

THE JOPLIN GLOBE

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WALL STREET: Rebounding AI stocks lift market. **4A**

GAZA STRIP: Hamas says it is dissolving its government. **6A**

Joplin water bill could rise \$15 per month

Utility submits rate case to Missouri Public Service Commission

FROM STAFF REPORTS
news@joplinglobe.com

Water bills for Joplin residents could increase by \$15 a month under a rate request submitted last week by Missouri American Water

to the Missouri Public Service Commission. Rate increases would be applied to the utility's 1.7 million customers statewide to cover \$1.6 billion in water and wastewater system investments from June 2025

through May 2028. "We strategically plan and invest in our water and wastewater systems to help ensure they continue meeting the needs of our customers and communities," Rich Svindland, president of Missouri American Water, said in a statement. "These investments strengthen service reliability and enhance water quality — from treat-

ment to tap — while reflecting our employees' ongoing commitment to the health and safety of the communities we proudly serve." In a statement, Missouri American said over that three-year period, it modernized and strengthened water and wastewater systems across Missouri, including replacement of approximately 140 miles of

aging water and wastewater pipeline, upgrading of storage tanks, wells, pumping stations, hydrants, meters and wastewater plants, as well as ongoing replacement of lead service lines and improvements to treatment facilities to address regulatory requirements, including PFAS and other contaminants. The investments include

construction of a new carbon feed system, well site treatment upgrades and filter backwash improvements in Joplin that will increase safety and help maintain consistent water quality and service reliability. If approved as filed, the water bill for the average residential customer in St.

SEE **WATER**, 2A

SMALLER BUDGET



Willis Pound, a driver for the Community Action Ride System, helps Sharon Soprych, a rider heading to a kidney dialysis appointment, on Monday at the Economic Security Corp. office in Joplin. **GLOBE | JOHN HACKER**

CARS program seeking more local help as state funding shrinks

BY JOHN HACKER
jhacker@joplinglobe.com

A program providing rides to people in four Southwest Missouri counties will need more local help as state funding shrinks.

The Community Action Ride System, or CARS, run through the Economic Security Corp. in Joplin, will receive less state funding in the fiscal year that started July 1 than it did in the previous fiscal year. And it might not receive any

funding at all from the state in coming fiscal years. Cavanaugh Studyvin, community organizer in charge of CARS, said the program will see state funding cut from \$367,000 to \$218,000 in the 2026-27 fiscal year, which means informing people who use the service they may have to find different means of transportation to essential destinations. The group's total budget last year was \$392,000, including \$25,000 in funding

SEE **CARS**, 2A



Cavanaugh Studyvin (from left), director of the Community Action Ride System, speaks Monday with driver Willis Pound; Tisch LaVallee, transportation intake coordinator; and rider Sharon Soprych in the program's office at the Economic Security Corp. in Joplin. **GLOBE | JOHN HACKER**

Data center backlash spills into primaries

August vote approaches

BY STEPH QUINN
Missouri Independent

MONTGOMERY CITY, Mo. — Bill Cope stood before the Montgomery County Commission recently to urge local officials to reject a 25-year, 70% personal property tax abatement for a \$15 billion, 934-acre Google data center project under construction outside of New Florence.

"I'm not against the schools or health department or anybody getting more money," Cope said, referring to expected real property tax revenues from the project. "I think that's needed. I do. I'm against the abatement part of it, because if (data center developers) are that good, they should come in, and we would welcome them. But pay your fair share."

Cope's objection captures the tension now pushing data centers into Missouri's Statehouse politics: Local officials are approving multibillion-dollar projects while lawmakers debate whether the state needs rules on transparency, utility costs, water use and public input before more deals are locked in.

Cope told the Independent he lost about 300 acres of his 1,500-acre corn and soybean farming operation in Truxton when the owner of land he was renting sold to Amazon, which is building a \$10 billion data center in New Florence north of the highway. Losing that ground, he said, will drive up fixed costs across the remaining 1,200 acres he farms.

The Amazon and Google data centers, part of a 5,000-acre "Heart of America" industrial megasite, are among at least five data centers proposed for a 30-mile stretch along the Interstate 70 corridor west of St. Louis. Other data center projects are under discussion in Liberty, Maryville, Independence and Joplin.

As Missouri's Aug. 4 primary approaches, the promise and peril of data centers have moved from local development meetings into statewide campaign politics. Data centers have become a flashpoint in fights over

SEE **PRIMARIES**, 2A

Wednesday events in Joplin to mark America's 250th

FROM STAFF REPORTS
news@joplinglobe.com

The America 250th celebration will continue in Joplin with two events Wednesday that are open to the public.

The Joplin Celebrations Commission will unveil the newest Heritage Trail Marker at 2 p.m. Wednesday at the recently opened Tin Cup Bridge behind the

Joplin Family Y, 3404 W. McIntosh Circle Drive. The Heritage Trail is a project the commission started as part of the Joplin sesquicentennial in 2023. This will be the 10th marker telling Joplin's history. Ten more are in development. The storyboard to be unveiled is for the namesakes of both Jasper and Newton counties.

The names were derived from Revolutionary War heroes Sgt. John Newton and Sgt. William Jasper. Five states — Indiana, Missouri, Texas, Mississippi and Georgia — have adjacent counties named Jasper and Newton. The suspension bridge is over Tin Cup Creek at the head of the Tin Cup Trail. On Wednesday evening, Joplin will join other Amer-

icans and participate in "Sharing the Spirit of America." A simultaneous nationwide reading of the Declaration of Independence will take place at 5 p.m. Wednesday. Joplin's event will be at the Joplin Public Library, 1901 E. 20th St. The event commemorates the 250th anniversary of the first public reading July 8, 1776.

Simultaneous readings will occur across all 50 states. Joplin's Sgt. Ariel Nims Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution will conduct the ceremony, with some participants in colonial attire. The first public readings of the declaration took place in Philadelphia; Easton, Pennsylvania; and Trenton, New Jersey.

