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# THE JOPLIN GLOBE

FRIDAY | SEPTEMBER 4, 2026

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**LABOR DAY:** Close out the summer with these recipes. **6A** | **VOLLEYBALL:** MSSU splits 2 matches at Gorilla Classic. **1B**

# Federal charge



Missouri House District 161 candidate Thomas Ross speaks during the Jasper County Republican Central Committee's candidate forum in July in Carthage. GLOBE FILE

Candidate accused of trying to plant drugs on political opponent

BY JOHN HACKER AND DEBBY WOODIN  
news@joplinglobe.com

Missouri state representative candidate, Thomas Ross, has been charged with conspiring to plant cocaine and Adderall on his political opponent in the Aug. 4 primary. Ross, 37, of Joplin, faces a one-count federal complaint. Ross is the Republican candidate for House District 161, which includes much of Joplin, and won the Republican primary in August to replace Lane Roberts, who wasn't running because of term limits. Ross won by just 33 votes over Joplin real estate agent Louise Secker, 1,589 to 1,556.

Federal officials said in a statement released Thursday that on July 30, the FBI was contacted by the Joplin Police Department regarding an alleged public corruption matter. According to the initial information provided by police, Ross' former campaign manager was asked by Ross to plant drugs on his opponent. The informant provided law enforcement with a black nylon glove that he claimed was given to him by Ross.

SEE **ROSS**, 2A

## County clerk lays out options for GOP

Party officials have urged Thomas Ross to withdraw from Missouri House race

BY JOHN HACKER  
jhacker@joplinglobe.com

As of Thursday morning, Thomas Ross will still be on the Nov. 3 general election ballot as the Republican nominee for the Missouri House District 161 seat,

which covers much of Joplin. It's up to the recently arrested candidate whether he wants to withdraw his name. He is being urged to withdraw by state and local Republican Party officials. Jasper County Clerk Charlie Davis said Thursday that he has been working with the Missouri Republican Party and the Missouri secretary of state's office to determine

SEE **GOP**, 2A

## Court blocks new map

Unanimous decision puts congressional plan before Missouri voters

BY RUDI KELLER  
Missouri Independent

Missourians will vote in November on the gerrymandered congressional map muscled through the Legislature in 2025, the Missouri Supreme Court ruled unanimously on Thursday. The decision puts a congressional plan before voters for the first time since 1922 and affirms that the Missouri Constitution's provision allowing voter-initiated referenda applies to redistricting plans as well as almost all other legislation. "Because the plain language of... the Missouri

SEE **MAP**, 2A

## Ex-officer charged over use of Flock system

Oronogo man facing 4 misdemeanor counts

BY DEBBY WOODIN  
dwoodin@joplinglobe.com

A former Joplin police officer has been charged in Jasper County with misusing Joplin's Flock Safety camera system and the Missouri State Highway Patrol's computerized law enforcement network to conduct tracking checks of three private citizens — two women and one man. The former officer, Kenneth Dewayne Andersen, of Oronogo, has been charged with four misdemeanor counts of misuse of official information. The Joplin Police Department said in a statement in January that an internal investigation had been conducted regarding misuse of

SEE **FLOCK**, 2A

## Newton County commissioners order burn ban

Move follows similar actions by other counties, communities

BY JOHN HACKER  
jhacker@joplinglobe.com

NEOSHO, Mo. — A burn ban is now in place for Newton County following

Thursday's commission meeting. Newton County joins Jasper County and the city of Joplin and other surrounding counties and communities in banning outdoor fires for any reason as drought spreads across the region that has seen only about an inch-and-a-half of rainfall since the end of July.

Joplin declared a burn ban Monday, and Jasper County commissioners approved a burn ban at their regular meeting Tuesday. Charla Geller, emergency management director for Newton County, said on Wednesday that county officials could ban burning if the county was categorized as being in a severe drought or worse on the U.S.

Drought Monitor website, <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/CurrentMap/StateDroughtMonitor.aspx?MO>. The monitor showed most of Newton County in a moderate drought last week, but on Thursday morning, the severe drought area had expanded from parts of McDonald and almost all of Barry

counties to McDonald, Newton, Jasper and Barton counties along with Barry County and part of Lawrence County. A sliver of area of extreme drought was noted on the map along the Missouri-Arkansas border across McDonald County and a part of Barry County.

SEE **BAN**, 2A



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