



# The Record

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## Wins on Earth and in Space

By Dr. Jim Haas

**H**ungarians voted in record numbers—77% of those registered—April 12th to rid themselves of Prime Minister Viktor Orbàn, whose authoritarian rule had been systematically destroying Hungary’s democratic institutions. From rigging elections to controlling media, universities, and courts, Orbàn believed in “my way or the highway.”

Hungarians had clearly had enough of far-right “illiberal” government, not only throwing out the prime minister but electing to parliament a supermajority of more than two-thirds of the opposition party (Parliament building in Budapest on the Danube pictured). They intend to undo as much of Orbàn’s anti-democratic policies as they can, beginning with electoral structures that gave him and his party an advantage (like U.S. gerrymanders).

From 1945 to 1990, Hungary was a Soviet satellite but became a relatively liberal democracy after the Soviet collapse. Hungary joined NATO and the EU, building on a knowledge-economy supported by good public education including free university for



Photo by Jorge Franallillo

those qualified. (Hungary has 67 universities including several of Europe’s oldest. So many Hungarian physicists and mathematicians worked in the Manhattan Project unlocking the secrets of nuclear energy that a running joke was that it must be Hungary’s water. What it was, of course, were universities strong in math and the sciences.)

Orbàn’s rule saw rising prices and widespread corruption as well as close ties to Putin’s Russia, all highly unpopular with the public. In the U.S., Orbàn’s policies were a model for the right-wing Heritage Foundation’s Project 2025, the framework for Trump Administration policies. Trump even sent Vice-president Vance to Hungary to help rally Orbàn supporters. Vance failed. Hungarians wanted their free democracy back and chose to side with Europe, not Russia or the U.S. Hungarians got what they wanted by voting in record numbers. Democracy works.

On April 13th, Canadians elected three new Liberal Party members to the House of Commons, giving Prime Minister Mark Carney a clear majority. Carney earned a doctorate in economics at Oxford, worked at Goldman Sachs, was governor of the Bank of Canada then of the Bank of England, followed by several years as UN special envoy for climate action and finance.

Carney’s rousing speech at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, last year

marked him as one of the influential leaders of the free world. Carney said that U.S. economic and foreign policies during the past year, especially tariffs, have “ruptured” the largely stable relations among most nations that have endured for nearly 80 years. With his new governing majority, Carney plans to reduce Canada’s dependence on the U.S., certainly in trade. It’s not a divorce, however. A Canadian was a crew member on the recent Artemis II Moon mission.

In Greek mythology, Artemis is the daughter of Zeus, king of the gods, and Leto, a Titaness. Artemis is goddess of the hunt, of wilderness, and of nature. NASA’s Artemis II was our first manned flight to the Moon in 50 years. The Orion spacecraft was launched by a Space Launch System (SLS) rocket April 1 from Kennedy Space Center on a 10-day mission to test how well the Orion works in deep space, to study crew health, to test optical communication with Earth, to photograph the far side of the Moon, and to prepare to return humans to the lunar surface and eventually establish a permanent base.

The Orion crew (pictured) included U.S. astronauts Reid Wiseman, Victor Glover, and Christina Koch, and Canadian astronaut Jeremy Hansen. As they passed above the Moon’s far side, they were 252,756 miles from Earth, farther than humans had ever been. Quite a ride!





By Sharon Hoover

All the Parade of Hearts exhibits are on display and 15 are in Wyandotte County. Close to home, a beautiful golden heart is at The Windmill KC on South 55<sup>th</sup> in Turner. You can do a google search for Parade of Hearts and the website will take you to Communities and Wyandotte County is listed. A map is included with directions to each site and a little bio on each artist.

The National Agricultural Center and Hall of Fame is hosting its An-

# Comin' & Goin' Turner Style

nual Barnyard Babies on April 25 from 10am-3pm. Experience life on the farm with much to see and do for all ages. Admission is: \$10 for ages 13 & up, \$8 for ages 3-12, free for ages 2 and under. All attractions are included in the cost of admission (except food and drink). Because of the farm animals, they ask you do not bring your dogs (or other pets). This event is rain or shine. They recommend you arrive by at least 1:30 pm in order to have time to see the animals, ride the train and ponies, and see the Great American giant animal kites. Entrance closes at 2:30pm. Tickets can be bought online or at the entrance.

While in the area, the Wyandotte County Historical Society and Museum is hosting the 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Ethnic Festival with a dual

venue at George Meyn Center and the Museum. Enjoy music, dancing, ethnic foods, visit cultural booths at George Meyn and view the Hopewell Native American Exhibition at the Museum. This free event runs from 10am-6pm.

Saturday, April 25 is the Earth Day Weekend Cleanup. Celebrate Earth Day by participating in a community cleanup at one of these locations across Kansas City, KS: Armourdale, 718 Shawnee Ave. 9am-12pm; Turner, 2611 S. 31st St. 9am-12pm; Central Corridor, 1120 Central Ave. 9am-12pm; Rosedale, 1401 Southwest Blvd. 9am-12pm. Dumpsters are being provided by each of the Neighborhood Business Revitalization organizations- Armourdale Renewal Assn., Turner Community Connection, Inc., Central Avenue Business Assn.,

and Rosedale Development Assn.

Wy/Lv Area Agency on Aging's April 30th "Senior Impact Series" featured speakers are Greg Kindle from the WyC0 Economic Development Council; Commissioners, Melissa Bynum and Andrew Davis. Lunch at noon. Reserve seating and lunch at 913 573 8531 or 60plus@wycokck.org.

Wyandotte County Extension Master Gardeners are holding their Annual Plant Sale on Friday, May 1 from 9am-5pm and Saturday, May 2 from 9am-2pm at 1200 N 79<sup>th</sup>, KCK. Available for sale: tomatoes, peppers, herbs, berries, hanging plants, annual and perennial flowers. This is their only fund-raising event of the year and supports all their programs.

Until next time, stay safe and be kind to those around you.

## Stock Market Insights

### Bank Earnings: What It Told Us About the Economy

**Joe Shearrer, CPFA® is Vice President and Wealth Advisor at Fervent Wealth Management.**

Last weekend, I was coaching my kids' youth baseball team in a tournament. They didn't play perfect baseball, far from it. There were a few errors and missed opportunities, but they kept showing up each inning, putting the ball in play, getting walked, stealing bases, and finding a way to stay in the game. They were resilient. Not dominant. Not flawless. But steady enough to keep moving forward. That idea stuck with me this past week as I watched bank earnings roll in.

When the country's largest banks report earnings, it's about more than profits. It's a window into the financial health of consumers, businesses, and the broader economy. Based on this past week's reports, the message is fairly clear: the economy is holding up, but it's starting to feel some pressure.

On the surface, things look solid. Goldman Sachs reported a record quarter in banking and trading. The bank's profit rose 19% in the first

quarter, driven by a resurgence in deal activity and market volatility. PNC Bank's total first quarter revenue rose 13% to 6.17 billion as client activity remained robust.

Major banks like JPMorgan, Wells Fargo, and Citigroup have described the consumer as "resilient," noting that spending remains steady despite higher interest rates and persistent inflation. People are still traveling, dining out, and making purchases; key drivers of economic growth. The three banks earned a collective 27.5 billion dollars in the first quarter, up 17% from a year ago.

But beneath that strength, there are subtle shifts worth paying attention to. More consumers are relying on credit to maintain their spending. Credit card balances and auto loans continue to rise, while the excess savings many households built up in recent years are gradually declining. That doesn't signal immediate trouble, but it does suggest that financial flexibility is tightening.

Banks themselves appear to be preparing for that possibility. One important indicator is loan loss pro-

visions; funds that banks set aside to cover loans that may not be repaid. Several large banks increased these reserves this quarter, a sign they expect some level of credit stress ahead. Historically, this is often an early warning signal, even if current conditions still appear stable.

The business side of the economy is showing a similar pattern. Activity remains steady, with trading and investment banking providing a boost to earnings, but the tone from executives has shifted. Words like "uncertain" and "cautious" are being used more frequently, reflecting a more measured approach to hiring, borrowing, and expansion. Companies are still moving forward, but not as aggressively.

Interest rates continue to play a central role in this dynamic. Higher rates have supported bank profitability by increasing returns on loans. At the same time, they are making it more expensive for consumers to carry debt and for businesses to invest.

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# SENATE NEWS



By Sen. Pat Pettey

Continued from last week. On the Senate Floor.

• **HB 2781:** HB 2781 would authorize the State Historical Society to acquire the junior officers' quarter at Fort Dodge for their use, preservation, improvement, and maintenance. Senator Haley attempted to amend this bill on the floor to include appropriations for the Quindaro ruins archaeological park project in Wyandotte County, Kansas, but his amendment was rejected by the body. HB 2781 passed 40-0, I voted YES.

• **Sub for HB 2114:** Sub for HB 2114 would clarify which structures shall be considered water obstructions, compared to a dam, and increase the application fees for a permit to construct, modify, or

add a dam. Sub for HB 2114 passed 39-1, I voted YES.

• **HB 2466:** HB 2466 would extend the sunset on the Angel Investor Tax Credit, a program that has created 2,116 direct jobs and retained 799 positions in Kansas since it was first enacted. This program is dedicated specifically to new, small businesses in Kansas. HB 2466 passed 34-6, I voted YES.

• **HB 2528:** HB 2528 is a mega-bill that would amend more than 30 Kansas statutes relating to nursing, nursing licensure, and the Kansas Board of Nursing. There have been numerous concerns raised regarding the Kansas Board of Nursing in recent years, and we must address these concerns, but this bill is far-reaching and will have many unintended consequences. HB 2528 passed 34-6, I voted NO.

o "HB 2528 changes over 30 statutes and directs the Board of Nursing to void 20 years of some disciplinary records. This legislation is far reaching and hints of

doing away with the Board of Nursing. The board of nursing licenses over 72,000 nursing professionals and its mission is to protect and promote the welfare of the people of Kansas. This legislation threatens that charge and creates the ability for some to profit financially. Our Kansas nurses deserve better. I stand in strong opposition to HB 2528." —PAT PETTEY

• **HB 2521:** HB 2521 would expand the Kansas Tort Claims Act to include child placement agencies, if the agency had an active contract with the Secretary for Children and Families when the act or omission that caused the claim occurred. This attempt to solve the insurance issues facing providers by limiting the resources of harmed children is an unprecedented change that may have harmful impacts for years to come. HB 2521 passed 31-9, I voted NO.

• **HB 2527:** HB 2527 would prohibit certain sex offenders from entering school property or attending school activities. This

bill would also prohibit a defendant from being assigned work release if they are imprisoned for a crime that will place them on the sex offender registry upon their release. HB 2527 passed 38-0, I voted YES.

• **HB 2553:** HB 2553 would provide for the PBS Kansas distinctive license plate. Under this bill, all proceeds collected from the sale of these distinctive license plates would be distributed to local PBS stations, dependent on where in the state the license plate was purchased. HB 2553 passed 34-6, I voted YES.

• **HB 2644:** HB 2644 would require a county appraiser to adjust the value of residential and commercial property upon final determination or seek a fee simple appraisal, if the appraised value is greater than a 5% increase over three years. HB 2644 passed 36-4, I voted NO.

• **HB 2739:** HB 2739 would exclude apartment homes from

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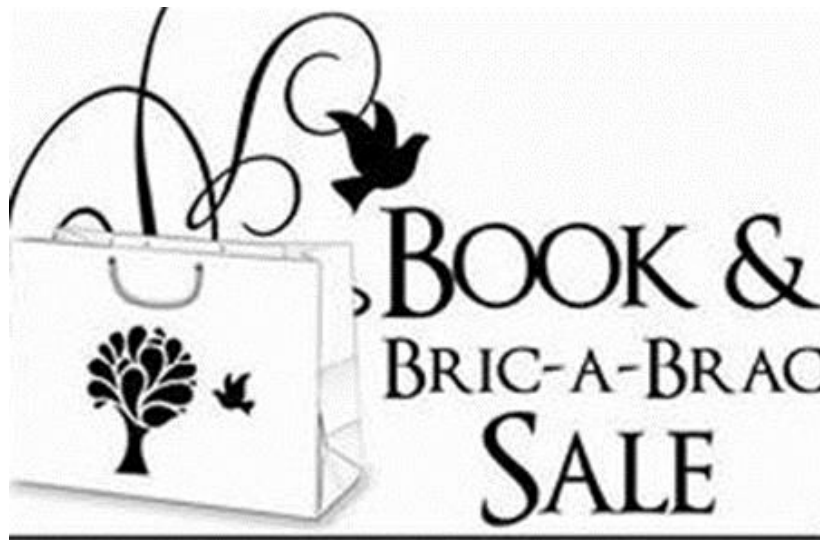
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## The Shepherd's Center of Kansas City, Kansas



Annual Used Book and Bric-a-Brac sale benefitting the Shepherd's Center of Kansas City, Kansas

(an interfaith organization helping older adults in Kansas City, Kansas)

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**WHITE CHURCH CHRISTIAN CHURCH**

**2200 N. 85<sup>th</sup> Street, KCKs**

Donations will be accepted at the church beginning at 8am on Thursday, April 30, 2026.

**No clothing or magazines will be accepted.**

Call 913-281-8908 with questions or to schedule donation pick-up. Donations are tax deductible.

*PS: We need volunteer help to organize and run the sale! Can you give us an hour or two on Thursday to set up, or Friday and Saturday of the sale? Call Melissa at the Shepherd's Center office, 913-281-8908 to sign up for a shift!*

## Petty...

...from page 3

fire safety rules and regulations administered by the State Fire Marshal. This bill would also exclude dwellings paid for by the Kansas Housing Investor Tax Credit and Kansas Moderate Income Housing Program from accessibility standards for certain dwellings. This bill was amended on the Senate floor to exempt certain rules and regulations adopted by the State Fire Marshal from economic impact statement requirements. HB 2739 passed 39-1, I voted YES.

• House Sub for HB 2357: Sub for HB 2357 would allow for the expungement of eviction records from a renter's history after three years. On the floor, Senator Faust-Goudeau attempted to amend the bill to allow for expungement after two years; this amendment was defeated. Senator Holscher also attempted to amend the bill to cap late rental fees at 5% of the standard rental price, but this amendment was also defeated. Sub for HB 2357 passed 33-7, I voted YES.

• Senate Sub for HB 2402: Sub for HB 2402 would require eligible local school boards to consider participation in the community eligibility provision. The Community Eligibility Provision program is a federal program that provides free school meals to all students, if the school is at a particular level of students who qualify for free and reduced-price school meals. This bill would not mandate that schools participate in the program, but rather just encourage them to consider the program and whether it would make sense and benefit their community. Sub for HB 2402 passed 38-2, I voted NO.

• SB 521: SB 521 would modify credit percentages, allowable credit amounts, and eligible expenses for the tax credit for employer contributions to a third party that expands the availability of community child care. On the Senate floor, we amended the bill to restore the refundability of the credit for child care expenses and provide for an additional refundable tax

credit for certain child care-related contributions. SB 521 passed 34-6, I voted YES.

• Sub for HB 2595: Sub for HB 2595 would enact the Attorney Training Program for Rural Kansas Act. We know that there is a shortage of attorneys in rural Kansas, and this bill would provide stipends to law students who meet certain requirements and agree to practice law in rural areas. This bill would also provide for loan forgiveness to lawyers who meet certain requirements and practice law in rural areas. Sub for HB 2595 passed 34-6, I voted YES.

• Senate Sub for HB 2111: Sub for HB 2111 would exempt certain registered agritourism operations from any local codes or regulation enforcement, including fire codes, ADA compliance, and health and safety standards. Senator Francisco attempted to amend this bill on the floor to ensure that fire safety standards would be followed at these sites, but, unfortunately, her amendment was defeated. Sub for HB 2111 passed 26-14, I voted NO.

### BATHROOM & DRIVERS' LICENSE BILL GOES INTO EFFECT

Sub. for SB 244, which prohibits Kansans from using the bathroom that aligns with their identity, went into effect. This poorly written legislation also bans parents from bringing their children, if they are nine or older, into the restroom with them if their child is the opposite sex. Sub. for SB 244 also immediately invalidates any driver's license that does not reflect a person's sex assigned at birth.

If you have questions about navigating this legislation and how it may affect you, contact the ACLU of Kansas.

The ACLU has announced that it is suing Kansas over this legislation.

### KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

With the influx of immigration raids across our country, it is important that we ensure our communities know their rights. It is clear that this administration has no respect for the rule of law.

Know Your Rights cards are

an effective way to distribute information about the rights we all have – regardless of immigration status – when interacting with law enforcement officers. You can download these cards to print out and share with your friends and neighbors here. Cards are available in more than 50 different languages.

### FOLLOW OUR WORK

Let's stay connected throughout the session! You can follow our caucus on Facebook and Instagram to receive legislative updates and information about how to get involved.

### WEATHER INSURANCE CLAIM INFORMATION

Having trouble filing an insurance claim after a winter storm? Contact the Kansas Department of Insurance—consumer assistance representatives are always standing by to help! The Department will review your complaint and contact the appropriate parties. File a complaint or seek assistance online at <https://www.insurance.kansas.gov/consumers/file-a-complaint>, by phone at 785-296-3071, or by email at [KDOI.Complaints@ks.gov](mailto:KDOI.Complaints@ks.gov).

## Tom's Tasty Treats

By Tom Valverde

This week's tasty treat is a wonderful Bundt cake that is special because it's flavored with rum. Want to make it alcohol-free? Just use rum extract, look for it on the shelf close to where the Vanilla is. This is an unforgettable cake. Please give it a try:

### RUM BUNDT CAKE

#### Ingredients:

- 1/2 c Brown Sugar
  - 1 Yellow Cake mix
  - 1 3.5 oz. pkg Instant Vanilla Pudding
  - 1/2 t Salt
  - 4 Eggs
  - 1/2 c cold Water
  - 1/4 c Rum\*
  - 1 t Vanilla
  - 1/2 c Canola oil
- Glaze:
- 3/4 c Butter
  - 1 1/2 c Sugar
  - 1/2 c Rum•
  - 1/2 c Water
  - \*or use 1t Rum extract
  - or use 2t

Rum extract for the glaze

Set the oven to 325°. Grease and flour the Bundt pan. Put the pecan pieces in the pan, then sprinkle the brown sugar over them evenly. In a large bowl combine and whisk together the cake mix, pudding mix, eggs, cold water, rum, and Vanilla. Finish by scraping the bowl with a spatula to make sure that no dry mix is left in the bowl. Pour the batter into the Bundt pan and use the spatula to even out the top.

Bake for 55-60 minutes. Do not over bake.

Prepare the glaze before the cake is done, give yourself about 20 minutes. Melt the butter and stir in the water and the sugar. Boil 4-5 minutes and stir constantly. Take the pan off the heat then stir in the rum. As soon as you remove the cake from the oven, drizzle 1/3 of the glaze over the top; let sit for 5 minutes. Then, invert the cake on the serving plate. Using a fork, poke holes all over the cake and pour the remaining glaze over the cake.

The cake is rich with the flavor of rum so the slices of cake don't need to be very large. The cake is good, but it is even better with a scoop of Vanilla ice cream. Try it and you'll be a fan. This is a cake for adults only because of the rum. Enjoy!

# Storm season is here. Get ready now to weather it well.

## Vicki Schmidt, Kansas Insurance Commissioner

As Insurance Commissioner, the Department staff and I have deployed to disasters all over the state. In these situations, we see people on their worst days and encounter circumstances I hope most Kansans never have to experience.

One situation I will never forget was after the Andover tornado when a man whose entire home had been destroyed was struggling to breathe. Somewhere amidst the rubble, his oxygen tank was buried, and he did not have a backup. He had reached out to the medical supply company several times but was getting the runaround. I picked up the phone and started making calls. While I received the same answers from the supplier, I was unwilling to accept that nothing could be done to help this man. I connected with a Red Cross volunteer who went to pick up the tank, and we were able to deliver this vital resource to help him begin breathing easier.

This situation taught me and our Department staff to be ready for the unexpected and that when severe weather turns lives upside down, sometimes the most meaningful help we can offer is to simply step up.

My hope is that by preparing ahead of time, each and every Kansan will be equipped to weather severe storms and the aftermath in better circumstances. As we all know, Kansas weather can be unpredictable. This year alone, we have experienced blizzards, thunderstorms, wildfires, and tor-

nadoes – some within the same month! So, if you have not already begun preparing for storm season, here are five things you can do right now to get ready.

Review your insurance policy with your insurance agent to make sure you understand your current coverage and have appropriate coverage.

Consider if you need flood insurance as standard homeowners' insurance, renters' insurance and dwelling policies do not cover damage from floods.

Establish an emergency plan to stay safe and informed. Be sure to practice your plan so everyone in your home knows what to do when storms come.

Create a home inventory list or update your existing list with any recent changes. Access a free digital list building tool on the Department's website: [insurance.kansas.gov](http://insurance.kansas.gov).

Protect your home from damage before storms arrive. Check your roof and gutters, clear tree limbs and debris away from your house, and put away loose items like lawn furniture that could cause damage to your home.

The devastation following storms is always heartbreaking, but even amid great loss, I am continually inspired by the Kansas communities that come together to help each other pick up the pieces. It makes me fiercely proud to be a Kansan and honored to work for you.

If you have an issue with an insurance claim, I want to hear from you. Contact the Department's

Consumer Assistance Division at 785-296-3071, by email at [kdoi.complaints@ks.gov](mailto:kdoi.complaints@ks.gov) or online at [insurance.kansas.gov](http://insurance.kansas.gov) for any claims-related questions or concerns. We have real live people answering the phones and we are here to assist.

Stay safe and be ready, Kansas.

Since being elected in 2018 and serving eight years as Kansas Insurance Commissioner, Vicki Schmidt has returned a total of \$206.6 million to Kansans in consumer recoveries; she resides in Topeka with her husband of over 50 years.

## Market Insights... ...from page 2

Taken together, the data points to an economy that is still growing, but at a slower and more fragile pace. This is often what a late-stage economic cycle looks like; growth continues but the margin for error narrows. It's not perfect. Even though there are mistakes, pressure points, and signs of fatigue, the economy continues to move forward.

The question for investors isn't whether challenges exist today. It's whether your plan is built to hold up if the game gets tougher from here. Like my youth baseball team, the U.S. economy remains resilient, not because everything is going just right, but because it's finding ways to keep going even when conditions aren't ideal.

Have a blessed week!  
Joe Shearrer

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Fervent Wealth Management is a financial management and services entity in Springfield, Missouri.

## Quotes To Ponder

By Tom Valverde

"The masters of war pretend not to know that it takes only a moment to destroy, yet a lifetime is often not enough to rebuild. They turn a blind eye to the fact that billions are spent on killing and devastation, yet the resources for healing, education and restoration are nowhere to be found."

Pope Leo XIV  
April 16, 2026

"Blessed are the peacemakers but woe to those who manipulate religion and the very name of God (And His image) for their own military, economic and political gain, dragging that which is sacred into darkness and filth... The world is being ravaged by a handful of tyrants. Pope Leo denounced corruption and said, "The management of public resources and the respect for the rule of Law are essential to restoring trust"

Pope Leo VIX

The Pope's message is for the world, but it sadly applies to the current president and his administration. Everyday some new low is done with little if any intervention by the Congress. They are complicit in his unlawful actions and often lives are put out, both here in the US and abroad in the Middle East.

Senseless destruction of entire countries is an everyday occurrence. We need to demand much better from our leaders.





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