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Newark Post

MAY 31, 2019

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FREE

COMMUNITY



Race supports injured cop

Police, community rally around officer hurt in scuffle Pg. 16

DEVELOPMENT



Demo begins at Park N Shop

Old bank building will be replaced with apartments Pg. 6

EDUCATION



25 years of service

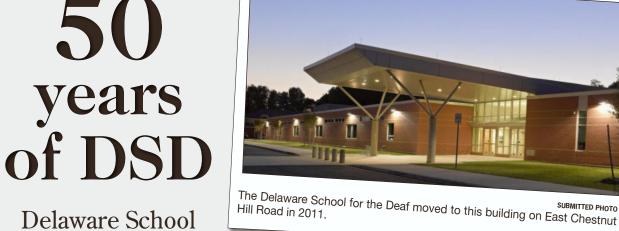
Educators hit milestone at Newark Methodist Preschool

Pg. 8

POLICE

Crashes kill two Newarkers

Men die in separate crashes over the weekend Pg. 4



Delaware School for the Deaf marks anniversary

By BROOKE SCHULTZ bschultz@chespub.com

After she clicked her silver slippers and returned to Delaware from the peculiar world of Oz, Amelia Berg said that she really enjoyed signing during the Delaware School for the Deaf's production of "Wizard of Oz" so both deaf and hearing people could enjoy the show.

Berg, a sixth-grade student at DSD, played the role of Dorothy in the production earlier this month, which coincided with the school's 50th anniversary. The celebration brought together alumni, community members and current students to celebrate the work the school does.

"We have a really good culture at the school," Berg said through an interpreter. "I believe that DSD is really good for us, supporting the deaf community and deaf children who would otherwise be stuck going to hearing schools."

Berg is just one of the 115 students enrolled in the K-12 program at the school. DSD, however, stretches beyond the campus on East Chestnut Hill Road.

The school is housed within the Christina School District, but it supports all 19 school districts and charter schools within the state.

See 50 YEARS

Page 9

NEWARK POST PHOTO BY BROOKE SCHULTZ During Delaware School for the Deaf's 50th anniversary celebration, students performed "The Wizard of Oz" using American Sign Language.



A Delaware School for the Deaf student is assisted by school nurse Earlene D. Gillan in a sound-proof audiologic testing room as an audiologist uses testing equipment in this photo taken in 1969 during the school's first year in operation.

Bike trail upgrades underway

shannon@chespub.com

An improved walking and biking trail will make it easier for residents of northwest Newark to get to the Pomeroy Trail and downtown.

Construction on the \$110,000 project began last week and will take approximately three weeks to complete, according to Public Works Director Tim Filasky.

The approximately 0.3mile trail will run from Fremont Road in Fairfield

> See **TRAIL** Page 11

Police issue first citations under party law

By JOSH SHANNON jshannon@chespub.com

Two months after Newark passed the controversial unruly gathering ordinance, police gave out the first two citations under the new law.

The violations came within a half hour of each other on May 18, as University of Delaware students marked one of the final weekends before the end of the school year.

The first incident came

See LAW Page 11



CONNECT WITH US F C WARK POST 5.31.2019

LOCAL NEWS

The week ahead

History event: Saturday, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., at Pencader Heritage Museum, 2029 Sunset Lake Road. Event includes a yard/artisan/craft sale, small military encampment, antique cars, local history themed book signings from local authors, a historical interpretation by Willis Phelps, food vendors and more. Free.

Food truck festival: Saturday, 11:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., at Holy Angels Church, 82 Possum Park Road. Event includes food trucks, music and craft vendors.

Planning commission: Tuesday, 7 p.m., at city hall, 220 S. Main St. The planning commission will consider a request by Newark Charter School to annex a property adjacent to the school's Patriot Way campus. Concert: Thursday, 7 to 8 p.m., at the Academy Lawn,

105 E. Main St. The Newark Parks and Recreation Department's spring concert series continues with a performance by BFF. Free.

For more events, visit newarkpostonline.com/calendar. To submit listings, go online or email news@newarkpostonline.com. Information runs in the print edition as space is available.



NEWARK POST PHOTO BY JOSH SHANNON

Historical interpreter Willis Phelps Jr. portrays Private James H. Elbert outside the Pencader Heritage Museum last year. He will return to Pencader as part of a daylong event Saturday.

Newark Police Department forms **Police Athletic League chapter**

By JOSH SHANNON jshannon@chespub.com

A group of Newark Police Department officers recently formed a chapter of the Police Athletic League to help foster a relationship with the community and reduce juvenile crime.

Sgt. Greg D'Elia, who commands NPD's special operations unit, said the PAL will provide an outlet for local kids to engage in sports and other activities after school and on weekends.

"Research shows that these times are often when juveniles are most likely to commit crimes or become victimized themselves," D'Elia said. "Positive interaction with police officers, and other mentors affiliated with the PAL, reduces this by establishing role models and by giving the juvenile participants an alternative to bad behavior."

The nonprofit organization is planning to establish after-school programs at local elementary schools, hold community events, sponsor a weeklong Newark Police Youth Academy Camp and work on other projects in the community. D'Elia said he hopes to have the after-school programs in place as early as this fall.

The group's long-term goal is to plan and raise money to build a PAL community center here in Newark, possibly in Dickey Park. "This is true community policing at work," D'Elia said.

The National Police Athletic League was founded 70 years ago and now includes more than 300 local chapters. The New Castle County Police Department's PAL offers a number of programs at four sites around the county.

D'Elia said NPD has always valued its community outreach programs and has been considering establishing a PAL since 2017.

Last summer, NPD held two "mobile PAL" events – community block parties in the White Chapel and College Park neighborhoods. Police officers cooked food donated by local businesses and played games with the kids.

D'Elia said having a formal PAL group will help NPD expand those efforts and make fundraising easier.

The Newark PAL was established May 1. Its board of directors include two representatives from NPD, two representatives of the Newark Parks and Recreation



NEWARK POST PHOTO BY JOSH SHANNON

Ryder Smith, 7, fist-bumps Cpl. Brandon Walker while playing ladder ball during a Mobile PAL event at Dickey Park last summer.

Department, Councilman cess of becoming affiliated Jason Lawhorn, Christina School District Director of Operations Ed Mayfield, the Rev. Lonnie Rector of Pilgrim Baptist Church, business owner Nic DeCaire, Newark Alderman Lisa Hatfield and two University of Delaware students.

with the National PAL.

D'Elia noted that while the PAL involves city employees, it is a separate organization and does not rely on taxpayer funds.

"It's a completely separate entity," he said. "It doesn't cost the city anything. It has The group is in the pro- its own funding sources."

UDon't Need It to collect donations through June 6

POST STAFF REPORT Couches, clothes and storage ottomans – oh my.

UDon't Need It?, a recycle and reuse program coor-dinated by the University of Delaware and the city of Newark, is operating a collection drive through June 5 under several tents at the STAR Campus.

The program allows students and local landlords to drop off items - like furniture, decor, electronics and more – that are unwanted as UD students move out of their dorms and rental homes.

Donations/disposal can still be made on Saturday, between 4 to 8 p.m., and Sunday through June 5, between 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Items will be sold for \$10 each today and June 6 between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. Each year, the drive keeps

nearly 100 tons of material from going to landfills.

Drop-off is free for students



UDon't Need It, a recycle and reuse program, will have will sell items today for \$10.

landlords. Students and should bring a university ID; landlords should bring proof he or she is a landlord. Others will be charged \$10 per carload of materials.

Accepted items include: furniture, appliances, lamps, fans, clothing, household goods, kitchen wares, car- lin@udel.edu.

pets, unopened toiletries, unopened non-perishable food, televisions, computers and monitors, bed frames, curtains and storage containers. For more information, visit

udel.edu/commencement/ udni/ or contact Caitlin Olsen at 302-831-6978 or cait-



Newarkers travel to England for historic flag's return

Flag was left with retired police chief **Bill Brierlev** 40 years ago

By JOSH SHANNON jshannon@chespub.com

When Bill Brierley flew to England earlier this month for a ceremony commemorating a historic British flag, the trip represented the culmination of a mission more than 40 years in the making.

The large Union Jack - which had once flown over the HMS Sheffield, a British ship that sank during the Falklands War - was left in Brierley's possession decades ago, and the retired Newark Police chief had long desired to return it to the British people.

"That flag right now is where it belongs," Brierley said. "It's back home.'

The story of the flag traces back to 1974, when Brierley hosted an international police conference here in Newark. He asked attendees to bring their nation's flag to be displayed at the event, and one of the British officers brought a flag from the Sheffield, which at the time was commanded by his brother.

While the officers participated in the conference, their wives were fascinated by the malls and large supermarkets here, Brierley recalled. They stocked up on Hershey bars, Levi jeans and other American products.

"They were absolutely captivated by Duncan Hines cake mix. They'd

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PHOTOS COURTESY OF IAN M SPOONER

Former Newark Police Chief Bill Brierley (second from left) participates in a ceremony rededicating a flag that flew over the HMS Sheffield and then spent 40 years in Newark before being returned to Britain.

said, adding the women bought a dozen or so boxes to take home. "They had all this loot. When it came time to go home, it didn't fit in the suitcase.

While packing, the Brits had to make some sacrifices.

"The cake mix and Hershey bars were more important than the flag," Brierley said, adding that they left the flag with him.

The flag took on a new, somber significance eight years later, when the Sheffield was sunk during the Falklands War, killing 20 sailors.

Brierley kept the flag at the old Newark Police station and later at

never seen such a critter," Brierley his home and thought several times of trying to return it. Two years ago, he enlisted the help of the Pencader Heritage Museum, where volunteers cleaned the flag and contacted the British Embassy.

In September 2017, the museum hosted a formal military ceremony in which Brierley transferred the flag to Commander Richard McHugh, the assistant naval attaché based at the British Embassy in Washington, D.C.

The flag eventually made it back to Britain and into the hands of the HMS Sheffield Association, which made plans to install it in the centuries-old Sheffield Cathedral.

"It would mean a lot to the fami-



Four Newarkers pose with British military officials during a ceremony rededicating a flag that flew over the HMS Sheffield and then spent 40 years in Newark before being returned to Britain.

lies of those who died and to the flag because the ship was named afsurvivors to have this flag hanging there," Tanzy Lee, of the HMS Sheffield Association, told the local newspaper, The Star. "All the photos and other possessions they had on that ship were lost, and this is something physical people can look at when the memorial service takes place each year."

Brierley, along with Pencader members Marcia Adams, Linda Duffy and Barbara White, traveled to Sheffield – an industrial town about 150 miles north of London - to participate in the ceremony. The event coincided with the 37th anniversary of the ship's sinking.

With a number of Sheffield survivors present, the Bishop of Sheffield rededicated the flag, which was hung alongside other military artifacts. "The whole city rallied around the

ter the city," Duffy said. "It will hang there till it falls off the pole.'

The Newarkers spent six days in Sheffield and were treated as honored guests by everyone they met, they said.

"Bill was their hero, there's no other word for it," Duffy said.

Brierley, meanwhile, enjoyed meeting the Sheffield survivors.

"I've never seen a closer band of brothers," he said. "They live for each other.'

Brierley, who served in the United States Marines during the Korean War, said he understands why the flag means so much to the Sheffield sailors.

"Every Marine who's ever served pays tribute to the flag that flew over Iwo Jima," he said. "This is the same.'

ANSWERS ON PAGE 10

The Post Stumper

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POLICE BLOTTER

Two Newarkers killed in separate crashes

Bv JOSH SHANNON jshannon@chespub.com

Two Newark men were killed in separate crashes over Memorial Day weekend.

The first crash happened just after 11 p.m. Friday at the intersection of Concord Pike and Fairfax Boulevard in Wilmington, according to Master Cpl. Michael Austin, a spokesman for the Delaware State Police.

Shavar Steer, 25, of Newark, was riding a Suzuki GSX motorcycle north on Concord Pike while the driver of a Kia Sedona was turning left from southbound Concord Pike onto Fairfax Road.

By JOSH SHANNON

jshannon@chespub.com

Police are searching for a

Patrick Powell, 21, of Wilm-

ington, was initially arrested

around 6 p.m. May 16 in the

Millstone Plaza apartments off

Elkton Road near Suburban

Plaza, according to Lt. Andrew

Newark Police Department.

Powell was spending the

Facebook

Newark Post

man accused of threatening a

said.

the scene.

"Multiple witness accounts described the Suzuki as traveling with several other motorcycles that were being operated recklessly and driving at high rates of speed just prior to the collision occurring," Austin said

The driver of the Kia, who police identified only as a 69-year-old man from Holly Springs, N.C., was taken to the hospital to be treated for nonlife-threatening injuries.

The second crash happened just after 12:30 a.m. Sunday on Christiana Road, west of Old Baltimore Pike.

Lanier Brooks, 28, of New-The vehicles collided in the ark, was walking east on ing any type of lighting device.

Cops searching for man accused of

threatening woman at gunpoint

intersection, and Steer died at Christiana Road in the turn lane for Old Baltimore Pike. Austin said

> A Nissan Versa Note struck Brooks, and the impact of the crash threw him off the road into a grassy area. He was taken to Christiana Hospital, where he died.

> The driver of the Nissan. identified only as a 21-year-old woman from Bear, was not hurt.

> "At the time of the collision there was heavy rainfall occurring," Austin said. "The investigation also determined that the victim was wearing a darkcolored top and light-colored pants, none of which were reflective. He was also not carry-

commission of a felony and

carrying a concealed weapon.

night on \$49,000 unsecured

bail and issued a no-contact

order with the victim. With an

unsecured bail, the defendant

Ån hour and five minutes

after being released, Powell

called the victim on the phone,

violating the no-contact order,

Police obtained another ar-

rest warrant charging Powell

with breach of release and are

asking the public's help locat-

as to Powell's whereabouts is

asked to contact Newark Po-

lice at 302-366-7111 or 911.

Anyone with information

pays nothing upfront.

Rubin said.

ing him.

He was released later that

Vandal slashes tires on Madison Drive

A vandal slashed the tires on several cars in the College Park neighborhood last week. Police received reports of a man walking along Madison Drive slashing tires with a knife around 11:15 p.m. May 23, according to Newark Police Department spokesman Lt. Andrew Rubin.

The vandal was described as a white man with facial hair, between 5 feet 5 inches tall and 5 feet 10 inches tall. He was wearing a green, buttondown shirt.

A short time later, police located a man who fit the description and was "acting disorderly" on South Main Street, about a half mile from College Park, Rubin said.

Officers obtained his identity but are still investigating whether he was involved in the vandalism.

Rubin asked tire slashing victims who have not already reported the damage to call Newark Police at 302-366-7111

Car, items from cars stolen in Newark neighborhoods

Two men are wanted for allegedly stealing several items from an unlocked vehicle, police said.

The theft occurred in the 100 block of Sypherd Drive around 11:30 p.m. on May 23. According to Lt. Andrew

Rubin, a spokesman for the Newark Police Department, the suspects - later identified as Newark residents Nathaniel Smith, 18, and Rashaon Lane, 20 – entered the vehicle and stole a cellphone from the car.

Rubin said there was no damage done to the vehicle. Police obtained warrants

charging the men with one count of felony theft, one count of misdemeanor theft and one count of felony conspiracy second degree. Rubin said that their arrests are pending.

This incident comes after two other cases of thefts from vehicles in the city.

Rubin said that a burglar stole property from a car parked in the 800 block of Hilltop Road between 7 p.m. May 21 and 7:30 a.m. on May 22. There was no damage to that vehicle.

On May 22, around 2 p.m., a cellphone was stolen from a vehicle parked in the 100 block of West Main Street. Rubin said the phone may have been grabbed through an open window.

He said the phone was later retrieved outside an apartment complex in the 200 block of South Main Street.

Earlier in the week, between May 17 and 20, a car was stolen from the unit block of Linden Street. The vehicle is a 2015 Honda Civic, with a Rhode Island tag 365835. There is no video available for release.

Newark residences, warehouse broken into

Police are searching for suspects following break-ins at several residences and a warehouse in Newark.

A man is wanted for attempting to take products from a business' warehouse on May 12 between 7 and 7:30 p.m. in the 100 block of Interchange Boulevard.

An employee confronted the man, and the man fled out a rear door without any items, said Lt. Andrew Rubin, a spokesman for the Newark Police Department.

The burglar is described as

a black man between 6 feet and 6 feet and 2 inches tall and 220 pounds. He was wearing a red hooded sweatshirt and covered his face with a white garment. He fled in a gold Acura MDX, which had a Delaware tag, Rubin said.

Anyone with information about the incident is asked to contact Det. William Anderson at 302-366-7100 ext. 3469 or wanderson@newark. de.us.

Two residences were broken into on May 25. The first occurred between 3:35 and 3:54 p.m. in the 100 block of South Chapel Street.

The resident was in her bedroom when a burglar entered her room and turned on the light, Rubin said.

The burglar left her room and went to a third-floor bedroom, where the resident could hear the burglar moving around. The victim contacted police, and the burglar fled, Rubin said.

Officers and a K-9 unit from the New Castle County Police Department responded to the residence but did not locate the burglar.

Items within the third-floor bedroom had been moved, but nothing appeared to have been taken, Rubin said.

There is no video available for release. Anyone with information about this incident is asked to contact Det. Paul Keld at 302-366-7100 ext. 3106 or pkeld@newark.de.us.

Between midnight and 10 a.m. the same day, several items were stolen from a property in the 200 block of Courtnev Street after a burglar entered a residence through an unlocked rear door. Rubin said.

There is no surveillance images available for release. Anyone with information about this incident is asked to call Det. Taras Gerasimov at 302-366-7100 ext. 3474 or tgerasimov@ newark.de.us.

Rubin the was on phone, Powell grew angry because he didn't want

her talking to that person.

and pointed it at the victim,

loaded 9mm handgun and arrested him, Rubin said. Powell was charged with aggravated menacing, posses-

Twitter

@NWK Post



Powell pulled out a handgun

who called police, Rubin said. Officers found Powell with a

Rubin, a spokesman for the night with an acquaintance who lives at the apartment sion of a firearm during the



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woman with a handgun inside victim a Newark apartment earlier talking this month and then contactthe ing his victim in violation of a and no-contact order, authorities

point,

ing.

said

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601 Bridge St., Elkton, MD 21921.



New Ark Chorale's patriotic concert a Memorial Day tradition

concert on Sunday at St. Paul's Lutheran Church. The show featured traditional patriotic songs, as well as spiritual songs ing which audience members waved flags and sang along.

The New Ark Chorale held its 16th-annual Memorial Day and a recitation of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address. It concluded with a performance of "Battle Hymn of the Republic," dur-



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Shuttered bank demolished at Park N Shop

By JOSH SHANNON jshannon@chespub.com

A demolition crew spent this week knocking down the shuttered M&T Bank at the Park N Shop to make room for an apartment building.

The structure was built in 1969 to house Dolly Madison, a fastfood chain, and was converted to a Wilmington Trust bank a few years later.

The demolished building will be replaced by a three-story building containing 10,600 square feet of retail space on the first floor and 12 apartments on the second and third floors. There will be 10 fourbedroom apartments and two twobedroom apartments for a total of 44 bedrooms.

Meanwhile the rest of the shopping center, which was recently renovated, will remain intact.

The fate of the bank building was the subject of controversy for several years before the project was approved last summer.

It was originally slated to be-



NEWARK POST PHOTOS BY JOSH SHANNON A demolition crew spent Tuesday knocking down the shuttered M&T Bank at

the Park N Shop to make room for an apartment building.

come a Wawa gas station, but ty meetings to gain feedback from strong opposition from the com- neighbors about what they wanted munity forced the then-owner of to see there. The plan originally the property to abandon the plans. DSM Commercial purchased but DSM eliminated that after

called for a drive-thru coffee shop, the site in 2014 and held communi- many residents voiced concerns



The shuttered M&T Bank at the Park N Shop, which is being demolished to make room for an apartment building, was built in 1969.

from the speaker.

When the final plan came up for approval in March 2018, community input remained divided. Some residents of the surrounding neighborhoods raised concerns about the encroachment of student housing and fears that the project would bring more traffic.

about increased traffic and noise Others, though, supported it and praised DSM for its efforts to improve the aging Park N Shop.

Council tabled the project and told DSM to come back with a revised plan that would address concerns. Four months later, however, council approved the same plan with no substantial changes.

Indictment: Newarker helped kidnap Philadelphia man

By JOSH SHANNON jshannon@chespub.com

A Newark man is among eight people charged with kidnapping a Philadelphia man whose body was found in the woods in Maryland.

If convicted, the men could face a mandatory sentence of life in prison, and all but one could also face the death penalty.

The defendants were identified as Jose Bernal, 30, of Newark; Ivan Rangel Prieto, 34, of Asheboro, N.C.; Jose Castillo, 44, of Albuquer-que, N.M.; Jose Delgado, 40, of Warminster, Pa.; Salvador Sanchez Guerrero, 47, of Philadelphia; Robert Favors, 39, of Philadelphia; John Perkins, 31, of Philadelphia; and Fermín Perez Mejia, 35, of Norristown, Pa.

"Anyone willing to abduct another human being and try to trade their life for money is a danger to soci-Michael T. Harpster, etv." Special Agent in charge of the FBI's Philadelphia Di-

ACORN



This photo shows the general location of where a man's body was found in a wooded area off Route 222, north of Port Deposit, Md., in August 2018. Eight men were indicted in connection to the man's kidnapping.

operation.

vision, said in a prepared statement. "Just imagine the terror of being kidnapped, restrained, and at the total mercy of armed criminals. The FBI will never stop working to make our communities safer from violent thugs who care nothing for the lives of others.

Prosecutors said the kid-

AN ACORN STAIRLIFT IS A PERFECT SOLUTION FOR:

Arthritis and COPD sufferers

Those with mobility issues one who struggles on the stairs



PHOTO COURTESY OF PPD

a Pennsylvania man who was abducted on a Philadelphia street in June and then murdered, was identified by authorities as the body found

indictment, instead of talking business, Bernal, Prieto, Castillo, DelGado, Guerrro, Favors and Perkins grabbed Ramon on a street in Philadelphia and forced him into with duct tape, handcuffs and zip ties.

They drove him to a garage in Chester County to confront him about the debt. Over the next two days, they placed several calls to Ramon's wife demanding hundreds of thousands of dollars in ransom, prosecutors allege.

At some point, Ramon was shot in the head, and Bernal and four others drove his body to Cecil County, Md., and dumped it in a wooded area north of Port Deposit, according to the indictment. Abiding by the demands of the ransom calls, Ramon's wife did not immediately involve the police and paid the

ransom June 21, not knowing that Ramon was already dead, authorities said.

She called police several days later.

Ramon's body was discovered Aug. 30 by a man who was walking in the woods near Route 222, across the road and south of the Union Hotel restaurant.

\$

"It was a short distance off of the roadway. It was between the roadway and the water," Lt. Michael Holmes, a spokesman for the Cecil County Sheriff's Office, said at the time.

After identifying the remains as those of Ramon through dental records, police released surveillance photos of two of the men suspected in the kidnapping.

Following months of investigation, a federal grand jury indicted the eight men earlier this month. All eight are charged with conspiracy to commit kidnapping, seven of them are charged in the actual kidnapping, and five also face weapons charges.

"As alleged in the indictment, these ruthless individuals are a serious threat to the safety of our neighborhoods – not just in Philadelphia, but the entire mid-Atlantic region and beyond," U.S. Attorney William Mc-Swain said.

Reporter Carl Hamilton contributed to this article







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www.pulsepoll.com

Luis Alejandro Chueder Ramon,

Boys volleyball debuts at Newark High

By JON BUZBY JonBuzby@hotmail.com

The first season of boys volleyball at Newark High just ended, but if head coach Sara O'Brian has her way, it won't be the last.

"I have committed myself to being the coach next year again, so long as the school is willing to have this option available for the boys for the spring, we will definitely exist," she said.

O'Brian's first attempt to start a high school boys volleyball team occurred when she was a student at McKean High School. As a varsity player for the Highlanders, she enjoyed the sport so much she tried to start a boys team so that her male classmates could have the same opportunity. However, despite her efforts to make it happen after rousing some interest among her peers, she just didn't receive the support necessary to get it off the ground.

There wasn't a teacher working there at the time who wanted to coach and facilitate the team," she explained.

Ô'Brian went on to attend the University of Delaware, where she kept her hand in the game by competing in the Blue Hens' intramural program. After graduation, she went to work in the corporate word, but with the Christina School District.



Boys volleyball debuted at Newark High during the 2019 spring season.

In October, Newark High hired her to teach business, finance and marketing. O'Brian decided to try once again to start a boys volleyball team at the high school level.

"I never thought I would end up being a teacher, but since I had landed the position as one, I thought I would take advantage of the opportunity and seek out those students who may be interested in playing," said O'Brian, who serves as the club's head coach on a volunteer basis.

attracted approximately 30 people. That number dropped to 13 at the second meeting, with only two players having any formal volley-ball experience. Of the remaining 11, only some had ever played a team sport of any kind before. Determined to make it happen for those interested, O'Brian moved forward.

"The biggest challenge to getting the sport up and running was figuring out how we were going to pay for the officials and the uniforms," O'Brian said. "The officials typically cost around \$150 wasn't going to be cheap."

Like many high schools, Newark does not provide funding for club sports, so the onus to raise funds falls on the coaches and the plavers. PoBu, a Main Street restaurant, provided a financial sponsorship to help offset some costs, but it was the players and their families who paid for the remaining balance of the needed funds.

"Personally, [having to pay] didn't bother me at all," sophomore Brett Butcofsky said. "It's a sport that I love to play and I feel like if you truly enjoy something, money shouldn't stop you from doing it."

With the required funds secured, Newark started practicing on March 1 along with all the other spring sports teams and on April 2, the club sport of boys volleyball officially got underway when the Yellowjackets hosted A.I. du Pont.

"It felt great, honestly," Butcofsky recalled of how he felt during pre-match warmups prior to the first game. "At that point, we didn't really feel like a first-year team, but rather one that was established and ready to go."

The Yellowjackets were more than ready and couldn't have asked for a better start, sweeping the Tigers 3-0 to secure the first win in program history.

"The first win was definitely a great experience because I hon-

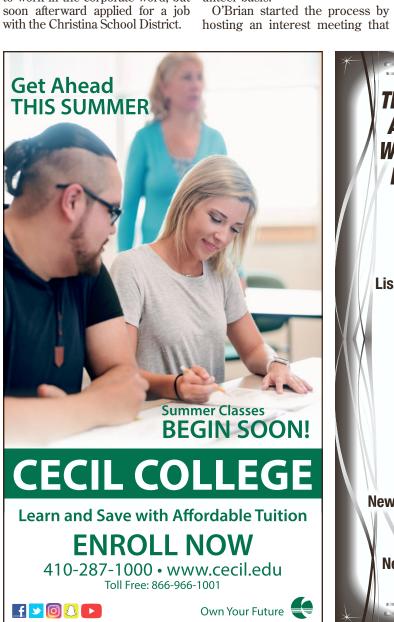
per match, so with six matches, it estly didn't know how this season would go with it being our first," said junior Nate Catts, who recorded eight aces, two digs and two assists in the win. "Then, when we got a win our first game, it felt really good. It made it seem like all the hard work we put into creating the team and practicing really paid off. The win made me look forward more to the rest of the season and to getting better as a team."

SPORTS

However, that first win would be its last of the inaugural season. The Yellowjackets finished the regular season 1-6 and after taking a 2-1 set lead against Dickinson in the opening round of the playoffs, fell to the Rams 3-2.

"The season was very successful in my opinion for what we were dealt with in terms of experience per player for a first-year team," O'Brian said. "The diversity on the team played a critical role in our success. The environment at practices and games was always positive and vivacious. Inside each player was an eagerness and willingness to learn and grow. Ultimately, it was the combination of personalities that helped this team be strong, survive and conquer. To witness each player improve and learn so much in such little time is absolutely incredible. I am looking forward to next season.'

Have a good sports story? Email



THE NEWARK HIGH SCHOOL AFTER PROM COMMITTEE WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE FOLLOWING BUSINESSES AND ORGANIZATIONS FOR THEIR GENEROUS **DONATIONS:** Lisa Diller, New Castle County Council

Representative Paul Baumbach

Senator Dave Sokola

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Educators celebrate 25 years at Newark Methodist Preschool

By BROOKE SCHULTZ bschultz@chespub.com

Over the course of two decades, coworkers have become friends and then family for Newark Methodist Preschool employees Debbie Knight and Robin Finnegan.

The women are celebrating 25 years at the preschool, which they've seen grow and evolve like the children they serve.

became involved when their children attended the preschool, which is based at Newark United Methodist Church on Main Street.

"I loved it," Finnegan said. "I was like, 'This is a really cool place. I would love to teach here.' And it kind of evolved from that."

They noted the principles of the school as a big draw.

You learn through play, and that's what's so special about this place," Finnegan said. "My kids loved coming here. They still have friends from here. And it was just a very, very good experience for me. She came to some all the way around.

Finnegan now works as a sent me flowers," she said. lead teacher, responsible for lesson plans, parent-teacher conferences and the curriculum. Knight works as an administrative assistant, handling the business side of the preschool.

But, Knight said, it has become more than work. She said when she hears about negative experiences in other workplaces, she's thankful that her job isn't like that.

The staff here is so ter-Knight and Finnegan both rific. Just everyone is so nice, so helpful. They'll do anything for you," she said. "I think we are so fortunate that we all get along so well here, and we've become friends as well as workmates."

> Finnegan noted that the two started out as exercise buddies and became good friends.

> "I mean, we're pretty much sisters," she said. Knight turned to the time, about 10 years ago, when

she was diagnosed with breast cancer. "Robin was always there

of my radiation treatments,

Knight said the whole staff present. made a difference during that time, particularly school director Tammy Sharpe.

Tammy would have everybody come over to her house for a movie night just to give me something to do and make me think about other things. Every time I had chemo, they'd bring me meals," she said. "They're just all so supportive in any way."

Those strong relationships extend to the families and students who come through the school's doors, too.

When Knight and Finnegan were parents dropping off their children, they made friends with other parents.

You're out in the hallway with the kids and all the parents, so you really get to know the families. And even though the kids get to become really good friends with some children in the classroom, you get to be good friends with a lot of the parents also," Knight said.

As staff members, the

bonds with families are still

"It just amazes me what some families will do for the preschool and how involved they get, how they make our life a lot easier and more fun," Knight said.

Knight said she enjoys reading about her former students' accomplishments in the newspaper as they get older.

"It's fun going to like Newark Nite or something. You see all these graduates," Finnegan added.

Knight agreed.

"You don't get very far, because you're stopping to talk to everybody," she said.

After 25 years, the two said they're still learning things about themselves. Both said they have gotten used to going with the flow.

You never know what's going to happen every day here. You just never know, and you have to step in and handle it," Knight added. 'So you do find that maybe that's not in your job description, but if you can step in and do it, you do it."

NEWARK POST PHOTO BY BROOKE SCHULTZ Debbie Knight, administrative assistant, and Robin Finnegan, a lead teacher, are celebrating 25 years at Newark Methodist Preschool.

enjoy the work.

"I was trying to think this morning, I was like, 'OK, well, let's see how many little hearts have we touched in 25 years,' if you think about it," Finnegan said. "It's a ton." And there are more little

hearts still left, they agreed. "I'm going to try to stick it out till I'm 70, just because I enjoy it so much," Knight, 67, said.

"I'll stick it out until I can't get up off the floor anymore," Finnegan added, laughing.

DeCaire receives national humanitarian award

By JOSH SHANNON jshannon@chespub.com

Nic DeCaire recalls traveling to Washington, D.C., in 2007 to watch his father receive a national humanitarian award from the Small Business Council of America.

Earlier this month, De-Caire went back to Washington to receive the same award.

"Growing up watching my dad, I always saw him getting involved. I saw how he gave back," DeCaire said. Subconsciously, it was ingrained in me.'

The SBCA's Humanitarian of the Year Award recognizes a small business owner who has gone above and beyond in committing his or her time to charitable activities that make the world a better place for people in need.

"DeCaire has worked tirelessly to develop and expand inclusive opportunities for individuals within his community, particularly children," the organization wrote.

DeCaire, who ran Fusion Fitness before closing the gym last year to focus on his race timing business and and Preston's March for En- I was accepting the award his philanthropy work but



Nic DeCaire poses with his father, Xavier, after receiving the Small Business Council of America's Humanitarian of the Year Award. Xavier DeCaire won the same award in 2007.

charitable efforts, is well ergy. His biggest project, the known here in Newark for both his philanthropy and his ability to rally community support for a good cause.

Over the last 13 years, he estimates he has raised nearly \$2 million for various charities, including the Newark Police Department K-9 unit

handicapped accessible Preston's Playground, opened last fall after a community-wide effort to raise the \$500,000 needed to build it.

DeCaire shifted the credit to others.

"I got recognized, but it was the Fusion community



Nic DeCaire poses with his wife, Anne, and daughters, Josephine and Grace, after receiving the Small Business Council of America's Humanitarian of the Year Award.

for," he said.

The award came with a prize of \$5,300, which he plans to use to create the Friends of Fusion Foundation, which will provide grants to organizations that help local children or first responders. The foundation will allow him to continue

have better control over can do for a community, how the money is used, he explained.

DeCaire credits his father. Xavier DeCaire, with inspiring him to get involved in the community.

An insurance agent by trade, Xavier spent many years traveling to South America with Operation Smile, a medical charity that goes to developing counties to perform free surgeries for children with cleft palates and similar conditions.

In Bolivia, he met a kid named Freddy who had a tumor on his face and needed a surgery too complex to perform there. Xavier rallied Delawareans to raise \$80,000 to bring Freddy to A.I DuPont Hospital for Children in Wilmington.

That effort evolved into a nonprofit, Kids with Confidence, which benefits local kids with facial deformities that subject them to teasing and prevent them from having normal social lives. Insurance companies often deem the surgeries cosmetic and thus don't cover them, so the organization pays for the children to receive the procedures.

"I saw what one person

Nic said of watching his father get involved and, just as importantly, inspire others to get involved as well. "One act of kindness can change one person's life and also change a community."

Xavier, who was there for Nic's award ceremony along with other family members and members of the Fusion community, said it was "just a wonderful thing to see.'

"He's not doing it for himself," he said. "He's doing it because he feels in his heart it's the right thing to do."

Helping others was just a way of life for the DeCaires when Nic was growing up, Xavier said.

"We never really talked about it," he said. "He'd see me packing my suitcase and taking off for two weeks to go to South America. I never really said anything like, 'Nic, you should do this."

Already, that philanthropic spirit is being passed on to the next generation - Nic's daughters, Josephine and Grace.

"Seeing his two daughters getting to watch their father be honored was pretty remarkable," Xavier said. Those are memories those kids will have."

Most of all, though, they

50 YEARS From Page 1

Its origins, however, can be traced to humbler beginnings. In 1929, Margaret Sterck opened a one-room school for deaf students in Grace Church in Wilmington.

"It started with a 3-year-old little boy that they couldn't figure out how to set up services for, and it went from there," said Dr. Laurie Kettle-Rivera, director of DSD.

A year later, Sterck purchased a house on Van Buren Street in Wilmington to create a school and a private residence.

Sterck, whose career in deaf education began at a school in Philadelphia at the age of 17, was motivated out of concern that deaf and hard-of-hearing students in Delaware didn't have students enough access to education within their own state.

Her concern was a driving force for the evolution of deaf education in Delaware, which has continued to expand in the last 50 years.

"It says that we're having a 50th anniversary, but really deaf education in Delaware goes back almost 100 years," Kettle-Rivera said.

Though Sterck's program was later disbanded, when the Delaware State Board of Education constructed a building for deaf students next to Kirk Middle School in 1968, it was named in honor of Sterck.

In 1973, Dr. Roy Holcomb was hired as the director and introduced the "total communication" philosophy, which advocates for the use of sign language when instructing deaf students. Up until that point, it had been done through oral instruction. In 1993, Director Edward Bosso introduced the bilingual, bicultural philosophy, which has students is to increase the local camaximize their potential in American Sign Language and English.

That shift really helps students find pride and confidence in both languages and cultures," Kettle-Rivera said. In 1995, the name officially

changed to Delaware School



A Delaware School for the Deaf student watches a projector to learn lipreading in this photo taken in 1969 during the school's first year in operation.

for the Deaf. Sterck's name remains as the name of the theater at the school's new building, which opened in 2011 just down the road from the original school and features mindful architecture and design for those with hearing loss.

Beyond the physical building, DSD's statewide programs include services for around 80 deaf-blind students, consultations and additional support for districts and families, a home-visit program for children from birth to age 5 with hearing loss, preschool classes at DSD and parent-infant programming.

"We have teams that will go out and work with school staff in districts and charters to help them. Our goal pacity around the student to create child change," Kettle-Rivera said. "We serve children wherever they are, regardless of educational placement. We are here to support and serve any child with a varying hearing loss in the state, one to 21.

Kettle-Rivera explained that the school has a residential program, opportunities for students to take classes at the nearby Christina School District high schools and intense transition programming to make sure students are prepared for higher education or career placement.

The residential program allows for students to live on campus with their peers in age and gender appropriate units. Each has a resident advisor, who works with the students on interpersonal and social skills, problem solving, communication and independent living skills.

"DSD is really fun, and I've learned a lot of things in the dorms," Enrique Martinez-Sandoval, an eighth-grade student from Georgetown who lives in the dorms during the week, said through an interpreter.

He noted that students get to go swimming, fishing, to the park or for walks.

"We do a lot of fun activities," he said.

For many of the students,



NEWARK POST PHOTO BY BROOKE SCHULTZ

During Delaware School for the Deaf's 50th anniversary celebration, students performed "The Wizard of Oz" using American Sign Language.



NEWARK POST PHOTO BY BROOKE SCHULTZ

During Delaware School for the Deaf's 50th anniversary celebration, students performed "The Wizard of Oz" using American Sign Language.

the school has offered them fun of him. But at DSD, he a way to connect with their peers and learn in a supportive environment.

Devante Serfass, a ninthgrader, said that at his previous school, there was a lot he couldn't learn.

"I wasn't a social person when I was there and I wasn't able to learn that much, but I can here," Serfass said through an interpreter. "It's easier for me to learn here and I had better communication and I have a higher chance of graduating.'

Äidan Walls, a seventhgrade student who starred as the lion in DSD's production of the Wizard of Oz, said it was a little scary to be in the play because he just started at DSD a month ago, but he is more confident now.

He noted that at his old school, a lot of people made

has made a lot of friends and has gotten involved in the school.

"I like my friends here," he said. "They're the best friends I've had."

Kelly Graham, who graduated from DSD in 1991 and now works there, said the school offers many opportunities to its students.

"I decided to come back to teach us because I really love deaf children. I've had a lot of experience around deaf people, obviously, and I love the exposure they can get here," Graham said through an interpreter. "I really love it."

Ås a teacher, she said the highlights are vast, but she pointed to growth as a top factor.

"It's really inspiring to see the steps that they've made, and all their improvements, throughout the year," she said.

She noted one student who arrived without any language skills now manages a flower shop in Wilmington.

"She's just doing amazing," she said. "Every child here thrives and does amazing things."

Kettle-Rivera said that she recently spoke to the Delaware House of Representatives in recognition of the 50th anniversary.

"I talked a little bit about 'Here's what we're doing today,' but we're constantly focusing on the future and our strategic plan, what are we doing next, and where we're going to be in 20 years," she said. "We have to keep growing and expanding because the population keeps growing and expanding.



She noted the strength of the program and the people who make it come together.

"We all really support each other and collaborate together," she said. "I just love coming here and I'm really motivated to get to work every day."

Jayanna Henry, a seventhgrader, and Savvy Werner, a first-grader, both said they love everything about the school - except maybe gym class, Werner added.

"It's a good environment for me and it fits my person-ality and needs," Henry said through an interpreter.

Daimier Miller, a sixthgrader, said that he loved "basically everything" after being at DSD for 12 years. Unlike Werner, he did show favoritism to the gym.

"A lot of like good things happen there - like a lot of basketball games, volleyball, pep rallies," he said. "A lot of good things."

Kettle-Rivera also noted that children from other countries come to DSD to learn, and teachers have seen those students flourish.

"We have students every year that come to our school who have moved from other countries who have no language, they have no school experience, they have never stepped foot in a school before, and they're teenagers," she said. "We've had several students who just thrive."

Newark veterans honored for police work at VA

POST STAFF REPORT

Two veterans from Newark have been recognized as national police officers of the year by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Sgt. Pedro Custodio and Deputy Chief Paul Woodland, officers with the Wilmington VA Medical Center, were honored in Little Rock, Ark., at the VA's 9th Annual Chief of Police Awards Banquet. Custodio and Woodland, along with Detective Chris Peters of Dover, were three of the nine VA officers recognized at the event.

Custodio, a veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps, was recently named VA's 2018 Lead Officer of the Year in Category II. Since joining the Wilmington VA in 2009, Custodio has served as lead firearms instructor, lead armorer, field training officer and active threat instructor. He also trained more than 100 facility employees in the prevention and manage-



WOODLAND **CUSTODIO**

ment of disruptive behavior. "Sgt. Custodio is absolutely the best firearms instructor that I have ever had. His attention to detail and training plans are technically flawless," Chief Jeffrey Steidler, who has led the Wilmington VA Police Service since September 2018, said in a prepared statement.

Woodland, a veteran of the U.S. Navy, is the VA's 2018 Supervisory Officer of the Year in Category II. Woodland spent 11 years in the military as a master at arms and started with the VA Police in 2008. Woodland wrote policy on law enforcement response to the mentally ill, launched an addiction recovery initiative called First Light and was chosen for VA's inaugural Chiefs of Police Leadership Development Program. He is an original member of Delaware's Veterans Response Team.

"Deputy Chief Woodland is the consummate professional. I am constantly in awe of his veteran-focused work ethic and out-of-the-box thinking," Steidler said.

Wilmington VA's police department is responsible for protection of life and property at facilities under the VA's jurisdiction. This includes the medical center, community living center, regional benefits office, support structures, grounds and outpatient clinics. The Wilmington VA has 20 officers, two dispatchers and one program support assistant. Currently, 87 percent are veterans.



Sgt. Pedro Custodio and Deputy Chief Paul Woodland, of Newark, and Chris Peters of Dover, were recognized as national police officers of the year by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. The three are officers with the Wilmington VA Medical Center.

UD students raise \$2,300 for new Aetna fire engine



The latest updates on the Main Street reconstruction project:

Work on Main Street Washingbetween ton Street and Chapel Street (left lane closed) and between North College Avenue and The Deer Park Tavern (right lane closed) will continue through June 10.

On or around June 10, the work in both areas will switch sides.

Information provided by DelDOT. Schedule subject to change based on weather. Visit mainstreetimprovements.com for updates.

POST STAFF REPORT ness management students. A fundraiser organized by "Over 100 guests attended this lovely patio event and two University of Delaware students raised more than raised \$2,335 for the capital fund," Sullivan said. "Thanks \$2,300 for Aetna Hose, Hook and Ladder Company earlier

this month. The \$20-per-plate barbecue at the Courtyard by Marriott hotel May 17 was intended to help the fire department replace one of its aging fire engines, said Bill Sullivan, managing director of the hotel.

UD students Stefania Vito and Baylee Ryan organized the event – with assistance from fellow students Jennifer Racca, Justin Lee and Lindsay Hoyt – as part of their "hotel enhancement" project this semester. The hotel on UD's Laird Campus functions as a training ground for hospitality busito all the dedicated firefighters at Aetna."

The fire department is seeking to raise \$750,000 as part of a capital campaign that began last summer. Fire engines have an average life span of 15 years, but Aetna's oldest is 21 years old.

Of the department's \$4.4 million budget, only about 27 percent comes from government sources. A little more than half comes from ambulance billing, and the department relies on donations, fire hall rental fees and other fundraisers for the rest.

To contribute, visit www.aetnahhl.org/donate.



University of Delaware students organized a barbecue fundraiser for Aetna Hose Hook and Ladder Company.

Newark Post earns six awards in regional journalism competition

POST STAFF REPORT

The Newark Post took home six awards in the annual Maryland, Delaware, D.C. Press Association journalism contest, including one Best in Show award.

The awards luncheon on May 10 in Annapolis, Md., honored excellence in journalism by recognizing the winners of the editorial contest, which celebrates print and online work completed in 2018. The contest admitted nearly 2,300 entries from 64 publications among 94 categories.

"Website of General for Excellence" in its division, which is made up of non- division, the article also

with a circulation of 10,000 or less. Newarkpostonline. com is updated daily and serves nearly 60,000 visitors each month.

Reporter Brooke Schultz won first place for public notice reporting, a category that recognizes articles based on public notices, the small legal ads in the back of the newspaper that often provide the first glance at the government's actions. Schultz's article detailed the allegations against three downtown restaurants who The paper won first place faced possible penalties for serving alcohol to minors. Besides winning in its

ors, topping entries across all divisions, including the region's largest newspapers such as the Baltimore Sun and The News Journal.

Schultz won a second place award for an article about the Christina School District implementing ALICE training for activeshooter scenarios.

She was also one of six nominees for Rookie of the Year, an award that honors new journalists in the first 18 months of their career. Editor Josh Shannon won first place in public service reporting for his articles

detailing how, under a little-

known quirk in the city's

to cast 31 votes in the city's capital referendum last June. The resulting public outcry led elected officials to examine ways to change the law. An amendment to Newark's charter provisions regarding referen-dum voting recently passed the state house and is awaiting action in the senate. Shannon also won second

place in public notice reporting for an article about city council giving Acting City Manager Tom Coleman a raise and a \$10,000 bonus.

Scott Serio, a freelance photographer for the Newark Post and its sister paper

daily papers in the region received Best in Show hon- law, one person was able the Cecil Whig, won first place in general news photo for his heart-wrenching image of a Newark woman cleaning her husband's burial marker at the Delaware Veterans Memorial Ceremony on Memorial Day.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

Jim Normandin, president of the Newark Post's parent company, APG Media of Chesapeake, said he was proud of the work done by the company's papers.

"Each and every day we strive to deliver relevant news and information to our readers and online users, as well as offer integrated marketing solutions to our advertisers and commu-

nity leaders, but it's seldom we're uniquely recognized for this excellence from our peers, so we are mighty proud of all our associates, Normandin said.

Post Stumper solved



TRAIL From Page 1

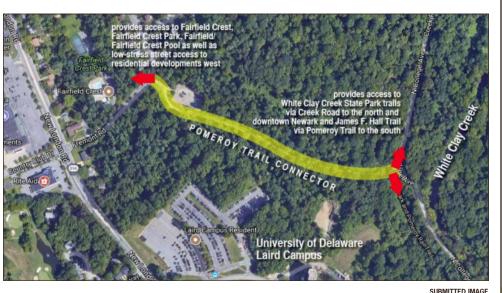
Crest through a wooded area to the Pomeroy Trail near Creek Road. From there, cyclists and pedestrians can head north into White Clay Creek State Park or head south to downtown. The Pomeroy Trail eventually connects to the Hall Trail, which heads into Devon in one direction and the Delaware Technology Park in the other direction.

"We're very happy to get this underway," Filasky said. "This will be a good connector between the northwest areas and into ity for those folks to use town."

The trail is currently a combination of grass and gravel and is used as an access road for city workers to reach utility connections. However, it has long been used as a shortcut by pedestrians and mountain bikers, Filasky said.

trail have been planned Fairfield Crest, noted that for years after requests from residents of Fairfield Crest and BikeNewark.

Workers will pave the trail and add lighting, which Filasky said will make it safer and more accessible. He noted there are more than 500 houses and apartments within a half-mile of the Fremont the residents," Lawhorn Road trailhead.



This map shows the route of the trail that will be paved.

"This will bring the abilthe trail as a very lowstress way to get to Main Street and into the city,' Filasky said.

land owned by the University of Delaware, but the city reached an agreement with UD for an easement for the trail.

Councilman Improvements to the Lawhorn, who represents the trail also will make it easier for students and residents in other areas to walk or bike to Fairfield Shopping Center, which is home to the Wooden Wheels bike shop and the recently opened Food Lion supermarket.

"It's heavily desired by said.

The trail is located on

Jason

NEWARK POST PHOTO BY JOSH SHANNON The city is planning to pave this grass-and-gravel path that connects Fairfield Crest with the Pomeroy Trail.

LAW From Page 1

around 4:30 p.m. when police received a complaint for noise on Benny Street, according to Lt. Andrew Rubin, a spokesman for the an unruly gathering and Newark Police Department. also charged with a noise

Officers arrived to find more than 300 people partying in the backyard. Loud music was playing, beer cans and other litter filled the yard, some partygoers were trespassing on a neighbor's property, and other guests were spilling out into the street, blocking traffic, Rubin said.

The two people responsible for the party, who police did not publicly iden- a new offense called untify, were cited for an unruly gathering and also charged with a noise violation, disorderly premise and having a gathering of more than 150 people without a permit.

Eleven minutes later, police were dispatched to Kershaw Street, where neighbors had also complained of derly premises, people on citation for any gathering of

noise.

Officers found approximately 200 partygoers, loud music, people yelling and screaming, litter all over the yard and two people urinating in the backyard, Rubin said.

One person was cited for violation, disorderly prem-ise and having a gathering of more than 150 people without a permit.

City council passed the unruly gathering law in March in response to Old Newark residents' complaints about the large gatherings in their neighborhood they've come to refer to as "super parties.'

The ordinance created ruly gathering, which will be triggered when police observe three or more nuisance behaviors at a residence where four or more people have gathered. Those offenses include minors consuming alcohol, noise, disor- empowers police to issue a

the roof, more than 150 four or more people. people present without permit, obstruction of public rights-of-way, public drunkenness, fights, criminal mischief, public urination, littering, drug use, trespassing on neighboring property and any other conduct that "threatens the health, safety, good and quiet order of

the city." The penalty for a first offense will be a \$500 fine and 20 hours of community service, a second offense will be \$1,000 and 32 hours, a third offense will be \$1,500 and 48 hours, and a fourth offense will be \$2,000 and 60 hours.

The passage of the law prompted an immediate backlash from students, thousands of whom signed a petition claiming the crackdown on partying will "ruin our school." Many repeated the false claim – fueled by misleading social media posts and sensationalized headlines – that the law

"This didn't prohibit conduct that wasn't already prohibited," Rubin noted. 'It just added another penalty when you have multiple behaviors at once."

Rubin said it's too soon to tell if the law has had a deterrent effect, but Amy Roe, an Old Newark resident who led the push for the ordinance, said she and her neighbors noticed a "huge and immediate" effect.

"There's been a big decrease in problem parties. Everybody's talking about it," Roe said. "It's been a real blessing.'

Supporters of the law have said the mandatory community service requirement is an important part of the law because students often pool their money or collect money at the door of a party in order to pay fines.

Roe predicted that when students find out the violators are sentenced to community service, the deterrent effect will grow. will

"Hopefully word spread," Roe said.

LOCAL NEWS





On the second floor of Cal Tort. you can eat, relax, or even host a meeting with our free wifi.



Officers, community rally behind injured Newark cop

By JOSH SHANNON jshannon@chespub.com

When a volunteer sang the national anthem prior to the start of the Cops and Joggers 5K last week, Cpl. Patrick Craig rose from his wheelchair and put his hand over his heart as fellow officers and community members stood behind him – both literally and figuratively.

More than 400 people at-tended the May 23 event to show support for Craig and raise money to help him and his family while he recovers from a serious injury he suffered while scuffling with a suspect earlier this year.

"It's very humbling," Craig said as he sat near the finish line, thanking each runner as they crossed. "There are peo-ple here who I don't even know. That means a lot to me. I'm honored by what everybody's doing.²

The race at Olan Thomas Park was originally planned as a fundraiser for the Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 4's catastrophe fund, which is used to assist officers who have experienced adverse life events both on and offduty. It took on even more importance after Craig was injured.

In total, the event raised about \$13,000 for Craig and his family directly and another \$3,000 for the FOP fund.

Nearly every one of the Newark Police Department's 71 officers ran in the race, donated or volunteered at the event, organizer Master Cpl. William Smith said. The event also drew strong support from other nearby police departments as well as the general public.

"We're all just one big family," Smith said. "When there's trouble, we all lend their "new normal." a hand.'

Adjusting to a 'new normal'

Craig, 51, was injured March 23 while struggling with a disorderly conduct suspect in the holding cell job at NPD, where he is area in the basement of the police station. The sus- erator and has done stints pect allegedly used his leg to trip Craig, who struck his head on a metal counter and then fell to the con- ist. crete floor.

Craig finished his shift, not realizing the extent the other," he said. "Two of his injuries. However, months ago, I had a stroke while at home several and here I am walking days later, he began suf- now. So I don't know."



With several of his fellow cops standing behind him - literally and figuratively - Cpl. Patrick Craig rises for the national anthem before a 5K to raise money for him and his family. Craig was seriously injured while scuffling with a suspect earlier this year.

fering medical problems. Doctors told him he had suffered a stroke caused by damage his brain sustained in the fall.

He was admitted to the hospital with what police later described as life threatening injuries and spent weeks in a rehabilitation center.

Craig still struggles with cognition issues and has had to relearn many tasks. He's trying to get used to what his wife, Patti, calls

"That's the hardest thing," he said. "In my mind, I'm still the traffic cop. I'm still that same guy in my brain. But my body is not.'

He isn't sure if he will be able to return to his a certified motorcycle opas a firearms instructor, a SWAT team member and a collision reconstruction-

"Nobody can give me a definite answer one way or

Craig recalled that he had a feeling something was wrong after his fall and wishes he'd gotten it checked out before his condition worsened. He agreed to speak about his medical issues with the hope that others can learn

from his mistake. "I knew something was wrong, and I kept pushing through," he said. "If I could tell somebody, if it doesn't feel right, go get checked out. Don't put it off. You address it right away."

'The support was unwavering'

From the moment Craig hospitalized, was the brotherhood of the local law enforcement community was there to support him and his family.

"The support was unwavering," Patti Craig said. "Immediately, everybody was there to help surround us, pick us up, do what needs to be done."

Fellow cops, as well as family members, provided meals, visited and took care of other needs. Patti singled out Lt. Scott Rieger.

"Scott Rieger is a phenomenal person," she said. "Anything we needed, I reached out to Scott, and he made it happen.'

She also thanked those who attended the fundraiser.

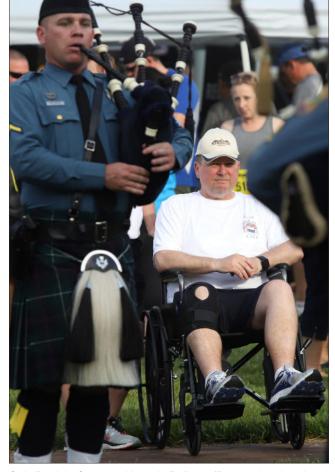
"Not only are you sup-porting Pat and I, but you're supporting all these police officers here, not just in Delaware but nationwide," she said. "Community support is so important to these guys wearing the uniform. We need it more now than ever."

Cpl. Craig said he hopes his injury raises aware-ness of the FOP's catastrophe fund and the need to support other officers going through rough times.

"Obviously, nobody wants to go through this," he said. "But if something this bad can be used for good, that's great.'

Chief Paul Tiernan, too, was grateful for the support Craig has received.

"I think it says a lot about Pat. He's well-respected and well-liked," Tiernan said. "It's heartwarming. They're always there for each other in times of need."



Cpl. Patrick Craig, a Newark Police officer seriously injured while scuffling with a suspect, watches as the Delaware State Police Pipes and Drums Unit performs.