

DOWNTOWN: Art going up on traffic light boxes. **3A** | **TENNIS:** Thomas Jefferson claims Class 2 District 6 title. **1B**

3-way race

Data centers, rural economy
focus of candidates
for House District 127

BY JOHN HACKER
jhacker@joplinglobe.com

LAMAR, Mo. — The race for Missouri House District 127, featuring Republican candidate Brenden Kelley, of Lamar, and Democratic candidate Marvin Manring, of Stockton, is one of two House races that also includes an independent candidate, Racheal Martin, also of Lamar.

Kelley is a commercial insurance underwriter and part-time real estate agent who has served through church ministries, local conservative grassroots efforts and pro-life advocacy. He said his campaign priorities include expanding educational opportunities for families, strengthening rural economies by bringing back jobs and investing in infrastructure, and defending the First and Second amendments.

Manring is a native of northeast Missouri and a lifetime resident of Missouri who grew up on a farm as one of eight children raised by parents who lived through the Great Depression and World War II. He and his family moved to Stockton in 1993, and he's a retired public school educator with 37 years of experience.

Martin said she's been running her own commercial cleaning business since the COVID-19 pandemic. Before that, she was in banking and real estate in Barton County. She's also the local coordinator for the Barton County Community Foundation, which provides grants annually to local and area nonprofits.

The district includes rural eastern Jasper County as well as all of Barton and Dade counties and the southern half of Cedar County.

KELLEY

Kelley is the son of term-limited Republican incumbent Ann Kelley and the man who held the seat for eight years before her, her husband Mike Kelley.

"My biggest concerns are the concerns of the people that I represent," Kelley said. "I think that, as a good legislator, if I have a pet project that I want to try to do, sure, that's awesome, but when I talk to people, affordability, jobs, the economy, being able to make the American dream for them and their families, their future kids and everything is probably the No. 1 issue, and that would probably be my No. 1 focus."

He said economic development is vital for the 127th District.

"Lamar, where I grew up my entire life, when O'Sullivan's closed, the town has struggled and the surrounding areas have struggled," Kelley said. "I want to make sure that kids can grow up and live here, work here and thrive here."

Data centers and their proliferation in rural Missouri have become a topic of concern for many voters, especially with Geronimo Power planning on building a massive data center and solar farm complex in eastern Jasper County, inside the 127th District's boundaries.

Kelley said he's been researching data centers and that he believes they are good ideas for some areas but not rural Jasper County. He also said he believes they can be regulated effectively by state government.

He also said he's passionate about passing Amendment 3 in this election, the constitutional amendment that would overturn an



Brenden Kelley



Marvin Manring



Racheal Martin

SEE **127TH**, 2A

Foundation ceremony to be held at JHS

4 to be inducted
into Alumni Hall of Fame;
another to receive award

BY DEBBY WOODIN
dwoodin@joplinglobe.com

The Joplin Schools Foundation will hold its annual Alumni Hall of Fame ceremony at 6 p.m. Thursday in the high school's Performing Arts Center.

Established by the Joplin Schools Foundation, the Alumni Hall of Fame recognizes graduates from Joplin High School, Lincoln School, Memorial High School and Parkwood High School whose accomplishments have brought distinction to their communities, professions and the Joplin Schools legacy.

"As a proud Joplin Schools graduate, it's an honor to celebrate the remarkable alumni and supporters who have shared our schools and community," foundation President Kelli Perigo said in a statement. "The Hall of Fame Banquet recognizes individuals whose leadership, service and achievements inspire future generations of Joplin Eagles to dream big and make a lasting difference."

Inductees will be:
• **LEON KASSAB**, Joplin High School,

SEE **HALL**, 2A

Hearings set in 'house of horrors' case

Charges includes
child abuse, animal neglect

BY DEBBY WOODIN
dwoodin@joplinglobe.com

Preliminary hearings have been set for three members of a Joplin family facing charges related to conditions in which a child and animals were being kept in what Joplin police called a "house of horrors" at 610 N.Pool Ave.

A girl escaped the cluttered house full of animals on Sunday, Aug. 9, by climbing over mounds of trash and debris.

The case drew national attention. The 12-year-old special needs girl was found later that day wandering Joplin streets wearing only a diaper. Authorities said at the time that she was severely malnourished and, at 4 feet tall, weighed only 50 pounds. She had been kept in a dog kennel and had not been to school in years, authorities said.

The child was initially taken for medical help and then placed in protective custody.

SEE **HEARINGS**, 2A

Riverton teacher accused of inappropriate relationship with student

School board terminates
educator's contract

BY DEBBY WOODIN
dwoodin@joplinglobe.com

RIVERTON, Kan. — A Riverton School District teacher who lives in Webb

City, Missouri, was arrested Wednesday by the Cherokee County Sheriff's Office following allegations that the teacher had what is being characterized as an "inappropriate relationship" with a student, the sheriff's office said in a statement.

Riverton Superintendent Dr. Kevin Cooper on

Wednesday also confirmed that the school board terminated the teacher's contract last week.

The department reported that it was contacted Oct. 7 by an official with the school district reporting the teacher's alleged conduct and that detectives began an investigation.

Cherokee County also worked with the Jasper County Sheriff's Department on the investigation, but charges could not be verified through the Kansas court records website.

The sheriff's department reported that a Cherokee County judge on Tuesday signed a warrant for the

teacher's arrest and issued a \$15,000 bond and that the teacher was arrested and placed in the county jail in lieu of bond.

However, a spokesman for the department's jail said he could not find an inmate by the name of the teacher in the jail's records.

The Globe does not report

names until charges have been filed.

The sheriff's office said the investigation is open and that anyone with information about this investigation or any other relevant information involving a teacher is asked to contact the Cherokee County Sheriff's Office at 620-429-3992.

