

# **FCC QUARTERLY ISSUES/PROGRAM REPORT**

**Fourth Quarter 2023**

**January 10, 2024**

**KMOV-TV, ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI**

Station **KMOV-TV** is a CBS Network affiliate in its service area. Our responsibilities as a public trustee, KMOV-TV deals with and is responsive to the principal issues arising in its community on a continuing basis. A variety of specials, public service announcements, public affairs programs and broadcasts on matters of concern to our community are supplemented, in some cases, with in-community projects. Our most significant programming which has dealt with current community issues during the preceding three-month period are set forth below.

## DESCRIPTION OF LOCAL PROGRAMS PROVIDING MOST SIGNIFICANT TREATMENT OF COMMUNITY ISSUES

The following programs are locally produced live news programs that present a mixture of news, weather, sports and issue-related stories and segments.

|                      |                 |                   |
|----------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| NEWS 4 THIS MORNING  | SUNDAY          | 6:00AM - 8:00AM   |
| NEWS 4 THIS MORNING  | MONDAY-FRIDAY   | 4:00AM - 7:00AM   |
| NEWS 4 THIS MORNING  | SATURDAY        | 5:00AM - 6:00 AM  |
| NEWS 4 THIS MORNING  | SATURDAY        | 8:00AM - 9:00AM   |
| NEWS 4 THIS MORNING  | SATURDAY        | 9:00AM -10:00AM   |
| NEWS 4 AT NOON       | MONDAY-FRIDAY   | 12:00PM - 12:30PM |
| NEWS 4 AT 4:00 PM    | MONDAY-FRIDAY   | 4:00PM – 4:30PM   |
| NEWS 4 AT 5:00 P.M.  | MONDAY-SATURDAY | 5:00PM - 5:30PM   |
| NEWS 4 AT 6:00 P.M.  | MONDAY-FRIDAY   | 6:00PM - 6:30PM   |
| NEWS 4 AT 10:00 P.M. | MONDAY-SUNDAY   | 10:00PM - 10:30PM |

**NEWS 4 THIS MORNING** - This is a locally produced morning newscast presented Sunday from 6:00-8:00am and Monday through Friday from 4:30-7am and Saturdays from 5:00-6:00am and 8:00-10:00am that focuses on local news segments of community interest.

**NEWS 4 AT NOON** - This is a half-hour locally produced newscast presented Monday through Friday at noon.

**NEWS 4 AT 4:00** – This is a half-hour locally produced newscast presented Monday through Friday at 4:00pm.

**NEWS 4 AT 5:00** - This is a half-hour locally produced newscast presented Monday through Saturday at 5:00 p.m. (and at 5:30pm Sundays).

**NEWS 4 AT 6:00** - This is a half-hour locally produced newscast presented Monday through Saturday at 6:00 p.m. includes a weekly scheduled segment featuring youths who “Do the Right Thing”.

**NEWS 4 AT 10:00** - This is a half-hour locally produced newscast presented Monday through Friday at 10:00 p.m. (and an hour on Saturday and Sunday), including regularly schedule medical feature addressing public health concerns.

CBS News programs present a mixture of news, weather, sports, issue-related stories and segments.

| PROGRAM                   | DAY           | TIME             |
|---------------------------|---------------|------------------|
| CBS THIS MORNING          | MONDAY-FRIDAY | 7:00AM – 9:00AM  |
| CBS EVENING NEWS          | MONDAY-FRIDAY | 5:30PM – 6:00PM  |
| CBS SATURDAY MORNING NEWS | SATURDAY      | 6:00AM – 7:00AM  |
| CBS SATURDAY EVENING NEWS | SATURDAY      | 5:30PM – 6:00PM  |
| CBS SUNDAY MORNING        | SUNDAY        | 8:00AM - 9:30AM  |
| FACE THE NATION           | SUNDAY        | 9:30AM - 10:30AM |
| CBS SUNDAY EVENING NEWS   | SUNDAY        | 5:00PM - 5:30PM  |
| 60 MINUTES                | SUNDAY        | 6:00PM – 7:00PM  |
| 48 HOURS                  | VARIOUS       |                  |

The following is a sampling of locally produced programming and syndicated programming, or segments of programming, that aired on KMOV-TV during the past three (3) months in response to community issues. This report covers the fourth quarter of 2017. This list is by no means all-inclusive, but is only meant to provide the reader with an idea of topics we have addressed that are of community concern.

Among the issues determined to be of most concern to the community during the current quarter were:

- CONSUMERISM/INVESTIGATIVE
- EDUCATION
- COMMUNITY
- ADVOCACY

**Each segment was 20 seconds to 3 minutes in length (except as otherwise indicated)**

## CONSUMER/INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING

### TOY INVENTED BY ST. LOUIS ENTREPRENEUR DEEMED SO DANGEROUS THE GOVERNMENT WANTS YOU TO THROW IT AWAY

10/13/23

6PM

2:15

ST. LOUIS— A toy invented by a St. Louis entrepreneur has been deemed so dangerous the United States government wants buyers to throw it away. St. Louisan Conor Lewis raised more than \$2 million in a Kickstarter campaign to crowdfund The FORT. He thought of the idea as parents struggled to keep their kids occupied during the pandemic. In 2021, First Alert 4 Investigates questioned Lewis after parents started to complain about long waits after ordering. At the time, he said supply chain issues were to blame. Now, the Consumer Product Safety Commission has recalled the product stating, "The magnets used to connect the various pieces of The FORT can become dislodged from their pouches, posing choking and laceration hazards to young children." The commission said they received 17 reports of loose or broken magnets and three people were injured. Anyone who owns one of the products is being advised to throw them away and not resell or donate them. Since the company is closed, there is no remedy for consumers.

### COLLECTING CASH FOR CHILD'S FUNERAL? FIRST ALERT 4 INVESTIGATES QUESTIONS LOCAL PANHANDLERS

10/26/23

5PM

5:05

ST. LOUIS—, They're wearing traffic vests and walking up and down major streets in the St. Louis region: Panhandlers that appear to be collecting money for a child's funeral. But they didn't want to answer questions from First Alert 4, and if they're not being honest, some local parents say it's a punch in the gut for people truly suffering. "She's such a fighter," said Makayla Allgire about her 3-year-old daughter, Nova. "She's the strongest person I know in

my life." Makayla had recently noticed something off about Nova. "She started walking differently," she said. Just last week, they got the nightmarish news - Nova has neuroblastoma. "They said that it is a tumor bigger than a grapefruit wrapped around her spine, up through her ribs, through her chest," Makayla said. Nova is now in the fight of her life and getting intensive treatment at Cardinal Glennon. "There are nights she's going through rounds of chemo where she's screaming in pain like I've never heard before," Makayla said. "As a mother, it's just heartbreaking to see your daughter like that." That's why she said she can't believe what we showed her - people possibly trying to capitalize on childhood cancer. "That's sad and just downright evil," she said. First Alert 4 first noticed the panhandlers in South County off Interstate 55 and Lindbergh recently. They were wearing bright safety vests and carrying the same simple sign: "Funeral donation," with a picture of a child appearing to be ill, right in the middle. Later, we saw the same people just down the road, collecting cash from passing cars. But after spotting First Alert 4 taking video, they took off. One man certainly didn't want to talk to us a few days later, this time in St. Louis city, at Kingshighway and I-64. Even after offering them a translation app, as he claimed not to speak English, he kept walking quickly away. "Just breaks your heart," said Sarah Wetzel with the Better Business Bureau. She told First Alert 4, that sadly, people will use just about anything in a scam: "But you have to take a step back before you open your wallet because, unfortunately, the Better Business Bureau does hear of scammers taking advantage of these really heartbreaking situations," she said. First Alert 4 Investigates has learned of similar schemes popping up all over, close to home in Springfield, Missouri, in Nashville, and in California, ending with arrests in San Bernardino County. Wetzel said there are obvious red flags. "Ask for more details about the family. Try and donate directly to the parents themselves. That way you know that your hard-earned dollars are going to help this family because that's what you want. But just really make sure that you're giving to an organization that is trustworthy, that you know where that money's going to," Wetzel said. Though the one man we tried to talk to denied wrongdoing, it certainly seemed

suspicious. "I wouldn't wish this on my worst enemy," Makayla said. It's all a bit sickening to Makayla, who won't even let her mind go to the unimaginable. "All I want is prayers right now. I don't need money. I need my daughter. That's the most important thing," she said. She's holding out every hope for a full recovery for her sassy, spunky star. "It is the most painful thing that I've ever been through, and I feel selfish for even saying that because it's her battle. Like she's fighting, and yet she's smiling all the time." Believe it or not, even after First Alert 4 confronted them, the people were back, asking for more donations in the same spot a few days later. If you really want to make a difference for a family dealing with cancer, the Better Business Bureau has vetted over 11,000 legitimate charities. You can search for them here. Makayla's friend also set up a GoFundMe for the single mom. You can find it here.

## NOVEMBER

### THEY'RE TASKED WITH INVESTIGATING HOUSING LAWS, NOW THEY'RE UNDER INVESTIGATION

| 11/01/23  | 6PM | 1:50 |
|---|-----|------|
| ST. LOUIS, Mo. (KMOV) - A federal agency has suspended taxpayer funding to the Metropolitan St. Louis Equal Housing and Opportunity Council pending the results of an investigation. The organization's Board President confirmed to First Alert 4 Investigates that the Department of Housing and Urban Development had suspended a "considerable percentage" of the funding to the agency and that some of their services have been impacted and employees laid off. Nate Johnson declined, however, to comment on the specifics of the allegations the federal government was investigating, saying there were "a variety of things that have come to light that need to be looked at." Often referred to as EHOC, the non-profit is the only one like it in the region and has received hundreds of thousands of dollars in public grant money in recent years to assist local people with housing problems. Johnson stressed the suspension of funds was only temporary. |     |      |
| "We are hoping to get that resolved so we can resume operations and get back to our full capacity,"   |     |      |

he said. During COVID, EHOc provided eviction defense services and has historically investigated instances of alleged violations of Fair Housing laws, sexual harassment by landlords and other instances of potential law violations. The investigation comes amidst a significant change in leadership in the agency. Will Jordan, the Executive Director of the agency, resigned in mid-October. Jordan told First Alert 4 he was locked out of his computer in July when he entered the hospital for health problems. He said a "coup" of employees in the agency had sought to oust him. First Alert 4 has reached out to HUD, but we are still waiting for a response. A spokesperson for the Office of Inspector General for the Department said they could neither confirm nor deny the existence of an investigation. This is a developing story. Check back for additional details.

**FDA WARNS AGAINST**  
**'COPIES' OF POPULAR**  
**WEIGHT LOSS DRUGS,**  
**FIRST ALERT 4 INVESTIGATES**  
**FOUND IT FOR SALE**  
**ALL OVER ST. LOUIS**

**11/21/23**

**10PM**

**7:40**

ST. LOUIS (KMOV) -- As the holiday season approaches, you might find yourself scrutinizing the scale but how far are you willing to go to shed a few pounds? First Alert 4 Investigates is digging deep into a legal loophole that facilitates easy access to unregulated weight loss injections. "I was definitely emotionally eating. I knew it," said Alex, a nurse from south St. Louis County, overwhelmed by the challenges of working full-time and caring for her son, Oscar. "I need help. I need a leg up, you know, like, I need a hand," Alex said. Like many others, she opted for an injectable weight loss drug. However, she faced obstacles obtaining name-brand options. "She's like, your insurance won't cover it," Alex explained. So, she turned to an unapproved alternative, featuring the same active ingredient, from a local med-spa. "I was surprised that she was charging a reasonable price because a lot of places, it's outrageously expensive," she noted. While she trusts her provider, Alex remains concerned about the contents of the



injection. "You can't even see what's in there. So it's like, well, what is in there?" Alex questioned. Weekly, she self-administers syringes with medication from the spa, something she's very familiar with in her job. However, the situation raises eyebrows: spas selling FDA-unapproved medicine? The answer becomes convoluted. The FDA regulates major drug makers, approving drugs like Ozempic and Wegovy after rigorous testing. However, when drugs land on the FDA's shortage list, companies can legally produce "copycat" versions. Though intended to address short-term needs, these copies, made by compounding pharmacies, lack the same oversight as mainstream pharmaceutical manufacturers. "It's happening, and people should be really concerned about it," warned Dr. Deepu Suhakaran, a bariatric surgeon at Mercy. Dr. Suhakaran, with over a decade of weight loss expertise, highlights concerns about unapproved versions. First Alert 4 found that obtaining these versions is relatively easy, with Semaglutide, the active ingredient, available in unapproved forms across the St. Louis region, both at med spas and online. "These new compounds, we don't know the side effects, and we don't know how it's going to affect other organs and the body itself," Dr. Suhakaran cautioned. Unlike approved versions with pre-dosed pens, Semaglutide often comes in vials, leading to inadequate training on self-administration, Dr. Suhakaran said. "If you don't know how to inject it, you can have injection site problems, infections, necrosis, things like that," he explained. Ed Timm, CEO of a local pharmaceutical company, shares concerns about the mass production of compounded Semaglutide, citing past incidents of contaminated injectable steroids causing severe health issues. "It's not a matter of if a catastrophe happens, it's only a matter of when," Timm warned. Patients may be left in the dark about adverse events, as pharmacies are not obligated to report them. The FDA is aware of reported adverse effects of unapproved Semaglutide, including the use of salt forms, cautioning consumers about potential dangers. Timm advises potential users to be their own advocates and ask questions before opting for Semaglutide injections. However, obtaining information isn't always straightforward, as illustrated by a med spa in Chesterfield and an online company

called Premium Health. Despite concerns raised about Anazao Health Corporation's history with the FDA, Alex, the nurse, feels confident in her research.

"I think you just really need to do your research. It's really important to do your research," she emphasized.

The FDA recommends obtaining medicines only from state-licensed pharmacies or FDA-registered outsourcing facilities. Premium Health and Anazao Health Compounding Pharmacy have not responded to requests for comment. IV Nutrition, offering in-facility injections, said they have stringent policies and procedures meeting or exceeding regulatory requirements. You can read their full statement, by clicking on the link below.

[https://www.kmov.com/2023/11/22/fda-warns-against-copies-popular-weight-loss-drugs-first-alert-4-investigates-found-it-sale-all-over-st-louis/?utm\\_source=newsfore&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=16933&pnespid=qLJmVztbfJCgPbZrSS1Gcilr0K8W51xKeOjwehmQ1mQCp3Gj03mwFQtb16TjD4MMK02QvcNA](https://www.kmov.com/2023/11/22/fda-warns-against-copies-popular-weight-loss-drugs-first-alert-4-investigates-found-it-sale-all-over-st-louis/?utm_source=newsfore&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=16933&pnespid=qLJmVztbfJCgPbZrSS1Gcilr0K8W51xKeOjwehmQ1mQCp3Gj03mwFQtb16TjD4MMK02QvcNA)

## DECEMBER

### THEIR COUCH CAUGHT FIRE, NOW A LOCAL FAMILY FACES HOLIDAY SEASON WITHOUT A HOME

12/18/23

6PM

3:25

ST. LOUIS (KMOV) -- A local family finds themselves without a home just in time for the holidays and their residence reduced to rubble after a devastating fire. The flames claimed not only their Christmas decorations and clothes but also irreplaceable belongings, leaving them with only memories. James Coffman, surveying the wreckage of his Bonne Terre home, expressed the profound loss, stating, "Lots of memories that are gone." Walking through the burned home, he reflected on the impact of the fire, "You don't think about it until you lose everything you got. And we lost a lot of personal stuff," he said. On a recent night, he heard the smoke alarm. "I got in here; the couch was in flames. That was the only thing on fire was the couch," he said. While the family managed to escape unharmed, their possessions were not as fortunate. "I've lost everything. We've lived in this

house since 2000. And now, I got to start all over everything," Coffman said. The fire's origin, he claims, was their brand-new couch. "It was the only thing I seen on fire was the couch, and it was shooting up from the couch," Coffman said. The couch in question was purchased from their local Big Lots and is still available for purchase on the store's website. It features phone charging ports and an LED light for reading. A similar-looking couch manufactured by Ashley Furniture, named Party Time, is currently under recall by the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) due to six reported fire incidents nationwide. Just last week, First Alert 4 reported a St. Louis man's lawsuit against Ashley Furniture, claiming serious burns suffered when his couch caught fire. Additionally, a video surfaced depicting another comparable couch catching fire during a gamer's livestream. Coffman, unaware of the Ashley couch recall until recently, wants to warn others. "If you got them, unplug them. If you ain't got them, don't buy them. Until they figure out what's going on. Do not buy them. They're gonna get you killed," he said. The family, now residing with relatives after witnessing their home being leveled by a bulldozer, hopes their experience serves as a warning to others. "I've never had to go through this before, and it's terrible," Coffman said. The CPSC states there is a repair for the Ashley couch under recall. You can [find more information here](#).

A representative for Big Lots sent a statement saying: *"We obviously take customer concerns very seriously. If any customer has a concern, we would encourage them to reach out to us. We have sold the Jamestown for years and subject it to rigorous annual testing by independent experts using standards that exceed industry requirements and we and the manufacturer stand behind the product."* Ashley Furniture also responded, saying the company offers condolence regarding Coffman's loss but the couch he had was not an Ashley product. *Ashley Furniture expresses its sincere sympathy to Mr. Coffman and his family during this difficult time. However, we feel compelled to clarify that the sofa owned by Mr. Coffman was not manufactured, sold, or sourced by Ashley Furniture. There is simply no connection between Mr. Coffman's unfortunate circumstances and Ashley*

*Furniture. As such, the recall referenced in the story is completely unrelated to Mr. Coffman's sofa.*

**PROPOSED MISSOURI LAW  
WOULD IMPOSE STATES'S  
CANNABIS REGULATIONS  
ON HEMP, DELTA-8 THC  
PRODUCTS**

**12/29/23**

**6PM**

**1:03**

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (First Alert 4) - A set of proposed bills filed in the Missouri House and Senate would add Delta-8 THC products, hemp products and any other intoxicating cannabinoids, to the state's definition of "marijuana." The change would require such products be sold only in a licensed comprehensive facility, medical facility, or marijuana microbusiness facility, – all but eliminating the ability of local smoke shops, convenience stores and gas stations to sell them. "It is the intent of this section that intoxicating cannabinoid products should be subject to the legal framework contained in article XIV of the Constitution of Missouri, under which the purchase, possession, consumption, use, delivery, manufacturing, and sale of marijuana is regulated by the department," the Senate legislation said. Supporters of the measure argue the products have almost no state-imposed regulation, though most retailers restrict sales by age and proactively employ other safeguards. "This legislation provides much needed consumer protections, into an industry that has very few," said state Rep. Chad Perkins, R-Bowling Green, who is sponsoring the House version. "It's an industry that I fully support. It's a growing and thriving business in Missouri, that will benefit by insuring a high quality product." Opponents of the measure, warn it will increase the price of such products, cripple hundreds of businesses which sell them, create burdensome costs on law enforcement agencies, and fail to solve any actual problem or harm created by existing availability of the products. "This is probably \$300 million worth of economic impact," said Eapen Thampy, a lobbying with the Missouri Hemp Trade Association. "Hundreds, if not thousands of employees would be directly affected in terms of the companies having to close or leave the state." The impact on Missouri's hemp and

cannabinoid industries would ripple across other states as well, with suppliers and manufacturers losing in-state distributors. The Missouri Hemp Trade Association does support what it describes as “sensible consumer safety regulations,” including a prohibition of sale to minors, a standardization of product testing, and limits on the THC content or “intoxicating cannabinoids” in products.

## EDUCATION

### NEWS 4 SCHOOLS

#### TWICE WEEKLY

5PM

1:45 AVG

This regular feature is reported and produced by our morning show anchor and various reporters. Each report spotlights noteworthy programs and individuals, both staff and students and public and private schools across the Metro St. Louis area. Following are examples of stories aired:

#### OCTOBER

10/03/23

4PM

1:18

High school students given sneak peek at healthcare, construction careers

ST. LOUIS, Mo. (KMOV) - Local high school students were given a sneak peek at careers in healthcare and construction on Tuesday. The sneak peek is part of a unique initiative between BJC HealthCare and STL Works. Half of the students spent the day learning more about careers in healthcare while the other half learned construction trades. The current BJC Healthcare project needs 4,000 workers to complete construction and work in the hospital. Overall, officials said there are 20,000 construction jobs available in the St. Louis region.

Boxing champion, St. Louis native Devon Alexander speaks to high school students about importance of education

10/19/2023

10PM

0:47

ST. LOUIS (KMOV) -- Three-time world boxing champion Devon Alexander hosted 150 high school students at the Urban K-Life building in St. Louis Thursday. The North City native is spreading a positive message about the importance of education and avoiding gun violence. Alexander said the

inspiration he received as a kid fueled him into being a world champion. Alexander will return in November for his sports foundation's first annual event at Harris-Stowe State University, "Fight in the Ring NOT in the Neighborhoods." It's on Saturday, November 4 at 5 p.m. and will have a guest appearance from boxing world champion Roy Jones Jr.

Mehlville NHS students  
honor veterans at Jefferson  
Barracks

11/12/2023 5PM 1:44

ST. LOUIS, Mo. (KMOV) - Mehlville High School members of the National Honor Society spent Sunday honoring more than 150 veterans interred in Jefferson Barracks Cemetery who are family members and friends of school district staff. The effort was an annual service project by the students, who used a map and research to find veterans who had friends and family members in the school district. The students placed wreaths and rock markers decorated by students at Bierbaum Elementary School on the gravesites. The students then took photos of the decorated veterans' gravesites and will place them in cards to be delivered to the veterans' families and friends.

Edwardsville School District  
Turning to solar energy

11/16/23 6PM 2:02

ST. LOUIS, Mo. (KMOV) - The Edwardsville school board voted this week to approved the issuance of \$13 million dollars in bonds to pay for the installation of solar panels on school buildings. The district plans to install collections of solar panels in 10 places on 7 buildings. Some taxpayers in the district were uncomfortable with the initial cost but others saw the long range benefits. "I think long term as an investment it sounds like a good idea," said Jackie Toigo. Stephanie Crouch told First Alert Four, 'I think anything we can do to harness the power of the sun and nature is fantastic.' The

district estimates the use of solar energy will lead to 40-60% savings on electric bills over the 30 life of the panels. According to Generation 180's 2022 Solar Schools Report, the number of schools powered by solar energy has tripled since 2015. And an estimated 6-million students attend solar powered schools. The school district's decision is part of a proliferation of solar panels in the region. Debbie Evans installed solar panels on her Edwardsville house in March. She said she has no regrets. "It is a no brainer. There's no maintenance, you do nothing and it's cheap," she said. The company Evans went with didn't have an upfront cost, instead she'll pay \$111.84 a month for 25 years to lease the panels. She said the solar panels have saved her money. "Big time, big time. Probably this summer I saved \$250 to \$300 a month on electricity," said Evans. This week Amazon announced plans to install a solar farm in Warren County. It's estimated the project will have a \$34 million dollar impact and the solar farm is projected to be operational in 2026.

Lindenwood cuts 10 athletic teams, gets rid of 9 staff positions

12/01/2023 6PM 0:23

ST. CHARLES (KMOV) -- Lindenwood University is cutting 10 athletic teams at the end of their respective seasons this school year and getting rid of nine filled positions at the university. After an assessment of the athletic department, the university announced it decided to cut men's lacrosse, swimming and diving, tennis, indoor and outdoor track and field, and wrestling. Women's field hockey, gymnastics, swimming and diving, as well as men's and women's cycling, will also be discontinued. All the programs will be cut after the spring 2024 season, with the exception of women's field hockey, which had its season in the fall. It was discontinued effective immediately. The decision was "a result of a thorough assessment of our athletic department's sustainability," the

university said in a statement released just after 3 p.m. on Friday. The university also got rid of nine current staff positions and dropped many vacant positions. Cutting the positions was in an effort to “rebalance our investments in staffing across various university divisions.” The staff cuts were effective as of Friday. Earlier this week, Fontbonne University in Clayton announced it would cut 21 programs and 19 faculty positions amid a budget shortfall.

Ladue School District welcomes a four-legged friend to its counseling staff

12/01/2023

5PM

2:50

ST. LOUIS, Mo. (KMOV) -The Ladue School District is helping its students overcome lingering challenges leftover from the pandemic with the addition of a therapy dog. Maggie Travers, a counselor within the district, proposed the idea to district staff shortly after the pandemic. “I think we’ve seen a lot of anxiety, some social skills that kids who weren’t in school for a couple years have been struggling with, academically sometimes too,” said Travers. “So this is an added layer to help some of those kiddos.” After two years of waiting, Travers learned last year she would receive a therapy dog from local non-profit CHAMP. Jag, short for Jaguar was officially placed with the district earlier this summer. “He loves to go where the need is,” she said. “When I was sitting in a circle with kids, no one shared what was going on but he army crawled over to one of the students and just wanted to sit by the student, Jag is very sensitive.” Jag was born in August of 2021 and along with his siblings, was raised and trained to be service dogs. First Alert 4 first met Jag when he was just eight-weeks-old. After two years of extensive training as a facility dog, he now finds himself in the hallways and classrooms of elementary schools and the fifth grade center in the Ladue School District. “It’s a good thing because lots of kids including me have mental health struggles and need help with



their emotions and anxiety and stress and having a dog there kind of comforts you, like I'm here, you're okay, everything is going to be fine," said fifth grader Alice McDonald. Travers visits different schools and in addition to serving as a counselor, teaches a chair yoga class to students. While she teaches, Jag relaxes on the floor. Even in his shut-eye, students say it spreads a comforting feeling. "He lets me let go of any stress that I've been holding in so I feel much more relaxed after I can pet Jag," said PJ Hangbe. Shortly before class is over, students are given the chance to love on Jag, petting him and giving him hugs. It's the highlight of the day for many kids. "I think even having Jag makes lots of people grades go up and it could be very good in schools, like if you're sad or angry or any strong emotion that you need someone by you to help you," said fifth grader Michael Allen. Jag will continue to work at the district until he retires. Living with his handler, Travers, has changed her life, too. "He's such a special boy and I've seen the joy he has brought and it's been such a long road to get him and just to see what he's doing for kids in the district," said Travers.

## COMMUNITY

KMOV believes in the importance of being a good member of the community. To that end, we have created a number of ongoing campaigns that serve various community members and help raise awareness of issues and needs affecting the St. Louis metropolitan area.

Working with several corporate sponsors, News 4 selects at least one individual or family to receive a gift, which can be free groceries or other household support. News 4 shoots the delivery of the gift for a weekly report.

### SURPRISE SQUAD

OCTOBER- 10/27 Surprise Squad delivers to animal love and her furry family

NOVEMBER- Surprise Squad did not air in November

DECEMBER- 12/25 Surprise Squad goes all out to surprise mother recovering after being shot 14 times

### 4 DEGREE GUARANTEE

Each month we select a local non-profit to be the subject of our 4 Degree Guarantee. Each night in our 10pm weathercast, the charity and its purpose are mentioned. When our temperature prediction is within 4 degrees of the actual temp for the previous day, we add \$50 to the fund for that month. At the end of the month, those funds are donated to the charity. These mentions usually run between: 30 and: 45 seconds.

This quarter's recipients were:

OCTOBER 2023 – All American Athlete 85% \$1,000.00

NOVEMBER 2023 – Butterfly Haven 91% \$1,100.00

DECEMBER 2023 – Circus Harmony 86% \$1,050.00

## OCTOBER

|                   |             |             |
|-------------------|-------------|-------------|
| <u>10/03/2023</u> | <u>10pm</u> | <u>1:01</u> |
|-------------------|-------------|-------------|

ST. LOUIS, Mo. (KMOV) - Tuesday was a chance for neighborly love and identifying services in St. Louis City. Tuesday was National Night Out in St. Louis. The nationwide celebration is typically in August, but St. Louis hosts its celebration in October. Street blocking fees are waived, and residents are encouraged to host parties on their neighborhood streets. Both North and South City held parties. Neighbors near Tower Grove Park came together to celebrate and enjoy each other's company. For some, it was a chance to see some old faces while making friends with some new additions to the neighborhood over the past year. National Night Out has been a nationwide event since 1984. Since then, more than 65,000 crime, drug and violence prevention organizations have joined on to help their communities.

|                   |            |             |
|-------------------|------------|-------------|
| <u>10/23/2023</u> | <u>6pm</u> | <u>1:09</u> |
|-------------------|------------|-------------|

ST. LOUIS— The St. Louis County Police Department's basketball team will have its hands full this Thursday when it squares off in a charity match against St. Louis' nationally ranked youth wheelchair basketball team the Saint Louis Rolling Rams. The game raises money for the Rolling Rams program to help off-set team travel costs and wheelchair maintenance. The Rams travel throughout the Midwest competing against other youth wheelchair teams. This is the fifth annual game between the two teams, with the Rams victorious in each contest. Parent volunteer Rob Niemira says the Rams are just that good. "The Rams are just better at controlling their chairs and they are so much faster. It's What they do!" Niemira's son Liam, has Spinal Bifida and has been playing wheelchair basketball since the age of two. "For Liam, this basketball team means freedom. It's a shot at normalcy." Says Niemira. "If this team doesn't succeed, none of these kids can play basketball at all. It's over. Unfortunately, we can't do this alone. That's why we turn to the community and ask for their help and generosity and they always come through and we thank them." The game will take place this Thursday, October 26th at 6:30 p.m. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. The location is St. John Vianney High School located at 1311 South Kirkwood Road. Admission is \$4 per person or \$10 a family. All proceeds go to the Saint Louis Rolling Rams Basketball team.

## NOVEMBER

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| <u>11/03/2023</u> | <u>5pm</u> | <u>2:27</u> |
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ST. LOUIS COUNTY, Mo. (KMOV) - Long a wish of several families with loved ones interred there, a group of volunteers on Friday worked to restore several acres of the largest African-American cemetery in the St. Louis Area. Brush and undergrowth had overtaken a sizeable

portion of the Washington Park Cemetery in North County, spurring an effort by community members and a group of employees of landscaping company Focal Pointe Outdoor Solutions to take action. The company's 25-person crew donated time and equipment toward the restoration effort, which owner Dan Schafer says he hopes more people get involved in. "We saw the sign that cemetery volunteers were needed, we just saw this large mass of honeysuckle within the cemetery, and we can only imagine what could be under there that needs to be exposed for people to be able to pay their respects," Schafer said. For Walter Rice, the cleanup had a more personal meaning. His mother is buried there, alongside 40,000 other African Americans. For decades now, he says it's been difficult accessing her gravesite. "I brought my machete out here and cut a path down to my mother's grave," Rice told First Alert 4. "I've been doing that ever since 1991." The cemetery's history dates to the days when many cemeteries were racially segregated. Businessmen Andrew Henry Watson and Joseph John Hauer established it as a burial place for African-Americans, according to a history page on the City of St. Louis website. It is currently owned by Kevin Bailey of Amazing Grace Enterprises. Craig Smith, who is attorney for the owners, says he was moved to advance cleanup efforts after driving by the cemetery and seeing the substantial overgrowth. "I'm heartbroken that this place has been abandoned for 40 years, I'm embarrassed for the citizens of St. Louis that they've let this place deteriorate," Smith said. Volunteers are still needed for future cleanup efforts, such as mowing, weeding and picking up trash. Anyone wishing to get involved can call 314-502-4465.

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| <u>11/12/2023</u>  | <u>5:30pm</u> | <u>0:43</u> |
| ST. LOUIS, Mo. (KMOV) - Volunteers are getting to work to make the holidays better for local children. <u>VP Community Impact Foundation</u> volunteers spent part of their Saturday assembling more than 100 bicycles. The bikes will be donated to Mission St. Louis's Affordable Christmas project. In addition to the bikes, the VP Community Impact Foundation donated \$5,000 to <u>Mission St. Louis</u> to help fight poverty throughout the city. |               |             |

#### DECEMBER

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|---|---------------|-------------|
| <u>12/04/2023</u>   | <u>4:30AM</u> | <u>0:47</u> |
| ST. LOUIS, Mo. (KMOV) - A large showing of Jewish pride throughout the St. Louis area. The Home Depot in Brentwood hosted the Chanukah experience. The holiday officially starts on Dec. 7 and the goal of Sunday's event is to get children excited through hands-on activities. That is where Home Depot came in. Kids were able to build a few items including dreidels or their own menorahs. |               |             |

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| <u>12/05/2023</u>  | <u>6:00pm</u> | <u>3:08</u> |
| JEFFERSON COUNTY, Mo. (First Alert 4) - A crusade is underway to prioritize helping the growing homeless population across Jefferson |               |             |

County. Dozens of agencies and nonprofits rallied under one roof Tuesday afternoon at the Arnold Salvation Army to give the unhoused critical services. John Jones is constantly thankful as he makes his way through the lunch line in the basement cafeteria of the Salvation Army in Arnold, Missouri. "Every week, I come here every Tuesday because I love the people here," Jones said. These volunteers with nonprofits like The James II Project, serve free hot meals every Tuesday. It just so happens that the quarterly Homeless and Essential Needs Outreach Event organized by the Jefferson County Health Department and other partners is taking place upstairs in the gym. A lot of helping hands took time to help John when he most needed it. "I was homeless for six months, from May to November," Jones explained. "My family broke up and I got into the position I couldn't afford deposits. I just kept in mind there are a lot of people worse off than me, and I'll make it." Jones got an assist filling out and submitting his HUD application. That help is why Jones got to move into a new apartment on November 1st, just in time for the holidays. "We know the need," Karen Kostich said. Kostich is the Executive Director of the nonprofit The James II Project. She has one of the seats at the table with the Jefferson County Unhoused Coalition – a group tasked with meeting the unique needs of a rural county. "I think when you go into St. Louis, you see it more, it's more prominent in your eyes because it's an urban area so you see it," Kostich explained. "We have a lot of wooded areas. That's where a lot of people go, you don't see them but they are there." The challenge is getting many of the unhoused to receive resources like Tuesday's event. Jefferson County's Homeless and Essential Needs Outreach Event in Arnold placed medical, dental, hygiene, nutrition, mental health, drug recovery, and other services in one space. The event helped dozens but a very small fraction of the growing population, especially in the southern part of the county. "How do we get transportation, because there is a whole community of people in High Ridge who would love to be here, how do we get them here," Kostich shared. "It's a conversation we are having and it's a need, a huge need. Hopefully will hear that need and say that's something I can do. It's something very simple. It's not giving even a whole day sometimes, just a couple hours to help someone get somewhere to get the resources they need." Al Martinson volunteers with 25:35 ministries. "We go out on the street where people are at and help them on the street where they sleep and eat," Martinson said. A group originally from St. Louis, moved to Jefferson County three years ago because volunteers felt no one was addressing homelessness. He and a handful of volunteers drive out to the homeless encampments every Thursday from South St. Louis County down to South Jefferson County. He told First Alert 4 there are so many across the county that can benefit from events like Tuesday's but have no way to get there. "This is a good start," Martinson shared. "But there is a lot more that needs to be done. Exposure, getting the word and letting people know there are resources are here." That's why Jones wanted to share his story with First Alert 4 because a meal, a new haircut, and an act of kindness like filling out paperwork can go a long way for someone in a bind. "Just be good to other people and it will come back to you," Jones said. For you to learn more about getting involved to address homelessness in Jefferson County such as volunteering or maybe stepping up to fix the transportation challenges email Karen Kostich at [TheJames2Project@gmail.com](mailto:TheJames2Project@gmail.com).

## ADVOCACY

### WATCHING OUT FOR YOU

#### First Alert 4 Investigates: MSD's Project Clear turns messy for local homeowner

A regular feature in nearly every KMOV newscast, these are reports that have significant viewer benefit from a consumer, crime alert/prevention or medical aspect.

10/05/2023

10pm

5:38

ST. LOUIS- It's a multi-billion-dollar project meant to help update sewer and rainwater systems all over the region but a property owner says Project Clear has turned into a big mess. Chris Gorrell carefully carries his son around the place that should be his lasting legacy. "We had plans for the property, and we haven't been able to do anything with it. It's very depressing," he said. He bought it years ago from the City of St. Louis, with a promise it'd stay a green space—he planned to use it for a burgeoning co-working landscaping business, planting trees and shrubs for sale. "It's like nothing I've ever seen," he said. But when we first visited in July, it was next-level dumping. To see nearby mountains of trash, stretching all around it. The amount of trash and debris is larger than the area of a football field. It's hard to know, he said, what kind of contaminants may be here. "For all we know, there could have been chemicals, who knows, it's so large and devastating, we may never know," he said. Plus, he claimed there was a swamp of sludge out back from a nearby salvage yard. "All this mud and sludge, all this is soil mixed with used motor oil," he said. And who's to blame, he said, is a public utility we all know: MSD. Gorrell's property sits right on top of plans for MSD's Project Clear. That \$6 billion, nearly three-decade-long endeavor is meant to upgrade the region's wastewater and rainwater infrastructure.

MSD's halfway through and could soon be asking voters for a rate hike to finish the rest, installing massive underground tunnels and a network of 9-foot sewers to allow for water control, prevent basement backups, and water over roads—something Gorrell says they too have dealt with. "So, we're very happy that they're coming in and doing what they're doing. It is great for the community. It's great for us." Gorrell's property runs along MSD's new plans for the sewer system in North City, known as the Harlem-Baden Relief. Years ago, the utility told him they'd need an easement. "It was just, 'Hey, we're going to start work.' And that's what they did soon after. So originally, it was supposed to be three months. But it ended up being closer to three years that they were on the property for that initial easement work." Gorrell says that meant he couldn't get his business really going. MSD, he said, created an easy path for illegal dumpers, and, the utility and its contractors left the area unsecured with a gate not sufficient to prevent access. Hence, the trash. He said the sludge was caused by creating runoff from the next-door salvage yard. "And it was obvious, and an MSD contractor even talked to us after the fact about how it was so visible, not only in the soil but in the pipes 20 to 40 feet below," he told us. Fast-forward to now, and the debris seems gone from the naked eye, and in its place, a giant hole. "They've cleaned it off, most of it off the top, all those contaminants, of course, they're still going to be on the soil. And then the stuff that was left over on the bottom, they just kind of turned into the soil," he said. Gorrell said despite his requests, MSD isn't answering how they'll remediate the property. "We've heard nothing about any testing that they've done or anything at all, it's just been nothing." His livelihood seems buried here now, he told First Alert 4. "Any of the stuff that we were to do on that property, it's not possible now," he told First Alert 4 Chief Investigative Reporter Lauren Trager. "We always leave the property nice and clean and in the same or better condition as before." First Alert 4 wanted to talk with MSD about Gorrell's concerns. Project Clear spokesperson Bess McCoy said those concerns should most fairly be worked out in a courtroom. "Since that litigation is ongoing, I can't speak to any specifics of that property. But what I can say is that this project is essential to the long-term well-being of our community," said McCoy. Regulation requires MSD to restore the construction sites to a condition "equal to or better than it was prior to construction." Work on Gorrell's property, she notes, isn't done yet. We asked if they'd routinely test the soil for contaminants. "It's something that we will absolutely do if we have any evidence or any reason to do that. But otherwise, this is not a standard practice," McCoy said. "We understand that this is disruptive work. And we do our best to work with property owners to come to a fair agreement and make sure that we are minimizing impact and maximizing the overall public benefit." Compensation amounts for disrupted property owners, she says, isn't public record. "We're a public utility, all of the work we do serves the public, and everything that we're doing is essential to the long-term well-being of our community. So while we try to minimize the impact to private properties, we also have an obligation to this entire region to help serve and protect the public health and environment," she said. So far in court, Gorrell's been awarded about \$50,000 in compensation for MSD being on his property. Total damages, he said, could instead be in the millions. "So, we kind of feel like they're

just going to do whatever they're going to do and hope that they can get away with it," Gorrell said. With the hope of helping millions have clean water, Project Clear for this property owner is turning very messy. Right now, Gorrell said he's got no access to his property. He wants MSD to clean up the soil, or at least, at the very least, do testing on it to know for sure what's in it. What happened to all the trash? How much did it cost to carry it away? MSD says it's still in conversation with Gorrell, in addition to pending litigation. It's an issue we will continue to track.

**First Alert 4 Investigates:  
Second player accuses St.  
Louis County softball coach  
of sexual assault**

10/09/2023

6pm

3:55

ST. LOUIS, Mo. (KMOV) - A second young softball player is suing her former St. Louis County coach, accusing him of sexual assault. It's the latest development in a First Alert 4 Investigation first brought to light last year after obtaining a deposition of Aaron Byington, admitting under oath he had sexual contact with a teen player. Byington is a former coach of the St. Louis Stix, a competitive team for girls 18 and under that paid the Kirkwood Athletic Association [KAA] to play on their fields. Byington was the head coach. He was also employed by KAA. Byington was first sued by a young woman going by Jane Doe to protect her identity. Jane Doe claimed Byington and another coach, Alex Wolters, sexually assaulted her over the course of months. In the lawsuit, Jane Doe claims the abuse started in 2020 with Byington and Wolters each "grooming" her. She said it evolved to "repeated sexual assault that continued for a year." According to the lawsuit, Doe was 17 years old when she joined the team. Wolters was 27, and Byington was 36. **News 4 Investigates: Disturbing video testimony of former St. Louis County softball coaches accused of sexually assaulting player** Jane Doe also sued KAA for negligence. Her suit against the coaches and athletic association reached a settlement, but the details are not public. Now another woman going by Janet Doe to protect her identity, is suing Byington and KAA. In her lawsuit, Janet Doe claims the abuse started in August 2020 when she was 17 years old and Byington was 36. Janet Doe's lawsuit says it started with grooming through compliments and Snapchat messages then evolved into sexual assault including, "forcing her to make contact with his genitals." According to Janet Doe's lawsuit, she was, "conditioned, brainwashed and 'groomed' to trust Byington to comply with his direction and to respect him as a person of authority." **First Alert 4 Investigates: Jury finds no negligence at West County training facility where coach is accused of sexually abusing teen softball player** Last year First Alert 4 Investigates obtained video of Byington, speaking under oath. The video was taken as a deposition of Byington in the Jane Doe case and is a public court record. While Byington admits to actions including oral sex with Jane Doe, lawyers also questioned him about other players he coached. In the video deposition, Jane Doe's lawyer Dan DeFeo off camera can be heard asking, "Have there been other players that you've had any kind of sex with, whether it's kissing, groping, anything?" Byington responds, "No, sir." At another point in the deposition, DeFeo asks Byington, "You deny that you've ever had sex with any other player?" Byington responds, "Yes, sir."



DeFeo follows up and asks, "So if any other player or Jane Doe says that you have, they're -- as far as you're concerned, they're lying?" Byington answers, "As far as I'm concerned, they are lying, yes." Byington gave that testimony in 2023, two years after he coached Janet Doe. First Alert 4 Investigates reached out to Byington and his lawyer, but neither responded to requests for an interview. A lawyer for the Kirkwood Athletic Association had no comment but said they'd be filing their response to Janet Doe's lawsuit. Janet Doe's lawsuit claims KAA, "turned a blind eye and dismissed all the red flags of grooming." The suit also says KAA was supposed to follow the federal SafeSport Act, which applies to Olympic-affiliated teams and events. The act, passed by Congress in 2017, makes it clear there is a "power imbalance" between coaches and players and they can't be involved in sexual acts until the player turns 20. KAA's website touts USA Softball events and includes multiple images of its logo. USA Softball is subject to the SafeSport Act. In his deposition, Byington is asked by a lawyer, "Do you think it's okay for you to have sexual relationships with your female players?" Byington responds, "If a female player is of age, a consenting age then I would say yes." St. Louis County Police investigated Byington and he has not been charged criminally.

**'Slap in the face:' Families  
say MoDOT never held  
ceremony for memorial signs  
after loved ones killed in  
work zone crash**

11/03/2023 6pm 2:36  
ST. LOUIS COUNTY (KMOV) -- The families of two Missouri highway workers killed when a car crashed through their work zone claims the state skipped a step honoring them. This November marks two years since Kaitlyn Anderson, who was six months pregnant with a son named Jaxx, and James Brooks were killed while working on a MoDOT striping crew on Telegraph Road at I-255 in St. Louis County. A third MoDOT worker, Michael Brown, was left with lifelong injuries. Earlier this year, Missouri Gov. Mike Parson signed a bill naming the bridge on Telegraph Road next to the crash site for Anderson, and I-70 in St. Louis City and St. Louis County for Brooks. Crash that killed two MoDOT workers prompts calls to improve worker safety The families claim MoDOT was supposed to install memorial signs and help coordinate a dedication ceremony. This week Anderson's mom, Tonya Musskopf, says she was driving on the Telegraph Road bridge when she spotted a memorial sign for her daughter. "This is a big slap in the face," Musskopf said. "They don't care that she is no longer with us, they don't care she can't be a mother, and they didn't even care enough to give her a naming ceremony for a bridge that the governor signed for her." Musskopf says she called James Brooks' wife, Brigit Brooks, and asked if the sign for her husband was also installed. Brigit Brooks said MoDOT never contacted her about her husband's sign, which

has also been installed. "I couldn't believe what I was seeing, that James' sign was up there without my knowledge," Brigit Brooks said. "I was hurt. I pulled over and just burst into tears." A MoDOT spokesperson sent First Alert 4 Investigates a statement saying, "We are not providing comment at this time due to pending litigation." It's not uncommon for MoDOT to hold ceremonies when they dedicate a road or bridge. There is no lawsuit involving the memorial signs. Anderson's family is suing MoDOT for negligence and wrongful death. The case is currently before the Missouri Supreme Court. Both families are pushing for safety changes at MoDOT. First Alert 4 Investigates exposed how multiple supervisors were disciplined over the crash for not following safety standards. Reporting by the I-Team uncovered how MoDOT has more than 300 trucks and trailers designed to protect crews called Truck and Trailer Mounted Attenuators (TMAs) but are not always used and weren't with the crew the day of the deadly crash. Fired MoDOT supervisor claims department hadn't required work zone training in years before deadly crash The driver in the crash was not charged. St. Louis County prosecutors claim he was a diabetic suffering from a medical episode when the crash happened. First Alert 4 Investigates uncovered the driver was in another crash three months before, where police noted it was medically related. "We're supposed to just go on with our life. It's hard when you have no closure, no accountability. My husband is gone," Brigit Brooks said. The families are planning on holding their own dedication ceremony on November 18 at 5 p.m. at Bee Tree County Park in south St. Louis County.

'Are We Dating the Same Guy  
STL' seeks to vet good  
catches and ditch the bad.  
But can it have a downside?

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| 11/09/23 | 10PM | 6:02 |
|----------|------|------|

ST. LOUIS, Mo. (KMOV) - The pour of a beer and the din of the bar. That's one place Joe, from Maplewood, is pretty comfortable. "I'm pretty laid back, I think," Joe said. The 29-year-old high school teacher is newly single. "I'm hoping to meet someone to do life with," he said. But he knows it's far less likely he'll meet someone at a bar or brewery nowadays, and matching up through friends or family hasn't worked yet either. "I will say this. My mother is on the hunt like no one else," he said. Instead, he's often on his phone—swiping left or right—on dating sites. "It really becomes a numbers game more than anything else, which feels weird and artificial almost with dating, but it kind of is," he said. "You're a match to this many people and they talk with this many that you meet up with this many. And so in order to find someone with whom you have a connection, you really have to try that with a

lot of people.” But he was surprised when we showed him a Facebook page called “Are We Dating the Same Guy St. Louis.” With more than 50,000 women from the region, posting their dates, boyfriends, and even their husbands to see if someone else is dating them or has dirt on them. “I know I haven’t, I have no reason that I’d be on that,” said Joe. St. Louis’ page isn’t the first but has been exploding with members in the last six months. It all started in New York last year, and now similar sites have popped up all over the country and the world. Commenters can then “spill the tea” or share red flags—often to find out if the person’s telling the truth. Upwards of 25% of users on the dating app Tinder, for example, are already in committed relationships, according to a survey in Science Direct. Each group has specific rules. The first of which is don’t share the posts. No last names or personal information. It’s about protecting women, they say, not judging men. “If someone’s being dishonest about something a little more surface level, what else are they being dishonest about?” asked Maggie, from St. Louis. She’s a member of the group. On a recent walk with her dog Regis, she scrolled to see if any upcoming dates might appear there. “I really appreciate [the pages] just because I view them as a positive from a safety standpoint,” Maggie said. There is, group moderators and members argue, a real public service in the sites. With the World Health Organization estimating one in three women will experience either physical or sexual violence in their lifetime, the group can serve as a significant warning. “They could be an unsafe person. And I kind of see it as empowering almost in like makes me feel a deeper connection with other people who are in similar circumstances dating like I am,” Maggie said. “You’re able to vet them, you’re able to figure out if this is a safe scenario to be in more easily, which reduces the burden of labor, of online dating,” said Alexandra Freeman with Missouri Matchmaker. She said the social media sites can have value but they’ve got significant downsides too. “Where there is light, there’s always shadow, right? And in the end, you don’t know who is saying what about these

people on these sites. You have no way of knowing if these people are being deceptive," Freeman said. "Legally there are potential legal issues for the women and for the men who are posted about," said Michael Pelagalli, an attorney whose firm Minc Law is now specializing in these sites. "There are times when these groups can be used inappropriately to defame someone or cause harm, and we have been contacted by people who have lost romantic partners, they have been questioned by their employer," he said. The groups, though meant to be private, often do get back to the person posted about. So often that being posted about in the group even became a Halloween costume this year. "The groups are legal within the bounds of the first amendment; it's when someone commits defamation, that's when the line is crossed," he explained. To stay out of trouble: "Keep your post truthful and accurate and proceed with caution and know that those groups do not outright protect a woman posting," Pelagalli said. Sometimes seeing the worst makes Maggie think of just sticking it out with Regis instead. "Sometimes they can feel like that, especially seeing those groups. But I'm trying to stay hopeful," she said. So she keeps swiping on men and women. "I'm still out there, still looking," she said. "You know, it's sad that it has to exist, but I kind of get it," said Joe. Meanwhile, Joe said he's making it a goal never to be posted on "Are We Dating the Same Guy." "I would point that to the man and be like, 'You got to change some behaviors, dude,'" Joe said. Instead, he likes the other Facebook page we showed him: "Vouched Dating" where women post men they'd actually recommend. There have been real success stories on both of the sites. One of the positives can be a place of community. The lawyers First Alert 4 Investigates spoke with said defamation most often occurs not on the original post but in the comments section. But regardless, we've heard these types of sites are here to stay. First Alert 4 Investigates reached out to the moderators of the pages but haven't yet heard back.

**First Alert 4 Investigates:**  
**Crime unsolved, Loved ones**  
**missing**

**12/07/23                      6PM                      2:10**

ST. LOUIS, Mo. (First Alert 4) - Missouri has a backlog of more than 120 unidentified bodies. Advocates assert that a proposed new law in Missouri could aid in the search for individuals who mysteriously vanish. There is a federal database known as NAMUS. It is freely accessible for law enforcement and the public to input information about missing persons. However, its effectiveness has been hindered because not everyone utilizes it. Chris Hoyer, the husband of Alysse Hoyer, has been missing since May 2022, vanishing near Dixon, outside Rolla. His truck was discovered with the keys inside, but he left behind his phone, computer, and wallet. "I hope he comes home. I hope they find him," expressed Alysse. Until recently, though, Chris was never entered into a national database called NAM-US. Federally funded, NAM-US permits police, medical examiners, and the public to access information related to the missing and unidentified. However, only 13 states nationwide mandate law enforcement to use it. "I'm just really shocked that we have this free resource and to find out that law enforcement across Missouri doesn't know that it exists," stated Missouri State Representative Tricia Byrnes. She has now prefiled legislation that would require police in the state to enter information about missing persons. "This is so traumatic and hits everyone's heart. It's going to be Missourians that will pull the timeline on this right," she added. The proposed bill is welcome news to Chris' wife. "That is great. That is really great. A little good has come from this," said Hoyer. While the database is free, DNA testing is not. Byrnes is also seeking a solution to close the funding gap for testing on the more than 120 unidentified bodies in the Show-Me State. We will continue to monitor her efforts on this missing persons bill and the backlog of unidentified bodies.

**First Alert 4 Investigates:**  
**Families still pushing for**  
**Safety changes two years**  
**after deadly Amazon**  
**warehouse tornado**

**12/08/2023                      6PM                      3:48**

EDWARDSVILLE, Ill. (First Alert 4) - Families continue pushing for safety changes as they mark two years since a tornado hit an Amazon warehouse

in Edwardsville, killing six workers. The nearly million square foot warehouse didn't have a storm shelter. Previous Coverage: Records show safety concerns with construction at Amazon warehouse hit by tornado

Austin McEwen, 26, is one of the workers who died as they took shelter in a bathroom when the walls collapsed on them. "He was our world," Austin's mom Alice McEwen told First Alert 4 Investigates during an interview last year. "It ripped my heart out, basically, it was the worst day of my life." In the two years since the December 10, 2021 storm, survivors and families continue to advocate for safety changes. The warehouse was built using tilt-up construction, which has a history of collapsing in powerful wind events. "Amazon, you have to do better because this was preventable," said Jamarco Hickman, a worker who was inside as the EF-3 tornado hit. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) investigated and found Amazon did not violate any workplace rules, but sent the company a letter asking them to do more. "We are calling on Amazon to be an industry leader for workplace safety," Assistant Secretary of Labor for OSHA Doug Parker said last year. "Six workers died in this event, it was a tragic event that in and of itself should be a wake up call for employers." The warehouse was rebuilt using the same construction style and it does not have a storm shelter. Amazon leases the building. The building owners declined to comment. There have been several notable changes since the storm. Last year, Illinois lawmakers passed a bill creating the Warehouse Safety Task Force. The group has already held several meetings and is expected to complete a report with recommendations by January 1, 2025. The City of Edwardsville changed its building inspection procedures. Reporting by First Alert 4 Investigates exposed how an engineer called to the warehouse the night of the storm found support columns he believed were not properly anchored to the foundation. The I-team uncovered how during the original build in 2017 inspections were a one-page checklist and none noted anything out of code.

### Amazon hiring meteorologist month after deadly Illinois warehouse tornado

The I-Team found during the rebuild at the warehouse inspections changed to include detailed notes and pictures. One of the inspections First Alert 4 Investigates found noted that nearly a dozen support columns, “had either loose or missing anchor bolts.” Within a month, a subsequent inspection report noted those columns were repaired. Amazon has also made changes, hiring a chief meteorologist and providing employees with ID cards containing emergency response information.

“This event led us to really focus on emergency preparedness and emergency response,” Amazon Director of Global Media Relations Kelly Nantel said. Amazon faces five lawsuits filed by surviving employees and families who lost their loved ones, all claiming negligence. The McEwens are among the families suing Amazon. Their case is set to go to trial in January 2024. Nantel sent the following statement to First Alert 4 for this story. “We’ll always mourn those we lost two years ago in Edwardsville and remain grateful for the support we’ve received from the onset of the tragedy to today,” she said. “Edwardsville is a strong community – and one that we’re committed to and honored to be a part of.”