



# Florissant to pay \$4M over actions of ex-cop

City settles with the victims who had nude photos stolen

**BY JUSTIN DIEP**  
St. Louis Post-Dispatch

Florissant has agreed to a \$4 million settlement with two dozen victims who had nude photos stolen by a city police officer during traffic stops, an attorney for the victims said Friday.

W. Bevis Schock announced the

settlement between the city, former Florissant officer Julian Alcala and 24 anonymous victims.

It resolves several lawsuits against Alcala and Florissant that were combined in federal court, Schock said.

The settlement is the maximum amount available based on Florissant's insurance, he said.

Florissant and Alcala denied responsibility under terms of the settlement, which was sealed to protect the identities

of the victims who sued.

Florissant officials declined comment on Friday.

In January 2023, the Florissant Police Department hired Alcala. He graduated from training in July that year.

Between December 2023 and May 2025, Alcala pulled over women and demanded to see their insurance on their phones, the lawsuits alleged.

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# Nonprofit calls for study on reunion

Group seeking analysis of city, county reunification

**BY AUSTIN HUGUELEY**  
St. Louis Post-Dispatch

ST. LOUIS — A quiet push toward reunifying St. Louis and St. Louis County is now moving more publicly to build a case for change.

A group studying the issue is circulating a request-for-proposals to estimate the cost of the status quo — and model how much money could be saved if the city reentered the county, or at least shared more services, according to documents obtained by the Post-Dispatch.

The RFP, from newly formed non-profit United St. Louis, is seeking contractors to examine what the city and county both do separately — like policing, courts, public health and economic development — and identify potential combinations.

The goal, the RFP says, is to provide policymakers, elected officials, business leaders, and the public with “clear, credible, and actionable fiscal and economic analysis.”

Contractors will need to present findings by mid-February 2027.

The RFP dovetails with a growing public conversation: In recent months, County Executive Sam Page has called publicly for a recombination to address budget issues. Mayor Cara Spencer has said the idea deserves a serious look. And the Regional Business Council has endorsed the concept.

At the same time, others have been meeting and weighing a campaign to change things. One of them, Michael Loynd, who heads the nonprofit Interco Charitable Trust, told the Post-Dispatch last week that research could be completed over the next six months or so.

Loynd said on Thursday that he was not part of United St. Louis and did not say who was, but acknowledged the proposed study would look at topics he and others have discussed.

In the RFP, United St. Louis describes itself as an organization convening civic, business, and community leaders to “tackle the structural challenges that have constrained growth and opportunity in the region.”

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## EXPANSION PLAN

# SPACE MUSEUM NEEDS NEW SPACE



**CHRISTIAN GOODEN, POST-DISPATCH**

Jack Rathbun, 8, of Lesterville, tries on a glove from a real space suit on Friday, July 31, 2026, at the Space Museum and Grissom Center in Bonne Terre. The museum dedicated to the history of space exploration has outgrown its space, according to Earl Mullins, its founder and president. Mullins is seeking to move to a new Missouri town, and St. Charles is high on the list.

## St. Charles mayor pitches his city, but owner says it has other suitors

**SAM OAKS-LEAF**  
St. Louis Post-Dispatch

BONNE TERRE, Mo. — A large collection of space artifacts could be the next step of the mayor's plan to revamp tourism in St. Charles.

The Space Museum and Grissom Center has amassed space suits, rocket engine parts and even a moon rock over 23 years of operation in this town an hour south of St. Louis.

Now, the museum's owner, Earl Mullins, wants to expand his collection but he needs more room to do it.

Mayor Dan Borgmeyer thinks St. Charles is the answer.

Borgmeyer pitched the idea last month of moving the museum to a new, larger location in St. Charles to be part of an array of attractions. He said the museum would lure tourists to book overnight vacations and generate more revenue for local businesses.

“The difference between somebody who comes from Chesterfield and spends a day at \$99 or somebody that comes and stays overnight, it's about \$500 to \$2,000 a day,” Borgmeyer said.

Borgmeyer hopes to house the space museum alongside the soon-to-be built

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# Premiums for Obamacare set to spike again

**BY DAN BAUMAN**  
St. Louis Post-Dispatch

Missourians who purchase health insurance coverage through the Affordable Care Act could see a third straight year of double-digit increases in monthly premium payments.

The costs of some Obamacare plans in Missouri are set to spike as much as 30 percent next year, according to proposed rate increases released on Friday.

On the low end, Centene Corporation's Ambetter from Home State Health Plan proposes increasing average monthly premium payments by more than 10%.

On the high end, Medica Insurance Company anticipates an average change of almost 26% and a maximum of almost 32%.

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**Doing the math**

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