

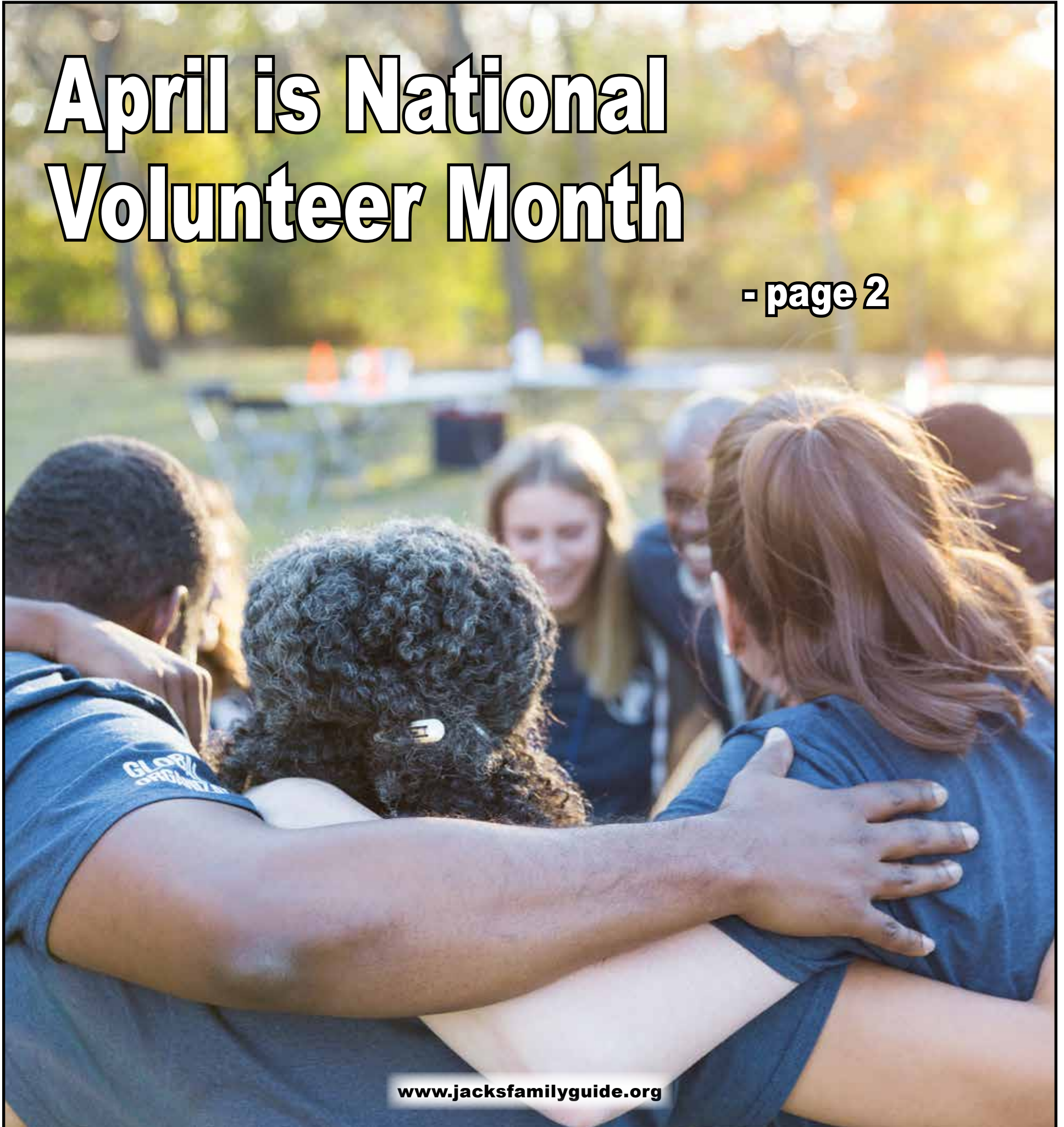
FREE

J.A.C.K.S.O.N

JACKSON AREA COLLABORATIVE KNOWLEDGE SOURCE

April is National Volunteer Month

- page 2



www.jacksfamilyguide.org



2026 MARK YOUR CALENDAR

- APRIL 5-18 CALENDAR CONTEST Online
- MAY 30 PAWS IN THE PARK 5K Cascades Park
- JULY 11 BLOOMS & BREWS CHS Grounds

For More Information: www.chspets.org

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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It is the responsibility of the submitting business or organization to obtain the proper photo release. The Jackson Area Collaborative Knowledge Source is a collaborative guide. Stories and articles published herein are not written by us.

Find us at one of your favorite area businesses!



National Volunteer Month

Across Jackson, small acts of care are happening every day. Neighbors are giving their time to support others, often without recognition. A meal is served, a student is mentored, a trail is cleared, a dog is walked. These moments add up, quietly shaping the kind of community Jackson continues to be.

April's National Volunteer Month is a chance to recognize the people who show up and to highlight the many ways residents can get involved. Whether you have an hour to give or are looking for something more consistent, there are opportunities across Jackson County that meet a wide range of interests.

Here are a few places to start. This list is by no means exhaustive:

Food and basic needs: Jackson Community Food Pantry, The Salvation Army Jackson, Interfaith Shelter, City of Zion Ministries

Housing and support services: My-Place Jackson, Habitat for Humanity of Jackson County

Youth and family services: Jackson Public Schools, Council for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Jackson County

Seniors: Thome Pace, Arbor Hospice, Southern Care Hospice, John George Home

Environment and community spaces: Grow Jackson, People for the Parks and Trails, Dahlem Center

Animals: Cascades Humane Society, Jackson County Animal Shelter

Libraries and community enrichment: Jackson District Library

These opportunities range from hands-on work like preparing meals, building homes, and maintaining parks to mentorship, companionship, and behind-the-scenes support. Many are flexible, making it easy to get involved in a way that fits your schedule.

For those not sure where to begin, United Way of Jackson County maintains a regularly updated list of local opportunities and helps connect volunteers with organizations based on interest and availability.

To explore more or sign up, visit: unitedforscmi.org/jackson-county/volunteer

As Jackson moves into spring, volunteering offers a simple way to give back and be part of what keeps the community strong.

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Kitten Season is Here: How Cascades Humane Society Can Help

Contributed by
Cascades Humane Society

Each spring and summer, animal shelters across the country prepare for an annual influx of tiny, vulnerable lives, kitten season. As temperatures rise, so does the number of kittens being born, often in unexpected places thanks to what many jokingly call the "cat distribution system." Whether it's a stray cat choosing your garage as a nursery or a litter appearing in your barn, you may find yourself caring for kittens.

While these moments can be heartwarming, they can also be overwhelming. That's where Cascades Humane Society (CHS) is here to help.

Kittens Need Their Mothers, When Possible

The best place for kittens, especially in their earliest weeks, is with their mother. Kittens should remain with their mom for at least eight weeks to receive critical nutrition, immune support, and social development. However, this ideal situation does not always happen. The good news is that if kittens are handled early enough, they can often be socialized and

grow into loving, adoptable companions.

Found Abandoned Kittens? Call Us First

If you come across what appears to be an abandoned litter, it is important to pause before intervening, as mother cats often leave temporarily to search for food. If you are certain the kittens have been abandoned, please give CHS a call. We have trained foster volunteers who specialize in caring for neonatal kittens.

Caring for a neonatal kitten is far more complex than simply feeding them every few hours. These fragile babies require frequent feedings, proper temperature regulation, and close monitoring. Without this level of care, they are at high risk of not surviving.

Common Health Concerns

Kittens born outdoors are especially vulnerable to illness, including upper respiratory infections (URI). Symptoms like crusted eyes, nasal discharge, sneezing, and lethargy can quickly become serious, especially in very young kit-

tens. Early medical care is critical, and CHS ensures kittens receive the treatment they need.

Fosters Make Lifesaving Work Possible

Our foster program is the backbone of our kitten season response. Foster homes provide a safe, low-stress environment, especially for pregnant cats. Without foster volunteers, we simply could not care for the number of kittens that need us each year.

Applications can be found at chspets.org or at our shelter at 1515 Carmen Drive.

A Final Note

Please do not give kittens away for free online. When kittens come through CHS, they receive comprehensive care, including spay or neuter services, vaccinations, and proper placement into safe, loving homes.

Kitten season can be challenging, but it is also an opportunity for our community to come together and make a difference. Whether you find kittens, foster them, or support our work, you are helping save lives, one tiny paw at a time.

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Jackson County Animal Shelter's Adoptable Pets: Haden, Jason, Shane, Phoebe

Contributed by the Jackson County Animal Shelter

Haden, Jason, & Shane

Calling all German Shepherd lovers! These three boys came from the same home after their owner sadly passed away and are now looking for new beginnings. They are all neutered males and may be adopted individually.

Pictured on the right is Haden, a five-year-old black shepherd (78 lbs) who is alert, observant, and friendly with other dogs. He showed curiosity around cats but quickly moved on. Shane, a two-year-old (87 lbs), is a classic tan-and-black shepherd with higher energy and a playful spirit. When the cats hissed, he respectfully backed away. Jason, three years old (86 lbs), is easy-going, dog-friendly, and showed little interest in cats.

All three are house-trained and enjoy spending time outdoors. German Shepherds are known for

their intelligence, loyalty, and energy, and each of these boys has the potential to make a wonderful companion. While only Haden is pictured, you can meet Shane and Jason by stopping by the shelter or visiting their website.

Come meet them at the Jackson County Animal Shelter. Apply online



at co.jackson.mi.us/Dog-Adoption-Application. Adoption fees are \$200-\$300 and include vaccinations, microchip, and sterilization.

Phoebe

Meet Phoebe, a six-year-old with a soft grey coat and beautiful yellow-green eyes. She was surrendered by her owner and is now looking for a loving home where she can settle in and be adored.

Phoebe has a wonder-

fully affectionate personality and truly enjoys being around people. She will happily greet visitors, often hopping up to say hello, and is always ready for attention. Her gentle nature and sweet demeanor make her an easy companion, whether you are relaxing at home or just looking for a friendly presence nearby.

With her soft fur, calm energy, and loving spirit, Phoebe is the kind of cat who quickly becomes part of the family. She would do well in a home that can give her the attention and affection she enjoys while providing a comfortable, safe space to call her own.

Phoebe is spayed and ready for adoption at the Jackson County Animal Shelter, 3370 Spring Arbor Rd. Adoption fees are \$60 for one cat or \$80 for two and include applicable tests, vaccinations, and spay or neuter.

Visit the shelter or apply online at co.jackson.mi.us to meet Phoebe today.



Cascades Humane Society's Pet of the Month

Contributed by Cascades Humane Society

Layla is a one-year-old pit mix with a sleek black-and-white coat and a lean, athletic build, weighing in at forty-eight pounds. Still very much a puppy at heart, she brings a playful energy and curiosity to everything she does. Layla can be a bit timid when meeting new people and appreciates a little time and patience as she gets comfortable, but that patience is well worth it. Once she begins to trust, Layla's affectionate and loving personality truly shines. She is eager to please, highly treat motivated, and would thrive with positive reinforcement training. With

her high energy level, she would do best in an active home where she can enjoy regular walks, playtime, and engaging activities that help her burn off energy



while building confidence. Layla is looking for a forever home where she can feel safe, continue to grow, and be loved for who she is. She is spayed, up to date on vaccinations, and microchipped, with an adoption fee of \$410. For more information on Layla, or any

of our other adoptable pets, please contact Cascades Humane Society at (517) 787-7387.

About the Cascades Humane Society

Organized and incorporated in 1952, Cascades Humane Society is dedicated to improving the lives of animals, promoting responsible pet ownership, and creating lasting connections between pets and families. If you are interested in donating, volunteering, or learning about other ways to support CHS, please call 517-787-7387 or email hgolightly@chspets.org to learn more.



2025

IMPACT

CHS

Cascades Humane Society

943

TOTAL ADOPTIONS

26,657

POUNDS OF PET FOOD GIVEN TO PETS IN NEED

1,761

CATS & DOGS SPAYED OR NEUTERED

6,301

VOLUNTEER HOURS

Joe Zessin Named MHSAA SEC White Division Swim Coach of the Year

Contributed by Jackson Public Schools

Jackson Public Schools (JPS) is proud to congratulate Joe Zessin on being named the MHSAA SEC White Division Swim Coach of the Year. The honor recognizes Coach Zessin's exceptional leadership, dedication to student-athletes, and commitment to building a program grounded in excellence, teamwork, and sportsmanship.

Under Coach Zessin's guidance, student-athletes

have demonstrated impressive progress in performance and character throughout the season. His coaching approach emphasizes consistent effort, strong fundamentals, and a positive team culture; values that align closely with JPS's mission to support student growth in and out of the pool.

Coach Zessin emphasized that the award reflects a team effort and strong community partnership.

"I'm grateful for the sup-

port of our community and the families who encourage our student-athletes every



step of the way," Zessin said. "I'm also truly grateful

for the support of the JPS administration, which helps supply the needs of our program and provides state-of-the-art facilities. Because of this high level of support, coaching is enjoyable, and it allows us to focus on helping students grow, compete, and represent JPS with pride." "Coach Zessin is known for his tireless work ethic, strong organizational leadership, and exceptional communication skills.," said Chris Hoover, Athletic Director for Jack-

son Public Schools. "He builds meaningful relationships with his athletes and consistently creates an environment where students feel supported, challenged, and valued. His ability to connect with young people and bring out their best, both in and out of the pool, is a hallmark of his coaching." JPS congratulates Coach Zessin and thanks him for the energy, mentorship, and high standards he brings to our schools and community. #ALLINFORJPS!

Phillip Thompson Named MHSAA SEC White Division Basketball Coach of the Year

Contributed by Jackson Public Schools

Jackson Public Schools (JPS) is proud to announce that Phillip Thompson has been named the MHSAA SEC White Division Basketball Coach of the Year. In his first year coaching at JPS, Thompson led the Jackson High School Boys Basketball program to a truly extraordinary season, earning both the SEC White Division Conference Championship and the Dis-

trict Championship.

From day one, Thompson expressed confidence that the program was ready for a breakthrough, pointing to a strong mix of young players with varsity experience and steady senior leadership. He also highlighted the passion and effort he saw in practice, setting the tone for a season built on consistent preparation, toughness, and belief.

Thompson, the son of two former basketball

players, has emphasized throughout the season that court confidence can translate far beyond athletics. His message to student-athletes has been consistent: use the lessons of competition to prepare for life after graduation, whether students go "pro or go corporate," and wherever their paths lead.

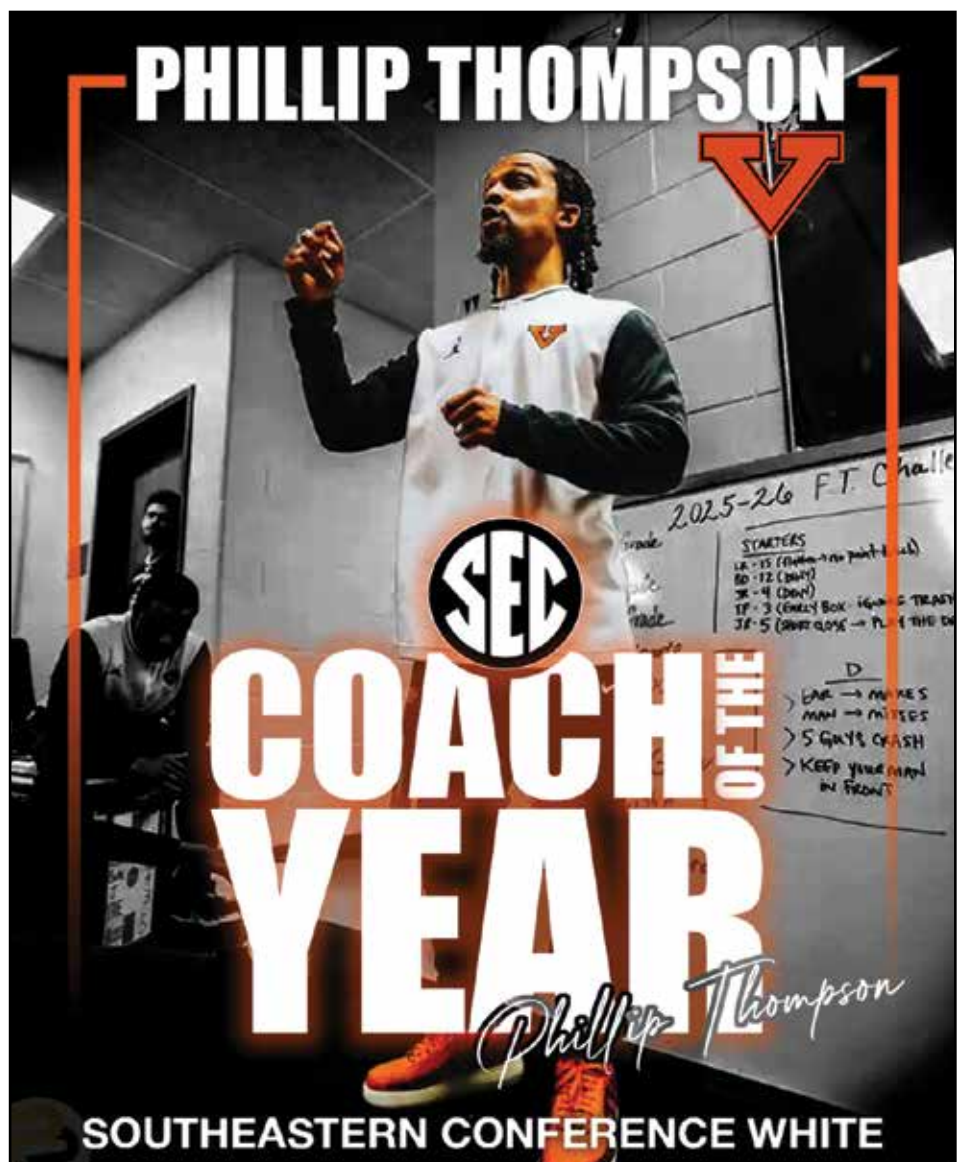
"Culture wins championships, and I am indebted to the work ethic and buy-in of our players this season.

Without their effort and focus, none of these achievements would be possible. They have made me a better coach, and I hope these lessons of competitive greatness stick with them for the rest of their lives." Thompson said.

Chris Hoover, Athletic Director for Jackson Public Schools, shared his enthusiasm, "We are grateful for the passion, integrity, and positive leadership Coach Thompson brings to our

school community and are excited about the continued growth of our program under his direction. Congratulations to Coach Thompson and our student-athletes on a tremendous season."

Jackson Public Schools congratulates Coach Thompson and the JHS Boys Basketball team on a championship season and thanks them for representing the district with pride, excellence, and integrity.



Photos courtesy of Jackson Public Schools

Money Makeover: Your Fresh Start Financial Spring-Cleaning Checklist

Contributed by
**TRUE Community
Credit Union**

Spring is a natural reset. While you're cleaning and organizing your home, take time to refresh your finances too – using this checklist to refocus your money for the months ahead.

Clear Financial Clutter

- Review all recurring subscriptions and cancel unused services
- Close or consolidate old checking or savings accounts
- Organize digital and paper financial documents
- Shred outdated statements you no longer need

The average consumer underestimates subscription spending by more than \$100 per month. Small recurring charges are easy to ignore, but they quietly drain cash flow over time.

Refresh Your Budget

- Review the last 60–90 days of spending
- Identify categories that increased
- Adjust spending targets to reflect current costs
- Set one realistic spending goal for next month

Most people set budgets once, and rarely revisit them. But income shifts, prices rise, and habits change. A quarterly review dramatically improves follow-through.

Create a Clear Debt Strategy

- List all balances, interest rates, and minimum payments
- Choose a payoff strategy (highest interest first or smallest balance first)
- Set up automatic minimum payments to avoid late fees
- Explore options if interest rates are slowing progress

Structured repayment options like a Debt Management Program may help simplify payments and potentially lower interest so more of your money goes toward principal.

Review Your Credit Reports

- Request your free reports at AnnualCreditReport.com
- Check for unfamiliar accounts
- Verify balances and payment history accuracy
- Dispute any inaccuracies you find

Regular reviews are one of the simplest ways to protect your financial reputation and catching mistakes protects your future borrowing power.

Strengthen Your Emergency Fund

- Confirm how much you currently have saved
- Set a short-term target (\$500–\$1,000)
- Set a long-term target (3–6 months of essentials)
- Automate a small recurring transfer - even \$25 helps

Unexpected expenses are one of the leading reasons people turn to high-interest credit or payday loans. Even a modest emergency cushion reduces reliance on costly borrowing.

Align Money With What Matters

- Write down one financial priority for the next 6–12 months
- Identify one action you can take this month
- Put a date on your calendar to review progress

People who write down specific financial goals are significantly more likely to achieve them than those who keep them in their heads. Written goals create accountability.

Support Makes Progress Easier

Use TRUE Community Credit Union's budgeting and savings tools, and consider free, confidential counseling from our partners at GreenPath Financial Wellness to build a personalized plan for paying off debt and strengthening your finances. Find our free financial wellness resources at TRUECCU.com.



CHS
Cascades Humane Society

PAWS IN THE PARK

5K RUN/WALK 1-MILE WOOF WALK

May 30, 2026 - Cascades Park
10:00am Start Time

Join us for our 9th annual 5k run/walk at Cascades Falls Park! Paws in the Park is one of Cascades Humane Society's largest fundraisers of the year. All donations and registration fees go straight to the animals in our care. The park is located at 1401 S Brown St, Jackson, MI 49203.

Register Now



5K Run/Walk - \$35
1-Mile Woolf Walk - \$25
Virtual 5K - \$40



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Lomar Advances Manufacturing with New Electric Machine Technology

By Becky Dorian,
Lomar Machine and Tool
Company

At Lomar Machine & Tool, we continue to build on our legacy of innovation with the introduction of electric-powered machinery—marking a significant step forward in efficiency, performance, and sustainability. As part of this transition, we are moving away from traditional hydraulic systems and introducing electric alternatives across our standard machine lineup.

A standout example of this advancement is our new S1112E, an electric crimping machine designed to support the evolving needs of the automotive industry. This machine is engineered to crimp a coupling onto hoses used to transport A/C coolant fluid throughout a vehicle.

While the application may seem straightforward, the technology behind it represents a meaningful shift. Traditional hydraulic machines rely on pumps, fluid systems, and ongoing maintenance to operate effectively. By eliminating hydraulics, the S1112E offers a cleaner, more streamlined solution. With fewer components to maintain, our customers can expect reduced downtime, lower maintenance costs, and improved overall reliability.

In addition to these efficiencies, the electric design significantly reduces noise levels on the shop

floor. This creates a more comfortable working environment for operators while also aligning with modern manufacturing standards that prioritize both productivity and employee well-being.

Our move to electric machinery reflects what we are hearing from customers across the industry—a growing demand for equipment that not only performs at a high level, but also minimizes maintenance requirements and improves day-to-day working conditions. The S1112E is designed to meet those expectations while delivering consistent, reliable results.

Our transition to electric machinery also aligns with a broader industry shift toward cleaner, more energy-efficient manufacturing processes. By removing the need for hydraulic fluid and reducing energy consumption associated with traditional systems, electric machines offer a more sustainable path forward.

For us, this shift is another example of our commitment to staying ahead of industry needs while continuing to provide practical, high-quality solutions.

As we continue to expand our electric machine offerings, the S1112E stands as a strong example of what's to come—combining precision, reliability, and innovation to support the next generation of manufacturing.



Photo courtesy of Lomar Machine and Tool Company

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College & Career Access Center, April Scholarships

The Michigan American Legion Skilled Trades Scholarship

Description: The American Legion Skilled Trades Scholarship aims to provide annual scholarships to deserving individuals – aged 17-21 years old – who are pursuing a construction/building, automotive, advanced manufacturing, or energy career either in a post-high school trades training/apprenticeship or earning a 2-year college degree in any of the areas listed above where the student would be certified at the state or federal

Eligibility:

- Must be a Michigan resident
- Applicants should be between the ages of 17 and 21 at the time of application
- Applicants must be pursuing a skilled trades career through post-high school trades training/apprenticeship OR through a 2-year college degree in a skilled trade
- It is preferred that the applicant be a descendant of a veteran, but it is not required.

Award Amount: \$1,000 will be awarded each year. 2 scholarships will be awarded

Deadline: Application and supporting material must be received by April 3, 2026, in order to be considered.

Sigmund Foundation Scholarship & Sigmund Scholarship for the Trades

Description: The Sigmund Foundation Scholarship and the Sigmund Scholarship for the Trades were established to provide financial assistance to needy residents of Jackson and Lenawee Counties in Michigan. **both scholarships are renewable**

Eligibility: For the Sigmund Foundation Scholarship:

- Jackson or Lenawee County resident
- Acceptance at an accredited college or university
- Proof of financial need
- Cumulative grade point average of 2.5 or higher
- Completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

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 Amount: Up to

\$5,000 for both scholarships
Deadline: April 15, 2026 for both scholarships

Jim & Kathy Desy Work Experience and Scholarship For the Trades

Description: The Jim and Kathy Desy Work Experience and Scholarship Program offered by Lammers Heating & Air Conditioning is currently seeking applicants. The program was established in 2022 and in 2026 will provide a scholarship and/or a three-month paid internship to a Jackson County high school senior who is seeking further education or a career in the HVAC field. The program is named to honor the husband and wife team that established Lammers Heating & Air Conditioning as a successful and trusted HVAC company in Jackson County starting in 1965. The \$1,000 scholarship portion of this program can be used for tuition, books and related fees.

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 2026 and/or acceptance to secondary education program focusing on HVAC

Required Items: 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 lammersheating@lammersheating.com and have "Desy scholarship" in the subject line

mersheating.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 Amount: \$1,000
Deadline: April 15, 2026

For the full list of monthly scholarships, please visit the College and Career Access Center's website at jacksoncac.org.

2026 KINDERGARTEN & YOUNG FIVES ROUND-UP

READY, SET, GROW!

AT ONE OF OUR JPS ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS!

• John R. Lewis Elementary	April 13	5:00 - 6:30 pm
• Dibble Elementary	April 14	5:30 - 7:00 pm
• Cascades Elementary	April 15	5:30 - 7:00 pm
• Hunt Elementary	April 16	5:30 - 7:00 pm
• Sharp Park Academy	April 20	5:30 - 7:00 pm
• JPS Montessori Elementary	April 22	5:00 - 6:30 pm
• Northeast Elementary	April 23	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!

For Information Call 517-841-2147