

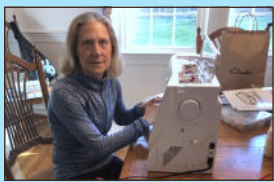
Newark Post

APRIL 17, 2020

GREATER NEWARK'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER SINCE 1910

FREE

COMMUNITY



How you can help

See a list of organizations that need assistance during pandemic
Pg. 3

WILDLIFE



Officer saves baby fox

Animal was stuck in soccer goal
Pg. 4

BUSINESS



'Virtual cinema'

Theater tries to stay afloat with watch-at-home movies
Pg. 7

POLICE

3 hurt in robbery

Masked men with gun invaded New London Avenue home
Pg. 4



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Health officials held an event outside Newark United Methodist Church last week to provide health screenings for homeless people and to connect them with housing and other resources.

'Everyone has really come together'

Clifton gives update on Newark's coronavirus response

By JOSH SHANNON
jshannon@chespub.com

Mayor Jerry Clifton last week thanked Newark residents for taking coronavirus restrictions seriously and expressed optimism that the shutdown, while painful, is starting to pay off.

"Newarkers ought to be really commended for really taking this seriously. I think Newarkers get it, we understand it and we're doing our level best to stop the spread of coronavirus," Clifton said. "Each and every one of you ought to be commended for staying home and limiting travel and limiting contact."

Clifton's comments came during a 24-minute address that was broadcast via an online live stream April 9. Speaking from an empty council chambers on the one-year anniversary of being elected mayor, he updated residents about the city's response to the pandemic and encouraged people to continue taking precautions.

Newark City Council took action earlier than the state government, passing an unprecedented emergency ordinance March 16 in response to concerns about large groups of students

See **TOGETHER**
Page 8



NEWARK POST PHOTO BY JOSH SHANNON

This sign at the corner of Haines Street and Delaware Avenue was originally installed to advertise a new parking lot the city leased to increase the supply of parking downtown. Now, with many businesses closed and the state under stay-at-home orders, the lot sits empty and the sign has been repurposed for a more timely message.

Difficult decisions ahead for Christina

District planning referendum in midst of pandemic

By JOSH SHANNON
jshannon@chespub.com

Coming off of a failed referendum last year and facing a budget deficit of more than \$10 million, Christina School District officials have long had June 9 circled on their calendars as the day for a new referendum that will decide whether large budget cuts are necessary.

Officials acknowledge that convincing voters to approve a tax hike is never easy – and that was before a global pandemic sent the economy into free

See **CHRISTINA**
Page 11

Main St. project nears completion

By JOSH SHANNON
jshannon@chespub.com

The lengthy Main Street construction project will likely wrap up within six weeks, a bit sooner than once predicted, officials said.

The quicker completion is a small silver lining of the coronavirus shutdown, which has allowed crews to pick up the pace while many businesses are closed.

See **MAIN ST**
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Delaware surpasses 2,000 coronavirus cases

Cases, hospitalizations fall short of projections

By **JOSH SHANNON**
jshannon@chespub.com

Delaware surpassed 2,000 confirmed cases of COVID-19 on Wednesday, when officials announced 88 new cases.

That marks the smallest one-day increase since April 5.

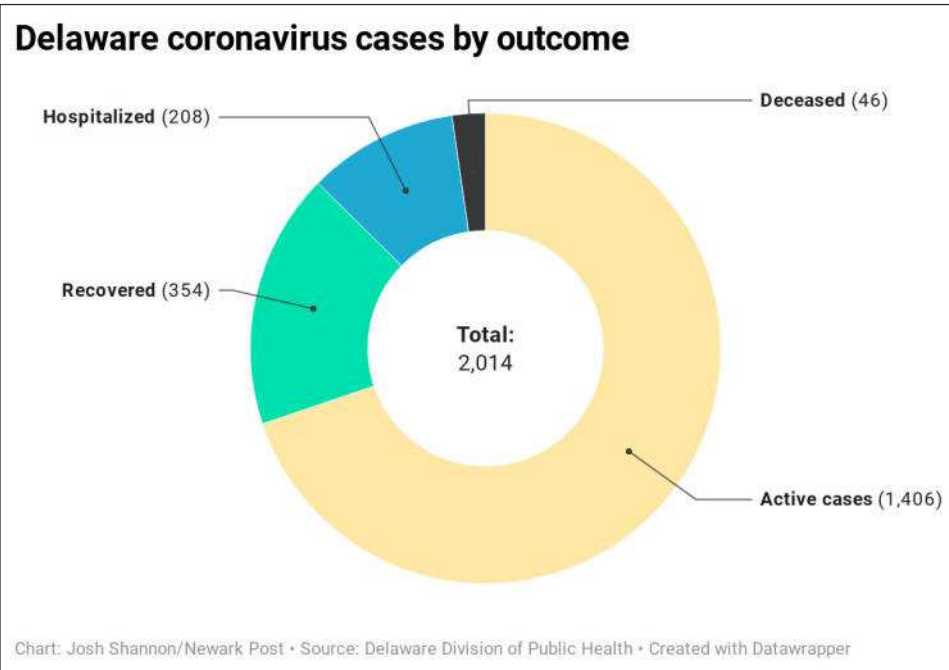
While cases continue to rise, both the number of cases and the number of hospitalizations have fallen short of projections released by Gov. John Carney last week. At the time, Carney said modeling predicted that by April 14, the state would have more than 2,800 cases and 550 hospitalizations.

Instead, those numbers stand at 2,014 cases and 208 hospitalizations.

“That’s a very good thing. ... We’re happy that that’s tracking in a way that is manageable,” said Carney, who noted that the number of cases resulting in hospitalization is less than 12 percent. Officials had previously predicted a hospitalization rate of up to 20 percent.

Meanwhile, the state’s death toll rose to 46 on Wednesday with the announcement of three additional deaths. The new deaths included a 46-year-old man from New Castle County, a 53-year-old woman from Kent County and an 83-year-old woman who lived in a Sussex County nursing home.

Overall, the deceased have ranged in age from 33 to 96, and 28 of the deaths were con-



nected to nursing homes. Little Sisters of the Poor near Newark remains the hardest-hit facility in the state. As of Wednesday, 11 residents of the Salem Church Road nursing home have died from COVID-19. Of the confirmed cases in Delaware, 974 are in New Castle County, 345 are in Kent County, and 678 are in Sussex County. There are also 17 cases for which the county of residence is unknown.

According to officials, 45 are critically ill. The patients range in age from 1 to 97. In another piece of good news, the state continues to see an increase in the number of recovered patients, with the total recoveries now at 354. More than 11,000 people have tested negative. In a joint press conference Monday afternoon, the governors of Delaware, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, New York, Connecticut and Rhode Island announced plans to form

a task force to look at how to begin reopening the states’ economies once the pandemic subsides.

The coordinating group – comprised of one health expert, one economic development expert and the respective chief of staff from each state – will work together to develop a fully integrated regional framework to gradually lift the states’ stay-at-home orders while minimizing the risk of increased spread of the virus.

The council will create this framework using every tool available to accomplish the goal of easing social isolation without triggering renewed spread – including testing, contact tracing, treatment and social distancing – and will rely on the best available scientific, statistical, social and economic information to manage and evaluate those tools.

“We need a consistent approach for moving our states out of this crisis, when that day comes,” Carney said. I’m grateful for the partnership of my fellow governors in the region. They are all working around-the-clock to prevent surges in COVID-19 cases, protect hospital capacity for the most critically-ill patients, and save lives. We’ll get through this by working together.”

As we continue to cover the coronavirus outbreak at Little Sisters of the Poor and elsewhere, the Newark Post would like to speak to people who have been affected by the crisis. If you or a family member reside at Little Sisters of the Poor or are otherwise affected by COVID-19 and would like to share your story, please contact reporter Josh Shannon at jshannon@chespub.com or 443-907-8437.

Little Sisters receive \$40K grant to fight virus outbreak

By **JOSH SHANNON**
jshannon@chespub.com

The Little Sisters of the Poor Jeanne Jugan Residence has received a \$40,000 grant to help in its battle against a coronavirus outbreak.

The Salem Church Road nursing home will use the grant from the Delaware COVID-19 Strategic Response Fund to pay for personal protective equipment, cleaning and additional staff to control the virus and care for residents.

The facility, which serves 66 low-income seniors, has been the hardest-hit nursing home in Delaware. Eleven residents there have died due to complications from COVID-19.

Little Sisters of the Poor is one of 24 nonprofits statewide that have received a combined \$700,000 from the Delaware CO-

VID-19 Strategic Response Fund. The fund is managed by the Delaware Community Foundation. In less than a month, the fund has raised \$2.3 million, from the Longwood Foundation, several large businesses and many individual donors, with another \$1.1 million pledged.

“As the pandemic continues, the needs are growing and evolving,” DCF President and CEO Stuart Comstock-Gay said. “We are calling on the community to help local nonprofit organizations get food, shelter, medical care and other essential services directly to the people who need it most. We also must support our workforce, arts community and other sectors to restore our quality of life post-COVID-19.”

The Longwood Foundation, which previously gave \$1 million, has announced plans to contribute another \$500,000,

contingent upon the DCF raising a matching \$500,000 from the community.

DCF plans to award more grants each week as long as funding is available and there are still needs in the community.

Grants will initially focus on urgent needs related to COVID-19, then expand over time to more structural and long-term needs. Target applicants are nonprofit organizations with deep roots in the community and a strong track record of serving people who are immediately and disproportionately suffering from the crisis.

Recipients are selected through a rigorous process that involves a team of more than 50 community leaders representing all three counties and a range of areas of expertise.

To donate or apply for a grant, visit delcf.org/covid19-fund.



NEWARK POST PHOTO BY JOSH SHANNON

The Little Sisters of the Poor Jeanne Jugan Residence on Salem Church Road is home to one of the state’s worst coronavirus outbreaks.

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How to help fellow Newarkers during the coronavirus crisis

By **JOSH SHANNON**
jshannon@chespub.com

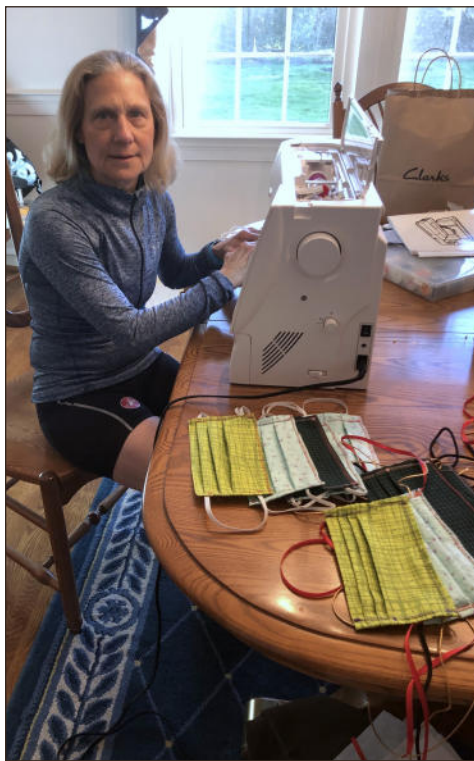
As the coronavirus pandemic continues to affect Delawareans' health and financial stability, a number of organizations are stepping up to help. Below are some of the ways residents can pitch in to offer assistance. Those in need of assistance should dial 2-1-1 to be connected with the appropriate resources.

Newark Area Welfare Committee: Nearly a century old, the all-volunteer group helps Newarkers in need with food, utility bills, rent, prescription medicines and other necessities of life. As the coronavirus crisis pandemic continues, NAWC is anticipating an increase in need, particularly for rent assistance. To donate, visit www.newarkareawelfare.org or mail a check to NAWC, PO Box 951, Newark, DE 19715-0951.

COVID-19 Rapid Response Fund: Administered by the United Way of Delaware, the fund will address immediate needs resulting from COVID-19. Visit uwde.org to donate.

Little Sisters of the Poor: The nursing home on Salem Church Road has been the hardest-hit facility in the state, and 11 residents have already died from COVID-19. The nursing home is asking the public for donations of medical gloves, face shields, surgical masks with shields, N-95 masks, disposable gowns for staff, pulse oximeters, paper trays, take-out containers with flip lids (preferably paper or cardboard, not styrofoam), dinner-size paper napkins and heavy-duty plastic utensils. Monetary donations can be made at littlesistersofthehoodelaware.org/donations or mailed to Little Sisters of the Poor, 185 Salem Church Road, Newark, Delaware 19713.

Newark Empowerment Center: Run by Friendship House and located at Newark United Methodist Church, the empowerment center helps Newark's homeless year-round and always welcomes



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Marguerite Diehl, the school nurse at McVey Elementary, sews face masks.

donations. To donate, visit donatenow.networkforgood.org/friendshiphouse.

Blood Bank of Delmarva: With many schools and other organizations canceling blood drives, The Blood Bank of Delmarva is issuing an urgent call for donors in order to maintain its supply of blood during the coronavirus pandemic. The blood bank is located at 100 Hygeia Dr. near Newark. Donors can schedule appointments by calling 1-888-825-6638 or visiting www.delmarvablood.org/coronavirus. The organization is also looking for COVID-19 survivors to donate plasma to help researchers find a treatment for the virus.

Food Bank of Delaware: The organization, which each year distributes millions of meals to hungry Delawareans, needs support during the pandemic – including monetary donations and volunteers to help pack emergency food boxes. Donors can also drop off food donations at its warehouse located at 222 Lake Drive in Pencader Corporate Center. The most-needed items include canned fruits, canned vegetables, peanut butter, pasta and jarred sauce, canned meats (tuna fish or chicken), rice, hot and cold cereal, healthy snacks like granola bars and raisins and 100 percent fruit and vegetable juice. For more information, visit www.fbd.org or call 302-292-1305.

ChristianaCare Caregivers Relief Fund: Donations will help ChristianaCare health care workers manage the pressing priorities of their own families while they work around the clock to serve, protect and heal their neighbors. To donate, visit giving.christianacare.org/2020caregiverrelief. For more information, please contact the development office at 302-327-3305 or developmentoffice@christianacare.org.

Delaware COVID-19 Strategic Response Fund: Administered by the Delaware Community Foundation, the fund gives grants to local nonprofits that are providing services to people affected by the pandemic. Visit delcf.org/covid19-fund to contribute.

Food First Delaware: Founded by Javier Acuna, the owner of Santa Fe Mexican Grill, Pachamama Rotisserie Chicken and Mi Ranchito Mexican Food Mart, the project allows people to purchase meals and grocery baskets for hospital workers, first responders and people in need. Those interested in donating can visit www.foodfirstde.com and choose between purchasing a meal (\$15) a family-size meal for four (\$48), a bag of groceries (\$28) or a boxed breakfast/lunch

for 12 to 15 people (\$153).

Adopt-A-Unit @ ChristianaCare: Home Grown Café is raising money to deliver free meals to ChristianaCare health care workers – feeding one unit at a time. Units are comprised of 20 to 70 employees, working four different daily shifts, ranging from testing facilities to ICU. Once meal donations for a single unit are fulfilled, the restaurant will make and deliver the orders. To donate, visit <https://www.gofundme.com/f/adoptaunit-christiana-care>.

Meals for health care workers: Café Gelato is donating a free meal to health care workers for every take-out or delivery meal customers order. Visit caffegelato.net to order.

Gift card donations: The Newark Area Welfare Committee is collecting gift cards to local restaurants – a way to help both people in need as well as businesses struggling to stay afloat during the shutdown. Purchase gift cards from Newark area restaurants and food providers worth between \$25 and \$50 and write the dollar value of the card in permanent marker either directly on the card or on masking tape attached to the card. Place the cards in an envelope and mail to NAWC, PO Box 951, Newark, DE 19715-0951. Include your name and contact information so the gift can be acknowledged.

Restaurant worker relief fund: The Delaware Restaurant Association has formed the restaurant industry Emergency Action Trust (E.A.T.s) to provide immediate emergency funding to restaurant and bar employees who are out of work due to restaurants being shutdown. The fund will give \$500 grants to workers in need. To donate, visit delawarerestaurant.org/relief.

To have your fundraiser or volunteer opportunity included in future versions of this list, submit details to jshannon@chespub.com or call 443-907-8437.

The Post Stumper

ANSWERS ON PAGE 6

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- 3 Punch
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- 10 Wilder's "— Town"
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- 20 Gloomy guy
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- 32 Dr. Frankenstein's creation
- 33 Gate fastener
- 35 Bankroll
- 36 Ready for action
- 38 Social group
- 39 Frighten
- 42 Nobel Prize subj.
- 43 Scarce
- 44 As soon as
- 45 Last letter in London
- 46 Praise in verse
- 47 Squeak stopper
- 49 Reuben bread

Armed robbers invade Newark home, pistol-whip three residents

By **JOSH SHANNON**
jshannon@chespub.com

Police are searching for four masked men who invaded a Newark home and pistol-whipped and robbed the residents early Monday.

The robbery happened in the unit block of New London Avenue around 12:41 a.m., according to Lt. Andrew Rubin, a spokesperson for the Newark Police Department.

The incident began when one of the residents saw a car parked in a driveway behind their house and went outside to see what was going on.

Inside the car were four masked men, one of whom displayed a gun and forced the resident back into the house. The men demanded the five residents turn over personal property and struck

three of them with the gun before fleeing.

The residents who were struck all suffered minor cuts but declined transportation to the hospital.

The victims were all men between 18 and 22 years old, but Rubin said he did not know if they are University of Delaware students.

The robbers were described only as black men driving a dark sedan.

Rubin said it's not yet clear if the victims were targeted or if the incident was random.

"I don't have any information on that," he said.

Anyone with information about the robbery should contact Det. Taras Gerasimov at 302-366-7100 ext. 3474 or tgerasimov@newark.de.us.

Newark man charged with robbing woman outside Royal Farms

By **JOSH SHANNON**
jshannon@chespub.com

Police have charged a Newark man with robbing a woman outside of a convenience store in Bear.

The incident happened just before 11:30 a.m. April 10 at the Royal Farms at 1551 Pulaski Highway, according to Senior Cpl. Heather Pepper, a spokeswoman for Delaware State Police.

The 71-year-old victim was sitting in her vehicle when Knowledge Thomas, 20, approached and asked the woman to roll down her window. When she refused, Thomas opened the unlocked passenger-side door and grabbed the woman's purse, Pepper said.



THOMAS

Thomas and the woman struggled over the purse, causing an injury to the woman's arm, and Thomas ran away with the purse, according to Pepper. Around 10 a.m. the following day, a trooper spotted Thomas walking out of the nearby Sparrow Run neighborhood and caught him after a brief foot chase, Pepper said.

Thomas was charged with first-degree robbery and resisting arrest. He was released on \$20,100 unsecured bond.

Officer rescues baby fox trapped in soccer goal

By **JOSH SHANNON**
jshannon@chespub.com

A baby fox has a new lease on life after Newark's animal control officer rescued him from a soccer goal.

Officer Donna Vickers was called to the backyard of a home in the 700 block of Bent Lane in Nottingham Green on April 3, according to Newark Police Department officials.

Vickers found the baby fox – called a kit – tangled in the soccer goal's netting, which was tightly wrapped around the fox's neck and back leg. Vickers was able to cut the fox out of the net and took him to a wildlife rehabilitation facility.

Once he is old enough, the fox will be released back into the wild,

officials said.

Newark has long handled animal control issues differently than many other areas of the state, choosing to employ a full-time animal control officer as part of the police department. The officer responds to a variety of animal related complaints – including animal bites, animal abuse, lost/found pets, aggressive animal behavior and noise complaints – and is state-certified to trap wildlife.

In her 30 years with the city of Newark, Vickers has rescued or captured countless animals, including some more unusual encounters, like wrangling an escaped emu, capturing a 6-foot python and rounding up a runaway pig, she recalled in a 2015 interview.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Newark's animal control officer rescued this baby fox, which was found trapped in a soccer goal in a Nottingham Green backyard.

"A lot of these animals need help, and I'm just glad I can give them the help they need," she said.

Man charged with check fraud, violating coronavirus restrictions

By **JOSH SHANNON**
jshannon@chespub.com

A Philadelphia man who allegedly deposited fraudulent checks at a Newark bank is facing charges for that offense – as well as for traveling to Delaware in violation of the governor's emergency order.

The incident happened at 3:18 p.m. April 10 at the TD Bank on Delaware Avenue, according to Lt. Andrew Rubin, a spokesman for the Newark Police Department.

Khalil Davis, 22, attempted to deposit a fraudulent check into two separate accounts in a different person's name, Rubin said.

Bank officials later realized that Davis, who had signed a fake name to the check, had successfully de-



DAVIS

posited fraudulent checks there on March 11 and March 27.

Police arrested Davis on fraud charges and soon discovered Davis was also violating restrictions aimed at curbing the spread of the coronavirus. "Once Davis' true identity was determined, it was confirmed that he was a Pennsylvania resident and traveled to Delaware to engage in this fraudulent transaction," Rubin said. "This act of traveling to Delaware for a non-permitted purpose violates the current state of emer-

gency order in Delaware."

Under an emergency declaration by Gov. John Carney, all visitors from out-of-state must self-quarantine for 14 days. Under the civil defense provisions of Delaware code, violators of Carney's order can be fined up to \$500 or imprisoned for up to six months.

Davis was charged with three counts of identity theft, three counts of second-degree forgery, attempted theft over \$1,500 and failure to obey an emergency order. He was released on his own recognizance.

Anyone with information about this incident, or similar incidents, is asked to contact Det. Alex Whitt at 302-366-7100, ext. 3483, or awhitt@newark.de.us.

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NEWARK POST FILE PHOTO

"The members of our lodge are aware of the need in our community and felt that this was a small way to help address some of those needs," said Cpl. William Anderson, president of F.O.P. Lodge #4.

Police union, ACME offering gift cards to Newarkers in need

By JOSH SHANNON

jshannon@chespub.com

The union that represents Newark Police Department officers is teaming up with ACME to provide grocery gift cards to dozens of Newarkers in need during the coronavirus crisis.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the Newark community more than anyone could have imagined," the union wrote in a letter to residents. "F.O.P. Lodge #4 members are part of the community, and whether we are wearing our uniform or not, we are here to help."

The union is contributing just over \$2,000 from its existing charity fund, and Acme agreed to match the contribution. The combined \$4,100 will be enough to provide \$50 ACME gift cards to 82 Newark families, F.O.P. President

Cpl. William Anderson said.

"The members of our lodge are aware of the need in our community and felt that this was a small way to help address some of those needs," Anderson said.

He invited residents who need assistance to email newarkfop4community@gmail.com. Applicants should provide their name and address and briefly explain how their lives have been affected due to the pandemic. The FOP will then send gift cards to the chosen recipients.

Eligibility is limited to city of Newark residents, and gift cards are limited to one per household.

"We have seen the strength and resiliency of our Newark community already," the union wrote. "F.O.P. Lodge #4 has no doubt that we will all get through this together and come out a stronger Newark."

Christina slightly extends school year, shortens spring break

By JOSH SHANNON

jshannon@chespub.com

The Christina School District will slightly extend the school year and reduce the duration of spring break in order to account for the days lost due to the coronavirus outbreak.

Last week, the school board approved moving the last day of school for traditional schools from June 15 to June 18. [Some of the district's schools in Wilmington are on an extended-year schedule and follow a different calendar.]

Students had off Good Friday and the Monday after Easter but attended online classes for the rest of the week, rather than having

the entire week off as spring break. Officials also canceled a June 10 in-service day.

Once the coronavirus outbreak hit Delaware, schools were closed for three weeks, starting March 16. Students began taking classes online last week.

Under state law, students must attend class for 1,060 hours each year. Because the district already built extra hours into the calendar, adding the eight days means the district is still above the minimum requirement, Director of Operations Ed Mayfield said.

The district is assuming that students will resume in-person classes May 18, the first day allowed under the current order from Gov.



NEWARK POST FILE PHOTO BY BROOKE SCHULTZ

The Christina School District will slightly extend the school year and reduce the duration of spring break in order to account for the days lost due to the coronavirus outbreak.

John Carney. If that changes, more calendar alternatives may be necessary, Superintendent Richard Gregg said.

So far, high school graduations are still scheduled for June 1 (Christiana), June 2 (Newark) and June 3 (Glasgow).

DIAA making plans for abbreviated spring sports season

By JOSH SHANNON

jshannon@chespub.com

The Delaware Interscholastic Athletic Association is making plans for an abbreviated spring sports schedule – one that would begin in late May and extend beyond the end of the school year.

However, officials cautioned that the plan is contingent on Gov. John Carney lifting the state of emergency and allowing students to return to class on May 18.

Carney's current order mandates schools stay closed through May 15, though it's possible he could extend that if conditions warrant. In Penn-

sylvania, Gov. Tom Wolf announced Thursday he was keeping schools closed for the rest of the academic year.

If Delaware schools reopen as planned, spring sports teams will start practicing May 18. Schools will then have a four-week period to schedule games, starting May 26 and ending June 20 – two days after the end of the school year in the Christina School District.

The DIAA's typical rules for the maximum number of games per week will still apply.

"Our student-athletes can now truly prepare to be ready to return to action on May 18," DIAA Execu-

tive Director Donna Polk said in a prepared statement. "The creative ways teams have bonded together to train and work on their individual skills during the suspension period will definitely pay off once you return together as a team. We look forward to seeing all on the field, court, track and course. Until that day approaches, focus academically, be safe, be healthy and continue to practice social distancing. We are in this together."

The DIAA will continue to monitor the coronavirus situation and make adjustments to the plan as needed. Decisions about spring sports championships will be made next month.

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Newark electric dept. recognized as Reliable Public Power Provider

POST STAFF REPORT

Newark's electric department has been recognized for its performance, earning a Reliable Public Power Provider designation from the American Public Power Association for providing reliable and safe electric service.

"This is a great honor," Electric Director Bhadrash Patel said in a prepared statement. "We take a lot of pride in the work we do to power our community, and it's nice to be recognized as among the 'best of the best' on a national level."

The RP3 designation, which lasts for three years, recognizes public power utilities that demonstrate proficiency in four areas: reliability, safety, workforce development, and system improvement, Newark spokeswoman Jayme Gravell said.

Criteria include sound business practices and a utility-wide commitment to safe and reliable delivery

of electricity. There are approximately 2,000 cities and towns nationwide that use public power, and Newark is one of only 275 to hold the RP3 designation.

"Receiving an RP3 designation is a great honor and demonstrates a utility's commitment to implementing industry best practices in utility operations," Aaron Haderle, Chair of the Association's RP3 Review Panel and Manager of Transmission and Distribution Operations, said in a prepared statement. "RP3 utilities are consistently looking to improve their workforce, system reliability, and safety to serve their communities better."

The City of Newark provides electric to 13,000 meters, supporting commercial and residential customers within city limits. Power is purchased on the wholesale power market and delivered by the city. The electric department's 23 employees are responsible for maintaining 175 miles of electric lines.

Butterflies showcased in Newark High School's online art exhibit

By JOSH SHANNON
jshannon@chespub.com

While most people are cooped up at home due to the coronavirus pandemic, a new project by Newark High School art students provides some springtime beauty to break up the monotony.

Dozens of photographs and drawings – all based on a butterfly theme – are on display as part of a virtual art exhibit organized by the Delaware Museum of Natural History. The students' work was supposed to be displayed in the museum, but with the facility closed, the exhibit was moved online.

According to art teacher Jaime Moore, digital photography students were asked to interpret the concept "butterfly" as a significant change taking place. Students were challenged to be reflective of a time in their lives where great change occurred and such events are captured in the photographs. The messages in these images, some hidden in symbolic representations and some raw, unfiltered have all changed the



SUBMITTED PHOTO

This photo by Newark High student Maudee Devlin is part of an online art exhibit.

lives of these young people forever.

Drawing students created their visions of butterflies in colored pencil and marker on book or music score pages.

The 3-D students incorporated butterflies into sculptures from books or created their visions using alcohol inks on plastic or with found objects, using a Steampunk movement theme. Steampunk is inspired by the 19th century Victorian age and steam-powered machinery and is influenced by science fiction, fantasy and technology.

The digital exhibit can be viewed at www.delmnh.org/portfolio-items/art-of-the-butterfly-newark-high-school-student-exhibit.

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SUBMITTED PHOTO

This drawing by Newark High student Zoe Acord is part of an online art exhibit.



The 2020 Newark Post Winners Announcement tabloid section originally scheduled for Friday, April 25th has been postponed in deference to the many businesses that are currently closed and/or experiencing significant current hardships. We anticipate a time to celebrate the reader's favorites in our community to be right around the corner. Stay tuned and we look forward to sharing the big reveal date soon! We will post the new date in print and at newarkpostonline.com.

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*Additional terms and conditions apply. If your business is approved for the program, that information is provided on the APG Grant Match Acceptance Form for review.



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Theater offers 'virtual cinema' during coronavirus shutdown

By WILLIAM CARROLL
wcarroll@chespub.com

As Delaware residents continue to stay at home to fight the spread of COVID-19, a Newark business has stepped up to provide entertainment to those seeking something to break the monotony.

Main Street Movies 5 in Newark Shopping Center recently unveiled a "virtual cinema" for area residents to use during the stay-at-home period.

Systems Technology Manager Sven Johnson said the theater began the program on April 3 as a way to allow area residents to keep the movie-going experience alive in their own homes.

Johnson said the program also allows the community to support the theater, which closed temporarily on March 18 as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak.

Johnson, who said one of his roles with the theater is to book films, said he reached out to the theater's booking company in California to determine what to do during the shutdown. He said the company suggested following the lead of several other theaters in offering a virtual cinema.

When the program began April 3, there were three participating studios including Magnolia Pictures, Distrib Films U.S. and Film Movement. Since that time, the theater



NEWARK POST FILE PHOTO BY JOSH SHANNON

Main Street Movies 5 in Newark Shopping Center is closed due to the pandemic but is offering a "virtual cinema" program.

has added Bleeker Street and Zeitgeist Films.

"These are smaller film studios, so the movies are more art films and independent films," Johnson said. "By having these smaller studios, we are able to let them have a little more notice."

Johnson said that in exchange, the studios have been generous, allowing for a 50/50 revenue split with

the theater. He said that normally the split is more like 60/40 or even more favorable to the studio and the larger the studio, the higher percentage retained by the studio.

Johnson said the types of films available in the virtual cinema are ones that the theater would generally play on a limited showing, perhaps once a day, along with first-run movies from the larger studios.

"We are doing this more in response to COVID-19," he said. "Once we get the data, and see if people like it, we will decide where the program goes from there."

In the opening week of the virtual cinema the theater had nine available movies, but added to more to that list last week. Just like a regular theater experience, new movies for the virtual cinema will be released

on Friday, Johnson said.

"We want folks to check back with us every Friday for new releases," he said.

In order to access the virtual movies, go to mainstreetmovies5.com and click on the virtual cinema in the middle of the screen. A list of movies will then pop up and from that screen a movie can be selected. Johnson said patrons would need to enter an email address and credit card information and that the movie would be available for viewing for a period of time.

"A lot of these movies can only be seen by going through the studios' websites," Johnson said, adding that each studio's website was a little different as far as how to gain access to the films.

The movies range from \$10 to \$12 each, Johnson said.

Johnson said the virtual cinema experience will last until at least mid-May. He said that based on what he is hearing from the major studios, they are anticipating possibly releasing new movies around mid-late May.

The current stay-at-home order issued by Gov. John Carney remains in effect until May 15 or until the COVID-19 related public health threat is eliminated.

"We just want to do what we can to provide our customers with the opportunity to have something to do during this period," Johnson said.

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Persian Window (detail), 2004. Dale Chihuly (born 1941). Blown glass, installation. Delaware Art Museum, F. V. du Pont Acquisition Fund and contributions, 2005. © Dale Chihuly/Chihuly, Inc.

Delaware's economic loss could exceed 10 percent of budget TOGETHER

By RANDALL CHASE
Associated Press

The coronavirus epidemic could cost Delaware half a billion dollars, or more than 10 percent of next year's proposed budget, Gov. John Carney said Tuesday.

Carney referred to the potential economic loss in responding to a question about federal financial assistance related to President Donald Trump's approval of major disaster declarations for all 50 states.

"For most states and localities, it's can we use the money for lost revenue," Carney said. "We could lose a half a billion dollars in revenue with the economy shutdown. That's \$500 million on a \$4.6 billion budget. That's a lot of money."

The potential loss could become clearer when the panel that sets Delaware's official revenue projections meets next week.

State officials have delayed income tax filing deadlines because of the virus epidemic, and more than 48,000 Delawareans have filed for unemployment benefits in the past three weeks — five times more than the previous monthly record in January 2020.

Hundreds of Delaware businesses, including restaurants, bars, theaters and fitness centers, have been forced to close or severely restrict operations under an emergency declaration by Carney.

Meanwhile, Delaware's



Delaware Gov. John Carney meets with staffers during a tour of the State Health Operations Center on Monday, March 16, to get an update on how Delaware is monitoring and responding to the coronavirus outbreak.

chief justice on Tuesday extended a ban on public access to all state court facilities for another 30 days. Chief Justice Collins J. Seitz Jr. extended the judicial emergency he had declared on March 14 until May 14. The move came after Carney last week extended the state-of-emergency declaration that he had issued March 12.

Officials noted last week that they are now reporting deaths not just of people known to have COVID-19, but also "probable" deaths. Those are fatalities in which a person was exposed to a confirmed case and had symptoms consistent with COVID-19, but was never tested.

More than 215 people were hospitalized as of Tuesday for virus-related reasons. That's less than half the number of hospitalizations that officials had predicted last week. Carney said the projection for hospitalizations by next Monday remains below the surge capacity of Delaware's hospitals.

"That's a very good thing. ... We're happy that that's tracking in a way that is manageable," said Carney, who noted that the number of cases resulting in hospitalization is less than 12 percent. Officials had previously predicted a hospitalization rate of up to 20 percent.

seen having St. Patrick's Day parties at bars and in backyards the previous weekend.

Under the law, which is active for up to 60 days, the Newark Police Department is empowered to break up gatherings of more than 10 people and disperse crowds of more than 10 people along streets and sidewalks.

Gov. John Carney imposed increasingly strict restrictions but didn't match Newark's gathering ban statewide until April 2.

Delaware's coronavirus outbreak started here in Newark with seven cases tied to the University of Delaware, and the city remains among the worst-hit areas in the state.

"We on council saw the handwriting on the wall on the 16th of March," Clifton said. "They took action to limit gatherings of 10 or more in the city of Newark. I think that has been instrumental in slowing the extrapolation of the virus citywide."

The city has already taken a hit to its budget, both in direct costs and lost revenue. Clifton noted that Delaware is expected to receive \$1.5 billion from the federal stimulus bill, part of which will trickle down to municipalities.

Right now, the city will only be reimbursed for expenses directly tied to the pandemic, but Clifton said he is lobbying Sen. Chris Coons to push for broader compensation.

"We've requested they look at this and let especially the smaller towns use it for replacing the revenue we have lost and let us maybe give some other assistance to at-risk populations," Clifton said.

Addressing concerns for Newark's homeless population, he noted that the city partnered with the Newark Empowerment Center, state health officials and Lt. Gov. Bethany Hall-Long to hold an event at Newark United Methodist Church. Officials provided health screenings and food to two-dozen people, signed them up for social services and, when possible, connected them with temporary housing.

"A lot of our neighbors got a lot of help they need," Clifton said.

The city has suspended late fees and shut-offs for utility customers, he added.

Clifton said that with less traffic and many businesses shutdown, the Main Street construction project is now moving at "an accelerated pace."

"We're keeping our fingers crossed construction will be complete when the state of emergency is lifted," he said.

Clifton noted that with people cooped up at home, there's a fear that domestic abuse could increase.

"If you suspect something, call 911. Please don't be hesitant to do it. You can save a life by doing it," he said. "Police will respond, and trust me, they'd rather find nothing than investigate a horrific crime."

The city has already canceled its Memorial Day parade and other events, and playgrounds, basketball courts, tennis courts and skate parks are closed. However, the city's parks and trails remain open.

"I strongly encourage you to spend some time outdoors," Clifton said. "Physical activity is good for your mental health, but always remember to exercise social distancing and proper hygiene."

Though many people are preoccupied with the pandemic, Clifton sought to remind people that now is the time to fill out the 2020 Census because an accurate population count is crucial to ensuring Delaware and Newark receive all the federal funding they are entitled to.

"I encourage everyone to help us out and keep the funding streams for the issues that we need to address over the next decade," he said.

With Easter, Passover and Ramadan all occurring this month, Clifton urged Newarkers to resist the temptation to gather with extended family or friends to celebrate the holidays.

"As hard as it — and trust me, I know how hard it is when you want to be with your family, your children and your grandchildren — but we can't give up on staying at home and take that chance."

Clifton said that in the end, it comes down to all residents doing their part to end the spread of the virus.

"We in government are the facilitators to the response, but I'm telling you, each and every one of you are the ones who are going to get us out of this because of everything you're doing," he said. "I look at Newarkers making masks, and Newarkers in faith-based communities who have reached out to me. It's been gratifying. Everyone has really come together."

"Thank you for being part of Team Newark," he added.



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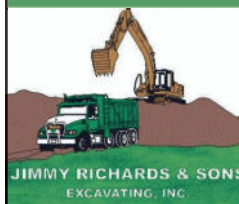
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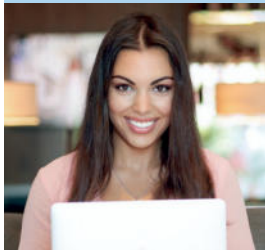
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CHRISTINA

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fall and sent ripples of uncertainty through the country.

Now, district officials and their supporters are facing the unenviable task of explaining to residents the need for a referendum at a time when most people are more focused on their health and job security – not to mention the fact that no one yet knows if it will even be safe for voters to go to the polls by then.

District officials had been planning a months-long public outreach campaign, but that was put on hold as administrators focused their attention on the fallout of the pandemic and transitioning to online learning. Successful referenda in the past have been the result of retail politics – parents talking to other parents at PTA meetings, officials meeting with community groups, and district leaders holding public forums – all things that are nearly impossible now due to social distancing requirements.

“We all know referendums are super-challenging. This one is going to be monumental,” said Mary Schorse, co-leader of the parent-run Friends of Christina School District, which is helping with referendum outreach.

Referendum votes are a fact of life in Delaware, where under state law, school districts cannot raise taxes without holding a referendum to seek approval from voters. Because of inflation, rising labor costs and other increases, school districts typically have to go to referendum every three to five years just to maintain the status quo.

The three-part referendum scheduled for June 9 would increase school taxes as well as allow the district to take on \$10 million in debt to expand Downes Elementary, upgrade the Newark High auditorium and complete other renovation projects. A successful referendum would cover rising costs, restore cuts made after last year’s referendum failed and fund a new English-Language Arts curriculum.

If all three parts are approved, average residents would see their taxes increase approximately \$290 over three years.

If the referendum fails again, the district would once again see massive budget cuts, including the possibility of laying off upward of 200 teachers and/or cutting a wide variety of extracurricular programs like sports and music.

This month, the school board began discussing possible cuts. Because the



NEWARK POST FILE PHOTO BY BROOKE SCHULTZ

Voters cast ballots in April 2019 to decide whether to fund the Christina School District’s operating referendum. After that referendum failed, district officials are planning their next attempt.

district is required to notify teachers by May 15 if their jobs are being cut, officials must make their decisions soon – preparing for the worst while hoping for the best. If the referendum passes, the teachers would be hired back.

“We’re trying to make the best worst decision possible,” board president Meredith Griffin said Tuesday. “None of these things are anything we want to do.”

The district’s suburban schools will bear the brunt of the cuts for the second year in a row, because Christina’s Wilmington schools operate under a separate memorandum of understanding with the state that prohibits staff reductions.

District administrators presented board members with a scenario that eliminated all extracurricular activities, according to board members who referenced the memo several times. However, the document was not made public, and a district spokeswoman said she was not immediately able to provide it to the Newark Post.

Several board members called for striking a balance between staff reductions, eliminating programs and other cost savings.

“I am not at all in favor of wholesale cutting programs,” board member Claire O’Neal said. “To think of large cuts to arts and music and sports, those are district-killers. You’re going to have families who can run the other way running the other way.”

Other board members asked the administration to crunch the numbers on cutting transportation costs and consolidating the district’s three high schools into two.

Consolidation is often raised by crit-

ics of the district, but closing a school is far from the panacea that many people believe it would be. By law, the district would have to split the proceeds from selling a building with the state and can only use its portion for debt reduction or capital expenses, not for operational costs.

Still, board member Fred Polaski said shuttering a building could result in some cost savings, such as utilities.

“I don’t know how much they’re going to be. I’m just thinking of ways to try to save money wherever we can and impact students as little as possible,” Polaski said. “I don’t know what the right answer is; I’m just throwing out ideas.”

Board members are also considering reducing the tax increase sought in an attempt to make it more palatable to voters, but most indicated Tuesday they prefer to keep it as is.

A smaller tax hike would keep the district afloat but would mean many of the cuts made last year would not be restored.

“Our students and our school community deserve for us to ask for what they need,” board member Keeley Powell said. “They don’t have what they need right now.”

The board is planning meetings on April 21 and 28 to further discuss potential cuts and to finalize a list of teachers who would lose their jobs.

In the meantime, O’Neal said the focus needs to be on educating the public about why they should vote yes on the referendum.

“It’s absolutely vital that we as a district get together to do everything we can to pass the referendum so that these cuts that we make don’t have to stay made,” she said.

MAIN ST

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Natalie Barnhart, a representative of the Delaware Department of Transportation’s consultant AECOM, said that’s good news for motorists as well as business owners.

“We’ll be out of their hair soon,” Barnhart said.

Planned for years, the \$11.8 million project began April 1, 2019. At the time, officials estimated it would be completed in June or July 2020.

The project was broken into phases as a way to limit the impact on businesses and keep portions of a lane open while crews work in a specific area. However, with traffic decreased, University of Delaware operating online only and non-essential businesses closed due to the coronavirus, AECOM has expanded its work area, Barnhart said.

Currently, nearly the entire right lane is closed. While one crew finishes up the last major section of roadway reconstruction, another crew is preparing previously completed sections for the final overlay. The prep work includes leveling the roadway and adjusting manholes, gas and water valves and drainage inlets.

The final overlay is the last major step of the project, and involves pouring the nearly 2 inches of asphalt that will make up the permanent road surface. Overlay of the right lane is expected to be done April 23 and 24.

After that, workers will reopen the right lane and begin preparing the left lane for the final overlay. Once that is done, there will some finishing touches left to complete, like striping and crosswalks, but the major work will be over.

“It should be done by the end of May at the latest,” Barnhart said.

She noted that many motorists have questioned why the road remains bumpy. That is a temporary surface, and the final overlay will be smoother, she said.

In a virtual town hall meeting last week, Mayor Jerry Clifton heralded the accelerated pace of the construction.

“We are so grateful to DelDOT, A-Del Construction and the public works department, and a huge thank you to all of you for taking advantage of the opportunity,” Clifton said. “We’re keeping our fingers crossed construction will be complete when the state of emergency is lifted and we get back in to our normal operations.”



NEWARK POST PHOTO BY JOSH SHANNON

Reduced traffic due to the coronavirus shutdown has helped the Main Street construction project move more quickly, with completion expected by the end of May.

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COUNCIL MEETING CANCELLATION NOTICE

There is no April 20, 2020 Council meeting. The next regularly scheduled meeting will be on April 27, 2020.

/rkb

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4/17/2020

CITY OF NEWARK
Newark, DelawareTraffic Committee
Meeting Notice

The Traffic Committee meeting scheduled for Tuesday, April 21, 2020, has been cancelled.

2902436 NP

4/17/2020



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