back office.

Pink Electrical is using the \$50,000 EDGE grant to buy a work truck, a utility trailer and other equipment.

Beyond the capital expenditure, the grant benefits included an online tool that helped them “drill down” into what Delawareans were paying for electrical services and what Delaware companies were paying electricians. That sort of research led them to focus on homeowners and small businesses.

Kathy also praised the guidance they got from Anastasia Jackson, Kent County regional business manager with the Delaware Division of Small Business.

Pink Electrical has also been helped out with in-kind Equitable Entrepreneurial Ecosystem grants from the Pete du Pont Freedom Foundation, a nonprofit founded by the former governor. In the first round, they were mentored by Gregg-Brooke Koleno from IA Business Advisors. In the second phase, the E3 grant paid for their website.

EDGE and Rail Haus

The Leganses were inspired to create the Rail Haus by seeing how Frankford Hall helped transform Philadelphia’s Fishtown section (where they had been living), and they want to do the same for downtown Dover. “We want to make downtown Dover awesome,” Donny said.

The Leganses now live in Dover, and they began paperwork on the Rail Haus in 2020 and opened the business in November 2023 in the former Southern

States building on West Street. It’s named for the nearby railroad tracks and the German word for “house.”

The EDGE application process has taught them the power of appearances. “It helped me identify that every dollar you invest in the outside space, you get back \$3.85 in sales the first year,” he said.

The \$50,000 they got was used to buy outdoor heaters, fire pits, trees, sod and a sprinkler system. The Rail Haus sits on an acre, with 20,000 square feet of outdoor space and 2,600 of indoor space. As Delaware’s first year-round beer garden, the Rail Haus got a lot of media attention, with [ShoreCraftBeer.com](https://www.shorecraftbeer.com) calling it a “game-changing” family- and dog-friendly business.

Development of the Rail Haus was a \$3.5 million project, Donny said, and it got a lot of help. That included \$311,000 from the Downtown Development District program administered by the Delaware State Housing Authority, \$300,000 from the Critical Improvements Program administered by the Downtown Dover Partnership (Donny serves on the board of the partnership and recused himself from the partnership’s grant review), the \$50,000 EDGE grant, \$12,000 from Delaware’s Urban Forestry program, a \$5,000 façade grant, a \$5,000 Kent County matching grant, a \$3,000 architectural grant and a \$3,000 grant from the Dover/Kent County Metropolitan Planning Organization.

Donny praised the advice he got from Jackson and Laura Wisler, now deputy director of the Delaware Division of Small Business.

“They look at it as an investment,” he said. “EDGE wants companies to succeed.”



Celebrating National School Choice Week

DELAWARE FUTURE'S FEST
DISCOVER YOUR PATHWAY

Goldey Beacom College

27 January, 2023

10am–2:30pm

[Click here for more information.](#)

GOVERNMENT & POLITICS



photo link: Marcia Reed



WALNUT STREET BRIDGE PROJECT MOVES CLOSER TO COMPLETION

BY TERRY ROGERS

At a recent meeting, Milford City Council approved two requests from City Engineer James Puddicombe that will bring upgrades to the Walnut Street bridge in downtown Milford to fruition. Council awarded a construction oversight contract to Greenway-Pederson, Inc. as well as the bid for construction to Mumford and Miller Concrete.

“Greenman-Pederson has a local office for their engineering firm here locally, which is under a state contract with DelDOT to provide structural engineering services and oversight for bridge repair programs that the DelDOT does. We requested their assistance because part of the Walnut Street Bridge Project includes some structural work. We just don’t have that ability in house,” Puddicombe said. “So, what we did is request a quote from them. We looked at the numbers, their con-

struction oversight was similar to the costs that we currently pay through KCI for some of our construction oversight for residential developments and things. So costing is similar to what we currently pay. So we received that proposal about two weeks ago from them and reviewed their current agreement with DelDOT for bridge design services.”

Puddicombe continued, explaining that Greenway-Pederson would perform any structural repairs to the bridge that would be necessary as part of the project. The project includes raising the bridge slightly in an effort to slow traffic, adding ADA compliant features to make it easier for those with mobility issues to access the Riverwalk on both sides of the river as well as some aesthetic upgrades that will beautify the center of downtown.

see page 18

Give your Fur Baby the BEST VACATION of the Year.

FUR BABY PET RESORT IN MILFORD, DE

SHERRY SHUPE
Fur Baby Pet Resort Owner, Dog lover

FUR BABY
PET RESORT

“The goal is to try to limit any expansion of time. There’s 45-day window for the work and we really don’t want to go outside of that window,” Puddicombe said. “The total cost of the project is slated to take seven weeks. We included an additional week in there just to be safe for some extra time on the front and back end because we don’t want to have to come back to council and get that additional approval. Like I said, we’re we want to make sure that everything is good to go, and the project kicks off because it’s on a tight 45-day timeline.”

The cost for the construction oversight portion of the project is \$48,702.98, with funding coming from Realty Transfer Tax reserves. Councilman Mike Boyle asked what the anticipated start date would be for the project and Puddicombe stated March 11. The date was chosen as the project would be sandwiched in between downtown festivals.

“I think after most of the construction, it’s done downtown. But before I believe it was the Bug and Bud Festival, which is I think, April and so we’re trying to squeeze in that 45-day period there. There’s a detour plan. But it would include closing essentially that section of Walnut Street because they’re going to have to essentially take the top couple of inches of the bridge off and then lift the whole bridge up essentially. Well, not lift it but pour a whole new section on top of that,” Puddicombe said. “Structural repairs are required for the girders or steel support. And so, they’re not necessarily doing structural repairs but because of the work and how it’s being done, they’re going to take a thin

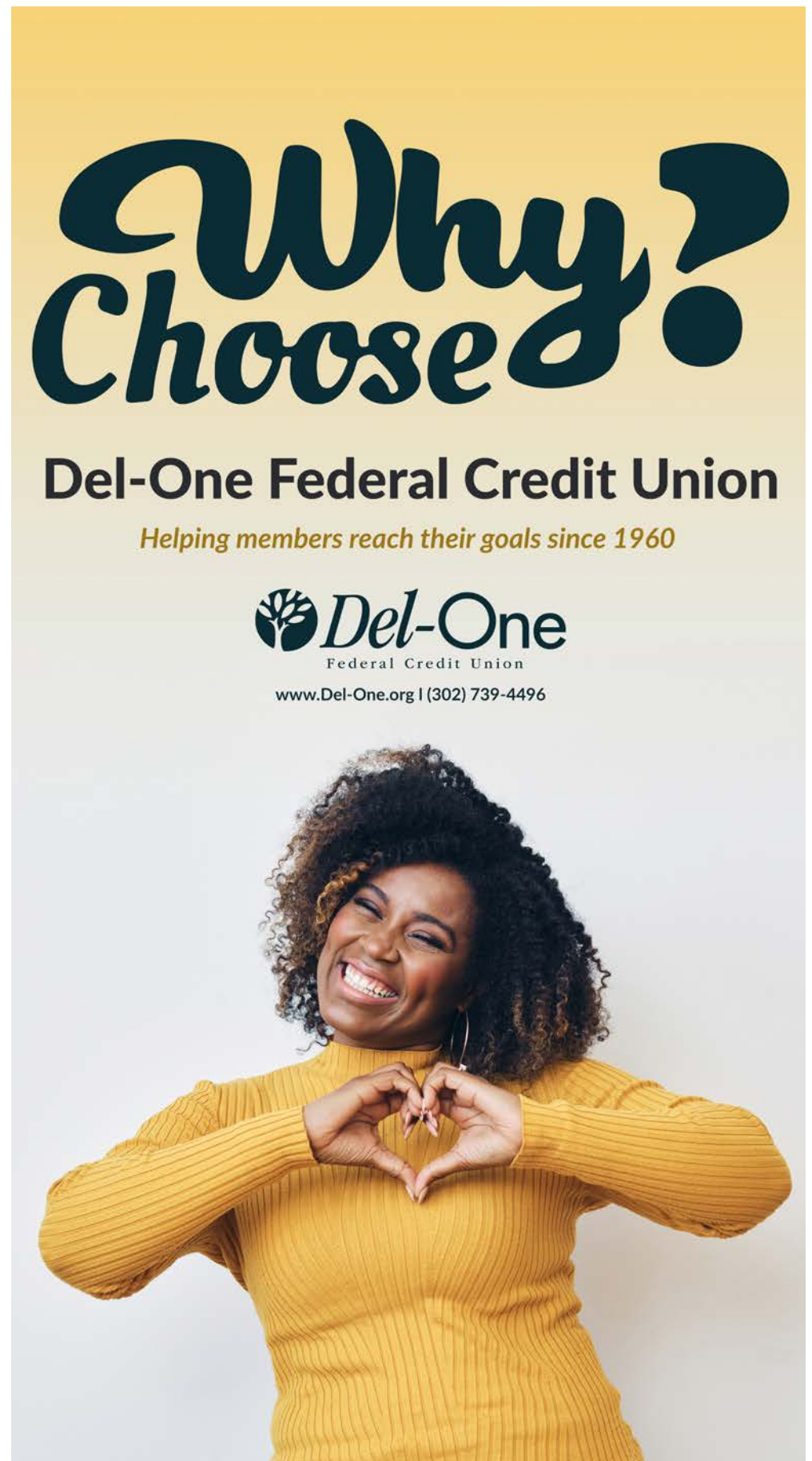
layer of the structure off of the bridge. And the work we’re doing on top is going to be basically integrated with the structure of the bridge. So, they’re going to do rebar and concrete. That’s basically being integrated as part of the structure the bridge. So, the work is structural work. It should kind of be thin up the bridge because he couldn’t just put the concrete on top because the structure wouldn’t be able to handle it.”

Mayor Archie Campbell asked if the request could be rounded up to \$48,702.98 and the motion was to award Greenman-Pederson the contract for \$48,703. The motion passed by a vote of 7 to 0 as Councilwoman Katrina Wilson was not in attendance at the meeting.

“Next, this is the bid award for the Walnut Street pedestrian bridge project as well. The city worked in conjunction with DelDOT and Greenman-Pederson incorporated to get design work done for bridge number 2502, which you guys probably know better as the Walnut Street Bridge,” Puddicombe said. “This is the bridge right downtown, located right over top of the Mispillion river right near where the ice cream shop is there. This bridge is to be lifted.”


Puddicombe explained that the city received two to sealed bids, although there were three companies who received a set of plans. The two bids were from Eastern Highway Specialist whose bid was \$528,566 and Mumford and Miller whose bid was \$467,919. Currently, Mumford and Miller are working on the TAP project in the downtown area.

[CLICK TO READ MORE](#)



Why? Choose?

Del-One Federal Credit Union
Helping members reach their goals since 1960


www.Del-One.org | (302) 739-4496

MILFORD ELECTRIC RATES REMAIN AMONG LOWEST IN STATE WITH UPCOMING 4.8% POWER COST ADJUSTMENT

STAFF REPORT

The city of Milford, a community electric utility powered by the Delaware Municipal Electric Corporation (DEMEC), will be increasing the current Power Cost Adjustment (PCA) by \$0.00686 per kilowatt-hour (kWh) to \$0.02124 per kWh for energy usage in 2024. Customers will see the new rate on city of Milford utility bills in February.

This power cost increase is primarily due to a DEMEC budget adjustment. The passthrough results in a 4.8 percent increase in electric bills for the average household and small business accounts in Milford. Commercial accounts in Milford can expect an increase ranging from about 3.0 to 5.3 percent depending on demand, load factor, seasonality, and time of use.

Even with this rate increase, bills are comparable to the city's rates dating back six years. Additionally, the city's overall electric rate continues to be among the lowest rates in the state of Delaware, proving that the city is controlling the variables that are able to be controlled, while market forces are pushing power rates higher across the region.

"DEMEC continues to represent Delaware's public power cities and towns, including the city of Milford, with rate stability and power cost containment among its highest priorities," Finance Director Lou Vitola said, "and while certain cost drivers in the wholesale power market are beyond control, DEMEC understands the market and positions its members for success now and into the future."

To help offset this increase, the city encourages customers to utilize **Efficiency Smart** for rebates and an electric usage monitor, insulating windows, purchasing a water heater jacket, utilizing the city's budget plan and servicing their HVAC system. Reducing your household energy consumption by 2.7 kWh per day will completely offset the last two rate adjustments.

Questions regarding utility billing or the upcoming PCA can be directed to the city's Customer Service Department at 302-422-6616.

The city of Milford, incorporated in 1807 and located in Kent and Sussex counties along the Mispillion River, is home to 11,000+ year-round residents, 500+ retail businesses and non-profits, local restaurants, parks, trails, small town events, major healthcare providers, an historic shipyard, and its own school district. Known throughout the state as River Town, Art Town, Home Town, the city celebrates the beauty of its natural resources, the ingenuity of its people and its commitment to quality of life.

DEMEC was incorporated in 1979 as a public corporation constituted as a Joint Action Agency and a wholesale electric utility. DEMEC represents and serves the following municipal electric distribution utilities located in the state of Delaware: city of Newark, MSC of the city of New Castle, town of Middletown, town of Clayton, town of Smyrna, city of Milford, Lewes Board of Public Works and city of Seaford.



JOHN MOLLURA

- PHOTOGRAPHY -

BEAUTY PORTRAITS - HEAD SHOTS
- FAMILIES -

302.222.6308



EDUCATION



photo link: [Milford School District](#)



EDUCATOR PAY REPORT GETS MOSTLY WARM WELCOME FROM LEGISLATORS

BY JAREK RUTZ

Delaware state senators and representatives didn't revolt when they got their first bite at recommendations for higher educator pay that would cost the state hundreds of millions in coming years. But questions did arise in the Jan. 11 joint House And Senate Education committees meeting that lasted about 1¼ hours.

They included concern about poorer districts' ability to pay their 30% share of salaries, whether incentives should be created for high-performing teachers, whether the state was chasing arbitrary salary numbers from other states, and whether the state also should look at other issues such as classroom discipline that affect teacher morale and retention.

The salary recommendation came from the final report of the 15-person Public Education Compensation Committee, which met all year. Secretary of Education Mark Holodick and Kim Klein, associate secretary of operations at the [Department of Education](#), presented

the final report of the Public Education Compensation Committee to the joint meeting.

"What I see here in terms of compensation looks good to me...with minimal study so far, but I like the concept of what you're doing," said Rep. Rich Collins, R-Millsboro. There are other issues in education he worries about, including teacher attendance. Superintendents have told him many take off Fridays for a three-day weekend.

"We ought to consider some sort of incentive program through this," he said. He believes teachers don't want to be in the classroom because of the lack of discipline for misbehaving students.

"If we look at a comprehensive package to solve our fundamental problems, I would think this would be the ideal place to try and address it to some extent," Collins said. "In other words, give the teacher a better working environment combined with higher pay."

see page 23



**New School Year.
New Teacher.
New Chance to Learn.**

*Ask Your Child's Teacher:
How can you and I ensure that my
child is academically successful?*

DELAWARE LIVE
OUR STATE. OUR NEWS. OUR HOME.

“

**With Delaware LIVE
we share our story,
not remain a static ad**

- BOYS & GIRLS CLUB OF DELAWARE

He also wants the state to keep taxpayers in mind, especially because of inflation and with property reassessments taking place in New Castle and Sussex counties.

“I would think it would be reasonable to at least look at any other area we could to see where we might be able to find cuts, to try and keep the burden on the taxpayers to something that they can afford,” Collins said.

Pay committee recommendations

The pay committee evaluated the five education groups in Delaware Code, as well as two employee groups that are not listed: teachers, custodians, nurses, bus drivers, administrators, secretaries, information technology workers, paraprofessionals and food service workers.

The committee was formed to make Delaware regionally competitive with salaries to strengthen its educator pipeline and ensure the recruitment and retention of school employees. Notable pressure came from neighboring Maryland, which passed a law that would increase the starting salaries of teachers to \$60,000 by 2026.

“You’re setting up districts to be challenged to keep good teachers because they’re going to be competing against other districts that can afford it,” said Sen. Eric Buckson, R-Dover, a former teacher and coach.

He wanted to see data on how other states are raising revenue as well as cost of living.

“I need to really know what the apples to apples are, because if you don’t, you start chasing other people’s budgets and that gets dangerous,” Buckson said. It’s an opinion he’s expressed before.

“I’d like to be able to know the difference between the two because maybe our cost of living is different and [Maryland’s] \$60,000 is equal to our \$54,000. I don’t know, but we really need to have that conversation.”

The pay adjustments involve hiking salaries by a series of annual raises and stipends.



The recommendations also would condense some salary scales to create fewer steps up the ladder of pay raises triggered by years of experience and qualifications such as a master’s degree.

Rep. Mike Smith, R-Pike Creek, and a member of the compensation committee, said there needs to be consideration about the salary structure and requirements. Some teachers simply cannot afford to go back to school and earn a master’s degree that would bump up their pay.

He also pointed out how important staff retention is.


“What we’re seeing, what’s very successful, is if you have the school leader that’s been in that school for 20 years, and grew from either a para or a teacher and worked their way up to school leader,” he said. “It’s obviously helped camaraderie with other teachers and staff and it’s also helped build credibility with parents and students within the schools.”

[CLICK TO READ MORE](#)



The families of 18,455 students made the charter school choice for the 23/24 School Year! Next year's choice window is open through Jan 10, 2024.

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



the meoli companies

BA-DA-BA-BA-BA BIG OPPORTUNITY.



[JOIN OUR TEAM](#)

HEALTH



photo link: Bayhealth



HEALTHY LIFESTYLE REDUCES RISK OF BREAST CANCER, CHRONIC DISEASE

BY TERRY ROGERS

Delaware Breast Cancer Coalition (DBCC) is working to lower those statistics significantly and one program, Yes2Health, promotes healthy lifestyle groups and events that not

only help reduce breast cancer risk, but also the risk of other chronic diseases, many of which are related to unhealthy lifestyles, such as poor diet or lack of exercise. DBCC hopes to empower the community to make healthy changes for a happier and healthier new year by joining this month at no-cost!

“Our Yes2Health Program provides interactive classes focused on nutrition, fitness, health and wellness,” Connie Holdridge, Director of Survivorship, said. “One of the most popular New Year’s resolutions is to lose weight, make healthy choices and become more active. The Yes2Health Program is designed to help anyone achieve those goals.”

Yes2Health is open to anyone, not just those who have been diagnosed with breast cancer. A wide range of programs are available, some offered virtually while others are offered in person. For 2024, Yes2Health will offer new health ed groups which include virtual guid-

ed and self-guided groups. The new year groups will meet virtually from 9:30 to 10 a.m. as well as 5 to 5:30 p.m. on Tuesdays from Jan. 16 through March 19. There is also a virtual meeting on Thursdays from Jan. 18 through Nov. 21 from 7 to 7:30 p.m. A DIY Self-Guided option is also available from Jan. 15 to March 18. Registration is available [HERE](#).

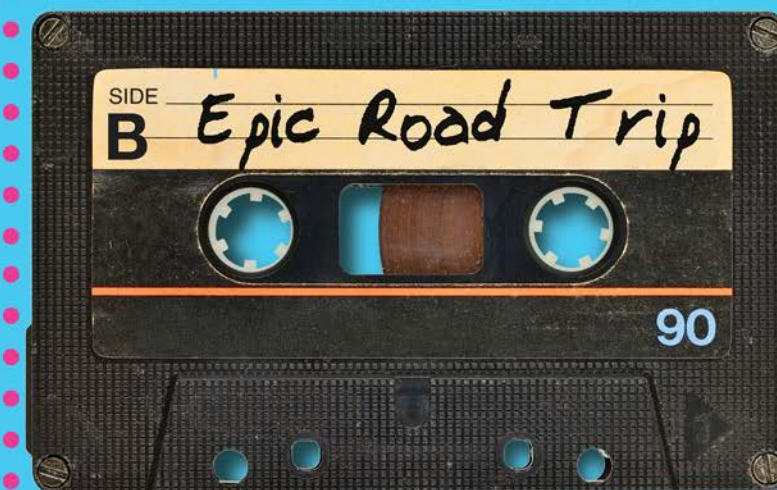
“Once you register for any of the programs you will receive a Zoom link along with materials for the program,” Holdridge said. “This is a fun way to learn about health and gain a new skill while connecting with others who may just be starting out on their journey to a healthier lifestyle.”

For those interested in learning more about nutrition and how the food you eat can improve health, Yes2Health also offers interactive, online cooking classes. Each session provides details on new cooking skills as participants prepare a new recipe. Classes are led by Chef Dee Iraca, founder of “Eat Well Chef,” a registered dietician, nutritionist and professional chef. Classes are held Jan. 16, Feb. 6, Feb. 20, March 5 and March 19 from 5:30 to 6:45 p.m. in a virtual format.

“Participants will create delicious recipes that not only taste good but are good for them,” Holdridge said. “Rec-

see page 26

IF YOU REMEMBER MAKING ONE OF THESE,



IT'S TIME TO MAKE ONE OF THESE: **Today**

LET'S MAKE COLORECTAL CANCER HISTORY

Help us make colorectal cancer history by scheduling your colonoscopy today or by encouraging your 45+ friends and family to do so.



GET A TOTALLY AWESOME 'BOS T-SHIRT TO SUPPORT THE CAUSE

▶ LEARN MORE



Bayhealth™
CANCER INSTITUTE

from page 25

ipes include bison chipotle black bean chili, healthy breakfast burritos, pecan crusted chicken tenders and much more. This is a great way to impress your friends and family with restaurant-quality meals, and you don't even have to tell them they are healthy!"

In addition to the interactive cooking classes, Yes2Health also offers an Active Cooking Series. After registering, participants receive a cookbook to follow. Once a month, on Jan. 24, Feb. 28 and March 27 from 5 to 6:30 p.m., they meet virtually to share tips, review the recipes in the cookbook and talk to Chef Iraca about nutrition. One-on-One Nutrition Counseling is also available for breast cancer survivors who need some help with nutrition.

"The One-on-One Nutrition Counseling is for breast cancer survivors who have received a diagnosis in the last five years," Holdridge said. "A staff member will need to refer them and they must be able to attend Zoom meetings. The program is designed to assist those who may be dealing with nutritional issues during or after treatment. Space is limited to 31 participants and requests can be sent to choldridge@debrestcancer.org."

DBCC's mission is to empower the community by raising awareness of breast cancer issues and to increase access to care through outreach, education and support services in order to improve early detection and treatments. Through the Yes2Health program, DBCC hopes to reduce breast cancer diagnoses by helping men and women live a healthier, more active lifestyle. For more information, visit <https://debrestcancer.org>.



PACE Is The Place *For My Loved One!*

Hear what PACE Your LIFE Caregivers Are Saying!



"Before enrolling in PACE Your LIFE, my husband was living in an assisted living facility in another state. PACE Your LIFE allowed him to be able to safely come back home with me and still receive opportunities & socialization during the day."

—Mary



PACE YOUR LIFE

- ✓ Coordinated health care
- ✓ Medication management
- ✓ Social activities
- ✓ Transportation and more.

Your Life, Your Home, Your Way

PACE is a national program of coordinated care for adults age 55 and over who meet the criteria for nursing facility placement but want to stay in their homes for as long as possible. We can make it happen at

PACE — Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly.

Contact us today.

1-302-865-3565

www.paceyourlifemwv.com



Our priority is to keep you living at home while providing essential services.

STAY CONNECTED

MILFORD LIVE IS YOUR SOURCE FOR NEWS AND INFORMATION IN THE GREATER MILFORD, DELAWARE AREA. STAY CONNECTED WITH US BY PHONE, EMAIL OR ON SOCIAL MEDIA BY CLICKING ON THE LINKS.



PHONE: 302-542-9231



**For News & Information: news@delawarelive.com
To Advertise With Us: shupe@delawarelive.com**



[instagram.com/milford_live/](https://www.instagram.com/milford_live/)



twitter.com/live_delaware



[facebook.com/delawarelivenews/](https://www.facebook.com/delawarelivenews/)





Watch Delaware Live on YouTube!



[linkedin.com/company/delaware-live-news](https://www.linkedin.com/company/delaware-live-news)

MILFORD LIVE

 MilfordLive  @Milfordlive

Without these collaborators,
this outlet would not be
possible:

Bryan Shupe, CEO

Betsy Price, Editor

Sonja M. Frey, Publisher

John Mollura Photography

Design your 2024 through Intentional Business and Marketing Planning

As a locally-owned company, Delaware LIVE News takes pride in working alongside regional businesses to develop digital marketing campaigns, through our daily news platforms.

From large corporations like Christiana Care, Delaware Tech Community College, and Delaware Department of Health to small shops like Fur Baby Pet Resort, Dolce Coffee Shop, and Benvenuto Tuscan Restaurant, we customize each plan to optimize the needs of each of our marketing partners.

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

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

