

The Record

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Comin' & Goin' Turner Style



By Sharon Hoover

I cannot believe this weather. The heat yeah, but the rain just keeps coming. We've been lucky there was no flooding at our house. One of our friends had 4 feet in her basement. She's lost her major appliances and furnace and is without AC. Calvin helped get rid of the water and took a couple of fans over to use until they get the AC back.

With all the rain, the grass is growing, so are the vegetables and the weeds. This leads me into talking about the upcoming training classes at K-State Research and Extension. This month's K-State Garden Hour's subject

is "Innovations in Horticulture Research at K-State" Presented by DR. Cheryl Boyer, professor and extension specialist who will discuss recent emerging horticulture research projects addressing specialty crops such as ornamentals, fruits, vegetables, and turfgrass. The program will be on Zoom, Friday, August 6 at noon. To enroll: ksrelearn.com/KStateGardenHour.

WYCO K-State Research and Extension Master Gardeners Advanced Training this month is Thursday, August 7, at 11:30 at 1200 N 79th St. The topic is "Growing Blueberries in Kansas" and the guest speaker will be Rick Mareske, owner of The Garden at Dogwood Forest in Kansas City Ks. Mr. Mareske is an agroforestry expert and commercial level blueberry producer. The Garden at Dogwood Forest is a member of the Rolling Prairie Farmers Alliance, a Midwest vegetable cooperative serving Lawrence and Kansas City

established 30 years ago. For more info on the organization <https://rollingprairiesa.com/resources/aboutus>.

If you are interested in gardening but don't know where to start, K-State Extension has a weekly newsletter that covers every topic you can think of, from gardening to-dos for the week to pests in the garden. To get the newsletter send a message to hortsupport@ksu.edu or cdipman@kcsu.edu and include your email address in the message.

On a completely different topic: The American Red Cross is holding a Blood drive on August 4 at the South Branch Library on Strong Ave. from 1:30 to 5:30 pm. Giving blood can make a difference in the lives of others. Registration is required. <https://www.redcrossblood.org/give.htm/drive-results>.

Finally: VOTE ON AUGUST 5. If you missed the Memorial Hall Event with the Mayoral Candidates on July 23, it is on the KCTV5 You Tube Channel.

That's it for now. Until next time, stay safe and be kind to those around you.

Social Security Gains Momentum: Meeting Customer Needs Online, on the Phone, and In-Person

Increased capacity through new technology allows SSA to serve more customers at greater speed

The Social Security Administration (SSA) recently announced substantial progress in service delivery outcomes resulting from focused technology enhancements and process engineering. These improvements reflect Commissioner Frank J. Bisignano's strategic vision to modernize SSA's customer service—meeting people where they are, addressing customer needs at the first point of contact, and improving outcomes across all channels.

"Our vision is centered on providing outstanding service that works for everyone we serve—whether they call, walk into a field office, or choose to manage their benefits online," said Commissioner Bisignano. "We are transforming the customer experience, investing in technology to build frontline capacity, and using real-time data to monitor

performance across the board. We are delivering higher levels of customer service—and this will continue."

With the implementation of new telephone technology on the National 800 Number and in SSA field offices, along with process engineering and better strategic resource alignment, SSA has expanded its capacity to handle work on the phones and in its field offices, resulting in improved service to the American people. Recent accomplishments include:

- SSA is handling more calls with a faster response time. The agency handled nearly 1.3 million calls on the National 800 Number last week, or 70 percent more than the same week last fiscal year, while reducing the average speed of answer to 6 minutes. This response time is down from an average of 18 minutes

so far this year and 30 minutes last year, or an 80 percent reduction.

- SSA is reducing field office wait times. The agency reduced the wait time in field offices to 23 minutes so far this year, compared to 30 minutes last year, or a 23 percent reduction.

SSA has also improved service for its customers online by eliminating the longstanding scheduled downtime of 29 hours a week for my Social Security. This enhancement has already enabled 125,000 more customers to access their online accounts in the first week.

These continued improvements across all of SSA's customer service channels come just two weeks after the agency announced it completed sending over 3.1 million payments,

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How School Discipline Can Impact BIPOC Mental Health



July is BIPOC Mental Health Month, a time to raise awareness about the unique challenges that Black, Indigenous, and People of Color face when it comes to mental health. These challenges are often linked to the impacts of racism, poverty, and unequal treatment in schools and communities.

One concern that Wyandot BHN's BIPOC Advisory Board has been discussing is how racial disparities

in school discipline affect the mental health of Black and Brown youth. National data from sources such as the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights and the ACLU shows that Black students are more likely to be disciplined—and receive harsher punishments—than white students for the same behaviors. They are more likely to be suspended, removed from class, or even referred to the police. These patterns also hold true for Black students with disabilities.

Research shows that Black students are not more likely to misbehave than their white peers. Yet, their behaviors often result in

more severe consequences, which can lead to lost classroom time and fewer opportunities to access supportive resources. Over time, this can affect a child's mental health, self-esteem, and trust in the adults and institutions around them. It may also contribute to increased anxiety, depression, and trauma.

When children are removed from supportive school environments rather than offered guidance and help, it can put them at greater risk for future challenges. Some are funneled into the juvenile or criminal justice system—a pattern often called the “school-to-prison pipeline.” These are kids who often

have disabilities or have experienced poverty, abuse, or neglect. What they need is support and understanding, not punishment.

As a community, we can do better. At Wyandot BHN, we are committed to listening, learning, and partnering with families, schools, and community members to help build systems that treat every child with dignity and care. Together, we can create safe, supportive environments where all children have the opportunity to thrive.

By Randy Callstrom, President & CEO, Wyandot BHN and Le'Nae Roberts, Chairperson, Wyandot BHN BIPOC Advisory Board

Bass Pro Shops Named America's Best Outdoor Retailer Four Years in a Row

Conservation and outdoor company recognized with prestigious honor from Newsweek after extensive nationwide survey of consumers

Bass Pro Shops has once again been named as the unquestioned leader in the outdoor retail industry, being voted America's Best Outdoor Retailer for the fourth year in a row, in a comprehensive survey of customers across the United States.

Since its founding in 1972, Bass Pro Shops has blazed a new trail in the retail experience for outdoor enthusiasts, building a destination retail experience that is one of the most well-recognized brands in North America. As millions of families know, a trip to a Bass Pro Shops or Cabela's is more than a retail experience; it's an adventure, a mini-vacation, a celebration and exploration of the natural world around us, and an educational and enriching outing for the entire family.

More than 250 million visitors flock to Bass Pro Shops and Cabela's retail stores each year to experience giant aquariums teeming with live fish, extensive wildlife dioramas, free family-friendly events and educational outdoor-focused seminars. People leave a Bass Pro Shops store with more than a bag of gear. They leave with a smile, a greater appreciation

for nature and a dream of spending more time with family, friends and loved ones fishing, camping and hiking.

“This is a great honor for our entire team of Outfitters, and their collective dedication to providing the best experience and service to every customer who visits us. It means the world to us that this recognition comes directly from our customers – the true outdoor enthusiasts who inspire everything we do. From the products and services we offer to the unforgettable experiences we help create, our mission has always been about inspiring everyone to enjoy, love and conserve the great outdoors,” said Johnny Morris, noted conservationist and founder of Bass Pro Shops.

Johnny Morris has never seen Bass Pro Shops as just a retailer. In his mind, the mission for Bass Pro Shops has been to connect people to nature. Johnny wants everyone to enjoy outdoor activities in the way he did with his mom and dad. And they continue to leverage the success of Bass Pro Shops to support conservation causes across North America. That's why, over the past decade, the company has

donated more than 10% of its earnings to support conservation.

Committed to conservation for over 50 years

Johnny Morris and Bass Pro Shops have spent the last 50-plus years working tirelessly alongside the customers they serve to advance a shared conservation mission.

This visionary leadership has led to the creation of an unprecedented alliance of customers, team members, industry partners and leading conservation organizations to make a significant impact in our communities and the future of the outdoors.

Expanding to serve customers across North America

Bass Pro Shops is continuing to expand in locations across the United States and Canada.

In recent months, destination retail locations have opened in Duluth, Minn.; Tyler, Texas; St. Augustine, Fla.; and Spring, Texas; with openings scheduled soon in Clifton Park, N.Y.; Odessa, Texas; Loveland, Colo.; Tucson, Ariz.; Fort Smith, Ark.; Pittsburgh, Pa.; Lansing, Mich.; Greater Gulf-

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Social Security... ...from page 1

totaling over \$17 billion, to beneficiaries eligible under the Social Security Fairness Act (SSFA), 5 months ahead of schedule. When the SSFA became law on January 5, 2025, SSA identified about 2.8 million current Social Security beneficiaries whose benefits were reduced because of the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) or Government Pension Offset (GPO), including firefighters, police officers, teachers, and other critical public servants. The agency successfully completed actions on these beneficiaries' records exceeding its original estimate of it taking a year or more.

At the same time, SSA has driven down disability backlogs. The initial disability claims backlog has been reduced to 940,000 pending cases—down from a record of over 1.2 million last year, or a 25 percent reduction. Average

processing time has improved to five days faster than before Commissioner Bisignano's tenure. SSA has also maintained historic lows of disability hearings pending, with average wait times reduced by 60 days since June 2024.

Commissioner Bisignano's modernization agenda is designed to improve customer experience, foster operational agility, and build trust in government service. The agency remains committed to measuring what matters and flexibly deploying resources to sustain progress.

"Our strategy is clear: serve customer needs quickly and completely, no matter how they contact us," said Commissioner Bisignano. "We will continue to evaluate our tools, technology, and processes to empower our workforce to provide best-in-class customer service to the American people."

For more information about Social Security's services, visit www.ssa.gov.

Sentenced for Securities Fraud

Kansas Insurance Commissioner Vicki Schmidt and Attorney General Kris Kobach, announced that an Olathe man has been sentenced to prison for securities fraud. Michael Davin, age 69, was sentenced in Johnson County District Court on July 17 to 88 months in prison for one felony count of securities fraud. Davin pleaded guilty and was taken into custody last week to begin his prison sentence. In addition to the prison time, Davin was ordered to pay \$702,694.76 in restitution to his victims.

Davin was convicted for his role in a scheme with Premier Global Corporation. The Kansas Department of Insurance's civil case against Premier Global Corporation and other defendants remains ongoing.

"White collar crime—like securities fraud—carries real consequences for those who seek to defraud Kansans," said Commissioner Schmidt. "These types of convictions are a testament to the diligent work of our Securities Division and the Office of the Attorney General."

"Securities fraud creates an enormous and lasting impact on investor victims and their families, with harms far beyond the loss of financial security," said First Assistant Attorney General Stacy Edwards, who prosecuted the case on behalf of the Kansas Attorney General's Office. "We believe justice has been served by a prison sentence in this case." Assistant Attorney General Rebecca Silvermintz assisted in prosecuting the case and added, "Individuals in vulnerable positions are often the targets of financial criminal activity. It is our privilege to be able to bring forth justice on behalf of these victims, and the state of Kansas."

The Securities Division of the Kansas Department of Insurance investigated the case, which was prosecuted by the Kansas Attorney General's Office.



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Bass Pro ...

...from page 2

port-Biloxi, Miss.; and Muncy, Pa.

Comprehensive survey underscores Bass Pro Shops' leadership in customer satisfaction

Newsweek sponsored the comprehensive, independent survey – conducted by the global market research and consumer data firm, Statista – which focused on consumer perspective with more than 140,000 evaluations collected during a two-month period.

Consumers were asked about the likelihood of recommending a retailer to friends and family members, and to assess a broad range of factors, including product quality, pricing, product range, staff helpfulness, convenience, parking access, cleanliness and more.

About Bass Pro Shops

Bass Pro Shops, North America's premier outdoor and conservation company, was founded in 1972 when avid young angler

Johnny Morris started selling tackle out of his father's liquor store in Springfield, Missouri. That was the company's sole location for the first 13 years, and it has since grown to nearly 200 retail locations throughout North America. Today the company provides customers with unmatched offerings spanning premier destination retail, outdoor equipment manufacturing, world-class resort destinations and more. In 2017 Bass Pro Shops united with Cabela's to create a "best-of-the-best" experience with superior products, dynamic locations and outstanding customer service. Bass Pro Shops also operates White River Marine Group, offering an unsurpassed collection of industry-leading boat brands, and Big Cedar Lodge, America's Premier Wilderness Resort. Under the visionary conservation leadership of Johnny Morris, Bass Pro Shops is a national leader in protecting habitat and introducing families to the outdoors and has been named by Newsweek as "America's Most Trusted Retailer for Outdoor Gear."

KCKFD Update:

Trench Collapse Incident

KANSAS CITY, KS - On Thursday, July 24, 2025, at approximately 2:15 PM, the Kansas City, Kansas Fire Department (KCKFD) was dispatched to the area of 16th Street and Metropolitan Avenue, KCK near the railroad tracks, for a reported trench collapse involving a possible trapped victim. Initial reports indicated that a worker operating an excavator as part of a fiber optic installation project had not been seen for some time. Coworkers became concerned when they noticed the equipment was no longer moving. Upon checking the site, they discovered that the trench had collapsed. A hand shovel was found near the site.

The KCKFD Trench Rescue Teams, along with our mutual aid partners, worked through the night to locate the missing worker. At approximately 11:45 pm, the missing worker was located and pronounced deceased on the scene. The victim and scene have been turned over to the Kansas City, Kansas Police Department (KCKPD).

The KCKFD extends our deepest sympathies to the victim's family and coworkers.

The KCKFD would like to thank our partners for their services and support throughout this extended major operation. Our operational partners were the Unified Government Public Works Department, the Board of Public Utilities, the KCKPD, Burlington Northern/Santa Fe Railroad, Kansas City Fire Department, Olathe Fire Department, Central Jackson County Fire Protection District, Edwardsville Fire Department, and Leavenworth County Emergency Management. Taking it to the Streets, a not for profit organization that provides on-scene services for first responders throughout the Kansas City metropolitan area, was on the scene throughout the incident.

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