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Missouri S&T museum updates put minerals in new light

Charles Dunlap
Columbia Daily Tribune
USA TODAY NETWORK

The brilliancy of more than 4,000 types of minerals is now shown in optimum light at Missouri University of Science and Technology in Rolla.

Once in wooden display cases and drawers, the mineral samples now are featured in modern glass cases with brighter lighting and mirrored backs

that make colors, textures and crystal structures more visible, Missouri S&T said.

The Missouri S&T Mineral Museum in a hallway of McNutt Hall is curated by Peter Bachle, an associate teaching professor of earth sciences and engineering.

“When people visit the museum now, you can see their eyes light up immediately,” he said. “Missouri S&T has always had some of the most amazing

pieces you can find anywhere. Now they are displayed in a way that helps them really shine.”

The museum is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on the first floor of McNutt Hall on the S&T campus, and admission is free. Tours are generally self-guided, though arrangements for a guided tour with Bachle are possible by emailing

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Judge hears arguments on Missouri redistricting signatures

Rudi Keller
Missouri Independent

A petition to force a statewide vote on Missouri’s gerrymandered congressional map was less than 200 signatures away from meeting its goal Tuesday, March 17, as a Cole County judge heard arguments over the status of 100,000 signatures set aside in December.

There is no doubt that People Not Politicians, the political action committee pushing for a referendum, will meet the minimum goal of 111,071 signatures spread across six of the state’s eight congressional districts, campaign director Richard von Glahn said in an interview with The Independent. That’s based on records from Secretary of State Denny Hoskins’ office obtained through Sunshine Law requests for individual county reports.

The petition is nearing enough valid signatures despite Hoskins’ refusal to send to local election authorities more than 100,000 signatures he claims are invalid. Hoskins has said any signatures collected before Oct. 14 — the day he certified the form of the referendum petition — don’t qualify.

If the petition succeeds in putting the map to a statewide vote, the law forced through by Republicans in September would be put on hold.

The campaign’s legal team — Chuck Hatfield and Aliandra Cossette — were in court March 17 again asking Cole County Circuit Judge Christopher Limbaugh to order Hoskins to deliver the remaining signatures for validation.

On Dec. 12, Limbaugh put his decision on hold, noting that he could order the additional signatures to be checked if the petition falls short and the question would be moot if the petition is sufficient without them.

“I am worried that what is going on here is an attempt to delay all this, and whatever happens, they are going to say it is too late,” Hatfield told Limbaugh.

Attorneys Graham Miller, representing Hoskins, and Marc Ellinger, representing the Republican-backed Put Missouri First political action committee, asked Limbaugh to leave his December decision in place.

“This court’s triggers have not been met,” Miller said.

Ellinger asked Limbaugh to wait for more information.

“If they have enough signatures through the normal process, then these claims are entirely moot,” he said. “If they don’t have enough signatures through the normal process, then these claims can become live at that point.”

Limbaugh did not rule immediately, instead setting another hearing for April 7.

Republicans pushed the new map at the insistence of President Donald

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A woman stands at a window as first responders and security forces inspect a damaged apartment after the building was hit by an Iranian missile in Ramat Gan, on the outskirts of Tel Aviv, on March 18. ILIA YEFIMOVICH/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

Israel kills another top Iranian official

Gas field hit in Iran as U.S. eases shipping rule

Michael Loria, Bart Jansen, Kathryn Palmer and Andrea Riquier
USA TODAY

Israel said it had killed Iran’s intelligence minister in its second targeted killing of a top leader in two days, as President Donald Trump suggested he might abandon the task of reopening the Strait of Hormuz to shipping traffic, Iran’s huge Pars gas field was hit and U.S. gas prices reached a national average of \$3.86.

Israel said it had given its military a free hand to target Iranian leaders after announcing the deaths of Intelligence Minister Esmail Khatib on March 18, and Ali Larjani, a top intelligence official and negotiator, on March 17.

Shrapnel from Iranian cluster munitions killed a man and a woman outside Tel Aviv in a retaliatory strike, Iranian state media reported. It was unclear if the pair died in a direct strike or from debris falling from a missile interception.

The killings bring the death toll in Israel from the war to at least 14 and underscore Iran’s continued capacity to strike from a distance despite over two

weeks of U.S. and Israeli attacks.

President Donald Trump, who has criticized European countries for not contributing minesweepers and other support in the war on Iran, questioned whether those countries should instead be left to reopen the Strait of Hormuz to commercial shipping.

The strait is a key shipping lane for 20% of the world’s oil, and Iran’s attacks on oil tankers have closed off a significant volume of shipments. While the shortage has driven up fuel prices worldwide, Trump has argued the United States gets only 1% of its oil

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