

# JACKSON

Issue XI, Summer 2017

BIMONTHLY

## SUMMER CONCERTS, CAR SHOWS AND MOVIES ON TAP DOWNTOWN

Summer fun in downtown Jackson is in full swing, with car shows, live concerts, movies and more on tap through September and beyond.

With the completion of the CP Federal City Square in downtown Jackson's Horace Blackman Park - a multi-use facility featuring the lighted glass mural by famed artist Glidden Parker - area residents are set to enjoy the new downtown venue for years to come.

The remaining Fridays in July will feature the "Jammin' in Jackson" concert series, followed by the "Friday Film Festival" outdoor movie series - both within Horace Blackman Park and across the street from City Hall, 161 W. Michigan Ave.

**July 14, 21 and 28 will feature free concerts from 6-8 p.m.** by top 40 classics group Act III, contemporary classic rock group Blackstone Steel and reggae group One Love Reggae Band, respectively. Following the concerts, movies are set to begin at dusk (about 9:30 p.m.) with the classic titles **"Hook", "Beetlejuice" and the original "Jurassic Park" scheduled for July 14, 21 and 28, respectively.**



**A band plays in front of fans at CP Federal City Square in downtown Jackson. Concerts are scheduled through July. (Photo courtesy of JTV)**

"We're very excited to be able to utilize the new band shell and movie viewing area in downtown's Horace Blackman Park this year," Downtown Development Authority Director and events organizer Nate Mack said. "We're getting record crowds for the concerts, movies and car shows. It's shaping up to be a great summer."

Downtown Jackson car shows are scheduled for the fourth Friday of every month through September

(July 28, Aug. 25 and Sept. 22). The shows begin at 5 p.m. and continue through the evening, featuring hundreds of classic and contemporary cars from communities across the state. **On Aug. 25, the Model A Restorers Club will feature more than 100 restored Model As.**

All downtown events are open to the public and free of charge. Events feature food vendors, public restrooms and other accommodations for patrons.

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# CITY EARNS \$2.9 MILLION GRANT

In a continued effort to keep families safe from lead-based paint, City officials recently garnered a \$2.9 million grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Overall, more than \$127 million in federal grant funds were distributed to 48 states. In Michigan, both Jackson and Wayne County received \$2.9 million in federal funds to abate lead risks in area homes.

“Of the nearly \$3 million in federal grant funds to curb lead-based paint risks in the community, \$1.2 million is earmarked for lead abatement within City rentals,” said Councilman Dan Greer, 3rd Ward, who also sits on Jackson’s Brownfield Redevelopment Authority. “We estimate these funds will completely abate lead-based issues in roughly 150 homes in Jackson.”

City administration submitted their grant application in March, and this month received the maximum funds allowed under the grant guidelines: \$2.5 million in



**Jackson was recently granted a \$2.9 million federal grant to abate lead paint hazards within the community.**

Lead-Based Paint Hazard Control grant funds and \$400,000 in Healthy Homes Supplemental funding. The last LBPHC grant was awarded to Jackson in 2005.

“The City Manager’s office worked diligently to ensure Jackson received its portion of federal funds toward fixing this issue,” Mayor Bill Jors said. “We are excited to see the results.”

A recent report from the Department of Health and Human Services shows Jackson has the second highest lead poisoning rate for children in Michigan (10.7 percent). Further, the 49203 zip code ranked in the top 30 zip codes for high blood lead levels across all measured categories.

“Jackson and the surrounding communities rank

as one of the leaders in Michigan when it comes to childhood lead poisoning,” City Councilman and Vice Mayor Derek Dobies, 6th Ward, said. “These funds can help begin the remediation efforts and get us back on track, but we need to continue to pursue policies that help children and their families lead healthy lives within the community.”

## ***DOWNTOWN MURAL IN RUNNING FOR AWARD***

The City of Jackson and those involved with the CP Federal City Square project downtown are in the running for the 2017 Community Excellence Award from the Michigan Municipal League.

The award recognizes municipalities that create “new and better ways to make vibrant communities for their residents,” the MML’s website reads. Jackson officials entered into the contest last month. Voting is open to any area resident, and those inter-

ested are allowed one vote per day between before July 30.

“CP Federal City Square serves as a keystone project in downtown Jackson,” Vice Mayor and Jackson City Councilman Derek Dobies, 6th Ward, said. “This project is a testament to what can happen when an entire community comes together and works toward a specific goal. The countless people and organizations who helped make this building a reality should be very proud.”

After roughly three years

of planning, fundraising and construction, the Glidden Parker mural - housed in CP Federal City Square - was unveiled May 5. Funding for the project began with the success of two competitive grants, and was followed by eight organizations and nonprofits stepping forward to donate funds.

“Private donations and grants accounted for nearly 75 percent of the project costs,” said Jackson City Councilman Andrew Frounfelder, 5th Ward. “Throughout the

process of garnering support for the project, it became clear that the work began to serve as a catalyst of community support and appreciation from all sectors - public, private and nonprofit.”

The City of Jackson won an MML Community Excellence Award for the Armory Arts Project in 2008. In 2015, the City of Jackson won the MML’s “Place for Talent” category for the Citizen Interaction Design project - competing in the state convention in Traverse City.





**MAYOR**

Bill Jors

**COUNCIL (Ward)**

- Arlene Robinson 1
- Freddie Dancy 2
- Daniel Greer 3
- Craig Pappin 4
- Andrew Frounfelker 5
- Derek Dobies 6

**CITY MANAGER**

Patrick Burtch

**MEETINGS/EVENTS**

**July 14, 21, 28**

Friday Film Festival  
*CP Federal City Square*

**July 14, 21, 28**

Jammin' In Jackson  
*CP Federal City Square*

**Aug. 22 • 6:30 p.m.**

City Council Meeting  
*City Hall, 2nd Floor*

**Friday, Aug. 25**

Model A Cruise In  
*Downtown Jackson*

**Monday, Sept. 4**

City Hall Closed  
*Labor Day*

For more information on the Friday Film Festival or Jammin' In Jackson, see Page 1.

# A Day In The Life

**Richard and Michelle Savicki**

Jackson officials have consistently said if the City's core is improved, the City as a whole will improve. With a number of new restaurants, lofts, businesses, parks and events coming to downtown Jackson, people will follow.

As one Jackson couple willing to speak on the positive changes downtown can attest: The plan is working.

For nearly 30 years, Rich and Michelle Savicki have lived together and raised a family on North Waterloo in Jackson. Now, with a son entering into his last year at Lumen Christi High School and a daughter at Central Michigan University, the couple is ready to make a change.

"We already spend a lot of time in downtown Jackson and we thought since we are looking to downsize it would be convenient to move down to where we enjoy ourselves," the couple wrote in an email. "We can walk to our favorite places like Jackson Coffee Company and Grand River Brewery, and be a part of the positive changes downtown."

The soon-to-be empty nesters said the direction that downtown Jackson is heading is very exciting, and they're looking to get in on the action.

"We love being able to go downtown and have a drink at one of the pubs and having the choice to eat there or just walking over to another restaurant to eat there," they wrote. "It's nice to see large crowd downtown, like during Cruise Nights, while other nights there always seem to be a nice, relaxed atmosphere where its just fun to hang out."

Rich, 47, has worked for Tyco SimplexGrinnell as a fire alarm technician for the last two years. Before that he worked for Safety Systems, Inc. since 1993. Michelle has worked for Consumers Energy for the last four years in electric operations doing data analysis. Before that she worked in Dexter for 13 years.

The couple said it's important to them to keep things local, support small businesses and attend fun events - all of which they can accomplish with ease by moving to the City's core - either by frequenting a



**The Savickis**

new local restaurant or bar, or by enjoying a concert or car show within or around the upgraded Horace Blackman Park.

"The upgrade to Horace Blackman Park along with the possibility of a downtown urban grocery store make for a very exciting opportunity for us to relocate downtown," they wrote. "We are really looking forward to seeing what else is in store for the downtown area. We are hoping to get downtown and support the local economy right from the get-go.

"Hopefully there are more in the community who feel the same," they added. "For us, it's always been important to try to keep things local and support the small businesses."

The couple said they're currently looking for a downtown Jackson condo or apartment.



# CITY RANKS FOURTH IN EPA LIST

The City of Jackson recently ranked fourth in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's 2017 list of small cities nationwide with the most Energy Star certified buildings.

Cities are ranked on the list according to how many buildings in their area achieved Energy Star certification in 2016. To qualify for the rating, a building must outperform 75 percent of similar buildings nationwide when it comes to energy savings. In 2016, 13 Jackson-area buildings made the list, including Jackson High School and T.A. Wilson Academy, among others.

"We're honored to be ranked in the EPA's energy savings list," Public Information Officer Will Forgrave said. "We are fully committed to environmental stewardship and lowering energy costs, and we are proud to be

a national leader in supporting energy-efficiency."

The ranking confirms the City's commitment to providing building owners and managers with the technical guidance and best practice training they need to make their buildings more energy efficient, City Manager Patrick Burtch said.

By the end of 2016, roughly 30,000 buildings across the country earned EPA's Energy Star certifications. Together, these buildings saved more than \$4 billion on utility bills and prevented greenhouse gas emissions equal to the annual electricity use of nearly 3 million homes.

In Jackson, the 13 certified buildings saved an estimated \$635,000 in energy cost savings.

For more information, visit [www.energystar.gov/topcities](http://www.energystar.gov/topcities).



The City of Jackson ranked fourth in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's 2017 list of "Top Cities" for energy-saving buildings.

## A Message from Jackson Mayor Bill Jors

The City of Jackson, more than ever before, continues to trend in the right direction - and we've got the testimony of local residents (Pg. 3), the opening of new businesses (Pg. 5), new and excited summer events (Pg. 1) and the national recognition (Pg. 4) to prove it.

For years and years, I've heard area residents ask for three things consistently: repaired streets and infrastructure, more street sweeping within the community and the addition of a Mediterranean restaurant option within the City limits. Now, I'm happy to say we're accomplishing all three of these goals this summer.

Street construction

continues apace, and will continue through December with the completion of more than six miles of streets and roadways within the City limits set for a full rebuild or a new top course.

West Michigan Avenue from Brown Street (the City limit) to the downtown Jackson loop began in earnest this April. Crews are currently working to replace water mains and sewer systems beneath the street before they begin repaving sections of the main thoroughfare later this summer.

The downtown Jackson loop is also on the docket for a conversion to two-way traffic.

Work to repave all of East

Michigan Avenue and upgrade sidewalks and curbs is now complete. Come December, all of Michigan Avenue and the downtown business loop - from the west side of the City to the east, will be upgraded.

Other major projects include the Kibby Road upgrade, which was delayed due to hiccups at the federal level, but is not set to begin in the Fall of 2017.

The second round of street sweeping began earlier this month, and contractors will hit every inch of Jackson roads over the course of July.

Finally, a new Mediterranean restaurant will open its doors this month in downtown Jackson - adding



to the every-growing list of new businesses within the City.

For these reasons and others, the future looks bright in Jackson!

Mayor Bill Jors



# DID YOU KNOW?

## *Mediterranean Cuisine Comes to Jackson*

Add one more restaurant to the growing list of newly opened or soon-to-be opened businesses within the City of Jackson.

Sultan's, a popular Mediterranean restaurant based in Lansing, has branched out to Jackson. The restaurant was scheduled to open in mid-July.

Located at 133 W. Michigan Ave., Suite B, next to the former location of Swan Creek Candle and where Lenny's Subs, Subs-N-More and the Double Play Cafe once operated, Sultan's will feature eat-in seating, with customers or-

dering at a counter before getting their food to-go or staying in.

The specialty is chicken shawarma, with the restaurant also offering other choices like kabobs, falafel, salads, drink and more. The restaurant will also offer takeout and catering services, owner Bassam Mahmoud said.

"We're very excited to welcome Sultan's to downtown Jackson," Public Information Officer Will Forgrave said. "The community has been clamoring for a while - myself included - to have a Mediterra-

nean restaurant move to the City, and Sultan's opening is very welcome news."

The restaurant will be able to seat 70, with hours tentatively scheduled for the restaurant to be open seven days per week: 10:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Wednesday, 10:30 a.m. to 9 p.m. Thursday and Friday, 10:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Saturday and 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday.

Mahmoud was born and raised in Syria before moving to the United States in the mid-1980s. He has a masters from Michigan State University.

# NEW POLICE CHIEF NAMED

Deputy Police Chief Elmer Hitt was promoted as the new director of police and fire services for the City of Jackson in May, after serving five months as interim director following the retirement of Matthew Heins.

Hitt, a Northwest High School graduate, rose through the ranks within the Jackson Police Department after he joined as a police cadet in 1996. He became a patrol officer in 1997 before he was promoted to sergeant in 2005, lieutenant in 2010 and then deputy police chief in 2015.

"City administrators, officials, and myself all look forward to seeing how he moves the department forward." City Manager Patrick Burtch said. "We're all very pleased with Elmer's qualifications and administrative capabilities."

Hitt said he is humbled to be named director after serving within the police department for more than two decades.

"My 21 years of service with the department has taken several twists and turns, and it is rewarding to be given the responsibility of leading the professional men and women of the Jackson police and fire departments." Hitt said. "I look forward to providing high quality service and safety to the citizens of this community."



Sultan's storefront in Jackson.



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