



Bottomley, Stokes, Bowden get Inland District honors

SPORTS, 1B



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CANTON MAYOR'S RACE

Kimberly Bell embraces political outsider role



Mayoral candidate Kimberly Bell is a frequent speaker at Canton City Council meetings but has not held public office. JULIE VENNETTI BOTOS

Kelly Byer
Canton Repository
USA TODAY NETWORK

CANTON – Kimberly Bell has been a regular attendant of City Council meetings for more than a year. It's a rare Monday when she isn't at the podium during the public speaking period.

Now she wants to fill the mayor's seat as one of five Democrats competing for the position on the May ballot.

Bell has been critical of the current

mayor and council, particularly in regard to their response to the fatal police shooting of Canton resident James Williams. She also has questioned the city's support of the Pro Football Hall of Fame Village when she says areas outside of northwest Canton have been neglected.

"The city can be in a better direction once I take office with my new ideals and I dismantle the old policy and procedure handbook and make my own footprints instead of following in the former mayor administrations' foot-

steps," Bell wrote in response to a Canton Repository questionnaire, which asked all mayoral candidates the same questions and was used to write this profile.

Meet Kimberly Bell

Bell, 58, has been a lifelong resident of Canton and lives in the city's northeast Ward 6. She has a son and five

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Demand for welders growing nationwide



Stark State College students use the welding equipment at the college's Welding and Joining Center in Akron, which opened last fall. Stark State plans to open a 13-booth Welding and Joining Center at its Jackson Township campus in August 2024. PHOTO PROVIDED BY STARK STATE COLLEGE

Five things to know about Stark State's Welding and Joining Center

Kelli Weir
Canton Repository
USA TODAY NETWORK

JACKSON TWP. – Stark State College welding students soon will have a lab of their own in Stark County.

After years of using high school weld-

ing facilities for student training, Stark State plans to open a Welding and Joining Center on its Jackson Township campus.

The center will allow Stark State to expand its welding program in Stark County, which now serves 20 students. College officials expect to serve between

50 and 100 students once the center opens.

The demand for welders continues to grow nationwide as older welders reach retirement age. According to the American Welding Society, more than 361,000 new welding professionals will be needed by 2027 to fill job openings.

OhioMeansJobs lists 2,887 open welding jobs in Ohio, with 394 of the

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Lawmakers tie Larry Householder to debate over rules

Haley BeMiller
State Bureau
USA TODAY NETWORK

Backers of a plan to raise the threshold for amending Ohio's constitution have used several arguments to further their case.

The latest selling point: Former House Speaker Larry Householder once tried to use the process to his advantage.

Rep. Brian Stewart, R-Ashville, invoked Householder Wednesday as he made the case for his proposal to require 60% of voters to enact constitutional amendments, instead of a simple majority. The resolution itself is an amendment, meaning a simple majority of voters would need to approve it before it could take effect.

The committee hearing came nearly two weeks after a federal jury found Householder and former Ohio Republican Party chair Matt Borges guilty of racketeering in the state's largest public corruption scandal. Householder spearheaded a scheme to trade nearly \$61 million from Akron-based FirstEnergy and its allies for a \$1.3 billion nuclear bailout, known as House Bill 6.

Speaking before a packed hearing room, Stewart discussed Householder's failed attempt to enact changes to term limits and extend his grip on power. The former speaker wanted to put an amendment on the 2020 ballot that reset the term-limit clock for

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