


Community Advisory Group Announces Hall of Fame Inductees

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BESSERT



KEON



LORENZ

By Jane Keon

Pine River Superfund Citizen Task Force

Three local men are recipients of this year's CAG Hall of Fame Awards. Bernie Bessert, Norm Keon and Ed Lorenz were voted into the Hall of Fame by the members of the Pine River Superfund Citizen Task Force, an EPA-recognized Community Advisory Group (CAG). All three were involved with the formation of the CAG at its beginning in December, 1997.

In previous years, the award ceremony took place at the annual Christmas Potluck, but with Covid 19 restrictions in place, the plaques were presented separately.

Bessert, a resident of St. Louis, was an employee of [Farm](#) Bureau Services during the PBB crisis of the 1970s. "When FBS was forced into bankruptcy because of the tragic PBB mix-up, it had an impact on my livelihood," Bessert said. The mix-up occurred when bags of Firemaster, a fire retardant made with the chemical PBB (polybrominated biphenyl) were added to livestock feed instead of Nutrimaster, a magnesium oxide supplement for animals.

Living in St. Louis near the chemical factory that produced over 200 chemical compounds, Bessert could see the degradation of the Pine River from chemical contamination. "I joined the CAG because of my concern for our river and the need to get both Federal and State help in the cleanup."

Keon lived near the river as both a child and an adult. He remembers his father warning him to not go into the water due to the chemical pollution. When he was a freshman at Alma College, an assigned book was "Silent Spring" by Rachel Carson that made famous the DDT pollution throughout the country. The chemical plant in St. Louis was a producer of DDT from 1946-1966.

"I never dreamed that I would be able to actually see eagles flying in our area," Keon said, referring to DDT (dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane) as the cause of the local eagle population nearing extinction. "But they do now, and it's due to the environmental advocacy of many people and agencies."

Keon is retired from the Michigan Department of Public [Health](#), and now works as an epidemiologist for multiple counties in Michigan, including Gratiot County. He serves on the CAG Executive Committee.

Lorenz, recently retired from Alma College as a professor of history and political science. He chaired the CAG in its first four years, and now serves as Vice Chairperson. His book, Civic Empowerment in an Age of Corporate Greed, details the business ethics of the companies responsible for the seven most contaminated chemical sites in the nation, including two in Gratiot County.

A native of Maryland, Lorenz learned only after moving to Alma that he was living near a notorious Superfund site and the one where the PBB mix-up had occurred. Even before the start of the CAG, he began research on the history behind the chemical company. Both he and Keon have worked to locate documents from the PBB era and to have them archived at the Clarke Historical Library in Mt. Pleasant.

"Without our CAG in place, I doubt much would have taken place in terms of a cleanup in St. Louis," Lorenz said. He has toured other Velsicol plant sites in the country, and remarks on the deplorable pollution in those

places that do not have a citizens group advocating for a cleanup.

Both Lorenz and Keon serve on the PBB Leadership Team, which includes researchers from Emory University, and representatives from Mid-Michigan District Health Department, the PBB Citizens Advisory Board, and the Pine River Superfund Citizen Task Force.

“The primary focus of the Team is to solicit grants from the National Institutes of Health to fund research into the health outcomes from exposure to PBB in the food chain,” Lorenz said. While a professor at Alma College, he organized a DDT conference that included experts from other countries, and also a conference on the multigenerational effects of exposures to DDT, PBB and other chemical compounds.

The Pine River Superfund Citizen Task Force is completing its 21st year, and is currently monitoring the EPA thermal treatment operation at the chemical site, the investigation of the 1980s failed containment wall around the site, and an experiment in the use of carbon to reduce bioavailability of DDT to animal life.

Daily News

Monday, December 14, 2020

Incoming state rep to Lakeview restaurant owners: ‘I have your back’

Refuse To Obey Unconstitutional Mandates Tour makes stop at Chapz

By [Elisabeth Waldon](#) | on December 14, 2020

LAKEVIEW — While most Michigan restaurants are closed for dine-in service per a state order, it was just another Saturday night for one Montcalm County restaurant.



Incoming 70th District State Rep.-Elect Patrick Outman, R-Six Lakes, at left, speaks with a constituent during Saturday’s Refuse To Obey Unconstitutional Mandates Tour stop at Chapz Roadhouse in Lakeview. — DN Photo | Elisabeth Waldon

Chapz Roadhouse was full of in-person diners with waitresses bustling to and from tables and booths, taking orders and delivering plates of hot food — from “big ole’ onion rings” to the Lakeview restaurant’s famous “steaks from the chuck wagon,” roadhouse burgers and cowboy beans.

Including among Saturday’s hungry — and mostly maskless — supporters were three faces who are planning to take the fight for restaurants to remain open all the way to the top — incoming 70th District State Rep.-Elect Patrick Outman, R-Six Lakes, 59th District State Rep.-Elect Steve Carra, R-Three Rivers, and Stand Up Michigan Executive Director Tammy Clark.

The Lakeview stop was part of Saturday’s Refuse To Obey Unconstitutional Mandates Tour with multiple stops made at Michigan restaurants currently defying state orders — including Daily Grind and Bucky’s, both in Portage, Rise N Shine in Niles, Bullseye in Three Rivers, Royal Scot in Grand Ledge, Lakeside in Sand Lake and Jimmy’s Roadhouse in Newaygo, plus an afternoon rally at the State Capitol in Lansing.

Carra, Clark and Outman gave a speech, alongside Chapz owners Dan and Camille Schutte as diners turned in their chairs to listen while others lined the walls or joined a long line coming through the lobby.

“I want to commend Dan and Camille for staying open here at Chapz and fighting the good fight,” declared Outman to applause. “It’s not easy what we’re asking you guys to do, but you guys have been defiant ... and I can’t tell you how proud I am of you guys and how proud I am to represent you guys in the Michigan Legislature. Just know that I do have your back and I’m going to do everything I can for you guys.”

“We need to drain the swamp in Lansing, that’s what we need to do,” Dan Schutte responded. “It’s a cesspool down there.”



Speaking during Saturday’s Refuse To Obey Unconstitutional Mandates Tour at a stop at Chapz Roadhouse in Lakeview are, from left to right, Stand Up Michigan Executive Director Tammy Clark, 59th District State Rep.-Elect Steve Carra, R-Three Rivers, 70th District State Rep.-Elect Patrick Outman, R-Six Lakes, and Chapz owners Dan and Camille Schutte. — DN Photo | Elisabeth Waldon

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services issued an epidemic order beginning Nov. 18 ordering restaurants to cease indoor dining, ordering high schools to cease in-person learning and enacting additional restrictions on social gatherings. On Dec. 7, the state health department extended that order until Dec. 20.

However, Chapz Roadhouse has remained open for in-person dining throughout the state health department's order, despite receiving warnings from the Mid-Michigan District Health Department and even though the Michigan Liquor Control Commission has suspended the restaurant's liquor license (the Schuttes and their attorney Stephen Kallman are currently appealing that ruling to Montcalm County Circuit Court).

In between bites of chicken wings, Outman told the Daily News that Saturday's tour was all about supporting small businesses that have been adversely affected by state-ordered shutdowns.

"Anything we can do to help them, we fully stand behind them and as their elected official I stand behind them as well," Outman said.

"I'm hopefully optimistic that we can work together," added Outman, who will take office in mid-January and will work next door to his father, 33rd District State Sen. Rick Outman, R-Six Lakes. "I certainly extend an invitation to the governor to work with us and come up with a more reasonable approach to fighting this pandemic. But there's no question about it, the voices throughout the state of Michigan and certainly in this district have been actively silenced. Our government is meant to operate with three branches and that hasn't been the case throughout the past year.



Incoming 70th District State Rep.-Elect Patrick Outman, R-Six Lakes, at left, and 59th District State Rep.-Elect Steve Carra, R-Three Rivers, at center, speak with Dan Schutte, owner of Chapz Roadhouse in Lakeview, during Saturday's Refuse To Obey Unconstitutional Mandates Tour. — DN Photo | Elisabeth Waldon

"I challenge someone to answer me how a few people coming into a restaurant and eating is any different than a bunch of people packing into a big box store for Christmas shopping?" Outman said. "It's all about personal responsibility. I think if patrons choose to come here and choose to do business, they will do what's best for

themselves and their families. I certainly feel for restaurants in particular and anybody in the hospitality industry — they operate on razor-thin margins as it is. I fully stand behind them.”

Outman added that he would not support a statewide face mask mandate — which was proposed by House Democrats but rejected by House Republicans this past week.

“In my opinion, it’s a personal decision,” Outman said. “I would be strongly opposed to a mandate that would require residents of Michigan to wear face masks. I struggle with government mandating that you take such measures.”

In Carra’s speech to Chapz diners, he referred to Michigan’s Public Health Code Act 368 of 1978.

“Just because the Legislature and the governor made a mistake back in 1978 doesn’t mean that the governor and her unelected bureaucrats should use that,” Carra declared. “Yes, they made a mistake in a long public act back in 1978, but to try to operate under that specific statute is blatantly and egregiously obvious how unconstitutional it is, and because of that I think it’s an impeachable offense.”

Diners burst into applause and cheers at this statement.

Carra reiterated his comments when speaking with the Daily News while digging into a juicy steak and sneaking some cowboy beans from Clark’s plate across the booth.



Dan Schutte, owner of Chapz Roadhouse (in red shirt at left), visits with 59th District State Rep.-Elect Steve Carra, R-Three Rivers, and 70th District State Rep.-Elect Patrick Outman, R-Six Lakes as the Lakeview restaurant fills with dine-in supporters during Saturday’s Refuse To Obey Unconstitutional Mandates Tour event. — DN Photo | Elisabeth Waldon

“I know there are differences in opinion, but it seems a blatantly obvious and egregious subversion of power,” Carra said of the state’s pandemic orders. “The unilateral and unconstitutional decision-making that the governor’s doing right now is completely inappropriate, and to me, it’s an impeachable offense.

“There’s a lot of business owners and their employees who are suffering from all these shutdowns,” he said. “These are all consenting adults and their families who have chosen to come here, nobody was forced to come here. That’s what America is, we make decisions in our lives, we take a risk if we want to.

Clark, who has been executive director of the Stand Up Michigan group since July, agreed with Carra’s comments.

“The restaurants are really no different than any other businesses. They’re just a group of businesses that are being targeted,” Clark said. “The government and the governor and individual state agencies do not have the authority to pick and choose who gets to stay open and who has to close. We’ve been saying you need to go to court, we need to challenge them.

“There is a whole lot of things this governor is doing that she’s not supposed to be doing,” Clark added. “She is in contempt of court. This behavior by her is criminal and it needs to be stopped. They’re the ones who are the criminals. Places like this (Chapz) have not done anything wrong.”



SALT?

ad salt on environment, wildlife



MID-MICHIGAN

Region sees deadliest 10 days of pandemic

By Eric Baerren

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Sixteen people from Isabella, Gratiot and Clare counties were among the 29 who died from COVID-19 from Dec. 4 to Monday. Four of Isabella County's seven deaths were from two nursing home outbreaks.

Three of those were from one facility, Medilodge of Mt. Pleasant, 1524 Portobello Dr. In all, 61 residents and approximately 20 staff have contracted the disease.

The deaths — all involving elderly people — including two women, one who died on Dec. 4 and one on Dec. 8, and a man who died Dec. 9, said Steve Hall, health officer for Central Michigan District Health Department. It brings the total number of Medilodge deaths to five, including a woman who was Isabella County's second COVID-19 death in early April.

During that same timeframe,

UPDATE » PAGE 3

ISABELLA COUNTY

Cops: Intoxicated man found after fleeing stuck car

By Rick Mills

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A 36-year-old Shepherd man, disoriented and drunk after getting stuck in a ditch, was found huddled in a snowy thicket in a T-shirt and jeans by a state trooper's tracking dog more than an hour after fleeing his car.

A state trooper and his canine partner were sent to East Jordan and Whiteville roads, northwest of Mt. Pleasant, about 10:45 p.m. Saturday for an unattended car in

Update

FROM PAGE 1

the number of cases in Isabella County increased by 243 to a cumulative total of 2,679 confirmed cases.

Eight people in Gratiot County died during the 10 days between Dec. 4 and Monday, all of them elderly. State records show seven new nursing home deaths. Those records don't define what is meant by new.

Four of those deaths involve people at Masonic Pathways properties, including four at Masonic Health Care Center, according to state records. It was the site of an earlier outbreak, in which seven residents died. A total of 13 people at the facility have died from COVID-19 since March.

Two of the other new nursing home deaths took place at Michigan Masonic

Home; the other at The Laurels of Fulton.

The eight deaths involved six elderly women, four in their 80s and two in their 90s; and two men, one in his 80s and one in his 90s, said Leslie Kinnee, spokeswoman for Mid-Michigan District Health Department. Gratiot's cumulative confirmed cases increased by 282 to 1,905 on Monday.

Nursing home residents have proven particularly vulnerable to the disease. The cause of outbreaks, health officials have previously warned, is community spread. That is, where someone who has contracted the disease outside the facility — usually an employee — brings it inside.

Because someone with COVID-19 is usually most contagious before the onset of symptoms, usually the person doesn't even know they have the disease.

As cases rose dramati-

cally in November, so did outbreaks in nursing homes and other congregate care facilities. An outbreak at Central Michigan Correctional Facility infected more than three-quarters of its inmates, or 2,037 of 2,661. Two inmates have died from the disease, according to Michigan Department of Corrections records.

Prison staff cases are counted in the county where the employees live and are handled by local health departments. Inmate cases are managed by the MDOC.

A member of the prison's staff is believed to have brought the virus in, one of 205 staff members who have confirmed cases.

During those 10 days, one additional person — an elderly woman — died in Clare County, Hall said. She died on Dec. 6. No new nursing home deaths were reported as new, state records say.

Clare's cumulative total of confirmed cases increased by 115 during that time, to 892.

Elsewhere in mid-Michigan, deaths and cumulative case numbers are as follows:

- In Gladwin County, there are a cumulative total number of 907 confirmed cases, with 13 deaths;

- In Mecosta County, there are a cumulative total number of 1,438 cases, with 11 deaths;

- In Gladwin County, there are a cumulative total number of 3,067 cases, with 30 deaths; and,

- In Midland County, there are a cumulative total number of 2,437 cases, with 40 deaths.

Statewide, another 90 deaths were reported for a total of 10,752, and another 7,205 cases were reported Monday for a cumulative total of 437,985. Those numbers reflect counts from both Saturday and Sunday.

Vaccine

FROM PAGE 1

medical centers, including ones in Mt. Pleasant, Clare and Alma.

McLaren is also planning to get its first vaccinations this week, said Rachel Blizzard, spokeswoman for McLaren-Central Michigan. The network has partnered with Walgreens to administer their vaccinations to employees and healthcare workers.

Healthcare workers are part of the first wave of vaccinations. So are residents and staff of nursing homes and other long-term living facilities, groups that have proven particularly vulnerable to the virus.

Those facilities were offered the opportunity to partner with chain pharmacies, which would inoculate both residents and staff, said Melissa DeRoche, spokeswoman with Central Michigan District Health Department.

The next group that would receive the vaccine are workers in critical industries and people who work in critical non-medical fields like health labs and at funeral homes.

People at-risk for serious illness and death — those 65 years old and older, and people with underlying health conditions — are next.

Finally, everyone else.

Both of mid-Michigan's health departments — CMDHD and Mid-Michigan District Health Department — are handling the vaccine's community-based rollout.

Currently, CMDHD plans to start holding those clinics in the new year, DeRoche said, with the health department announcing times, dates and locations.

MMDHD's plans are identical to CMDHD's, said Leslie Kinnee, spokeswoman for the health department.

While the timeframe on when those clinics will take place is up in the air, Dr. Anthony Fauci said Monday morning that people in at-risk groups could start re-

ceiving the vaccination by late April or early May.

Depending on the efficiency of the vaccine's rollout, the nation's top infectious disease expert said that it could be available to the general public by late spring or early summer.

That could lead the United States to see the rate of infections drop throughout the summer until enough people have received it that the nation could achieve herd immunity by early fall, he said.

Earlier Monday, Alex Azar, secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services, said during an interview on the Today show that the vaccine could be available to the general population by the end of February.

Pfizer started shipping its COVID-19 vaccine from its facility in Portage over the weekend to great fanfare. State and national media showed images of trucks leaving the facility and aircraft taking off from Lan-

sing's airport, carrying the vaccine across the country.

A second vaccine, from Moderna, is expected to have a hearing before the same panel that greenlighted Pfizer's vaccine last week.

Both vaccines are themselves novel, using a strand of RNA to communicate to cells to construct a protein spike crucial to the SARS-CoV-2 virus's ability to use cells to replicate itself. The strand of genetic code is broken down by the body's immune system, never having entered the cell.

It's the first vaccine that uses this mode to stimulate an immune response in human bodies. Previous vaccines have all relied on weakened virus cells. Another vaccine in trials, from Astra Zeneca, is one of these vaccines.

The Pfizer vaccine comes with the requirement that it needs to be kept very cold, requiring freezers that can store it at temperatures down to minus 94 degrees Fahrenheit.

Study

FROM PAGE 1

to animals — we should switch clearing alternative beet juice.

Learning about stressors could have broader applications, such as road-clearing.

"It's interesting to think about how we can use technology to model climate change. It's something we might not think of as large-scale climate change," said Stevens.

Stevens, together with her former classmates, said that climate change causes multiple stressors on any organism, such as temperatures, moisture, new pathogens and other changes.

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The two preliminary studies were presented at a month at the Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry (SETAC) North America conference, an annual gathering of thousands of scientists from government, industry and academia.

Stevens, who is currently at Alma studying for her part of the ALMA STEM Cooperative Experience (ALMA-STEM) — designed to provide money to perform research — said that such large projects are rare opportunities.

"To give a chance and talk about it is something I've been able to do. I've had chances I've had at Alma College. Harwood," she said, "take this experience and put it in graduate programs and projects."

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CORONAVIRUS IN MID-MICHIGAN

Vaccines to arrive this week

Region may receive Pfizer doses for health workers as soon as today

By Eric Baerren
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@ebaerren on Twitter

The first doses of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccines are expected to arrive in mid-Michigan this week, to be administered to health care workers by their employers.

MidMichigan Health expects

their first doses to arrive anywhere between today and Thursday, said Millie Jezior, MidMichigan Health's spokeswoman.

The first people immunized will include 20 employees at the network's Midland hospital and 10 in Alpena, she said. All of them are part of MidMichigan's vaccination team and work in quality, infec-

tion control, employee health and in the pharmacy. It also includes a few physicians.

Currently, the next step is to give vaccinations to workers in emergency departments and intensive care units, plus those working in COVID units, she said. These will include employees at the network's

VACCINE » PAGE 3



Bruce Smith, a FedEx package handler, works in a facility at the Gerald R. Ford International Airport in Cascade Township, Mich., on Saturday.

COURTESY OF FEDEX VIA AP

ALMA COLLEGE NEWS

WORTH ITS SALT?

Alma College students study impact of wintertime road salt on environment, wildlife

Alma College Communications

Every year, billions of pounds of salt are poured onto roadways and sidewalks to make commuting in winter weather a little safer. But student scientists at Alma College say it comes at a cost to the environment, which could have far-reaching implications for animals and people.

Camera Stevens and Hannah Walker are among several students studying under Amanda Harwood, an assistant professor of biology and environmental studies, to learn more about the effects of road salt on aquatic ecosystems. What the students know, they say, is that the salt doesn't simply disappear when the snow melts.

"We know that when the snow melts, that salt needs to go somewhere. Where it ends up going, more often than not, is our freshwater systems," said Stevens, a senior from South Point, Ohio. "So, if you think about the plants and animals that live in the freshwater environments of Michigan, and the people who use them for various purposes, and you put lots of saltwater in there, it's going to have an impact.

"We're trying to figure out what that impact is, and what it means for us and future generations."

At the center of Stevens's and Walker's studies are Hyalella azteca, a crustacean commonly found in North American freshwaters. Hyalella are considered an easy species to breed, but apart from that, the students say they are a good invertebrate to study because of their status at the bottom of the food chain.

"They do reproduce quickly, which helps, because we need a



MID-MICHIGAN

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During that same timeframe, UPDATE » PAGE 3

ISABELLA COUNTY

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Vaccine

FROM PAGE 1

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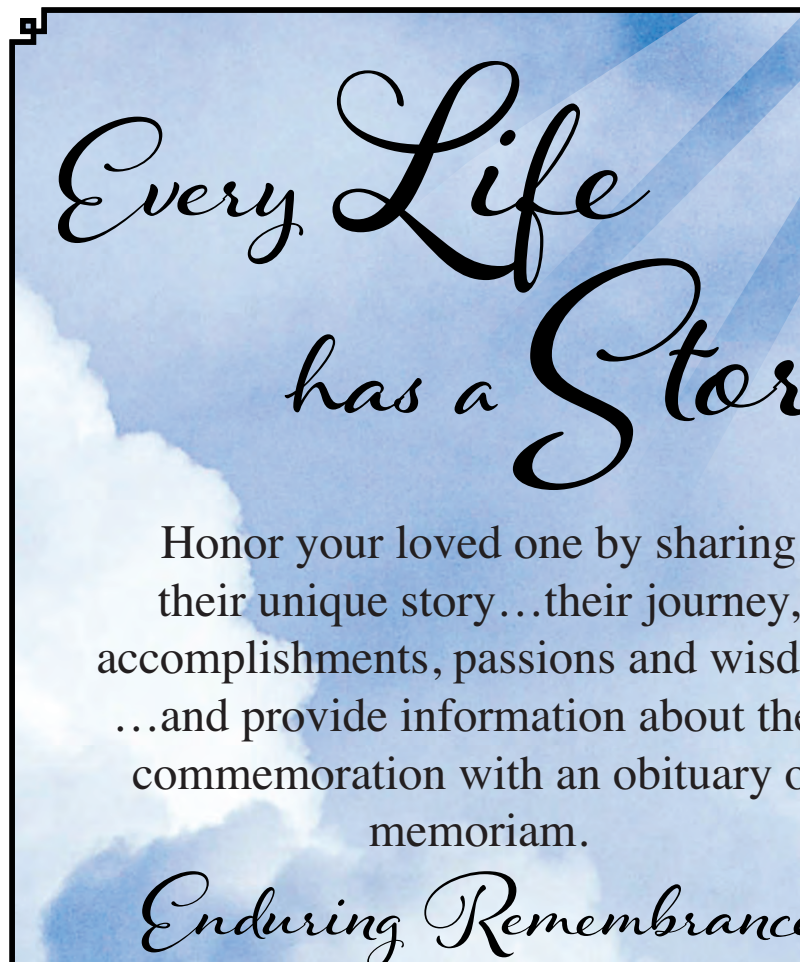
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Enduring Remembrance

COVID-19: Gratiot Death Toll Hits 50; Outbreaks at Long Term Care Facilities, St. Louis Prisons

By Emma Selmon
Herald News Editor

As COVID-19 continues to sweep mid-Michigan, Gratiot County saw its 50th resident die from complications from the virus this week. 19 of these victims passed away within the last two weeks.

According to Leslie Kinnee, Public Information Officer of the Mid-Michigan Health Department (MMDHD), five of these individuals were males in their 70s. Four were females in their 90s. Three were females in their 80s, two were females in their 70s, one was a male in his 80s and another was a male in his 90s.

Information on the three most recent identified deaths was not available at press time.

As of Tuesday, Dec. 15, Gratiot County is reporting a total of 50 resident deaths from COVID-19 and 1,984 total confirmed cases since March, 206 of which were identified within the past week.

Long Term Care Facilities

Gratiot's nursing homes are once again seeing COVID-19 cases within their walls. As of Tuesday, Alma's Masonic Pathways was reporting a total

of 37 residents who have tested positive for COVID-19 as well as 13 staff members. This outbreak comes just months after their weeks-long battle with an outbreak of COVID-19 this spring.

Vicky Johnson, chief marketing officer for the Michigan Masonic Home, told The Herald that the a case was identified in a staff member in mid-October, "following the lifting of restrictions and the opening of schools." In the weeks and months since, they longterm care facility has "experienced a continual increase in the total number of residents and staff with COVID-19."

Johnson said that although they continue to follow best practices and guidelines, it is very difficult to keep COVID-19 from spreading within the facility.

"Unfortunately, we have a large population of residents with dementia and it is nearly impossible to keep them in masks or safely distanced from others," she said. "Can you imagine how they feel when they can no longer see the faces of their caregivers or receive an 'ungloved' touch? It's heart-breaking for everyone."

See COVID-19 on page 4

Gratiot County Herald

Thursday, December 17, 2020

COVID-19 *continued from page 3*

Masonic Pathways is not alone in facing cases of COVID-19. Warwick Living Center in Alma is reporting a positive COVID-19 case in a staff member, and according to data from the State of Michigan, residents at the Laurels of Fulton and Ashley Care Center are also testing positive for COVID-19.

Prisons

The State of Michigan reports Gratiot County as nearing 2,000 COVID-19 cases, but this number does not include cases identified in the prisons in St. Louis. Both the Central Michigan Correctional Facility and the St. Louis Correctional Facility are experiencing large outbreaks of COVID-19.

At the Central Michigan Correctional Facility, the Level I prison, 2,042 total prisoners have tested

positive for COVID-19, according to data from the Michigan Department of Corrections. Of these cases, 1,415 are currently active. In addition, 205 staff members have tested positive.

Two prisoners have died from COVID-19 at the Central Michigan facility, one on Nov. 28 and the other on Nov. 30.

At the St. Louis Correctional Facility, the Level IV prison, 840 total prisoners have tested positive for COVID-19, and 487 of those cases are currently active. 84 staff members have tested positive, and no deaths are currently being reported at that facility.

Neighboring Counties

COVID-19 cases continue to rise throughout the area. From Tuesday, Dec. 8 to Tuesday, Dec. 15, neighboring Montcalm Coun-

ty gained 254 new cases and 14 more deaths for a total of 2,508 cases and 49 deaths. And in Clinton County, 246 more COVID-19 cases and two more deaths were reported for a total of 3,244 cases and 31 deaths.

Isabella County gained 209 more cases and six more deaths for a total of 2,759 cases and 34 deaths, and Midland County reported 177 more cases and two more deaths for a total of 3,105 cases and 32 deaths. And Saginaw County gained 843 cases and 35 deaths, reaching a total of 10,475 cases and 313 deaths.

Statewide, as of Tuesday, Michigan was reporting a total of 442,715 COVID-19 cases since March and 10,935 residents dead from the virus.

Vaccine On The Way

With a COVID-19 vaccine approved for use in the United States, the MMDHD's Kinnee said they are "hopeful that the end of the pandemic is in sight"; however, it will "likely be several months before the vaccine will be available to everyone who wants it."

Priority populations, which include health care workers and residents of long-term care facilities, could begin to receive the vaccine as soon as next week "if all goes according to plan," said Hailey Brewer, the MMDHD's emergency preparedness coordinator.

As the healthcare systems begin to administer vaccinations at the same time they are tending to high volumes of sick COVID-19 patients, Kinnee said that it is important that everyone continues to follow COVID-19 safety protocols.

"[I]t is still crucial that we all

continue to wear a mask in public, practice social distancing and avoid indoor gatherings with those whom we do not live with," she said.

Johnson, marketing officer with the Michigan Masonic Home, also encourages the community to keep up COVID-19 safety protocols. She said this is the "best thing our community can do" to support the longterm care residents and workers who are battling the novel coronavirus.

And while the wait for vaccine distribution grows shorter, Johnson asks the community not to hesitate to get the vaccination when their turn comes up.

"[W]e encourage everyone to help us avoid losing one more resident to this terrible pandemic by getting [the vaccine] just as soon as it is available to you," she said.



ND SERVE



MORNING SUN FILE PHOTO

r during the march from downtown Mt. Pleasant to
updated city commissioners in a memo about the

edented law enforcement climate

January 8, 2021 2:23 pm (GMT -5:00)

o be among the protests did not devolve as some
ng to date." Law have in other cities

REGION

Six new COVID-19 deaths reported

By Eric Baerren

ebaerren@medianewsgroup.com

[@ebaerren on Twitter](#)

Six new deaths from COVID-19 were reported across mid-Michigan on Wednesday, including a middle-aged man who was living in an Isabella County nursing home.

The man, a resident of Medilodge, died Tuesday, said Steve Hall, health officer for Central Michigan District Health Department. He is the sixth Medilodge resident to die in the current outbreak, and the seventh death connected to the facility since an elderly woman died at McLaren-Central Michigan after being transferred there from the nursing home.

In total, 90 people associated with the nursing home — including 64 residents and 24 staff — have contracted the disease.

The new death brings Isabella County's total deaths to 35.

UPDATE » PAGE 3

ALMA

Alma College wins \$15,000 humanities grant

Alma College Communications

Sometime next year, the restored Wright Leppien Opera House in downtown Alma will be transformed to showcase the type of performances it was known for in its heyday, at the turn of the 20th century.

That's thanks to a \$15,000 grant awarded to Alma College by the nonprofit organization Michigan Humanities, the state's affiliate of the National Endowment of the Humanities. The funds will go

his tribute. Green put his hand to his forehead Monday, Dec. 17/2020.

Green took the opportunity to rip partisanship in Lansing and Washington, saying he'd do away with the R, D and I if he could and just force people to focus on public service.

Later, he expounded on what that meant for the county commission.

"Sooner or later, you realize you're there for the county," he said.

Isabella County's commission has long operated as if it's a non-partisan board. While individual commissioners belong to either the Republican or Democratic parties, the board usually reaches decisions based on consensus built among the commissioners.

A sign of that was Green's elevation to the chairmanship in 2012.

At the time, Green was one of two Republicans on the board and Ling was its chairman. Ling decided to not stand for another term as commission, and originally nominated fellow Democrat Frances Lichtman to replace him.

She declined the nomination and Green was instead named county commission by a unanimous vote of commissioners.

During the homage, speakers repeatedly credited Green for putting the people of Isabella County first. Green credited his mentorship by ex-county chairman Larry Beltinck as instilling in him that the county board was about public service, not personal or political enrichment.

Green leaves public service after 24 years. During his tenure, the county built the Isabella County Trial Court next to the administration building in downtown Mt. Pleasant. It also built the Commission on Aging building, 2200 S. Lincoln Road, west of Mt. Pleasant. It is also in the process of building a new jail on property purchased in August east of Mt. Pleasant.

Nights at the Opera" is tentatively slated for fall 2021, but could change depending on restrictions stemming

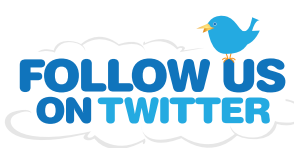
from the special life of the town, including dramatic and musical performances, and political

ing \$171,925 in October. Alma College's proposal was one of eight to receive the \$15,000 maximum.

Lauria said the department has also engaged Recovery, Peace, and Confidence, Safety and Empowerment (RISE) and entered into a collaborative agreement to establish and promote a pilot program that will create a standardized domestic and sexual violence response within the city.

"In summary, 2020 has been continued positive interactions, discussions and improved understanding between the community and the Mt. Pleasant Department of Public Safety," Lauria wrote.

"While pleased with the progress made to date, our division remains committed to working alongside our community partners and continuing to learn from one another as we enter into 2021."



Update

FROM PAGE 1

Nearly one quarter of those deaths, nine, involve nursing home residents, according to state records.

Another 32 cases were reported in Isabella County on Wednesday, bringing its cumulative total to 2,791.

The state reported two additional deaths in Gratiot County, bringing its total to 52, the highest total number of deaths in any mid-Michigan county.

No information was immediately available on their identities. Leslie Kinnee, spokeswoman for Mid-Michigan District Health Department, said she hadn't seen the day's information yet.

An additional 32 confirmed cases were announced in Gratiot County on Wednesday, bringing its cumulative total to 2,016.

State records also showed a new nursing home outbreak at Ashley Care Center, 103 W. Wallace St., in Ashley. Twelve residents there have contracted the disease, and a total of 10 staff. Four of those are listed as new. State records don't break down what is meant by new.

An additional 11 confirmed cases were reported in Clare County, bringing its cumulative total to 943, with 28 deaths.

Elsewhere in mid-Michigan, three new deaths were reported in two counties, with totals and cumulative cases as follows:

- In Gladwin County, an additional two deaths were reported for a total of 19, and an additional 10 cases were announced for a cumulative total of 939;

- In Montcalm County, an additional death reported for a total of 50, and an additional 40 cases were announced for a cumulative total of 2,548;

- An additional 46 cases were announced in Midland County for a cumulative total of 3,151, with 32 deaths; and,

- An additional 23 cases were reported in Mecosta County for a cumulative total of 1,492, with 12 deaths.

Statewide, another 83 deaths were reported for a total of 11,018, and another 4,037 cases were reported Monday for a cumulative total of 446,752.



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FREDERICK R. "FRITZ" REED
REED Frederick R. "Fritz" Reed, age 59, of Powell, passed away unexpectedly Monday, August 27, 2017. He was a graduate of Harvard University and The Ohio State University Law School. During his career he practiced law with Vorys, Sater, Seymour and Pease, served as Chief Financial Officer for Wendy's International and worked as a business consultant.

Robaire's Bakery

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January 8, 2021 2:23 pm EST (300) **(989) 772-3516**

Daily News

Friday, December 18, 2020

Montcalm County reports its 50th COVID-19 death

Health department begins to help with vaccine effort

By [Elisabeth Waldon](#) | on December 18, 2020

STANTON — As Montcalm County hits its 50th COVID-19-related death, the Mid-Michigan District Health Department (MMDHD) is preparing to help locally distribute COVID vaccines.



Mid-Michigan District Health Department Health Officer Marcus Cheatham, at upper left, gave an update during Wednesday’s Board of Health meeting about how a COVID-19 vaccine process will unfold locally. Listening are Gratiot County commissioners Chuck Murphy, top right, and George Bailey. — DN Photo | Elisabeth Waldon

MMDHD Health Officer Marcus Cheatham gave an update on how the vaccine process will unfold during Wednesday’s Board of Health meeting.

Cheatham said the local health department’s district of Clinton, Gratiot and Montcalm counties are seeing a “leveling off” of new COVID cases, which is good news, but related deaths continue to “surge” locally.

From March to present, Montcalm County has had 50 COVID-related deaths — 37 of them occurring in November and December. Those include three deaths on Nov. 7, two deaths each on Nov. 16, Dec. 1, Dec. 3, Dec. 5 and Dec. 9, four deaths on Dec. 12, three deaths on Dec. 13 and two deaths on Dec. 14, according to the state of Michigan.

Montcalm County has had 2,548 COVID cases from March to present.

“The state has gone back to the worst level of deaths that we’ve ever had and our jurisdiction we’ve exceeded that, unfortunately,” Cheatham said. “Gratiot and Montcalm have recently had really high death rates. We’re averaging about five COVID deaths per day in our three-county area — just like a drumbeat every day. We’ve really doubled our mortality rate in the last couple of days and we can only really hope that this is the peak and that it comes down and doesn’t go on through the winter.”

“We can only hope we can get the vaccines into our vulnerable, long term adult facilities soon,” Cheatham told Board of Health members. “I would really encourage to you guys that when people express skepticism about the vaccine, really talk about the importance of people in longterm care and vulnerable seniors getting that vaccine because that is what’s going to reduce this mortality rate.”

According to Cheatham, the MMDHD will have three main roles to play in the local vaccination process: ensuring healthcare providers are prepared to offer the vaccine, vaccinating essential workers and other priority populations during Phase 1 of the rollout and vaccinating part of the general population during Phase 2 of the rollout.

“During Phase 1, the MMDHD will be asked with vaccinating small groups of essential workers and other priority populations at so-called closed PODS or Points of Dispensing,” Cheatham said. “A closed POD refers to the fact that at such a site, only pre-selected eligible people may participate. For example, we might go to a school to vaccinate school personnel or go to a sheriff’s office to vaccinate officers and support staff.”

“When vaccine is more readily available and essential workers have been vaccinated, MMDHD will transition to open PODS where the general public can come to be vaccinated,” he said. “The COVID-19 testing clinics we recently offered are examples of open PODS. This will be the most challenging phase of the effort. MMDHD staff will almost certainly have to give tens of thousands of vaccines over a period of just a few months, meaning staff will need to give hundreds per day.”

“At the present time, we do not know what proportion of the general public will be vaccinated by their own doctors and what proportion will come to us,” he noted. “We also do not know how we will allocate resources between offering vaccine through our own offices like we did with Hepatitis A and offering it through drive-through clinics like we did with COVID-19 testing. During this phase, MMDHD expects to establish contracts for nursing services to supplement our own staff and volunteers.”

“What we have tried to do is strategically identify what parts of the vaccination effort MMDHD is best suited to handle and what parts others can be responsible for,” he elaborated. “For example, we are not attempting to provide vaccinations to most healthcare providers because hospitals are well equipped to do this and have access to these personnel. Furthermore, we won’t vaccinate most first responders because Emergency Medical Services has taken this role. MMDHD is focusing on preparing to vaccinate essential workers, especially roles such as educators, and then to provide vaccinations to the general public when the time comes for that.”

Michigan is expecting \$8 million in CDC funding specifically for the COVID vaccines, which means the MMDHD should expect no less than \$100,000, according to Cheatham.

“MMDHD anticipates using these funds for contract nurses for vaccination when the time is appropriate,” Cheatham said.

Gratiot County Commissioner George Bailey noted some issues with Pfizer’s COVID vaccine distribution this week, referring to fewer doses being delivered to Michigan than previously anticipated.

“We see hiccups already happening with the distribution and so I’m concerned,” Bailey said. “It just seems to be that it’s all going to back up real quick.”

“I would be surprised if we did not have hiccups,” MMDHD Medical Director Dr. Jennifer Morse responded. “I would be surprised if we didn’t have things worse happening because of the magnitude of this. Nothing like this has ever been done before. I’m impressed with how well it’s going so far. Things are going to go wrong, it’s going to happen. This is an unprecedented event. We just have to be patient with it.”

“I’m just concerned about the distribution because I asked the sheriff last night (Tuesday night) at our (Gratiot) county board meeting how it was getting along and he said he was scheduled to go over there tomorrow to Carson City to get his vaccination,” Bailey said. “Then called and put it off for a week. That builds up a problem.”

prosecutor, announced Thursday afternoon that he plans to file the motion against Brian Kolodziej

be filed. He did say that the case will go through the same Isabella County courts where first the county and then the state prose-

at a press conference, said she'd give him a simple choice: Quit or be fired. She also launched an in-

CHARGES » PAGE 3



CORONAVIRUS

SHOT OF HOPE



ERIC BAERREN — THE MORNING SUN

Preston Withun, a paramedic with MidMichigan Health-Mt. Pleasant's emergency department receives the first of two COVID-19 vaccination shots Thursday afternoon from Rachel Peltier, a registered nurse. Withun is among the first of the facility's employees to receive the vaccination.

Vaccinations begin as nine new COVID deaths reported in mid-Michigan

By Eric Baerren
ebaerren@medianewsgroup.com
Multimedia journalist

Preston Withun wasn't the first person vaccinated for COVID-19 in Isabella County, but he was pretty close.

Withun, a paramedic with MidMichigan Health-Mt. Pleasant's emergency department, received the first shot of two COVID-19 vaccination shots in his right arm Thursday afternoon.

After conducting a first run with staff directly involved in care for COVID-posi-

tive patients, the network started inoculating its employees Thursday, including its hospitals in Clare and Alma.

The shots as new positive cases show signs of leveling off. Deaths, however, continued, with an additional nine across mid-Michigan.

One of those was in Clare County, bringing its total to 17. It involved an elderly man with underlying health conditions, said Steve Hall, health officer with Central Michigan District Health Department.

Clare County saw an additional 17 cases for a cumulative total of 960.

Another death was reported in Gratiot County, its 53, according to state records.

Thursday morning, Mid-Michigan District Health Department was reporting 49 deaths in the county, said Leslie Kinnee, MMDHD spokeswoman. Reporting of death information has sometimes lagged during the recent statewide surge in cases.

One of the deaths involved a woman in her 40s and one involved a man in his 90s, Kinnee said. Neither was a resident in one of the county's nursing homes.

COVID » PAGE 3

der the new Tax Exemption Ordinance.

These housing projects include the Arbors at Eagle

Later the board unanimously approved the bid from Konwinski Construction Inc., in the amount of

the usefulness and safety of the hall as a polling location and open space." Phase I Construction is

COVID

FROM PAGE 1

The county saw and additional 17 cases for a cumulative total of 2,033.

No new deaths were reported in Isabella County, where an additional 24 cases were reported for a cumulative total of 2,815.

Elsewhere in mid-Michigan, seven new deaths were reported in three counties, with totals and cumulative cases as follows:

▪ In Gladwin County, an additional two deaths were reported for a total of 21, and an additional five cases were announced for a cumulative total of 944;

▪ In Montcalm County, an additional three deaths reported for a total of 53, and an additional 22 cases were announced for a cumulative total of 2,570;

▪ In Midland County, an additional two deaths were reported for a total of 34, and an additional nine cases were announced for a cumulative total of 3,160; and,

▪ An additional seven cases were reported in Mecosta County for a cumulative total of 1,499, with 12 deaths.

Statewide, another 190 deaths were reported for a total of 11,208, and another 4,024 cases were reported Monday for a cumulative total of 450,226. Of those deaths, 125 were discovered during a review of death certificates.

Eric Baerren is a multimedia journalist for The Morning Sun in Mt. Pleasant, where he covers local news.

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**VILLAGE OF LAKE ISABELLA
 ISABELLA COUNTY
 NOTICE OF ORDINANCE ADOPTION**

Ordinance 2020-02
 Ordinance 2020-03
 Ordinance 2020-04


Notice is hereby given that the Lake Isabella Village Council as part of a Regular Meeting beginning at 7 PM local time on Tuesday, December 15, 2020, adopted the following Ordinances after conducting a Public Hearing on each:

- Ordinance 2020-02: The purpose of this ordinance is to update the regulation of attached and detached garages, as well as other accessory structures in single-family zoning districts. The purpose of the new Chapter 1220 is to establish criteria for regulating the type, size, and location of Accessory Structures in single-family residential zoning districts. These regulations are intended to allow property to be more useful while not altering the residential character of the surrounding area.
- Ordinance 2020-03: The purpose of this ordinance is to update rules and regulations that aim to prevent, reduce, or eliminate blight in the Village of Lake Isabella. The regulations contained in the proposed amendments to Chapter 642 are intended to prevent or eliminate the contributing factors and causes of blight that exist or which may in the future exist in the Village of Lake Isabella.
- Ordinance 2020-04: The purpose of this ordinance is to protect, promote and provide for the health, safety, and general welfare of the citizens of the Village and to eliminate unsightly conditions which negatively impact property values by preventing, eliminating, and removing blight and/or blighted conditions within the community as it specifically relates to keeping and storage of vehicles as amended in Chapter 644.

These ordinances shall be in effect after the expiration of seven days from the date of this publication. A complete copy of each ordinance is available at the Village Hall at the address below.

Carol Shannon
 Village Clerk
 1010 Clubhouse Drive
 Lake Isabella, MI 48893
 (989) 644-8654

Gratiot Healthcare Workers Begin to Receive COVID-19 Vaccine

 Posted on Wednesday, December 23rd, 2020 and is filed under [FEATURE](#), [News](#). You can follow any responses to this entry through the [RSS 2.0](#) feed. You can skip to the end and leave a response. Pinging is currently not allowed.



Family Medicine Physician Jeffrey Holmes, M.D, doctor at Alma Family Practice, was the first Gratiot County healthcare worker to receive the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine last Thursday.

By Emma Selmon
Herald [News](#) Editor

It was the Christmas gift many healthcare workers have been hoping for when the Pfizer vaccine arrived at MidMichigan Medical Center – Gratiot last week.

Gratiot healthcare employees began to receive their first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine last Thursday, beginning with Dr. Jeffrey Holmes, family medicine physician at Alma Family Practice.

According to a news release from MidMichigan [Health](#), the first individuals to receive the vaccine include employees in the hospital's emergency departments, intensive care units, emergency medical services (EMS), medical and COVID floors. As more doses become available, additional employee groups will be vaccinated against COVID-19.

Marita Hattem-Schiffman, president of MidMichigan Health – Central Region, was among the team members to receive their shot last week, which is the first of two doses. Physically, she said it was “easy.” Unlike a flu shot, she “barely felt it,” and the injection site soreness that began a few hours later was gone the next morning. Indeed, rather than pain, she and many of her employees felt “relief and joy.”

Hattem-Schiffman has been leading healthcare workers at the frontlines of the COVID-19 pandemic for over nine months now. She was “surprised” at how “emotional” she felt to see so many of her team members get their vaccine, knowing that it is “the first step towards their safety.”

As a health care leader, “safety” is always her “first priority”: “safety of our health care team, safety for our patients, safety for our community.” And the arrival of the Pfizer vaccine gives her and her staff “reason for hope” after so many months of “non-stop” work, “always on high alert.”

Hattem-Schiffman told The Herald that “there isn't a worse nightmare than a pandemic — a prolonged, sustained, enigmatic enemy posing great risk to all.”

“We've never had a virus whose impact was on the range from ‘Asymptomatic to Fatal,’ and as a [society](#), we've never had to face the kind of restrictions necessary to control the spread. It's taken a terrible toll on everyone's mental health,” she said.

“The vaccine gives us reason to hope that we can slowly beat this virus, but after that we have a long road of recovery, mentally, economically and for health care team members physically, as well,” she continued.

As of Monday, 1,754 vaccinations had been administered throughout the MidMichigan Health System, which includes the hospital in Gratiot as well as medical centers in Alpena, Clare, Gladwin, Midland, Mt. Pleasant and

West Branch. Hattem-Schiffman said on Tuesday that the system planned to vaccinate another 675 employees on Tuesday and Wednesday, and expects to “continue at this pace and rate after the Christmas weekend.”

Numbers for how many Gratiot team members specifically have been vaccinated were not available at press time.

MidMichigan Health has received the Pfizer vaccine, the first of two COVID-19 vaccines approved for use in the United States. Hattem-Schiffman said that they do not expect to receive the second vaccine, manufactured by Moderna, because MidMichigan Health is equipped with the ultra-cold storage ability that is needed to store the Pfizer vaccine.

The Moderna vaccine, which does not have the ultra-cold storage requirement, is the vaccine that has arrived at the Mid-Michigan District Health Department (MMDHD), according to Public Information Officer Leslie Kinnee.

Earlier this week, MMDHD Health Officer Marcus Cheatham shared detailed information regarding their COVID-19 vaccination plan via Zoom with a variety of community organizations, although he noted that the timeline is subject to change.

The first individuals to be vaccinated are the medical personnel who will themselves be giving the vaccinations as well as medical first responders and EMS workers. High risk hospital workers will follow.

By early January, the plan is to begin to vaccinate staff members and residents of long term care facilities, and later in the month, additional healthcare workers — including those performing aerosol-generating procedures, those with direct patient contact, and those who perform critical functions — will receive their first dose.

In late January, essential and critical infrastructure workers will begin to receive their first doses, although some of these workers will be moved further down the priority list in order to allow those 75 and older to receive their vaccines. And tentatively by February, adults between the ages of 65 and 75 and individuals with chronic health conditions will be vaccinated.

After these priority populations have received their vaccines, efforts will continue to vaccinate the rest of the population.

Cheatham told the community organizations that the Moderna vaccine is “crazy-safe,” and that despite public apprehensions, it has been thoroughly tested and it is very effective. He encouraged the individuals on the call to help spread accurate information about the vaccine, and to encourage especially high-risk individuals to get their shot.

For both the health department and the hospital, administering the vaccine is a heavy lift — one that comes while the pandemic continues to rage throughout the area. While the arrival of the vaccine gives hope for the end of the pandemic, Hattem-Schiffman warned that the pandemic is not over yet: until “a broad section of the community is vaccinated,” which will take months, COVID-19 safety protocols are still necessary to avoid more illness and more death.

She said that people “can’t give up yet.”

CORONAVIRUS IN MID-MICHIGAN

Region sees 12 more COVID deaths

Four fatalities are confirmed in Clare as state sees 3,082 new infections in daily update

By Eric Baerren
ebaerren@medianewsgroup.com
@ebaerren on Twitter

Even as new confirmed cases of COVID-19 continued to decline across mid-Michigan, the state of Michigan continued to report

deaths in the double digits.

Four of the 12 deaths reported across mid-Michigan Tuesday were in Clare County, bringing that county's total to 36.

No information was immediately available about them, although an email was sent to Cen-

tral Michigan District Health Department seeking general information about their identities.

A new outbreak was recently reported at a second Clare County nursing home, and large daily increases in deaths have previously been linked to nursing home outbreaks.

Another 11 cases were reported in Clare County, bringing its cumulative total to 1,026.

Two of those deaths were reported in Isabella County, bringing its total to 39. Information about the two deaths was also not immediately available.

Isabella and Clare counties are two of the six counties covered by the Central Michigan District Health Department.

An additional 18 cases were reported in Isabella County, bringing its total to 2,923.

Two additional deaths were also reported in Gratiot County, bringing its total to 60. It continues to have the most deaths of any mid-Michigan county.

An email seeking information was sent to Leslie Kinnee, spokeswoman for Mid-Michigan District Health Department. She has not responded yet.

According to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, **UPDATE » PAGE 2**

ST. LOUIS

SANTA'S 'SECRET' WORKSHOP



GREG NELSON — MORNING SUN

Students at Carrie Knause Early Childhood Learning Center dig into their toys Tuesday morning. Shop students at St. Louis High School built them.

Area shop classes make holiday toys for Carrie Knause elementary students

By Greg Nelson
gnelson@medianewsgroup.com

Christmas arrived a little early for elementary students at St. Louis Public Schools.

Tuesday morning wood shop teacher Phil Maxwell and about a dozen of his students surprised young students at Carrie Knause Early Childhood Learning Center and Nikkari Elementary by

Kindergarten and first graders received a train set, second and third graders a Jeep or a race car, and fourth and fifth graders a board game.

In all, about 50 students in three classes built more than 400 toys to hand out.

"We make them, we build them. I have the greatest job in the world," Maxwell told kindergartners in Tina Doughty's class

view the festivities.

"This is the first time we've done this," she said. "Last year at Christmas the (shop) students attended the (city) parade and handed out toys to all of the kids who were there."

The district received a \$3,000 grant from the Central Michigan Youth for Christ Youth Advisory Council to help fund the project.

"I think this also provides a

toys."

Senior Kay Stites, a first year woodshop student who was helping deliver the gifts, agreed.

"This is the best part," she said. "Just seeing the kids get all excited."

However, due to COVID-19 restrictions, it wasn't easy pulling off such an undertaking.

Kindergarten through eighth graders have been back in class

SHEPHERD

Area school district plans January in-class return

By Sarah Wright
swright@medianewsgroup.com

Shepherd Public Schools (SPS) informed parents of students of the prospective protocols for returning to face-to-face learning on Monday, Jan. 11.

The Shepherd Board of Education and administration listened to community members' concerns related to the current Bluejay On-Line instructional model and took action on Tuesday, Dec. 15 on how they would return to face-to-face instruction for K-12 students in January.

The schedule is likely to be similar to the schedule SPS has prior to moving to fully virtual learning.

"The major difference, at this **SCHOOLS » PAGE 2**

MT. PLEASANT

Union Township OKs rezoning request reading

By Sarah Wright
swright@medianewsgroup.com

Union Township approves first reading for proposed PREZ 20-03 request from Grayling Investors LLC to rezone the northern 465 feet of PID 14-026-20-001-06 from the B-4 (General Business) to the B-5 (Highway Business) District.

The first reading was approved at the Dec. 16 Board of Trustees meeting which was conducted via Zoom or could be heard over the phone.

Grayling Investors LLC submitted an application is October to the Union Township Zoning Map rezone a 6.94-acre parcel on the southwest corner of the East

... Dickey – former resident of Reading
 ... on December 19, 2020 in Clare, MI.
 ... on January 30, 1921, Donald died
 ... 's old.
 ... dairy farmer most of his life, until moving
 ... se City, where he was employed at Tra-
 ... Public Schools, until retirement.
 ... survived by his wife, Marjorie (Gibson)
 ... Clare, children: Ann M Longenbaugh
 ... Columbia City, Indiana, Catherine L Nel-
 ...) of Spring Arbor, MI, William P Dickey
 ... Wyoming, MI, step children: Bill and
 ... umer of Clare MI, Greg and Emily Gib-
 ... ell, MI, Pat Gimbel of Ludington, MI., Tim
 ... ra Gibson of Ludington, Roland and Ruth
 ... Traverse City, Philip and Linda Nelson
 ... e, TX, 5 grandchildren, 11 great grand-
 ... and 12 step grandchildren
 ... d was preceded in death by Retha (Piper)
 ... ary A (Nelson) Dickey, brother Everett
 ... and sister Margaret Clifton.
 ... ly memorial service will be held at a later
 ... orials to
 ... High School Athletic Department, 301
 ... St. Reading, MI 49274
 ... a Children's Wish Fund 6081 East 82nd
 ... napolis, IN 46250. Arrangements were
 ... by the Clare Chapel of Stephenson-Wy-
 ... eral Home. Online condolences may be
 ... w.stephenson-wyman.com

... also continue deep cleaning
 ... the classrooms and facilities.
 ... A "Learning Option Sur-
 ... vey" for grades 6-12 will be
 ... For more information, visit
 ... shepherdschools.net.



GREG NELSON

Wooden toys, made by high school shop stu-
 ... for distribution to elementary school kids at
 ... Knause Early Childhood Learning Center on
 ... morning.

Update

FROM PAGE 1

partment of Health and Hu-
 ... man Services, an additional
 ... six cases were reported for a
 ... cumulative total of 2,137.

Elsewhere in mid-Michi-
 ... gan, seven new deaths were
 ... reported in three counties,
 ... with totals and cumulative
 ... cases as follows:

- In Montcalm County, an additional two deaths were reported for a total of 59, and an additional 11 cases were announced for a cumulative total of 2,645;
- In Midland County, an additional two deaths were

reported for a total of 38,
 ... and an additional 44 cases
 ... were announced for a cumu-
 ... lative total of 3,288;

- An additional eight cases were reported in Gladwin County for a cumulative total of 973, with 24 deaths; and,
- An additional three cases were reported in Mecosta County for a cumulative total of 1,517, with 12 deaths.

Statewide, another 173
 ... deaths were reported for a
 ... total of 11,705, and another
 ... 3,082 cases were reported
 ... Tuesday for a cumulative
 ... total of 466,485. Of those
 ... deaths, 72 were discovered
 ... through a review of death
 ... certificates.

Toys

FROM PAGE 1

regulations, high school
 ... students didn't return to
 ... in-person learning until
 ... Monday.

The shop classes started
 ... making the toys in Sep-
 ... tember but things slowed
 ... down in November when
 ... the new health restrictions
 ... were implemented.

Because of the missed
 ... classroom time a couple

of retired teach
 ... Stanglewicz
 ... Kelly – came
 ... McKittrick sa

"They help
 ... the sanding,"

Even if it
 ... a couple of
 ... Christmas br

to have all t
 ... back in the
 ... McKittrick sa

"Kids need
 ... learning," she

All student
 ... to school on M

4.

ning

... zoned between
 ... (General Business)
 ... (Highway Business)
 ... tricts.
 ... g to an action
 ... m from Town-
 ... er Mark Stuhl-
 ... doped, the re-
 ... ld place the en-
 ... within the B-5
 ... the updated Of-
 ... g Map."

... ning Commis-
 ... a public hear-
 ... request at their

... g, Nov. 17. After
 ... g, the Commis-
 ... ted the request
 ... eration of eval-
 ... g and prop-
 ... g districts, ap-
 ... and, availabil-
 ... c services and
 ... ure, and con-
 ... th the Master

Plan as mentioned in Sec-
 ... tion 14.5.G. of the Zoning
 ... Ordinance.

After some deliberation,
 ... the Commission decided to
 ... adopt the following motion:

Motion by Commissioner
 ... LaBelle supported by Com-
 ... missioner Fuller to rec-
 ... ommend to the Township
 ... Board of Trustees that the
 ... PREZ 20-03 Zoning Map
 ... Amendment to rezone the
 ... northern 465 feet of PID
 ... 14-026-20-001-06 from the
 ... B-4 (General Business) to
 ... the B-5 (Highway Business)
 ... District be adopted based
 ... on the following findings
 ... and conclusions:

- The setbacks for both districts are equal. The subject parcel meets the required lot dimension standards for both a B-4 and B-5 parcel.
- A parcel that is split-zoned in two different business districts can create obstacles for development

The Planning Commission held a public hearing on the request at their meeting on Nov. 17. After the hearing, the Commission evaluated the request.

as to where a use can go
 ... or if a use is allowed at all.

- The subject site is located on the northern edge of the Bluegrass Center Area as defined on the Future Land Use Map. The Bluegrass Center Area Plan also encourages mixed use developments, with first floor retail/office/entertainment/restaurant venues and residential units on upper floors, as the intended predominate uses, especially in the core of this area along E. Bluegrass Rd.
- Nearly all of the core of the Bluegrass Center Area is currently zoned B-5

(Highway Business).

- The full range of allowable uses in the proposed B-5 District include auto-oriented activities that are not fully consistent with the Bluegrass Center Area Plan, but the proposed rezoning should be adopted based on the following information that supports a change without a need to amend the Master Plan:

The timing of adoption
 ... of the new Zoning Ordinance
 ... No. 20-06, which disallowed
 ... drive-through restaurants in
 ... the B-4 (General Business) District,
 ... is a relevant fact to consider
 ... with regards to this

requested zoning change.
 ... Although the applicant
 ... failed to submit their final
 ... site plan application while
 ... Zoning Ordinance No. 1991-5
 ... was in effect, the SUP 2019-06
 ... special use permit for a filling
 ... station was approved and the
 ... previous SPR 2019-12 preliminary
 ... site plan for a filling station
 ... and restaurant with drive-
 ... through facilities did receive
 ... an initial informal review
 ... under the former Zoning
 ... Ordinance, which allowed
 ... these land uses in both
 ... zoning districts.

- Based on trends in the area, availability of public infrastructure, the timing of this rezoning proposal is appropriate for consideration.
- This amendment will not create any special privilege, result in unlawful exclusionary zoning or set an inappropriate precedent. No adverse impacts

are anticipated
 ... posed rezoning
 ... ment of the lot
 ... with Zoning O
 ... quirements.

"In their 11/
 ... tion to recom
 ... Township Boa
 ... ees that the I
 ... Zoning Map A
 ... be adopted,
 ... ning Commi
 ... tified seven
 ... findings of fa
 ... clusions, base
 ... zoning crite
 ... Section 14.5.G.
 ... ing Ordinance
 ... tify and supp
 ... ommendation,
 ... form said.

A second re
 ... decision on a
 ... proposed req
 ... made at a lat
 ... Trustees meet

For more infor
 ... visit uniontown.com.

CORONAVIRUS IN MID-MICHIGAN

4 deaths reported, including one in Clare County

By Eric Baerren
ebaerren@medianewsgroup.com
@ebaerren on Twitter

Just four new deaths from COVID-19 were reported across mid-Michigan Wednesday amid signs that the number of confirmed cases also continue to decline.

One of the deaths was in Clare County, it's fifth in two days.

Two of those deaths involved residents at Clare County nursing homes, said Steve Hall, health officer for Central Michigan District Health Department.

One was an elderly woman who lived at Medilodge of Clare, and who died Monday. The other nursing home resident was an elderly man who died on Dec. 14 and who lived at Pioneer Golden Estates.

It was Medilodge of Clare's second death, and the first at Pioneer Golden Estates.

One of Clare County's other deaths was a middle-aged man with underlying health conditions, Hall said. That COVID death was discovered during a review of death certificates, one of 72 reported by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services.

An additional nine cases were reported in Clare County on Wednesday for a cumulative total of 1,035.

A total of 37 people from Clare County have died from COVID-19.

No new deaths were reported in Isabella County, but information about two deaths announced Tuesday was released.

One of them involved an elderly woman who lived at Medilodge of Mt. Pleasant. She died Monday.

Nine residents of Medilodge of Mt. Pleasant have died from COVID-19 since March, the first being the county's second COVID death. It involved an elderly woman who was transferred to McLaren-Central Michigan while suffering from the disease. She died in the hospital.

The other eight have died in an outbreak that started this month. A total of 83 people — 66 residents and 27 staff — have contracted the disease, according to state records.

An additional 27 cases were reported in Isabella County on Wednesday for a cumulative total of 2,950. A total of 39 people from Isabella County.

No new deaths were reported in Gratiot County, and no new information was available on deaths announced earlier this week due to a computer glitch, said Leslie Kinnee, spokeswoman for Mid-Michigan District Health Department.

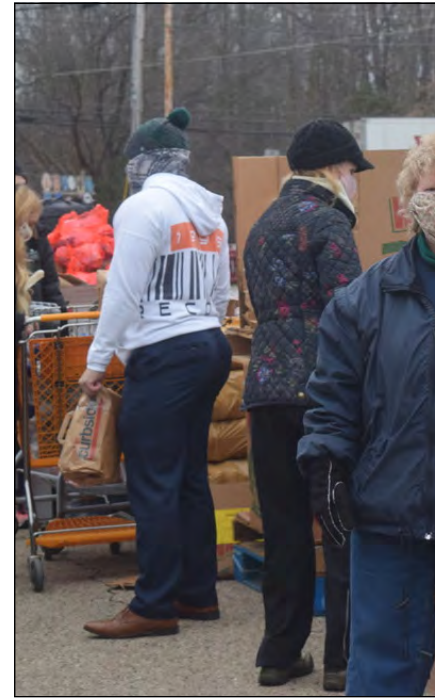
UPDATE » PAGE 2

MT. PLEASANT

Heavy snow showers expected for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day

MT. PLEASANT

HEL MORE



Volunteers with the Community Compassion Network

Community Compassion Network

By Sarah Wright
swright@medianewsgroup.com

The Community Compassion Network (CCN) held its last drive-thru food pantry for the year.

The event took place on Wednesday at the William and Janet Strickler Nonprofit Center. At the start of the drive-thru pantry, cars were already lined up down High Street.

"There's quite a crowd already," one of the pantry coordinators, Peg Simon said. "We've had around 100 families per month come through and it keeps doubling."

After this the pantry will be closed for around two-and-a-half weeks due to the holidays, and the first drive-thru pantry of 2021 will

PANTRY » PAGE 2

MT. PLEASANT

Sacred Heart uses

Powered by TECNAVIA

Service part of year of

in a statement. The cost to taxpayers: \$1.95 billion, for the additional 100 million doses.

— The Associated Press

Update

FROM PAGE 1

An additional 14 cases were reported Wednesday for a cumulative total of 2,151. A total of 60 people from Gratiot County have died from COVID-19.

Elsewhere in mid-Michigan, three new deaths were reported in two counties, with totals and cumulative cases as follows:

▪ In Gladwin County, an additional two deaths were reported for a total of 26, and an additional 10 cases were announced for a cumulative total of 983;

▪ In Midland County, an additional death were reported for a total of 39, and an additional 48 cases were announced for a cumulative total of 3,330;

▪ An additional 23 cases were reported in Montcalm County for a cumulative total of 2,668, with 59 deaths; and,

▪ An additional four cases were reported in Mecosta County for a cumulative total of 1,521, with 12 deaths.

Statewide, another 70 deaths were reported for a total of 11,775, and another 3,443 cases were reported Monday for a cumulative total of 469,928.

Snow

FROM PAGE 1

perly roads.

During the day, snow accumulations could generally be 1 inch or less east of US 131 and 1 to 3 inches west. Higher snowfall rates are expected after 6 p.m. with locally 1 inch per hour for western half of lakeshore counties.

Travel conditions are expected to be the worst after 6 p.m. with snow covered and slick roads.

On Christmas Day, temperatures are expected to

fall in the teen by morning and highly variable conditions with occasional heavy snow showers are expected, mainly west of US 131.

Several inches of additional accumulation will be expected especially on the western half of lakeshore counties.

The expected 2-day total accumulations are expected to be a few tenths of an inch up to 2 inches east of US 131. On the west of US 131 2 to 6 inches are expected with the exception of locally 6 to 10 inches across western lakeshore counties.

For more information, visit weather.gov.

Pantry

FROM PAGE 1

be on Jan. 13.

The pantry generally takes place every second and fourth week on Wednesday from 2 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

“Donations have been pretty good because we’ve packed around 475 boxes and we’ll probably go over,” Simon said.

Volunteers were helping by organizing and distributing food and some of the children volunteers handed out candy canes to those picking up food.

“We had trouble getting volunteers in the past but now we have a loyal team of volunteers,” Simon said.

Besides that, Pizza King arranged for around 120 pizzas to also be given out at the Strickler Center to those who wanted it.

For more information, visit ccnfeeds.org.

Many people at airports this week thought long and hard about whether to go somewhere and found a way to rationalize it.

“My mom’s worth it. She needs my help,” said 34-year-old Jennifer Brownlee, a fisherman from Bayou La Batre, Alabama, who was waiting at the Tampa airport to fly to Oregon to see her mother, who just lost a leg. “I know that God’s got me. He’s not going to let me get sick.” Brownlee said that she

disregarded and ended up coming home. Michelle decided if she made a decision after Houston to Louisiana, where she serves in the military. “I didn’t want to see her long,” said the woman who last saw her about five months ago. “I was trying to fix their relationship.” Before flying

Mass

FROM PAGE 1

end Loren Kalinowski.

During normal times, Christmas services are full, even standing room only. This year, they added a mass and the reservation system to ensure attendance doesn’t swell beyond physically-distant capacity.

The reservation system isn’t new for the church. In fact, one was implemented after Memorial Day after some of the early attendance restrictions were lifted.

The early restrictions were part of restrictions handed down to all churches in Sacred Heart’s diocese, he said. Sacred Heart formed a committee to implement those, including figuring out which pews they could use and which parts of the church needed to be roped off.

One early challenge was obtaining supplies to sanitize the church in between services.

Warmer weather brought a decline in reported cases. Following Memorial Day weekend, attendance was permitted to increase to 25 percent of capacity. That’s when the reservation system was put into place.

They didn’t need it. While Sacred Heart was adapting to the pandemic, so were many of its parishioners. Attendance of the previously lightly attended weekday Mass services dou-

bled, and some stayed home.

“There are some people who aren’t comfortable,” said.

Technology is a way to reach people. The parish broadcast its services on cable for years, started them over Facebook.

Catholicism on rituals, many require in-person dance.

Some rituals — funerals — are faith groups. Weddings, baptisms were a difficult choice. Others required attendance.

Others require in-person.


Communion to the end of the year. People could receive before leaving. Keep people also, for the time.

Consists of a virus through touching the wine.

They also confirmation people — usually are made full of the faith. This is done during gathering of friends and the bishop when churches in the

Those are place individuals. weekday Mass a bishop.

COVID-19 Update: Gratiot Death Toll Tops 60

 Posted on Wednesday, December 30th, 2020 and is filed under [News](#). You can follow any responses to this entry through the [RSS 2.0](#) feed. You can skip to the end and leave a response. Pinging is currently not allowed.

By Emma Selmon
Herald [News](#) Editor

The number of COVID-19 deaths in Gratiot County has more than doubled since the beginning of the month.

Gratiot County was reporting 31 resident deaths due to COVID-19 as of Dec. 3. As of press time on Tuesday, Dec. 29, Gratiot has seen 64 residents die from the virus, according to data from the State of Michigan.

Of the 64 Gratiot County residents dead, 14 passed away within the past two weeks. Due to a data issue, the MidMichigan District [Health](#) Department (MMDHD) was unable to provide information about the relative age and sex of these individuals.

Since Tuesday, Dec. 22, Gratiot County gained four deaths and 35 new cases, bringing the county's cumulative totals up to 2,172 confirmed COVID-19 cases since March and 64 deaths. Neighboring Montcalm County gained 87 new COVID-19 cases and three new deaths in that time period, bringing their totals up to 2,732 cases and 62 deaths. And Clinton County gained 113 new cases and three deaths as well, for a total of 3,524 cases and 40 deaths.

To date, the MMDHD jurisdiction, which includes these three counties, has seen 166 residents die from COVID-19 and 8,428 infected by the virus.

Elsewhere in mid-Michigan, Isabella County gained 115 new COVID-19 cases and three new deaths for a total of 3,038 cases and 42 deaths. Midland County saw 107 new cases and five more residents die from COVID-19, for a total of 3,395 cases and 43 deaths. And in Saginaw County, 455 new COVID-19 infections were reported and six more residents passed away from the virus. The county is now reporting a total of 11,615 total cases and 363 deaths.

Statewide, as of Tuesday, Michigan was reporting 483,922 total positive COVID-19 cases since March and 12,282 deaths from the virus.

Daily News

Wednesday, December 30, 2020

Montcalm County judge to hear Chapz Roadhouse case

By [Elisabeth Waldon](#) | on December 30, 2020



Chapz Roadhouse in Lakeview was home to a Refuse to Obey Unconstitutional Mandates Tour stop on Dec. 12. Since that event, Chapz began running a series of politically-charged statements on its digital marquee outside the restaurant, including: “Is there really a pandemic with a 99.8% survival rate?” — DN Photo | Elisabeth Waldon

LAKEVIEW — The attorney for a Lakeview restaurant fighting against the Michigan Department of Health & Human Services (MDHHS) says the state’s entire case rests upon forced compliance instead of being based upon facts and science.

A Montcalm County judge will soon hear the case of Chapz Roadhouse which continues to offer dine-in service despite an MDHHS no dine-in order issued Nov. 15. That order has been extended several times now and is not set to expire until Jan. 15.

The Michigan Liquor Control Commission (MLCC) on Dec. 2 issued an emergency suspension of the liquor license at Chapz, alleging the bar and restaurant are violating the MDHHS order by continuing to offer dine-in service and also allowing people to gather indoors without requiring them to wear face masks.

Administrative Law Judge Mike St. John heard arguments on Dec. 4 from the Michigan Attorney General’s Office and from defense attorney Stephen Kallman on behalf of Chapz owners Dan and Camille Schutte.

On Dec. 7, St. John suspended the restaurant’s liquor license for 60 days and also issued a \$600 fine.

Kallman on Dec. 11 filed a claim of appeal and petition for review in Montcalm County Circuit Court arguing that St. John erred because the MLCC did the following:

- Acted beyond the scope of its authority and/or jurisdiction;
- Violated Constitutional and statutory requirements;
- Issued its decision which was not supported by competent, material and substantial evidence on the whole record;
- Acted in an arbitrary and capricious manner and it was clearly an abuse or unwarranted exercise of discretion;
- And affected Chapz Roadhouse through other substantial and material errors of law.

Kallman requested the Montcalm County court reverse the MLCC decision, grant a motion for stay of enforcement, grant Chapz oral argument in the matter and also grant such other and further relief as appropriate.

“Instead of being based upon demonstrated facts and science, the state’s entire case rests upon forced compliance with the order issued by MDHHS Director Robert Gordon,” Kallman wrote. “Rather than providing evidence of any infection actually being spread by Chapz Roadhouse or any evidence specific to Chapz Roadhouse, the state just relies upon (MDHHS) Director (Robert) Gordon’s order for generic allegations that COVID-19 exists. No one disputes that COVID-19 exists, however, the state is required to provide that Chapz Roadhouse’s license, specifically, should be suspended.

“If the state is to impose such severe measures, such as shutting down every restaurant and unfavored business in Michigan, it requires more evidence than mere speculation,” Kallman wrote. “There is a reason for judicial review of executive action, to prevent this exact type of executive branch overreach. This case is not truly about any violation of the Liquor Control Code ... Instead, it is about the MLCC acting outside of its authority to police, investigate, convict and sentence Chapz Roadhouse for violating Director Gordon’s order.”

According to Kallman, Chapz Roadhouse has lost approximately \$250,000 in sales since the state’s first COVID-related shutdowns were ordered in March by Gov. Gretchen Whitmer (the Michigan Supreme Court in October found Whitmer’s executive orders to be unconstitutional).

“Chapz Roadhouse will suffer immediate and irreparable injury if the requested relief is not granted,” Kallman wrote. “Chapz Roadhouse has a strong likelihood to prevail on the merits, the public interest will not be harmed and the harm to Chapz Roadhouse in the absence of a stay outweighs any alleged harm to the MLCC.”

The Attorney General’s Office has filed a motion to dismiss the Chapz appeal.

Ionia-Montcalm Circuit Court Chief Judge Ronald Schafer is set to hear the case on Jan. 5.

CHAPZ POLITICAL COMMENTARY

Chapz Roadhouse was home to a Refuse to Obey Unconstitutional Mandates Tour stop on Dec. 12, where incoming 70th District State Rep.-Elect Patrick Outman, R-Six Lakes, 59th District State Rep.-Elect Steve Carra, R-Three Rivers, and Stand Up Michigan Executive Director Tammy Clark all made an appearance and voiced their support for the Lakeview restaurant.

Since that event, Chapz began running a series of statements on its digital marquee outside the restaurant, including:

- “Stand for freedom, stand for liberty”
- “The Constitution is not suspended under the state of emergency”
- “We are not a Democratic government, we are a Constitutional republic.”
- “In the beginning of a change, the patriot is a scarce man; brave, hated and scorned; however, the timid join him, for then it cost nothing”
- “Is there really a pandemic with a 99.8% survival rate?”
- “Where are the peer review studies on mask and gatherings?”
- “Why is it only Democratic governors who are for the draconian lockdowns?”
- “Did Whitmer weaponized (sic) the election process?”
- “Was Whitmer’s 1st CV-19 shutdown weaponized for mail-in ballots?”
- “Was Whitmer’s 2nd shutdown weaponized for the federal reserve bank financial reset?”
- “Isn’t Whitmer responsible for 620% more deaths then (sic) all bars and restaurants in Michigan?”
- “Did Whitmer give Dominion voting 25 million taxpayer dollars?”
- “Is Whitmer trying to end private ownership of small businesses?”
- “God bless America”

During the Mid-Michigan District Health Department Board of Health meeting on Dec. 16, Environmental Health Director Liz Braddock gave a brief update about Chapz Roadhouse, noting that not only has the MLCC suspended the

restaurant's license, but the Michigan Department of Agriculture & Rural Development has issued a cease and desist order to Chapz.

"They are in operation and they have not closed," Braddock said. "It's a very challenging time for our inspectors, but we are continuing to do our work and educating as much as we can and assisting our partners with enforcement as needed.

"Local public health is really hoping that there will be some relent for local restaurants that are complying," Health Officer Marcus Cheatham noted. "We've told them we hope that's what happens. That doesn't mean that that's what's going to happen."

CORONAVIRUS

State adds 9 COVID deaths from mid-Michigan

By Eric Baerren
ebaerren@medianewsgroup.com
@ebaerren on Twitter

Three more COVID-19 deaths were reported in Gratiot County and two more in Clare County, five of the nine new deaths from the disease reported across mid-Michigan on Tuesday.

No information was immediately available about the new deaths in Gratiot County. Mid-Michigan District Health Department, to which Gratiot is a member, has stopped reporting new COVID-19 cases and deaths on its website.

Leslie Kinee, MMDHD spokeswoman, previously said that the problem is with geocoding at the state level.

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services is currently reporting that 67 Gratiot County residents have died from COVID-19, and on Tuesday that an additional 13 confirmed cases were reported, bringing the county's cumulative total to 2,185.

MMDHD's COVID-19 dashboard is reporting 2,063 new cases and 53 deaths, which are both more than a week old.

Two additional deaths were also reported in Clare County, bringing its total number of deaths to 41.

An email was sent to Central Michigan District Health Department later in the afternoon seeking additional information about the people who died. No one had responded by press time.

An additional 17 confirmed cases were reported, bringing the county's cumulative total to 1,087.

No new deaths were reported in Isabella County, where the total number of deaths remains at 42.

An additional 32 cases were reported for a cumulative total of 3,070. That is double the daily average from the previous five days. While there can be significant variability in how many cases

COVID » PAGE 3



GREG NELSON — MORNING SUN

Gary Litwiller shows off the Tiny House on Wheels that took him two years to build.

BACK

Countdown: No. 10- No. 6



COURTESY PHOTO

Austin, who died unexpectedly in April.

inary school af-
g Pol's show with
oe. Harp earned
of science degree
om Kansas State
and later earned
te in veterinary

was hiring.

Filming is underway for the next season, and Harp is ready.

9 Deputies chase man through Chippewa Township

managed a dog
Philadelphia and
n animal hospi-
as City. Harp had
moving to Cal-
instead moved

Deputies from the Isabella County Sheriff's Office attempted to apprehend a man with several arrest warrants and an extensive criminal past.

MPELSTERT
 Tuesday
 Midday Daily 3: 5-8-2-8
 Midday Daily 4: 0-2-8-7
 Daily 3: 5-8-6
 Daily 4: 0-6-9-9
 Fantasy 5: 01-09-21-27-35
 Keno: 04-05-07-09-15-19-20-25-26-28-29-33-38-40-42-48-54-57-70-71-74-80
 Mega Millions: Estimated
 Jackpot: \$376million
 Powerball: Estimated Jack-
 pot: \$363million
 The lottery numbers are not of-
 ficial. Check www.michiganlot-
 tery.com for confirmation.
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MICHIGAN

Private schools win decision over tax dollars for safety

LANSING » The Michigan Supreme Court on Monday upheld a law that gives public money to private schools to comply with health and safety orders.

The court's decision was 3-3, which means an opinion in favor of private schools by the state appeals court will stand.

At issue was whether more than \$5 million authorized by lawmakers during Gov. Rick Snyder's administration conflicts with the Michigan Constitution, which says "no public monies or property" can be used to "aid or maintain" private schools.

The money is OK because it's not for "educational services" in private schools, said justices Stephen Markman, Brian Zahra and David Viviano, all nominated by the Republican Party.

Three Democrats — Megan Cavanagh, Bridget McCormack and Richard Bernstein — disagreed.

"Simply stated, the aid provided to nonpublic schools ... is of a 'direct' nature," they said. "The legislation appropriates public monies for one specific purpose: to pay that money directly to nonpublic schools. None of this court's precedents permits such a result."

Justice Elizabeth Clement, a Republican nominee to the court, didn't participate because she was a lawyer in Snyder's office.

The case now returns

confirmed another 3,414 vi-
 rus cases and 193 deaths,
 including 105 deaths found
 during a review of records.

COVID

FROM PAGE 1

are reported each day, it is not uncommon for fewer cases to be reported on Monday, especially following a holiday, followed by an uptick in new cases on Tuesday as staffing in both private labs and in state offices catches up from the weekend.

Elsewhere in mid-Michigan, 11 new deaths were reported across four counties, with totals and cumulative cases as follows:

- In Gladwin County, an additional two deaths were reported for a total of 30, and an additional 11 cases were announced for a cumulative total of 1,019;
- In Montcalm County,

masks and social distanc-
 ing is "more important than
 ever," she told reporters.

an additional two deaths were reported for a total of 64, and an additional case was announced for a cumulative total of 2,733;

- In Midland County, deaths were revised down by one from 43 to 42, and an additional 64 cases were reported announced for a cumulative total of 3,459; and,
- In Mecosta County, one more case was reported for a cumulative total of 1,562, with 14 deaths.

Statewide, another 193 deaths were reported for a total of 12,282, and another 3,414 cases were reported Monday for a cumulative total of 483,922.

- Of those 193 deaths, 105 of them are deaths within the last 30 days that were discovered during a review of death certificates.

Charges

FROM PAGE 1

the accused was clearly drunk, the complaint said.

In the complaint, Thompson reported attempting to make several attempts to contact the man at his local resi-

dence. That includes times when his car was present and that when he knocked he heard movement inside the residence. Thompson also reported attempted to contact the man by phone and leaving his business card for the accused at his residence, adding that the man never got in contact with him.



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For more ways to contact us,
please visit us online at:
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Central Eavestrouging, LLC
LICENSED & INSURED • FREE ESTIMATES
Manufacturers of...
• 5" Seamless Gutter
• 6" Commercial Seamless Gutter

clinical trials go
 prescription pill have
 phenomenal.

Why so effective? We asked its developers that same question.

STRENGTHENS THE BLADDER MUSCLES & PREVENTS THEM FROM RELEASING

Until now, many within the medical community — including myself — believed it was impossible to strengthen the muscles that control the bladder without drugs, surgery, or exercises.

Remarkably, it has now been proven this can be achieved with a tiny pill. Albeit, a natural one.

The secret? A revolutionary discovery that helps the bladder create a tighter seal...while also preventing your bladder from releasing involuntarily.

Research shows that as we age, the muscles surrounding the bladder can deteriorate. This is triggered by hormonal changes in the body which results in *muscle atrophy*, the medical term for muscle shrinking.

When these muscles get too small and weak, they cannot seal the bladder shut. That's why you may leak, dribble, and experience uncontrollable accidents.

Worse, because the bladder fails to empty completely, you feel like you need to go all the time! And as old urine just sits there, it can seep into your blood stream, causing painful infections which need multiple rounds of antibiotics to get rid of.

"URIVARX TARGETS A FAILING BLADDER IN A WHOLE NEW WAY"

In its most recent clinical trial, scientists discovered a trio of science based compounds that actually strengthen the tiny muscles surrounding the bladder. So effectively that they were shown to decrease adult diaper use by a staggering 400%.

Even more surprising, these three compounds also had a rejuvenating effect on the bladder, allowing it to work like it

clinical trials go
 prescription pill have
 phenomenal.
 Why so effective? We asked its developers that same question.
STRENGTHENS THE BLADDER MUSCLES & PREVENTS THEM FROM RELEASING
 Until now, many within the medical community — including myself — believed it was impossible to strengthen the muscles that control the bladder without drugs, surgery, or exercises.
 Remarkably, it has now been proven this can be achieved with a tiny pill. Albeit, a natural one.
The secret? A revolutionary discovery that helps the bladder create a tighter seal...while also preventing your bladder from releasing involuntarily.
 Research shows that as we age, the muscles surrounding the bladder can deteriorate. This is triggered by hormonal changes in the body which results in *muscle atrophy*, the medical term for muscle shrinking.
 When these muscles get too small and weak, they cannot seal the bladder shut. That's why you may leak, dribble, and experience uncontrollable accidents.
 Worse, because the bladder fails to empty completely, you feel like you need to go all the time! And as old urine just sits there, it can seep into your blood stream, causing painful infections which need multiple rounds of antibiotics to get rid of.
"URIVARX TARGETS A FAILING BLADDER IN A WHOLE NEW WAY"
 In its most recent clinical trial, scientists discovered a trio of science based compounds that actually strengthen the tiny muscles surrounding the bladder. So effectively that they were shown to decrease adult diaper use by a staggering 400%.
 Even more surprising, these three compounds also had a rejuvenating effect on the bladder, allowing it to work like it

The results are incredible.

The participants received UriVarx improvements in bladder pressure, and to go — all usual side effects. Prescription drugs also reported to the bathroom and night.

STUDY RESULTS
The group using UriVarx saw bladder improvement:

- 56% Reduction in Incontinence
- 66% Reduction in Incontinence
- 61% Reduction in Incontinence
- 33% Reduction in Frequency
- 46% Reduction in Nighttime Bathroom Visits

Additionally, the results of clinical trials are seeing the results of the participants. UriVarx" said it fully improved the quality of life.

"The clinical results are incredible, still wonder how they really work" e... developer for UriVarx" users exactly like... pants in the... amazing product.

EXCITING RESULTS FROM URIVARX USE

Many UriVarx users reported their bladders were stronger. In time in years, they were confident and in control. Adult diapers are no longer a worry.

"It's exciting to see the results of the positive

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BILL » PAGE 2

CORONAVIRUS IN MID-MICHIGAN

State reports new COVID deaths in Gratiot

Health department won't back numbers

By Eric Baerren

*ebaerren@medianewsgroup.com
@ebaerren on Twitter*

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services reported two new COVID-19 deaths in Gratiot County on Wednesday afternoon, the only new deaths reported by the state in mid-Michigan.

They were the only new deaths reported across mid-Michigan on Wednesday.

It brings the number of deaths in Gratiot County to 69, according to state records. No information was available about the deaths from Mid-Michigan District Health Department, which continues to cite a computer glitch as its reason.

"I don't think the state's data is wrong, there is a glitch in the sys-

tem from which we get data from the State," said Leslie Kinnee, MMDHD spokeswoman. "We are not comfortable reporting on numbers until it gets straightened out."

An email asking why anyone should trust the state's numbers if MMDHD didn't feel comfortable enough to report on them didn't get a response by press time.

The state reported an additional 61 cases in Gratiot County, bringing its cumulative total to 2,246.

No new deaths were reported in either Clare or Isabella counties. It is the second straight day of no new deaths reported in Isabella County, a sign that the trend behind new deaths, which lag new cases by at least two weeks, are also declining in number.

In Isabella County, an additional 15 cases were reported for a cumulative total of 3,085. In Clare County, an additional five cases were reported for a cumulative total of 1,088.

Elsewhere in mid-Michigan, no new deaths were reported and

one county had its deaths revised downward, with totals and cumulative cases as follows:

- In Gladwin County, the total number of deaths were revised down by one from 29 to 28, and an additional five cases were reported for a cumulative total of 1,024;

- In Montcalm County, an additional 20 cases were reported for a cumulative total of 2,773, with 64 deaths;

- In Midland County, an additional 27 cases were reported for a cumulative total of 3,486, with 42 deaths; and,

- In Mecosta County, an additional 13 cases were reported for a cumulative total of 1,575, with 14 deaths.

Statewide, another 193 deaths were reported for a total of 12,282, and another 3,414 cases were reported Monday for a cumulative total of 483,922.

Of those 193 deaths, 105 of them are deaths within the last 30 days that were discovered during a review of death certificates.



RUS YEAR IN REVIEW



re Planning and Facilities Landscape Services, all Spartans. NICK KING/LANSING STATE JOURNAL

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“It is with this Spartan spirit that we will get through this difficult time together and be stronger because of it. Together, we will.”

MSU President Samuel Stanley Jr.
In a letter to the campus community

Vaccine rollout limited in region

Providers have more capacity than supply

Craig Lyons

Lansing State Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK – MICHIGAN

LANSING – Health providers in Greater Lansing have already distributed nearly 5,500 doses of COVID-19 vaccines in the first two weeks of the rollout but officials say there’s more to do.

So far, the state has distributed 313,375 doses of the vaccine and reported 71,256 vaccinations, according to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. While local providers are making progress, smaller than anticipated shipments of the vaccine are being received and limiting faster vaccination.

Since vaccine distribution started, health providers in Ingham County received 11,800 doses, Eaton County received 1,400 doses and Clinton County received 1,300 doses, according to MDHHS.

Ingham County Health Officer Linda Vail said vaccination could quickly ramp up if more vaccine was available to providers.

“Our limiting factor is having enough vaccine,” she said. “We can do more.”

Sparrow Hospital, McLaren Greater Lansing and the Ingham County Health Department received the first shipments of Pfizer’s COVID-19 vaccine on Dec. 17. Providers have since begun receiving the Moderna vaccine.

The state has so far distributed

See VACCINE, Page 4A

re expected vs. what we got

Vaccine

Continued from Page 1A

227,175 doses of the Pfizer vaccine and 86,200 doses of the Moderna vaccine, according to MDHHS.

Vail said her plan is to administer as many doses as she has available each week.

“We basically vaccinate as many people as we can,” she said.

Providers report progress on vaccination

Sparrow Health System has vaccinated 2,574 people; 2,302 are hospital staff and 371 are non-Sparrow providers, spokesman John Foren said. He said 25% of the hospital system’s caregivers have been vaccinated so far.

That includes Sparrow’s main hospital in Lansing and its community hospitals.

“We are grateful for any vaccines we

get,” Foren said. “We certainly have capacity to distribute more but we’re also mindful of the process.”

McLaren Greater Lansing vaccinated about 700 of its staff members and affiliated providers, according to Marla Ekola, McLaren Greater Lansing’s director of pharmacy.

The Ingham County Health Department is administering 975 doses a week, the full weekly allotment of the vaccine, Vail said. The health department is vaccinating about 350 people each day, focusing on their own health care providers, emergency medical service providers and first responders.

“We could double or triple that if we had the vaccine to do that,” Vail said.

The Barry-Eaton Health Department has vaccinated 130 people in Eaton County and 120 in Barry County, said Sarah Surna, the department’s community health promotions specialist.

Staff report that the process is running smoothly, with scheduled appointments keeping a steady flow of individuals coming through the clinic, Surna



Pharmacy manager John Winger prepares a dose of the COVID-19 vaccine for ICU nurse Dawn Chapel at McLaren Greater Lansing hospital on Dec. 17 in Lansing.

NICK KING/LANSING STATE JOURNAL

Public vaccination remains months away

The state’s focus and that of local providers is still on the 1A category, which includes people working in health care settings and long-term care residents, Vail said.

The state has set up phases for who gets vaccinated first:

- Phase 1A: Paid and unpaid people working in health care settings who have direct or indirect exposure to patients or infectious materials, and residents in long-term care facilities.

- Phase 1B: Workers in some essential and critical industries.

- Phase 1C: People 16 years of age and older who are at high risk of severe illness and people 65 years and older.

- Phase 2C: All individuals over 16 years old.

MDHHS expects widespread public vaccination will start in the spring of 2021 once an ample supply is available.

Contact reporter Craig Lyons at 517-377-1047 or calyons@lsj.com.

2020

Continued from Page 1A

Trump’s personal lawyer Rudy Giuliani later satirized on national television.

Anthony herself became the subject of international headlines when she was escorted into the Capitol by a group of armed Black constituents who volunteered to walk alongside her after she had experienced an unsettling walk through a crowd of protesters, some carrying firearms and displaying racist symbols, a few days before.

It was her way of getting to work safely. Not everyone agreed.

“I found myself on white supremacist websites and a target of all of these fringe militia groups,” said Anthony, now an outspoken proponent for banning firearms from the Capitol building. “I’m always open to having a debate about the Second Amendment and where guns should be present in workplaces, schools, but my mere presence as a Black woman who is just trying to protect herself to go to work becomes like a threat to certain people. That was the part that I don’t think I was ready for.”

Modest goals become ‘bizarre’ year for Izzo

After a difficult end to 2019 and some turbulent years before it, Izzo had modest goals for 2020.

“My New Year’s wish was to get a little back to normal,” Michigan State’s longtime basketball coach said. “It was a grinding three years for me from everything and then the Cassius (Winston) thing hit. I don’t know if things got worse, but they got crazier, that’s for sure.”

Winston, Izzo’s star point guard, lost his brother to suicide at the beginning of 2019-20 season. Looking ahead became a day-at-a-time thing.

January 13, 2021, 3:31 pm (GMT -5:00). “I thought I had a good team. I thought if I could get them back together



Demonstrators look on during a statewide rally hosted by Black Lives Matter on June 29 at the Capitol in Lansing. NICK KING/LANSING STATE JOURNAL



Rallygoers, including open-carry advocates, protest against Gov. Gretchen Whitmer’s stay-at-home order on April 15 in downtown Lansing, near the State Capitol. MATTHEW DAE SMITH/LANSING STATE JOURNAL

in high school, the other a junior at MSU, all navigating their days on Zoom around the same dining room table.

“I found out my kids are also kind of cool as adults,” Norris said. “If I was getting frustrated in a meeting, they would write stuff on signs and hold it up behind my camera.”

Norris always has a one-word goal for the year. For 2020, it was “intentional.” For 2021, “it’s going to have to be ‘flexible,’” she said.

Pewamo-Westphalia Superintendent Jeff Wright had all sorts of forward-thinking goals for 2020. Professionally, he was going to find new ways to help students find career paths.

“That was absolutely a goal,” Wright said. “How could we get a virtual welder at P-W, so that students to put those goggles on and feel what it’s like to have virtual welding? What would it look like to offer more dual enrollment in manufacturing and science and agriculture, so that we could get our kids just exploring those options?”

“I mean, I was I was going after that. Until March.”

Hello March. Goodbye plans.

That’s when many lost control of their 2020 plans.

Poet Masaki Takahashi spent March in denial. The pandemic hit right as he was gearing up to host The Poetry Room’s big April feature, where Brenna Twohy – his “poet crush,” the “bomb.com” – was going to perform. He was sure this whole coronavirus thing would blow over in time for Twohy to take the Robin Theatre stage.

Alas, it didn’t blow over.

So The Poetry Room, a monthly open mic event that Takahashi has hosted since 2017, went virtual.

“When that happened, I really started preparing myself to make this shift and go ‘OK, you’ve got to learn how to use Zoom, you’ve got to have really good internet,” Takahashi said.

Powered by TECNAVIA

Learning from 2020 as we

Daily News

Saturday, January 2, 2021

Health Department to offer free fluoride varnish applications

Submitted by the Mid-Michigan District Health Department

STANTON — The Mid-Michigan District Health Department (MMDHD) will be helping children in Montcalm County start the new year off right with a healthy, happy smile.

Parents with children as young as five months old are encouraged to take advantage of free fluoride varnish applications and limited dental exams being offered by MMDHD to help stop cavities before they start.

This service is open to children of any age, even as young as five months old, as long as they have at least one tooth and have not seen a dentist or had a fluoride varnish treatment within the last year.

The fluoride varnish applications and dental exams will take place on Jan. 13 and Feb. 3 from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the MMDHD, 615 N. State St. in Stanton. These services are free. No appointment is needed.

In addition to receiving a free fluoride varnish application, participants will also receive a free limited dental exam by MMDHD Oral Health

Coordinator and Registered Dental Hygienist Shelley Treynor. The dental exam is quick and painless and will identify signs of decay or other dental problems.

“Tooth decay is one of the most common diseases in children, but it is preventable,” said Treynor. “I can’t stress enough the importance of good oral health and the role it plays in the overall wellness of a child. Poor dental health can be devastating because cavities are not only painful, but also prevent kids from eating, speaking, sleeping, and learning.”

Fluoride varnish treatments are very effective at protecting teeth from decay. While most kids benefit from the treatments, they are especially beneficial for those who are at-risk for dental decay or those who live in communities without fluoridated water.

Fluoride varnish is a protective coating that is “painted” on the teeth with a small disposable brush. The coating makes the outer layer, or the enamel, harder, helping to prevent cavities and stop cavities that have already started. The process is quick, painless, safe, and effective.

ARRIES EATS



PHOTOS PROVIDED BY THE SNOW SNAKE FACEBOOK PAGE
COVID-19 precautions are in place.

COVID precautions in place



MICHIGAN

State answers bell with new PBB website

Pine River Task Force championed additions for ease of access to information of chemical contamination

By Greg Nelson
gnelson@medianewsgroup.com

Members of the Pine River Superfund Citizens Task Force have been trying to get state health officials to make it easier to get data regarding current or past generations that may have been exposed to Polybrominated Biphenyls, or PBB.

Their work has finally paid off.

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services has launched a new website about PBB and opportunities for individuals who have been exposed to participate in a PBB study.

“It is in response to our continuing work to keep the PBB legacy from being forgotten, including face-to-face talks with MDHHS personnel and with our legislators in Lansing, that

PBB » PAGE 3

MICHIGAN

Criminal justice reform and other new notable laws take effect in 2021

By Mark Cavitt
mcavitt@medianewsgroup.com

bars similar to the one administered earlier this year. Morning Sun - 01/03/2011

The restaurant meal program benefits, and people experiencing homeless-

aim of providing diverse and affordable options for eligible participants across the state. Restau-

roll. Restaurants are allowed to be open for carryout and outdoor dining.

Deaths in fatality for a... and Rapids

Michigan State Police (MSP) to a one vehicle traffic crash to a female driver from Grand... ease from the MSP, troopers... on Friday, Jan. 1 at ap... Westbound I-96 near Hast... ship, Ionia County. ... ion revealed a 2002 Honda... by a 47-year-old female from... g westbound on I-96 at a high... rted to pass a vehicle in the... driver then lost control of the... h lanes of travel before leav... ing numerous trees. ... was not wearing a seat belt... d was pronounced deceased... speed are believed to be fac... by the Ionia County Sher... epartment, LIFE EMS, Ionia... nd Reed and Hoppes Towing... nued by the Michigan State... -352-8444.

Sun



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MorningSun.com/Contact

PBB

FROM PAGE 1

the state health department has decided to establish a webpage dealing with PBB," Task Force Chairperson Jane Keon stated in an email. "In particular, we have persisted in asking for a process for family members to request the PBB records of a deceased relative from the state, which their new webpage will allow to occur."

According to an MDHHS press release, like the task force, the agency is partnering with Atlanta, Ga.-based Emory University to conduct health research projects that may benefit state residents who were affected by the PBB contamination in the early 1970's.

"MDHHS is making efforts to ensure that Michiganders are provided key information on potential health impacts from PBB exposure, historical research that had been conducted by MDHHS, and how they can participate in future PBB research with Emory University," MDHHS Chief Medical Executive Dr. Joneigh Khaldun stated in the news release.

In addition to the task force and Emory University researchers, the state's PBB

Citizens Advisory Board and Mid-Michigan District Health Department have been involved the past several years in helping state residents who were exposed to PBB get answers to their questions regarding the effects the chemical has on human health.

"At present we are partnering with the PBB research team from Emory in a clinical trial study that determines if ingestion of a certain substance helps the human body eliminate PBB faster than waiting for nature to conduct its long process," Keon said.

The state's PBB contamination occurred in early 1973 when the Michigan Chemical Co. in St. Louis shipped the fire retardant PBB to Farm Bureau Services instead of magnesium oxide, a nutritional supplement for livestock.

The PBB was mistakenly mixed with livestock feed and consumed by cattle, pigs and chickens.

However, after entering the food chain the mix-up wasn't discovered for a year.

According to Emory University's head researcher Dr. Michele Marcus, about 60 percent of Michigan residents still have some levels of PBB in their bodies from contaminated food consumed from the original incident.

Some of the health issues associated with PBB exposure include thyroid issues, certain cancers, reproductive, digestive and joint problems, cognitive difficulties such as dementia and autism, and immune diseases, she noted.

Marcus added that workers at the plant have the highest levels of PBB in their systems, followed by families of the employees, farm families and the average Michigan resident.

It is also known that mothers can transmit PBB to their children and there are also indications that men can do so as well, she said.

The task force and Emory University have been working to help get individual's records transferred to the Michigan PBB Registry, get their blood tested for PBB and get them involved in ongoing research studies.

Now, thanks to the new MDHHS webpage, anyone who has a deceased relative who participated in the Michigan Long-Term PBB Study conducted back in the late 1970s, can request that person's historical study records from the state.

For more information go online to Michigan.gov/PBB or call 800-648-6942.

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MI LOTTERY

Saturday
Midday Daily 3: 3-7-4
Midday Daily 4: 8-2-7-6
Mega Millions: Estimated jackpot: \$432 million
Powerball: Estimated jackpot: \$384 million

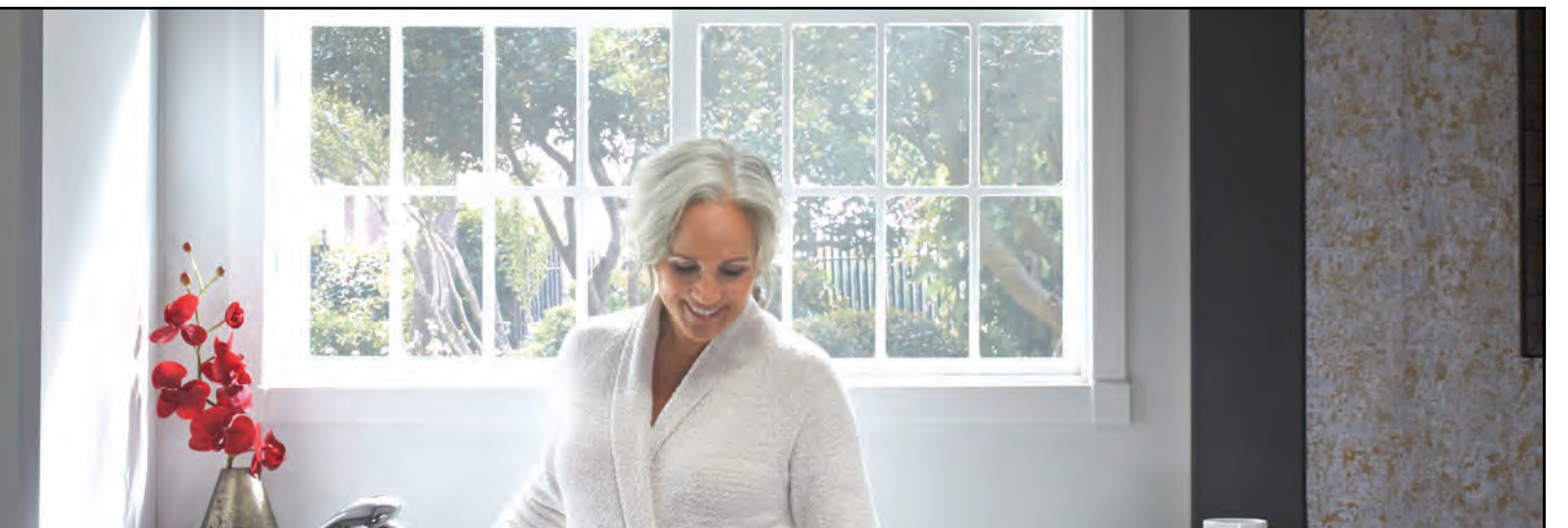
Saturday evening's drawings were not available at press time.

The lottery numbers are not official. Check www.michiganlottery.com for confirmation.

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CORONAVIRUS IN MID-MICHIGAN

Twenty-two die from COVID since Wednesday

398 deaths were reported in state during the same time period, total stands at 12,678

By Eric Baerren
ebaerren@medianewsgroup.com
Multimedia journalist

Twenty-two additional deaths from COVID-19 were announced across mid-Michigan Monday, including eight in Gratiot County. That is 4.4 new deaths on average per day during the reporting period, which started Wednesday.

The state didn't report numbers Thursday or Friday due to the New Years holiday. The eight new deaths bring the county's total to 77, but no information from Mid-Michigan District Health Department to verify the deaths or provide information about who they were was immediately available. MMDHD stopped reporting

new deaths and cases on its own dashboard two weeks ago, citing "geocoding" problems with the state data. The last number of deaths the health department reported was 52. It isn't just Gratiot County, but it doesn't appear to be all of their counties. The health department also covers Montcalm and Clinton counties, and they are reporting fewer deaths in Montcalm. While the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services is reporting 69 COVID deaths

in Montcalm County, MMDHD is reporting 53; while in Clinton County, the state is reporting 42 deaths and MMDHD is reporting 41. It does appear that MMDHD is reporting new confirmed COVID-19. On Monday, MDHHS reported a cumulative total of 2,242 cases in Gratiot County; MMDHD reported 2,239. In Montcalm County, the state reported 2,874 cases as of Monday; MMDHD reported 2,866. In Clinton County, the state reported 3,888 cases as of Monday; MMDHD reported

3,864. An email sent to MMDHD spokeswoman Leslie Kinnee asking if they were getting accurate data from the state now has gone unanswered. Three new deaths were reported in Isabella County over the holiday weekend, and one was reported in Clare County. It brings the total number of deaths in Isabella County to 45 and 42 in Clare County. No information on the people who died was immediately available. **UPDATE » PAGE 3**

ALMA

OFF THE SIDELINES

Alma College resumes sports competition

For the first time in several months Alma College athletes will be able to return to competition. All sports were postponed Sept. 9 when the Michigan Intercollegiate Athletic Association voted to cancel the fall sports seasons and not return to competition until 2021. Well, that time has arrived. Members of the Cheer and Stunt teams (right), as well as athletes on the men's and women's basketball teams, and swimming and diving, wrestling and bowling teams are back on campus and preparing for their respective seasons, most beginning later this month, with the STUNT team making it debut with a Feb. 7 meet at Davenport University. — Greg Nelson



PHOTO COURTESY OF JEFF ABERNATHY, PRESIDENT OF ALMA COLLEGE.

MT. PLEASANT

Det. sgt. at MP post honored

McMillan named 2020's trooper of the Year

By Eric Baerren
ebaerren@medianewsgroup.com
Multimedia journalist

A trooper with the Michigan State Police post in Mt. Pleasant was named 2020's trooper of the year.

Joe McMillan, a detective sergeant at the post, was named 2020's Gerstacker Trooper of the Year, according to a press release.

The award was created in 1961 by Dr. Carl A. Gerstacker, former chairman of the board of Dow Chemical Company. It is given to troopers or sergeants in honor of their professional ethics, dedication and for giving back to their communities.

In addition to handling high-profile cases with the post and mentoring fellow troopers, McMillan was recognized for his

HONOR » PAGE 3



McMillan

NATION

House Democrats vow new effort on economic aid

By Erica Werner
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON » House Democrats vowed Monday to renew efforts to provide economic assistance - including state and local aid and potentially

\$600 checks, legislation that Trump ultimately signed even while criticizing the size of the checks as "measly." (CNN) Democrats anticipate writing a new relief bill once President-elect Joe Biden is

out of the most recent relief bill, remains a top priority for Democrats. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., said Sunday that "we owe them more." "Our most urgent priority will be continuing to de-



MONTCALM COUNTY

County woman missing since New Year's Eve

By Rick Mills
rimills@medianewsgroup.com
@rickmills2 on Twitter

Police are seeking tips in their effort to locate a Montcalm County woman who was last seen on New Year's Eve.

for visits between children and non-custodial parents. We think this last volunteer job was probably her favorite as she often talked about how much she enjoyed getting to know the children. Mom's life was not an easy one. In addition to the early losses in her life, she struggled from her teen years on with a form of lymphedema that affected her mobility, especially in later years. She faced her years as a single mom and widow with great strength, and her life was filled with fun and much love. She imparted to us a love of home, travel, knitting, gardening, and family. We have many memories that we will cherish for all our lives and we miss her greatly. Mom was preceded in death by her parents Howard and Edna Newman, husband Dennis Andrew, sister and brother-in-law Lorryne and Herb Clafin, and son-in-law Sonny Chandler. She is survived by her sister Jean (Portland, OR); daughters Denise Chandler (Live Oak, FL) and Linda Sherwood (John; Bozeman, MT); son Bill Andrew (Live Oak, FL); grandchildren Cindy Eichorst (Steve; Macomb, MI), Zachary Chandler (Ariel; Jacksonville, FL), Renee Chandler (Gainesville, FL), Morgan Stangl (Matt; St. Louis Park, MN), Ty Sherwood (Bozeman, MT), and Aaron Andrew (Kiki; Indianapolis, IN); and great grandchildren Austin Eichorst, Ethan Eichorst, Eli Stangl, Cora Stangl, Tamia Andrew, and Hermoni Andrew; as well as several nieces, nephews and cousins. Rest easy Mom. We love you. Cremation has taken place and no services are planned at this time. A private family gathering will be held in the future. Please sign the Guest Book at Daniels Funeral Home (www.danielsfuneralhome.com). If desired, donations can be made in Marie's memory to support treatment for those with lymphedema (lymphedematreatment.org) or to HATS (www.hatsweb.org).

BUNTING, CORA JOAN



It is with saddened hearts we announce the passing of a wonderful wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, and friend, Cora Joan Bunting. Joan, age 85 of St. Louis, passed away Saturday, January 2, 2021 at Green Acres of Mt. Pleasant. Joan was born February 6, 1935 the daughter of Franklin and Hazel A. (Smith) Lintemuth. She was a telephone operator after

high school where she met and later married Robert "Bob" Duane Bunting on March 18, 1957. After her kids graduated high school, she worked at Jan's Pizzeria in St. Louis and was well known and loved by her customers. She was well known as being the sweetest and nicest lady. Joan and Bob were campers and long-time Good Sam club members. They were also members of the Moose Lodge and the VFW. They liked to travel and were known for taking long Sunday drives or hitting the road with suitcases packed and no "set" travel plans. Joan taught Sunday School at the Saint Louis United Methodist Church for a number of years. Joan is survived by her sons Randy (Gina) Bunting of Bay City, David (Ann) Bunting of St. Louis, Steven Bunting of St. Louis, and Roger (Patti) Bunting of Ithaca; 12 grandchildren Josh, Jake, Valerie, Thomas, Kyle, Jordan, Matthew, Luke, Jessica, Zachery, Sarah, and Rachael; 8 great grandchildren; sister-in-law Joyce Lintemuth; and many nieces and nephews. Joan was preceded in death by Bob, both her parents, and her 8 siblings Therin Lintemuth, Quinten Lintemuth, Ilah Jean Worth, Oakley Lintemuth, Leatrice "PeeWee" Freiberg, John Lintemuth, Kieth Lintemuth and infant baby girl Lelah Irene. There will be a private family viewing for Joan on Wednesday, January 6 from 10 to 11 a.m. at **Berry Funeral Home**. There will be a public graveside service at Oak Grove Cemetery at 11:30 a.m. The family will have a celebration of life at a later date. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be sent to **Berry Funeral Home**

and staffing shortages during end-of-year vacations.

— *The Associated Press*

Update

FROM PAGE 1

able, although a request for information was sent to Central Michigan District Health Department.

An additional 95 cases was reported in Isabella County, bringing its cumulative total to 3,175; and an additional 122 cases were reported in Clare County, bringing its cumulative total to 1,110.

Elsewhere in mid-Michigan, new deaths were reported in three counties, with totals and cumulative cases as follows:

- In Gladwin County, two more deaths were reported for a total of 30, and an additional 33 cases were reported for a cumulative total of 1,067.

- In Midland County, an additional three deaths were reported for a total of 45, and an additional 122 cases were reported for a cumulative total of 3,608.

- In Mecosta County, an additional 46 cases were reported for a cumulative total of 1,621, with 14 deaths.

Statewide, another 398 deaths were reported since Wednesday for a total of 12,678, and another 8,197 cases were reported Monday for a cumulative total of 502,119. While MD-HHS didn't report new deaths and cases on Thursday, they did report them on Saturday. According to that update, more than 200 of the deaths they reported that day happened within the last 30 days and were discovered during a review of death certificates.

Honor

FROM PAGE 1

community work. He coaches youth sports — including baseball and basketball — and, with his spouse, hosts bi-weekly meetings so they can provide advice and support to other married couples.

He enlisted in the MSP in 2008, and after graduating with the 121st Trooper Bn.

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please visit us online at:
www.TheMorningSun.com/Contact

Every Life has a Story

Honor your loved one by their unique story...their accomplishments, passions and...and provide information a commemoration with an obituary memorial.

Enduring Remembrance

Remembering...

FREDERICK R. "FRITZ" REED

REED Frederick R. "Fritz" Reed, age 99, of Powell, passed away unexpectedly Monday, August 27, 2007. He was a graduate of Harvard University and The Ohio State University Law School. During his career he practiced law with Vorys, Sater, Seymour and Penne, served as Chief Financial Officer for Wendy's International and most recently worked as a business consultant for Developmental Specialists, Inc. He will be dearly missed by his wife of 16 years, Jane; sister, Jane Prause; sister-in-law, Jane (Michael) Kedlik; uncle, Charles E. (Patricia) Reed; mother-in-law, Carol G. Williams; brothers-in-law, John D. (Dorothy) Williams and Barry J. (Phillips) Williams; nieces and nephews, David (Melissa) Black, Sarah Black, Matthew Reed, Samuel Reed, Margaret (Joel) Strom, Sarah (Kevin) Mueller, John Carl (Sarah) Williams and James B. (Holly) Williams; Colin (Elaine) Williams, Charlotte (Lewis) Muir and Lesley (Wes) Patterson; step-nephew, Calvin Kedlik; 7 grand-nieces and nephews; 2 step-grand-nieces and nephews; and many friends. Fritz was preceded in death by his parents Carl R. and Marjan Faler Reed, brother Ellen "Susie" Robert H. Penne, father-in-law James T. Williams and aunts and uncle Ellen "Susie" Reed, Ruth Reed (Warren) Calvert. Friends may call 2-5 and 7-9 p.m. Wednesday at Reed, Ruth Reed (Warren) Calvert, Friends may call 2-5 and 7-9 p.m. Wednesday at Reed, Ruth Reed (Warren) Calvert, Friends may call 2-5 and 7-9 p.m. Wednesday at Schoedinger NorthWest Chapel, 1740 Zollinger Road. Private graveside service and interment at Libbey's Cemetery, 6770 North High St., p.m. Thursday, August 30, 2007 at All Saints Lutheran Church. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to the Frederick R. Reed Scholarship Fund at the OSU Moritz College of Law, c/o Lisa Ballmann, OSU Moritz College of Law, 55 West 12th Avenue, Columbus, OH 43210 or the All Saints E. Lutheran of Law, Endowment Fund, in his memory. Visit www.schoedinger.com to send condolences to his family. *Sign the online guestbook at www.dispatch.com/obituaries

To place an obituary please contact us at: 877.271.1272

(Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 5 p.m.)

Saturday 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.)

Daily News

Wednesday, January 6, 2021

Crystal Township talks tax time building occupancy

Board also questions in-person meeting procedures

By [Brandon Schreur](#) | on January 06, 2021



Crystal Township Treasurer Nancy Mills, right, brings up the topic of building occupancy during tax time at Crystal Township’s meeting in December while Trustee Roger Martin listens. — DN Photo | Brandon Schreur

CRYSTAL TOWNSHIP — Around this time in an average year, township treasurer offices typically find people stopping by to pay their winter taxes.

For many municipalities, such as Crystal Township, this year will look somewhat different.

The topic of building occupancy and how the township intends to promote health and safety practices during tax season was brought up by Treasurer Nancy Mills during the Crystal Township Board’s meeting in December.

“I got people banging on my door even though it says that I’m closed,” Mills told board members. “I realize that people want to pay their taxes. We have mail and we have a drop-box. There are scenarios when we can take cash. People still do not pay attention to the signs telling them to stay out in the hallway when there’s somebody else in my

office. (Clerk Patty Baker-Marek) had to deal with this when it was the election. Now that it's tax time, I'm in the hot spot."

With winter taxes due on Feb. 15, Mills said she'd like the township to look into some of the practices that Montcalm County government buildings have adopted.

"They're taking your temperature and you need to write down your name, address and contact information," she said. "We're doing none of that. I'm going to keep my door locked."

Crystal Township Fire Chief Mike Fitzpatrick pointed out that township offices can remain open under Michigan Department of Health & Human Services' (MDHHS) guidelines as long as there is a proper health and safety plan in place.

"The Health Department has a packet you can download off the internet for businesses on how to reopen and the guidelines that you have to follow," Fitzpatrick said. "Technically, you could be audited. There are places being audited and fined that don't have that in place. The reason I'm speaking up is because I'm assuming that whatever policies and procedures the board adopts, we're going to have to have the same policies and guides for the fire department."

Fitzpatrick said firefighters are currently following guidelines similar to those put out by MDHHS.

"We've had some exposures and different things that have taken place," he admitted. "We try to be as proactive as possible, but there are some situations, since we are frontline workers, where we don't have the options as some other places to mitigate exposure."

With no township-wide health and safety plan currently approved, Mills said she wasn't comfortable letting a large number of people into her office.

"Since we don't have a plan, I'm going back to what I was doing before," she said. "There are two days that I have to be in here and perhaps let people into the building. I'm sticking with that until we have something else in place. Otherwise, we're up for a fine, possibly. Or just widespread COVID."

Some audience members suggested board members look at the MDHHS's recommended guidelines and vote to adopt them as township policy either at a special meeting or during January's regular meeting.

"The problem is, right now, if we don't act, we have people who want to pay this month (December) for their taxes and then you've got the rest of us who want to wait until the last day to pay them," Supervisor Curt McCracken pointed out.

"We're talking about a policy for the safety of the people here and the safety of the people coming here," Crystal resident Barb Leonard said from the audience. "If it's something that's already provided, I'm suggesting that you don't need to rewrite the whole thing. Share that with each other and vote on it next month."

With board members in agreement upon that topic, Mills pointed out that meeting procedures also might need some revising.

Having held in-person meetings either inside the Community Center's gym or outside the front of the building throughout 2020, Mills questioned if the township should transition to virtual meetings in light of the health department's orders and local COVID cases.

“When it comes down to it, we should not be here right now,” she said while seated in a room with about 15 other people. “According to this paper (from MDHHS), this meeting should be held over Zoom.”

While other board members were hesitant to pull the trigger on initiating virtual meetings and wanted to wait to see how the state’s rules regarding open meetings were extended before making any decisions, Kelly Martin of Crystal said she was in favor of giving residents more options when attending meetings.

“I think if we could find a way to have someone help us set-up Zoom or a Facebook live video, it would allow people to watch it from home on a live stream,” she said. “It’d protect people in this time, but it would also open up the opportunity for people who pay taxes in this community who aren’t living here year-round. In years past, coming to these meetings, they were packed. Hardly anyone is coming anymore because of COVID. I don’t think it’s because they don’t want to be here.”

“We’re kind of denying them the opportunity to participate because we’re not virtual,” Mills agreed.

The Crystal Township Board is next scheduled to meet at 7 p.m. Jan. 13.

Daily News

Wednesday, January 6, 2021

Local COVID deaths slowing after tough December

Vaccines gradually being distributed in Montcalm, Ionia counties

By [Elisabeth Waldon](#) | on January 06, 2021



Mid-Michigan District Health Department Emergency Preparedness Coordinator Hailey Brewer, receives a Moderna vaccine from MMDHD Public Health Nurse Bethann McPherson. — Submitted photo

Montcalm County suffered a stunning total of 43 COVID-related deaths in December, an average of more than one death per day, a trend which thankfully is now declining.

From March 2020 to the present, Montcalm County has had 70 COVID-related deaths — 58 of them occurring in November (15 deaths) and December (43 deaths). Those include three deaths on Nov. 7, three on Dec. 5, three on Dec. 12, four on Dec. 13, four on Dec. 15 and three on Dec. 17, according to the state of Michigan.

Montcalm County has not had any COVID-related deaths since Dec. 29, according to the state.

Ionia County also saw its deadliest COVID months in the same time frame. Of Ionia County's total of 47 COVID-related deaths since March 2020, 35 of them occurred in November (12 deaths) and December (23 deaths), including four deaths on Dec. 4, according to the state of Michigan.

Ionia County has not had any COVID-related deaths since Dec. 25, according to the state.

Montcalm County has reported a total of 2,890 COVID cases from March 2020 to the present, while Ionia County has reported a total of 3,499 COVID cases from March 2020 to the present.

COVID vaccines from Moderna are gradually being administered to healthcare employees and other frontline workers in Ionia and Montcalm counties.

MONTCALM COUNTY VACCINES

The Mid-Michigan District Health Department (or MMDHD, which covers Clinton, Gratiot and Montcalm counties) received 5,500 Moderna vaccines for local hospitals, plus another 300 vaccines for Clinton County, 400 for Montcalm County and 600 for Gratiot County, according to the state.



Mid-Michigan District Health Department Health Officer Marcus Cheatham receives a Moderna vaccine from MMDHD Public Health Nurse Becky Stoddard. — Submitted photo

The MMDHD began administering the COVID vaccines to priority groups on Dec. 28 — including emergency medical services, medical first responders and frontline health care workers not already being vaccinated through their hospital or organization, according to MMDHD Public Information Officer Leslie Kinnee, who added that staff and residents at skilled nursing facilities will be vaccinated through national pharmacy chains in coordination with the federal government.

Residents of Clinton, Gratiot and Montcalm counties who would like to be notified when the vaccine will be available to them can visit mmdhd.org/covid-center/ and fill out the “Vaccine Notification” form.

Businesses that would like their employees vaccinated may call the MMDHD and request to be added to the notification list. Montcalm County businesses should call (989) 831-5237, option 2.

The MMDHD did not return a message from the Daily News on Tuesday asking how many vaccinations have been issued to date through that health department.

Montcalm County Emergency Services Director Eric Smith told the Daily News on Tuesday that about 20% of his employees received the vaccine when it was offered.

“Some were very ready and signed up for the first spot they could, while others are waiting a bit to allow their comfort level to rise, and some are just against it,” Smith said. “It is voluntary for EMS folks at this point and everyone knows there is more vaccine on the way and there will be more clinics soon.”

Smith said Sparrow Carson Hospital offered clinics on five different days and administered 400 doses, while the MMDHD has had one clinic so far and administered 120 doses.

“It has been quite the process to plan and prepare for the vaccinations to arrive and to get as many of our local people vaccinated as we could once it did,” Smith said. “We have been very fortunate to have great partners in Sparrow Carson Hospital and the Mid-Michigan District Health Department. It was apparent that there would not be enough vaccine coming locally to get everyone at one time and/or one place, so we identified which agencies would be vaccinated where and got the message out to everyone.”

Montcalm County Sheriff Mike Williams told the Daily News on Tuesday that about 40 of his office’s 45 employees received the vaccine at Sparrow Carson Hospital.

“They had the safest and most efficient setup I’ve ever seen for that type of event,” he said of the Carson City hospital. “We’re lucky to have such a great resource within our county.

“We’ve only had a few people decline, and a few having to delay it due to other circumstances,” Williams added of his employees. “Our employees have only had minor side effects, most which consisted of mild injection site pain. I’m hopeful that area hospitals and the health department continue to get the vaccine distributed as fast as possible. I’ve offered the resources of the Sheriff’s Office for any kind of mass vaccination events, if needed. Personally, I think that the only way to end this pandemic is for everyone that can to get vaccinated.”

IONIA COUNTY VACCINES

The Ionia County Health Department received 900 Moderna vaccines for local hospitals and another 600 Moderna vaccines for the county health department, according to the state.



Brittni Brummette administers a Moderna COVID-19 vaccine during a drive-thru clinic Tuesday offered by the Ionia County Health Department. Health Officer Ken Bowen said by the end of this week, the county health department will have 130 doses remaining of an initial 600 doses received, the rest of which will be used early next week. — Submitted photo

Ionia County Health Officer Ken Bowen told the Daily News that by the end of this week, his health department will have 130 doses of the 600 doses left, which will be used early next week.

“We do not expect any more Moderna vaccine until toward the end of January,” Bowen noted.

Bowen said Sparrow Health is handling the “vast majority” of medical staff vaccinations in Ionia County and Spectrum Health is handling their own staff as well, while the Ionia County Health Department is handling some other local groups, such as emergency medical service employees.

Ionia County Central Dispatch Director Jim Valentine told the Daily News that six out of 15 Central Dispatch employees have either been vaccinated or signed up to be vaccinated, including Valentine himself.

Visit the Ionia County Health Department's Facebook page for more information about future COVID vaccines.

HOSPITAL VACCINES

Sparrow Health Spokesman John Foren told the Daily News on Tuesday that Sparrow Carson Hospital received 400 vaccine doses and has administered 330 (including to 125 caregivers); Sparrow Ionia Hospital received 700 doses and has administered 160 to date (including to 140 caregivers); Sparrow Eaton Hospital received 700 doses and has administered 160 (including to 140 caregivers); and Sparrow Clinton Hospital received 1,100 doses and has administered 396 (including to 86 caregivers). Foren said community hospitals will be offering additional clinics this week.

Sheridan Community Hospital Marketing & Promotions Director Holly Smith told the Daily News on Tuesday that the Sheridan hospital will have distributed 80 of its initial 100 doses by the end of Wednesday to healthcare employees and other frontline workers in the community.

Spectrum Health Communications Specialist John Norton told the Daily News on Tuesday that United Hospital in Greenville has given 445 doses of the vaccine to hospital employees, plus another 320 doses were given to employees at Pennock Hospital in Hastings. Norton did not specify how many doses Spectrum initially received.

Mid-Michigan District Health Department Begins Administering COVID-19 Vaccine



Posted on Wednesday, January 6th, 2021 and is filed under [News](#). You can follow any responses to this entry through the [RSS 2.0](#) feed. You can skip to the end and leave a response. Pinging is currently not allowed.

The Mid-Michigan District [Health](#) Department (MMDHD) began the monumental task of administering the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine to priority groups on December 28.

Those priority groups include emergency medical services (EMS), medical first responders, and frontline health care workers not already being vaccinated through their hospital or organization. Staff and residents at skilled nursing facilities will be vaccinated through national pharmacy chains, in coordination with the federal government.

It will take time for MMDHD to work through the priority groups and get to the point where the vaccine will be available to the general public. Until then, residents should continue to wear their face masks, practice social distancing, wash hands often, and follow isolation and quarantine guidelines when appropriate.

Residents of Clinton, Gratiot and Montcalm counties who would like to be notified when the vaccine will be available to them should visit www.mmdhd.org/covid-center/ and fill out the “Vaccine Notification” form.

Businesses that would like its employees vaccinated may call MMDHD and request to be added to the notification list. Clinton County businesses should call 989-224-2195, option 2. Gratiot County businesses should call 989-875-3681, option 2. Montcalm County businesses should call 989-831-5237, option 2.

The Moderna vaccine requires two doses, 28 days apart. Individuals should receive both doses to be considered fully protected. There is no out-of-pocket cost to individuals for the vaccine.

The vaccine cannot give someone COVID-19. The vaccine gives your body a code which helps it recognize the virus, so your body can fight it off in the future. After vaccination, it is common to experience some mild side effects, which is a normal sign that your body is building protection from the virus. If side effects are experienced, they last no more than one or two days and may include injection site pain, a low-grade fever, and headache.

Both the Moderna and the Pfizer vaccines have undergone the same rigorous process that was used to create safe and effective vaccines for the flu, polio, measles, whooping cough and more. While the COVID-19 vaccines were developed rather quickly, no steps were skipped in their development. Instead, modifications to the process were made to shorten the timeline without sacrificing safety. These include:

- Overlapping phase I and phase II clinical trials.
- Beginning the manufacturing process during phase III clinical trials.
- Developing vaccine delivery plans prior to approval.

For the latest COVID-19 information, including vaccine distribution and explanation of the priority groups, visit www.mmdhd.org and click on the Coronavirus banner at the top of the page.

ANENTLY G CENTER



MORNING SUN FILE PHOTO

...cials announced, citing the swift and unprecedented
...ties all across the U.S. especially hard.

operations' at local nursing home

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Moving forward the Warwick Living Center and Masonic Pathways will "merge operations," he added.
All Warwick residents who choose to do so, will have the opportunity to move to Masonic's main campus a few blocks away.
"We are preparing a special unit for our Warwick family and residents will have a choice of rooms within that neighborhood," Logan said. "For those experiencing dementia our newly remodeled Memory Care unit

WARWICK » PAGE 3

COVID-19 UPDATE

Nine new deaths reported in region

By Eric Baerren

ebaerren@medianewsgroup.com
@ebaerren on Twitter

Two people in Isabella County and two in Clare County were among the nine COVID-19 deaths reported Tuesday afternoon.

It brings the number of Isabella County deaths reported since last Wednesday to five, including two on New Year's Eve and one on New Year's Day.

On New Year's Eve, two women — one middle aged and one elderly woman with underlying health conditions — died; a middle-aged man died on New Year's Day, said Steve Hall, health officer

UPDATE » PAGE 3

MT. PLEASANT

Buck 92 Radio now features classic country

By Sarah Wright

swright@medianewsgroup.com

The newly rebranded Buck 92.3FM & AM 830 WMMI radio station provides classic country music to listeners around the Isabella County area.

The change officially took place on Monday, Jan. 4 at 6 a.m. and features classic country music, mostly from the 70s, 80s and 90s as well as some songs from the early 2000s.

The station previously featured news and talk radio before the owners of WCZY/WMMI Latitude Media, LLC, Bob and Laurie Peters, and operations manager/air

BUCK 92 » PAGE 3



Buck 92

FROM PAGE 1

personality Shawn Powers as well as other radio staff members worked for 6 months to change the content.

“We thought people in Isabella County wanted country music,” Peters said. “We knew we wanted to make a change and we took the old format, washed it clean, and started fresh.”

They did some research and found they could fill a hole with classic country music as there hasn't been a country station around the area in years.

“The reaction has been phenomenal,” Powers said. “Some have asked what's going on since the change began but the Facebook likes have doubled and the comments have been good.”

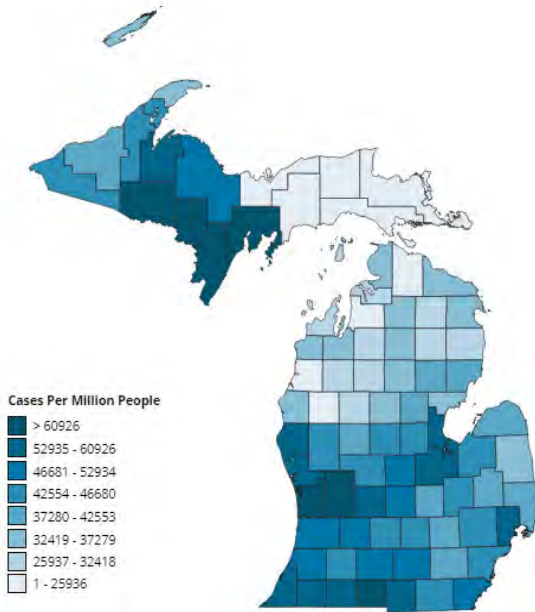
The radio station has made several promotional plans to further promote the new country music station for local audiences. This includes billboards and social media postings as well as a mobile app which is expected to come out shortly.

Further spring and summer plans for promotion and community engagement with Buck 92.3 Radio are in the works. Specifically, the station will still cover high school sports as well as work with any other local events and organizations.

For more information, visit buck92.com or the Buck 92 Radio Facebook page.

wants,” Logan said. “It is a beautiful facility with unlimited potential. I have no doubt it will be occupied soon.”

According to Masonic Home Chief Marketing Officer Vicky Johnson, there are currently 37 residents and 50 employees at Warwick Living Center.



GRAPHIC PROVIDED BY MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Total Confirmed Cases
504,410

Total COVID-19 Deaths
12,867

Daily Confirmed Cases
2,291

Daily COVID-19 Deaths
189*

*The deaths announced today includes 117 deaths identified during a Vital Records review. See cumulative data page for more information.

01/05/2021

SEE CUMULATIVE DATA

Update

FROM PAGE 1

for Central Michigan District Health Department.

The other two deaths included an elderly woman who died Saturday and an elderly woman who died Monday, Hall said.

It brings the number of Isabella County residents who've died from COVID-19 to 47.

An additional 13 cases were reported Tuesday afternoon, bringing the county's cumulative total to 3,188.

Two of Clare County's deaths were also on New Year's Eve, Hall said. They included an elderly woman who was hospitalized with the disease and an elderly man. An elderly man died from the disease on Monday, Hall said.

The three additional deaths brings the total number of Clare County residents to die from COVID-19 to 44.

That is three shy of Isabella County's total, despite that Clare County has less than half the population. A likely explanation for the disparity is in the demog-

graphics.

Clare County's population is older and more impoverished than what is in Isabella County. Age and chronic health conditions often linked to higher rates of poverty are among the biggest factors in determining who develops serious cases from COVID-19. A large number of Isabella County's cases are also linked to Central Michigan University's student body, young and healthy people more likely to develop only mild — even asymptomatic — cases of COVID-19.

An additional eight confirmed cases were reported in Clare County, bringing its cumulative total to 1,118.

An additional death was reported by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services in Gratiot County, bringing its total to 78.

Mid-Michigan District Health Department hasn't responded to two messages sent over the last two days inquiring why they've stopped reporting death information, or why their own website includes numbers of deaths in both Gratiot and Montcalm counties that are nearly two weeks old.

Michigan Department of

Health and Human Services reports that the cumulative total number of confirmed cases in the county is 2,243.

Elsewhere in mid-Michigan, new deaths were reported in three counties, with totals and cumulative cases as follows:

- In Gladwin County, an additional death was reported for a total of 31, and an additional seven cases were reported for a cumulative total of 1,074;
- In Midland County, an additional two deaths were reported for a total of 47, and an additional 26 cases were reported for a cumulative total of 3,636;
- In Montcalm County, an additional death were reported for a total of 70, and an additional 16 cases were reported for a cumulative total of 2,890; and
- In Mecosta County, an additional three cases were reported for a cumulative total of 1,624, with 14 deaths.

Statewide, another 189 deaths were reported since Wednesday for a total of 12,867, and another 2,291 cases were reported Monday for a cumulative total of 504,410. Of those deaths, 117 were discovered during a review of death certificates.

Charged

FROM PAGE 1

ternal report.

While the investigation was ongoing, Nessel and Elliott's attorney, Joe Barber, negotiated a new plea deal for Elliott.

duties due to concerns that he was getting too personally close to criminal complainants. At the time, Bill Schuette was Michigan At-

Daily News

Thursday, January 7, 2021

Local health department has administered 440 of its 1,600 COVID vaccines

By [Elisabeth Waldon](#) | on January 07, 2021

STANTON — The Mid-Michigan District Health Department (MMDHD) has administered 440 COVID-19 vaccines out of a total of 1,600 received from Moderna for Clinton, Gratiot and Montcalm counties.



Mid-Michigan District Health Department Health Officer Marcus Cheatham receives a Moderna vaccine from MMDHD Public Health Nurse Becky Stoddard. — Submitted photo

The MMDHD, which covers Clinton, Gratiot and Montcalm counties, received 300 vaccines for Clinton County, 600 for Montcalm County and 600 for Gratiot County (plus another 5,500 vaccines for local hospitals).

According to MMDHD Public Information Officer Leslie Kinnee, the MMDHD has administered 210 doses in Gratiot County, 120 doses in Montcalm County and 110 in Clinton County.

Montcalm County Emergency Services Director Eric Smith previously told the Daily News that the MMDHD administered 120 doses from the health department's Stanton office during a Dec. 30 clinic.

"We are currently in the process of scheduling more clinics to vaccinate any remaining individuals in (Phase) 1A and will start vaccinating (Phase) 1B soon," Kinnee said. "We will notify the Daily News of our plans."

The Ionia County Health Department received 900 vaccines for local hospitals and another 600 vaccines for the county health department. Ionia County Health Officer Ken Bowen told the Daily News on Tuesday that by the end of this week, his health department will have 130 doses of the 600 doses left, which will be used early next week.

Ionia County Sheriff Charlie Noll told the Daily News on Wednesday that about 40% of his employees have taken the vaccine while about 60% have declined. The Ionia County Sheriff's Office and Jail employs 58 people. By comparison, Montcalm County Sheriff Mike Williams previously told the Daily News that about 40 of his office's 45 employees have taken the vaccine.

"Either way we continue to take all the precautions as we have for the last several months — temperature checks and daily symptom questions," Noll said. "We continue to test in the jail and follow the protocols put in place to minimize the spread."

Spectrum Health Communications Specialist John Norton told the Daily News that United Hospital in Greenville received 2,700 doses of the vaccine and has administered 445 doses to hospital employees so far.

"We continue to vaccinate individuals in the Phase 1A priority group," Norton said. "We are also working with state health department officials and will begin vaccinating essential workers and other community members in the Phase 1B priority group when the state provides permission to do so."

Sparrow Health Spokesman John Foren told the Daily News on Tuesday that Sparrow Carson Hospital received 400 vaccine doses and has administered 330 (including to 125 caregivers); Sparrow Ionia Hospital received 700 doses and has administered 160 (including to 140 caregivers); Sparrow Eaton Hospital received 700 doses and has administered 160 (including to 140 caregivers); and Sparrow Clinton Hospital received 1,100 doses and has administered 396 (including to 86 caregivers). Foren said community hospitals will be offering additional clinics this week.

Sheridan Community Hospital Marketing & Promotions Director Holly Smith told the Daily News on Tuesday that the Sheridan hospital will have distributed 80 of its initial 100 doses by the end of Wednesday to healthcare employees and other frontline workers in the community.

ACKERS S CAPITOL



a police barrier Wednesday at the Capitol. JOHN MINCHILLO/AP

s lawmakers locked down



rawn watch as protesters try to break into the House
S. Capitol on Wednesday. J. SCOTT APPLEWHITE/AP

plex, the recording
also seen inside the
one got up on the dais
p won that election.”

Several dozen roamed the halls, yelling, “Where are they?” according to a pool report.

See **LOCKDOWN, Page 4A**

State to open new vaccine phase

Teachers, over-65s can get jab starting Monday

Carol Thompson and Ken Palmer

Lansing State Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

LANSING — Local health departments are taking appointments for COVID-19 vaccines as Michigan prepares to ramp up its vaccination campaign aimed at curbing the coronavirus pandemic.

Starting Monday, local health departments can start vaccinating residents over 65, as well as front-line workers like teachers, child care providers, police, first responders and corrections officers.

The new phase in the state’s vaccination campaign will run alongside previous phases, state health officials announced Wednesday. Priority groups already eligible for vaccines, like health care workers and people who live in long-term care facilities, can continue to get them.

State health officials are targeting “those who have the highest level of risk, whether it is because of where they work or because of their age,” Michigan Chief Medical Executive Dr. Joneigh Khaldun said.

“These vaccines are safe and effective, and we especially want our first responders, teachers and older adults to get vaccinated as soon as possible,” she said.

When the various groups can get their shots will vary across the state.

Want a vaccine? Fill out this form.

Supply of the vaccine is limited and demand is high, Ingham County

See **VACCINE, Page 4A**



McLaren nurse Chelsey Towns receives the COVID-19 vaccine at McLaren Greater Lansing hospital on Thursday, Dec. 17, 2020, in Lansing.

NICK KING/LANSING STATE JOURNAL

Vaccine

Continued from Page 1A

Health Department spokesperson Amanda Darche said.

"We have people calling, messaging, emailing," she said. "We've had people just show up. We've had people drive in from Detroit. Yes, there is demand."

A note: Don't just show up. Make an appointment (but only if you live or work in Ingham County).

People who live and work in Ingham County can fill out a form on the health department website to indicate they want to be vaccinated. Department staff will contact people who fill out the form to schedule appointments. People most at risk of COVID-19 exposure or developing serious cases will be prioritized.

On Monday, Ingham County Health Department staff will start vaccinating teachers and school support staff, child care workers who have frequent, direct contact with children and people 70 and older. The department already has been vaccinating health care workers, police officers, firefighters and first-responders.

McLaren Greater Lansing and Sparrow Health System started vaccinating their staff in December. Private pharmacies are helping vaccinate people who live in long-term care facilities.

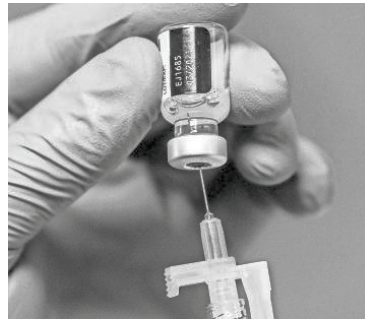
Sparrow will launch a community COVID-19 vaccination effort in the coming weeks, spokesperson John Foren said.

Health officials in Eaton and Clinton counties said only people in the highest-priority group, including health care workers and long-term care facility residents, were being vaccinated this week. They said they were trying to prepare for the next step in the vaccination roll-out but couldn't predict when vaccinations might begin for people in other critical fields.

Like the Ingham County Health Department, both the Barry-Eaton District Health Department and Mid-Michigan District Health Department have interest forms available for people who want to schedule appointments.

And both were delayed with phone calls on Wednesday after state health officials announced Michigan is preparing to move on to the second-highest priority group.

BEDHD's Anne Barna said her agen-



Pharmacy Manager John Winger prepares the coronavirus vaccine at McLaren Greater Lansing hospital on Dec. 17, 2020, in Lansing. NICK KING/LANSING STATE JOURNAL

cy is asking that people who want to get the vaccine go to the COVID-19 vaccine page on BEDHD's website instead of calling for information.

For now, the agency is still vaccinating health care workers and other people in the first group on the priority list. But anyone in the next group can fill out a form on the website and will be notified when they can be vaccinated, she said.

"You should go ahead and fill out that form," Barna said. "That will let us know you are interested, and we'll let you know."

The agency plans to set up offsite vaccination clinics, but it's not clear when that might happen, she said.

"One of the challenges we're having is, we're receiving the Moderna vaccine, and we don't know when we'll get more," she said.

Residents of Clinton, Gratiot and Montcalm counties can schedule an appointment on MMDHD's website if they fall under the two highest-priority groups.

The latest coronavirus numbers

Nearly 509,000 people had tested positive for COVID-19 in Michigan as of Wednesday. Nearly 13,000 have died. Approximately 4,000 people tested positive and 51 died from the disease in the last day.


Thirty-six people tested positive for COVID-19 in Ingham County on Wednesday, according to Michigan Department of Health and Human Services data. There have been 13,212 con-

firmed and probable cases of the disease since March and 196 deaths.

Sixteen people tested positive for COVID-19 in Eaton County on Wednesday, according to state health department data. In total, there have been 4,997 confirmed and probable cases and 100 deaths.

Eight people tested positive for COVID-19 in Clinton County on Wednesday, according to state health department data. In total, there have been 4,209 confirmed and probable cases and 44 deaths.

Contact Carol Thompson at ckthompson@lsj.com.



**NOTICE OF ELECTRONIC PUBLIC HEARING
ANNUAL PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY (PHA) PLAN AND
ADMINISTRATIVE PLAN**

MICHIGAN STATE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

The Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) will hold two public hearings regarding the proposed changes to the Fiscal Year (FY) 2021-22 Annual Public Housing Authority (PHA) Plan and Administrative Plan in compliance with Section 903.17 of Title 24 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

PARTICIPATION: Due to COVID-19 health concerns, the general public is invited to make oral comments and recommendations during the public hearings via the conference number below. The public hearings will take place on the following date and times:

Public Hearing number 1 conducted via Microsoft Teams

DATE:	Friday, Feb. 26, 2021
TIMES:	9-11 a.m.
CONFERENCE CALL PARTICIPATION:	1-248-509-0316 Conference ID: 826 672 9#

Public Hearing number 2 conducted via Zoom

DATE:	Friday, Feb. 26, 2021
TIMES:	1-3 p.m.
CONFERENCE CALL PARTICIPATION:	1-866-434-5269 Conference ID: 425309

Persons who wish to join one of the public hearings via Microsoft Teams or Zoom rather than by phone may contact Lisa Kemmis at kemmisl@michigan.gov or 517-241-2427 to receive a link that will allow them to join the hearing by computer at the scheduled time.


Persons who are unable or do not attend one of the public hearings may submit written comments to the address listed below through 5 p.m. February 26, 2021 or can email those comments to kemmisl@michigan.gov.

Prior to the hearing, the general public may obtain a copy of the FY 2021-22 Annual PHA Plan and Administrative Plan proposed changes by visiting MSHDA's website at www.michigan.gov/mshda.


Lisa Kemmis
Policy Manager
Michigan State Housing Development Authority
P.O. Box 30044
Lansing, Michigan 48909

Persons with disabilities needing a reasonable accommodation to ely participate in this Information Hearing should contact Kara Hart-Negrich, O of Legal rs, MSHDA at (517) 335-2273 or (855) 646-7432 at least 7 days prior to the meeting date.

Gary Heidel
Acting Executive Director



MSHDA is an Equal Opportunity Employer and an Equal Opportunity Lender.



Gratiot County Herald

Thursday, January 7, 2021

COVID-19 Update:

Two Deaths Per Day in Gratiot Last Week as Vaccine Distribution Continues to Progress

By Emma Selmon
Herald Staff Writer

Gratiot County lost an average of two residents per day to COVID-19 last week.

From Tuesday, Dec. 29 to Tuesday, Jan. 5, a total of 14 more Gratiot County residents died of COVID-19, according to data from the State of Michigan.

Gratiot County has now lost a total of 78 residents to the virus.

The Mid-Michigan District Health Department (MMDHD) was unable to provide information on the age or sex of the most recently deceased individuals.

The county also gained 71 new positive COVID-19 cases over the past week, bringing the cumulative case count up to 2,243.

Gratiot continues to lead its fellow MMDHD counties in its death toll, despite being the smallest county in the jurisdiction. Montcalm county, having gained 158 new COVID-19 cases over the past week and eight additional deaths, is reporting a total of 2,890 cases and 70 deaths. Cases spiked in Clinton County last week, with 371 residents identified as COVID-19 positive, and four more individuals have passed away. Clinton County is reporting a total of 3,895 cumulative COVID-19 cases and 44 resident deaths from the disease.

The MMDHD as a whole has seen a total of 9,028 residents diagnosed with COVID-19 since March, and has lost 192 residents to the disease.

COVID-19 cases continue to rise by triple digits elsewhere in the mid-Michigan region. Isabella gained 150 new COVID-19 cases and five more deaths, bringing their totals up to 3,188 cases and 47 deaths. Midland is reporting 241 new cases and four additional deaths, for a total of 3,636 cases and 47 deaths. Saginaw County saw 482 new cases and 38 new deaths over the past week, for a total of 12,097 identified positive COVID-19 cases and 401 deaths.

Statewide, as of Tuesday, Michigan is reporting 504,410 cumulative COVID-19 cases and 12,867 deaths.

As COVID-19 continues to ravage the state, local health-care systems continue to feel the strain that the virus has placed on the system. Marita Hattem-Schiffman, president of MidMichigan Health – Central Region, said that although they continue to operate with adequate PPE and hospital beds, their team members are facing “greater demands...than ever before.”

They’re strained between processing COVID-19 tests in their lab, running staff testing sites and administering staff vaccination clinics and caring for patients with COVID-19. Those patients include outpatients recovering at home and

inpatients being cared for at the hospital, including those who are critically ill with the virus.

Hattem Schiffman said that their inpatient volume was six times higher than it was last spring.

That’s “the highest it’s ever been.”

“During December, much of [COVID-19 spread] was community acquired, meaning acquired during family events, social interactions, etc,” she wrote in an email to The Herald. “We were relieved to see the volume come down to about two times our Spring volume over the holidays, but we are now waiting for the post-Christmas and New Year’s surge.”

While COVID cases are still high — with the threat of climbing higher — progress is being made in vaccinating priority populations.

MidMichigan Health is equipped with the Pfizer vaccine, since their facilities have the capability to store the doses at the required ultra-low temperature. This vaccine is given in two doses, 21 days apart.

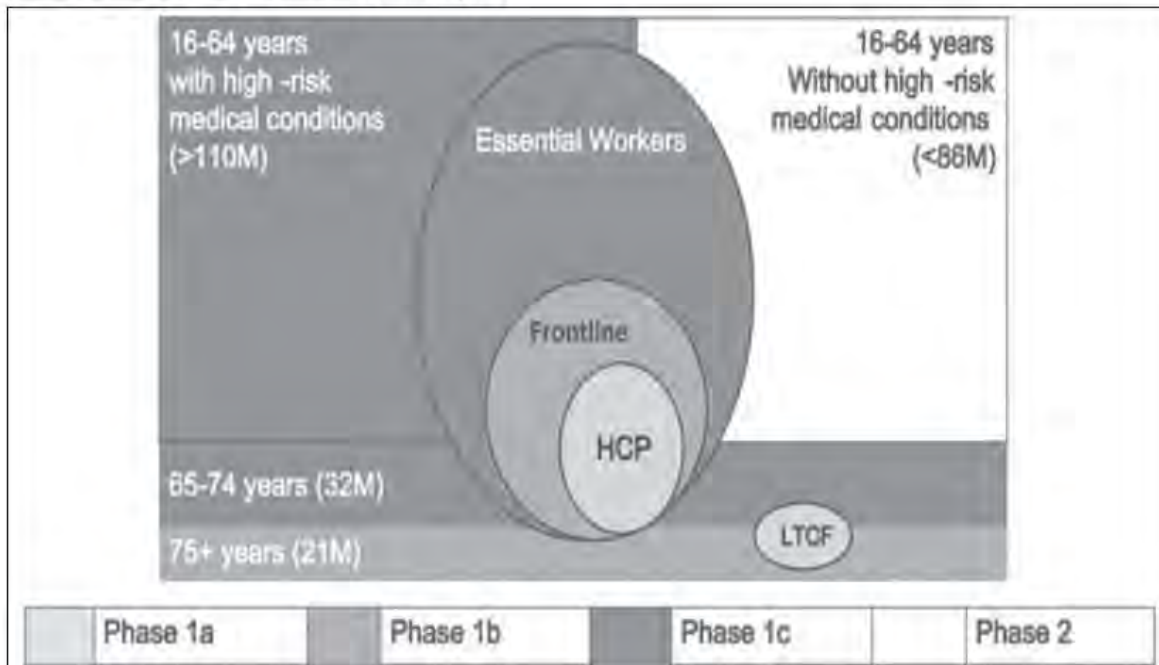
As of Monday, Jan. 4, the MidMichigan Health system — which includes hospital locations in Alma as well as Alpena, Clare, Gladwin, Midland, Mount Pleasant and West Branch — has administered 4,271 doses of the Pfizer vaccine, at a rate of approximately 400 a day.

See UPDATE on page 4

Gratiot County Herald

Thursday, January 7, 2021

UPDATE *continued from page 3*



This Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) graph represents the proposed phases of the COVID-19 vaccine. HCP = Health Care Personnel. LTCF = Long Term Care Facilities.

All employee groups within the MidMichigan Health system have had the opportunity to receive their first dose of their COVID-19 vaccine, and they are beginning to administer the vaccine to priority populations beyond their health-care workers, Hattem-Schiffman said.

Under the direction of the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services — and, locally, the MMDHD — MidMichigan Health

teams are “being deployed to administer vaccine to others within the 1A distribution group,” Hattem-Schiffman said, in reference to the prioritization guidelines set by the state.

According to these guidelines, the 1A distribution group includes individuals who serve in health-care settings and “have the potential for direct or indirect exposure to patients or infectious materials and are unable to work from

home,” in addition to “residents in long-term care facilities.”

Hattem-Schiffman encourages everyone to educate themselves about the vaccine and its role in the fight against COVID-19. Several resources are available through the CDC’s website, including educational tools about how the vaccine works, its benefits, and more.

And in the meantime, as hospitals continue to treat record numbers of COVID-19 patients, it’s crucial to continue to follow best practices to prevent the spread of the virus, including handwashing, masking, social distancing and avoiding unsafe gatherings.

“Together, COVID-19 vaccination and following all CDC’s recommendations to protect yourself and others will offer the best protection from COVID-19,” Hattem-Schiffman said. “We recommend getting the COVID-19 vaccine when it becomes available to you.”

CORONAVIRUS IN MID-MICHIGAN

Four more deaths reported

By Eric Baerren
ebaerren@medianewsgroup.com; @ebaerren on Twitter

Four more deaths from COVID-19 were reported across mid-Michigan Thursday, including two in Gratiot County.

It brings the total number of Gratiot County deaths to 80, according to state records.

Two emails seeking information from Mid-Michigan District Health Department went unanswered earlier this week, and the department hasn't updated the number of deaths it is reporting in Gratiot and Montcalm counties since before Christmas 2020.

At the time, MMDHD spokeswoman Leslie Kinnee said that a "geocoding error" in the state's database was responsible. On Thursday, Lyn Sutfin, a spokeswoman with MDHHS, said that wasn't the case.

"We're not aware of any geocoding issue that would prevent the local health department from providing information," she said in an email.

The state is also reporting that 55 of the county's reported 80 deaths were residents of nursing homes. According to state records, recent nursing home deaths are as follows:

- Three at Ashley Care

Center;

- One at Country Friends Assisted Living;
Seven at Masonic Health Care Center; and,
One at The Laurels of Fulton.

A total of 36 residents at Ashley Care Center, four at Country Friends Assisted Living, 67 at Masonic Health Care Center and 43 at The Laurels of Fulton have had confirmed cases of COVID-19.

Another 21 cases were reported in Gratiot County on Thursday for a cumulative total of 2,272.

One more death was reported Thursday in Clare County, its 46th COVID death and the second in two days. Twenty of those deaths involve nursing home residents, according to state records.

The death reported Wednesday involved an elderly man with underlying health conditions, said Steve Hall, health officer with Central Michigan District Health Department. He died Monday.

Another nine cases were reported in Clare County on Thursday for a cumulative total of 1,136.

No new deaths were reported in Isabella County on Thursday, but information was made available about one of the deaths reported Wednesday.

It involved a middle-aged

woman, Hall said. She died Tuesday.

Fifty-one Isabella County residents have died from COVID-19, 15 of them nursing home residents.

An additional 27 cases were reported in Isabella County on Thursday for a cumulative total of 3,239.

Elsewhere in mid-Michigan, a new death was reported in one county, with totals and cumulative cases as follows:

- In Gladwin County, one new death was reported for a total of 32, and an additional seven cases were reported for a cumulative total of 1,093;

In Mecosta County, an additional 10 cases were reported for a cumulative total of 1,647, with 14 deaths;

In Midland County, an additional 32 cases were reported for a cumulative total of 3,719, with 47 deaths; and

In Montcalm County, an additional 20 cases were reported for a cumulative total of 2,930, with 70 deaths.

Statewide, another 176 deaths were reported since Wednesday for a total of 13,094, and another 4,015 cases were reported Monday for a cumulative total of 512,751. Of those deaths, 138 were discovered during a review of death certificates.

DETROIT

20K vaccinations scheduled for older residents

DETROIT » Detroit officials plan to begin scheduling 20,000 COVID-19 vaccination appointments over the next four weeks at the city's downtown convention center for residents 75 and older.

The number is based on the anticipated supply of vaccines from the state, Mayor Mike Duggan said

Thursday.

Scheduling is to start Monday, and appointments will begin Wednesday. The no-cost vaccinations will be given at the TCF Center.

Persons 65 and older who drive seniors to the center also can get vaccinated for the coronavirus.

Voluntary vaccinations for police officers and bus drivers are to start today. Vaccinations for other essential workers will follow.

"We are going to keep ramping up our vaccinations to the maximum extent the supply allows," Duggan said.

- The Associated Press

LOCAL AND STATE BRIEFS

MT. PLEASANT

Police seek tips on suspect who dumped stolen truck

A Macomb County police department is asking for help identifying a man who stole a truck there and ditched it near Mt. Pleasant.

Roseville police on Thursday released images of the man they said were captured on a trail camera near where the truck was dumped.

The truck was stolen on Dec. 26.

Anyone who can identify the suspect is asked to contact Detective Brian Wawrzyniak at 586-469-6924.

- Rick Mills, Morning Sun

LANSING

Police: Man's body found in tent at homeless camp

LANSING » Police are investigating the death of a 33-year-old man whose body was found in a tent at a homeless camp in Lansing.

The death does not appear to be suspicious. The man's name was not immediately released.

His body was found Wednesday afternoon in the encampment known as the "Back 40" where the homeless live in improvised shelters, the Lansing State Journal reported.

City officials citing health concerns have considered clearing out the camp.

As of mid-December, about 10 people were living in the area, city officials said. But advocates for the homeless estimated the number to be about 20.

Crews were prevented Thursday from cleaning up the site, Mayor Andy Schor said in a release.

- The Associated Press

pened

Capitol building was temporarily closed to the public

Monday, a day after a violent mob attempt to overturn the

police cleared employees to conducting a sweep.

opening until next week. Legislator

legislators have offices in an attempt to overturn the

the police cleared employees to conducting a sweep.

Prosecutor in Capitol mob

if there are connections to the state.

"It looks like the acts took place in Washington, D.C. But it's under review right now - what's the connection of the people in D.C. to the people in Michigan? That's going to take time to figure out," Schneider said. "I'm personally disgusted and horrified by this. It's just nauseating to me. It's sick what people did inside the Capitol."

D.C. police said Thursday that 68 people were arrested, while Capitol police said 14 were arrested, most for unlawful entry. More than 50 Capitol and D.C. police were injured, including several who were hospitalized.

"If you're aware of people who might have traveled from Michigan to go to Washington, D.C., to commit acts of violence, then that could potentially be a federal crime," Schneider said. "There's a big difference here between peaceful protests and acts of violence. ... Just because people traveled to Washington, D.C., doesn't necessarily make them criminals."

Daily News

Monday, January 11, 2021

The COVID-19 vaccine: Who's received it so far in Ionia and Montcalm counties

By [Elisabeth Waldon](#) | on January 11, 2021

Although a COVID-19 vaccine shortage is causing delays, some healthcare workers, first responders, school staff and local government employees — including some prosecutors and road workers — have received the vaccine in Ionia and Montcalm counties.

According to the Mid-Michigan District Health Department (MMDHD) which covers Clinton, Gratiot and Montcalm counties, the vaccine has been given to some healthcare providers, medical first responders, firefighters, home health agency staff, school staff, Road Commission staff, Children's Protective Services staff, Michigan State Police, dentist office staff and childcare agency staff.



Ionia County Health Officer Ken Bowen

The Ionia County Health Department has vaccinated about 30 Ionia County employees in the past week, including health department staff, some key Commission on Aging employees (including drivers and those who do home visits) and four Road Department employees, according to Health Officer Ken Bowen.

Bowen said while health department and Commission on Aging staff both fall into the Phase 1A group (healthcare workers and longterm care residents and staff), Road Department employees are in Phase 1B (frontline state and federal responders, school and childcare staff, corrections staff, anyone 75 years old and older and other essential frontline workers).

“We had a few instances where we had to use up some vaccine doses at the end of clinics or they would have gone to waste, so we offered some of those to the Road Department,” Bowen explained. “Even though they are 1B, we wanted to get a head start on them because of the time of year.”

Bowen said Sparrow Health in Ionia vaccinated some Ionia County law enforcement officers and prosecutors in the past week. Ionia County Prosecutor Kyle Butler confirmed to the Daily News that some employees in his office received the vaccine, but he declined to specify how many of his employees received it, or whether he himself received it.



Ionia County Prosecutor Kyle Butler

Montcalm County Prosecutor Andrea Krause, Montcalm County Public Defense Administrator Matthew Nave and Ionia County Public Defender Walter Downes all said their offices have not yet received or been offered the vaccine.

Montcalm County Road Commission Superintendent/Manager Mark Christensen said about half of 49 employees who were interested in the vaccine received it on Friday from the MMDHD.

Ionia County Sheriff Charlie Noll previously told the Daily News about 40% of his employees have received the vaccine while about 60% declined. The Ionia County Sheriff's Office and Jail employs 58 people.

Montcalm County Sheriff Mike Williams previously told the Daily News about 40 of his office's 45 employees received taken the vaccine.

'COURT PERSONNEL WILL WAIT THEIR TURN'

On Friday, State Court Administrator Thomas Boyd of the State Court Administrative Office (SCAO) in Lansing sent communication to all judges in Michigan regarding how the state will launch Phase 1B of its vaccination program starting Monday.

"The work of the courts is essential to the functioning of society and poses a substantially higher risk of exposure to COVID-19 due to the need to perform so much work onsite and in close proximity to the public and coworkers," Boyd wrote. "Recently, the Michigan Department of Health & Human Services issued a Vaccination Prioritization Guidance that describes the vaccination phases. According to the guidance, essential court personnel who cannot work remotely are likely eligible for a vaccination in Phase 1B (Group B or C) because their work puts them at risk of exposure. Since vaccinations in this category will begin on (Monday), we urge you to contact your local health department to schedule vaccinations for your court."

Not all local judges are on board with this recommendation.



Ionia-Montcalm Chief Circuit Court Judge Ron Schafer

“I do not agree with the idea that judges should be given any kind of preference for a vaccine,” Ionia-Montcalm Circuit Court Chief Judge Ronald Schafer told the Daily News. “It’s hard to imagine a position that has more autonomy over its own work environment. Short of someone in the judiciary who might also be a member of a priority group, such as over age 65, I believe the judiciary can wait.

“The courts have been diligent in working with our local health departments to ensure jurors, litigants, attorneys and court staff are as safe as possible,” Schafer added. “That was true before the release of vaccines and remains true now that vaccines are being administered. Moving forward, our courtrooms are safe for all, whether vaccinated or not. Now that vaccines are being administered, court personnel will wait their turn until eligible.”



Ionia County Probate Court Judge Robert Sykes Jr.

Ionia County Probate Court Judge Robert Sykes Jr. says like many citizens, he is patiently waiting to receive the vaccine and he will not use his position on the bench to try to move near the front of the line.

“I have made it known to our health department that once it determines that my profession or demographic is eligible, then I will get in line,” Sykes told the Daily News. “Unfortunately, there does not appear to be a clear directive from the state as to what specific groups or professions should be receiving the vaccine. Judges received a memo on Friday from the State Court Administrator urging us to contact our local health department to determine into what phase we should be placed. I think it is terribly unfair to (Health Officer) Ken Bowen to have to decide such things — and what is decided in Ionia County may not be the same as Wayne County.

“I would hope that there is not significant lobbying going on behind the scenes by departments or individuals trying to receive priority status, but human nature tells me otherwise,” Sykes said. “Everyone who works with the public can make a compelling case for receiving the shot, but there is obviously more demand than supply currently. I will wait my turn and trust the judgment of the health professionals.”



Ionia County District Court Judge Raymond Voet

“As a judge, I think those of us in the legal system should be down the list in priority because we are able to take measures to protect ourselves,” Ionia County District Court Judge Raymond Voet told the Daily News. “As a citizen, I think those people at risk daily with frequent person-to-person contact should be first in line.

“I also don’t understand the high number of people who are in those high human contact positions that are refusing the vaccine,” Voet added. “Don’t we want the pandemic to end as soon as possible? I suspect it’s an unfortunate byproduct of the misinformation age in which we now live.”

Krause told the Daily News that even though her staff in the Montcalm County Prosecutor’s Office have not yet received or been offered the vaccine, she was not surprised some Ionia County prosecutors have already received it.



Montcalm County Prosecutor Andrea Krause

“The prosecutor is the chief law enforcement official in the county,” Krause said. “In addition, criminal activity has not slowed down during the last year. Our courthouse has not closed to the public. My staff is working every day at the courthouse so COVID exposure is a real possibility. While I don’t believe we are at the level of healthcare or hospital workers and/or first responders who are on the front lines of this epidemic, I would hope that my staff would have the opportunity to get the vaccine as soon as possible.”

Greenville-based attorney Joshua Blanchard questioned what will happen if attorneys and their clients are required to start attending court in person without having received the vaccine, while others, such as prosecutors and judges, will have the advantage of already receiving it.

“When we return to in-person court proceedings, we have an obligation to our community to do it safely,” Blanchard told the Daily News. “We know from watching prison systems around the country that infections inside a jail or prison are expensive and deadly. We need to take steps to ensure that all of the participants in the justice system are protected. Like the prosecution and bench, the defense bar is an equally important part of the system and ought to be prioritized for vaccination at the same time as judges and prosecutors.”

Jourdan Rasmussen is an attorney with offices in Edmore and Lakeview and he also handles some felony and misdemeanor cases for the Montcalm County Public Defender’s Office.

“I would be happy to receive the vaccine whenever offered to me,” Rasmussen told the Daily News. “At the same time, I am 31, so I would like to see older judges and attorneys get it first. We have some older attorneys in this county and it’s definitely a risk that they have to go to court. Even with Zoom, there are some hearings we can’t effectively have from our offices.”

Daily News

Monday, January 11, 2021

Vaccination vexation: Local health officer calls Gov. Whitmer's vaccine announcement 'unfortunate'

By [Elisabeth Waldon](#) | on January 11, 2021

Many people are confused and frustrated about the COVID-19 vaccine rollout in the state of Michigan — including the health officer of the Mid-Michigan District Health Department (MMDHD).



“I know the governor told you at her press conference on Wednesday that anyone can call their health department and sign up to get vaccinated. That was very unfortunate,” Mid-Michigan District Health Department Health Officer Marcus Cheatham said in a video posted Friday in which he addressed the ongoing COVID-19 vaccine shortage in the state of Michigan. — DN Photo | Elisabeth Waldon

“I know the governor told you at her press conference on Wednesday that anyone can call their health department and sign up to get vaccinated,” Marcus Cheatham said in a YouTube video posted Friday. “That was very unfortunate. All of the health departments are very mad at her because we hardly have any vaccine and mostly don’t know when we’re going to get more.”

Cheatham said the MMDHD received 1,100 doses for its jurisdiction of Clinton, Gratiot and Montcalm counties with a total population of 180,000, including an estimated 50,000 healthcare workers, essential workers and people 65 and older (the MMDHD received an additional 5,500 vaccines for local hospitals).

“Fifty thousand people for 1,100 vaccines,” Cheatham declared. “Even if all the vaccine came today and there was a dose for everyone, it would still take weeks and weeks, maybe four months for us to vaccinate all of those people. I’m hoping all of you will understand and be patient.”

As of this past week, the MMDHD had administered 440 vaccines in Clinton, Gratiot and Montcalm counties — including 210 doses in Gratiot County, 120 doses in Montcalm County and 110 in Clinton County.

Currently, when users go to the MMDHD’s website to sign up for a vaccine appointment (mmdhd.org/covid-vaccine-information), it shows all appointments are booked through the end of January.

When users go to the state of Michigan’s vaccine website (michigan.gov/coronavirus/0,9753,7-406-98178_103214_00.html) and click on “Vaccine Locations,” there are only two available health departments listed: Ingham County and LMAS District (Luce, Mackinac, Alger and Schoolcraft counties).

“If your local health department is not named, then there are not yet appointments available,” Cheatham said. “We don’t have any appointments available right now. I’m really sorry about that. One of the problems with the governor’s announcement was it made it sound like everyone is going to get vaccinated at their local health department. Many of us are going to get vaccinated somewhere else.”

Cheatham said Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) officials have told Michigan officials that the Moderna vaccine (which is what the MMDHD currently has on hand) and Pfizer vaccine will continue to be made available slowly in the state.

“We’re going to be ordering the Pfizer vaccine and we’re going to be using that as well,” Cheatham said. “The opportunities for expansion are going to come when we get the AstraZeneca and Johnson & Johnson vaccines that are going to come in February and then the supply should really start to open up.”

Cheatham said Spectrum Health, Sparrow Health and MidMichigan Health officials have all said they will start vaccinating people when the vaccine becomes widely available.

On Saturday morning, Spectrum Health announced they would begin vaccinating people 65 and older starting on Monday (See details at the end of this story.) Spectrum said it has administered more than 16,000 vaccines as of Saturday.

Cheatham said the MMDHD is in the process of asking local pharmacies to issue vaccines as well when vaccines become available.

“Only a third of the healthcare providers in our jurisdiction are currently signed up to vaccinate people,” Cheatham noted. “You’re very likely to get a call from your healthcare provider when they have vaccines. We don’t have specific information, but that’s something to watch for.”

Cheatham also noted that while senior citizens are in one of the high-risk groups for COVID-19, many of them may not have internet access or feel comfortable using the internet

“Everybody please help your neighbors and your family members to sign up online,” he requested.

“But right now we don’t have vaccine,” he added. “You’re probably mad at us because right now today you can’t go to our website, there are no slots available and we don’t know when they’re going to open up. Just keep visiting our websites, visit that state website, check to see when the vaccine is available and we’ll be doing more updates.”

In coming weeks, the MMDHD plans to continue to vaccinate Phase 1A groups (healthcare workers and longterm care residents and staff) and 1B groups (frontline state and federal responders, school and childcare staff, corrections staff, anyone 75 years old and older and other essential frontline workers).

“When we started scheduling our vaccination clinics, we were following the guidance issued by the Michigan Department of Health & Human Services for priority group 1B,” Cheatham told the Daily News. “Then the guidance changed suddenly on Wednesday. We will continue to invite 1B agencies to available clinics.

“There will be many other opportunities to get vaccinated—not just at the health department,” he added.

You can watch Cheatham’s video in full at youtube.com/watch?v=yTo6rT5pm28&feature=youtu.be.

The Ionia County Health Department received 900 vaccines for local hospitals and another 600 vaccines for the health department, according to Health Officer Ken Bowen, who said by the end of this past week, his department will have 130 of its 600 doses left, which will be used up by early this week.

Bowen said Ionia County residents 65 and older can sign up at ioniacounty.org/health/covid-19-vaccine/vaccine-registration online to find out when the vaccine will be available to them; however, he said his department does not currently even have enough vaccine to cover the Phase 1B population.

“It could be a month or more before we have enough vaccine,” Bowen told the Daily News.

COVID-19 VACCINES AT SPECTRUM

Spectrum Health officials announced on Saturday morning it would begin vaccinating people 65 and older starting on Monday, Jan. 11.

“At this time, please do not call your provider’s office for vaccine scheduling,” the Spectrum statement said. “To prepare for scheduling your COVID-19 vaccination, follow the steps below. If you require special assistance or have difficulty with MyChart, we are working on making other scheduling options available soon.”

Step 1: Log in or create a Spectrum Health MyChart account at mychart.spectrumhealth.org/MyChart/Authentication/Login? online.

“We will use Spectrum Health MyChart as a primary means of confirming your eligibility and notifying you when you are able to schedule. You do not need to be a Spectrum Health patient to use this service.”

Step 2: Fill out the COVID-19 Vaccination Survey found in Spectrum Health MyChart.

All Spectrum Health MyChart users ages 16 and older will have a COVID-19 Vaccination Survey available to them in their MyChart account. The survey will ask if you are interested in the COVID-19 vaccine and will help us understand what vaccination phase you are in. Please note: completing this questionnaire does not mean you will be scheduled for an appointment immediately.

“Upon logging in to your Spectrum Health MyChart on a desktop, click on “Health” at the top of your MyChart screen. Next, click “Questionnaires” in the menu as shown below. After clicking “Questionnaires” you will see “COVID-19 Vaccination Survey.” Click on the survey and follow on-screen instructions to begin.

Step 3: You will receive a MyChart message when you are able to self-schedule your vaccination.

“Based on your survey responses, the Michigan Department of Health & Human Services vaccine distribution guidance and Spectrum Health’s available vaccine supply, you will receive a notification when you are able to self-

schedule your vaccine appointment. Even when you become eligible appointments may not be available right away, so we continue to ask for your patience,” the Spectrum statement said.

To learn more about the COVID-19 vaccine at Spectrum Health, visit www.spectrumhealth.org/covid19/covid-19-vaccine online.

Source: Spectrum Health

H VISIBILITY



organized by the Metro Lansing Poor People's Campaign in Lansing. The protest was conducted to bring attention to issues surrounding Porter Senior Apartments and...

JOURNAL

Mich. Capitol



Capitol was...
e. MATTHEW
UAL FILE

people with valid...
who are in...
ulations.
tentious but

"relevant to the times that we're in," commissioner John Truscott said before Monday's vote.

Commissioners hastily scheduled the Monday meeting on Friday as the country reeled from a violent mob's attack on the U.S. Capitol last week. "Open carry firearms in the Capitol" was the only topic they placed on the agenda.

Their unanimous support for an open carry ban was an about-face from September, when commissioners split 3-3 on a similar proposal. Commissioners John Truscott, Gary Randall and Margaret O'Brien reversed their September decision and joined Joan Bauer, Kerry Chartkoff and Wil...

See OPEN CARRY, Page 4A

COVID-19 vaccine in short supply

Eligibility expands, but availability is limited

Carol Thompson

Lansing State Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

Starting Monday, Michigan local health departments are allowed to administer the COVID-19 vaccine to teachers, child care workers and people over 65, an important step toward ending the coronavirus pandemic, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer and state health officials said last week.

But Michiganders who fall into those groups shouldn't expect to get a dose anytime soon. COVID-19 vaccination appointments remain limited in the Lansing area despite the expansion of vaccine-eligible Michiganders.

Whitmer's Wednesday announcement was "very unfortunate," Mid-Michigan District Health Department Health Officer Marcus Cheatham said in a video he posted online Friday.

People are eager to get vaccine appointments, but health departments don't have enough doses to vaccinate such a broad group quickly, he said.

"All of the health departments are very mad at her because we hardly have any vaccine and mostly don't know when we're going to get more," he said.

Mid-Michigan Health Department, which covers Clinton, Gratiot and Montcalm counties, has received 1,100

See VACCINE, Page 4A



People are eager to get vaccine appointments.

NICK KING/LANSING STATE JOURNAL

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Vaccine

Continued from Page 1A

doses of the COVID-19 vaccine, he said. Roughly 50,000 people in the three-county district are technically eligible because they are health care workers, essential workers or over 65.

It would take four months to vaccinate 50,000 people even if the department could secure enough doses, Cheatham estimated.

Health departments focus on priority groups

It's a similar story for the Ingham County Health Department. There are about 83,000 people in Ingham County technically eligible for the vaccine, like health care workers, teachers, child care providers or over 65, county Health Officer Linda Vail estimated.

The department will receive 2,000 doses of the vaccine this week, she said. It will take a long time to vaccinate eligible residents with that kind of supply.

That's why the Ingham County Health Department is not yet vaccinating everyone over 65. As of Monday, the department is vaccinating law enforcement officers, firefighters, shelter workers, corrections officers, education workers who have direct contact with children and people 70 and older.

Ingham and other nearby health departments have set up a screening system that organizes vaccine-eligible people based on their priority group.

They're asking interested residents to fill out an online survey, answer questions about their risk of exposure to the coronavirus or of developing a serious case of COVID-19.

Health department staff will schedule people for vaccination appointments based on how likely they are to catch or die from the disease. Someone over 70 who has a chronic medical condition and works in a school would be in line before a retired 65-year-old who spends most of his time at home, for example.

"That is the ethical thing to do," Vail said.

He's 71 and works in a school. He'll be vaccinated in April.

Joe Costello falls in two categories of Michiganders who recently got closer to the COVID-19 vaccine — he's 71 and the Bellevue High School boys varsity basketball coach.

He has a history of heart attacks and wants the vaccine. He'll have to wait.

Costello, an Eaton County resident, filled out a COVID-19 vaccine interest form on the Barry-Eaton District Health Department website after he learned the state was allowing health departments to vaccinate more groups. He was told his appointment



Pharmacy Manager John Winger, left, administers the COVID-19 vaccine for ICU nurse Dawn Chapel at McLaren Greater Lansing hospital on Dec. 17 in Lansing. NICK KING/LANSING STATE JOURNAL

would be sometime in April.

"I'm 71, I'm a high school coach, which means I'm a part of the staff. I'm in the school all the time," he said. "If I can't get it, when are the normal people going to get it?"

The vaccine's bumpy rollout in Michigan

Dr. Joneigh Khaldun implored Michiganders to be patient Friday as she spoke at a livestreamed press conference alongside Whitmer.

"We don't want people to be frustrated by this," said Khaldun, Michigan chief medical executive. "We knew this would happen because we just don't have enough vaccine in the state and I ask for patience as our health systems and our local health departments develop systems to provide the vaccine to as many people as possible."

The federal government has not allocated enough vaccine to Michigan to meet demand, she said, alluding to questions over what is causing the slow distribution.

As of Monday, the state's COVID-19 vaccine dashboard shows 725,850 doses have been shipped throughout the state, with most going to hospitals. Only 195,240 doses have been administered, also mostly by hospitals.

The dashboard doesn't tell the whole story, Whitmer said.

The 60,000 doses of the Pfizer vaccine that come into the state each week are shipped right away to hospitals and health departments, which are asked to use them within a week, she said Friday. Doses of the Moderna vaccine are sent directly to CVS and Walgreens, which administers them to long-term care facility residents and staff.

Whitmer also urged the federal government to release more doses.

"We will get everyone who wants a vaccine vaccinated," she said, "but we need to be a little bit patient."

Still, state and local health officials show a measured optimism. Cheatham predicted the shortage would start to ease in February as more COVID-19 vaccines get federal approval. Whitmer on Friday predicted many education workers would be vaccinated in the next month and said the state continues to increase the doses administered a day.

How to get in line for COVID-19 vaccines in Clinton, Eaton and Ingham counties

Pharmacies and health care providers will eventually help in administering the COVID-19 vaccine to many Michiganders, Cheatham said in his Friday video. He predicted most people will get doses from their regular doctors and pharmacists, not the health department.

Meanwhile, Health departments are collecting interest forms from people who want to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. Here's how to find those forms:

Ingham County: People who live and work in Ingham County can fill out a health department interest form. They can be found on the department's website, hd.ingham.org, in the COVID-19 updates and response page. Click on "vaccine information" to find a link to the form.

Eaton County: A link to the Barry-Eaton District Health Department's vaccine interest form is available at barryeatonhealth.org/covid-19-vaccine-information.

Clinton County: A link to the Mid-Michigan District Health Department's vaccine interest form is available at mmdhd.org/covid-vaccine-information.

Contact Carol Thompson at ckthompson@lsj.com.

Daily News

Tuesday, January 12, 2021

Greenville Public Schools teachers, staff begin receiving vaccine for COVID-19

By [Cory Smith](#) | on January 12, 2021

GREENVILLE — For many teachers and staff throughout Greenville Public Schools (GPS), Monday proved to be a monumental day in their efforts to educate and care for students amid a pandemic.



Greenville High School paraprofessional Kathy Cavendish, right, receives the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine Monday at Spectrum Health United Hospital. About 100 teachers and staff from Greenville Public Schools were able to receive the vaccine, with Superintendent Linda Van Houten stating that all district employees will have the chance to receive a vaccine soon as more clinics are held. — Submitted photo | Chris Clark, Spectrum Health

It marked the first time in 10 weeks for high school students, and about nine weeks for elementary students, that those students and their teachers were back to learning in-person, seated with their peers in the classroom instead of alone behind a computer screen in their home.

“Some were quite excited to be back, and while some joke around about how they’d rather not be in school at all, they were all 100% glad to be done with distance learning,” Greenville High School science teacher Tami Braginton said.

After being restricted to distance learning from home due to rising positive cases and deaths attributed to the coronavirus, students and teachers rejoiced in the opportunity to be together, face-to-face, once again.

And Monday’s return to the classroom was trumped by yet one more occasion — receiving the COVID-19 vaccine.

According to Superintendent Linda Van Houten, of the nearly 475 total staff employed throughout the school district and its seven school buildings, 390 had expressed an interest in receiving a vaccine, many with the hope that they could obtain it before returning to the classroom.

Last week, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer announced that Phase 1B of the state’s COVID-19 vaccine distribution process — which includes essential workers such as teachers, child care providers, jail staff and those age 65 and up — would begin Monday, where available for distribution.

Fortunately for many staff members, 100 doses of Moderna vaccine were available at Spectrum Health United Hospital.

According to Spectrum Health United and Kelsey COO Jon Ashford, while working in coordination with the Mid-Michigan District Health Department, United Hospital was happy to hold a vaccination clinic for Greenville staff and other essential workers.

“We have been collaborating with the Mid-Michigan District Health Department and they sent a request out, asking if we can take on Greenville Public Schools, and our answer was ‘we’d be happy to,’” he said. “Fast forward a week since then and we have about 100 or so teachers and staff getting vaccinated today.”



Greenville Middle School science teacher Joseph Conley, right, receives the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine Monday at Spectrum Health United Hospital. About 100 teachers and staff from Greenville Public Schools were able to receive the vaccine, with Superintendent Linda Van Houten stating that all district employees will have the chance to receive a vaccine soon as more clinics are held. — Submitted photo | Chris Clark, Spectrum Health

Braginton described receiving the vaccine as delivering a “peace of mind” as she now returns to her classroom full of students.

“I think it’s the first step in ensuring that students can remain in our building and we can remain with face-to-face learning for our kiddos,” she said. “If our teachers and staff can get it, that’s a big step forward. Going back to the classroom with this vaccine, I have a little bit more safety and security in my mind that I will be vaccinated against this virus.”

Braginton said she had no hesitation in signing up to receive the vaccine, and upon eventually receiving her second shot in another 28 days, she is confident it will help her and her colleagues remain in the classroom.

“Knowing that I can go back and fully engage in my job without worrying about becoming ill — or deathly ill — it’s definitely an advantage, I think, in my opinion,” she said. “I did not expect it (the vaccine) to happen this fast for us teachers, so this is pretty awesome.”

For Joseph Conley, a science teacher at Greenville Middle School, receiving the first dose was equally as beneficial.

“It’s a sense of security, but I kind of feel like it’s a duty as well, a responsibility,” he said. “I whole-heartedly believe that a vaccine is the way to go, just scientifically speaking. Not only am I protecting myself, but you’re protecting other people. You’re also protecting other people who maybe can’t get the vaccine.”

While Kimberly Bell, the dean of students at Satterlee School, said she wasn’t originally convinced receiving the vaccine was necessarily the right thing to do with it being developed under emergency conditions, after consulting with her doctor, she chose to receive it.

“I was a little hesitant,” she said. “We don’t know the long-term effects, but I checked with my doctor, and he advised that I get it.”

By getting the vaccine, Bell is hopeful things can begin to now trend a bit toward “normalcy.”

With only 100 vaccines available for this first clinic, Van Houten said she provided the hospital with a list of all staff who expressed an interest in getting the vaccine. The hospital then randomly called individuals on the list to set them up with an appointment.



Greenville High School science teacher Tami Braginton, left, receives the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine Monday at Spectrum Health United Hospital. About 100 teachers and staff from Greenville Public Schools were able to receive

the vaccine, with Superintendent Linda Van Houten stating that all district employees will have the chance to receive a vaccine soon as more clinics are held. — Submitted photo | Chris Clark, Spectrum Health

As Van Houten visited the clinic to observe and support her staff, she said she witnessed a sight of teachers laughing, smiling and crying, grateful to receive the vaccine.

“This is truly a great day for GPS and we are thrilled this day is finally here,” she said. “We look forward to getting everyone vaccinated and know that this goal is within our reach now and that gives us so much hope.”


Ashford stressed the importance of getting those in the field of education vaccinated, which he described as an important step in creating a safe environment for teachers to return to the classroom.

“Greenville Public Schools is a tremendous pillar in our community,” he said. “I think it’s very important for us to get our children back to school. We all lean on the teachers and staff for not only the excellent education they provide, but many members of our community need that resource of public education so they can maintain their daily lives.”

Ashford said the hospital will continue to hold clinics for those who qualify under the state’s COVID-19 vaccine distribution process, as it receives doses of the vaccine and has them in stock.

Those seeking more information about potentially receiving the vaccine can visit spectrumhealth.org/covid19/covid-19-vaccine.

MMDHD Experiencing COVID-19 Vaccine Shortage

 Posted on Wednesday, January 13th, 2021 and is filed under [News](#). You can follow any responses to this entry through the [RSS 2.0](#) feed. You can skip to the end and leave a response. Pinging is currently not allowed.

The Mid-Michigan District [Health](#) Department (MMDHD) has begun the process of administering the COVID-19 vaccine, but a limited supply is slowing their efforts.

The Mid-Michigan District Health Department reminds community members that there has been an unfortunate shortfall in the expected supply of COVID-19 vaccine across the country and most of the existing vaccines have already been allocated. We want to tell you what is being done to create more opportunities for vaccination.

MMDHD is currently vaccinating those in priority group 1A (first responders, health care, adult foster care, assisted living, skilled nursing, and home health care workers) and those in priority group 1B (those 65 years of age and older, first responders not vaccinated in 1A, corrections and jail staff, childcare providers, K-12 school staff, homeless shelter staff, drug rehabilitation center staff, transient living staff, and CPS workers).

If you fall into one of these groups, you unfortunately may not be able to get vaccinated right away because of the vaccine supply shortage.

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) website shows that our counties received a total of 8,900 doses of vaccine. However, most of those doses went to other health care providers. MMDHD only received 1,600 doses for Clinton, Gratiot, and Montcalm counties. Most people will actually be vaccinated by another health care provider, not the health department.

Those wishing to make an appointment to get vaccinated at the health department should visit their website at www.mmdhd.org.

Unfortunately, all of the MMDHD clinics are currently full, but be sure to check their website often as they may have cancellations. When they receive more vaccine, additional clinics will be added and posted on our website. As soon as other health care providers share links to their vaccination clinics, the MMDHD will put those on their website as well.

MMDHD is doing five things right now to increase access to the vaccine:

1. They are ordering the Pfizer vaccine, but the supply is limited.
2. They will set up clinics staffed by the National Guard and will let their communities know when that occurs.
3. They are ordering vaccines to share with area pharmacies, but it will take time before it is received. It would be ideal if people could get vaccinated at their pharmacy, just like the flu shot.
4. Only 1/3 of area health care providers currently offer COVID vaccinations. MMDHD is helping them get certified to offer the vaccine so people can get vaccinated by their own doctor. Some hospitals have already started emailing their patients about this option.
5. They will be partnering with area agencies on aging to help senior citizens who have difficulty with transportation to get to a vaccination location.

MMDHD knows scheduling an appointment online might be difficult for some of their elderly residents or those with no access to a computer or the internet. Community partners are being recruited to assist with scheduling, but in the meantime, they are encouraging those residents to ask a family member, friend, or neighbor with internet access to help them schedule an appointment. Additional options will be posted on their website as soon as they are finalized. You can also call 211 for assistance.

If you would like to be notified when they schedule additional clinics, you may sign up to receive their E-newsletter by visiting their website at www.mmdhd.org and looking for the “sign up for updates” section of the home page.

MMDHD is currently administering the Moderna vaccine. A second dose is required 28 days after the first dose. Instructions on when to return to receive your second dose will be given at your first vaccination appointment. MMDHD’s phone line is experiencing high call volumes, so if you need to call one of their offices, you can expect delays. They have had numerous people call their office to ask how to schedule an appointment or to let them know that the COVID-19 clinics shown on their website are full. They are asking that you refrain from calling for these reasons because their phone line is not able to handle such a high volume of calls.

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services reported earlier in the month that local public health departments would be receiving a shipment of KN95 masks that the public could have for free. The Mid-

Michigan District Health Department has not received the shipment yet, but when it does will place a notice on their website.

CORONAVIRUS IN MID-MICHIGAN

Four new deaths reported in region

Total includes two in Gratiot, one in Isabella; Mecosta County moves off high-risk category

By Eric Baerren
ebaerren@medianewsgroup.com
@ebaerren on Twitter

Four COVID-19 deaths were reported across mid-Michigan Thursday, including two in Gratiot County and one in Isabella County.

The deaths come as declining

new cases have shifted one county off the highest risk coding in a county-level data dashboard.

The two deaths brings the total number of deaths in Gratiot County to 85, and an additional 11 cases were reported from the county Thursday for a cumulative total of 2,327.

No information was available

about who died or what demographic categories they fall into. Mid-Michigan District Health Department stopped releasing that information before Christmas, citing a "geocoding error" with the state. The health department, which oversees Gratiot County, has also stopped updating the COVID-19 dashboard on its website.

State records show that 57 of the county's deaths involving nursing home residents, with two listed as new as of Thursday, one

at Ashley Care Center and one at Masonic Health Care Center.

State records of long-term care facilities often take several days to update, and the MDHHS COVID-19 data released Thursday afternoon indicated that more than half of deaths reported that day were discovered during reviews of death certificates within the last 30 days.

The additional death reported in Isabella County brings its total to 59. An additional eight cases

were reported for a cumulative total of 3,329.

An additional seven cases were reported in Clare County for a cumulative total of 1,203, with 57 deaths.

Meanwhile, new cases across mid-Michigan have declined to where one county has been moved from the highest risk to the merely high risk, according to a prominent public health dashboard.

UPDATE » PAGE 3

HARRISON

STATE POLICE SEEK MAN WHO RAMMED PATROL CAR



PHOTO PROVIDED BY MICHIGAN STATE POLICE

A trooper's disabled patrol vehicle sits on the edge of a road following an incident in which a man, identified by police as 36-year-old Jonah Vaughn, pictured below, rammed the vehicle twice following a stop. According to reports, Vaughn refused to identify himself while the vehicle's initial driver was being questioned outside the vehicle. Vaughn then reportedly slid into the driver's seat and fled the scene, with the trooper pursuing.

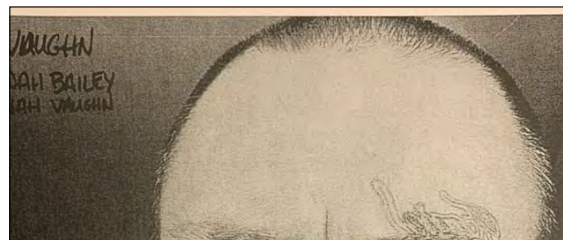
Trooper treated at hospital, suspect identified by authorities as 36-year-old Jonah Vaughn

By Sarah Wright
swright@medianewsgroup.com

Michigan State Police (MSP) are in search of a 36-year-old man who fled the scene and rammed a vehicle into a patrol vehicle.

the driver side and fled the scene. The trooper pursued and the suspect rammed the patrol vehicle twice.

The second time the patrol vehicle was rammed it caused it to swerve into the ditch and be-



ALMA

Gratiot Area Chamber awards dinner is canceled

By Greg Nelson
gnelson@medianewsgroup.com

Normally his time of year the Gratiot Area Chamber of Commerce is gearing up for its annual dinner and awards program to honor the top citizens in Alma, Breckenridge, Ithaca and St. Louis.

The event unusually attracts a crowd of 200 or more from throughout the county.

However, these are still not normal times.

The chamber has announced it will not be holding its award banquet, which takes place annually in late January at Masonic Pathways' Doig Chapel.

This would have been the 27th year for the event.

Chamber Executive Director Brenden Kelley was in New Jersey due to the death of his sister, according to his administrative assistant Sheila Bishop.

However, he did leave a message with her in response to an

CANCELED » PAGE 3

MT. PLEASANT

Union Township OKs business items at meeting

By Sarah Wright
swright@medianewsgroup.com

Union Township Board of Trustees approved all new business items at first meeting of the year.

The meeting was held on Wednesday, Jan. 13 at 7 p.m. and it could be viewed via Zoom or lis-

Daily News

Saturday, January 16, 2021

Local health department: Please do not call us to request COVID-19 vaccination

Submitted by Mid-Michigan
District Health Department

STANTON — The two approved vaccines for COVID-19, Moderna and Pfizer, continue to arrive slowly in Michigan. The main problem is that the manufacturers have not been able to produce vaccine quickly enough.

Last week the Mid-Michigan District Health Department did begin vaccinating essential workers in group 1B. However, no new shipments of vaccine were received in our district (Clinton, Gratiot and Montcalm counties). As a reminder, 8,900 doses came into the district, of which 1,600 came to the health department. By the end of this week the health department will have administered all but 400 of its doses, and the remaining doses are all assigned to someone for clinics next week. When more vaccine is available new clinics will be found at www.mmdhd.org/covid-vaccine-information online.

People in our jurisdiction have a number of options for getting vaccinated:

- Patients of Spectrum Hospital providers can schedule a vaccination through their Spectrum MyChart online. Please understand there is very little vaccine, and most people will have to

wait for a vaccination.

- MidMichigan hospital has begun calling their own patients to schedule vaccinations. MidMichigan patients can get information at www.midmichigan.org online. Until more vaccine is available only a small number of people should expect to be called.

- Sparrow Hospital finished vaccinating their health care providers and did vaccinate a small number of school personnel (1B). Sparrow is now out of vaccine and will resume when more comes in.

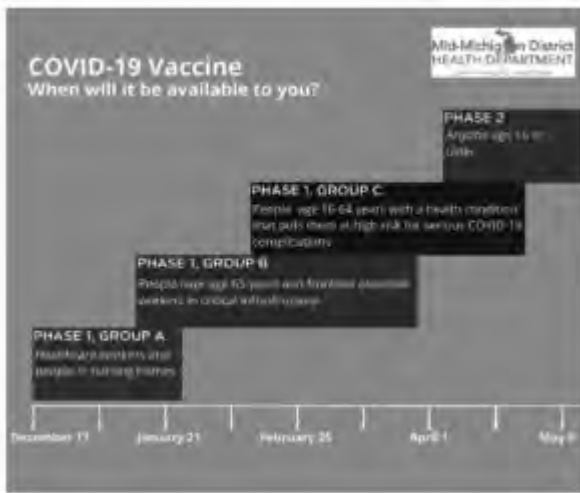
Please do not call the Mid-Michigan District Health Department or hospitals requesting vaccine. There is no new vaccine at this time and phone lines are overloaded. Please sign up for our newsletter to ensure you hear about new clinics. Sign up at www.mmdhd.org online.

The health department has placed a sizeable order of vaccine. Hospitals also expect to receive vaccine. We will not know until next week if we will receive any. If we get vaccine, we will be partnering with a pharmacy to do new clinics in our jurisdiction immediately.

We want to thank all our community partners at our three community collaboratives and emergency operations centers for helping us plan these upcoming clinics.

COVID-19 Update: Cases Slow, But Vaccine Shortages Linger

Posted on Wednesday, January 20th, 2021 and is filed under [News](#). You can follow any responses to this entry through the [RSS 2.0](#) feed. You can skip to the end and leave a response. Pinging is currently not allowed.



This infographic, retrieved from the MMDHD's website on Jan. 19, shows a proposed timeline for COVID-19 vaccinations based on priority groups. If vaccine deliveries continue to be delayed, individuals in Phase 1C and Phase 2 may be vaccinated later than indicated here.

By Emma Selmon
Herald [News](#) Editor

Counties in the Mid-Michigan District [Health](#) Department gained fewer new COVID-19 cases this week, but vaccine distribution has also slowed.

As of Tuesday, Jan. 19, Gratiot County gained 31 new cases of COVID-19, which is half the number of new cases reported over the previous seven-day period. Five more individuals passed away from the disease, which is the same number of deaths Gratiot saw last week.

Gratiot County is now reporting a cumulative total of 2,341 COVID-19 cases and 88 COVID-19 deaths. Montcalm and Clinton Counties also saw fewer new COVID-19 cases than the previous week, and fewer deaths as well. Montcalm gained 84 new cases, bringing up their total case count to 3,069. Their death toll remains at 76, as no additional deaths were reported last week. And Clinton County gained 70 new cases for a total of 4,133. Two more residents passed away, bringing their death toll up to 51.

Elsewhere in mid-Michigan, counties gained fewer cases between Tuesday, Jan. 12 and Tuesday, Jan. 19 than they did within the previous seven-day period. Isabella is reporting 40 new cases and six additional deaths, bringing their case count up to 3,357 and their death toll to 64. Midland County gained 163 new COVID-19 cases, but saw no new deaths from the disease. Their total case count is now at 3,977, and their death toll remains at 49.

And in Saginaw County, 356 new COVID-19 cases were identified and 17 more residents passed away, bringing their cumulative totals up to 12,982 cases and 443 deaths.

Statewide, as of Tuesday, Michigan is reporting 540,115 total COVID-19 cases and 13,865 resident deaths. Nationwide, COVID-19 deaths have surpassed 400,000.

In mid-Michigan, COVID-19 vaccinations opened up to Phase 1B individuals last week; however, immunization appointments have stalled as the district is running low on vaccine.

In a press release dated Jan. 14, the Mid-Michigan District Health Department (MMDHD) announced that they are waiting for more vaccine, noting that the "main problem" behind the delay is that "manufacturers have not been able to produce vaccine quickly enough."

As of Jan. 14, all but 400 of the available doses in the district had been administered, and all of those doses were already claimed by individuals in clinics scheduled for the following week.

In a video message released that same day, MMDHD Health Officer Marcus Cheatham said that local health departments, like the MMDHD, met with the governor's office last Wednesday. They were told that that governor's office has asked the CDC to "release all of the vaccine that could potentially come to the State of Michigan" so more vaccine can be made available at the local level.

Cheatham said he is hopeful that this could open up more opportunities for his department to receive the vaccine, and that the MMDHD has been "very aggressive in ordering all the vaccine [they] can," including both the Pfizer and Moderna shots.

He said that while they "hope it comes," there is "actually a chance" that the MMDHD "might not get any vaccine" from this order.

If the vaccine does arrive, the MMDHD will be partnering with the National Guard and a pharmacy to set up community-based clinics in the jurisdiction's three counties.

As of Tuesday, there was no update indicating whether the MMDHD had received more vaccine.

With the vaccine in short supply, progress in immunizing individuals in Phase 1B — which includes individuals over 65 as well as frontline essential workers, such as teachers — has been slow. Cheatham warned in his video message that if vaccine deliveries are delayed further, they may not be able to start vaccinating individuals in Phase 1C on time.

Those in Phase 1C — generally, individuals aged 16-64 with health factors that put them at a high risk for serious COVID-19 complications — are scheduled to begin receiving their vaccines in mid-February. A spokesperson from the MMDHD was unable to confirm by press time whether these individuals should expect their vaccinations to be delayed.

The MMDHD encourages residents to sign up for their e-newsletter to receive updates about COVID-19 vaccine availability at the health department, but they also encourage residents to explore other options for receiving their COVID-19 vaccinations.

Local hospitals, including MidMichigan Medical Center – Gratiot in Alma, have been administering COVID-19 vaccines as well; however, all vaccination clinics through MidMichigan Health are currently full. The hospital system requests that patients do not call the hospital or their doctor to schedule an appointment, as they "will continue to reach out to eligible patients in an orderly fashion, based on supply."

While the area waits for more vaccine to become available, the MMDHD's Cheatham is encouraged by the efforts of the various "community partners," including community collaboratives, commissions on aging, pharmacies, the national guard, and emergency operations centers. He said these entities have been "tremendously helpful," and that "they're doing everything they can to help [the MMDHD] be prepared for when that vaccine does come."

"It's really gratifying to see the community come together, and I am optimistic that once the vaccine starts to flow, you'll get it quickly," Cheatham said.

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HIGHLAND » PAGE 3

a problem in region

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Lake was was driving over on Burch Street, after seeing activity in the front seat. The Lake man was arrested immediately for jumping parole. While the officer was removing him, he saw a cell phone and a hypodermic needle in the car, which the Lake man told him might be dirty with heroin.

The Mt. Pleasant woman with him was arrested on a warrant for failing to appear at a court hearing.

METH » PAGE 3

VID-19 pandemic.

Corky's Beal City Tavern, 2007 N. Winn Road, had its license suspended Thursday.

TAVERN » PAGE 3

Vaccine shortages tied to federal-level chaos

By Eric Baerren

ebaerren@medianewsgroup.com

@ebaerren on Twitter

Last Thursday, Central Michigan District Health Department requested 4,725 doses of COVID-19 vaccine from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. On Friday, they were notified they'd receive a quarter of that, 1,200 doses.

"Demand is currently far outweighing supply. We are pleased to see so much interest in the vaccine. As vaccine comes in, we will be getting it out as soon as possible. We thank you for your patience and cooperation as we move forward in this process," said Steve Hall, CMDHD health officer, in a press release.

In a video released last week, Hall said that they had been receiving the Moderna vaccine, but reallocations meant scrambling to find doses of the Pfizer vaccine. The two are currently the only ones authorized for use in the United States.

So far, CMDHD has vaccinated 2,300 people across its six counties — Isabella, Clare, Roscommon, Arenac, Gladwin and Osceola — and has another 16,000 people signed up for it. The health department has vaccinated everyone in the highest priority group and is now on the so-called 1b, which was originally for long-term health care facility staff and residents over the age of 75. Gov. Gretchen Whitmer earlier this month expanded that to anyone 65 years old and older.

VACCINE » PAGE 3

.....A5 | Sports..... B1 | ComicsB4 | Classifieds.....B5 | 



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Vaccine

FROM PAGE 1

"How quickly we can vaccinate is dependent on how much vaccine we receive from the state and federal government," the press release said.

It turns out that much of the turmoil appears to be caused at the top.

In a report published Tuesday, investigative reporting newsroom ProPublica said that much of it was caused by the decision within the federal Operation Warp Speed program to let states know only weekly how many doses they could expect. The decision was made, per the report, because Operation Warp Speed's chief operating officer, Gen. Gustave Perna didn't want to make promises to the states that he wasn't sure he could deliver on after a disappointing experience rolling out an H1N1 vaccine during the last flu pandemic in 2009.

In Michigan, the decision to roll the vaccine out like this has left the state with just two days to figure out where to distribute the shots, Lyn Sutfin, MDHHS spokeswoman, told ProPublica.

The news comes as the state announced five new deaths from COVID-19 and 56 new confirmed cases across mid-Michigan.

Two of the new deaths

were in Isabella County, bringing its total to 64. Information on the two wasn't immediately available, but earlier on Tuesday CMDHD's health officer Hall released information about three deaths reported over the weekend. All three involved people with underlying health conditions.

They include an elderly man who died Jan. 8, an elderly woman who died Jan. 13 and an elderly woman who died Friday, Hall said.

An additional seven cases were reported in Isabella County on Tuesday for a cumulative total of 3,357.

Two more of those deaths involved Clare County residents, bringing its total to 60. No information was immediately available about them, either, but information about a death reported Monday was made available. It involved an elderly man with underlying health conditions and who died on Saturday.

An additional six cases were reported Tuesday for a cumulative total of 60. The case fatality rate for COVID-19 in Clare County is 4.8 percent, a full 2 percent higher than the statewide average of 2.6 percent.

Clare County's population is older and more impoverished than most of the state, and those two factors are closely tied to higher rates of COVID-19 deaths.

One death was reported in Gratiot County, for a total of 88. Mid-Michigan District

Health Department stopped responding to inquiries for information after the start of the new year and went for almost a month without updating its COVID-19 dashboard, rendering it unreliable as a means to verify state numbers.

An additional four cases were reported in Gratiot on Tuesday for a cumulative total of 2,341.

Elsewhere in mid-Michigan, no new deaths were reported Tuesday, with new and cumulative cases as follows:

▪ In Gladwin County, an additional four cases were reported for a cumulative total of 1,155, with 34 deaths;

▪ In Mecosta County, an additional three cases were reported for a cumulative total of 1,713 cases, with 15 deaths; and,

▪ In Midland County, an additional 22 cases were reported for a cumulative total of 3,977 cases, with 49 deaths; and,

▪ In Montcalm County, an additional 10 cases were reported for a cumulative total of 3,069, with 76 deaths.

Statewide, another 41 deaths were reported for a total of 13,824 and another 7,573 cases were reported Monday for a cumulative total of 538,577. Of those deaths, the state reported Saturday that 90 of them were uncovered during a review of death certificates over the last 30 days.

Highland

FROM PAGE 1

no event was happening.

"Are we glad to make this decision? No. Are we sure it is the right decision? Yes."

The festival takes several months to plan and to secure judges for the various dancing, piping, drumming and other competitions that take place during the event.

The decision to cancel had to be made early "knowing the current status of our world still holds us in limbo," the board's letter stated.

The festival also plays host to the Midwest Regional Highland Dance Competition.

"If Scotland should allow dancing in 2021 we will move forward with making that event happen," board members said.

Other highland games throughout the U.S. scheduled after Alma's, are already being canceled, they noted.

"We know we made the right call," the letter stated.

However, that doesn't mean all is lost.

"We are dreamers and want to try to do something," the board said. "We have ideas in the works to host a Highland Experience in Scotland U.S.A, that would allow small tastes of what the Alma Highland Festival is all about should restrictions lift and allow us to gather in some capacity.

Tavern

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Specifically, the Commission issued an emergency suspension of its Class C, and Specially Designated Merchant licenses and its permits for Sunday Sales and Outdoor Service.

Also in the latest suspen-

sions:

▪ 408, Inc., operating as The Post Local Bistro, 844 Penniman Ave. in Plymouth.

▪ KG Hardscrabble, operating as Bitely Tavern, 2384 W. Main Street in Bitely.

Corky's Beal City Tavern and The Post Local Bistro are scheduled to appear before an Administrative Law Judge today for a virtual

hearing via Zoom to determine whether this summary suspension should continue, or other fines and penalties should be imposed.

Bitely Tavern is scheduled to appear before an Administrative Law Judge on Friday, also via Zoom.

Licensees are prohibited from allowing indoor gatherings, as defined by the MDHHS Gatherings

and Face Mask Order, on their licensed premises, the agency said. They must also follow the MDHHS order's provisions concerning outdoor dining.

Prohibited gatherings held without requiring patrons to wear face masks pose an immediate threat to the health, safety, and welfare of the public, officials said in a press release.

Meth

FROM PAGE 1

pipe that, according to the police report, tested positive for meth.

The two were arrested for possession of meth, with the woman also arrested for possession of a firearm.

The county had its first deaths possibly related to drug use last week.

In one, a 22-year-old Howell man was found dead in the city of Mt. Pleasant, said Anthony B.

Complicating meth use is that Narcan, which was developed to address overdoses of opioids, is ineffective against the COVID-19 because Meth is a stimulant.