

## FEELING SAUCY

Food science students competed to see which of their creations would become MU's official barbecue sauce

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## SPARTANS ICE BRUINS

Battle girls basketball seal a win over Rock Bridge in its first Central Missouri Activities Conference match-up of the season

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# COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

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## Sen. Blunt delivers farewell address

BY STEPHANIE SOUTHEY  
KOMU 8

WASHINGTON D.C. — Missouri's U.S. Sen. Roy Blunt delivered his farewell address on the Senate floor Tuesday.

Blunt is set to retire following his current term, which ends in January. Current Missouri Attorney General Eric Schmitt will head to Washington after he was elected to the U.S. Senate in November.

Blunt, in front of his fellow senators, reflected on some of the most important take-aways from his two terms.

"Finding someone on the other side to work with produces the most lasting results," Blunt said. "You don't have to agree on everything to work together."

Blunt also noted how he hopes the Senate will improve in the years following his retirement.

"For 225 years the topics of what to fund and how to pay for it dominated the congressional debate," he said. "And we frankly need to get back to that where people see what's going on and members feel bought in to what's going on."

Majority Leader Mitch McConnell honored Blunt on the Senate floor earlier Tuesday morning, calling the senator a friend and distinguished colleague.

"The record of accomplishments Roy's racked up reflects the fusion of focus,

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## RECOGNIZING HEROES



SHANE PALMA • Missourian

*Thom Lutz, center, poses with The Sherman Brown award Tuesday at The Blue Note in Columbia. Lutz was the recipient of the award which recognizes a community member who, "serves neighbors, patrons, or customers with the highest esteem."*



**READ MORE ABOUT THIS YEAR'S WINNERS INSIDE THE SPECIAL SECTION**

## Democratic Sen. Warnock wins Georgia runoff over Walker

BY BILL BARROW AND JEFF AMY  
The Associated Press

ATLANTA — Democratic Sen. Raphael Warnock defeated Republican challenger Herschel Walker in a Georgia runoff election Tuesday, ensuring Democrats an outright majority in the Senate for the rest of President Joe Biden's term and helping cap an underwhelming mid-term cycle for the GOP in the last major vote of the year.

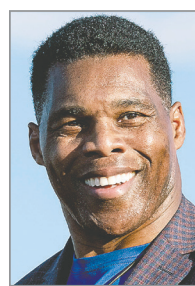
With Warnock's second runoff victory in as many years, Democrats will have a 51-49 Senate

majority, gaining a seat from the current 50-50 split with John Fetterman's victory in Pennsylvania. There will be divided government, however, with Republicans having narrowly flipped House control.

In last month's election, Warnock led Walker by 37,000 votes out of almost 4 million cast, but fell short of the 50% threshold needed to avoid a runoff. The senator appeared to be headed for a wider final margin in Tuesday's runoff. Walker, a football legend who first gained fame at the University of Georgia and later in the NFL in



RAPHAEL WARNOCK



HERSCHEL WALKER

the 1980s, was unable to overcome a bevy of damaging allegations, including claims that he paid for

two former girlfriends' abortions.

"The numbers look like they're not going to add up," Walker told supporters in a concession speech late Tuesday at the College Football Hall of Fame in downtown Atlanta. "There's no excuses in life and I'm not going to make any excuses now because we put up one heck of a fight."

Warnock, Georgia's first Black senator, was slated to address a jubilant crowd at a nearby downtown hotel shortly after Walker's remarks.

Democrats' Georgia victory

solidifies the state's place as a Deep South battleground two years after Warnock, 53, and fellow Georgia Democrat Jon Ossoff won 2021 runoffs that gave the party Senate control just months after Biden became the first Democratic presidential candidate in 30 years to win Georgia. Voters returned Warnock to the Senate in the same cycle they reelected Republican Gov. Brian Kemp by a comfortable margin and chose an all-GOP slate of statewide constitutional officers.

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### CORRECTION

Starr Pines Christmas Tree Farms is located west of Columbia. A story on Page 1A on Tuesday incorrectly described where Starr Pines was located.

**TODAY'S WEATHER**  
MOSTLY CLOUDY  
51/42

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## State to extend health coverage for new moms

BY KURT ERICKSON  
St. Louis Post-Dispatch

JEFFERSON CITY — Missouri lawmakers are set to consider plans to extend Medicaid coverage for new moms and their babies after a similar idea fell short earlier this year.

Five bills have been introduced in the Missouri House that would extend insurance coverage for low-income mothers from a current 60 days after giving birth to 12 months.

Two other versions have been introduced in the Senate.

"We've got low-income women having babies and we need to see that both the mother and the child can have the best care after the baby is born," said Sen. Elaine Gannon, a Jefferson County Republican who is sponsoring one of the measures. "We're talking about

people's lives here."

Among the House sponsors is Rep. Jon Patterson, a Lee's Summit physician who has gained new clout under the Capitol dome after he was elected by his fellow Republicans as majority leader in the chamber.

The concept also could take on new significance now that nearly all abortions are outlawed in Missouri after the U.S. Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade in June.

"I'm not an advocate of growing government. But at the same time, with the changes that have been made in our state and in the nation, I think we need to look at is how can we support these mothers and children," said Rep. Brad Pollitt, R-Sedalia, who introduced one of the versions.

"I'm pro-life," Pollitt said.

"But I also believe that we have to have institutional programs that help in those situations."

The Department of Health and Senior Services found an average of 61 women died each year between 2017 and 2019 while they were pregnant or within a year of their pregnancies.

Three out of every four pregnancy-related deaths were preventable, the report said.

The risk of pregnancy-related death for Black women was more than three times as high as the risk for white women, the report found.

The state also tracked when women were dying, finding that the "greatest proportion of pregnancy-related deaths occurred between 43 days and one year after pregnancy" — meaning many deaths occurred after the state's 60-day cutoff for Medicaid coverage.

An estimated 4,565 women would have coverage extended if the bill passed. The proposal could cost \$10.7 million by 2025, a legislative analysis of last year's legislation noted.

Gannon shepherded the extension through the Missouri Senate in the spring, but it was derailed by other provisions in the measure.

For example, the proposal was paired with a provision that would make it legal to give away free needles to drug users in order to ensure they don't catch or pass along infectious diseases.

Some conservative Republicans balked at the needle exchange idea and an attempt to separate the two issues failed.

Gannon said the legislation is one of her priorities for the

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