

LAKE OF THE OZARKS BUSINESS JOURNAL

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BOATING ON BACK

Boating



NEWS IN BRIEF



Tree-Toppler
Storm causes damage 15



Strike Out
Ballparks National cancels contract 16



Thinking Christmas
Car show helps Shop with a Cop 4



Crossword
Fill in the blanks on: 18 Solution: 6

SERVING THE LAKE OF THE OZARKS & SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES

VOL. 20 -- ISSUE 8

AUGUST, 2024

36th Annual Shootout events fill the month

By Nancy Zoellner

The arrival of August may mean that the summer season is wrapping up, but it doesn't mean the fun is coming to an end.

In fact, from start to finish, August is packed with, among other things, activities leading up to one of the Lake's most popular events - the Lake of the Ozarks Shootout - and the city of Lake Ozark and the establishments on the Bagnell Dam Strip, where the Shootout on the Strip Street Party will be held, are getting prepared.

The Street Party, set for 4 to 11 p.m. on August 21, kicks off with a parade of boats that will be racing in the Shootout. The boats, which will stage along Route 242, will make their way to the Strip and park along both sides of the street, allowing fans to get pictures and meet the drivers and members of their teams.

At their July 23 meeting, aldermen voted to allow open containers during the event. City Administrator Harrison Fry explained that the ordinance would allow the restaurants and bars to obtain a caterer's license from both the city and the state so they could make outside sales of alcohol.

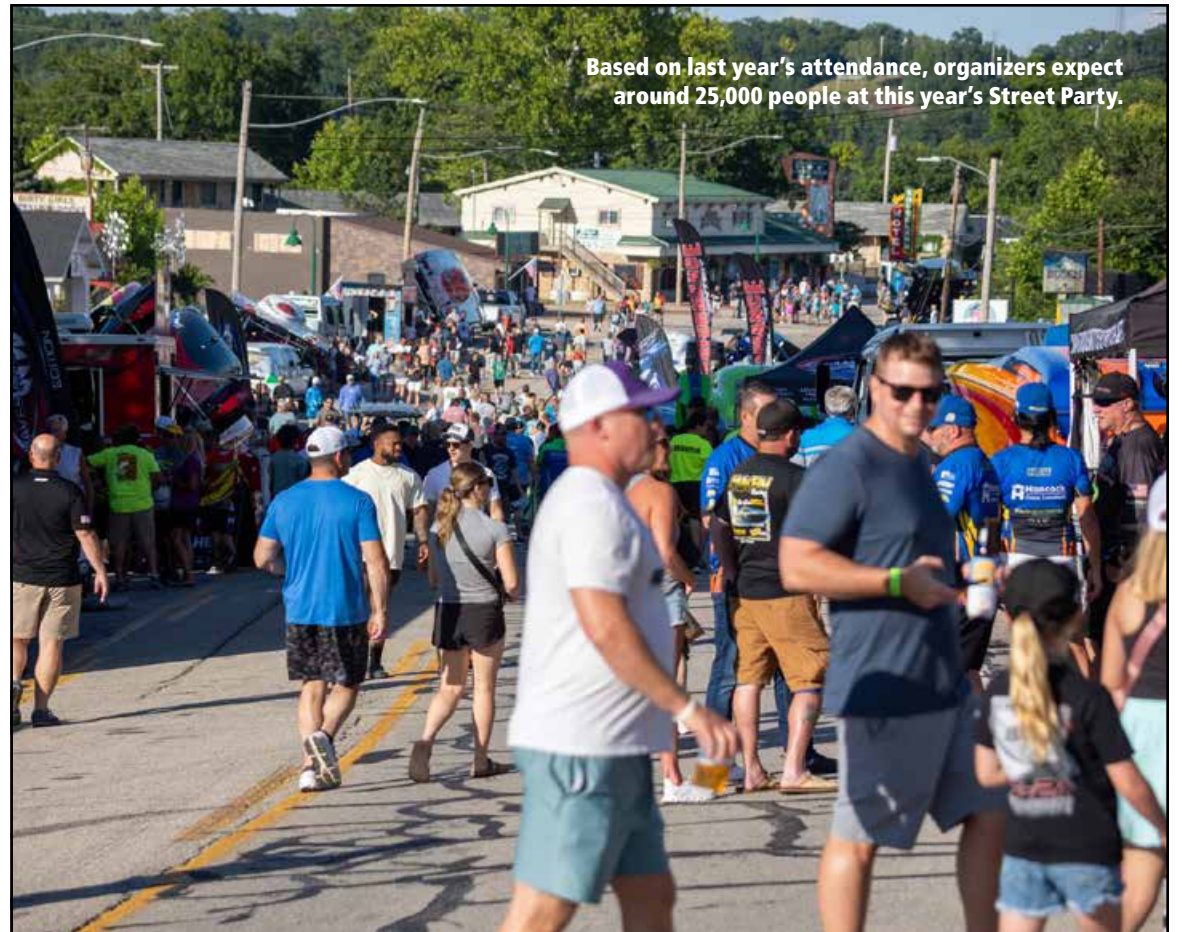
The ordinance also

states that wristbands or some other indicator for those 21 and older who

ing the event area, which will include Bagnell Dam Boulevard from School

• Everyone purchasing and consuming an alcoholic beverage in the

pedestrian traffic, or interfering with organizers and volunteers - will not



Based on last year's attendance, organizers expect around 25,000 people at this year's Street Party.

will be consuming alcoholic beverages will be required. Fry said that requirement had been included in previous agreements with event organizers but had not been enforced.

According to the ordinance, event organizers must post signs designat-

Road to the city's corporate limits near Bagnell Dam, and those signs must inform attendees that no one shall possess or consume any alcoholic beverages without an identifiable wrist band that has been approved by the city.

In addition:

event area must be 21 or older and they must have on their person a valid form of picture identification for verification.

• Disruptive behavior - which could include, but will not be limited to, loud noise, obstructing the views of others, obstructing the flow of

be allowed. Those who are behaving badly will be required to leave the event area immediately and won't be permitted to return.

• The organizer must provide sufficient security personnel to ensure compliance with the ordinance. *continues on page 16*

Turn to Page 16 for This Month's

As The Lake Churns.com

All the information you need to make the right decisions in the current market. When the waters get choppy, you can trust C. Michael Elliott to help you navigate the Lake area real estate channels.



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Letters to the Editor

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Death of the Lodging tax will kill tourism at Lake of the Ozarks!

By Merlyn Vandervort

Every economist or economic development expert in the country will tell you that the best and quickest way to achieve real economic development and prosperity in a community, especially a resort community, is to bring in revenue from outside the community, via outside investment dollars, transient business and vacation travelers or by generating tax dollars that are not paid by the residents or property owners within that community. That is precisely what the lodging tax accomplished for Lake of the Ozarks.

The first and probably most important thing you should take from this article, is that not a single resident or property owner at Lake of the Ozarks pay one penny for the lodging tax, unless they happen to be spending the night in one of our local hotels or lodging facilities! That's correct, Lake "locals" pay ZERO! Hotel and resort owners, and vacation rental owners, pay ZERO! These business owners merely collect the tax from business and vacation travelers who spend the night at their lodging property and remit the tax to the county. The lodging tax is entirely different than a sales tax, which everyone pays. Who benefits from the tax? Every business and everyone who has a job at the lake that is at all dependent on tourism, which is virtually every business and every job at the lake.

History of the Lodging tax: Over thirty years ago, the three counties that surround Lake of the Ozarks (Camden, Miller & Morgan) established a 3% lodging tax for any lodging property within five miles of the lake. This tax was voted on and passed by the residents of the three counties. In July 2008, an increase in the lodging tax, to 5% went back on the ballot, and only Miller County passed the increase. This tax was developed specifically to promote tourism and special events at Lake of the Ozarks which greatly benefited tourism, and fueled economic development, all of which helped make the Lake the thriving resort community that it is today.

Flash forward to 2020, and a small group of well-intended, but in my view, misguided property owners challenged the tax in court as being unconstitutional. After

several lower courts rejected the challenge, the Missouri Supreme Court reversed the lower court's decision on June 25th, 2024. On July 8th, Camden & Miller County Business Districts, filed a petition to the Missouri Supreme Court asking for a stay, in order to give the Missouri Legislature, the opportunity to amend the language in the tax to comply with the Missouri Constitution. As such, this litigation is still pending until the high court rules on the stay. Barring any legislative corrective action, the court's decision will have delivered a death blow to tourism marketing at the Lake and will most certainly be extremely damaging to tourism and economic development for many years to come.

Without getting into the weeds on the legal issues of the litigation, the crux of the challenge boiled down to a couple of issues; one of which was, if the lodging tax applied to "vacation rentals". While the language outlined in the tax didn't specifically refer to "vacation rentals" it was clear that the tax was intended for all "Transient Guests". And why shouldn't vacation rentals have to pay the lodging tax? These lodging properties directly compete with the area hotels, motels, campgrounds and resorts, and they have as much to benefit from a mass tourism marketing campaign as any other lodging facility. Another issue regarding the challenge is who can serve on the business districts boards, and who can vote for board members of the business district. The obvious answer is any property owner within the district that collects and remits the lodging tax. This is not any different than many other similar tax districts in Missouri such as fire or ambulance districts.

I get it, I'm a fiscal conservative, and I hate taxes of almost any kind! And if anyone should hate this tax more than anyone else at the Lake; it is me! Let me explain. I currently own The Resort at Lake of The Ozarks which is in Miller County, and all the hotels I compete with are in Camden County; which means my property collects and remits a 5% lodging tax, while my competitors are only collecting 3%; that's a 66% difference and gives a huge competitive advantage to my competitors. While I do think that discrepancy

should be equaled out to level the playing field, I am happy to collect and remit the tax because I know how very important it is for all lodging properties to coop our marketing resources, and the lodging tax is the only way to effectively and fairly accomplish that objective. Those who suggest that each individual property owner can market their property or market tourism in general through their own limited advertising budget or via social media, are not being at all realistic!

Those who have been applauding the court's recent decision, are in my view, very misguided or misinformed on who really pays the tax, and how those tax dollars are used to the benefit of the entire community. It is worth repeating that none of the property owners pay the lodging tax; they merely collect and remit it to the county. The tourists who visit the Lake hotels, resorts and other lodging facilities are the only ones who pay the tax. No resident or property owner at the lake pays any of the tax, unless they happen to be spending the night at one of our local hotels or other lodging facilities. The tax is passed on to the guest, as it is in every other lodging market across the country, including St. Louis, Kansas City & Branson. For the life of me, I can't figure out why anyone who is invested in the lake's future would not want revenue that comes exclusively from outside the lake community, to be collected and used to promote tourism and events at the Lake!

Like it or not, understand it or not; everyone who lives at the lake, or owns property at Lake of the Ozarks, is in the tourism business. Every job at the lake is dependent on and supported by tourism; It doesn't matter if you are a doctor, lawyer, utility worker, realtor, plumber or firefighter; your career at the Lake, is dependent on tourism. The substantial increase in property values at the lake is a direct result of tourism. The community bridge would never have been possible, nor would it have ever been paid off, if not for tourism! Every new road, bridge, electric service, natural gas lines, clean city water & sewer systems, highspeed internet and every other luxury we have all come to appreciate is a direct

continues on page 17



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Seniors Corner

What To Expect When You Meet With A Financial Advisor

Meeting with a financial advisor is a crucial step toward ensuring your financial security and achieving your retirement goals. If you're not already working with one, the idea might seem intimidating, but knowing what to expect can make the process easier and more rewarding. Here's a guide to help you prepare for your first meeting with a financial advisor and make the most of this valuable relationship.

GETTING TO KNOW YOU Your initial meeting with a financial advisor or wealth manager focuses on understanding your financial situation, goals, and concerns. Financial advisors work with people from all sorts of economic situations, so don't worry if you think your situation is unique. They've seen it all and are there to help you. Be prepared to bring all relevant financial documents, such as bank statements, investment accounts, and tax returns. The more information you provide, the more personalized and effective your financial plan will be.

NOW IS THE RIGHT TIME It's never too late to start planning your finances, but the earlier you begin, the better. Early consultations with a financial advisor offer more options, such as determining the optimal age to start collecting Social Security. Even if you feel behind, taking the first step can lead to greater financial security and peace of mind.

EXPRESSING GOALS AND FEARS Your financial advisor needs to understand your financial and lifestyle goals. Whether you want to travel, downsize your home, or leave an inheritance, be honest about what you hope to achieve. Discussing your concerns, such as running out of money or covering medical expenses, is equally important. Sharing your fears allows your advisor to address them and build a plan that makes you feel secure. The Center for REALTOR® Development (CRD) confers the Seniors Real Estate Specialist® (SRES®) designation, which is an official credential of the National Association of REALTORS® (NAR).

KEEPING IN CONTACT Meeting with a financial advisor isn't a one-time event. It's the beginning of an ongoing relationship. Your financial situation and goals will likely change over time, and it's important to keep your advisor updated. Many advisors will meet with clients quarterly. Some will meet less often. It all depends on your needs and your plan. Remember that big events, including family changes and real estate transactions, may require some adjustments to your plan. Regular check-ins ensure that your financial strategy stays on track and can be adapted as needed.

Meeting with a financial advisor is a key step toward achieving security and peace of mind. Whether you're starting late or just want to ensure you're on the right track, your advisor is there to help guide you through the process. Not sure how to find the right financial advisor or wealth manager for you? Don't hesitate to reach out to your Senior Real Estate Specialist® for a referral and start planning for your future now.

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Car show gives Shop With a Cop a boost



The Camdenton High School parking lot was full of yesterday's favorite vehicles, as well as a few from today.

The Camden County Sheriff's Office is another \$2,800 closer to their fundraising goal of \$20,000 for its Shop With a Cop Christmas program. The money was raised in mid-July at a car show organized by Detention Facility Supervisor Lt. Henry VanDonsel.

Although it wasn't originally planned as a two-day show, that's how it ended up.

"It was supposed to be held Saturday (July 13). The academy students helped set everything up but it started raining. We waited until 11:30 before shutting it down and sending the 14 cars that showed up home. We decided we'd try again on Sunday, but the academy students had class Sunday morning and couldn't come back to help set up

again. Since only a handful of us were handling the show we decided to just leave everything set up and camp out overnight in the Camdenton High School parking lot, where it was held. Then we fired it back up Sunday morning and had a second run of it," Lt. VanDonsel said, adding that they didn't know what to expect - or if anyone would even show up.

They were pleasantly surprised when they ended up with 52 entries - nearly double the number they saw last year.

This year's show included "best" awards in several categories - Custom Car, Custom Truck, Modern Muscle, Interior, Paint, Electronics and People's Choice, which was won by Ken and Donna Brown from Linn Creek for their 1985 Chevy C10.

1st place Classic Truck went to Zack Walker's 1953 Ford F100

1st Place Custom Truck went to Kent Hoke's 1978 Chevy El Camino

1st place Classic Car winner was Randy Albright with a 1971 Chevelle SS

1st Place Custom Car went to

Bests Interior - Ron Hazenicht
Best Electronics - Ralph Sarrell

The judging was handled by Lt. VanDonsel's son, Henry Jr, a volunteer; as well as E-911 Mapping and Addressing Director Mike Lloyd, who serves as Camden County Sheriff's Office Employee Association; and Tim Goodson, a resident of the county who volunteered. Several members of the employee association helped run the show, man the tables and grill the burgers and hot dogs that were sold.

"We couldn't have done this without their help," Lt. VanDonsel said.

Additional fundraisers are planned for the fall - a fishing tournament set for October 5, a chili cookoff to be held November 2 at Harmy's Cheese Store in Osage Beach, and a four-man mini golf scramble tournament. More information will be available as details are finalized.

Lt. VanDonsel said he hopes they won't be as exhausting.

"On Friday I worked a concert until 1 in the morning, I went home and slept until 5:30 a.m. then headed out Saturday morning to set up. We stayed the night Saturday so we wouldn't have to tear everything down and we could be there early Sunday morning - and you know you don't get much rest when you're sleeping in a parking lot. Then we worked the car show and cleaned up after it was over. I was tired by Sunday evening, but it was worth it because of the money we were able to raise. We usually see around 200 kids at our Shop



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Steve Pickens' 1955 Chevy Belair
1st Place Modern Muscle winner was Mark and Tiffany Maasen's 2014 GT 500 Shelby
Best Paint - Steve Pickens

With a Cop event and we give each one of them \$100 to spend, so it helped get us closer to the \$20,000 we need to make sure these kids get a Christmas."

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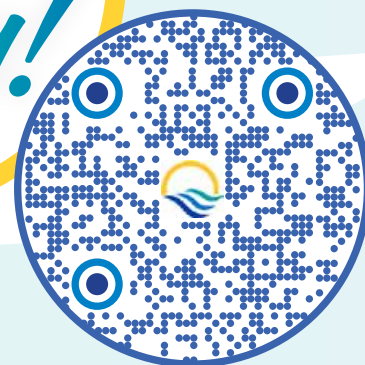
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The fight to keep the lodging tax continues

By Nancy Zoellner

In late June the Missouri Supreme Court ruled that the lodging tax, which had been collected and used to market the Lake for more than 30 years, and the statutes creating the Lake area taxing district, are unconstitutional. The court also ordered the circuit court to appoint trustees to dissolve the lake area business districts.

However, in mid-July, the Lake of the Ozarks Area Business District of Camden County and Sue Westenhaver asked the court to set aside its decision and grant a rehearing or to modify its opinion based on overlooked material matters of fact and law.

The request states that the opinion issued by the court overlooks the long history of reliance upon the validity of the statutory scheme, which was enacted in 1993, and the fact that voters approved the authorized lodging tax that same year.

According to the stated "Facts" in 1993, the General Assembly enacted the Statutory Scheme governing the creation, operation, and dissolution of the lake area business districts in an

effort to create a framework for promoting and marketing tourism for the lake area. The Statutory Scheme provides "[t]he governing body of any county" with a large lake, by petition of the landowners, may create a lake area business district. Once created, each district is "a political subdivision of the state" consisting of the area within five miles of the lake shoreline in such county.

Section 67.1175.1 requires each lake area business district to have an "Advisory Board" to act as the district's governing body. The Advisory Board "shall be a nonprofit entity" consisting of seven members—six elected members and one member from the county governing body.

Members of the Advisory Board are to be elected by the "county lodging association," which is statutorily defined as lodging businesses in the district. One of the Advisory Board's powers is the ability to propose a tax to the district residents to be paid by the transient guests of hotels, motels and resorts situated within the district. If passed, the Lodging Tax "shall be used by the advisory board for advertis-

ing and promotion of tourism."

On April 9, 1993, the Camden County Commission formed the Business District. After its creation, the Business District's Advisory Board submitted a 3% lodging tax to the voters within the Business District's boundaries. Voters approved the Lodging Tax on June 8, 1993, demonstrating their support for initiatives aimed at boosting tourism and local businesses.

The Camden County Advisory Board has governed the Electronically Filed Business District for over thirty years, operating under the Statutory Scheme and its own bylaws. The Advisory Board members consider themselves public officials committed to serving the community. They've contracted with multiple third parties to effectively implement the district initiatives of promoting and marketing tourism to support the local economy and local businesses.

Appellant Salamun owned Pointe View Management in Camden County and, in 2020, ran for a position on the advisory board of the Business District. Salamun did not win her elec-

tion. Salamun and her business filed suit against Camden County, the Business District, and various county officials.

The request states, "Conceding, for the sake of this Motion, that the General Assembly erred in its language, the Respondents urge this Court to not destroy a vital local government, but instead modify its Opinion to make it prospective and stay its effect for a full session of the General Assembly. This would allow the General Assembly the opportunity to remedy its error without punishing and harming the economy of a key region of our state."

"In the alternative, if the Court is not inclined to allow its mandate to be stayed for a legislative session, then it should modify its Opinion to remand the case to the trial court to craft the appropriate remedy."

In a lengthy opinion piece by developer and business owner Merlyn Vandervort, Vandervort states that "the tax was developed specifically to promote tourism and special events at Lake of the Ozarks which greatly benefited tourism, and fueled economic

development, all of which helped make the Lake the thriving resort community that it is today."

He reminds readers that none of the owners of lodging establishments pay the lodging tax; they simply collect and remit the tax to the county. Instead, it is the tourists who visit the Lake hotels, resorts and other lodging facilities who pay the tax, just as they do in other markets including St. Louis, Kansas City and Branson. "For the life of me, I can't figure out why anyone who is invested in the Lake's future would not want revenue that comes exclusively from outside the Lake community to be collected and used to promote tourism and events at the Lake," Vandervort wrote.

He goes on to say, "Barring any legislative corrective action, the court's decision will have delivered a death blow to tourism marketing at the Lake and will certainly be extremely damaging to tourism and economic development for many years to come."

Vandervort wrote that the answer to the issue of who can serve on the business district boards was simple - any property owner

continues on page 16



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How to Earn Royalties and Expand Your Market Through Strategic Licensing – Noon on August 6

Strategic licensing is a proven approach to expanding your business reach and increasing your product profitability. However, if you want to utilize your intellectual property strategically to gain royalties or grow your business, you must understand the licensing process.

In this 69-minute webinar, you'll discover the powerful benefits of strategic licensing. You'll learn the key elements of product and brand licensing, understand the process, and provide a roadmap to potential revenue growth,

and you'll learn:

Product Licensing:

Assessing the viability of your product for licensing

Finding and evaluating potential licensees

Negotiating fair and profitable licensing agreements

Managing the licensing relationship for long-term success

Brand Licensing:

Identifying brands that align with your business goals

Building mutually beneficial brand partnerships

Expanding your market reach and brand recognition

Avoiding common pitfalls and maximizing the value of licensed brands

Social Media Marketing for Small Businesses - Basics and Latest Trends – Noon on August 8

Social media can be a powerful tool for small business owners to market their products and services directly to their customers. However, social media can also be overwhelming. Which platform do you post on? How often should you post? What do you post and when?

In this 90-minute webinar, marketing expert Patty Ross will teach you the basics every business owner should know about

social media marketing and the latest trends you should follow.

You will learn:

How to create a content calendar

How to choose which platforms make sense for your business

The right times to post on each platform and how often

What type of content to post for the best engagement

What are the best social media advertising options

Google Analytics for Small Businesses - How to Improve Your Website Traffic – noon on August 14

To maximize your business website's return on investment, you need to be able to track its performance. Google Analytics allows you to see where your website traffic is coming from, identify your top-performing channels and gain insight into your visitors' behavior.

In this 60-minute webinar, you'll learn the basics of Google Analytics, how to track your website's performance, and how to turn these insights into action. Finally, you'll learn how to increase leads and sales using your collected data.

Learning objectives:

How to set up Google Analytics for your website

How tracking conversions can guide your marketing strategy

Which analytics reports you should focus on

How to enhance both your website and marketing campaigns using the data you've collected

Marketing on a Budget: Boost Your Brand Without Breaking the Bank – Noon on August 20

You don't have to empty your pockets to market your business successfully. Join small business experts Brian Moran and Jocelyn Ring for an exclusive webinar on mastering Marketing on a Budget. Learn cost-effective strategies to maximize your marketing impact and efficiently grow your brand.

This 60-minute webinar will provide practical tips and actionable insights for optimizing your marketing plans. Jocelyn and Brian will share proven methods that you can implement immediately to see results. Take advantage of this opportunity to enhance your marketing efforts without overspending.

Learning Objectives:

Discover the essential principles of cost-effective marketing.

Develop a clear and compelling marketing message

Make effective use of social media and digital platforms

Measure and analyze marketing performance on a budget

How to Optimize Your Google Business Profile to Boost Your Online Presence – Noon on August 22

Ensure your business appears on Google Search and Maps and boost your online visibility by leveraging Google My Business, now known as Google Business Profile.

In this 60-minute webinar, our expert presenter will show you how to build and manage your Google Business Profile, ensuring visibility and accuracy across Google Search and Google Maps. Take advantage of this opportunity to maximize your online presence and attract customers in your local community and beyond.

Here's what you'll learn:

Understanding the basics of Google Business Profile

Step-by-step guidance on creating and verifying your business profile

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How to optimize your business information

How to manage your business profile to stay relevant

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Managing Rental Property

What's Up Dock?



Erin Burdette

Guests renting a vacation home at the Lake of the Ozarks are definitely coming for the dock experience! In fact, about 80% of guests renting a home bring or rent a boat. If your vacation home does not have a dock available for guest use, you are likely missing out on a large pool of renters.

Keeping this in mind, here are some things you can do to your dock to make it more attractive to renters, especially when they are browsing vacation homes online. The first thing a renter will be looking for is the boat slip size. For this reason, the larger the slip, the better; you can always put a smaller boat in a large slip, but cannot put a large boat into a small slip. While changing the size of your slip might not be possible, there are other amenities that you can add to make your dock more appealing.

Even if a guest is not bringing a boat, they could still enjoy sitting out on the dock, soaking up some sun or taking a dip in the lake. Having a good, easy to use swim ladder on your dock is a great amenity. Investing in some Wet Steps is the best option, as they are easy to use, durable and lightweight.

Having plenty of seating available on your dock is another positive. It is nice to have a space for those who do not want to get into the water to sit and talk while others are swimming. Having a few loungers for guests to sunbathe in is also a great option. Various guests will have different ways of enjoying their lake time, and having a variety of options for them will make your property more appealing.

Other considerations might be to have a canoe, kayaks, or paddle-

boards available for guest use. This way guests that do not have a boat are still able to get out on the Lake and enjoy the water. Having some water toys such as a beach ball, pool noodles or floats, etc. are bonuses that could set your property apart from others, keeping guests coming back year after year, because everything they could want and need for their vacation is already there!

For those guests bringing a boat, you will want to make sure that your boat slip does not have a lift in it. Guests often do not know how to use them and they also do not fit every type of boat. In addition, make sure that your bumpers/pads are in good shape so guests do not damage their boat or your dock. And finally, make sure your dock has proper and adequate lighting for use at night.

Erin Burdette is the Director of Business Development for Your Lake Vacation, the largest vacation rental management company at the Lake of the Ozarks. If you are looking for a vacation rental manager or just looking for some friendly advice, call our office at 573-365-3367 or e-mail me at erin@yourlakevacation.com. Happy renting!



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Lake Ozark's court cases headed to Tuscumbia

By Nancy Zoellner

The city of Lake Ozark will soon join the ranks of municipalities that have turned their municipal court operations over to the county.

At their July 23 board meeting, aldermen voted to dissolve the court and transfer adjudication of municipal code violations to the Miller County Circuit Court. City Administrator Harrison Fry said that move will result in an annual savings to the city of between \$65,000 and \$100,000.

Because of the paperwork involved, that transfer isn't expected to take place until February of 2025. Until then, Lake Ozark's Municipal Court will be held as usual on the third Monday of each month, except where this conflicts with a holiday.

At the July meeting, Fry explained that over the past several years many municipalities not only in the Lake region but across Missouri have chosen to dissolve their municipal courts because of changing regulations, structure, and oversight of by the Office of the State Courts Administrator. Currently, Osage Beach is the only municipality in the

tri-county area that will continue holding municipal court.

"While these changes have been put in place to ensure a more transparent and consistent judicial experience, it has also severely limited the level of con-

state change, in 2021 and it became effective in January 1, 2022. It's in those last two and a half years that we've really seen a decline in the revenue-vs-expense position."

Year-to-date, the court has op-

cers off the street to serve as court bailiffs.

"For the past few years we've taken a hard look at some elements of city operations that address a more efficient use of tax dollars or provide additional services as they exist, either through partnership or a separate agency," Fry said. "Earlier this year the board identified within their action plan the priority of reviewing city staffing levels, structure and job descriptions to ensure we are doing that to the best of our ability. The first opportunity to make improvements to the general fund position, while having a minimal impact on city services, will be this change in our municipal court."

City Attorney Chris Rohrer, who attended the meeting via Zoom, said the only drawback is that people required to appear before a judge for Lake Ozark municipal code violations will have to drive to Tuscumbia.

Fry told aldermen that both Police Chief James Boren and Rohrer have reviewed the process and support the move.

"In conversations with the court employee, they were sur-

prised it has taken this long. I think this was a question, from their standpoint, of 'when' and not 'if,'" he said.

Aldermen also voted to approve a severance package for the city's court clerk.

Fry said this step was taken to ensure the city would be able to provide continuity in service for the duration of the transition, as well as to provide a level of income security to the court clerk who, due to no fault of her own, will be without permanent employment once court services are transferred.

"Assuming that person stays for the duration of the period, in addition to the normal pay they will receive through the next six months - depending on how they choose to use vacation and sick leave time - it could have an impact of between \$8,600 and \$9,800 on the city's general fund," Fry said. "In the event that the relevant employee opts not to participate in the program, there will be no budgetary impact."

The severance package is identical to the one offered to dispatchers when the city turned 911 services over to Miller County.



control that municipalities maintain over their courts, while increasing financial and operational costs," he said, adding that, as a result, the Lake Ozark Municipal Court has been, at best, at break-even endeavor for the city. "We really saw a change in the revenue when we adopted the Show Me Court System, which is the

erated at around a \$4,000 loss.

Fry said once the court is eliminated, the only cost will be the expense of the prosecutor. The Miller County Circuit Court will keep the assessed court costs but the city will continue to collect the fines.

He said the transfer will also eliminate the need to take offi-

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Armchair Pilot

By Nancy Zoellner

ALASKA AIRLINES is adding seasonal flights to Puerto Vallarta, Mexico – but not from Alaska. Instead, the flights will originate at St. Louis Lambert International Airport. An airline spokesperson announced that the weekly flights will run from January 25, 2025 through April 5, 2025 on Alaska Airlines' 737 fleet. United Airlines will also be adding two daily non-stop flights to San Francisco as of August 19. According to booking information, the flights will be on Airbus A319 twin-engine jets. In June, Southwest Airlines restarted daily nonstop service from Lambert to San Francisco, as well as seasonal flights to several vacation destinations in Florida and Mexico, and Houston-based budget Avelo Airlines added nonstop flights from Lambert to New Haven, Connecticut.

THE NUMBER OF passengers passing through Lambert is rising but it still hasn't returned to pre-Covid



levels. According to airport officials, last year 14.9 million passengers flew in or out of the airport. That's up almost 9 percent from 2022 but still down from the 15.9 million that flew in 2019.

AFTER TWO DEADLY crashes involving its 737 Max Jetliners Boeing agreed to plead guilty, pay a \$487.2 million fine and invest at least \$455 million in its safety and compliance programs to avoid a criminal trial. Boeing will also be independently monitored to make sure it's following the requirements. The agreement, filed just hours before Boeing's time ran out to respond, came around two months after the Department of Justice found that Boeing had violated a 2021 settlement made after crashes in 2018 and 2019 that killed 346 people.

HURRICANE SEASON is fast approaching. That has some asking if they have options on vacation rental bookings when severe weather is forecasted. We checked policies on a couple of the most popular booking sites.

VRBO RECENTLY announced they have added an "extenuating circumstances policy" that states, "Partners must refund the guest

in full if they have not yet checked in to their reservation. For reservations already underway, partners must offer a partial refund for the portion of the stay that cannot be completed due to the covered event. VRBO will refund all fees." However, the list of covered "natural disasters and abnormal weather events" does not include hurricanes. A note states, "Foreseeable weather disasters (such as hurricanes, cyclones, and extreme winter storms) may be covered if they cause or coincide with another covered event. For example, a hurricane that causes prolonged outages to public utilities to a vast majority of homes in a major region or city (cannot be outages to a few neighborhoods)."

AIRBNB'S MAJOR Disruptive Events Policy allows guests to cancel their reservation and receive a refund, travel credit, and/or other consideration regardless of the reservation's cancellation policy, and hosts can cancel without fees or other adverse consequences, although their listings calendar will be blocked for the dates of the canceled reservation. However, their policy also contains a caveat: "Weather or natural conditions that are common enough to be foreseeable in a given location—for example, hurricanes occurring during hurricane season in Florida—are covered only when they result in another event covered by this policy that prevents completion of the reservation, such as a mandatory evacuation order or large-scale outage of essential utilities."

TRAVEL INSURANCE could come in handy if you want to chance it. However, not all weather events



are covered on every policy. To be covered, you must purchase a policy that includes hurricane coverage as a benefit – and it must be purchased at least 24 hours before a storm is named. Policy coverage varies widely so read all the fine print. Some policies will reimburse you for non-refundable, pre-paid costs plus the extra cost of flying home early and/or for the cost of a hotel room, meals or other essentials. If you're injured in a storm,

some travel insurance can provide emergency medical and dental benefits, as well as emergency medical transportation benefits. Some policies also allow travelers to cancel up to two days ahead of a trip if they aren't comfortable going. It might just be better to visit hurricane-prone areas at another time of year.

NOW THROUGH December would be a great time to visit the city of Venice. They've discontinued collecting their tourist day-trip fee for the rest of the year, although they plan to implement it again next year – and increase the cost. The fee, which went into effect in April, was \$5.45 per person and it covered 29 days and most weekends. The city will increase the fee to \$3.27 for travelers who book in advance, but it will rise to \$10.91 per person on busy days. The fee was established to reduce overtourism. The city also limited tour groups to no more than 25 people. However, tourists who stay overnight in Venice are exempt from the fee since they are already subject to a



different tax.

WHAT WOULD YOU do if a laptop inside of a passenger's carry-on bag started smoking just as the plane was pulling to the gate? Some passengers on a flight from Miami that had just landed in San Francisco decided to do nothing. Three chutes were deployed and crew members ordered everyone to evacuate – however, some passengers blocked the aisles and another passenger opened the emergency exit and chucked the smoking laptop to the ground. His father then said that since the problem had been taken care of, there was no reason to deplane and he refused to get off.

ALTHOUGH IT probably won't be available soon in the Lake area, travelers will be able to take the stress out of getting to or from the airport by scheduling a ride with Uber Shuttle. According to a story in Travel Weekly, customers in areas where Uber has shuttle partnerships will see a "Shuttle" option in the Uber app. Customers can book up to five seats total from seven days in advance to five minutes before their shuttle's scheduled departure. They'll be able to pay for and track their shuttle within 25 minutes of their departure time in the app.

"Insurance Talk"

Maximizing Cost Efficiency: The Case For Higher Deductibles On Property Insurance



Jeff Bethurem

In the complex world of business operations, managing costs while ensuring adequate protection is a perpetual challenge. One area where savvy business owners can make strategic decisions is in their property insurance policies. While many opt for lower deductibles for peace of mind, there's a compelling argument for considering higher deductibles, such as \$25,000, to optimize cost efficiency without compromising coverage.

Understanding Deductibles

Deductibles represent the amount a policyholder must pay out of pocket before their insurance coverage kicks in. Typically, lower deductibles result in higher premiums, while higher deductibles lead to lower premiums. The rationale behind this trade-off lies in risk-sharing between the insured and the insurer.

The Case for \$25,000 Deductibles

- **Premium Reduction:** By opting for a higher deductible, businesses can significantly reduce their insurance premiums. This reduction can translate into substantial cost savings over time, especially for companies with large property portfolios or high-value assets.
- **Risk Mitigation:** While the upfront cost of a higher deductible may seem daunting, it encourages businesses to prioritize risk management and loss prevention measures. Knowing they'll bear a significant portion of any potential loss, business owners are incentivized to invest in robust safety protocols, maintenance procedures, and disaster preparedness plans.
- **Customized Coverage:** Higher deductibles allow businesses to tailor their insurance coverage to their specific needs and risk tolerance. Rather than paying for extensive coverage with low deductibles across the board, companies can allocate resources where they're most needed, focusing on critical assets or locations.
- **Financial Stability:** Opting for a higher deductible demonstrates

financial prudence and stability, which can be advantageous when seeking financing or partnerships. Lenders and investors may view businesses with a sound risk management strategy more favorably, potentially leading to better terms and opportunities.

Assessing Your Risk Tolerance

While the potential benefits of higher deductibles are compelling, it's essential for business owners to conduct a thorough risk assessment before making any decisions. Considerations should include:

- **Financial Capacity:** Can your business comfortably absorb the cost of the deductible in the event of a claim?
- **Risk Exposure:** What are the most significant risks facing your business, and how likely are they to occur?
- **Industry Standards:** What deductible levels are common within your industry, and how do they compare to your current coverage?

In the dynamic landscape of business management, every decision carries financial implications. Opting for higher deductibles on property insurance represents a strategic approach to cost optimization without sacrificing protection. By carefully evaluating risk tolerance, financial capabilities, and operational needs, business owners can leverage higher deductibles to enhance their bottom line while maintaining comprehensive insurance coverage. In a world where adaptability and efficiency are paramount, this approach offers a compelling solution for businesses looking to thrive in uncertain times.

To discuss this and see if this is an option for your business, give Jeff a call at (573) 348-1731, and he will be more than happy to sit down and discuss it.

Osage Beach aldermen reallocate funds to create better environment for park employees

By Nancy Zoellner

Pickleball players looking for additional courts will have to keep looking. Osage Beach has nixed the plan to add courts to City Park this year.

Welty said it was the third time the city put the project out to bid over the last 18 months. The next lowest bid was over \$200,000.

“The bathroom does include a shower, but it’s a simple con-

crete shower with one shower head and a shower curtain and the cost to put the shower in is less than \$5,000 of the total project cost. Most of the cost is in the grinder station that has to be installed for the bathroom and running the sewer line so we can connect the bathroom to the sewer system,” Welty explained.

“The police department has bathrooms, the ambulance department has bathrooms, public works has bathrooms. Your Parks Department has never had a bathroom - or a shower - and it’s not the shower. It’s truly the rising cost of materials and the connection to the sewer.”

“I understand the concerns

about the costs, but this is something we’ve been talking about for a year and a half. To me, it’s kind of embarrassing for the staff that they don’t have a facility on the premises where they work the majority of their time. A facility should be there if they have an emergency situation where they need to shower to wash off hazardous materials,” he said. “This goes back to providing the best

working environment to attract the best employees possible. I think this is a moment to take that to heart.”

After further discussion, aldermen voted unanimously to accept the bid and move forward with the project.

Welty reiterated that the pickleball courts will be reconsidered in 2025.



At their July 18 meeting Assistant City Administrator Mike Welty said the bids to construct two fenced pickleball courts and a parking lot, as well as handle retaining wall stabilization at the City Park were too high.

“Pickleball is kind-of being re-designed at a different location, and that will come to the board later but that’s definitely not going to happen until 2025,” he told the board.

Instead, he recommended that the board use \$50,000 of the money budgeted for that project

crete shower with one shower head and a shower curtain and the cost to put the shower in is less than \$5,000 of the total project cost. Most of the cost is in the grinder station that has to be installed for the bathroom and running the sewer line so we can connect the bathroom to the sewer system,” Welty explained. “The police department has bathrooms, the ambulance department has bathrooms, public works has bathrooms. Your Parks Department has never had a bathroom - or a shower - and



to cover the overage of a project to add a bathroom to the park maintenance building located in the back of the park behind soccer field 3. The addition would include a toilet, urinal, sink and shower.

The low bid, which came from Construction Concepts Corporation, was \$156,897 - over budget by \$52,397.

these are the people that are taking care of your fields all summer long. They’re dealing with fertilizers, they’re dealing with pesticides. Most of them bring a second set of clothes to work every day. I understand the price and if the board doesn’t want to pass this because of the price, no one would bat an eye but I just want to make sure you understand -

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Chicken lovers have something to crow about

By Nancy Zoellner

As of August 28, homeowners' associations in the state can no longer restrict the ownership or pasturing of chickens. That's because on July 9, Missouri Governor Mike Parsons signed HB 2062, which legalizes backyard chicken ownership regardless of what homeowners association rules say – as long as their lot is large enough and local laws allow it.

The new law, which is a small part of a large piece of legislation outlining changes to property rights, states:

5. (1) No deed restrictions, covenants, or similar binding agreements running with the land shall prohibit or have the effect of prohibiting ownership or pasturing of up to six chickens on a lot that is two-tenths of an acre or larger, including prohibitions against a single chicken coop designed to accommodate up to six chickens.

(2) A homeowners' association may adopt reasonable rules, subject to applicable statutes or ordinances, regarding ownership or pasturing of chickens, including a prohibition or restriction on ownership or pasturing of roosters.

In terms of square footage, 0.2 acre equals 8,712 square feet. To determine if a lot is large enough, without getting out the tape measure, visit the appropriate county GIS site. Camden County residents can visit camdenmo.org, scroll down to the bottom of the page to Quick Links, and click on County GIS. Residents of Miller County should visit millercountymissouri.org and click on the Miller County MO GIS link on the left side of the page. Morgan

County residents should visit morgancountymo.gov and click on the GIS Map link.

In his article titled "Hen-dependence Day: Missouri Law Lets Homeowners Keep Chickens, HOA or Not," St. Louis attorney Zachary R. McMichael, outlined the changes.

"Many municipalities in Missouri have ordinances regulating the keeping of chickens, but many of them do not regulate the architectural design of chicken coops. Further, some allow the keeping of up to eight chickens in some circumstances. In municipalities without regulations, and without further action from the HOA, an owner would be allowed to keep an unlimited number of chickens, including roosters," he wrote.

McMichael suggested that HOAs with a general prohibition on the keeping of livestock should consider an amendment to their declarations to regulate such things as the number of chickens that can be kept, whether roosters are allowed, and how the chickens are kept.

Some cities limit the number of chickens that can be kept on a property; some require chickens to be kept in enclosures that protect them from predators, keep them out of neighboring yards, and meet certain size and safety requirements; and some require permits.

Currently, the Four Seasons Property Owners Association, the largest HOA in the Lake area, has covenants that restrict owners from raising, breeding or keeping, either temporarily or permanently, poultry of any kind. As of August 28 the POA will no longer be allowed to en-

force that restriction.

However, the Village of Four Seasons, which encompasses the majority of the POA properties on Horseshoe Bend, prohibits raising poultry, as well as other livestock, inside Village limits. Porto Cima, which is in an unincorporated area of Camden County, is a different story. As long as lot size requirements are met, homeowners there will be able to own chickens because the county does not prohibit backyard chickens.

Earlier this year Lake Ozark aldermen voted to add an ordinance specifically addressing chickens. According to that ordinance, no one is allowed to keep more than six chickens per half acre in residential areas and roosters are not permitted on fewer than 10 acres and then only one rooster is allowed. The law also requires chickens to be kept in maintained coops inside enclosed areas and prohibits them from running loose. In addition, those coops and runs cannot be closer than 200 feet to the nearest dwelling, church, school or place of business.

That means residents of HOAs like Beacon Pointe that are located inside Lake Ozark city limits will be allowed to raise chickens, as long as they are operating within the guidelines set forth by HB 2062 and the Lake Ozark ordinance. Beacon Pointe's restrictive covenants currently state that "no poultry of any kind shall be housed, raised or kept in the development either temporarily or permanently," and goes on to say that the only animals allowed are those commonly considered household pets.

Building an effective web presence

How AI Can Revolutionize Your Email Management



Mike Waggett

In today's digital age, managing emails efficiently is crucial for both personal and professional communication. Artificial Intelligence (AI) offers powerful tools to enhance email management, ensuring productivity and efficiency. Here's how AI can help you manage your email more effectively:

Email Sorting and Prioritization

AI algorithms can analyze the content and context of your emails to automatically sort and prioritize them. For instance, AI can categorize emails into different folders such as "Work," "Personal," "Promotions," and "Spam." It can prioritize emails from key contacts, ensuring that important messages are not overlooked. This automated sorting saves you time and helps maintain an organized inbox.

Spam and Phishing Detection

AI is highly effective in identifying and filtering out spam and phishing emails. Machine learning models are trained on large datasets of known spam and phishing attempts, allowing them to recognize malicious content and suspicious email patterns. By reducing the number of unwanted emails, AI helps protect your personal information and maintains a cleaner inbox.

Smart Replies and Email Drafting

AI-powered tools like Google's Smart Reply and Smart Compose suggest responses and even draft entire emails based on the context of your previous messages. These tools leverage natural language processing (NLP) to understand the tone and content of your emails, providing relevant and contextually appropriate suggestions. This feature speeds up your response time and ensures consistency in your communication style.

Automated Follow-Ups

AI can help track your sent emails and automatically remind you to follow up if there has been no response within a specified timeframe. Some AI tools can even send follow-up emails on your behalf. This feature is particularly useful for sales professionals and customer service representatives who need to maintain regular contact with

clients and prospects.

Email Summarization

With the help of AI, you can quickly get summaries of long emails or threads. Summarization algorithms extract key points and action items, allowing you to grasp the essence of the email without having to read through lengthy content. This is especially beneficial for busy professionals who need to stay informed but have limited time.

Email Analytics

AI can provide insights into your email usage patterns, such as the number of emails sent and received, response times, and peak email activity periods. These analytics can help you understand and optimize your email habits, improving your overall productivity. For businesses, this data can be valuable for assessing team communication efficiency.

AI is transforming email management by automating routine tasks, enhancing security, and providing valuable insights. By leveraging AI tools, you can manage your email more efficiently, saving time and improving productivity. Whether for personal use or business communication, AI-powered email management solutions are a game-changer in the digital era.

If you would like to schedule a free strategy call with our team of experts, head over to www.mswinterativedesigns.com to schedule it with us.

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OB man gets second chance at life

By Nancy Zoellner

Two children get to have their dad around, and that dad gets to spend time with his wife and watch his children grow up thanks to the actions taken by several Osage Beach first responders. Those men and women were recognized at the July 18 Board of Aldermen meeting by Police Chief Todd Davis, who shared the events of the incident.

He said that on June 15, 2024, at 05:57 a.m. Dispatcher Wendy Foster with the Osage Beach Police Department received a 911 call about 62-year-old male who had collapsed and was unresponsive in a unit in the Ledges Condominium complex.

"She immediately dispatched police, EMS, and fire units to the scene, then returned to the caller to obtain additional information about the patient. After it was determined that the patient was not breathing, Foster instructed other individuals in the unit on how to administer CPR to the patient," Chief Davis said.

Officer Johnathan Rosenburg, Officer Justin Hutzler and Corporal Holly Vernon arrived on scene just a few minutes later, they continued providing CPR while using their department-issued Automated External Defibrillator (AED). The AED identified a shockable rhythm, the officers administered a shock and continued CPR until ambulance and fire personnel arrived on scene.

"Paramedic Floyd Handy and EMT Alexandria Johnson, along with Osage Beach Fire Protection District's Acting Captain Brad Smith, and firefighters Matt Mara and Josh Johnson continued advanced life support protocols. CPR was continued and an additional shock given by Handy converted the patient's heart into an organized rhythm prior to trans-

porting him to Lake Regional Hospital," the chief said, adding that the patient, Chad Burton, was stabilized and later flown to University Hospital in Columbia for additional treatment.

Burton and his wife Tammy were present at the meeting when Chief Davis recognized the "initiative, presence of mind, teamwork, and professional competence" of the group, adding, "You are commended for your actions in this stressful situation and I extend my sincere gratitude and congratulations for a job well done."

After his presentation, the Burtons were given an opportunity to speak. Tammy said she remembers putting the phone down and finding that her husband wasn't breathing.

"We're like 'what do we do?' they're like 'Start CPR.' Thank goodness my daughter was there. Then Officer Rosenberg was in our house and moving and taking charge and from there EMS and firefighters - they worked seamlessly," she said. "The gratitude I have to see such professionalism and respect. And the fact that when I called to follow up, Floyd even remembered my kitchen and asked if his fall might have impacted his neck. I'm thinking 'He remembers that a week later?' Wow. What these people do with what you have - what you're impacted by every day to just save so many lives. So thank you, thank you."

Chad Burton said while he wasn't much of a public speaker, he wanted the responders to know he would be forever grateful that they saved his life and changed his life forever.

"I can be here for my kids and my wife and watch my daughter grow up and my son grow up and try to be a better person. What you all have done has made a differ-

ence and all I can do is say I love you so much, and I appreciate it so much. So thank you - thank you very much," he said.

Osage Beach Fire Protection District officials said while they

typically don't learn the outcome of patients after being taken to the hospital, this case was different.

This is another example of how CPR saves lives. Quick recognition and action can be the difference

maker. This patient gets to spend another day with his family because of the actions taken by his family, our local first responders and dispatcher. We are honored to work alongside other individuals who are dedicated to protecting lives. Great work by all of those involved.



First responders who saved a man's life were recently recognized for their actions. Front row, left to right are Dispatcher Wendy Foster, Officer Johnathan Rosenburg, Tammy Burton, Chad Burton, Paramedic Floyd Handy and EMT-B Allie Johnson. Back row Officer Justin Hutzler, Jimmy Burton, Firefighter Matt Mara, Firefighter Josh Johnson and Acting Captain Brad Smith. Cpl. Holly Vernon wasn't present.





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Summer storm downed trees, blocked roadways

By Nancy Zoellner

The storm that swept through the area the morning of July 16 kept the Horseshoe Bend Special Road District busy removing trees knocked down by high winds. Superintendent Kevin Luttrell said the majority of the damage occurred on Horseshoe Bend Road past Bittersweet.

“The fire district called and asked us to clear the road because it was so covered with branches. When we got out we also found several trees down, completely blocking roads,” he said.

One of those trees snapped at the base, falling across Sunset Road at the very tip of Horseshoe Bend. Resident Amy Burnett said

when the storm hit, she looked out to see the neighbor’s chairs blowing off their deck and into the lake.

“I ran out to grab them but the wind was crazy. I turned around to run back inside, but the wind was blowing so hard that I couldn’t move forward. I had to

go to the side of the building and work my way around to get back in the house,” she said.

Two large trees fell, smashing vehicles and ripping down power lines at a neighboring property and another neighbor lost part of his dock roof.

The Sunrise Beach Fire Protection District also reported extensive damage with several trees blocking roadways and partially collapsing two houses, trapping a man inside in one of the homes.



Lodging Tax

continued from page 6

within the district that collects and remits the lodging tax should be eligible, adding “This is not any different than many other similar districts in Missouri such as fire or ambulance districts.”

“I get it. I’m a fiscal conservative, and I hate taxes of almost any kind! And if anyone should hate this tax more than anyone else at the Lake; it is me! ... I currently own The Resort at Lake of The Ozarks which is in Miller County, and all the hotels I compete with are in Camden County; which means I am paying a 5 percent lodging tax, while my competitors are only paying 3 percent; that’s a 66 percent differ-

ence and gives a huge competitive advantage to my competitors. While I do think that discrepancy should be equalled out to level the playing field, I am happy to collect and remit the tax because I know how very important it is for all lodging properties to co-op our marketing resources, and the lodging tax is the only way to effectively and fairly accomplish that objective.”

In the meantime, per county commissioners and county attorney Jeff Green, Camden County will continue to collect the lodging tax. However, it will not be distributed until the Supreme Court ruling is free of any challenges.

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Ballparks National severs ties with city of Osage Beach

By Nancy Zoellner

Ballparks National will not be renewing its management contract/lease for the 2025 season for the Osage Beach City Park fields. In a letter written by Ballparks General Manager Jeff Vernetti to the city, he said they will fulfill their contract through October 31, 2024 as planned and adhere to all of the terms as agreed.

The city had signed a contract with Ballparks National to take over the management of all aspects of the baseball and softball programs. In his letter to the city, Vernetti wrote that through the month of July, Ballparks National had generated \$71,430 in revenues for Osage Beach, through fees for the facility lease, advertising sales, and revenue share on concession sales. He added that they also ran a very successful youth league.

"In partnership with the City of Camdenton, we had 108 participants, ran two free camps for recreational players, and offered t-ball at no charge. BPN also ran very successful adult leagues once again, bringing back the community spirit that those leagues bring," Vernetti stated, noting that BPN brought 265 teams to the city for weekend tournaments and adult leagues.

Vernetti wrote that although they would like to continue building baseball and softball for

the area, they are pulling out of Osage Beach because Mayor Michael Harmison has "launched unfounded attacks on our business and integrity. Our ownership group and entire organization are very disappointed that he has used his title to attack one of the City's partners, as this clearly doesn't help the City of Osage Beach. His actions are extremely troubling because we all worked so hard to make this such a successful first year. However, BPN cannot in good conscience be in partnership with an organization led by Mayor Harmison."

Vernetti is referring to a letter to the editor Harmison wrote and sent to the Lake Expo claiming Ballparks National and Vernetti in particular mishandled a Local Tourism Asset Development Grant.

"This federal fund grant was to be used to support public/private partnerships from the negative economic impact of Covid-19," Harmison wrote, listing his concerns, one of which was that Ballparks National did not submit requested documentation in a timely manner.

"... as the Mayor of Osage Beach and one who was instrumental in joining forces with BPN at our city park, I find these financial irregularities disturbing and need to pay very close attention to our current agreement. Also, as some-

one who wrote a letter to the DED in support of this grant, I find the handing of this federal grant very troubling," Harmison states in the letter.

From the time the accounting error was discovered, Vernetti has stated it was just that - an accounting error that was rectified as soon as it was noted.

In the meantime, Vernetti had nothing but praise for Osage Beach Parks Director Eric Gregory and his staff.

"They have been tremendous through this entire partnership and their team should be commended. They are truly top notch and could not be a better representation for the City. We also want to thank the rest of the City administrative staff - the billing, licensing, and clerk departments have all been very easy to work with and professional at every turn. Finally, thank you to the Board of Alderman who believed in this idea and saw value - not just on the financial benefit for the City - but the benefit to the community as well. All of these individuals and departments have been true partners, and we thank you," the letter stated. "We would be happy to consider another partnership in the future, but at this time we cannot continue while Mayor Harmison is involved and trying to attack our business standing in the community."

Shootout Events

continued from page 1
agreement and ensure that all attendees who are possessing alcoholic beverages remain inside the event area.

- Glass containers will not be allowed in the event area.
- The event organizer will also be required to reimburse the city for the costs associated with law enforcement personnel deemed necessary to police the event over and above the normal force for at the rate of \$35 per hour per officer.

Other Shootout activities include a Float Your Boat competition at Captain Ron's, a Mini

Shootout, rides with the Make a Wish Foundation, a Hall of Fame Dinner and Induction Ceremony, a welcome party, a poker run, and an auction. The Shootout is set for August 24 and 25 and will once again be headquartered at Captain Ron's, located at 82 Aloha Lane in Sunrise Beach by land and at the 34.5 MM by water.

Boat patrol volunteers are still needed the days of the race. Get a front-row view of the race, as well as a box lunch and water while helping make the Shootout a success. To volunteer or get more information email adminasst@lowatershed.org.

In the meantime, the Shootout Board of Directors is under new leadership. Mark Maasen, co-owner of Poly Lift Boat Lifts who has been involved in the Shootout from the start, was recently elected president. In addition, Shane Landis, organizer of the Shootout for the Shootout Trapshooting event; Brad Harrington, a former racer and a Bob Morgan Memorial Hall of Fame inductee; and Taylor Scism, a world champion racer whose dad was the first-ever Top Gun in the inaugural year of the Shootout; have joined the team.

Visit lakeoftheozarkshootout.com for more information including times, dates and locations of the events.

Submit your Press Releases to: Lakebusjournal@gmail.com

Please remember to include photos if available, captions detailing the photographs and your information in Word (.doc) files

As the Lake Churns Year-to-Date

Here are some market figures from year-to-date and a comparison for the three years previous.

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Real Estate and Lake News with C. Michael Elliott

2021-2024 Comparison Lake of the Ozarks				Year to Date	Second Quarter
Year	# Trans	Volume	Avg. DOM	Avg. Sales Price	Trans% Vol%
Residential, Villas & Townhomes Waterfront					
2021	498	\$297,765,051	65	\$597,922	
2022	394	\$275,042,372	67	\$698,077	-21% -8%
2023	326	\$221,660,255	44	\$679,939	-17% -19%
2024	303	\$230,789,287	41	\$761,681	-7% 4%
Residential, Villas & Townhomes Offshore					
2021	707	\$169,600,510	78	\$239,888	
2022	602	\$162,653,018	63	\$270,188	-15% -4%
2023	428	\$122,966,287	46	\$287,304	-29% -24%
2024	502	\$156,600,772	46	\$311,954	17% 27%
Waterfront Lots					
2021	127	\$24,556,575	186	\$193,359	
2022	91	\$22,824,900	130	\$250,823	-28% -7%
2023	69	\$14,131,450	176	\$204,804	-24% -38%
2024	63	\$15,649,800	138	\$248,410	-9% 11%
Other Lots & Lands					
2021	254	\$13,641,020	209	\$53,705	
2022	339	\$26,724,359	110	\$78,833	33% 96%
2023	264	\$20,879,697	90	\$79,090	-22% -22%
2024	269	\$21,792,502	98	\$81,013	2% 4%
Condos & Timeshares					
2021	515	\$132,365,268	37	\$257,020	
2022	386	\$126,350,097	47	\$327,332	-25% -5%
2023	391	\$126,913,859	52	\$324,588	1% 0%
2024	319	\$110,199,036	46	\$345,452	-18% -13%
Commercial Properties					
2021	67	\$24,085,382	189	\$359,483	
2022	79	\$43,779,956	186	\$554,177	18% 82%
2023	32	\$20,577,858	71	\$643,058	-59% -53%
2024	48	\$27,759,250	80	\$578,318	50% 35%
Farm					
2021	20	\$9,238,100	102	\$461,905	
2022	26	\$14,476,600	102	\$556,792	30% 57%
2023	9	\$4,095,180	57	\$455,020	-65% -72%
2024	11	\$5,523,478	105	\$502,407	22% 35%
Homes Over a Million					
2021	56	\$93,987,101	76	\$1,678,341	
2022	64	\$105,591,589	71	\$1,649,869	14% 12%
2023	45	\$75,271,128	48	\$1,672,692	-30% -29%
2024	71	\$103,248,848	35	\$1,454,209	58% 37%

Year Total Volume
 2021 2188 \$671,251,906
 2022 1917 \$671,851,302
 2023 1519 \$531,224,386
 2024 1515 \$568,314,125

Based on information from the Association of REALTORS® (alternatively, from the Bagwell Dam Association of REALTORS® MLS and Lake of the Ozarks Board of REALTORS® MLS) for the period January 1st through June 30th of 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024. The data collected for this report is information that was reported to the MLS as of July 15, 2024.

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Letters to the Editor

continued from page 2
 result of tourism, all of which has been greatly benefited by our lodging tax that has allowed our community to prosper the way it has.

For the past two years, I have been intricately involved in the Miller County Business District as the current and past chair of that Board, as well as the current Co-Chair of Try County Lodging Association (TCLA), and the current Vice President of the Executive Committee of the Convention and Visitor Bureau (CVB); all of which are directly involved with the lodging tax to some extent. I don't know how any of these boards operated in 2020, when this dispute first began, but I do know that some changes have been made to accommodate all concerned. That said, I know very well how these boards operate today, and how the tax dollars are used to the great benefit of everyone in our community. Board members of each of these entities are business leaders in our community, and meetings are open to the public. Lodging tax dollars are not spent unless agreed to by each of the business districts, all of which are subject to annual audit, so there is complete transparency.

So, how much money is being collected, and what is it being spent on? The fiscal year is July 1st, through June 30th of each year. For fiscal year 2023 in round numbers the lodging tax collected was \$2,450,000, and YTD fiscal year 2024 the tax dollars are up by 8.5% so it could be estimated to be \$2,650,000. Additionally, in 2024 we received \$292k in Matching Marketing Grants from Missouri Division of Tourism and are already approved for \$280k in grant funding for 2025, which began July 1st, 2024. (NOTE: It is important to point out that any future marketing grants will now be lost to our community and will likely go to other tourism markets that the Lake directly competes with). The total Joint Marketing Budget for FY 2024 is \$1,936,000 plus the \$292k in grant dollars. In fiscal year 2025, the joint marketing budget increases by over \$900,000! The marketing funds that are generated by the lodging tax, are distributed as a percentage, as follows:

Print	3%
Digital Billboards	6.4%
Digital Marketing	32.5%

Radio & TV (Chiefs & Cardinals Radio, Streaming TV)	11.7%
Public Relations (includes content stories, etc.)	5.6%
Group Marketing	11.3%
Marketing Fulfillment (creative, publication distribution, etc.)	14.3%
Operations & Admin	15.2%

In addition to the extensive marketing campaign the lodging tax supports, it also budgeted over \$400k for Special Events in FY 2024. Think about all the great events that have been created all around the lake over the past couple of decades, most of these events could have never got off the ground without the financial assistance the lodging tax provides for special events. You may ask, why does a lodging tax support special events? Because these events put heads in beds, which is precisely what the lodging tax is all about. These are just a few of the events the lodging tax support:

- Lake of the Ozarks Shoot Out**
- LOTO Shoot Out Offshore**
- Lake of the Ozarks Bikefest**
- Ozark Rides Rally**
- Professional Fishing Tournaments**
- Youth Fishing Tournaments**
- Lake of the Ozarks Air Show**
- Jeep Invasion**
- Mardi Gras Pub Crawl**
- Fall Crawl**
- Apple Festival**
- Eagle Days**
- Hot Summer Nights**
- FCA Bridge and Dam Marathon**

The pending loss of the lodging tax has put all new special event funding requests on hold, which has already lost our community a fishing tournament that would have otherwise taken place this coming January. These fishermen and their families would have been here in the slowest month of the year, staying at motels, campgrounds and vacation rentals, and spending money at our local restaurants, convenience stores and other businesses. That tourism revenue is now gone, and this is just one small example of the tens of millions of dollars that our community will lose! Tragic.

So, who is happy about the lodging tax going away, other than the two petitioners who challenged the tax and their supporters? That would be the lodging & tourist communities of Branson, Kansas City and St. Louis, all of whom collect a significantly higher lodging tax than the lake respectively. In-fact Kansas City and St. Louis have a

7.25% lodging tax. So now all the tourism marketing all around the Mid-West and other markets the lake has traditionally drawn from, will now be spent to promote Kansas City, St. Louis and Branson, and none of it will be spent to promote our beautiful Lake of the Ozarks resort community! That my friends and neighbors, is an absolute tragedy of monumental proportions!

For those who would assert that more visitors will come to the lake without the lodging tax, I would suggest that anyone making that argument knows very little about business and the importance of marketing and advertising. The lodging tax has been in effect at the lake for over thirty years, and during that time it has fueled tourism, not hindered it. Travelers are very accustomed to paying a lodging tax, and the Lake's tax is substantially less than the lodging/tourism tax in KC, St. Louis and Branson. St. Louis also charges a 3.5% tax on sporting events; do you think that is going to keep someone from going to a Cardinals game? Branson charges a 4% tax on not just lodging, but on amusements, do

you think that is going to keep someone from taking in a show or visiting Silver Dollar City? Branson even charges a .05% tourism tax on restaurants! I will say it again, I hate taxes more than almost anyone, but some taxes are necessary to benefit a community, and the lodging tax at the lake, is very competitive with other markets in Missouri, and provides a great benefit.

As the only Developer & Entrepreneur who has ever invested in and built a new hotel development at Lake of the Ozarks in over thirty years (Camden on the Lake), and the current owner of the third largest hotel at the lake; I have a lot of skin in the game, and a heck of a lot to lose by this travesty. The Resort at Lake of the Ozarks remits more in lodging tax dollars than all other lodging properties in Miller County combined. You might think eliminating this tax would be a good thing for me, and beneficial to my business, but I know first-hand that it will be very damaging to my business as it will to the entire lake community, especially anyone who depends on tourism for their livelihood.

When I was asked to write this article I was happy to do so because of the importance of this issue to our community, and because I have a unique, and informed perspective on this topic, as a long-time business owner, and resident of the lake. An initial draft of this article was originally published in the Lake Sun Leader, and Lake Expo.

In full disclosure, one of the two Appellants in this legal case is a colleague and a friend; that said, good people can agree to disagree. As previously noted, I think the two people that began down this path, were well intentioned, and may have had some legitimate concerns at the time they began this journey, but I do not believe that they fully considered the unintended consequences this action will have on our community for many years to come. For anyone who lives or owns property at the lake and doesn't think that eliminating the lodging tax will have an adverse impact on their life and livelihood; I have every confidence that they will soon realize that they are sadly mistaken.

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Crossword Puzzle

THEME: THINGS WITH BUTTONS

ACROSS

- 1. Genoa or storm jib
- 5. Pouch
- 8. Support for #1 Across
- 12. Gaelic language
- 13. Big-ticket _____
- 14. Flowerbed cover
- 15. Western Samoan money
- 16. Agrippina's slayer
- 17. Literature class homework
- 18. *"The Curious Case of _____ Button"
- 20. God of thunder
- 21. Tight or rigid
- 22. Blunder
- 23. *_____ control
- 26. *Alarm clock delay
- 29. Edible tuber
- 30. Racecourses
- 33. Crew propellers
- 35. Often follows dark or back
- 37. _____-Town, or Chicago
- 38. Friend, south of the border
- 39. Singular of #25 Down
- 40. Containing uranium
- 42. Rip off
- 43. Sleeping sickness vector
- 45. Che Guevara's hat, pl.
- 47. Roman road
- 48. "And Then _____ Were None"
- 50. Hillside, in Scotland
- 52. *Home ringer
- 55. Raccoon's South American cousin
- 56. Debate side
- 57. Spring in a mattress
- 59. Ar, atomic number 18
- 60. Black-tie occasion
- 61. Golfer's aim
- 62. Group with pressure
- 63. Stallone
- 64. Semiprecious variety of agate

Solution on page 6 DOWN

- 1. Collector's goal
- 2. Kuwaiti, e.g.
- 3. _____ of Man
- 4. Shanty
- 5. Flower trunks
- 6. American Eagle's intimates brand
- 7. "Oh _____!"
- 8. *Edible button
- 9. "The Sun _____ Rises"
- 10. "The Lion King" villain
- 11. Olden day "your"
- 13. More asinine
- 14. City area
- 19. Bulwark
- 22. Ems follower
- 23. Aimless walk
- 24. "Bravo! Bravo!", e.g.
- 25. Pall _____ and _____ of America
- 26. Largest organ of human body
- 27. Mobutu Sese Seko's nation
- 28. Cereal killer
- 31. Land measure
- 32. _____-cha-cha
- 34. Wails
- 36. *Tall building people-mover
- 38. Of sour taste
- 40. All 50 states
- 41. Spanish airline
- 44. Make a logical connection (2 words)
- 46. Repeat an echo
- 48. Opposite of atonal
- 49. In a heated manner
- 50. Dull one
- 51. Angry display
- 52. Entertainingly eccentric people, Down Under
- 53. "On Golden Pond" bird
- 54. _____ of the valley
- 55. *A baseball one has a button on top
- 58. Lexington airport code

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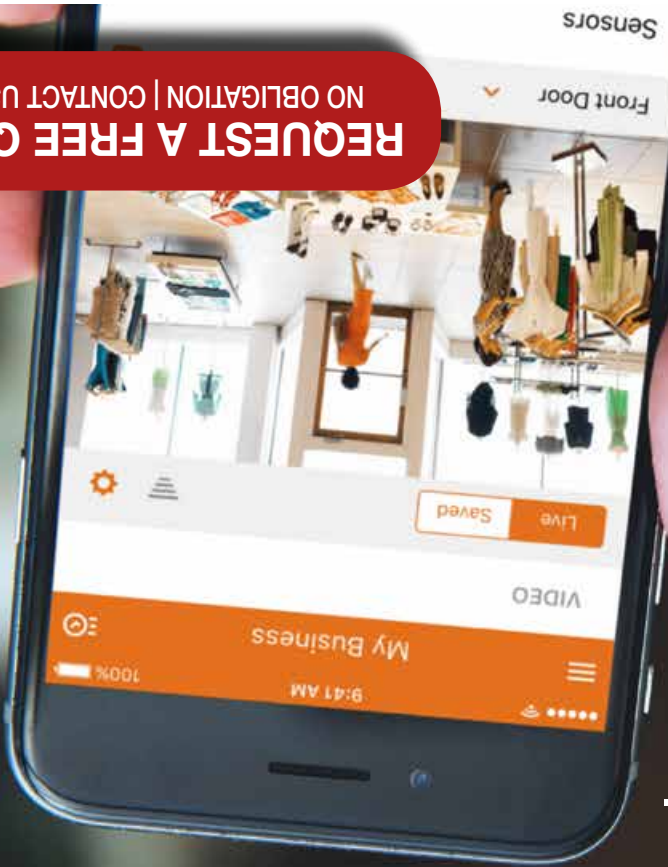
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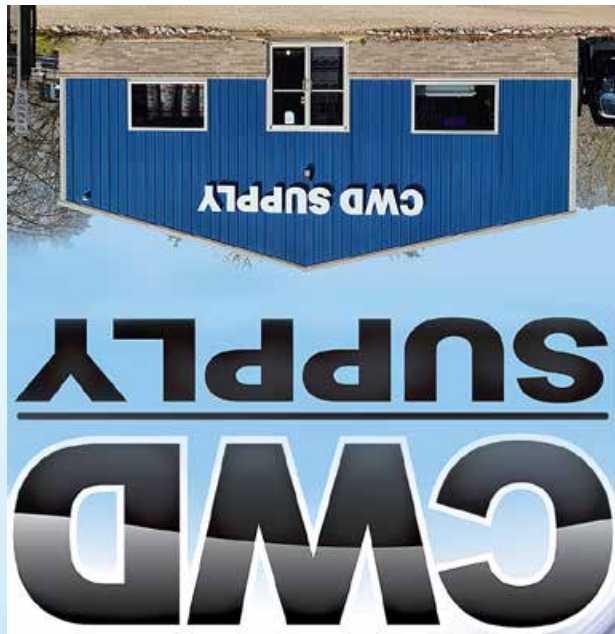
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The logo block features several brand logos. At the top center is the 'Marty's Marine' logo in a stylized blue and red font, with 'OSAGE BEACH, MISSOURI' written in a smaller font above it. To the right of this is the 'Barletta Boats' logo, which includes a blue circle with a white 'B' and the word 'Barletta' in a cursive font, with 'BOATS' written vertically to its right. Below the Barletta logo is the 'Playcraft Boats' logo, featuring a yellow and blue wave graphic and the text 'PLAYCRAFT BOATS' with the slogan 'Leave It All Behind.' To the left of the Marty's Marine logo are two 'MERCURY' logos: one for 'Outboards' and one for 'Racing'.



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