

Staying home

Brennan Watkins almost transferred to avoid losing his senior season, but COVID sent him right back | Page C1



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County entities unite to vaccinate masses against coronavirus

BY KELLIE HOUX
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NORTH KANSAS CITY — A Northland mass COVID-19 vaccination site will get off the ground this week thanks to the state's adjustment to vaccine allocations announced Monday, Feb. 1.

According to information from the state's Department of Health and Senior Services, North Kansas City and Liberty hospitals, along with Truman Medical Center were selected to receive just over half of the state's weekly vaccine allocation in the Kansas City region for the month during the weeks of Feb. 1 and Feb. 15 as distribution is available. The HCA Health System and St. Luke's Health System will receive allocations for the weeks of Feb. 8 and Feb. 22.

"The hospitals included in the first phase of this plan were selected for their ability to rapidly begin community vaccination efforts on a large scale," said Herb B. Kuhn, Missouri Hospital Association president and CEO.

The first vaccination clinic will take place Thursday to Saturday, Feb. 4 to 6, at Cerner World Headquarters,

"...Vaccination is one of the most powerful tools in our toolbox to prevent further spread of COVID-19."

Gary Zaborac
public health director

2800 Rock Creek Parkway in North Kansas City. Vaccines will be available from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. on designated dates. Appointments are required, and walk-ups will not be accommodated. Those coming to get vaccines must wear a surgical or N-95 mask.

Those who completed the Clay County Public Health Center interest form on the center's website and who are prioritized under the state's current vaccine tier system will receive invitations to sign up for an appointment. Invitations will be distributed in the

order of form completion.

Ahead of the state's allocation adjustment, efforts to create a mass vaccine site in the county were underway as part of Operation Safe, the name given to the Clay County coalition formed to vaccinate residents.

The coalition consists of Liberty and North Kansas City Hospital, the local health center, Cerner, William Jewell College and the cities of Liberty, Gladstone, Smithville, Kearney, North Kansas City and Excelsior Springs. The goal of the coalition is to provide eligible individuals who work or live in Clay County an opportunity to receive a COVID-19 vaccine as soon as possible within the state's tiered structure.

In a press conference Monday, Feb. 1, CCPHC Director Gary Zaborac said efforts will include rapid deployment of doses, but he also urged patience as the state works to fill vaccine orders.

"Along with continuing to wear masks, keeping physical distance and washing hands, vaccination is one of the most powerful tools in

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LIBERTY BANK ROBBED

LIBERTY —The Liberty branch of Capitol Federal Bank, 1911 Star Drive, was robbed Tuesday, Feb. 2.

The Kansas City office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation is currently seeking community help in identifying the individual seen in security footage. The person of interest is described as wearing a dark coat, pajama pants and carrying a multicolored handbag.

If anyone has information about the robbery, call FBI KC at 512-8200 or the TIPS Hotline at 474-TIPS (8477). A reward is possible



SUBMITTED PHOTO

The person of interest is described as wearing a dark coat, pajama pants and carrying a multicolored handbag. If anyone has information about the robbery, call FBI KC at 512-8200 or the TIPS Hotline at 474-TIPS (8477).

for information that may be significant to the case. More details on this developing story will be published as they become available.

Library challenges adults to read

Mid-Century Public Library System is encouraging adults across the Kansas City metro to participate in its annual Winter Reading Challenge now through March 15.

Adults should read five books in two months with the promise of an exclusive coffee mug given to all those who complete the challenge as well as the chance to win a trip to St. Louis (which can be taken any time in 2021), courtesy of Drury Hotels, according to a Mid-Century press release.

The Challenge, open to those 18 and older, is now in its eighth year of

promoting leisure reading among adults. "The past year has been incredibly stressful, and one great way to combat stress is reading. Reading offers tremendous benefits to people of all ages, but oftentimes it gets put on the back burner for adults with busy day-to-day schedules," said Amy Fisher, manager of MCPL's Information and Reader Services Department. "The Winter Reading Challenge offers adults a chance to reclaim those benefits and enjoy being part of a fun, citywide movement."

This year's Winter Reading Challenge

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GROWING IN FAITH

Kearney's Annunciation Church celebrates 35 years

KEARNEY — Back in 1986, Bishop John J. Sullivan consecrated the then newly-built Catholic Church of the Annunciation on North Jefferson Street.

On Tuesday, Jan. 19, the parish community celebrated the 35th anniversary of that dedication. Members of the parish gathered for a special Mass, "On the Anniversary of the Dedication of a Church," according to a press release.

Catholic Christians have been worshiping in Kearney



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Four pastors helped celebrate the 35th anniversary of the Church of the Annunciation: Fr. Bill Fox; the previous pastor, Fr. Al Ebach who preached the homily; the first pastor of Church of the Annunciation, Fr. Ken Criqui; and the current parish administrator, Fr. Terrell Finnell, pastor at Good Shepherd Church, Smithville, concelebrated the Mass.

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A Close Call.

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