

# SEDALIA DEMOCRAT

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## Central Bank partners with Hispanic community leaders

*Bank now offers bilingual services*

**By Faith Bemiss-McKinney**  
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Sedalia's Central Bank has recently partnered with several Hispanic community leaders to expand its services to include materials printed in Spanish and bilingual staff to serve the diverse members of the local community.

The program will be available Saturday, Sept. 16 at the Sedalia Hispanic Festival hosted in downtown Sedalia.

Partnering with Central Bank are Blue Ramirez, the president of Sedalia's Hispanic Heritage Committee; Israel Baeza, the Pettis County Eastern Commissioner; Cesar Marin, the owner of El Tapatio Mexican Restaurant; and businessman Jorge Guevara. The concept came about due to Erica Petersen, Central Bank's business and marketing associate.

Petersen said she saw a need for services for the growing Hispanic community in Sedalia. She reached out to the bank and also to members of the community for ideas.

"I attended a meeting about the struggles facing women in the community, which was put on by Israel Baeza," Petersen noted. "There was a group of Hispanic women there who had much different struggles than the rest of us, mainly centered around finance."

"As the only banker in the room, this piqued my interest because our goal as a bank is to help all members of our community," she continued. "These women talked about not being comfortable walking into a bank, not being able to communicate, and really, just being scared overall to talk about lending."

Due to that discussion, she spoke to Central Bank CEO Gregg Eby and asked if they could expand their services.

"Mr. Eby and I knew the first step was to meet with community members already heavily involved with the Hispanic community, so we reached out to Israel, Jorge, Cesar and Blue to get feedback on what we could do as a bank," she said. "As a result of this collaboration, Central Bank has taken significant steps to bridge communication gaps by translating key materials into Spanish. These translated materials include brochures, flyers, and informational guides, making financial resources more accessible to a wider range of individuals."

Baeza noted Petersen spoke to him about the need for bilingual resources, and he referred her to Carlos Gomez, the CEO and president of the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Greater Kansas City.

"He was able to offer why it's a smart business decision to be able to reach out to the Hispanic community," Baeza explained. "Among the statistics he shared with us is that the Spanish contribute over \$2.5 trillion to the U.S. economy. "They are the fastest growing (community) — one of the demographics most likely to take on entrepreneurship," he continued. "So, just as a business sense, it made sense to reach out to them."

He added he believes that in the Hispanic community, word-of-mouth is essential. He said although his grandmother is unfamiliar with English, she will go to the businesses his mother suggests.

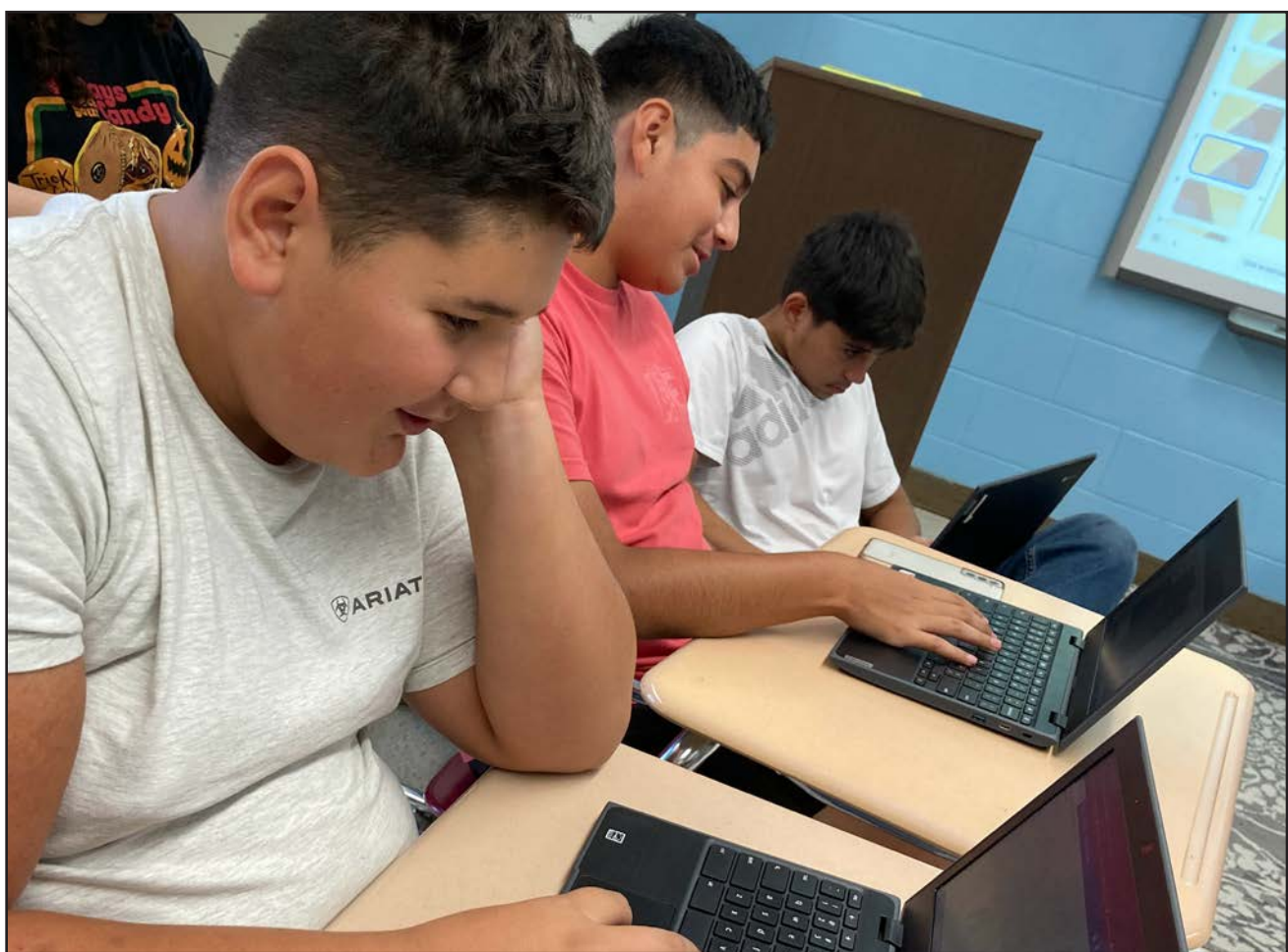
"Central Bank definitely took on not just reaching out to Hispanics, but they made several efforts to provide information that Hispanic-Americans can share with their family members as well," Baeza said.

**See BANK | A6**



At the Hispanic Festival hosted in 2015 in downtown Sedalia, two traditional dancers perform. At the Sedalia Hispanic Festival to be hosted Saturday, Sept. 16, Central Bank will be on hand with bilingual services.

FILE PHOTO BY NICOLE COOKE | DEMOCRAT



Eighth grade La Monte student Ricardo Garcia, freshman Jonzel Rios, and freshman Gabe Knight-Lintz work to put out the new student publication, The La Monte Gjallarhorn, Tuesday, Sept. 12 in Taylor Mankin's yearbook class.

PHOTO COURTESY OF TAYLOR MANKIN

## La Monte journalism students operate school newspaper

**By Chris Howell**  
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LA MONTE — At La Monte High School, Taylor Mankin teaches English, mythology, yearbook and journalism. Due to the popularity of Mankin's classes, he had a number of promising students without enough work.

So Mankin and his students started a school newspaper, the La Monte Gjallarhorn, on a Google site to keep everyone updated on school activities.

"It started with just the fact that I had 15 kids signed up for yearbook," Mankin said. "So that was too many kids just to work on the yearbook, so since we're offering it under the title of 'journalism,' we might as well start a paper and spread the all the events that we're doing here at La Monte."

Like in many professional newsrooms, Mankin and the journal-

ism students write story ideas on a dry-erase board, then fan out across the La Monte School campus in search of stories and accompanying photos for their Google-based paper.

"On this board over here, I have a list of reoccurring articles," Mankin said. "Like athlete of the week, student of the week, staff of the week. But then, like in the margins, I usually ask them ideas what they think we should write about."

Luckily, Mankin's students, along with being aspiring journalists, have wide-ranging interests to draw upon for story fodder.

"I have a pretty good collection of different kids," Mankin said. "Some FFA, I have some in every sport, some in only one sport, some all the clubs and some in none of the clubs. So anytime they get something going on, I'd ask them to share and tell



Journalism teacher Taylor Mankin and his yearbook class have taken on the duties of producing a school paper in addition to creating the yearbook.

PHOTO BY CHRIS HOWELL | DEMOCRAT

us what it's about. If we can make a story out of it, I'd love to."

Mankin's students rally when asked to go on assignment and generally come back with a story, even the shy ones.

"Most of the kids that I have are very outspoken," Mankin said. "Since we're in a small school, everyone knows each other already, so that helps. But there are some shy kids that don't want to sign up to do it."

They like the idea of being able to share their work, so it's kind of like carrying the stick and the carrot."

Amber Knoernschild is the elementary principal and special education director. Knoernschild used to have to post all the news to the Google site herself, but with Mankin's class handling the journalism duties, her job is as simple as copy, paste, and publish.

**See STUDENTS | A6**

## Two sentenced in two Pettis County court cases

**By Democrat Staff**

Two people in two separate Pettis County cases were sentenced over the last week.

Rebecca O. Stetzenbach, of Sedalia, was sentenced Friday, Sept. 8 in Pettis County Circuit Court to seven years in the Missouri Department of Corrections for her involvement in the June 12, 2022, abuse of a 3-year-old child.

The Democrat previously reported that after the Pettis County Sheriff's Office conducted a wellness check on a child who had reportedly received burns to his legs, the child was rushed to Children's Mercy Hospital. The child spent 14 days in the burn ward with second- and third-degree burns.

Rebecca and Dylan M. Stetzenbach were arrested and charged with first-degree endangering the welfare of a child-causing serious physical injury (non-sexual contact).

Rebecca Stetzenbach was sentenced by Judge Robert L. Koffman after pleading guilty in 2022.

Dylan Stetzenbach is set for sentencing Oct. 12.

Joseph D. Rankin was sentenced Monday, Sept. 11 in Saline County Circuit Court to 10 years in the Missouri Department of Corrections for his involvement in the 2020 fatal shooting of Sedalian Robert G. Fox Jr.

Rankin was sentenced by Judge Dennis Rolf after pleading guilty in June to one count of involuntary manslaughter. The case

was filed in Pettis County Circuit Court, but a change of venue to Saline County was granted in 2022.

The Democrat previously reported Rankin was residing in Kansas City, Kansas, when he and Daniel Fernandez, also of Kansas City, Kansas, came to Sedalia on Feb. 22, 2020, to kill Fox for money owed to the Kansas City drug cartel. An autopsy confirmed the victim died from a gunshot.

Fernandez entered a guilty plea in May 2021 to amended charges: voluntary manslaughter and

third-degree kidnapping. He was sentenced to eight years in the Missouri Department of Corrections for manslaughter and one year in jail for kidnapping. The sentences are to be served consecutively.

Rankin was charged in 2020 with felony second-degree murder, felony armed criminal action, felony second-degree kidnapping and felony unlawful use of a weapon. Online court records from 2021 and 2022 for various cases list Rankin as living in Sedalia and Kansas City, Missouri.



Stetzenbach



Rankin



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## OBITUARIES

### Anna Belle Williams

Anna Belle Williams, 100, of Sedalia, MO, passed away Monday, September 11, 2023, at Primrose Retirement Community in Sedalia.

She was born February 9, 1923, in Pettis County, MO, a daughter of Riley and Elizabeth (Ward) Howard. On February 13, 1942, in Sedalia, she married Paul "Bill" Warren Williams. He preceded her in death on November 21, 2018.

Anna Belle worked for Rival Manufacturing for many years. She enjoyed sewing, quilting and playing cards. Anna Belle loved spending time with her family, especially her grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Survivors include three children, Paul Warren Williams (Janet) of La Monte, MO, Ronald Eugene Williams (Tina) of Waxahachie, TX, and Sharron Kaye Rustman (Mike) of Rocky Mount, MO; five grandchildren, Stephen Williams (Pam),

Scott Williams, Aimee Kotrba (Jeff), Kristopher Rustman (Candis), and Gerry McEnery; 12 great-grandchildren and three great-great-grandchildren.

In addition to both of her parents and her husband, she was preceded in death by two siblings, Leroy Howard and Irene Shackles Pauley.

Visitation will be held from 1 p.m. until service time on Saturday, September 16, 2023, at Heckart Funeral Home in Sedalia. Funeral services will be at 2 p.m. on Saturday at the funeral home, with Jeff Page officiating.

Casket bearers will be grandsons Stephen Williams, Kris Rustman, and Scott Williams and great-grandsons Shane Williams, Blake Williams and Gage Williams.

Burial will be in Crown Hill Cemetery.

Memorials are suggested to Crossroads Hospice or donor's choice.



### John Wayne Dove

John Wayne Dove, 67, of Green Ridge, MO, passed away on Monday, September 11, 2023, at St. Luke's East Hospital in Lee's Summit, MO. He was born on August 9, 1956, in Sedalia, MO, the son of Bernard O. and Helen M. (Reusch) Dove, who preceded him in death.

On May 5, 1990, at St. Johns Lutheran Church in Cole Camp, MO, he was united in marriage to Denise Ann Viets, who resides in the home.

John graduated from Green Ridge High School in 1974. He spent his entire life farming. In 1988, he went to work for Fantasia Confections for 20 years until they closed. He then went on to work for eight years at MFA Agri-Services. He worked at Whiteman Air Force Base at Envision until he retired due to his health in August 2020.

He was an avid hunter and trap shooter. He was a member of the Sedalia Rod and Gun Club for many years. He and his late brother, David, organized and supervised registered trap shoots for over 20 years. He played slow-pitch softball for many years on the team the "Turtle Herd." He was a huge St. Louis Cardinals and Kansas City Chiefs fan. He was a member of the Green Ridge Volunteer Fire Department and served as the treasurer for many years. He was also a Green Ridge Community Building Board member and served as treasurer there. He served on the School Board in Green Ridge for six years, one of those terms as the president. He enjoyed going to

his son's many sporting events over the years.

Besides his wife, Denise, John is survived by his son, Landon Dove of Green Ridge, MO; one brother, James Dove (Georgia Stevens) of Green Ridge, MO; one sister, Pauline Pritchett (Doug) of Belton, MO; sister-in-law, Kathy Dove of Sedalia, MO; and several nieces and nephews.

Besides his parents, John is preceded in death by a brother, David Dove, and two sisters-in-law, Cheri Dove and Julia Dove.

Visitation will be from 6 to 8 p.m. on Thursday, September 14, 2023, at Rea Funeral Chapel, Sedalia.

Funeral services will be held at 10 a.m. on Friday, September 15, 2023, at Our Savior Lutheran Church, with pastor Andrew Tessone officiating.

The burial will be at Calvary Cemetery, Sedalia, MO.

Pallbearers will be Matt Dove, Derek Pritchett, Dennis Dove, Tom Walz, Brad Grupe, and Juan Ramirez.

Honorary bearers will be Kent Scotten, Johnnie Kreisel, Ron Kreisel, Tony and Audrey Hagedorn, Tom and Carla White, Angella Ramirez, David Curtis, Allan Rohrbach, Tim Hudson, and Sarah Grupe.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Green Ridge Fire Department, Green Ridge Community Building, or the Our Savior Lutheran Church Radio Ministry in the care of Rea Funeral Chapel.



## DEATH NOTICE

### Barr

Lois Jean Barr, 77, of Cole Camp, died Friday, Sept. 8, 2023.

Funeral services will be at 7 p.m. Friday, Sept. 15, 2023, at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Cole Camp. Burial will be at 11:30 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 16, 2023, at Edwards Cemetery in Kirbyville. Arrangements are under the direction of the Fox Funeral Home in Cole Camp.

## FUNERALS

### Heather Carroll

6 p.m. today at Rea Funeral Chapel in Sedalia. Arrangements are under the direction of Rea Funeral Chapel.

### Pauline Marie Zimmerschied

11 a.m. Thursday at Brauersville Lutheran

Church in Cole Camp. Arrangements are under the direction of the Fox Funeral Home in Cole Camp.

### John Wayne Dove

10 a.m. Friday at Our Savior Lutheran Church in Sedalia. Arrangements are under the direction of Rea Funeral Chapel in

Sedalia.

### Lois Jean Barr

7 p.m. Friday at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Cole Camp. Arrangements are under the direction of Fox Funeral Home in Cole Camp.

### Frederick Goetz

11 a.m. Saturday at Cole Camp Cemetery

in Cole Camp. Arrangements are under the direction of the Fox Funeral Home in Cole Camp.

### Anna Belle Williams

2 p.m. Saturday at Heckart Funeral Home in Sedalia. Arrangements are under the direction of Heckart Funeral Home.

## POLICE REPORTS

This list is a sampling of crime in Sedalia and the surrounding area. Information is taken from official police reports, which do not necessarily contain statements from all parties involved in each case.

### Sedalia Police Department Arrests Sept. 11

4:24 a.m.: Sarita Linda Leon, 61, of the 600 block of South Washington Avenue, was arrested after officers responded to a business in the 1600 block of East Broadway Boulevard in reference to a theft. They made contact with a highly intoxicated female who, when run through dispatch, was confirmed to have a non-expiring trespass from the business. Leon was arrested and released with a municipal citation and a court date.

8:44 a.m.: Sarita L. Leon, 61, was arrested after an officer responded to a business in the 3100 block of West Broadway Boulevard for a report of someone defecating in the parking lot. Contact was made with Leon, who had feces on her shoes. The caller said the

suspect's private areas were exposed during the incident and Leon was arrested, transported to the Pettis County Jail, and placed on a 24-hour hold pending charges of sexual misconduct.

1:48 p.m.: Stella Ray Oetting, 30, of the 300 block of McAnally Court, was arrested after police responded for a physical disturbance. Contact was made with both parties. A primary physical aggressor was determined and Oetting was placed under arrest. While making the arrest, she resisted and kicked officers and had to be restrained further. She was transported to the Pettis County Jail and placed on a 24-hour hold.

8:25 p.m.: Samuel Harrison Hunton, 19, of the 700 block of McVey Road, was arrested after officers responded to the 300 block of South Ohio Avenue for a domestic disturbance. The victim provided information on the assault and officers requested assistance from the Pettis County Sheriff's Office due to the suspect living outside the city limits. Officers and deputies went to the address, placed Hunton

under arrest, and transported him into the Pettis County Jail for a 24-hour hold pending fourth-degree domestic assault and theft charges.

### Sept. 12

5:01 a.m.: Francisco M. Pasqual, 20, of the 1700 block of Stewart Avenue, was arrested after a traffic stop for speeding. He did not have a valid license and was issued citations for speeding, no proof of insurance, and operating a motor vehicle without a valid driver's license. Pasqual was released from the scene pending pick up from a licensed driver.

### Incidents Sept. 11

8:05 a.m.: Officers responded to the 2800 block of Jerome Drive in reference to a previous animal attack. A stray cat, white in color, attacked a resident in the area while they were in their yard. The animal was reported to be friendly normally, however, something changed its behavior on that day. Animal control was advised of the situation and a report was made for documentation.

9:54 a.m.: Officers responded to the 400 block of Welch Court for a theft

report. The reporting party said over the weekend, someone stole items from her residence. No suspects were identified.

8:29 p.m.: Officers responded to the 1800 block of South Kentucky Avenue in reference to a hit-and-run accident. Parties identified two vehicles that were damaged when an unknown vehicle struck a parked vehicle, which struck another parked vehicle. The suspect vehicle has not been identified. A report and photographs of the incident were submitted.

8:47 p.m.: Officers responded to the 600 block of East 19th Street in reference to a burglary. A small motorcycle was stolen from a garage but was recovered a short time later. A suspect has not been located.

### Missouri State Highway Patrol Arrests Sept. 11

10:41 p.m.: Jack E. Perry, 21, of Windsor, was arrested in Pettis County for driving while intoxicated. He was transported to the Pettis County Jail and released.

Compiled by Chris Howell.

## CRASH REPORTS

### Claycomo man hurt in Johnson accident

Ian J. Dawson, 21, of Claycomo, sustained minor injury at noon Monday in a Johnson County accident.

According to a Missouri State Highway Patrol report, a 2001 Dodge Ram driven by Peyton W. Duchesne, 24, of Warrensburg, west on U.S. Highway 50 was slowing to make a left turn.

Dawson failed to observe it and struck the rear of the truck with his Honda Accord.

Both drivers were wearing seat belts. Dawson was transported to Western Missouri Medical Center in Warrensburg by Johnson County Ambulance District.

### Kansas woman injured in Saline County accident

Rebecca L. Roberts, 57,

of Riley, Kansas, sustained moderate injuries at 10:37 a.m. Monday in a Saline County accident.

According to a Missouri State Highway Patrol report, Roberts was driving a 2003 Honda Odyssey south on U.S. Highway 65 when she traveled off the left side of the roadway. She over-corrected and the vehicle traveled off the right side of the roadway

and overturned.

She was not wearing a seat belt and was transported by Saline County EMS to Fitzgibbon Hospital in Marshall.

Information is taken from preliminary Missouri State Highway Patrol reports, which do not necessarily contain statements from all parties involved.

Compiled by Chris Howell.

## LOCAL BRIEFS

### Green Ridge to host Harvest Fun Fest

Green Ridge will host its annual Harvest Fun Fest from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 16 at Green Ridge Park.

The parade lineup is at 9 a.m., with the parade beginning at 10 a.m. There will be games, food, crafts, a prince and princess contest, a live auction, a pie auction, a car show and a tractor show.

Entry forms can be

found at <https://linktr.ee/ChamberGR>. For more information, call Barbara at 660-620-3485. The event is sponsored by the Green Ridge Chamber of Commerce.

### Smithton Baptist to host Fish Fry

Smithton Baptist Church to host its 19th annual community Fish Fry from 4 to 7 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 16 at the Smithton Park.

There is no charge,

but donations will be accepted for unpaid student lunches at the Smithton School.

The event will feature fish and fixings, horse shoes, and children's games. New this year is a sidewalk chalk art contest at 4 p.m. for children grades K-6. For more information, call 660-473-4220.

### Mozarkite Society to host Rock & Gem Show

The Mozarkite Soci-

ety of Lincoln Mo., Inc. will host its 64th annual Rock & Gem Show from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday and Saturday, Sept. 15-16 and from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 17 at Lincoln Park in Lincoln.

Admission is free and there will be public dig for Mozarkite during the show. For more information, call Kelly at 816-835-2044 or email Mozarkiterocks@gmail.com.

## Photo Submissions

We invite readers to submit photos for "Community Snapshot," which features images of local residents and events. Images must be current, in JPEG format and must be the property of the person submitting the photo. Please include your name, city and a contact telephone number with your submission (phone numbers will not be published). Please also include the names of all persons in the photo and any additional information. Email your submissions to [news@sedaliademocrat.com](mailto:news@sedaliademocrat.com).



## Wear Red Committee donates AED to SPARK

Wear Red for Women, a Bothwell Foundation committee, recently gave an automated external defibrillator (AED) to the Sedalia-Pettis Amateur Radio Klub (SPARK).

An AED is a small, lightweight device that allows individuals and first responders to treat sudden cardiac arrest. The machine automatically analyzes the heart rhythm and when appropriate, it delivers an electrical shock to the heart to restore its normal rhythm.

SPARK is comprised of area ham radio operators who use their skills and equipment for fun and service. Klub Vice President Richard Camirand said the donated AED will be placed in the club's emergency communications trailer that is used during exercises and real disasters such as tornadoes and earthquakes.

"This is a fantastic gift, and we really appreciate the donation," Camirand said. "The AED will be another tool in the trailer. We pray we don't have to deploy it or use it, but if needed, we know we can help our own members or the community as well."

Funds to purchase the device were raised during the 2023 Wear Red for Women luncheon and auction. The committee's goal is to have AEDs in every place people work, learn, play or pray in Sedalia and Pettis County. Since the inception of the luncheon event in 2020, 72 AEDs have been placed in or committed to various locations. The 2024 Wear Red for Women event is Feb. 23, 2024, and tickets will be available in January.

*Release courtesy of Bothwell Regional Health Center.*

## S-C crowns activities king & queen



At halftime of the Smith-Cotton football game against Warrensburg High on Friday, Sept. 8, senior Dakota Acosta, left, was named activities queen and senior Alex Rice was crowned activities king. Princess, not shown, was Skyler Green. Acosta was nominated from Team SCREAM, the Smith-Cotton robotics program. Rice was nominated by the Math Club. Student votes determined the winners.

PHOTO COURTESY OF SEDALIA SCHOOL DISTRICT 200

## Sedalia donates equipment to Green Ridge FD

The City of Sedalia announced the donation of a set of Hurst extraction equipment, commonly known as the "Jaws of Life," to the Green Ridge Volunteer Fire Department.

The donated equipment is an extra set that the Sedalia Fire Department had on hand, ensuring that the Sedalia community will continue to be well-equipped for emergency situations. SFD professionals with specialized training in this equipment

spent off-duty hours instructing Green Ridge volunteers on how to use the life-saving device.

"The safety and well-being of our neighboring communities impact all of us," said Mayor Andrew Dawson. "We believe that by fortifying Green Ridge's emergency response capabilities, we are enhancing regional safety as a whole."

In many vehicle-related emergencies, quick and efficient extrication of trapped individuals is crucial for survival. The "Jaws

of Life" will help bolster the GRVFD's emergency response capabilities.

"This additional capability is not just an asset for Green Ridge; it fills critical gaps in our regional emergency response system," Sedalia Fire Chief Matt Irwin said. "When seconds matter, having access to reliable equipment can make all the difference."

The Sedalia City Council has authorized an inspection of the extraction equipment by Hurst. Any

necessary repairs will be made prior to the donation so that the equipment is in optimal condition for immediate use.

"This donation reflects the broader values and responsibilities we uphold as public servants," Dawson continued. "We are committed to using our resources in a manner that provides tangible benefits to the public, and this act exemplifies that commitment."

*Release courtesy of the City of Sedalia.*



From left, Rhonda Ahern, Wear Red for Women committee member; Lauren Thiel-Payne, Bothwell Foundation executive director; Richard Camirand, SPARK vice president; and Harry Burford, SPARK secretary.

PHOTO COURTESY OF BOTHWELL REGIONAL HEALTH CENTER

# Missouri is moving to time-based electric rate plans this fall.

Missouri customers will have a choice of **four new rate plan options**. Evergy is here to help you understand your options and choose the rate plan that best fits your household.

Learn more at [evergy.com/MyPlan](https://www.evergy.com/MyPlan)

### Why is Missouri changing to time-based rates?

Timing is everything when it comes to energy costs. Time-based rates match the cost you pay with the actual cost to produce energy. With time-based rate plans, you'll pay less for energy during off-peak times, when demand for energy is lower, and more for energy used during the peak hours of 4-8pm.



Scan to learn more about your options.

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**CONTRIBUTING COLUMN**

# Finding & accepting our own joy

Where does your joy come from and who provides it?

That is a question I have had to ponder for quite a while. We all encounter highs and lows throughout our lives and it seems that during the low periods, we struggle to find real joy.

It's not difficult to find when things are going our way and there is nothing dragging us down, but when more difficult circumstances begin to pile up, it's easy to fall into a rut and simply be "off."

I've told myself over and over again that I simply have to find my joy again. I don't want to present as though I'm overly depressed or have issues that are far greater than the average person. That's not the case at all. But sometimes, as we all know, life gets tough. We just want to be happy.

I went through a period of time when I felt as though I was "doing" for everyone else and not being reciprocated with things that would make me feel joy. I started to become bitter about the way I was feeling and looked for someone else to blame. To tell the truth, I was even blaming inanimate objects like the washing machine, my faulty broom, the smelly dish scrubber (that someone forgot to wring out and clean), and a dirty trash can. Side note: Who doesn't have a dirty trash can?

Irritants were all they were. Those things were not the cause of my inability to experience inner joy. There was something deeper. Maybe I should blame the people around me?

My husband plays a lot of golf. That was the problem! Or was it? Does his desire to experience joy mean that he's taking mine away? No. What about my kids? Are they purposefully doing things to steal my joy? No. Is it work? No.

This year hasn't been one of my finest. There has been a compilation of different traumatic and unreasonable things that have occurred. It would be easy for anyone in those circumstances to simply chalk it up to, "Life stinks and it's never going to get better." Unfortunately, that's where many people land... and stay.

Thankfully, I know where my joy is, but it is my job and mine alone to go get it back. My joy is found in the Lord.

So many people give up on God when life seems to fall apart. They become angry, sour and mean. Sometimes, they express it outwardly in everyday communication with others and sometimes, they internalize it while putting on a happy façade. Either way, it is unhealthy and counter-



**Stephanie Lefevers**  
Contributing Columnist

productive.

All I have to do is turn to my Bible and understand that this is not my permanent home. Each of us will have trials throughout life that will bring us to our knees. The question is, what do we do when we get there?

I've read the Bible many times and I have never once encountered a passage that says anything about God making life perfect for us. In fact, the Bible is loaded with trial after trial, tribulation after tribulation. And throughout all of these, one thing was consistent and that is that God was "with" them.

I can come up with 10 different scriptures right off the bat to prove that point, but I'll stick with my favorite. "For he said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you.' So we can confidently say, 'The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?'" Hebrews 13:5-6.

After all, what do anxiety and being in a funk stem from? Most often, grief and fear are the culprits.

The next question I have to ask myself is, what can I do about the things that are out of my control? Death, turmoil, guilt, shame, etc. Did I cause these things to occur or did they simply happen with me in the mix?

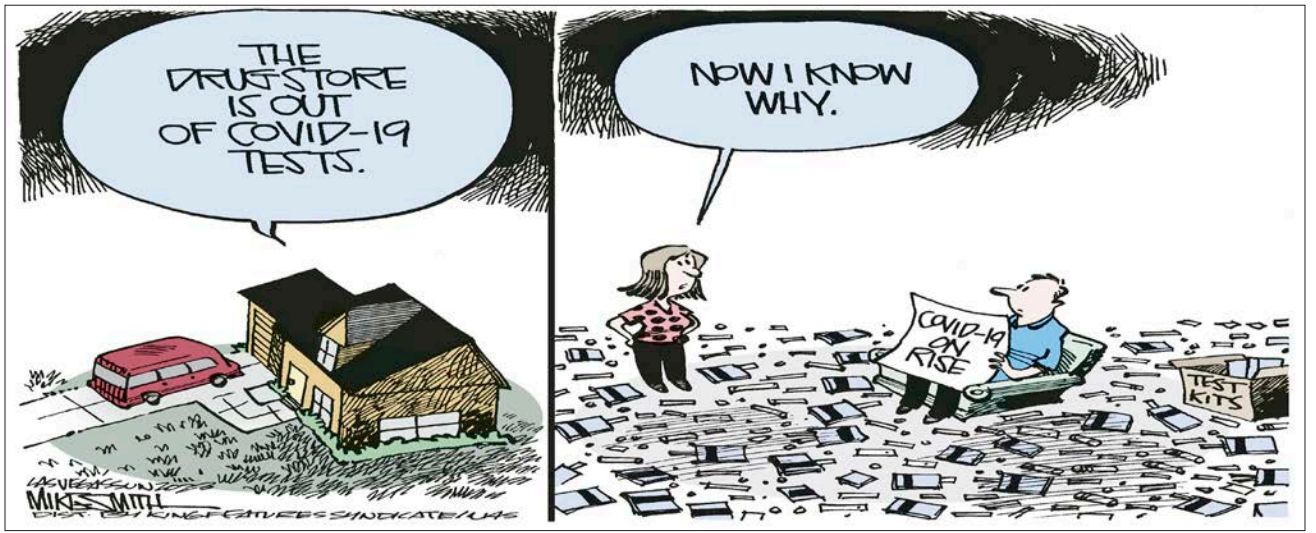
If I did something to cause it, the way back to joy is through prayer, repentance, humility and self-forgiveness. If I did not, the way back is through forgiveness, faith, hope and prayer.

James reminds us in Chapter 1, Verses 2-3, "Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance."

Our treasures are not here. They are waiting for us with the Lord. Perseverance through faith is what brings joy to our souls as we await our turn to ascend into glory.

Now more than ever, we all need to find and accept inner peace and joy as a gift that was freely given by the one who created us and loves us most.

*Stephanie Lefevers is a local business owner, former member of the Sedalia 200 Board of Education and a resident of Sedalia for more than 40 years.*



**CONTRIBUTING COLUMN**

# The unusual tale of the 'petrified woman'

Nineteenth-century folks displayed an incredible interest in the unusual, the old, and the rare. Whether it was something real, like the mastodon bones found near Warsaw or Native American arrowheads found in the fields after plowing, or fake, like the mummified mermaids displayed by traveling shows, people would pay to see it. Someone was even more interested in taking their money.

Such was the case of the "petrified female supposedly found in Johnson County" in late 1897. The woman was not displayed in Sedalia, however, because the find was revealed to be a fake by the Sedalia Democrat and the Warrensburg Star before the supposedly miraculous item was brought in a packing crate to the express office in Sedalia, addressed to Mr. Cobb and Mr. Shackelford.

The box supposedly contained the ancient petrified body of a woman supposedly found by Oscar Cobb and some other men near Fayetteville (a small unincorporated town located west of Highway 13 on Northeast County Road H) in Johnson County and put on exhibition in Warrensburg, Johnson County.

People gladly paid a dime for the privilege of seeing her.

Shortly after she was put on exhibit in Warrensburg, J.D. Dyer, a well-known man from Hoffman



**Rhonda Chalfant**  
Contributing Columnist

(an unincorporated town south of I-70 and west of Highway 13) in Johnson County, wrote to the Warrensburg Star on Dec. 23 that he knew that some men hauled a large pine box from Higginsville to Hoffman about 3 a.m. Dec. 16, 1897.

Their presence at such a late hour with a packing crate aroused suspicion, as did the fact that they returned to Hoffman at 9 or 10 p.m. that same day. Dyer asked a few questions and discovered that the box was addressed to Mr. Cobb and Mr. Shackelford. He also learned what was supposed to be in the box.

The Star's article recounted what Cobb and Shackelford had done in transporting the box and exhibiting its contents. The paper also questioned whether they knew if the exhibit was really what they claimed it to be.

The gullible people who had paid their dimes were incensed that the Star questioned the reality of the

exhibit. They had, after all, seen the petrified woman.

Shackelford claimed that if the exhibited woman was a fraud, then he had been "grossly deceived." His denials did not dampen the local folks' enthusiasm for the exhibit, which continued to operate and rake in the dimes.

The Star reporters continued to investigate. They telegraphed the mayor of White Hall, Illinois, the former home of Oscar Cobb.

The mayor responded that a "petrified woman" had been discovered near White Hall about three years before and had been exhibited by Jake Caldwell. It was a "fake." The one being exhibited in Warrensburg, he said, was a "fraud."

The Star also learned that Jake Caldwell had come from White Hall, Illinois, to Hazel Hill Township (a no longer recognized township north of Skyhaven airport) in Johnson County. His trip was so out of character that the gossips of White Hill questioned his purpose.

The circumstantial evidence suggested that Caldwell had brought his discovery with him and arranged for it to be hauled to Fayetteville, where it was buried and later claimed to have been found by Oscar Cobb.

The Star reporters, a "hardhearted" lot who wanted the truth, kept asking questions and received more answers.

Elijah Youngs, a respected farmer, examined her supposed grave and proclaimed it far too small to have held the body.

Others pointed out the faint tracks of the sled on which the packing crate was pulled toward the grave. Still another investigator discovered a dirty spade in the bushes near the gravesite.

The most convincing evidence was scientific. State Geologist Gallagher pointed out that the soil in which she was supposedly discovered in Fayetteville was not the type of soil that leads to petrification. Doctors noted that human flesh will not petrify. In addition, Gallagher noted the woman's body was made of Portland cement.

The Star offered a reward of \$100 to anyone who could prove the cement body was that of a petrified woman.

The Democrat noted with some pride and sorrow that the woman would not be put on display in Sedalia to deceive local residents. The cement woman and the box she came in were being shipped instead to Boonville, where the gullible folks there would have the opportunity to see a "ge-en-u-ine petrified woman for the mere sum of ten cents."

*Rhonda Chalfant is active in the Sedalia/Pettis County chapter of NAACP and the Pettis County Historical Society.*

**THE ROCKWOOD FILES**

# Channel surfing in the desert

I miss the writers. The Writers Guild of America went on strike in early May, and it has been a creative wasteland on television ever since. Most of the shows Tom and I used to watch won't be back with new episodes this fall. Lately, we've been flipping through over 100 channels, amazed that there are so many options yet so little we want to see.

If I see one more rerun of "House Hunters," I'll go nuts. I want to hunt down that annoying suburban couple who wouldn't stop whining about a powder room painted a color they don't like. Just paint the tiny room, people! You can learn how on YouTube.

I should turn off the TV and do something useful – read a book, do some chores, or start flossing daily like I promised my dental hygienist. But old habits die hard. I grew up on TV, and I still like it.

When my brother and I were kids, we watched "Three's Company," "Gilligan's Island," and "The Beverly Hillbillies" after school. We heated Chef Boyardee ravioli in the microwave and ate it in the living room using fold-out TV trays.

After dinner, we



**Gwen Rockwood**  
Syndicated Columnist

watched shows our parents liked since there was only one TV in the house. If Dad had the remote, we watched "The Rockford Files," "MASH," "The A-Team," or "MacGyver." When Mom chose the channel, we watched "The Love Boat," "Dallas," or "Dynasty." And sometimes, my older brother talked Dad into watching "Knight Rider."

But on Saturday mornings, the TV was all mine. I pulled my beanbag up close so I could be front and center when it was time for "Looney Tunes."

The characters and stories in those old shows feel like part of my childhood. I learned as much as I'll ever know about physics and consequences from Wile E. Coyote. Daffy Duck taught me sarcasm, and Bugs Bunny showed me it's cool to be smart and

funny. But none of those characters – cartoon or human – would've had anything to say or do without their writers.

I don't know the details of the current writers' strike. But I know writers deserve a fair wage and to share in the success when they help create a hit show. According to news coverage about the strike, most studios have increased their production budgets. Yet, the average pay for writers has decreased by as much as 23% in the last decade. Good writers are smart enough to leave the writing industry entirely if they can't support themselves or their families. And if that happens, we all lose the great characters and shows we would've fallen in love with.

Artificial intelligence is one of the big sticking points in the negotiation. Writers don't want robots to take their jobs, but that's not the whole story. Artificial intelligence learns to create scripts by reading and mimicking the work of human writers. But those human writers aren't paid for teaching computer programs how to write. It's like having a robot cheat off your English exam so it can win an Oscar for

best screenplay. Writers want new ground rules to be put in place because artificial intelligence continues to change the game so drastically.

As someone who loves characters, stories, and the new worlds in which they happen, I hope the writers and studios find common ground – soon. I miss the stories that come alive in my living room. I miss laughing at the late-night show monologues (written by a team of writers) before I shuffle off to bed.

I don't want to watch a "Golden Bachelor" give out roses. I don't want to see people eat bugs on "Survivor" or celebrities spin the wheel for Pat Sajak. I want what only good writing and acting can deliver – the magic of the human imagination.

So, to our number-crunching friends at the Hollywood studios, could you pay the humans, please? And regulate the robots?

Because we have plenty of popcorn and hundreds of channels, but nothing fun to watch.

*Gwen Rockwood is a syndicated freelance columnist. Email her at gwenrockwood5@gmail.com. Her book is available on Amazon.*

**Letters to the Editor Policy**

The Sedalia Democrat welcomes letters from its readers on topics of general public interest.

Persons with questions concerning Letters to the Editor may contact the Democrat at 660-826-1000 during regular business hours. Please note the following guidelines for letters and their submission:

- All letters to be considered for publication must include the name and address of the writer and a daytime telephone number where the writer may be reached during normal business hours.
- All letters must be signed. The name and hometown of the writer will be published.
- Letters must be 250 words or less.
- Letters may be mailed to:

*Letters to the editor, Sedalia Democrat, 111 W. Fourth St., Sedalia, Mo., 65301 or emailed to news@sedaliademocrat.com.*



# Some mayors discussing compact among Mississippi River states

By Michael Phillis and Jim Salter

Associated Press

ST. LOUIS — Community leaders along the Mississippi River worried that dry southwestern states will someday try to take the river's water may soon take their first step toward blocking such a diversion.

Mayors from cities along the river are expected to vote on whether to support a new compact among the river's 10 states at this week's annual meeting of the Mississippi River Cities and Towns Initiative, according to its executive director Colin Wellenkamp. Supporters of a compact hope it will strengthen the region's collective power around shared goals like stopping water from leaving the corridor.

"It is the most important working river on earth," said Wellenkamp. "It's a matter of national security that the Mississippi River corridor remain intact, remain sustainable and remain ecologically and hydrologically healthy."

The Southwest has long struggled to find enough

water for its growing population in a region prone to drought that climate change is making worse. Transporting water from the Mississippi River basin, which drains roughly 40% of the continental United States, has always been a long shot that many say isn't practical or remotely cost-effective. But Wellenkamp worries that conversation around the idea hasn't stopped.

A formal compact is still far off. The mayors' support would be just the first step in a lengthy, politically fraught process that would require buy-in from all 10 states along the river and federal approval, experts said. Those states range from left-leaning states like Minnesota, where the river begins, to thoroughly conservative states like Louisiana, where it empties into the Gulf of Mexico.

The others are Wisconsin, Iowa, Illinois, Missouri, Kentucky, Tennessee, Arkansas and Mississippi.

Proponents say a compact would protect the river's water levels and ecology, make it easier to coordinate when floods or

other disaster strikes and provide a way to resolve conflict among the river states. A favorable vote would ask the Mississippi River Cities and Towns Initiative to pursue a new river compact, according to a draft copy of the motion.

"This is not going to be easy and it's not going to happen overnight," said Wellenkamp. "But, you know, every journey begins with a first step and a cash advance, I like to say."

Fear of water export has ignited political action before. Plans by a Canadian company in the 1990s to fill up tankers with Great Lakes water and ship it to Asia "was probably the tipping point" for establishing the Great Lakes Compact that went into effect in 2008. It strengthened cooperation among Great Lakes states that work with two Canadian providences to manage water from the lakes effectively, monitor its use and prevent it from leaving the basin.

"The Great Lakes are better protected today than they ever have been before," said David Strifling, director of Mar-

quette Law School's Water Law and Policy Initiative.

But Strifling said it was difficult to get an agreement together decades ago and it would be even harder to do so now "just due to the increased level of political polarization that exists."

Wellenkamp said a Mississippi River compact, besides blocking diversions, would ensure that nearby water users also act in a sustainable way.

The river's water levels can be precarious. Last fall, they fell so low that they disrupted ship and barge traffic that moved soybeans, corn and other goods downriver for export. Much of the river is once again facing drought.

People realize that the river "is not some stable resource," said Melissa Scanlan, director for the Center for Water Policy at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

"People are aware of how those low levels on the Mississippi River affect commerce and the communities," she said.

There are protections against some water diversions now. If one of the

five states on the upper portion of the river wants to move large amounts of water out of the basin, it must notify and consult with the other four states first. The Upper Mississippi River Basin Association has existed for decades to foster cooperative management of the river. Currently, there's an effort to quantify water use among the upper basin states and understand how that use affects the river, officials said.

John Fleck, a water expert at the Utton Center at the University of New Mexico School of Law, said he is rooting for a Mississippi River compact so that what he calls the unworkable idea of a water pipeline to the west will die.

"This is a waste of our time because (diversion) is magical thinking and it will never happen," he said.

Jennifer Gimbel, senior water policy scholar at Colorado State University, said the obstacles to a pipeline are high.

It would need approval from Congress and from legislatures in each state it passes through, payments for landowners and

condemnation procedures for those who didn't want the pipeline through their properties, and expensive permitting. Then there is the engineering nightmare and huge costs of moving huge amounts of water west.

"It becomes pretty complicated real fast," Gimbel said.

The talk of diverting water to the Southwest will hopefully "light a fire under some states" to approve a Mississippi River compact, said Olivia Dorothy, director of river restoration with the conservation group American Rivers.

Diverting water can harm the river's ecology, depriving species of the water they rely on. It could also slow the movement of sediment that's vital to the health of Louisiana and the Gulf of Mexico, among many other problems, she said.

Dorothy said a compact would be a good way to say "this is our water."

"If you want the Mississippi River water, you can move here," she said.

## Missouri governor appoints appeals court judge to the state Supreme Court

By Jim Salter

Associated Press

Kelly C. Broniec, chief judge of the Eastern District of the Missouri Court of Appeals in St. Louis, was named Tuesday to the Missouri Supreme Court.

Republican Gov. Mike Parson announced the choice during a news conference in Jefferson City. Broniec will replace the retiring George W. Draper III, who was appointed by Democratic Gov. Jay Nixon in 2011. Parson appointed Broniec to the state appeals court in 2020.

"Her experience and perspective ensures that she will be a balanced and fair judge," Parson said. "And we are confident that her appointment will help reshape and strengthen the Missouri Supreme Court and our judicial system as a whole."

Broniec pledged that she "will not be attempting to make laws. I will interpret them and apply them to the facts in each case in determining if there were prejudicial legal errors made in the cases that come before us."

Parson will have another opportunity to shape the court soon — Judge Patricia

Breckenridge is retiring effective Oct. 13. Breckenridge was appointed by Republican Gov. Matt Blunt in 2007. Both Draper and Breckenridge this year reached the court's mandatory retirement age of 70.

Once Parson appoints the replacement for Breckenridge, he will have named three of the seven members of the state's High Court. He also appointed Judge Robin Ransom in 2021.

The governor's appointment power is far more limited than the president's power to name someone to the U.S. Supreme Court. In Missouri, a seven-member commission nominates three candidates to fill state

Supreme Court vacancies.

The commission is chaired by the state Supreme Court's chief justice, Mary Rhodes Russell, appointed by a Democrat. The commission also includes three lawyers elected by members of the Missouri Bar, and three appointees selected by the governor.

Michael Wolff, a former Missouri Supreme Court chief justice and a dean emeritus at the St. Louis University School of Law, said Broniec is well-regarded and isn't an "ideologue."

Wolfe said the Missouri system is set up to take the politics out of the process, and he believes it works well.

"The good thing about the Missouri plan is first of all, it's not a wide-open choice," Wolff said. "The governor has to take one of these three or else the commission will make the appointment."

Once considered a swing state a decade ago, Missouri now has a supermajority

of Republicans in the both houses of the General Assembly. Every statewide officeholder is a Republican.

Broniec, 52, lives in the small eastern Missouri town of Montgomery City. She has a bachelor's degree from William Woods University and a law degree from the University of Missouri-Co-

lumbia School of Law. She served as Montgomery County's prosecutor from 1999 to 2006.

Other finalists from the commission's list were Ginger K. Gooch, an appeals court judge in Springfield; and Michael E. Gardner, an appeals court judge in St. Louis.

HOOVER'S

BULK FOOD STORE, LLC

HooversBulkFoodStore.com Prices Good til Sept 19

<p style="font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">Deli Sale</p> <p style="font-size: 8px; margin: 0;">Lebanon Bologna \$6.99 Habanero Jalapeno Cheddar @ pound</p>	<p style="font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">Russett Potato Sale</p> <p style="font-size: 8px; margin: 0;">\$1.79/5lb. \$14.95/50lb.</p>
<p style="font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">Local Homegrown Tomatoes</p> <p style="font-size: 8px; margin: 0;">Mums and Pumpkins</p>	<p style="font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">MISSOURI</p> <p style="font-size: 8px; margin: 0;">Gala, Jonathan, Yellow Delicious Apples</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">\$19.95 @ Bushel</p>
<p style="font-size: 8px; margin: 0;">See us for Homemade Cinnamon Rolls, Cookies &amp; Breads Deli, Sandwiches, Local Produce, Fresh &amp; Frozen Fruit, Amish Jar Goods, Candy, Spices, Sugar, Flour, Pasta, Beans.</p>	
<p style="font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">8-6 Mon - Fri, 8-5 Sat</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">CLOSED SUNDAY</p>	
<p style="font-size: 8px; margin: 0;">2 miles west of Versailles on 52</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">573 378 6699</p>	

# SEPTEMBER IS LIBRARY CARD SIGN UP MONTH

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- Kids & Adults crafts
- What Can You Do with Your Library Card?
- Tour the Board Room
- Tour the Building
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- Hear about all of our amazing Adult Services
- Fall Treats



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# Bank

## From Page A1

“Central Bank has always been great about getting out in the community,” he continued. “So, I’m not surprised that this is another branch they are taking on. I think when people see you in the community, it makes them more likely to come and approach you.”

Baeza added that the move is a great community move for the bank and a “smart business move.”

Ramirez, also the catering manager for El Espolon Mexican Restaurant, said he’s been helping to unite the Hispanic community by offering services at the Hispanic Soccer Association games, which has more than 200 adults, and by taking the restaurant’s food truck to events.

“Being involved with the community is what has led us to be able to share our mission,” he noted. “And now, setting up this Latino Festival and bringing everybody downtown ... we will be able to share stuff about the county, and then we’ll share stuff about the city, and then our sponsors like Central Bank.”

Ramirez said that he explained to businesses the Latino community needs to feel welcome.

“And that took having bilingual people,” he noted. “And that’s exactly what Central Bank did. They translated their flyers, they hired four or five bilingual people. And now, any time

someone asks me, I tell them they will take care of you.

“I’m sure every business wants everyone to come in, but it’s a matter of how do we make you feel welcome?” he continued. “And that’s by hiring bilingual-speaking people. That way, they feel safe ... that makes a huge difference; it’s a game changer.”

Ramirez also recently began teaching Spanish I at State Fair Community College. He tells his students if they can welcome someone or ask what their name is in Spanish, it brightens their day.

“It’s real-world stuff,” he noted. “From my experience, from my journey, I know that I’ve been blessed to be bilingual, and I teach my kids that.”

Petersen added she understands the importance of “inclusivity and accessibility.”

“Central Bank initiated discussions with these prominent community figures, who, again, have been actively involved in the growth and prosperity of Sedalia,” she noted. “The bank identified opportunities to enhance its services and address the unique needs of various demographics within the community.”

“This collaborative effort reflects the bank’s commitment to its community roots and its determination to continuously improve its offerings based on valuable feedback from local residents and businesses.”

*Faith Bemiss-McKinney can be reached at 660-530-0289 or on Twitter @fbemiss.*

# Students

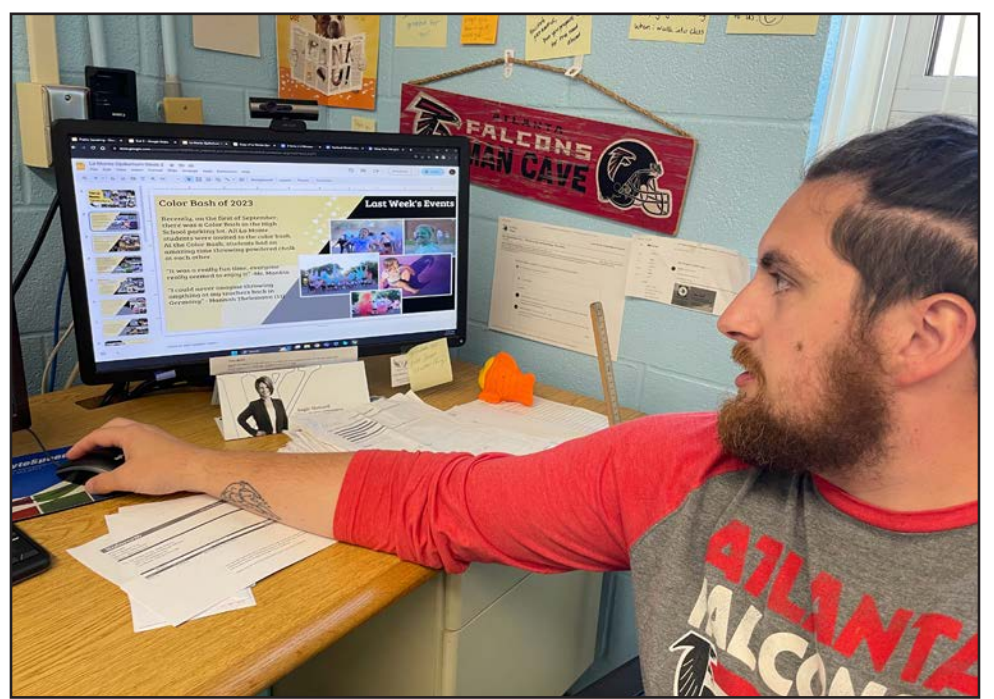
## From Page A1

“I’ve really enjoyed it this year,” Knoernschild said, “and it’s interesting to get the high schoolers’ take on what is going on in the school. Typically, it’s been my job to post all that stuff, so I like hearing what they have to say.”

And there is the bonus of having the high school kids come over to the elementary to collect news; the different age groups get time to interact.

“It has them come back over to the elementary side and ask questions,” Knoernschild said. “You know, come back and see us over here on the elementary side, which is nice.”

And the elementary students get to see themselves in the pages of the student paper, increasing their involvement and letting parents see what they are up to throughout



La Monte teacher Taylor Mankin and his students have taken on the duties of newspaper reporters and publishers of the La Monte Gjallarhorn, a Google-based publication. PHOTO BY CHRIS HOWELL | DEMOCRAT

the school year.

The students have taken to journalistic writing quickly, and Mankin is sometimes taken aback by their prose.

“I mean, honestly, sometimes, every now and then, I’ll just be surprised

at the level of writing that they do,” Mankin said.

“I’ve only had half of the kids in my yearbook class for English, so for a lot of them, this is the first thing that I’m seeing them write, so it is sometimes shocking, like, ‘Oh, I didn’t

know you could write like that.”

More on the La Monte Gjallarhorn can be found on the La Monte R-IV Facebook page or at [www.lamonte.k12.mo.us](http://www.lamonte.k12.mo.us).

*Chris Howell can be reached at 660-530-0146.*

# STATE BRIEFS

## Man sentenced after wife recorded fight that ended with her found dead

ST. LOUIS — A newlywed prison guard was sentenced Tuesday to probation after his wife recorded a fight that ended with her being found dead at the bottom of a parking garage near the stadium where the St.

Louis Cardinals play.

Bradley Jenkins, of Taylorville, of Illinois, was initially charged with third-degree felony domestic assault after 27-year-old Allissa Martin’s 2019 death. Court documents say a video taken on Martin’s phone recorded Martin yelling at Jenkins to stop punching her in the face before

she dropped the phone.

Jenkins was a lieutenant for the Illinois Department of Corrections at the time.

But after a grand jury declined to indict him, he was recharged with a lesser count of misdemeanor assault. He pleaded guilty to that charge before he was sentenced, the St. Louis

Post-Dispatch reported.

In June 2022, Martin’s mother sued a bar, the parking garage operator and Jenkins for the wrongful death of her daughter. She argues that the bar overserved alcohol to her son-in-law and the parking garage operator didn’t provide adequate security. That case is ongoing.

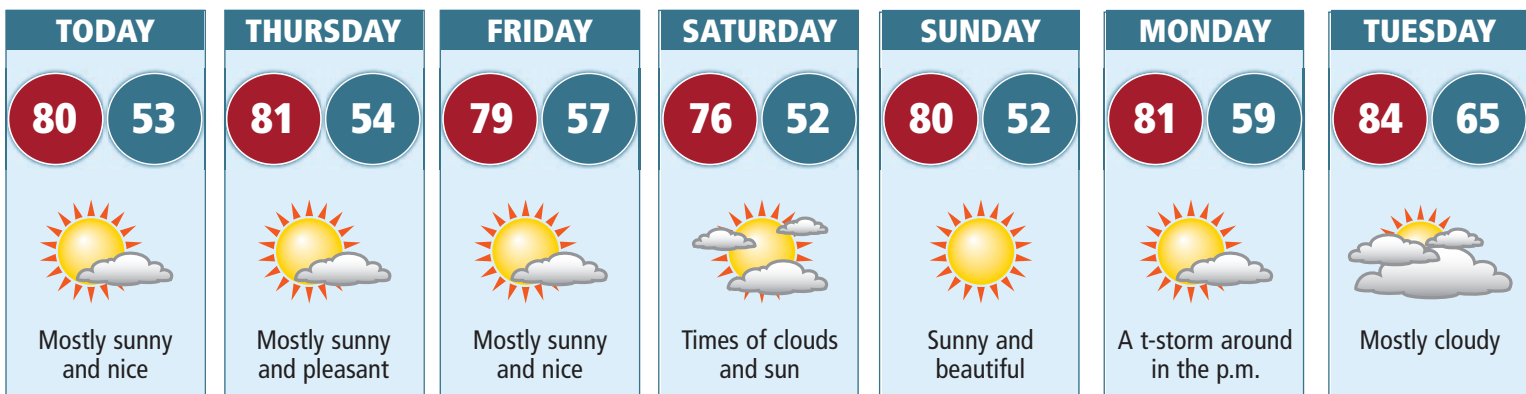
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# THE WEATHER

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## SEVEN-DAY FORECAST



## SUN AND MOON

Sunrise today	6:52 a.m.		
Sunset tonight	7:25 p.m.		
Moonrise today	5:21 a.m.		
Moonsset today	7:08 p.m.		
<b>New</b>	<b>First</b>	<b>Full</b>	<b>Last</b>
Sep 14	Sep 22	Sep 29	Oct 6

## WEATHER HISTORY

On Sept. 13, 1857, a hurricane off the Florida coast was blamed for sinking a passenger steamer. More than 200 aboard lost their lives. Over \$2 million in gold went down with the ship.

## ALMANAC

Sedalia Regional Airport Monday

**TEMPERATURES**

High	75
Low	64
Normal high	80
Normal low	57
Record high	97 in 1953
Record low	37 in 1940

**PRECIPITATION**

Monday	Trace
Month to date	0.04"
Normal m-t-d	1.56"
Year to date	27.72"
Normal y-t-d	32.34"

**COOLING DEGREE DAYS**

Index of energy consumption indicating how many degrees the average temperature was above 65 degrees for the day.

Monday	5
Month to date	97
Year to date	1446
Normal year to date	1104
Last year to date	1509

**RIVER LEVELS**

In feet as of 7 a.m. Tuesday

Blackwater	Stage	Chg	Fld Stg
Blue Lick	6.21	+0.03	24
Valley City	2.37	+0.02	22

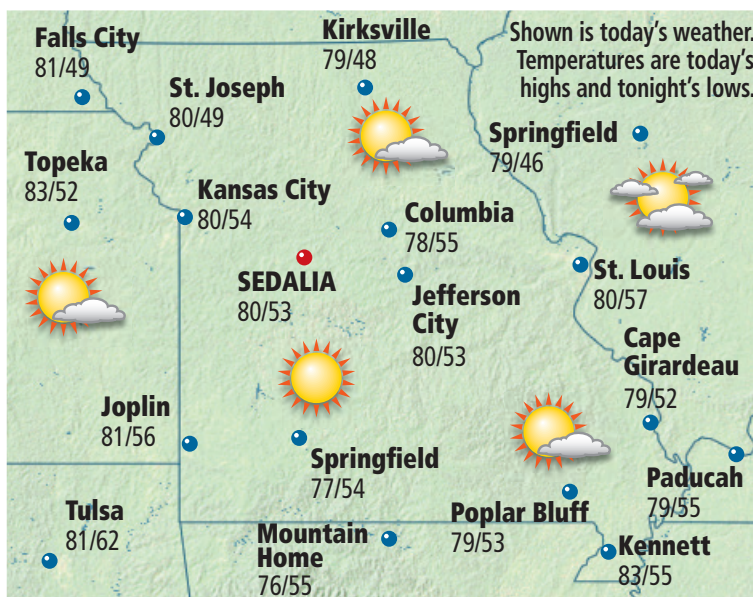
**Lamine**

Oterville	0.48	+0.02	15
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**Missouri**

Boonville	6.32	+0.03	21
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Forecasts and graphics provided by AccuWeather, Inc. ©2023



**BRANSON**  
High: 78. Low: 53. Sunny and nice today. Mainly clear tonight. Pleasant tomorrow with clouds and sun. Friday: mostly sunny and nice. Saturday: some sun.

**KANSAS CITY**  
High: 80. Low: 54. Pleasant today with plenty of sunshine. Clear tonight. Mostly sunny and nice tomorrow. Friday: pleasant with sunshine and patchy clouds.

**ST. LOUIS**  
High: 80. Low: 57. Patchy fog in the morning; otherwise, mostly sunny today. Clear to partly cloudy tonight. Mostly sunny and pleasant tomorrow.

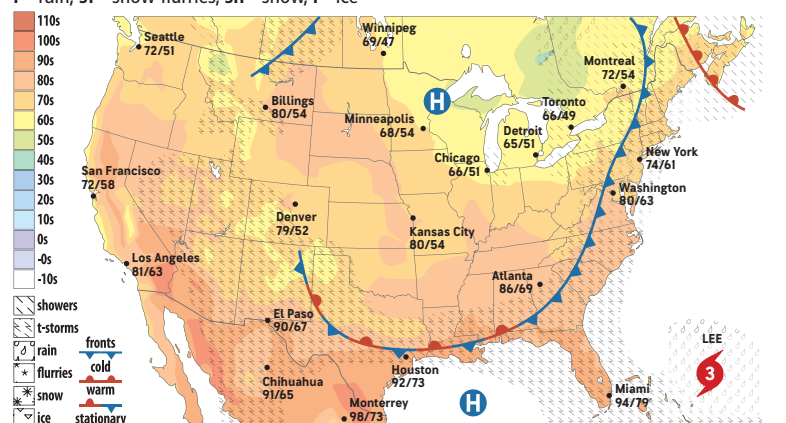
**NEW YORK CITY**  
High: 74. Low: 61. Mostly cloudy and humid today with showers and a heavier thunderstorm. Partly cloudy tonight. Brilliant sunshine tomorrow.

**LOS ANGELES**  
High: 81. Low: 63. Areas of low clouds early today; otherwise, mostly sunny. Mainly clear tonight. Mostly sunny tomorrow. Friday: sunny to partly cloudy.

## NATIONAL WEATHER

	Today	Thursday	Today	Thursday	
	Hi/Lo/W	Hi/Lo/W	Hi/Lo/W	Hi/Lo/W	
Atlanta	86/69/t	83/67/s	Milwaukee	64/52/pc	69/55/s
Baltimore	81/63/pc	80/57/s	Nashville	82/57/pc	82/56/s
Billings	80/54/s	74/52/t	New Orleans	93/77/t	90/76/pc
Boston	75/65/sh	75/59/pc	Norfolk	82/70/t	79/66/pc
Buffalo	67/52/c	66/50/pc	Oklahoma City	77/63/c	69/61/r
Charlotte	83/64/t	79/57/s	Orlando	92/76/t	91/75/t
Chicago	66/51/c	73/53/s	Phoenix	99/79/t	102/80/s
Cleveland	65/54/c	65/52/s	Pittsburgh	70/50/pc	69/47/s
Dallas	83/71/t	78/70/t	Portland, ME	73/64/t	73/51/pc
Denver	79/52/t	70/51/t	Portland, OR	79/55/pc	87/57/s
Detroit	65/51/pc	68/49/s	Sacramento	93/58/s	90/57/s
Honolulu	92/78/sh	92/78/sh	St. Louis	80/57/s	80/56/s
Houston	92/73/t	92/74/t	San Francisco	72/58/pc	72/59/pc
Indianapolis	74/51/pc	76/52/s	Seattle	72/51/pc	75/53/s
Las Vegas	93/76/s	95/74/s	Washington, DC	80/63/pc	78/58/s

Weather (W): s - sunny, pc - partly cloudy, c - cloudy, sh - showers, t - thunderstorms, r - rain, sf - snow flurries, sn - snow, i - ice



Shown are noon positions of weather systems and precipitation today. Temperature bands are highs for the day.

**Summary:** Drenching showers and gusty thunderstorms will extend from Maine to Georgia then westward to Texas today. Storms will also erupt over the interior West as cool air sprawls over much of the Central states.



# FDA advisers: Popular nasal decongestant doesn't relieve congestion

**By Matthew Perrone**  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The leading decongestant used by millions of Americans looking for relief from a stuffy nose is no better than a dummy pill, according to government experts who reviewed the latest research on the long-questioned drug ingredient.

Advisers to the Food and Drug Administration voted unanimously on Tuesday against the effectiveness of the key drug found in popular versions of Sudafed, Dayquil and other medications stocked on store shelves.

“Modern studies, when well conducted, are not showing any improvement in congestion with phenylephrine,” said Dr. Mark Dykewicz, an allergy specialist at the Saint Louis University School of Medicine.

The FDA assembled its outside advisers to take another look at phenylephrine, which became the main drug in over-the-counter decongestants when medicines with an older ingredient — pseudoephedrine — were moved behind pharmacy counters. A 2006

law had forced the move because pseudoephedrine can be illegally processed into methamphetamine.

Those original versions of Sudafed and other medicines remain available without a prescription, but they're less popular and account for about one-fifth of the \$2.2 billion market for oral decongestants. Phenylephrine versions — sometimes labeled “PE” on packaging — make up the rest.

If the FDA follows through on the panel's recommendations, Johnson & Johnson, Bayer and other drugmakers could be required to pull their oral medications containing phenylephrine from store shelves. That would likely force consumers to switch to the behind-the-counter pseudoephedrine products or to phenylephrine-based nasal sprays and drops.

In that scenario, the FDA would have to work with drugstores, pharmacists and other health providers to educate consumers about the remaining options for treating congestion, panelists said Tuesday.

The group also told the

FDA that studying phenylephrine at higher doses was not an option because it can push blood pressure to potentially dangerous levels.

“I think there's a safety issue there,” said Dr. Paul Pisaric of Archwell Health in Oklahoma. “I think this is a done deal as far as I'm concerned. It doesn't work.”

This week's two-day meeting was prompted by University of Florida researchers who petitioned the FDA to remove most phenylephrine products based on recent studies showing they failed to outperform placebo pills in patients with cold and allergy congestion. The same researchers also challenged the drug's effectiveness in 2007, but the FDA allowed the products to remain on the market pending additional research.

That was also the recommendation of FDA's outside experts at the time, who met for a similar meeting on the drug in 2007.

This time, the 16 members of the FDA panel unanimously agreed that current evidence doesn't show a benefit for the drug.

“I feel this drug in this oral dose should have been

removed from the market a long time ago,” said Jennifer Schwartzott, the patient representative on the panel. “Patients require and deserve medications that treat their symptoms safely and effectively and I don't believe that this medication does that.”

The advisers essentially backed the conclusions of an FDA scientific review published ahead of this week's meeting, which found numerous flaws in the 1960s and 1970s studies that supported phenylephrine's original approval. The studies were “extremely small” and used statistical and research techniques no longer accepted by the agency, regulators said.

“The bottom line is that none of the original studies stand up to modern standards of study design or conduct,” said Dr. Peter Starke, the agency's lead medical reviewer.

Additionally, three larger, rigorously conducted studies published since 2016 showed no difference between phenylephrine medications and placebos for relieving congestion. Those studies were conducted by Merck

and Johnson & Johnson and enrolled hundreds of patients.

A trade group representing nonprescription drugmakers, the Consumer Healthcare Products Association, argued that the new studies had limitations and that consumers should continue to have “easy access” to phenylephrine.

Like many other over-the-counter ingredients, phenylephrine was essentially grandfathered into approval during a sweeping FDA review begun in 1972. It has been sold in various forms for more than 75 years, predating the agency's own regulations on drug effectiveness.

“Any time a product has been on the market that long, it's human nature to make assumptions about what we think we know about the product,” said Dr. Theresa Michele, who leads the FDA's office of nonprescription drugs.

But FDA reviewers said their latest assessment reflects new testing insights into how quickly phenylephrine is metabolized when taken by mouth, leaving only trace levels that reach nasal

passages to relieve congestion. The drug appears more effective when applied directly to the nose, in sprays or drops, and those products are not under review.

There's unlikely to be any immediate impact from Tuesday's panel vote, which is not binding.

The group's negative opinion opens the door for the FDA to pull phenylephrine from a federal list of decongestants deemed effective for over-the-counter pills and liquids. The FDA said removing the products would eliminate “unnecessary costs and delay in care of taking a drug that has no benefit.”

The FDA's nasal decongestants drug list, or monograph, has not been updated since 1995. The process for changing a monograph has traditionally taken years or decades, requiring multiple rounds of review and public comment. But a 2020 law passed by Congress streamlines the process, which should allow the FDA to accelerate the publication of new standards for nonprescription ingredients.

# Child poverty jumped, income declined in 2022 as pandemic benefits ended

**By Mike Schneider**  
Associated Press

Child poverty in the United States more than doubled and median household income declined last year when coronavirus pandemic-era government benefits expired and inflation kept rising, according to figures released Tuesday by the U.S. Census Bureau.

At the same time, the official poverty rate for Black Americans dropped to its lowest level on record, and income inequality declined for the first time since 2007, when looking at pre-tax income, due to income declines in the middle and top income brackets.

However, income inequality increased when using after-tax income, another result of the end of pandemic-era tax credits, according to Census Bureau reports on income, poverty and health insurance.

The reports reflected the sometimes-conflicting factors last year buffeting

U.S. households. Workers faced a robust jobs market, with the number of full-time employees increasing year over year, the share of women working full time year-round reaching an all-time high and an increase in income for households run by someone with no high school diploma. But they also faced rising inflation and the end of pandemic-era stimulus benefits.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which started in 2020, the federal government expanded the child tax credit and sent payments to people who had suffered from the pandemic, lowering poverty measures in 2021. The expansion of the child tax credit expired at the end of 2021, and other pandemic-related benefits have expired within the past year.

As a result, the supplemental poverty measure rate for children jumped 7.2 percentage points to 12.4% in 2022, according to the Census Bureau.

“This represents a return to child poverty levels prior to the pandemic,” Liana Fox, an assistant division chief at the Census Bureau, said during a news conference. “We did see the child tax credit had a substantial decrease in child poverty.”

In a statement, President Joe Biden blamed congressional Republicans for failing to extend the enhanced child tax credit and vowed to restore it.

“The rise reported today in child poverty is no accident,” said Biden, a Democrat.

Opponents objected to extending the credit out of concern that the money would discourage people from working and that any additional federal spending would fuel inflation, which climbed to a 40-year high.

Before the pandemic, the Rev. Mary Downey would receive from 400 to 600 calls a month from people seeking assistance from the center that she operates for homeless people and those

living in poverty in Osceola County, Florida. She is now receiving 1,800 calls a month.

The expiration of the child tax credit expansion has been “devastating” to the people she serves in metro Orlando, and addressing poverty should be a bipartisan issue, she said.

“There is no surprise here. The bigger question is, ‘What we are going to do?’” said Downey, CEO of Hope Partnership. “Hungry babies deserve to be fed and have roofs over their heads.”

The median household income in 2022 was \$74,580, a decline of 2.3% from 2021, and about 4.7% lower than in 2019 before the pandemic's start. Asian Americans had the highest median household income, at almost \$109,000, while Black Americans had the lowest, at about \$53,000. Regionally, it was highest in the West, at almost \$83,000, followed by the Northeast at more than \$80,000, the Midwest at more than \$73,000 and the

South at more than \$68,000.

The official poverty rate in 2022 was 11.5%, not statistically different from 2021, and for Black Americans it was 17.1%, the lowest on record. The supplemental poverty measure was 12.4%, an increase of 4.6 percentage points from 2021.

The U.S. Census Bureau releases two poverty measures. The official poverty measure is based on cash resources. The supplemental poverty measure includes both cash and noncash benefits and subtracts necessary expenses such as taxes and medical expenses.

The rate of people lacking health insurance dropped almost half a percentage point to 7.9%, driven by workers' getting health insurance and growth in the rate of people receiving Medicare due to an increase in the number of people aged 65 or older in the U.S. It declined for people in all age groups except those who were age 18 or younger, though that gain for children wasn't statisti-

cally significant, according to the Census Bureau.

The uninsured rate of children who were foreign born was more than 20%, and it was almost 25% for children who weren't citizens.

Anti-poverty experts worry the poverty rate will only get worse without a long-term, systemic solution, as the pullback from the pandemic-era benefits has coincided with housing cost increases, jumps in homelessness and a rising cost of living.

“We know better, and we should do better. To see the increase in poverty, particularly for children, is very worrisome,” said Kim Janey, a former mayor of Boston who now heads an anti-poverty nonprofit. “If we want to be a country where the American dream is within reach, then we have to invest in our children and try to eradicate poverty in our nation.”

# Americans can now get an updated COVID-19 vaccine

**By Mike Stobbe and Lauran Neergaard**

AP Medical Writers

Most Americans should get an updated COVID-19 vaccine, health officials said Tuesday.

Advisers to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention endorsed the new shots for everyone 6 months and older and the agency's director quickly signed off Tuesday on the panel's recommendation. That means doses should be available this week, some as early as Wednesday.

The severity of the COVID-19 pandemic has faded, but there are still hundreds of hospitalizations and hundreds of deaths in the U.S. each week. Hospitalizations have been increasing since late summer, though the latest data indicate infections may be starting to level off, particularly in the South.

Still, experts worry that immunity from previous vaccinations and infections is fading in many people, and a new shot would save many lives.

According to a survey last month that CDC cited, about 42% said they would defi-

nately or probably get the new vaccine. Yet only about 20% of adults got an updated booster when it was offered a year ago.

Doctors hope enough people get vaccinated to help avert another “triple-demic” like last year when hospitals were overwhelmed with an early flu season, an onslaught of RSV, or respiratory syncytial virus, and yet another winter coronavirus surge.

Here is what you need to know about the new COVID-19 shots:

## WHO SHOULD GET THE UPDATED VACCINE?

The Food and Drug Administration approved the updated shots for adults and children as young as age 6 months. FDA said starting at age 5, most people can get a single dose even if they've never had a prior COVID-19 shot. Younger children might need additional doses depending on their history of COVID-19 infections and vaccinations.

The CDC decides how best to use vaccines and makes recommendations for U.S. doctors and the general public. The agency's panel of outside experts recommended the updated COVID-19 shots

by a vote of 13-1. The no vote came from a panel member who had argued that the new shots should initially be recommended only for older people and others at greatest risk of severe illness. But other panel members said all ages could — and should — benefit.

“We need to make vaccination recommendations as clear as possible,” said one panel member, Dr. Camille Kotton, an infectious diseases doctor at Massachusetts General Hospital.

## WHERE CAN I GET A SHOT?

The new vaccine will be available at pharmacies, health centers and some doctor offices. Locations will be listed on the government's vaccines.gov website. The list price of a dose of each shot is \$120 to \$130, according to the manufacturers. But federal officials said the new COVID-19 shots still will be free to most Americans through private insurance, Medicare or Medicaid. For the uninsured or underinsured, the CDC is working with health departments, clinics and certain pharmacies to temporarily provide free shots.

On Tuesday, a Pfizer

official said his company expected to have doses available at some U.S. locations as early as Wednesday.

## WHY MORE COVID-19 SHOTS?

Similar to how flu shots are updated each year, the FDA gave COVID-19 vaccine makers a new recipe for this fall. The updated shots have a single target, an omicron descendant named XBB.1.5. It's a big change. The COVID-19 vaccines offered since last year are combination shots targeting the original coronavirus strain and a much earlier omicron version, making them very outdated.

Pfizer, Moderna and Novavax all have brewed new supplies, and the FDA on Monday approved shots from Pfizer and Moderna. Novavax's updated vaccine is still under review.

## WILL THEY BE EFFECTIVE ENOUGH?

Health officials are optimistic, barring a new mutant. As expected, XBB.1.5 has faded away in the months it took to tweak the vaccine. Today, there is a soup of different coronavirus variants causing illness and the most common ones are fairly close

relatives. Recent lab testing from vaccine makers and other research groups suggest the updated shots will offer crossover protection.

Earlier vaccinations or infections have continued to help prevent severe disease and death but protection

wanes over time, especially against milder infections as the virus continually evolves. The FDA did allow seniors and others at high risk to get an extra booster dose last spring. But most Americans haven't had a vaccination in about a year.



**Mozarkite Society of Lincoln Mo., Inc.**  
64th annual

## Rock & Gem Show

**September 15, 16 and 17, 2023**  
9-5 Fri. & Sat    9-3 Sun.  
**Lincoln City Park, Lincoln, MO**  
20 miles south of Sedalia on HWY 65  
Turn east on Main Street, North side of road

2 blocks east of Bullseye  
**Free Admission**  
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**For More Information: Call Kelly, 816-835-2044**  
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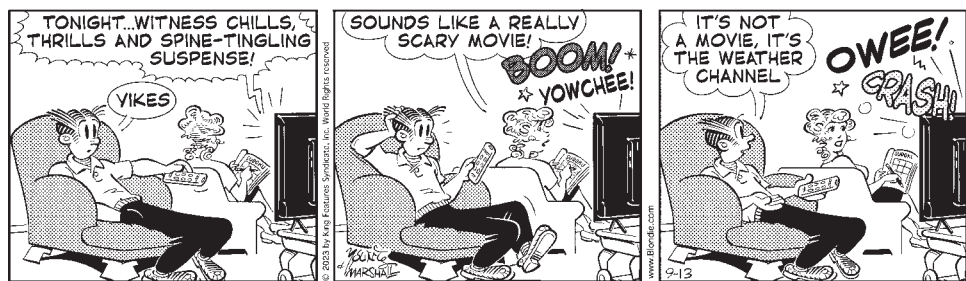



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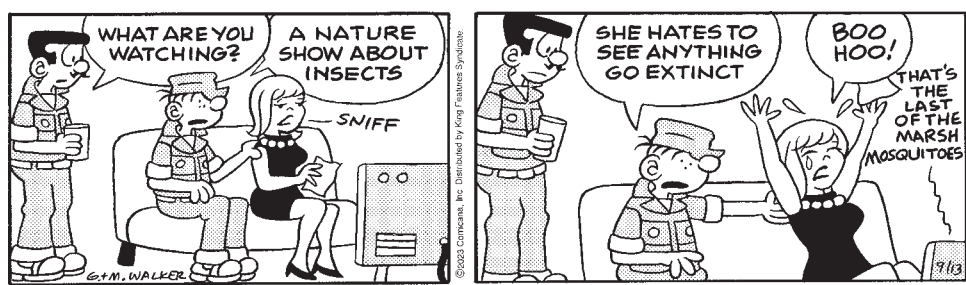
### BLONDIE

BY DEAN YOUNG AND JOHN MARSHALL



### BEETLE BAILEY

BY GREG WALKER, BRIAN WALKER AND NEAL WALKER



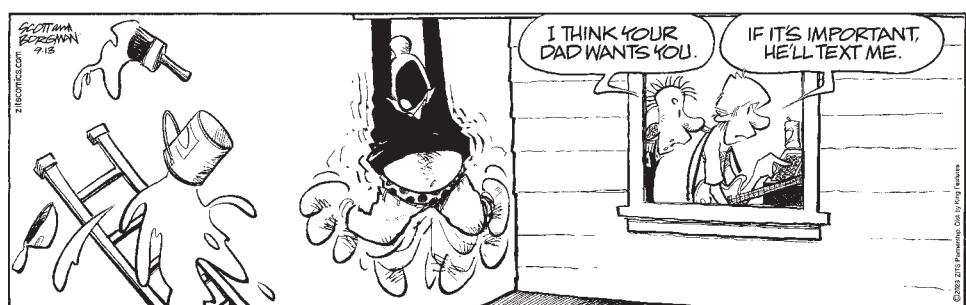
### HAGAR THE HORRIBLE

BY CHRIS BROWNE



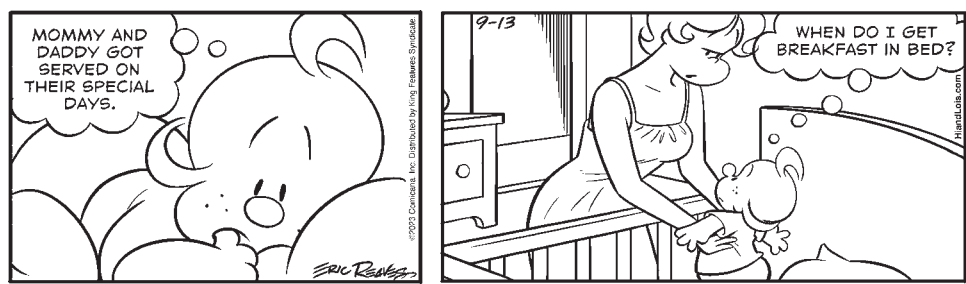
### ZITS

BY JERRY SCOTT AND JIM BORGMAN



### HI AND LOIS

WRITTEN BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER; DRAWN BY CHANCE BROWNE



### PARDON MY PLANET

BY VIC LEE



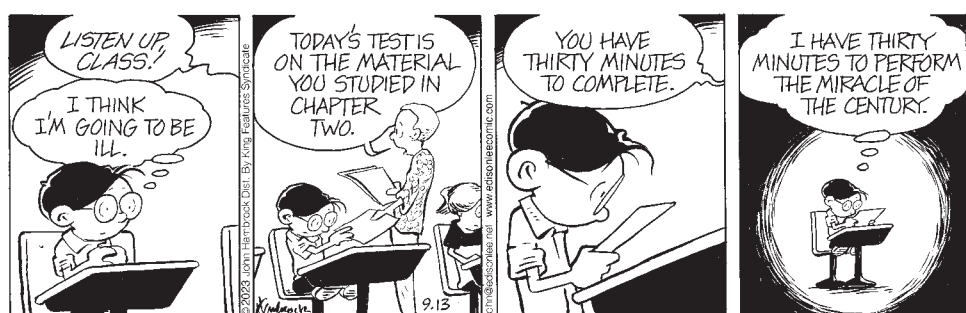
### RHYMES WITH ORANGE

BY HILARY PRICE



### THE BRILLIANT MIND OF EDISON LEE

BY JOHN HAMBROCK



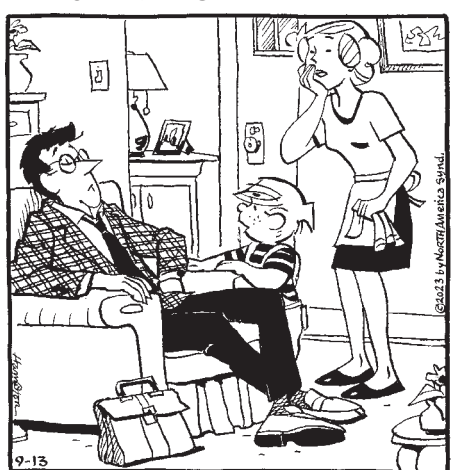
### DUSTIN

BY STEVE KELLEY & JEFF PARKER



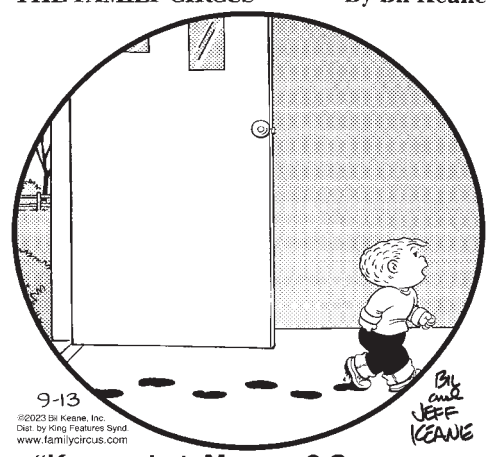
### DENNIS THE MENACE

BY HANK KETCHAM



### THE FAMILY CIRCUS

By Bil Keane



### CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 45 Halt

- 1 Holds up
- 5 Increase
- 11 Concept
- 12 Incite
- 13 Billy Crystal TV comedy
- 14 Emmy winner Candice
- 15 Memorable time
- 16 Cellar supply
- 17 Valerie Harper TV comedy
- 19 "Succession" network
- 22 Relay stick
- 24 Lipstick goof
- 26 Dull pain
- 27 Singer Fitzgerald
- 28 Roof support
- 30 Scent
- 31 That girl
- 32 Starry hunter
- 34 Lose one's footing
- 35 — lane (carpoolers' place)
- 38 Emmy winner Patricia
- 41 Sandy hill
- 42 Hearts, e.g.
- 43 Poker payment
- 44 Friend of Jerry and Elaine

DOWN

- 1 Ascend
- 2 Scent
- 3 Emmy winner for "Maude"
- 4 Easy victim
- 5 Zealous
- 6 Sports spots
- 7 Extra amount
- 8 Snub-nosed dog
- 9 Try out
- 10 Signing need
- 16 Took the title
- 18 Garden tools
- 19 Emmy winner for "Mad About You"
- 20 Emmy winner Lucille
- 21 Test type
- 22 Soaking spot
- 23 Field unit
- 25 Office note
- 29 "See ya!"
- 30 Small drink
- 33 Washer cycle

R	E	F	S		P	R	A	D	A	
A	C	R	E	S		A	A	R	O	N
T	H	E	W	E	S	T	W	I	N	G
E	O	S		R	A	H		S	A	L
S	E	N	S	E	D		P	E	T	E
	S	O	U	N	D		O	N	E	S
			L	A	L	A	W			
S	A	C	K		E	L	E	N	A	
T	R	A	Y		S	T	R	A	N	D
A	T	M		H	U	E		E	Y	E
T	H	E	S	O	P	R	A	N	O	S
E	U	R	O	S		S	W	A	N	K
D	R	A	W	S			L	E	E	S

#### Yesterday's answer

- 20 Emmy winner Julia Louis-Dreyfus series
- 34 "— Trek"
- 36 Aware of
- 37 Sty resident
- 38 Sty resident
- 39 Before, to bards
- 40 Before today
- 41 German article

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9	10	
11					12						
13					14						
15					16						
			17	18				19	20	21	
22	23					24	25				
26							27				
28					29		30				
31					32	33					
				34					35	36	37
38	39	40							41		
42									43		
44									45		

9-13

### MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG



### THE LOCKHORNS

BY BUNNY HOEST & JOHN REINER



### SUDOKU

To play sudoku, use logic to fill the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9 only once. Puzzle difficulty increases from Monday to Sunday.

King Classic Sudoku

4	1	3		5	2	6				
5		8						3	1	
		2	6			1				
			1	6			4			
		3	2	5	8					
8	9									
1		9						8		
				1	6		5			
			5	3				4		

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#### Answer to previous puzzle

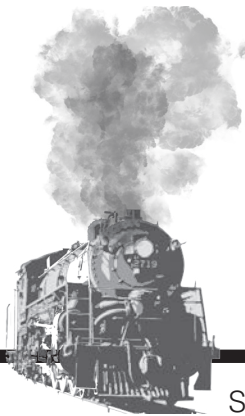
6	8	2	5	4	7	3	9	1
9	3	5	1	6	2	4	7	8
7	1	4	9	3	8	6	2	5
8	2	3	4	7	5	1	6	9
4	6	9	3	8	1	7	5	2
5	7	1	6	2	9	8	3	4
3	4	8	2	5	6	9	1	7
2	9	7	8	1	3	5	4	6
1	5	6	7	9	4	2	8	3

Difficulty: ★★

Difficulty: ★★★

9/13





Fans sit inside Arrowhead Stadium, home of the Kansas City Chiefs, before an NFL football game, Dec. 12, 2021, in Kansas City, Mo. A coalition of professional sports teams is backing a new proposal to put the legalization of sports betting on Missouri's 2024 ballot. The group spearheaded by the St. Louis Cardinals also includes the Kansas City Chiefs and all four of the state's other major sports teams.

FILE PHOTO BY CHARLIE RIEDEL | AP PHOTO

## Missouri's pro teams push to get legal sports gambling on 2024 ballot

By David A. Lieb  
Associated Press

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. — A coalition of Missouri's professional sports teams is backing a new effort to legalize sports betting that could put the issues to voters on the 2024 ballot.

After missing out on millions of dollars in betting revenues over the past several years, the sports teams decided they are done waiting for the Missouri Legislature to act and instead have taken the first step toward an initiative petition drive that would circumvent lawmakers.

The effort is spearheaded by the St. Louis Cardinals baseball team, and also includes the Kansas City Chiefs football team, the Kansas City Royals baseball team, the Kansas City Current and St. Louis City soccer teams, and the St. Louis Blues hockey team.

Gathering petitions signatures and running an advertising campaign for a ballot measure can cost millions of dollars — a price the teams are committed to collectively help cover, said Mike Whittle, the Cardinals' senior vice president and general counsel, on behalf of the coalition.

Legalized sports betting would "provide our fans a good, new exciting way to enjoy sports and root for our teams," Whittle said Tuesday. Sports betting has

expanded rapidly — it's now legal in all but one of Missouri's neighboring states — since the U.S. Supreme Court cleared the way for it five years ago. Kentucky became the 35th state with active sports betting when the NFL season began last week. Maine and Vermont have legalized it but are still working to set up their betting systems.

The last state to put sports betting on the ballot was California, where supporters and opponents of two competing proposals raised a record of around \$460 million last year. Voters defeated both measures.

Earlier this year, the Missouri House voted 118-35 in favor of sports betting legislation, but it never received a Senate vote. Similar bills have repeatedly stalled in the Republican-led Senate because of a dispute about whether to pair sports betting with the regulation of slot-machine-style games that have been popping up in convenience stores.

As professional sports teams waited for a resolution on sports betting, lawmakers passed various other high-profile issues, including expanded gun rights and restrictions on transgender health care treatments.

"We're not optimistic that kind of dynamic within the Missouri Senate will change," Whittle said.

See **BALLOT** | A14

# AREA ROUNDUP

## VOLLEYBALL TEAMS THRIVE AT WEEKEND TOURNEYS

By Democrat staff

Local teams did more than just get in plenty of reps at volleyball tournaments across the state last weekend.

Stover traveled to Kansas City and returned to Morgan County as champions of the HyVee Arena Invitational.

The Lady Bulldogs, one of a dozen programs competing, were part of Pool A, which included Lincoln

Prep, Grandview and KC KIPP. They ran through all three. In bracket play, Stover defeated Grandview and Maryville, followed by Summit Christian Academy in the final.

Following a win at Skyline on Monday, Stover entered Tuesday's matchup at Otterville at 11-0, its only set dropped coming against Warrensburg in the season opener on Aug. 29.

Green Ridge, meanwhile, traveled

to Cape Girardeau for the Dig For Life Tournament. After opening with a defeat to Clearwater and a tie to West County, the Lady Tigers proceeded to reel off six consecutive victories, with wins over Caruthersville, Hazelwood West, Senath-Hornersville, Cape Girardeau Central (JV), Bloomfield, and finally Bunker. Those results were good enough to claim first place in the Silver Division.

See **ROUNDUP** | A14



The Stover Lady Bulldogs show off their first-place silverware, as well as the bracket from last weekend's HyVee Arena Invitational in Kansas City.

PHOTO COURTESY OF STOVER LADY BULLDOGS VOLLEYBALL

## Jets' Rodgers to miss season with torn left Achilles tendon

By Dennis Waszak Jr.  
AP Pro Football Writer

Aaron Rodgers' debut season with the New York Jets is already over. It didn't even last one quarter.

The 39-year-old quarterback has a torn left Achilles tendon that will require season-ending surgery, coach Robert Saleh announced Tuesday. The Jets placed Rodgers on the injured reserve list.

An MRI revealed the severity of the four-time NFL MVP's injury, confirming what the Jets feared after their 22-16 overtime win over Buffalo on Monday night. Saleh said during a video call he was not immediately certain when the quarterback would have surgery.

Torn Achilles tendons typically take several months of recovery due to the extensive rehabilitation needed.

"I feel more for Aaron than anyone," Saleh said. "He's invested so much into this organization, so much into this journey that he's embarked on and wanting to be a part of what we've got going here. And how much he's invested in not only this organization, but his



New York Jets quarterback Aaron Rodgers (8) is sacked by Buffalo Bills defensive end Leonard Floyd (56) during the first quarter of an NFL football game, Monday, Sept. 11, 2023, in East Rutherford, N.J.

PHOTO BY SETH WENIG | AP PHOTO

teammates, himself, this fan base, the city, so I have a lot of emotions for him."

On his fourth regular-season snap in a Jets uniform, Rodgers tried to avoid a rushing Leonard Floyd, who wrapped up the quarterback and spun him down

to the MetLife Stadium turf. Rodgers stood up after a few moments, looked over to the Jets' sideline and then sat on the turf — seemingly knowing he was seriously hurt.

See **JETS** | A14

## Big 12 aims for 3-game sweep of mighty SEC after Longhorns' win



Texas wide receiver Adonai Mitchell (5) gestures to the crowd after a touchdown against Alabama during the second half of an NCAA college football game Saturday, Sept. 9, 2023, in Tuscaloosa, Ala.

PHOTO BY VASHA HUNT | AP PHOTO

By Dave Skretta  
Associated Press

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — You can bet the Southeastern Conference is counting the days until Texas is playing with them rather than against them.

In the first of three matchups between the heaviest of heavyweight conferences and the Big 12 spanning two weeks, the then-No. 11 Longhorns — soon to be jumping to the SEC — did something last Saturday that only eight teams had done in 112 tries spanning more than 16 seasons: They beat

then-No. 3 Alabama and coach Nick Saban at Bryant-Denny Stadium.

Now, the once-in-peril Big 12 could sweep the SEC when No. 15 Kansas State visits old conference rival Missouri on Saturday and newcomer BYU heads to Arkansas. The Wildcats were 4 1/2-point favorites as of Tuesday, according to FanDuel Sportsbook, while the Cougars were 8 1/2-point underdogs as they prepared to face the Razorbacks.

"There's a lot of energy, a lot of excitement with our fans and our players. I'm excited about it, too," BYU coach

Kalani Sitake said this week. "We know that we have a conference to play for, a conference to represent."

The Big 12 has been ransacked twice by the SEC over the years. The first came with the departure of the Tigers and Texas A&M more than a decade ago, and now with the Longhorns set to join the SEC along with Oklahoma beginning next season.

At one point, after Nebraska left for the Big Ten and No. 18 Colorado for the Pac-12, some thought the Big 12 was on life support.

See **SWEEP** | A14



# SPORTS CALENDAR

**Wednesday**

**ON TAP**

**HIGH SCHOOL BOYS SOCCER**

Smith-Cotton at Hickman  
Smithton at Knob Noster

**HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS GOLF**

Smith-Cotton at Richmond Tournament

**HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS TENNIS**

Smith-Cotton at Hickman

**HIGH SCHOOL SOFTBALL**

Leeton at Smith-Cotton

**ON AIR**

**COLLEGE VOLLEYBALL (WOMEN'S)**

7 p.m. ESPN — Kentucky at Louisville  
FS1 — Wisconsin at Marquette

**MLB BASEBALL**

Noon MLBN — Tampa Bay at Minnesota  
6 p.m. MLBN — Regional Coverage: NY Yankees at Boston OR Texas at Toronto  
10 p.m. MLBN — San Diego at LA Dodgers (Joined in Progress)

**TENNIS**

7 a.m. TENNIS — Davis Cup Finals Group Stage: U.S. vs. Croatia, Australia vs. Britain, Spain vs. Czech Rep., Canada vs. Italy; San Diego-WTA, Osaka-WTA Early Rounds

**SOCCER (MEN'S)**

4:30 p.m. FS2 — CPL: Pacific FC at Atletico Ottawa

**WNBA BASKETBALL**

7 p.m. ESPN2 — Playoffs First Round: Minnesota at Connecticut, Game 1  
9 p.m. ESPN — Playoffs First Round: Chicago at Las Vegas, Game 1



Kansas City Chiefs wide receiver Mike Williams (15) attempts to elude defensive back Shannon Edwards (39) during NFL football training camp in St. Joseph, Mo., Tuesday, Aug. 2, 2016. Williams, who was injured in a construction accident two weeks ago and later put on a ventilator, died Tuesday, Sept. 12, 2023, his agent said. He was 36. FILE PHOTO BY ORLIN WAGNER | AP PHOTO

## Ex-NFL receiver Mike Williams dies 2 weeks after construction accident

**By The Associated Press**

TAMPA, Fla. — Former NFL receiver Mike Williams, who was injured in a construction accident two weeks ago and later put on a ventilator, died Tuesday, his agent said. He was 36.

Williams, who played for the Tampa Bay Buccaneers and Buffalo Bills from 2010-14, died at St. Joseph's Hospital in Tampa, agent Hadley Engelhard said.

Williams was injured at a construction site in Hillsborough County, which includes Tampa, and removed from life support on

Thursday, the Tampa Bay Times reported. The newspaper quoted the mother of Williams' 8-year-old daughter as saying he was partially paralyzed in the accident.

"We are saddened to hear of the untimely death of Mike Williams, which has left our organization, his former teammates and fans with very heavy hearts," the Bucs said in a statement. "We send our deepest sympathies to his family and loved ones as they mourn this tragedy."

Williams was a fourth-round draft pick of the Bucs in 2010 following a standout college career

at Syracuse. He had 65 receptions for 964 yards and 11 touchdowns as a rookie and started 52 of the 54 games he appeared in over four seasons with Tampa Bay.

The native of Buffalo was traded to his hometown team in 2014. He played nine games, finishing with eight catches for 142 yards and one TD in his lone season with the Bills.

Williams was last on an NFL roster during a portion of the 2016 offseason with the Kansas City Chiefs. He ended his career with 223 receptions for 3,089 yards and 26 TDs in 63 games.

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# W-K

## ATHLETE OF THE WEEK

The Sedalia Democrat is pleased to announce Beau Gray and Alle Case as area players of the week for Sunday, Sept. 3 to Saturday, Sept. 9.

**BOYS:** Smith-Cotton junior Beau Gray broke several school records in Friday's game against Warrensburg. He passed for 313 yards, and the quarterback added 94 on the ground for 407 total yards, both program bests.

**GIRLS:** Smith-Cotton sophomore Alle Case helped the Lady Tigers go 2-2 on Saturday to place third at the Higginsville Spikefest Tournament. Case led the team in kills and digs with 19 and 41, respectively, adding three blocks and two aces.

# W-K

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## HOROSCOPES

### By Georgia Nicols

**Moon Alert:** After 1:30 a.m. EDT today, there are no restrictions to shopping or important decisions. The Moon is in Virgo.

### Happy Birthday for Wednesday, Sept. 13, 2023:

You're passionate and focused, and you dedicate yourself to your work. You have amazing powers of concentration. This year is slower paced. It's time for you to rest and rejuvenate your energies. Focus on relationships, especially with people who are kind and helpful to you. Trust your inner tuition this year.

The Stars Show the Kind of Day You'll Have: 5-Dynamic; 4-Positive; 3-Average; 2-So-so; 1-Difficult

#### ARIES (March 21-April 19)

★★ This is a poor day to talk to supervisors, bosses or parents. Very likely, the response of authority figures will be, "Talk to the hand." Knowing this ahead of time, postpone these talks for another day when what you have to say will be better received. Tonight: Chill out.

#### TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★ Romantic couples might be at loggerheads today. This could pertain to arguments about shared expenses or the division of labor. You also might have quarrels with your kids. Sports and fun outings also might be blocked by rules and regulations. Oy! Tonight: Be calm.

#### GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★ Family conversations will be difficult today because parents or people in authority might squelch your ideas or plans. Step gingerly and savor small victories. Perhaps a better approach is to go slowly, step by step — maybe baby steps — until you get what you want. Tonight: Patience.

#### CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★ Something might hold you back today. It could literally be legal restrictions or difficulties related to travel, learning or something to do with publishing, the media or medicine. Whatever the case, you can't fight city hall. Not today. Timing is everything. Tonight: Pace yourself.

#### LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★ You might encounter some difficulties with financial matters today, whether it's purchasing something or an issue related to your earnings. The bottom line is that some kind of authority figure will block your ideas or challenge them. Be courteous. Use skillful means when dealing with others. Tonight: Tolerance.

#### VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★ You might be talkative today because you're finely tuned in to everything around you. You are alert and sensitive to everything. This is why you might feel discouraged by a close friend or partner if they rain on your parade. Tonight: Listen.

#### LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★ You might encounter difficulties when dealing with your daily tasks or your job today. Most likely, this will relate to legal restrictions or rules and regulations. Or possibly, someone older or in a position of authority will put the kibosh on your ideas. It's a tough day. Tonight: Be stoic.

#### SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★ You might have the opportunity to have an insightful, meaningful conversation with someone today, especially someone younger. Nevertheless, something might create difficulties or judgments, which eclipses the potential for anything to really take place. It's a tough day. Tonight: Be strong.

#### SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★ Discussions with authority figures, parents, bosses and the police might be challenging today. Ironically, you are mentally fine-tuned and clued in. Nevertheless, someone else might shoot you down or refuse to hear you, which is frustrating. Be aware that you are high-viz and people notice you today. Tonight: Be cool.

#### CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★ Avoid philosophical discussions, and especially steer clear of controversial subjects like politics, religion and racial issues today, if possible. Nothing will be accomplished. People in authority might block you or shut down your views or refuse to listen. Timing is everything. Tonight: Cooperate.

#### AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★ Financial discussions might be difficult today. Likewise, you might encounter obstructions to your efforts to buy something. Since this is a matter of timing, and the Moon today is opposite stern Saturn, why not wait until tomorrow when the opposition to your ideas is less or maybe even gone? Tonight: Listen.

#### PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★ You might feel lonely or cut off from others today. It might be difficult to communicate. Without knowing, you might be sending out signals to others to declare that you don't want to be bothered. Today it's easy to see the dark side of things because you feel that your cup is half empty instead of half full. This is a fleeting dark cloud on your horizon. Tonight: Be patient.

#### BORN TODAY

Actress Lili Reinhart (1996), actress Jean Smart (1951), Olympic sprinter Michael Johnson (1967)



Houston Rockets guard Kevin Porter Jr. dribbles during the second half of an NBA basketball game against the Brooklyn Nets, March 7, 2023, in Houston. Porter was arrested Monday, Sept. 11, 2023, and charged with assault and strangulation after allegedly attacking his girlfriend at a New York City hotel. FILE PHOTO BY ERIC CHRISTIAN SMITH | AP PHOTO

## Prosecutors: Rockets' Porter Jr. fractured girlfriend's vertebra in NYC assault

By Michael R. Sisak  
Associated Press

NEW YORK — Houston Rockets guard Kevin Porter Jr.'s alleged attack on his girlfriend in a New York City hotel room left the woman with a fractured neck vertebra and a deep cut above her right eye, prosecutors revealed at his arraignment Tuesday.

Porter, 23, is charged with felony assault and strangulation in connection with the incident early Monday at the Millennium Hilton near the United Nations in Manhattan. Prosecutors said he didn't stop until his girlfriend, former WNBA player Kysre Gondrezick, ran out into the hallway covered in blood.

Porter was not required to enter a plea during his brief court appearance.

The NBA star, who had been in police custody since his arrest around 6:45 a.m. Monday, was ordered to post \$75,000 cash or obtain a \$100,000 bond to secure his release. He was also ordered to stay away from Gondrezick.

"This is a serious domestic violence case," Assistant Manhattan District Attorney Mirah Curzer said in court.

According to Curzer, Porter has a history of abusing Gondrezick, including an incident in which he rammed his car into hers.

Porter is due back in court in Manhattan on Oct. 16. The Rockets are scheduled to play a preseason game that day in San Antonio, with their regular season tipping off about two weeks later.

A message seeking comment was left with Porter's lawyer.

In a statement Monday, the Rockets said: "We are in the process of gathering information surrounding the matter involving Kevin Porter Jr. We have no further comment at this time."

According to a criminal complaint, Gondrezick told police that Porter punched her repeatedly in the face with a closed fist, causing an inches-long gash above the right eye, bruising and substantial pain to her face.

Gondrezick, 26, said

Porter also wrapped his hands around her neck and strangled her, causing her to have difficulty breathing, redness and bruising to her neck, and loss of motion to her left arm.

Hospital testing showed that Gondrezick sustained a fracture to one of the vertebrae in her neck, the criminal complaint said.

Porter and Gondrezick started dating in February 2022, according to an anniversary message she posted on X, the social media site formerly known as Twitter.

Gondrezick, the fourth pick in the 2021 WNBA draft, played one season for the Indiana Fever and is currently a free agent. She is also an actress and model.

A message was left with Gondrezick's management company.

Porter has played four seasons in the NBA — a tenure marked by on-court prowess and off-court problems.

Last year, Porter averaged 19.2 points, 5.3 rebounds and 5.7 assists per game, earning a lucrative four-year

extension with Houston, where he'd landed after wearing out his welcome in Cleveland.

In November 2020, while playing for the Cavaliers, Porter was arrested after police said they found a loaded handgun and marijuana in his car after a single-vehicle crash. Porter claimed he didn't know the gun was there, and his charges were eventually dismissed.

Porter, a 2019 first-round draft pick from USC, was traded from Cleveland to Houston a few months later after he reportedly blew up at the Cavaliers' general manager after finding out that his locker had been moved to make room for a newly acquired player.

In April 2021, the NBA fined Porter \$50,000 for violating the league's COVID-19 health and safety rules by visiting a Miami strip club. In January 2022, the Rockets suspended Porter for a game after then-coach Stephen Silas said the player had a "spirited debate" and "lost his temper" at halftime.

## Allen's turnover troubles too much to overcome in Bills loss

By John Wawrow  
Associated Press

ORCHARD PARK, N.Y. — The many assurances Bills quarterback Josh Allen provided in April and repeated throughout the summer over how he was placing an emphasis on cutting down on turnovers suddenly seem like empty promises entering Week 2 of the season.

There, in the early hours of Tuesday morning, an emotionally drained Allen sat at the podium having to explain how his four-turnover outing ultimately cost Buffalo in a 22-16 overtime loss to the New York Jets.

"Trying to force the ball. 'Same (stuff), same place, different day,' the player who graces this year's Madden video game cover said glumly, spiking his words with a profanity. "I can't. I hurt our team tonight."

This was hardly the first time Allen has been required to explain himself in front of cameras following an error-filled performance.

And it may not be the last for someone who is just as capable of throwing three or more touchdowns — he's

19-1 when he does that — as he is committing two or more turnovers (9-12) in an outing.

Uniquely talented as the sixth-year player has proven to be as both a passer and runner in leading the Bills to win three consecutive AFC East titles, the stubborn over-reliance Allen places on his abilities versus trusting those around him continues to be a drag on his reputation.

What's troubling about Monday's outing is how the Bills were in a prime position to win, especially after the Jets lost starter Aaron Rodgers to a season-ending torn left Achilles injury during the first series, before Allen tilted the field back in New York's favor in squandering a 13-3 lead at the half.

His third interception, a throw forced to the sideline intended for Gabe Davis on third-and-2 and with less than five minutes left, led to the Jets tying the score at 13.

On Allen's next play from scrimmage, he mishandled a snap before recovering the ball. Rather than giving himself up, Allen rushed toward the line only to lose a



Buffalo Bills quarterback Josh Allen answers questions during an interview after the Bills lost to the New York Jets 22-16 in overtime of an NFL football game, Monday, Sept. 11, 2023, in East Rutherford, N.J. PHOTO BY SETH WENIG | AP PHOTO

fumble, which led to the Jets go-ahead score.

Sure, Allen effectively engineered a nine-play, 43-yard drive to set up Tyler Bass hitting a 50-yard field goal to tie the game with 2 seconds remaining. But the score was never supposed to be this close if not for Allen.

"I know he's capable of playing better," coach Sean McDermott said. "He's capable of playing smarter as well."

Allen's teammates have his back.

"That 17 is special. It doesn't matter if it's three

or four (turnovers)," tackle Dion Dawkins said. "That doesn't define 17, not even a little bit."

Added tight end Dawson Knox: "It's never one person."

As much as the Bills run defense sprung leaks in giving up 172 yards rushing, and Buffalo's special teams unraveled in allowing Xavier Gipson to close overtime by scoring on a 65-yard punt return, the brunt of the blame does fall on one person, who said so himself.

"I am the reason why we lost tonight," Allen said.



# Blues defenseman Krug injures right foot while training for coming season

By The Associated Press

ST. LOUIS — St. Louis Blues defenseman Torey Krug injured his right foot while training for the coming NHL season, general manager Doug Armstrong announced Tuesday.

The Blues did not reveal how long they expect the 32-year-old to be sidelined, other than to say Krug is expected to be reevaluated Oct. 1.

St. Louis opens the season Oct. 12 at Dallas. Krug's injury is a pre-training camp blow to the organization that's attempting to return to the playoffs quickly after a rare down season and trading away Stanley Cup-winning forwards Vladimir Tarasenko and Ryan O'Reilly.

Krug is going into his fourth season with the Blues since signing a seven-year, \$45.5 million contract in 2020. The former Boston Bruins defenseman has 112 points in 185 regular-season and playoff games with St. Louis.

If Krug misses time early in the season, it would create a spot for one of the Blues' young defensemen, either Tyler Tucker or Scott Perunovich, to get a regular role on a blue line that includes veterans Colton Parayko, Justin Faulk, Marco Scandella, Nick Leddy and Robert Bortuzzo.



St. Louis Blues defenseman Torey Krug plays against the San Jose Sharks during the second period of an NHL hockey game in San Jose, Calif., Thursday, March 2, 2023. Krug injured his right foot in training for the upcoming NHL season. General manager Doug Armstrong announced the injury Tuesday, Sept. 12. The Blues did not reveal how long they expected the 32-year-old to be sidelined for other than to say Krug is expected to be re-evaluated Oct. 1. FILE PHOTO BY GODOFREDO A. VÁSQUEZ | AP PHOTO

# Stewart edges Wilson for AP WNBA Player of the Year honors by 1 vote

By Doug Feinberg  
AP Basketball Writer

Breanna Stewart wanted to get closer to home after spending her entire WNBA career in Seattle so she signed with New York as a free agent in a seismic move during the offseason.

The decision has paid major dividends for Stewart and the Liberty.

She finished the regular season second in the league in scoring, averaging a career-best 23 points a game. She helped New York secure the second best record in the league and Tuesday became the first player to repeat as The Associated Press Player of the Year.

"To be honored as the AP Player of the Year is an

incredible honor," said Stewart, who also won the award in 2018. "It's quite different after switching teams and coming to New York and having such a positive season going 32-8. It's been a lot of amazing basketball going on this year and makes you feel good going into the playoffs."

Stewart narrowly edged Las Vegas' Aja Wilson by one vote from the 12-member media. Alyssa Thomas was third in voting. Stewart and Wilson finished one-two in the balloting last year also with the Aces' star winning the league's MVP award.

The WNBA will announce its awards over the course of the postseason which begins Wednesday.

The league MVP will be announced on Sept. 26.

"We're at a special place in women's basketball when there are so many great players doing so many great things every single night," said Stewart, who is the first three-time winner of the award since voting began in 2016.

Wilson was selected as the AP's Defensive Player of the Year for the second consecutive season, edging Thomas and Washington's Brittney Sykes. Wilson anchored the Aces' defense, averaging 2.2 blocks and 1.4 steals. Las Vegas earned the top seed in the playoffs.

Her Aces teammate Alysha Clark was chosen as the AP Sixth Woman of the Year. It's the fourth time that

an Aces player has won the award with Clark joining Dearica Hamby, who won it twice and Kelsey Plum. Clark consistently provided a spark on both ends of the court while coming off the bench for the Aces this season.

For the second consecutive year a former WNBA player won the AP Coach of the Year award with Connecticut's Stephanie White receiving the honor. She led the Sun to the third-best record in the league despite the team losing center Brianna Jones to a torn Achilles a month into the season.

Other AP winners included:

— Rookie of the Year: Aliyah Boston. She was the No. 1 pick of the Indiana

Fever and helped the team double its win total from last year. Boston averaged 14.5 points and 8.4 rebounds while shooting 57.8% from the field.

— Comeback Player of the Year: Brittney Griner and Napheesa Collier. Griner missed all of last year after a spending nearly 10 months in a Russian prison. She averaged 17.5 points this year. Collier missed nearly all of last season after giving birth to her first child. She averaged 21.5 points and 8.5 rebounds to help Minnesota earn the sixth seed in the playoffs.

— Most Improved Player: Satou Sabally. After playing in just 44 games because of injuries her first three years combined, Sabally was able

to stay healthy and played in 38 of the Dallas Wings' 40 contests this season. She averaged a career best 18.6 points and had 8.1 rebounds.

— All Rookie Team: Boston was joined on the team by her teammate Grace Berger, Dorka Juhasz and Diamond Miller of Minnesota, Jordan Horston of Seattle and Haley Jones of Atlanta.

— All-WNBA Teams: Stewart, Wilson and Thomas were unanimous first-team selections. Joining them on the first-team are Seattle's Jewell Loyd and Las Vegas' Chelsea Gray. The second team: Jackie Young of Las Vegas; Sabrina Ionescu of New York; Arike Ogunbowale; Sabally and Collier.

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## DEADLINES

Tues-Fri: Day before at 2pm  
Weekend Edition: Friday at 2pm

All legals, auctions & bordered ads deadline 24 hours prior to above deadlines.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### Notices

**IN COMPLIANCE WITH** the MO Self Storage Act, Section 415-400 to 415-430 and due to the repeated failure to pay monthly lease on storage unit lease, the following Leasee's stored items will be sold to the highest bidder by Public Auction at 9:00 A.M., Saturday, September 16, 2023, at Easy-Stor Storage, 3025 Clinton Rd., Sedalia, MO. Sale to be conducted by the owner's of Easy-Stor Storage, Sedalia, MO. All sales are final. Must be paid for with cash  
C-15: Julie Wade, Sedalia, MO

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**Notice to Bidders**  
Pettis County Commission is seeking bid proposals for the sale of property at 2208 West Main Street. Property exterior may be viewed at any time. Bid Proposals should be clearly marked "Sale of Property at 2208 West Main Street" and include thumb drive with proposal and sealed. Bid Proposals to be submitted by 9:30 a.m. Thursday, September 21, 2023 at the Pettis County Clerk's Office located at 215 East 5th St. Sedalia MO. Pettis County Commission reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals. Proposals deemed most advantageous to Pettis County will be accepted.  
For additional information, please contact Facilities and Grounds Coordinator Bret Manuel at 660-620-0154 or by email at [manuelb@pettiscomo.com](mailto:manuelb@pettiscomo.com) 4x-8/2, 16, 9/1, 13, 2023

**Notice to Bidders**  
Pettis County Commission has suspended the bidding process for 23576 Cedar Drive.

**NOTICE OF TRUSTEE'S SALE**  
For default under the terms of the Deed of Trust executed by Noble Kyle Moore Jr, a single person, dated February 28, 2020, recorded on February 28, 2020 as Document No. 2020-1022, as modified by

### Legal Notice

instrument recorded June 3, 2022 as Document No. 2022-2953, Office of the Recorder of Deeds, Pettis County, Missouri, the undersigned Successor Trustee will on Thursday, October 5, 2023, at 10:30 AM at the West Front Door of the Pettis County Courthouse, 415 South Ohio, in Sedalia, Missouri, sell at public vendue to the highest bidder for cash: Lot Number Twenty Two (22) in Block Number Five (5) of DAL-WHI-MO PLACE, an addition to the City of Sedalia, Pettis County, Missouri, to satisfy said debt and costs.  
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# Jets

From Page A9

He needed help from trainers to get to the sideline, where he was taken to the blue medical tent to be examined. Rodgers then got on a cart to go to the locker room, hopped off near the tunnel and limped inside.

Zach Wilson replaced Rodgers just 3:45 into the game and finished 14 of 21 for 140 yards with a touch-down pass to Garrett Wilson and an interception in the victory.

The third-year quarterback will now start for the Jets on Sunday at Dallas — and the foreseeable future.

Saleh said third-stringer Tim Boyle would be promoted from the practice squad and the Jets would explore their options to find a backup quarterback.

“We are going to look through some things, but I do want to make it very clear: Zach’s our quarterback,” Saleh said. “We’ve got a lot of faith in Zach. We’re really excited about his opportunity, but we’re rolling with Zach and excited for this and excited for him.”

Wilson praised the work Rodgers did with him during the offseason and training camp, helping him feel “a lot more prepared” to take the next step in his development.

“The hardest part is now putting it into a game and I’ve got to be able to do that,” Wilson said Monday night. “Going into this week, it’s applying everything that he’s kind of helped walk us through and being able to watch him and the coaches, how they’ve handled this offense. I’ve got to be able to handle that efficiently.”

Rodgers, who spent his first 18 seasons with Green Bay, was acquired by the Jets in April and immediately raised expectations for the frustrated franchise.

He gave the Jets their most accomplished quarterback since Brett Favre, who was acquired from Green Bay in 2008 — clearing the way for Rodgers to become the

Packers’ signal caller.

Rodgers, who repeatedly has said he won’t be one-and-done with the Jets, agreed in July to a restructured contract that gives him \$75 million in fully guaranteed money over this season and next.

But now, he’ll have to focus on a lengthy recovery and rehabilitation process, which could make his playing future uncertain.

Saleh expects Rodgers to continue to remain with the team and help throughout the rest of the season.

“I think I speak for everyone in the organization, we all want him here,” Saleh said. “We all want him to be connected, and I think he wants to be here.”

The situation evoked eerily similar memories of 1999, when Vinny Testaverde — who, coincidentally, was the Jets’ honorary captain Monday night — ruptured his Achilles tendon early in New York’s season opener against New England.

Like this year’s squad, those Jets had Super Bowl aspirations after going to the AFC championship game the previous season. New York instead finished 8-8 and missed the playoffs.

Rodgers’ injury brought up some debate in football circles as to whether the playing surface was a contributing factor. Saleh said he didn’t think it was because it wasn’t a noncontact injury. MetLife Stadium has been criticized for its turf the last few years because of several noncontact injuries, but the playing surface was replaced before this season.

With Rodgers out for the season, New York will not give up a first-round draft pick to Green Bay next year as part of the trade’s terms. It will remain a second-round pick that could have become a first-rounder if Rodgers had played 65% of the Jets’ plays this season.

The Packers also received the 13th overall pick, a second-rounder and a sixth-rounder in this year’s draft in exchange for Rodgers, the No. 15 overall pick and a fifth-rounder this year.

# Analysis: Payton’s excoriation of predecessor looks even worse after bungled Broncos debut

By Arnie Stapleton

AP Pro Football Writer

DENVER — If you’re going to excoriate your predecessor over the mess you were hired to clean up, it’s best to outperform the guy you replaced.

Sean Payton didn’t deliver enough enhancements in his Denver debut Sunday to justify calling out Nathaniel Hackett like he did in the summer.

During a passionate defense of quarterback Russell Wilson, who’s coming off the worst season of his career, Payton accused Hackett and his staff in Denver of doing “one of the worst coaching jobs in the history of the NFL” in 2022.

The potshot would have hit different had it come during Payton’s time as a Fox football analyst during his year’s sabbatical from coaching.

Hackett, now the Jets’ offensive coordinator, owned up to his failures as a first-time head coach in Denver but suggested Payton broke an unwritten code among coaches to not publicly criticize one another.

Payton’s stinging critique of Hackett’s performance in a USA Today article is sure to provide some extra juice to the Jets’ Week 5 visit to Denver next month, even with Aaron Rodgers’ left Achilles tendon

snapping just four snaps into his Jets debut Monday night, taking some luster off the league’s biggest storyline this season.

With his criticism of Hackett, Payton also put himself on the hook to deliver a better product in Denver — and fast.

While Wilson looked a lot more like his vintage Seattle self while running Payton’s offense, the Broncos’ 17-16 loss at home to the Raiders on Sunday was the exact score by which Hackett lost his head coaching debut at Seattle last season.

Hackett infamously settled for a 64-yard field goal attempt by Brandon McManus, a head-scratching decision that backfired and sent the Broncos on a season-long tailspin that cost Hackett his job after 15 games.

Payton didn’t even get the chance to try a last-second field goal Sunday because his defense, which produced zero sacks and committed a half dozen penalties, made Jimmy Garoppolo look like Tom Brady in the fourth quarter.

A Denver offense that averaged 11 plays and more than 6 minutes per drive produced its only third-and-out after falling behind and never got the ball back.

The Broncos’ special teams was worst of all, with

a botched inside kick to start the game, a crucial holding call negating a big early return and a dismal debut from Wil Lutz, the reliable kicker Payton had in New Orleans whom he acquired from the Saints two week ago for a late-round draft pick.

Lutz missed his first extra point as a Bronco and was also wide right on a 55-yard field goal attempt, leaving four points on the board in a one-point loss on the same day Brandon McManus, whom Payton curiously cut loose in May, made all five of his kicks for the Jaguars’ in their win at Indianapolis.

Another decision, to trade tight end Albert Okwuegbunam to the Eagles on cut-down day, drew renewed scrutiny Sunday when Greg Dulcich pulled a hamstring on the opening drive of the second half and didn’t return.

Combined with the absence of top receiver Jerry Jeudy (hamstring), Dulcich’s departure left the Broncos without any downfield threats and Wilson was forced to dink and dunk his way through a 52-yard second half.

The Broncos did average 2.7 points per possession, a great figure if you’re looking at the usual 10 to 12 drives teams get in a typical game.

Denver had just six drives Sunday — six! —

and the Broncos ran but three offensive plays over the final 8:54 of the game, including a third-down catch 3 yards shy of the sticks. That three-and-out was sandwiched around Garoppolo’s 6-yard TD strike to Jakobi Meyers and his 8-yard scramble on third-and-7 that iced the Raiders’ seventh straight win over their rivals.

A lack of pressure (zero sacks) and a lack of discipline (10 penalties) also doomed Denver, especially safety Kareem Jackson’s 15-yarder for a helmet hit on Meyers on Las Vegas’ final drive.

Despite all that, there were certainly signs of progress under Payton, including this: the fans didn’t have to resort to counting down the play clock as they mockingly did in Hackett’s home debut last year when he had so much trouble getting the plays in on time. General manager George Paton brought Jerry Rosburg out of retirement the next day to take over the game management duties and then promoted him to interim head coach following Hackett’s Dec. 26 ouster at 4-11.

Many of the same issues that dogged the Broncos under Hackett showed up under Payton, including too many flags, a paucity of explosive plays and not enough pressure on the passer.

# Roundup

From Page A9

Smith-Cotton went 2-2 on Saturday, good for third place in the Higginsville Spikefest Tournament. Alle Case provided team-highs in kills (19) and digs (41), while Addison Lyles compiled 11 kills and 37 digs, Lennon Adams came up with six blocks Taylor Pinkel provided 18 assists, also a team-high. It provided some momentum going into Tuesday night’s home match against Warrensburg.

Also in Higginsville, Northwest picked up wins over Cameron, Richmond and Smith-Cotton, while tying Versailles. The Lady Mustangs only defeat there came to Warrensburg, also their first on the year.

**Cardinals move up in ranks**

Tipton made a slight jump in the Missouri Media

Week 2 football rankings with a 54-0 home shutout of Cole Camp.

The Cards jumped from fourth to third in Class 1 thanks to a dominating defensive performance that saw them force punts on the Bluebirds’ first three drives and four turnovers altogether. Lucas Cashman weaved in for Tipton’s eight points in the first quarter, but the Cards began to put in on in the second and led by 30 by intermission.

Six Bluebirds (1-2) combined to rush 25 times; Grant Rodriguez led with a team-high 42 yards on eight of those carries. Cody DeWitt finished with a team-high eight tackles for Cole Camp.

Elsewhere, Lincoln (1-2) dropped a heated contest at Crest Ridge with Chilhowee, 42-8. Windsor (1-2) was also on the road and fell 26-8 at Knob Noster. In 8-man, Jason Boss and Connor Thorp combined to rush for

201 yards and three TDs, but Northwest with Otterville (0-3) fell to St. Paul Lutheran, 51-36.

Week 4’s slate of games is highlighted by Windsor making the trip to take on Lincoln.

**S-C swim competes at Belton Invite**

Smith-Cotton boys swim and dive traveled to the Belton Invite over the weekend and finished with several standout times.

The 200-meter medley relay team of Aiden Scholl, Adam Rowe, Findlay Hume and Julius Washington placed fourth with a consideration time of 1:58.24, and the quartet of Scholl, Hume, Washington and Clayton Tankersley took third with a state consideration mark of 3:55.30 in the 400 freestyle relay.

Individually, Hume took gold in the 200 IM with a time of 2:12.10, and also collected a second-place finish in the 100 freestyle.

Other second-place finishes included Adam Rowe in the 200 free (2:11.69) and Scholl in the 500 free (5:48.43).

On the first day of action in Belton, S-C’s Julius Washington finished fourth.

**Jennies volleyball splits DH**

UCM volleyball defeated UT-Tyler and fell to Metro-State Denver as part of a split at the Colorado Premier Challenge on Saturday.

Outside hitter Kersti Nix led the Jennies with a match-high 18 kills in the five-set win over UT-Tyler, while Emma Siron (Sacred Heart HS) finished with four kills and two blocks.

Siron recorded a season-highs of seven kills and three blocks the day before in a five-set win over Cal State LA.

The Jennies, 3-4 on the season, play next at home Thursday against Missouri Western, then face No. 18 Northwest Missouri in the road two days later.

# Sweep

From Page A9

The league stabilized under Big 12 Commissioner Brett Yormark, though. BYU, Cincinnati, UCF and Houston have joined this year, and four more are due to arrive next year with Colorado returning alongside No. 12 Utah, Arizona and Arizona State.

Before that, they can make a statement against the SEC, which won four of six meetings between the leagues last year.

One of the losses was Kansas State blowing out Missouri.

“I think it’s going to be a great environment for college football,” Wildcats coach Chris Klieman said of the trip to Columbia, where his team will play for the first time since 2010. “This is a great game, a regional non-

conference game and rivalry, and it’s going to be a great test for our guys because we’re going to be going into these types of environments in the Big 12.

“I don’t know how the game is going to go, but it’s going to be a great opportunity for our guys to measure ourselves against a great team on the road in a hostile environment.”

Tigers coach Eliah Drinkwitz also believes the match-up between Power Five schools is good for college football in general.

“I don’t think there’s anything better than regional rivalries,” Drinkwitz said, pointing out that many players on each team were recruited by the opposing coaching staffs as well. “There’ll be the watercooler conversations. The people this summer flying their flags at the lake and talking trash, and that’s what makes college football so fun: the

bragging rights.”

The Tigers have won just twice in six games against Big 12 schools since bolting the league, while Kansas State is just 8-16 against the SEC. The Razorbacks are 13-6 against the Big 12 while the Cougars are 4-7 against the SEC.

“We played against (Arkansas) last year and they put up a lot of points against us and they go the victory,” said Sitake, whose Cougars lost a 52-35 shootout in Provo, Utah. “We’re looking forward to the rematch and going down to Arkansas for this game and getting ready for them. A tough team, tons of talent, just like we saw last year.”

It’s an excellent opportunity for BYU to represent the Big 12 in its first season in the league and an important game for the SEC in avoiding a potential 0-for-3 mark against the Big 12 this season.

# Ballot

From Page A9

Several versions of an initiative petition were filed Friday with Secretary of State Jay Ashcroft’s office, which must approve an initiative summary before supporters can start gathering the roughly 180,000 signatures needed to qualify for the ballot by a May deadline.

The proposed constitutional amendment would allow each of Missouri’s professional sports teams and casinos to offer sports betting onsite and through online platforms that could be used anywhere in the state. Some of the different versions would allow up to four online sports betting companies to receive approval to operate directly from the state.

The professional sports teams have been in conversations about the Missouri ballot initiative with the Sports Betting Alliance, which consists of BetMGM, DraftKings, FanDuel and Fanatics Sportsbook, said Nathan Click, a spokesperson

for the alliance.

Under the proposed initiative, Missouri would impose a 10% tax on adjusted gross sports betting revenue, after the payout of winnings and promotional bets to customers. A similar legislative proposal had been estimated earlier this year to generate around \$30 million annually when fully implemented.

The proposed initiative would allot \$5 million to a compulsive gamblers prevention fund, with much of the rest going to K-12 schools and higher education institutions.

Nationwide, state funding for problem gambling services has lagged behind recommended levels, with just 38 cents per capita spent in the 2022 fiscal year. But the most recent states to launch sports gambling all required at least a portion of the revenue to go toward helping addicted gamblers.

Missouri’s sports betting proposal is not the only prominent issue drawing attention from petitioners. Various ballot proposals also have been filed to relax Missouri’s prohibition on most abortions.

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