



Unified Government Board of Commission Appoints Alan Howze as Interim County Administrator

During the July 2 full commission meeting, Mayor/CEO Christal Watson presented her recommendation to the Unified Government Board of Commissioners for Alan Howze to serve as Interim County Administrator for the Unified Government of Wyandotte County (UG). This recommendation follows the recent resignation of County Administrator David Johnston.

After discussion, the commission voted 8-0 to appoint Alan Howze as Interim County Administrator.

"This interim appointment reflects our commitment to responsible leadership, organizational stability, and good governance," said Mayor/CEO Christal E. Watson. "Appointing an internal Interim County Administrator provides the stability our organization needs while we conduct a thoughtful, transparent national search for the next permanent County Administrator. We are ensuring continuity today, while positioning our county for continued future success."

Mr. Howze has been with the UG for over 10 years and has an extensive background spanning data and technology, process improvement, and

strategic planning. Over his many years with the UG, Alan has worked with or provided leadership and guidance to almost every UG department. He brings valuable experience and a strong understanding of our organization's priorities, operations, and commitment to public service. Alan's experience provides the stability the UG needs during this period of transition.

"I want to express my sincere appreciation to the Mayor and Commission for their trust and confidence in me, and I am grateful for the opportunity to continue serving our organization and the residents of our community," said Alan Howze.

"As we move forward together, as Interim County Administrator, I remain committed to leading with the values that define our county: integrity in every decision we make, compassion in how we serve, accountability for our actions and results, and stewardship of the public resources entrusted to us."

Residents and stakeholders can be assured that services, programs, and ongoing projects will continue without interruption during this transition.



The UG will continue to communicate openly throughout this transition while keeping the focus where it belongs, on serving the residents

Stock Market Insights

S&P 500 Earnings Face a Big Test as AI Drives Corporate Profits

Dr. Richard Baker, AIF®, is the CEO and executive wealth advisor at Fervent Wealth Management.

A few days ago, I went into the kitchen thinking I was on firm footing in my own house, but I didn't realize my wife had left the dishwasher door open. In the pitch dark, I tripped over the open dishwasher door, flipped in the air, and landed hard on my right arm. I sure hope the stock markets are on firmer footing than I am.

The second quarter wrapped up at the end of June on a good note. It ended up being the best quarter for the indexes since quarter two of 2020 and more than made up for the first-quarter losses. Looking at performance year-to-date,

the DOW Jones returned 8.9%, the S&P 500 returned 10.2%, and the tech-heavy Nasdaq gained 12.8%. The technology sector led all sectors despite the sharp pullback in June, with industrials following, while real estate companies struggled.

As the quarter ends, corporate America closes its books and prepares to report results to shareholders over the coming weeks. Though first-quarter index returns were negative, earnings were great, with S&P 500 companies as a group growing earnings per share (EPS) by 29%. Analysts estimate that second-quarter earnings will be up by over 20%.

If earnings growth is going to approach 20%

or more again, the technology sector will have to do more heavy lifting. Memory chip maker Micron did its part by growing its earnings 12-fold and contributing 4.5 points of the S&P 500 EPS growth on its own. In fact, Micron and NVIDIA are expected to drive 40% of overall S&P 500 EPS growth, and, according to Goldman Sachs estimates, artificial intelligence (AI) infrastructure stocks are expected to contribute 60% of S&P 500 EPS. Besides technology, only energy had positive earnings. The market will again be heavily dependent on the technology sector to carry the load for the market as a whole.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Market Insights... ...from page 1

If earnings are going to hit the estimates in quarter two and the second half of 2026, profit margins will have to increase quite a bit — enough to move from low-teens revenue growth into at least double that pace of earnings growth. Workers' increased productivity from using AI should gradually show up as higher profit margins in the second half.

The AI boom should drive another quarter of strong earnings growth. Adding a boost to oil prices from the Iran conflict will help energy contribute, but technology is expected to continue to do most of the work. Similar to last quarter, investors will be watching to see whether there is a significant return on the massive AI investment.

Historically, the market rewards strong earnings: when S&P 500 earnings grow in double digits, the average annual S&P 500 index return is over 14%.

The economic backdrop remained resilient in June despite several geopolitical developments that continue to bring about market uncertainty. The economy looks to be on stable footing as it navigates several unique issues in the second half of this year: the AI buildout, a new Federal Reserve chairman, and a midterm election that will probably get feisty.

I got up off the floor but couldn't lift my toothbrush. X-rays showed nothing was broken, but the doctor suggested that my wife use the delayed-start function on the dishwasher and that I turn on the light so no one gets hurt. The earnings report will also shine a light on

America's companies, and we will see if anything can trip them up.

Have a blessed week.

www.FerventWM.com

This article was written by humans for humans because AI doesn't have this quality of sarcasm.

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

Social Security Administration Celebrates America's 250th with Commemorative Cards for Newborns

Baltimore, MD – The Social Security Administration (SSA) announced a first-of-its-kind commemorative Social Security card for children born in the United States between July 2 and December 31, 2026, celebrating the 250th anniversary of American independence. The limited-edition cards, identical in function to a standard Social Security card, will feature the official Freedom 250 logo in black ink, marking the recipient's birth during the nation's 250th year.

The commemorative cards will be issued as part of the Enumeration at Birth (EAB) program, where parents at hospitals, birthing centers, or those using licensed midwives can request a Social Security number during the birth registration process.

"Freedom 250 is a celebration of America's storied history and the monumental moments that have shaped our nation, including the creation of Social Security over 90 years ago," said Commissioner Frank J. Bisignano. "The next generation of Americans born during this historic year will receive limited-edition Social Security cards bearing the Freedom 250 logo. Under the leadership of President Donald J. Trump, we are strengthening Social Security, improving service, and building an SSA to serve Americans today and in the future."

The official Freedom 250 designation is exclusively for original cards issued through the EAB program to newborns during the qualifying period. EAB cards issued outside the July 2 – December 31, 2026, timeframe and all replacement and duplicate cards will not carry the commemorative designation regardless of the cardholder's birth date. For additional information, please visit www.ssa.gov/faqs.

SSA has issued Social Security numbers to newborns since 1987 through the EAB program, a partnership with hospitals and state vital records offices across the country. More than 3.5 million children are born in the United States each year. The commemorative cards will be produced at no additional cost to families or taxpayers.

Beware of Scams

SSA asks that you protect yourself and your loved ones from scams. SSA will never call, text, or email you requesting payment to obtain a commemorative card for your child or otherwise. Parents do not need to apply, register, or provide information beyond what is already collected through the standard EAB program.

If you receive a suspicious communication claiming to be from SSA or from a third party on behalf of the agency, please report it to the Office of the Inspector General at oig.ssa.gov/report or call 1-800-269-0271. To learn about Social Security scams, please visit www.ssa.gov/scam.



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Tom's Tasty Treats

By Tom Valverde

This week's tasty treat is a cookie that has either semi-sweet chocolate chips or butterscotch chips in the dough. And features old fashioned oats and the cookies turn out nice and chewy with the mixture of brown sugar and regular cane sugar. They come together in a snap and the batter as well as the baked cookies can be frozen. Please give them a try:

OATMEAL CRACKLE COOKIES WITH CHIPS

Ingredients:

1 c Brown Sugar

1 c Sugar

1 stick Butter, softened

1/2 c Crisco

1 t Vanilla

2 Eggs

1 1/2 c Flour

1 c Semi-sweet

Chocolate chips or Butterscotch chips

1/4 t Baking Soda

1 1/2 c Oats

1/2 t Salt 1-1/2 c Powdered Sugar

Set oven to 350°. Line two cookie sheet with parchment paper. Place the powdered sugar in a medium bowl. In the bowl of a mixer combine the brown sugar and sugar, and the butter and Vanilla. Beat on medium speed to mix together. Add the eggs, one at a time and beat until the batter is smooth. Add the flour, 1/2c at a time. Then add the oats, again, 1/2 c at a time. Add the salt and baking soda. Blend together well.

Add the chips to the batter and stir in well. Using a tablespoon sized scoop, scoop dough and place into the powdered sugar. Roll the balls to coat them well and evenly. Place on the cookie sheet and space 2" apart. Bake at 350° for 12-14 minutes. Leave the cookies on the cookie sheet for 3 minutes, then transfer to a wire rack to finish cooling. If you don't have powdered sugar, frost the cookies with melted chocolate instead. The butterscotch cookies are fine left plain. This recipe will make about 3 dozen cookies. The recipe may be doubled or halved. A really good cookie for anytime. Take them on a picnic in your favorite park.

Enjoy!



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Request for Proposal Advertisement

Turner Unified School District No. 202 is seeking Bid Proposals for the purchase of Foodservice Equipment throughout the school district.

Documents pertaining to this Request for Proposal will be provided to any qualified contractor/vendor free of charge by email request sent to figgeb@turnerusd202.org

Turner USD 202 Foodservice Coordinator, Bev Figge will host the blind bid opening, July 23, 2026, at 1:00 pm. The location of the bid opening will be 800 South 55th Street, Kansas City, KS 66106. Turner USD 202 will announce the vendor that is awarded the bid or bids Wednesday, August 5, 2026.

(First published 7-9-26)

2t-The Record-7-16-26

Firefighters receive over \$938,000 from Kansas Department of Insurance

Topeka, Kan. – Kansas Insurance Commissioner Vicki Schmidt, today, announced, that the Kansas Department of Insurance has made its annual distribution to local Firefighter Relief Associations (FRAs). Pursuant to the Kansas Firefighters Relief Act, \$938,083.39 has been distributed among three local FRAs throughout Wyandotte County.

The funds from the Kansas Firefighters Relief Act are generated by a two percent tax paid by insurance companies on fire and lightning insurance premiums written in Kansas. Associations primarily use their distributed funds for insurance premiums and safety enhancements. The relief funds may pay for the health, accident, disability, and life insurance premiums of local firefighters. Safety enhancements such as new firetrucks, fire station building improvements, and firefighting gear can be purchased via relief funds loaned to local governing entities.

Kansas Insurance Commissioner Vicki Schmidt announces the launch of real-time insurance verification system

Topeka, Kan. – Kansas Insurance Commissioner Vicki Schmidt, today, announced the launch of the real-time insurance verification system she fought to establish to lower insurance costs. The Kansas Insurance Verification System (KSIVS) was authorized by the Legislature through SB 42 in 2025 and is now live.

“This new tool for law enforcement will better equip them to identify uninsured motorists in real-time,” said Commissioner Vicki Schmidt. “No longer will bad actors be able to take advantage of an antiquated system to skirt the law and drive-up costs for law abiding Kansans.”

“Vehicle insurance is essential to protect citizens from the expenses of a crash,” said Colonel Erik Smith, Superintendent of the Kansas Highway Patrol. “A real-time insurance verification system allows law enforcement to instantly determine whether a motorist has all the coverage necessary for safe travel on Kansas roadways.”

According to a data call done by the Kansas Department of Insurance (KDOI), accidents with uninsured motorists over a two-year span cost insurers in Kansas over \$51 million dollars – a cost that directly affects the law-abiding driver who gets into an accident with an uninsured motorist, and indirectly for all insured drivers through increased premiums.

With the launch of this new system, when a request is made for insurance verification – such as during a traffic stop or when a registration is renewed – the KSIVS system checks the vehicle against the Kansas Department of Revenue (KDOR) motor vehicle records and the insurance companies’ data in real-time, confirming whether the vehicle is insured at that moment.

“Today marks the first step in lowering the uninsured motorist rate in Kansas,” said Commissioner Vicki Schmidt. “The lower we can get the rate, the better for Kansans and their pocketbooks.”

As of today, there are 317 insurance companies providing data to the KSIVS. For over 126,000 of the personal vehicles reported to the system, no active insurance could be found. The KDOI will continue working with KDOR and MV Solutions, the selected vendor, on an enforcement mechanism targeting uninsured vehicles who are violating state law.

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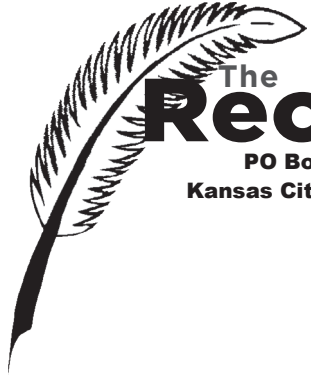
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