

BACK TO WORK

After a monthlong August recess, Congress returns to Washington with a laundry list of things to do, including avoiding a shutdown

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**BORDER WAR SPOTLIGHT**

“SEC Nation” will come to Columbia and broadcast from campus on Saturday ahead of the Mizzou-Kansas matchup

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FAMILY PHOTO FINISH



CLAIRE NGUYEN • Missourian

From left, Brody Brockman, 6, finishes the Heart of America Marathon with his dad, Trevor Brockman, and his brother, Trenton Brockman, 4, on Monday at the Boone County History and Culture Center. After the race, runners were offered pizza from Pizza Tree and a variety of other refreshments.

For more coverage, see Page 4A.

Wilkes Blvd. United Methodist Church to close

BY AUDREY ELLIS

news@columbiamissourian.com

A Columbia church that largely serves the city's unhoused population will close next summer due to financial issues.

Wilkes Blvd. United Methodist Church will shutter its doors in the summer of 2026. This decision comes months after announcing financial difficulties in May due to its tenant, Turning Point, planning to relocate.

Turning Point, an organization that offers mailing addresses, temporary storage, bathing facilities,

prayer and Bible study and other means of support to homeless people, is slated to move to Opportunity Campus, an extensive new homeless shelter and resource center.

Turning Point's current location at the church puts it close to downtown Columbia, but the new Opportunity Campus will be on Business Loop 70.

Wilkes Blvd. United Methodist Church has been a fixture in Columbia for over 100 years, and has housed Turning Point since 2014. Pastor Andrew McCausland estimated that 80% to 90% of the

church's congregation consists of members of Columbia's unhoused population.

But without rent money from Turning Point, the church has no option but to close.

For McCausland, the efforts to keep the church open were many, but ultimately not enough.

“We love being here for the community. It is the heart that everybody that serves here has, but it means a heavy toll and a heavy cost,” McCausland said. “And that’s not just financial, but that’s also in the energy of the people that are involved.”

The church's building will be returned to its umbrella organization, where it will attempt to give the building to another Methodist congregation. If the organization is unable to find a new ministry, it will find a tenant who seeks to use the building for community purposes, McCausland said.

“We don’t believe, as Methodists, as our conference, that this is a horrible thing,” McCausland said. “It’s bittersweet, because there’s a lot of people that grieve for this place. But we know that these are just buildings, and that the church lives on.”

Local health experts wary of new CDC guidelines

BY ADDISON ZANGER
KBIA

Missouri health officials are bracing for the fall COVID season after the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recently changed vaccine guidelines.

According to a post by Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr., the CDC has revoked the emergency declared by the Biden administration at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

This removal means the new vaccine is now considered non-essential for many groups, leaving some organizations to worry that doctors may want to recommend it, but insurance companies are not required to pay for it.

Austin Krohn, spokesperson at Columbia/Boone County Public Health and Human Services, said he would not be surprised if insurance companies began to pull coverage from those who are not considered an essential group for vaccination.

“Since it’s coming down to insurance,” Krohn said, “Yeah, that is going to be a problem.”

Krohn said he hasn’t seen any organization aiming to lobby against the removal of the COVID-19 vaccination from insurance coverage.

“It very well may become necessary to kind of get that ball rolling again in these politicians’ minds as we get into the respiratory illness seasons,” Krohn said. “And see how these new rules and regulations affect the upcoming season.”

Krohn believes it would be helpful for vaccine recommendations to include information coming from the state and local level, as doctors may continue to recommend the vaccination for more people than the CDC currently does.

“We just wanna reiterate that vaccines are safe and effective,” Krohn said, “We still encourage everyone that can get them to get them”

Krohn also said that he doesn’t anticipate a lack of insurance coverage to affect who receives care from the Health Department. The organization promises on its website that no one will be turned away due to lack of payment.

He anticipates this program continuing even if insurance coverage for COVID-19 vaccinations gets revoked.

“I’m not sure that it will affect us a whole lot given, you know, grants and funding and things” Krohn said, “But it’s kind of a ‘time will tell’ thing as well.”

CORRECTION

Nancy Shepherd's name was misspelled in a photo caption on Page 1A Sunday. A switch in party affiliation was also incorrect.

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1.2M immigrants absent from U.S. labor force

BY COREY WILLIAMS

The Associated Press

It's tomato season, and Lidia is harvesting on farms in California's Central Valley.

She is also anxious. Attention from U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement could upend her life more than 23 years after she illegally crossed the U.S.-Mexico border as a teenager.

“The worry is they’ll pull you over when you’re driving and ask for your papers,” said Lidia, who spoke to The Associated Press on condition that only her first name be used because of her fears of deportation. “We need to work. We need to feed our families and pay our rent.”

As parades and other events celebrating the contributions of workers in the U.S. are held Monday for the Labor Day

holiday, experts say President Donald Trump’s immigration policies are affecting the labor force.

More than 1.2 million immigrants disappeared from the labor force from January through July, according to preliminary Census Bureau data analyzed by the Pew Research Center. That includes people who are in the country illegally as well as legal residents.

Immigrants make up almost 20% of the U.S. workforce and that data shows 45% of workers in farming, fishing and forestry are immigrants, Pew senior researcher Stephanie Kramer said. About 30% of all construction workers are immigrants and 24% of service workers are immigrants, she added.

The loss in immigrant workers comes as the nation is seeing the first decline in the

overall immigrant population after the number of people in the U.S. illegally reached an all-time high of 14 million in 2023.

“It’s unclear how much of the decline we’ve seen since January is due to voluntary departures to pursue other opportunities or avoid deportation, removals, underreporting or other technical issues,” Kramer said. “However, we don’t believe that the preliminary numbers indicating net-negative migration are so far off that the decline isn’t real.”

Trump campaigned on a promise to deport millions of immigrants working in the U.S. illegally. He has said he is focusing deportation efforts on “dangerous criminals,” but most people detained by ICE have no criminal convictions. At the same time, the number of illegal border crossings has

plunged.

Pia Orrenius, a labor economist at the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas, said immigrants normally contribute at least 50% of job growth in the U.S.

“The influx across the border from what we can tell is essentially stopped, and that’s where we were getting millions and millions of migrants over the last four years,” she said. “That has had a huge impact on the ability to create jobs.”

Lidia, the farmworker who spoke to the AP through an interpreter, said her biggest fear is being sent back to Mexico. Now 36, she is married with three school-age children who were born here.

“I don’t know if I’ll be able to bring my kids,” Lidia said. “I’m also very concerned I’d have to start from zero. My whole life has been in the United States.”