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Care Clinic breaks down barriers

MSU Care Clinic staff receive a plaque commemorating 10 years of serving the community at an Oct. 15 celebration at the Missouri State University's Plaster Student Union. SUSAN SZUCH/SPRINGFIELD NEWS-LEADER

MSU facility celebrates 10 years caring for uninsured, underserved patients

Susan Szuch
Springfield News-Leader | USA TODAY NETWORK

Missouri State University and Mercy Springfield celebrated 10 years and 33,000 patients served at its MSU Care Clinic on Wednesday evening. Leaders from Mercy and MSU, as well as clinic employees, spoke during the Oct. 15 event.

The clinic first opened on the MSU campus in 2015 as a joint effort between the two institutions to provide free health services and medication to uninsured and underserved patients.

Providers from Mercy and MSU staff the clinic, which serves as a training site for students in MSU's physician assistant, nurse practitioner, pharmacy, dietetics and nursing program. In addition to primary care services, MSU Care Clinic also provides vaccines, pharmacy counseling, nutritional guidance, lab work, EKGs and more.

Currently, the MSU Care Clinic sees about 210 patients per month and provides care beyond the traditional health care model, where someone goes in to a primary care office and only addresses physical health concerns. Similar to Jordan Valley Community Health Center, the MSU Care Clinic provides a hub where people can access community resources they might not know about.

The program is instrumental in breaking down barriers that prevent people from accessing not only health care, but ways they can be in control of their own health, explained Justin Gassel, clinic manager.

For example, if someone has diabetes and relies on convenience stores or gas stations to get their food, the clinical dietitian can take that into account rather than giving advice that isn't helpful to someone who doesn't have easy access to fresh food or the ability to prepare it. They can counsel patients on what to look and how to read nutrition labels when they're purchasing food to "try and orient (themselves) toward the kind of foods that are going to be helpful," Gassel said.

"The second way we address that is through part-

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Absentee voting open prior to Nov. 4 special election

Susan Szuch
Springfield News-Leader | USA TODAY NETWORK

Have thoughts about Springfield's proposed convention center? Tell the city with your vote.

A Nov. 4 special election will give city residents the opportunity to decide on a new fee that would help the city pay for the proposed $175 million convention and event center.

Christian County voters will also get the chance to vote on a countywide use tax for out-of-state and online purchases. Voters in the Nixa Fire Protection district will vote on the first operational tax increase in more than 20 years.

Absentee voting is already in full swing. Here's what you need to know about the ballot, absentee voting and other dates to know for the special election.

What are Springfield residents voting on?

Springfield voters are being asked whether they want to approve a 3% increase to the current hotel/motel tax, which applies to any temporary lodging establishments, including short term rentals, and would specifically go toward constructing a convention and event center downtown.

The additional tax would pay off debt the city would incur over the course of 30 years to fund a majority of the $175 million cost of the center.

The increase would be permanent, so even after the convention center is built and debt is paid, the city would keep receiving revenue.

The ballot language leaves the use of the money open for anything related to attracting travel and tourism.

Currently, the city has a 5% lodging license tax that is split between promoting tourism, hosting sporting events, supporting arts tourism and more.

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Details about deaths of Greene County couple released

Claudette Riley
Springfield News-Leader | USA TODAY NETWORK

Detectives with the Greene County Sheriff's Office concluded that Charles Buckner fatally shot his wife, Donella, before dying from an apparent self-inflicted gunshot wound.

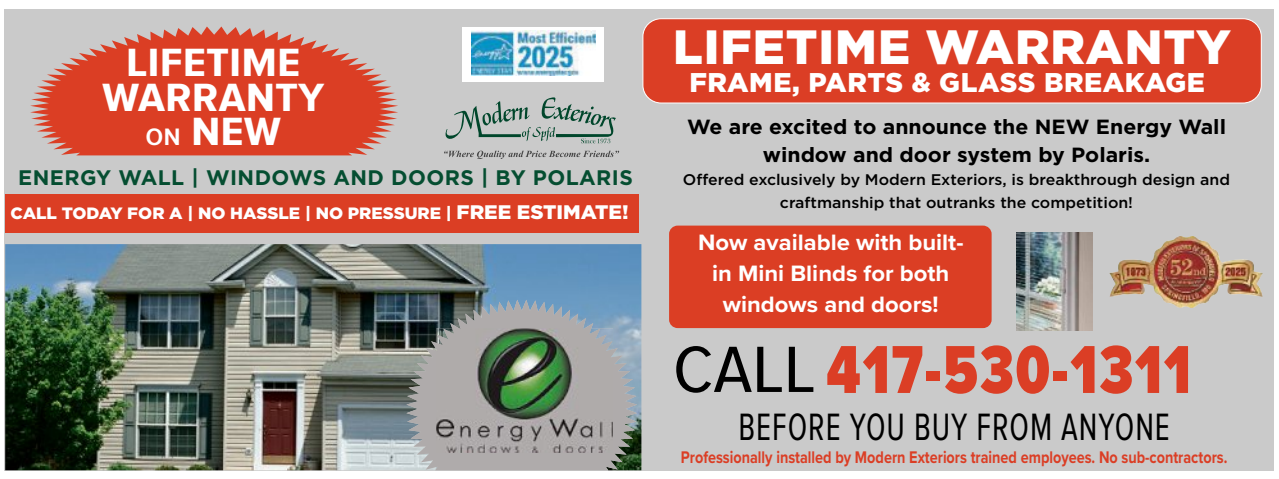
The determination was announced Oct. 15, three days after the bodies of the couple were discovered in their Greene County home.

"Detectives worked thoroughly to confirm the facts of this investigation to provide answers to the family and our community," said Sheriff Jim Arnott, in a release.

Shortly after 2 p.m. Oct. 12, deputies responded to a well-being check at a residence in the 3900 block of North Springlawn Avenue.

They found the 85-year-old man and his 84-year-old wife dead inside the home. Details about how they died or why the well-being check was requested were not initially released.

The sheriff's office asked anyone with additional information to reach out.



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