

THE CENTURION

“The Voice of the Students”



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Forever Tainted - How PFAS Pollutes Some of Buck County's Drinking Water

Christian Grosso
Editor

In 2007, Renee Frugoli of Southampton heard the words that no parent ever wants to hear — “Your child has cancer.”

And it wasn't just any cancer. Frugoli told us that her 3-year-old daughter Felicia was diagnosed with stage 5 Wilms Tumor, a rare kidney cancer primarily found in children. Thankfully, Felicia won her battle against the aggressive tumor the following year.

In 2013, Frugoli attended a meeting at a local school for her friend who couldn't make it. That friend also had a daughter who unfortunately died from bone cancer. The meeting was about water pollution in the area from polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), a chemical that has polluted wells throughout the nation. The chemical is commonly found in pesticides, personal care products, fire-resistant products and more.

At the meeting, they mentioned that PFAS were linked to kidney cancer. That's when Frugoli became suspicious that the cancer

her daughter had may have been caused by her drinking water.

“I thought I was doing something good by drinking water when all these years, and I could've been the cause of why my child got kidney cancer.”

The Environmental Protection Agency has linked PFAS contamination to a long range of health effects, such as decreased fertility, high blood pressure in pregnant people, increased risk of certain cancers, developmental delays and low birthweight in children, hormonal disruption, high cholesterol, reduced effectiveness of the immune system, and more.

Scientists are still debating whether PFAS can cause cancer. But in September, the Journal of Exposure Science and Environmental Epidemiology conducted a study that showed women with prior diagnoses of melanoma, ovarian cancer or uterine cancer had higher levels of “forever chemicals” and other toxic compounds in their blood.

In 2011, it was revealed that the former Naval Air Development Center in

Warminster, Bucks County, and the nearby Willow Grove Naval Air Base and Air Reserve Station in Horsham, Montgomery County were among the bases contaminated by PFAS. A few years later, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency test revealed that a well in the area had PFAS levels of 2,740 parts per trillion, which is nearly 40 times the limit recommended by the EPA.

A water crisis then ensued. Shortly after the report was released, the Navy offered to switch over residents in the area to the public water system, free of charge. According to a report from USA Today from 2016, 52 homes have been connected to the system around Warminster and Horsham.

The contamination wasn't limited to private wells. In Warminster Township, private wells fed into the public water system, and many of those wells were found to have high levels of PFAS. To this day, multiple homes are still not hooked up to the system that should be but aren't being funded by the Navy because the levels measured in their wells

weren't extremely high. Many of these homes rely on bottled water, and a few have been abandoned. Property values in the area have suffered as a result.

Unfortunately, the pollution is now spreading into the public water system. In August, the U.S. Geological Survey released a report that PFAS were found at high levels in the Neshaminy Creek in Langhorne. Much of Lower Bucks County relies on this creek for drinking water.

Beginning in the 1970s, firefighting foam, which is similar to the substance used in fire extinguishers, was tested at multiple military bases and airports to put out fires on airplanes and explosives. The foam then sank into soils and polluted wells surrounding the testing sites.

But what has angered people the most is the fact that producers of PFAS, including DuPont and 3M, knew of its health effects as far back as the 1960s, according to an investigation from the National Institute of Health. Yet they continued to produce the substance at dan-

Read more on page 6

Upcoming Events



12/8
Wellness & Life Hacks - A Guide To Mental Health Around the Holidays
12:15 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Zoom

12/11
PJ's Day
8 a.m. - 11 p.m.
Upper Bucks Campus

12/13
Bucks Acting Showcase
2:30 - 4:00 p.m.
Zlock Performing Arts Center
Newtown Campus

12/13
Stich-In
12 p.m. - 1 p.m.
Newtown Campus Library & Zoom

Political Club's Posters Ripped Down While Trying to Promote Political Politeness

Rafael Melendez
Centurion Staff

Members of the Political club attempting to revive weekly open political discussions at Bucks say their posters have been torn down

In a world of increasingly polarized political and social views, attempts at civil discourse often devolve into emotionally charged hostilities devoid of logic. In an attempt to revive mannerly discussions, the Political Club at Bucks began a weekly “table discussion,” a format of civil discourse that has not gone without controversy among both students and faculty alike.

Mark McFarlane, a 30-year-old paralegal major from Langhorne and co-creator of the Political Club, said “The Political Club was born in the void left by the absence of the Republican

and Democrat Clubs” and that the club “espouses no specific political affiliation.”

He detailed that forming the club “was a long and arduous process that required a club constitution. We had to piggyback off the previous club constitution until we drafted our own, which was eventually recognized after one semester.”

Drew Schaffer, a 25-year-old social science major from Abington and co-creator of the Political Club, said “We started the Political Club and began the table discussion in the interest of encouraging civil discourse among our peers.” He went on to say “It's a skill that has great importance in professional settings.” He also made clear that “club membership is open to political affiliation, and we run the club encouraging participation by people of all politi-

cal and social backgrounds.”

Schaffer went on to detail that the discussion table “was ultimately set up at the entrance to the cafeteria for higher visibility to encourage student engagement. The ground rules are simple; participants should be respectful and civil with each other and be prepared to support your ideas.” He added, “Opinions are separate from facts, but our opinions can be supported by anecdotal and statistical evidence.”

McFarlane said, “The overall topic of discussion is communicated a week before on the Bucks+ Suitable application, with the title of the discussion divulged at the table on the day of.” The Political Club also posts flyers around campus to raise interest.

Unfortunately, some of these flyers were recently

Read more on page 5...



Photo Courtesy of Raeanne Raccagno

News

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Email your letters to: buckscenturion@gmail.com

Letters should be limited to 500 words. They will be edited for spelling, space and malicious or libelous statements. Letters must be the original work of the writer and must be signed. For identification purposes, letters must include the writer's full name and telephone number.

Weather

Thursday 12/7



Friday 12/8



Saturday 12/9



Sunday 12/10



Monday 12/11



Tuesday 12/12



Wednesday 12/13



8-14 Day Outlook

Temperatures: Above Normal

Precipitation: Near Normal

Forecast for Newtown, PA courtesy of weather.com, valid 12/4/2023 at 2:00 AM EST.

8-14 Day Outlook courtesy of NOAA National Weather Service, issued 12/3/2023.

Nor'wester Therapy Dogs Ease Tensions and Stress For Students During Finals

Jesse Fischer
Centurion Staff

The Nor'wester Therapy Dogs joined the Bucks campus from Nov. 28 to Dec. 6, offered as a way for students to release stress before their upcoming finals.

Located just beyond the Gallagher room Bucks students were invited to sit down and pet dogs that were brought to the campus by Nor'wester Therapy Dogs, located in Richboro. Plenty of students stopped by to spend time with the dogs and take their minds off school for a brief and relieving period.

Wendi Glessner, one of the founders of Nor'wester Therapy Dogs and a dog breeder herself, joined the campus, bringing along a black Labrador named Journey. Wendi spoke about Journey who is 4 years old with six puppies saying, "We got Journey from Macedonia for breeding, she passed her tests and has become a great therapy dog."

Glessner has several therapy dogs that she brings to different places. The dogs work as a way of improving student's motivation and achievement.

"Nor'wester was found-

ed in 2007 and has been at Bucks for a few years now for finals and freshmen that are new to the campus," said Glessner. "The program is strictly educational, and the dogs are taken to schools and libraries as ways to motivate students to learn and read" Glessner added.

To become a therapy dog, the dogs are brought in by volunteers, "The dogs have to pass two different tests to become legit therapy dogs" Glessner said. "The volunteers of the program meet once a week with their dogs," Wendi said. Members of the group send out emails and texts about upcoming events where the dogs can be taken.

A volunteer of the group, Steve, was also present on campus, bringing his yellow lab named Vern. Steve has been involved with Nor'wester for six months now and spoke on the process that Vern went through to become a therapy dog. "Vern has been taking lessons for six years now and it really shows, the training has helped a lot," Steve said.

Steve spoke of one of the ways Vern was tested saying, "Vern would start by going to different Home



Depot's and standing by the exit to see how well he was able to behave." Now that Vern is trained, he has recently been visiting Klinger Middle School on Fridays to see special needs children. "The kids love him," said Steve, adding that for Halloween Vern dressed up as a lion, fitting very well with his yellow fur. Steve described Vern as very

well-behaved but also very excited and energetic.

Nor'wester Therapy Dogs has been going strong for 16 years now and always appreciates the support that they have been given. To donate to the program, learn more about the program or look into getting involved visit norwestertherapydogs.org.

Photo Courtesy of Jesse Fischer

The Rising Crisis of Overpopulation in Animal Shelters

Cristopher Ramirez
Centurion Staff

Over a million homeless animals face euthanization as shelters' last resort as the heartbreaking struggle against overpopulation in shelters continues.

According to the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, every year, there are around 6.3 million animals that enter animal shelters in the U.S. while there are 4.1 million animals that are adopted. About 920,000 animals in animal shelters are euthanized, which is a decrease compared to the 2.6 million shelter animals that were being euthanized in 2011.

Chase Miller, the Director of Operations and Outreach at The Bridge Clinic, a nonprofit veterinary clinic in Bensalem, says, "Access to spaying and neutering is a big part of overpopulation. People need to be more educated about it. Getting cats and dogs spayed and neutered really reduces kittens and puppies, it's extremely important."

Data from the American Pet Products Association suggests that 78 percent of pet dogs and 85 percent of pet cats in the U.S. are spayed or neutered. However, 88 percent of pets living in poverty-stricken communities are not spayed or neutered due to the lack of availability and afford-



ability of resources for pets, according to the Humane Society of the United States.

"I think the economic stability of certain communities today contributes to this [overpopulation in animal shelters] because some people can't afford to keep their pets or take care of them so they end up having to leave them behind for their well-being," says George Keller, a 19-year-old chemical engineering major from Bensalem.

"I think that educating people [about overpopulation in animal shelters] would be an amazing solution to this issue because it will then make people think a lot harder about their decisions. I don't think that many people really address this topic enough I feel that this topic should be more well-known," Keller states.

Kelley believes that "a solution would be for people to do their research and actually understand what

they are committing to because these animals feel and people being able to throw some of them away so easily is truly disheartening." "I think community-wise it's pretty important especially if you live in a neighborhood where strays are

Photos Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons very common. I feel like the community could band together and help these shelters either by getting animals to good homes or raising money to help the shelter keep taking care of these animals," Kelley said.



Sports

Bucks Women's Basketball is Ready to Bounce Back After An Unsuccessful Last Season

Chris Lopez
Centurion Staff

After last season was abruptly canceled because of poor performance, the Bucks women's basketball team is working on reestablishing itself, with new coaches and a steady approach.

In August, Brian Tumpowsky was named head coach of the women's team. Tumpowsky was the assistant coach of the Bucks men's team in the 2022-2023 season in which Bucks won the ECAC district championship and had a record of 11 wins to five losses.

Tumpowsky has more experience as a women's coach, having led a girls' amateur athletic union team for nine years. In November, he announced the hiring of a new assistant coach, Ebony Johnson, from Mercer County, NJ, who played basketball in high school and briefly in community college.

"Our goals right now are less about wins and losses. 'Win a game' was one of our goals. We achieved that. Hopefully in, say, three years, our goal will be to win the championship," said Tumpowsky. The team now holds a record of one win to



four losses. Speaking on his coaching philosophy, Tumpowsky noted that different players require different kinds of instruction. "Some people respond really well to a coach being hard on them, and they use that to get better. But other people just shut down, and it's ineffective," he said.

Bucks being a two-year school competing against four-year schools remains a continual challenge, leading to high turnover in players and coaches. "We're still learning how to play together. We've played against

some well-established teams—so we're like a car that's designed to go 35 mph, and we're pushing it to 90. We're getting better game by game," said Tumpowsky.

As evidence of the team's gradual improvement, in their first game of the season, they lost to Central Penn by 69 points with a final score of 87 to 18—whereas, in their most recent game, they lost by only 25 points to Rowan Collage South Jersey-Cumberland with a final score of 69 to 44.

"We're trying to give our

full 40 minutes of effort and be relentless—that's really difficult with a small team," said Tumpowsky.

The team is composed of eight players, and its highest scorers are Martina Fedor, a freshman from Hamilton, NJ who averages 3.5 points per game and Caramia Delucia, a freshman from Quakertown who averages three points per game.

Describing the recruitment process, Tumpowsky said, "We're a commuter school, so we mostly contact high school coaches in this area and ask them about players we might be interested.

Photos Courtesy of Chris Lopez

We also held an open gym where we found somebody we're keeping our eyes on. But it would be hard to get somebody to relocate for the team."

Though Tumpowsky himself was not much involved with recruiting this season's team, he is confident in his players' abilities, saying, "This year our challenge is more in numbers. We've got more skill, but fewer players."



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News

Is Working From Home Changing Students' Outlooks On Career Choices?

Madison Kifolo
Centurion Staff

The Coronavirus Pandemic shifted and shattered the previous norms in the workplace and continues to direct choices made by students for their future careers.

Ever since the 2020 shutdown, many workplaces have shifted to hybrid or completely digital workspaces. This is a huge shift from what was previously the norm. Matt Gerkin, a 50-year-old Bucks County resident, welcomed this change.

Pre-pandemic, he worked in person every day for a company called FINRA, "I worked in person for over 20 years, and working from home has allowed me to be more productive and dedicated while allowing me the freedom to focus on my personal life when needed. It has also allowed me the opportunity to take breaks when I need to."

He explained, "Working from home allows me to be productive for longer because I don't have to commute for three hours into Center City every day." Bucks Mathematics Professor Robert Luisi had an opposite outlook, "Some jobs are done well at home, but teaching is done better in a face-to-face environment." He said that he preferred working in an in-person

environment but agreed that an upside to virtual work environments is the lack of commute.

How will this affect students' decision-making when it comes to post-grad jobs? Will students cater their degrees to their preferences for the work environment?

Rorbie Auguste, a 19-year-old Bucks psychology student, doesn't think that work environments are worth debating about. "I don't even think it should be a debate. I think it's beneficial for companies to let their employees be able to work in an environment where they can be most efficient."

Auguste's goals after Bucks include either becoming a clinical psychologist or a school psychologist. When asked if the work environment plays a part in her career choice, Rorbie said, "To be honest, it didn't influence my major choice much. I knew that I'd mostly be working in person unless I chose a telehealth option which I'm not against."

Alejandra "Lola" Sosa, a 20-year-old Bucks psychology student, would prefer working in person over at home. "I do think it is necessary to work in an office due to its professional environment."

Sosa's long-term goals



include getting a master's in counseling psychology, which has career options both in person and online. Although her personal preference is in person, she believes that "every person should be able to pick whichever option works for them without being put down or having negative stigma attached to the option they chose."

Bucks Alumni, Kendall Craig, graduated Bucks with a Liberal Arts degree in 2020. She is currently working as an HR Assistant for a car dealership where she works 100 percent in person.

"I was working in the food service industry for about six years until last year

when I had my first full-time job. That job was entirely remote due to Covid-19, and the internship I did after that was hybrid. Both were unexpected opportunities that I would have been happy to take regardless of the environment."

Craig would prefer a "hybrid position as there are elements of both remote and in-person that I enjoy." She said that at her next job, she would like to have a few days in person and a few days at home each week. When asked about productivity in work environments, Craig says that it changes based on the environment.

"I would say that it depends on the person. For example, one individual

Photos Courtesy of Unsplash might excel with productivity and self-motivation in a remote setting, while another individual may struggle without face-to-face interaction and collaboration. For myself, I think an in-person element is important when it comes to productivity as well as mental health, but it may help to have some work-from-home days in order to focus and get more detail-oriented tasks done."

It seems that students are not too worried about their future work environments, as a lot of careers have options. The pandemic was a huge change for everyone, and the flexibility that it provided to some is too valuable to throw away.

How Covid Has Left An Impact On The College Classroom

Leila Kelley
Centurion Staff

Bucks professors share their opinions on how Covid has impacted their students' capabilities and attitudes to learn in the classroom.

An article written by Rikki Schlott about how students are not ready for college learning after experiencing distance learning has taken statements from high school teachers who give statements about all the problems students are presenting after distance learning; they worry these students are going into college at a disadvantage.

Maria McGrath, professor of Humanities and History, said "It is difficult to know whether things have changed or whether this is just a feeling. I would say that over the 17 years that I have been teaching at Bucks, I have seen changes in student engagement in class and with assigned readings. This predates Covid though. Bucks has seen a dip in enrollment since 2019 (pre-Covid)."

McGrath feels that though Covid produced some negative effects on students they have persevered and still put their best foot forward to engage with the class. "I cannot prove this, but I

get the sense that students in my classes want to be there. In general, this semester my students are engaged, responsible, mature and ambitious."

Stacey Bennett, arts and communications professor, said "I am actually seeing the opposite in my classroom," referring to Schlott's article. "Students are prepared and are turning in great work. One of the trends that I see in my classroom is more students asking relevant questions pertaining to their work and how they may be able to improve. In addition, I am receiving more and more emails from students asking me to review their outlines and drafts for their presentations a week before the projects are due."

Professional Advisor and Psychology Professor, Patti Alloway said, "I agree with the contents of the article. I feel that Covid had a very big effect on everyone, but especially children and adolescents. It was a difficult transition, but we forged ahead and made it work. We did not go back into a classroom until almost three years later, and even then it was just different, with the number of students, the distance in class, plexiglass and masks. The amount of



time we needed to wear masks took the ability to read people's faces, making interactions somewhat impersonal and awkward. Being afraid to be within six feet of people, ceased people's need for touch and reassurance."

Alloway agrees with Schlott's article in that Covid had a large impact, but it primarily affected children and adolescents. She argues that distance learning all but destroyed the relationships between students, peers and professors.

Alloway said, "Schools, including my daughters' high school, did not have

proms, did not have in-person graduations (or limited ones) and all included masks. We went from in-person, human contact, to a computer from our homes and total isolation. Our hopes and milestones were lost, never to get back again. Again another loss."

Alloway said, "Having said all of that, students really have struggled with getting back into a rhythm and wanting to be back in person for classes and activities on campus. Clubs have struggled to maintain members. Many students decided it was "just easier" to zoom into a class or take it asynchronously. Many

Photos Courtesy of Unsplash students decided it was just an easier vessel, as they are used to doing things from home now."

"I have noticed in my classes, that students are not handing in assignments on time, and some just do not complete anything that is even assigned. The group participation/discussions have also become shorter and less in-depth. Some students have realized that being online completely is just a better way for them to learn and now they have that opportunity, but again it is isolating and impersonal at times."

News

Political Club's Posters Ripped Down While Trying to Promote Political Politeness

Continued from page 1

taken down by anonymous parties. Schaffer and McFarlane were disheartened by this, with Schaffer stating, "We create flyers to draw attention to the event with no intention of hurting any group." McFarlane added, "While everyone has the right to be offended, instead of taking down flyers, join the discussion!"

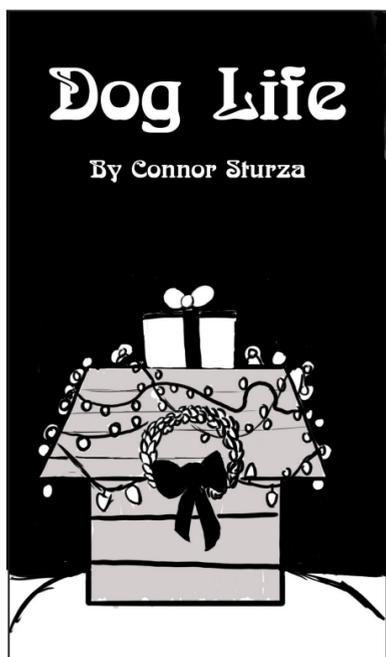
Both feel that there is a general misconception about their motives and feel they have been unfairly "put in a box." Schaffer added, "Contention seems to be coming more from faculty than the students themselves."

McFarlane and Schaffer said, "The title of the flyers goes through a rigorous process of review to ensure the title is attention-grabbing without being offensive."

Regardless of any misconceptions about the Political Club's discussion table format or motives, everyone should be encouraged there is a platform to discuss their ideas in a civil manner. So join the discussion; it's imperative to move social and political conversations forward in the interest of creating a more positive and inclusive societal landscape.



Photo Courtesy of Unsplash



"The world would be a nicer place if everyone had the ability to love as unconditionally as a dog."
- M.K. Clinton



The Importance of Planning Your Transfer Early

Leila Kelley
Centurion Staff

Bucks Transfer Center helps transferring students plan their futures and prepare them for their next steps into continuing education.

Bucks has a transfer center that can assist prospective transfer students with the large task of planning their futures. Planning early helps students make the right decisions during their time at Bucks.

Director of Prior Learning Assessment and Transfer Services Debora Bergen said, "Over 75% of students intend to transfer." This means that is likely you, who is reading this right now, might be a student thinking about or having decided to transfer.

Bergen said, "The Transfer Center assists students with exploring transfer options. The center will help students match up the credits they need at the transfer school and help students connect with that school."

This allows students to optimize their semesters at Bucks so that they can transition into another college as seamlessly as possible.

Bergen said, "Early planning will ensure that students are taking the correct classes and exploring all options, which helps students save time and money. Students are not limited to the schools that Bucks has agreements with."

By optimizing their path students can save time and money, they can even optimize classes with colleges that Bucks doesn't have transfer agreements with. These transfer agreements are very important because some schools offer awards to students who complete letters of intent before certain milestones in their college pathways.

Bergen said, "The transfer office will assist students with exploring agreements and matching up credits. If there are transfer concerns after transferring, the office will help with those questions."

Concerns are always valid and any questions any



student may have can be answered at the Transfer Center.

There are a few things students should take into account while planning to transfer. Bergen said, "When planning to transfer, students would want to make sure that the transfer school has the major of interest. Students should also consider tuition, but if certain agreements are taken advantage of, there could be significant scholarships. Students would want to feel comfortable at the transfer school."

Students who prepare for transfer planning will have a successful, comfortable

and optimized transfer process. Planning early is very important because some transfer agreements are time-sensitive. Students need to be aware they have to apply to their transfer college the semester they are expected to graduate.

Bergen said, "Besides planning early, students would need to apply to their transfer school the semester they are graduating from Bucks, request their transcript (www.bucks.edu/transcripts), and work on financial aid."

Transcripts will have up-to-date information including the current semester

Photo Courtesy of Unsplash that the student is taking when it gets sent to their transfer college. It is also important that students' financial aid is ready for the next semester at their transfer college.

Bergen said, "The length of the transfer process is different for each school, and it may differ depending on the time of year. It could take a couple of weeks to a couple of months."

This means a student should be incentivized to start their transfer process as soon as they can so that it allows them to enter without the stress of last-minute applying.

News

Forever Tainted - How PFAS Pollutes Some of Buck County's Drinking Water

Continued from page 1

gerous levels for another 40 years before the EPA asked them to stop in 2000.

In 1981, multiple female employees were relocated from a DuPont plant in Parkersburg, West Virginia after female coworkers had given birth to severely deformed babies. "One of them (gave birth) to a baby with eye defects and just a single nostril; another to a baby who had eye and tear duct defects; and a third with C8 in its cord blood," according to TIME Magazine.

C8, a series of chemicals that contain high levels of PFAS, were produced at this plant. Yet TIME reported that DuPont kept it a secret as to why the women were being relocated. The report from the National Institute of Health says that DuPont and 3M conducted multiple studies with animals that showed severe defects when PFAS were present in their blood. When PFAS were found in water sources throughout West Virginia in 1991, the companies released a joint statement saying, "According to studies by DuPont and 3M Corporation, C8 has no known toxic or ill health effects in humans at concentration levels detected."

The floodgates opened in 2000 when a judge ordered DuPont to hand over nearly 100,000 documents related to their studies on PFAS to Bob Bilott, a lawyer who was representing a farmer in Parkersburg whose cows he suspected were being sickened by runoff from a landfill DuPont built next to his farm.

Although that case settled for an undisclosed sum, Bilott compiled a 900-page report on his findings and released it to multiple envi-

ronmental agencies. Shortly afterward, Bilott, using the money from the settlements of the prior cases, funded a study of 70,000 West Virginians that involved taking blood samples in exchange for a \$400 check.

It took a grueling seven years for the results of the study to be concluded. Finally, in 2011, the researchers released their findings, which stated that "there was a 'probable link' between PFOA (a form of PFAS) and kidney cancer, testicular cancer, thyroid disease, high cholesterol, pre-eclampsia and ulcerative colitis."

Frugoli and her twin children were part of a similar study taken in 2018 from people around Warminster and Willow Grove. In 2022, individual results were released to people who showed many had high levels of PFAS in their blood, according to the Bucks County Courier Times. But an overall evaluation of the results has yet to be published, as the Department of Defense is planning on testing more people in the area.

Frugoli said her family's results showed that "we are all in the range of moderate, and have to be tested for certain things sooner than later. It's crazy because a lot of the specialists we go to don't know what it (PFAS) is. It's mindblowing to me!"

DuPont did not respond to this news organization's request for comment on this situation.

Larry Menkes of Warminster was the co-founder of the Warminster Environmental Authority. It was formed years before the public found out about the PFAS contamination, but there were already concerns about Warminster NADC

when it was deemed a superfund site shortly before it closed in 1997.

Menkes explained when the authority found out about the contamination, the township manager at the time encouraged them not to deal with it as it would make it look like they were the ones responsible. "I thought that was bullshit and I ignored him."

Menkes himself has stage four bladder cancer that is currently in remission. His father-in-law, who was stationed at Warminster NADS just after World War II, died of gastric cancer 25 years ago. And his wife had an aggressive form of skin cancer and thyroid problems. Since the findings of Bilotts study were released, TIME Magazine reported that "more than 15,000 claims that have been filed nationwide against DuPont, and its spinoffs Chemours and Corteva—along with 3M, the major manufacturers of PFAS in the U.S., according to Michael London, partner in the New York-based Law firm Douglas & London, which is handling most of the cases".

"So far, DuPont, Chemours, Corteva and 3M have paid a total of nearly \$11.5 billion in damages for PFAS contamination. But that number could grow considerably, even exceeding the more than \$200 billion paid by Big Tobacco in the 1990s," according to TIME Magazine

But Menkes and others locally are going a different direction, by being involved in a class-action lawsuit against the Navy.

"I think the Navy is the logical choice to sue because they were the ones that controlled the use of firefighting foam to practice with. And

I'm sure someone in the Navy knew as far back as 1940 that this stuff was toxic to humans," said Menkes. Hope Grosse, from Warminster, is the founder of the nonprofit BuxMont Water Coalition. Grosse grew up right across the street from the Warminster base. In 1992, she was diagnosed with stage four Melanoma in her lymph nodes.

She explained that, unlike other parts of the country where PFAS contamination came from the factories that produced it, our area is dealing with contamination from the use of the product. That complicates the situation as to whether the federal government or the producers are at fault. "The Department of Defense denies, delays and lies," she said.

But what do people want DuPont, 3M and the federal government to do about this? Grosse said a starting point would be to put filters on every public water system, and anyone with private water should be tested to see how much toxic chemicals are in their body. She said that 95 to 99 percent of PFAS contamination is removed from water with a reverse osmosis water filter.

Unfortunately, political turmoil and bureaucracy have prevented much of this progress from happening. A report from the American Water Works Association says that it could cost at least \$10 billion to clean up PFAS and install water filters on public systems.

Many people want DuPont and 3M held responsible for knowingly polluting water. In June, The Associated Press reported that DuPont and two of its spin-off companies, Chemours and

Corteva, reached a \$1.8 billion deal to compensate water providers for PFAS contamination found in water.

But the case doesn't settle the thousands of personal cases against the companies from people who may have been sickened by PFAS. Also in June, Pennsylvania sued DuPont and Chemours for marketing PFAS "firefighting foam manufacturers in the state despite knowing for decades they posed health dangers," says the AP. The state is seeking restitution for cleanup costs at contaminated sites across the Philadelphia area.

In a further blow to activists, the Sixth Circuit Court tossed a lawsuit on Nov. 27 against DuPont and 3M seeking restitution for those affected by PFAS in Ohio. The court ruled that Kevin Hardwick, a firefighter from Ohio, has no standing in the case. He is being represented by Mr. Bilott.

There is also growing anger over a corporate restructuring of DuPont in 2015 that many say was done to avoid paying lawsuits related to PFAS. NBC News reports that the company unloaded its lawsuit obligations to smaller spin-off companies, such as Chemours and Corteva, that they purposefully underfunded to avoid paying debts.

But Grosse just simply wants her water to be clean. "Why are we wasting all this time trying to figure out who's got what and let's put these filtration systems and stop wasting time and money. Because people's lives are being ruined by drinking water, like who would have thought? We're not a third-world country for God's sake."

Leila Kelley
Centurion Staff

The Bucks community has been getting excited about the wide variety of movies that are coming out in late 2023 or 2024.

This year, the Writers Guild of America strike and Screen Actors Guild-America Federation of Television and Radio Artists strike occurred where hundreds of thousands participated in the protest against the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers over a labor dispute. This resulted in several movies and shows being canceled and or pushed back.

Though the strike ended on Sept. 27 and Nov. 9 respectively, the negotiations were rewarded, and the members of both guilds received were major and a deal was struck for both guilds.

Tara Goddard said, "I can't wait to see "Aquaman and the Lost Kingdom." One I am a big Jason Momoa fan and two I feel that

The Excitement Behind The Upcoming Movies of 2023 and 2024

it showcases Atlantis. I like the imagery they chose to use for Atlantis, and I feel it's going to be a very action-packed movie."

"Aquaman and the Lost Kingdom," starring Jason Momoa as Aquaman was affected by both of the guilds' strikes, resulting in a delayed release date. The original release date was scheduled for Dec. 16 however with the strikes taking place the new release date is Dec. 22.

Logan David said, "I am looking forward to seeing "Bad Boys 4." I appreciate the continuance of the series and I want to see more comedic action-packed movies."

The fourth movie in the Bad Boys series has yet to have a proper name other than being called "Bad Boys 4," starring Will Smith and Martin Lawrence along with actors from the third film Vanessa Hudgens, Alexander Ludwig and Paola

Núñez. The filming of this movie was paused due to the SAG-AFTRA strike, though this did not result in a delayed release the studio believes it will still make its June 14 release date.

Deven Marilyn said, "I am waiting to see "Beyond the Spiderverse." I am interested in "Beyond the Spiderverse" because I saw "Across the Spiderverse" and I want to know how they continue and deal with the issues presented in the last movie. I also really enjoy the art style of the movie."

"Beyond the Spiderverse" is a continuation of Across the Spiderverse as that movie left off on a cliffhanger, the movie was originally scheduled to release on March 29 however with the strikes taking place it was postponed due to the actors unable to do their voice work. The release date is indefinite as of right now but the fans awaiting hope for a

date sooner rather than later.

Nicole Griscavage said, "An upcoming movie I'm excited for is "Wonka," I'm looking forward to seeing a modern twist on an older tale I watched as a kid." The Wonka movie only found an issue with actor Timothée Chalamet as "Dune 2" was pushed into 2024 when the strikes took place. Though the studio stood firm on its release date coming Dec. 15.

Christina Lorino said, "I'm personally excited for "Beyoncé's Renaissance Tour Film" because I enjoy her music and would love to see her show despite not being able to make it to a show on her actual tour. This film will allow those, such as myself, who could not attend a show on her highly-rated Renaissance Tour to see the amazing performances she put on nightly. As an enjoyer of "Taylor Swift's The Eras Tour Film," I'm excited to

see Beyoncé's talents showcased in a similar way for all in theaters."

This documentary was not disrupted by the strikes as it was filmed before the 2023 strikes took place and was released on Dec. 1. The documentary showcases the 39-city tour that Beyoncé took to Europe and North America.



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