

JACKSON



Issue XIII, Winter 2017/18

BIMONTHLY

ARTS SCHOOL TO MOVE TO MASONIC TEMPLE DOWNTOWN

The Jackson School of the Arts began operating out of 634 N. Mechanic St. with a class of roughly 35 students in 2001 and has since grown to nearly 1,000 students every year - including nearly 100 classes every week, student plays, summer programs, dance classes, and more.

Now, after years of operating out of a space far too small, the Jackson School of the Arts is getting the space it needs and deserves.

Jackson officials recently entered into an agreement with the arts school to have the school lease out part of the Masonic Temple at the 140-150 block of Cortland Street in downtown Jackson (pictured to the right). The group hopes to move into the space within the year, by the fall of 2018.

Formerly Vermeulen's Furniture, the furniture company sold the vacant building to the City in August.

"The new building will offer nearly 14,000 square feet of space, as well as an amphitheater, tall ceilings and a balcony for the Jackson School of the Arts," City Manager Patrick Burtch said. "We're currently hammering



The Jackson School of the Arts - currently on North Mechanic Street - plans to move into part of the Masonic Temple, pictured above, in the fall of 2018.

out the details of the lease agreement now, of which there are three options to consider."

There are currently three lease options on the table. Each includes a 15- to 25-year lease agreement with JSA paying property taxes, insurance and maintenance when required, as well as anywhere from \$780,000 to \$1.5 million over the life of the lease, depending on which option officials decide.

Each option has a combination of the City and the school paying for new bathrooms and repairing or replacing the old elevator in the structure, among other projects.

"The Jackson School of the Arts is a community treasure and we're excited to work with them to provide a new, more efficient, space to operate," said Councilman Andrew Frounfelker, who represents the ward where the JSA will soon call home.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 2** JFD Gets New, Donated Kitchen
- 3** Curbside Leaf Pickup Continues
- 5** Results Are In After Election
- 5** JPAC Stays Busy This Fall

'LOWE'S HEROES' PROGRAM UPDATES KITCHEN AT JFD

The last time the Jackson Fire Department's kitchen - which serves all Jackson firefighters 24/7 - was updated, the human race had yet to make it to the moon and Bob Dylan debuted "Blowing in the Wind."

That all changed this October, when volunteers from the Lowe's Heroes program worked with a number of local vendors to renovate the kitchen with new appliances, new cabinets, new counter-tops and new paint, among other upgrades.

"The fact that Lowe's was able to step up and help us at no cost is an amazing thing," Director of Police & Fire Services Elmer Hitt said. "It's pretty awesome."

Firefighter Joe Smith got the ball rolling on the project when he informed his sister Jen Phillips about the need for a kitchen renovation at the department. Phillips, who works as a manager



Volunteers from the Lowe's Heroes program worked for a week updating the Jackson Fire Department's kitchen, which hadn't been updated since 1962.

at Lowe's, brought the idea to the company board, and soon after volunteers were unloading supplies at the JFD garage.

"We try to give back to the community and this pro-

gram is one way we do it," Phillips said.

Vendors that donated supplies include Northwest Cabinet Company, Diamond Cabinets, Lowe's, Sherwin Williams, and more.

"We can't say enough about this program and what they did for us," Assistant Fire Chief Chris Ermatinger said. "Our kitchen was in rough shape. We're incredibly grateful."

NOTIFICATION SYSTEM CHANGES

Jackson City Council voted last month to cancel the City's annual contract with Blackboard Connect and enter into a one-year agreement with Jackson County to use CodeRed Next beginning in December, saving **\$19,666 general fund dollars per year.**

Since 2013, the City has utilized a mass communication system through Blackboard Connect to notify citizens of emergencies and provide public outreach for non-emergency related events and issues. The cur-

rent annual contract costs \$29,616 per year. The new agreement will cost the City of Jackson \$9,950 per year.

Through an inter-governmental agreement between Jackson County and the City of Jackson, the City stands to save a considerable amount of general fund dollars by using the county's system that provides the same services to area residents, Public Information Officer Will Forgrave said.

"For all intents and purposes, the County's mass notification system provides the same support to City staff as

well as the same tools for public outreach to area residents," Forgrave said of CodeRed, primarily used by the Jackson County Sheriff's Office. "The only difference is the cost, which is considerably less."

The most recent contract between the City and Blackboard Connect is set to expire Dec. 18.

Forgrave said the City and County now have time to work toward a smooth transition, including staff training and the transfer of current contacts on Blackboard Connect to the Coun-

ty's CodeRed system.

Area residents who currently utilize Blackboard Connect should go to the City's website, www.cityof-jackson.org, and sign up for CodeRed on the homepage.

"We are excited to partner with the City of Jackson on this very important project," Jackson County Sheriff Steve Rand said. "Not only does this partnership save money, but it raises efficiency. The sheriff's office has a long tradition of working with the City whenever we can seize the opportunity."





MAYOR

Derek Dobies*

COUNCIL (Ward)

- Arlene Robinson* 1
- Freddie Dancy 2
- Jeromy Alexander* 3
- Craig Pappin 4
- Andrew Frounfelker* 5
- Colleen Sullivan* 6

CITY MANAGER

Patrick Burch

MEETINGS/EVENTS

Nov. 23 and 24

City Hall Closed
Thanksgiving

Nov. 28 • 6:30 p.m.

City Council Meeting
City Hall, 2nd Floor

Dec. 5 • 6:30 p.m.

New Council Sworn In
City Hall, 2nd Floor

Dec. 22, 25 and 29

City Hall Closed
Christmas/New Years

Dec. 31 • 10 p.m.

“Eve on the Ave” Party
Downtown Jackson

*City Council members begin their new term on December 1. (See Pg. 5)

Leaf Pickup Continues

Additional Round Scheduled for All Residents

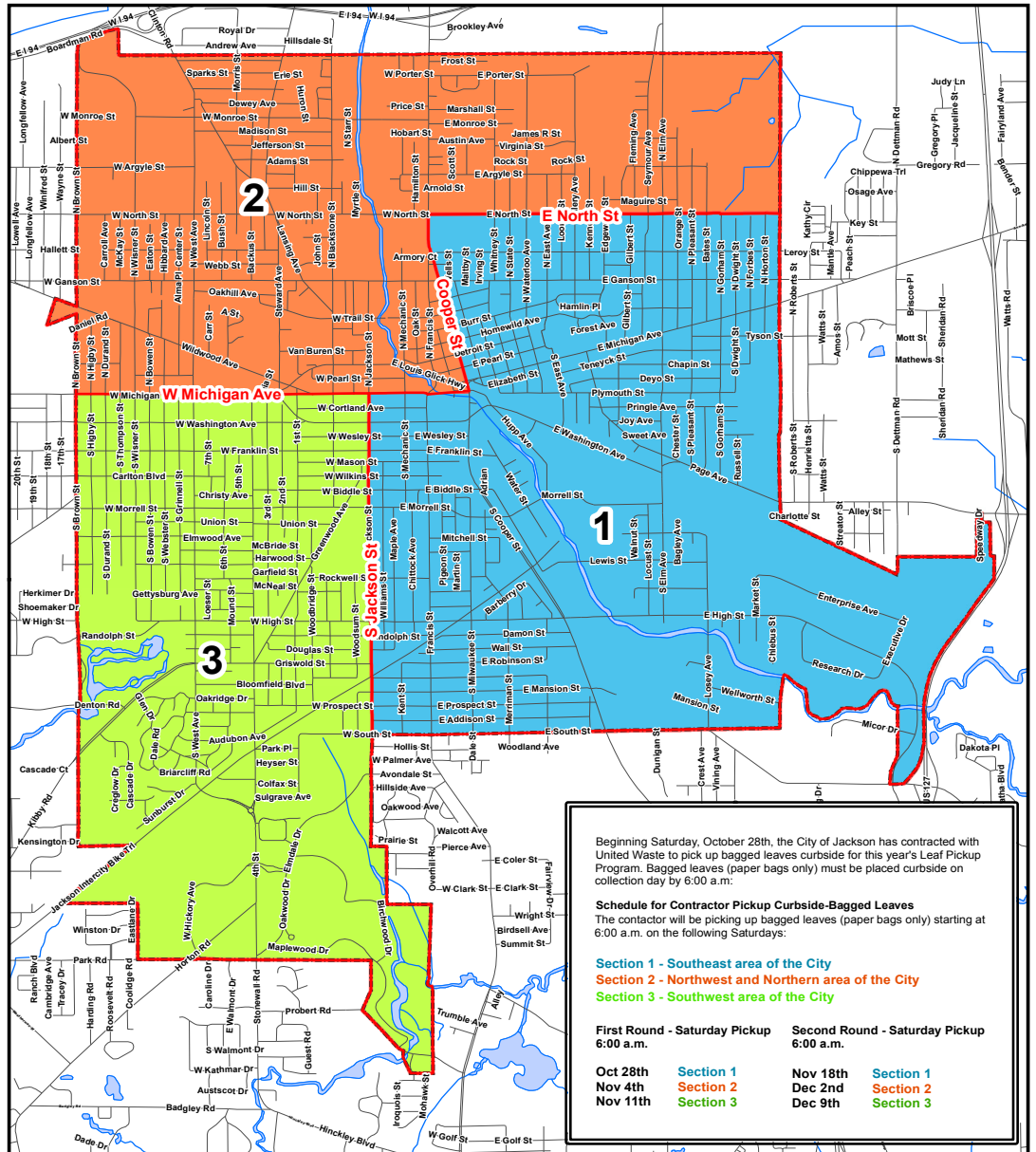
All residents within the City of Jackson will have another chance to have their bagged autumn leaves picked up curbside this fall, with three more scheduled pickup days scheduled throughout the City.

This is the third year the City will have contractors pick up bagged leaves, and already three pickup days have occurred in three separate sections within the community.

Residents must use 30-gallon paper bags to bag their leaves, and are required to put them on the curb in front of their residence the Friday before their sched-

uled pickup day. Residents living in Section 1 on the map below will have their next pickup day on Saturday, Nov. 18. Those in Section 2 will have their pickup day on Dec. 2, and Section 3 will have the final pickup day on Dec. 9.

“Since this is the third year we’re collecting bagged leaves, things are going smoothly,” Public Information Officer Will Forgrave said. **“We’ll continue to look for ways to best serve City residents at an affordable cost to taxpayers. We’re happy to announce this system is working, and working well.”**



JPAC RESTORES SCULPTURE

After the Weatherwax Foundation donated grant funds to the City of Jackson to both beautify Ella Sharp Park and restore the Summer Night Tree sculpture in downtown Jackson, officials got to work on the project.

Through private donations and grants, Jackson Public Arts Commission members worked to have the sculpture restored to its former glory. The sculpture, created by artist Louis Nevelson, was sandblasted to remove old paint and rust, before it was again painted.

Since its installations in 1978, the sculpture has become a cultural asset to the City of Jackson, and its restoration was a top priority for JPAC, officials said.

The sculpture - last appraised at \$4 million by a New York art appraising firm - is expected to last another 30 years after its restoration.

A crowd gathered at the sculpture in late October to celebrate its restoration. At



A crowd gathered at the Summer Night Tree sculpture in downtown Jackson last month to celebrate its restoration.

the celebration, the Phil and Pat Willis Foundation presented a \$5,000 check to the Jackson Public Arts Commission for this continued efforts to foster and enhance public art in the City of Jackson.

Organizations that contributed to the restoration

include the Weatherwax Foundation, the James A. & Faith Knight Foundation, the Phil and Kim Curtis Foundation, the Hurst Foundation, the Phil and Pat Willis Foundation, the Samuel Camp Foundation and numerous private donors.

"We as a City should be

very proud to have Summer Night Tree as part of our metropolis, as it adds to our town in a very special way," local artist and professor Tom McMillen-Oakley said at the ceremony. "What Nevelson ended up creating was something very novel and beautiful."

A Farewell Message from Bill Jors

While the November 7 election within the City of Jackson did not turn out the way I and my supporters had hoped, I have no regrets on what I - along with City officials and employees - accomplished these last two years.

I began this journey as a concerned citizen who wanted his streets swept and his leaves picked up - I wanted to beautify Jackson and promote the community with a positive message.

I believe I accomplished what I set out to do during my short time on City Council.

I look forward to seeing what the new council has in store for area residents, and I hope that we continue to move the City of Jackson in a positive direction. While in the private sector, I'll continue to be a champion for the City and promote new home ownership and small businesses as an official at County National

Bank.

I hope to continue to see business growth, job opportunities and economic development in our community. Whether I'm watching the City grow from a mayor's desk at City Hall or my home, I have faith in the direction this community is headed.

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

Bill Jors



DID YOU KNOW?

New Art Exhibit at CP Federal City Square

In addition to restoring the Summer Night Tree Sculpture in downtown Jackson, officials at the Jackson Public Arts Commission have stayed busy this season working to update the exhibit at CP Federal City Square.

Recently, the art exhibit on the north side of the structure was updated to include artwork from Jackson-native Philip C. Curtis and textile artist Marie Fisher.

“It’s truly an honor to have the opportunity to display and share fine art of this caliber,” JPAC

Chairwoman Stacy Harrison said. “Through his education and love of art, Curtis developed a masterful technique that needs to be seen to be appreciated.”

Harrison said the work sets a “very high standard” for future exhibits and promotes an altruistic tone for sharing the wealth and beauty of our regional history and artwork.

Curtis was born in Jackson, and was first exposed to painting while a student at Albion College. Following his education locally, he graduated from the School of Fine Art at Yale

University in 1936. In 1937 he helped to establish the Phoenix Art Center, which later became the Phoenix Art Museum.

In 1949, at the age of 42, Curtis had his first solo exhibition at the San Francisco Museum of Art.

His artwork presents an imagined vision of Americana influenced by the magic world of the circus and by the artist’s memories of his childhood in Michigan, his biography reads.

The exhibit is set to be on display through the end of November.

MEET YOUR NEW COUNCIL

Following the election Nov. 7, a number of new faces as well as familiar faces in new roles will begin their terms as City Council members Dec. 1. Elections were organized for five out of the seven seats within Jackson City Council.

Former 6th Ward Councilman **Derek Dobies** won his bid to serve as Jackson’s mayor, defeating incumbent mayor Bill Jors by a vote of 2,259 to 1,818.

The mayor serves a two-year term while council members serve four-year terms.

Replacing Dobies in his seat within the 6th Ward will be **Colleen Sullivan**, who defeated three challengers Nov. 7. Sullivan garnered 709 votes while Jeffrey Feahr, John Wilson and Matthew Swartzlander earned 489, 230 and 66 votes, respectively.

In the 5th Ward, incumbent **Andrew Frounfelker** defeated challenger Susan Murdie 251-73.

Challenger **Jeremy Alexander** won the 3rd Ward seat by a tally of 331-310 to beat incumbent Daniel Greer.

In the 1st Ward, incumbent **Arlene Robinson** won with roughly 85 percent of the vote.

The new City Council will begin their terms Dec. 1, and take their public oaths of office at the Dec. 5 City Council meeting (See Pg. 3).



The Philip C. Curtis art exhibit at the CP Federal City Square in downtown Jackson will be on display through November.



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