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THE
NEWS
JOURNAL

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Imelda's
wet mess
hits South

USA TODAY, 11A

CLIMATE CHANGE ON THE DELAWARE BAY

Rising seas leave lifeless landscape in wake



Ghost forests
tell the story

Maddy Lauria Delaware News Journal | USA TODAY NETWORK

As Mark Wells harvested rows of corn from his farm near Fowler Beach, he praised the fertility of eastern Sussex County's soils that sent thousands of golden kernels filtering through his combine. But it wasn't this healthy crop the farmer wanted to point out. To the north and east of his 126-acre farm at the corner of Fowler Beach Road, dozens of gray stalks of leafless and lifeless trees litter the landscape's edge. The same saltwater that killed those trees and created one of the state's most striking ghost forests has left chunks of Wells' fields barren. As the combine hit those decaying areas, he watched his yield drop by more than half. Wells pointed to the ghost forests skirting his farm and tried remembering where a beloved, huge persimmon tree once stood. He couldn't find it. Ducks flew out of a pond against a backdrop of dead trees and invasive common reed, or phragmites, that no longer feed the wild deer, raccoons and other critters that once roamed in the now-mummified forest. Some spots where Wells planted seeds earlier in the season are filled with fruitless, stunted stalks or nothing but grasses, evidence of a crop severely impacted by saltwater intrusion. "It's practically wasteland," he said. "It goes hundreds and hundreds of yards into the field."

See GHOST FORESTS, Page 4A

The ghost forest next to Fowler Beach Road in Sussex County. JERRY HABRAKEN, DELAWARE NEWS JOURNAL

Missing
children
center to help
ID remains

Jessica Bies Delaware News Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children has been asked to assist Delaware investigators in identifying the remains of a child found last week at a softball field in Smyrna. Often in cases like this, there is no missing child report, said Carol Schweitzer, who supervises NCMEC's forensic services unit. That's where the forensics come in. "We do a lot of facilitating," she said, running through a variety of forensic testing that will need to be done to build a profile of the unidentified child found at the Little Lass softball fields last Friday.

See REMAINS, Page 3A

More inside

Thousands of children go missing every year. Among them, several are from Delaware. Page 2A

State wants to
dissolve 'shell'
companies

Xerxes Wilson Delaware News Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

Delaware's top law enforcement official is asking a court to dissolve a list of local "shell" companies tied to acts like funneling hush money to President Donald Trump's porn star mistress to propping up the late Zimbabwean dictator Robert Mugabe. Attorney General Kathy Jennings on Thursday petitioned Delaware's Chancery Court to dissolve 15 Delaware business entities that have been involved in federal indictments, international sanctions and political controversies that have reached the highest levels of American power.

See DISSOLVE, Page 9A



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NJ-GC0252908-06

I-95 plane crash investigation

NTSB report reveals new information about crash that killed two men. 3A

Ritter sets record

Howard High coach secures legacy with school record for football wins. 1B

Weather

High 79° || Low 55°
Sunny. Forecast, 16A

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