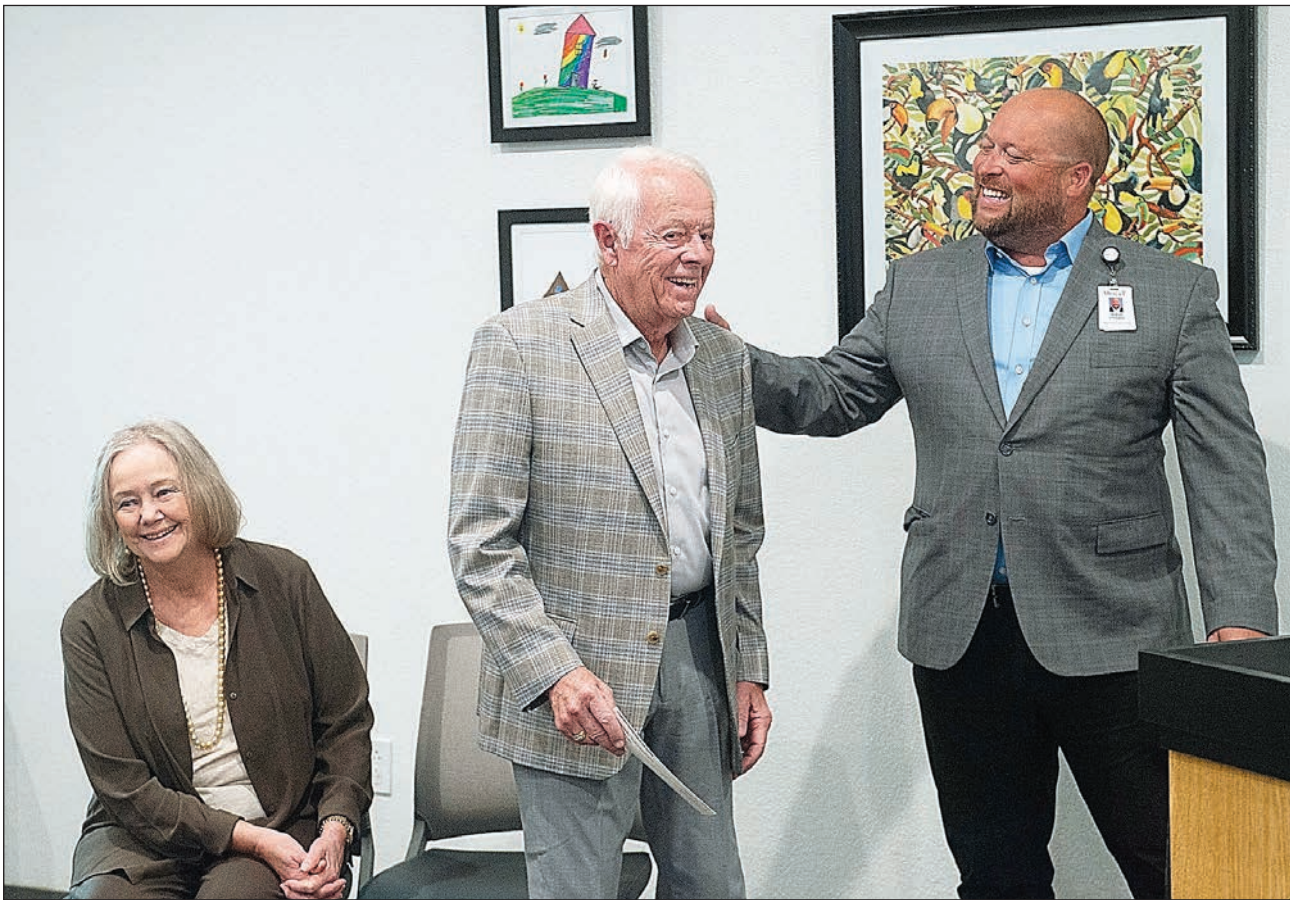


FORT SCOTT: Hospital on track to be finished by end of year. **3A** | **MSSU:** Softball team hosts Miracle League players. **1B**

'BIG DREAMS'



Jeremy Drinkwitz (right), president of the Jasper County CASA board, welcomes Jan and Wes Houser to Jasper County CASA on Monday.

GLOBE | ROGER NOMER

Jan and Wes Houser donate \$50,000 to Jasper County CASA

BY ROGER NOMER
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What started with a single visit has blossomed into a relationship between Jasper County CASA and Wes and Jan Houser.

On Monday, the Housers donated \$50,000 to help CASA realize its dream of serving every child in foster care in Jasper County.

"This is a legacy that is so representative of Wes and Jan, their generosity and their caring for others," said Debi Koelkebeck, executive director of CASA.

Jasper County CASA is a local



Louise Secker (from left), vice president of the Jasper County CASA board, Jan Houser and Debi Koelkebeck, executive director of CASA, talk before Monday's check presentation.

GLOBE | ROGER NOMER

nonprofit organization dedicated to recruiting, training and supporting volunteers who are called court-appointed special advocates. They advocate for children in Jasper County who have experienced abuse or neglect and who have a case in juvenile court.

Each volunteer remains on a case until it is closed through reunifica-

tion with a family member or kinship connection, adoption/guardianship or "aging out" of the system.

With this — the largest gift to its established endowment — CASA will get earnings it can use for emergencies and day-to-day operations.

Kelly Gier, development director

SEE **CASA**, 2A



Missouri Southern State University Board of Governors President Michael Seibert greets Fan Xinyu, deputy dean of graduate education from Zhenjiang International Studies University, at a ceremony Monday. Also pictured are (from left) Wang Linpu, deputy dean of education at ZISU; Li Min, dean of art at ZISU; and Southern President Dean Van Galen.

GLOBE | JOHN HACKER

Officials from Chinese university visit MSSU

Cooperation agreement to be signed in October

BY JOHN HACKER
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Missouri Southern State University leaders, faculty, students and members of the board of governors welcomed four professors from the Zhenjiang International Studies University on Monday to discuss an international partnership for education.

The university is in the city of Hangzhou in the Zhejiang province of eastern China.

MSSU President Dean Van Galen said 20 Southern students and four faculty have already visited the Zhenjiang International Studies University, also known as ZISU, and the delegation is in Joplin to discuss reciprocal visits by ZISU students to Southern.

They were also supposed to sign a cooperation agreement between the two universities, but a vice president from ZISU could not make it to Joplin this time. Plans are now to sign the agreement in October.

The delegation from ZISU was led by Li Min, dean of art, and included Wang Linpu, deputy dean of education; Fan Xinyu, deputy dean of graduate education; and Shen Lu, lecturer of the Portuguese department at ZISU.

The delegation traveled more than 7,000 miles in a day, landing in Springfield and arriving in Joplin on Sunday night.

Rebecca Shriver, executive director of International Education at Missouri Southern, said Monday was a great day for the university.

SEE **VISIT**, 2A

Judge denies request to freeze private-school voucher payments

Missouri's MOScholars program at center of case

BY ANNELISE HANSHAW
Missouri Independent

The Missouri state treasurer's office can continue to subsidize private-school scholarships from a \$51 million allotment of state revenue while a lawsuit challenging the fund's con-

stitutionality makes its way through the system, Cole County Circuit Court Judge Brian Stumpe ruled Monday morning.

Stumpe rejected arguments by the Missouri branch of the National Education Association that the flow of funds should be

stopped in order to prevent unauthorized spending of state funds that can't be "clawed back."

But he didn't outright deny the teachers union's case, also turning down the state's motion to dismiss Monday.

Still, Attorney General Andrew Bailey, who is in his final days in office before stepping into a federal posi-

tion as co-deputy director of the FBI, labeled the ruling a "victory."

"Parents, not unions, not bureaucrats, know what's best for their kids," he said in a press release. "This case is about freedom and opportunity, and today's ruling is a huge step toward securing both."

At the center of the case is the MOScholars program,

which until the infusion of general revenue landed last month funded private-school scholarships through a tax credit program.

The lawsuit challenges the shift from a program dependent on donations — which taxpayers are able to receive back as a tax credit equal to 100% of their contribution — to a state-spon-

sored voucher program.

Both sides met in circuit court last Thursday for the first in-person hearing of what will likely be a monthslong legal battle. MNEA attorney Loretta Haggard argued that the appropriation lacks authority from state statute.

"You can't just turn on

SEE **CASE**, 2A



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