

KIRKSVILLE Daily Express

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Vendor selected for new Kirksville License Office

Daily Express staff

A vendor has been chosen for Kirksville's new licensing office. Doug & Cheri LLC, run by

Doug and Cheri Galaske, was selected Friday, getting a contract with the state that runs through Sept. 7, 2026. There were four total vendors who applied for

the next office. The Galaskes currently operate license offices in Macon and Keytesville.

An address in the strip mall on West Potter Avenue will like-

ly be the home of the new office.

The previous Kirksville office closed in November. Judy Albin, who had been the fee agent for three decades, reached an agree-

ment with the state to close earlier than her original contract. Albin cited ongoing health concerns and staffing issues from the pandemic as the main reasoning why.



The Kirksville Commons shopping center, located along North Baltimore.

Cost for North Baltimore center lane project increases

Austin Miller
Daily Express

The cost for a planned street update in Kirksville has increased.

Bids opened on Dec. 17 for contractors interested in building a third lane on North Baltimore. Five bids were turned in, all over the city's original estimate.

The lowest bid was turned in by S&A Equipment & Builders at \$2,035,102.58. Bids increased from there with the highest, from Phillips

Hardy, Inc., at \$2.3 million.

This project dates back to 2020 when the city applied for a new state grant. The city reached an agreement with the state as part of the Governor's Cost Share program to fund this construction. The original estimate was just \$2 million, with the city paying for half and the state paying for the other half.

The plan is to put a center turn lane on North Baltimore from the Highway 6 interchange up to

West Brewington. With increased traffic in that section of town due to new housing and retail, the city has wanted this done.

The project was delayed from 2020 after cuts to MoDOT, then brought back onto MoDOT's planning for this year. The City Council voted this past summer to re-pursue the project. The city has already paid its original portion of the project, which is about \$955,000.

Costs have only increased since the project

was first talked about, with two years expected to pass since the City Council's original approval for it and construction to actually finish. The pandemic continues to effect the cost of materials, as well as the cost of labor and transport.

"I can say it wasn't a surprise," said Ashley Young, Kirksville's assistant city manager, on the price increase.

The city hasn't been a stranger to those increases

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Missouri schools must comply with COVID ruling to win treasurer approval of bond deals

Tessa Weinberg
Missouri Independent

If school districts want to take advantage of a lower interest rate on bonds, Missouri Treasurer Scott Fitzpatrick is requiring them to certify compliance with a recent court ruling targeting local health orders before his office will approve of the deal.

Fitzpatrick detailed the decision he described as "unprecedented" in an interview last Wednesday with Missouri.net.

Two school superintendents who received the instruction from the state said Thursday the change is highly unusual. But each said they accepted the terms in order to ensure higher costs wouldn't be passed on to taxpayers in their community.

"It's a little bit difficult to reconcile how the two things go together, but I was taken by surprise on Monday when I got the form," said Karl Matt, superintendent of the North Platte R-1 School District.

The change appears to be another avenue by which school districts are being pressured to comply with a recent court ruling that Attorney General Eric Schmitt has been trying to enforce.

On Nov. 22 Cole County Circuit Court Judge Daniel Green ruled certain state regulations delegating authority to public health officials violated the Missouri Constitution, and as a result, any health orders issued unilaterally under them were declared "null and void."

Mary Compton, a spokeswoman for the treasurer's office, noted school districts' participation in the bond direct deposit program is voluntary and said Fitzpatrick has the discretion to determine whether or not to grant approval for the financial transactions.

"Due diligence is always done in preparation for a financial transaction and the disclosure of pending or threatened investigations or litigation is a material consideration when making the determination whether

to engage in a financial transaction with any party," Compton said.

According to a copy of the certification agreement obtained by The Independent, superintendents were asked to certify that their district was in compliance with directives Schmitt sent Dec. 7 or that the district would become compliant no later than Dec. 23 — the day a after the court ruling becomes final under the rules governing civil cases.

For decades, the Missouri Health and Educational Facilities Authority (MOHEFA) has entered into financing agreements with school districts to repay debt. By agreeing to set aside a portion of its state aid, a district can receive a lower interest rate than they would otherwise be able to secure.

However, Fitzpatrick told Missouri.net that going forward that's changing. School districts will have to certify they will comply with Green's ruling in order to receive approval from the Treasurer's Office on the agreement.

"If they want our approval prior to the time that the closing is scheduled, we have to have that certification in hand," Fitzpatrick told Missouri.net.

If districts don't certify their compliance, then closing the deal would be delayed, he said, and they may have to rely on their own credit to borrow funds, which would likely result in a higher interest rate.

Compton said Thursday that six school districts have been asked to sign the certification with four doing so and two pending.

Gregg Klingensmith, the superintendent of the Warren County R-III School District, said refinancing past debt would save the district about \$762,000. The North Platte R-1 School District would be saving a little over \$972,000, Matt said. The North Platte district closed Wednesday on a \$6 million bond issue refinancing past debt.

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Manchin not backing Dems' \$2T bill, potentially dooming it

By ALAN FRAM and HOPE YEN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Democratic Sen. Joe Manchin said Sunday he cannot back his party's signature \$2 trillion social and environment bill, dealing a potentially fatal blow to President Joe Biden's leading domestic initiative heading into an election year when Democrats' narrow hold on Congress was already in peril.

Manchin told "Fox News Sunday" that after five-and-a-half months of negotiations among Democrats in which he was his party's chief obstacle to passage, "I cannot vote to continue with this piece of legislation. I just can't. I've tried everything humanly possible. I can't get there."

Manchin's choice of words seemed to crack the door open to continued



FILE - Sen. Joe Manchin, D-W.Va., walks to a caucus lunch at the Capitol in Washington, Dec. 17, 2021. Manchin said Sunday, Dec. 19, 2021 he cannot back a \$2 trillion social safety net bill, dealing a potentially fatal blow to President Joe Biden's signature legislation. J. SCOTT APPLEWHITE - STAFF, AP

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OBITUARIES INSIDE

Paul Hanke, 79



In Your Own Backyard: Memories of Christmas past

Submitted by Debi Boughton

Debi Boughton, Kirksville Tourism Director, shares a Christmas memory, as a small gift of joy to you during this Christmas season.

Where do you get your Christmas tree? In 1967 when my brother, John, was in kindergarten his class took a field trip to Baker's Tree farm just outside Kirksville. My mom went along to help shepherd the five-year-olds. That night at dinner our family made a plan to go back on Saturday and chop down our own Christmas tree. We had a wonderful time hiking up and down the rolling hills trying to find just the right tree. Ever since then, one of our Christmas family traditions is an outing to a tree farm.

Our family has loved and patronized Fouch's Christmas Tree Farm for years and years. We have sawed down Christmas trees, taken photos on the steps of the little cabin, and purchased peanut brittle and chocolate turtles. After 31 years in business, this season is the last one for the Fouch's Christmas Tree Farm.

Four generations of our family have happy Christmas memories thanks to four generations of the Fouch family. I have a wooden Santa figurine hand carved and painted by patriarch, Darrell Fouch, at least 25 years ago. I also have a ceramic angel ornament painted by Sue Fouch, which hangs on our tree.

This year, we actually cut down a pine tree in our own field. Although it is lovely and still has pinecones on it, it was not grown to be a Christmas tree, nor was it trimmed through the years. It is not the perfect cone shape. The tree stands tall in our living room and reminds us that sometimes imperfection can be beautiful. There is a whimsy in its asymmetry. We think our tree is charming as long as it does not tip over and crash onto the floor.

What about next year? We do not have very many trees in our field. Do you want to start a Christmas Tree Farm? Our family is ready and waiting to be your first customer!

44 COVID cases, 1 death reported since Dec. 18

The Adair County Health Dept.

The Adair County Health Department confirmed 44 new cases of COVID-19 since Friday and the 45th known COVID-related death. The overall case count is now 4,252.

A 70-year-old unvaccinated male previously reported as being admitted to Northeast Regional Medical Center on Dec. 11

passed away today. Among today's cases is a 66-year-old female admitted to Northeast Regional yesterday. Also, among today's 44 cases are 10 in the K-12 schools sector and eight breakthrough infections.

Cases include females ages 11, 16, 18, 19, 22, 24, 28, four age 32, 33, 34, 37, 39, 46, 49, 50, 51, 53, 66 and three age 79. Males include two age 13, 15, 16, 17, two age

18, 20, 21, 29, 39, 56, two age 59, 61, 66, 76, 80, 83 and 92.

The Adair County Health Department recommends that all county residents ages 5 and older get vaccinated against COVID-19. Vaccines are easily accessible, free, and continue to demonstrate that they prevent serious illness, hospitalization, and death.

A list of upcoming pediatric and adult COVID

vaccine clinics at the Adair County Health Department appear on its website at adair.lphamo.org. There are adult vaccination clinics on upcoming Tuesdays, Dec. 21 and 28, and pediatric vaccination clinics on upcoming Thursdays, Dec. 23 and 30. Residents must register for the clinics by calling the Health Department at 660-665-8491.

Dec. 15 storms across north-central US classified as derecho

By JIM SALTER
Associated Press

O'FALLON, Mo. (AP) — A line of severe thunderstorms and tornadoes that swept across the north-central U.S. last week was the result of a serial derecho — the first on record in December, officials with the National Weather Service said Monday.

At least 45 tornadoes have been preliminarily confirmed in the Dec. 15 storms that crossed the Great Plains and Midwest amid unseasonably warm temperatures, said Bill Bunting, chief of forecast operations at the weather service's Storm Prediction Center. Nebraska, Iowa and Minnesota took the brunt of the damage.

Bunting said at least 12 of the tornadoes were rated EF-2. Many of the thunderstorms also carried winds of up to 80 mph (129 kph). Five deaths were blamed on the weather.

Bunting said that normally in December, air from the Gulf of Mexico has cooled, and colder air is present in the upper Mid-

west — factors that reduce the risk of severe thunderstorms and tornadoes. But this year, "we haven't had much of a winter," he said.

"So you had a very strong storm system with really somewhat unprecedented access to very warm, humid air that flows northward, and those are the ingredients that you look for for severe thunderstorms," Bunting said. "The result was quite remarkable for December."

A derecho is often described as an inland hurricane. But, it has no eye and its winds come across in a line. The similarity is in the damage, which is likely to spread over a wide area, unlike a tornado where the damage is more spotty.

The weather service said a wind damage swath extending more than 240 miles (386 kilometers) with wind gusts of at least 58 mph (93 kilometers per hour) along most of its length can be classified as a derecho.

A derecho was also declared in August 2020 when storms packing 100 mph



FILE- A tornado approaches Interstate 80 near Atlantic, Iowa, as a semi truck rolls eastward on Wednesday, Dec. 15, 2021. The National Weather Service has declared the series of thunderstorms and tornadoes that swept across the Great Plains and upper Midwest on Dec. 15 as a serial derecho. BRYON HOULGRAVE - MEMBER, THE DES MOINES REGISTER

(161 kph) winds lasted several hours and caused damage from eastern Nebraska, across Iowa and into parts of Wisconsin and Illinois.

There was a difference: The August 2020 storm was a progressive derecho, while last week's was a serial derecho.

The weather service said a progressive derecho is fueled by a hot and moist environment with relatively strong winds aloft. Serial derechos are produced by storms with

strong winds that bow outward, the service said. They sweep across an area both long and wide, driven by the presence of very strong winds in the atmosphere.

The unprecedented December warm spell included temperatures that rose to 70 degrees Fahrenheit (21 degrees Celsius) as far north as Wisconsin, creating evening temperatures that weather historian Chris Burt compared to that of a "warm July evening."

BILL

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talks with Biden and top congressional Democrats over reshaping the legislation. But the West Virginia senator all but said the bill would die unless it met his demands for a smaller, less sweeping package — something that would be hard for many Democrats in the narrowly divided Congress to accept.

The bill would provide hundreds of billions of dollars to help millions of families with children by extending a more generous child tax credit, creating free preschool and bolstering child care aid. There is more than \$500 billion for tax breaks and spending aimed at curbing carbon emissions, which experts consider the largest federal expenditure ever to combat climate change.

Other provisions would limit prescription drug price increases, create hearing benefits for Medicare recipients and bolster aid for the elderly, housing and job training. Nearly all of it would be paid for with higher taxes on the wealthy and large corporations.

In an unusually hardball response to a lawmaker whose vote is crucial in the 50-50 Senate, White House press secretary Jen Psaki called Manchin's announcement "a sudden and inexplicable reversal in his position" and "a breach of his commitments" to Biden and congressional Democrats. She pointedly said that Manchin, whose

state is among the nation's poorest, "will have to explain" why many families will have to cope with higher health and child care costs the bill is intended to address.

Psaki said in a statement that Manchin had "in person" given Biden a written proposal last Tuesday that was "the same size and scope" of a framework for the bill that Democrats rallied behind in October, and agreed he'd continue talks. That framework had a 10-year cost of \$1.85 trillion. Officials hadn't previously disclosed that Tuesday meeting.

"We will continue to press him to see if he will reverse his position yet again, to honor his prior commitments and be true to his word," Psaki said.

A Manchin aide gave the White House about a 20-minute notice before the lawmaker announced his position on national television, said a person familiar with the senator's actions who described them only on condition of anonymity.

The legislation's collapse would deepen bitter ideological divisions between progressive and moderate Democrats. That would imperil the party's ability to get behind any substantial legislation before the November congressional elections, when their control of Congress seems in doubt. And it would add a note of chaos just as Democrats need to demonstrate accomplishments and show a united front to voters.

Manchin's declaration was a stunning repudi-



President Joe Biden speaks as he meets with members of the White House COVID-19 Response Team in the Roosevelt Room of the White House in Washington, Thursday, Dec. 16, 2021. SUSAN WALSH - STAFF, AP

ation of Biden's and his party's top goal, and its delivery — a last-minute heads up from a staffer — seemed little short of a slap in the face to Biden. A rejection of the legislation has been seen by many as unthinkable because of the political damage it could inflict on Democrats.

It is rare for a member of a president's own party to administer a fatal blow to their paramount legislative objective. Manchin's decision called to mind the famous thumbs-down vote by Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., that killed President Donald Trump's 2017 effort to repeal the health care law enacted under President Barack Obama.

Manchin's comments, as Congress was on a holiday recess, drew fury from Democratic colleagues he already has enraged and frustrated for months. Other problems have arisen, caused by another moderate Democrat,

Arizona Sen. Kyrsten Sinema, and bickering between progressives and centrists, but none has approached the magnitude of Manchin's stands.

Senate Budget Committee Chairman Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., said in a written statement that if Manchin wants to oppose the legislation, "He should have the opportunity to do so with a floor vote as soon as the Senate returns." Rep. Pramila Jayapal of Washington state, a leader of House progressives, said Manchin can no longer say "he is a man of his word."

Senate Finance Committee Chairman Ron Wyden, D-Ore., said it would be "extremely disappointing" to abandon top priorities but that a package helping families, containing health care costs and creating clean energy jobs "would go a long way toward addressing our challenges."

Rep. Suzan DelBene, D-Wash., reiterated moderates' desire to see the bill refocused on fewer programs. "Failure is not an option," she said.

South Carolina Sen. Lindsey Graham, top Republican on the Senate Budget Committee, had spent weeks trying to turn Manchin against the bill by saying it was too expensive. "I very much appreciate" Manchin's opposition, Graham said.

Manchin said he was opposing the 10-year, roughly \$2 trillion bill because of his concerns about inflation, growing federal debt and a need to focus on the omicron COVID-19 variant. He accused Democrats in a written statement later of trying to "dramatically reshape our society in a way that leaves our country even more vulnerable to the threats we face," seemingly delineating an

ideological gap between himself and his party.

He also wants the bill's initiatives to last the measure's full 10-year duration. Democrats made many of them temporary to limit the bill's cost, which Manchin says is misleading.

The bill's extension of enhanced child tax credit benefits, including monthly checks to millions of families, would only be extended one year. The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office projected the credit's full 10-year cost at \$1.6 trillion, nearly the size of the entire package Manchin says he'd accept. To fit, any compromise would likely have to reduce the tax credit's benefits and deeply cut many other proposals.

Democrats dismiss Manchin's assertions that the bill would fuel inflation and worsen budget deficits.

They say its annual spending would be a tiny percentage of the country's \$23 trillion economy and have little impact on prices. Its job training, education and other initiatives would spur economic growth and curb inflation long-term, they say.

Democrats note that CBO estimated the bill's savings would leave it adding \$200 billion to federal deficits over the coming decade, small compared to the \$12 trillion in red ink already projected.

Associated Press writer Josh Boak in Wilmington, Delaware, and AP Congressional Correspondent Lisa Mascaro in Washington contributed to this report.

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OBITUARIES

Paul Hanke

Sep. 14, 1942 - Dec. 13, 2021

Paul Vincent Hanke, 79, Passed away on Monday, December 13th, 2021 at Blessing Hospital in Quincy, IL. A private service will be held at a later date.

Paul was born on September 14th, 1942 in Des Moines, IA, grew up in Newton, IA and graduated Newton High School in 1962. He worked for Cozad's Dry Cleaners before beginning his 25 year career with Maytag and retired in 2000. After retiring, he moved a few different times before settling in Kirksville, MO where he lived the remainder of his years. Paul was a member of Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Newton for many years. He loved classic rock and football, and was a collector. Paul always lived life on his own terms, and will be missed greatly.



Paul was preceded in death by his parents, Raymond and Ethel Hanke, his sister, Evelyn Phelps, a niece, Catherine Dodd, and his beloved dog, Emily. Those left to honor his memory include: his son, Jon (Melanie) Hanke of Cumming, IA, his daughter Jodi (Wayne) Saunders of St Augustine, FL, his grandchildren, Casey, Cody, Zackary and Chloe, great-granddaughters, Sawyer and Paxton. He is also survived by his estranged wife, Marilyn Hanke of Kirksville, MO, first wife Darlene of Newton, his nieces, Becky, Linda and Sherry, as well as special friends at Kirksville Heights Apartments.

In Missouri, Greitens' comeback bid has some in GOP on edge

By **JIM SALTER**
Associated Press

ST. LOUIS (AP) — Former Missouri Gov. Eric Greitens is banking on Republican voters forgiving his past indiscretions when they choose a U.S. Senate nominee next August. Many in the GOP establishment are hoping they don't forget.

Greitens resigned as governor in 2018 amid an investigation of an extramarital affair with his St. Louis hairdresser allegedly involving bondage and blackmail and leading to criminal and legislative investigations. The allegation of a photo taken without the woman's consent for the purposes of blackmail led to a felony criminal charge, which was eventually dropped.

Now, he is among the frontrunners in a crowded field of Republican Senate candidates that includes U.S. House members Vicky Hartzler and Billy Long, Attorney General Eric Schmitt and the St. Louis lawyer who made headlines by pointing a gun at racial injustice protesters outside his home, Mark McCloskey.

Some Republican leaders worry that Greitens could win the GOP nomination but lose in the general election, ceding a crucial Senate seat in what should be a safely red state. Among them is Hartzler, citing one major demographic in particular.

"There's hardly any women in the state who will vote for him," she said in a phone interview.

John Hancock, a longtime Missouri Republican strategist, agreed.

"Certainly suburban women would be a concern, but I think the problems extend far beyond that," said Hancock, whose firm has done research for Hartzler's campaign.

It wouldn't be the first time Missouri women played a pivotal role in deciding a Senate race. In 2012, Democrat Claire McCaskill carried women voters by 22 percentage points in easily defeating the late Republican Todd Akin. The lopsided election followed a TV interview in which Akin, a staunch abortion opponent, said pregnancy in cases of "legitimate rape" was uncommon because women's bodies were able to prevent it.

Senate Republican leadership concurs that a Greitens primary victory would hand the seat to Democrats. But so far they've taken a hands-off approach, convinced Greitens' campaign will implode as he struggles to raise money and continues to be dogged by the scandal, according to two Republican strategists working on Senate races, who insisted on anonymity to discuss internal deliberations. That could change if Greitens candidacy gains steam, the strategists said.

On Thursday, Sen. Rick Scott, who heads the National Republican Senatorial Committee, told guest host Kurt Schlichter on Hugh Hewitt's radio show that there are "real concerns" that Greitens could lose to a Democrat, though he said he was confident Republican primary voters would choose someone else.

Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell said at a Thursday news conference that he hasn't made a decision yet about whether to get involved in any primaries because primary season is still in its infancy. But he said that may change if Republicans were "on the verge of nominating somebody who is unelectable."

Federal campaign finance filings show Greitens had about \$200,000 in his campaign account at the end of September, but was also about \$143,000 in debt. Separately, two pro-Greitens super PACs have emerged, which are financed by two Republican megadonors.

Missouri First Action, which has yet to disclose fundraising numbers, announced earlier this month that Home Depot CEO Bernie Marcus donated \$1 million. A separate pro-Greitens super PAC called Team PAC said it has raised \$2.5 million from Dick Uihlein, a billionaire shipping supply magnate.

So far, no other donors to those groups have emerged.

Republican voters in Missouri have shown a willingness to forgive — former President Donald Trump carried the state by 19 percentage points in 2016 despite being caught on video making lewd remarks about women and bragging about infidelity. He carried Missouri by 15 percentage points in 2020.

All of the Missouri GOP Senate candidates are courting Trump's endorsement. Greitens has the backing of several Trump insiders, including Michael Flynn and Rudy Giuliani. He appears regularly on Steve Bannon's podcast. Kimberly Guilfoyle, a Trump campaign adviser and the girlfriend of Donald Trump Jr., is the national chairwoman of Greitens' campaign, and Trump's pollster, Tony Fabrizio, is working for Greitens.

Hewitt, while interviewing Trump earlier this month, implored him not to endorse Greitens.

"That's a nightmare, Mr. President," Hewitt said. "We'll lose that seat."

"Well, that's an interesting opinion, that's true. He's right now leading by quite a bit," Trump said, apparently referencing early polling showing Greitens at or near the top among GOP contenders.

Hartzler, acknowledging Greitens is an early frontrunner, is taking direct aim at his character.

"I follow the rules," Hartzler said in her first TV ad, which launched in October. "I stay out of trouble. And when I need to see a hairdresser, I make an appointment."

For now, Greitens' other opponents are mostly ignoring his past. Long called it "old news."

"That's been out there," Long told The Associated Press in a phone interview. "Everybody's run that thing through the mill. I'll let other people talk about those issues. I want to talk about issues that matter to taxpayers and voters."

Greitens frequently appears on conservative TV networks, radio and podcasts but has largely avoided Missouri

media and made few public appearances. Greitens' campaign declined interview requests and didn't respond directly to emailed questions. But the campaign manager, Dylan Johnson, provided a statement on Saturday.

"Governor Greitens is the only America First candidate in this race who will fight for the people of Missouri, just like he has done as a Navy SEAL and as governor," Johnson said. "The political establishment and RINOs are frightened of losing their power to someone who would be a champion for the people."

Greitens, a charismatic former Navy SEAL officer and Rhodes scholar, was widely seen as a rising star in GOP politics after being elected governor in 2016. Then, in January 2018, news broke of an extramarital affair that occurred in 2015, before he was elected.

The woman said Greitens invited her to his home, where he blindfolded her, bound her and removed her clothes. He then allegedly took a photo.

"Don't even mention my name to anybody at all, because if you do, I'm going to take these pictures, and I'm going to put them everywhere I can," she quoted Greitens as saying.

She said the encounter left her crying, but admitted to a relationship that went on for several more months.

It was the alleged photo that resulted in a criminal charge of invasion of privacy. Greitens accused St. Louis Circuit Attorney Kim Gardner, a Democrat, of a political vendetta.

In short order, a Missouri House committee began investigating and found the woman's allegations credible, and Greitens faced a second felony charge in St. Louis, accused of providing his political fundraiser with the donor list of his veterans charity. Greitens had denied any criminal wrongdoing.

The blackmail charge was dropped in May 2018, three days into jury selection, when a judge ruled that Gardner would have to provide a statement under oath about her investigation at the request of Greitens' attorneys, who had repeatedly criticized her handling of the case.

The judge appointed Kansas City prosecutor Jean Peters Baker to review the case. A week after Greitens resigned in June 2018, Baker announced that she believed the woman's claim that Greitens took an unauthorized and compromising photo but that there wasn't enough evidence to merit a criminal charge.

The fundraising charge was dropped when Greitens resigned. Greitens and his wife, Sheena, divorced last year.

The former FBI agent Gardner hired to investigate Greitens in the invasion of privacy case, William Tisaby, was indicted in 2019 on six counts of perjury and one count of evidence tampering. The indictment accuses him of lying during a deposition in preparation for Greitens' trial and concealing notes taken during an interview with the former governor's accuser. His trial is scheduled for March.

PROJECT

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over the last year, with purchasing costs increasing in several areas.

"Everything from chlorine to basic building materials, you name it," Young said.

Now, the city will pay another \$125,102.58 — a 6.5 percent increase — to cover the increase. And that is if the Missouri Highway Commission selects the lowest bid. Those funds will come from city sales tax revenue and the city has started making those arrangements. The Missouri Highway Commission will consider the bids at its Jan. 6 meeting, and those additional funds need to be available before selecting one.

Young said during Monday's City Council meeting that bids for other MoDOT projects have come in 15 or more percent higher than original estimates.

"Given the rising cost of everything nowadays, that's really right about on target," Young said during the meeting. "So in light of that news, perhaps we're lucky to have only seen an increase of that much."

The city is overseeing the engineering of this project, though MoDOT oversees the bidding process and then the inspection process.

Construction on the project is tentatively scheduled to start in March or April.

SCHOOLS

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Both superintendents said they received the certification form a few days before their deals were scheduled to close and signed them this week.

Erica Chandler, a spokeswoman for the Affton School District, confirmed the district received the certification form on Monday and is currently exploring the potential impacts it will have on their district.

Not going through with the bond deal would have meant having to consider raising tax rates to pay for future projects or delaying projects, Matt said.

"It's a tough spot. We're a small community and the chance to save the taxpayers roughly a million dollars is big," Matt said, "but you also have to balance that with looking at what's the best interest of your students' safety — which your students' safety is worth more than a million dollars. I think it's kind of the way things are heading anyway."

If his district was unable to consolidate debt at the lower interest rate, Klingensmith said it would have lost the expected savings and taxes would

remain at current levels. That, he said, would "be almost a tax increase on our local taxpayers by us not being able to refinance."

In the past week, a growing number of school boards have voted to allow mitigation measures, like mask requirements, to expire. Others have pushed back on Schmitt's demands, citing both local authority and state statutes that they argue allow for their health measures.

Matt and Klingensmith said both their health departments have stopped issuing quarantine notices following Green's ruling. The North Platte R-1 School Board is expected to adjust the district's safety plan Thursday night, and the district will likely not be identifying close contacts after that, Matt said.

The Warren County R-III School Board already voted last week to drop the district's quarantine rules and mitigation strategies, Klingensmith said, putting the district in compliance with the attorney general's directive.

Klingensmith said he could see how the new requirement might pose a problem for other districts who are attempting to follow the guidance of

their health departments, and expressed concern if other parameters, like proficiency levels or test scores, might be used in the future as a requirement to allow districts to refinance their bonds.

"It definitely seems to be crossing some sort of line," Klingensmith said. "But we just follow the rules that are sent to us, and we're happy that we're able to refinance."

Fitzpatrick cited the possibility of future litigation by Schmitt as a reason that factored into his decision, in addition to wanting to ensure schools are compliant with the law.

"For us, it doesn't make sense for the state to enter an agreement allowing a district to piggyback off of our credit rating, if simultaneously they're about to be sued by the state for not complying with a court order and what the attorney general has interpreted as being the law.

"And so that is what it comes down to. It has to do with the risk of the district being embroiled in litigation with the state, while at the same time seeking to use the state's credit to borrow money," Fitzpatrick said.

Asked if critics may view the move as politicizing a routine process, Fitz-

patrick, who is running for state auditor, told Missouri that he wasn't loudly publicizing the decision.

"You called me. It's not like I'm out there, thumping my chest in the press about this," he told Missouri. "This is something we're doing because we believe it's the right thing to do and it's the financially prudent thing to do."

Along with Fitzpatrick's signature, the financing agreements must be approved by MOHEFA and the state education department.

It's unclear if MOHEFA approves of the change. MOHEFA's executive director Michael Stanard did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

Both MOHEFA and Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) officials were copied on an email the Treasurer's Office sent informing a district of the certification form, according to an email obtained by The Independent.

Mallory McGowin, a spokeswoman for DESE, said the department didn't have prior knowledge that the Treasurer's Office was adding the certification form to the standard financing agreement documentation.

Compton said Fitzpatrick's fiduciary responsibility is separate from MOHEFA's responsibilities towards the program, and that he did not need authorization from any other party to require the certification.

Fitzpatrick told Missouri he had received guidance from both the attorney general's office and his office's counsel, and said he has the discretion on whether he signs off on the deals.

"It's my discretion as a state treasurer to do that or not," Fitzpatrick told Missouri.

Chris Nuelle, a spokesman for Schmitt, said the attorney general's office was grateful to see Fitzpatrick feels the same to ensure districts come into compliance and is "pleased to have Treasurer Fitzpatrick with us in this important fight."

The effects of last month's court ruling has continued to reverberate across the state with more than a dozen local health departments stopping aspects of their work to surveil and mitigate the spread of the coronavirus, citing a lack of guidance from the state health department.

Warning of the potential to hinder their ability to

respond to all contagious diseases more broadly, the counties of Jackson and St. Louis and a local public health department, have requested to intervene in the case and appeal the ruling.

Meanwhile, the South Nodaway R-IV and Polo R-VII School Districts ended their fall semesters early this week in the face of large numbers of students and staff out sick.

On Wednesday, the St. Louis County Department of Public Health released an analysis that found, for the week ending Dec. 4, self-reported COVID-19 cases among school staff reached a peak of 95 — a 70% increase from the previous high of 56 staff cases.

For that same week, there were 402 cases reported among students, the second-highest amount in a week, and 551 pediatric COVID cases diagnosed in the county — more than any single week since November 2020, the health department said.

While in-school transmission declined, there were 1,514 staff and students reported as being quarantined due to a school-related exposure — the highest figure since the beginning of October, the analysis found.

Kirksville Daily Express CLASSIFIEDS

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IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF ADAIR COUNTY, MISSOURI
JUVENILE DIVISION
Russell Steele, Judge

In the Interest of)
N. R. R.) Case Number: 21AR-JU00084
Male)
DOB: 10/29/2017)
Age: 4)

Notice Upon Order for Service by Publication

The State of Missouri to: UNKNOWN FATHER

You are notified that an action has been commenced against you in the Juvenile Division of the Circuit Court of Adair County, Missouri, the object and general nature of which is to terminate your parental rights in and to N.R.R., a minor child born October 29, 2017.

The names of all parties in this action are stated in the caption above and the name and address of the Juvenile Office attorney is:

C. David Rouner
ROUNER LAW OFFICE LLC
400 N. Franklin Street
Kirksville MO 63501
(P) 660.665.7515
(F) 660.665.7514

You are further notified that, unless you file an answer or other pleading or otherwise appear and defend against this action within 45 days after December 15, 2021, judgment by default will be entered against you.

Published December 15, 22, 29, 2021 and January 5, 2022



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NOTICE OF TRUSTEE'S SALE

WHEREAS, Richard W. Hatcher Jr. and Latuana C. Hatcher, Husband and Wife, by their deed of trust dated the twenty-sixth (26th) day of August, 2009, and recorded in the office of the recorder of deeds for Adair County, Missouri, in Book 925, Page 760-770, conveyed to J Michael Conway, Trustee, the following-described property situated in the County of Adair, State of Missouri, to-wit:

All of Lots 8 and 9, Block 4, Still's Addition to Kirksville, Adair County, Missouri

which conveyance was made to the said J Michael Conway, Trustee, in trust to secure the payment of one promissory note in said deed of trust described;

WHEREAS, Wayne Blackman was appointed successor trustee pursuant to the terms of the deed of trust; and

WHEREAS, default was made and still continues in the payment of said note;

NOW THEREFORE, at the request of the legal holder of said note and in accordance with the provisions of said deed of trust, I, Wayne Blackman, Successor Trustee, will sell the property above described at public vendue, to the highest bidder for cash, at the South front door of the Adair County Courthouse, in the city of Kirksville, Adair County, Missouri, on January 7, 2022, between the hours of 9 o'clock a.m. and 5 o'clock p.m., and more particularly at 1:00 p.m., for the purpose of satisfying said indebtedness and the costs of executing this trust.

By: Wayne Blackman
Successor Trustee

Publication Dates: December 15, 2022, December 22, 2021, December 29, 2021 and January 5, 2022

634030cb

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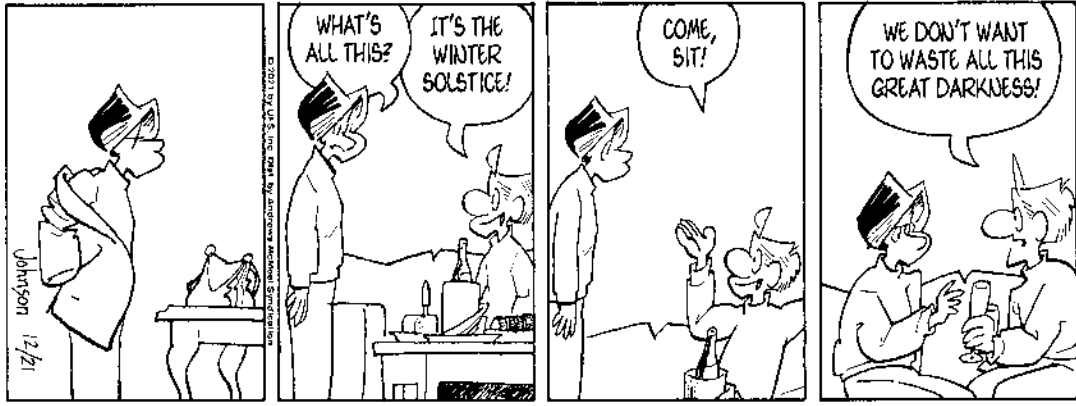


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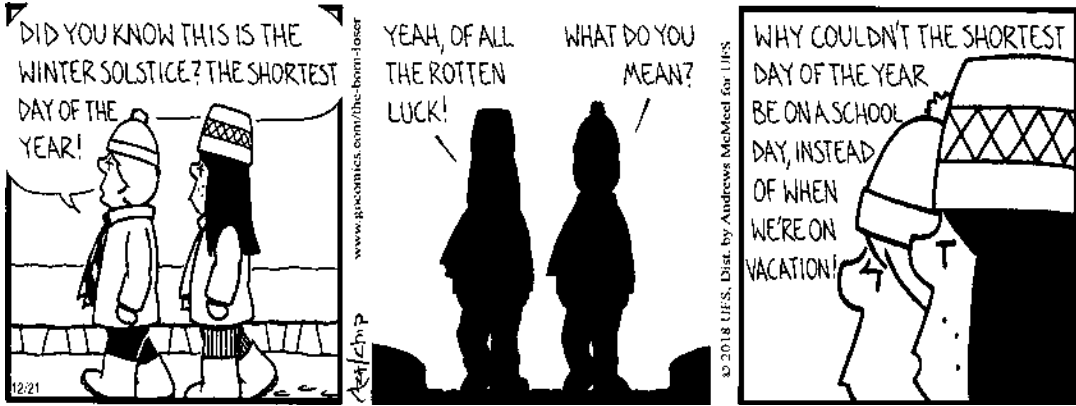
ARLO AND JANIS



BIG NATE



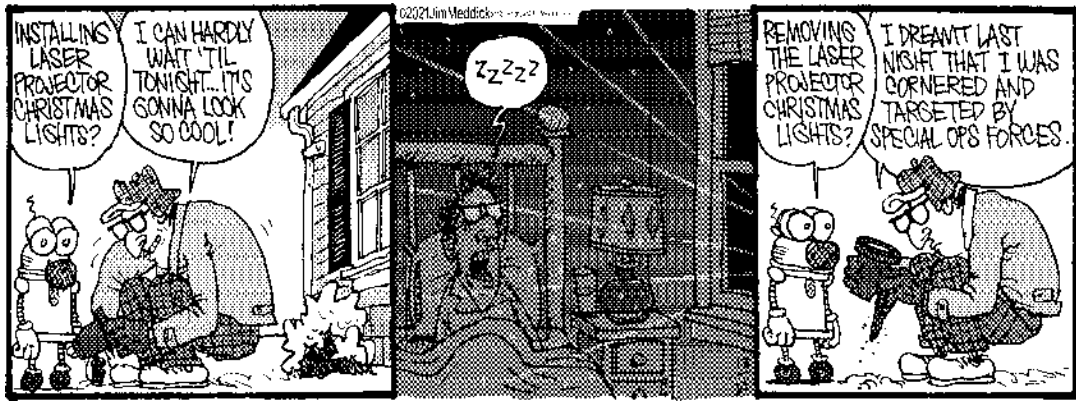
THE BORN LOSER



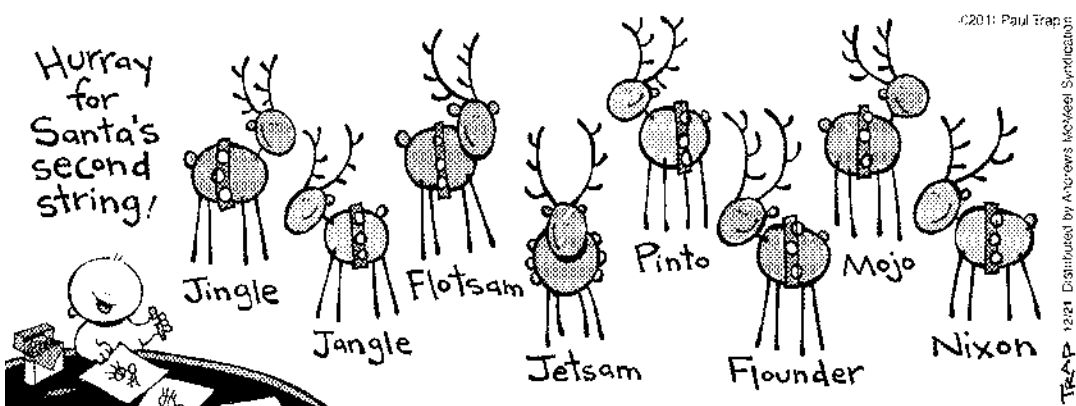
FRANK AND ERNEST



MONTY



THAT A BABY



SUDOKU

Here's How It Works: Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

PREVIOUS ANSWER

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

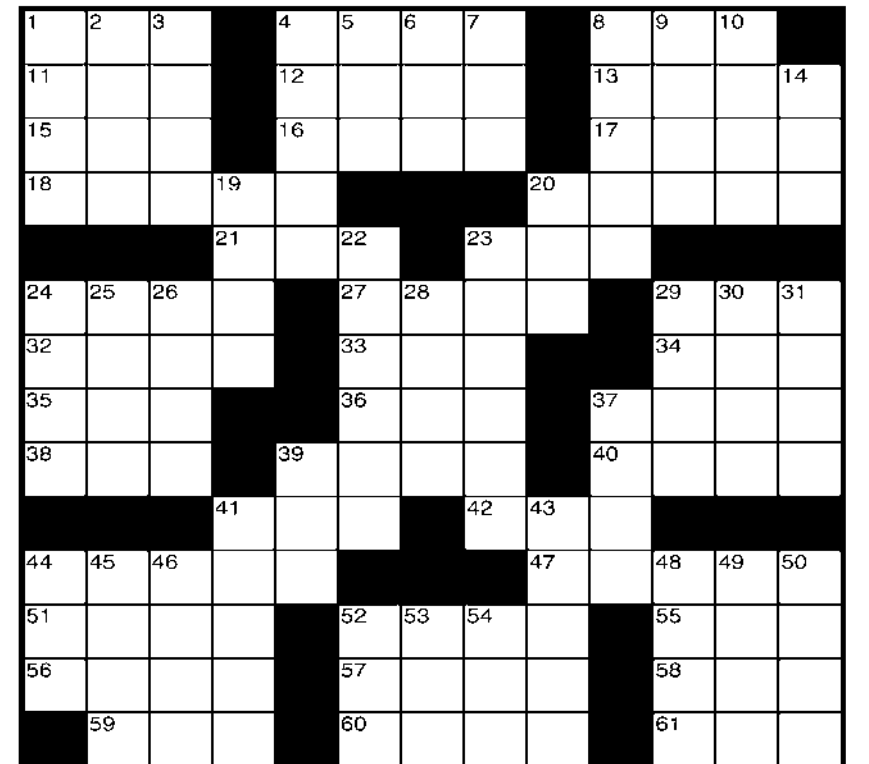
			2	9	8			
	2	4	6				3	7
			3	1	4	6	2	9
3			9				8	5
	1		4	8	6		9	
4	8		7					1
5	9	2	1	6	7			
8	7				2	5	1	
		6	8	3				

CROSSWORD

- ACROSS**
- 1 Set ablaze
 - 4 Monkey havens
 - 8 Attack word
 - 11 Sense of self
 - 12 Island near Corsica
 - 13 Make arrangements
 - 15 Checkmated
 - 16 Diamond or Simon
 - 17 — McEntire
 - 18 Feel anxiety
 - 20 Young girl
 - 21 Sallow
 - 23 Navy lawyer TV show
 - 24 Arizona city
 - 27 Woodwind instrument
 - 29 Notice
 - 32 Passable
 - 33 Habit
 - 34 Top
 - 35 Some toothpaste
 - 36 Co. honchos
 - 37 Large movie ape
 - 38 Devotee's suffix
- DOWN**
- 1 Lascivious
 - 2 Borodin prince
 - 3 Musical note
 - 4 "The Prisoner of —"
 - 5 Yea, to a matador
 - 6 Sapporo sash
 - 7 Mineo of old films



- 8 Bit of holly
- 9 Seine vistas
- 10 Hansoms
- 14 Voice vote
- 19 Not at home
- 20 "Diamond Lil"
- 22 Illustrator — Rockwell
- 23 Made a note
- 24 Cartoon bear
- 25 Small guitars
- 26 Fountain fare
- 28 Program flaws
- 29 Untidy person
- 30 "— kleine Nachtmusik"
- 31 Nervous
- 37 Eyeliner
- 39 Farm member
- 41 Bother-some
- 43 Houston MLBer
- 44 Yak
- 45 City near Des Moines
- 46 Water-filled trench
- 48 Be next to
- 49 Sweater letter
- 50 Garment part
- 52 Round Table knight
- 53 ET vehicle
- 54 Light beam



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HERMAN



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ASTROGRAPH BY EUGENIA LAST

Take a unique approach to the way you handle money, contracts and legal matters this year. It's OK to do things differently and to adapt your strategy to current economic times. Understanding what's possible and how you can use what's available to you to improve your life will help you excel. Think big, maintain integrity and embrace change.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23-Dec. 21) -- Get organized. Disregard what others do and concentrate on your responsibilities. Rethink your budget and spending, and don't make unnecessary last-minute purchases.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) -- Draw on experience, knowledge and common sense, and forge ahead. Share your thoughts and intentions with a loved one, and long-term plans will evolve. A change at home will require attention.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 19) -- Take the path of least resistance when you encounter a problem. Don't fight an impossible battle when all that's required are patience and the proper use of your skills.

PISCES (Feb. 20-March 20) -- Touch base with people you enjoy being around and catch up. A discussion will encourage you to think long and hard about how you spend your downtime. Perhaps some changes can be made!

ARIES (March 21-April 19) -- Watch how others react. It's essential to keep things fair and to offer as much as you receive. Your attitude will help you get the support you need and the rewards you deserve. Stick to the truth.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) -- Play to win. Concentrate on what you do best, and finish what you

start. Put your reputation on the line, and don't disappoint. A domestic matter will escalate if you are careless or aloof.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) -- Don't be gullible. Get the lowdown and look at your alternatives. When in doubt, take a pass. Discipline will pay off, especially when it comes to emotional matters. You don't have to please everyone.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) -- Pay attention to price tags, bargains and shared expenses. Stick to a budget and pool your resources. Working with someone will have benefits. Plan carefully and make wise decisions.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) -- Monitor situations and pick up the pace. How you handle matters will dictate your reputation. With honesty and tact, clear up emotional issues that are holding you hostage.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) -- Do something joyful and spend time with loved ones. Get in the spirit of the season and reminisce. Make a move that will alter your life. Make it a point to show your appreciation to your supporters.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23) -- Be careful whom you trust. Someone will misconstrue your actions if you don't say what's on your mind. Leave nothing to chance when dealing with matters that can affect your reputation.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 22) -- Convey what you want and what you are willing to give. Talks will lead to resolutions and help you come to terms with sensitive issues. A celebration is in order.

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ARLO AND JANIS



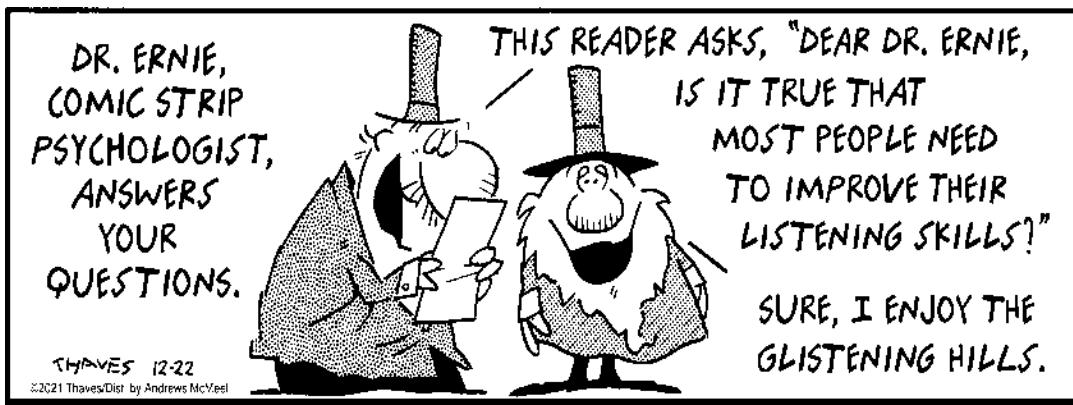
BIG NATE



THE BORN LOSER



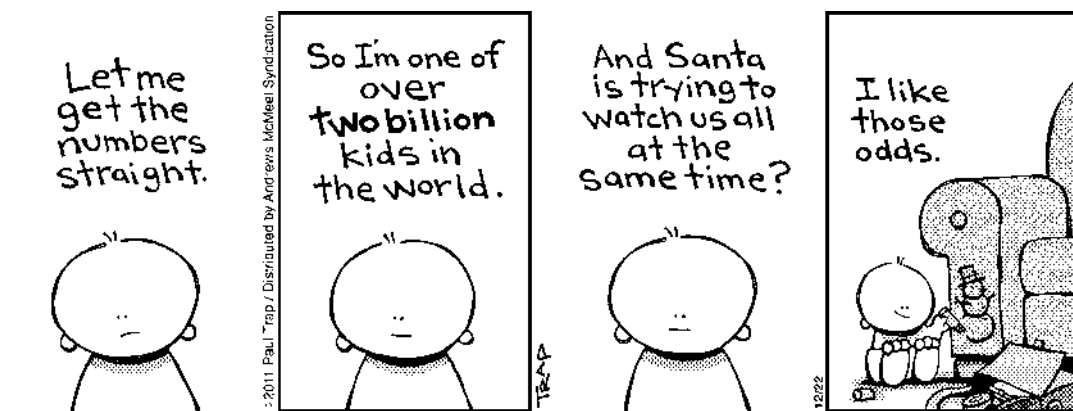
FRANK AND ERNEST



MONTY



THAT A BABY



SUDOKU

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

PREVIOUS ANSWER

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

CROSSWORD

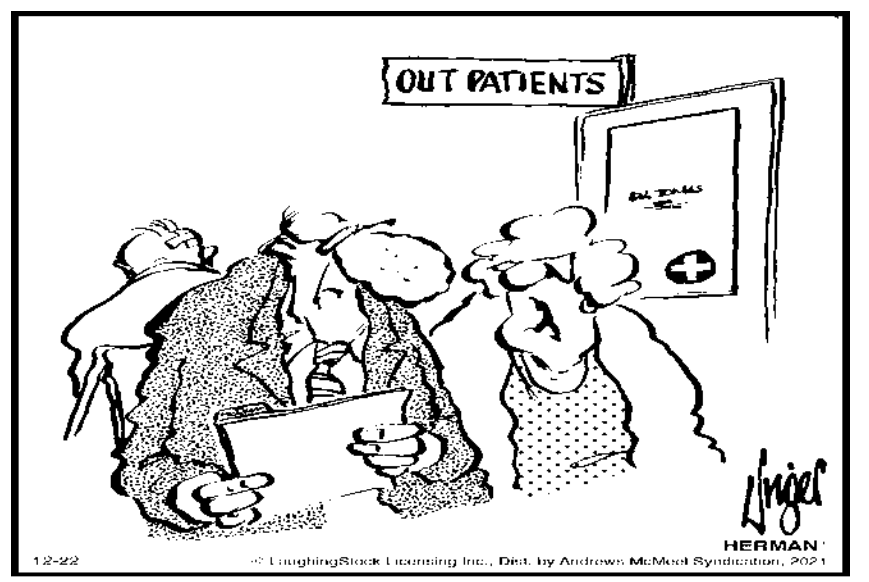
- ACROSS**
- 1 Ewe's offspring
 - 5 Tomahawk
 - 8 "CSI" network
 - 11 Guthrie of folk music
 - 12 Number of Muses
 - 14 Lodge member
 - 15 Chafe severely
 - 16 Put in order
 - 17 Luau welcome
 - 18 Complaints
 - 20 Like some orders
 - 22 Trigger's rider
 - 23 Flapjack chain
 - 24 Summer flower
 - 27 Swedish actress — Olin
 - 29 Dinny's rider
 - 30 Hesitate (2 wds.)
 - 34 Fine
 - 37 Familiar digit
- DOWN**
- 1 Be overdue
 - 2 Sheik, usually
 - 3 Mme.'s daughter
 - 4 Composition by Ravel
 - 5 Uneasy
 - 6 Noon, to Caesar
- 38 Exclamation of dismay**
- 39 Plato's last letter**
- 41 "Beg pardon!"**
- 43 Rocky Mountain tribe**
- 44 Hugs tightly**
- 46 Wild guesses**
- 49 Perform**
- 50 Linen color**
- 52 Loud noise**
- 54 Beaded shoe**
- 55 Active one**
- 56 Sleek sled**
- 57 "Humbug!"**
- 58 Recipe qty.**
- 59 Single Earth orbit**

Answer to Previous Puzzle

LIT	ZOOS	SIC			
EGO	ELBA	PLAN			
WON	NEIL	REBA			
DREAD		MISSY			
	WAN	JAG			
YUMA	OBOE	SEE			
OKAY	RUT	LID			
GEL	MGT	KONG			
IST	SASE	OBEY			
	PIN	DAH			
JAMES		SLABS			
AMOS	KURT	BEE			
WEAK	AFAR	UTA			
STY	YOYO	TAM			

1	2	3	4		5	6	7		8	9	10	
11					12			13		14		
15					16					17		
	18			19			20		21			
				22				23				
24	25	26				27	28					
29						30				31	32	33
34			35	36						37		
						38			39	40		
	41	42						43				
44						45		46		47	48	
49						50		51		52		53
54						55				56		
57								58			59	

HERMAN



ASTROGRAPH BY EUGENIA LAST

Work with people heading in a similar direction. Walk away from dead ends and situations that limit what you want to achieve. Set goals and adjust as you move forward. Consider every angle and pursue the path that favors your success. Do your own thing and develop promising partnerships. Personal growth and self-improvement are featured.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) -- Fix up your surroundings and enjoy the comforts of home. The changes you make should ease stress, not add to your anxiety. Stop worrying and start enjoying what life has to offer.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 19) -- Study situations thoroughly before you act. How you deal with partners, colleagues or superiors will lead to a change. You'll want to ensure that what takes place is beneficial.

PISCES (Feb. 20-March 20) -- A lifestyle change is overdue. Consider what makes you feel good about yourself and the direction in which you're heading, and put a strategy in place. It's time to get down to brass tacks.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) -- Enjoy the company of people who share your concerns and interests. A festive event will allow you to network with someone who can influence your career. Be entertaining and understanding.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) -- Insecurities and negativity will get you down. Walk away from people who are critical and divisive. Set new rules and standards that will help you head into the new year with optimism.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) -- Be a help, not a hindrance. Put your energy into domestic and relationship improvements. Follow through and live up to the promises you make. Explore your options, but do your fair share.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) -- Don't let gift-giving disgruntle you. Put a limit on spending and set your sights on things you can afford. It's the thought, not the amount you spend, that will put a smile on someone's face.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) -- Your emotions will vary due to outside influences. Maintain dignity and common sense, regardless of what others do or say. Put your heart and soul into something that you can control.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) -- How you relate to others will affect how they treat you. A positive attitude, kind gestures and patience will win favors and gain respect. A physical or personal change will prove enlightening.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23) -- Take care of unfinished business. If you count on others, you will be disappointed. Look for an opportunity to show what you have to offer. Problems at home will develop due to a lack of information.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 22) -- An emotional debate with a loved one will fester if you are indecisive. Gather facts and take a firm view to avoid being cornered by someone trying to take advantage of you. Trust your intuition.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23-Dec. 21) -- Set limits and stick to your budget. Put in place last-minute preparations that will position you for a brighter future. Follow your heart and commit to a plan. Make up your mind and get moving.

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LOCAL ROUNDUP

Dec. 18

High school boys basketball

Canton 76, Novinger 54

Novinger - Connor Robinson, 17 points; Adrian Peterson, 14 points.

Brashear 57, Braymer 48

Brashear - Brandon Jochimsen, 23 points, 10 rebounds; Carson Erwin, 18 points, 7 rebounds.

Macon 70, Battle 65

Macon - Boston Douglas, 26 points, 9 rebounds; Maurice Magruder, 18 points, 9 rebounds; Hayden Lovingier, 10 points.

High school girls basketball

Braymer 46, Brashear 30

Brashear - Alexa Borgmeyer, 8 points; Lacey Fisher, 7 points, 12 rebounds.

Macon 45, Highland 32

Macon - Lexi Miller, 20 points; Caylie Wilson, 10 points.

High school wrestling

Kirksville @ Sam Richardson Duels

Kirksville - Went 5-0; Jaden Crisp, Dominic Cahalan, Jaden Ballinger, Colton Hannah and Bryce Kertz all had undefeated days.

Dec. 17

High school girls basketball

Schuyler Co. 52, Paris 9

Schuyler - Jacie Morris, 16 points; Kait Hatfield, 13 points.

Atlanta 49, Brashear 45

Atlanta - Kyley Magers, 21 points; Sylvie Christensen, 10 points.

Brashear - Lacey Fisher, 16 points; 17 rebounds; Aubrey Borgmeyer, 10 points, 7 rebounds.

Polo 38, Putnam Co. 24

Putnam - No stats by deadline.

Scotland Co. 54, Harrisburg 25

Scotland - Alayna Whitaker, 27 points.

Kirksville 57, Fulton 31

Kirksville - Corinne Vorkink, 11 points.

Novinger 62, Bucklin-Macon Co. 37

Novinger - Abbi Fountain, 32 points; Kelsey Frederick, 18 points.

La Plata 66, Marceline 55

La Plata - Claire Coy, 21 points; Paige Carvajal, 18 points; Olivia Coy, 13 points.

High school boys basketball

Schuyler Co. 57, Paris 38

Schuyler - Kale Windy, 18 points; Cooper Amen, 15 points; Trevyn Small, 10 points.

Putnam Co. 58, Polo 29

Putnam - Lance Fowler, 14 points; Owen Ream, 13 points; Landon Wood, 12 points.

Novinger 65, Bucklin-Macon Co. 31

Novinger - Wes Findling, 25 points; Jace Brownell, 12 points; Connor Robinson, 12 points.

Kirksville 57, Fulton 54

Kirksville - Keaton Anderson, 22 points; Ike Danielson, 19 points.

Atlanta 93, Brashear 63

Atlanta - Landon Gilliland, 28 points; Roman Phillips, 17 points; Mason Reed, 15 points; Jason Viers, 13 points; JJ White, 11 points.

Brashear - Brandon Jochimsen, 22 points, 10 assists; Carson Erwin, 21 points.

Harrisburg 73, Scotland Co. 54

Scotland - Kabe Hamlin, 19 points; Owen Triplett, 18 points.

Marceline 64, La Plata 47

La Plata - Cutter St. Clair, 13 points; Lee Mack, 12 points.



Kansas City Chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes celebrates after defeating the Los Angeles Chargers in an NFL football game Thursday, Dec. 16, 2021, in Inglewood, Calif. The Chiefs won 34-28. MARCIO JOSE SANCHEZ - STAFF, AP

Chiefs alone in first place in AFC after some weekend help

By DAVE SKRETTA
AP Sports Writer

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — The Kansas City Chiefs took care of their business with a thrilling come-from-behind overtime victory over the Los Angeles Chargers last Thursday, avenging an earlier loss to their AFC West rival and taking a two-game lead in the division.

Then the Chiefs sat back and watched everyone else help them out.

On Saturday night, the Colts leaned on Jonathan Taylor to run past the New England Patriots for a 27-17 victory in Indianapolis. The next day, the Pittsburgh Steelers turned to their defense to shut out Tennessee in the second half of their win over the Titans to keep their own playoff hopes alive.

The results left Kansas City (10-4) alone with the best record in the AFC, one game ahead of the Patriots and Titans and two up on the Chargers, Colts and Bengals in the race for the lone bye and home-field advantage throughout the conference playoffs.

“They were great games to watch,” Chiefs coach Andy Reid said Monday. “I was a viewer like everybody because we didn’t have the guys here. But I enjoyed the competition and I know how it lines up — I see that. But the important thing is we take care of our business now like we have been the last few weeks and you know, don’t count on anyone but ourselves to get hat done. You have to go back to the process and the hard work and all those things.”

Indeed, it’s been a striking about-face for the Chiefs, who began the season 3-4 behind an inconsistent offense and dismal defense as they pursued a third straight trip to the Super Bowl. Patrick Mahomes suddenly looked as if the league figured him out, injuries had begun to mount and defensive coordinator Steve Spagnuolo was at a loss on his side of the ball.

The low point came during a 27-3 loss to the Titans, when the Chiefs allowed them to score on their first five possessions and trailed 27-0 at halftime. Kansas City only managed a field goal in the second half of the lopsided loss.

The turnaround wasn’t sudden by any means.

In fact, the Chiefs didn’t look a whole lot better the following week, when they squeaked out a 20-17 victory over the Giants at Arrowhead Stadium. Or the week after that, when they took advantage of Aaron Rodgers testing positive for COVID-19 to beat fill-in quarterback Jordan Love and the Packers 13-7 in a game just as ugly as the final score.

Yet they were wins. And at 5-4, the Chiefs finally had some optimism about the second half of the season.

It’s gone better than anybody outside of Kansas City could have imagined.

They romped past the Raiders in Las Vegas, finally putting on the field the kind of offense that fans have grown accustomed to seeing over the years. Then their once-maligned defense held three straight

opponents to nine points apiece in wins over the Cowboys, Broncos and Raiders. And with their stirring victory over the Chargers on Thursday night, the Chiefs take a seven-game winning streak into Sunday’s game against the play-off-contending Steelers.

“I’m not going to tell you that you can’t be excited to be in that position,” Reid, “but you better understand what got you in that position, and it wasn’t being giddy about it. It was about working.”

Or, as Mahomes said, “I think it shows the character of the guys in the locker room.”

“My first few years,” he said, “it’s always been jumping out to these leads and then we kind of try to coast almost into the playoffs. This year was the opposite of that. It was, we’re going to have to battle every single week to get to where we want to be at. But the job’s not finished.”

Not by any stretch.

The Chiefs can clinch their sixth consecutive AFC West title on Sunday if they beat the Steelers and the Chargers lose in Houston. After this weekend, they head to Cincinnati and Denver — two teams still in the playoff hunt.

“We have three more regular-season games, and then going into the playoffs, we have to find a way to continue to get better and better,” Mahomes said, “and try to build that momentum into the playoffs.”

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Baylor stays No. 1 in AP Top 25; Arizona rises to No. 6

By DAVE SKRETTA
AP Basketball Writer

Defending national champion Baylor maintained its top spot in The Associated Press men’s college basketball poll, though not without ceding a No. 1 vote to Arizona, while the six remaining unbeaten continued their rise on Monday.

The Bears ended a four-week streak of turnover atop the poll by taking care of Oregon last week, receiving 60 of 61 first-place votes from a national panel that regular covers college basketball. The Wildcats got the only other No. 1 vote and climbed two spots to sixth heading into a brutal stretch of games over the next three weeks.

Duke remained No. 2 after ending a two-week break with three easy wins. Purdue was third while Gonzaga and UCLA flip-flopped their spots with the Bruins — currently in the midst of a COVID-19 pause — rounding out the top five.

The Bears (10-0) reached the top spot last week after dominating then-No. 6 Villanova, something they never accomplished during their title-winning season. But they nearly became the fourth straight No. 1 to lose, falling behind the Ducks by four at halftime before rallying for a 78-70 victory in Eugene, Oregon.



Baylor forward Jonathan Tchamwa Tchatchoua (23) celebrates in the second half against Oregon during an NCAA college basketball game in Eugene, Ore., Saturday, Dec. 18, 2021. THOMAS BOYD - FREELANCER, FR24134 AP

“This was really our first road game in two years. Last year everyone had limited crowds,” said Baylor coach Scott Drew, who picked up his 400th career win. “People want to know how important crowds are; we’re the first No. 1 to win on the road.”

The Wildcats (11-0), who cruised past Cal Baptist, will have a chance to prove they deserve their No. 1 vote. They head to No. 19 Tennessee on Wednesday, then visit the Bruins on Dec. 30 and No. 8 South-

ern California on Jan. 2.

Throw in a trip to Arizona State on Jan. 8 and the Wildcats won’t play a home game for 24 days.

“I didn’t even know that, to be honest,” Arizona coach Tommy Lloyd said. “I always tell you guys, Tennessee on Wednesday and then Christmas. We have an awesome opportunity on Wednesday. We’ve had a really strong start. I played at Tennessee and it’s a monster, and it’s a great opportunity for us to go in there and test ourselves.”

The Wildcats were followed by seventh-ranked Kansas and two more unbeaten in the Trojans (12-0) and Iowa State (11-0), both of which moved up two spots. Alabama fell four spots after its loss to Memphis and rounded out the top 10.

“That’s the best Memphis has played all year, so you have to give them a lot of credit,” said Crimson Tide coach Nate Oats, whose team faces Davidson before a showdown with the Volunteers. “We have a lot of work to do.”

No. 11 Michigan State was followed by Auburn, Houston, Ohio State and Seton Hall. All moved up one spot after the Buckeyes had a game against Tennessee-Martin scrapped because of COVID-19 issues and the Pirates had a game against Iona called off.

Texas also moved up one spot to No. 16 and was followed by LSU (11-0), fast-climbing Xavier, Tennessee and Kentucky. The last five spots belonged to Colorado State (10-0), Providence, Villanova, Wisconsin and Texas Tech.

RISE AND FALLING

Xavier made the biggest jump this week, climbing four spots to No. 18. The Musketeers beat Marquette over the weekend and now head into a two-game doozy against Villanova and UConn for early Big East supremacy.

Villanova took the biggest toppling, falling from ninth to No. 23 after getting blown out by Creighton. The Wildcats’ 79-59 loss came after a 57-36 loss to Baylor, the first time since 1998-99 that they’ve lost consecutive games by at least 20.

HELLO AND GOODBYE

Providence entered the poll at No. 22 after its win over UConn while Wisconsin moved back into the poll.

“We knew coming on the road would be a challenge for us. I was proud of our players’ preparation,” Providence coach Ed Cooley said. “They did a really good job paying attention to detail and understanding the importance of a Big East game.” Dropping out were the Huskies and Arkansas, which lost to Speedy Claxton’s Hofstra over the weekend.

CONFERENCE WATCH

Big 12: 5 (Nos. 1, 7, 9, 16, 25)
SEC: 5 (Nos. 10, 12, 17, 19, 20)
Big Ten: 4 (Nos. 3, 11, 14, 24)
Big East: 4 (Nos. 15, 18, 22, 23)
Pac-12: 3 (Nos. 5, 6, 8)
ACC: 1 (No. 2)
West Coast: 1 (No. 4)
American: 1 (No. 13)
Mountain West: 1 (No. 21)

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