

School's out for the year

GOVERNOR ORDERS MISSOURI SCHOOLS TO REMAIN CLOSED FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE ACADEMIC YEAR

In a COVID-19 briefing, Governor Mike Parson announced that all Missouri public and charter school buildings will remain closed through the remainder of the academic year.

This recommendation was made to Governor Parson by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and several school superintendents from rural and urban areas across the state.

"Continuing our efforts to slow the spread of COVID-19, I am ordering all public and charter schools to remain closed through the remainder of this academic year, with the exception of nutrition and child care outlined in our Stay Home Missouri Order," Governor Parson said.

School services are ex-

pected to continue through the last day of school in each school district as pre-established by the academic calendar approved by their local board of education. These continued services include alternative educational opportunities as well as providing much-needed meals to students who count on them.

DESE will issue additional guidance to Missouri school leaders in the near future. In conjunction with the Governor's Office, DESE is continuing efforts to help local school leaders by removing barriers and waiving the necessary state statutes and regulations.

Additional K-12 information and guidance can be found at dese.mo.gov/COVID19.

COVID-19 has had serious impacts on anticipated

economic growth, and the state is now expecting significant revenue declines.

"The impact of COVID-19 has already been hard felt in our economy. More people are staying home, business operations have been limited, many people have lost their jobs, and state revenues are down," Governor Parson said. "This has had a serious impact on our anticipated economic growth, so we've had to take a hard look at our budget and make some very difficult decisions."

To ensure a balanced state budget and the necessary funds to combat COVID-19 going forward, Governor Parson is planning to restrict \$180 million in spending. More may have to be restricted in the future depending on how extreme the eco-

nom ic impacts of COVID-19 become.

These restrictions include reduced funding for several state departments including the Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development, Department of Transportation, Office of Administration, Department of Natural Resources, and the Department of Economic Development, among others.

On a positive note, today U.S. Senator Roy Blunt (Mo.), Chairman of the U.S. Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies (Labor/HHS), announced that Missouri will receive \$208 million to help elementary and secondary schools respond to coronavirus-related needs.

See SCHOOL 5A



Local school encourages the community.
Photo by Caden Swearingen.

New housing complex planned for Cassville



Cassville Heights Phase II planned for Cassville. Photo by Caden Swearingen.

Sheila Harris

Cassville will soon see new, much-needed affordable housing. MidContinent Equity Holdings, LLC, a Missouri-based developer, plans to announce the ground-breaking date for a new apartment complex after engineering and survey work are complete.

Cassville Heights Phase II, a 32-unit complex which will offer 2 and 3-bedroom options, will be situated near the current Cassville Heights Phase 1 complex located on Smithson Drive. Common

areas of the complex will include storage, a playground, a central office and community room, a cook-out area, and an on-site tornado shelter.

Cassville City Administrator, Steve Walensky, is excited about seeing plans for this complex come to fruition.

"I've been working with MidContinent Equity, the developer for this project, for the past four years," he said. "Part of that time was spent preparing a presentation to bring before the Missouri Housing Development

Commission to compete for housing grants made to rural communities. With a set amount of funds available for distribution, the competition for grant money was fierce."

According to Walensky, Cassville was in the running with about 40 other towns in southwest Missouri. Part of his presentation involved detailing Cassville's current housing shortage, as well as projecting the future housing demand.

"With the new job oppor-

See HOUSING 7A

Inside this issue:

How a mail-in election would affect Barry County 2

Barry County Clerk, Jill LeCompte, discusses prep work needed for possible mail-in election.

Second confirmed case of COVID-19 in Barry County 2

Person visited multiple locations.

Tips from local gardener 9

April's cool but sunny weather is the perfect time to start a garden.

Tax advice for retirees 13

Possible ways to reduce your tax bill.

Upcoming 4 A
Obits 6-7 A
Sports 15 A
Classified 12-13 A
Auctions 10 A

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Recovered COVID-19 patients encouraged to donate plasma

Sheila Harris

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) is encouraging people who are fully recovered from COVID-19 to donate plasma, with the aim of helping current COVID-19 patients.

In southwest Missouri, both CoxHealth and Mercy Hospitals are participating in the plasma-donation program currently being investigated by the U.S. Food & Drug Administration as a viable means of treating patients who are currently suffering from the virus.

Sonya Kullman, Media Relations and Communications Manager for Mercy, is excited about the possibilities for the therapy.

"In our area, people like to give," she said. "Yesterday, we had a recovered COVID-19 patient in our four-state region in Oklahoma step forward to offer his plasma as a means of helping others fighting the virus," she said. "Today, we've had word that another recovered patient in Springfield would like to donate, although we'll need to follow up with them for confirmation."

"Although we don't currently have as many COVID-19 patients in counties southwest of Springfield, it's nice to know that this type of therapy may become available if it's needed," she continued.

According to the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services, historically, convalescent plasma has been used to prevent or treat new viral diseases, when other treatments or vaccines were not available. People who have fully recovered

See PLASMA 6A

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Second case of COVID-19 confirmed in Barry County

The Barry County Health Department reported the second confirmed case of COVID-19 in Barry County.

Administrator Roger Brock announced, “In an effort to keep the public safe and informed, we are releasing a list of locations the COVID-19-positive individual has visited in Barry County.”

The individual and their close contacts are in quarantine and have been directed to avoid travel, except to seek medical care.

Barry County Emergency Management Director David Compton reiterated, “Quarantined people must not come in contact with the public. Those individuals, if they fail to obey the quarantine, will place all close contacts at a much higher risk of contracting COVID-19.”

“We have notified emergency responders in the county of the quarantine to ensure their safety if responding to a known individual,” Compton said.

According to the health department, people who visited the following locations, but who did not have close contact, are at low risk of contracting COVID-19, but should monitor for symptoms. There is no need for self-quarantine or isolation. Anyone who develops symptoms should call their primary care provider and follow their instructions.

Symptoms of COVID-19



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include fever, cough, and shortness of breath, and may occur two days to two weeks after exposure.

It is out of an abundance of caution for the safety of Barry County residents that The Barry County Health Department is notifying the public of these potential exposures from a COVID-19 positive individual.

Our recent positive case attended:

- 04/05 Mass at the Body of Christ church in Wheaton from 11a.m. to 12p.m.
- 04/06 Walmart in Cassville around 8:30 a.m.
- 04/06 Walmart in Monett around 3:00 p.m.
- 04/08 Dollar General in Wheaton between 4:00 and 7:00 p.m.
- 04/08 LNS foods in Wheaton between 4:00 and 7:00 p.m.
- 04/08 Fastrip in Wheaton between 4:00 and 7:00 p.m.

Administrator Brock said, “This is an important reminder that we should all be staying at home as much as possible.”

When we do have to go out for essential tasks, we should be limiting our exposure to other individuals and keeping a minimum of 6 feet of separation between ourselves and everyone else.

For more information about COVID-19, visit cdc.gov/coronavirus, call the Barry County Health Department at 417-847-2114, or the Missouri DHSS 24-hour hotline number at 877-435-8411.



Barry County Courthouse in Cassville.

Sheila Harris

With COVID-19 concerns, many residents are wondering how elections will be accomplished if restrictions on public gatherings are still in place. On a national level, some officials are in favor of transitioning to elections conducted solely by mail. However, such a change would necessitate that a ballot be mailed out to every eligible voter: a costly and time-consuming process.

Barry County Clerk, Jill LeCompte, said she’s prepared to follow through with whatever instructions are passed down to her through the Missouri’s Secretary of State’s office.

“At this time,” she said, “there’s been no indication that we’ll shift to a mail-in election, but our office is cer-

tainly wondering about it.”

Because LeCompte’s primary concern is for the safety of voters, her staff, and election volunteers, she thinks a mail-in election might be a good option.

“However,” said LeCompte, “if we’re going to have a mail-in election, I’ll need to know, like... today.”

“With a staff of only three,” she continued, “we’ll really have to hurry to prepare for the June 2 municipal election if we end up having to do it by mail. It will require that two envelopes, plus voting instructions, be mailed to every registered voter in the county. It not only takes a lot of time, but it’s costly. It would definitely affect our budget. Right now, with absentee ballots – which are just a small percentage of our voters – we pay \$1.40 for each packet mailed out. Multiply that amount times 20,000, the number of registered voters in Barry County. It would make the cost of a mail-in election at least \$28,000.”

“Then, too,” she added, “the voter registration and information portal controlled by the Secretary of State’s office would need to be updated to reflect changes in the election process. There are several things that would need to be done to get ready, and they all take time.”

“Still,” LeCompte said, “I’m fine with switching to a mail-in election if that’s what we need to do.”

While questions are sometimes raised about the possibility of voter fraud with a mail-in election, LeCompte doesn’t believe it would be a concern in Barry County.

“I take voter fraud seriously, of course, but several states have long had mail-in elections with no problem. This type of election would be new to me, and to voters in Barry County, but they’re not uncommon in other areas of the country. I’ll do whatever the state orders. I just hope they let us know soon.”

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Open letter to the Missouri Congressional Delegation

April 8, 2020

Dear Missouri Congressional Delegation,

The move to vote by mail can give us a greater chance of litigation and fraud. I agree with President Trump that there is a higher potential for voter fraud with vote by mail compared with in-precinct voting.

What can go wrong with voting by mail? When you go to the precinct polling place, you meet face-to-face with poll workers who sign you in, then let you cast a ballot that immediately joins the group of ballots to be counted after the polls close.

For example, a question about your signature, address or I.D. can be sorted out as part of the face-to-face contact at the polls. Once you have proved you are qualified to vote, you can get an ordinary ballot, and not have your ballot not counted.

In comparison, voting by mail requires the voter to get the ballot in time to send it back or delivered in person by the required deadline of 7 p.m. on election day in Missouri. You could have an administrative delay at the

election office or a postal problem, which could cause the voter not to receive the ballot with enough time for its return. As a former election official in Palm Beach County, Florida, there were over one-third of the absentee ballots rejected because they arrived too late on election day.

The states and local election officials should control their own elections. The federal government should stay out of their way, except for providing sufficient money to conduct safe and fair voting.

Thank you.
Bob Bartelsmeyer


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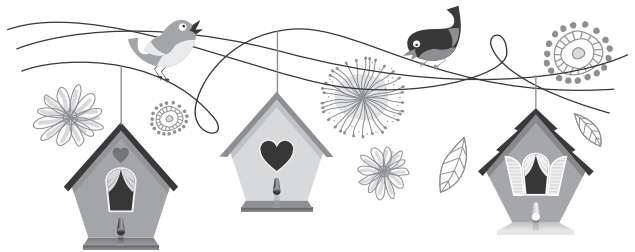
Community Calendar

Community Calendar page is free as a courtesy to local events. If your event is relying on advertising for attendance, then it is vital for you to place a paid ad. There is no guarantee that your event will be placed in Community Calendar. The deadline for community calendar is Friday at 4 p.m. The contact person is Elaine Phaneuf, class@4bca.com or (417) 847-4475. Thank you for keeping us informed of all updates/changes to local events.

Notice:

Please Note: Because of safety measures to slow the spread of the coronavirus including social distancing, many events have been cancelled or postponed. It is recommended to call ahead if you are unsure of the status of an event. The Barry County Advertiser has been informed of cancellations and postponements of formerly published events. Those cancellations are indicated in this section. Thank you.

Due to the current situation, Barry Electric has postponed their 73rd Annual Meeting of the members. At this time, they have tentatively rescheduled the meeting for June 18th. They want to assure their members that the meeting will be held, and they will be sending out updates when they are available.



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As OATS Transit continues to adjust to the COVID-19 crisis, they are only offering essential service trips at this time. They are limiting the number of individuals on their buses to facilitate social distancing, and drivers are cleaning buses on a routine basis. The essential trips only service will remain in effect until further notice. Individuals can call the OATS Transit office at 417-887-9272 or 1-800-770-6287 for information on local service. Visit their website at www.oatstransit.org/health for updated information on this topic.

Essential service transportation is defined as dialysis, doctor appointments, grocery shopping, food banks, etc. “This is a difficult decision and one we are not taking lightly, but it is the right thing to do during this national crisis,” said Dorothy Yeager, Executive Director. Individuals who are sick should stay home.

Several measures have been put into place to ensure the safety of everyone on board the buses:

- Drivers are doing routine cleaning and disinfecting on the buses throughout the day, and cleaning surfaces that riders may come into contact with.
- The amount of people on each bus will be limited to ensure safe distances for riders and drivers.
- Non-essential appointments should be delayed if possible to limit exposure.
- During the COVID-19 crisis, riders should expect drivers to refrain from touching any personal belongings and packages. OATS asks riders to be understanding and prepared for this adjustment to our normal routine.

The Cassville High School Alumni Banquet scheduled for May 23, 2020, has been cancelled due to the school closing.

Southwest R-5 All School Reunion scheduled for Memorial Day Weekend 2020 has been postponed until further notice due to the coronavirus. Contact (417) 835-8281 for additional information.

Second Act will be closed until further notice. They ask that no donations be left until they reopen.

The Seligman Train Ride for May has been cancelled and will be rescheduled at a later date.

Beginning Wednesday, March 25, the Cassville City Hall lobby closed to the public. Payments can be made online, in either of the two outside drop boxes, or over the phone. Please call 847-4441 if you need any services related to water, sewer and trash utilities or Municipal Court. Please call 847-3121 if you need any services related to making a police report, or to have an officer contact you. Please call 911 if you have an emergency.

The Barry County License Office is Closed Until Further Notice. To alleviate public congestion in local license offices, DOR (Department of Revenue) has implemented automatic extensions for expiring driver licenses

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and motor vehicle registrations. These extensions are effective immediately:

Vehicle owners with registrations or license plates expiring in March and April have been granted an automatic two-month extension. Owners will be able to continue operating their vehicles on Missouri roadways without penalty until they can apply for renewal.

The time frame in which a vehicle safety and emission inspection is valid for March and April license plate expirations has also been extended an additional 60 days. Applicants for title will not be assessed a late title penalty when visiting a license office, effective immediately; this waiver will continue through April 30, 2020.

Valid Missouri driver licenses, nondriver licenses and noncommercial instruction permits with original expiration dates of March 1, 2020, through April 30, 2020, have been granted an automatic 60-day extension.

The approved extension does not waive the mandatory retesting requirement for persons who have allowed their license to expire for more than 184 days. Also, individuals who were provided notice to complete additional testing as part of a medical review program requirement may be granted an additional 60 days to comply with such requirements.

More information may be obtained at the Department of Revenue website: dor.mo.gov.

Haven of the Ozarks Animal Sanctuary of Washburn has closed to the public temporarily due to the coronavirus, Covid-19, as a cautionary measure. All scheduled appointments will still be honored.

All Branches of the Barry-Lawrence Regional Libraries are closed. The following message has been sent out from the Cassville Library: Our library and the other libraries in the Barry-Lawrence Regional Library system will remain closed until April 24th. Some things to remember: Free Wi-Fi is accessible in our parking lot from 6am-11pm. Use your library card to access ebooks, audiobooks, magazines, movies, and music at hoopladigital.com and Missouri Libraries to Go (Overdrive). Please don't use our Dropbox. Keep your library materials and return them once we reopen. You will NOT be charged a late fee. Stay well. We miss seeing you all.

Habitat for Humanity is looking for families to apply for a home in Wheaton. For more information or to apply, stop by the Habitat for Humanity ReStore, 900 10th St. in Cassville. They are open Tuesday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Saturday, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

2020 Southwest Yearbooks are on sale now. The cost is \$25 and the deadline to order is May 31. For more information, contact Mr. Voyak at svoyak@swr5.net.

The Seligman Chamber Dance normally hosted every Saturday at 7:00 p.m. will be cancelled until further notice. For information, call (417) 662-3612.

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MDC cancels kids' fishing day

The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) announces that kids' fishing day events at the state's trout parks have been cancelled this year amid concerns over the coronavirus (COVID-19). The kids' fishing day events cancelled include: May 2 at Montauk State Park near Licking and Bennett Spring State Park in Lebanon and May 16 at Roaring River State Park near Cassville and Maramec Spring Park in St. James.

In order to protect the public amid the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, MDC has extended the temporary closures of its facilities and cancellations of all public events and programs through April 30. Closures include regional offices, Department headquarters in Jefferson City, staffed shooting ranges, nature centers, visitor centers, and education centers. MDC has also temporarily cancelled public events and programs, including hunter education classes, nature center programs and events, shooting range programs and events, and landowner workshops. Learn more at <https://mdc.mo.gov/newsroom/>

mdc-extends-closures-and-trout-tag-waiver-due-covid-19.

All conservation areas, nature center trails, and boat accesses remain open to the public.

Additionally, MDC has temporarily waived fishing permits through April 15. Anglers will need to have a fishing permit, unless exempt, after April 15. Trout anglers will also need required fishing permits after April 15 but will not need a daily trout tag at the three open trout parks until further notice. Trout anglers fishing other areas around the state, including lakes and streams not at a trout park, will need both a fishing permit and trout permit after April 15. Only three Missouri trout parks remain open for day use and fishing: Bennett Spring State Park in Lebanon, Montauk State Park near Licking, and Roaring River State Park near Cassville. All seasons, dates, methods, and limits will continue to apply and be enforced. Learn more at mdc.mo.gov/newsroom/mdc-temporarily-waive-fishing-permits-starting-friday.



Sheila Harris

I come from a long line of gardeners. Exactly how long that line is I don't really know, although I remember snapping green beans and shucking corn from my grandpa's garden from the time I was old enough to do so. Grandpa was the gardener; Grandma was the canner. I learned at their knees. I learned from my Mom, too, although I didn't participate as willingly for her. (There's just something about grandparents that bring out the best in a child.) Still, I learned.

I remember Grandpa telling me not to pick green beans in the morning when the dew was still on. They'd

Show me your garden

A note from the editor

rust, he said. He told me, too, to hunker down and lean my elbow on one knee to pick them. It'll save your back, he said.

My grandpa's gardens were a source of great pride to him. And to me, too. We've got photos of him standing in the middle of knee-high beans with stately corn stalks towering behind his head. Even without photos, those of us who knew him will always remember his gardens.

The day after I got home from his Iowa funeral in 2013, my own green beans were due to be picked. As I tackled the chore, his words of advice rang through my memory. Words of love, they were, I now realize. For it's in the generations that follow us we sow the seeds of ourselves.

I'm fairly sure my own grandson will be able to come up with a garden memory, or two. He toddled beside me, a stalwart companion and helper in all of my backyard endeavors. At his insistence, we planted an apple tree, and

in so doing, dug up a garter snake. For him, thoughts of tree-planting were abandoned. For the rest of the day, he carried the snake around in an empty coffee container, playing with it at will.

During World War I, people were encouraged to plant victory gardens in every idle bit of ground in an effort to help feed the nation. In 1917, according to history, 3 million gardens were grown. In 1918, that number rose to 5.2 million.

Only six weeks ago, it would have seemed unfathomable that the United States could experience a food shortage. Today, we have an inkling of how it could happen.

Gardens, of course, can't provide all of our nutritional needs, but they help. Plus, they're fun.

For a woman who once thought digging holes was "men's work," I've dug up a good part of my back yard, one shovelful at a time. It's been therapeutic in more ways than one. Plus, there's

something awe-inspiring about watching giant plants spring from the tiniest of seeds.

I'd like to challenge each of you to grow a garden this year, even if it's no bigger than the proverbial thimble. For inspiration, check out local gardener Sherry Leverich Lotufo's notes on page 9A.

Send a photo of your garden, along with a couple of comments, to me at editor@4bca.com. I'd love to see and hear about your progress.

READ ALL ABOUT IT!



IN THE BARRY COUNTY ADVERTISER

SCHOOLS from FRONT

The funding will be used to help schools address immediate needs of students and teachers, improve the use of education technology, support distance education, and make up for lost learning time. The Education Department notified each state of their funding allocation today to help them plan how to best utilize funds to meet local needs. Blunt urged the department to quickly release funds.

"The coronavirus pandemic is straining education budgets as schools have had to shift to distance learning to keep kids safe," said Blunt. "This funding will help schools cover technology and other distance learning costs to create the best possible learning environment for students during these unprecedented times. As a former high school history teacher, one of my priorities in responding to this virus is limiting the impact it has on a child's education and long-term development. I'll keep working closely with the

Education Department to speed up the release of this critical funding for school districts, teachers, and students."

As the chairman of the subcommittee that funds the Education Department, Blunt worked to secure this funding in the recently-enacted CARES Act. Last week, Blunt commended the Education Department for allocating \$206 million in funding for Missouri colleges, universities, and trade schools to make emergency

cash grants to students and offset other general expenses related to the coronavirus.

Cassville's School Board meets 6 p.m. Thursday night via Zoom. Local implications of the long-term school closure will be discussed and decisions announced after that time.

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Health care professionals needed

Caden Swearingen

Southwest Missouri is preparing for the outbreak of COVID-19 by getting hospital staff and medical teams ready.

Locally, Mercy Hospital in Cassville is coordinating plans with FEMA and the CDC.

There are tests for COVID-19 available for patients with high risk health situations. If your symptoms are severe, they urge you to call 911, your local health department, the CDC or your primary care physician.

Missouri Department of Economic Development and Missouri One Start Division are teaming up to recruit medical professionals that are not currently part of the work force to join a specialized state team that responds to critical health emergencies.

Selected medical professionals and first responders will be part of the Missouri Disaster Medical Assistance Team according to the press release from Missouri's Governor Office of Communications.

Individuals are needed with a background in the fields of medicine, nursing, allied health, dentistry, biomedicine, laboratory science, logistics, and communications.

People are asked to consider this opportunity even if they are a health care student, graduate, a retiree of the health care workforce or have a recently expired professional registration.

Health care professionals can apply online at <https://missourionestart.com/moshef/>.

from COVID-19 have antibodies in their plasma that have the potential to work against the virus. The plasma obtained from the blood of people who recovered from COVID-19 (convalescent plasma) is being evaluated as treatment for hospitalized patients with serious or immediately life-threatening COVID-19 infections, or those judged by a healthcare provider to be at high risk of progression to severe or life-threatening disease. Blood specimens may also be used to better understand patients' immune responses to COVID-19 to assist development of new therapies and vaccines.

Once collected, convalescent plasma will be distributed to hospitals treating COVID-19 patients. Treating physicians identify appropriate recipients and patients must consent to the treatment. After the patient is transfused, caregivers must track and, as required, report data such as improvements or reactions.

Although promising, convalescent plasma has not yet been shown to be effective specifically in treating COVID-19. The FDA's COVID investigational new drug and expanded access programs allow providers at participating hospitals to treat patients with or at risk of severe/life-threatening illness. Clinical trials and data-driven research studying convalescent plasma and other possible COVID treatments are also underway at research centers across the country, including through Mercy Research.

Mercy works with many blood collection agencies

PLASMA from FRONT

across its four states. The various agencies are contacting eligible donors. However, if you haven't been contacted and have a positive COVID-19 test in southwest Missouri and northwest Arkansas, please reach out to Community Blood Center of the Ozarks at 417-227-5000 or 800-280-5337, or cbco.org.

Recovered COVID-19 patients who are interested in donating plasma can also reach out to CoxHealth in Springfield at CoxHealthAccountableCare@coxhealth.com, 417-269-6756.

Physicians can also register patients, or patients may register at:

www.redcrossblood.org/donate-blood/dlp/plasma-donations-from-recovered-covid-19-patients.html#donorform

Plasma donations will be unpaid and strictly voluntary. According to Kullman, eligible candidates for donation:

- Must be over the age of 18.
- Must not be pregnant.
- Must have had a previous positive COVID-19 test.
- Must have been free from COVID-19 symptoms for at least 14 days.

If a patient has been symptom-free for 14 days, a second COVID-19 test will be administered to verify that a patient is no longer contagious.

If a patient has been symptom-free for 28 days, a second test will not be required.

Interested candidates are encouraged to contact the nearest participating provider for further instructions.

When asked if people who suspect they may have had undiagnosed COVID-19, then recovered, could be tested as possible plasma donors,

Kullman said she thought it was a great idea, but, at this time, test kits for antibodies were not widely available.

Senators Lamar Alexander and Roy Blunt are currently working to change the situation.

"We are dealing not just with a medical issue here," they said. "We are dealing with an issue of confidence. For weeks, Americans have watched 24/7 news coverage of the dangers of COVID-19. Even if the government says you can go back to work and back to school, many Americans may be reluctant to leave their homes. The availability of two types of free tests—one, a diagnostic test to determine if you have COVID-19, and two, an antibodies test to determine whether you have had it and are likely immune, at least for the short term—will give Americans confidence that it is safe to go back to work and to school and restart the economy."

The senators said the \$2.2 trillion CARES Act, enacted two weeks ago, specifically allows free tests for every American to determine whether they currently have COVID-19. They said the law also gives Secretary Azar the authority to make a second kind of test free that will determine whether someone has had the disease and therefore is likely immune, at least for a short time. Last Friday, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved the first such antibodies test and expects additional tests to detect antibodies to be developed and available for patients. Soon, antibody tests will be available at a local pharmacy or a doctor's office and only require a pin prick of blood from your finger.

Delta Dental of Missouri donates to COVID-19 relief efforts

Delta Dental of Missouri, the state's leader in dental benefits, today announced it is donating \$500,000 to organizations providing COVID-19 relief efforts in Missouri and in South Carolina where the company does business as Delta Dental of South Carolina. The donation is driven by Delta Dental's ongoing commitment to the health and well-being of people in the communities it serves.

A total of 11 organizations will benefit from the \$500,000 donation, which is being allocated as follows.

In Missouri, Community Foundation of the Ozarks will receive \$40,000 and Ozarks

Food Harvest in Springfield will receive \$5,000.

"We have chosen these organizations because of their dedication to mobilizing their teams and marshalling their resources to address the current health crisis," said Rob Goren, president and chief executive officer at Delta Dental of Missouri. "These organizations will be using any funds they receive to immediately benefit communities we serve at Delta Dental. We are also supporting local food banks to help them meet the dramatically increased demand from those impacted by the Coronavirus."

These donations are in addition to Delta Dental's

regular mission giving commitments to help meet the oral health needs of children and adults in their communities. Last year, Delta Dental of Missouri contributed more than \$1.5 million to support outreach initiatives, educational programs and charitable causes that teach people about the importance of dental health and provide free care to those who cannot afford it. To learn more about grant opportunities through Delta Dental's 2020 Oral Health Grant Program, visit <https://www.deltadentalmo.com/AboutUs/oral-health-grant-program>.

Delta Dental of Missouri is the state's leading dental benefits provider and a 501(c)(4) non-profit organization. It provides 1.9 million members with access to affordable, high-quality dental care through group plans tailored to meet the needs of organizations of all sizes. To learn more about the company, visit www.DeltaDentalMO.com.

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Missouri bicentennial poster contest for students

The Missouri Bicentennial Commission is excited to announce the Bicentennial Poster contest. The contest is open to all students in grades 3-12 in Missouri. Judges will select four posters to commemorate Missouri's bicentennial of statehood. Selected posters will best interpret the theme: Sharing Missouri's stories: past, present, and future.

Each student entry must be sponsored by an eligible institution, which includes public and private schools, home-school networks, nonprofit arts agencies, cultural heritage institutions and public libraries. The COVID-19 pandemic, undoubtedly, complicates the sponsorship process. The commission welcomes sponsoring organizations to help facilitate the contest while students are at home during this time. The competition runs now until October 31, 2020. Judges will select the final designs: two from grades 3-6 and two from grades 7-12. Missouri 2021 will be available on all social media platforms to answer questions, including email: contact@missouri2021.org. Complete guidelines and the online submission form can be found at missouri2021.org/bicentennial-poster.

The Missouri Bicentennial Commission is partnering with Hallmark Creative Marketing Studio to design a brochure and develop the selected designs into their final

poster format.

Vinnorma Shaw's 1921 poster for the Missouri Centennial Exposition at the Missouri State Fair is an iconic reminder of the Missouri Centennial commemoration. Likewise, the final designs chosen by the Missouri Bicentennial Commission will serve as a lasting reminder of the bicentennial. Students, teachers, and parents can find educational materials related to the centennial poster at the website for the Bicentennial Poster page.

Established through a state executive order in October 2018, the Missouri Bicentennial Commission is charged with furthering statewide efforts to honor the State of Missouri and its rich history and heritage on the occasion of its bicentennial.

Missouri 2021 is a statewide initiative of the State Historical Society of Missouri. The mission of Missouri 2021 is to promote a better understanding of Missouri and its regions, communities, and people, both past and present. The Missouri Bicentennial provides opportunities for citizens to celebrate, explore, and share perspectives on the state's rich history and culture.

Keep up-to-date with all Missouri 2021 happenings by following us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram @missouri2021.

Missouri National Guard assesses alternate sites for medical facilities

The Missouri National Guard is currently working to identify alternate care sites around the state to assist in the fight against COVID-19.

The Missouri National Guard is working with state and federal partners including the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Missouri Hospital Association to conduct site surveys for alternate care facilities in six locations throughout the state. The tentative design of the care facilities will provide the medical community with additional options for treatment on a temporary basis during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"These site assessments are another example of how we are putting plans in place to anticipate needs and sup-

port our communities during this unprecedented fight against COVID-19," said Brig. Gen. Levon Cumpston, adjutant general of the Missouri National Guard. "The sites are geographically dispersed to be able to support the entire state if needed and to allow the greatest synergy with existing healthcare systems that can take on the operation of these facilities," Cumpston said.

The Guard assessed the following sites for suitability: In the Kansas City area, Hy-Vee Arena, Independence Event Center, the Adams Mark Hotel and Bartle Hall (KC Convention Center). In the St. Louis area, America's Center Convention Complex and The Dome at America's

Center; in the Springfield area, Bill R. Foster and Family Recreation Center and John Q. Hammons Arena; in the Joplin area, Missouri Southern Campus Leggett and Platt Athletic Center; in the Cape Girardeau area, the Show-Me Center and Student Recreation Center; and in the Columbia area, the Hearnes Center and Mizzou Arena.

Col. Matthew Bacon, 635th Forward Engineer Support Team-Main commander and part of the assessment team said, "Alternate medical care facilities are evaluated on several criteria including areas where demand could exceed capacity (bed space), areas with spaces large enough for pa-

tient populations and areas where utilities are available to start immediate construction." Should the need arise, alternate care facilities could be available in six weeks once they are approved. "These assessed sites will not necessarily be used. The purpose of site inspections is to give the state options for alternate medical care locations, should the need arise," Bacon said.

In addition to sites physically assessed, the Missouri National Guard also completed virtual assessments of over 100 sites. The virtual assessments evaluated the validity to house patients and separate patients from one another as needed.

Ashcroft Announces Approved Electronic Notary Vendors

On April 6, Governor Mike Parson signed Executive Order 20-08, suspending a statutory requirement that a Notary Public must conduct the notarization of official documents while the signer appears personally in front of him or her.

Today, Secretary of State Jay Ashcroft announced the first of what is expected to be several approved vendors capable of providing the audio-video services required to conduct electronic notarization. Additional approvals are anticipated in the coming days. Missouri's current list of approved vendors is available on the Secretary of State's website at <https://www.sos.mo.gov/Electronic-Notary>.

"I am pleased to make this temporary electronic notary service available to Missouri's nearly 70,000 notaries," Ashcroft said. "During this time when we are maintaining physical distance from each other, I am glad to be able to implement this new service just a few days removed from the Governor's Executive Order to help protect the health and safety of notaries and those of us who need notarization services."

The Application for Electronic Notary form is available online. Applications may be completed and emailed to commissions@sos.mo.gov. Applicants will receive a confirmation email when the ap-

plication has been processed and approved.

Questions about the suspension of the personal appearance requirement may be directed to the commissions unit within the Business Services Division by emailing commissions@sos.

sos.mo.gov or calling (573) 751-2783.

If you are not a notary in Missouri and wish to become one, visit the Secretary of State's Notary web page and click "Become a Notary Public" in the left side bar.

HOUSING from FRONT

tunities opening up in Cassville, including WinTech's expansion into Cassville, the future medical marijuana dispensary and the growing operation, plus the new Cornerstone Bank, we'll probably add about 60 people to Cassville's work force over the next 18 months," Walensky said. "Those people will all need a place to live. As things stand now, the waiting list for rental housing has been right at a year. Way too long!"

Walensky's presentation was well-received and he's pleased to announce that Cassville is a recipient of MHDC funds. They will cover a portion of the cost of the new complex, with the balance to be financed by MidContinent Equity Holdings, LLC.

MidContinent Equity extends its gratitude to the Cassville city council, city leaders and to the community for their support throughout the application and funding process. They will be accepting bids from MBE, WBE and Section 3 tradespeople for the project. Interested parties may contact them at 417-276-5404.

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Wind turbine sites under construction to serve Liberty Utilities-Empire customers



Sites in Lawrence and Jasper Counties are being prepared for the erection of wind turbines, estimated to be 500' tall. The turbines will provide electricity to Liberty-Empire Utilities customers in Barry County and counties north. The structures will be similar to turbines prospectively scheduled for construction in Barry County, after Invenergy, a Chicago-based company, solicited landowners for leases. According to the Barry County Recorder's office, 34 leases with Invenergy were signed from March, 2018, through February, 2020.

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More reader-contributed photos of the Liberty-Empire wind farm projects are shown on 15A.

Purdy School staff and local businesses donate books to students

Purdy's preschool through sixth grade students received a surprise in their supplemental education packets this week, thanks to the generosity of several local businesses. Purdy First Grade Teacher, Chelsea Bennett (pictured left), wanted to do something to keep her students engaged and reading during Purdy's Wellness Break.

"As teachers we are doing our best to navigate a very difficult situation. It's so hard. We miss our kids. I wanted to find a way to let our students know that they are loved and cared for and to keep their minds active in a fun way," she said.

After discussing her idea with Purdy Superintendent Mindi Gates (pictured right) and a local business owner, Bennett finalized a plan to purchase three new books for each Purdy Elementary student. Purdy Elementary Principal Julie Dalton (pictured center) ordered, sorted and packaged the books for distribution.



Left to right: 1st Grade teacher, Chelsea Bennett; Elementary principal, Julie Dalton; Superintendent, Mindi Gates.

She noted, "It was one of the most heartwarming jobs I've completed during the Wellness Break. Just knowing that our businesspeople treasure our students and want to help them through this difficult time brought tears to my eyes as I sorted through their new books."

The Purdy Elementary staff wishes to thank the following businesses for their joint contribution of over \$5,000 to enable them to

put books in every student's hands: RM Industries; Austin Hammen Trucking; Hayes Heating and Air; White's Insurance; Farmers Mutual Insurance; Insurance Specialties; Schallert Seed Company; Eagle Logistics; Purdy Farm Center; First State Bank of Purdy; Innovative Natural Solutions; Norm's Farms; Circle M Cattle Company; Mareth Enterprises; and Country Corner.

Haven of the Ozarks Pet of the Week



Meet Rosalind Franklin, the Haven of the Ozarks Pet of the Week! Rosalind is a beautiful one year old kitty who came to us after being found as a stray. She's now looking for her forever home. Rosalind is good with kids, dogs, and other cats. She's also litter box trained. Rosalind will make a great addition to nearly any home, and she hopes you will come meet her once the stay at home order is lifted and visitors can once again come to the Haven. Please call 417-835-3647 or email for more information.

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LOCAL GARDENING NOTES

by Sherry Leverich Lotufo

This week's cooler weather has served as a reminder that spring in the Ozarks can be unpredictable, and taking caution when considering a garden is generally a smart plan.

April's cool, but warming - wet, but sunny - weather is the perfect time to start a garden off with some old-fashioned favorites that respond well to this kind of environment.

Most lettuces and greens will stop producing and "bolt" once hot weather arrives. This means they stop growing and prepare for seed production. Once a lettuce plant decides it is time to "bolt," their leaves become bitter and are no longer good for eating.

Salad greens of all kinds are easy to plant from seed. Some of our lettuce favorites include: Black-seeded Simpson, Bibb, Romaines and Oakleafs - and Arugula varieties as well. Many readily-available seed packets have fun-to-grow lettuce mixes that add variety to a fresh salad.

Lettuce seed can be sewn in a row in a garden, or even planted in a pot. Plant about a ¼" deep in the soil, cover lightly and pat slightly. Keep the soil moist until seedlings pop up. You can accomplish this by carefully watering and keeping covered with a newspaper, just be sure to remove the paper when seedlings emerge so they can gain access to sunshine. Once established, lettuce needs little care except for watering. Carefully harvest leaves as soon as they are big enough to use, but be sure to only harvest ¼ of the leaves at a time to keep the plant healthy and producing for the rest of the spring season. Some let-

tuce varieties can also be left to grow into larger heads, and then harvested at once. Be sure to harvest before hot weather makes the lettuce bitter.

Spinach is easy to establish, just like lettuce. The seeds are larger and can be planted at a distance of 4 - 5 inches apart, rather than sewn like lettuce. Healthy spinach plants will flourish in the cool weather and produce dark green, luscious leaves until hot weather leads the plants to produce seed.

Some other great greens good for cooking, as well as eating fresh, are chard and kale. They can be started this time of year as well. The wonderful thing about chard and kale is that they will continue to produce through the hot summer months and into the fall. Sometimes they fall prey to bugs in the summer months, but once cooler weather arrives, new fresh leaves will start coming out.

Fun root veggies are great to start this time of year too. Potatoes, beets and carrots, as well as quick-to-harvest radishes are easy to get going in the garden. Radish seed can be started along with the lettuce, but when planting potatoes, beets and carrots, consider a garden spot that will be utilized by these plants for several months, as they will not be harvested until June or July. Also, be sure to work up the soil really well in the area where root crops will be planted. They will produce much better if their roots can grow where the soil is not hard and packed.

Seed potatoes can be purchased at feed stores or other businesses where plants and gardening supplies are carried. It's best to



Sherry Lotufo checks the early greens growing in her hoophouse outside Exeter.

cut seed potatoes in halves or thirds (make sure each section has an "eye") a day or two before planting. Plant at least a foot apart, around 6 inches deep in the soil. Potatoes take a while to come up; keep them watered and weeded while new plants get established.

Beets are a favorite of mine. There are many interesting varieties, but even the old-fashioned Detroit Red is a great specimen. They're delicious cooked and pickled, and the greens are delicious sauteed with spinach, chard and kale greens. Beet seeds are similar to spinach seeds in size and can be planted and spaced apart 3 - 4 inches. As they grow, thin out larger ones that can be harvested early to make room for others that will continue to grow in their space.

All of the plants mentioned here can be easily be started from seed and thrive in our Ozarks spring weather. They can also all tolerate a passing frost and chilly

nights. A cold, dreary week of weather may slow them down, but once the warm sunshine wakes them up, they will be producing like wild.

Good luck with your spring garden!
Sherry Leverich Lotufo lives near Exeter. She's the former editor of Ozark Hills and Hollows Magazine, an Agricultural and Human Interest Freelance Writer, and the copy manager for Walmart Private Brands team.

Moseley named to University of Arkansas Fall Chancellor and Dean's List



John Hilsden Moseley was recently named to the University of Arkansas Fall Chancellor and Dean's list. Moseley is pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Poultry Science. After completing his degree, he hopes to be accepted into a Veterinarian program or graduate school. Moseley is a native of Barry county, graduating from Wheaton High School in 2017. His parents are Jay and Natalie Moseley, and his grandparents are John and Billie Jean Higgs.

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BUD HAYWARD
Otis Ray “Bud” Hayward, 81, of Wentworth, passed away on Monday evening, April 13, 2020, while at Laco-ba Homes in Monett.
Bud was born on Decem-ber 31, 1938, in Purdy, son of the late Lennie Otis and Ruth Ella (Roden) Hayward.
Bud received his educa-tion from Purdy Schools and graduated from Purdy High School with the Class of 1956. Bud married Ar-lene Kleiboeker on July 16, 1960, at the Trinity Lutheran Church in Freistatt. She pre-ceded him in death on July 5, 1985. Bud owned and op-erated Hayward Mfg. and Hayward Drilling and Pump Service. He enjoyed hunt-ing, fishing and gardening, as well as having fish fries and

taco feeds for his family and friends.
Bud is survived by his son, Ron Hayward (Glory Sullivan), of Wentworth; two daughters, Kimberly Moen-nig and husband, Glen, of Pierce City, and Brenda Klei-boeker and husband, Steven, of Wentworth; eleven grand-children and seventeen great-grandchildren, Brady, Bailee and Kendyl Hayward, of Wentworth, Jessica and Sean Hood (Madisonann, Tay-lor, Dakota and Hayleigh), of Mesquite, Texas, Jeffrey Moennig (Anden and Van-essa), of Pierce City, Justin and Heather Moennig (Pay-ton, Carson and Makinley), of Pierce City, Jansen and Sa-mantha Moennig, of Pierce City, Jared and Shannon Kleiboeker (Colton and Co-bie), of Wentworth, Jeanell and Ryan Stockton (Mekhi, Cohen and Evie), of Wen-tworth, Jennifer and Phil-lip Elbert (Beckett, Tatum and Pippa), of Pierce City, Jamison and Jennifer Klei-boeker, of Wentworth. He is also survived by three sisters, Willa Dean and Deryll Ste-bler, of Monett, Mary Ruth and Carl Barker, of Monett, and his twin, Bonnie Fay and

OBITUARIES

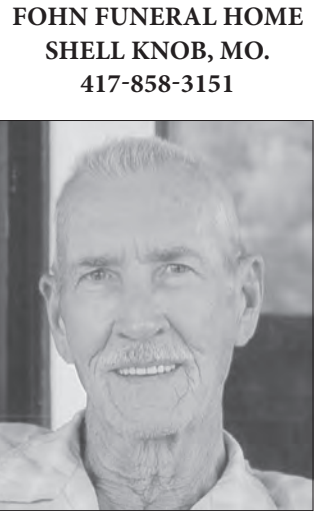
Johnny Williams, of Purdy; one brother, Jim and Jo Hay-ward, of Verona; as well as a host of extended family and friends.
Bud was also preceded in death by one sister, Betty Jean, and a brother-in-law, Don Lowery.
The family would like to extend a special word of grat-itude to the staff at Lacoba for the special care and love given to their Dad during his last days.
Private funeral services for Mr. Hayward will be held at the Bethel Cemetery. Reverend Larry Lowery will be officiating. Friends may pay their respects from 1:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. on Fri-day, April 17, 2020, at the funeral home. Memorial contributions can be made to the Bethel Cemetery or Trinity Lutheran School in care of the funeral home. Arrangements are under the personal care and direction of Buchanan Funeral Home, Monett.



HANNAH GRACE HURLBUT
Hannah Grace Hurlbut, 12, Carthage, passed away early Saturday morning, April 11, 2020, at Mercy Hos-pital, Springfield, with fam-ily by her side. Hannah was born February 28, 2008, in Joplin, to Keith and Ashley (Farran) Hurlbut. She was a 6th grade student at the Carthage Intermediate Cen-ter. Hannah was spunky and very full of life. She loved art, listening to music, singing, puzzles, board games, and spending time with her fam-ily and friends, whom she adored very much. She loved being in the honor choir at school and was also active in the Fellowship of Christian Students.
Survivors include her mother, Ashley Weston (Doug); her father, Keith Hurlbut (Nikki); broth-ers and sisters, Caleb Hurl-but, Olivia Hurlbut, Eliza-beth Hurlbut, Cameron Weston, Blake Weston, Ma-son Weston, and Shelby Sleeth (Jacob); a nephew, Soren Sleeth; grandparents, Kim Gallentine, Chris Far-ran (Hollie), Ron Hurlbut (Marilee), Kelly Spencer (Scott), Tim Tommey, and Opal Weston; two great-grandparents; and a host of aunts, uncles and cousins.
She was preceded in death by a grandma, Gail Hurlbut, and a grandpa, Gary Weston.
Private family services will be held for Hannah at 11 a.m., Friday, April 17, 2020. Services will be available to view via live stream post on the Knell Mortuary Face-book page. A celebration of life will take place at a later date for everyone to attend. Hannah’s register book will be available for people to sign from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Wednesday, April 15, 2020, through Thursday, April 16,

2020, at Knell Mortuary. In-terment will take place in Park Cemetery, Carthage. In lieu of flowers, contributions can be made to the Hannah Grace Hurlbut Memorial Fund in care of Knell Mor-tuary. Online condolences may be expressed through www.knellmortuary.com. Arrangements are under the direction and personal care of Knell Mortuary.

DAVID PAUL WILHELM
David Paul Wilhelm, age 84, of Shell Knob, passed away Saturday, April 11, 2020, at Mercy Hospital in Rogers, Arkansas.
Memorial services will be planned at a later date. Ar-rangements are under direc-tion of Fohn Funeral Home in Shell Knob.
Contributions may be made to Central Crossing Fire District, P.O. Box 86, Shell Knob, MO 64757 in memory of David.
Visit fohnfuneralhome.com for online obituaries, guestbook and private condolences.



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STEPHEN GODSEY
Stephen Godsey, age 86, of Golden, passed away on Tuesday, April 7, 2020, at Mercy Hospital in Rogers, Arkansas. Mr. Godsey, son of Carn and Francis (Wilson) Godsey, was born on July 7, 1933, in Pacific Junction, Iowa. On February 11, 1953, he was united in marriage to Mary Pitt; she survives. Mr. Godsey served in the United States National Guard for fif-teen years, and subsequently went on to drive a truck for Farmland Industries. He en-joyed spending time with his family and fishing.
Additional survivors in-clude one son, Kirk Godsey, of Golden; two daughters, Mary Godsey, of Golden, and Ava Henry, of Evans, Colora-do; seven grandchildren; and several great-grandchildren.
In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by one son, Patrick Godsey; and two daughters, Debra Phil-lips and Rochelle Ford.
A celebration of life will be held at a later date.
Cremation arrangements are under the direction of the White Funeral Home and Crematory, Cassville.

White Funeral Home and Crematory
www.whitefuneralhome.org
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VONCINE EUNICE ABRAMOVITZ
Voncine Eunice Abramo-vitz (Breedlove) passed away on Tuesday, April 14, 2020, in Monett. Due to the CO-VID-19 restrictions, private family services are being held. Family and friends are invited to visit at Buchanan Funeral Home in Monett on Thursday, April 16, 2020, from 8 a.m.-8 p.m.

MARGARET ANN HOLLE
Margaret Ann Holle, 78, passed away in Monett on April 7, 2020. A private fami-ly graveside service was held. There will be a memorial ser-vice at a later date. Arrange-ments have been entrusted to Buchanan Funeral Home, Monett.



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The Missouri Bar provides form for National Healthcare Decisions Day

The initial funding for this commitment is provided by the CFO, Missouri Foundation for Health and the Louis L. and Julia Dorothy Coover Charitable Foundation managed by Commerce

Trust Company.

MFH is extending a multiyear partnership with the CFO by providing \$300,000 in funding for COVID-19 response and recovery. The CFO also has had a long-standing partnership with the Coover Charitable Foundation, which will repurpose about \$350,000 in annual grant funds to the CFO to focus on COVID-19 related issues. The CFO also will repurpose the majority of its FY21 discretionary grant-making budget for this fund.

The CFO will announce an accelerated grantmaking process within several days. Information will be posted at cfozarks.org/COVID19 and distributed via traditional and social media channels.

The COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund continues to accept donations from the general public at cfozarks.org/donate. Checks can be sent to: Community

Foundation of the Ozarks, P.O. Box 8960, Springfield, MO, 65801. Please note “COVID-19” on the check.

The CFO is cited in Springfield-Greene County’s long-term disaster recovery plan as the lead charitable foundation to coordinate the philanthropic response to a community emergency. The CFO will convene area grantmakers to coordinate additional funding opportunities either through the CFO’s COVID-19 fund or by reducing duplication of effort among philanthropic funders.

The impact occurring for nonprofits across the region holds many similarities to the CFO’s experience in providing disaster response and recovery through philanthropy since 2003.

“We already are seeing how the COVID-19 pandemic is affecting the work our nonprofits do to fill gaps

and support community needs,” CFO President Brian Fogle said. “We are so grateful to our funding partners for their quick assessment in making funds available and their confidence in the CFO to get this money working for the nonprofits in our region.”

The CFO grants to 501(c)3 and equivalent nonprofits such as faith and civic entities, which in turn provide services to their constituents. Under IRS rules, the CFO does not make grants directly to individuals.

The Community Foundation of the Ozarks is a regional public charitable foundation established in 1973 that provides asset and resource development, grantmaking and public leadership through a network of donors, 49 affiliate foundations and some 600 nonprofit partners across central and southern Missouri.

It's not fun to talk about end-of-life decisions, but many advocates say doing so can help take stress off loved ones later. Missourians can easily set up their own durable power of attorney for health care thanks to free materials authored by volunteer lawyers and provided by The Missouri Bar.

The free advance care directive form is available 24/7, but the occasion of National Healthcare Decisions Day, April 16, 2020, makes it a particularly timely resource. National Healthcare Decision Day (NHDD) is a national effort that brings together state and community groups across the nation to educate the public about the importance of making advance health care decisions and empower them to complete an advance care directive.

versation well in advance of when you face those circumstances. The Missouri Bar is here to help make it easier with some easy-to-follow forms that help ensure your health care choices are honored while also preventing your family members and providers from having to make those decisions alone.”

Bender noted the Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care and a Health Care Directive is available, in English and Spanish, at no charge to Missourians. The form, drafted by licensed Missouri lawyers, puts your decisions in writing and allows you to designate an agent to carry them out. The forms are available by calling 573-635-4128 or online at <http://missourilawyershelp.org/legal-topics/durable-power-of-attorney-for-health/>.

To learn more about NHDD, advance health care planning, directives and other tools for starting the conversation, visit TheConversationProject.org/NHDD.

During Coronavirus, we must take silver linings where we can. A new study shows during the pandemic, spam phone calls – a non-medical epidemic – have declined 58% nationally and Missouri ranks No. 12 seeing the largest decrease of any state.

AllAreaCodes.com today released a study, Coronavirus Causing Decline in Spam Calls, after analyzing one million consumer complaints to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) since the World Health Organization (WHO) declared a global pandemic on March 8.

Nationally, the number of complaints has steadily decreased every week. March 8 saw a 15% decline, March 22 a 23% decline, and the most recent figures week of April 5

While the slowing of spam calls likely correlates with the economic shutdown, Americans who receive spam calls remain encouraged to file a complaint with the FTC to continue to combat this issue facing our country.

Colonel Eric T. Olson, superintendent of the Missouri State Highway Patrol, announces that the Patrol is extending the suspension of all written and skills-based driver road testing at all locations until April 27, 2020. This includes operator, commercial driver license, and motorcycle testing.

In addition, the Patrol is extending the suspension of all salvage inspections at all locations and all bus inspections until April 27, 2020. This does not affect local businesses that are the providers of safety and emission inspections for the public and may continue to be open

The Patrol is monitoring the status of the COVID-19 pandemic and will update

The Missouri State Highway Patrol appreciates the

public's cooperation in this effort to ensure public health and safety.

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Missouri Department of Conservation urges public to "bee-friend" native pollinators



The green sweat bee (pictured) is one of 455 species of native bees in Missouri. Native bees are important pollinators of many popular food crops.

Support Missouri bees this spring by planting native flowers and mowing less. Spring and summer months bring both the buzz of lawnmowers and bees. These fuzzy flyers are important pollinators, playing a crucial role in the production of many favorite fruits and vegetables. The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) encourages the public to “bee-friend” these valuable native pollinators.

“Missouri is home to around 450 species of native bees, but it’s not uncommon for more to be identified each year,” said MDC Urban Wildlife Biologist Erin Shank. “There are several common bees Missourians will encounter, including the bumblebee, carpenter bees, sweat bees, and the leafcutter bee.”

Most native bees only live about one year. They emerge in the spring as adults, visiting flowers and buildings nests. Many species, such as bumblebees, make their nests underground, while others, such as leafcutter and mason bees, will set up shop in small cavities found in wood or in the pith of plant stems.

Bees may send some running for the hills for fear of being stung, but most native bees are harmless.

“Most don’t have stingers long enough to penetrate human skin,” said MDC Private Land Services Division Chief Bill White. White and his team work to create and maintain native wildlife habitat on private lands.

Additionally, native bees are doing their agricultural duty by pollinating flowering plants that provide food, fiber, and even medicines.

Shank explained that native bees, such as the bumblebee, are effective pollinators because of a technique called buzz pollination.

“It’s a vibrating movement involving their wing muscles that allows the bumblebee to free pollen from the anther, the flower’s pollen-producing structure,” Shank said. “This strategy causes the flower to explosively release pollen. There are some flowering plants that will release pollen only through buzz pollination. One favorite, the

growth of another, can help facilitate the pollination of fruits and vegetables. For example, planting bee balm can help pollinate tomatoes, peppers, and eggplant. Other examples of flowering companion plants include sunflowers, wild hyacinth, blue wild indigo, purple prairie clover, and common milkweed.

There are several options of flowering trees and shrubs, too.

“Redbud, American plum, and golden currant are great for pollinators,” said White.

Shank noted that providing more flowers can also mean not mowing the lawn as much.

“Clover, violets, and dandelions are some common lawn plants that provide vital food for bees – especially in the spring before most flowers appear,” Shank explained. “Delaying mowing or mowing higher can help bees by letting the plants grow. Even allowing access to the ground by not mulching every inch can help. Some bees need access to the soil to excavate

their nests.”

NO YARD? NO PROBLEM!

Shank said residents who live in urban areas without access to a yard can still be a big help to native bees.

Surprisingly, St. Louis has one of the most diverse bee populations in the Midwest, with more than 200 species found in the city limits alone.

“You can offer bees native flowers in a planting box or pot,” Shank explained. “Getting involved in a community garden or helping plant at a nearby park is great, too.”

For those without a green thumb, White encourages hanging bee houses.

“These houses, which look a lot like bird houses, can provide nesting space for solitary bee species,” White said. “They should be placed next to native blooming plants because most bees nest only a few yards away from their food source. They should also face east to absorb the morning sunlight.”

White stressed the need for yearly maintenance on bee houses.



A bee house is a great way to support habitat for solitary bees. Missourians can construct their own bee house by using scrap wood with covered nesting and resting holes.

“After bees emerge in the spring, either the used tubes need to be removed or plugged so they can’t be re-used,” White stressed. “The tubes will harbor parasites and disease, as well as pollen mites that could impact another generation of bees wanting to use the house.”

Though bee houses help many of Missouri’s native solitary bees, White noted that a bee house can’t replace the critical need bees have for flowering native plants.

UN-BEE-LIEVABLE

Bee pollinators’ national value is around \$30 billion annually, and they are responsible for 1 in 3 bites of food Americans eat. Without bees and other pollinators, humans would not have foods such as grapes, nuts, coffee, and even chocolate.

“It’s easy to forget their critical role in agricultural food production,” Shank said. “But by making small strides to plant native flowers and shrubs, Missourians can support bee health and habitat.”

For more information on native companion plants, contact the Missouri Prairie Foundation’s Grow Native! program at moprairie.org/grownative

To learn more about Missouri’s native bee species, visit MDC’s online Field Guide at <https://bit.ly/2Iq5OBw>

MDC reminds the public that it is still critical to continue to heed all recommendations for physical distancing, avoiding overcrowding, handwashing, and other public health measures during outdoor activities.

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Tax Time During Coronavirus: What Retirees Need To Know

By Chris Orestis

Retirement and the effects of aging come with a lot of changes, but at least one thing remains constant.

Every year, Uncle Sam wants to make sure you're paying any taxes you might owe him, and that's true whether you are retired or not. That said, though, there are tax rules that are specific to older Americans, so it's important to be aware of the different ways you might be able to reduce your tax bill that weren't available to you when you were younger.

Normally, of course, April 15 is the deadline to file your tax returns. But this year, because of the disruption caused by the coronavirus, the deadline has been extended to July 15. Remember also, if you currently receive Social Security and don't file taxes anymore, you will receive a government stimulus check (or auto-deposit) of \$1,200 automatically without filing any additional paperwork.

Meanwhile, that tax deadline extension means you've got extra time to explore some of those rules that seniors can take advantage of. A few to be mindful of include:

You may qualify for a larger standard deduction. For many Americans, including many seniors, there's no reason to itemize your deductions anymore because the standard deduction is so high – \$12,200 for a single person and \$24,400 for a married couple filing jointly. But you can get an even higher standard deduction if either you or your spouse is 65 or older, and a still higher deduction if either of you is blind. If you aren't itemizing, then you want to make sure you're getting the maximum

standard deduction that you are allowed because that's going to impact how much of your income is taxed.

Yes, your Social Security benefit may be taxed. The rules for how much – if any – of your Social Security benefit is taxed can be tricky, so you want to be extra careful with that. According to the Social Security Administration, if you're filing as an individual, and your Social Security benefit plus any other taxable income you have is between \$25,000 and \$34,000, you may be taxed up to 50 percent of your benefit. If your combined income is more than \$34,000 then up to 85 percent of the benefit may be taxable. For married couples filing jointly, if the combined income is between \$32,000 and \$44,000, you may have to pay tax on up to 50 percent of your benefits. If your income is more than \$44,000 then up to 85 percent of your benefits may be taxable.

You may be able to deduct long-term care insurance premiums. Owners of long-term care insurance policies can take tax deductions on premiums they pay for qualified plans – as well as other reimbursed medical expenses such as Medicare premiums – as long as the premiums are greater than 7.5 percent of adjusted gross income.

Selling your life insurance policy has advantages. There can be significant tax benefits for people who sell their life insurance policy

through what is called a "life settlement." Under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), the proceeds from a life settlement are fully exempt from federal taxes if the policy owner is terminally or chronically ill. Those who are not terminally or chronically ill do pay capital-gain taxes on the proceeds from the sale, minus the amount in premiums the policyholder paid over the life of the policy.

You may want to increase contributions to your retirement accounts. Of course, many seniors aren't adding anything to their IRAs or 401(k)s. Instead, they are regularly withdrawing money to pay for monthly living expenses. But if you're still working, you can increase your contributions, which can both reduce your tax bill now and give you an even larger nest egg when you do retire. The IRS limits how much you can contribute each year, but that limit increases once you turn 50.

The important thing to remember is that you may have options at tax time that you hadn't thought about. Knowing the tax rules and how they apply to your personal situation, and seeking professional advice, can make a huge difference.



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Missouri receives federal rural transit grant

Missouri Governor Mike Parson announced that Missouri is the first state in the nation to receive a federal grant for rural transit as part of national COVID-19 relief efforts.

The U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Transit Administration (FTA) yesterday announced a \$61.7 million grant to the Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) as part of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act signed by President Donald J. Trump on March 27, 2020.

"These funds will provide a needed boost to rural transit systems in Missouri, as many have reduced service due to the COVID-19 crisis," Governor Parson said. "I want to thank Secretary Chao and our Missouri congressional leaders, Representative Sam Graves and Senators Josh Hawley and Roy Blunt, for their role in obtaining these important funds for our state. This relief will help keep Missouri's vital rural transit system operating for people who have limited transportation options and need it most."

The CARES Act provides emergency assistance and

health care response for individuals, families, and businesses affected by COVID-19 and provides emergency appropriations to support Executive Branch agency operations during the pandemic. It includes \$25 billion in transit assistance funding to support public transit recipients of urban and rural area funds, with \$22.7 billion to large and small urban areas and \$2.2 billion to rural areas.

MoDOT will use the funds for operating expenses and capital assistance for 30 Missouri rural agencies, including the Cape Girardeau County Transit Authority; the nonprofit OATS Inc., which operates in 87 Missouri counties; the City of Excelsior Springs; and the New Bourbon Regional Port Authority Ferry Boat Opera-

tor. Please see FTA's apportionment tables for the totals apportioned to each area.

Operating expenses incurred beginning on January 20 are eligible, including operating expenses to maintain transit services as well as payment for administrative leave for transit personnel due to reduced operations during an emergency.

"MoDOT will work closely with rural public transit providers to implement this critical funding. I want to thank my staff for reacting so quickly when the grant availability was announced," MoDOT Director Patrick McKenna said. "The grant application clearly painted a picture of Missouri's rural transit challenges as a result of the coronavirus, and we are grateful to receive this vital aid."



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Missouri FFA honors members for achievement

The Missouri FFA Association will honor fellow members for outstanding achievements April 20–24 utilizing video releases accessible through social media and association websites. The 92nd Missouri FFA Convention was postponed due to the pandemic, but video releases and a summer event will replace many activities normally held during the annual April convention.

Missouri FFA Executive Secretary Keith Dietzschold detailed this year’s plans.

“Due to the pandemic facing our state, nation and world, the tough decision was made to postpone our convention,” Dietzschold said. “As of press time, we are weighing all options, and are hopeful we can have a one-day summer convention held face-to-face or virtually. In the meantime, we are moving ahead to recognize many of our outstanding members. April 20-24 we will be releasing the names of award recipients in the following categories - proficiency awards, chapter awards and the top-four star candidates, along with a list of state degree winners. To share this information, we will use Missouri FFA Facebook and Instagram pages, as well as missouriffa.org and the convention media website. We are exploring when and how to hold Career and Leadership Development Events. Hopefully, later this spring we can shed light on when these can be held and in what fashion – face-to-face or virtual. Our number-one concern is your safety, and we are asking you to continue following guidelines set in place by our leaders.”

State Star Farmer, State Star in Agribusiness, State Star in Placement and State Star in Agriscience will be named during a summer event, with area stars and the top four in each category to be recognized through the April video releases. During the video releases, 578 FFA members will be recognized with awards in 46 agricultural proficiency areas for development of their supervised agricultural experience (SAE) program. The proficiency areas are varied and include production, management and communications disciplines. In Missouri, SAE programs during the 2018-19 school year generated more than \$50 million in student income.

Missouri FFA Association Advisor Leon Busdieker said the state association will present the State FFA Degree to a record 988 members who, as a result of their agricultural and leadership achievements, have qualified for the state's highest FFA degree.

"Missouri FFA members have always considered earning the State FFA Degree an honor," said Busdieker. "Instead of limiting the number of individuals eligible to earn the degree, the Missouri FFA Association has established a minimum set of qualifications, increasing the number of recipients. This gives students a more defined path to the recognition."

Missouri has the largest number of American FFA Degree recipients of any state. In October 2019, 520 Missouri FFA members received the American FFA Degree during the National FFA Convention held in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Two Missouri FFA chapters will be chartered during the summer session. The

new chapters are Climax Springs FFA Chapter, Climax Springs, and Hillcrest FFA Chapter, Springfield.

Missouri FFA President Brenden Kleiboeker, Pierce City FFA Chapter member, said this year’s theme HOME has taken on a whole new meaning.

"Nearly a year ago, the 2019-2020 state FFA officers chose the theme HOME for our year," Kleiboeker said. "Though we all came from different corners of the state, we all found our home in the Missouri FFA Association. We all had different life experiences, different joys and different trials. However, each and every one of us found our home in Missouri FFA. Little did we know that in the spring of 2020 HOME would have a much different meaning. This spring, nearly every one of nearly 26,000 Missouri FFA members is confined to their home. FFA members have never been ones to back down from a challenge. This is a great time for FFA members to put extra time into their Supervised Agricultural Experience, or perhaps extra time into studying for a Career Development Event or Leadership Development Event. Though times are uncertain, I am confident Missouri FFA members are equipped with the leadership skills necessary to persevere. Even with nothing set in stone, after the battle has been won against this invisible enemy, I truly look forward to later this year when members will come HOME to Columbia for the 2020 Missouri FFA Convention."

The Missouri FFA will present awards this summer to several adults and groups for their support of agricultural education and FFA. This year, 26 Honorary State FFA Degrees will be presented. An additional 16 honorary degrees will be presented to parents of retiring state officers.

The Missouri FFA Association is recognizing Diane Olson, Jefferson City, with the Distinguished Service Citation. Olson from 1985 to 2019 worked with promotion and education programming for Missouri Farm Bureau, Jefferson City. She worked with Agriculture in the Classroom and Agricultural WebQUEST, started with a federal grant secured by Olson. Olson was the force behind the annual Health and Safety Roundup at the Western Farm Show, Kansas City, and was instrumental in developing the GROW EXHIBIT at the St. Louis Science Center, St. Louis. Olson retired from Farm Bureau in 2019 and is currently working with the University of Missouri to develop a demonstration farm for hands-on experiences. Presentation of the Distinguished Service Citation will take place this summer.

The Missouri FFA Association has 348 chapters and 25,945 members, ranking sixth as a state in membership. FFA strives to make a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education.

Exeter City Hall will be unstaffed Wednesday and Thursday, beginning April 20.

For emergencies, city clerk, Myrna Eisenbraughn, may be contacted at 417-342-9740

WIND TURBINE PHOTOS from 8A



The nose cone to which wind turbine propellorss attach (above), and a view of a construction site (below) of the Liberty-Empire Utilities wind farm project which will serve customers in Barry County.



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28-30c

Cassville Primary students honored for responsibility



Cassville Primary counseling staff and teachers team up to present a different character trait every month. Classroom teachers then nominate students for awards in recognition of exemplifying that trait. Students were selected during the month of January for responsibility.

Kindergarten and Kinder Academy award winners are pictured above, from left to right. In the front row: Savannah Doucet, Zoei Stockton, Jozy Young, Avalynn Press, Harper Ragsdale and Paisley Lehman. Back row: Jameson Fellwock, Kole Younger, Lucas Thompson, Jensen Ritchie, Eli Buckner, Jack Weiser, Michael Bauman and John Farris. Madison Still is absent from the photo.



Cassville Primary counseling staff and teachers team up to present a different character trait every month. Classroom teachers then nominate students for awards in recognition of exemplifying that trait. Students were selected during the month of January for responsibility.

First grade award winners are pictured above, from left to right. In the front row: Addison Dodge, Briellla Houston, Aliza Jagger, Kynadee Carter, Isabell Huffman and Presley Daniels. Back row: Kole Flynn, Logan Vance, Luke Stouffer, Ashton Henderson and John Godsey. Hayle Sizemore is absent from the photo.



Cassville Primary counseling staff and teachers team up to present a different character trait every month. Classroom teachers then nominate students for awards in recognition of exemplifying that trait. Students were selected during the month of January for responsibility.

Second grade award winners are pictured above, from left to right. In the front row: Baili Reynolds, Allie Norris, Liliana Burgess, Aleah Williams and Allison Jagger. Back row: Ashton Edie, Roper Wiseman, Nic Luna, Garrett Matthew and Zayden Miller. Jamie Frazier, Serenity Lyons and Aislynn Christen is absent from the photo.

Cassville Middle School Students of the Month



The March Cassville Middle School Students of the Month, sponsored by Willis Insurance, are pictured.

In photo, left to right, CMS Principal Mr. Jimmie Barton; Audrey Gosvener, daughter of Laila Riffe and Gregory Gosvener of Cassville; Kaiya Cooper, daughter of Tempest and Joe Cooper of Cassville; Logan Wingo, son of Jeremiah and Cailey Wingo of Cassville; representing Willis Insurance is Devon Forsythe and Andy Reavis.

CMS Students of the Month are nominated by CMS teachers and coaches based upon academic excellence, perseverance, or improvement, displaying exemplary citizenship and are a positive influence on school culture.

Students of the Month receive a candy bar, a Subway gift card and will enjoy lunch at a local restaurant with Mr. Barton.

Sign encourages
Roaring River Health and Rehab staff



A sign placed at the entrance of Roaring River Health and Rehab in Cassville offers encouragement to their employees, designated as “essential.” Director of Nursing, Katherine Taylor, says the staff is doing its best to boost the morale of residents, who are missing their families.



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