

Douglas County's COVID pandemic update

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Public Health Liaison**

There are fewer updates to report on COVID testing and vaccination efforts, other than that they are indeed ongoing and both require appoint-

ments. One item of note is DCHD has moved the site for COVID vaccination clinics to its Tuscola Outlet Mall location—Building J600.

COVID testing at J600 is done Monday-Thursday from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. and Friday 8:30 a.m. to 12 noon. From

Feb. 28-March 4, DCHD had a total of 61 rapid and PCR tests scheduled. Please note at this time DCHD is once again able to offer rapid testing to people whether or not they are symptomatic, meaning if you require a rapid test for travel or other purposes we can accommo-

date that need.

IDPH figures from March 4 show the 7-day rolling positivity rate (rapid and PCR testing) for Douglas County residents was 1.0%, and for Region 6 that number was 1.7%. IDPH data as of March 7 shows 51.59% of Douglas County residents have had at least one vaccine dose, while 47.51% of residents are fully vaccinated. There have been 4,327 booster doses administered to county residents.

Douglas County residents receiving Medicaid benefits need to know the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS) is asking them to update their addresses with the agency as soon as possible. This measure is in preparation for the eventual end of the Federal Covid-19 Public Health Emergency, at which

time both Medicaid and Medicare will end the continuous coverage provision.

The continuous eligibility provision has meant Medicaid customers haven't been asked to update their information for two years. That accurate information will be critical for continued coverage when the public health emergency is ended, so renewal forms are being sent to all customers. In order to ensure they get this renewal form, Medicaid customers can update their addresses in one of two ways: Call the HFS hotline at 877-805-5312 or go online to www2.illinois.gov/hfs/address.

numerous communities is the prevalence of opioid addiction and overdoses. With Fentanyl—a synthetic opioid 80-100 times stronger than morphine—being found in all manner of street drugs, users are at increased risk of accidental overdose. This is just a reminder that DCHD provides Naloxone (common brand name—Narcan) free of charge to entities, organizations and even individuals/families who might be likely to encounter an overdose victim. We have supplied the lifesaving drug and training on how to use it to local law enforcement and first responders, substance abuse counselors, court personnel, gas stations and more upon request. If you would like more information, contact Summer Phillips at summer.phillips@douglascountyil.com.

SBL Lincolnland Hospice offers free volunteer training classes

In those precious end-of-life moments, hospice volunteers offer an intimate level of comfort, companionship, and support to patients and their families. Sarah Bush Lincoln is hosting hospice volunteer training classes at the Lincolnland Hospice office in Prairie Pavilion 2 on the Sarah Bush Lincoln main campus. Volunteers like Chris Halsey chose to become a volunteer because she had family members use hospice services and witnessed firsthand the empathy needed for end-of-life care.

"I immediately knew I was called to be a part of the Lincolnland Hospice volunteer team. I want to do anything I can to ease the minds of patient and families, showing them the love and compassion my family felt," Halsey explained.

Through her volunteer work, Halsey has stayed with patients while their caregivers and family members take

much-needed time to grocery shop, do laundry, or other tasks. She prays for the patients while they sleep and socializes with them when they are awake. Halsey has volunteered since 2012.

"Being a Lincolnland Hospice volunteer has been a privilege and one of the most impactful, beautiful experiences of my life. I am humbled to be able to help families at such a vulnerable time of their lives, and I'm happy that they allow me to be a part of their story," Halsey remarked.

Upon completion, participants will be eligible to become a Lincolnland Hospice volunteer. Participants need only attend one class from 9 am to 4 pm. Lunch will be provided. The course is free; however, registration is required.

- **Friday, April 1**
- **Wednesday, April 6**
- **Friday, April 8**

The training class will cover: history and philosophy

of hospice; the role of the volunteer; family dynamics; communications; spiritual care; psychological issues; clinical issues surrounding the terminal illness; pain control; grieving and bereavement.

Lincolnland Hospice provides medical and support services, including nursing, emotional, and spiritual care to people who are terminally ill and their family members. When a person is diagnosed with a life-threatening illness, their lives and the lives of those who love them drastically change. As a certified volunteer, participants will be there to support people in their community during difficult times in their lives.

Lincolnland Hospice serves 20 counties in East Central Illinois: Bond, Christian, Clark, Clay, Coles, Crawford, Cumberland, Douglas, Edgar, Effingham, Fayette, Jasper, Lawrence, Marion, Montgomery, Moultrie, Piatt, Richland, Shelby and Wayne.

To register or for additional information, call Jennifer Kirk, Lincolnland Hospice Volunteer Coordinator, at 1-800-454-4055 or visit www.sarahbush.org/hospicevolunteer.

On another front . . .

An unfortunate reality in



SBL Races for All Paces returns on EIU campus after two year hiatus

Sarah Bush Lincoln is mobilizing its 14th annual Races for all Paces, a multi-race event Saturday, May 14, that starts and finishes on the track of Eastern Illinois University's O'Brien Stadium.

Race organizers are thrilled to offer challenging and fun race courses, including the Panther Trail, campus locations, local neighborhoods and the half-marathon that goes into the country with hills and other exciting challenges along the route. "Our goal is to encourage everyone to live healthy lifestyles at every age," Race Director Laura Bollan said. "We purposefully developed multiple race events to appeal as many people as possible."

The event includes a half marathon, as well as an individual 10K, 5K Run/Walk, 1-Mile Run/Walk, and even races for young children, including a "Toddler Trot" for kids ages 3 to 5 and a "Diaper Dash," for kids under age 3 that takes place on the EIU football field.

Race participants are encouraged to bring the entire family. "We welcome everyone," Bollan said. "Races for All Paces can be a competitive run or simply a fun day to enjoy with the family." The event includes fun activities for people of all ages, including inflatable bounce houses for the kids, face painting, a photo booth and music for everyone's enjoyment.

Participants are encouraged to register early to ensure receiving the desired shirt size, but people can register for all races up until 10 minutes before the start of each race on the day of the event. Course support for all events includes


water, sport drinks, and chocolate milk, fruit and port-a-potties, which will be available at various stages of the events. Race bibs will feature a QR code that can be scanned for real-time race times.

There will also be an untimed One-Mile Fun Run, and the Toddler Trot and Diaper Dash on the football field, giving even the youngest kids an opportunity to start an active lifestyle. A training schedule for each race and tips for running can be found on the Sarah Bush Lincoln website, www.sarahbush.org/races for those who have never run before, Bollan said.

To register, go to www.sarahbush.org/races. T-shirts and medals are guaranteed for all runners registered (excluding Toddler Trot and Diaper Dash). Please note, registration fees are non-refundable and are used to support Healthy Communities programs. Parking is available in the O'Brien Stadium parking lot.

Event Title partner is First Mid; Half Marathon partner is KC Summers Buick Toyota GMC; 5K partner is Rural King; KidZone Partnership is Wave Graphics; Runner Tracking and Results partner is First Neighbor Bank; and Toddler Trot and Diaper Dash Partners are Charleston Wesley United Methodist Church, Old State Road Christian Church, St. John's Lutheran School, and Truth and Grace Fellowship. Support partnerships are A Heart's Desire Photography, J-WAG photo, and Studio Magee.

For more information, contact Laura Bollan at 217 345-6828. Race course maps are available at www.sarahbush.org/races.



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CITY OF TUSCOLA SUMMER HELP

The City of Tuscola is accepting applications and/or resumes for temporary summer help. Term of employment is from around May 1, 2022 to October 1, 2022, although weather and applicant availability may shorten this term. Duties may include mowing, painting, water meter installation, and other miscellaneous labor. All applicants must be 18 years of age or older to apply. EOE.

Applications are available at Tuscola City Hall, 214 N. Main St. or on the internet at www.tuscola.org


Submit application and/or resume not later than April 15, 2022 to:
Tuscola City Administrator, 214 N. Main St., Tuscola, IL 61953 or info@tuscola.org.

MISC

**DOUGLAS COUNTY:
HOW HAS THE
PANDEMIC
AFFECTED YOU?**

Looking for written, oral, video submissions on how your life, business, workplace, school, family, health has been affected by COVID-19 for historical documentation project.

Douglas County Health Department is taking your submissions now. For more information, contact Colleen Lehmann at colleen.lehmann@douglascountyil.com or call 217-253-4137 X 1229.



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