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Number 31

THE NORTHEAST NEWS

NOV. 12, 2025

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

As we move into the season of gratitude and giving, we want to take a moment to thank you for being part of the Northeast News family. For 94 years, this newspaper has been the trusted voice of Kansas City's Historic Northeast — connecting neighbors, celebrating our diversity, and making sure that the stories of our community are told with care and integrity.

Right now is an extremely important time to support local journalism. From November 1 through December 31, 2025, every donation made to The Northeast News will be matched dollar-for-dollar through the Institute for Nonprofit News' NewsMatch program. That means your contribution has double the impact — helping us continue to provide reliable, community-driven news and information to every household in our neighborhood.

We know that during the holiday season, there are many worthy causes asking for your support. But we ask you to consider this: Northeast News is the platform that helps those causes reach the people who care. We share where donations are needed, where assistance can be found, and who is making a difference right here in our community. When you support Northeast News, you're supporting every organization, every neighbor, and every story that depends on being heard.

Your partnership ensures that the most vulnerable members of our underserved community continue to have access to trustworthy information — about resources, events, opportunities, and the people working to make our neighborhoods stronger.

We also invite you to join us for Coffee, Culture & Conversation on Thursday, November 13, 2025, from 10 to 11 a.m. at The EGG (Economic Growth Gallery), 2659 Independence Ave., KCMO. This upcoming free monthly gathering is a chance to meet the team behind The Northeast News, share your own neighborhood updates, and connect with other community leaders and small business owners. Enjoy free coffee, sweets, and great conversation — and learn more about how your support fuels the stories that matter most.

As a nonprofit newsroom, we rely on reader support to keep our work going. Please consider making a tax-deductible donation today — and help us continue to shine a light on the people, challenges, and triumphs that define Kansas City's Historic Northeast.

Together, we can ensure that local journalism remains strong, independent, and accessible to all.

With gratitude,

The Northeast News Team

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YOUR NORTHEAST NEWS TEAM

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Healing House Expands Again, Purchasing Historic Firehouse on St. John Avenue

Bryan Stalder
Contributor

Healing House KC, a Kansas City-based recovery ministry that has transformed lives—and landmarks—throughout Northeast, has announced its latest major step in neighborhood revitalization: the purchase of the historic firehouse at 4444 St. John Avenue.

Built in 1908 as Fire Station No. 23, the two-story brick building once served as a vital hub for Kansas City's fire department, protecting this growing Northeast community before being replaced by the modern station at 4777 Independence Avenue.

"This beautiful landmark sits right in the heart of our campus, surrounded by our administrative buildings, and we couldn't be more excited about what's ahead," Healing House KC shared in a statement announcing this acquisition.

In the short term, the building will serve as recovery housing and a gathering place for recovery groups, while long-term renovation plans are developed. The new addition represents another chapter in Healing House's ongoing commitment to restore both lives and historic properties in the urban core.

Founded in 2003, Healing House is a faith-based nonprofit that provides housing and support for individuals and families recovering from substance use disorders. Its programs offer a holistic approach—addressing mental, physical, and spiritual healing—through recovery housing, outpatient services, counseling, peer support, and employment assistance.

Over the past decade, the organization has steadily grown its presence in the Indian Mound Neighborhood near the Gladstone Elementary School, acquiring and renovating several significant properties that now form a cohesive recovery campus centered around St. John Avenue.

Among these projects are:

The former Safeway grocery building, located directly across from the firehouse, which now serves as Healing House's main administrative offices and community outreach hub.

4444 St. John Ave., former location of Firehouse 23, was recently purchased by the Healing House KC.
Photo by Bryan Stalder, © Northeast News

The former Northeast Bowling Alley, located just behind the firehouse on N. Elmwood Avenue. Once an auto repair garage, then a bowling alley and dance hall, the structure was completely transformed following a $3 million renovation and officially reopened in March 2019 as the Recovery Community Center—a modern, welcoming space for support meetings, job training, and social connection.

4600 St. John Avenue, the building immediately west of the former Gladstone Theatre. After the theatre was destroyed by fire in 2011, Healing House acquired and salvaged the surviving portion of the structure, preserving a piece of local history while expanding its recovery housing footprint.

With the addition of the former Fire Station No. 23, Healing House's campus now includes some of the most recognizable landmarks along St. John Avenue—each reborn with a new purpose.

"Together, we're building brighter futures—one house (and one firehouse!) at a time," stated a post from Healing House's offical Facebook page on Nov. 6.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Thursday, Nov. 13- Coffee, Culture and Conversation, 10 to 11 am, 2659 Independence Blvd. Stop by the Northeast News office inside The EGG for this month's topic, Supporting Community Journalism. Learn how your donation can be doubled through our NewsMatch fundraising campaign, now through Dec. 31. Meet the News Staff, Inky, and enjoy a free cup of coffee and sweet treat. All are welcome.

Friday, Nov. 14- Neighbor Night at PH Coffee, 6 p.m., 2200 Lexington Ave. The evening's program will focus on neighborhood issues and creating activities for engagement. Meet your friends for coffee or a snack and take the survey. Neighbor Nights are held on 2nd and 4th Fridays of the month.

Friday, Nov. 14- St. Anthony's BINGO Night, 3208 Lexington (St. Joseph's Hall). Doors open at 4 p.m., BINGO begins at 6 p.m. Come early for dinner, stay to play and win prizes. BINGO (3 cards and 3 papers) $6, chili bowl $5, chili dog $3, beef hotdog $2, drinks and desserts $1.

Friday, Nov. 14 & Saturday, Nov. 15- Puppets a Glow Art Festival, 5 to 10 p.m. National WWI Memorial, 2 Memorial Drive. View giant glowing puppets throughout the evening. An illuminated puppet show, Fable of the Long Spoons, begins at 7:30 p.m. Free, for more information visit www.stonelionpuppets.org

Saturday, Nov. 15- America Recycles Day Eco Event, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. 1301 N Chouteau Trwy. Free drop off of computers, laptops, printers, monitors (charge for CRT monitors and TVs). Free hard drive cleaning.

Saturday, Nov. 15- Active Threat Awareness Workshop, 11 a.m., 2657 Independence Blvd. (Northeast Kansas City Chamber of Commerce). Trained staff from Titan Protection will lead this workshop, participants will learn prevention, mitigation, protection and response techniques to stay safe in Critical situations. Sponsored by the Independence Avenue Community Improvement District, free.

1932 Fun Fact

Getting ready for winter in 1932 meant it was time to lay in a supply of furnace coal. Standard Coal Co., located at Twelfth St. and Jackson Avenue, advertised as "The Home for Clean Coal" and the sole agent for the Crown Smokeless brand. With a wide variety of coal available, this company stated, "We cordially invite you to inspect the largest and most complete display of fuels in Kansas City at the lowest prices." Priced from $10 to $3.50 per ton (2000 pounds), free delivery was offered to addresses in both Kansas Citys, North Kansas City and Independence. Each order offered "satisfaction guaranteed or your money back."

Evergy Launches Urban Heat Island Program

Sponsored Content From Evergy

Evergy spearheaded, researched, and launched a new innovative initiative in partnership with the Independence Avenue Community Improvement District (CID), the Northeast Kansas City (NEKC) Chamber of Commerce, the Office of Public Council, Mid America Regional Council, the University of Kansas and UMKC.

The purpose of this collaboration was to bring together subject matter experts in urban temperature methodology and local advocates and stakeholders with a shared interest in reducing Kansas City's Urban Heat Island. Several urban neighborhoods were considered, with the Independence Avenue Corridor ultimately being selected. For Evergy, this initiative means that customers in this area will save energy by not having to run their air conditioning as much during the peak summer months. Additional benefits include lower overall ambient temperatures, improved air quality, increased property values, better stormwater management, and lesser heat related illnesses and deaths.

There are currently two activities taking place: tree planting and cool roofs installation. Tree planting activities began in 2024, and 1,700 trees are expected to be planted by the end of this year. Evergy will maintain and water the trees and continue planting new ones in the Northeast for at least the next two years. In addition to planting along the Independence Avenue, trees are also being planted in the surrounding neighborhoods. Residences in the Northeast are eligible.

The cool roofs are also underway. Cool roofs are a reflective coating that help buildings use less air conditioning during the summer. Dark and gray roofs were identified through aerial photographs, followed by on-site inspections. Evergy received great interest, with sixteen applications. To date, five projects have been completed, resulting in approximately 60,000 square feet of new, white roofs.

The plan is to reopen the cool roof upgrades and tree plantings next Spring. In the meantime, Evergy will be searching for more candidates. If you are interested in participating in the program, please reach out to UHI@evergy.com.

Public Invited to Help Shape Future of Bi-State Corridor at Dec. 9 Meeting

Bryan Stalder Contributor

The Mid-America Regional Council (MARC) is inviting residents to take part in a public meeting on Tuesday, December 9, from 5 to 7 p.m. at the Don Bosco Senior Center Community Room, 580 Campbell St., in Kansas City, Missouri.

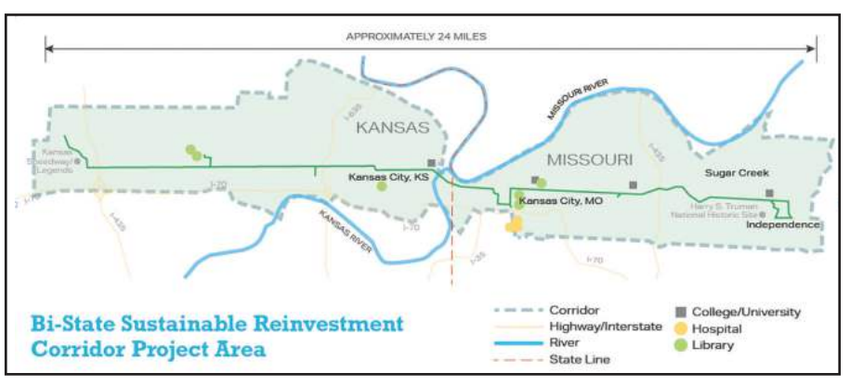
The meeting is part of MARC's ongoing effort to develop a long-term, multi-jurisdictional strategy for the Bi-State Sustainable Reinvestment Corridor — a 24-mile stretch that connects Kansas City, Kansas, with Independence, Missouri, passing through Sugar Creek and Kansas City, Mo. along the way.

This ambitious planning effort aims to strengthen infrastructure, transportation, housing, and economic opportunity along the corridor, which encompasses everything from dense urban neighborhoods and industrial zones to historic small-town districts and regional attractions.

Phase 2 of the study is now underway, and community input is once again shaping the vision for the corridor's future. At the December 9 meeting, participants will:

- Learn which bus rapid transit (BRT) route has been selected for the corridor.
- Explore early design concepts for new transit stations and neighborhood connections.
- Share feedback to help guide the next stage of planning.

To make the evening even more festive, the event will include seasonal drinks, snacks, and door prizes, with drawings for gift cards to corridor businesses, holiday hams or turkeys, and fruit baskets.



A Spanish translator will be on hand to assist attendees. MARC encourages anyone needing special accommodations to email lara@parsonkc.com at least 48 hours in advance. The meeting site is accessible by RideKC bus route 24.

The Bi-State Sustainable Reinvestment Corridor is coordinated by MARC in partnership with multiple cities, organizations, and regional agencies. The effort seeks to create a cohesive, long-term vision for connecting people across the state line to jobs, education, health care, housing, and transportation.

For more information, visit the project website or contact Ron Achelpohl or Lukas Yanni at transportation@marc.org or 816-474-4240.

New Pediatric Wing Unveiled, Ready For Patients

Dorri Partain
Managing Editor

A ribbon-cutting ceremony on Friday, Nov. 7, marked a vision 55 years in the making and opening of a new pediatric wing at Samuel U. Rodgers Health Center at 825 Euclid Ave.

This 40 room expansion concentrates children's health services — primary care, dental, behavioral health and nutrition —- with a first floor parking garage in this 30,000 square foot expansion.

This opening follows an expansion that created Sam Rodgers Place - an affordable income living complex- and Propeller Building community space (2050 E. 9th St.) that along with the current health center creates the Samuel U. Rodgers Healthy Living Campus. The ground-breaking for this new pediatric wing coincided with that ribbon-cutting celebration in June 2024.

Friday's ceremony opened with a poem composed and read by Taylor Brown, titled Healthy Kids, Healthy Families, Healthy Kansas City, a theme that was repeated in opening remarks made by Bob Theis, CEO for Samuel U. Rodgers Health Center.

"I can't wait for you to get in there and see it," Theis told attendees. "On behalf of the Board of Directors and every member of the Samuel Rodgers family, I welcome you to this historic day. We gather here not just to cut a ribbon, but to open a new chapter to the legacy that began 55 years ago with a vision — that every person regardless of circumstances, deserves access to compassionate high-quality health care.

Preventive care, wellness visits, dental care, behavioral health, nutritional support, all right there (pointing to new wing) under one roof- everything a family needs- in one location. These services mean healthier kids, stronger families, and a healthier community for generations to come. This new pediatric wing represents more than an expansion, it's a strategic investment in the future of our community," said Theis.

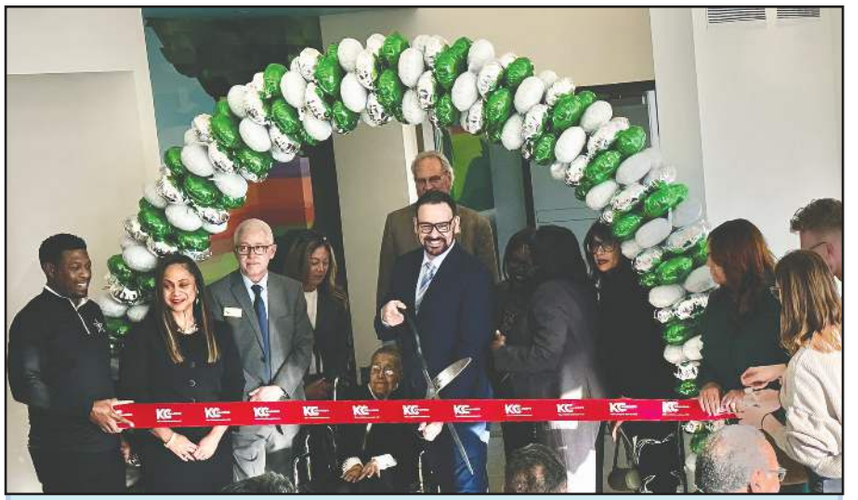
This expansion allows the 12 rooms that previously housed children's care to be opened up for new uses.

"I don't want to keep secrets from anyone, our next move is into Geriatrics, " Theis announced to a round of applause.

"So today, as we cut the ribbon, let us celebrate not only the building but the goals set forward in our mission. Let us remember the spirit of Dr. Samuel U. Rodgers, whose work continues to guide us," Theis concluded.

Rosalyn Rodgers Moore and Rita Rodgers Stanley, daughters of Dr. Samuel U. Rodgers (1917-1999) spoke about how their father began serving the community with a clinic at the Wayne Minor public housing complex, and expanding to create a health care facility in his own name, making sure all patients were treated with compassion and dignity.

Inside this new wing, visitors were welcome to view large, comfortable waiting areas, and two floors of exam rooms and staff spaces. For wellness visits, up to 27 rooms are available. Three rooms for Dental, four for Behavioral Health, six for WIC (Women, Infant and Children's nutrition program) and two lactation rooms will soon be greeting patients with a welcoming staff that will include three new physicians.



Samuel U. Rogers Health Center CEO Bob Theis is joined by members of the Board of Directors to cut a ribbon to open the new pediatric wing.

Photo by Dan Bethe

Pediatric wing examination room.
Photo by Dorri Partain

New murals created by Phil "Sike" Shafer and his team welcome pediatric visitors inside the second floor entrance and stairwells that connect the three floors. Families may enter through the health center's main lobby or from the first floor parking garage, providing easy access for parents with infant carriers or strollers.

A third-floor Conference Room includes a balcony that offers an expansive view of the Rodgers campus and the Kansas City skyline. Guests for the ribbon-cutting were treated to several photo ops as well as refreshments served in the conference room, which features a tribute to the man and doctor for which this center is named.

All pediatric services will be transitioned to this new space in coming weeks.

For more information about health care options for all ages, visit samrodgers.org or call 816-474-4920.

Imagine a Day Gala Draws Large Crowd, Raises Over $1 Million for Newhouse Domestic Violence Shelter

Larua Birdsong
Contributor

On Saturday, November 8, 2025, the Imagine a Day Gala benefiting Newhouse domestic violence shelter welcomed nearly 1,300 attendees to the Muehlebach Tower at the Kansas City Marriott Downtown, marking the largest turnout in the event's history.

The fundraiser generated more than $1 million, funds that will support Newhouse's emergency shelter, transitional and permanent housing, counseling services, legal advocacy, job training, and on-site children's programs, including the shelter's K-8 school.

Among those in attendance were Independence Avenue Community Improvement District (CID) Chairman of the Board and local business owner Charlie Passantino, accompanied by his daughter Nina. Several Kansas City Council members, community leaders, and local philanthropists also attended.

Jackson County Prosecuting Attorney Melissa Johnson served as a keynote speaker, addressing the role of the justice system in supporting domestic violence survivors. Three survivors who have completed the Newhouse program also spoke, detailing how the shelter's services helped them leave abusive situations, secure housing, and rebuild their lives.

Proceeds were boosted by a live auction that included items such as private dining experiences, sporting event packages, and vacation getaways.

Newhouse, founded in 1971, remains the only domestic violence shelter in Kansas City offering comprehensive, long-term residential services. The facility currently operates 88 emergency beds and has served more than 25,000 women and children over the past five decades.

© Laura Birdsong

Event organizers said the million-dollar total represents the highest single-night fundraising amount in the gala's history.

For more information about Newhouse services or to make a donation, visit newhouseshelter.org or call (816) 474-1110.

Independence Plaza & Forgotten Homes Neighborhoods Plan for Future Projects

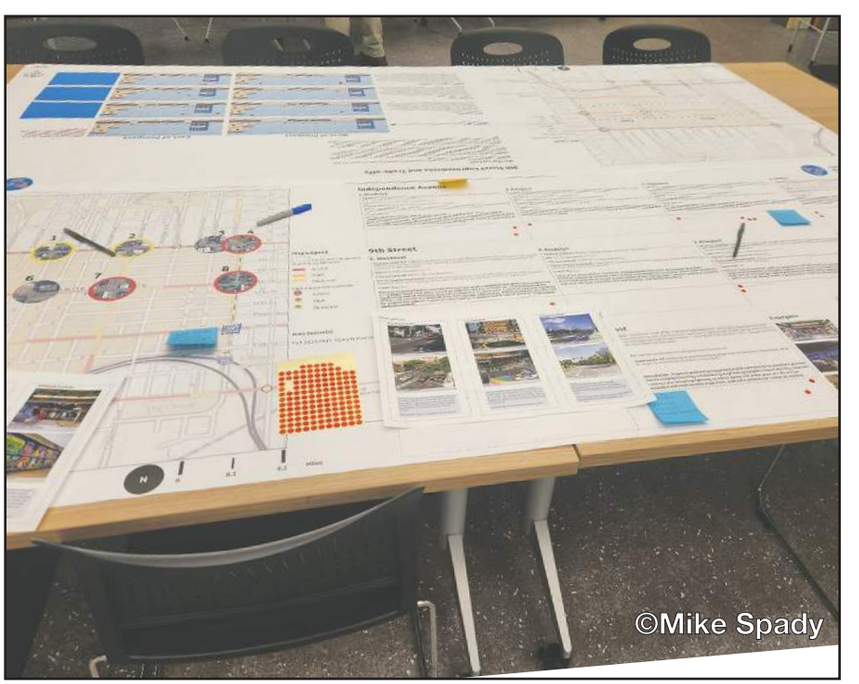
Mike Spady
Contributor

Residents and stakeholders gathered on Thursday, November 6, for a community planning workshop focused on the next phase of initiatives for the Forgotten Homes and Independence Plaza neighborhoods.

The neighborhood planning effort is being led by Hoxie Collective, a Kansas City-based community-planning practice that works with underserved neighborhoods to develop housing, transportation, and design strategies. The updated plan for the area is intended to include new affordable housing units, commercial space for local businesses, and improvements to streetscapes along Independence Avenue.

Discussion topics at the meeting included strategies for maintaining housing affordability, opportunities for small-business growth, traffic-calming measures, pedestrian safety, and enhanced lighting in the Independence Plaza corridor. The Forgotten Homes portion of the plan focuses on rehabilitating vacant properties and constructing new infill housing while preserving the historic character of the neighborhood. These priorities align with the grant-funded study for the area, which highlights housing and transportation issues.

For more information, contact Hoxie Collective via email at choxie@hoxiecollective.com.


©Mike Spady

Simple Estate Planning Steps for Business Owners

Dr. Adrienne B. Haynes, Esq., Contributor

I've always had a curiosity about strategies for sustainability and generational wealth. When I was in college at Buena Vista University, I worked for the phonathon team and I had a call with an alumni member who had experienced a career-ending work injury soon after he graduated. He told me sagely, "Whatever you're saving for retirement or disability, triple it." We talked a bit longer and I thanked him for his wisdom.

Early on in law school at UMKC Law, I read an article about a business owner who passed away and, unbeknownst to his wife, he had been experiencing financial difficulties. She had the unfortunate surprise of finding out about a second mortgage on the home due to business debts. In the midst of her grief, she was having to deal with a mess, and there was no plan in place for her.

One of my first jobs out of law school was at Legal Aid of Western Missouri. I spent my time learning about the impact of blight on our inner city communities and how nonprobate transfers could be used as a mitigation tool. This project allowed me the honor of attending and presenting at neighborhood association meetings and doing one on ones with proud grandparents. In the heart of the city, at their kitchen tables, we were able to prepare hundreds of beneficiary deeds free of charge thanks to grant funding.

Today, as an attorney and business consultant, I work with my clients on sustainable business and transferable wealth strategies. I still teach an advanced planning class in English and Spanish at a local senior center and try to work with all of the SEED Law clients on succession and exit planning. There are plenty of tools out there that can give you coverage, mitigate uncertainty, and give you the confidence to plan ahead.

A full estate plan can include a trust, a will, an advanced healthcare directive, power of attorney assignments, business governing document, supplemental memos and more. When considering the initial steps for an estate plan, consider the following strategies:

Activate a Health Plan

A health plan communicates your wishes about how you want to be treated and the health care you receive as you age. The legal document that can communicate your wishes is typically a Living Will outlining your Medical Power of Attorney.

Make decisions now so that you can ensure that your wishes will be honored in the even you're not able to speak for yourself. Transitioning those wishes from your mental hard drive onto physical documentation can help your loved ones and medical professionals if you experience any health issues.

While a health plan typically considers future needs, a crucial part of staying healthier, longer is by incorporating preventive health techniques and mental health management techniques today.

Use Your Available Nonprobate Transfers

When someone passes away, in order to transition items from their possession legally, the family typically opens a probate case. It is in this process that the judge reviews the will and divides the assets. This process can require both time and financial investments and for smaller estates, nonprobate transfers may be more beneficial.

A nonprobate transfer is a transfer of property that occurs upon the death of the decedent and that passes property to a beneficiary outside of regular probate channels.

Nonprobate transfers can be set up for one's home, car, bank accounts, and other assets:

- Beneficiary Deed-home
- Transfer on Death-car title
- Paid on Death-bank accounts

Invest in Insurance

In estate planning, it is important to consider personal insurance lines as well as commercial insurance options. Insurance helps mitigate the exposure to loss for property, personnel, net income and liability. Personally, business owners can implement health, life, disability, auto, home or renter's insurance policies. Looking ahead to succession planning and retirement, owners can also choose IRA based plans or qualified plans with a defined contribution and defined benefit. To determine which plan is most appropriate for your situation, consider your choice of entity and then start by projecting how much you, as the employer, are committed to contributing annually. Then evaluate the complexity and costs of various alternatives.

For the business, there are several types of available commercial insurance lines. A company with high exposure to risk should consider all available, including workers' compensation, general liability, auto, umbrella or excess, professional liability, employment practices liability, directors and officers, and cyber liability.

Understanding which insurance plan(s) are right for you and your business can be complex. This is a good reason to put together a complete professional team that can help navigate the options.

Set up a Succession Plan

Succession planning is the systematic approach to preparing a business for the exit of ownership or management by building a pipeline for recognizing and developing talent and business value. No matter what, none of us will be able to work in our companies in this same capacity, forever.

The best time to make a succession plan is when you start your business, but data shows that less than 30% of small businesses have a written succession plan (much higher for SEED Law clients, of course!). If you're already in business, start now and give yourself 3–5 years to fully develop and implement your plan. If you've done the seven steps to a succession plan and you don't like what you've found, there may be strategies you can implement to build business value through systems, processes, and guidance from professionals. Once your plan is created, it should be signed, stored, and

Continued on p. 11

Northeast Chamber of Commerce Collaborations

Northeast Kansas City Chamber of Commerce Spreads Holiday Cheer with Thanksgiving Basket Drive

Bryan Stalder
Contributor

As the holiday season approaches, the Northeast Kansas City Chamber of Commerce (NEKCCoC) is calling on local businesses and residents to help spread gratitude and generosity throughout the Historic Northeast. This year, the Chamber is organizing a Thanksgiving Food & Essentials Basket Drive to support local families in need.

The initiative aims to collect food, household items, and comfort goods that will be assembled into festive baskets and delivered to families before Thanksgiving. Donations can be dropped off at the Chamber office, located at 2657 Independence Blvd., Kansas City, Mo., through Thursday, November 20.

While traditional Thanksgiving foods like canned vegetables, boxed stuffing, and cranberry sauce are welcome, organizers emphasize that all types of contributions are appreciated — from kitchen supplies and winter clothing to gift cards and small family comfort items like board games or books.

"We want every business and neighbor to have an opportunity to participate," said Bobbi Baker of the NEKCCoC. "Even if you don't sell food, there are plenty of ways to make a family's holiday brighter — whether it's donating warm gloves, a roasting pan, or a gift card to a local restaurant."

Residents are also invited to nominate a

Sponsored by these NEKC Chamber Members:

family in need to receive one of the baskets. To participate, community members can submit a short paragraph explaining why a particular family would benefit from the gift, along with a shelf-stable item or winter item donation such as a coat, scarf, or gloves. These contributions will also support the Northeast High School Food Pantry, the "Northeast Village Pantry," ensuring the spirit of giving extends throughout the neighborhood.

For more information or to arrange a donation pickup, contact the Northeast Kansas City Chamber of Commerce or visit www.nekcchamber.com.

Together, the Chamber and the Historic Northeast community hope to make this Thanksgiving a little warmer, a little brighter, and a lot more hopeful for families right here at home.

This year's effort also highlights the Chamber's ongoing commitment to supporting local commerce while addressing community needs. By encouraging residents to purchase items and gift cards from neighborhood stores, the drive helps strengthen small businesses and fosters connections among neighbors. The NEKCCoC hopes that this initiative not only fills baskets with food and essentials, but also fills hearts with the shared joy of giving — reminding everyone that the true spirit of Thanksgiving is found in generosity, unity, and care for one another.

NEKC Chamber member benefits:

Monthly Business Section: The Chamber sponsors a monthly business section in the Northeast News. Businesses that commit to a monthly ad enjoy an annual feature story on their business.

Monthly Newsletter: Monthly member newsletter with updates on upcoming events, new businesses, workshops, and other important news impacting the Northeast business community.

Technical Assistance: The chamber provides technical assistance and referrals to help with business plans, developing working capital, and business licenses and permits.

After Hours Events: The Chamber invites members to host periodic After Hours events. These informal gatherings provide opportunities to enhance new and old relationships; exchange ideas on products, services, and sales; and meet new business owners and government officials.

Commercial Listings: The www.nekcchamber.com website provides free commercial property listings to members. property descriptions and a map help to encourage new businesses in the Northeast area. Non-members pay a fee for these listings.

Public Policy Advocacy: The Chamber promotes policies for economic development in the Northeast. Its Governmental Affairs Committee works with officials to keep members updated on business growth issues.

Facade Rebate Program: The Independence Avenue CID also offers member businesses the opportunity to apply for facade rebate funding to assist in updating or improving the exterior of their retail outlet in the CID's footprint.

Indian Mound , Artist and Chamber Reveal Avenue Mural

Dorri Partain
Managing Editor

While passers-by have noticed and admired the newest mural on Independence Avenue for several weeks, the Indian Mound Neighborhood Association hosted an official Reveal Party on Sat., November 1 to celebrate its completion.

On a grassy area adjacent to the mural site, the east-facing wall on Furniture La Cuadra (5500 Independence Ave.), attendees enjoyed an array of foods prepared by International Marketplace businesses —- spicy beef sambusas from Yasmeen Cafe, paletas from Frutopia, and cookies and cupcakes from Elvira's Panaderia.

Cupcakes —- chocolate and vanilla —-- featured dragon and panda decorations to match the Asian theme of this year's mural project.

A design submitted by muralist Michelle Renn, coincidentally an Indian Mound resident, was chosen from 11 submitted designs and work began the last week of September. "Progress was contingent on the weather and a full-time work schedule.

"I missed 2 days right off the bat due to rain," said Renn. "But after that I would say it was like adding a full-time job to my schedule for 2 weeks. I would work my normal full-time from 5 a.m. to 1 p.m., and then head over to the mural wall and work 1 to dusk. My husband Chris helped me most days, and my friend Miriam Feingold came by a few afternoons to help out as well, so I must give them credit for all their help."

Renn's design concept was originally designed for a different building, 99 Cent Bargain Market (5304 Independence Ave.), where two murals would cover the front and west side of the building. That owner had chosen the concept featuring dragons and pandas but backed out of participating. In its place, Furniture La Cuadra was approached and plans proceeded with an altered design due to a longer wall.

"I added a new element (the pagoda) into the center to tie the two scenes together better," said Renn. "The furniture store was extremely accommodating and they let us store our scaffolding in the building, so that was extremely helpful!"

In addition to challenges of reworking her design, reestimating how much paint would be needed and assembling and disassembling the scaffolding, Renn had planned a family trip to Florida the first week of October.

"I found out I got the mural (contract) only two weeks before our trip- but two weeks was the original time frame given, so I knew that if we could just stick to the original two-week window I would have had anyway, we could get it done before our trip, " said Renn.

Funding for this mural was from the City's Neighborhood Empowerment Grant, submitted by the Indian Mound Neighborhood Association, which in turn worked with the Northeast Kansas City Chamber of Commerce as the fiscal agent to disperse the funds and put out the call for artists, among other details.

In this collaboration between the Chamber of Commerce, association president Jimmy Fitzner said that this project offered him and the association the opportunity to improve relationships with businesses within the Indian Mound boundaries. Without having input to help select the mural's location, he stated that he probably wouldn't have developed the relationship with Furniture La Cuadra's owner that he has during this project.

Oz Aguilar, owner of Furniture La Cuadra, echoes Fitzner's comments about this collaboration.

Aguilar opened his business in 2019, but other than signage, had not planned any exterior upgrades as he leases the building for the furniture store and tire shop next to it. The building owner approved the mural installation, and Aguilar stated they were both excited to participate in a program that highlights all the cultures of businesses found along Independence Avenue.

"People have been coming in to ask about the mural, they take pictures. The kids love it, it's been a real boost for us," Aguilar said.

Indian Mound Association President Jimmy Fitzner, artist Michelle Renn, Chamber of Commerce representatives Bobbi Baker and Rebecca Koop, and Indian Mound board members Dustin Fish, Kaye Hopkins and Riley Roche were all involved in this mural project revealed on November 1.

Photo by Dorri Partain, © Northeast News

The rest of the story...

Bryan Stalder
Contributor

In the autumn of 1916, a lanky young man of just fifteen years shuffled through the crowded halls of Northeast High School, his sketchpad tucked under one arm like a shield against the world. He was a quiet sort, with sharp eyes that darted to every shadow and curve, already dreaming in lines and forms that others couldn't quite see. Earnest and a bit withdrawn— he navigated algebra and history lessons that felt as distant as the stars he sometimes etched in the margins of his notebooks.

His family's home at 23rd & Hardesty Avenue was small, plain, and nothing special to passersby. But inside, at the kitchen table, the young man would sketch. Over and over, he filled scraps of paper with drawings. A mere hobby which helped him to develop an eye for detail and a hunger to create.

His father had come a long way to build this life. A German immigrant and a studio photographer, he captured frozen moments on glass plates and early film stock. It was in his father's dim, chemical-scented darkroom that this young man first glimpsed the magic of the film industy—flickering reels of shadow and light that danced like living drawings.

And then one day, his father was gone- walked out and never came back. The young man was forced to drop out of school, not because he wanted to, but because someone had to keep food on the table for his mother and four younger siblings. He took a job engraving checks at a bank note company, his steady hands learning deft precision and repetition.

This skill carried him to the Pesmen-Rubin Commercial Art Studio, a bustling hive of ink and ambition in downtown Kansas City. By 1919, at eighteen, he was already a standout commercial artist and illustrator with the steady hand of a surgeon. Expert in drafting, he wielded lettering like poetry and airbrushed shadows with surgical grace, turning ads into windows to other worlds.

Then, in the fall of that year, a new apprentice arrived—another Missouri native, fresh-faced and full of fire— was hired to hustle sketches for holiday catalogs. The two teens, both on the cusp of manhood, found themselves side by side at scarred drafting tables, the air thick with the scent of India ink and fresh newsprint.

But the art world, like life, had its ebbs and flows. Come the new year, after the holiday rush faded, the orders dried up. The studio's doors swung shut on both of them—laid off, pockets light, futures adrift. Yet in that sting of rejection, opportunity flickered.

Together, the two young men hustled for jobs, drew ads, and made slides for local theaters. Then came something bigger. An experiment in moving drawings. A little studio at 31st and Forest, filled with teenagers who believed they could turn doodles into stories. The dream was too big for their bank accounts, and the company didn't last. But the lessons did.

When the time came to invent something new—something the world had never seen—it was the quiet one, the young man from Hardesty Avenue, who sat down with his pencil and made it real.

The drawings poured out of him, hundreds a day. He went on to create a character that would outlive them both. A cheerful little mouse, drawn with simple lines, but filled with life. The partner with the big dreams gave it a voice and a name, while the partner with skilled hands gave it a face the world would never forget.

The whole world knows the dreamer by name… Walt Disney. But the lesser-known boy from Hardesty Avenue was Ub Iwerks. Together, they gave the world Mickey Mouse.

And now you know the rest of the story.

To learn more about the nearly forgotten history of Ub Iwerks, read A Mouse Divided: by Jeff Ryan published in 2019.

Mike Westby has also written a book, which was released in 2024, titled "Disney History: Rare & Unknown" where he identifies Ub Iwerks' childhood home as the former location of The Yum Yum Express, a restaurant that closed in 2020. The property is currently vacant.

Simple Estate Planning *Continued from page 7*

reviewed every 1–2 years as well to account for any leadership, business, or legal changes.

Store and Review

Now that you've done the hard work of developing your plan, seal it with a signature and store it where your business partner, financial agent or power of attorney would be able to easily access when if needed. Because of changes in law, circumstance, and wishes, estate plans should be reviewed every 2–3 years. Another good review reminder is when you experience any of the five D's:

- You reach a new DECADE
- You experience the DEATH of a family or friend
- You DIVORCE
- You receive a new DIAGNOSIS
- You have a significant DECLINE in your condition

Your professional team should also provide counsel in the process and may present good options for storage.

Talking about big life changes or mortality can be tough, but not having a plan makes things tougher. This article is an overview of estate planning considerations and does not cover every legal right or obligation, consideration, exception, or restriction. These decisions are complex, and should be well researched and discussed with professionals before being made.

To contact Haynes, email *adrienne@seed.legal.*

Northeast News Invites Community Voices: Share Your Art, Stories, and Creativity

Bryan Stalder
Contributor

At the Northeast News, we believe that the strength of our neighborhood lies in the creativity, talent, and stories of the people who call Historic Northeast Kansas City home. Our community is full of poets, painters, photographers, musicians, and storytellers—and we want to make sure you have a place to be seen, heard, and celebrated.

We're inviting local residents to submit poems, creative writing, artwork, and even community news stories to be featured in our newspaper and online. Whether you're an experienced artist or a first-time writer, this is your opportunity to share your voice with your neighbors and contribute to the story of our community.

If you'd like to see your artwork featured on the cover of the Northeast News in 2026, or to learn how to get involved with our creative community, email northeastbuzz@gmail.com for more information.

A Home for Creativity and Growth

In 2022, the Northeast News moved from its longtime home on St. John Avenue to a new creative space at the Economic Growth Gallery (EGG), located at 2659 Independence Boulevard. Around the same time, the Northeast News became a nonprofit organization, committed to strengthening our neighborhood through storytelling, civic engagement, and the arts.

The EGG was designed to be a small business incubator—a place where creativity can grow into opportunity. For those whose passions include writing, art, photography, or community journalism, the EGG and the Northeast News aim to be partners in your journey. We want to help residents develop their skills, build creative habits, and imagine how their passion might one day become a career.

By publishing local work in our pages, we hope to provide a launching pad for creative expression—one that helps transform hobbies into professional pathways.

Sharing Stories, Old and New

This fall, editor Bryan Stalder launched our creative writing series with a three-part story titled The Avenue Inn, a piece of fiction inspired by real conversations and experiences gathered from neighborhood bars and taverns across Northeast Kansas City.

We're now continuing the series with Betsy Cochran, who is writing historical fiction based on her grandmother's life in the Northeast nearly a century ago. Her stories offer a moving reminder that while our community continues to evolve, its heart and spirit remain constant.

And looking ahead, we're excited to share an excerpt from The Crow's Omen, a novel by Northeast resident and attorney Jerry Potocnik, as part of our growing lineup of locally written works.

Be Part of the Story

The Northeast News isn't just about headlines—it's about the people who make this neighborhood what it is. Whether you're interested in reporting on community meetings and local events, or sharing your own creative work through poetry, memoirs, or short fiction, we welcome you to join us.

Every story, every sketch, every photograph has the power to inspire someone else. Together, we can make the Northeast News not just a newspaper, but a living gallery of our community's creativity and resilience.

If you have a story to tell, a talent to share, or a dream you're ready to grow, we want to hear from you.

Submit your work or learn more at: northeastbuzz@gmail.com

Visit us at: 2659 Independence Blvd., inside the Economic Growth Gallery

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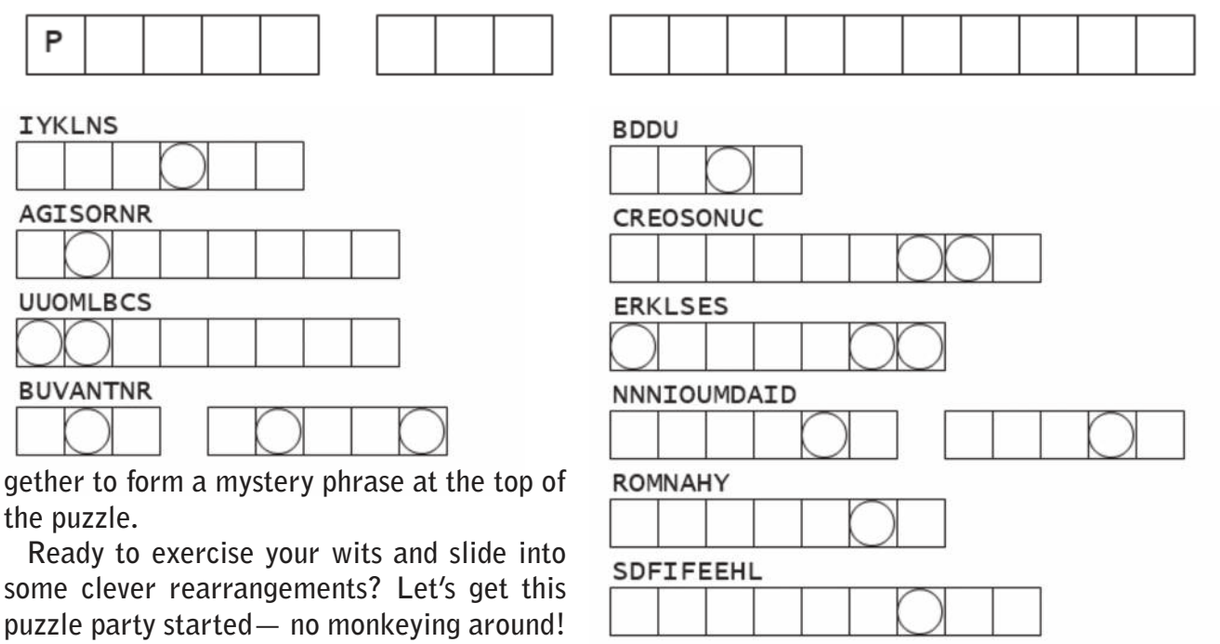
Hey there, puzzle pals! This is Inky The Newscat, your ink-redible mascot from Northeast News, here to spill the beans on today's brain-teaser. I'm feeling extra "recreational" today—after all, who doesn't love a good swing at solving mysteries, or maybe even kicking back with some wordplay that gets your heart pumping like a playground romp? Your mission: Unscramble each anagram clue to reveal words or phrases tied to the theme. But don't stop there! Keep an eye on those circled letters in your solutions—they'll shuffle together to form a mystery phrase at the top of the puzzle.

Ready to exercise your wits and slide into some clever rearrangements? Let's get this puzzle party started— no monkeying around!



Under the Kansas City Sky

Historical fiction written by Betsy Cochran

June 8, 1921
Kansas City, MO

I was born just before dawn on a June morning in 1921, beneath a Kansas City sky already heavy with summer heat. No cigars, no champagne—only my father, Frank, drifting in and out like a ghost with whiskey on his breath, and a half-trained osteopathy student, Dr. Virgil Bishop, passed out cold on what we generously called a "divan" (though any respectable visitor would have called it a lost cause).

It was my eldest sister Marie, barely eighteen, who delivered me while my mother, Marjorie, lay exhausted on sweat-soaked sheets. That night Marie collapsed on the cedar chest—the same chest that would outlast my childhood chaos, and follow me for the rest of my life.

Our cramped two-bedroom apartment at 1010 Park Avenue in Kansas City was already bursting with my mother, part-time father, and six siblings: Marie, Edward, Catherine, Grace, Dorothy, and baby Regina, who was sleeping soundly in her dresser-drawer crib. That nap turned out to be the last gift she gave anyone for years.

I was my mother's tenth living child, arriving just thirteen months after Regina. "Irish twins," the doctor slurred when he briefly roused—until Dorothy, only six and sharp as a tack, corrected him: "Not unless it's under twelve months." Even at six, Dorothy wasn't about to let bad math slide.

My mother was forty-four and exhausted, and the household already ran on borrowed energy. By the time I arrived, it was hardly a surprise anyone noticed. Looking back, it's fair to say I was born into a house balanced somewhere between chaos and exhaustion.

"Mom looks strange," Grace whispered, tugging at Marie's sleeve. "Strange," she repeated, "like a ghost."

Marie froze, eyes narrowing as she took in their mother's pallor. "I don't know, Grace," she murmured, exhaustion creeping into her voice. She had been up all night, coaching Mom through labor—just as she had the year before with Regina. "Maybe wake the doctor? I have to get to work." She grabbed her handbag and headed for the door.

Not two seconds later, Edward, our no-good brother, burst in, chest heaving, eyes darting toward the windows.

"Where's Frank? And who the hell is that?" he demanded, pointing at the unconscious doctor.

"Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, where'd that baby come from?" His finger jabbed toward me, a tiny bundle on our mother's chest. Then, realizing the blasphemy, he promptly crossed himself for good measure.

Just then, Dorothy piped up from the doorway, voice trembling: "Mom's shaking."

That's when everything erupted. Grace, all of twelve but already bossy enough to run the household, ordered Dorothy to sprint for St. Aloysius, her skirt flying as she bolted down the block. Edward, meanwhile—resident Houdini—made his exit through the bathroom window, shimmying down the rusted fire escape like he'd practiced it. Grace leaned out the window just in time to watch him vanish toward Olive Street in rags that confirmed what everyone suspected: he'd been living under the viaduct for weeks.

When the Sisters of Charity arrived, they brought order with them. Sister Bernadette barked for the parish wagon, Sister Margaret fetched clean linens, and Sister Agnes worked briskly, her rosary clacking like a metronome. Neighbors peeked from their doorways as our mother, Marjorie, was carried out, wrapped in makeshift sheets and lifted into Brother Conway's horse-drawn cart bound for St. Mary's Hospital.

Inside, Sister Cecilia took me in her arms, soft-voiced and Irish-lilted, counting my fingers and toes. "What's this child named?" she asked.

"Delores!" Dorothy shouted, desperate to claim the name for me.

"No," Grace said firmly, smoothing my blanket with authority that belied her years. "This is Nadine."

Nadine's Northeast follows the life of Nadine Burnett (née Pulliam), who was born in 1921 and spent most of her life in Northeast Kansas City, where she raised ten children amid the city's rapid changes in the 20th century. Written by her granddaughter, Betsy Cochran, these historical fiction stories draw from Nadine's lived experiences, local history, and a little family lore. Each installment stands alone while weaving into a larger portrait of Nadine's past. For a deeper dive, visit betsycochran.substack.com, where you can subscribe for free or choose a paid plan for extended content.

A Night Serving on the Salvation Army's Street Outreach Mobile Canteen

@ 2025 by Lonnie England

On a rainy Kansas City night
The canteen stops at a traffic light.

Just up the road a woman shakes;
Her body's wet, her stomach aches.

The truck pulls up and honks its horn
And others come; a line is formed:

A barefoot man with a torn Chief's hat,
A bearded fellow and his cat,

A mother with her kids in tow,
A teenage boy with a meek "Hello,"

Two men with plastic bags for coats
And tattoos on their necks and throats.

The canteen window opens wide.
There's empathy and love inside,

For from within, the crew extends
Grocery sacks to the muddled friends.

There'll be a meal inside each sack:
A sandwich, fruit, a drink, a snack.

A bowl of chili then appears.
It's hot, it's hearty; someone cheers,

"It's chili night! Oh, man! All right!
It's perfect for a rainy night!"

"Any socks?" Yes, here's a pair.
"Thank you, ma'am." Now you take care.

"I'm John," he whispers to the crew.
God bless you, John, and the others, too.

Some will chat. Some ask for prayer.
They thank the Army for being there.

The truck heads out to other stops,
Under bridges, in back of shops,

Junkyards, parks, abandoned spaces;
Homeless live in all these places.

The truck's horn honks, wet beings appear.
They know their daily bread is here.

Two hours go by, the journey ends.
Tomorrow, it begins again.

Tonight, the 4-man crew observed
That 160 mouths were served.

Back home, I close my eyes and pray
That these lost sheep will find their way.

And in my cozy bed I know
But for the grace of God I go.

Checks made out to The Salvation Army, with "Mobile Canteen" entered in the Memo portion of the check, can be mailed to The Salvation Army, 3637 Broadway Blvd., Kansas City, MO 64111. Donate online at https://give.salvationarmyusa.org/

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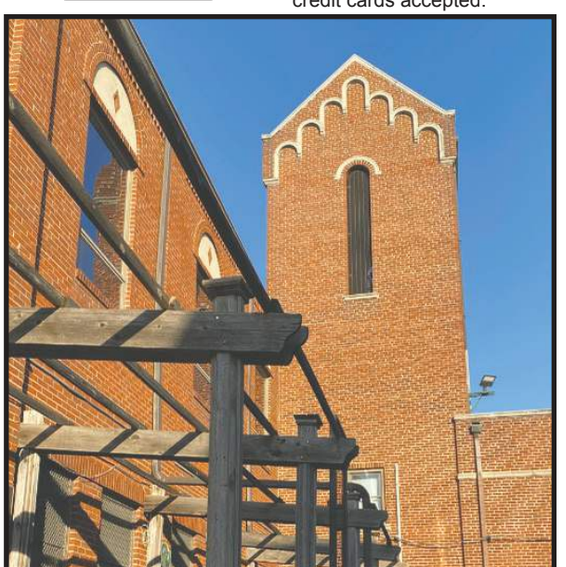
REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS CONSTRUCTION MANAGER AT-RISK RFQ# 0001 NOTICE

The Kansas City International Academy of KCMO, MO ("School") will accept qualifications for a construction manager at-risk in accordance with RSMo § 67.5050 and as described in the attached request. Qualified organizations ("Respondent") are invited to submit four (4) copies of a formal qualifications proposal as described herein.

QUALIFICATIONS SUBMITTAL SHALL BE LABELED "QUALIFICATIONS-CONSTRUCTION MANAGER AT-RISK" AND ADDRESSED TO:
Attn: Dr. Stacy King, Superintendent
Kansas City International Academy

414 Wallace Ave, Kansas City, MO 64125
PROPOSALS MUST BE RECEIVED BY:
1:00 p.m., November 21, 2025
Questions may be directed to:
Attn: Dr. Stacy King, Superintendent
Email: sking@kcia.us



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