Local state of emergency declared over COVID-19

BY DEREK ORPHEL AND DAVID ZOELLER

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A local state of emergency was declared for the city of Paducah and McCracken County on Monday as a result of public health concerns surrounding COVID-19, the disease caused by the novel coronavirus.

Paducah Mayor Brandi Harless and McCracken County Judge-Executive Craig Clymer conducted a joint afternoon news conference declaring the emergency.

Both officials stressed the seriousness of the public health crisis that has spanned the globe the last several months.

No positive cases have been reported in Paducah or McCracken County, or in any of the western Kentucky counties in the Purchase and Pennyrile area development districts.

“We still have an opportunity here to be very preventative in our measures,” Harless said. “We do know that testing will become more available over the coming weeks and we will start to see more people in our area and in the community, so we need to keep our guard up, keep our preventative measures up, and prevent this virus from spreading any further.”

Harless said the goal of the state of emergency is to prevent any current positive cases from spreading further, and to get people tested if they are experiencing any symptoms.

“We still have an opportunity here to be very preventative in our measures,” Harless said. “We do know that testing will become more available over the coming weeks and we will start to see more people in our area and in the community, so we need to keep our guard up, keep our preventative measures up, and prevent this virus from spreading any further.”

No cases have been confirmed in McCracken County, according to Judge-Executive Craig Clymer. Clymer added that the state of emergency is to get people tested if they are experiencing any symptoms.

“Let’s do this together; this is a community effort,” Clymer said.

St. Mary senior eye career in orthopedics

BY KELLY FARRELL

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Graves County teen Ethan Barnett aspires to become an orthopedic surgeon one day — perhaps specializing in shoulder injuries — and it’s a field that caught his interest early.

“Just because my family’s had a lot of medical issues revolving (around) like bone and bone joint problems and stuff like that, so, going to their appointments and watching how they developed and how they got better — just really got my interest into it,” he said.

It’s an area that Barnett is a little familiar with, as his mother, Vanessa

Area school districts using buses, drop-off sites to feed hungry students

BY DAVID D. SNOW

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With all Kentucky public schools closed for at least the next two weeks, the McCracken County and Paducah Independent school districts opted to continue providing breakfast and lunch to students.

The first day of providing food for both districts was Monday. McCracken used buses to deliver meals to bus-riding students and provided food at six “satellite sites.” The Paducah district made food available at 18 sites for students.

Also, the Paducah Middle School Cafeteria was open 10:30-11:30 a.m. every day for students to get their meals and take them home. Those going to the school cafe should enter through the doors in the back of the building.

On Monday, McCracken buses made their rounds at 10 a.m. Bus drivers went along their usual routes and stopped at their riders’ homes, bringing a sack of breakfast and lunch either to parents or students waiting at the bus stop or to their door.

McCracken County also has pickup points — also called satellite sites — in its district for students who do not ride the bus. Those locations are Banks Market, Destiny Church, Farley Elementary School, Fortman Foods, Gospel Mission and Rural King.

Paducah schools closed for at least two weeks, the McCracken County Courthouse, where they declared a local state of emergency for both governments because of public health concerns over COVID-19.

Governor moves date for primary election

BY BRUCE SCHEERER

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Frankfort — Kentucky’s governor has pushed back the May primary election and halted bar and restaurant in-person visits as he took aggressive steps to contain the new coronavirus.

Gov. Andy Beshear also announced the state’s first death linked to the illness.

The 66-year-old Bourbon County man had other health conditions but his death was counted as a coronavirus fatality.

Beshear said Monday he offered his sympathy to the man’s family.

“There were numerous factors that led to this point,” the governor said. “The coronavirus was only a factor. But what it means is that it’s very important that all of us do our part in this as we move forward to model the type of behavior that we need.”

Beshear announced a postponement of the May primary election to June 23 after consulting with Secretary of State Michael Adams on Monday.

Stocks plunge as Wall Street, White House see recession risk

BY TAM CHOE

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NEW YORK — The U.S. stock market plummeted to its worst day in more than three decades as voices from Wall Street to the White House said the coronavirus may be dragging the economy into a recession.

Monday’s 12% drop for the S&P 500 means it has plummeted nearly 30% since setting a record less than a month ago, and it’s at its lowest point since the end of 2008. Losses were steep Monday, accelerating in the last half hour of trading after President Donald Trump said the economy may be headed for a recession and asked Americans to avoid gatherings of more than 10 people.

The plunge came even though the Federal Reserve rushed to its recession page A7

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