



FRIDAY, APRIL 2, 2021

\$1.00

167th Year, Edition 91

THE DAILY BEAT

THIS WEEK'S POLL QUESTION:

Are Republican efforts to change election laws justified?

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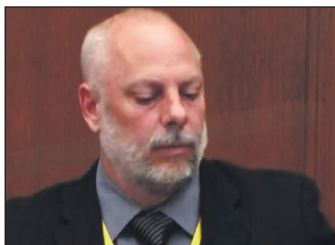
WHAT'S INSIDE



Rebound Hopes

Frontier seeks IPO, hopes travel is set to rebound

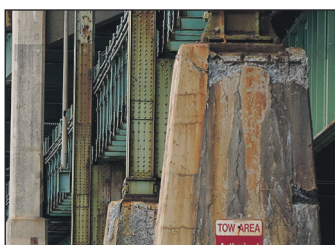
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Damning Testimony

Prosecution witnesses say officers were in the wrong during Floyd arrest

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Time to Rebuild

Biden announces group of cabinet members to push infrastructure plan

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ON THIS DAY

Traitors Flee

In 1865, Jefferson Davis and other Confederate leaders flee Richmond, Virginia.

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Vacant bar burns



Argus-Press Photo/Greyson Steele

FIREFIGHTERS spray water on flames pouring from the former Jumbo's Burger Bar, 200 S. Washington St. Thursday.

Former Jumbo's building destroyed by fire

By GREYSON STEELE
Argus-Press Staff Writer

OWOSSO — The former Jumbo's Burger Bar, an Owosso fixture for more than 50 years, suffered extensive damage Thursday evening as a fire tore through the now vacant structure.

Owosso Public Safety Director Kevin Lenkart said the cause of the fire is still under investigation. The building was unoccupied at the time of the fire, he said.

Downtown residents were without power for more than two hours overnight as several area departments battled the blaze at the 200 S. Washington St. business. Power crews turned off power downtown to ensure the safety of firefighters, Lenkart said.

Some businesses were still without power this morning.

Many residents lined the streets as fire crews worked to bring the fire under control.

Firefighters were still on scene as of 8 a.m. as smoke continued to billow from the structure. The Irish-themed bar/restaurant closed its doors in March 2019 after 55 years in business.

Firefighters were dispatched to the vacant bar shortly after 9 p.m. Thursday, with reports of flames and smoke emanating from the rear of the building. Owosso city, Owosso Township, Corunna-Caledonia and Perry



Argus-Press Photo/Greyson Steele

FIREFIGHTERS spray water this morning on the remains of a downtown Owosso building after an overnight fire at the former Jumbo's Burger Bar, 200 S. Washington St.

firefighters battled the flames throughout the night, bringing the blaze under control around 1:30 a.m.

Neighboring business Cupcakes and Kisses, 210 S. Washington St., was spared, according to a Facebook post.

"All our staff is out of the building safely and our families are all safe," bakery officials said. "Praying for the Owosso Fire Department and their safety."

"Everything is intact with no water damage here," bakery

officials added in a subsequent Facebook post this morning, noting the establishment was still without power as of 8 a.m.

Maurer Heating and Cooling, located behind Jumbo's at 203 S. Water St., also appeared to suffer little, if any, damage.

"We assure you that our MH&C family are safe and we are all praying for the safety of all the fire and policemen and women who are out there tonight battling this devastating fire and loss to our community," officials said in a Facebook

post. Jumbo's first opened its doors in 1964. The original owners, Jim "Jumbo" Mahaney and his wife Pat, operated the bar for several years before selling to Mick Flynn.

Joe Merkel and his family purchased the place in 1994, running it for 22 years.

The bar/restaurant was purchased by Todd and Shelly Sydow from the family of Joe Merkel in 2016. Merkel died in 2015. Jumbo's locked its doors and closed March 21, 2019.

State sees case of variant identified in Brazil

By DAVID EGGERT
Associated Press

LANSING — Michigan, where COVID-19 is surging more than in any state, on Thursday reported its first confirmed case of a coronavirus variant that was initially identified in Brazil.

There are concerns it might re-infect people who have already had COVID-19. The variant was found in a resident in Bay County, where the local health officials were investigating the person's exposure history.

State Health and Human Services Director Elizabeth Hertel expressed concern. Michigan has the second-most cases of another variant — first identified in the U.K. — that is more contagious than the original strain that drove the U.S. outbreak last year.

"It is now even more important that Michiganders continue to do what works to slow the spread of the virus by wearing their masks properly, socially distancing, avoiding crowds, washing their hands often and making a plan to get the safe and effective COVID-19 vaccine once it is their turn," she said in a statement.

As of Thursday, the state had the country's highest new case rate in the past week, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. It added 6,000 cases for the second day in a row.

The seven-day average, 5,061, has grown six-fold over nearly six weeks. It is below the 6,825 average from mid-November, when the state closed high schools to in-person instruction, stopped organized sports, prohibited indoor restaurant dining and closed various entertainment businesses such as movie theaters and bowling alleys. On Thursday, hospitals had about 2,500 adult patients with confirmed cases. That number stood at roughly 3,100 when Democratic Gov. Gretchen Whitmer announced the restrictions more than four months ago.

The seven-day daily average of deaths, 22, is well below past peaks.

Whitmer has said variants are a factor in the state's spiking cases and hospitalizations. She does not want to tighten restrictions that her administration gradually loosened in recent months. But the rising case rate and hospitalization totals are similar to what they were less than a week before the last restrictions were ordered.

A mask requirement remains in effect, unlike in several states with Republican governors. Starting today, Michigan will require teen athletes to undergo regular coronavirus testing. The governor has been emphasizing vaccinations.

See **VIRUS** on Page 3

Perry council welcomes new members

By JOSH CHAMPLIN
Argus-Press Staff Writer

PERRY — The Perry City Council officially added two new council members Thursday, bringing the body back up to full strength.

Perry City Clerk Devin Miller administered the oath of office to Steve Wallace and Randy Coffey, who replaced Terry Wood and Kraig Elliott, who both resigned in February.

Wallace previously served on the city council for 10 years. He also is a former Perry mayor. He is retiring from his full-time job this year, and said he expects to have more time to work for the city.

"It's really good," Wallace said after the conclusion of Thursday's meeting. "I talked to a few council members, and it really re-energized me to

make the city a better place for residents. That's always been my motivation."

Coffey said he was honored to be recommended by Mayor Pro Tem Sue Hammond to serve on the council. He is co-owner of Amy's Diner in downtown Perry.

"I've been here all my life," Coffey said. "And then I'm on the fire department, too, so I've got a lot in this community. I've been here all my life, grew up here, went to school here... My focus is to try and get some stuff downtown — car shows and events and stuff. We got a lot of energy here now."

After swearing in its new members, the council took up several issues.

■ Council discussed ongoing renovations at the

See **PERRY** on Page 3



Argus-Press Photo/Josh Champlin

PERRY CITY Clerk Devin Miller, left, administers the oath of office to new council members Steve Wallace, center, and Randy Coffey.

SNEAK Peek:

Tomorrow in The Argus-Press

Argus-Press Staff Writer Sally York reports on the city replacing a fishing dock at Hopkins Lake

WEATHER STATISTICS

In the Shiawassee Area Thursday, the high was 36 and the low 28. At 7:15 a.m. today, the Shiawassee River was at 3.57 feet. The temperature was 20.

THE FORECAST - THE WEEK AHEAD



Saturday
Morning clouds, then sun. High 59-63. Low 33-37.



Sunday
Partly cloudy. High 64-68. Low 43-47.



Monday
Afternoon rain. High 63-67. Low 48-52.



Tuesday
Mostly cloudy. High 64-68. Low 45-49.



Wednesday
Mostly cloudy. High 61-65. Low 44-48.

TODAY'S LOTTERY

Lucky For Life: 05-27-36-42-47. **Ball:** 9.
Poker Lotto: JD-QH-5C-9C-9S.
Midday Daily 3: 1-5-7.
Midday Daily 4: 5-0-9-3.
Daily 3: 1-9-4.
Daily 4: 8-7-8-7.
Fantasy 5: 07-13-14-31-36; 4-10-14-19-24.
Keno: 01-03-09-14-16-19-20-23-24-32-33-34-37-38-50-53-56-58-71-75-77-79.