

SEDALIA DEMOCRAT

Issue 8 • Volume 158

Tuesday, January 27, 2026

SedaliaDemocrat.com • \$2

Cold and snow hit Sedalia, but crews clear quickly



Traves Williams snowblows the sidewalk along Second Street on Monday, Jan. 26. City crews began at 5 a.m. in their snow removal efforts. PHOTO BY CHRIS HOWELL | DEMOCRAT

By Chris Howell
chris.howell@sedaliademocrat.com

Traves Williams and Carl McCallum were up early Monday, Jan. 26, working for the City of Sedalia clearing snow from downtown sidewalks. “Five o’clock,” Williams said. “We’re removing the snow from the sidewalks and salting them. When we start, we don’t see anybody. We have about 12 sidewalks that the city owns, some properties, so we maintain those; put salt down and remove the snow.” Across Sedalia, MoDOT plows had already cleared the major arteries of U.S. Highway 65 and U.S. Highway 50 by the time the sun came up, and City of Sedalia crews were plowing the snow on downtown streets into long windrows in the middle of the streets before scooping it up, loading it in dump trucks and hauling it off. Over the radio, crews joked about how it felt like Summer outside, though temperatures were hovering around 0 degrees.

See **SNOW**, Page 5A



Carl McCallum said layers upon layers of clothing were necessary to work for long in the 0 degree weather on Monday, Jan. 26. PHOTO BY CHRIS HOWELL | DEMOCRAT

Hoskins takes action on trailer park near Whiteman Air Force Base

By Democrat Staff

A trailer park bordering Whiteman Air Force Base is facing state cancellation after its owners failed to meet Missouri’s basic business requirements. Missouri Secretary of State Denny Hoskins’ office issued an administrative cancellation against Property Solutions 3603 LP, which owns a trailer park on the north side of the base, on Thursday, Jan. 22. According to Hoskins’ office, the limited partnership has failed to register an agent in Missouri, as required by state law. A routine check of the property discovered the registered agent information on file was inaccurate. Hoskins’ office issued a 60 day notice to correct the issue on Nov. 13. The registered agent had last been updated by the entity in 2020, with it being listed as an agency out of Harrisonville. Online records indicate Property Solutions 3603 LP’s general partner is 3695GA31068 CORP, with a listed mailing address of Blaine, Washington. “Operating a compliant business in Missouri is not hard,” Missouri Secretary of State Denny Hoskins said in a statement. “The rules are clear, the process is straightforward, and millions of businesses successfully meet these requirements every year. When an entity fails to do so—especially after notice and ample opportunity to correct the issue—Missouri law requires action.” Hoskins’ release states administrative cancellations are routine and occur regularly when entities fail to meet basic statutory obligations. “This action is about compliance with Missouri law—nothing more and nothing less,” Hoskins added. “If an entity wants the benefits of doing business in Missouri, it must also accept the responsibilities. That principle applies equally to every business, regardless of size, ownership, or location.” Hoskins’ administrative action letter sent to limited partner property’s general partner on Jan. 21 states the entity can request to be reinstated by providing the appropriate documentation of a Missouri based registered agent to his office.

Income tax cut plan could allow tax on gas, diesel

By Rudi Keller
Missouri Independent

The latest version of a proposal meant to implement the governor’s income tax cut could also trigger a first for Missouri: sales taxes on gasoline and diesel, a result the bill’s sponsor says was accidental. Under the terms of the proposed constitutional amendment sponsored by House Speaker Jon Patterson, sales tax could be imposed “on transactions involving any goods and services” and the revenue would be exempt from the prohibition on using money generated from a tax on

fuel sales for state needs other than highways. Missouri has earmarked money from taxes on motor fuels for highways since 1928. That is not the intent, Patterson said in an interview with The Independent on Thursday, the day after he filed a revised version of the proposal that fixes earlier errors and expands on limitations intended to prevent a windfall of new revenue for state and local governments. “There is absolutely zero intention on my part to see any increase in the motor fuel tax,” Patterson said. An amendment to his bill will be prepared to make that explicit, Patterson said. The reference to how taxes on motor fuels are used is intended to prevent a new sales tax on fuel, Patterson said, not to divert money from highways.

See **GAS**, Page 5A

Snow, frigid temperatures move through Sedalia



Cattle brave the weather along Main Street in Sedalia on Saturday, Jan. 24. PHOTO BY CHRIS HOWELL | DEMOCRAT



A News / Sports
Obituaries 2A-3A
Opinion 4A
Weather 5A
Sports
Horoscopes 7A

B Living / Classified
Heartland Chronicles 5B
Comics 7B
Service 8B
Classifieds 10B

Check out our E-Editions to find what you’re looking for!
Sedalia Democrat
www.sedaliademocrat.com

JOIN THE CONVERSATION
What’s your take on today’s news? Go to sedaliademocrat.com or visit us on social media to share your thoughts!
Facebook Instagram Twitter @SEDALIADEMOCRAT
660-826-1000 | sedaliademocrat.com

OBITUARIES

Thomas Patrick Gibbs

Thomas Patrick Gibbs, 79, of Overland Park, Kansas, passed away on January 16, 2026. He was the beloved husband of Diana Gibbs, with whom he shared 50 wonderful years of marriage.



Born in Sedalia, Missouri, Tom was the son of George and Kathleen Gibbs. He graduated from Smith Cotton High School and the University of Central Missouri with a degree in business and spent his career in sales with Avery Label Company before going on to own his own business, Diversified Label Company.

Tom was a proud member of the Sons of the American Revolution and the Nicholas Gibbs Historical Society. Known for his kindness and generosity, he was a loyal friend who was always the first to step in when someone needed help. A true “MacGyver” at heart, Tom could cobble just about anything together and make it work—even if it wasn’t a perfect fix.

He was a devoted fan of all things Mizzou and rarely missed a football or basketball game. His favorite team was the undefeated 1994 Missouri basketball team led by Melvin Booker. Tom also loved sitting outside on the deck—at home or at the lake house—listening to the Roy-

als games. Nothing brought him more joy than his grandchildren; he was always the first to ask about their games and activities and attended everything he possibly could.

Tom had a deep fascination with family history and especially enjoyed visiting the Nicholas Gibbs Log Cabin in Corryton, Tennessee. His family’s Civil War roots were a constant source of interest and pride.

Stubborn in the best way, Tom fought cancer with determination and strength until the very end. He never gave up—his body simply gave out.

He is survived by his wife, Diana Gibbs; his son, Patrick Gibbs (Jennifer), his daughter, Anna Seher; his grandchildren, Brynn and Colin Gibbs, and Austin, Evan, Colby, and Taylor Seher; his son, Theron Twenter and his brother Terry Gibbs. He was preceded in death by his parents, George and Kathleen Gibbs.

A funeral service will be held on January 28, 2026, at Penwell-Gabel Funeral Home, 14275 S. Black Bob Road, Olathe, Kansas, 66062, with interment at Pleasant Valley Cemetery. Visitation will begin at 1:00 p.m., followed by the service at 2:00 p.m. A reception will be held at the home of Patrick Gibbs following the service.

Michael Grant Rocco

Dr. Michael Grant Rocco (Duncan), born December 30, 1960, in Sedalia, Missouri, to Barbara Duncan and Michael Lee, passed away on January 19, 2026, in Sacramento, California.

Grant earned a B.A. in Social Work from

the University of Missouri, an M.S.W. from San Francisco State University, and a doctorate in social work from the University of Southern California. He



spent his final years in private psychotherapy practice helping people heal, grow, and navigate life’s hardest moments.

A lifelong

Mizzou college football fan, although they frequently disappointed him, Grant is survived by his husband of 29 years, Matthew Rocco; his daughters, Sharon and Monica; and his soon to be son in law, Tariq Nichel-

son. beloved dog, Max, and cat, Tucci.

She was preceded in death by her father, George Mack Oswald, and a sister, Virginia “Pook” Stuedle.

The family will receive friends from 12:00 to 1:15 p.m. Wednesday, January 28, 2026, at Heckart Funeral Home, where funeral services will begin at 1:30 p.m. Burial will follow in Olive Branch Cemetery near Syracuse.

Casket bearers will be Kannon Simmons, Jacob Schoen, Matt Oswald, Tyler Oswald, Paul M. Oswald, Franklin Oswald, P.J. Phillips, and Jimmy Mac Oswald. The remaining nieces, nephews, and grandchildren will serve as honorary bearers.

Memorials are suggested to Olive Branch Church and Cemetery, in care of Heckart Funeral Home.

Beverly Sue Simmons

Beverly Sue Simmons, 73, of Otterville, passed away Thursday, January 22, 2026, at her home, surrounded by her family.

She was born March 6, 1952, in Boonville, the daughter of George Mack and Mildred Sue (McNeal) Oswald. She was formerly married to Jerry Simmons, and together they had two children.

Bev was a 1970 graduate of Otterville High School. As a child, she was involved in Theta Rho. Bev was deeply community-minded and known as a take-charge person who stepped in when there was a need and believed in doing things the right way. She helped organize entertainment for the Otterville Street Fair and took pride in bringing baton twirling to the fair, leading and teaching young girls in the community.

Family was always at

the center of her life. Aunt Bessie, as she was affectionately known, enjoyed supporting her nieces and nephews by attending their ball games. She found enjoyment in listening to live music, especially her brother’s band. Bev consistently put others before herself and, over the years, opened her home to many who needed a place to stay. She was a member of First Baptist Church of Otterville.

Bev worked for many years as a manufacturing supervisor, including positions at Fasco and Delta.

One of her proudest accomplishments was helping bring her cousin, Harold Lee Dick, home. He was killed in action during World War II and had been



missing since 1944. In 2020, Bev was instrumental in coordinating his repatriation and organizing a meaningful homecoming.

Survivors include a son, Jerry Mack Simmons (Jackie) of Bunceton; a daughter, Laura Sue Moore (Richard) of Sedalia; her mother, Mildred Sue Oswald of Otterville; three grandchildren, Madisyn Horn (Codey), Jordyn Simmons, and Kannon Simmons (Kaylee); three great-grandchildren, Morgan, Blair, and Kayson; three brothers, Jimmy Oswald of Otterville, Paul Oswald (Ruth) of Otterville, and Frank Oswald (Terri) of Florence; a brother-in-law, Roger Stuedle; numerous nieces, nephews, and cousins; and her

Janet L. Gant

Janet L. Gant, 82, of Otterville, Missouri, passed away Saturday, January 24, 2026, at Primrose Assisted Living in Sedalia, Missouri.

She was born March 2, 1943, in Job, Kentucky, the daughter of Ershel and Martha (Mills) Bowen. On March 3, 1962, in Kansas City, Missouri, she married Charles Gary Gant. They shared 55 years together before his passing on December 3, 2017.

Janet grew up in Kentucky and spent her early married life moving to different places with the military. After settling in Otterville, she made a career in banking, working first at

First State Savings and Loan, then at Mercantile Bank and First Community Bank, from where she retired as a loan officer and vice president.

She was a member of Mt. Olive Baptist Church in Florence and had also been a member of the Eastern Star. Janet cared deeply about her community and served two terms as mayor of Otterville, as well as time on the local school board.

Janet enjoyed cooking and baking, crocheting, line dancing, and spending time entertaining



others. In recent years, she especially enjoyed hosting block parties for her neighbors. She was a loyal fan of the Kansas City Chiefs and the Kentucky Wildcats.

She is survived by two sons, Brian Gant (Christina) of Smithton and Bradley Gant (Nicole) of Roach; three grandchildren; four great-grandchildren; a brother, Larry James; a sister, Loretha Muncy; several nieces and nephews; and her recent companion, Bob Bentzin.

In addition to her hus-

band and parents, she was preceded in death by a grandson, two brothers, and two sisters.

The family will receive friends beginning at 11:00 a.m. Saturday, January 31, 2026, at Heckart Funeral Home in Sedalia, Missouri, where funeral services will be held at 12:00 p.m.

Private burial will be in the Missouri State Veterans Cemetery in Higginsville.

Memorial contributions are suggested to the Missouri Veterans Home in Warrensburg, in care of Heckart Funeral Home, P.O. Box 434, Sedalia, Missouri 65302.

Anna Lee Holloway

Anna Lee Holloway, 86 of Sedalia Missouri passed away January 20th at home.

She is survived by

her Son Greg Corpier of Sedalia, her Daughter Kimberly Fuelling of Clinton, four grandchildren, Hunter Fuelling,

Indigo Fuelling, and Jo Fuelling all of Clinton; and Roy Corpier of Sedalia. She was preceded in death by one son Joey Corpier, her parents Roy Gehlken and Edith Hoehns- Gehlken, plus one grandson Joshua Corpier.

She enjoyed spending time with her grandchildren and making floral arrangements

and artificial decorative trees which she did for many years working at Kim Originals, she finished her work career and retired from Tyson Foods. No formal services will be held at her request. Cremation arrangements are in the care of H.T. May and Son funeral homes. A celebration of life will be held at a future time.

Check out our E-Editions to find what you're looking for!

Sedalia Democrat
www.sedaliademocrat.com

Mast Greenhouse

From Birdseed to Bloom — We've Got You Covered!

Bird Feeding Supplies
Black Oil Sunflowers – \$23/bag
Sunflower Chips • Niger Seed
Feeders for Birds & Squirrels

Garden Essentials
Potting Soil, Fertilizers & Seed Starters
6% Off During December!
50% Off 2025 Garden Seed!

Open Mon–Sat 8–5
3 miles north of Windsor on WW Hwy, then ¾ mile left on 1100 Rd

KELLY INSURANCE GROUP

Medicare Annual Enrollment Period is right around the corner! Please contact us to get scheduled to discuss your plan options for 2026!

Specializing in Medicare Products and Health Insurance

NOAH KELLY
Owner/Agent

119 N Maple St., Cole Camp, MO 65325
(660) 668-3995

We do not offer every plan available in your area. We represent 5 organizations which offer 35 products in your area. Any information we provide is limited to those plans we do offer in your area. Please contact Medicare.gov, 1-800-MEDICARE, or your local State Health Insurance Program (SHIP) to get information on all of your options.

The BARGAIN Shed

Make your tax refunds stretch further by shopping at The Bargain Shed!!

Furniture • Mattresses

thebargainshed.net
660-441-7438 • 10340 US Hwy. 50 - Knob Noster

MARTIN'S GOODS & GIFTS
14382 HIGHWAY E • VERSAILLES, MO

COME SEE US AT

573-378-6898

Monday- Friday 8-5 pm Sat 8-Noon
14382 Hwy E Versailles: Hwy C to Hwy E, after curve, ½ mile first place on the left, watch for sign.

CORRECTION

On page A9 of the Friday, Jan. 23 edition of the Sedalia Democrat, an image of a house was published in attachment to a La Monte narcotics warrant. The location of the search warrant was at a neighboring residence. The Democrat apologizes for the error.

Those Were The Days
2nd largest antique mall in Missouri!

Antique, Vintage, Shabby Chic & Usables Finds for Your Home & Garden
Furniture, Décor, & Housewares all in one place

138 West Pine, Warrensburg, MO • (660) 747-8742
twtdcontact@gmail.com

SEDALIA DEMOCRAT
(USPS 488-400)
Telephone: 660-826-1000
Entire contents copyright 2022
Sedalia Democrat,
a Carpenter Media Group publication.

Publishes Tuesday and Friday.
Subscription rate is \$198.82/year, plus tax.
Prices are subject to change at any time; no refunds.

CONTACT US

PUBLISHER
Jamila Khalil
660-826-1000 ext. 1503
jamila.khalil@sedaliademocrat.com

EDITOR
Joe Andrews
660-826-1000 ext. 1482
joe.andrews@warrensburgstarjournal.com

CIRCULATION
Nikki Monsees
660-826-1000 ext. 1500
nikki.monsees@sedaliademocrat.com

NEWSROOM: 660-826-1000
OBITUARIES: 660-826-1000
ADVERTISING: 660-826-1000
CLASSIFIED ADS: 660-826-1000
SUBSCRIPTION SERVICES: 660-827-4400

www.sedaliademocrat.com
111 W. Fourth St., Sedalia, MO, 65301 • Periodical postage paid at Sedalia, MO • POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Sedalia Democrat, 111 W. Fourth St., Sedalia, MO, 65301

FUNERAL LIST

Dennis Lowell Barnes
11 a.m Wednesday, Jan. 28, at St. John’s Lutheran Church near Cole Camp. Arrangements are under the direction of Fox Funeral Home.

Beverly Sue Simmons
1:30 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 28, at Heckart Funeral Home in Sedalia. Arrangements are under the direction of Heckart Funeral Home.

Thomas Patrick Gibbs
2 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 28, at Penwell-Gabel Funeral Home in Olathe, Kansas. Arrangements are under the direction of Penwell-Gabel Funeral Home.

Janet L. Gant
Noon Saturday, Jan. 31, at Heckart Funeral Home in Sedalia. Arrangements are under the direction of Heckart Funeral Home.

POLICE REPORTS

Sedalia Police Department

Arrests
Jan. 21
12:27 a.m.: Gavin Clayton Mercer, 20, was arrested after a traffic stop on a vehicle displaying an expired temporary registration near South Wagner and East 12th street. The driver was intoxicated and was issued a uniform traffic ticket for DWI.

Jan. 23
7:44 p.m.: Edy Lopez, 22, was arrested after a traffic stop near North Missouri Avenue and West Pettis Street. The driver had revoked driving status and was released from the police department with a municipal citation for driving while revoked.

Jan. 25
12:41 a.m.: Christopher Jonathan Wright, 37, was arrested after a traffic stop near South New York Avenue and East Broadway Boulevard on a vehicle not displaying

a front registration plate. The driver was intoxicated and as he was being arrested he pulled away and fled on foot resulting in a short foot pursuit. He was transported to the Pettis County Jail for a 24-hour hold pending a charge of DWI - prior offender.

4:14 a.m.: Bridget Marie Pardee, 42, was arrested after officers responded to St Patrick's church, 415 East Fourth Street for a subject trespassing on the property. She was transported to the Pettis County Jail and placed on a 24-hour hold pending a charge of first-degree trespass.

5:50 a.m.: Gavin Clayton Mercer, 20, was arrested after an officer was dispatched to a traffic crash near South Limit Avenue and West Third Street. The driver was intoxicated and was transported to the police department and issued a uniform traffic ticket.

Compiled by Chris Howell

WEEKLY REPORT

The Commission attends 2026 World Cup Committee meeting

During the week of Jan. 19 through Jan. 23, the Pettis County Commission completed the following:

Monday, Jan. 19: The courthouse was closed in observance of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

Eastern Commissioner Israel Baeza attended the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day service held by Burns Chapel Free Will Baptist Church.

Tuesday, Jan. 20: The Commission met with Road and Bridge Superintendent James Hill regarding planning for asphalt roads in 2026.

Professional Land Surveyor Cody Darr visited the Commission to discuss land records.

Citizen Harv Ebers visited the Commission.

The Commission reviewed Ordinance 01-2026-1893 which authorizes a property tax credit pursuant to Senate Bill 3 and RSMo 137.1055 to provide property tax relief on citizens' primary residence.

Shannon Howe, Paul Winkelman, and Beth Moots from Howe Engineering visited the Commission to discuss the outer road project and progress on the South Grand Avenue Road bridge project.

Wednesday, Jan 21: The Commission attended the 2026 World Cup Committee meeting.

The Commission met with Pioneer Trails Regional Planning Commission Executive Director Chris Hess and Pioneer Trails Regional Planning Commission

Transportation Advisory Council Member Ron Toellner.

Baeza met with Road and Bridge Administrative Assistant KeLyn Carpenter to discuss snow operations preparations.

Thursday, Jan. 22: The Commission approved a contract between Pettis County and Otis Elevator Company for elevator phone services.

Presiding Commissioner Bill Taylor attended the Missouri Association of Counties board meeting.

The Commission met with Engineering Surveys and Services Sedalia Branch Manager and Project Manager Kelly Lohsandt, Engineering Surveys and Services Vice President of Engineering Ben Ross, and

Engineering Surveys and Services Lead Project Engineer Auston Bevins to discuss the outer road project. Present was, GIS and Grants Director James Theisen

The Commission met with 911 Communications Director Dannelle Lauder to discuss emergency communications.

Western Commissioner Mark Edwards attended a Region F virtual meeting pertaining to Missouri House Bill 2761.

The Commission met with Sedalia Senior Center Board Member and Pettis County Silver Hair Representative Rene Vance to hear a request for consideration for a senior service fund as outlined under RSMo 67.990.

DEMOCRAT SALUTES



Immanuel United Church of Christ recently donated \$495 to Open Door. The money was raised from Immanuel's Christmas Offering. Pictured are Rayvin Welch, Open Door Service Center Case Manager, Julie Bales, Immanuel Vice-President and Autumn Benedict, Open Door Pantry Case Manager. PHOTO COURTESY OF PHILLIP GERLT



24 HOUR
EMERGENCY
SERVICES

- COMMERCIAL
- RESIDENTIAL
- INDUSTRIAL

ELECTRICAL NEEDS

SEDALIA MO

Business Hours: Monday - Friday | 7:00AM - 5:00PM

Family Owned and Operated Since 1976

www.reinholdelectric.com

660-227-8249

ALL IN A DAY’S WORDS

The poet and the nurse

I sit here looking at my laptop, trying to compose a column, but the words are difficult to place. And yet again, another American citizen in Minnesota has been gunned down and killed by ICE.

On Jan. 7, we tried to wrap our heads around the shooting and killing of Renee Good, 37, a mother and poet, by ICE agents in Minneapolis. The videos of the altercation and deadly force showed something different to the public masses than what America was told. The same seems to apply to the Saturday, Jan. 24 shooting and killing of Alex Pretti, 37, an ICU nurse at a VA hospital, who was shot around 10 times as he lay face down on the street, also in Minneapolis.

As we’ve all heard in news accounts, Pretti had a license to carry and did have his weapon with him at the time (which was not wise), but it wasn’t drawn. He was filming ICE with his phone when things went sideways. A woman next to him was pushed down, he tried to help, and they were pepper-sprayed by agents, and he was thrown to the ground. Some photos show an agent possibly holding up Pretti’s gun and then another agent shooting Pretti multiple times in the back while he was lying in the street.

Again, we’re being told Pretti is a “domestic terrorist” who came to the ICE raid to “massacre” agents. But once again, that’s not what we’re seeing in the videos taken there.

I’m neither a Republican nor a Democrat — I believe both parties have major problems. So, please don’t take me down that road by expounding on my political beliefs. Although I do believe these shootings were wrong and unfounded, I do believe we are being fed wrong information. All of this culminates in making the American people feel unsafe, not only physically but in what our government spins to save their own faces.

As I sit here feeling somewhat depressed about the state of our



Faith Bemiss - McKinney
Contributing Columnist

country and the injustice of it all, I wonder what we would do if this were happening in Sedalia? I believe we would also protest, well, maybe some of us, while others may drink the sweet Kool-Aid, believing the administration does no wrong.

These two people are not just names in the news; they were American citizens. Citizens who had family/children, jobs, pets, who were creative, who were healing, they are us. Any one of us could have something like this happen if things don’t change. Unfortunately, an AP news account stated Pretti’s parents, who live in Wisconsin, didn’t know of his death until news sources contacted them. As they began calling different agencies, none answered their questions until they called the coroner. What a way to find out your son was shot by government agents while lying face down on a street.

How do we, as a nation, rectify these shootings and the possible additional ones that could happen in the future? Someone needs to be held accountable.

When asked by the “Wall Street Journal” about the Pretti shooting, even President Trump was at a loss for words and failed to state if the agent acted appropriately. He did say the administration was reviewing the incident. I should hope so.

We all know changes must be implemented, and American citizens must never be shot unjustly. Tensions are high. And rightly so. And may we all remember the poet and the nurse—people like us.

Faith Bemiss-McKinney can be reached at faith.bemiss@sedaliademocrat.com.

Find past news, sports & Classifieds on our website

Check out our E-Editions to find what you're looking for!



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.



CONTRIBUTING COLUMN

Blackwater Township named for the Blackwater River

When Pettis County was established in 1833, it was divided into five townships.

Blackwater Township lies at the northwest corner of the county.

The township was bounded on the west by Johnson County, on the south by Elk Fork and Mt. Sterling Townships, on the east by Bowling Green Township, and on the north by Saline County.

The Blackwater River ran east-northeasterly direction through Johnson, Pettis, and Saline Counties toward the Lamine River, which drains into the Missouri River. A heavy growth of timber bordered each side of the river.

According to Mark McGruder's 1919 History of Pettis County, the township was named for the Blackwater River.

Other large streams in the township included Elk Fork Creek, Beaver Dam Creek, Wolf Creek, as well as several smaller streams. These waterways were also bordered by large stands of timber.

Buffalo, elk and deer were plentiful. They grazed on the rich growth of grass that the early settlers found there.

The land in the western and central part of the township was high rolling prairie.

The earliest inhabitants were Native Americans. McGruder does not identify a specific tribe. Their graves were marked. Early American settlers dug up some of the graves.

They found bones, as well as things such as stone arrowheads and other items buried with the individuals. (Today suspected Native American burials must be reported to the State Historic Preservation Office in Jefferson City or to the county coroner. It is against the law to disturb a Native American grave.)

The Spanish, who came seeking gold, were early explorers.



Rhonda Chalfant
Contributing Columnist

They did not find gold, but their mining efforts left several pits that concealed iron ore that attracted electricity.

Lightning strikes were frequent in the area, often killing stock standing near the pits.

The surveyor's compass refused to work when near the pits.

Some of the early American settlers included Isaiah Prigmore, who came from Kentucky in 1929, and Peter Fisher, who came from Kentucky in 1832. Fisher later moved to Texas.

Benjamin Snelling moved to Blackwater Township in 1833. Samuel Fisher came in 1834 from Kentucky.

According to the 1882 History of Pettis County, the first polling place in Blackwater Township was at Samuel Fisher's house.

McGruder identifies other early inhabitants as George Miller, who came in 1836 from Cooper County and later moved to southwest Missouri.

John Loper and Hiram Taylor, came from Illinois to Blackwater Township in 1837.

James Scott came from Cooper County in 1838.

Elijah Roberts came from Cooper County in 1840 and later moved to Texas.

John Rice came from Cooper County in 1840. McGruder notes he was active in township

affairs for many years.

David Ramsey came to Blackwater Township in 1840 from near Georgetown.

B.F. Prigmore, the son of Isaiah Prigmore, was the first child born in the township; he was born in 1838.

Unfortunately, McGruder does not mention Mrs. Prigmore or identify her by name.

The early settlers found the soil fertile. Any crops then grown in Missouri did well there.

The early settlers raised horses, cattle, hogs, sheep and goats.

An early private school was taught by Mr. Jones. The students had to pay a “subscription” or fee to attend.

The first preaching in the township was held at Isaiah Prigmore's house. The Reverend Duke Young, a member of the Christian or Disciples of Christ denomination first established by Alexander Campbell, came from near Tebo to serve as minister.

The first church was organized by Martellus Embry, an “Old Iron Side Baptist.” The church was organized at James Roberts' House. Embry also helped organize the Hardshell Baptist church in Elk Fork Township.

John Rice organized a Methodist Episcopal Church. Circuit riding ministers held worship services at his house.

County Line Baptist Church was organized in 1844 in the southwestern part of the township.

The early American settlers in Blackwater Township were busy establishing a community in what was once a wilderness.

Next week's column will complete the study of the early townships in Pettis County with an examination of Bowling Green Township.

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

CONTRIBUTING COLUMN

Pockets



Jack Miller
Contributing Columnist

I write this for every man who, like me, has a closet full of clothes with no pockets.

I doubt that I am in the minority when I say I like pockets on my clothes, and I will pass up shirts in my closet that do not have them. It is the same with pants, I don't like leisure wear that has no back pockets because I have things to carry, whether I am working or at leisure.

This pocket thing is not new to me; my love for pockets probably started when I was a young boy, wearing bib overalls with pockets everywhere. The old bib overalls had nine pockets altogether, with three on the bib to hold pens and pencils, a pocket watch, and a wallet or tobacco if you were a man who smoked or chewed. Boys like me would load the pockets of bib overalls with things that would make any mother cringe at the thought of washing the overalls.

I have told my wife, who sometimes buys my clothes, how I feel about pockets, but pocketless clothes still find their way into my closet. I also hear objections to my pocket policy when she complains that I am wearing certain shirts too often, just because

they have a pocket.

I know that those who agree with me on pockets will mainly be men, because women do not feel the need for pockets as much as men do; women have those huge handbags to carry their belongings. As I said, this pocket thing is not a new thing for me, and when I moved on from bib overalls as a teenager, I still wanted lots of pockets.

My favorite pants as a boy were cargo pants that could be bought from the Army and Navy Surplus Store here in Sedalia at that time. As I recall, my uncle Bill bought me the pants. The pants had the standard four pockets in the normal locations, but they also

had extra pockets down both legs; the pants would carry everything a growing boy needed to get through the day. My mother was not crazy about the pants, however, and would even delay washing them when I wore them too much.

I found the same problem with pockets when I joined the Navy. The 13-button pants that were part of the dress uniform in those days had no back pockets, and only small pockets behind the front flap. Sailors usually put their open wallets paper-clip style over the flap or in their jumper pocket for that reason. The problem with the jumper pocket was that there was no security, and I remember gangs of kids overseas, who were adept pickpockets, knew just how to hit that pocket so the wallet would pop out. I don't worry too much about pickpockets in Sedalia, so if I don't have a back pocket in my pants, I want that shirt pocket for my wallet. I have often wondered if the companies that make shirts really believe they save that much money by eliminating that little piece of cloth that makes the pocket.

Jack Miller is a longtime Sedalia resident and former radio news reporter.

SNOW

From Page 1A

“It’s very cold today,” Williams said. “But we have a system, I’ll hit it with the snow blower, he hits it with the regular blower, and then we’ll both salt and then jump back in and go to the next one. We’re not spending too much time; he can stay warm, then I’ll rotate to get warm.”

Pouring fresh gas in their snowblowers, Williams and McCallum head down Second Street, clearing snow from the sidewalks and parking lot under the Scott Joplin mural.

“You have to work in increments,” McCallum said. “You get out, do your shoveling, and then you get back in, a little heat, you get out, you do your salting, and then move on to the next location. Lots of layers, lots of layers, have a good hat, gloves, and work in increments.”

On Pettis County roads, crews had already put in 24 hours of snow removal.

“Very proud of our team,” Eastern Commissioner Israel Baeza said. “Our crews put in long hours all this weekend to keep our roads as safe and passable as possible. These guys must get out before the roads are cleaned off, so I’m thankful for their sacrifice and willingness to show up.”

County officials coordinated closely with the Sedalia Pettis County Emergency Management Agency to



A city-owned frontloader dumps snow scooped off South Ohio Avenue into a dump truck for removal on Monday, Jan. 26.

PHOTO BY CHRIS HOWELL | DEMOCRAT

track the weekend storm and best coordinate the road-clearing efforts.

“We did learn that the snow was not going to have a lot of precipitation, so we made the call to wait till Sunday, and I think it paid off,” Baeza said. “We were able to get a lot done between yesterday and today. We did primary roads first, and eventually we’ll start focusing on our secondary roads as well.”

The dispatchers are systematic about which county roads they send snowplows to first.

“We always try to focus on our primary emergency

routes, school routes and our biggest thing is that people can have access to some of our main highways,” Baeza said. “I want to encourage people to go on the county website or the county Facebook. We did launch for the first time ever a public interface where they can get essentially live updates of the snow removal or snow operations for Pettis County.”

Baeza noted Pettis is the first county in the Midwest to implement the technology, which can be found at https://citizeninsights.geotab.com/#/pettiscounty_snow.

Chris Howell can be reached at 660-530-0146



Osage Avenue was temporarily divided by deep windrows of snow before plows could remove the traffic hazard.

PHOTO BY CHRIS HOWELL | DEMOCRAT

GAS

From Page 1A

“The purpose of that whole paragraph is to say, ‘no, the motor fuel tax is not part of this,’” Patterson said.

Gov. Mike Kehoe, in a brief interview, declined to comment on imposing sales tax on fuel. He said he had not read Patterson’s proposal.

Missourians, who would have to vote on Patterson’s proposal, don’t want to pay more for gasoline, said Senate Minority Leader Doug Beck, a Democrat from Affton, at his weekly news conference.

“They’re going to be upset,” Beck said. “I think they’re going to be upset because there’s a lot of this.”

Kehoe and Republicans who control the General Assembly have made eliminating the state income tax on individuals their top priority for the year. Patterson’s proposal, which is expected to receive a public hearing next week, does not specify a sales tax rate to replace the income tax.

Missouri currently charges 4.225% on taxable goods other than food from groceries and vending machines. Of that, 3% is for general revenue, generating about one-fifth of the \$13.4 billion in general revenue collected in the most recent fiscal year.

Local sales tax can double or almost triple the basic state rate.

The version filed Wednes-

day is Patterson’s second attempt. A constitutional amendment he filed last week had a drafting error that misstated which article contains the limit on the use of highway funds.

Patterson’s new proposal asks voters to grant lawmakers broad authority to expand sales tax to currently untaxed goods and services. Services such as accounting fees for tax preparation or car repairs are not currently taxed, and goods currently exempt include prescription drugs and home utilities.

In his State of the State Address, Kehoe said he wants to target “monthly subscriptions and digital services like online advertising, e-books and AI platforms that fall outside our current sales tax base.”

Lawmakers are also authorized by Patterson’s proposed amendment to set revenue triggers that would reduce, and then eliminate, the individual income tax as early as Jan. 1, 2031. Other provisions would:

- Exempt the tax legislation implementing the proposal from revenue lids that require tax increases to be submitted to voters.
- Require local governments to adjust local tax rates downward to offset any increase in revenue from the broader sales tax base.
- Reduce the constitution-

ally imposed sales taxes for conservation and state parks and soil conservation, 0.225% total, to make revenue from the new tax base equal the average of recent years.

- Keep in place income taxes on corporations and other businesses, as well as allow income taxes on estates and trusts.

The exact list of things to be taxed, and the rate needed to replace current revenue, will be decided later, if voters approve his amendment, Patterson said.

“The people and their elected representatives will come together and decide, No.1, if they even want to do this, and if they do how they’re going to do it,” Patterson said. “But it’ll be the people and their elected representatives doing it together.”

Asking voters to trust Republican leaders to get the details right is irresponsible, Beck said. The GOP has rushed and made mistakes on tax cuts, congressional district maps and state budget estimates, he added.

When a bill eliminating the income tax on capital gains passed last year, it carried an estimated price tag of about \$160 million in the current fiscal year and ongoing cost of \$111 million. The actual revenue cut is about \$500 million in the current year and \$350 million annually.

The mistake in state budget estimates was a \$250 million math error in the forecast for how much the state would have on hand at the end of June 2027.

“The whole tax scheme in general, I’m just going to be honest with you, is ill conceived,” Beck said.

Missouri’s two largest population centers are on the state’s border and people who can shift purchases over the state line to avoid taxes will do so, Beck said.

“I don’t see this as an economic driver for the state,” Beck said. “I don’t see this as helping anything.”

Gasoline prices are one of the most visible barometers of the economy, rising after disruptions or when there is high sustained demand and falling when supplies are plentiful or purchases fall off in a recession.

Missouri fuel taxes have increased 12.5 cents per gallon since Oct. 1, 2021, and stand at 29.5 cents a gallon.

Missourians consume about 4.1 billion gallons each year, generating approximately \$1.2 billion in highway revenue.

That fuel, if sold at \$2.50 per gallon, would generate about \$435 million if subject to the the current state sales tax. The price of a 15-gallon fill-up would increase from \$37.50 to \$39.10.

Republicans have been cut-

ting state income tax rates since 2014, when the top rate stood at 6% for taxable incomes greater than \$9,000. The top rate is now 4.7%. Two future cuts, bringing the rate down to 4.5%, are already on the books and will take effect if general revenue growth hits certain targets.

Missouri collected \$9.2 billion from the individual income tax before refunds in fiscal 2025. Generating the same revenue on the current sales tax base would require an additional sales tax of about 8.5%.

Those funds pay for public schools, prisons and medical care for more than 1.3 million people, among other state services.

The goal, Patterson said, is to replace a tax structure put in place in the 1920s and 1930s with one that fits modern economic activity.

“It really needs to be modernized,” Patterson said. “And this is something that you’re seeing, not just in red states or blue states. A lot of states are looking at modernizing their tax system.”

The lack of details on what will — and what won’t — be taxed is a big problem, Beck said.

“They’re taking (income tax) away,” Beck said, “and they’re saying the legislature knows better than the people, just like they’ve done in the past.”

SEVEN DAY FORECAST

TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
SUNNY	SUNNY	MOSTLY CLOUDY	MOSTLY SUNNY	SUNNY	MOSTLY SUNNY	MOSTLY CLOUDY
28	32	22	16	21	32	41
6	11	3	-2	4	18	23

WEEKLY PRECIPITATION

JAN. 20	0.00 INCHES	JAN. 23	0.00 INCHES	JAN. 26	0.00 INCHES
JAN. 21	0.00 INCHES	JAN. 24	0.00 INCHES	YEAR TO DATE:	1.49 INCHES
JAN. 22	0.00 INCHES	JAN. 25	0.36 INCHES	NORMAL:	1.51 INCHES

THIS WEEK IN WEATHER HISTORY

1991: The 103 year record snowfall for the date was broken with 6.2 inches from less than half an inch of measurable precipitation, resulting in dry powder.

2003: Three youths at a detention center in the Annapolis Valley, in southeastern Canada, took advantage of record breaking snowfall to escape. A snowbank high enough to climb over a fence in the yard was constructed and then used to escape. One of the three youths was arrested minutes after he escaped. The cold temperatures forced the remaining youths to turn themselves in.

SPONSORED BY

MARK POHL

TheHomesTour.com

TheCommercialTour.com

660-620-1888

1439 Thompson Blvd. Sedalia Mo. Office: 660-827-4435



Windsor boys basketball storms back from early hole to beat Sacred Heart



Windsor junior Ryan Millington (5) takes a jump shot during the game against Sacred Heart on Friday, Jan. 23, at Sacred Heart High School.

PHOTO BY JACK DENEBEIM | DEMOCRAT

By Jack Denebeim
jack.denebeim@sedaliademocrat.com

Windsor boys basketball went into half-time trailing Sacred Heart, but it did so with the confidence of a team in control. The Greyhounds clawed back from an 18-point deficit to come within eight by the break, giving them the fuel to complete the comeback and win 60-49 on Friday, Jan. 23, at the McGremlin Gym.

“That was unbelievable,” Windsor head coach David Hesse said. “When our kids looked up and saw it was a single-digit lead, I think they knew they could win the game. It was huge for us.”

Windsor (13-3, 4-0 Kaysinger Conference) was behind 30-12 with 3:52 left to play in the second quarter.

From that point, the Greyhounds went on a 10-0 run to close out the first half and cut their deficit to 30-22.

The run continued into the third quarter, as Windsor scored the first six points of the second half to come within two.

After senior Max Van Leer made a jump shot to put Sacred Heart (7-9, 2-2 Kaysinger Conference) up four, senior Conner Barnes made 1-of-2 free throws, senior Reece Heany made a layup and junior Ryan Millington made 2-of-2 free throws to give the Greyhounds their first lead of the game at 33-32 with 3:49 remaining in the third quarter.

See **WINDSOR**, Page 8A

No. 12 SFCC women’s basketball improves to 20-0



State Fair Community College sophomore Zoe Newland shoots the ball during the game against Crowder College on Jan. 17 at the Fred E. Davis Multipurpose Center. Newland forced a crucial turnover during the game against Mineral Area College on Friday, Jan. 23, helping the Lady Roadrunners improve to 20-0. FILE PHOTO BY JACK DENEBEIM | DEMOCRAT

By Jack Denebeim
jack.denebeim@sedaliademocrat.com

Perfection remains intact, but for No. 12 State Fair Community College women’s basketball, the quest to 20-0 did not come easily.

The Lady Roadrunners grounded out a 68-62 win over Mineral Area College to stay undefeated on Friday, Jan. 23, in Park Hills.

“It was a much closer game than we were hoping for, but to be honest, we needed it,” SFCC head coach Nicole Collier said. “We needed to work through some of the kinks, and it’s always better to learn from a win than a loss.”

The Lady Roadrunners (20-0, 5-0 Region 16) led 14-12 at the end of the first quarter, but pushed their lead to 30-22 by

halftime.

SFCC extended the advantage to 41-28 early in the second half, but Mineral Area (12-8, 1-4 Region 16) was able to trim its deficit to 48-44 by the end of the third quarter.

The game was tied at 58 with 2:53 to go.

Sophomore Sophia Edwin scored a layup to put SFCC in front with 2:37 to play. Sophomore Zoe Newland then went 1-of-2 from the free-throw line to give the Lady Roadrunners a three-point lead with 1:48 left.

After a basket by Mineral Area, freshman Chloe Reed hit a 3-pointer to give SFCC a 64-60 lead with 18.8 seconds left.

The Lady Cardinals scored again to cut the deficit to two with 10.4 seconds remaining.

Reed was fouled and made 2-of-2 free throws with 6.7 sec-

onds left.

Newland forced a turnover on Mineral Area’s next possession. She was then fouled and made two free throws to secure the win.

“There’s going to be moments that things don’t go our way,” Collier said. “There’s going to be shots that don’t go down. There’s going to be fouls we don’t believe are fouls. That’s part of playing on the road and having that adversity, and still being able to buckle down and move on to the next play and not get caught up or let it ruin your day. I didn’t think things went our way down in Park Hills, and I will tell you that I don’t think we handled it extremely well, but we also battled and we competed and kept fighting.”

See **SFCC**, Page 8A

Sacred Heart girls basketball stifles Windsor in bounce-back win

By Jack Denebeim
jack.denebeim@sedaliademocrat.com

Following a 37-point loss to Stover, Sacred Heart girls basketball head coach Desmon Carl challenged his team to play with more effort and intensity.

Carl saw the response almost immediately, as the Lady Gremlins stifled Windsor 50-19 on Friday, Jan. 23, at the McGremlin Gym.

“I said the last game that I thought the effort was good, but the ‘playing with our minds’ wasn’t there,” Carl said. “After I watched the film, I didn’t really feel that the effort was fully there. So, I really challenged the girls this week to get after it on the defensive end. It’s one thing if we can’t score, but it’s another thing if we can’t stop people. I felt like we needed to turn some defense into offense, and I thought, especially at the beginning of the game, we really flew around, created a lot of turnovers and got a lot of easy baskets. It got us rolling in the right direction. I was proud of the girls tonight. I’m 100% fully onboard with their effort tonight.”

Windsor held a 3-2 lead about a minute and a half into the contest.

A steal and a layup by Sacred Heart freshman Allie Offinier sparked a 16-0 run the Lady Gremlins used to take an 18-3 lead. Including the layup, Offinier had seven points during the stretch.

The Lady Gremlins led 18-5



Sacred Heart sophomore Maggie Van Leer (11) drives through the lane during the game against Windsor on Friday, Jan. 23, at Sacred Heart High School. PHOTO BY JACK DENEBEIM | DEMOCRAT

at the end of the first quarter after Windsor junior Taylor Luetjen made a basket to close out the period.

Sacred Heart (7-7, 2-2 Kaysinger Conference) took full control of the game in the second quarter by holding Windsor (2-13, 0-4 Kaysinger Conference) scoreless in the period.

The Lady Gremlins led 33-5

at halftime.

“We kind of switched defenses a lot,” Carl said. “I challenged my guards to really get after them, even if they weren’t on the ball, get on the off guard to make sure they’re trying to deny, and I challenged the post players to just not stand behind people, and I think it showed. We rotated defenses, really got after their ball handlers, and

we were diving on the floor. Things we haven’t been seeing is what we saw tonight, and that’s the result we get.”

During a ceremony at halftime, Sacred Heart recognized Grace Goodwin as the girls basketball program’s all-time leading scorer.

Goodwin, who graduated from Sacred Heart in 2020 and went on to play at State

Fair Community College and Columbia College, scored 1,508 points during her high school career.

A banner was unveiled on the southern wall of the McGremlin Gym, placing the girls’ all-time scoring leader directly adjacent to the boys’ all-time leader, Coen Brown.

See **SACRED HEART**, Page 8A

AREA ROUNDUP:

Smith-Cotton girls basketball places fifth at Gary Keeling Tournament

By Democrat Staff

No. 5-seeded Smith-Cotton girls basketball defeated No. 7-seeded Fair Grove 45-34 in the fifth-place game of the Gary Keeling Tournament on Thursday, Jan. 22, in Bolivar. Senior Brekyn Scanlon led the Lady Tigers (8-8) with 15 points. Freshman Reese Collier added 11 points. Smith-Cotton went 2-1 throughout the tournament. S-C lost to No. 4-seeded Ozark 47-37 in the first round Monday, Jan. 19. Collier led the Lady Tigers in this one, scoring 10 points. Junior Olivia Birdsong had nine points. Smith-Cotton bounced back in the consolation semifinals by defeating No. 8-seeded Parkview 80-26 on Wednesday, Jan. 21. Four players reached double figures in this one. Birdsong and sophomore Camdyn Jones each had 16 points to lead the charge. Scanlon added 14 points while sophomore Mia Cavanagh had 12. The Lady Tigers are scheduled to travel to Osage on Tuesday, Jan. 27, before visiting Willard on Thursday, Jan. 29.

Stover girls beat Cole Camp to win fifth straight

Stover girls basketball defeated Cole Camp 51-27 on Friday, Jan. 23, at the Stover Dome. The win is the Lady Bulldogs' fifth in a row. Freshman Rory Pinzke led Stover (9-7, 4-0 Kaysinger Conference) in scoring with 15 points. Sophomore Teagan Morris added 14 points while junior Gabby Sidebottom had eight. Sophomore Lilly Mellen paced Cole Camp (9-7, 2-2 Kaysinger Conference) with eight points. The Lady Bluebirds are scheduled to visit Sacred Heart on Tuesday, Jan. 27. The Lady Bulldogs are

scheduled to travel to Northwest on Tuesday.

Green Ridge boys erupt for win over Otterville

Green Ridge boys basketball defeated Otterville 77-60 on Friday, Jan. 23, at Otterville High School. Four players scored in double figures for the Tigers (12-5, 4-0 Kaysinger Conference). Junior Wyatt Crawford led the charge with 21 points. Junior Max Tylar scored 20 points, junior Jack Hoos had 16 points and sophomore Levi Lentz had 10 points. Sophomore Cameron Krause led the Eagles (7-10, 2-3 Kaysinger Conference) with 19 points. Otterville is scheduled to host La Monte on Tuesday, Jan. 27. Green Ridge, which has won five straight, is scheduled to host Lincoln on Tuesday.

Green Ridge girls stay hot with win over Otterville

Green Ridge girls basketball won its 15th-straight game by defeating Otterville 44-33 on Friday, Jan. 23, in Otterville. Sophomore Elyse Cooley led the Lady Tigers (15-1, 4-0 Kaysinger Conference) with 15 points. Sophomore Nevaeh Blythe added seven points while senior Kayden Box had six. Green Ridge is scheduled to host Lincoln on Tuesday, Jan. 27.

Northwest girls roll past Lincoln

Northwest girls basketball defeated Lincoln 61-21 on Friday, Jan. 23, in Hughesville. Senior Gabby Meyer led the Lady Mustangs (16-1, 5-0 Kaysinger Conference) with 25 points. Senior Mary Walker added 12 points. Northwest, which has won 12 straight, is scheduled to

host Stover on Tuesday, Jan. 27.

La Monte girls sneak past Smithton

La Monte girls basketball defeated Smithton 37-36 on Friday, Jan. 23, at La Monte High School. Senior Sophia Parton led the Lady Vikings (6-10, 1-3 Kaysinger Conference) with 16 points. Junior Morgan Hall added 12 points. La Monte is scheduled to travel to Otterville on Tuesday, Jan. 27.

Winter weather causes cancellations, postponements

Frigid temperatures and snow caused many sporting events to be canceled or postponed on Friday, Jan. 23, Saturday, Jan. 24, and Monday, Jan. 26. The Smith-Cotton boys basketball game against Marshall scheduled for Friday was canceled. Smith-Cotton girls wrestling's trip to the Clinton Invitational Tournament on Friday was canceled. S-C boys wrestling's trip to Clinton on Saturday was canceled as well. The Greater Missouri Wrestling Conference Tournament scheduled for Saturday was canceled. The Tipton boys basketball game against South Callaway scheduled for Friday has been postponed to Feb. 19. The first round of the Conway Tournament, which Tipton was scheduled to compete in on Monday, has been postponed. Tipton wrestling's triangular meet with Macks Creek and Missouri Military Academy scheduled for Monday has been postponed as well. The Tipton girls basketball Harrisburg Shootout game against Centralia scheduled



Smith-Cotton senior Brekyn Scanlon looks to pass the ball during the game against Jefferson City on Jan. 6 at Smith-Cotton High School. Scanlon scored 15 points during the Gary Keeling Tournament fifth-place game on Thursday, Jan. 22, in Bolivar.

FILE PHOTO BY Jack Denebeim | Democrat

for Saturday was canceled. The Windsor basketball games against Leeton scheduled for Monday have been postponed to Wednesday, Jan. 28. The Stover boys basketball game against Russellville scheduled for Monday has been postponed. A makeup date was still in the works as of the Democrat's press deadline.

More results

Friday, Jan. 23

Cole Camp boys 62, Stover 44
Lincoln boys 49, Northwest 34
Smithton boys 72, La Monte 49

Thursday, Jan. 22

Windsor boys 53, Slater 49
Slater girls 46, Windsor 31
Clinton boys 76, Sacred Heart 44

Coaches, please send scores and stats to jack.denebeim@sedaliademocrat.com.

Seahawks, Patriots to play in Super Bowl LX

By Jack Denebeim
jack.denebeim@sedaliademocrat.com

The Seattle Seahawks and the New England Patriots will face each other in Super Bowl LX at 5:30 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 8, at Levi's Stadium in Santa Clara, California. The Seahawks advanced to the Super Bowl by defeating the Los Angeles Rams 31-27 in the NFC Championship Game on Sunday, Jan. 25, while the Patriots advanced by beating the Denver Broncos 10-7 in the AFC Championship Game. The matchup is a rematch of Super Bowl XLIX, where the Patriots defeated the Seahawks 28-24 thanks to cornerback Malcolm Butler's famous interception on the goal line. New England's defense guided it to the AFC title on Sunday, as the Patriots (17-3) had two takeaways and forced the Broncos to punt six times. Denver scored the first touchdown of the game through a 6-yard pass from quarterback Jarrett Stidham to wide receiver Courtland Sutton. The Broncos had a chance to extend the

lead in the second quarter, but turned the ball over on downs. Denver forced New England to punt after the turnover on downs, but Stidham fumbled six plays later, setting the Patriots up inside the red zone. Two plays later, quarterback Drake Maye scored on a 6-yard run to tie the game at 7-7. That score remained until Patriots kicker Andres Borregales made a 23-yard field goal on New England's first possession of the second half. Broncos kicker Wil Lutz had a 45-yard game-tying field goal attempt blocked in the fourth quarter. After the Patriots punted, cornerback Christian Gonzalez intercepted Stidham to allow New England to run out the rest of the clock. This is the 12th time the Patriots have advanced to the Super Bowl. They will be playing for an NFL-record seventh championship. Over in Seattle, offense was the key in the NFC title game. Seahawks quarterback Sam Darnold

completed 25 of his 36 passes for 346 yards and three touchdowns. Wide receiver Jaxon Smith-Njigba had 10 catches for 153 yards and a touchdown while Cooper Kupp and Jake Bobo each caught one touchdown. Darnold's 14-yard touchdown to Smith-Njigba provided the go-ahead score just before halftime. Running back Kenneth Walker had 23 total touches for 111 scrimmage yards and a touchdown as well. The Seahawks (16-3) had 396 yards of total offense and no turnovers. A muffed punt by the Rams early in the second half allowed the Seahawks to build a double-digit cushion. Los Angeles also had a turnover on downs in the red zone late in the fourth quarter. This is Seattle's fourth time in the Super Bowl. It will be playing for its second title. Super Bowl LX will be broadcast on NBC. Sports editor Jack Denebeim can be reached at 660-530-0142

HOROSCOPES

These horoscopes are for the week of Jan. 26, 2026.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19)

Although you're getting kudos and other positive reactions to your suggestions, don't let the cheers drown out some valid criticisms. It's better to deal with them now rather than later.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20)

Following your keen Bovine intuition pays off as you not only reassess the suggestions that some people are putting in front of you but also their agendas for doing so.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20)

You continue on a high-enthusiasm cycle as a new project that you've assumed takes shape. You're also buoyed by the anticipation of receiving some good news about a personal matter.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22)

Your eagerness to immerse yourself in your new assignment is understandable. But be careful that you don't forget to take care of a pressing personal situation as well.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22)

This is a good time to learn a new skill that could give the clever Cat an edge in an upcoming competition for workplace opportunities. On another note, enjoy the arts this weekend with someone special.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22)

You could risk creating an impasse if you insist on expecting more from others than they're prepared to give. Showing flexibility in what you'll accept could prevent a stalemate.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22)

Although you can weigh all the factors of a dispute to find an agreeable solution for others, you might need the skilled input of someone you trust to help you deal with an ongoing situation.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21)

The good news is that your brief period of self-doubt turns into a positive "I can do anything" attitude by midweek. The better news is that you'll soon be able to prove it.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21)

This is a good time for Sagittarians to start making travel plans while you can still select from a wide menu of choices and deals -- and not be forced to settle for leftovers.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19)

Like your zodiac sign, the sure-footed Goat, you won't allow obstacles in your path to keep you from reaching your goal. Don't be surprised by who asks to tag along with you.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18)

Let your head dominate over your heart as you consider the risks that might be involved in agreeing to be a friend's co-signer or otherwise acting as their backup in a financial matter.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20)

Resolve to close the door and let your voicemail take your phone calls while you finish up a task before the end-of-week deadline. Then go out and enjoy a fun-filled weekend!

BORN THIS WEEK

Your capacity for care and compassion helps bring comfort to others. You could serve as a reliable foundation to many.

SPORTS CALENDAR

Tuesday, Jan. 27

HIGH SCHOOL BOYS BASKETBALL

4 p.m. - Smith-Cotton vs. Versailles (Eldon Tournament)
7:30 p.m. - Cole Camp at Sacred Heart
7:30 p.m. - Lincoln at Green Ridge
7:30 p.m. - La Monte at Otterville
7:30 p.m. - Windsor at Smithton
8 p.m. - Stover at Northwest

HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS BASKETBALL

6 p.m. - Cole Camp at Sacred Heart
6 p.m. - Lincoln at Green Ridge
6 p.m. - La Monte at Otterville
6 p.m. - Windsor at Smithton
6:30 p.m. - Stover at Northwest
7:15 p.m. - Jefferson City at Tipton
7:30 p.m. - Smith-Cotton at

Osage

HIGH SCHOOL BOYS WRESTLING

6:30 p.m. - Smith-Cotton JV at Stover

HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS WRESTLING

5 p.m. - Smith-Cotton at Stover

Wednesday, Jan. 28

HIGH SCHOOL BOYS BASKETBALL

TBD - Windsor at Leeton

HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS BASKETBALL

TBD - Windsor at Leeton

MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL

7 p.m. - State Fair Community College at Three Rivers Community College

WOMEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL

5 p.m. - State Fair Community College at Three Rivers Community College

HIGH SCHOOL BOYS WRESTLING

5 p.m. - Versailles at Cole Camp

HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS WRESTLING

5 p.m. - Versailles at Cole Camp

HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS SWIM & DIVE

TBD - Smith-Cotton at West Central Classic

Thursday, Jan. 29

HIGH SCHOOL BOYS BASKETBALL

7 p.m. - Chilhowee at Sacred Heart

TBD - Smith-Cotton at Eldon Tournament

HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS BASKETBALL

5:30 p.m. - Chilhowee at Sacred Heart
6:15 p.m. - Leeton at Lincoln
7:30 p.m. - Smith-Cotton at Willard

HIGH SCHOOL BOYS WRESTLING

5:30 p.m. - Windsor at El Dorado Springs Quad
6 p.m. - Helias Catholic at Smith-Cotton

HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS WRESTLING

5:30 p.m. - Windsor at El Dorado Springs Quad

SFCC

From Page 6A

Edwin led SFCC in scoring with 14 points, nine of which came from 3-point range. Sophomore Ellie Buscher added 13 points, eight rebounds and four assists.

Sophomore Carolyn Foster had 10 points and seven rebounds while Reed had nine points and three steals.

Off the bench, freshmen Kamaree Pollard and Taylor Wilson both had eight points.

Newland finished with four points, all coming from the free-throw line.

SFCC shot 35.9% (23-of-64) from the field, 31.8% (7-of-22) from 3-point range and 68.2% (15-of-22) from the free-throw line. Mineral Area made 38.6% (22-of-57) of its shots from the field, but shot just 11.1% (2-of-18) from beyond the arc and 66.7% (16-of-24) from the stripe.

“I thought Mineral did a good job of preparing for us,” Collier said. “I believe our freshmen were just like, ‘Well, we went in there last time and ran the table,’ and, you know, not understanding that people don’t just roll over for you. So, we’ve got some learning and growing to do, but I thought Mineral did a fantastic job of just being prepared and making some changes. They wanted it. You could tell they definitely wanted it.”

Collier noted that the game being moved up to Friday from Saturday, Jan. 24, due to winter weather and cutting into the Lady Roadrunners’ bye week may have contributed to the close finish.

Even though the game did not go exactly as planned, Collier added that still being undefeated 20 games into the season is a surreal feeling.

“At the start of the season, I don’t think that anybody’s head would be wrapped around that,” Collier said. “It’s definitely something to be celebrated, and it’s one of those things that I look back on my college career and I remember my records when I played, and I remember making it to the national tournament. I remember all of those things, and this is something that can never be taken away from them. To start our year 20-0 is something to be celebrated and to be excited about.”

The win clinches SFCC’s third straight 20-win season. This is the first time the women’s basketball team has had three straight 20-win seasons since it had four straight from 2012 to 2016.

Despite the accomplishment, Collier said she and the Lady Roadrunners have their sights set on much bigger goals.

“Our goal is to take care of business one game at a time because, big picture, we want to get back to the national tournament and these next dozen games are going to be crucial in whether we can make that happen,” Collier said. “So, we want to make sure that we’re not getting caught up on the end of the year. We just need to handle things game by game. If you ask anybody on the team, we want to get back to the national tournament. I definitely don’t want to downplay the 20-0, but these next seven games are going to be what separates us.”

SFCC travels to No. 14 Three Rivers Community College on Wednesday, Jan. 28, and then to Crowder College on Saturday, Jan. 31.

The Lady Roadrunners return home Feb. 4 to take on Moberly Area Community College.

Sports editor Jack Denebeim can be reached at 660-530-0142.

SACRED HEART

From Page 6A

“I give all the credit to Tom Van Leer, my assistant coach,” Carl said. “That’s kind of been his idea for the last two years. Grace comes in and helps us play just like an open gym in the summer. She plays with the girls and she’s a great leader. And I mean, you put up 1,500 points, you can put the ball in the hole. So, we love Grace. What an honor for her. It’s time her banner was up there with everybody else’s. I’m super excited for her and Coach [Steve] Goodwin. They deserve it.”

Sacred Heart’s lead peaked at 35 twice in the second half. Freshman Aspen Carl led the Lady Gremlins in scoring with 10 points, seven of which came in the third quarter.

Offlineer finished with nine points, as did junior Paisley Carl. Sophomore Maggie Van Leer added eight points while senior Bailee Vogel had seven.

Freshman Ginny Jones paced Windsor with nine points. Senior Julia Ashby and junior Dala Brooks each had four.

“We just didn’t come out with a whole lot of energy, and that’s what dug us in a hole early,” Windsor head coach Shawn Bigler said. “I thought in the second half we brought more energy, but we just struggled to get shots to fall ... We have a motto that says, ‘don’t matter, get better.’ We get beat — doesn’t matter, get better. We’re going to keep getting better every game. That’s our mindset right now.”

Windsor, which has lost 11 straight, is scheduled to visit Smithton on Tuesday, Jan. 27. The Lady Greyhounds’ game against Leeton scheduled for Monday, Jan. 26, has been postponed to Wednesday, Jan. 28.

With its win, Sacred Heart snaps a three-game skid.

The Lady Gremlins are scheduled to host Cole Camp on Tuesday.

Sports editor Jack Denebeim can be reached at 660-530-0142.

WINDSOR

From Page 6A

“I think the words you’re looking for are attitude, effort and heart,” Hesse said. “We talked about that in the locker room. This is a big boy’s ball game. We’re going to see who has the most heart on the floor tonight and who wants it more. I think in the third quarter we really beat them up physically, and not in a bad way, just we’re a little bigger and a little stronger, especially on the glass and in the paint.”

The lead changed twice down the stretch of the third quarter, with Windsor taking a 43-39 advantage into the fourth.

Sacred Heart opened the final frame with a 6-0 burst to take a 45-43 lead with 5:50 left to play.

Windsor tied the game with a pair of free throws from Millington at the 5:27 mark and then took the lead for good with two free throws from Barnes at the 4:38 mark.

The Greyhounds went 11-for-11 on their free-throw attempts in the fourth quarter. They were 22-for-23 in the second half and 28-for-32 overall.

“We actually do free throw drills in practice,” Hesse said. “Tonight, it paid off.”

Millington scored 14 of his game-high 18 points from the free-throw line. All of his points arrived in the second half.

Barnes, who put the exclamation point on the win with an and-one with



Sacred Heart alum Grace Goodwin was recognized as the girls basketball program’s all-time leading scorer during halftime of the game against Windsor on Friday, Jan. 23, at Sacred Heart High School. PHOTO BY JACK DENEBEIM | DEMOCRAT



A banner recognizing Grace Goodwin as Sacred Heart girls basketball’s all-time leading scorer was unveiled during the game against Windsor on Friday, Jan. 23, at Sacred Heart High School. PHOTO BY JACK DENEBEIM | DEMOCRAT

45.8 seconds left, finished the game with 16 points.

Heany added nine points while junior Rowan Cox had eight.

Van Leer and sophomore Colt Conardy each had 11 points to pace the Gremlins while sophomore Carson Bentsch had nine and junior Miles Brown had eight.

Sacred Heart went 4-of-11 from the free-throw line.

“We played a good first half, but we just couldn’t close the deal,” Sacred Heart head coach Steve Goodwin said. “Windsor’s a big, tough and strong team, and we just couldn’t finish it ... We haven’t played four quarters yet, and it shows. We can’t put together four good quarters. Hopefully, that’s a sign of youth. I think it is. They’re trying and working really hard. I’m proud of them.”

According to MSHSAA.org, Windsor snapped an 18-game losing streak to Sacred Heart with the win.

It is also the Greyhounds’ eighth straight win since losing to Lone Jack on Dec. 17.

“This is the first time since I’ve been here we’ve beaten Sacred Heart,” Hesse said. “Just saying that and knowing what we did tonight — I mean, I’m at a loss for words making that statement. Coach Goodwin is a guy I look up to. He is one of the better coaches in this area. He always has his



Windsor senior Conner Barnes dribbles the ball as he looks to pass during the game against Sacred Heart on Friday, Jan. 23, at Sacred Heart High School. PHOTO BY JACK DENEBEIM | DEMOCRAT

kids ready to go. They were on fire tonight early, but I’m proud of the boys. The boys played hard. They held their composure and we got after them a little in the second and third quarters to come back and get the ‘W’ tonight.”

Windsor’s game against Leeton scheduled for Monday, Jan. 26, has been postponed to Wednesday, Jan. 28. The Greyhounds are scheduled to visit Smithton on Tuesday, Jan. 27.

Sacred Heart is scheduled to host Cole Camp on Tuesday.

Sports editor Jack Denebeim can be reached at 660-530-0142.

\$15

OFF

PURCHASE OF

\$50.00

WARRENSBURG

213 N. Holden St. • 660-362-1563

Mon. - Fri. 9-6, Sat. 9-5

REDEEM IN STORE *ONE PER CUSTOMER *MUST PRESENT COUPON

*ONE COUPON ONLY PER SALE *SOME EXCLUSIONS MAY APPLY

Expires 2/7/26

WINTER SPECIALS

NOW IN STOCK....

Come see us for.....

50 lb bags of Block Oil Sunflower Seeds or Wild Bird Food

\$25 a bag

Peanut Crunch, Birds Blend, Berry Blast, Orange Burst, & Apple Dough

Suet Cakes

\$1.60 each

Receive 7% off of purchases when you pay with a check or cash or 5% off when paying with a debit/credit card

MORGAN COUNTY

seeds

18761 Kelsay Road, Barnett, MO 65011

573-378-2655

Monday through Saturday 8:00 am to 5:00 pm

Directions: From Versailles take Hwy 52 east to Hwy C, east to Kelsay Road, or 1 mile past the Dutch Country Store

www.morgancountyseeds.com



UCM hosts Day of Service during annual MLK Jr. Celebration week

By Hasina Shah
hasina.shah@warrensburgstarjournal.com

WARRENSBURG – The University of Central Missouri kicked off its annual Days of Service Events as part of its Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration on Thursday, Jan. 22.

With this year’s theme of “Building the Beloved Community,” top of mind, UCM faculty, staff and students gathered from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the Elliot Student Union ballrooms to craft learning modules for this year’s service partner, Warrensburg Head Start.

From sorting activities and counting games to ribbon rods and egg-shaker maracas, participants worked in groups at different stations to build educational tools for head start children in the area to use in their classrooms.

“Because of various government cuts, (Warrensburg Head Start) is short of staffing,” said Beth Rutt, director of student services. “So, what we’re doing is making learning centers that (teachers) can use with the children they work with.”

Each station at Thursday’s service event was set up with various supplies to create each learning module— pipe cleaners, muffin tins, plastic cups, dried beans and rice, construction paper— these were just a few of the inexpensive and easily accessible items Rutt and her team provided for the participants to craft with. Their goal? Make these learning experiences easy to recreate for parents and families on a tight budget.

“Usually, head start students are from a specific representation in the populace where income can be a challenge,” Rutt said. “All of our items are practical— they are things that, if a parent wanted to make these at home to reinforce (their child’s) learning, they would be able to do that.”

Rutt is known throughout Warrensburg for her service to the community. She has a master’s degree in recreation and leisure education and spent 30 years on the Warrensburg R-VI Board of Education.

With her 32 years of registered girl scout experience paired with the 19 years she spent as the superintendent of recreation for the City of Warrensburg’s Parks and Recreation Department, Rutt said she’s had a lot of experience with providing services to people while working with limited funds.

All these experiences, she said, inform her work each year as she prepares for the MLK Days of Service.

“Parks and Recreation (is) similar to the university— we’re tax-supported entities,” Rutt said. “So, I learned how to work within a budget and do things frugally.”

Though these service days have looked different for the university year-after-year, Rutt said the mission to spread MLK’s vision of community care and collective action has remained the same.

“Martin Luther King was such an example of making sure that everyone had access,” Rutt said. “Our students are such a fantastic representation. There’s so much diversity and when you do activities like this, you bring all that diversity together.”

See **UCM**, Page 6B



Beth Rutt explains station logistics with students during the MLK Day of Service on Thursday, Jan. 22, in the Elliot Student Union.
PHOTO BY HASINA SHAH | STAR-JOURNAL



State Fair Community College’s Career and Technology Center (CTC) is providing career opportunities to high school juniors and seniors, including this welding class, one of 10 programs. PHOTOS COURTESY OF STATE FAIR COMMUNITY COLLEGE

SFCC’s CTC brings career opportunities to high schoolers

By Faith Bemiss-McKinney
faith.bemiss@sedaliademocrat.com

Since its inception in 1973-74, State Fair Community College’s Career and Technology program has grown and continues to inspire career paths for high school juniors and seniors.

Eric Rehmer, the CTC executive director, said there are 10 two-year programs available to high school students: automotive technology, building trades, criminal justice, early childhood professions, graphic design, health occupations, industrial equipment maintenance, precision machining technology, welding and Missouri Options. The Missouri Option allows students at risk of dropping out an opportunity to earn a standard high school diploma.

Currently, 10 school districts participate in the program along with three private and parochial schools. Rehmer noted that SFCC created the CTC program and approached various school districts to see if they would like to participate. They liked the concept and wanted students to be enrolled in the program.

Rehmer referenced a book about SFCC written by Debbie Noland, “The Legacy of Plywood U: A History of State Fair Community College 1966-2002.”

“This gives a synopsis of when it (began),” Rehmer said of the book. “But when reading through here, in ’74 the area Vocational Technical School, which is what we were at that time called, opened its doors to students in building trades, auto mechanics, (and) business and office technology programs.”

Building trades, auto mechanics and business and office technology were the three original programs for high schoolers in the CTC program at the time.

“Then as the years went on, we added six other programs,” Rehmer said. “So, we have nine total programs right now.”

The “sending” school districts pay for students’ tuition in the program, and the program is free to each student. They also receive college credit while in high school through dual enrollment instead of a dual credit program.

“We gave them articulated credit,” Rehmer said of past enrollment procedures. “What articulated credit did was, the kids earned it, but then they had to come to State Fair for a semester before it got transcribed into their transcript. When I switched to dual enrollment, what that did was more or less remove the GPA requirement. I said every kid that comes here is going to be in a college class.”

Rehmer said most programs are two years, and the number of college credits a student can earn



The Career and Technology Center at State Fair Community College also offers an Early Childhood Professions program for high school students.



A Graphic Design career program taught by Linda Harris is also one of 10 programs offered in the Career and Technology program at State Fair Community College.

depends on the program.

“Right now, we would like for them to be 20 credits over two years,” Rehmer said. “The reason for that is we have certificates that we’re starting to implement, which we call skill level certificates. Those are typically 15 to 18 hours. So, for welding, it would be a skill certificate in welding — that’s 18 hours. In that particular program, we can earn that in the first year. Then in the second year, they are earning more. So, in that particular program, when the kids get done, they could have potentially 30 (credits).”

Rehmer added that some students believe they aren’t college material until they realize the program they are in is a college class. Rehmer said around 240 students are enrolled in the program this year.

He said the program is important because it gives the students an opportunity to learn a skill set that makes them career ready.

“It gives them a huge advantage over somebody that doesn’t have those skill sets,” Rehmer said “We get them ready, job one in a career field. Some choose to follow through with it. Some choose not to; that’s completely up to them. But we get

them ready for entry-level work, that’s something the kids don’t understand. In reality, they wouldn’t have to do any college. And they should have a leg-up on somebody looking for a job.”

He noted that at age 18, they may have more knowledge than an older person when applying for a job, based on their training.

Students may also receive mock interviews from local businesses while in the program. Linda Harris, the instructor for the graphic design program, brings in people from Inter-State Studio to conduct mock interviews with her students.

“They come out and spend a day out here and mock interview her students,” Rehmer said. “One of the things we’re looking at expanding in that nature is ... we want to take the students to Inter-State and drop them off outside.”

This gives the interview a whole different aspect, and one that the students will often see after graduation.

Morning sessions of the CTC program run from 8 to 10:35 a.m., and the afternoon sessions run from 11:45 a.m. to 2:20 p.m. The school districts have buses that transport their students to SFCC for the classes.

See **SFCC**, Page 6B

CLUB NOTES

Grow and Glow Garden Club

The January meeting of the Grow and Glow Garden Club met at the local meeting place and Tipton famous Bobbio's. Sixteen members enjoyed Bob's usual favorites of fried potatoes, green beans, dessert pizzas, and fill in the blank with your favorite item.

In lieu of a program, members were handed a list of questions to answer about themselves so that members could get to know each other better. It is amazing that you can know someone for a long time and still learn things about them. As members shared stories, there were many laughs and tears. Many had lost family members, but each was united by the love of gardening. Bird watching was also a common theme. Cynthia Broderon's name was mentioned several times because members shared who invited them to become a member. One person called the number at the bottom of an article about a monthly meeting (see below).

A letter was read from Tim Schisler, who shared pictures of flowers from his own gardens. Those pictures were frame worthy. A letter was passed around from the Morgan County food pantry thanking the group for their donation.

A gift certificate to Longfellows was presented to club president, Linda Dahl for years of service and Christmas '25. Debbie Harper agreed to repaint the Blue Star Memorial sign in Versailles. Nicki Kelley got permission for a concrete pad and picnic table at the same location.

The February meeting will be a sweetheart luncheon held at the Fortuna Community Church and hosted by Nicki Kelley and Debbie Harper. If you would like to become a member, please join our spunky group. You can call Nicki Kelley at (660) 433-2381.

Sedalia Photo Club

The Sedalia Photo Club held its business meeting and Christmas party on Wednesday, Dec. 17, at the Heckart Community Center.

The 2026 photo club calendars and 2026 photo club assignments were handed out. It was announced that a joint meeting with the Saline County Photo Club and the Mid-MO Photo Club will be held on June 17. Plans were finalized for the Ag Expo Photo Contest, to be held on Feb. 6 and 7. Club members voted for photos in the Holiday Photo Contest.

The Christmas party consisted of eating delicious treats and exchanging nice gifts.

ENTERTAINMENT BRIEFS

Johnson County Historical Society to host dance

Everyone is invited to join the Johnson County Historical Society from 2 to 4 p.m. on the first Sunday in Feb. 1, for the annual Breaking Up Christmas Dance at the Johnson County Historic District, 302 N. Main St. in Warrensburg.

The Schoolhouse String Band will play period music for a contra dance in the Culp Building. A caller will provide instructions for the Virginia Reel and other group dances so no previous experience is needed.

The event is free and open to the public, but donations are welcome as this is a fundraiser for the Johnson County Historical Society. This annual event began as the "Breaking Up Christmas" event and continues to follow the tradition. We always hold this event on the Sunday between the football playoffs and the Superbowl. Put on comfortable dancing shoes and join the fun.

Check out our E-Editions to find what you're looking for!



UCM to host high school Computer Information Systems and Analytics competition

The University of Central Missouri (UCM) is hosting a Computer Information Systems and Analytics (CISA) competition for high school students, which includes the chance to earn scholarships.

Registration is open for the second annual competition offered by the Computer Information Systems and Analytics programs at UCM.

High school students will demonstrate their problem-solving and critical-thinking skills with current technology trends, such as the impact of big data on businesses and agriculture. Participants will also meet other students and interact with faculty from the UCM Department of Accountancy, Big Data Analytics and Computer Information Systems.

Teams can have up to three students, and a maximum of four teams per high school can participate.

Each team will submit a 10- to 15-minute video presenting their solution to a problem statement, which they will receive after registering. After using a tool to solve the problem, the team should

create a slideshow presentation explaining the process, analysis, visualizations, results, sources used and the data story. The video should feature the team members presenting their slideshow.

Registration is free and closes on Monday, Feb. 2. Teams must submit their videos by Monday, Feb. 9.

All participants will be invited to an event on Monday, Feb. 23 at UCM Lee's Summit. Selected teams will present their solutions. The event will include lunch, a Tableau training session, and awards.

Each member of the top team will earn a \$2,000 scholarship, members of the following three teams will receive a \$500 scholarship, and all other participants will receive a \$100 scholarship. The scholarships will be granted and applied toward tuition if students pursue CIS or Analytics programs at UCM.

For more information, visit the competition website or contact ahmad@ucmo.edu.

Release courtesy of the University of Central Missouri.

Physical education requirements could increase under proposed bill

By Scott Hudson
Columbia Missourian

A Missouri House bill aims to increase the physical education requirements for K-12 students.

Introduced by Rep. Bishop Davidson, a Republican from Republic, the legislation would require all students to participate in a minimum of 60 minutes of physical activity each school day. PE classes, additional recesses and other supervised physical activities could fulfill the new requirement, as outlined by the bill.

The bill does include caveats for students with disabilities.

Student-athletes, who are occasionally excused from physical education requirements, would not be exempt from the required 60 minutes of daily activity under the bill.

Legislators expressed concerns over the bill's logistics — an additional hour of required learning could disrupt or extend the current school schedule. Davidson told a House committee Wednesday that he does not intend for the bill to add more time to the school day or detract from other Common Core curriculum requirements.

Haley Edwards, a senior at Republic High School in Greene County, testified in favor of the bill.

"We see the signs that tie (exercise) back to physical well-being and mental well-being, and I think that this bill really opens doors to be able to see those effects," Edwards said.

The National Education Association has not yet determined whether legislative

'Mercy' unseats 'Avatar: Fire & Ash' atop the box office

By Jake Coyle
AP Film Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — With a winter storm blanketing a large swath of the country, Hollywood had its quietest weekend of the year at the box office. The Amazon MGM sci-fi thriller "Mercy" dethroned "Avatar: Fire and Ash" from the No. 1 spot with \$11.2 million in North America, according to studio estimates Sunday.

Some 250 theaters were forced to close, from Texas to Maine, according to data firm Comscore. More than 140 million Americans were under winter storm warnings, depressing moviegoing.

But the weekend was never going to be a blockbuster one, anyway. "Mercy," a \$60 million thriller starring Chris Pratt as a man in a near-future standing trial before an AI judge, was the top new release. It arrived with withering reviews (20% fresh on Rotten Tomatoes) and an equally poor reception (a "B-" CinemaScore) from audiences.

That was still enough to finally dislodge James Cameron's third Pandora epic from its monthlong perch atop the box office. "Avatar: Fire and Ash" slid to second place with \$7 million. While The Walt Disney Co. release is starting to peter out domestically, it remains a top draw overseas. It took in \$28.1 million internationally in its sixth weekend.

"Avatar: Fire and Ash" isn't going to come close to the box-office heights of the previous two "Avatar" movies. The 2009 original grossed \$2.9 billion and the 2022 sequel, "The Way of Water," tapped out at \$2.3 billion. "Fire and Ash" has now cleared \$1 billion internationally, but its domestic haul (\$378.5 million) is well off the pace of the other two films.

The "Oscar bump" that films once saw following nomination is largely a thing of the

2026 Central Missouri AG Expo

FEBRUARY 6TH & 7TH

Mathewson Exhibition Center/Mohler Hall
Missouri State Fairgrounds, Sedalia

FREE ADMISSION



CUSTOM APPLICATOR – February 6th 9am, February 7th 11 am

Pre-enroll at the MU Extension Office, 1012 Thompson Blvd Suite A, Sedalia

Seminars on Soil and Fertilizer throughout the day both days.

MIXTURE OF SEMINARS ON FLOWERS, TREES & PLANTS throughout the day, both days.



736518jl

AG APPRECIATION BANQUET & PIE & CAKE AUCTION

SPONSORED BY CENTRAL BANK OF SEDALIA

JANUARY 24 6 P.M.

@ PORK PLACE, MISSOURI STATE FAIRGROUNDS

✓ Social Hour ✓ Pork Dinner

✓ Presentation of Century Farm Awards

✓ Farm Family Award ✓ Pie & Cake Auction

Adults \$20 • Kids 7-15 \$16 • 6 & under Free

Pie Contest Rules & Registration Available At:

Central Bank, 301 W. Broadway, Sedalia or call Janice Klenke, 660-473-1140



2026 FEBRUARY

Central Missouri AG EXPO

6TH & 7TH

~ Free Admission ~

Mathewson Center & Mohler Hall,
Mo State Fairgrounds

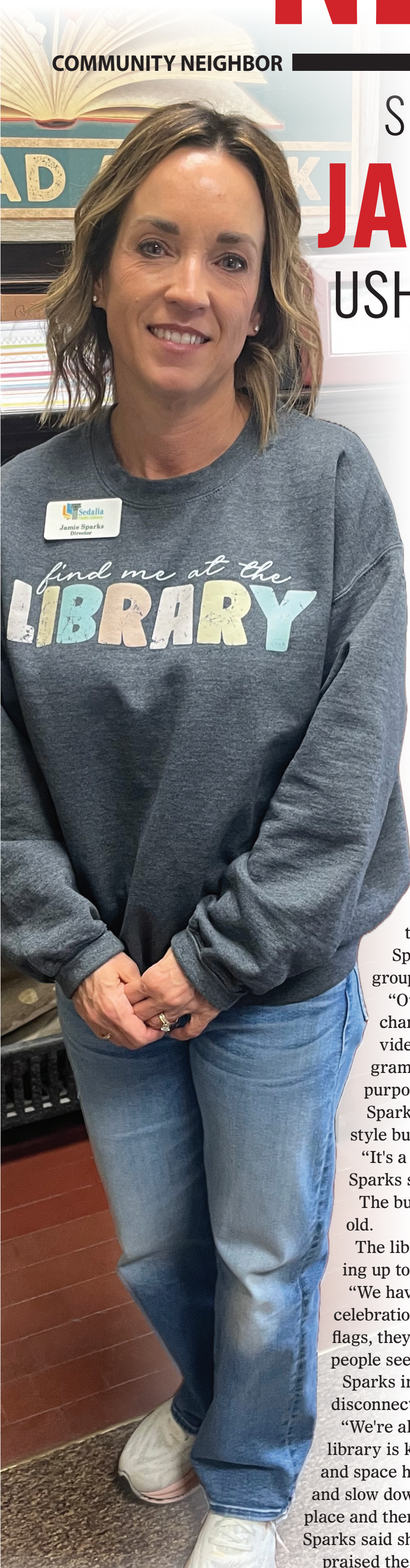


736516ot

Meet Your

NEIGHBOR

COMMUNITY NEIGHBOR



SEDALIA PUBLIC LIBRARY'S

JAMIE SPARKS

USHERS HISTORIC BUILDING

INTO 125TH YEAR

By Chris Howell | chris.howell@sedaliademocrat.com

Jamie Sparks, Director of the Sedalia Public Library, was born and raised in Sedalia and attended Smith-Cotton High School.

“I went to State Fair for a couple of years, and transferred to UCM Warrensburg and got my education degree,” Sparks said. “Then I got my graduate degree from Mizzou.”

Sparks took the director position at the library on Nov. 1, 2021, after working as a teacher and an instructional coach for the Sedalia 200 School District.

“I was in education for about 20 years and decided I was ready for a change,” Sparks said. “I started here in November of 2021 and I just kind of looking for a job and I've always loved this library always have been you know a patron of this library and I had some library experience when I was in education but not in a public setting so I decided to give it a shot and so here we are.”

Sparks admitted it took a bit to get a feel for the position, but knew right away it was a good match.

“For me it's been a big learning curve, I had never worked in a library before and I didn't quite know what I was getting into,” Sparks said. “But I feel like I've had a lot of support with people in the community.”

Sparks is also receiving peer support through a Missouri directors' group and has a mentor that helps her learn the many aspects of her job.

“Our society is always changing, and technology needs are always changing as well,” Sparks said. “But the basis for what a library provides in a community hasn't really changed; we have different programs and services based on those needs, but I feel like there's always a purpose for the library in communities.”

Sparks works in Sedalia's historic Carnegie Library, a Greek Revival style building on Third Street.

“It's a very special place and well loved and respected in this community,” Sparks said. “So it's an honor for me to get to take care of it.”

The building was dedicated in July of 1901 and is approaching 125 years old.

The library is celebrating by featuring different decades each month leading up to the anniversary.

“We have some signs that are going to be spotlighting the 125th anniversary celebration out on the front of the lawn,” Sparks said. “You may have seen the flags, they'll be up as much as we can use them throughout this year to help people see we're celebrating.”

Sparks invites people to come in, relax and read a book as a perfect way to disconnect with the modern world.

“We're always rushing and going and trying to get to the next spot, so the library is kind of that sacred place for people that we really protect that time and space here” Sparks said. “It's a relaxing place for people, they come here and slow down a little bit and feel at peace. It's just a quiet, peaceful, welcoming place and there's not many places like that in our community anymore.”

Sparks said she also enjoys the peace found at the Sedalia Public Library, and praised the relationship with the City of Sedalia and most of all, the taxpayers.

“Wrapping up January, we all just paid that big bill,” Sparks said. “I hope people see the value in where their tax money goes; that's how the library is mainly funded. We have an amazing board that supports our library, our staff here is awesome, our patrons are so amazing and support us and give us good ideas and are thankful for what the library provides them.”

Sedalia Public Library director Jamie Sparks was with Sedalia 200 for 20 years before taking the job at the library on Third Street.
PHOTO BY CHRIS HOWELL | DEMOCRAT

SACRED HEART CROWNS WINTER ROYALTY



Sacred Heart seniors Jaden Twenter, left, and Cassidy Bentch were named winter homecoming king and queen during halftime of the boys basketball game on Friday, Jan. 23, at Sacred Heart High School.
PHOTO BY JACK DENEBEIM | DEMOCRAT

Missouri weather in 2025: From bitter cold to flash drought

Fourth consecutive drought during growing season

Missouri farmers faced another challenging weather year in 2025, says University of Missouri Extension state climatologist Zachary Leasor.

It was a year of extremes, with bitter cold temperatures, record-breaking rainfalls and flash drought during critical parts of the growing season, says Leasor.

The year opened with the coldest January in more than a decade. Preliminary data from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration shows the statewide average temperature during January and February was lower than the long-term (1895 – 2025) average, marking it the state's coldest winter since 2020-21.

Snows and lows

Nearly all of Missouri, except the northern tier of counties, received more snow than average in January and February. Many of the highest seasonal snowfall totals of 20-plus inches centered around I-70 corridor and the metro areas.

Two blasts of cold air dropped temperatures as low as minus 18 degrees Fahrenheit (Gentry County) in January and minus 22 F (Clay County) in February. Drier conditions continued into March, but temperatures flipped quickly. March was 7.5 F warmer than average and finished tied as the state's eighth warmest March on record.

Dry to wet to dry

By April 1, the United States Drought Monitor (USDM) designated approximately 72% of the state as at least abnormally dry with 23% of state in a drought. This was short lived, however, because the state recorded the fourth wettest April on record with locations such as St. Louis (10.85 inches) and Springfield (13.29 inches) breaking the all-time April rainfall record.

The highest monthly totals were in the eastern Ozarks, with 18.02 inches in Summersville (Texas County). As the growing season began in Missouri, wetness continued, with near normal precipitation in May followed by two consecutive wetter than average months for the state during June and July.

Oppressive heat, high dew points

Temperatures throughout late spring and summer were near average, but July had some oppressive heat, owing more to record or near-record high July humidity in Missouri. According to the National Weather Service office in Paducah, Ken., the Cape Girardeau airport recorded a dew point temperature of at least 75 F for 26 consecutive days in July, setting a new record.

Release courtesy of the University of Missouri Extension.

Missouri Farm Bureau Insurance included in 2026 Forbes ranking

Missouri Farm Bureau Insurance has been recognized on the Forbes list of America's Best Insurance Companies 2026. This prestigious award is presented in collaboration with Statista, the world-leading statistics portal and industry ranking provider. The award list was announced on Sept. 16, 2025, and can be viewed on the Forbes website.

The America's Best Insurance Companies 2026 ranking is based on an independent survey of over 18,000 U.S. citizens. The award list has been categorized into five insurance types: Auto, Homeowners, Renters, Permanent Life, and Term Life. The survey considered customers' overall recommendations, their general satisfaction, their loyalty, and the six subdimensions: Advice, Customer Service, Price/Performance, Transparency, Digital Services, and Damage/Benefit Service.

For each insurance type, the insurance companies with the highest score have been awarded. This prestigious recognition honors the most trusted, innovative, and high-performing insurers across the nation. Missouri Farm Bureau Insurance is honored to be recognized on the Forbes list of America's Best Insurance Companies 2026.

"I am so proud of our Missouri Farm Bureau Insurance team and I'm honored they've once again been recognized by Forbes for their hard work and dedicated service," said MOFB President Garrett Hawkins. "It's truly a testament of their commitment to serve customers and it also highlights the value of the products they make available to members across the state. Our organization's legacy dates back to 1915, and throughout those 100-plus years, it has, and always will be, about our MOFB members."

Release courtesy of Missouri Farm Bureau.

MDC reminds hunters of changes to the 2026 coyote hunting season

The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) reminds hunters they can now use artificial light and other methods for an extended period during the coyote hunting season. Regulations changes approved by the Conservation Commission in fall 2025 allow the use of artificial light, night vision, and thermal imagery equipment from Jan. 1 through Sept. 30, excluding the prescribed spring turkey hunting season. The changes took effect Jan. 1, 2026.

During this extended period, coyotes may not be chased, pursued, or taken during the daylight hours from April 1 through the day prior to the beginning of the spring turkey hunting season. Coyotes, except as otherwise provided in the Wildlife Code of Missouri, may be taken by hunting, and pelts and carcasses may be possessed, transported, and sold in any numbers throughout the year.

Special method restrictions apply during spring turkey season, elk season and deer season. See Allowed & Prohibited methods at <http://short.mdc.mo.gov/o3H>. Any questions about conservation area regulations and the Wildlife Code can be directed to local MDC staff. Find local MDC staff by county at <http://short.mdc.mo.gov/4ok>.

Find a complete list of Missouri's hunting seasons at <http://short.mdc.mo.gov/o3j>.

Release courtesy of the Missouri Department of Conservation.

Sedalia Animal Shelter

2420 S New York Ave • Sedalia • 826-5816



Pepper

Breed: Retriever, Black Labrador / Terrier, American Staffordshire
Sex: Male • Weight: 62 lbs
Age: 6Y/2M/3W • Location: Dog Holding
Adoption Fee: \$65.00



Benny

Breed: Husky / Shepherd
Sex: Male • Weight: 46 lbs
Age: 2Y/1M/1W • Location: Dog Holding
Adoption Fee: \$65.00

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

50 Hours — Lanyard 150 Hours — Shirt
250 Hours — Water Bottle
On holidays, your hours are recorded as double!

DONATIONS NEEDED

Bleach, Wet Cat Food, Purina Kitten Chow,
Paper Towels, Dawn Dish Soap, Leashes,
Grooming Supplies & Toys

Sponsored by:



Central Bank

www.windsorlivestockauction.com

WINDSOR LIVESTOCK AUCTION

660-647-5444

MARKET REPORT 01/21/2026

2894 Receipts.

5% Cows.

Compared to last week all classes of steers and heifers sold mostly 5–15 higher. Slaughter cows and bulls traded mostly 10–30 higher.

Steers Med & Large Frame #

3-400 lbs.	\$425-\$601
4-500 lbs.	\$420-\$545
5-600 lbs.	\$410-\$520
6-700 lbs.	\$335-\$477
7-800 lbs.	\$345-\$406
8-900 lbs.	\$300-\$373

Small Frame or Fleshy Steers & Bulls

4-700 lbs.	\$270-\$410
-----------------	-------------

Heifers Med & Large Frame #1

3-400 lbs.	\$420-\$515
4-500 lbs.	\$375-\$515
5-600 lbs.	\$356-\$443
6-700 lbs.	\$310-\$410
7-800 lbs.	\$285-\$377.50
8-900 lbs.	\$270-\$321

Small Frame or Fleshy Heifers

4-700 lbs.	\$230-\$357
-----------------	-------------

Weigh Cows Bulk	\$155-\$167
High Dressing	\$170-\$191
Low Dressing	\$138 Back
Bulls Bulk	\$185-\$214

Rep Sales

17 BLK Strs 575#487.50
18 BLK Strs 590#494
20 BBWF Strs 592#497.50
16 RD Strs 594#452
17 BLK Strs 626#477
20 CHEX/RD Strs 692#401
34 MX Strs 688#448.50
LD BLK Strs 698#414
24 MX Strs 763#393
LD BLK Strs 759#387
15 BLK Strs 710#406
LD BLK Hfrs 663#401
17 BLK Hfrs 675#392.50
14 BLK Hfrs 709#372.50
2LDS BLK Hfrs 698#370

For our weekly text alerts

text the word CATTLE to 660-647-6040

Rodney Drenon @ 660-890-4898
Jake Drenon @ 660-441-7716
Blake Drenon @ 660-351-4887

Sale Every Wednesday 12PM



Like the Sedalia Democrat on Facebook

facebook.com/SedaliaDemocrat



HeartlandChronicles

Focusing on Henry, Benton and Morgan County news.

Applications for Missouri Century Farms open February 1

If your farm has been in your family since Dec. 31, 1926, you can apply to have it recognized as a Missouri Century Farm.

The University of Missouri College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources, MU Extension Ag and Environment team and Missouri Farm Bureau sponsor the program.

Applications to be recognized as a 2026 Missouri Century Farm open Feb. 1. Deadline is May 1.

To qualify, the same family must have owned the farm for 100 consecutive years. The line of ownership from the original settler or buyer may be through children, grandchildren, siblings and nephews or nieces, including through marriage or adoption. The farm must be at least 40 acres of the original land acquisition and make a financial contribution to the overall farm income.

“Family farms have shaped Missouri’s agricultural heritage and rural communities for generations,” said MU Vice Chancellor for Extension and Engagement Chad Higgins. “They contribute to the state’s economy by producing livestock, soybeans, corn and other crops while also supporting local businesses. Family farms have also been vital partners with MU Extension in our land-grant mission for more than 100 years.”

“Missouri Farm Bureau is a proud partner in the recognition of Century Farms,” said Garrett Hawkins, Missouri Farm Bureau president. “We applaud the hard-working farm families who have kept us fed and clothed for generations. They represent an important part of our heritage and laid a foundation for the bounty Americans enjoy every day.”

Since the program began in 1976, more than 10,000 Missouri farms have received the Century Farm designation.

A \$140 fee covers the cost of a certificate, a metal farm sign and booklet for approved applicants. County MU Extension centers present these items.

Applications open Feb. 1, 2026. Details and online application are at <https://muext.us/CenturyFarms>. You can also contact your local MU Extension center with questions.

Release courtesy of the University of Missouri Extension.

MDC, partners to host Missouri Master Naturalist training workshops

The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) has partnered with the University of Missouri (MU) Extension to host a series of weekly trainings this spring for the Missouri Master Naturalist program. The Hi Lonesome Master Naturalist Chapter in Cole Camp will host the workshops at various public meeting spaces.

An initial orientation is scheduled for Wednesday, Feb. 4 at 6 p.m. at Boonslick Regional Library in Cole Camp. Attendance at the orientation is required to participate in the full Missouri Master Naturalist training. Training classes will take place in and around Cole Camp every Wednesday from 6 – 9 p.m. beginning Feb. 25 and running through May 20.

Interested participants must register for the weekly trainings by February 14. Class size is limited, and early registration is encouraged. Enrollees must be at least 18 years old and pay a \$110 fee to the MU Extension for chapter programs and expenses. Register for the orientation and full training course at <https://pears.io/events/mu/1938/>.

A full list of class times and locations can be found at the link above.

The Missouri Master Naturalist program mixes science with service, engaging Missourians in stewardship of the state’s natural resources through science-based education and volunteer community service. The program is a partnership between MDC and MU Extension.

“Volunteers are critical to our work connecting people to nature,” said MDC’s Cara Coates, Volunteer Engagement Specialist. “The Master Naturalist program is a great way for community members to further expand their interest in nature and develop skills to educate the public.”

Master Naturalists receive specialized training regarding nature in the region where chapters are based. Members help MDC and conservation partners through citizen science, educational programs, and stewardship projects. To become a certified Master Naturalist, participants must complete an initial training course and eight hours of advanced training. They must also contribute 40 hours of natural resource-related volunteer service through a local chapter.

For more information about the Hi Lonesome Master Naturalist trainings, contact Joni Harper at rossjo@missouri.edu or (573) 378-5358.

Boonslick Regional Library is located at 701 W. Main St. in Cole Camp.

Information about the Missouri Master Naturalist program is available at <http://short.mdc.mo.gov/4A4>.

Release courtesy of the Missouri Department of Conservation.

AROUND THE HEARTLAND

Morgan County Library Winter Reading Program
Runs from January 1 through February 28. Open to all ages, with prizes for children and adults.

Tales along the trail
Until Jan. 31 at the Runge Conservation Center, look for book pages posted along Runge’s Naturescape trail and enjoy a seasonal children’s book as you walk and explore. Book begins at the trailhead across from the parking lot. No registration required..

Heartland Hero

Grayson Copowycz

Celebrating John Cramer

Sponsored by Missouri Land Company



Grayson Copowycz is being recognized as a Heartland Hero for being an overall amazing human.

He has a kind heart and an upbeat personality, consistently using his manners with both students and teachers.

Grayson always gives his very best effort in the classroom and during extracurricular activities, including archery.

He goes out of his way to show kindness to others and enjoys making conversation with his peers and teachers alike.

His positive attitude, strong work ethic, and genuine compassion make him a standout student and a true Heartland Hero.

THANK YOU to this month’s sponsor MISSOURI LAND COMPANY

660-668-4868

In Business Since 2013

14484 Centerline Avenue • Cole Camp, MO 65325

www.MissouriLandCo.com

MISSOURI LAND COMPANY

Hometown BANKING

WITH YOUR NEIGHBORS & FRIENDS

COLE CAMP | STOVER

(660-668-4416) [573-377-4272]

CITIZENS-FARMERS BANK

Member FDIC



Say Hello to Enhanced, Expanded Drive Through Video Service.

Now available at our Warsaw location - chat with our video teller team in our drive through locations. Just tap to talk or swipe your card and visit with one of our banking pros! It’s secure, it saves time, and you get to say hello, You’re in the driver’s seat, and we’re your copilot.



EQUITY BANK

100 Main St, Warsaw, MO 65355 • (660) 438-4388

www.equitybank.com

Member FDIC

SFCC

From Page 1B

“One thing I’ve always told the kids out here is we’re going to treat you a little bit higher than the regular high school student in responsibility,” Rehmer noted. “But you’re not quite a college kid yet.”

Rehmer added that there are 57 career centers in Missouri, but only four are on college campuses. With 53 of them located on a high school campus.

"Think about the opportunity the kids on the four college campuses have," Rehmer said. "Because they're coming to a college campus, which is a totally different setup. It gives all kids an opportunity to better themselves."

The CTC program also offers internships and entry into military training for students.

Those parents and students interested in the program should contact their school district in their sophomore year to participate in the two-year program. Testing for the program is conducted at the beginning of the second semester. For more information, visit www.sfccmo.edu or call CTC at 660-530-5806.

Faith Bemiss-McKinney can be reached at faith.bemiss@sedaliademocrat.com



Automotive Technology is taught as one of the career fields in the Career and Technology program at State Fair Community College. Currently, 10 school districts participate in the program along with three private and parochial schools.

PHOTO COURTESY OF STATE FAIR COMMUNITY COLLEGE

UCM

From Page 1B

Whether they're stopping into the event for 30 minutes or the whole four hours, Rutt said seeing students take the time out of their busy schedules to be in service to others is not only humbling, but incredibly important to the greater good of the community.

"It's important for our students to be able to have a chance to give back to others," Rutt

said. "It's important that the students (aren't) just perceived as, 'I'm a taker,' but 'I can be a giver and I can help somebody else.'"

No matter a person's age, vocation, education or background, Rutt said having a heart to serve the community knows no limits. Sharing King's message of coming together to selflessly serve others in accessible ways with these students every year is what Rutt said makes these service days so special.

“MLK asks the question, ‘What are you doing for your community?’ And I think that, regardless of our state in life, we can all give back,” Rutt said. “I think we’re concentrating so much on all (our) differences and disagreements that we (don’t) realize how much common good we could be doing if we (gave) back. So, I think that’s a good question (King) asked— what are you doing to give back?”

Hasina Shah can be reached at 660-747-8123.

Judge weighing whether to allow April votes on new MO property tax caps

By Rudi Keller
Missouri Independent

While the Kansas City Chiefs are leaving Missouri and won't use the incentives lawmakers created for them last summer, the question of whether other tax credits and property tax caps included in the legislation will be used by anyone remains undecided.

One Remains undecided: Cole County Circuit Judge Christopher Limbaugh after a hearing on Wednesday promised he would rule by Feb. 10 on whether to issue a preliminary injunction to block elections on property tax caps that must be held in April in 97 counties.

A second hearing in the case, originally filed by two taxpayers, six school districts and a fire district, will be held next week as attorneys for the plaintiffs seek a summary judgment in their favor.

And in a Jan. 16 decision certain to be appealed, Limbaugh denied standing — the right to sue — and dismissed a case brought by two lawmakers and a conservative activist arguing the wide-ranging legislation violated procedural rules for passing bills.

The bill approved by lawmakers in a June special session offered up to \$1.5 billion in incentives to keep the

Kansas City Chiefs and Royals in Missouri. It also expanded a program of tax credits as an incentive for major amateur sports competitions, offered tax credits for disaster relief and set the property tax caps in 97 of the state's 114 counties.

In 75 counties, voter approval would limit future increases in tax property tax bills to 5% or the rate of inflation, whichever is greater. For 22 counties, voter approval would mean individual property tax bills could not increase. The tax base would be reset when a property changes hands. The caps allow tax bills to increase when a new or increased tax is approved by voters.

Feb. 10 is a key date because that is when April ballots must be certified by local election authorities. Twenty-seven counties joined the lawsuit after it was filed, arguing that the cost of the election is an unfunded mandate that violates the Missouri Constitution.

Attorney Jim Layton, who represents several of the original plaintiffs, said Limbaugh must decide whether the property tax caps are improperly passed special laws or violate constitutional provisions requiring uniformity in taxation and equal rights.

Lawmakers opted their counties into the legislation during a late-night floor session, deciding what level of relief they wanted for their area. Many of the state's largest counties were excluded, leaving Boone, Greene, Jackson, St. Louis County and the city of St. Louis out of the law.

“There’s no rational basis for the lines that it drew, or for designating some counties, particular counties, as 0% or 5% or unaffected counties,” Layton said in an interview with The Independent.

The state is defending the law by saying it will provide cover to local assessors who have been reluctant to bring property values up to the current market because of its impact on tax bills, Layton said.

Neither the original plaintiffs nor the intervening counties challenging the tax caps are asking Limbaugh to throw out the entire law. That was the goal of the lawsuit that was dismissed Jan. 16, filed by state Sen. Mike Moon, a Republican from Ash Grove, and state Rep. Bryant Wolfen, a Republican from Ste. Genevieve, and Ron Calzone, a conservative activist who has challenged several laws for violating procedural rules in the Missouri Constitution.

Dutch Bakery & Bulk Food Store, LLC

709 Hwy 150 W; Tipton, Mo 65081
phone #: (660)433-2865

Winter Hours: Monday-Friday 7am-6pm
Sat 7am-5:30pm CLOSED SUNDAY

DELI SPECIALS!

 Deli Pepperoni Reg. \$7.29 lb. Sale! \$6.29 lb. Lacey Baby Swiss Cheese Reg. \$5.29 lb. Sale! \$4.29 lb.
--

sale prices good Jan 28 - Feb 3, 2026

Cheese Sale!

unsliced 6lb rolls

Marble, Colby, Muenster,
Pepper Jack, Lightning Jack

\$19.95 each
5 or more \$18.95 ea.



Noodles & Canned Meat

Homemade Noodles

14oz & 28oz Canned Meats
(Beef, Chicken, Pork, Turkey)

Canned Broths & Broth Mixes

Canned Soups

Sale! 10% off





Ice Melt

50lb Roadrunner Ice Melt 22.95 ea.

20lb Paw Pal Pet Friendly 9.95 ea.



Bird Seed

Black Oil
Sunflower Seeds

\$26.99 / 50 lb. bag





We will be closing at 2:00 P.M. on New Year's Day!

Sunshine Foods LLC

Deli Special

Salsa Jack Cheese
Was \$5.49lb Now \$4.49lb

Rotisserie Style Chicken Breast
Was \$7.49lb Now \$6.49lb

BAKERY • SURPLUS GROCERIES • BULK FOODS • DELI

19532 Hwy. C, Barnett, MO 65011
 Between Versailles and Highpoint on Hwy. C

573-378-6500

Pineapple Orange Juice Drink 50¢ 8oz \$5.75_{cs} 12	Milk Chocolate Covered Pretzels \$1.75_{lb}	Uncooked Spicy Chicken Breast Filet \$6.99_{3lb.}
Beef Sausage Snack Pieces \$4.49_{28oz} <i>Sale! Was \$5.49ea.</i>	Coco June Unsweetened Plain Cultured Coconut Organic \$1.75_{16oz}	Original Velveeta \$6.99_{2lb}
Jalapeno Cheese Snack Spread 50¢ 4oz. \$27.99_{72ct cs}	Diet Dr Pepper \$1.25_{2 Liter}	Candied Walnuts \$1.25_{lb.}

Sale Prices Good Through January 28th - February 3rd, while supply lasts

Check out our pallet areas for even larger savings on case quantities.

STORE HOURS: Mon-Sat 8:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M.
 Fri 8:00 A.M. - 6:00 P.M. • Closed Sunday





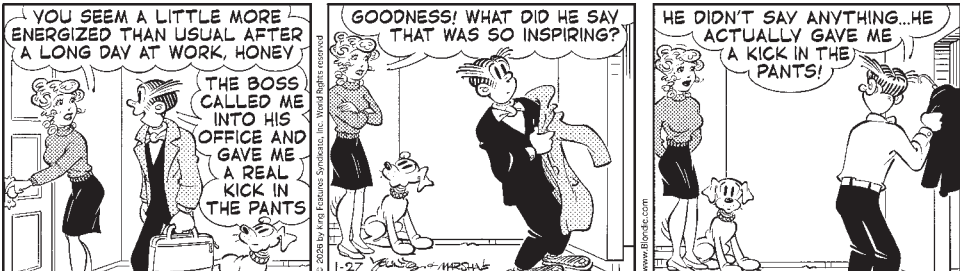
We Now Accept EBT

Monday - Saturday **Friday**
8am - 5pm **8am - 6pm**
 18268 Kelsay Road • Barnett, MO • 573-378-4395

Bonus Special! Medium Brown Eggs \$2.59 1½ doz.	Troyer Cheese SALE Mini Horns approx 6Lb Only \$2.49 Lb. Pepper Jack, Colby, Morbie	
Flavored Pork Loins \$2.50 18.4 oz. \$3.69 27.2 oz.	Breaded Shrimp \$2.99 Lb.	Sliced Honey Ham \$1.25 Lb.
Fully Cooked Chicken Breast Patties \$9.99 4 Lb. Spicy Miso Ramen Soup Bowl \$0.75 5.4 oz. Honey Bunches of Oats w/ Almonds \$1.99 12 oz.		000 Deli 000 Cherrywood smoked Ham REG. \$5.15 Lb. SALE \$4.15 Lb. Butter Cheese REG. \$5.45 Lb. SALE \$4.45 Lb. Smoked Swiss Cheese REG. \$7.25 Lb. SALE \$6.25 Lb.
Prices Good Jan 28 th -3 rd , 2026. While Supplies last. Not responsible for printing errors.		

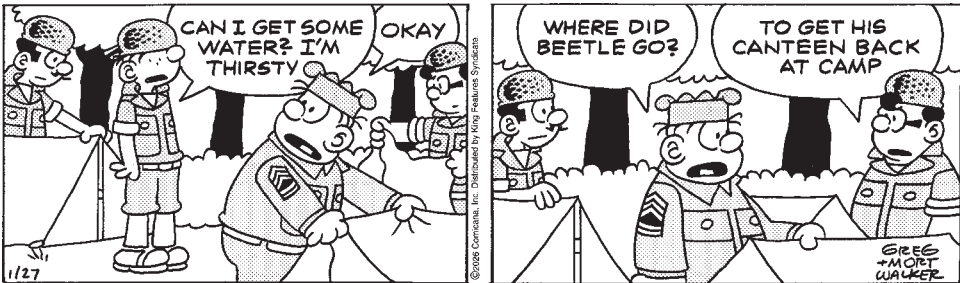
BLONDIE

BY DEAN YOUNG AND JOHN MARSHALL



BEETLE BAILEY

BY GREG WALKER, BRIAN WALKER AND NEAL WALKER



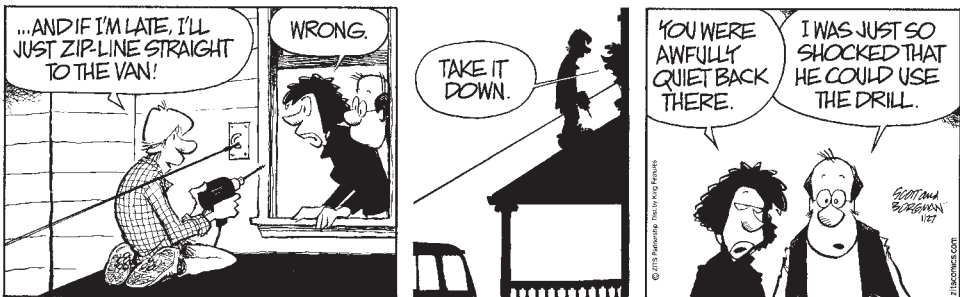
HAGAR THE HORRIBLE

BY CHRIS BROWNE



ZITS

BY JERRY SCOTT AND JIM BORGMAN



HI AND LOIS

WRITTEN BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER; DRAWN BY CHANCE BROWNE



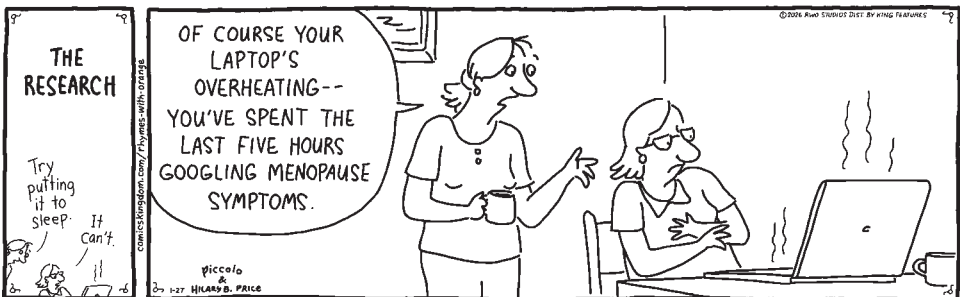
PARDON MY PLANET

BY VIC LEE



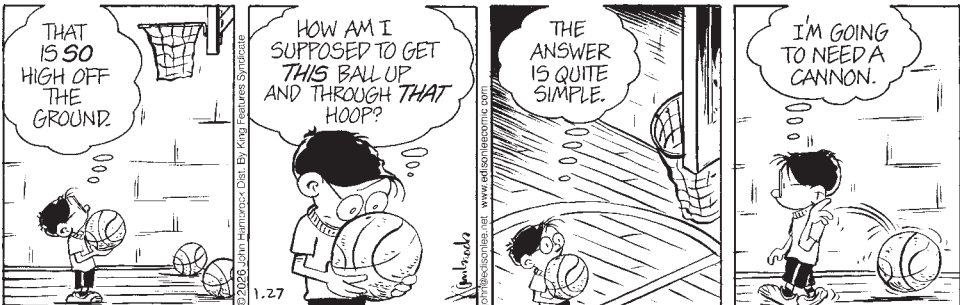
RHYMES WITH ORANGE

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

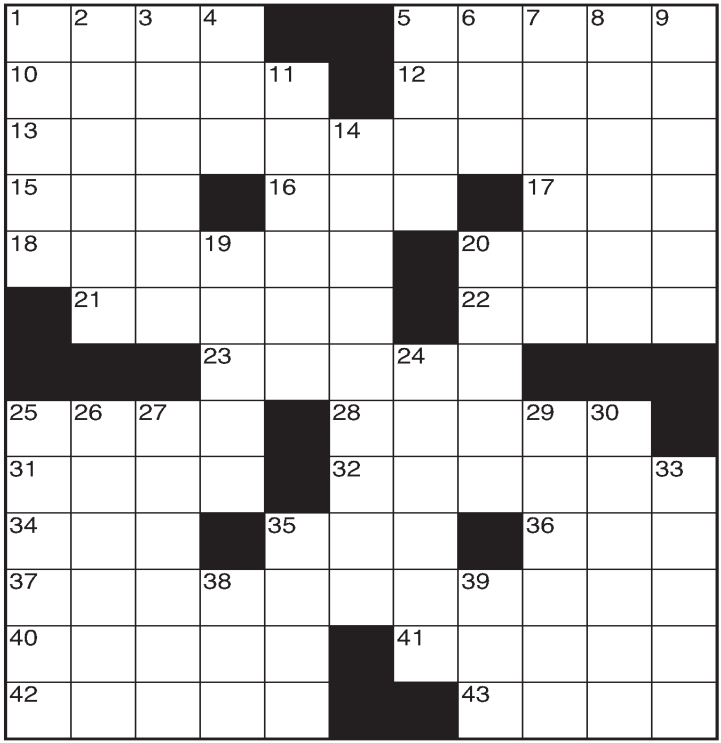
- 1 Military sch.
5 Weather aid
10 Pago Pago setting
12 Banded quartz
13 Massive retail outlets
15 Language suffix
16 Golf peg
17 Maze runner
18 Belgrade's nation
20 Do some modeling
21 Yertle's creator
22 Greatly impressed
23 Different
25 Duplicate
28 Plain to see
31 God of war
32 Take, as the bus
34 Tell tales
35 Signing need
36 "Roses — red"
37 Cinematic compositions

40 Justice

- Kagan
41 Turn outward
42 Office sights
43 Commo-tions

DOWN

- 1 Braying beasts
2 Things to fight for
3 Current unit
4 Female rabbit
5 Assess
6 In the past
7 Scopes trial lawyer
8 Relaxed
9 Took ten
11 Monet or Manet
14 Coasts
19 Harbor sights
20 Trimmed
24 Show clearly
25 Placated
26 Baltimore player
27 Irritates
29 Brought up
30 Bull-fight star
33 High homes
35 Pod contents
38 Pen fill
39 Future embryos



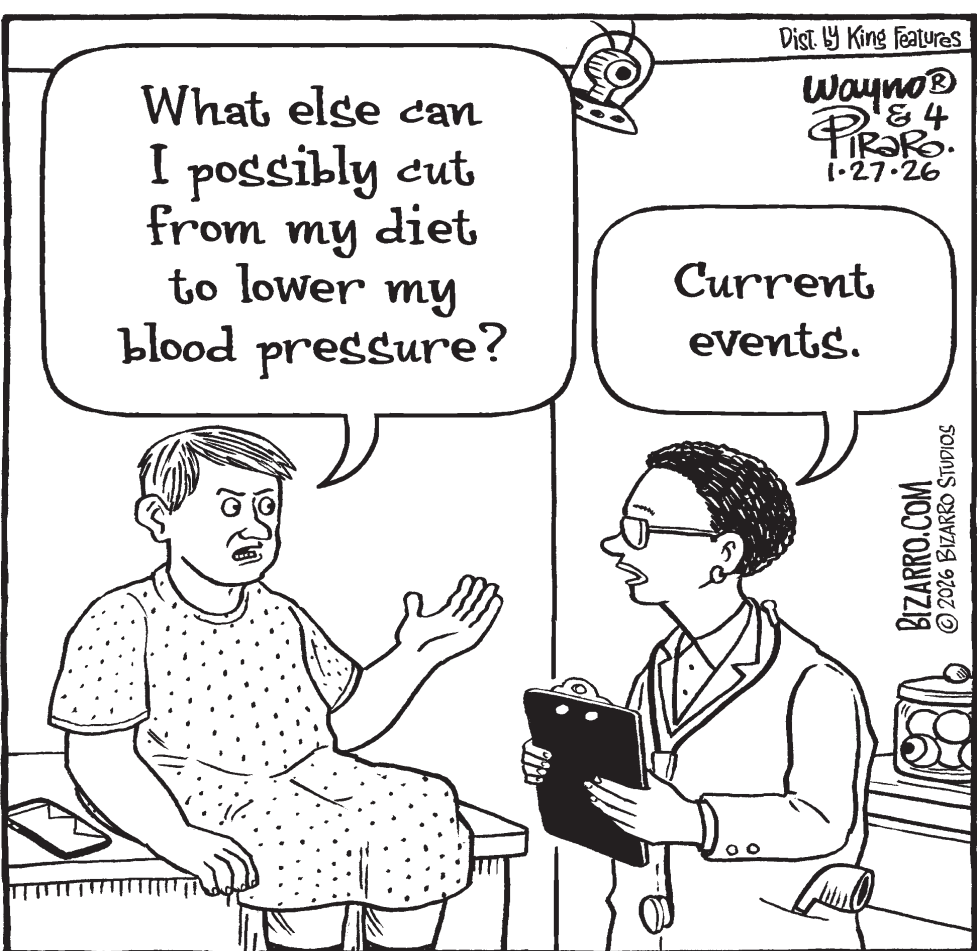
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG

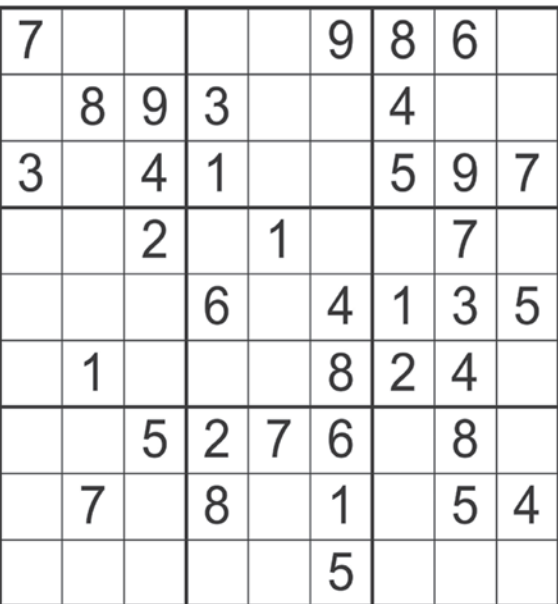


BIZARRO

BY DAN PIRARO



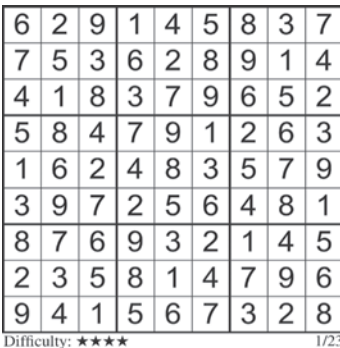
King Classic Sudoku



Difficulty: ★★

1/27

Answer to previous puzzle



Difficulty: ★★

1/23

BUSINESS & PROFESSIONAL SERVICE DIRECTORY

BARNES Black Bear BARNES Call Today! 660-747-3563 Why Black Bear Barns? -Quality Structures -Affordable Price -Custom Design -5yr. Warranty Right Here in Johnson County Since 1997		CONSTRUCTION Danner Roofing Commercial, residential & Flat roof specialist. Asphalt, metal, single ply & steel roofs. 20 Year Warranty's 573-378-ROOF (7663) Free inspections & estimates Insurance claim specialist.
	FENCING CORNERSTONE FENCE & GATE, LLC. AUTOMATIC GATES • FENCES • GATES HANDRAILS • MOBILE WELDING Richard Rhodes 23 Years Experience Office: 660-653-0183 • Cell: 816-716-1052	
GARAGE DOORS Show Me Overhead Door WE OPEN DOORS showmeohd@gmail.com • www.showmeohd.com • Knob Noster, MO.	FENCING "Good Fences Make Good Neighbors.*" For all types of Fencing: Pipe, Vinyl, Chain Link & Farm. 30 Years Experience. Call Tom Smith 660-221-1187 SMITH FENCING	GUTTERS STEVE'S GUTTERING Serving the area for over 20 years. We now offer 5, 6, & 7 inch seamless aluminum as well as 6 inch half round seamless guttering. 660-438-6381 www.stevesguttering.com
GUTTERS J&T GUTTERING SERVING CENTRAL MISSOURI 660-620-9708 • https://jtguttering.com 5 & 6 INCH SEAMLESS GUTTERING • 20 COLORS AVAILABLE LEAF GUARD • REPAIRS QUALITY WORK GUARANTEED JON MILLER KNOB NOSTER, MO THOMAS MILLER	PAINTING A1 PAINTING & RESOTRATION DAVID DURGAN ddurgan@a1paintingpro.biz Office: 573-434-1482 816-804-0821 Exterior & Interior Painting Wood Replacement • Texture Ceilings Remodeling • Wallpaper Removal & Hanging FREE ESTIMATE CALL: 660-232-2766	
ROOFING YODER'S QUALITY ROOFING Roof your home with 40-year Metal Color of Choice B. Truman Yoder 660-723-3516		SERVICES & EQUIPMENT CLEAR FORK EQUIPMENT, LLC. Forestry Mulching • Stump Grinding Land Clearing • Rentals 660-624-6068
WINDOWS Yoder's Superior Warranties VINYL REPLACEMENT WINDOWS Certified Lead & Asbestos Compliant TRUMAN YODER & SONS Over 30 Years Experience 660-723-3516	NEED A NEW ROOF? RESIDENTIAL • SHINGLES • METAL • FREE ESTIMATES REFERENCES • NO SUNDAY CALLS BRUBAKER ROOFING LAMONTE, MO 660-909-1370	
HOUSE PAINTING Interior/Exterior 660-827-1211 FREE ESTIMATES Max Frisby		

To be included in our business directory please call

660.826.1000

As AI-generated fake content mars legal cases, states want guardrails

By Madyson Fitzgerald
Stateline

Last spring, Illinois county judge Jeffrey Goffinet noticed something startling: A legal brief filed in his courtroom cited a case that did not exist.

Goffinet, an associate judge in Williamson County, looked through two legal research systems and then headed to the courthouse library — a place he hadn’t visited in years — to consult the book that purportedly listed the case. The case wasn’t in it.

The fake case, generated by artificial intelligence, came across Goffinet’s desk just a few months after the Illinois Supreme Court’s policy on the use of AI in the courts took effect. Goffinet co-chaired a task force that informed that policy, which allows the use of AI as long as it complies with existing legal and ethical standards.

“People are going to use [AI], and the courts are not going to be able to be a dam across a river that’s already flowing at flood capacity,” Goffinet said. “We have to learn how to coexist with it.”

As more false quotes, fake court cases and incorrect information appear in legal documents generated by AI, state bar associations, state court systems and national law organizations are issuing guidance on its use in the legal field. A handful of states are considering or enacting legislation to address the issue, and many courts and professional associations are focused on education for attorneys.

From divorce cases to discrimination lawsuits, AI-generated fake content can cause evidence to be dismissed and motions to be denied.

While some states urge attorneys to lean

on existing guidance about accuracy and transparency, the new policies address AI concerns related to confidentiality, competency and costs. Most policies and opinions encourage attorneys to educate themselves and to use proprietary AI tools that prevent sensitive data from being entered into open source systems. Since AI tools could also increase efficiency, several policies advise attorneys to charge less if they spend less time on cases.

Some states, such as Ohio, also ban the use of artificial intelligence for certain legal tasks. In Ohio, courts are prohibited from using AI to translate legal forms, court orders and similar content that may affect the outcome of a case.

Several states have also advised legal professionals to adhere to the American Bar Association’s formal opinion of ethical AI use in law.

Artificial intelligence can help attorneys and law firms by automating administrative tasks, analyzing contracts and organizing documents. Generative AI can also be used to draft legal documents, including court briefs. Experts say the use of AI productivity tools can save legal professionals time and reduce the risk of human error in everyday tasks.

But law professionals nationwide have faced fines and license suspensions, among other consequences, for submitting legal documents citing false quotes, cases or information.

Many legal professionals are likely to not notice instances in which an AI system is “hallucinating,” or confidently making statements that are not true, said Rabiha Butler, the manager for enter-

prise content for Risk, Fraud and Government at the Thomson Reuters Institute. The institute is a research subsidiary of the Thomson Reuters company, which sells an AI system meant to help lawyers.

Courts and law organizations will need to consider education, sanctions and punitive actions to ensure law professionals are using AI appropriately, Butler said.

“AI has such confidence, and it can appear so polished, that if you’re not paying attention and doing your due diligence, the hallucination is being treated as a factual piece of information,” she said.

Since the beginning of 2025, there have been 518 documented cases in which generative AI produced hallucinated content used in U.S. courts, according to a database by Damien Charlotin, a senior research fellow at the HEC Paris business school.

“So far, if we’re looking at the institutional response, there’s not a lot because people are not very sure how to handle this kind of issue,” Charlotin said. “Everyone is aware that some lawyers are using artificial intelligence in their day-to-day work. Most people are aware that the technology is not very mature. But it’s still hard to prevent a mistake.”

State guidance

As of Jan. 23, state bar associations or similar entities have issued formal guidance on the use of AI in at least 10 states and the District of Columbia, typically in the form of an ethics opinion. Those aren’t enforceable as law, but spell out proper conduct.

In February, for example, the Professional Ethics Committee for the State Bar of Texas issued an ethics opin-

ion that outlines issues that may arise from law professionals using AI. Texas lawyers should have a basic understanding of generative AI tools and guardrails to protect client confidentiality, it said. They should also verify any content generated by AI and refrain from charging clients for the time saved by using AI tools.

Legal professionals must be aware of their own competency with AI tools, said Brad Johnson, the executive director of the Texas Center for Legal Ethics.

“A really important takeaway from the opinion is that if a lawyer is considering using a generative AI tool in the practice of law, the lawyer has to have a reasonable and current understanding of the technology because only then can a lawyer really evaluate the risks that are associated with it,” he said.

Court systems in at least 11 states — Arizona, Arkansas, California, Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, New York, Ohio, South Carolina, Vermont and Virginia — have established policies or issued rules of conduct regarding AI use by law professionals.

Illinois, for instance, allows lawyers to use artificial intelligence and does not require disclosure. The policy also emphasizes that judges will ultimately be responsible for their decisions, regardless of “technological advancements.”

“The task force wanted to emphasize that as judges, what we bring to the table is our humanity,” said Goffinet, the associate judge. “And we cannot abdicate our humanity in favor of an AI-generated decision or opinion.”

Some state lawmakers have tried to address the issue through legislation. Last year,

Louisiana Republican Gov. Jeff Landry signed a measure that requires attorneys to use “reasonable diligence” to verify the authenticity of evidence, including content generated by artificial intelligence. The law also allows parties in civil cases to raise concerns about the admissibility of evidence if they suspect it was generated or altered by artificial intelligence.

California Democratic state Sen. Tom Umberg also introduced legislation last year that would require attorneys to ensure confidential information is not entered into a public generative AI system. The measure, which was approved by the Senate Judiciary Committee last week, also would require attorneys to ensure that reasonable steps are taken to verify the accuracy of generative AI material.

Attorney education

It’s also important for state bar associations and law schools to provide education on artificial intelligence, said Michael Hensley, a counsel at FBT Gibbons and an advocate for the safe use of AI in California courts. AI has the ability to reduce research time just like online legal research systems, but it requires training, he said.

“I would hope the state bar would have training for this,” Hensley said. “And I think it’s absolutely imperative that law schools have a session on AI.”

In a Bloomberg Law survey conducted last spring, 51% of the more than 750 respondents said their law firms purchased or invested in generative artificial intelligence tools. Another 21% said they planned to purchase AI tools within the next year. Attorneys reported using generative AI for general legal re-

search, drafting communications, summarizing legal narratives, reviewing legal documents and other work.

Of the law firms that were not using generative AI, attorneys cited incorrect or unreliable output, ethical issues, security risks and data privacy as the top reasons.

While attorneys and law firms have become more comfortable with AI tools, courts have been more apprehensive, said Diane Robinson, a principal court research associate at the National Center for State Courts. Robinson is also project director at the Thomson Reuters Institute/NCSC AI Policy Consortium for Law and Courts, an association of legal practitioners and researchers developing guidance and resources for the use of AI in courts.

AI has the potential to improve case processing and can allow people needing legal advice to find information by using AI chatbots, she said. But, she added, courts are still struggling with evidence altered by AI and briefs littered with hallucinations.

“Fake evidence is nothing new,” Robinson said. “People have been altering photographs as long as there were photographs. But with AI, the ability to create videos, audio and pictures has become very easy, and courts are really struggling with it.”

Charlotin, of HEC Paris, said most courts and professional associations will continue to focus on education right now.

“You cannot prevent a mistake just by telling people, ‘Don’t make a mistake,’” Charlotin said. “That doesn’t work. It’s more about setting up processes to make people aware of it, then they can set up processes to work on dealing with it.”

MO Supreme Court strikes down law on ballot title cases, special appeal power for AG

By Rudi Keller
Missouri Independent

The Missouri Supreme Court on Friday threw out a law passed last year that was designed to keep politicians in control of writing ballot summaries and give the attorney general extraordinary appeal power.

The bill was changed too much during its path through the General Assembly, Chief Justice W. Brent Powell wrote in the unanimous opinion. The changes, he wrote, violated the Missouri Constitution’s requirement that amendments should not change the original purpose of legislation.

The original bill contained one section intended to prevent the courts from rewriting ballot language for measures referred to voters by the General Assembly. By the time it was passed, it changed five sections of state law, completely revising the process for court challenges to

ballot summaries and granting the attorney general authority to appeal preliminary injunctions preventing enforcement of state laws or regulations in any field.

In arguments on Jan. 7, Deputy Solicitor General Samuel Freedlund tried to convince the judges that changes to how ballot summary cases are managed are germane to the attorney general’s appeal power because the bill, from the start, was designed to amend the process for judicial review of state laws.

“This argument stretches the boundaries of logic,” Powell wrote.

The court considered allowing the changes to ballot title cases to remain in effect, which was the result when Cole County Circuit Judge Danel Green ruled in September. Green found that the original purpose of the bill had not been improperly changed but there was no legal basis for allowing the at-

torney general’s office to have special appeal power.

The Supreme Court considered whether the bill would have passed absent the provisions for the attorney general, Powell wrote.

“While it remains possible the General Assembly would have passed (the law) without the amendment... this mere possibility is not enough for this court to save the non-offending provisions (the law),” he wrote.

The decision restates what lawmakers should have known when they passed the bill because what is and is not allowed procedurally has been argued repeatedly in court, attorney Chuck Hatfield said.

Hatfield represented Sean Nicholson, who sued in part because the new ballot summary process is more expensive and creates delays for ballot initiatives.

“Every few years, the Supreme Court needs to remind the Legisla-

ture that they have to follow the procedural requirements of the Constitution when they pass a bill,” Hatfield said. “It’s not that hard. They need to vote on things separately.”

The ballot summary provisions of the law were written to take revisions out of the hands of the courts. In lawsuits during 2023 and early 2024, the courts rewrote the language for the abortion rights initiative petition, finding the original version written by then-Secretary of State Jay Ashcroft “replete with politically partisan language.”

Instead of a judge making changes when summaries are deemed unfair or biased, the law gave the secretary of state three chances to make revisions.

The law was used last year during a challenge to the summary of a proposal to reinstate Missouri’s almost-total ban on abortions. Cole County Circuit Judge Daniel Green approved a summary from Secretary of State Denny Hoskins after rejecting two previous versions, but that decision was overturned at the Western District Court of Appeals, which issued its own revision.

By throwing out the law, the judges put revisions to a referendum on Missouri’s

gerrymandered redistricting plan into the hands of Cole County Circuit Judge Brian Stumpe. Hoskins has already admitted in court through his attorneys that the ballot summary “is close to the line of being inherently argumentative.”

In the effort to save the law, Freedlund during oral arguments asked the court to reject the lawsuit entirely. Nicholson is not working for any initiative campaign engaged in litigation over a ballot title and therefore had no injury, he contended.

And there is no standing, or right to sue, for anyone to challenge the appeal power because it involved no new expense for the state, he argued.

The court did not address the first argument and rejected the second. While in many cases a challenge could not be sustained if the only expense is for state employees who would be paid a salary anyway, this case is different, Powell wrote.

Lawmakers added the appeal power to the bill specifically to allow the attorney general to challenge a preliminary injunction in the court battle over abortion rights playing out in Kansas City. Planned Parenthood

and the ACLU of Missouri are suing the state over laws and regulations that prevented Missourians from immediately accessing abortion following the passage of an abortion rights amendment in 2024.

Jackson County Judge Jerri Zhang found some of the regulations to be unconstitutional under the new abortion rights law and issued two preliminary injunctions.

Immediately after the bill was signed, Bailey used the new authority to file appeals that were ultimately unsuccessful. Those filings, Powell wrote, are a use of state funds that would not have been made absent the new legal authority.

“In connection with the attorney general’s appeal of a preliminary injunction filed after passage of (the law), tax dollars necessarily have been spent on the pursuit of that appeal when no appeal was previously allowed,” Powell wrote. “This expenditure establishes taxpayer spending.”

The decision helps clarify when a lawsuit challenging a new law or regulation can be filed, Hatfield said.

“That’s somewhat helpful,” he said, “to those of us who worry about this kind of thing.”

Find past news, sports & Classifieds on our website

Check out our E-Editions!



