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Time for all-area teams

Sports Writer Mac Moore presents winter sports' top athletes, coaches | **Page B1-B2**

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ELECTION NEWS

APRIL 2021 WINNERS EDITION

Incumbents retain seats on Kearney board

BY AMANDA LUBINSKI

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KEARNEY — Familiar faces will continue to lead the city of Kearney after voters handily supported the reelection of Kathy Barger for First Ward alderman with nearly 63% of the 412 votes cast Tuesday, April 6. Second Ward Alderman Dan Holt ran unopposed in his reelection bid, winning another term as well. Based on unofficial results from Clay County Election Board, both will serve another two-year term.



Kathy Barger

"I'm very excited," Barger told the Courier-Tribune after her win Tuesday.

Barger said the city has a lot of work to do and she is grateful for the opportunity to serve once again and

Use tax fails by nearly 67% of vote

thanked voters for placing their trust in her.

"I think the support was overwhelming, and I am humbled by that," she said.

Use tax

While candidates were celebrating their wins, they were also marking a loss as the city's use tax effort failed. Unofficial results show Kearney voters said "no" to the measure by nearly 67% of the 760 votes cast.

If approved, the effort would have meant purchases from out-of-state vendors delivered to a Kearney address would be taxed just as an item purchased in a

Kearney store is. Proponents of the measure said passage would have meant an equal playing field in terms of taxes charged to online purchases and those in brick-and-mortar stores.

Both Barger and Mayor Randy Pogue said they were disappointed with the use tax question result. Pogue said the tax is "extremely vital" to Kearney and, if the Board of Aldermen approve to do so, it will brought back to voters on a later ballot.

Barger said she feels having another tax issue on the ballot, Metropolitan Community College's question about expanding its footprint into the Kearney district, did not help the city's effort.

With roughly 33% of voters in favor of the use tax measure, Pogue said a bit more effort to better educate the 18 to 20% more of voters needed for passage needs done.

"We've got some more work to do," he said.

Community college will expand footprint in parts of Northland

BY AMANDA LUBINSKI

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CLAY COUNTY — Based on uncertified election results from the Tuesday, April 6 ballot in Clay and Platte counties, Metropolitan Community College will expand its offering of in-district tuition rates to those in Liberty Public Schools, but not those in Kearney or Smithville districts.

The ballot question in Kearney, Liberty and Smithville school districts, along with others in the Kansas City area, asked voters if they wanted to increase their property taxes 21.28¢ per \$100 of assessed valuation to provide in-district tuition

rates to students from those K-12 districts who decide to attend the community college. LPS voters in Clay County said "yes" with 58% of the 4,543 votes cast.

In contrast, those in the Kearney district overwhelming said "no," with roughly 78% of the 1,402 votes cast against the measure in Clay County and 67% of the votes cast in Clinton County. In Smithville's district, 89% of the 132 votes cast in Platte County said "no," while another 79% of 956 votes said "no" in the portion of Smithville School District in Clay County.

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Betty Garton next Holt mayor

HOLT — Voters in Holt city limits elected restaurant owner Betty Garton as the next mayor. Garton, who has experience as a former alderman, bested fellow former Alderman Leon Clifford, according to uncertified election results from Clay and Clinton counties Tuesday, April 6.

In Clay County, Garton garnered more than 66% of the vote with 43 of the

65 votes cast. In Clinton County, Garton took an even larger percentage of the small number of votes cast, claiming nearly 95% of the 19 total votes.

Aldermen race

In the aldermanic race, of the six candidates vying for office, top two vote-getters Thomas Waters and Waneva Smith came out on top. In Clay County, Waters

claimed the most votes with 38 of the 111 cast. Smith claimed 26 votes.

In Clinton County, Waters also captured the most votes with 39% of the 31 votes cast while Smith came in second with 29%.

Mayor and aldermen in Holt serve two-year terms.

Garton, Waters and Smith will be sworn in at the next aldermen meeting.

Newcomer claims Liberty council seat

BY KELLIE HOUX

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LIBERTY — Kelley Wrenn Pozel will take the Liberty City Council's Second Ward seat that will be vacated by Rae Moore, who decided not to run for reelection.



Kelley Wrenn Pozel

Pozel took 43% of the 718 votes cast Tuesday, April 6, in the unofficial count from the Clay County Election Board.

"I have been so overwhelmed," she said of her win after returns came in. "I woke up election morning and felt like I had won already. I have made new friends. I am so grateful that I will get to be on the council to represent the ward and the city. I am just very happy."

Pozel, who has served on the Liberty Historic District Review Commission, believes her experience helped sway voters.

"I believe my authenticity also helps," she explained. "What you see is what you get. I am who I am, and want to be myself as I serve others. I am also hopeful that my credentials such as a Moms Demand Action leader helped too. I can't downplay what I am involved in."

Pozel said she will continue to speak for the removal of the Confederate statue in Fairview Cemetery.

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Liberty mayor ready for 5th term

BY KELLIE HOUX

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LIBERTY — Mayor Lyndell Brenton will take the mayor's oath of office for the fifth time on Monday, April 12, in Liberty.



Lyndell Brenton

In reacting to his win Tuesday, April 6, Brenton told the Courier-Tribune the first word that comes to mind is "humbling."

Brenton captured 83%

of the 2,285 votes cast, according to the unofficial count from the Clay County Election Board.

"I appreciate the confidence of the citizens with their votes," he said. "I would be remiss if I didn't give credit to the high-performing council and city staff, both are part of these accomplishments."

Brenton said the city continues to be progressive in appealing to industries and housing developments.

"I look forward to the next two years as I get to help move Liberty forward," he said. "I am just thankful and humble

by the vote; it's as much about the city staff and council as it is me."

The mayor said the collective council and city staff are responsive and thoughtful about every issue from the simplest to the most challenging.

"We endeavor to come up with the best solutions we can," he said. "First and foremost, we won't get back to the old normal, but we will find our post-pandemic normal. Then there are the social issues that are driving conversation such as cemetery Block 174 and the proposed memorial."

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