COVID-19 vaccine rollout continues for older adults

Decennial review of government
Plaza honors WWI hero, park legend
Signs of spring mean more time to walk

Middle section features
JCPRD 50 Plus programs
How to be a 50 Plus Superstar

By Michelle Alexander

Actively participate in Johnson County Park and Recreation District’s (JCPRD) 50 Plus Department’s 50th anniversary celebration by completing 50 Things with 50 Plus. Pick from a long list of things to do that promote engagement through physical, social, mindful, nature oriented, forward thinking and even some passive activities.

It’s all about making time to take care of yourself and having some fun, too. All that participate and submit a completed “50 Things with 50 Plus” checklist will receive a 50 Plus Superstar button and be entered into a gift card drawing to be held at the end of the year in December, giving everyone plenty of time to join in.

The “50 Things with 50 Plus” checklist and tracking sheet can be accessed four ways.

The first is to visit jcprd.com/50plussuperstars where you can download and print a copy of the activity list and tracking sheet.

The second way is to email Rachel at rachel.rendina@jocogov.org to have the document emailed directly to you.

Preprinted lists are available for pick up at the following locations:
- Registration Office at Antioch Park, 6501 Antioch, Merriam.
- 50 Plus Office at the Matt Ross Community Center, 8101 Marty, Overland Park.
- Meadowbrook Park Clubhouse, 9101 Nall, Prairie Village.
- Roeland Park Community Center, 4850 Rosewood.

Last, you can call 913-826-2975 to have the list mailed directly to your home address.

A sample of some of the activities include:
- Telling a family member about one of our programs you attended.
- Visit the Rose Garden at Antioch Park in the spring or summer.
- Call one of our offices just to say “hello.”
- Watch a sunset at Lexington Lake, Kill Creek or Shawnee Mission Park.
- Visit the Johnson County Museum.
- Be brave and attend a virtual program with your video on.
- Share a picture of yourself from the 1980s or 1990s with our staff via email, Facebook or in person.
- Visit a 50 Plus Program location you’ve never been to before.

As you see, there are plenty of options to choose from that provide physical distance while staying involved in the amazing world around us.

To participate, use the tracking sheet to record the item you’ve completed along with something positive you gained from the activity. Once you’ve filled in all 50 lines, return the completed list with your name, email and phone number to our office via email, postal mail or in person to any of the locations listed above by Dec. 1, 2021.

Engaging our mind, body and social connections regularly can provide positive outcomes to overall health and wellness. Anything we can do to help make your day a bit brighter is a win for us. Please help us celebrate 50 years of 50 Plus and thank you for being the best part of the 50 Plus Program!

Michelle Alexander is 50 Plus Department manager for Johnson County Park and Recreation District.
Our Sensations dining experience is one of the many features of our community that makes our residents feel right at home. Join us tableside, and get to know our Executive Chef and culinary team. Using only the freshest ingredients, our culinary team create mouthwatering entrées, side dishes, and desserts that are always delicious!

**Our Sensations Dining Features:**
- Chef-Prepared Meals, Made from Scratch Daily
- Restaurant-Style Dining with Tableside Service
- Down-Home Dishes and Local Favorites
- Large Menu Selection Plus Daily Specials
- Fresh, Locally Sourced Meats and Produce
- Plenty of Healthy Choices for Each Meal

---

**LUNCH ON US!**

Call **913.738.4969** To Schedule Your **FREE** Lunch & Tour!

Don’t worry, we are taking the necessary precautions to ensure your safety.
Getting vaccines into arms of Johnson County seniors

By Jennifer Dunlay

The long awaited COVID-19 vaccines began arriving in Johnson County before 2020 ended.

Public health workers and EMS/paramedics received the first 1,200 doses. As the weeks passed, vaccine supply increased only slightly to about 6,000 doses a week with the majority going to health care workers, individuals age 80 and older, law enforcement/first responders, staff at K-12 Johnson County schools, child care providers and staff at the Kansas School for the Deaf.

With the limited number of vaccines being shipped to the state of Kansas, the county is following the vaccine distribution plan developed by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment that prioritizes individuals based on their risk for contracting the COVID-19 virus and/or experiencing a severe disease outcome or death. The plan can be found at kansasvaccine.gov or the county’s COVID-19 website jocogov.org/coronavirus.

Right now, those in Phase 1 and Phase 2 are eligible for a COVID-19 vaccine in Kansas. Those age 65 and older (starting with those age 80+) are among the first Tier in Phase 2 to be vaccinated in Johnson County.

Getting Johnson County’s senior adult population vaccinated, nearly 95,000, is a top priority for the Johnson County Department of Health and Environment and the Johnson County Board of Health as people in this age group are at highest risk for severe illness, hospitalizations and even death from COVID-19. However, due to the current amount of vaccine being allocated to Johnson County, coupled with the need to provide two doses of the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines for maximum protection from COVID-19, the health department estimates it will be well into the spring months before everyone age 65 and older is fully vaccinated.

“Every week we are chipping away at getting more and more of the senior population in our county vaccinated,” said Dr. Sanmi Areola, director of the health department. “The demand for vaccine right now is far greater than the supply available, so we ask for your continued patience while you wait for us or your health care provider to contact you about scheduling a vaccine appointment.”

If you are interested in getting the COVID-19 vaccine, and you’re eligible in Phase 2, you can add your name to the health department’s vaccine interest list. The county will contact you when appointments become available. You choose how you want to be notified – a phone call, text message or email.

The county is also partnering with KU Med, Olathe Health, Menorah Medical Center, Overland Park Regional, St. Luke’s and AdventHealth to help speed up the process of vaccinating adults 65 and older.

Each week, depending on the allotment from the state, the health department provides vaccines to these health systems so they can vaccinate their patients in this age group. The health department recommends that you also reach out to your health care provider to see if they offer a wait list that you can join. If you are not affiliated with any of these health systems, you can still get vaccinated at one of the health department’s clinics.

The vaccine is provided free by the federal government and there is no charge or insurance needed if you are vaccinated at one of the county’s mass vaccination clinics. Health care providers administering the vaccine may charge your insurance for an office visit or a small administration fee, but you will not be charged for the vaccine.

If you don’t have access to a computer or need assistance getting your name added to the county’s vaccine interest list, scheduling a vaccine appointment or you would like more information about the county’s vaccination efforts, call the Johnson County COVID-19 hotline at 913-715-2819, Monday-Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. You can also contact the health department via email at jedhe@jocogov.org.

As more vaccines receive Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) and vaccine supply increases to health care providers and pharmacies, the faster we will be able to get vaccines to those who want one.

While you wait your turn to be vaccinated, continue to wear a mask consistently and appropriately whenever you leave your home, avoid crowds, keep a safe distance from those not in your immediate household and wash hands frequently. These public health practices will not only keep you safe but will slow the spread of illness in the community and keep our health care system from being overwhelmed.

Jennifer Dunlay is risk communicator at the Johnson County Department of Health and Environment.
IRS warns about COVID-19 scams

The Internal Revenue Service’s Criminal Investigation Division (IRS-CI) is warning taxpayers about a new wave of COVID-19-related scams as the agency delivers Economic Impact Payments (EIP).

In the last several months, IRS-CI has seen a variety of EIP scams and other financial schemes designed to steal money and personal information from taxpayers. Criminals are taking advantage of EIPs – as well as the approaching tax filing season – to trick taxpayers.

Some common COVID-19 scams include:

- Text messages asking taxpayers to disclose bank account information under the guise of receiving the Economic Impact Payments.
- Phishing schemes using email, letters and social media messages with key words such as “Coronavirus,” “COVID-19” and “stimulus” in varying ways. These communications are blasted to large numbers of people and aim to access personal identifying information and financial account information (including account numbers and passwords).
- The organized and unofficial sale of fake at-home COVID-19 test kits (as well as offers to sell fake cures, vaccines, pills and professional medical advice regarding unproven COVID-19 treatments).
- Fake donation requests for individuals, groups and areas heavily affected by the disease.
- Bogus opportunities to invest in companies developing COVID-19 vaccines while promising that the “company” will dramatically increase in value as a result.

Although criminals are constantly changing their tactics, taxpayers can help protect themselves by acting as the first line of defense. The best way to avoid falling victim to a scam is knowing how the IRS communicates with taxpayers.

The IRS does not send unsolicited texts or emails. The IRS does not call people with threats of jail or lawsuits, nor does it demand tax payments on gift cards.

COVID-19 scams should be reported to the National Center for Disaster Fraud (NCDF) Hotline at 1-866-720-5721. The NCDF is a national coordinating agency within the Department of Justice’s Criminal Division dedicated to improving the detection, prevention, investigation and prosecution of criminal conduct related to natural and man-made disasters and other emergencies.

Taxpayers who receive unsolicited emails or social media attempts to gather information that appear to be from either the IRS or an organization closely linked to the IRS, should forward the message to phishing@irs.gov. Taxpayers are encouraged not to engage potential scammers online or on the phone.

To learn more about COVID-19 scams and other financial schemes, visit IRS.gov. Official IRS information about COVID-19 and EIPs can be found on the Coronavirus Tax Relief page, which is updated frequently.
Temporary exhibit recalls clothing from feed sacks

The latest temporary exhibit at the Johnson County Museum explores the reuse of feed sacks to make clothing and other household objects and illuminates how the “upcycling” of these bags mutually benefited twentieth-century consumers and businesses.

The Thrift Style exhibit, located which in the museum’s temporary exhibit room, will remain on display through May 1. The traveling exhibit is a program of ExhibitsUSA, a national division of Mid-America Arts Alliance with The Kansas Creative Arts Industries Commission and The National Endowment for the Arts.

The Johnson County Museum is located inside the Johnson County Arts & Heritage Center, 8788 Metcalf Ave., Overland Park. Exhibit admission is included with regular museum admission rates of $6 for adults, $5 for seniors and $4 for children ages one to 18, and free for children under one. The museum is open 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Saturday, and is closed on Sundays.

The museum is also presenting a related virtual History on Tap program called Thrift Style: Ingenuity in Hard Times, which will take place at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, March 2.

Kansas State University Historic Costume & Textile Museum Curator Marla Day will explore how we can use our past to improve our present through thrifting.

The one-hour program is free, but registration is required. All registered participants will receive an email with a Zoom link and instructions on how to proceed. For more information or to register by phone, call 913-831-3359.

Call for a tour!

It’s Not the Years, it’s How You Live Them

Stop by and check the convenient lifestyle, unique ambiance and exceptional living experience. Mission Square offers the best value for Active Senior Living in the area, come see why!

Mon-Thurs 9AM-5PM, Fri 9AM-4PM

Heated Garage, Social Activities, Chef Prepared Meal Options, All Basic Utilities Included, Essential Transportation Available

Sylvester Powell, Jr membership included

913-403-8200 • mission-square.com 6220 Martway Street • Mission, Kansas 66202

TimberRidge, Mildale Farm plan activities on April 24

Two public events are taking place on April 24 at Johnson County Park and Recreation sites. Residents will have the opportunity to choose from several activities during the annual open house from 9 a.m. to noon or 12:30 to 3:30 p.m. at the TimberRidge Adventure Center, 12300 Homestead Lane, Olathe.

Fun things to do include canoeing, kayaking, pedal boating, hiking, BB gun shooting and archery. Participants need to be 8 years or older for the BB gun and archery range activities.

This is a free event; however, Johnson County Park and Recreation District is currently anticipating registration will be required due to COVID and maximum group sizes.

The latest details are available online at JCPRD.com/TRAC.

The annual Mildale Farm Community Day, a free event, is fun for individuals or as a family outing to explore the 158-acre site from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Visitors are also welcomed to picnic on the farm located at 35250 West 99th St., Edgerton.

Arts and crafts activities for the kids will be in the main barn. Catch-and-release fishing will be available. Participants must bring their own bait and tackle. No alcohol is allowed, pets must be on-leash and vehicles must remain on roadways.

Physical distancing, face masks and COVID-19 safe practices will be observed at both events.

For more information, call 913-826-2957.

The Thrift Style exhibit, located which in the museum’s temporary exhibit room, will remain on display through May 1. The traveling exhibit is a program of ExhibitsUSA, a national division of Mid-America Arts Alliance with The Kansas Creative Arts Industries Commission and The National Endowment for the Arts.

The Johnson County Museum is located inside the Johnson County Arts & Heritage Center, 8788 Metcalf Ave., Overland Park. Exhibit admission is included with regular museum admission rates of $6 for adults, $5 for seniors and $4 for children ages one to 18, and free for children under one. The museum is open 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Saturday, and is closed on Sundays.

The museum is also presenting a related virtual History on Tap program called Thrift Style: Ingenuity in Hard Times, which will take place at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, March 2.

Kansas State University Historic Costume & Textile Museum Curator Marla Day will explore how we can use our past to improve our present through thrifting.

The one-hour program is free, but registration is required. All registered participants will receive an email with a Zoom link and instructions on how to proceed. For more information or to register by phone, call 913-831-3359.

Call for a tour!

It’s Not the Years, it’s How You Live Them

Stop by and check the convenient lifestyle, unique ambiance and exceptional living experience. Mission Square offers the best value for Active Senior Living in the area, come see why!

Mon-Thurs 9AM-5PM, Fri 9AM-4PM

Heated Garage, Social Activities, Chef Prepared Meal Options, All Basic Utilities Included, Essential Transportation Available

Sylvester Powell, Jr membership included

913-403-8200 • mission-square.com 6220 Martway Street • Mission, Kansas 66202
Patience is a virtue. That popular saying is centuries old and worth repeating now.

At age 73, I’m among the aging adults who have signed up at the end of January to receive one of now two approved and effective vaccines against the COVID-19 virus. Since then, it has been a hurry up and wait in scheduling and receiving a vaccination.

Vaccines are being shipped to Kansas and Johnson County – but you won’t be able to get one instantly. There are an estimated more than 90,000 residents in the county who are 65-plus. Some folks in their 80s and older, who were in the first phase of focus, still have not been vaccinated and remain a top priority.

The vaccination rollout has had bumps nationally and statewide, but the process is improving in early 2021. More vaccines are becoming available in the days, weeks and months ahead in Johnson County and elsewhere.

Is it still frustrating? As a two-time cancer survivor now with early chronic kidney disease, it is for me since I am now listed in the current second phase among others who are 65 and older. Many of us have signed up to receive our vaccination but are still waiting for a call or email when to be immunized.

My message is: Hang in there. Late last year, we welcomed the news of multiple effective vaccines for the disease caused by the pandemic coronavirus. Developing a useful vaccine was one giant hurdle overcome, but as we now know, we had yet to face the other hurdle of manufacture and distribution on a scale the nation has never seen before.

It’s a hurdle that Kansas continues to confront. Vaccine supply in our state remains limited in addressing the needs of 105 counties. Johnson County officials don’t know week-to-week how many doses they will receive. At this point, we must make the best of a challenging situation.

On the bright side: Thousands of doses have been administered locally and across the state. They’ve gone to crucial workers in our healthcare systems and to residents who are believed to be most likely to need hospitalization should they catch the coronavirus.

We had hoped to see more people vaccinated by now, but we’re thankful for the headway we have witnessed in protecting key parts of our medical infrastructure. First doses have helped to protect frontline healthcare workers who were most likely to be exposed and helped to keep older and immunocompromised people out of the hospital to start with. That effort was aimed at curtailing the risk of hospitals and healthcare systems from not being overwhelmed by staffing or supply shortages in treating patients who do come down with the disease or being hospitalized for other reasons.

For the 65-plus population, the Johnson County Department of Health and Environment (JCDHE) has provided vaccines to KU Med, Olathe Health, Menorah Medical Center, Overland Park Regional, St. Luke’s and Advent Health healthcare systems. These health systems will book appointments based upon vaccine availability, but do not call for an appointment. You will be contacted by them.

We anticipate more pharmaceutical companies rolling out their vaccines. Plans also are in the works for more sites for vaccinations, including local pharmacies to get more vaccine into the arms of residents of all ages.

So, regardless of which shot you end up getting, you’re still a lot less likely to end up in the hospital than if you didn’t get vaccinated at all.

If you haven’t completed the JCDHE’s interest form to sign up for a vaccination, please do and then be prepared to get vaccinated when supply becomes available and you’re notified.

Access to the form is on the county’s webpage at jocogov.org/covid-19-vaccine. If you’re a Johnson County resident/worker who is eligible in Phase 2 and you haven’t taken the vaccine interest survey, fill out the form or call 913-715-2819.

Shot by shot, we’ll eventually get through this. Hang in there.
Be patient.
Stay safe.

This feature is made possible through the support of Johnson County Department of Health and Environment (JCDHE).

---

**NEWS**

In 2021, subscribe to The Best Times online at jocogov.org/TheBestTimes
Trualta offers resources for caregivers

The Johnson County Area Agency on Aging is now offering an innovative eLearning program for family caregivers of loved ones with dementia – part of a national program created by Trualta and offered by many aging offices across the country.

Trualta offers skill-based training delivered through an online learning system built specifically for the family caregiver audience. Each caregiver who enrolls in the free program receives a personalized learning journey based on the caregiving topics that are most relevant to their care situation.

Topics include personal care (e.g., tips for showering, toileting); dementia care (managing difficult situations like wandering, agitation, apathy); safety and injury prevention (identifying fall risks, safely moving and transferring) and caregiver wellness (e.g., balancing work and caregiving).

Trualta also offers “expert level” training from professional-level providers like Teepa Snow that’s adapted for the family caregiver audience.

The caregiver support program also provides a print-and-digital hybrid solution, so caregivers can also receive printed booklets to demonstrate the value of the program and help encourage online engagement.

Johnson County has a dedicated learning portal for its caregivers who are invited to participate, and an easy-to-use dashboard allows participants to review caregiver learning modules as well as information the AAA adds about local resources for caregivers.

AAA staff can introduce the platform to families during a phone call or home visit. They can direct caregivers to the modules that would be most helpful to them and follow up to assist or encourage engagement.

Trualta works with progressive Area Agencies on Aging that want to connect social services for families to health outcomes for seniors aging-in-place. A confident and trained family caregiver makes a significant difference in the life of the person they care for and complements the services offered by the AAA.

A clinical outcomes-based evaluation of the Trualta program is taking place in coordination with University of Florida Health, and the initial evidence points to the program’s value for older adults, their caregivers and the Area Agencies on Aging that serve them.

For more information or to participate in this Johnson County AAA-sponsored program call 913-715-8861.

CHAMPSS offers online video to help residents in enrollment

The Johnson County CHAMPSS (Choosing Healthy Appetizing Meal Plan Solutions for Seniors) program has launched participant enrollments online due to Covid-19.

Through the program, aging adults 60 years or older or married to someone 60 years or older are eligible to get a hot meal at six participating Hy-Vee stores for a suggested donation of $4.

Prospective participants can go to jocogov.org/dept/human-services/area-agency-aging/nutrition-services/champss and view a video to learn about the program and follow the instructions for enrollment.

CHAMPSS is offered through the Older Americans Act and the Johnson County AAA Nutrition Program in partnership with Hy-Vee stores in Lenexa, Olathe, Overland Park, Prairie Village, Mission and Shawnee.

Aging adults may receive a meal seven days a week in the dining area of the grocery store or for carry out.

The CHAMPSS office number is 913-715-8894.

Upcoming COA meetings

The Commission on Aging (COA) will continue to meet online via Zoom at 9 a.m. Wednesday, March 10 and April 14.

For more information about the COA and upcoming meetings, call 913-715-8860 or visit jocogov.org/coa or facebook.com/jocoaging/.
In 1969, states were encouraged by an act of Congress to create a body of aging adults who would identify important aging issues and educate their respective state legislative bodies about those issues by forming advocacy groups.

The Kansas Silver-Haired Legislature (KSHL) was created in 1982 as a unicameral legislature composed of 125 representatives. All are 60-years-old or older and are elected from their county of residence. Wyandotte, Johnson, Shawnee and Sedgwick counties have five additional representatives.

The Kansas Silver-Haired Legislature identifies priority concerns of Kansans over 60 years of age and develops resolutions designed to address those identified concerns. The KSHL presents those resolutions to the Kansas Legislature and governor as recommendations for state policy.

SHL representatives advocate for the KSHL legislation with state legislators, testify at hearings regarding KSHL legislation and meet with aging adults in their county and district about aging legislation.

Every two years, six delegates for Johnson County are selected. There is no election if six or fewer candidates file for this position. In January 2021, five incumbents filed and will serve terms again to represent Johnson County in the SHL. One person will be appointed. The 2021-2023 Johnson County SHL delegation, so far, includes:

- **Gary R. Scott** of Olathe is a lifelong Kansan and an advocate for healthcare, transportation and reduction of taxes for the aging population. He taught 32 years in the Shawnee Mission School District, and eight years at Johnson County Community College. He has been a volunteer in many capacities with Olathe schools, Special Olympics, Johnson County Adult Residential Center, home-delivered meals, local 5k and 10k races, election campaigns, and youth baseball and softball.
- **Jerry Ireland** of Lenexa is a long-time advocate for the elderly, serving 10 years in the SHL. He is retired from the U.S. Navy and worked as a hospital business office manager. He has been a caregiver for his parents and is married to an R.N. who specializes in eldercare. He is an advocate for health care, elder abuse prevention and in-home care supports for aging adults.
- **Jeanie Adkins-Peine** of Overland Park is an advocate for older adults, grandparent rights, reduction in taxes and affordable transportation. She worked with a touring agency in Mexico, volunteered with fourth graders in the Shawnee Mission School District, helped veterans in rehab centers, rode with the Patriot Guard at military funerals and has worked with the elderly and mentally challenged adults.
- **Katherine “Katy” Hoffman** of Lenexa is a retired administrative assistant from the Johnson County District Court, served on the Commission on Aging and is involved with the Daughters of Isabella, advocating unity, friendship and charity. She is interested in presenting aging adults’ concerns, advocating because “Seniors Count!” and wants to encourage aging adults to become involved and share their ideas and needs with the SHL. She started a food pantry at a senior housing complex and regularly listens to and responds to the needs of aging adults.
- **Mary Penrose** of Prairie Village has a master’s degree in adult education and worked in adult education and real estate. She is an advocate for homeless and women’s shelters and has an interest in the well-being of aging adults and youngsters. She advocates for people to be active, informed and connected to community resources.

Did you know?

**Johnson County diversion rate hits highest mark in 2020**

The Johnson County AAA nursing facility diversion rate for 2020 was 74%. Of those assessed for long-term care options in 2020 (3,421 assessments), older Johnson County residents chose home and community-based service options 74% of the time.

Of those assessed, three out of four people chose to stay home with services over institutional care. This statistic and change in behavior make sense when recognizing the effect of the pandemic. It also stresses the importance of community-based care for older adults and the funding necessary to readily provide these services.

To give you some perspective, we have tracked this number since 2013; our low in 2018 was 58% and our high before this year was 2016 at 66% ... this is a significant change in the behavior of this population. Clearly there is a measurable value for the in-home service options and services we provide through the Johnson County Area Agency on Aging. To learn more about in-home services in Johnson County call 913-715-8861.
Eating fresh is outside the door

By Dennis Patton

When it comes to a healthy diet, the current trends are eating seasonal produce, locally grown, and farm-to-table.

The importance of adding fresh, nutritious fruits and vegetables in our diets is widely known. Now more than ever, people want to learn more about the food they consume and if there are any added preservatives or pesticides. It is easy to know what is in your food when you grow your own fruits and vegetables.

Think it is a lot of work? Think again. Using containers for vegetable gardening is a relatively simple and rewarding way of putting food on your table.

Container gardening is not a new concept. Colorful containers can be found on porches and patios in practically every neighborhood. They have been successful in the past and we know the basics for this spot of color.

While flowers have been at home in a pot, we think of vegetables as only grown in the ground. The concept of plant care is no different with vegetables. All it takes is a container, quality soil, a little fertilizer and water and soon you will be eating local, very local.

Need for quality sunlight

The primary difference between flowers and vegetables is the need for quality sunlight. Flower species are available from sun to shade, but vegetables require lots of sunlight. Crops producing leafy growth, like lettuce and spinach, may survive on a few hours of daylight. Vegetables producing fruit, the most popular crops of tomatoes, peppers and green beans, need at least six hours of full sun.

Because of this requirement, vegetable containers may need to be relocated into spots around the landscape. Traditionally, we place containers on the patio for ease of care. Patios are often shady for our enjoyment. Save the shadier patio for flowers and situate the containers in sunny locations. Sunlight is your key to success.

Container gardening does require a pot to hold the soil for developing roots and growth. The requirement of a suitable pot is a drainage hole and large enough to maintain a mass of soil for plant growth. Plants don’t care what the pot looks like, we do. Containers can be decorative or merely functional.

Functional containers usually cost less. Recycled nursery pots, often free from a local garden center, is one such option. Trending now are container fabric bags, referred to as grow bags. Made from landscape fabric they come in a variety of sizes. They may not look the best, but they do the job, nonetheless.

Proper soil is necessary for success. The best media for container gardens is a soilless mix. Soilless mixes contain no soil or dirt from the yard. Instead, these growing mediums are mixes of peat moss, pine bark, coconut coir, perlite or vermiculite. These combinations are designed to have excellent water retention while providing air space needed for root growth.

Soilless mixes for containers are readily available on the market. They can be more costly but are used for multiple growing seasons. Think of quality soil as an investment for success.

Another key to success in container gardening is applying even moisture to the pot. This reduces stress on the plants. There is not a set schedule or manual for how often to water. How much and how often will depend on soil mix, plants, sun exposure and other factors. The good news is with proper drainage and quality potting mix, it is almost impossible to overwater.

Size of container

A question I frequently receive is how big the container should be. My philosophy is to go big or go home. The larger the containers, the greater the rewards. Tomatoes and peppers will need at least a 5- to 7-gallon container. Depth much greater than a foot is not necessary as roots may not grow deeply.

Once the depth is achieved, width is more important as additional plants can be planted in the container for a larger harvest. Tall skinny pots are not ideal for vegetables. The larger the pot, the more fresh fruits and vegetables you can grow. Another benefit of a larger pot is it will need to be watered less frequently.

The best way to start is to just jump in. Once you determined you have the sunlight needed, then you are ready to go. It does not take a green thumb, and we are never too old to learn. Besides, Extension is here to help. Our gardening hotline can assist by calling 913-715-7050 or email at garden.help@jocogov.org.

We’ve got your back and want you to succeed. Join in on the eat local movement by growing your own fresh produce.

Dennis Patton is horticulture agent at the Johnson County K-State Research and Extension Office
Join us at our

Informational Session & Tour

Fridays at 2:00 PM
March 19 | April 2

Call today to reserve your spot!
Limited spots available to adhere to CDC guidelines.

(913) 270-6753
NovelPlaceSeniorLiving.com

A care-free lifestyle is calling your name...

- Vibrant activities program with several multi-purpose rooms and two outdoor courtyards to gather with your friends
- Bright and beautiful studio, one and two bedroom homes to simplify everyday living
- Restaurant style dining with chef-inspired specials and comforting classics available

Ask about our Move-In Specials!

Overland Park - 9651 Barkley Street | Blue Springs - 1001 SW 7 Highway

www.jocogov.org/thebesttimes • 11 • March-April 2021
New Charter Commission set to study county government

A new Charter Commission for Johnson County, the third in county history, has been authorized.

The Johnson County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) unanimously approved a resolution on Feb. 4 to establish a 25-member Charter Commission with eight members named by the board.

The other 17 charter members were appointed by organizations representing state legislators, political parties, chambers of commerce, council of mayors and rural Johnson County.

Establishment of a Charter Commission is required by the county’s Home Rule Charter. Under the provisions of the charter, the BOCC must convene a commission every 10 years to study and make recommendations about the structure and operations of the county government, including possible amendments to the charter.

Johnson County’s Home Rule Charter was the first of its kind in the 105 counties of Kansas. The charter was approved by Johnson County voters in 2000,” said Chairman Ed Eilert. “Any amendments to the charter, if proposed by the newly-formed Charter Commission, will require an election set by the board and approved by Johnson County voters.”

The decennial commission must convene its first organizational meeting within 30 days of today’s authorization.

“The first meeting might be virtual in light of current health and safety guidelines regarding the ongoing pandemic,” Chairman Eilert said. Details will be arranged prior to the meeting and publicly announced.

The Charter Commission will then meet as frequently as its membership deems necessary and schedule at least one public hearing. The commission must submit a final report of its findings and recommendations by Feb. 4, 2022, to the BOCC.

The county’s first Charter Commission was established in May 1999 and issued its report a year later with recommendations that the county adopt a Home Rule Charter form of government along with three interrelated questions for voters to decide in the operational structure of County Government:

- Appointment of a county manager and elimination of three elected officers – county treasurer, county clerk and register of deeds – with the positions to be appointed by the county manager.
- Increase the number of the Board of County Commissioners from five to seven members, including a publicly elected, at-large chairman.
- Non-partisan elections for county commissioners.

Johnson County voters approved all three questions in the November 2000 General Election.

The county’s Second Charter Commission was formed in January 2011 and issued its final report in February 2012. The commission proposed no amendments to the county’s Home Rule Charter that would have required voter approval.

Virtual State of County set March 30

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2021 State of the County address by Ed Eilert, chairman of the Johnson County Board of County Commissioners, will be presented virtually at 11 a.m. Tuesday, March 30.

This year’s partnet is the Lenexa Chamber of Commerce.

Considering the pandemic, the State of the County presentation will be available online only in observance of guidelines for reducing/containing the spread of the coronavirus. The Chairman’s address will be live streamed on boccmeetings.jocogov.org and Facebook Live.

Final details of the virtual event will be posted and announced on the county’s website at jocogov.org.

The weekly public business sessions of the Johnson County Board of County Commissioners begin at 9:30 a.m. on Thursdays in the Johnson County Administration Building, 111 S. Cherry Street, in downtown Olathe.

Live coverage of the meetings is viewable on the Internet through the county’s main website, jocogov.org.
Trout season starts at two lakes

The 2021 trout season has started at lakes in Kill Creek Park, 11670 Homestead Lane, Olathe, and Shawnee Mission Park, 7900 Renner Road, Shawnee and Lenexa.

The season opening follows the stocking in late February of approximately 5,400 pounds of rainbow trout in the two lakes. Both parks are part of the Johnson County Park and Recreation District (JCPRD).

While fishing, anglers are encouraged to observe physical distancing and COVID-safe practices at the lakes.

The two lakes will be closed to fishing again on March 19 when another 2,000 pounds of trout will be stocked. Fishing will resume at 5 a.m. on Saturday, March 20.

Before fishing for trout in district waters, anglers age 16 and older will need to have a valid Kansas fishing license, a JCPRD fishing permit and all appropriate boat tags, if applicable.

All persons, regardless of age or residency, must also possess a JCPRD trout permit. Trout permits are required whether you plan to keep your catch (up to a daily limit of four) or release the trout you catch.

For more information, contact Visitors Services at Shawnee Mission Park at 913-888-4713. The building is open seven days a week.

Lanesfield offers field trip days

The Johnson County Museum is rolling out new socially-distanced Family Field Trip Days at the Lanesfield School Historic Site, 18745 S Dillie Road, Edgerton, in March and April.

Participants will experience a bit of life in 1904 - from life on the farm and completing chores to the challenges of lessons inside the one-room schoolhouse.

“On Family Field Trip Days, visitors will get an inside look at the history of Johnson County on a kid-friendly tour, led by one of our museum educators,” explained Curator of Education Leah Palmer.

“They will also dig into the past with educator-led learning activities that give families a chance to put what they learn into practice.”

The programs, lasting about two hours each, are open not only to families, but also schools, homeschool and scout groups. Group size will be limited to allow for social distancing.

Family Field Trip Days are offered at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. on Tuesday, March 16; Friday, March 19; Saturday, April 17; and Wednesday, April 21.

For more information, call the museum at 913-715-2570. To register by phone, call 913-831-3359. To register online, visit JCPRD.com.
New plaza honors John Barkley

Shawnee Mission Park has a newly-redesigned eastern entrance and a memorial plaza honoring John Lewis Barkley with a dedication set for April 24. Barkley, a Medal of Honor recipient from World War I, was the first superintendent of the county’s park district. He acquired approximately 1,300 acres for development of the first two parks in the Shawnee Mission Park District, now called the Johnson County Park and Recreation District (JCPRD).

“John Barkley’s love for nature, combined with his vision and dedication to provide public park space for the community to enjoy outdoor recreation and nature, made him the perfect fit,” said Jeff Stewart, JCPRD executive director. “This was the great beginning of developing a park and recreation system that is highly valued by the residents of Johnson County and nationally acclaimed.”

Aside from acquiring the first land for park development, Barkley also spearheaded efforts, along with the Shawnee Mission Sertoma Club and its female counterpart, La Sertoma Club, in the early 1950s to ask the Kansas Legislature to create a special park district in Johnson County. The League of Women Voters also supported the initiative.

In 1953, legislation was passed to allow a park district to be formed upon petition to the county by 5,000 fully qualified electors. That was achieved in 1954 when the club presented 7,309 signatures on petitions to the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC). Concurrently, special legislation was obtained from state lawmakers for a three-quarter mill levy for park operation and maintenance.

The BOCC created the Shawnee Mission Park District on Jan. 12, 1955. The following year, a bond issue of $1.1 million for land purchase and park development was passed by Johnson County voters. The bonds were used for purchase and initial development of land for three parks.

Barkley was appointed the park district’s first superintendent in December 1956. He was responsible for touring the undeveloped countryside in Johnson County in search of park land.

He personally negotiated the acquisition of 1,250 acres in Shawnee and Lenexa that would become Shawnee Mission Park along with 44 acres for development of Antioch Park in Merriam. Dedicated on May 25, 1958, Antioch Park was the first park in the Shawnee Mission Park District.

A neighborhood park was also established in Shawnee. Approximately an acre in size, it was called Bluejacket Park and later became the site of Old Shawnee Town.

Barkley retired as superintendent of the park district in 1963. He died three years later at age 70.

The Shawnee Mission Park District’s name was changed to JCPRD in 1969. It remains the only special park district in Kansas. JCPRD now has 17 parks with slightly more than 10,000 acres.

In 1977, the main entrance to Shawnee Mission Park, 7900 Renner Road, was renamed Barkley Drive in honor along with the opening of the John Barkley Visitors Center. The visitors center was closed and razed in 2016 with construction of a major addition to the JCPRD Administration Building to house the park police headquarters and visitor services.

“The John Barkley Plaza, where the building (visitors center) used to sit, was re-imagined as the gateway into Shawnee Mission Park,” Stewart said.

Construction of the John Barkley Plaza has taken place over the past year at the entry way into Shawnee Mission Park from Renner Road. The project included improvements to Barkley Drive, additional parking, a new monument sign and installation of a traffic light at the park entrance at 79th Street.

The plaza features seat walls, a shade pavilion, a drinking fountain, a BikeShare rack and a bike-fix-it station along with an existing flagpole near the park entrance. Users of the plaza will have access to existing restrooms in the nearby JCPRD Administration Building, which are available whenever the park is open.

Informational kiosks, including a park map for reference, will be located near the north and south parking areas. The John Barkley Plaza will be dedicated on April 24 in a public ceremony with social distancing and face masks required. The event is tentatively scheduled to start at 10 a.m.

“The plaza serves as an impressive welcome to Shawnee Mission Park off Renner Road,” Stewart said. “The space includes a pavilion that is perfect for small gatherings and provides a meeting point from which to explore all of the wonderful things that Shawnee Mission Park has to offer.”

Joan Barkley Wells stands in front of the plaza honoring her father, John Lewis Barkley, at the entrance to Shawnee Mission Park.
Welcome to the new home of printed listings for the 50 Plus Department of the Johnson County Park and Recreation District. Our program listings are also always available at JCPRD.com/50Plus. In 2021, 50 Plus is marking its 50th anniversary and invites you to celebrate with us by participating in programs marked with [50!]. Be sure to look for 50 Plus listings in future issues of Best Times.

**Enrichment & Special Interests**

**NEW! Cooking: Making Macarons**
Delicate and delightful, macarons are becoming a popular dessert for the home baker to attempt. Learn tips and tricks to making a successful macaron. The best part is included, a box of these delicious treats for you to enjoy at home while watching the program! Macaron pick up is March 19 from 8 am to noon at Roeland Park Community Center.

1 - 1 hr. session - $15 / $17 nonresidents
8924 Virtual Program
3/19 1:30 pm

**NEW! Crafts: Craft Savvy - Dream Catchers**
Meet with others virtually and put together a dream catcher. A dream catcher is a spiritual tool used to help assure good dreams to those that sleep under it. All supplies included. Live step-by-step guidance will be available on Zoom! Pick up supplies at Roeland Park Community Center between April 8 and 9.

1 - 1 hr. session - $20 / $22 nonresidents
8020 Virtual Program
4/14 Wed 1:30 pm

**NEW! Reading: Wanderlust Virtual Book Club**
Intertwine your love of travel and a good book with a travel-themed book club. Each month enjoy the selected book from the list and conclude the month in a group virtual discussion about the read, how it relates to your travel, and how it may inspire your wanderlust. March’s book is “Turn Right at Machu Picchu: Rediscovering the Lost City One Step at a Time” and April’s is “Bowling to Elephants.”

2 - 1 hr. classes - $5
8073 Virtual Program
3/30 Tue 1:30 pm
4/27 Tue 1:30 pm

**NEW! Technology: How to Use Zoom**
Zoom is the new buzzword! Learn how to sign up and use the software platform Zoom. Bring your device and any associated account passwords.

1 - 1 hr. class - $10 / $11 nonresidents
8076 RPCC
4/15 Thu 1 pm

**Technology: One-on-One Computer Tutoring**
Train and get questions answered by our knowledgeable instructor. Must bring laptop or tablet to class. Call (913) 826-3160 for an appointment available on a Tuesday or Thursday. Program fee nonrefundable.

1 - 2 hr. class - $60 / $66 nonresidents
RPCC
By Appt.

**Technology: Password Protection**
“Password: Ky39X@”zlf9# does not meet password setting criteria.” Does remembering and resetting all those online passwords drive you bananas? Hear from a technology wiz on how to keep your personal information safely password protected in a manageable fashion.

1 - 2 hr. class - $20 / $22 nonresidents
8093 Virtual Program
3/11 Thu 1 pm
8096 RPCC
4/24 Sat Noon

**Technology: Selling Online**
Clearing out clutter? Looking to sell handmade wares? Class covers how to sell online safely. Learn tips and tricks to online payments, where to sell, and how to ship.

1 - 2 hr. class - $20 / $22 nonresidents
8097 RPCC
3/16 Tue 10 am
8099 RPCC
4/24 Sat 9 am

**Technology: Smartphone Workshops**
Is your smartphone smarter than you? Learn the basic fundamentals of your device through these helpful workshops. Purchase individually or take them all! Handouts included.

1 - 1 ½ hr. session - $17 / $19 nonresidents
● Android®
8174 MRCC Apps 101
3/4 Thu 10 am
● iPhone®
8175 MRCC Contacts & Calling
3/18 Thu 10 am
8176 MRCC Settings & Notifications
3/25 Thu 10 am
8177 MRCC Email & Text
4/1 Thu 10 am
8178 MRCC Apps 101
4/8 Thu 10 am

Technology: Participants in technology classes must know the device and App store usernames and passwords associated with their smartphone accounts. Bring portable devices to the class.

**Looking for at home recreation opportunities?**

We are currently offering a variety of virtual programs weekly that include both free and fee-based offerings. Fees are typically charged to cover the cost of instructors and supplies. It’s a fun, easy way to engage! See what’s available and sign up at JCPRD.com/50plusvirtual.
Art: Painter’s Palette
Techniques, styles, and tips taught with pastel, watercolor, acrylic, or oil. Individual instruction and peer assistance provided. Punch cards expire three months from date of purchase.
5 Punch Art Card - $55 / $61 nonresidents
10 Punch Art Card - $107 / $118 nonresidents
TRCC Mon 9:30 am
MRCC Thu 1:30 pm
TRCC Fri 9:30 am

Art: Watercolor Painting
Learn techniques, styles and tips. Individual instruction and peer assistance provided. Start anytime with a punch card. Punch cards expire three months from date of purchase.
5 Punch Art Card - $55 / $61 nonresidents
10 Punch Art Card - $107 / $118 nonresidents
MRCC Tue 1:30 pm

Dance: Tap - Beginning
Learn basic tap fundamentals such as the Waltz, Clog, and Rhythm Time Steps. Hard-soled or tap dance shoes required. No previous tap dance necessary.
8 - 50 min. sessions - $61 / $67 nonresidents
8255 MRCC 3/15 Mon 2 pm

Dance: Tap - Next Level
Stomp, shuffle, and stamp to the next level of tap dance. Test out of Beginning Tap and build upon the fundamentals. Tap dance experience necessary.
8 - 50 min. sessions - $61 / $67 nonresidents
8257 MRCC 3/15 Mon 3 pm

Exercise: AEA Arthritis Foundation Exercise Program (AFEP)
This recreational chair-based exercise class includes range-of-motion exercises suitable for every fitness level and ability.
1 - 45 min. workout - $3 pay at the door
Merriam Community Center M,W 10 am
Spring Hill Civic Center T,Th 1 pm
New Century Fieldhouse W,F 10:15 am
Meadowbrook Park Clubhouse Wed 1 pm
Matt Ross Community Center Fri 10:45 am
1 - 45 min workout - $3 online pay option during class
8899 Virtual Program Wed 11 am

Exercise: Chair Yoga
Take yoga off the mat and onto the chair, incorporating breathing with movement while retaining all the benefits of yoga. Use the chair for support if needed during standing poses.
6 - 50 min. sessions - $47 / $51 nonresidents
7954 MBPC 4/6 Tue 10:30 am
7955 MBPC 4/8 Thu 10:30 am
6 - 50 min. sessions - $35 / $37 nonresidents
7958 Virtual Program 4/6 Tue 9:30 am

Exercise: Tai Chi
Tai Chi offers a slow and gentle exercise with benefits in endurance, flexibility, and muscle strengthening. All experience levels welcome in this course.
4 - 50 min. sessions - $36 / $40 nonresidents
8108 RPCC 3/9 Tue 5 pm
8109 RPCC 4/6 Tue 5 pm

Exercise: Tai Chi for Arthritis and Fall Prevention
Incorporating all the essential principles of Tai Chi, the movements in this class are safe and easy to learn for those with arthritis or just starting a wellness routine. Through practice, improve muscular strength, flexibility and fitness. All experience levels welcome in this course.
1 - 45 min. workout - $3 pay at the door
Meadowbrook Park Clubhouse (Int) Mon 1 pm
Meadowbrook Park Clubhouse (Beg) Mon 2 pm
1 - 30 min workout - $3 online pay option during class
8898 Virtual Program Wed 12:15 pm

NEW! Exercise: Virtual Strength and Stretch
A stretching and strengthening class designed to increase strength and range of motion to help with the activities of daily living.
6 - 50 min. sessions - $35 / $37 nonresidents
8580 Virtual Program Thu 11:30 am

NEW! (50!) Exercise: Virtual Zumba Gold - Sweatin’ to the 90s
Pull out those neon leg warmers and get ready to throwback your workout to the 90s! Maximize calorie output and total body toning by following upbeat and easy to follow dance steps to the beat of Latin rhythms...with a little 90s tunes mixed in! No dance experience necessary.
1 - 45 min session- $10/ $11 nonresidents
7941 Virtual Program 3/10 Wed 2 pm
8926 Virtual 3/10 Wed 10 am
8925 RPCC 4/21 Wed 6 pm

NEW! Meditation: Building a Meditation Practice in the New Year
Taking a few minutes to focus your mind each day can reduce stress, pain, depression, and more. Meditation is a simple, cost effective solution to a great number of health concerns. This introductory class is offered by certified meditation leader Whit Welch.
1 - 50 min. session- $5 / $6 nonresidents
8926 Virtual 3/10 Wed 10 am
8925 RPCC 4/21 Wed 6 pm

Yoga: Hatha ( Gentle) Yoga Punch Card
● MODERATE INTENSITY: Strengthen your body, calm your mind and improve flexibility and balance. To try one class for free, call (913) 826-3160 for details and class schedule. Participants must bring their own yoga mat to each class.
5 Punch Card - $45 / $50 nonresidents (valid for 3 months)
10 Punch Card - $90 / $99 nonresidents (valid for 3 months)
20 Punch Card - $180 / $198 nonresidents (valid for 4 months)

Yoga: Sunset Yoga (Ages 14 & Older)
● LOW INTENSITY: Enjoy the spring breeze while you regulate your metabolism, increase flexibility, and coordination by practicing yoga on the park lawn. Lengthen your muscles while increasing both bone and muscle density. Yoga Participants of all levels are welcome. Participants are required to bring their own yoga mat and other equipment needed.
6 - 50 min. sessions - $47 / $51 nonresidents
7985 MBP - Shelter #3 4/7 Wed 6 pm

Virtual courses are offered via Zoom, an online video conferencing platform. Advanced registration is required 24 hours prior to class. Information on how to access the program will be sent no later than 9 am the day of the program to those who registered/RSPV. If you are unable to attend at the scheduled time, you will receive a link to watch the recorded class at your convenience within 48 hours.

Visit JCRPD.com/activities or call (913) 831-3359 for information and/or to register
Nature & Outdoors

Social Walks: Spring Strolling
Make friends while exploring the great outdoors. Please bring your own water bottle and mask. Please register at least one week prior to departure.

● Overland Park Arboretum - Enjoy the brisk spring morning air while strolling on a leisurely walk through the stunning trails and gardens of the Overland Park Arboretum, 8909 W 179th Street, Overland Park. Meet at the Visitor’s Center. Includes coffee and entry into the arboretum.
1 - 1 hr. outing - $5 / $6 nonresidents
9015 OP Arboretum 3/25 Thu 9 am

● Meadowbrook Park - Enjoy the trails at one of JCPRD’s newest parks. Stroll past the three lakes, lined with green space and beauty. Meet in front of the clubhouse. Includes coffee after the walk.
1 - 1 hr. outing - $2 / $3 nonresidents
9016 MBPC 4/7 Wed 9 am

● Mill Creek Streamway Park - Stroll along the peaceful trails of Mill Creek Streamway Park on the Gary Haller Trail. Meet at the 87th Lane Access Trailhead at Shelter 3, 19803 W 87th Lane, Lenexa. Includes coffee after the walk.
1 - 1 hr. outing - $2 / $3 nonresidents
9017 MCSP 4/21 Wed 9 am

Special Events

(50!) Games: Anniversary Special - Gameshows of the 90’s
Have you ever dreamed of hearing your name being called as, “you’re the next contestant, come on down!” Join in on this silly rendition of television game shows. Everyone gets a chance to play. Refreshments will be served. Please register in advance, space is limited.
1 - 1 ½ hr. event - $15 / $17 nonresidents
8110 RPCC 3/15 Thu 1:30 pm

(50!) Games: Anniversary Special - I Love the 90s Music Bingo
Spice up your life with a totally wicked afternoon of music bingo. Score some sweet prizes and enjoy refreshments as you get jiggy with it to your favorite tunes of the 90s.
1 - 1 ½ hr. event - $15 / $17 nonresidents; $17 / $19 nonresidents day-of registration; cost of admission covers food and staff time to administer the bingo program. No additional charge for bingo.
8270 MRCC 3/10 Wed 1:30 pm

NEW! Holiday Event: 50 Plus Easter Egg Hunt
Who says kids get to have all the fun? This egg hunt is for 50 Plus ONLY! Search high and low for these hidden eggs outside the community center (indoors in the event of inclement weather). A special furry friend might even hop by for a photo op! Coffee and refreshments included.
1 - 1 hr. event - $10 / $11 nonresidents
8113 RPCC 4/1 Thu 1 pm

Social Event: Afternoon Tea in the Pavilion
Enjoy an afternoon of well-mannered frivolity. Try traditional Afternoon Tea snacks and sample a variety of teas. Bring your favorite teacup from home.
1 - 1 ½ hr. event - $15 / $17 nonresidents; $18 / $19 nonresidents for registrations starting one week before event.
7975 MBPC 4/29 Thu 3 pm

Sports

Pickleball: Drop-in Play
Join fellow pickleball enthusiasts for play and practice! Times and days are subject to change due to indoor court availability. Equipment available.
$3 per person per day
8271 MRCC Wed Noon - 4 pm
8272 TRCC M,T,Thu,F Times vary
10 Punch Card - $35 or 20 Punch Card - $70
Or Drop-in Fee: $4 per person per day
8749 New Century Fieldhouse T,W,Th,F 9 am - 1 pm

Pickleball: Pickleball Beginning Lessons
Learn how to play the game all your friends are talking about! Equipment provided and space is limited.
1 - 2 hr. lessons - $14 / $15 nonresidents
8276 NCF 3/3 Wed 10 am
8279 MRCC 3/24 Wed 10 am
8277 NCF 4/7 Wed 10 am
8280 MRCC 4/21 Wed 1:30 pm

Travel

For more information about 50 Plus travel opportunities and worry-free cancellation waiver offers, call (913) 826-2975 or visit jcprd.com/50plustravel.

Extended Trip: Spain & Morocco
Sept. 18 - Oct. 1, 2021 - 14 Days, 18 Meals
● Registration deadline: March 19, 2021.
$4,449 per person, double occupancy
$5249 per person, single occupancy

Extended Trip: Shades of Ireland
Oct. 4 - 13, 2021 - 10 Days, 13 Meals
● Registration deadline: March 29, 2021.
$3,899 per person, double occupancy
$5,499 per person, single occupancy

Extended Trip: Exploring South Africa, Victoria Falls & Botswana
Nov. 3 - 17, 2021 - 15 Days, 29 Meals
● Registration deadline: March 29, 2021.
$7,549 per person, double occupancy
$8,459 per person, single occupancy

Extended Trip: Spotlight on Santa Fe Holiday
Dec. 5 - 10, 2021 - 6 Days, 8 Meals
● Registration deadline: May 29, 2021.
$2,299 per person, double occupancy
$2,699 per person, single occupancy

Paid Advertising ● Location listings, Page 4
Outdoor Education

Boating: Sailing I (Ages 18 & Older)
Learn the basic skill of sailing. Types of boats, launching techniques, docking, maintenance, and safety will be covered in this class. Sailing I consists of two indoor lecture sessions and four water sessions. Basic swimming skills required. Instructor: Johnson County Sailing Society.
6 - 2 hr. sessions - $78 / $85 nonresidents
7432 JCPRD Admin. Bldg
Shawnee Mission Park Lake
4/20 T,Th 7 pm
4/24 Sat 9 am

Go Green: Rain Barrel Workshop (Ages 18 & Older)
During this class participants will construct their own rain barrel and learn how to hook it up when they get home. For more information call Park Naturalist, Andrea Joslin at (913) 826-2806. Registration deadline April 12.
1 - 1 hr. session - $55 / $60 nonresidents
7633 Ernie Miller Nature Center
4/15 Thu 9:30 am
7433 Ernie Miller Nature Center
4/17 Sat 9:30 am

Hiking: Walk with a Naturalist (Ages 18 & Older)
Take a hike... with a naturalist. Join us for themed hikes as we explore the landscape for hidden gems in the park. Hikes will be easy (E) to moderate (M) in difficulty dependent on the theme. Dress for the weather and muddy conditions on the trail. For more information call (913) 826-2800.
1 - 1 ½ hr. session - $7 / $8 nonresident
9091 Ernie Miller Park Prairie Prescription (M)
2/25 Thu 9:30 am
9092 Ernie Miller Park TREEmendous (E)
3/11 Thu 9:30 am
9093 Ernie Miller Park Bird Bonanza (M)
4/8 Thu 9:30 am
9094 Ernie Miller Park Spring Ephemerals (E)
4/22 Thu 9:30 am
9095 Ernie Miller Park Down by the Bank (M)
5/6 Thu 9:30 am

Yoga: Flowing with Nature (Ages 16 & Older)
Exhale as you take in the beauty of the lake with kayaking and yoga. Take in your surroundings and feelings as you journal and hike the trails. Prior experience is not necessary, and participants will choose their own level of activity. For more information, call Park Naturalist Diana Bliss (913) 826-2807.
1 - 3 ½ hr. class - $39 / $43 nonresident
9097 TimberRidge Adventure Center
4/17 Sat 1 pm

Heritage & History

Museum: History on Tap - Thrift Style - Ingenuity in Hard Times (Ages 21 & Older)
K-State Curator of the Historic Costume & Textile Museum, Marla Day, will explore how we can use our past to improve our present through thrifting. The exhibition Thrift Style explores the reuse of a simple piece of leftover fabric and how homemakers used what was available to them to meet the needs of their families. A message that resonates with consumers during our current economic climate. Corresponds to museum’s “Thrift Style” exhibit, from NEH on the Road.
1 - 1 hr. program - $6, includes museum admission. Museum members receive a 20% discount - call (913) 831-3359 to register and claim discount.
8334 Johnson County Museum
3/2 Tue 6 pm

Museum: Scandal in the Schoolhouse - A Historic Escape Room Experience (Ages 10 & Older)
Solve the mystery of the missing schoolmarm at this new escape -room style adventure! Begin in the visitor center with a costumed school teacher then head off to an actual 1904 schoolhouse to solve the mystery. You will learn about the local history of Lakesfield along the way. This experience is best for ages 10 and older. Someone in the party must be 18 or older. This program is at the Lakesfield Historic Site. Call to register your group. (913) 715-2570.
1 - 1 hr. program. Groups of 2-8. Best for ages 10 & Older. $50 for 2 people, $20 per person for 3-8 people. Must pre-register. Call (913) 715-2570.

SilverSneakers® and Renew Active™ memberships are available at two JCPRD facilities.

Roeland Park Community Center (913) 826-3160
Mill Creek Activity Center (913) 826-2950
Virtual book club explores Wanderlust

Traveling has come to a halt during the pandemic, but the itch to explore new adventures remains alive in the patrons of the Johnson County Park and Recreation District’s 50 Plus Department. Keeping in mind the observed physical distancing protocols JCPRD follows, the 50 Plus Department sought a way to merge the social aspect of traveling with the thrill of adventure and thus, the launch of virtual book club, “Wanderlust.”

In March, the group will read “Turn Right at Machu Picchu: Rediscovering the Lost City One Step at a Time.” The author retraces the steps of the Yale professor who discovered Machu Picchu more than a century ago. The virtual discussion will take place at 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 30.

April’s selection is “Bowing to Elephants,” which follows the off-beaten wanderers of a young woman looking for life’s answers all over the world. The virtual discussion for this book is scheduled at 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, April 27.

The fee for both one-hour sessions is $5 per person. Books can be acquired at the library, online or at local bookstores and is not included in the course fee.

For more information about Wanderlust Book Club’s upcoming titles, meeting dates or to register by phone, please call 913-831-3359. To register online, visit jcprd.com/50plusvirtual.

Families invited to amazing race

The Amazing Family Race is set from 4 to 6 p.m. March 20 at the Meadowbrook Park Clubhouse, 9101 Nall, Prairie Village.

Participants can use clues to play games, solve puzzles and have fun. Pizza and popsicles are provided for dinner, but participants can bring additional food. Cost is $10 per person ($11 nonresidents), $30 for a family of four or less ($33 nonresidents), $40 for a family up to 7 ($44 nonresidents).

Register online at JCPRD.com.
A century ago, John Lewis Barkley became a World War I hero, receiving the Medal of Honor. Forty years later, he helped to create the Johnson County Park and Recreation District.

He was a Missourian during the first half of his life. During the second half, he was a Kansan, living and farming in Mission Township in northeast Johnson County.

Often referring to himself as “Old Farmer John,” Barkley was unpretentious about his many feats during and after WWI. He also claimed to be a descendent of Daniel Boone with his family roots in Kentucky before his parents moved to Missouri.

“He didn’t talk much about the war. Not really at all,” said his daughter, Joan Barkley Wells.

“He liked to describe himself as a Missouri backwoodsman and a Kansas dairy farmer.”

The seed of the park system was planted by her father following WWI when he became a Johnson County farmer and later a land developer, acquiring land to create the county’s first two parks.

Born on Aug. 28, 1895, and raised at his family’s farm near Holden, Missouri, where he graduated from high school, Barkley was a student at Warrensburg Teachers College, now the University of Central Missouri, until WWI when he left college.

Stuttering in childhood

According to Barkley Wells, her father was initially rejected by the Army in 1916 because he stuttered but was admitted a year later. His stuttering began in early childhood.

“He was teased at school and often hid in the woods,” Barkley Wells said. While attending college at Warrensburg, he had to write all his oral reports because of his speech defect.

As part of his Army training, Barkley received special instruction as a sniper, observer and scout at Fort Riley. He also was an expert marksman in his military training since he loved to hunt while growing up on the family farm. According to a Kansas City Times article, he could “repeatedly hit a bull’s-eye about the size of a half dollar at 200 yards.”

Barkley arrived in France in the spring of 1918. Late that year, during the Second Battle of Marne (July 15-Aug. 6), his stuttering was “miraculously cured,” according to his mother, when a German artillery shell struck a tree behind his observation position. The tree fell on him and he was unconscious for several hours.

“He said when he radioed his commanding officer, he found that his stuttering had stopped,” Barkley Wells said. The Kansas City Times reported his mother called it “a missile from God.” His father thought his son only “needed (the) hell knocked out of him to get over that.”

Barkley was a 23-year-old Army PFC when he earned the Medal of Honor in combat on Oct. 7, 1918 near Cunel, France. He was stationed in an observation post near the German line when he witnessed an enemy advancement.

Repelling two German counterattacks

Using a captured enemy machinegun and mounting it in a disabled two-man French tank near his post, Barkley then single-handedly repelled two German counterattacks, killing or wounding many of the enemies.

The “WWI – Through their Eyes” exhibit at Kansas City’s WWI Museum and Memorial details his heroic actions, noting: “After hostilities had ceased, there were over 4,000 expended machine gun rounds found in the tank.”

Barkley was awarded the Medal of Honor by General John Pershing on April 2, 1919. His heroism also earned
him the French Croix de Guerre, the Italian Cross of Military Valor and the Montenegrin Medal of Bravery.

After WWI, Barkley worked for a time as a private detective in Kansas City, Missouri. In 1930, he wrote a book titled “No Hard Feelings!” about his war experience. With about 4,000 copies printed and only a few sold, the book flopped. The book was reissued in 2012 under the new title “Scarlet Fields: The Combat Memoir of a WWI Medal of Honor Hero” with more success.

He came to Johnson County in 1936, settling in Mission Township and marrying Marguerite Mullen whose farming family settled in Johnson County prior to the Civil War.

Along with growing wheat and other grains, Barkley was a dairy farmer whose property straddled what is known today as Johnson Drive. He was known for stopping traffic on the road twice a day to move his dairy cattle from pasture to the milking barn and back.

“...The cows were very eager to get up to the milk barn,” Barkley Wells said with a smile. “There wasn’t too much traffic to stop back then.”

**Farm land finds other uses**

After the dairy operation ceased circa 1950, he helped develop the farm for commercial and residential use, including the site of the Northeast Johnson County Offices in Mission. Sections of the family farm and Mission Township land would eventually be incorporated as the city of Mission in 1951.

In the early 1950s, with a county population of approximately 65,000, Barkley led acquisition and development for a park system to benefit a growing Johnson County. He also spearheaded legislative action to create and fund a county park district.

“The park system development was important to my dad because he thought that it was against freedom of an individual, a child, to be cooped up on an 80-foot suburban lot,” Barkley Wells said.

“He remembered his growing up in the Missouri woods where he had the freedom to investigate nature—the flora, fauna and the habitats of native wild animals. He thought that children would gain a depth in their souls from contact with nature.”

Her father was appointed the park district’s first superintendent in December 1956, a year after creation of the Shawnee Mission Park District. He retired as superintendent of the park district in 1963. He died in 1966 at age 70. Three years later, the park system was renamed the Johnson County Park and Recreation District.

Since March 1978, Barkley Wells has served as a board member of The Parks and Recreation Foundation of Johnson County, including as past president. She is also a former trustee at the National WWI Museum and Memorial. Father and daughter are former trustees of the Johnson County Museum.

Her 43 years on the foundation board have been important to her in helping further development of a park system championed by her father.

“It allows me to be a part of decision-making for the betterment of this great park system,” she said.

**Roadway, building, plaza in his honor**

In honor of Barkley’s legacy to the park system, the main entrance to Shawnee Mission Park, 7900 Renner Road, was renamed Barkley Drive in 1977 in his honor along with the opening of the John Barkley Visitors Center. The visitors center was closed and razed in 2016 with plans to build the John Barkley Plaza in his honor. Construction of the plaza occurred in 2020 with completion in early 2021, paving the way for a public dedication on April 24.

Barkley Wells believes her father would be humbled about having a former building, new plaza and existing roadway named after him.

“I think he would be surprised, really, about having something like this (plaza) in his honor,” she said. “He would also be really surprised about how the park district has grown to what it is now. He would be really pleased.”
**Pandemic takes toll on mental health**

By Keith Davenport

After almost a year of experiencing the pandemic in Johnson County, one might begin to think that this physically-distanced, face-masked way of life is old hat.

The reality is, even for those who have embraced this different pace of life, the pandemic can still affect the way you think, feel and act.

Your body may be giving your warning signs that it’s being impacted, not by the virus itself, but by the stress caused by disruptions to routines, relationships and the regularity of life. Here are some examples of what you could look for:

- Poor sleeping patterns, increased fatigue and major changes to activity-level, appetite or digestive system are some physical signs.
- New challenges to remembering things, concentrating or decision-making can be signs that stress is affecting some of your mental functions.
- Emotionally, you might experience increased irritability or sensitivity. Overwhelming feelings of fear, guilt, anxiety, depression or anger are also common.

Everyone is different and will be experiencing and processing the pandemic in different ways. It’s possible that one person might be experiencing all of these symptoms at once, while another person may not be able to identify any of these symptoms.

There are three key takeaways:

- Be able to recognize when something about you is off.
- Realize you are not alone. We are all experiencing this together.
- Know that help is always available.

If you or someone you love is experiencing these symptoms over an extended period of time or at extremes, please call the 24/7 Crisis Line at 913-268-0156.

Keith Davenport is the community relations manager for Johnson County Mental Health Center. This article was made possible in connection with the Kansas Stronger Together grant. For more information, please email KansasStrongerTogether@jocogov.org.

---

**Virtual programming continues into spring**

The 50 Plus staff at Johnson County Park and Recreation District miss the face-to-face interaction with patrons, however, virtual programming is a way for staff to stay connected to the patrons and keep them connected to their community.

The 50 Plus Department values the importance of emotional health, community connections and general wellness of patrons. Professionals in the community continue to offer their expertise on topics such as Medicare enrollment, joint health, self-empowerment, wise credit tips and everyday mindfulness.

Upcoming complimentary virtual programs include:
- “Sleep-Want It, Need It, How to Get It!” at 10 a.m. Thursday, March 18.
- “Common Sense Budgeting” at 10 a.m. Thursday, April 15.
- “GMOs - What Are They? Why Should I Care?” at 11 a.m. Thursday, April 22.

For the game enthusiasts, they can play “Hollywood Bingo” on Tuesday, March 16; “Earth Day Bingo” on Thursday, April 1; and “Totally 90’s Trivia” on Wednesday, April 14.

All game programs start at 1:30 p.m.

For more information about virtual programs or to register by phone, call 913-831-3359. To enroll online, visit jcprd.com/50plusvirtual.

---

**Quality housing that meets your budget**

The application process for our buildings couldn’t be easier. Contact us directly and we’ll find out if you qualify and promptly take care of the details, including assistance with the paperwork. If you qualify, you simply move in and begin living anew!

- Utilities provided (allowance based)
- Rent based on income
- Section 8 assistance available
- Great location
- Social events
- No voucher needed

Quality housing that meets your budget, in a safe, secure setting.

**Overland Towers Apartments**
8580 Farley, Overland Park, KS
(913) 341-3113

**Santa Fe Towers Apartments**
8101 Santa Fe Drive, Overland Park, KS
(913) 642-5995
As coronavirus cases continue to rise, more than 40 states have enacted some kind of restriction by issuing different types of orders to help keep people at home.

Finding ways to stay engaged and active during the pandemic is proving to be challenging for many Americans, but it can be particularly challenging for people living with Alzheimer’s and other dementia and their care partners.

To help care partners engage their loved ones living with dementia, the Alzheimer’s Association offers a variety of tips, including:

- **Start by asking yourself these questions:** What does my loved one like to do? What is he/she able to do? And, what is he/she in the mood for today? Spending time with a loved one with Alzheimer’s and other dementia can remain meaningful and fun, especially if you take your cue from the person.

- **Encourage involvement in daily life activities:** Activities that help the individual feel like a valued part of the household, like setting the table and folding laundry, can provide a sense of success and accomplishment.

- **Focus on individual enjoyment:** A former office worker might enjoy activities that involve organizing, like putting coins in a holder, helping to assemble a mailing or making a to-do list. A former farmer or gardener may take pleasure in preparing the soil for planting.

Because staying at home can be isolating, sometimes the care partner needs to modify or adjust the activities. If you notice a person’s attention span waning or frustration level increasing, it’s likely time to end or modify the activity.

Some suggestions for the care partner are:

- **Help get the activity started.** Most people with dementia still have the energy and desire to do things, but may lack the ability to organize, plan, initiate and successfully complete the task.

- **Concentrate on the process, not the result.** Does it matter if the towels are folded properly? Not really. What matters is that you were able to spend time together and that the person feels as if he or she has done something useful.

- **Be flexible.** If the person insists on doing an activity in a different way, let it happen and change it later if necessary.

- **Assist with difficult parts of the task.** If you’re cooking, and the person can’t measure the ingredients, finish the measuring and say, “Would you please stir this for me?”

- **Encourage self expression.** These types of activities could include painting, drawing, music or conversation.

For more information, visit [alz.org/help-support/caregiving/daily-care/activities](http://alz.org/help-support/caregiving/daily-care/activities) or call the Alzheimer’s Association free, 24/7 Helpline at 800-272-3900.

Juliette B. Bradley is the Kansas state director of communications of the Alzheimer’s Association, Heart of America Chapter, Prairie Village.
Library expands curbside service

By Elissa Andre

It’s now been a year since we were thrown into our “new normal” at Johnson County Library.

While we miss many of the everyday interactions we had when our branches were buzzing with patrons and events were in-person, we hope you’ve found value and convenience in some of the new services we’ve launched over the last 12 months:

Our new Curbside Holds Pickup service launched at Leawood Pioneer Library in July 2020, and as of Feb. 1 includes Cedar Roe, Gardner, Oak Park and Spring Hill locations. We’ve delivered more than 5,000 items to your vehicles in the last eight months, and plan to continue offering Curbside service even after the library returns to pre-pandemic levels of operation.

Since we began Virtual Programming in summer 2020 on platforms like Facebook Live, Zoom and ON24, we’ve hosted almost 800 online events with nearly 34,000 total participants from across the globe. We will launch a virtual library community website this spring with links to upcoming events, and recordings of past programs to view at your convenience.

Johnson County Library’s first eNewsletter, The Open Book, also launched in 2020. Sent directly to your inbox on the first Tuesday of each month, The Open Book allows us to share highlights and updates from across our 14 branches and online resources. We’ve since grown our email outreach to include newsletters to our Summer Reading program, Kids and Family features, and Career and Finance offerings. Signup is easy at jocolibrary.org/enewsletters.

For many of us, the best part about Johnson County Library is the experiences and interactions we share as a community.

We’ll update our website and social media platforms and will send you emails through your Library account as we add back hours, services and events throughout the year. Meanwhile, as we look ahead to spring, we look forward to bringing the best of the library right to your home with features both familiar and new – see a full list of events and register at jocolibrary.org/events.

Our new Connect with Your Community series explores the many ways your tax dollars help make Johnson County a great place to live.

On March 2, we’ll meet employees from the K-State Research and Extension Office (a unique partnership with Kansas State University, Johnson County Government and the United States Department of Agriculture).

On April 6, we’ll get to know the Facilities Management team, who oversee maintenance on existing county properties as well as design and construction of new ones, like the Johnson County Courthouse.

Artists in Sight is another exciting new event series that features some of the Kansas City area’s best visual artists for insights about their work, creative process and the things that inspire them. These 30-minute monthly conversations include painter and musician Sol Anzorena on March 23 and author and illustrator Lindsey Yankey on April 27.

Finally, our virtual booklists are a great place to discover new reads and upcoming releases. Place your holds straight from the booklists and pick up at your local branch. Click on the Explore section of jocolibrary.org or follow our librarians in the catalog to get started.

We also host weekly interactive Book Parties on Facebook Live to get recommendations straight from library staff and your fellow readers.

Elissa Andre is external communication manager for Johnson County Library.

VOLUNTEER!

VISITOR SERVICE ASSISTANTS

Learn about art, expand your understanding!
While the Nerman Museum is currently closed to the public, our volunteers continue to meet with staff online to train, learn and prepare to reopen.

Contact the Education Coordinator
913-469-8500 ext 4989
Tours@nermanmuseum.org
Join online at nermanmuseum.org

Betty Woodman, Persian Pillow Pitcher No. 6, 1981, Earthenware and glaze, Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, Johnson County Community College, Overland Park

Library expands curbside service
Summer hours of 5 a.m. to 11 p.m. go into effect March 1 for many Johnson County Park and Recreation District parks. Summer hours will stay in effect through Oct. 31. District parks impacted by the change in hours are:

• Shawnee Mission Park, 7900 Renner Road, Shawnee and Lenexa.
• Heritage Park, 16050 Pflumm Road, Olathe.
• Kill Creek Park, 11670 Homestead Lane, Olathe.
• Lexington Lake Park, 8850 Sunflower Road, DeSoto.
• Big Bull Creek Park, 20425 Sunflower Road, Edgerton.
• Meadowbrook Park, 9101 Nall, Prairie Village.

Summer hours for Antioch Park, 6501 Antioch Road, Merriam, are 6 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Other district parks with year-round dawn to dusk hours include: Ernie Miller Park, 909 North Kansas 7 Highway, Olathe; Sunflower Nature Park, 103rd Street and Edgerton Road, rural DeSoto; Thomas S. Stoll Memorial Park, 12500 W. 119th St., Overland Park; Camp Branch Glade, 175th Street and Mission Road, Aubry Township; Stilwell Community Park, 207th Street and Metcalf Avenue, Stilwell; Arthur and Betty Verhaeghe Park, 11401 W 167th St., Overland Park; and all of the Streamway Park System access points.

For more information, visit the district’s website at JCPRD.com or call 913-888-4713.

Virtual tour to focus on Holocaust

The Johnson County Park and Recreation District’s 50 Plus Department is sponsoring a virtual presentation on the Holocaust and a tour of the St. Louis Kaplan Feldman Holocaust Museum. at 9 a.m. Tuesday, April 6.

Amy Lutz, historian, docent and the communications and social media manager for the museum, will provide a virtual opportunity to tour some of the museum’s exhibits and will share the history of the Holocaust through a photographic narrative.

The museum is dedicated to preserving the legacy of the Holocaust, education about its causes and illustrating how what happened during this tragic period relates to our lives today.

Six million Jews and millions of others perished in the Holocaust and their memory must not be forgotten.
t’s been said that youth is wasted on the young; they just don’t appreciate it.

From my experience, I believe this is true. When I was younger, I couldn’t wait to be older. But now that I’m older, I find waiting is not such a bad thing! Even my teenage son often complains that time is moving too slowly for him. He wants a job and independence. But I just want time to slow down.

While there’s not much we can do about the speed of time, there are some things that research shows we can do to potentially extend the time we have. Researchers who study the lives of people who’ve lived the longest determined that there are eight key habits that foster longevity. These habits include:

1. **Destressing** – Stress activates our bodies’ “flight or fight” instincts. Constant stress wears our bodies down which leads to many health problems like high blood pressure, heart disease and diabetes. Developing a regular relaxing routine can help slow everything down and give your body a chance to recover.

2. **Purpose** – Having a purpose brings meaning to life and helps put difficult situations into perspective. All people at any stage in life can have a purpose. Your purpose doesn’t have to be big; it just must be meaningful for you.

3. **Eating plants** – It’s no secret that healthy eating is good for our bodies. You can’t eat healthfully without eating plants. They’re packed with nutrients which are the essential components that sustain our bodies—and our lives.

4. **Spending time with loved ones** – Surrounding ourselves with people who want the best for us not only feels good—it is good!

5. **80% rule** – We should listen to our bodies when we eat and drop the fork when we feel 80% full.

6. **Right tribe** – Want to change your habits? Change your tribe! We tend to model the people we’re around, so surround yourself with people who support positive behaviors.

7. **Belong** – All of the longest living populations belonged to a faith-based community from different denominations. Being connected, physically or virtually, to a unified community can add purpose—and time.

8. **Move naturally** – It’s not vital to be a marathoner or weightlifter to extend time, but it is vital to move. Finding ways to be active naturally throughout the day can do wonders for our health.

Want to learn more about these lifestyle habits? Join our eight-week Walk Kansas program that challenges you to move more, sit less and make better nutrition choices. Each week we’ll explore one of these topics through a Zoom class and encourage you to make healthy choices.

To learn more about this program and how to participate, visit our johnson.k-state.edu webpage and click on the Walk Kansas link.

Crystal Futrell is the health and food safety agent at the Johnson County K-State Research and Extension Office.

---

**Walk your way to more time**

By Crystal Futrell

With all the things we worried about in 2020 wouldn’t it be nice if you had one less thing to worry about?

Give your loved ones peace of mind.

Contact us to make your arrangements ahead of time.

---

### Give the Gift of Peace of Mind

With all the things we worried about in 2020 wouldn’t it be nice if you had one less thing to worry about?

Give your loved ones peace of mind.

Contact us to make your arrangements ahead of time.

---

**Porter Funeral Homes and Crematory**

Locally Owned and Operated Since 1902

[www.porterfuneralhome.com](http://www.porterfuneralhome.com)

---

[www.jocogov.org/thebesttimes](http://www.jocogov.org/thebesttimes) • 22 • March-April 2021
Spring Strolling walks offer way to explore outdoors

Spring will soon be in the air and the call for a crisp morning walk is a welcome sound.

Johnson County Park and Recreation District’s 50 Plus Department is offering Spring Strolling walks at nearby trails. Patrons can enjoy socializing and exercising at a safe distance.

Interested walkers are invited to meet staff at 9 a.m. at each location and stroll at a comfortable pace on these hour-long walks.

The first stroll will take place Thursday, March 25 at the Overland Park Arboretum at 8909 W. 179th St. Enjoy the stunning trail while admiring the beautiful gardens. The cost is $5 for Johnson County residents and $6 for nonresidents (includes admission fee to the arboretum.)

Meadowbrook Park is one of Johnson County’s newest parks. On Wednesday, April 7, walkers can meet the staff at the clubhouse and walk along a trail, featuring an outdoor fitness area, three fishing lakes and expansive green spaces. The cost is $2 for Johnson County residents and $3 for nonresidents.

A stroll on the Mill Creek Streamway trail system is being offered on Wednesday, April 21. Participants can meet staff at the 87th Lane Access Trailhead’s Shelter 3 at 19803 W. 87th St. The cost is $2 for Johnson County residents and $3 for nonresidents.

Social distancing will be encouraged and so is socializing! Walkers can participate in a safe and social way to get those steps in, enjoy the company of others and a cup of coffee together after the stroll.

For more information on these and other outdoor programs or to register by phone, please call 913-831-3359. To register online, visit jcprd.com/50plusvirtual.

---

YOUR WELLNESS
Our Priority

Safe, Secure, Lifetime Retirement Income?
Don’t leave work without it!

The team at Protecting Your Retirement are experts in helping you plan income that you cannot outlive with no stock market risk, fees or commissions. Call for your appointment today. protectingyourretirement.com

ANTHOLOLOGY SENIOR LIVING OLATHE
Put your mind at ease with a care team working tirelessly to keep you safe at Anthology Senior Living of Olathe. Discover a vibrant community to continue your life story.

Ready to Start Your Next Chapter?
TOUR TODAY!

913-815-8364

101 West 151st Street Olathe, KS
AnthologySeniorLiving.com/Olathe
March-April classifieds

SenCom (Senior Computer Users Group) will continue to provide FREE COMPUTER WEBINARS through March. These are 1 to 1-½ hour live video conferencing sessions on topics like Basic Smartphone Usage, Windows File Explorer Tips, and other requested topics from members. We will also continue to hold our monthly general meeting and special interest group meetings by video conference until we are able to meet in-person again. We anticipate restarting in-person classroom instruction in April if allowed and are tentatively scheduling four classes per month for the second quarter. For schedules and more information on how to attend a video conference by phone, tablet, or computer, or attend an in-person class check us out at www.kcsenior.net or call Lou at 913-298-0575 with any questions.

Electricians - semi-retired, licensed, neat and courteous. "We work with you, listen, and advise accordingly." All jobs considered, from adding new receptacles and lights to upgrading electrical service panel. Stop over-paying. Raymond 913-671-8868.

B & L Quilting Longarm Service. Quilting E2E Quilting Designs. Call Linda VanDiver: 913-469-9522 Email: lbvandivner@yahoo.com.

Need help with Medicare? Medicare Supplements, Medicare Advantage or Part D Plans- Whether you are just now aging into Medicare or would like to compare your current plan, you have options. Let me help you find the best plan or answer your questions. I’m a local, licensed and experienced Medicare advisor. Call Rhonda at 913-579-3349.


LEND A HANDY HELPER, LLC. We do those "little" jobs that other Handymen won't do. Licensed, Insured. Free Estimates. From Lightbulbs to Ceiling fans, Gutters, Power washing, and Grab bars. No Job Too Small! 22 year Retired Military Veteran, Honest, Reliable, REASONABLE. You can make an estimate appointment online at the website or call 913-713-9030. www.lendahandyhelper.com.


The classified ad rate in The Best Times is $55 for the first 20 words and $0.75 for each additional word. Advertising rates and advertising deadlines are subject to change without notice.

Payment for classified ads and business card ads must be paid in advance by the invoice due date prior to ad publication.

Classified ad requests are not accepted after the third day of the month preceding the publication. For more information on the classified ad or business card ad process, contact Tim Phenicie.

Email: tim.phenicie@jocogov.org
Call: 913-715-8920

www.jocogov.org/thebesttimes • 24 • March-April 2021
March-April Classifieds


Lawn Mowing, Aeration, Seeding, Fertilizing, and Landscape. Honest, Reliable and Reasonable. 25 years exp. of golf grounds management. Call Kurt at Kaw Lawns 816-896-7354.

How do I get rid of all these machines & tools? If you have a basement or garage full of woodworking tools, why not let me price and sell them while freeing up some space and putting cash in your hands. With over 24 years’ experience in appraising and selling woodworking machinery & tools, I can make life easier. Call or email Mike at 913-375-5750_mbcobb5@gmail.com.


Can We Buy Your House? We pay cash for houses in good neighborhoods. We buy in as-is condition and you can close on the day of your choosing. Easy. Cash. No Commission. Schedule a no obligation appointment. Daniel Bennison 913-787-6354.

Senior Care Assistance. Assist with showers, meal, errands, medication management and companionship. Fee: $50 for 3 hours Certified Nurse Assistant, (evening hours 5 to 8pm) Lisa 314-229-1703.

Want to sell your home? Don’t know where to start? Retired Overland Park Realtor will pay cash for your home. No inspections, appraisals or closing costs. Leave furniture behind. Broken basements ok. Linda Mathiesen. 913-642-5055.


ANTiques WANTED: 35th year in business in KC. We are actively looking to purchase antique furniture, paintings, glassware, quilts, jewelry, postcards, watch- es, pottery, advertising signs, country store items and almost anything old or unusual. Free verbal appraisals. Call 913-677-5566 or www.horsefeathersantiques.com.

ALL CLEAN CARPETS. Family Owned and Operated since 1977! Carpets-Tile-Grout-Ori entals / Area Rug Cleaning. Small Carpet Repairs and Odor Control. We also Clean Upholstery. Sofa’s-Love Seats-Chairs. Mention This Ad and receive 10% off your first cleaning. ALL CLEAN CARPETS 913-894-0301.


PROFESSIONAL HANDYMAN. Brooks Lytle has “UN-RETIRED” and is again offering to help you with small handyman projects. I specialize in minor plumbing and electrical, disposals, toilet repair, faucets, ceiling fans, lights, outlets and switches. Call 913-701-5171.

One cemetery plot available in Oak Lawn Memorial Gardens in Olathe, Kansas. Willing to discuss reasonable offers. Call Bob at 913-444-2240.


Companion site for two Oak Lawn Memorial Gardens Olathe lawn crypt block nine Lot 10 easy access (v6000) $3,750 441-2773.


Johnson County Memori al Gardens Lawn Crypt for 2, traditional cemetery option, includes vault, headstone, vases. Cemetery Rep. will show plot. Please call Deborah: 505-280-0312. Eager to Sell!

March calendar

Due to the COVID-19 and preventative actions, please check websites or call ahead of time for the latest information about program/class/events cancellations and/or facility closures.

March 1
Pickleball Noon-3:30 pm $2 Lenexa Community Center BYO racquet.

March 2
50 & Beyond Matinee “Yellow Rose” 12:30 pm. $1/2. Powell Community Center

March 3
Silver Screen Matinee. 1 pm. FREE. Merriam Community Center. Masks required. Limited space. Call to reserve a spot.

March 4
Ping pong 11am-4pm FREE Lenexa Community Center

March 5
50+ ART: China Panting Drop In. 9 am – noon $3 Meadowbrook Park Clubhouse

March 8
Pickleball. Noon-3:30 pm $2 Lenexa Community Center BYO racquet.

March 9
Ping pong 11am-4pm FREE Lenexa Community Center
March-April calendar

Due to the COVID-19 and preventative actions, please check websites or call ahead of time for the latest information about program/class/events cancellations and/or facility closures.

March 10
Silver Screen Matinee
1 pm. FREE. Merriam Community Center. Masks required. Limited space. Call to reserve a spot.

March 11
BINGO: 1:30-3:30 pm. $3 Merriam Community Center. BYO snacks & drinks. Space limited. Call to reserve a spot.

March 12
50 & Beyond SPECIAL Bingo "Sweetheart Bingo". 1:30 pm. $1/2. Shawnee Town 1929 (Location Change)

March 15
Pickleball Noon-3:30 pm $2 Lenexa Community Center. BYO racquet.

March 16
50 & Beyond Matinee “The Mustang” 12:30 pm. $1/2 Powell Community Center

March 17
Silver Screen Matinee. 1 pm. FREE. Merriam Community Center. Masks required. Limited space. Call to reserve a spot.

March 18
Senior Prep. Noon-3:30 pm $35/10 Class Card. Lenexa Community Center. Get energized and gain cardiovascular endurance, flexibility and strength.

March 19
50 & Beyond SPECIAL Bingo "Spring into Spring." 1:30 pm. $1/2. Powell Community Center

March 20
Spring Break Living History. 10 am-4 pm $7 adults/$5, children 5-11. Mahaffie Stagecoach Stop & Farm

March 22
Pickleball Noon-3:30 pm $2 Lenexa Community Center. BYO racquet.

March 23
Senior Prep. Noon-3:30 pm $35/10 Class Card. Lenexa Community Center. Get energized and gain cardiovascular endurance, flexibility and strength.

March 24
Silver Screen Matinee. 1 pm. FREE. Merriam Community Center. Masks required. Limited space. Call to reserve a spot.

March 25
Ping Pong 11am-4pm FREE Lenexa Community Center

March 26
Chair Yoga 9-10 am $40/10 class card. Lenexa Community Center

March 27
Friends of the Library Book Sale. 10 am – 4 pm. All books $1 or less. Olathe Indian Creek Library

March 28
Friends of the Library Book Sale 1–4 pm. All books $1 or less. Olathe Indian Creek Library

March 29
Pickleball Noon-3:30 pm $2 Lenexa Community Center. BYO racquet.

March 30
50 & Beyond Matinee “Let Him Go” 12:30 pm. $1/2. Powell Community Center

March 31
Hearing Checks. 9:30-11:30 am. FREE. Powell Community Center

April 1
Ping pong 11am-4pm FREE Lenexa Community Center

April 2
Senior Pep 9:30-10:30 am $35/10 class card. Lenexa Community Center

April 3
Easter: 1860's Style! $7/adults, $5/children ages 5-11, includes all activities. Mahaffie Stagecoach Stop & Farm

April 5
Pickleball Noon-3:30 pm $2 Lenexa Community Center. BYO racquet.

April 6
Senior Prep. Noon-3:30 pm $35/10 Class Card. Lenexa Community Center. Get energized and gain cardiovascular endurance, flexibility and strength.

I live alone

but I’m never alone. I have Life Alert®

One touch of a button sends help fast, 24/7, even when you can’t reach a phone for:

- medical
- fall
- fire
- invasion
- CO gas emergencies.

FREE SHIPPING!

No landline? No problem!

Life Alert®

Industry Leader
Since 1987

For a FREE brochure call:
1-888-675-0754

www.jocogov.org/thebesttimes • 26 • March-April 2021
Due to the COVID-19 and preventative actions, please check websites or call ahead of time for the latest information about program/class/events cancellations and/or facility closures.

April 7
Silver Screen Matinee. 1 pm. FREE. Merriam Community Center. Masks required. Limited space. Call to reserve a spot.

April 8
BINGO. 1:30-3:30 pm. $3. Merriam Community Center. BYO snacks & drinks. Space limited. Call to reserve a slot.

April 9
Chair Yoga 9-10 am $40/10 class card. Community Center

April 12
Pickleball. Noon-3:30 pm $2. Lenexa Community Center. BYO racquet.

April 13
50 & Beyond Matinee “Wild Rose” 12:30 pm. $1/2. Powell Community Center

April 14
50+ Virtual Bingo-Totally 90’s Trivia. 1:30-2:30 pm FREE Virtual. https://www.jcprd.com/1558/Virtual-Programs

April 15
Silver Screen Matinee. 1 pm. FREE. Merriam Community Center. Masks required. Limited space. Call to reserve a spot.

April 16
50 & Beyond SPECIAL Bingo "April Showers." 1:30 pm. $1/2. Powell Community Center

April 19
Pickleball Noon-3:30 pm $2. Lenexa Community Center. BYO racquet.

April 20
50+ Special Interest: Sprucing up Landscaping. 1-2 pm FREE Virtual. https://www.jcprd.com/1558/Virtual-Programs

April 21
Silver Screen Matinee. 1 pm. FREE. Merriam Community Center. Masks required. Limited space. Call to reserve a spot.

April 22
Senior Prep. Noon-3:30 pm $35/10 Class Card. Lenexa Community Center. Get energized and gain cardiovascular endurance, flexibility and strength.

Social Security: Your Questions Answered. 4-4:45 pm FREE. Olathe Indian Creek Library. Register by calling 913-971-6850.

April 23
Chair Yoga 9-10 am $40/10 class card. Lenexa Community Center

April 24
Spring on the Farm. 10 am – 4 pm $7/adults, $5/children ages 5-11. Mahaffie Stagecoach Stop & Farm

April 26
Pickleball Noon-3:30 pm $2. Lenexa Community Center. BYO racquet.

April 27
50 & Beyond Matinee “Greyhound” 12:30 pm. $1/2. Powell Community Center

April 28
Hearing Checks. 9:30-11:30 am. FREE. Powell Community Center

April 29
Ping pong 11am-4pm FREE. Lenexa Community Center

April 30
Chair Yoga 9-10 am $40/10 class card. Lenexa Community Center

FACILITY LOCATIONS

BLUE VALLEY REC: Blue Valley Recreation Activity Center, 6545 W. 151st St., Overland Park; 913-685-6090; bluevalleyrec.org.

CENTRAL RESOURCE LIBRARY: 9875 W. 87th St., Overland Park; 913-826-4600 and Press 3 for all Johnson County Library reservations.

EXTENSION: Johnson County K-State Research and Extension, 11811 S. Sunset Drive, Olathe; 913-715-7000; johnson.ksu.edu/classes.

ARTS & HERITAGE: Arts & Heritage Center, 8788 Metcalf Ave., Overland Park; 913-826-2787; jocoAHC.com.

LENEXA SENIOR CENTER: 13425 Walnut St., Lenexa; 913-477-7100.

MAHAFFIE STAGECOACH STOP AND FARM: 1200 Kansas City Road, Olathe; 913-971-5111.

MATT ROSS: Matt Ross Community Center, 8101 Marty St., Overland Park; 913-826-2830.

MEADOWBROOK PARK CLUBHOUSE: 9101 Nall Ave., Prairie Village; 913-826-2975.

MERRIAM COMMUNITY CENTER: 6040 Slater St., Merriam; 913-322-5550.

MILL CREEK: Mill Creek Activity Center, 6518 Vista, Shawnee; 913-826-2950.


OLATHE DOWNTOWN LIBRARY: 1078A W. Santa Fe, Olathe; 913-971-6850; to register, 913-971-6888.

OLATHE INDIAN CREEK BRANCH LIBRARY: 16100 W. 135th St., Olathe; 913-971-6835.

PRAIRIE VILLAGE: Prairie Village Community Center, 7720 Mission Road, Prairie Village; 913-381-6464.

ROELAND PARK: Roeland Park Community Center, 4850 Rosewood Drive, Roeland Park; 913-826-3160.

SHAWNEE CIVIC CENTRE: 13817 Johnson Drive, Shawnee; 913-631-5200.

SHAWNEE SAFETY CENTER: SenCom computer lab, lower level, 6535 Quivira Road, Shawnee; 913-631-5200.

SYLVESTER POWELL: Sylvester Powell Community Center, 11902 Lowell Ave., Overland Park; 913-327-6645.

TOMAHAWK RIDGE: Tomahawk Ridge Community Center, 11501 Nall Ave., Overland Park; 913-826-2900.
ESTATE PLANNING:
IF YOU DON’T DO IT,
THE COURT WILL...

WE WILL BE THERE
WHEN YOU NEED US

- Avoid Probate and Court Interference with your Affairs
- Minimize Family Infighting
- Protect Heirs from Wasting Inheritances
- Keep Assets in Your Bloodline
- Preserve and Protect IRAs and Retirement Accounts

✓ Family Estate Planning
✓ Powers of Attorney
✓ Business Succession Planning
✓ Probate & Trust Administration
✓ Trusts
✓ Wills
✓ Asset Protection Planning
✓ Special Needs Planning

www.rasmussenlawkc.com
4747 W. 135th Street, Suite 350  |  Leawood, KS 66224

The choice of an attorney is an important decision and should not be based solely upon advertisement.