

# THE VOICE

A Trusted Voice From The Community's Perspective



## END OF A TRADITION

GOODBYE BULLDOGS AND THE REST OF WICHITA'S  
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# THE VOICE

VOLUME 31, NUMBER 15  
FRIDAY, JULY 26, 2024

## LOOKING AHEAD

### If You're Not Reading Us Online... YOU'RE MISSING A LOT

Here are a few of the stories we've published exclusively online

#### Health

A Simple Tool May Be Able to Predict Your Risk for Both Dementia And Depression, Study Finds (This article was published in our Wednesday health newsletter, sign up for it and receive more great health stories each week.

#### Religion

Commentary: God Did Not Save Donald Trump

#### Arts & Culture

Nicodemus Nearing 146th Homecoming Emancipation Celebration  
KC Fringe Festival Returns for 20th Season: Highlights Diverse Artists

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Editor-in-Chief  
The Community Voice

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ISSUES AND  
OPINIONS.**

# Oh My, Now Teens Gangs are Shooting Seniors

I don't condone gangs shooting gangs, but when your rage rises to chasing and shooting seniors, I'm not at a loss for words.

**By Bonita Gooch**  
Editor-in-Chief

There's been a rash of recent gun shootings in Wichita involving teen shooters.

Some of them have been outright shootouts, with police counting at least 50 shots fired in one incident. On July 11, four people were wounded in a 3:14 a.m. shooting at 2300 E. Murdock. The wounded were aged 14 to 19.

Earlier that same night, a separate incident occurred

at Central and Oliver, where a Black male was assaulted following an exchange of words between two "groups." Members of one of these groups were involved in the shooting that occurred on Murdock.

Both of these incidents involved "groups" of young people, turning on each other. However, a shooting in downtown Wichita in the early evening of July 15 involved a group of young adults turning on a total stranger. They attacked, chased and shot a 64-year-old man who was with his wife.

Preliminary investigations indicate that the victim and his wife were walking in the Naftzger Park area when they got into a verbal argument with a large group of young individuals. The argument escalated into a physical altercation, leading to several

individuals pursuing the victim to a nearby parking lot, where the 15-year-old male suspect shot the victim before fleeing the area.

The victim was shot in the left shoulder and the 15-year shooter has been arrested.

Where this incident causes me concern beyond the usual is that this was no longer group against group. This was a group of young people taking on an older man and his wife who were walking at a reasonable hour in a reasonable part of town.

How brave, how macho, how much out of touch with the norms of society do you have to be to chase and shoot an old man and his wife? No, these kids weren't brave, they were out-of-control little punks.

I do not know the race of any of the individuals involved and it doesn't matter. Nor do

I know what anyone said or did to kick off the verbal argument, and that doesn't matter either. Even if this was a White man who called Black kids the N-word, that doesn't justify shooting someone. Even if someone pulled a gun on the youth, I'm still left questioning what a 15-year-old is doing carrying a gun.

I know this is an age-old statement, but I have to fall back on the question, where are their parents and other family members who should have some responsibility for positively directing these children?

I know children have a mind of their own and despite what you tell them, sometimes they go astray, but I still have to question the parents, especially when a 14-year-old is in the streets at 3 a.m. and a 15-year-old has a gun to brandish.

Oh, parents, where are you?

## Behind the Cartoon: Childless Cat Lady

Not sure if you missed this one or not, but it appears J.D. Vance can get as low and insulting as his running mate.

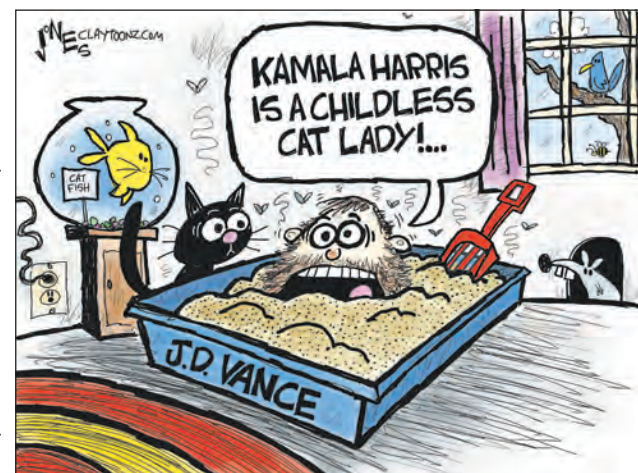
Hillary Clinton uncovered and shared on her social a 2021 interview of Vance on Fox where he calls VP Kamala Harris a "childless cat ladies." It's gone viral.

Vance knocks Harris, Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg and U.S.

Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez -- for not having biological children.

"We are effectively run in this country via the Democrats,... by a bunch of childless cat ladies who are miserable at their own lives and the choices that they've made and so they want to make the rest of the country miserable too," Vance said.

This low blow sparked widespread anger from women on both sides of the aisle: from women who have children, women who have lost children, women



who've been struggling to have children, women who don't want children and women who have cats.

**ON THE COVER:** Players from the Wichita Bulldogs organization posed for a photo during the Wichita Juneteenth parade. The Bulldogs are part of the historic Wichita Junior Football League which is being totally reorganized. Page 8-9

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# When We Vote, We Make History

Black female leaders rally around Kamala Harris

By Associated press

Four years ago, a Zoom meeting to build support for Kamala Harris as the Democratic vice presidential nominee attracted just 90 participants. On Sunday night, an estimated 90,000 Black women and allies logged on at the same time to support her brand-new presidential campaign.

Zoom typically maxes out at 1,000 participants but a female executive at the video conferencing company stepped in to increase the capacity to 40,000, said Aimee Allison, who has attended many of the weekly calls organized by the #WinWithBlackWomen network over the years. And organizers said the meeting was streamed to another 50,000 women on other platforms.

“It was thrilling,” Allison said. “It wasn’t chaos. The infrastructure



was there amongst Black women to be able to scale and meet the moment. And I think this is the difference-maker Kamala Harris is injecting into the race.”

The discussion just hours after President Joe Biden announced the end of his reelection campaign and

endorsement of Harris had the feel of a revival meeting, said Allison, who founded “She the People” to advocate for women of color in politics in 2018. Woman after woman described in detail what needs to be done before Election Day while also celebrating one of their own.

“We’re together. We’re beautiful, we’re strong, we’re capable. We’re ready. We have incredible power in this group,” she said. “People just were so hungry for that community and for that feeling of hope.”

On Monday night, a “Black Men for Harris” online streaming event co-hosted by #WinWithBlackMen, a similar networking group for Black men, drew tens of thousands who pledged to support Harris, and featured speeches from Black male leaders from elected offices, in the civil rights community and business. More than 53,000 people had registered for the call, according to Roland Martin, a Black media leader who moderated the virtual event.

Black voters in general, and women in particular, were key to Biden’s victories in both the 2020 primaries and general election. While Donald Trump had a modest advantage among white women,

Biden won overwhelmingly among Black women, 93% to Trump’s 6%, according to AP VoteCast, a survey of more than 110,000 voters.

“These were different generations with different education levels, different jobs, different backgrounds, different industries, all coming to the table and saying, we’re ready, we’re in,” she said.

Earlier this month, Harris herself extolled “the power of sisterhood and service” when she addressed the annual gathering of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, which she joined as a student at Howard University, one of the nation’s most storied historically Black colleges.

“Our nation is counting on the leaders in this room to guide us forward,” she told the crowd of Black women, some shaking pompoms to cheer her on. “When we mobilize, nations change. And when we vote, we make history.”



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# KS Senate District 4 Primary Race Will Choose the Winner

The Kansas Senate race in Wyandotte County District 4 Democratic primary race is yet another where the primary will decide it all. Incumbent state Sen. David Haley, who typically doesn't draw an opponent, let alone a primary opponent, is facing off against a fresh new face and serious contender, Ephren Taylor III. These two articles are compiled to help you make an informed decision.

## Meet the Candidate: David Haley Seeks Re-election to Kansas Senate

By Thomas White  
Kansas City Reporter

David Haley, a long-serving Democratic state senator from Kansas City, KS, is seeking re-election to represent District 4 in the Kansas Senate. With nearly 30 years of legislative experience under his belt, Haley touts his track record of championing criminal justice reform, economic development, and tax relief for his constituents.

Haley, an attorney by trade, has deep roots in Kansas City. His father, George W. Haley, was the first Black person elected to the Kansas Senate, and Haley proudly follows in those footsteps as an advocate for his community.

"I am of Wyandotte County," says Haley. "I know my community, I love my community and they know me."

Haley is a graduate of Morehouse College and Howard University School of Law. After college, he served as a Wyandotte County assistant district attorney. Haley was elected to the Kansas House in 1995 and served until he was elected to the state Senate in 2001. Haley is now seeking his seventh term and faces a primary challenger for the first time this year. Looking ahead, Haley outlined his main priorities if re-elected:

- **Tax Relief:** Haley wants to evaluate all options to ease property tax, sales tax and income tax burdens for his constituents. He voted against a state flat tax, but says he considered it because while it "would have helped people at the top" he thought it may have helped residents in Wyandotte County.

- **Economic Development:** "We have tools in the chest to assist with the development of Wyandotte County, both large and small." This includes championing incentives like STAR bonds for large projects (like a Chiefs or Royals stadium) and



David Haley

supporting small business development.

- **Law & Criminal Justice Reform:** Haley plans to continue pushing for "balanced" reforms. He highlighted past legislation he sponsored to make shooters financially responsible for supporting minor children of homicide victims and to enhance sentences for shooting into occupied buildings and cars.

- **Law Enforcement Accountability:** Haley wants to reform certain police practices and tactics like chokeholds and no-knock warrants. Haley also wants to reform civil asset forfeiture laws that allow law enforcement to seize property without a criminal conviction.

- **Addressing Disparate Racial Impacts:** "I think more than anything else, my service over the last almost 30 years total, has been to help ensure equal application of the law to all Kansans."

Haley also noted he brings valuable experience and institutional knowledge to the legislature. Haley points to his long record of legislative accomplishments, including being an early advocate for marriage equality and marijuana decriminalization in Kansas. He sponsored legislation to create felony penalties for extreme animal cruelty and worked to equalize sentencing disparities between crack and powder cocaine offenses.

Haley says he's accumulated a number of legislative victories that he is proud of over the years, but that the overarching theme is ensuring that all Kansans are treated equally. He points to his efforts against police profiling, for women's rights, and against discriminatory language and practices.

"We do not have a neutral society in Kansas or America at large," says Haley. "Oftentimes laws have a disparate impact depending on

See HALEY Page 7 →

## Meet the Candidate: Ephren Taylor III, A New Face

Taylor challenges longtime incumbent in Kansas Senate race

By Thomas White  
Kansas City Reporter

At just 20 years old, Ephren Taylor III is hoping to bring fresh energy and ideas to the Kansas Senate. The Gen Z candidate is challenging longtime incumbent David Haley to represent District 4, which covers northern and eastern Wyandotte County.

Taylor, a community organizer with civic engagement group Loud Light, says he was inspired to run because he doesn't think Wyandotte County's progressive politics are represented in Topeka.

"I think Wyandotte has the potential to be a political powerhouse, but it just hasn't been harnessed yet," says Taylor. Taylor says his youth would add to the diversity of the Kansas Senate, and that the young folks are not represented in the Legislature. He says that when he began knocking on doors to ask for their votes, he thought he'd receive push back due to his age but voters have been receptive.

"People are excited to see someone that's young, Black, doing something good and fighting for change," says Taylor.

Taylor grew up in the Kansas City area but is new to Wyandotte County. His father is incarcerated and he cites his experience trying to visit him as a child for opening his eyes to systematic racism and how institutions work.

He became politically active in high school, speaking at school board meetings in favor of DEI initiatives and organizing rallies on progressive issues like abortion rights. After graduating, he took an internship with Loud Light, where he worked to educate and mobilize young voters.



Ephren Taylor III

Through that work, Taylor says he gained valuable experience in community organizing and coalition building that he believes will serve him well as a legislator. He pointed to his efforts on passing a municipal ID and on expanding the availability of government documents in languages other than English.

If elected, Taylor's top priorities would include:

- **Property tax relief:** Taylor wants to expand programs like the Homestead Tax Credit to provide more relief to homeowners struggling with rising property taxes. He believes current programs are too limited in scope.

- **Medicaid expansion:** Expanding Medicaid is "very important because Wyandotte County has some of the worst health outcomes in the entire state," Taylor says. He views it as a life-saving policy.

- **Defending civil rights:** "Every single year, they're coming after some sort of civil rights," Taylor said, referring to Republican-led efforts. He pledged to be a vocal defender of LGBTQ rights, voting rights, and workers' rights.

- **Fully funding education:** Taylor supports increased state funding for public schools to reduce reliance on local property taxes. He criticized the current funding model, and school vouchers, as perpetuating inequalities between wealthy and poor districts.

- **Affordable housing:** Taylor wants to encourage denser housing development to increase housing supply and attract businesses to the area.

See TAYLOR Page 7 →

# 2024 ELECTION PRIMARY RECAP

Since June, we've introduced you to a group of fresh new candidates who've stepped up to run, but our detailed coverage has been focused on races with a contested primary.

Several of these races will be decided in the primary, since a candidate hasn't filed for the seat from the opposing party. With that in mind, we made sure to get you information to help you make an informed primary decision.

One of those races, between **Sen. David Haley** and his opponent **Ephren Taylor III**, is featured on page 4 of this issue.

The rest of our coverage can be found on our website – [CommunityVoiceKS.com](https://CommunityVoiceKS.com), under election. Here's a brief recap. To read more visit our website – It's FREE!

## Revisit Our 2024 Primary Coverage

### Meet the 3 Challengers Against Marvin Robinson in KS House Race

Incumbent **Marvin Robinson** is being challenged by three Black female candidates for the Kansas House District 35 seat. At a forum put on by the Wyandotte County NAACP, the three candidates made their case on why they were best for the position, while Robinson was absent.

His opponents have criticized Robinson for voting with Republicans 40 times. He also faced criticism for being singularly focused on funding for the Quindaro Ruins and for voting against Medicaid expansion.

With no Republican running in the general election, the winner of the Aug. 6 Democratic primary will assume the seat. In our story – online now – you can read a brief overview of the challengers: **Kimberly DeWitt**, **Wanda Brownlee Paige** and **Michelle Watley**.



Robinson



Dewitt



Brownlee



Watley



Allison Williamson



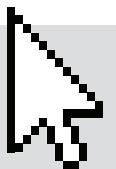
Jane Sieve Wilson

### WYCO Judge Race to be Decided in Primary

In the 29th District Court, Division 8 seat, two Democrats are facing off without a Republican contender for the November general election. In this race, incumbent **Jane Sieve Wilson** will face off against **Allison Williamson**.

This is a judicial seat that handles cases involving families trying to get custody for the children back from the Kansas Dept. of Children and Family Services. Many of them are lower income and minorities.

**ALSO ONLINE:**  
**Meet the Candidates:**  
Richard Brown for MO Lt. Governor  
Eric Morrison for MO Governor



### Jacqueline Kelly Pursues a Judicial Dream in Sedgwick County

This is the only primary race in Sedgwick County with an African-American candidate.

**Jacqueline Kelly** is pursuing a lifelong dream of being a judge. She'll face off against three opponents in the primary for district judge in the 18th Judicial District, Division 14:

They're all running as Republicans for the position of retiring Judge Patrick Walters. Yes, Kelly is a Republican and there is not a Democratic candidate for the seat, which isn't surprising since 100% of Sedgwick County judges are Republicans and running as

a Democrat for a Sedgwick County judicial seat is a formula for a loss.

Learn more about Kelly, her experience and her vision in our article online.



# More Voter Resources

As you get ready to vote in the August primary and as an update to the November general election here are some helpful resource

### KC Voters Guide 2024

<https://bit.ly/3Spdk1T>  
 Supplement the information provided by The Community Voice with this election guide prepared by the KC Media Collective in partnership with the Kansas City Star. It covers races in Missouri and Kansas races in Jackson, Johnson, Clay, Platte and Wyandotte counties.

### How to vote in Missouri

<https://bit.ly/3SmNzzq>  
 Missouri Secretary of State's website is a great resource. You can check your registration and see a sample ballot

### How to vote in Kansas

<https://bit.ly/4dfEosx>  
 On Kansas Secretary of State's website you can check your registration, see a sample ballot, and also find your voting site.

### How to register to vote in Missouri

<https://bit.ly/46B7G2R>  
 You can register online here

### How to register to vote in Kansas

<https://bit.ly/3LGnxmM>  
 You can register online here



## What's the Difference Between the Candidates for Jackson Co. Prosecutor?

Candidates Melesa Johnson and Stephanie Burton are two talented Black women vying against each other for the most important law enforcement position in Jackson County - that's the position of Jackson County prosecutor. Before you vote in this race, hear from both candidates in their own voice in these three-minute video clips from the Urban Summit candidates forum. It's their closing statements and they really summarize the positions and differences between the candidates.

**What's the Difference?**  
<https://bit.ly/4cRWXmH>



Candidate for Jackson County Prosecutor Stephanie Burton (forefront) responds to a question at the Urban Summit debate while candidate Melesa Johnson waits to respond. (Photo Bonita Gooch)

## CHECK THE FACTS: OUR LEADERS' LEGISLATIVE RECORD

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# Mosley, Hill & King Simms Face Tough Kansas Primaries

These ladies are running in districts seen as potential Democratic wins, but there's lots of competition.

**By Bonita Gooch**  
Editor-in-Chief

We featured 13 candidates of color running for office in our June 7 article "Kansas Candidates of Color Vying Beyond Traditional Districts." In our goal of highlighting the candidates in that group that had a primary, here are two more of those candidates: **Brooklynne Mosley**, **ShaMecha King Simms** and **Tonda Hill**.

Mosley is in one of those races where the primary will decide it all. In the primary, she'll face off against two other Democrats in the race for the Kansas House District 46 seat in Lawrence. In heavily

Democratic Lawrence, there is not a Republican candidate.

**Mosley**, a 10-year Air Force veteran who has worked as an organizer and campaign operative from local politics to the national level, finally decided to make her own run for office when long-time incumbent Dennis "Boo" Highberger decided not to seek reelection. She's running against **Brittany Kathleen Hall**, who serves as president of the Haskell Indian Nation University Board of Regents and works as a technical assistance research coordinator at the University of Kansas. Also in the race is Logan **Ginavan**, a lifelong Lawrence resident and recent KU graduate.

**King Simms** is running for Senate District 19, a newly drawn seat that stretches from Topeka to Lawrence. This is a district that's seen as one that Democrats can win, but there are three Democrats in the race and two Republicans.

King Simms is an educator who has served as president of her neighborhood association and as chair of the Topeka Citizen Advisory Council. Her Democratic opposition includes **Vic Miller**, who gave up his position as Kansas House Minority Leader to run for the Senate. The third candidate is **Patrick Schmidt**, who made an unsuccessful bid for Congressional District 2 in 2022.

**Hill**, a Lawrence resident who is currently serving as an assistant district attorney in Wyandotte County, is running as a Democrat for Douglas County district attorney. Two other Democrats are running for Douglas County prosecutor, **Dakota Loomis** and **Suzanne Valdez**. Loomis served as Baldwin City municipal judge for two years before recently becoming Baldwin city attorney. Valdez, who has held the DA position since 2021, underwent a disciplinary hearing late last year, resulting in a one-year censure. The winner of the primary will face off against Republican candidate Mike Warner.

Also pictured and featured



These four female candidates were guests at a political fundraiser sponsored by the Topeka Chapter of the Links at the home of Leslie Fleuranges earlier in the campaign cycle: (L-R) Stacey Knoell, Jessica "JP" Porter, ShaMecha King Simms and Brooklynne Mosley.

in our June 7 article were **Stacey Knoell** and **Jessica "JP" Porter**. Neither of them have a primary. **Knoell** is running for the Kansas Senate District 23 seat in Southern

Johnson County. **Porter** is running for the District 50 seat in the Kansas House. The district covers the northern edge of Topeka and a few rural communities.

**HALEY**, from Page 4 ↓

social, economic, and racial conditions."

On taxes, Haley said he would "continue to evaluate what options are on the table" to ease property tax, sales tax

and income tax burdens, with an emphasis on benefiting the people he represents. He noted his willingness to consider various tax proposals has drawn criticism from some, but he defends his analytical approach.

"If I'm re-elected, whatever

measures — no matter how popular or unpopular they might be — come before me for evaluation ... I'm going to consider them," says Haley. "I'm going to look critically and analytically at any measures that can make the quality of life better for the people I represent."

When asked why voters should support him, Haley pointed to what he calls the

"HALEY" acronym - Helpful Accessible Leadership Every Year. He says he will be just that for his voters.

"I have a good working relationship with the voters as an elected public servant," says Haley. "I also have a good track record to show who I'll continue to be if re-elected."

While welcoming a primary challenger, Haley suggests that his opponent needs more time

living in and experiencing the district.

"I'm not opposed to him or what he can represent," says Haley. "I think he needs more life experience and needs to pay taxes and to spend some more time not in the cocoon of suburbia but in the very urban district he wants to represent."

As he makes his case for another term, Haley is reflecting on his legislative legacy while

still looking ahead to future priorities. He maintains his commitment to independent analysis of issues facing his constituents and the state.

"Do we want representation that will just follow leadership loyally without asking critical questions," asked Haley, "or do we have independent evaluation based on an assessment of all of the district's needs before a vote is cast?"

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**TAYLOR**, from Page 4 ↓

Taylor pledges to be an "activist politician" who will keep voters informed and engaged in and out of the legislative session. He sees building community pressure as crucial to advancing progressive policies in a state legislature dominated by conservative politics.

"If you don't have community pressure, then anything you try to do is just gonna die in committee and nobody's ever gonna know about it," Taylor says. "We need to engage with our voters constantly because if you don't,

they're just gonna check out the system."

Taylor acknowledged that some may question his youth and experience. But he argued the district is ready for change after years of representation by his primary opponent, Sen. David Haley.

"I'm certainly running to the left of Haley," Taylor said. "I don't have to be that far left to be to the left of him, which is a little concerning."

Taylor says his work as a community organizer saw him interact with Haley, including a town hall where Haley was considering a flat tax. Taylor points to Haley's

flirtation with this tax and his votes on issues like school vouchers and a bill restricting local governments' regulatory powers as examples of the incumbent being out of step with the district.

Taylor feels the strongly Democratic district deserves different representation.

"Every community deserves real representation, people that will actually listen and advocate on their behalf," Taylor said. "With David Haley being there for so long and acting the way he does — not voting with his community — I think that I could do a better job."

Taylor says that his

advocacy work in Wyandotte County and speaking up on issues in Topeka, even at his young age, shows that he will boldly step up for Wyandotte residents. No matter the result of the election, he says he's eager to get to work on community initiatives. "People should vote for me if you're tired of getting literally nothing for your votes," says Taylor. "I'm someone who's going to come to your door, listen to your concerns, and keep you updated. There's a lot of work to be done here — it hasn't been getting done — I'm gonna do that work."

# Could This be the End of Wichita Junior League Football?

New Wichita Recreation & Public Schools partnership signals major changes to a beloved 60-year Wichita tradition.

By Bonita Gooch  
Editor-in-Chief

## Key Points:

- Partnership between Wichita Park and Recreation and Wichita Public Schools will transform Junior League Football.
- Starting in 2025, players will be assigned to teams based on high school attendance areas.
- Existing team organizations will be eliminated, and teams will be connected to area high schools.

There's probably not a longer-running or more beloved tradition in Wichita's African-American community than Junior League Football. It's an institution started by Alvin "Pappy" Allen in 1964 to give youth in the community an opportunity to play organized football.

No other community-based program has impacted more youth in Northeast Wichita. For some families, the impact is four generations deep, and the team loyalty is unbreakable. If your dad was a Bulldog, you're a Bulldog, and his dad was probably a Bulldog too.

Junior League Football is a family and community thing. Moms lend their support as "team mothers" or cheer coaches, the girls join in as cheerleaders, and the community shows up for socialization, support and often a fairly competitive game.

That culture will make a big shift because of a new partnership between the Wichita Park and Recreation Dept. and Wichita Public Schools. The partnership, announced earlier this month, has a two-year phased implementation plan beginning with the 2024 football season.

In the first year, the partnership moves junior league games from city fields to WPS turf fields.

It's the second-year reorganization plan that shakes things up with a shift from the current "strong-organization" structure.

Wichita, get ready because storied teams like the Colts, Cowboys and Bulldogs will be replaced with teams named and affiliated with each of Wichita's high schools.

## 2024 Season

Everyone we interviewed is excited about the



A new plan for Wichita's Junior League football, includes assigning players to teams based on WPS attendance areas, potentially ending the community-based structure.

plans for 2024.

After three years playing on modified soccer fields in South Wichita, decades of noticeable decline at Barry Sanders Field and unfulfilled promises for the fields and facilities at Glen Dye (formerly Grove) Park, the eight-game season will predominantly be held on WPS turf fields with Thursday night games still played at Barry Sanders Field.

According to Reggie Davidson, superintendent of recreation for the City of Wichita, the league will finally have "a true football environment."

Moving to WPS fields gives the league access to scoreboards and lights. Fans will have bleachers, which are positioned – to the joy of coaches – an adequate distance from the team.

Coach Ulysses "Pops" DeShazer, who's worked with the league for 33 years, is excited Wichita Junior League Football will finally play on fields similar to those suburban teams have had for years.

"We've been asking for this for a while," said DeShazer, who's pleased by this change. However,

he's not thrilled with some of the changes proposed for 2025.

## 2025 Season

In fall 2025, Wichita Park and Recreation will "transform" the Wichita Junior League Football program. Players will be assigned to teams based on where they live and how that team aligns with WPS high school attendance areas.

For seventh- and eighth-grade students, the league becomes a quasi-middle school sports league, with students playing at the middle school they attend.

The league will still be under the jurisdiction of Wichita Park and Recreation. WPS will provide mentors and tutors to support the player's academic success.

Another change: the middle school Junior League coaching staff will be paid versus using volunteers.

The focus on academics is similar to the WPS Middle School Challenge program that ran from 2017 to 2019, but didn't return after COVID.

With the league and teams' support, the successful Middle School Challenge program used participation in football as a "carrot" to improve players' academics, attendance and behavior in school. It's a level of accountability that's missing in the current league structure.

"They had to do well in school, keep their grades up, to be able to play," said Dr. William Polite, director of equity, diversity & accountability for WPS and founder of the Middle School Challenge Program. "That was my biggest thing. A kid could be the worst kid in the district and score five touchdowns and be the biggest hero."

Polite says this additional accountability supports gains beyond middle school with the program preparing students for the rigors of football and academics in high school and beyond.

"In high school, some of our best players don't even touch the field," says Polite. "They don't have the grades, they don't understand accountability, the parents don't understand accountability and they're playing catch up."

The new arrangement also helps level up WPS

with surrounding districts like Derby, Andover, Goddard and Maize that have structured and competitive middle school football programs.

In addition, Davidson says having players who have been playing together a couple of years in middle school then feeding into high schools will help strengthen Wichita City League teams. It's another advantage schools in neighboring communities have had.

### The End of a Tradition

Not only will seventh and eighth graders be assigned to teams based on WPS high school attendance areas. In 2025, the new plan calls for ALL Junior League players to be assigned that way, from first grade up.

Existing team organizations will no longer exist. Instead of the Colts, the Trojans, the Cowboys or any of the other six organizations, the teams will be connected to area high schools with all players living in the schools' designated attendance areas.

Coaches for the first- through sixth-grade teams will still be volunteers and existing coaches are encouraged to volunteer. However, volunteering within the new structure doesn't mean you can bring your team with you.

As an example, if you sign up to coach for a team that feeds into the East High feeder pattern, your team must be composed totally of students who live in East High's attendance area.

So, not only the organizations are gone, but so are their existing teams.

It's a whole new day and a whole new way.

Wichita District 1 Councilman Brandon Johnson says the new structure is modeled after successful programs across the country and will shift the focus from building strong organizations to building our youth.

"That's what Junior League Football is supposed to be about," says Johnson. "The focus overall will be to empower our children to be great athletes and great students as well."

Currently, he says, the focus is too much on winning. Organizations focus on building strong winning teams - and youth who may not be as great athletes, but show up and do the work, don't get an opportunity to play.

"Coaches need to coach," says Johnson. "They need to teach the fundamentals and help develop good athletes and not just focus on the stars."

Davidson says this is what he's hearing from parents.

"Parents wanted to make sure that kids had a good opportunity to play the sport, learn the sport, and be in an environment where it's conducive for them to do that," said Davidson. "This is what we're trying to do with this, create an environment that's going to help support the kids to be able to have a good experience moving forward."

### The Opposition

Initially, DeShazer says, the complete partnership plan for 2025 wasn't presented in the news.

"They just told us about the middle school



program and playing at the high school fields," he says.

Once coaches, families and players develop a full understanding of the plan, he expects an uproar.

"They're breaking up our community," says DeShazer. "You have grandpas and daddies and sons coaching in an organization; you got families in there. You're taking away family to strengthen the high schools. You're taking away the community, you're taking away tradition, but you still want us to work for it."

Larry Allen, a former Junior League coach whose father started the league 60 years ago and understands the entire 2025 plan, says, "The problem is they're trying to do this without working with us."

Both Allen and DeShazer are in agreement with the middle school league program but don't understand why changes in the first-through-sixth-graders' program has to include alignment with WPS attendance patterns and the elimination of the existing organizations.

"They say they're going to have mentors," says Allen. "But who are these mentors?"

Both feel strongly about having Black men involved with leading and mentoring young Black athletes, many of whom don't have a Black male role model in their lives.

"We're more than coaches," says Allen.

Johnson hopes great coaches from existing organizations will continue to be a part of the new program. However, Johnson, Allen and DeShazer agree, all current coaches aren't great role models.

"All of them aren't modeling great sportsmanship," says Johnson, who says he's seen coaches arguing, in fact fighting, with referees.

### Interim Year

The new structure and the elimination of the current strong organizational structure is a year out, which allows time for working out any kinks in the new programming, and for finding a way the existing program might be able to survive in the new structure.

Allen suggests some teams might walk away and begin their own league. Johnson and Davidson hope otherwise and that what's best for the kids will prevail.

Maybe, there's a meeting point, in the middle of the road, where everyone has a win.



## New 8-Field Junior League Football Complex Planned for Grove Park

Councilman Brandon Johnson hopes the \$20 million complex will be ready for the 2025 season.

**By Bonita Gooch**  
Editor-in-Chief

In a community where Junior League football is king, everyone is excited about plans for a new, state-of-the-art eight-field football complex in Northeast Wichita.

Renderings were recently released for the complex that includes seven full-size turf football fields, one 80-yard junior turf field, a restroom/concessions building, food truck parking, additional parking, and the addition of a playground and fitness equipment in Glen Dey (formerly Grove) Park.

Wichita District 1 City Councilman Brandon Johnson says an awards plaza is planned to recognize individuals who played in Wichita's Junior League and went on to big achievements in football.

"Like D'Angelo Evans," says Johnson. "He didn't go pro, but he made a big

impact in Nebraska."

In addition, the design includes a statue to be placed in the center of the park's existing roundabout.

Johnson wouldn't say who the statue will feature, but Wichitans may have a reasonable guess.

"It's going to be amazing," said Johnson about the new complex that he hopes will be completed in time for the 2025 football season.

Estimated costs for the complex is \$20 million. Johnson hopes to get support for using some city capital improvement funds for the project, but says the complex will be a public/private partnership with individuals and corporations contributing to the project.

The park, still referred to by the community as Grove Park, had been a favored location for Junior League football games, but for the past few three years play was held at South Lake Soccer Complex, at 47th

and Meridian in Southwest Wichita.

Recently, the Wichita Park and Recreation Dept. announced a partnership with Wichita Public Schools that will move Junior League play to WPS high school fields for the 2024 season.

Johnson says that move is an interim step to get the teams out of what he admits is an inferior situation.

South Lake wasn't designed for football and lacked score boards, goal posts, bleachers and appropriate fencing.

The new football complex is part of the city's plan to invest in and refocus junior league football, which has been met with some opposition.

Instead of a focus on winning and a strong team structure that has dominated the league for decades, the focus will be on teaching players the fundamentals of football, and on making great athletes and great students.

# Grants Help Fund 5 Early Learning Camps in 67214

In its second year, the summer learning program expands to five locations focusing on reading and math.

**By Bonita Gooch**  
Editor-in-Chief

Summer camp at The Center in Northeast Wichita doesn't start until 9 a.m., but by 8:45, the parking lot is full with parents and grandparents dropping off their children for a four-day camp

For families who often struggle to find affordable activities for their children in the summer, the camp is a God send.

Trish Saunders, a grandmother who brings her two grandchildren to the program, says she's glad the program is here.

"Last year, they spent the summer sitting around the housing playing on their computer and tablets," says Saunders. "This year, they're learning, going on field trips and completing their at-home reading assignments."

These are the children Wichita Collective Impact is designed to reach.

Research indicates that students can lose up to two months of reading and math skills if they are not actively learning over the summer.

This loss is more pronounced among students whose families may have less access to educational resources during the break.

Wichita Collective Impact, a three-year initiative funded through a \$2 million gift from Wichita-based Cargill Protein North America, is that resource for students in the 67214 ZIP code.

Their summer programs focus on helping kindergarten

to third graders stay on track.

This year, Wichita Collective Impact granted up to \$25,000 to five locations to operate four-week summer programs for first- to third-grade students. USD 259 runs its summer school program during June, and these programs operate in July to keep the learning going.

Last year, summer programs were offered by the YMCA at The Center, 1914 E. 11th St., Holy Savior Academy and St. Mark United Methodist Church. New this year are programs at Tabernacle Bible Church and a program at Calvary Baptist Church operated jointly by Women's Aspire and Read Bro.

Programming for the programs can be fun, creative and include field trips, but they must have an educational component that aligns with the Wichita Public Schools' strategic plan. At minimum, students must be tested before the program begins and at the end.

Tiffanie Irving, who heads up the program at Tabernacle, says her team is testing their "scholars" every week to see if they learned the skills for the week. If they didn't, the scholars are given extra one-on-one instruction on the concept the following week.

Irving says when she learned about the opportunity to be able to help students in the community, applying was a "no brainer."

"We have already decided it's our first year and it's not our only year," said Irving. "We've already seen in the short amount of time the impact we can make."

St. Mark has incorporated the program into its 20-year-old "Seeds of Life" summer program. While this program is not free, it runs five days instead of four, with longer



The 20-year-old Seeds of Life Summer Program at Saint Mark United Methodist Church, incorporates the Wichita Collective Impact Program into their regular five-day camp

hours, additional snacks and additional programming.

Gina Johnson, the program director, says they're using the grant funding to cover the cost of the instructional component and for additional

programming.

Most of the programs are using youth from the summer jobs program and seniors from the Foster Grandparents program to supplement their staffing.

Participants in the program must reside in the 67214 ZIP code. This ZIP code is the second-most impoverished in Kansas, with an average

adjusted gross income of \$27,906 in 2018. Almost 20% of households have an income below \$10,000 and 39.2% are not currently in the labor force.

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# How Can KCPS Regain the People's Trust?

By Joseph Nelson  
Guest Contributor

A dear friend asked me if the Kansas City Public Schools bond issue was going to fail as the KCKPS initiative did recently. He had watched the school board meeting the evening before and witnessed a somewhat heated exchange among board members and key KCPS staff.

## New Grading System Rollout

The heated exchange appears to have been about a new grading policy scheduled to go into effect this fall. Over a year, surveys had been shared on several occasions but only 250 responses were received from a district with 14,000 students.

District officials felt they

had checked the community engagement box and wanted to proceed with the new grading system, and the conversation got interesting.

## The Blueprint 2030 Fiasco

The staff, like they had in the past, explained the research, science and data supporting their decision. However, similar to Blueprint 2030, the community had not been engaged.

Is the district going to repeat the hard lessons of the 2022 public rollout of the Blueprint 2030 plan for school closings?

The public uproar was palpable and almost unanimous in their rejection of what was a well-thought-out plan. While not a perfect plan, the school district had taken a great amount of care

in their analysis.

The problem was, no amount of explaining mattered because the process was not in public view. So, when the plan rolled out, no matter how much sense it made, the people's trust had been betrayed once again.

Similarly, while a new grading system made sense to those in the room, the community would likely reject a change that had not been effectively communicated or explained in plain terms.

## What About the Bond Issue?

It appears several board members are concerned a similar pattern of engagement might negatively impact voting on the bond issue. If this pattern of



Joseph Nelson

engagement for the bond question is followed, it may not be asked at all for fear of controversy or, worse, rejection once again.

The bond initiative has had five steering committee meetings to date. These meetings have dismally low attendance, compared to the number of parents and community members that initially raised their hand to be included.

Despite these warning signs, a team of paid professional contractors continues to present data and analysis for reflection and feedback from the attendees. This is not a committee. It is another attempt to check a box to say we tried.

What some board members are saying is although they support the bond itself, they will not support a plan that has not appropriately and adequately involved the people of the district.



KCPS hopes to pass a bond issue, but with limited community engagement, will they struggle to get the community's buy-in?

## Is there still time to turn this around?

There most certainly is, but the clock is ticking. Public meetings must be posted to the public calendar, which is not always the

case. Recordings must be posted on time consistently.

Make no mistake, the expertise of the district staff is phenomenal. However, no number of collective degrees can mitigate a culture of ineffective communication.

## More Education Stories Online

Check out these recently posted education stories on our website [communityvoiceks.com](http://communityvoiceks.com)

### Missouri Uses Money, Laws to Push Evidence-Based Reading Instruction

*KCPS has embraced these new standards and Kansas recently passed a similar policy.*

### New \$2.5 Million Medicaid Grant Will Expand Mental Health Services in Kansas Schools

*Like occupational and speech therapy services, mental health services will be available for students as needed in Wichita public schools.*

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# Vigil Shines Light on Unsolved Homicides in KC

A sobering display: 700 flyers to honor victims.

By **Thomas White**  
Kansas City Reporter

A lawn in Independence, MO, was a sobering visual reminder of the lives lost to homicide in the Kansas City area that have gone unsolved.

The July 28 vigil displayed more than 700 flyers, each representing an unsolved homicide victim dating back to 1970. It is the 11th vigil put on by Corey's Network Inc., a group that helps surviving families of homicide.

"We want to raise awareness that there are this many unsolved homicides," says Corey's Network co-founder Robert Norris. "But primarily, we want to honor and recognize the families of those affected by these homicides."

A group of volunteers began setting up the display at Speaks Suburban Chapel, 18020 E. 39th St. S., Independence, MO, at 6:30 p.m. in the hours leading up to the vigil. They placed 700 flyers, each with a photo and information, on a bamboo stick across the funeral home's lawn.

"We want people to get a sense of the sheer number of unsolved homicides there are," says Norris. "We also want the affected families to see that they are not alone and for outsiders to realize that these people are hurting

because they don't have any answers or validation."

Families and community members were invited to walk through the display, locate their loved ones, read a flyer, and spend time in remembrance. The event also provided a platform for families to share their stories and the impact of their loss.

In addition to the flyer display, Corey's Network invited local groups to set up information tables. Organizations like Mothers in Charge, Circle of Hope, and AdHoc Group Against Crime were on hand to provide attendees with resources and information. Grandparents for Gun Safety handed out gun locks. The Who Dunit Sisters, a local true crime web series, shared their efforts to help locals raise awareness and potentially solve these homicides.

"We're trying to make sure that the community knows that there are programs and resources available if they want to participate in them," Norris said.

For those unable to attend in person, Corey's Network also conducted a virtual vigil. From July 26 to 29, they post a flyer of an unsolved homicide victim every 5 to 10 minutes across their social media platforms. If you want to see them, they're likely still available on their Facebook page.

The organization hopes that both the physical and virtual displays will help the community grasp the magnitude of unsolved homicides in the area. More importantly, they want to provide a sense of community for grieving families who often feel isolated in their pain.

## About Corey's Network Inc.

Founded by Robert and Michelle Norris following the 2013 stabbing death of their son, Corey Laykovich, Corey's Network has spent the last decade supporting families affected by homicide and raising awareness about unsolved cases in the community.

"When [Corey passed away] and we tried to get help, there was no one there to help us. We had to reach out to the community," Robert Norris explained. "So we do this to give back to the community."

The organization has assisted 600+ families in the past 10 years, providing both emotional support and practical assistance. Norris says they've donated more than \$100,000 to 400+ families for funeral costs alone.

Beyond the annual vigil, Corey's Network maintains a 24-hour hotline and posts daily remembrances on their social media platforms for victims on the anniversary of



More than 700 unsolved homicide victims will be commemorated in an upcoming vigil.

their deaths.

The organization also assists families in finding resources for utility and rental

assistance, grief counseling, and other needs. They encourage families to seek help and support from various

community organizations, recognizing that different groups may offer services that complement their own.

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# Feds Concerned By a Growing Number of Knock Off Food Items Containing Drugs

These items are legal, easily accessible to children and dangerous

By **Bonita Gooch**  
Voice Editor-in-Chief

With names like Trips Ahoy, Slizzles, and Cheetos Flamin' hot and similar packaging

designed to copy their non-intoxicating related product, no wonder the Federal Drug Administration and the Federal Trade Commission are issuing warnings to consumers and to

the companies that manufacture them.

This week, the FDA and the FTC issued warning letters to five companies for selling food items containing Delta-8 THC that mimic chips, candies and snacks from popular national brands.

Delta-8 THC (or delta-8 tetrahydrocannabinol) is a naturally occurring chemical compound, called a cannabinoid, that's found in traces in hemp and cannabis (marijuana) plants. Delta-8 produces a fuzzy, euphoric high that's said to be similar to that from marijuana, but milder.

However, the Delta-8 THC you can buy is made in labs with cannabidiol (CBD) from hemp plants along with several

chemicals. It's much more potent than the delta-8 found in nature.

In both Missouri and Kansas, you can legally buy products like gummies, vapes, cartridges, and snacks. The popularity of products that contain delta-8 is on the rise, and you can find them everywhere, from boutique weed dispensaries to convenience store shelves.

Copycat food products containing delta-8 THC are particularly concerning to the FDA as they are extremely easy to purchase and are often available to youth. In addition, packaging that is almost indistinguishable from many popular snacks can be confusing for consumers.

Several of the companies

warned today illegally sell copycat food products containing delta-8 THC, including chips, cookies, gummies or other snacks that mimic well-known snack food brands by using similar brand names, logos, or pictures on packaging that consumers, especially children, may confuse with traditional foods.

"Companies that market and sell edible THC products that are easily mistaken for snacks and candy are not only acting illegally, but they are also putting the health of young children at risk," said Samuel Levine, director of the FTC's Bureau of Consumer Protection. "Those that prioritize profits in front of children's safety are at serious risk of legal action."



Mary Jane's Bakery Co. LLC  
Infused Sour Slizzles




Mary Jane's Bakery Co. LLC  
Infused Sour Slizzles

From Jan. 1, 2021, to Dec. 31, 2023, the FDA received over 300 adverse event reports involving children and adults who consumed delta-8 THC products. Nearly half of these reports involved hospitalization or emergency department visits, and approximately two-thirds of these adverse events followed ingestion of delta-8 THC-containing food products such as candy or brownies. Adverse events included, but were not limited to, hallucinations, vomiting, tremor, anxiety, dizziness, confusion, and loss of consciousness.

The FDA is also concerned about the processes used to synthesize delta-8 THC, as impurities or variations in the composition process can result in products that may be harmful or have unpredictable effects on consumers.

The FDA and FTC warning letters were issued to: Hippy Mood, Earthly Hemps, Shamrockshrooms.com, Mary Janes Bakery Co. LLC and Life Leaf Medical CBD Center.



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Chester Owens holds a commemorative Chester and Lillie Owens street sign with Kansas City, KS Mayor Tyrone Garner, at the ceremony unveiling the official street sign on Fri., July 19.

# KCK Renames Street After Area Civil Rights Pioneers

A portion of 12th Street is renamed 'Chester & Lillie Owens Lane.'

**By Thomas White**  
Kansas City Reporter

A stretch of 12th Street in Kansas City, KS, between Washington Boulevard and Everett Avenue has been renamed "Chester & Lillie Owens Lane" in honor of the longtime community advocates and area civil rights pioneers.

"We are blessed to celebrate these true champions for unity, opportunity, hope, justice, and equity right here in Kansas City, KS," said Mayor Tyrone Garner. "They impacted and touched people in ways they probably don't even know; they deserve that street."

Chester Owens, 92, and his late wife, Lillie, devoted decades to civil rights advocacy and community service in Wyandotte County. The couple was active in the local NAACP and instrumental in bringing Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. to speak in KCK.

"I'm grateful and indebted," says Chester Owens. "It's quite an honor for both of us; we both did the best we could to serve the community."

Owens recalled that KCK "was as segregated as Birmingham, Alabama" when he and Lillie began their civil rights work in the late 1950s and '60s. They participated in lunch counter protests, picketing businesses that refused to hire Black workers, and efforts to desegregate local schools.

"I would hope that people know some of the things that we attempted to do," he said. "That's

a legacy that we want to be remembered by."

Chester Owens worked for H.W. Sewings' Sentinel Loan and Investment Company for 17 years before buying it and running the company for 25 years. In 1983, Owens became the first African American elected to the KCK City Council in the 20th century and served for several terms.

Lillie Owens blazed her own trail in the business world, rising through the ranks at American Woodmen Life Insurance Company to eventually become its president.

During the community celebration and street sign unveiling, area officials, neighbors, and admirers gathered to pay their respects for the decades of service by Chester and Lillie Owens.

"Words can not describe your contributions," said Kansas state Rep. Valdenia Winn. "Every day when we see your street sign, we'll salute you."

Chester Owens, also a respected area historian, took the opportunity to advocate even on the day he was honored. He challenged the elected officials in the room to commemorate locals Eva Belle and Mary Etta Fine for their 1950s-era accomplishments in tennis before desegregation. He also challenged them to rename KCK's Parkwood Pool after those who advocated for its opening.

"Things don't just happen," Owens said, with a pause before adding, "but they do happen just."



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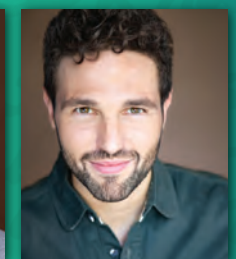
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**Wed., July 31, 9 am: Bud Palmer Warehouse Cleanup Auction.** Bud Palmer Auction, 101 W 29th St. For sale, windows – doors – floor machine, damaged freight, restaurant equipment, and much more. Terms: Cash, Visa, Mastercard, Discover for balance. NO CHECKS. 10% Buyer's Premium

**Wed., July 31, 10 am: Senior Wednesday - Negro Leagues** author Phil S Dixon speaks. TKAAM, 601 N. Water. Event supported by Humanities Kansas and the National Baseball Congress World Series. **FREE**

**July 31 thru Aug. 2, 6 - 8:30 pm: Vacation Bible School: Twists & Turns.** St. Mark UMC, 1018 N. Dellrose. Join the St. Mark Cathedral children and youth departments for an explosive, engaging Vacation Bible School experience. Games, drill teams, music, learning, laughs and lots of fun are included for each participant as well as nightly meals. **FREE**

**Thu., Aug. 1, 6 pm: NBC World Series Little League Night,** Eck Stadium, WSU campus. Anyone wearing a Y sports

jersey will receive a **FREE** upper general admission ticket at the Eck Stadium box office. Enjoy the game, sports card show on the concourse, kid-focused activities, autograph sessions with the NBC teams and pre-game recognition on the field for those in uniform.

**Fri., Aug. 2, 3 - 7 pm: Butler Community College Enrollment Event.** Butler Service Center, 2626 S. Rock Rd. #116. Admissions, academic advising, and financial aid reps will be available. Need placement testing? Come in for **FREE** testing 1 - 4pm.

**Sat., Aug. 3, 10 am - 3 pm: Health and Wellness Fair,** The Center, 1914 E. 11th St. N. Wellness across generations, empowering families together. Workshops, vendors, health screenings, chat with the candidates, prizes, food, music, backpack and supply giveaway. Lady Burritos will be a vendor. **FREE**

**Sat., Aug. 3, 9:45 pm: Body Shop Fireworks at Automobilia,** Downtown Wichita. Fireworks at the BEST car show in Wichita, what's better than a car show and firework display put on by the pros over at

Victory Pyrotechnics on a summer night. **FREE**

**Sat., Aug. 3, 12:30 - 2:30 pm: Summer Social with the League of Women Voters** Wichita Metro, White Crow Cider Company, 1206 E. Waterman. Join us for a League social event. We will supply lunch, while beverages can be bought at the venue. Games such as UNO, IconicWomen, and more will be provided, along with a door prize. RSVP at <https://bit.ly/LWVSummerSocial>. **FREE**

**Sun, Aug 4, 4:30 - 10 pm: Peace and Unity,** Sundays in the Park. Central Riverside Park, 720 N. Nims. Music and family fun. **FREE**

**Sun., Aug. 4, 11 am: St. Paul AME YPD Reunion,** St. Paul AME Church, 1756 N. Piatt. This special event is a call for all former and current YPD'ers to come together for a joyous celebration. Let's reunite and share the love and fellowship that has always been the heart of our community. **FREE**

**Tue., Aug. 6, 11:15 am: August WIBA Women's Luncheon,** Petroleum Club, 100 N. Broadway. Join us as we hear from Jacqueline "Jaci" Kelly. COST

\$25+ <https://bit.ly/4bXGYCt>

**Fri., Aug. 9, 9 am - 3 pm: HealthCore Mobile Mammography,** HealthCore, 2707 E. 21st St. N. You must schedule an appointment. Contact your host site organizer or Samantha Reno, [samantha.reno@ascension.org](mailto:samantha.reno@ascension.org), to schedule. Women over 40 are eligible for screening if it has been at least 12 months since your last mammogram. Insurance will be filed for you.

**KANSAS CITY**

**Sun, July 28, 2 pm: 6th Annual Kansas City People's Choice Awards,** Arvest Bank Theater, 1228 Main St. This annual ceremony recognizes & honors excellence. Dress Code Enforced. With performances by: KC Young Boss, Miss Kush, Yocelyn Ali, Malik Williamson, Dr. Tiff Sings & The Band, Rosae Michelle, JJTHRULA, Roblo Da Star, Rob Ruckus, & Ashley Brewer. Cost \$20+ <https://bit.ly/4bwUXPh>

**Thu., Aug. 1, 5 pm: Swope Health Equity 2024 Town Hall,** KC Public Library Plaza, 4801 N. Main. Jeron Ravin, JD, president and CEO of Swope Health, will guide the conversation, featuring panelists Steven Anthony, vice president of business development, Economic Development Corporation of KC; Terrell Jolly, managing partner and senior agent, Integrity Capital Management; Pat Jordan, president, Pat Jordan and Associates; Jennifer Tidwell, principal

impact strategist – Place, Health Forward Foundation; and Blaine Proctor, director of housing and community development, City of KCMO. **FREE**

**Fri., Aug. 2, 10 am: Jazz Storytelling,** American Jazz Museum Atrium, 1616 E. 18th St. Jazz Storytelling is a free, family-friendly, interactive show taking place behind the museum, introducing kids to the magic of jazz. Jazz Storytelling is led by vocalist Lisa Henry, storyteller Brother John, drummer Mike Warren, and bassist Tyrone Clark. **FREE**

**Fri., Aug. 2, 6 pm: First Friday Block Party,** The Velvet Freeze Daiquiris, 1827 Vine St. Block party on 18th and Vine. COST \$5+

**Sat., Aug. 3, 11 am - 2 pm: 5th Annual Operation Backpack,** Swope Park, 67th & Swope Pkwy. Back to school supplies and food give-aways. Computers, tablets, hot spots, books, food boxes, feminine products, immunizations, COVID vaccines and more.

**Sat., Aug. 3, 10 am - 1pm: A Safe & Healthy Community SKC Resource,** Optimist Bingo Hall, 11154 Blue Ridge Blvd. Resources for safety & security, health & wellness, education & employment; something for everybody. **FREE**

**Sat., Aug. 3, 8 am - 4 pm: 2024 Heart of America Hot Dog Festival,** Negro Leagues Baseball Museum, Historic 18th & Vine Jazz District. Don't miss a sizzling musical lineup featuring live

band concert performances by Stokely, Midnight Star, Jonathan Butler, Dazz Band, Brownstone and more. COST \$35+ <https://bit.ly/3YiS0yW>

**Sat., Aug. 3, 12 - 8 pm: 2024 KC Brew Fest,** Union Station, 30 W. Pershing. Over 50 breweries, 150 beers, food trucks, and much more. COST \$50+ <https://bit.ly/3VNPWx9>

**Sun., Aug. 4, 11 am - 4 pm: The Rhythm & Praise Brunch,** Soiree, 1512 E. 18th. Food, bottomless mimosas, and a vibe you don't want to miss. This is not your ordinary brunch; we will be throwing up our praises and also vibing and 2-stepping to R&B while sipping mimosas and eating. COST \$10 advance. <https://RNPBrunch.eventbrite.com>

**Fri., Aug. 9, 5 pm: J Love Band,** Blue Room, 1600 E. 18th St. J Love has become one of leading soul vocalists in the Kansas City area. Her voice could only be described as earthy and confident. **FREE**

**Fri., Aug. 9, 8:30 pm: "Forever, For Always, For Love: Ultimate Tribute to Luther Vandross,"** Just Off Broadway Theatre, 3051 Wyandotte. Marlin Cortez & Carlton Rashad will join for an amazing night honoring one of soul music's most influential balladeers. COST \$35 <https://bit.ly/3LCSLoB>

**BID SOLICITATION NOTICE TO ALL CERTIFIED KCMO MBE/WBE MEMBERS FOR THE CORE II APARTMENTS**

Neighbors Construction Company, Inc. is seeking subcontractor proposals from all subcontractors, including qualified MBE/WBE subcontractors who are in current good standing with Port KC, The City of Kansas City, MO, and The State of Missouri Office of Equal Opportunity, for the construction of the new CORE II Apartments.

This project will consist of the new construction of (154) apartment units, including an integral clubhouse, a first-floor parking garage, and a warm white shell retail space.

All bid documents, including the bid invitation and the bid form, can be found at the following link:  
<https://www.bidplanroom.com/clientapp/project.php?id=MTMyNTc=&k=s985b-pae8f>

Please call or email any questions to the NCCI Office at the following email address:  
[nccibids@neighborsconstruction.com](mailto:nccibids@neighborsconstruction.com)  
 Phone: (913) 422-5555

**NOTICE OF PUBLICATION**  
 IN THE EIGHTEENTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT  
 DISTRICT COURT, SEDGWICK COUNTY, KANSAS  
 IN THE MATTER OF THE MARRIAGE OF  
 Carissa Elizabeth Boyd (Petitioner)  
 and  
 Rico Teron Boyd (Respondent)

**Case No. 23DM4158**  
 PURSUANT TO CHAPTER 23 OF KANSAS STATUTES  
 ANNOTATED NOTICE OF SUIT THE STATE OF KANSAS TO:  
 YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED that a petition has been filed in the District Court of Sedgwick County, Kansas by Petitioner, praying for an absolute decree of divorce, and you are hereby required to plead to such petition on or before the 12th day of July, 2024, in said court at Wichita, Sedgwick County, Kansas. Should you fail therein, judgment and decree will be entered in due course upon said petition.

Carissa Elizabeth Bilson  
 Petitioner

**Read Our Calendar Online**  
 You can now read out calendar online a number of different ways. The calendar is featured as Out and About in Kansas City on the Kansas City News page and as Out and about in Wichita on our Wichita news page.  
 A link to the out and about pages is in our Monday Kansas City and Wichita newsletters and in our FridayTop Five newsletters. Sign up for either of these newsletter and the updated calendar will be in your inbox.  
 We're telling you this, because effective Sept. 1, the calendar will no longer be featured in our print edition.



# Igniting potential. *Driving progress.*

“We are committed to Kansas City and its growth and recognition as a city of innovation, collaboration, and connectivity.”

– Dr. DeAngela Burns-Wallace  
*President and CEO, Kauffman Foundation*

Together with our community, the Kauffman Foundation is committed to help position Kansas City as a national model for equitable economic mobility.

Mr. Kauffman’s core values remain at the heart of our mission, shaping our approach to increasing college access and completion, strengthening workforce opportunities, and improving access to business ownership.

Learn more about the  
Foundation’s strategic refresh at  
[Kauffman.org/our-strategy](https://www.kauffman.org/our-strategy)

