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# NORTHEAST NEWS

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**These funds are vital to our operation, but community journalism requires year-round effort. While we continue to apply for grants, sell advertising, and seek local sponsors, individual donations remain a cornerstone of our sustainability.**

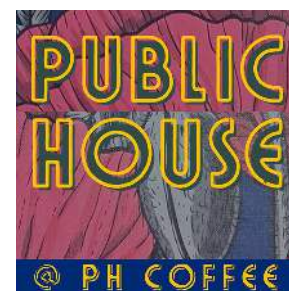
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**Thank you for believing in the importance of local news.**

**With gratitude,**

**The Northeast News Team**

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# Budd Park Playground Remains Closed, Awaits Replacement

**Dorri Partain**  
Managing Editor

Since last summer, families headed to Budd Park's southeast playground have been met with fencing and "Playground Closed" signage. The north playground, accessible from St. John Ave. has not been affected and remains open.

After residents questioned the playground's closure, The Northeast News contacted Kansas City Parks & Recreation and received a response on August 28 that cited safety concerns as the specific reason for the closure and the supervisor and Planning Division were working to determine if the playground should be repaired or replaced.

Swings near the playground are still accessible and not included in this closure.

In March of this year, Indian Mound resident Sarah Kaldenburg visited Budd Park with her young daughter and was surprised to find the playground was still closed, but the fencing was haphaz-

ard and the equipment was still accessible for anyone wanting to enter.

Kaldenburg emailed the Parks department and eventually received this response March 26, which she forwarded to The Northeast News.

"The playground surface contains multiple foot entrapment and trip hazards. Additionally, there are several potential entanglement risks throughout the structure. Numerous components have been vandalized, rendering the playground unsafe for public use."

An additional replay from Deputy Director James Wang stated that the playground was slated to be removed and replaced with new structures in 2027.

This playground



The parks department closed the southeast playground last summer and determined it will be replaced next summer.

**Photo by Dorri Partain**

was added to the park in 2006 and has been a continual site for graffiti and trash. Concerned about the condition last year, Kaldenburg recruited several other mothers and neighbors to remove graffiti from the equipment on April 27, 2025.

"It kind of sucks that we spent time to clean

it then a couple of months later they close it," said Kaldenburg.

During a discussion about Budd park improvements at the April 20 meeting of the Indian Mound Neighborhood Association, several residents stated that children were still playing on the equipment, despite the signs and partial fencing.

## COMMUNITY CALENDAR

**Thursday, April 30-** Art Club, 6 to 7 p.m., North-East Branch Library, 6000 Wilson Ave.

Come paint, draw and crafts during this creative session for kids ages 5 to 12. Free.

**Friday, May 1-** Family BINGO Night, St. Anthony Catholic Church St. Joseph Hall, 3208 Lexington Ave. Come for dinner, stay for BINGO. Doors open at 4 p.m., meatball sub sandwich \$5, chips, drinks and dessert \$1 each. BINGO play, 3 cards and three papers \$10. Prize items, cash prizes and raffle.

**Friday, May 1 & Saturday, May 2-** Guadalupe Center Cinco de Mayo 100th Anniversary, 1015 Avenida Cesar Chavez. Friday, beginning at 5 p.m., Saturday at 12 p.m., local vendors of food and art, live music, family fun zone. See story on page 4.

**Saturday, May 2-** Neighborhood Dumpster Day, 8 a.m. to 12 noon, various locations. Check the complete list on page 14.

**Saturday, May 2-**The Art of Being AANHPI: Kansas City's 6th Annual AANHPI (Asian American, Native Hawaiian, & Pacific Islander) Heritage Festival, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Zhou B Art Center, 1801 E. 18th St. Food and clothing vendors, art exhibit, music and kid's activities. Tickets and more information available at <https://hellagooddeeds.org/>.

**Monday, May 4-** Star Wars Day (May the Forth Be With You)

In addition to replacing the southeast playground, several improvements are slated for Budd Park in 2027. Jessica Blackwell, Senior Landscape Designer for Parks & Recreation, told meeting attendees that funding to im-

prove the park's pathways- from asphalt to concrete- as well as an ADA compliant access road to the historic stone shelterhouse and renovations to the long-shuttered shelter were approved and awaiting final designs.

# Guadalupe Centers Celebrates Centennial Cinco de Mayo Fiesta

Daisy Garcia Montoya  
Education Reporter

Guadalupe Centers annual Cinco de Mayo Fiesta is back and this year will be celebrating its centennial edition.

This free annual event hosted by Guadalupe Centers (1015 Avenida Cesar E. Chavez), the longest continuously operating organization serving Latinos in the United States, hopes to continue its mission of highlighting Latino culture while celebrating its heritage and significant milestone.

This year's festivities will take place across a two-day span, May 1-2, in Kansas City's Westside Neighborhood and will feature interactive activities, entertainment, food and art vendors, and will remain family friendly.

Director of Youth Development Gina Coronado has seen her fair share of Cinco de Mayo Fiestas over the nearly three decades she's worked with Guadalupe Centers.

As the go-to person for youth development within the organization, Coronado says that she likes to

ensure she can bring quality programming with caring certified adults in safe spaces for all young people by offering opportunities for families to learn and receive resources.

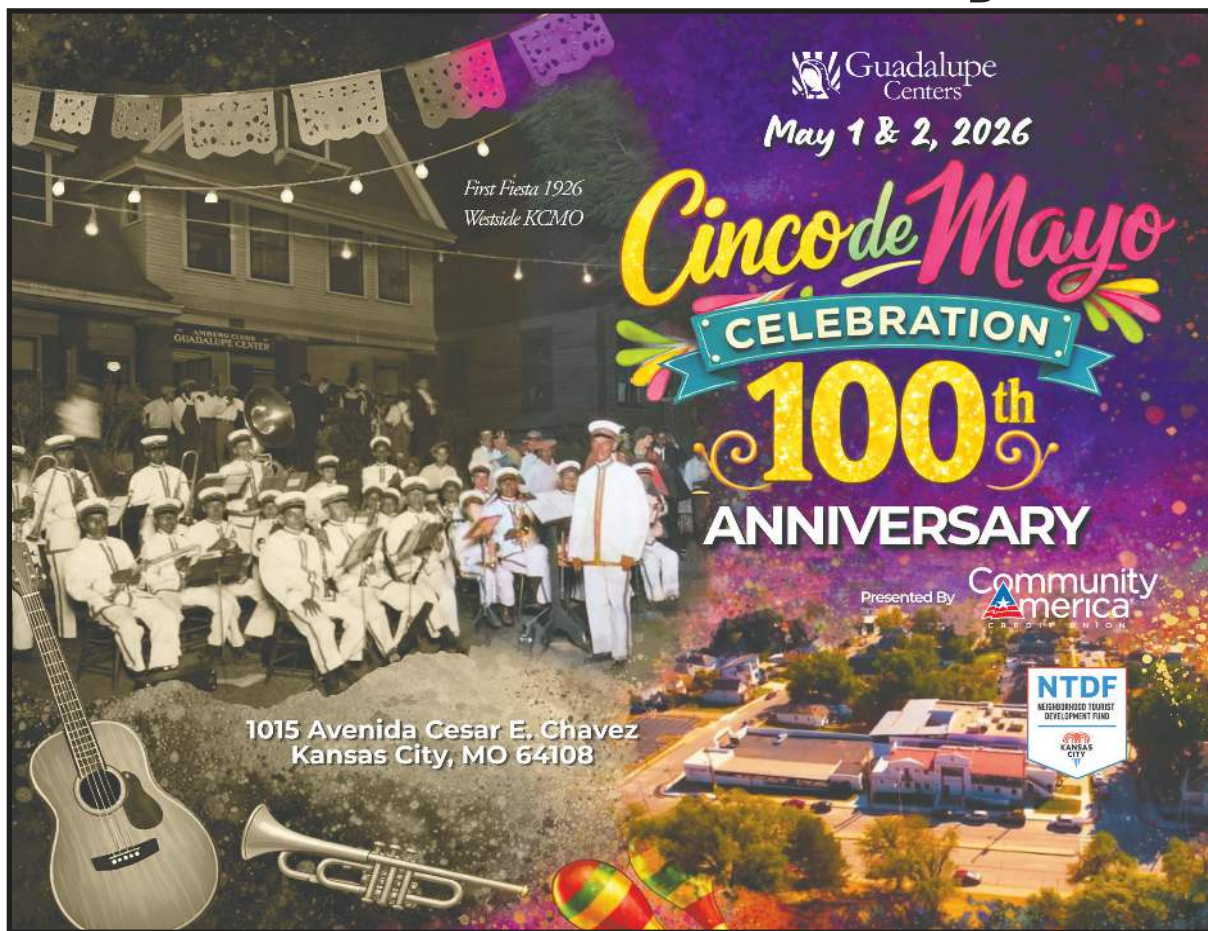
One way to accomplish that goal is through the activities and offerings at the Fiesta.

"One of the biggest changes throughout the years is bringing more attention to what young people would like, by bringing poetry, local artists and DJs that the youth would be interested in," Coronado said.

With festivities kicking off on Friday, May 1st, Guadalupe Centers is incorporating the 'First Fridays' theme into its first day of celebrations, focusing on the arts.

"It'll be more intimate, art-centered, and family focused with lots of engagement opportunities," Coronado said.

Attendees will have the opportunity to make friendship bracelets, color Mexican and other Latin American countries' flags and more as a way to make the event more hands-on and



interactive.

Friday will serve as a warm up for Saturday, which will resemble a block party and carnival with more entertainment and vendors present. Attendees on Friday can expect a night with budding excitement and the opportunity to meet and support local art vendors while learning more about the various social services Guadalupe Centers offers to the community at large.

"We're just trying to stay true to our roots and highlight the 100 years of the fiesta. We want to highlight our

culture and our differences, what makes us unique and special," Coronado said. "That is so important, more so now than it ever has been with the current climate in the United States right now. So this is one of the reasons why we do it, to celebrate our diversity."

Although Cinco de Mayo has become heavily Americanized, often celebrated more extensively in the United States than in Mexico, the country it originates from, this festive day provides an opportunity for non Mexicans and Latinos

to learn more and enjoy the richness of the culture.

What started as the Batalla de Puebla, where an outnumbered Mexican army defeated an elite French combat troop on May 5, 1862, resulting in a delay in the French invasion, has commercialized into a U.S. day filled with festivities.

Often mistaken as the Mexican Day of Independence, which actually takes place on September 16th, Chief Community Impact Officer Leo Prieto says that the Fiesta allows Guadalupe Center

to share more about Mexican and Latino traditions and people to educate themselves further.

"We want to be inclusive, we want to invite people to know more about our culture, about Mexico, through our food, art and music," Prieto said. For Latinos, celebrating and participating in this fiesta is another way to share their cultures with Kansas City and others.

As one of the first major Fiestas celebrating Latino heri-

**Continued on  
next page**

## Cinco de Mayo *Continued from previous page*



Guadalupe Centers, First Fiesta, 1926



Guadalupe Centers, 1015 Avenida Cesar E. Chavez.

Photos © Guadalupe Centers, used with permission

tage in the Midwest, it has become a staple event that people look forward to, as they gather and travel from surrounding areas and across state lines to attend.

“At a time when the Mexican American community was segregated in the barrio (neighborhood), the fiesta really fostered a positive view of the community that promoted cultural expression and their heritage,” Prieto said.

Reflecting back on the political turmoil experienced by Latinos, specifically Mexicans, Prieto says that being able to celebrate this 100th anniversary feels like paying homage to those individuals who experienced segregation at schools

and the inability to play in sports leagues.

“To see that sense of empowerment, what people created for us, that laid the foundation many years ago. It’s a beautiful thing to combine this special day, our 100th anniversary with those milestones,” Prieto said.

As for day two of the festivities, May 2, attendees can expect to see Avenida Cesar Chavez closed off with an even greater array of options from vendors, entertainment, games and food.

Saturday will feature different food options and vendors from authentic Mexican classics- tortas, burritos, fried tacos, eloteros (street corn vendors), paletas (popsicles) to

new food fusions that incorporate American flavors.

Children will be exposed to an array of inflatable carnival games including a soccer-themed one to continue to build excitement around the upcoming 2026 World Cup. Children will also have the opportunity to earn prizes for the games they play, a new concept in this year’s Fiesta.

As for the entertainment options, Coronado and Prieto both ensure that there will be a blend of everything.

“You’re going to hear everything from Spanish Rock to Cumbias to Nortenas to Irish music to bal-lads and Tejano, it’s going to be cool and

a little something for everyone,” Prieto said. Making Movies, a Latin Grammy-nominated local band, Selekt Show and SouLuna, a band made of former youth participants, will be performing among many others.

There will also be traditional forms of entertainment such as mariachis and folklorico dancers, including student led groups.

“Our goal is to showcase local talent, whether its local artists, musicians or food vendors. With the World Cup coming, it’s like a trial run. We want people to come and feel at home, mi casa es su casa (My house is your house),” Prieto said.

With a focus on the homegrown talent

and vendors, the organization hopes to continue to build on the Kansas City pride and remind residents of the exciting opportunities coming to the city.

“We really just want to encourage people to come on out and not just support Guadalupe Centers but to enjoy themselves. Come and bring the family out and have a good time, it’s a true

community event,” Prieto said. “We want people to know that we are here and we are going to continue. We have been here for 100 years and we are going to be here for another year.”

For more information on this year’s Fiesta, please visit: <https://guadalupecenters.org/event/cinco-de-mayo-fiesta/>

Come and bring the family out and have a good time, it’s a true

### Fiesta Time and Dates:

**Friday, May 1st: 5-8pm**

- Selekt Show - 7pm

**Saturday, May 2nd: 12-9pm**

- The Elders - 6pm
- Making Movies - 7pm
- Stranded in the City (with special guests) - 8pm

# Finding Our Global Roots at the Tidal Basin

**Bryan Stalder**  
Contributor

Northeast is proud of our “International Marketplace.” We are a neighborhood of many languages, where a single block on Independence Avenue can take you from the highlands of Vietnam to the markets of Somalia. As I stood on the edge of the Tidal Basin in Washington, D.C. this past March, the air was thick with the scent of cherry blossoms.

Standing beneath the pink canopy of the cherry trees, I realized that this iconic American scene is, at its heart, a story of immigration and intersection—one that belongs to all of us as we celebrate Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) Heritage Month and look toward America’s 250th Anniversary in 2026.

During my recent visit, I stood in front of a massive, weathered structure known as the Japanese Stone Lantern. Carved in 1651—making it over a century older than the United States itself—this

4,000-pound granite monument once stood in a temple in Tokyo.

It was gifted to the U.S. in 1954 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the first peace treaty between our two nations. Every year, during the Cherry Blossom Festival, a “Cherry Blossom Princess” ceremonially lights the lantern. Standing at the Japanese Stone Lantern, I thought about the many “lanterns” we have in the Northeast—the cultural traditions, the family recipes, and the stories our neighbors brought here from across the ocean to light up our own community.

The theme for this year’s AANHPI Month is “Power in Unity: Strengthening Communities Together.” It’s a fitting bridge to the upcoming United States Semiquincentennial (the 250th birthday of our country).

Often, when we think of “American History,” we think of the 13 colonies. But the cherry blossoms remind us that the American story is a “tapestry,” as the late

Secretary of Transportation Norman Mineta once said. The trees were a gift from Japan, but they were planted and cared for by Americans of all backgrounds. They represent a “healed wound” and a promise of peace that followed one of the darkest chapters of the 20th century.

For our readers in Northeast, seeing yourself in the history of the U.S. doesn’t require a direct Colonial or European lineage. It requires recognizing that the beauty of this country is built on cross-cultural gifts. Whether it’s Somali community members building businesses in former Italian storefronts, Southeast Asian gardens blooming in urban lots or a Mexican restaurant repurposing an old “Chinese Takeout pole sign” where a Burger King once operated, we are constantly “gifting” our culture to the American landscape, just as the city of Tokyo did in 1912.

While Northeast may not have a large Japanese population, we all share the same spirit felt at the Tidal Basin: Resilience and

Renewal. The cherry blossoms only bloom for a short window, but the roots of those trees—and the stone of that lantern—are permanent.

As you walk through our neighborhood this May, look at the diverse faces of our young soccer players or the entrepreneurs on the NEKC Chamber’s International Marketplace. We are the living embodiment of the “Power in Unity.” We aren’t just witnesses to American history; we are the ones writing its next 250 years.



Japanese Stone Lantern, Washington D.C.  
Photo by Perry Ganz  
Instagram: @agent.photography



Thomas Jefferson Memorial in the evening from across the Tidal Basin.  
Photo by Bryan Stalder

# Celebrate Show-Me Network Week May 4-8 with Resource Partners Across Missouri

**Dr. Adrienne B. Haynes, Esq., Contributor**

We are fortunate to live in a state that values entrepreneurship and providing aspiring and existing owners with resources and education.

For business owners in the Northeast, you can find resources through the Northeast Kansas City Chamber of Commerce, KC-SourceLink, and the Mid-Continent Public Library, to name a few. You can also tap into virtual resources available to owners across the state through the

Show-Me Network, an initiative of Missouri State University's efactory and codefi. This recently launched statewide network of regional and community connectors and training partners connects entrepreneurs, innovators, and small businesses with the resources, training, and funding they need.

During the week of May 4-8, Show-Me Network Week

will offer a curated schedule of more than 20 events, with a mix of in person and virtual sessions being offered. Springfield, Missouri was selected as the host city for the national kickoff for America's Route 66 Centennial Celebration and the "Historic Route to Innovation" captures strategies and resources that cultivate the entrepreneurial spirit that continues to drive new generations of innovators forward across our state. The week-long celebration kicks off on Monday, May 4th with an in-person event at efactory in Springfield. The sessions that follow offer insights for all, from retail businesses to technology companies.

SEED Law will be hosting a virtual business law workshop as a part of this weeklong celebration., Recruiting and Hiring Considerations, will be hosted virtually on Wednesday, May 6th from 12-1 pm. Building a dream team in your business requires a

multitude of strategies to build a competitive employment package, including policies, procedures, and legal compliance. This session will provide owners with a legal perspective on ten considerations to plan for when recruiting, hiring, and firing. To register for free and see the full list of virtual and in person events through the end of the year, please visit <https://showmenetwork.org/calendar/>

The MoWest Small Business Forum will take place in St. Joseph on Wednesday, May 7th, where business owners can strengthen financial knowledge, connect with local lenders, and learn about valuable business resources. Participants will receive hands-on training in QuickBooks, gain insights during a live Q&A with local bankers and lenders, and discover the support available through the Missouri SBDC at MoWest.

The week will conclude with statewide "Free Coworking



*Dr. Adrienne B. Haynes, Esq.*

Friday" on Friday, May 8th. There will be free coworking available in Cape Girardeau, Joplin, Monett, Springfield, St. Joseph, and West Plains. If you'll be coworking in Kansas

City, let us know!

As a reminder, there are in-person and virtual business education classes offered each month from SEED Law, RubinBrown, Justine PETERSEN and oth-

er statewide resource partners. To register for free and see the full list of virtual and in person events, please visit <https://showmenetwork.org/calendar/>

Thanks for reading!

My name is Dr. Adrienne B. Haynes and I'm an entrepreneur and attorney based here in Kansas City. My law firm, SEED Law, has been partnering with business owners across the Northeast and the city for almost 11 years. I loved living in the Northeast and I was fortunate to serve as an Entrepreneur in Residence for the Kauffman Foundation in 2017. Together with a dedicated group of Northeast residents and leaders, we explored a community designed innovation district pilot program. I was able to present this work during a TEDxUMKC Talk on Community Innovation Design in 2020.

Over the next few weeks, I'll be contributing articles and resources on small business and estate planning legal considerations. If you have questions, please reach out directly at [adrienne@seed.legal](mailto:adrienne@seed.legal).



# EXPLORE • DISCOVER

## Treasures of the Avenue: Finding the Perfect Gift in the International Marketplace

As Mother's Day approaches, gifts can be found right here in the heart of the city—jewelry stores—Ayser Jewelry just gold and gemstones; they



### Ayser Jewelry: A World of Gold on the Avenue

Located at 2321 Independence Avenue within the Somali Mall, Ayser Jewelry is a gateway to the artistry of East Africa and the Middle East. Owner Jawahir Weyrah has been a staple of the Kansas City business community since 2002, curating a collection that reflects the rich cultures of the families who call Northeast home.

**"The gold is from Somalia, the Middle East, and all of Africa," Jawahir told Northeast News. "It is designed in Somalia, South Arabia, Kuwait, and Dubai."**

The store is a feast for the senses, featuring intricate gold designs, vibrant scarves, and exotic perfumes. For Jawahir, her location at the Somali Mall is more than just a business address. **"I like the Northeast because it's a place where most of my people live," she said. "There are a lot of Somalian and African people here and it's like home."**

Visitors to the mall can enhance their shopping trip, stopping for a chai tea latte or a fresh sambusa at the Hamar Weyne Coffee Shop before exploring Ayser's wide array of jewelry, watches, and traditional clothing—perfect for a mother who appreciates a gift with global soul.



restored the metro, own very happy to s the improve they help peopl with a little help Whether you ar or need a cheris Anh is known gold selection v



This information is provided for you through the Independence Avenue CID (Community Improvement District) the Northeast Kansas City Chamber Of C

# EVER • EXPERIENCE



## Best Mother's Day Gift

In the search for a gift that truly reflects a mother's beauty and strength, the heart of Northeast. Within our vibrant International Marketplace, two jewelers—Victoria Thrift and Bao Anh Jewelry—stand as local landmarks, offering more than just jewelry; they offer stories, heritage, and a deep connection to the community.

### Bao Anh Jewelry: Generations of Craftsmanship

At 1835 Independence Avenue, Bao Anh Jewelry has been serving the community with precision and care for decades. Originally established in 1997 and moving to its current Avenue location in 2009, the store is managed by Bao Vo and is renowned for its fine jewelry and expert repair services.

Bao Anh is a "hidden gem" for those seeking bespoke designs, including custom engagement rings and meticulously crafted heirlooms. While the store draws customers from across the neighborhood, Bao Anh remains a steadfast advocate for Northeast. "We're grateful to see how the people at the CID help," Ann noted, referencing the community efforts along the corridor. "They help to keep things clean and safe... I know the Northeast community has a lot to offer, and I hope it can be a place where people love to come."

If you're looking for a modern statement piece, a delicate bracelet, or a cherished family heirloom repaired in time for Mother's Day, Bao Anh is the perfect choice. For providing personalized consultations and high-quality craftsmanship with a neighborly touch.



## FOUR CORNERS COMMUNITY CALL



Last week's Independence Avenue Community Improvement District 4-Corners Community Call was at Victoria Thrift located at 3829 Independence Avenue.

**JOIN US THIS FRIDAY AT 3PM FOR OUR 4 CORNERS COMMUNITY CALL**

**Bao Anh Jewelry  
1835 Independence Ave.**

## Shop Local This Mother's Day

This May, as you look to honor the women in your life, consider the Avenue. In the International Marketplace, you aren't just buying jewelry; you are supporting local entrepreneurs who have invested decades into making our neighborhood a premier destination for culture and elegance.

**Happy Mother's Day from the Independence Avenue CID!**



# East High Agriculture Program Teaches from Farm to Table

**Dorri Partain**  
Managing Editor

From a greenhouse filled with lush tropical plants and blooming flowers to fresh turkey eggs mixed into cookie dough, East High School agriculture students are enjoying the “fruits of their labors”.

This urban high school at 1924 Van Brunt Boulevard has seen a resurgence of an agriculture (AG) program first started in the 1980’s when Kansas City Public Schools introduced a magnet school program that aimed to desegregate the district’s elementary, middle and high schools with specific- focused

curriculums. As this program was phased out, East High was left with greenhouse and animal paddocks that largely went unused until East High Math instructor Andrew Killen restarted the program in 2017.

Along with Killen, this program includes Sheryl Palmieri, an instructor with 25 years of experience including FFA (Future Farmers of America) and educator Aaron Kick. Palmieri joined East’s program in 2024 and Kick in 2025; along with class instruction, they also play an integral role in plant production and animal care.

This school year 120 students enrolled in

one or more AG classes: AG Science 1 and 2, Food Science, Floraculture, Landscaping, and Animal Science. Palmieri stated that a new offering next fall will introduce students to Natural Resource Conservation and plans are being made to offer a Veterinary Science class the following year as this program continues to expand.

Depending on the class curriculum, students spend 30 minutes on instruction and the remaining 85-minute session is spent with hands-on activities; planting seeds, tending plants, harvesting fruits and vegetables and caring for animals.



Growing continues year-round inside the greenhouse, including a home-grown pineapple.

**Photo by Dorri Partain**



Classes for East’s AG program are held in a satellite building near the raised bed gardens and orchard.

**Photo by Dorri Partain**

In addition to a variety of domestic and exotic chickens, the AG program includes three turkeys (a tom and two jennies), four adult goats and two kids born earlier this year, one during class time. All the animals have names, with the most recent goat born on a very cold March day named Jack Frost.

A dozen turkey eggs are being incubated and those that hatch- Palmieri isn’t sure they’ve all been fertilized- will be added to the turkey flock.

Occasionally, animals will be processed and the meat will be

frozen for future use during the Food Science classes, which gives students a better understanding of the farm to table concept. Palmieri stated that processing an animal, such as a goat, is done off-site but a class or student could decide if they wanted to learn to process a chicken.

In the greenhouse, Floraculture students plant and care for their own trays of flowers and learn to propagate new plants from cuttings. Instructors also get in on trying special projects, such as growing a pineapple plant from the cut off top of a fresh pine-

apple, getting it to bloom, and produce fruit.

The school’s orchard contains forty fruit trees, including apple, pear, asian pear, paw-paw, persimmon and jujube. Students learn how to prune the trees for better fruit production and when to harvest. In addition to using fresh fruit in class, students also learn how to peel, dice and freeze fruit to be used later. In a recent Food Science class, students added frozen diced jujube fruit to a basic oatmeal cookie dough.

**Continued  
on next page**

## Urban Agriculture *Continued from previous page*

Students also grow three types of nuts—chestnut, pecan and hazelnut— but harvesting them has been a battle with local wildlife. Palmieri shared that students enjoyed roasted chestnuts last year before their winter break but squirrels got to all the pecans and deer ate the hazelnuts.

In addition to a ground level row garden, students tend to raised beds, with three accessible to students with disability issues, close to a paved path and 24 inches high. These raised beds allow each student to have their own garden with a variety of plants, grown from seed and monitored until ready for harvesting,

For Palmieri, the study of agriculture—even if students only participate in one class—is about learning life skills because everyone needs to know about food, and where it comes from.

For advanced students, the program offers paid internships where students come to school during breaks and/or weekends and help the instructors care for the plants and animals.

Even with students milling about, chickens clucking, turkeys gobbling and goats running about, the atmosphere inside East High's agriculture campus is very relaxed. Instructors Killen, Palmieri, and Kick



Checking the inside of a turkey egg for growth (candling), Palmieri uses the light on her cell phone. Eggs are expected to hatch the first week of May.

**Photo by Dorri Partain**

wear jeans, t-shirts, and work aprons. For Kick, who had no real experience teaching agriculture, working with students in the program has turned out to be ideal.

“I just wish I had

known about doing something like this sooner,” he said.

Currently, only students enrolled in East High, a neighborhood classified school, can participate in the AG program but Palmieri



Instructor Sheryl Palmieri and Bambi, one of several silky chickens recently added to the program.

**Photo by Dorri Partain**

stated steps are being taken to open enrollment to all KCPS high school students as part of its Signature School program.



A small herd of goats co-exist with the laying hens and often like to chill inside the coop.

**Photo by Dorri Partain**



Tom may soon be the father of a new brood of turkeys, which will give Animal Science students more opportunities in poultry care.

**Photo by Dorri Partain**

# Echoes of Gunfire: From Blair House to the Modern Presidency

**Bryan Stalder**  
Contributor

Recent events have once again forced the nation to confront the chilling reality of political violence, reminding us that the safety of the President of the United States is never guaranteed. As we witness the heightened tensions surrounding the Saturday, April 25 attempt on President Trump's life, our collective memory naturally drifts back to other moments when the lives of our elected leaders have been threatened.

As we look at the modern presidency in 2026, marked by the sobering reality of multiple attempts on our leaders' lives, it's worth remembering a time when the "People's House" was so accessible that the President's front door opened right onto the sidewalk. When Harry and Bess Truman moved into the White House in 1945, they found a building that was literally falling apart. Centuries of "slapping a coat of paint on it" had masked deep structural rot. Chandeliers swayed with every footstep, floors

creaked dangerously, and the peril became undeniable when a leg of Margaret Truman's piano famously crashed through a ceiling into the family dining room below.

Ever the practical Missourian, Truman ordered a total gut renovation. From 1948 to 1952, the White House was reduced to a hollow shell of steel beams, forcing the Trumans to take up residence across the street at Blair House. At that time, Pennsylvania Avenue wasn't the fortress it is today; it was a functioning city street. The concept of a "security perimeter" was almost non-existent; for much of American history, the public could—and often did—wander right up to the porch.

Living at Blair House meant President Truman was just feet away from the public, separated only by a brick wall and a sidewalk. It was the violence that erupted there that for-

ever changed how we protect our leaders.

On November 1, 1950, while President Truman was napping in an upstairs bedroom, two Puerto Rican nationalists—Oscar Collazo and Griselio Torresola—



While President Harry Truman served in the office of the Presidency, his primary residence was across the street at Blair House, because the White House was under a complete renovation.

**Photo by Bryan Stalder**

la—approached Blair House armed with semi-automatic pistols. They hoped to assassinate Truman to draw global attention to their independence movement. What followed was a chaotic, three-minute gunfight—the most vio-

lent in the history of the Secret Service.

Private Leslie Coffelt was stationed in a small guard booth outside the house. He was struck three times in the chest and abdomen almost immediately. Despite being

mortally wounded and losing consciousness, Coffelt regained his senses, leaned out of his booth, and took a single, steady aim. He shot Torresola in the head from 30 feet away, killing the assassin instantly and saving the President's life.

Truman, awakened by the thunder of gunfire, ran to the window to see the commotion. A frantic guard shouted for him to get back just as the smoke was clearing. Similar to President Trump's steely resolve, Truman went on with his scheduled appointments later that day, famously remarking, "A President has to expect those things."

The imposing black iron fences of 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue act as a barrier, and they are the direct result of the blood spilled on that November afternoon. After the attempt on Truman's life, the casual "walk-up" access to the Presidency ended, and the permanent fortification of the executive branch began.

Leslie Coffelt remains the only member of the Secret Service to be killed in the line of duty while protecting a President. Today, a small plaque on the fence at 1651 Pennsylvania Avenue

honors his ultimate sacrifice. On a recent visit to Washington, D.C., I found it difficult to even glimpse this memorial; the perimeter is so restricted that I was forced to take my photos from a distance, a stark contrast to the world Truman inhabited.

As Missourians prepare to celebrate Truman's birthday, we can take pride in his legacy. In a time when the world was in chaos and the very walls of his home were crumbling, Truman remained the "common man" from Jackson County—steady and resolute, even when the fight came to his front door.

Whether all Americans agree with the politics of the day or the leaders in power, the history of Blair House reminds us that the safety of the office is a burden carried by heroes like Private Coffelt—and a legacy shaped by a neighbor from Independence. Each May 8, we recognize the birth of Harry S. Truman: the plain-spoken county judge who rose to the most powerful desk in the world without ever losing his Missouri grit.

# The Voice of Northeast

*Historical fiction written by Bryan Stalder*

Kansas City, Winter 1933

Matthew Orr sat at his desk as the afternoon light settled in the narrow office, catching on the edges of account books and folded proofs. The place smelled of ink and paper, with the faint, familiar trace of whiskey that had long since soaked into the wood. He opened the lower drawer and touched the neck of a bottle—an old J. Rieger Monogram, its label nearly gone, refilled months ago with what everyone privately called Pendergast Gold.

Orr did not pour himself a drink. He rarely did, and never during business hours. The bottle stayed where it was, more symbol than temptation.

He unfolded the letter that had arrived that morning.

The handwriting was neat and deliberate, careful without being timid. The kind of script that came from habit, not schooling. The signature read Rosa Scardino.

Orr knew the name immediately. Joe Scardino had worked beside him years earlier at the Montgomery Ward warehouse in the advertising department. His wife Rosa was active at their church, steady in her routines, the sort of woman who brought lasagnas to potlucks and never raised her voice at meetings. If she had something to say in print, people would listen.

He read:

*Dear Editor,*

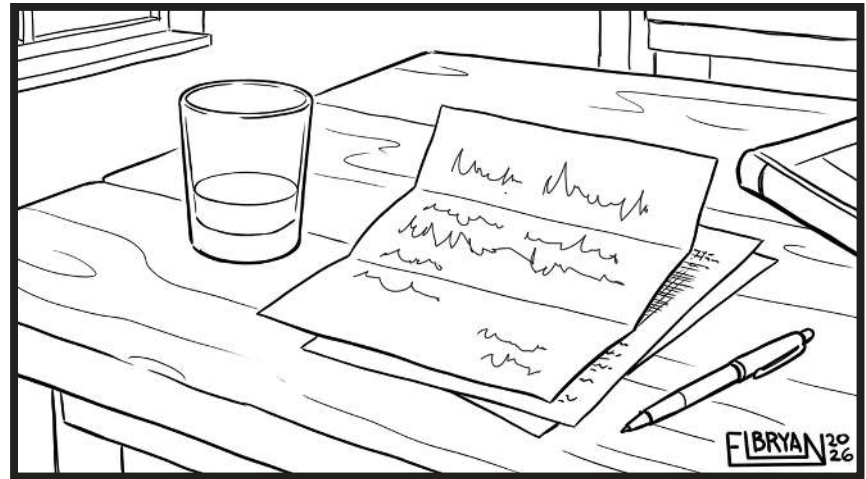
*I am writing as a wife, a mother, and a Catholic woman who has lived in the Northeast long enough to see good laws and foolish ones come and go.*

*I do not write to encourage drunkenness, nor to excuse bad behavior. Our faith teaches moderation, self-control, and responsibility. Those lessons are taught at our tables, not by Washington.*

*I will speak plainly. There is wine in my home. There is whiskey in my husband's cabinet. It is used at holidays, at weddings, and sometimes after a long day of work. We do not hide it from our children, and we do not abuse it. We treat it as our parents did, and their parents before them.*

*Under the law, this makes us criminals.*

*Prohibition has not made our neighborhood more moral. It has made honest people quieter and dishonest people bolder. It has not stopped drinking. It has only changed who profits from it.*



*I look forward to the day when this law is repealed, and when ordinary families no longer have to pretend that what they do responsibly in their own homes is something shameful.*

*We ask our children to respect the law. The law should be worthy of respect.*

*Sincerely,*

*Rosa Scardino*

*Northeast Kansas City*

Orr lowered the page slowly.

There was no anger in it. No politics, no sermonizing. Just a plain admission, printed in careful ink: there is alcohol in my home.

That was the danger.

The country was in its final months of Prohibition, but the law still stood. While local authorities generally looked the other way on the matter, printing the letter meant publishing a confession. Orr wondered, briefly and uncomfortably, whether Rosa understood that. Whether a federal agent could, in theory, take interest. Whether a county prosecutor might feel compelled to act, if only to prove something. Did her husband Joe even know she had written this?

More troubling still was who else might read it.

Prohibition had been good business for certain men. That much was understood. He knew the name Johnny Lazia. Everyone knew who controlled deliveries, who settled disputes, who expected cooperation when laws became flexible. If repeal came—and it was coming—those arrangements would shift. Orr was already hearing murmurings about some La-Capra fellow. But that's all he heard. Murmurings. People who spoke too freely sometimes found themselves reminded to be careful.

Orr did not imagine grand conspiracies. He imagined smaller things. A warning. A word passed. A quiet knock.

**Continued on next page**

## Walking St. John Avenue

*Continued from previous page*

He poured a finger of whiskey and set the glass aside, untouched. He stared at it, thinking about the ordinary nature of the act, and the extraordinary trouble it had caused for more than a decade.

The rest of the week's material lay ready: weddings, school plays, apartments for rent, parish notices. Life as it was actually lived. By Wednesday morning, it would all go downtown to the press, where other hands would set the type and roll it into Thursday's paper.

Rosa's letter sat apart from the rest.

Printing it did not mean endorsing it. It meant acknowledging that this was a voice in the neighborhood—and not a marginal one. This was not a speakeasy owner or a politician. This was a churchgoing mother saying, in public, what many said only in kitchens.

Orr folded the letter carefully and placed it with the editorials.

Outside, the street moved at its usual pace. A delivery truck rattled past. A man laughed too loudly. Somewhere nearby, a bottle was opened without ceremony.

Orr took the whiskey in one swallow, returned the bottle to the drawer, and closed it.

The newspaper's role was not to instruct the community how to behave, nor to pretend it behaved better than it did. Its role was to notice—honestly—and to give space when the neighborhood spoke in its own voice.

This week, it would speak plainly.

And Orr would print it.

### Haiku by Sam Crowley

Haiku poetry

Five and seven and then five

Wonderful magic

## 1932 FUN FACT

*Opening day for the summer season at Winnwood Beach on Saturday, April 30, 1932 featured the return of Monkeyland, an island built in the middle of Winnwood Lake that was populated by two dozen monkeys. This 35 acre amusement area in Clay County featured a spring-fed lake, roller skating, band pavilion, Fun House, amusement rides and swimming. Owner Fred Winn opened Monkeyland in 1931 and housed the monkeys at Winn Farm during the winter, where three females produced four offspring in time for opening day.*

# Neighborhoods Kick Off Monthly Dumpster Program



### Dorri Partain Managing Editor

Northeast area neighborhood associations are doing their part to help residents keep trash and bulky waste items from taking over curbs and alleyways by providing free opportunities to dispose of unwanted items. Each month, volunteers will monitor dumpster drop-off sites on the first Saturday from 8 a.m. to noon, or sooner if full.

Indian Mound will have a dumpster available on Saturday, May 2 at Indian Mound Park (Belmont & Gladstone Blvds.) and each first Saturday through September.

Independence Plaza's dumpster will be located in the parking lot of Independence Boulevard Christian

Church (606 Gladstone Blvd.), beginning June 6 and continuing through September.

On Saturday, May 2, Lykins neighborhood will provide two dumpsters, one located at 1329 Monroe and another at Lykins Square Park, 4105 E. 8th St.

Pendleton Heights and Scarritt Renaissance neighborhoods will also have dumpsters available for residents, but locations will change monthly as they are sponsored/hosted by individuals, not the association. For Scarritt Renaissance locations, check <http://www.scarrittkc.org/> or contact a board member. Pendleton Heights residents can check <https://phkc.org/> or contact a board member.

The dumpster location for Scarritt Renaissance residents will be 3411 Smart Ave. on May 2.

East 23rd St. PAC will have dumpsters located at East High School (1924 Van Brunt Blvd.) on July 18, Sept. 26 and Oct. 17, from 8 a.m. to noon, including a dumpster for leaves and brush.

Blue Valley's dumpsters will be located at 1247 Hardesty Ave. and 1600 Topping Ave., first Saturdays, May 2 through September.

Sheffield will not have dumpsters available this year, but residents are encouraged to utilize the dumpsters provided by Blue Valley and East 23rd St. PAC.

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### NOTICE: Lykins Community Meeting On Thursday, May 7, 715 Jackson Ave.

The Lykins Neighborhood Association will hold its annual Board Election for 2026-2027. Lykins neighborhood residents may apply to fill the following positions: President, Vice-president, Secretary, Treasurer, Sergeant of Arms. An outline of duties will be provided at the meeting. Interested residents should prepare a brief speech about their qualifications. Light dinner served at 6:30 prior to 7:00 p.m. meeting.

*La Asociacion Vecinal de Lykins llevara a cabo sus elecciones anuales de la mesa directiva para 2026-2027. Residentes de Lykins puede aplica para posiciones de Presidente, Vicepresidente, Secretario, Tesorero y Sargento de Armas. Las funciones se explicaran en la reunion. Residentes se necesitan prepararse un breve discurso explicando por que es una buena opcion para el puesto. Cena ligera as las 6:30 antes de reunion a las 7 p.m.*

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# Bocce Excellence and Charity at Sons of Columbus

**Bryan Stalder**  
Contributor

The rhythmic clack of rolling balls and the echo of measuring calls filled the courts at the American Sons of Columbus as the 2026 men's bocce league wrapped up another lively season. For many in the Northeast, the league at 2415 Independence Ave. is a weekly social ritual—part sport and part community gathering—where longtime friendships are anchored in Italian-American tradition.

When the final frames were played on Thursday, April 16, one team cemented their status as a local dynasty. The Four Horsemen (John Liberto, Joe Mazzeffe, Frank Pisciotta Jr, Louie Pisciotta) captured their third consecutive league

championship, riding a wave of momentum to finish at the top of a competitive field. They were followed by second-place finishers Breaka U Balls, with La Dolce Vita and Lucky 13 taking third and fourth place, respectively.

For those unfamiliar with the sport, bocce is a traditional Italian bowling game that balances precision with strategy. Players or teams compete to toss their larger, weighted balls as close as possible to a smaller target ball known as the pallino (or "the bullet"). Points are awarded based on proximity, often leading to dramatic finishes that require the referees to break out the measuring tape.

The competitive energy at the club didn't end with the league trophy. For the second

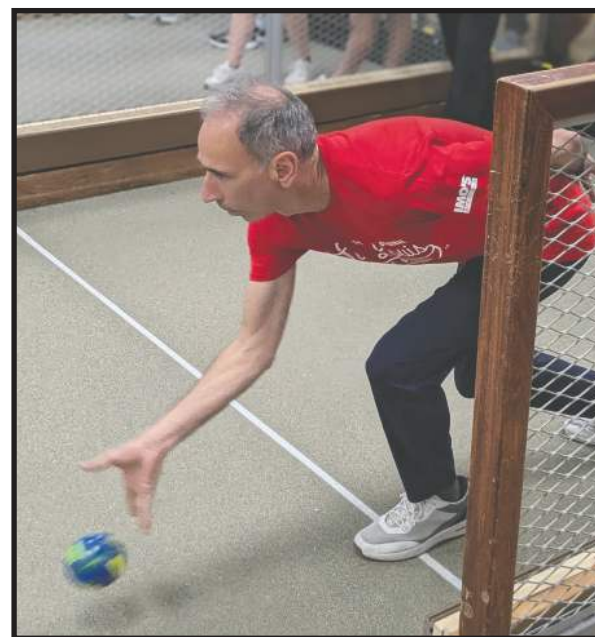
year in a row, the venue played host to the F.A.C.E. Bocce Tournament, organized by local advocate John Liberto. This year's event drew competitors from across the country—including teams from Chicago and New York—proving that Northeast is becoming a premier destination for the sport.

More than just a game, the F.A.C.E. Tournament serves a vital community mission. As a fundraiser to support autistic children, the proceeds help provide access to swimming lessons at the YMCA. These lessons do more than teach a

sport; they build confidence, improve safety, and provide lifelong skills for local families. Under Liberto's leadership, the tournament stands as a powerful reminder of how a simple game of bocce can unite a community for a greater cause.

Founded in 1965, the American Sons of Columbus continues to be a cultural anchor for Kansas City, whether hosting the annual St. Joseph's Table or crowning a new set of champions on the court.

While the spring season has concluded, the courts won't stay quiet for long. If you are in-



From April 24-26, teams competed in the F.A.C.E. Bocce Tournament to raise money for autistic children. **Photo by Bryan Stalder**

terested in joining the community or testing your aim, the bocce leagues are scheduled to return this coming August. Until then, the Four Horsemen remain the team to beat.

**Help shape the future of your regional transportation system!**

Share your thoughts on:

- An amendment to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), the region's five-year construction program.
- An amendment to the 2026 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), which describes transportation planning activities MARC and other agencies undertake during the year.



Visit [marc.org/transportationinput](https://marc.org/transportationinput), email [transportation@marc.org](mailto:transportation@marc.org) or call 816-474-4240 for details.