

After 120 years, historic Kansas City business has moved out of the city

BY DAVID HUDNALL
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Like an orchestra led by some demented conductor, the clocks begin announcing themselves around 2 in the afternoon. Cuckoos and chimes and gongs. It’s like this every day, all day, at the top of every hour. Life in a clock shop.

Beth Woolsey barely registers the cacophony. She’s talking about that Herschede grandfather clock over there. The price is steep, yes — \$3,000 — but it’s mechanical art. Look at the thing. It has tubular bells for chimes and a filigree dial with a moon face that rotates each day, simulating the lunar cycle.

“So when there’s a full moon, it’s centered on the face,” says Woolsey, the fifth-generation owner of The Clock Shop.

For 70 years, pieces like these ticked inside Woolsey’s family’s shop at 62nd and Oak streets in Brookside. But a 2017 fire forced a relocation around the corner. In January, the landlord announced other plans for the space, sending Woolsey hunting for yet another home.

She landed at a low-slung unit next to a pizza place in Independence: 17201 E. U.S. Hwy 40, Suite 115.

“We looked around Brookside but couldn’t find anything that fit what we needed,” Woolsey said. “Plus, we all live out this way in Blue Springs. It’s closer to home.”

Closer to home, but farther from where the



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The Clock Shop has moved from its longtime home of Brookside to an Independence strip mall at 17201 E. U.S. Hwy 40, Suite 115.

story began, back in 1905, when a German immigrant named Joe Beverley started fixing watches and clocks on West 12th Street in downtown Kansas City. From there, it passed through sons and marriages, eventually to Eldon Falke, who moved the shop to Oak Street in 1955 and built out the interior himself.

He handed the keys to his son, Dave Falke, in the early ‘90s. Woolsey, Dave’s oldest daughter, took over operations in 2014. Her son, Chris Hutson, has been apprenticing at the shop for four years and will likely be The Clock Shop’s sixth-generation owner one day.

Most of their business is repairs. A grandfather clock from an estate sale. A cuckoo clock that stopped singing. A shelf clock inherited from an aunt, wound once a week for half a century.

Woolsey and Hutson fix it all at benches in the

back of the shop. Tools hang from pegboards — pliers, tweezers, screwdrivers — while a bushing machine, jars of clock oil, tiny brass parts, and half-dismantled movements crowd the surfaces. It is a small, mechanical sanctuary where time is disassembled, cleaned, and coaxed back into motion by steady hands.

“There’s just something about taking a 100-year-old clock and figuring out how to make it work again,” Woolsey said. “And then we get to share that with the customer who’s had it in their family for ages. It’s a special thing.”

Up front, the clocks are for sale. They go for anywhere between a couple hundred bucks to several thousand dollars. A row of Vienna regulators hangs tall and narrow, their pendulums swinging behind glass-fronted cases. A tall-case grandfather clock from Austria is the oldest in the shop, built in 1784. Falke is

partial to their selection of French portico clocks: 19th-century timepieces with classical columns and gilded pendulums.

“During the Civil War, American clocks still had wooden wheels,” Falke said. “Meanwhile in Europe, the French were making these incredible pieces.”

Technically semi-retired, Falke still works most days, driving to Topeka or Odessa or Raytown on service calls. He walks around with a small headlamp clipped to the top of his ballcap and a Clock Shop polo with his name stamped on the left breast.

Business is better than ever, Falke said. Several clock shops in the area have closed in recent years — Northland Time, The Clock Center in Lenexa — leaving just The Clock Shop and Thompson’s Clock Manor in Overland Park to handle Kansas Citians’ complex clock needs.

Would-be horologists come and go. They buy the tools, learn the basics. But the patience required to bush out plates and repair antique mainsprings day after day isn’t something everyone is born with.

“A lot of the new people that get into this business treat it like a hobby, and that doesn’t work,” Falke said. “We’ve been around 120 years, and we have all the knowledge that comes with that. It makes a big difference.”

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The owners of Olive Cafe have opened a three-in-one business nearby.

New KC Mediterranean grocery, bakery, cafe (and sometimes buffet) opens

BY JENNA THOMPSON
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The owners of a long-time Mediterranean cafe have opened a new market, cafe and restaurant — all under one roof.

The Olive Zaytoona (“zaytoona” means “olive” in Arabic) opened in a spacious building at 8015 Bannister Road. Jerusalem native Salah Mansi owns the building, while his wife Nijma Mansi owns Zaytoona. They also own Olive Cafe at 9530 James A Reed Road but are looking to sell that space.

Olive Cafe has been around for 20 years. At one time, it had another spot at 3927 Broadway Blvd., which opened seven years after the original James A Reed spot.

On one side, an industrial bakery mass produces pita bread and other goods. (This portion is closed to the public, though customers can taste the products in the cafe.)

The middle section of the building is filled with Mediterranean produce, meat and dry goods. Some of the harder-to-find items that the market carries include imported Palestinian olive oil (Salah insists the one he carries is the purest grade), canned fava beans, date-filled maamoul cookies, grape leaves and a variety of

Arabic candies. Everything is kosher and halal, Salah said.

Then there’s the cafe side. Customers walk up to a counter and order hummus platters, shawarma, kebabs or some of the other menu items. They can enjoy their food inside the seating area or take it to go.

Salah said it’ll have many of the favorites customers loved at Olive Cafe, plus some new offerings. On Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, it’ll offer buffet-style service.

He’s seeing that side of the space as a relocation of his longtime restaurant.

Photos of his beloved home city of Jerusalem are plastered around the cafe.

He’s hoping his new spot will draw in the high Muslim population nearby. The Islamic Center of Greater Kansas City is nearby at 8501 E. 99th St.

Zaytoona will be open from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily.

A few more Mediterranean restaurants have opened in the Kansas City metro recently.

Zhoug Mediterranean opened a month ago in the former d’Bronx space at 39th and Bell.

This month, Lebanese restaurant Nour’s opened in Westport at 3855 Warwick Blvd.

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Kansas City Chiefs Rumble team welcomes students to the first day of school at Central Middle School on Monday, Aug. 19, 2024, in Kansas City.

FROM PAGE 1A SCHOOLS

according to U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data.

KCKPS initially asked voters in a May 2024 single-item special election to approve a \$420 million bond issue that would have increased property tax bills and addressed additional repairs and upgrades dis-

trictwide.

That initiative failed and garnered less than 9% voter turnout. Administrators eventually proposed the lesser, no-tax-increase bond in an effort to address some, although not all, of its priority projects.

The \$180 million bond

approved in the Nov. 5 general election was the second that the school district successfully passed in recent history. Voters in 2016 approved a request to issue \$235 million in bonds to pay for capital improvements at other district facilities.

IN THE WORKS

Since getting voter approval in November, KCKPS has partnered up with two firms to divvy up

the design work and named a construction manager.

Lenexa-based Newkirk Novak will oversee plans for the new Argentine Middle School campus and the consolidation of Silver City and Noble Prentiss elementary schools, projected to cost roughly \$90 million in combined work.

McCown Gordon Construction, based in Kansas City, Missouri, will oversee plans for the new Central Middle School and the addition to Sumner, which is estimated to cost a combined \$63 million, according to the district.

Although the district’s website proposes demolishing the school buildings that will no longer be in use after construction is completed, Lilly said KCKPS is still debating how those facilities will be utilized. He said school property has to have state approval before being sold, and that the district will determine down the road whether that’s the right thing to do, or if those properties should be razed or otherwise put to continued use.

As for incoming facilities, Lilly said the district plans to make each project unique in its own right while maintaining a sense

of cohesion across the district. KCKPS is trying to author plans for what it specifically wants to see from each building by meeting with school community members and staff.

The district is about to get into the schematics phase to work out some sort of vision, Lilly said. Offering a safe learning environment that meets enrollment needs ranks high on the list.

“I think our community showed that they have a real desire to make sure our kids are in the best environment possible, educationally,” he said. “I know that as a district we’re very thankful for the opportunity that our students are going to have because our community supported this project.”

WHAT NEXT?

After design plans are mocked up and rubber stamped, involved groups will map out a construction timeline.

Lilly said that although the district hasn’t identified which project will take priority, plans to add an extension to Sumner Academy would likely be the most affordable and navigable project to begin with. The district said it will try to start projects in

an order that allows them to complete construction as quickly as possible.

“So some of that depends on just what we can get out of the ground quicker,” Lilly said.

The district advised residents interested in keeping up to date on ongoing developments to keep an eye on its bond webpage.

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