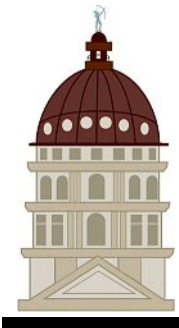




Washburn Rural's Hartman-Babb became Kansas' best sprinter

SPORTS, 1B



THE TOPEKA CAPITAL-JOURNAL

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WEEKEND

PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

GOP leaders object to high court finalists

Selection process likely to be campaign talking point

Stacey Saldanha-Olson and Jason Alatidd

Topeka Capital-Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

With voters set to decide whether to overhaul the process of choosing Kansas Supreme Court justices, the finalists to replace a retired justice have become a campaign talking point.

A proposed constitutional amendment on the Aug. 4 ballot would reform judicial selection by having voters choose justices.

Meanwhile, the state is in the midst of using the current system to replace retired Justice Marla Luckert. Supporters call it a merit-based system, with Gov. Laura Kelly choosing one of three finalists selected by a nominating commission.

Two of those finalists could have their names mentioned this summer as politicians and lobbyists campaign for and against the amendment.

Kansas Republicans object to Supreme Court justice finalist

Republican leaders and multiple lobbying groups are backing the amendment.

Senate President Ty Masterson, who is the Trump-endorsed Republican candidate for governor, is a top supporter of the constitutional amendment.

"It's all about giving the Kansas people a voice in that whole branch of government," he said in a May 26 interview with The Capital-Journal. "That's the key. What this system has brought us over the last 60 some years is a court that doesn't reflect the Kansas people — and that's being demonstrated in the recent resignations and replacements."

While Kansans used to elect their justices, that changed after a scandal in the 1950s. Since then, justices have been selected by the governor and the Supreme Court Nominating Commission. The commission is in charge of vetting the candidates and whittling them down to three candidates. It is made up of lawyers and non-lawyers from each of four Kansas districts,

See **GOP**, Page 2A

How Kansas tornados have shaped state's history



The day after the June 8, 1966, Topeka tornado, Albert Lollar surveyed the ruins of his home near Burnett's Mound. Lollar made a last-minute decision to gather his family and escape from their home, only to be caught up in the funnel in the family car, which was hurled hundreds of feet.

1966 FILE PHOTOS/THE CAPITAL-JOURNAL

Changing course of twisters

Keishera Lately and Charles Rankin
Topeka Capital-Journal | USA TODAY NETWORK

Tornado Alley since the early 1950s has dissected the central Great Plains, including the states of Nebraska, central Oklahoma, northwestern Texas and Kansas.

The fierce storms produced in the region included the 1966 tornado that carved across Topeka, leaving 16 people dead, destroying 800 homes and 250 businesses, damaging another 3,000 homes and 2,390 businesses, and engulfing Washburn University, leaving widespread destruction to campus buildings.

June 8 will be the 60-year anniversary of that F5 tornado.

But today, could Tornado Alley be shifting its path to different regions?

Deadly twisters have left cities forever changed

Many studies in recent years have examined the possibility of a shifting tornado alley, said Accu-

See **TWISTERS**, Page 8A



Irvin "Woody" Woodward, center, was among several residents who dashed to shelter at Countryside Methodist Church, 3221 S.W. Burlingame Road, as the June 8, 1966, tornado roared into the city. Woodward was identified in 2006 as the subject of this photo.

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