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Get Outside
this Spring

- page 2

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Welcome to J.A.C.K.S. —

Jackson Area Collaborative Knowledge Source. Our mission is to inspire community unification and promote the voices of organizations and individuals in Jackson County through a collaborative monthly publication.

Learn more at
www.jacksfamilyguide.org

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EST. 2015

Learn to Love Your Hometown

Take a Hike this Spring



By Val Herr

Spring is a magical time in Michigan. Not only have we survived winter, but signs of re-birth are everywhere. My spring flowers are starting to show, buds are on the trees, and the grass grows greener every day. Spring is also a time for me to crawl out of my long winter hibernation and get back into the world. While I appreciate every season, the cold of winter is my least favorite, and I tend to burrow in.

I'm making my list of all the things I want to do to experience our amazing town and enjoy spring. Jackson County is blessed with many places that allow us to enjoy spring, be a part of our community, and appreciate it.

Get off the couch and take a hike! Here are just a few of the areas in our community that you can enjoy.

1. The Dahlem: Located at 7117 S. Jackson Road, Dahlem features 5 miles of diverse trails, including a trail for those with mobility limitations. Featured along

the trails are ponds, marshes, forests, and lots of wildlife. With every step, you will see picturesque scenes of spring. While enjoying the trails, be sure to take time to listen. Birds, frogs, squirrels, and much more make their homes at Dahlem. This is truly one of Jackson's gemstones.

2. MacCready Reserve: Located at 9243 Skiff Lake Road, Liberty Township, the MacCready Reserve is an escape from reality. With over 400 acres of wilderness that includes almost 7 miles of trails, you really can escape into nature. Feel free to bring your favorite four-legged walking companion.

3. Falling Waters Trail: This paved trail that connects the City of Jackson to Concord has many entry points. This trail is perfect if you are looking for a paved trail to walk, run, or bike. Throughout the trail, you will enjoy native plants and animals.

If you are interested in learning more about Jackson's trails visit Experience Jackson's website. You can request free trial guides to help you plan your experiences: <https://www.experiencejackson.com/things-to-do/get-outdoors/trails>.

Picture a Bright Future - **APPLY NOW!**

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NEW!
SNAP benefits are now accepted for eligibility!

Who Qualifies:

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- Children with disabilities
- Families experiencing homelessness

Community Action Agency
Head Start & Early Head Start

Learn about our programs for the rest of the family at www.caajlh.org

JACKSON: (517) 888-3768
greatstartjackson.org

HILLSDALE: (517) 257-9287
greatstarthillsdale.com

Great Start Readiness Program
Michigan's Early Childhood Program

Community Action Agency is an equal opportunity employer and provider.



A Tea Party -

Just in time for Mother's Day!

Join us Saturday, May 11, 2024

11 - 1 pm @ Cascades Manor House

Guests will enjoy delicious teas and hors d'oeuvres, a fun activity, and a silent auction!

Reserve a table for 8 - \$300

Sponsor a Table for 8 - \$500

(Table, screen and program recognition, and table swag)

Individual Tickets - \$40 each (Y members)

\$50 each (Community)

Purchase Tickets @ bit.ly/teaandtotes tickets

Proceeds benefit the Jackson YMCA's Youth Programs.

New Online System Improving Recreation Registration in Jackson

By Aaron Dimick,
City of Jackson
Public Information Officer



Signing up for Jackson recreation programs has never been easier, thanks to a big improvement from the City's Parks and Recreation Department. A new online recreation registration system recently went live and is modernizing the way residents sign up for programs,

reserve facilities, and get information. The mobile-friendly portal is accessed through the Parks and Recreation section of the City website, cityofjackson.org. All available programs, events, and facilities are ready to view on the site. By creating an account through the website, residents can save information and easily sign up for programs with a few clicks. This will make registering more convenient for parents with children who frequently participate in programs. Parks



and Recreation staff say the new system improves communication with residents. Rosters, schedules, notices, and cancellations can all be sent to participants via text messages and emails through the system. There's also a calendar feature to keep track of activities. The Parks and Recre-

ation Department previously relied on in-person registration and payments. "We found that was a barrier for some residents to sign up for programs," said Parks and Recreation Director Kelli Hoover. "This new system means more convenient access for residents to get active and take advantage of all that our

wonderful programs and beautiful parks have to offer!" A video that explains how the new system works is available on the City's YouTube page. Paper forms and in-person registration will still be available at the Parks and Recreation Department, 5th Floor of Jackson City Hall.

Nonprofit Network Celebrates 25 Years of Impactful Collaboration with Nonprofits

Contributed by the
Nonprofit Network

Nonprofit Network proudly announces its 25th-anniversary milestone. To mark this remarkable journey and express gratitude to the communities it serves, Nonprofit Network is thrilled to unveil a series of no-cost workshops focused on their most popular and impactful sessions that focus on nonprofit success.

The first workshop, titled "Foundations of Board Governance," will kick off

on April 1, 2024, at the Commonwealth Commerce Center in downtown Jackson, MI, offering invaluable insights and strategies for nonprofit boards to strengthen their governance practices. In May, they will offer Board Recruitment and Orientation; in June, there will be HR and Policy Basics; and in September, there will be a Grant Writing Basics event. Seating capacity is limited, so please register to reserve your space at [www.](http://www.nonprofnetwork.org)

[nonprofnetwork.org](http://www.nonprofnetwork.org). These no-cost workshops are designed to equip nonprofit leaders, board members, and stakeholders with the knowledge and tools necessary to enhance their organization and governance and achieve sustainable growth. Regina Pinney, Executive Director, shares, "As we celebrate 25 years of empowering nonprofits, we are excited to launch this workshop series as a testament to our enduring com-

mitment to the sector. Our mission has always been to support nonprofits in fulfilling their vital missions, and these workshops represent a continuation of their mission by providing accessible resources and guidance on board governance." Nonprofit Network, a capacity-building center, is a leading nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting and strengthening nonprofits' capacity to achieve their missions effectively. Formerly the Jackson Non-

profit Support Center, the Nonprofit Network was started 25 years ago by the foundations in the Jackson community to ensure that nonprofits had a trusted partner, providing resources, training, and expertise to empower nonprofits and drive positive change in communities. For more information and to register for these in-person events, please visit www.nonprofnetwork.org/event-list. Registration is open, and seating is limited!

KINDERGARTEN ROUNDUP

Young Five Kindergarten & Kindergarten
Tuesday • April 16 • 8:30 a.m.-7:00 p.m.
Wednesday • April 17 • 8:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.

Paragon Charter Academy
3750 McCain Road, Jackson, MI
Call 517-750-9500 for an appointment.

PARAGON CHARTER ACADEMY

Jackson County Animal Shelter's Adoptable Pets: Rudy and Kimchi

Contributed by the
Jackson County
Animal Shelter

Rudy

Meet Rudy, a delightful 5-year-old American Staffordshire mix. Rudy was brought in as a stray and initially suffered from some hair loss due to ringworm. However, he has made a remarkable recovery, and his fur is rapidly regrowing. Rudy is a happy pup and is always glad to see everyone. He plays well with some of his kennel neighbors, is highly treat-motivated, and can learn some basic commands quickly. Instead of a chocolate rabbit this Easter, how about a new chocolate pup? Dog adoptions require an application, which you can find online here. The availability date is when the dog becomes JCAS property; however, any necessary medical procedures may cause a slight delay in the adoption process. A mandatory meet & greet with your dog is essential. A cat room

walk-through is available to test reactions. Dogs will be placed with approved applicants, and the adoption fee is \$150 for medium/large dogs and \$250 for puppies/small dogs, which includes vaccinations, microchip, and sterilization.

Kimchi

Meet Kimchi, a stunning long-haired brown and black tiger cat. She was

ments can be jerky or uncoordinated, causing a loss of balance. She will have a normal life expectancy, it is not contagious, and most cats learn to adapt to their condition. Come meet this lovely gold-eyed girl today at the Jackson County Animal Shelter, 3370 Spring Arbor Rd., Jackson, Michigan. Cat adoption fees are \$60 for one cat and \$80 for two, which includes applicable tests, vaccines, and spaying/neutering. Any necessary medical procedures may slightly postpone an adoption.

While visiting the shelter is always recommended, you can also submit an online cat application here, fax it to 517-780-4750, or email it to animalshelter@mijackson.org. For more information, visit our website at mijackson.org/579/Animal-Shelter. Find us on Facebook or view all pets on Petango.com-Shelter Details. Current Shelter Hours: Mon, Tue, Wed, Fri 10:00-4:30, Thu 10-7, Sat 10-4:30.



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Exploring the Senses: The Importance of Sensory Play

By Katie McCollom,
Community Action Agency

When you engage with your child in play, do you find yourselves running around, coloring, pretending, and using your imagination? Play looks so different for all children, but the most important part is that the child is exploring! Children learn best through active engagement, whether observing, listening, or participating in an activity. Sensory play is a wonderful way for children to play and learn! It uses the senses to promote cognitive development, language learning, and motor skills. Embracing this type of play can help set the foundation for positive learning for their whole lives!

What is Sensory Play?

Sensory play is any play-based learning activity that stimulates children's senses of touch, taste, smell, sight, hearing, body awareness, and balance. Children's senses are usually underdeveloped at birth. As children grow and interact with the world around them, their sensory system matures, ultimately supporting the rapid brain development that occurs in infancy.

Sensory play activates a child's senses as they engage in specific activities that encourage them to learn. Everyone learns differently, and sensory play is a great way to identify the individual learning styles each child has. For example, if a child gravitates toward playing with food with their hands or feeling around in sensory bins, they are most likely a kinesthetic learner. Or, if they love story time, listening to music, or are great at call-and-response activities, they could be an auditory learner. Or, if a child likes to identify colors and patterns, they could be a visual learner.

Why is Sensory Play Important?

Sensory learning has a host of benefits that affect the ongoing development and well-being of children. Below are some of the top benefits you can expect from this type of play.

Fosters Brain Development

Promoting brain development in young children will help children throughout their lives as they grow. Sensory play activities stimulate the five primary senses—touch, taste, smell, sight, and hearing. A child's brain embraces tons of cells known as neurons and nerve connections

known as synapses. These cells and nerve connections facilitate learning and adaptation. For example, when a child touches an object, their brain processes the touch as rough or smooth. Then, the brain sends signals to the body through the nervous system.

Supports Cognitive Development

Cognitive development refers to how children think, explore, and make sense of the world around them. Sensory play is a great way to promote cognitive development, it supports learning through exploration, curiosity, problem-solving, and creativity by building a mind-body connection. Activities like finger painting and playing musical instruments stimulate the mind and build nerve connections in the brain, which will help make learning and retaining information easier as they grow.

Promotes Language Development

Sensory play can engage multiple senses at once, providing rich opportunities for language development as it allows children to expand and explore new vocabulary words that are relevant to what they are experiencing firsthand. As they're playing, teachers can introduce new words to them and give them in-the-moment context. For example, as children explore sensory bins, you can identify what each item in the bin is, define it, and ask them to repeat each object's name back to you. This will help instill the new words they've learned, which will more effectively expand their vocabulary.

Encourages Motor Skills Development

Sensory play activities help children develop crucial motor skills for physical strength and movement. Children use motor skills daily to crawl, walk, and perform tasks like zipping and unzipping. Fine motor skills are necessary for tasks requiring small muscle movements like tying a shoe. Gross motor skills are crucial for activities that require large muscle movements like jumping and running. Sensory play activities like working with play dough and finger painting are excellent for developing fine motor skills. These activities enable children to develop the ability to use small muscle groups and coordinate movements. On the other hand, sensory play activities like jumping on a trampoline promote gross motor skills development.

Promotes Social-Emotional Development

Social-emotional development involves regulating emotions and establishing positive relationships with peers and adults. Sensory play activities like water play or making music can have a calming effect on children and support emotional regulation. When children can effectively manage their emotions, they are better able to problem-solve, collaborate, and interact cooperatively with their peers. Activities like throwing a ball, playing tag, and playing follow-the-leader are great ways to promote social-emotional development.

Simple Activities to Do at Home

1. Food Exploration: Have your child touch their food and learn various textures, tastes, and smells. Infants and young toddlers will enjoy the additional benefits of tactile explorations as they use their hands to eat.

2. Outside Obstacle Course: Set up a fun outside course that will have your child walking, running, and jumping, such as jumping over rocks, walking backward, spinning, etc.

3. Make Music: Let your child explore with pots and pans and wood spoons and have your child learn a pattern or make a song. Simply add singing and movements to the song for added sensory engagement.

4. Cook with Your Child: Have your child help you in the kitchen by making something - maybe bake a cake!


5. Water Play: Fill buckets and bins with water, food coloring, and bubbles, and let your child's imagination wander.

6. Frozen Toys: Try to freeze toys simply by filling a bowl with water, placing toys inside, and popping them in the freezer for 2 hours. Then, have your child get the toys out!

7. Digging or Gardening: Allowing your child to dig in the dirt or mud is amazing sensory fun! Learn what's in the dirt, how to plant, etc.


8. Finger Painting: Get some paint and use your finger as the brush, and paint a picture.

Our sensory system is what helps us learn and take in the world around us. The more practice and exposure we have to different sensory experiences, the more developed our senses become. Sensory play is essential to the development of a young child and can be incorporated into simple day-to-day activities. It supports all areas of development, and it promotes creativity, confidence, and curiosity, which are all necessary for a positive learning experience!



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Planning for the Fourth Trimester: Support for New Moms

By Dr. Meaghan S. Brent,
DC, CACCP
Brent Family Chiropractic



A typical pregnancy is divided into three twelve-week periods called trimesters. Many women plan for all the things they need for a baby, but what about the “Fourth Trimester?” The fourth trimester is the period of time after giving birth. The body is still going through just as many changes as the other three trimesters. During the fourth trimester, the mother’s body is healing from birth, adapting to changing hormones, creating breast milk for breastfeeding, and taking on many other physical and mental stressors. After giving birth, typically, all attention turns to the new baby. Everything the baby is doing is being closely monitored, but what about the mother? A

routine postpartum visit is typically scheduled for six weeks after childbirth. That leaves the new mother with six weeks of juggling all the new emotions, healing, new aches and pains, and questions and challenges associated with caring for a newborn. Most women would benefit from closer follow-up and a supporting community around them. Preparing for birth - and the fourth trimester - should be about taking care of the new mother too. Creating a plan and knowing what resources are available ahead of time will enhance this phase of life for the new mother. Dr. Meaghan Brent’s top recommendations for areas of support during the fourth trimester are chiropractic care, lactation consultants, postpartum doulas, mom’s groups, pelvic floor therapists, and yoga. Chiropractic Care Postpartum chiropractic care benefits mother

and baby by reducing physical and mental stress, reducing aches associated with holding, changing, and feeding a newborn, and other physical pains that may have occurred from giving birth. Addressing posture and other mobility issues helps reduce tension and promote relaxation, which is particularly important to new mothers who may be experiencing a heightened level of stress and anxiety. Lactation Consultants and Postpartum Doulas This team can provide valuable information and support, problem solve, and provide reassurance. Some postpartum doulas may even offer some needed relief with day or night time help with the newborn to allow the new mother time to rest! Lactation consultants and doulas offer hands on, direct support without judgement to help empower the new mother, offer encouragement, and instill confidence.

Pelvic Floor Therapists Pelvic floor therapy offers comprehensive care to help women recover from childbirth, restore pelvic floor function, and improve quality of life during the postpartum period and beyond. It’s an essential component of postpartum care for women experiencing pelvic floor issues such as pain, organ prolapse, incontinence, or bladder leakage. **Moms Groups** Finding a community of people who are in the same phase of life, walking through the same daily challenges helps provide empathetic support and encouragement. This can be a fantastic group for ideas and resources and long-term friendships may develop! Having a place to talk (and even cry) with other supportive people may be just what the new mom needs! **Postpartum Yoga** Yoga classes can help reduce stress mentally and

physically. This can be a gentle way to reintroduce exercise and provide an opportunity for quiet time, release of tension, and toning of the muscles. Postpartum yoga offers a holistic approach to physical and emotional well-being, helping women navigate the transition to motherhood with strength, grace, and mindfulness. Establishing a community of resources for the fourth trimester can significantly contribute to the overall well-being of both mother and baby. Providing everything the new baby needs is typically the focus, and many new mothers may neglect their own needs. Making sure the new mother is supported is essential to maintain their physical and emotional health! Check out the pregnancy and postpartum resources offered at Brent Family Chiropractic! More information can be found at <https://www.brentfamilychiropractic.com/>.

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Emma Scholfield Named Recipient of MAB Jamie McKibbin Memorial Scholarship

*Contributed by
McKibbin Media Group*
Emma Scholfield (a.k.a. Emma Rae), midday host on McKibbin Media Group’s 99.5 FM The Dale in Hillsdale, Mich., has recently been announced as the recipient of the Michigan Association of Broadcasters (MAB) Jamie McKibbin Memorial Broadcasting Scholarship.

Scholfield received recognition of the award at the MAB’s annual Student Broadcast Awards Celebration at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Lansing on Monday, March 18.

Scholfield is currently a broadcast student at the University of Michigan. She has served as host of “The Middays with Emma Rae” on 99.5 The Dale, Hillsdale’s country station, since early 2022.

“Congratulations to Emma for being selected as

the recipient of this year’s Jamie McKibbin Memorial Broadcasting Scholarship,” McKibbin Media Group President/Owner and Jamie’s wife Katina McKibbin said. “Jamie was a big believer in recruiting the next generation of young broadcasters in Michigan so I think he would have been proud of Emma and what she has accomplished thus far in her career. She has been a big part of our success with 99.5 FM The Dale in Hillsdale, while also going to college full-time at UM for broadcasting. She is a deserving honoree for the award.”

The MAB Jamie McKibbin Memorial Broadcasting Award was created after the passing of Jamie in November of 2020. The scholarship is awarded to a worthy student seeking a career in broadcasting annually by the MAB.

For more information about the MAB, visit www.michiganmedia.com.

About McKibbin Media Group
McKibbin Media Group (MMG) was founded by the late Jamie McKibbin (1977-2020) and his wife, Katina McKibbin, in December of 2019. MMG currently holds six local radio stations in its portfolio, providing quality news, sports and weather coverage, plus music and entertainment to tens of thousands of listeners in the Jackson, Hillsdale and surrounding communities in Michigan. MMG also provides digital and social media services, plus hosts a variety of community events each year. For more information on MMG and its stations, visit www.K1053.com, www.wkhm.com or www.RadioHillsdale.com.

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Application: Completed scholarship application and essay written by applicant.
• An official cumulative transcript through the most recent term.
• Copy of the front page of the last two most recent Federal family tax returns.
• Financial Information Summary form signed and sent to the institution you plan to attend.
For more details, read the application instructions thoroughly.
Award: Up to \$5,000
Deadline: April 15, 2024
Application: <https://www.sigmundfoundation.org/scholarships>

Jim & Kathy Desy Work Experience & Scholarship For the Trades
Eligibility:
• Graduating senior from

a high school located in Jackson County.
• A desire to work for Lammers Heating & Air Conditioning as a paid intern during the summer of 2024 and/or acceptance to secondary education program focusing on HVAC
Description:
The following must be returned to Lammers Heating & Air Conditioning via email or postmarked on or before April 15:
• Fully completed scholarship application.
• At least one letter of recommendation from an adult other than a family member.
• Copy of your most recent high school transcript.
Emailed applications should be sent as a PDF to lammerheating@lammerheating.com and have "Desy scholarship" in the subject line.
Mailed applications should be sent to: Lammers Heating & Air Conditioning
Attn: Desy Scholarship
2520 Lansing Ave.
Jackson, MI 49202
Award: \$1,000
Deadline: April 15, 2024
Application: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdcsWDI8z6grqMCH9QIRx-uXFyjTD48ZgjQ5N-NRakR0QjXFsg/viewform>

Gloria Barron Prize for Young Heroes
Eligibility:
The Barron Prize welcomes applications from public-spirited young people who are:
• Between the ages of 8 and 18 and a permanent resident, currently residing in the U.S.A. or Canada.
• Currently working on an inspiring service project or have done so within the past 12 months.
• Working as an individual to lead their service work.
*The Barron Prize does not accept applications from large groups of young people.
Description:
The Gloria Barron Prize for Young Heroes honors outstanding young lead-

ers who have made a significant positive difference to people and our planet. Their leadership and courage make them true heroes - and inspirations to us all.
Award: \$10,000
Deadline: April 15, 2024 by 5:00 pm M.T.
Application: <https://e-an-ca.org/Scholarships>

BHW Scholarship
Eligibility:
This scholarship is available to women who are pursuing an undergraduate or master's degree and are majoring in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics during the 2024 school year.
Description:
The BWH Group offers a scholarship for women who

are pursuing an undergraduate or master's degree and are majoring in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM fields) during the current school year. Applicants must write an essay between 500-800 words on either of the following topics:
• Tell us about your favorite app and what you like about it.
• Tell us about a time an app played a significant role in improving your day.
Award: \$3,000
Deadline: April 15, 2024
Application: <https://thebhwgroup.com/scholarship>
For the full list of monthly scholarships, please visit the College and Career Access Center's website at jacksoncac.org/

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2024 Kindergarten & Young Fives Round-Up

Join us at one of our JPS Elementary Schools!

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|----------|-----------------|
| • Cascades Elementary | April 15 | 5:00 - 6:30 pm |
| • Dibble Elementary | April 16 | 5:30 - 7:00 pm |
| • Hunt Elementary | April 18 | 9:30 - 11:00 am |
| • John R. Lewis Elementary | April 22 | 5:00 - 6:30 pm |
| • JPS Montessori Elementary | April 25 | 5:30 - 7:00 pm |
| • Northeast Elementary | April 23 | 5:30 - 7:00 pm |
| • Sharp Park Academy | April 24 | 5:30 - 7:00 pm |

- Please arrive early as program will begin promptly!
- Prizes & Food!
- Community partners will be available to serve you!
- Free T-Shirt upon enrollment!



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