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Broadband network wants to come to Joplin

Lumos seeking agreement with city

BY DEBBY WOODIN
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Another fiber network wants to come into Joplin. Lumos Fiber, based in High Point, North Carolina, seeks an agreement with

the city of Joplin to use city rights of way to install a fiber optic communications network.

Lumos Fiber is jointly owned by T-Mobile telecommunications and a private equity firm, EQT Infrastructure.

Lumos has undergone a transition this year in its top leadership, according to its website, but is working

to grow its fiber broadband services in the East and Midwest.

A council measure on the company's request will be considered at Monday's meeting.

PROSPECT VILLAGE

The council also will be asked to accept the final plat for the tax increment financing district that was

created for Prospect Village.

Prospect Village is to include a 135,000-square-foot indoor sports complex and two outdoor turf fields, a major anchor tenant, and 15 acres of additional retail businesses and hotels. In addition, there is to be a 375-unit apartment complex and the construction of streets, sidewalks, stormwater

drainage and other public improvements, including a park and trails.

The Joplin Industrial Development Authority on Tuesday approved up to \$75 million in bonds to be issued to finance the sports complex and mixed-use district that is to be built in the area of south of 20th Street and along Geneva Avenue.

The TIF is one of the components that is to help finance the district's construction with the property and business taxes that will be collected in that district. There also are two overlapping community improvement districts that will collect sales taxes of 2% within a broad section

SEE COUNCIL, 2A

Primary contest

Sen. Jill Carter, R-Granby, is shown during a recent legislative session. MISSOURI INDEPENDENT | ANNELISE HANSHAW

Ellen Nichols is hoping to unseat Sen. Jill Carter in the primary Aug. 4. Her husband, Bill White, is on her left. COURTESY PHOTO

Education, healthcare issues for 32nd District Senate race

BY REBECCA RIVAS
Missouri Independent

Sen. Jill Carter considers herself a “poster child” for school choice, having home-schooled her children and spent a decade advocating for parental rights before winning a Missouri Senate seat in 2022.

“I think government has ruined education,” said Carter, whose 32nd District encompasses Jasper and Newton counties, the area surrounding Joplin. “We talk

about outcomes for local schools. If there was true local control, you might be able to have an argument against that. But people don't understand that the state basically holds them hostage through accreditation and their funding.”

Despite her record, she's now the target of oppositional mailers and radio ads — not from her Republican primary opponent, Dr. Ellen Nichols, a neurosurgeon — but from national right-wing school-choice advocates.

Candidate forum planned in Carthage

A JASPER COUNTY Republican Central Committee candidate forum will be held starting at 6 p.m. Thursday, July 23, at Carthage Water and Electric Community Room, 627 W. Centennial Ave. in Carthage. The event is free and open to the public. All state and county candidates have been invited. There also will be presentations on amendments 1, 2, 4 and 5 by state Rep. Lane Roberts following the forum.

The American Federation for Children Inc. has sent direct mail messages and bought radio ads pushing the idea that Carter “walked away” from a vote on school choice legislation in 2024.

Although Carter voted twice to advance the legislation through the Senate, she was absent for the final vote after lawmakers unveiled

a last-minute substitute she said she had not fully reviewed. The measure ultimately passed 19-10.

“It was an omnibus bill nobody had read,” Carter said. “I abstained from the vote . . . and to say you're not for school choice because you don't want to vote for

SEE SENATE, 2A

Webb City to name street for Lankford

Ribbon-cutting to be held in few weeks

BY JOHN HACKER
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WEBB CITY, Mo. — The street that runs in front of Webb City High School, the district administration office and Cardinals Stadium will be renamed to honor a former Webb City School superintendent.

Mayor Lynn Ragsdale said street signs for Ronald L. Lankford Way are being made and a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new street

will be held in the next few weeks after the weather cools off.

“The Webb City School Board and a group of men specifically who have been meeting with Ron Lankford for coffee for years and were just dear friends as

well as the City Council all had a deep and lasting relationship with Ron,” Ragsdale said. “And we just decided it would be a very good thing to do in honor of Ron and for the sake of his family.”

The City Council voted unanimously Monday to make the change, Ragsdale said.

“Council member Brad Baker made the motion and Jim Dawson made the second, and they had a deep relationship with Ron,” Ragsdale said. “Brad was a part of that coffee club and basically met with Ron all the time. And Ron was instrumental in the Chamber of Commerce naming the annual Citizen of the Year award after Brad's dad, Bob Baker. Then Jim was president of the school board many years ago when Ron was still superintendent. They all had a relationship with him, so I purposely invited them to make the motion and the second.”

Ragsdale said the road section to be renamed includes North Madison Street from Crow Street on the south to Stadium Drive on the north.

Lankford, 77, died June 7. He spent 33 years with the Webb City School District, starting as junior high principal then high school principal and assistant superintendent before he was named the district's superintendent in 1998.

He was named Superintendent of the Year in 2009 by the Missouri Association of School Administrators before retiring in 2010.

After that, Lankford served six years as a deputy commissioner of financial and administrative services for the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in Jefferson City.

He also served for five years as human resources director and assistant superintendent for business services at the Joplin School District.

Ron Lankford

Joplin Globe seeking fall photos for magazine cover

We've said before that October and the Ozarks are a match made in heaven. The fall issue of Joplin Living will focus on that match, looking at the area's fall festivals, autumn events and more. That's where you come in. Got a great fall-themed or fall color photo of an area event? North Heights Porchfest in Joplin, perhaps. Or the annual Maple Leaf Festival in Carthage. Maybe it's

a photo of the grandchildren roughhousing in a pile of autumn leaves. Whatever it is, we'd like to see it. Send us your best fall photo from past events or from last year, and it may appear on the cover of the fall issue of Joplin Living, which comes out Sept. 26. We will need a high-resolution vertical image and a telephone number. Send an email to aostmeyer@joplinglobe.com.

A pup wears the colors of the season during the 2022 Maple Leaf Parade in Carthage. GLOBE FILE

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