

THE VOICE

A Trusted Voice From The Community's Perspective



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THE VOICE

VOLUME 33, NUMBER 19
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MORE WAYS TO CONNECT

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Jazz, Barbecue and Baseball: Kansas City's Story Comes Together at 18th and Vine

Kemet Coleman's recent commentary in Kansas City's online Startland News gave me something to think about. The musician and Vine Street Brewing co-founder acknowledged that his determination to put jazz at the center of Kansas City's identity had left him underestimating sports.

"I understand his reluctance. I'm similarly reluctant."

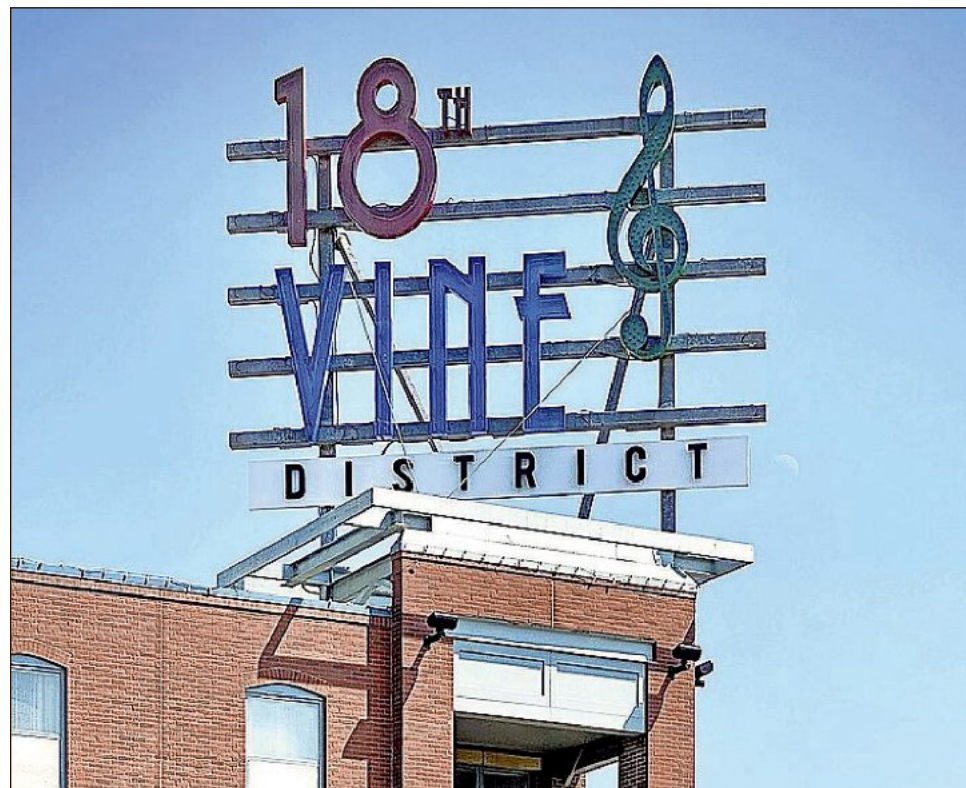
Jazz remains underplayed in Kansas City, considering this city's contributions to the genre. The city and its visitors bureau should do more to promote it.

I don't have the latest official visitors guide in front of me. But in the last edition I saw, its jazz promotion amounted to a photo of vocalist Eboni Fondren and a short headline identifying her and her genre. I found no broader telling of Kansas City's jazz history.

How do we expect visitors to appreciate that heritage if we don't appear to appreciate it ourselves?

My late friend Anita Dixon-Brown, who helped secure Kansas City's UNESCO City of Music, rooted in its jazz heritage" Music designation, preached this message for years. She saw how our jazz legacy could create opportunities for musicians and strengthen the local economy. Think Nashville and country music, Detroit and R&B.

I'm not ready to give up jazz as Kansas City's calling



card. But I may buy into Coleman's argument for presenting 18th and Vine as an entire package.

The American Jazz Museum, Blue Room and Mutual Musicians Foundation tell—and keep alive—the story of music that helped shape the world.

Nearby on Brooklyn Avenue, the Kansas City Monarchs played at what became Municipal Stadium. Satchel Paige, Buck O'Neil and Jackie Robinson are part of that history, preserved at the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum.

Then there's barbecue. Coleman points to Arthur

Bryant's, whose Brooklyn Avenue restaurant became a destination for ballplayers and fans. Gates belongs here, too. George and Arzelia Gates started their business at 19th and Vine in 1946.

Imagine inviting visitors to explore Negro Leagues baseball, enjoy barbecue and finish with live jazz—with coordinated programming that explains how those experiences connect. Yes, there's been a major increase in investment in the 18th and Vine district and in the district's musicians, businesses, museums and historic places. But its rich offerings and history

deserve stronger promotion. Building the district also means building awareness of what happened here—and what visitors can experience today.

Consider Tulsa's Black Wall Street. People who knew little about it a decade ago now want to visit and learn more. I want that same curiosity about 18th and Vine. Creating it takes sustained pride and commitment -- yes financial -- to promote the full legacy.

Let's put jazz, barbecue and baseball together—and put the Black community that connected them at the center of the story.

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VOTE NO NOV 3RD ON WICHITA SCHOOL BONDS

Pay Now, Plan Later?

The district wants us to pass their bond without a plan for **Adams Elementary** or **Claude Lambe**



Claude Lambe Park, near Adams Elementary.

Source: "What could go on Wichita schools land traded for city parks?" The Wichita Eagle, September 13, 2026.

Still Unanswered

- Only a tentative plan has gone to Wichita's park board to draft a memorandum of understanding.
- The City Council and the School Board would negotiate the fate of the park **after we vote**.

A \$615 million ballot question is not the place to begin a conversation about our park.

NO BENEFIT FOR OUR STUDENTS OR NEIGHBORHOODS

If the bonds pass, the WPS plans to **close** L'Ouverture and **take over** Claude Lambe Park which is precious Green Space for this neighborhood. More of our kids will be bussed around town.

Plus, property **taxes will go up** for the next 20 years.

Not only do we lose park space *and* another neighborhood school, but a newly built Adams Elementary would **increase traffic congestion** and mean more **students per teacher**.

67214: THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTS

NEW SCHOOLS HAVEN'T IMPROVED LEARNING

The **\$370 million** bond of 2008 built four new elementary schools.

Just **13.3%** of the students attending the new Mueller and Gordon Parks schools are proficient in math, reading and science.

Only **17.1%** of Wichita students are proficient compared to the state average of **32.4%**.

Wichita's test scores are down significantly since the 2008 construction projects- well below peers in neighboring districts.

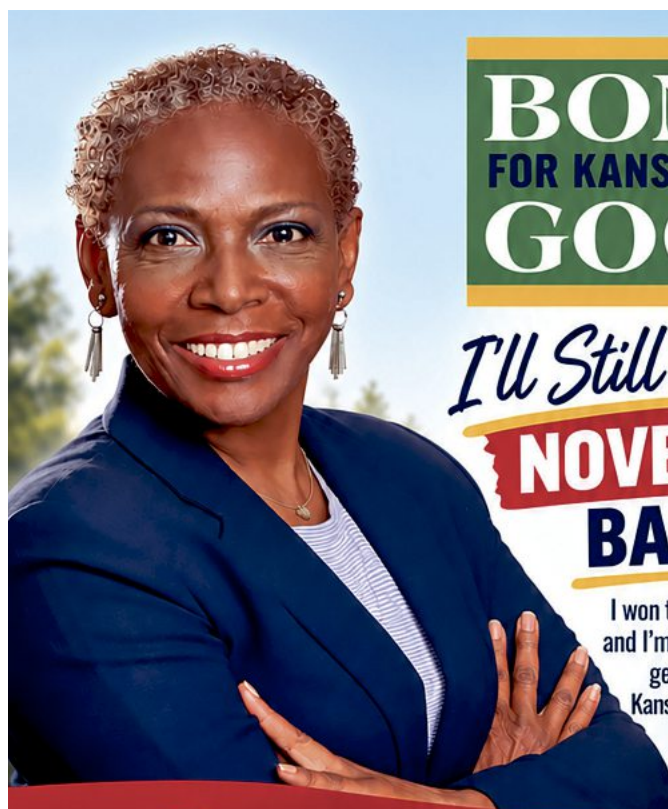
**VOTE NO ON BONDS
NOVEMBER 3RD**

For more information, go to
ImproveLearningFirst.com

Paid for by the Improve Learning First Coalition. Walt Chappell, Treasurer.

Tuesday, November 3rd, 2026

Advance ballots go out by mail starting **October 14**; in-person advance voting opens later in October. See **sedgwickcounty.org/elections**.



**BONITA
FOR KANSAS HOUSE 84
GOOCH**

I'll Still Be on Your
**NOVEMBER 3
BALLOT!**

I won the August primary
and I'm on the November 3
general ballot for
Kansas House District 84.

Thank You
**FOR YOUR SUPPORT
IN THE PRIMARY!**

Please help get more
Democrats in the
legislature and in
**Kansas leadership
roles.**



**THE DIFFERENCE IN HOW DEMOCRATS
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YOU, YOUR FAMILY &
YOUR FRIENDS VOTING.**



*I Want to
Hear From You!*

Before I go to Topeka, what issues
matter most to you? Come share
your ideas, concerns and priorities.

**COMMUNITY
LISTENING SESSION**



Tues., Oct. 27
6 – 7:30 p.m.



Carl Brewer Center
1329 E. 16th St.
McAdams Park, Wichita



bonitaforkansas.com



[bonitagoochforkansas](https://www.facebook.com/bonitagoochforkansas)

Paid for by Bonita for Kansas, Jim Coleman, Treasurer.

HBCUs are Underfunded

A Legal Effort Starting In Missouri Seeks to Fix it

The 1890 Project takes aim at funding disparities at land-grant HBCUs, beginning with a lawsuit alleging Missouri shortchanged Lincoln University by \$361 million.

By Associated Press

An effort to address decades of underfunding at historically Black land-grant universities began Wednesday with a lawsuit against Missouri, the first target of a newly formed group called the 1890 Project.

Students and graduates of Lincoln University in Jefferson City allege inadequate funding undercut their education and devalued their degrees. More than a dozen other states could face similar challenges.

"It is very unfortunate that we still live in a climate where, depending on the color of one's skin, one gets precedence over the other," said plaintiff Jeanneth Johnson, a Lincoln graduate.

The University of Missouri system and the governor's office said they couldn't comment on pending litigation.

Decades of funding disparities

In 2023, the Biden administration found historically Black land-grant universities in 16 states had missed out on \$12.6 billion in funding over three decades. It urged governors to increase spending.

The disparities trace back to the nation's land-grant system. The Morrill Act of 1862 gave states public lands to help finance colleges teaching practical subjects such as agriculture and engineering.

An 1890 update required



Lincoln University in Jefferson City is the first focus of the 1890 Project's broader fight for equitable funding at historically Black land-grant universities.

states to open their land-grant institutions to students of all races or establish separate schools for Black students.

Missouri chose to keep the University of Missouri segregated and designated Lincoln Institute as its Black land-grant institution. Black Union soldiers had founded Lincoln after the Civil War by pooling their military wages.

The 1890 land-grant system now includes 19 historically Black universities, including Tuskegee, its only private institution.

The 2023 federal analysis found only Delaware and Ohio funded their historically Black and traditional land-grant institutions equitably.

The issue is not whether Lincoln receives the same total funding as the much larger University of Missouri, but whether it receives equitable state support relative to its enrollment. The lawsuit cites a federal analysis estimating that Lincoln received \$361 million less from Missouri than it would have received with comparable per-student funding from 1987 through 2020.

"We're not saying they should be funded equally, but they should be funded on parity," said Don Calloway, a former Missouri lawmaker who leads the 1890 Project.

Calloway also blames deferred maintenance for some of Lincoln's enrollment struggles. Enrollment has fallen to

about 2,200 students, down from approximately 3,400 in 2011.

A fight beyond Missouri

Calloway said he is talking with attorneys general in Virginia, Arkansas, Maryland, North Carolina, Alabama and Georgia.

Earlier HBCU lawsuits generally addressed broader funding disparities between historically Black and other institutions. One Maryland case led to a \$577 million settlement. The 1890 Project focuses specifically on historically Black land-grant schools.

"We expect to negotiate and/or litigate in multiple jurisdictions over the next year," Calloway said. "Missouri is the first."

For plaintiff Herbert Kitchen, the fight is personal. His great-great-grandfather, Caleb Lindsey, was among the soldiers whose wages helped establish Lincoln.

Kitchen recalled his residence hall frequently lacked heat and hot water during the 1980s. Rumors circulated that Lincoln might close, and some employers regarded his degree as "second rate."

Now a retired California community college administrator, Kitchen is fighting for a university generations of his family attended.

"I am," he said, "the hope and dream that my great-grandfather had when he was a slave."

People on the Move



Joshua

Joshua New President at Holy Rosary Credit Union

Marquita Joshua is the new president of Holy Rosary Credit Union. Joshua succeeds President and CEO Carole Wight, who spent 18 years at the Kansas City-based credit union, according to a release.

Before stepping up, Joshua served as the current board treasurer for Holy Rosary. A

CPA, she worked in accounting for a Fortune 500 company until 2005, when she started Five Star Tax & Business Solutions.

The credit union was founded in 1943, is certified as a Community Development Financial Institution and has almost 7,000 members, about 90% of its members come from underserved communities.

Last year the credit union invested \$1.49 million in low-income small businesses and \$8.3 million in new loans, with 96% going to underserved families and neighborhoods.

Holy Rosary has four locations in the KC metro and St. Joseph. The U.S. Treasury has rated the credit union as a top 25 financial institution for serving low-income clients.

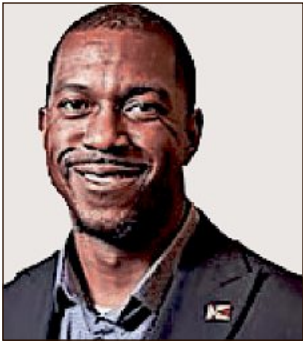


Sinks

Sinks Appoint ED of Marketing and Communications

Kiona Sinks has a new role as Executive Director of Marketing and Communications at Metropolitan Community College, Kansas City. Her prior professional experience includes five years as the Director of Marketing and community engagement at the Negro League

Baseball Museum and most recently a year as the Director of Marketing and Communications at the Kansas City Area Transit Authority. Sinks holds an MBA from UMKC's Henry W. Bloch School of Management and an undergraduate degree from Central Methodist University. Active in civic engagement, she serves on the Heartland Black Chamber of Commerce board and chairs its marketing committee. Her decade of volunteer service reflects a commitment to connecting people across generations and professions and encouraging the next generation of community leaders.



Johnson

Brandon Johnson Joins Meritrust Credit Union

Former Wichita City Council member Brandon Johnson has joined Meritrust Credit Union as a business development officer in Wichita, continuing a career rooted in community connections.

Johnson represented District 1 in northeast Wichita from 2018 until January 2026. Among his accomplishments was helping

deliver the expanded Carl Brewer Community Center as a community gathering place.

His professional background includes career coaching and business services at Workforce Alliance, youth development and employment programs, and football coaching at Friends University.

For more than a decade, Johnson has led CORE, the nonprofit that sponsors Wichita's three-day Juneteenth celebration.

He also served two years as vice president of the Kansas Democratic Party. Although term limits ended his council service, supporters believe his political career may have another chapter.

SENIOR CONNECT

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Attorney Olivia Dempsey Martin Pringle
Attorneys at Law

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Monday, October 26



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Wichita



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One-hour workshops: 10 a.m. and 11 a.m.
Ends at noon.

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or communityvoiceks.com — click on More.

Claim Your Child's Trump Account— *and Understand the Rules*

Automatic enrollment opens the door to long-term investing, but parents still must claim accounts, request eligible federal money and understand withdrawal restrictions.

By Voice News Service

Your child may already have a Trump Account waiting to be claimed. Treasury announced Oct. 1 that eligible children under 18 with valid Social Security numbers had been automatically enrolled. Nearly 70 million accounts now exist, according to the White House. The accounts give families an opportunity to start investing for their children's future. But having an account does not necessarily mean your child has money in it.

Who gets money?

U.S. citizens born Jan. 1, 2025, through Dec. 31, 2028, qualify for a one-time **\$1,000 federal contribution**. An authorized adult must request that contribution; automatic enrollment alone does not trigger the payment. Other children may qualify for contributions from philanthropists, nonprofits or participating donors. Eligibility can depend on age, location or other criteria. For example, Michael and Susan Dell committed \$6.25 billion to provide **\$250**

deposits for 25 million children born between 2016 and 2024, with recipients selected largely using ZIP-code income data. Not every child qualifies. Qualifying charitable contributions can reach automatically established accounts even before parents claim them. Those funds remain invested for the child. An account without federal, donor or family contributions, however, has nothing to grow. **How to claim the account** Start at **TrumpAccounts.gov** and follow the links to the official Trump Accounts app for iPhone or Android. Parents or guardians must verify their identity and relationship to the child, review

the child's information, accept the account terms and complete the activation instructions. Request the \$1,000 contribution if eligible. Claiming also allows family members, friends and employers to contribute. **Where is the money invested?** The accounts initially are established through Treasury's program, with cash contributions automatically invested in a low-cost fund that tracks the **S&P 500—a collection of about 500 major U.S. companies**. Parents do not need to pick individual stocks or manage daily trades. Treasury has announced additional



Even \$25 a month could help build a child's financial future. Trump Accounts give families a way to start investing early, with a \$1,000 federal deposit available for qualifying children. Here's how to claim an account—and what to know before contributing. approved index funds, but investment choices during childhood remain limited. Certain philanthropic gifts also may include individual company shares. Families can transfer the full account directly to another financial institution that offers Trump Accounts, following the program's transfer rules. Moving it does not remove the investment or withdrawal restrictions. For families, the approach requires relatively little day-to-day attention: Claim the account, check it periodically and contribute when affordable. The money remains invested, although its value can rise or fall with the stock market. See **TRUMP ACCOUNT** Page **13** →

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MEDICARE AND ACA ENROLLMENT NEARS Review Your Coverage

It's that time of year again. Health insurance enrollment season is approaching, making this a good time to check whether your coverage still meets your needs.

Medicare open enrollment runs Oct. 15–Dec. 7, 2026. Beneficiaries can change Medicare Advantage or prescription drug plans, with changes effective Jan. 1.

Affordable Care Act Marketplace enrollment runs Nov. 1, 2026–Jan. 15, 2027, in Kansas and Missouri. Enroll by Dec. 15 for coverage beginning Jan. 1; later enrollment starts

Often called “Obamacare”—a nickname first used by critics—the Affordable Care Act continues to help millions of Americans get health insurance. Open enrollment begins Nov. 1, making this a good time to review your coverage and compare plans.



coverage Feb. 1. For both programs, compare next year's premiums, deductibles, copays, prescription coverage and doctor networks against your expected needs. Don't assume your current plan's costs and benefits will stay the same.

Democrats in both chambers support restoring expired enhanced ACA subsidies—an issue voters concerned about insurance costs can weigh in November by supporting candidates who support returning the extended subsidies. The house eventually passed the extension of the enhanced subsidies but it never passed the senate. It would take a change in the senate majority to most likely the extensions reinstated.

Compare plans at [Medicare.gov](https://www.Medicare.gov) or [HealthCare.gov](https://www.HealthCare.gov).

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Compare plans at [Medicare.gov](https://www.Medicare.gov) or [HealthCare.gov](https://www.HealthCare.gov).

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Doctors warn that sports associations can make Energy drinks seem safer, despite their risks for children and teens. *AI-GENERATED ILLUSTRATION*

Sports Connections Can Make Energy Drinks Seem Safer

Sports partnerships are raising concerns as young people consume highly caffeinated drinks that can pose serious health risks.

By Voice Health News

Energy drinks are becoming part of many young people's daily routines, even as doctors warn that consuming too much caffeine—especially in a short period—can cause dangerous heart rhythms and, in rare cases, death.

Monitoring the Future survey results cited by The Associated Press found that 23% of 12th graders, 20% of 10th graders and 18% of eighth graders reported drinking energy drinks daily.

Meanwhile, the beverages are gaining visibility through sports partnerships, including Monster Energy's expanding relationship with the Big 12 Conference, home to the University of Kansas and Kansas State University.

The agreement puts Monster branding alongside college football and basketball. A coalition of doctors has asked conference leaders to pause the sponsorship, warning that associations with admired athletes and universities could give young fans a misleading sense of safety.

Stimulation isn't hydration

Traditional sports drinks such as Gatorade can help athletes replace fluids and electrolytes lost through sweating during prolonged, vigorous exercise. Their carbohydrates can also help fuel continued activity, although water is generally enough for routine exercise.

Energy drinks are marketed primarily to increase energy and alertness. Their stimulating effects largely come from caffeine. They should not be treated as substitutes for sports hydration drinks.

Depending on the product and serving size, an energy drink can contain roughly 80 to 300 milligrams of caffeine. A typical 8-ounce coffee contains about 80 to 100 milligrams.

The American Academy of Pediatrics advises children and teens to avoid energy drinks.

Back-to-back drinks add up

A major concern is how much caffeine young people consume and how quickly they consume it. An energy drink may follow a coffee,

soda or another energy drink. Some supplements, protein bars and other foods also contain caffeine. Guarana, an ingredient in some energy drinks, supplies additional caffeine.

Sugar-free products can still contain substantial amounts.

Too much caffeine can cause anxiety, sleep problems, elevated blood pressure and a racing heart. Severe reactions can include arrhythmia—an abnormal heart rhythm—and seizures.

In 2017, 16-year-old Davis Cripe died after collapsing at his South Carolina high school. He had consumed a Mountain Dew, a McDonald's latte and an energy drink. The coroner attributed his death to a caffeine-induced cardiac event causing a probable arrhythmia.

Parents should ask what their children drink, review caffeine labels together and explain that sports sponsorships do not establish safety. Seek medical help promptly for a racing or irregular heartbeat, fast breathing or uncontrolled shaking after substantial caffeine consumption.

Missouri Voted for Abortion Rights. Why Are They on the Ballot Again?

Lawmakers are betting that added exceptions and a ban on gender care for minors will change the outcome, while another vote clouds efforts to expand abortion access.

Missouri voters restored abortion rights two years ago. Now, Republican lawmakers are asking them to reverse that decision — with a different proposal designed to win over people who rejected the earlier ban.

Amendment 3, on the Nov. 3 ballot, would repeal the reproductive freedom protections voters approved in November 2024 and replace them with a near-total abortion ban that includes several exceptions. It also would put a ban on gender-transition treatment for minors into the state constitution. www.sos.mo.gov

A narrow victory with support beyond Democrats

The 2024 amendment passed with 51.6% of the vote, compared

with 48.4% opposed — a narrow margin of about 96,000 votes.

That same election, Donald Trump won Missouri with 58.5%. Abortion rights received approximately 1.54 million votes, substantially more than Kamala Harris' 1.2 million. Those totals indicate substantial support beyond Democratic presidential voters, including Trump voters, although election returns cannot identify individual voters' choices. www.sos.mo.gov

Republicans controlling the General Assembly approved the new ballot measure in 2025. They cannot simply erase a constitutional amendment through ordinary legislation; voters must approve the change.

Why supporters expect a different result

The new proposal combines

abortion restrictions with exceptions and a separate issue supporters believe can attract additional votes: prohibiting gender-transition care for people younger than 18.

The prohibition goes beyond surgery. It includes puberty blockers, which delay puberty, and hormones used to develop physical characteristics consistent with a person's gender identity. Gender-transition surgeries alter physical sex characteristics. The measure includes exceptions for specified medical conditions. www.sos.mo.gov

Missouri already restricts these treatments for minors under state law. Adding the prohibition to the constitution would make it harder to change.

Its political purpose is more than speculation. Tom Estes, a Republican Senate staffer working on the campaign, told The 19th that the transgender provision could reach voters the campaign failed to win previously.

The campaign's first television advertisement focused on transgender issues without mentioning abortion, Missouri Independent reported. missouriindependent.com

More exceptions — and a divided opposition

Missouri's 2022 ban allowed abortions only for medical emergencies. The new amendment would permit abortions for medical emergencies, fetal anomalies, and pregnancies resulting from rape or incest during the first 12 weeks. It also addresses care for miscarriages and ectopic pregnancies, which develop outside the uterus. Most abortions would still be prohibited. www.sos.mo.gov

Supporters present those exceptions as a politically achievable compromise. But they have divided the anti-abortion movement.

State Sen. Mike Moon and Abolish Abortion Missouri leader Wes Scroggins oppose the measure because it permits some abortions. Their faction also supports allowing criminal penalties against women who obtain abortions, a position many established anti-abortion organizations reject.

Some abortion opponents say the

exceptions go too far and plan to vote against Amendment 3. Supporters argue that a narrower ban is better than no ban: If the amendment fails, Missouri's current constitutional protections for abortion rights would remain in place. missouriindependent.com

An August SLU/YouGov poll found voters nearly evenly divided: 43% supported the measure, 44% opposed it and 13% were unsure. www.slu.edu

See **BALLOT** Page 15 →

Four More Missouri Ballot Questions Explained

Beyond abortion, Missouri voters will decide questions on citizen initiatives, congressional maps, state investments and elected sheriffs. Here's what each would do and what your vote means.

Proposition A: Voters Decide the Congressional Map

Proposition A puts the congressional map at the center of Missouri's recent court battles before voters. The dispute reached the U.S. Supreme Court three times in September. The legislature's 2025 map divides Kansas City among three congressional districts, aiming to give Republicans another seat.

Citizen petitions secured this referendum. The November 2026 election will use the 2022 map regardless of the outcome; this vote determines whether the 2025 map can take effect for future elections.

Yes: Approves the 2025 map for use beginning with the 2028 congressional election.

No: Rejects that map and keeps the 2022 boundaries,

unless another map is subsequently enacted.

Amendment 6: Making It Harder to Undo Citizens' Votes

Amendment 6 would prohibit elected representatives from directly amending or changing any law enacted through the citizen initiative process. Instead, at least 80% of the members of both legislative chambers would have to agree and send proposed changes back to voters.

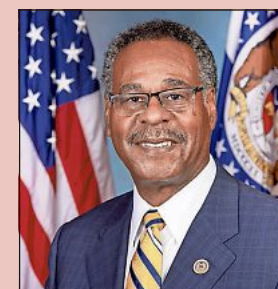
Paid sick leave shows why that matters. Voters approved it in 2024, but lawmakers repealed it without another public vote. Under Amendment 6, voters would have the final say on a repeal. But the General Assembly could only send

the proposed repeal back to voters if at least 80% of the members of each legislative chamber voted to do so.

The protection also covers citizen-approved constitutional amendments. **The abortion repeal appearing on this November's ballot received only about**

two-thirds support in the House and Senate. If Amendment 6's rules had already been in place, lawmakers would not have had enough votes to put that repeal on the ballot. www.sos.mo.gov

See **QUESTIONS** Page 15 →



Cleaver

Kansas Already Limits Voting to Citizens.

So What Would November Constitutional Amendment Change?

The ballot says a “yes” vote would clarify that only U.S. citizens can vote. But citizenship is already required, and the proposed amendment changes more than that simple explanation suggests.

Kansans will vote Nov. 3 on another proposed constitutional amendment — this one dealing with who is qualified to vote.

The official ballot explanation says the amendment would clarify that only U.S. citizens are eligible to vote in Kansas. A “yes” vote would approve that clarification. A “no” vote would leave the Constitution

unchanged.

But U.S. citizenship is already a qualification for voting in Kansas.

So what exactly are voters being asked to change?

The difference comes down to a seemingly small — but deliberate — shift in how Article 5 of the Kansas Constitution is written.

Currently, Article 5 speaks affirmatively: **“Every”** U.S. citizen who is at least 18 and meets residency requirements **“shall be deemed a qualified elector.”**

The proposed amendment reverses that framing. It would say **“No person shall be deemed a qualified elector unless”** that person is a U.S. citizen, at least 18 and meets residency requirements.

In other words, the Constitution would move from affirmatively declaring who is qualified to vote to stating that no one qualifies unless certain conditions are met.

That distinction is at the center of disagreement over the amendment.

Rep. Pat Proctor, the amendment’s lead sponsor, argues the existing wording creates a loophole because it says every citizen can vote without expressly saying only citizens can vote. In a recent interview, Proctor said he researched what other states had done before having the amendment drafted.

Supporters say the change would prevent a Kansas municipality or future court from interpreting the Constitution to allow noncitizens to vote in local elections.

Opponents say the change is more significant than the ballot explanation makes it sound.

Randi Thimesch, co-president of the League of Women Voters of Wichita Metro, said the current language is inclusionary — everyone who meets the qualifications may vote — while the proposed language starts from the opposite direction.

“They’re changing it to say, ‘no one can vote until they meet these qualifications,’” Thimesch said. She worries the wording could create an opening for lawmakers to change or add requirements in the future.



Attorney General Kris Kobach was a leading advocate for Kansas’ previous documentary-proof-of-citizenship requirement while serving as secretary of state. The requirement took effect in 2013, and Kobach continued defending it even as federal courts blocked its use in voter registration.



Masterson



Proctor



Hawkins

The ACLU of Kansas raised a similar concern when lawmakers considered the amendment. In written testimony, policy director Rashane Hamby said changing the Constitution from affirmative voter language to restrictive language could pave the way for future voting restrictions, including another attempt at documentary proof of citizenship.

The amendment itself does not

require anyone to produce a birth certificate, passport or other documentary proof of citizenship to register to vote.

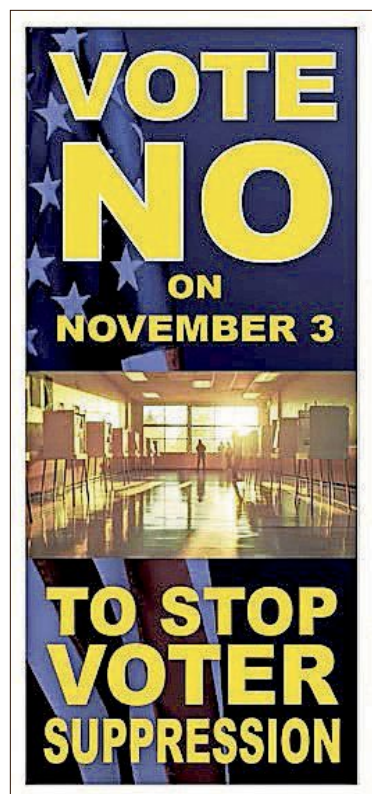
Kansas has, however, tried that before. Beginning in 2013, new registrants were required to provide citizenship documents in addition to affirming that they were citizens. More than 31,000 applications were affected before federal courts blocked the requirement.

Look Beyond “Yes” & “No”

Kansas voters faced a similar need to look beyond ballot shorthand in August.

The proposed Supreme Court amendment told voters that a **“yes”** vote would give Kansans the right to elect Supreme Court justices. A no vote could have easily have been interpreted as voters not having

See **AMENDMENT** Page 15 →



A League of Women Voters of Kansas graphic urges voters to reject the proposed constitutional amendment that would rewrite Kansas’ voting-qualification language. The amendment will appear on the Nov. 3 ballot.



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Urban Prep Clears Accreditation Hurdle, Eyes Growth Again

After two years without access to Kansas tax-credit scholarship funding, the Wichita private school has been accepted into a state-recognized accreditation organization and is working to restore scholarship eligibility for its students.

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

Urban Preparatory Academy has cleared a major accreditation hurdle that founder Bishop Wade Moore hopes will allow the Wichita private school to rebuild after two financially difficult years.

The K-8 school has been accepted into the Southern Association of Independent Schools, or SAIS, after more than a year of review of its finances, curriculum, board policies, teaching practices and other operations.

SAIS is one of the independent-school accrediting organizations recognized by the Kansas State Board of Education for purposes of the state's Tax Credit for Low Income Students Scholarship Program. Kansas law also allows schools working toward accreditation through a recognized agency to participate in the program.

Moore said he reviewed the accrediting organizations Kansas recognizes, talked with them and decided SAIS was the best fit for Urban Prep.

"I talked to every one of them that was approved by the state," Moore said. Urban Prep chose SAIS because he believed the organization could work with the school through the process.

Acceptance into SAIS doesn't end that relationship. Under the organization's process, Urban Prep will continue working with SAIS over the next several years as it builds capacity and completes the remaining accreditation process.

Moore said he immediately forwarded the school's SAIS acceptance to the Kansas Department of Education and requested that Urban Prep be restored as a qualified school in the tax-credit scholarship program. He said he was told the Kansas State Board of Education would have to act on the request at one of its meetings. The board normally meets once a month.

For Urban Prep, regaining



Bishop Wade Moore, founder of Urban Preparatory Academy in Wichita, shares news with students in 2022 that the school had won \$500,000 from the national Yass Prize. The award later helped Urban Prep weather a period when it could not access Kansas tax-credit scholarship funding. CREDIT: CARLA ECKELS / KMWU

scholarship eligibility could have a major financial impact.

Two Years Without Scholarship Funds

Urban Prep previously held conditional accreditation through the Kansas Department of Education. In 2023, state education officials moved toward denying accreditation after the school had not submitted required school-improvement documentation or results from Kansas state assessments.

Rather than continue through the state accreditation system, Moore decided to pursue accreditation through one of the outside organizations recognized by Kansas.

While that process was underway, Moore said Urban Prep went about two years without being able to participate in the tax-credit scholarship program.

That loss forced the school to shrink.

The Community Voice reported in 2023 that Urban Prep had about 140 students at two campuses. This year, enrollment is about 60.

Urban Prep now combines K-1,

grades 2-3 and grades 4-5; sixth grade stands alone; and seventh and eighth grades are combined.

Moore said the 2-3 and 4-5 classrooms are full with waiting lists, while K-1 is only one or two students short of capacity.

Finances weren't the only reason Moore reduced enrollment. He said Urban Prep also had begun accepting too many students with significant behavioral problems and was developing a reputation as primarily a school for students who had gotten into trouble elsewhere.

"We were losing our culture and who we really are," he said.

Today, Moore says the largest share of students comes to Urban Prep because they are struggling academically, followed by families looking for a different or safer school environment. Students are assessed when they enter, and reading and math progress is checked monthly so intervention can begin quickly when a student falls behind.

Yass Awards Helped Keep School Going

Two major national awards

helped Urban Prep through some of that financial uncertainty.

In 2022, Urban Prep was one of eight finalists nationwide to receive a **\$500,000 award from the Yass Prize**, a national competition that recognizes schools and education programs using innovative approaches to meet students' needs and helps successful models expand.

The Yass organization specifically highlighted Urban Prep's individualized assessment and learning plans, its work with low-income families and its plans to expand.

Moore said Urban Prep received another **\$500,000 Yass alumni grant in 2023**.

The first award helped Urban Prep expand and open its second campus. The grants also helped sustain the school during the period when tax-credit scholarship money was unavailable.

Even then, Moore said he raised additional money and used personal savings and investments to help keep the school operating.

Who Can Get a Scholarship?

Restoring Urban Prep's eligibility could also reopen a significant opportunity for low-income families who may assume private school is beyond their reach.

Kansas' program is specifically called the **Tax Credit for Low Income Students Scholarship Program**.

To qualify for a scholarship for the first time, a student must live in Kansas and come from a family with income at or below **250% of the federal poverty guideline**.

The child also must either have attended a Kansas public school in kindergarten through eighth grade during the previous school year, **or be age 7 or younger and eligible to enroll in public school during the year the scholarship is first requested**. Once a child has received a scholarship, eligibility can continue as long as other program requirements are met, until the student graduates

or turns 21.

Scholarships can provide up to \$8,000 a year toward tuition and other eligible education expenses.

Urban Prep's tuition is **\$4,500 a year, or \$450 a month for 10 months**.

Moore said scholarship assistance previously brought the amount paid by many qualifying Urban Prep families down to about **\$125 a month**, depending on the scholarship funds available. He said the school has also worked with families who cannot afford that amount.

For Wichita families specifically looking for **community-based schools with a history of serving Black students**, Urban Prep and Holy Savior Catholic Academy are two local schools connected to the tax-credit scholarship program. Other private schools across Wichita and Kansas also participate in the state program.

A Tax Credit — Not Just a Deduction

The program also offers a significant incentive to donors.

Individuals and qualifying businesses that contribute to an approved scholarship-granting organization can receive a **Kansas income-tax credit equal to 75% of their qualifying contribution**.

A tax credit is more valuable than simply reducing taxable income because it **reduces the amount of Kansas income tax actually owed**.

For example, a qualifying \$1,000 contribution generates a \$750 Kansas tax credit. If a taxpayer otherwise owed \$2,000 in Kansas income tax, that \$750 credit could reduce the tax bill to \$1,250.

If a taxpayer doesn't owe enough in Kansas taxes to use the full credit that year, the unused balance can be carried forward to the next year.

The donated money goes to scholarship-granting organizations, which then provide scholarships for eligible students.



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Wyandotte County Homes Face Tax Auction; Neighbors Rally to Help

A grassroots group is raising money to help residents pay delinquent property taxes before the Oct. 14 auction.

By Mary Sanchez
The Beacon

James Mays grew up in the Wyandotte County home he is now fighting to keep.

He recently canceled full insurance coverage on his car to put more money toward overdue property taxes, reducing his balance to under \$2,500.

"I never entertained the thought of leaving, or of losing my home," Mays said.

But the debt, dating back at least three years, landed his property on the list for an Oct. 14 auction alongside other homes, vacant lots and commercial properties.

The Unified Government of Wyandotte County and Kansas City, Kansas, holds delinquent property tax sales twice a year. For the past five years, residents have organized to help neighbors avoid losing their homes, raising enough to pay delinquent taxes for 85 families.

This year, fundraising has fallen short.

The KCK Neighbors Alliance, a grassroots group that grew from those efforts, says it still needs about \$79,000 to eliminate the debt on 10 owner-occupied homes facing auction. At minimum, it needs \$34,000 to get all the homes onto payment plans and prevent their sale.

The group is also pressing county leaders for changes to keep more residents housed.

"There's got to be something that the Unified Government can do to make sure that things like

this aren't happening," said Dustin Hare, who helps coordinate volunteer canvassers.

Unified Government officials did not respond to multiple requests from The Beacon to discuss the sale.

Ten homes at risk

Many properties on the auction list are vacant lots, abandoned homes or commercial properties. Residential owners must be at least three years behind on property taxes before their homes can be auctioned.

The Neighbors Alliance partnered with Advocates for Immigrant Rights and Reconciliation, known as AIRR, to knock on doors and identify residents at risk. Volunteers narrowed the list to about 10 owner-occupied properties whose residents could not afford the debt.

Mays inherited his house from family. He said he did not know about the unpaid taxes until someone knocked on his door offering to buy it outright. He suspected a scam.

Canvassers found recurring problems: Many homeowners were elderly, had disabilities or were struggling with medical debt. Some inherited homes with unpaid taxes after a parent's illness and death. Others reported mailing checks to out-of-state addresses, believing they were paying their taxes.

Mays has medical bills from a stroke and, more recently, hospitalization for a blood clot.

Last month's severe storms added more expenses. A century-old tree fell on



James Mays stands in front of his home in Wyandotte County. He's fighting to keep his property out of the coming tax sale. Credit: Mary Sanchez

the back of his house, gutters blew off, and hail damaged his roof and car.

"It was like somebody dropped a bomb over my house," he said.

Fundraising falls short

Foundations and agencies have committed money elsewhere or exhausted resources responding to storm damage in northern Wyandotte County, Hare said.

A September fundraiser brought in more than \$2,700, said Taisia Sarazov of the Neighbors Alliance.

Mays received help from his faith community toward a down payment. That allowed him to enter a payment plan, pay his remaining debt over the next few years and stay in his home.

"I don't believe the Lord brought me this far in life to go without," he said. "I've got a strong community around me."

Advocates seek policy changes

The Neighbors Alliance proposes three changes: apply payments to homeowners' oldest tax bills first; dedicate \$100,000 to a Tax Sale Foreclosure Mitigation

Fund; and hire an ombudsman to help homeowners navigate the system and access tax credit programs. Advocates say changing how payments are applied could make a significant difference as residents' debts grow.

About a decade ago, the Unified Government began applying payments to the newest tax bill instead of the oldest, according to the advocates. That means a homeowner making payments can still have older unpaid bills that qualify the property for auction.

"When we were trying to pay people's taxes off in 2021, the average tax debt was between \$3,000 and \$4,000," Hare said. "Now that average tax debt is \$9,000."

The policy was intended to stop commercial and rental property owners from repeatedly paying only their oldest debt to stay off the auction list without clearing their full balance, said Eva Garcia-Meza, an AIRR canvasser.

Owner-occupied homes should have been excluded from that change, Garcia-Meza said.

See TAX AUCTION Page 15 →



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TRUMP ACCOUNT,
from Page 6 ↓

**How can children use the
money at 18?**

Starting Jan. 1 of the year your child turns 18, traditional IRA rules generally apply. They can withdraw some or all of the money for college, a first home, a car or other expenses—but taxes and penalties depend on how they use it.

For college or eligible job

training: Withdrawals can avoid the 10% early-withdrawal penalty when covered by qualifying education expenses for that year. These include tuition, required fees, books and supplies. Some room and board costs also qualify for students attending at least half time. There is no fixed dollar cap, but scholarships and other tax-free assistance reduce the expenses that count. Income tax may still apply.

For a first home: Up to \$10,000 over the child's lifetime can qualify for an exception to the penalty. Income tax may still apply.

For a car, vacation or other spending: The taxable part generally faces both income tax and a 10% penalty, unless another exception applies. They can cash out the account, but doing so could mean a substantial tax bill. There is no special withdrawal change at age 30.

**How small contributions
could grow**

Suppose a family puts **\$25 a month** into a child's account from birth through age 18—a total of **\$5,400**.

Assuming a 7% average annual return, those contributions could grow to about **\$10,500 by age 18**. If the child leaves the money invested, adding nothing more and making no withdrawals, it could reach about **\$180,000 by age 60**.

For a child who also receives the **\$1,000 federal deposit at birth**, those balances could be about **\$13,900 at 18** and **\$238,000 at 60**.

Even the \$1,000 deposit alone, under the same assumptions, could grow to about **\$3,380 at 18** or **\$56,000 at 59½**.

These are illustrations, not guaranteed returns. Investments can lose value, and the figures are before withdrawal taxes and do not account for inflation.



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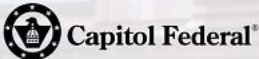
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New Outdoor Roller Skating Rink Opens at Kansas City's Blues Park

The 16,000-square-foot rink is open from dawn to dusk, but skaters must bring their own equipment and follow posted rules.



Skaters and community members celebrate the Sept. 30 grand opening of the new Blues Park roller skating rink. The rink is part of a \$1.7 million park improvement project that also includes new parking, sidewalks and restrooms.

Kansas City roller skating enthusiasts have a new place to roll following the Sept. 30 grand opening of an outdoor skating rink at Blues Park, 2000 Prospect Ave.

The 16,000-square-foot concrete rink is part of a \$1.7 million park improvement project that also includes a new parking lot, sidewalks and public restrooms.

The rink is open daily from dawn to dusk and accommodates both traditional roller skates and inline skates. Bicycles, skateboards and scooters are prohibited.

Skaters must bring their own skates, and the rink will not be staffed or supervised. Users are expected to follow posted safety rules, skate at appropriate speeds and respect others.

Helmets and protective gear are strongly encouraged, especially for children. Those 12 and younger must



Two young skaters enjoy the smooth concrete surface at Kansas City's new outdoor roller skating rink in Blues Park. The rink welcomes both traditional roller skates and inline skates.

be supervised by a responsible adult.

Food, drinks, smoking and vaping are prohibited in the skating area. Rough play and obstacles are also

prohibited.

The rink operates on a skate-at-your-own-risk basis, with Kansas City Parks and Recreation rangers providing oversight as needed.

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QUESTIONS, from Page 8 ↓

Yes: Adds these protections for citizen-approved measures.
No: Keeps the current rules.

Amendment 7: A Long-Term Investment to Replace State Taxes

Amendment 7 would create the “Show-Me Prosperity Fund,” a permanent state investment fund intended to grow until its earnings could replace state taxes.
It would not immediately cut taxes. Its sponsor,

Sen. Adam Schnelting, has suggested reaching that goal could take 100 to 125 years. Alaska has a similar permanent fund, built with oil revenue. Missouri’s proposal has no dedicated, ongoing revenue source. Instead, it could receive money appropriated by lawmakers, along with donations and grants, to invest in funds tracking the S&P 500.
The principal would be protected, and eventual annual withdrawals would be limited. The challenge is finding enough money to build the fund while paying

for today’s government services.
Yes: Establishes the fund and its constitutional rules.
No: Leaves the constitution unchanged.

Amendment 8: Constitutional Protection for Elected Sheriffs

Amendment 8 would put sheriffs’ four-year elected terms and specified duties into Missouri’s constitution. Those provisions currently exist in state law. But the amendment would also give the attorney general control over initiating the

court process to remove a sheriff—making that official a gatekeeper when problems arise between elections.
Supporters emphasize protecting voters’ control over the office; but the removal provision raises questions about accountability between elections.
St. Louis City, St. Louis County and St. Charles County are exempt.
Yes: Adds constitutional protections and removal requirements.
No: Keeps existing laws in place, including elected sheriffs.

BALLOT, from Page 8 ↓

Why access has returned slowly

The 2024 vote restored abortion rights, but providers still had to challenge restrictions such as

special clinic licensing rules, a 72-hour waiting period and requirements that doctors have privileges at nearby hospitals. Court battles delayed the return of services and briefly halted abortions again in

2025. www.reuters.com
With this amendment vote looming, providers have been reluctant to expand facilities and hire staff for abortion services they could be forced to stop offering if Amendment

3 passes.
A **yes** vote would repeal the 2024 protections and approve the new restrictions. A no vote would retain the existing constitutional protections. www.sos.mo.gov

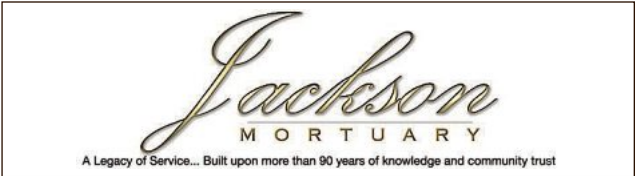
AMENDMENT, from Page 9 ↓

any say in who serves on the Supreme Court. But instead, a “no” vote meant keeping the existing merit-selection system in which a nominating commission sends finalists to the governor and voters later decide whether justices should be retained.
That amendment generated an intense statewide campaign, with at least **\$12.8 million** spent by groups arguing for and

against it. Kansans ultimately rejected the proposed change by a wide margin.
The November amendment presents another deceptively simple choice.
A voter seeing “**yes — only citizens should vote**” could reasonably assume that a “no” vote means supporting noncitizen voting.
It does not.
A **no vote leaves the current Constitution unchanged**, including its existing citizenship qualification.

A **yes vote changes the constitutional language** from an affirmative statement that every citizen meeting the requirements is a qualified elector to a restrictive statement that no person qualifies unless the stated conditions are met.
Whether that new wording would actually make it easier for a future Legislature to defend additional voter-qualification requirements has not been decided by a Kansas court.
But that possibility is

among the concerns voting-rights groups raised before the amendment ever reached the ballot.
For voters, that makes the question bigger than whether they agree that only citizens should vote. The question is whether they want to change constitutional language that already makes citizenship a qualification to vote — and whether they are comfortable with the way the replacement language defines who qualifies to vote.



Sondra Winn, 64
Apr 26, 1962 — Oct 5, 2026
Service will be held at 2 pm on Fri., Nov. 6 at Jackson Mortuary, 1125 E. 13th.

Earlean E Rhone, 92
Jan 8, 1934 — Oct 4, 2026
Service will be held at 11 am on Sat., Oct.31 at Shiloh Baptist Church, 1555 N. Hydraulic

Gregory Lea Word, 71
Dec 17, 1954 — Oct 2, 2026
Service will be held at 10 am on Sat., Oct. 24 at Tabernacle Bible Church, 1817 N. Volutsia.

Laura Eloise Bishop - Pearson, 82
Apr 29, 1944 — Sep 29, 2026
Service will be held at 10 am on Thur., Oct. 22 at Strangers Rest Baptist Church, 2521 N. Grove

Brenda Barnes, 71
Aug 28, 1955 — Sep 28, 2026
Service will be held at 10 am on Sat., Oct.17 at St. Mark United Methodist Church, 1525 N. Lorraine.

Oscar B Austin, Jr, 72
Dec 18, 1953 — Sep 28, 2026
Service was held Oct. 10 in Eufaula, OK.

Sylvia Ann Caviness, 87
Nov 8, 1938 — Sep 26, 2026
Service was held on Oct. 7 at St. Mark Cathedral Church of God in Christ

Abbie Mae Gunter, 97
Apr 28, 1929 — Sep 25, 2026
Service will be held at 1 pm on Sat., Oct. 17 at Dellrose United Methodist Church, 1502 Dellrose.

Carla Renee Bogan, 69
Apr 13, 1957 — Sep 20, 2026
Service was held on Oct. 10 at Jackson Mortuary

TAX AUCTION, from Page 12 ↓

Hare and other advocates say the number of households needing help each year is relatively small and consistent, making it possible for local government to intervene and keep residents housed. Providing homeless services can cost more than a one-time payment to save a family’s home, Hare said.
“This is a problem that we should be able to figure out how to handle because the numbers are small,” Hare said. “If these people lose their homes, where are they going to go?”

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MAKE A VOTING PLAN

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