

FUNDS: CFO takes applications for outdoors grants. **3A** | **AMENDMENT:** Anti-abortion divide complicates campaign. **6A**

Judge grants Nevada hospital change of venue to Vernon County

BY JOHN HACKER
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Future arguments, hearings and filings in a city of Joplin lawsuit against Nevada Regional Medical Center alleging homeless patients had been dumped in Joplin by the hospital will be heard in Vernon County.

Jasper County Circuit Judge Dean Dankelson granted the hospital's motion for a change of venue

Wednesday.

Dankelson heard arguments from both sides about the change of venue at a hearing Tuesday at the Jasper County Courts Building in Joplin.

The hospital filed a motion to change the venue from Jasper County in January, less than a month after the city filed the suit on Dec. 22, 2025.

The hospital argued in its motion that state law pro-

vides that the only proper venue for a lawsuit against a municipal entity such as the city-owned hospital is in the county where the municipality is located.

A separate motion to dismiss the suit, filed by Nevada Regional Medical Center in July, is still pending.

The suit was filed after Joplin city officials said in October 2025 that they had confirmed numerous instances over the previous

two years where agencies from outside Joplin had sent or brought transients who had nowhere to stay and no connection to Joplin to the city and left them at places such as hospitals, homeless shelters and convenience stores.

The city sent a cease-and-desist letter to the Nevada hospital on Oct. 2, 2025, saying Joplin police confirmed that the hospital had transported what it called

disabled patients to Joplin "without their consent and under false pretenses."

The hospital at the time denied the allegations saying their physicians "are dedicated to ensuring that every patient is discharged with a medically appropriate and safe discharge plan. While NRMC provides thorough discharge instructions and care coordination, we do not have control over patients' decisions or circum-

stances once they leave our facility."

The city amended its ordinances in November to prohibit dropping transient or homeless people in Joplin from other areas by agencies or individuals.

The city said in its summary of the ordinance that the agencies dropped off transients at Joplin shelters and in one instance at a

SEE **VENUE**, 2A



School bus mechanic Glen Woolsey checks the electrical system of one of the district's diesel-fueled buses Thursday as part of his routine checks over all district vehicles.

GLOBE | JOHN HACKER

Pain at the pump

Area schools monitor bus costs with rising diesel prices

BY JOHN HACKER
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With fleets of school buses and support vehicles consuming more expensive gasoline and diesel fuel daily, school districts are working to manage

SEE **BUS**, 2A



Joplin Schools operates a fleet of diesel-powered school buses.

GLOBE | JOHN HACKER

MSSU announces homecoming parade, other events

Chart returns to print for homecoming

BY ANDY OSTMEYER
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Homecoming at Missouri Southern State University, which begins Monday, will include mechanical bull riding, rock climbing, pie throwing and more, as well as the traditional parade and home-

coming game.

And one more thing For the first time in six years, students will also be able to read a print edition of The Chart, the 87-year-old student newspaper. The paper has been digital only since 2020.

That printed paper will be distributed Monday.

"I'm proud of it. We have been working on since the beginning of this school semester,"

said Kandice Williams, editor of The Chart and a mass communications major.

Bryan Trude, assistant professor of public relations and digital media and faculty advisor to The Chart, said the print edition will be distributed around 11 a.m. Monday on the campus. Copies of The Chart will remain available for free

SEE **MSSU**, 2A



Homecoming returns to Missouri Southern State University next week, with a downtown parade at 10 a.m. Saturday and a 2 p.m. game against Emporia State University.

COURTESY | MSSU

Former Jasper County Judge Elliston dies at 85

BY JOHN HACKER
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CARL JUNCTION, Mo. — Tom Elliston, a former Jasper County judge, died Monday. He was 85.

Services are being handled by the Bland-Brumback Funeral Home in Stockton. Visitation is Thursday at the funeral home and service is 10 a.m. Friday. Burial with full military honors will be at the Caplinger Mills Cemetery in Cedar County.

Jasper County Clerk Charlie Davis said Elliston served as Jasper County prosecutor from 1979-1981 and as 29th Circuit Judge for Division II from 1981-1992.

He also served as an assistant prosecutor for the county for several years.

Longtime Joplin attorney Bill Fleischaker said Elliston was his friend and a mentor.

"I was an assistant prosecuting attorney when he was the prosecuting attorney, and he taught me a lot about how to try cases in court," Fleischaker said. "If you knew Tom, you knew he cared about people and I think everything he did was because he did care about people. It's kind of a mold that's been broken, you don't see many people like that anymore. He was a helicopter pilot in Vietnam, a self-made man, pulled himself up by his bootstraps and he was the kind of person you don't see much of anymore."

Elliston's obituary said he served in the U.S. Army as an officer and helicopter pilot including service in Vietnam, where he earned several awards including a Bronze Star, 13 air medals and numerous other decorations. Elliston was released from the Army as a captain in 1967 and went to law school in Columbia before moving to Webb City to enter private practice.

Jasper County Assistant Prosecutor Norman Rouse said Elliston was "one of a kind."

Rouse said he was hired as an assistant prosecutor by Fleishaker, who succeed Elliston as prosecutor when Elliston moved to the bench.

"Tom was a real strong judge, fairly opinionated, extremely intelligent," Rouse said. "I tried a lot of cases in front of him as a young prosecutor, and after the jury was out, we'd have a session where we work out the instructions and Tom would always take the opportunity to tell me what he thought I did right and what he thought I did wrong. For the most part, it was pretty constructive criticism."

Elliston also served as president of the Jasper County Bar Association, president of the Missouri Association of Trial Attorneys, president of the Juvenile Judges Division of the Missouri Judicial Conference, and was on various Missouri Supreme Court committees, according to the obituary.

