

FED: Key interest rate cut for first time this year. **4A** | **SOCCER:** Carl Junction team maintains undefeated record. **1B**

Plans for Stockton Lake water to be discussed

Conference set for Tuesday in Springfield

BY JOHN HACKER
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Several communities in Southwest Missouri — Joplin included — have secured a source of water to help meet the needs of a growing population for the next few decades.

The challenge now? Getting that water from Stockton Lake, which was approved as a source earlier this year, to those communities.

That will be the topic of the annual Southwest Missouri Water conference to be held next week at Missouri State University in Springfield. The conference theme is “Reliable Water — in an Unreliable World.” It will last from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tuesday at the Darr Agricultural Center, 2401 S. Kansas Expressway.

Joplin gets the bulk of its drinking water from Shoal Creek, supplemented with wells and delivered via Missouri American, an investor-owned utility. Officials have said that might not be adequate in the future, given population growth and the possibility of a severe drought, and have looked for alternative sources.

This spring, the nonprofit Southwest Missouri Water learned that the Army Corps of Engineers has decided to allow access to some of its Stockton Lake water storage to members of the organization. Approximately 38 million gallons of water per day will be available.

The organization covers 16 counties and includes other cities in the region such as Springfield, Carthage, Branson, Monett, Mount Vernon, Nixa, Republic, Pierce City, Willard and Ozark.

Roddy Rogers, executive director of Southwest Missouri Water, said the 2025 conference will be the first where attendees will be able to “discuss next steps in implementing an approved source to meet nearly 70% of the Southwest Missouri region’s future drinking water needs.”

SEE **WATER**, 2A

Coming full circle



Jeffrey Legg stands by his paintings during the opening reception of his exhibit at Spiva Center for the Arts.

COURTESY | JEFFREY LEGG

Jeffrey Legg marks homecoming, milestone as artist

BY MARTA CHURCHWELL
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Jeffrey Legg has been described as “one of the greatest still-life painters of our time” by the editor-in-chief of Fine Art Connoisseur magazine.

His artwork has been purchased by astronaut Neil Armstrong, and at least one of his works is being enclosed in a time capsule to be launched to the moon.



“My Son” is among the Jeffrey Legg paintings in his “Alchemy of Light and Shadow” exhibit at Spiva Center for the Arts.

COURTESY | JEFFREY LEGG

Now, Legg is marking a homecoming and a milestone, having returned to

his hometown of Joplin for a solo exhibition at the art center that molded

him as a young artist.

Legg’s exhibition, “Alchemy of Light and Shadow,” is on display through Saturday, Oct. 25, at Spiva Center for the Arts in the Harry M. Cornell Arts & Entertainment Complex, 212 W. Seventh St.

“Returning to Joplin for my first solo exhibition, especially at the Spiva Center for the Arts, where I have deep roots, is incredibly meaningful,” said Legg, now of Rogers, Arkansas. “This is where my artistic journey began at age 12, where I had my first mentor, and where the initial sparks of my passion for art were ignited.”

“To bring ‘Alchemy of

SEE **EXHIBIT**, 2A

One Joplin to unveil new StoryWalk

Event to be held next week in Leonard Park

BY DEBBY WOODIN
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A new StoryWalk at Leonard Park will be introduced next week by One Joplin.

The nonprofit organization that promotes literacy as one of its services invites families, educators and other members

of the Joplin area to celebrate the unveiling of the new story at 9 a.m. Thursday, Sept. 25, at Leonard Park, 408 Turk Ave.

The latest edition is titled “School Is More Than a Building,” by author and illustrator Kelley Donner. The book provides a message that school is not solely a place to learn, but also a vibrant community of teachers, friends and shared experiences.

One Joplin collaborated with Southwest Missouri Bank

and the Joplin Parks and Recreation Department in providing the new book, furthering efforts to provide literacy opportunities along with creativity and outdoor family experiences.

“StoryWalks turn reading into adventure,” Nicole Brown, executive director of One Joplin, said in a statement. “It’s incredible to see families laughing, talking and exploring together while enjoying a story.”

Jessica Pommert, who is co-chair of the One Joplin Education and Literacy Team, said, “This installation highlights how partnerships can create joyful learning opportunities. It’s about building stronger connections between children, families and the community.”

This edition of Story Walk will be on display through November.

SEE **PARK**, 2A



“The Mighty McKraken” was the StoryWalk feature at Leonard Park earlier this summer. A new title will be unveiled next week.

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