







April 9, 2024 Vol. 14 • Issue 15

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HEADLINES





CAFFREY ARRESTED FOR MSD INCIDENT

BY TERRY ROGERS

Milford PD investigators apprehended Thomas Caffrey on April 8 during the morning hours after investigators did a routine check of his residence and located his 2012 Gray Nissan Titan pickup truck at the residence. Investigators were able to make contact with Caffrey at the residence and took him into custody without incident.

Caffrey was charged with four counts of Harassment (Class A misdemeanor). Caffrey had a presentment through the Justice of the Peace Court 2 where he was given a \$4,000 secured bail and a no-contact order with the four victims in the case along with the Milford School District and all of their properties. Caffrey was able to post the \$4,000 secured bail and was released from police custody. He was ordered to appear in the Sussex County Court of Common Pleas at a later date regarding this investigation.

On Thursday, March 7, several schools in Milford School District were placed on a low-level lockdown after a "credible threat was made toward Milford School District schools and offices." During a short press conference held on March 12, Milford Police Chief Cecilia Ashe and MSD Superintendent Dr. Bridget Amory provided additional details about what happened.

"At approximately 1:20 p.m. March 7, the suspect came to the Milford School District office at 906 Lakeview Avenue and dropped off a concerning letter," Chief Ashe said. "contained in this letter was a district key access

key card and building key for a previous employee of the school district." Reports were that when Caffrey dropped off the key and letter, he appeared

agitated and the district confirmed he was a former employee of the district.

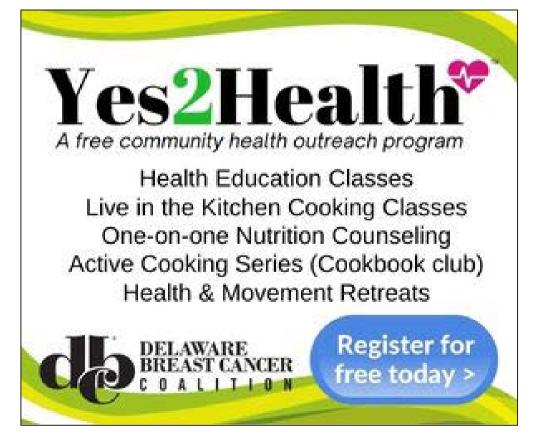
The statement continued that a subject matching Caffrey's description allegedly banged on the side door of Milford Central Academy, leading to a full lockdown of the high school and the academy. Although it turned out the subject was not Caffrey, the decision was made to dismiss students at that time. Milford and Delaware State Police continued to try to reach Caffrey by phone and by visiting his home in Lincoln into the early morning hours of Friday, March 8.

"It was determined by the school district to close the schools on March 8, as a precaution to keep all Milford students safe due to the police being unable to locate Caffrey at that time," Chief Ashe said. "This also allowed investigators, along with Milford Police Department to develop a safety plan to safely bring back the students on March 11."

A warrant was obtained for Caffrey on March 8 and a description of his vehicle released to the public that day. Click **HERE** for more information.









BY TERRY ROGERS

Social media in the area is filled with residents and business owners complaining about three road construction projects that have closed or slowed traffic. Northeast Front Street, Walnut Street and North Washington Street were all closed at one point in March.

"The Northwest and Northeast Front Street Screets-cape Improvements project began May 1, 2023, and will be completed this spring," Charles "C.R." McLeod, director of Community Relations at DelDOT said. "Final curb and pavement work will take place on the north and south side of Northeast Front Street east of Northeast 4th street."

Milford City Council approved the project unanimously at their Sept. 14, 2022, meeting after City Manager Mark Whitfield explained that the project came in well under with the city only required to cover \$429,000 rather than \$800,000.

"The project includes the reconstruction of existing curbs, curb ramps, sidewalks installation of new curbs, curb ramps, sidewalks as needed and pavement mill and overlay, lighting, landscaping and environmental improvements," McLeod said.

As for the Washington Street closure, McLeod explained that this was also part of the TAP project. The closure was short, however.

"Washington Street reopened on Friday, March 29," McLeod said. "The project was originally to be completed by December 2023, however, work related to the ADA improvements extended beyond the original time estimate and the final paving of the road surface could not occur until after winter."

The one project that is city managed is the Walnut Street bridge. This bridge stretches from Kent County



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to Sussex County in the center of town. According to Mark Whitfield, city manger, the street experiences a considerable number of speeders in the late afternoon and evening. 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 to beautify the center of downtown. This project was also unanimously approved by council.

McLeod stated that the new design would also have a mid-block pedestrian crossing that would provide better pedestrian safety as they crossed from one side of the Riverwalk to the other.

"The Walnut Street bridge is a city-managed project," McLeod said. "It closed on March 18 and will be closed through the end of April, with the project expected to be completed by mid-May."

Whitfield also stated that the contract for the bridge included a clause that it had to be completed by April 27, the day of the Bug and Bud Festival. Businesses downtown have been sharing maps of the downtown area with their business highlighted compared to parking. Northeast Front Street is open but there are lane closures periodically that can slow traffic. There are several city parking lots in downtown Milford that provide close access to the downtown area.

A parking study conducted in 2019 by Dover/Kent County Metropolitan Planning Organization found that there are approximately 1,757 parking spaces in downtown, although about 1,000 of them were private



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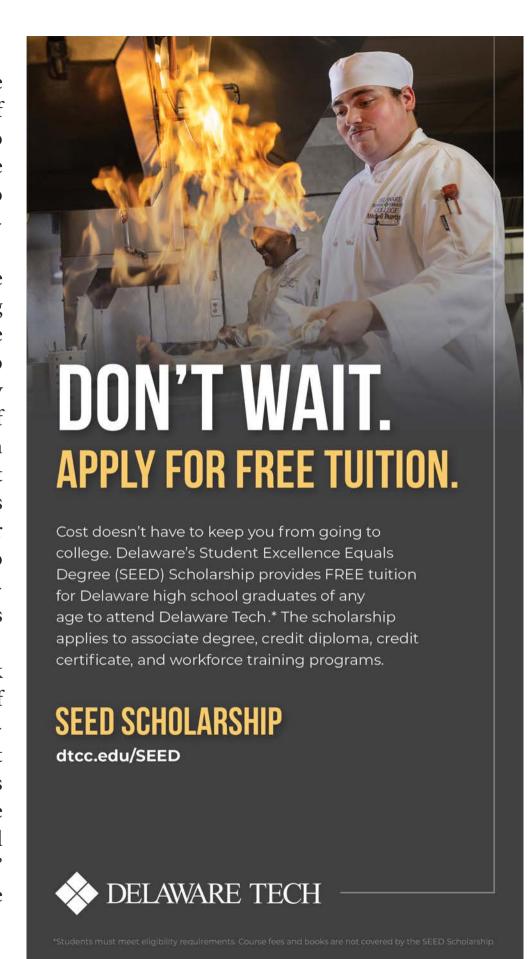


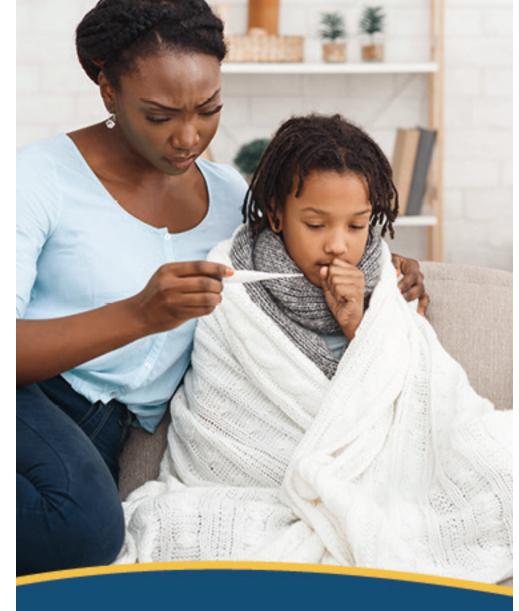
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lots. Of those that were public, 327 were on-street while the remaining 433 were public parking. The closure of the Walnut Street bridge only eliminated around six to 10 spaces on each side of the street. Although there are barriers at each end of the street, vehicles are able to drive onto each end to find street parking before reaching the barriers at the construction site.

In 2016, Arnette, Muldrow & Associates presented the Riverwalk Rebirth plan which also included a parking study. At that time, Ben Muldrow pointed out that there was ample parking, but better signage was necessary to direct people where to park, something the 2019 study found was still an issue. Muldrow explained that lack of parking was a "perception problem" as downtown Milford was not yet a destination in 2015, comparing it to Lewes and Rehoboth where people will park blocks away because they have multiple reasons to visit. For many in the area, the lack of signage directing them to traffic remained a problem in 2024. Businesses, however, are trying to keep the public informed about areas where parking is readily available.

"We've been getting a lot of questions about the work occurring on our street. Between the multiple areas of construction in town, and one-way streets, we understand that finding your way to us might be more difficult than usual," Red Bandana, a comic and collectibles store, posted on social media. "We made a quick little map to show you where to park and how to get to us! All three parking lots are less than 500 feet from the shop!" Irish Rose, Cultured Plate and other businesses have also posted about available parking.





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CUM General URE







BY TERRY ROGERS

Returning for the second year, Milford Library is excited to announce that 741.5 Con will again be the site of a celebration of all things comic. Attendees are asked to cosplay their favorite anime, comic book, video game, anime or other characters on Saturday, April 13 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

"We are calling all nerds, geeks and everyone in between to come out for our second comicon," Heather Kershaw, operations manager for the museum said. "We will have a costume contest, door prizes and more all day at the library."

741.5 CON RETURNS TO MILFORD LIBRARY

Events at the library during the comicon will include children's events like a Superhero obstacle course, comic story time and crafts. There is even a balloon twister game planned that is designed for all ages. There will be movie viewings, coloring sheets and from 3 to 4 p.m. a costume contest. Although children under 12 may participate, they will not be officially entered.

"We did not forget the teens and adults either," Kershaw said. "We have a button maker workshop, anime viewing area, Dungeons and Dragons as well as a Smash Brothers Tournament with Small Town Gaming."

Drawful will take place from 11 a.m. until noon and the Balloon Twister is from noon until 2 p.m. A teen and adult costume contest, sponsored by Ocean City Comicon, will be held from 3 to 4 p.m.

"We will have Oven Spring as a food vendor," Kershaw said. "We also have several other vendors, including Yanky Brit Collectibles, Z's Creative Space and Red Bandana."

To learn more about the costume contest, visit the library website. Milford Public Library is located at 11 Southeast Front Street and is open Monday through Thursday from 10 a.m. until 7 p.m.; on Friday from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. and on Saturday from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. They are closed on Sunday. For more information, call 302-422-8996.



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BY TERRY ROGERS

The Milford Library has many exciting and fun things planned for the month of April and they will kick off by celebrating Library Workers Day on April 9. The library is providing a way for the public to celebrate the hardworking library staff.

"We want our patrons to help us recognize the staff to show appreciation for the work they do," Heather Kershaw, operations manager of the library, said. "We are asking patrons that day to 'Submit a Star.' The staff member who receives the most stars will receive a gift basket."

On Wednesday, April 10, the library plans to help with your mental state when they offer "The Art of Journaling and Life Changing Possibilities." This will be offered on Wednesday, April 10 from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. The same day, AmeriHealthCaritas Delaware Mobile Unit will be on hand from noon until 4 p.m., offering free blood pressure and BMI screenings along with dental examinations, cholesterol tests plus much many more free health offerings.

"We are really looking forward to our Fun with Ceramics Night with Donna," Kershaw said. "This promises to be a night of fun, laughter and creation as each participant will create their own ceramic work. There is no fee for the class, but **registration** is required and is limited to 20 people."

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The library plans to celebrate its patrons on Friday, April 12. Dubbed "All That and A Bag of Chips Day," everyone who comes into the library will receive a free bag of chips when they check out an item. Then, on Monday, April 15, the 2023 eco-documentary "We're All Plastic People Now," will be screened at 5 p.m.

"This documentary explores the precarious relationship between people and plastics and asks how much evidence we need before we decide to address it," Kershaw said. "We thank our sponsors, Oceana, Plastic Free Delaware and the Delaware Division of Libraries."

Registration for the screening is recommended, but not required. AmerihealthCaritas will return to the library on Wednesday, April 17 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. to offer health and wellness education. They will be providing information on options for older people in Sussex County.

"This will be an informal coffee klatch," Kershaw said.

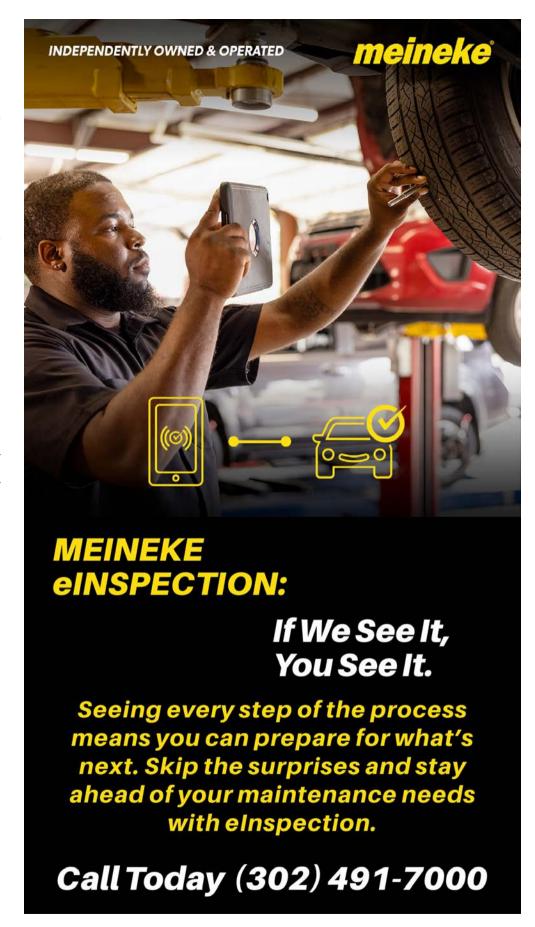
"It will give you an opportunity to ask local senior service experts questions so you can begin to prepare for your aging journey. It is not necessarily for the older generation, but even those who may be looking ahead to their older age or who may be taking care of an older friend or relative."

The same evening, "How Simple Gratitude Can Lead to a Happier & More Successful Life," is planned for 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. The second part of "The duPont Family" will be held on Saturday, April 20 at 1 p.m. This is a brief introduction to the duPont family and their company, presented by Lucas R. Clawson.

"We hope to get a good turnout for the program on Friday, April 26," Kershaw said. "This program, 'Empowering Seniors Against Scams,' an hour-long workshop designed to inform senior citizens about potential scams in an effort to protect them. We are partnering with Tidemark Federal Credit Union on this one and we really hope to see a big group as this is a topic that could protect them from becoming a victim."

The library will end the month with Mindful Mediation 101 on Saturday, April 27, from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. This is a beginner class which will teach form, breathwork and the positive effects of meditation on mental health.

To learn about other programs available at the Milford Library or to register, visit their **website**. The library is located at 11 Southeast Front Street in Milford. They can be reached by calling 302-422-8996. The library is open Monday, through Thursday from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.; Friday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.



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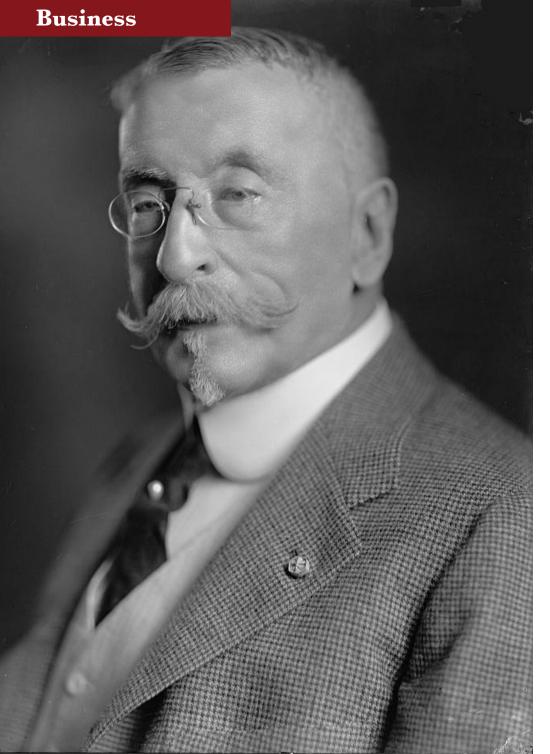
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BUSINESS







DU PONT FAMILY FOCUS OF UPCOMING MILFORD MUSEUM PRESENTATION

BY TERRY ROGERS

The name du Pont is well known, not only throughout Delaware but also globally. On Saturday, April 20 at 1 p.m., the Milford Museum will present the second part of their series on this famous family with "A Brief Introduction to the du Pont Family, Part II," presented by Lucas R. Clawson.

"In the first part of this series, discussion focused on why the du Pont family came to America and how they build a worldwide explosives business," Tom Summers, director of the Milford Museum said. "In this part, we will discover how the family and company fared into the 20th century."

Summers stated that Clawson will provide information on how the du Pont family went from creating explosives to the many products they are known for today. He will also provide details on the many challenges the family and company faced, including two world wars, investigations by Congress, World's Fairs and how consumer demand impacted decisions.

"It is a fascinating story," Summers said. "The many inventions that are credited to this family and this company are incredible. And to think it all began here in Delaware."

Since 2007, Clawson has served as an historian at the Hagley Museum and Library in Wilmington. He works with the historical records of the DuPont Company, the

du Pont family and businesses in the Delaware Valley. He uses his expertise and research to create public programming, lead discussions with Hagley staff and for scholarly research on topics such as the DuPont Company in the American Civil War and the United States Navy during the 19th century. Clawson is a graduate of Appalachian State University and the University of Delaware.

These monthly programs are sponsored by the Milford Museum and focus on a variety of topics concerning local, state and national history. They are provided through a generous grant from The Delaware Heritage Commission. The Milford Public Library is located at 11 Southeast Front Street in Milford. For more information, contact Summers at tom@milforddemuseum.org. MILFORD



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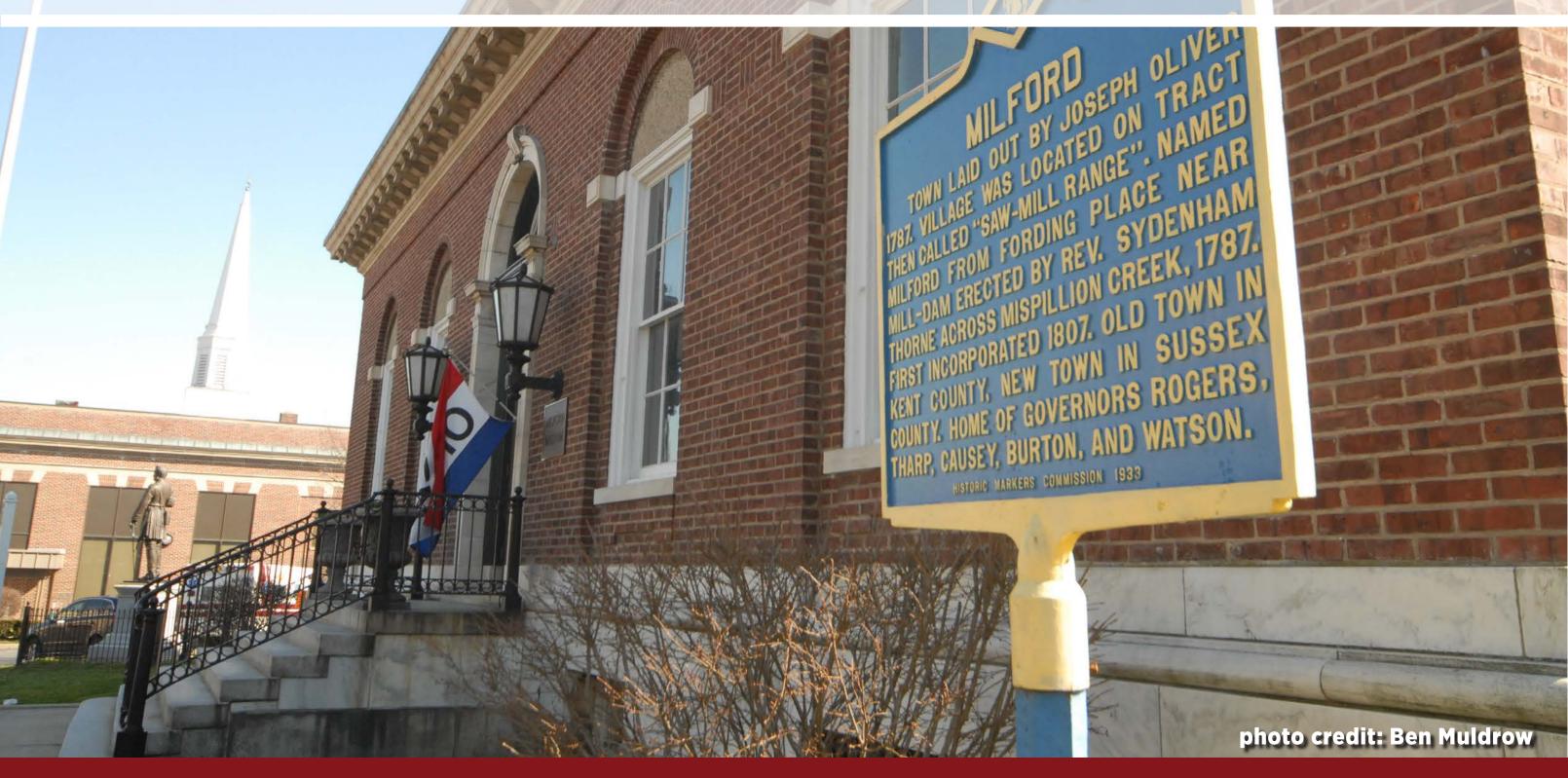
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GOVERNMENT & POLITICS









STAFF REPORT

The Chamber of Commerce for Greater Milford (CCGM) is pleased to announce they will hold three Candidate Q&A sessions prior to elections for the city of Milford Council. The sessions are planned as follows:

- Wards 1 and 2 April 18, 7 to 9 p.m. Milford High School Auditorium
- Mike Boyle, Ward 1, and Nadia Zychal, Ward 2
- Wards 2 and 3 April 23, 7 to 9 p.m. Milford High School Auditorium
- Danny Perez, Michael Stewart, Ward 3, and Katrina Wilson, Ward 4
- Mayor Archie Campbell April 25, 6 to 8 p.m. Milford High School Auditorium

"We made the decision to change this format somewhat in order to be sure we are fair to all participants," Pat Abel, president of CCGM said. "This will still be a moderated event and two Chamber members plus the executive director developed 10 questions focused on issues facing Milford today. Initially, we were not going to have public input, but realized that by asking the same questions of all candidates, we may be putting candidates in Ward 1 and 2 at a disadvantage over Wards 3 and 4 plus the mayoral race as they will get forewarning of what we will ask."

For that reason, Abel stated that, prior to the debate, audience members will be provided forms to write and

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submit questions they may have for the candidates. Those questions will be screened and those that meet the criteria will be asked of the candidates, either in replacement of the questions established by the Chamber of Commerce or in addition to those questions. Due to time restraints, not all audience questions may be asked.

"We also apologize for some confusion about times," Abel said. "Our original press release went out with incorrect times for the Ward 1/2 and Ward 3/4 events. All three Q&A periods begin at 7 and will run until approximately 9 p.m. As a precaution, doors will open at 6 PM which will also allow attendees additional time to complete the question form.

The city of Milford council election will be held Saturday, April 27. Registered voters may cast their ballots at the Public Works office located at 180 Vickers Drive in Milford between the hours of 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. All individuals who registered to vote with the state of Delaware by March 28, and reside at an address within the city of Milford are eligible to vote in the election.

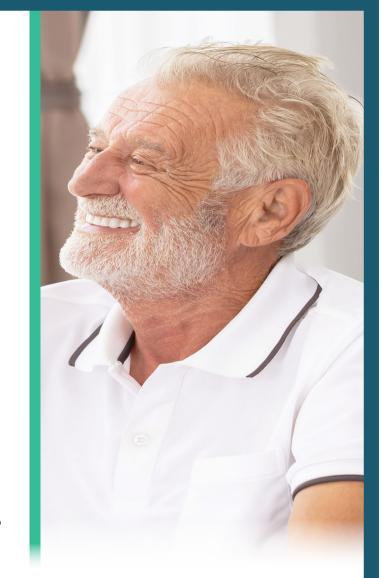




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EDUCATION





MILFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT SEEKS PUBLIC INPUT FOR FUTURE PLANNING

STAFF REPORT

Milford School District is actively seeking input from the district community, families, students and stakeholders as it launches the 'Building Our Future' initiative. This plan will ensure that our district's facilities, infrastructure, transportation and technology are well-equipped to accommodate increased enrollment and foster modern learning environments. The Milford Action Planner (MAP) will serve as a baseline of information from various stakeholders to contribute their perspectives and insights while guiding Milford School District in our approach to growth.

"At Milford School District, we are committed to providing our students with the best possible educational experience," stated Dr. Sara Hale, chief operations officer. "With the 'Building Our Future' initiative, we are taking proactive steps to ensure that our facilities and resources align with the evolving needs of our students and community."

The five-year plan, which will be inclusive of all quadrants of our strategic plan compass (Academic Excellence, Building Our Future, Supporting the Whole Student, and Empowering and Investing in Our People), underscores our commitment to achievement and excellence. Through strategic planning and community collaboration, the district aims to lay a strong foundation for continued growth.



Our four priorities are the four quadrants on our compass



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Our first step is to establish a baseline, to understand where we stand currently," explained Trish Gerken, public information officer. "That's why we are introducing the Milford Action Planner (MAP), a tool that will help us gather data and insights to assess our current status and identify areas for improvement.

"We believe in the power of collaboration and collective input. By engaging our community in this process, we can ensure that our plan reflects the aspirations and priorities of our stakeholders.

"We will begin analyzing responses during our committee meeting in late April. All responses will be confidential and will be used to inform the development of the five-year plan."

To participate in the survey, please visit https://forms. gle/G1VXuKUWaeasf7218









HEALTH









Women face many challenges today, from managing the schedules of their family, creating healthy work-life balance while also focusing on their own selfcare. Unfortunately, when it comes to health, the busy lifestyle of most women today can cause minor health issues to become major. Dr. Michelle Cooper, OB-GYN with Bayhealth explains why health screenings are critical for women.

"Eating whole foods can help keep you healthy," Dr. Cooper said. "It's important to cut back on refined sugars and processed foods, such as bread and pasta. Women also need to increase their fruit and vegetable intake because most don't eat nearly enough. Lastly, they should consider taking a multi-vitamin to make

up for some of the gaps in their diet."

There is a very important reason why women need to eat a healthy diet. Heart disease is the number one killer of women. What is equally important to know is that women may not recognize symptoms as a heart attack, blaming chest pain on heartburn or shortness of breath or walking too fast. Once a woman enters menopause, the risk of heart disease increases as well.

"Stress is a major cause of inflammation," Dr. Cooper said. "Many women are juggling working and raising children, both inside and outside the home. They are also caring for spouses and family members, including elderly parents. It is important to address the mind-body connection and take time for yourself with yoga, Ep-



som baths or even 10 minutes of meditation each day."

Breast cancer is the second-leading cause of cancer in women, with skin cancer the first. Monthly self-examinations are a critical step in early diagnosis as are regular mammograms. In addition to self-breast examination, women should also have an annual pap smear to detect the early stages of cervical cancer. Women over the age of 45 should also have regular colorectal screenings.

For more information on women's health, visit Bayhealth's website.

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POLICE & FIRE





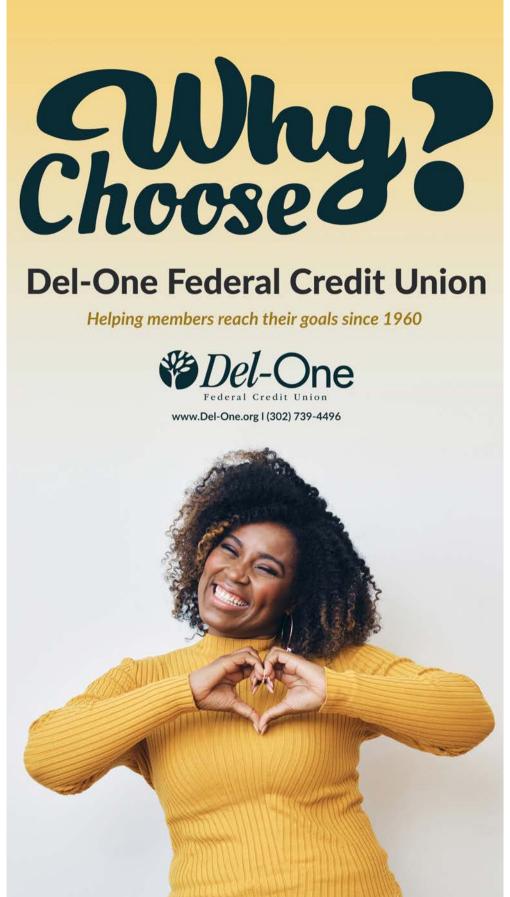


BY TERRY ROGERS

Planet Fitness along with other businesses within the Milford Plaza were declared safe by police personnel after responding to bomb threats over the weekend. It was determined there was no threat to Milford residents or visitors. This threat was part of a string of bomb threats made to Planet Fitness locations throughout the state. The businesses were turned back over to their management teams, although some businesses in the area decided to remain closed for the evening.

There were bomb threats sent to Planet Fitness locations throughout the country. No bombs or other explosive devices were found in any of the locations where threats were reported. No one has taken responsibility for the threats and police are asking the public for any information to apprehend suspects.







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