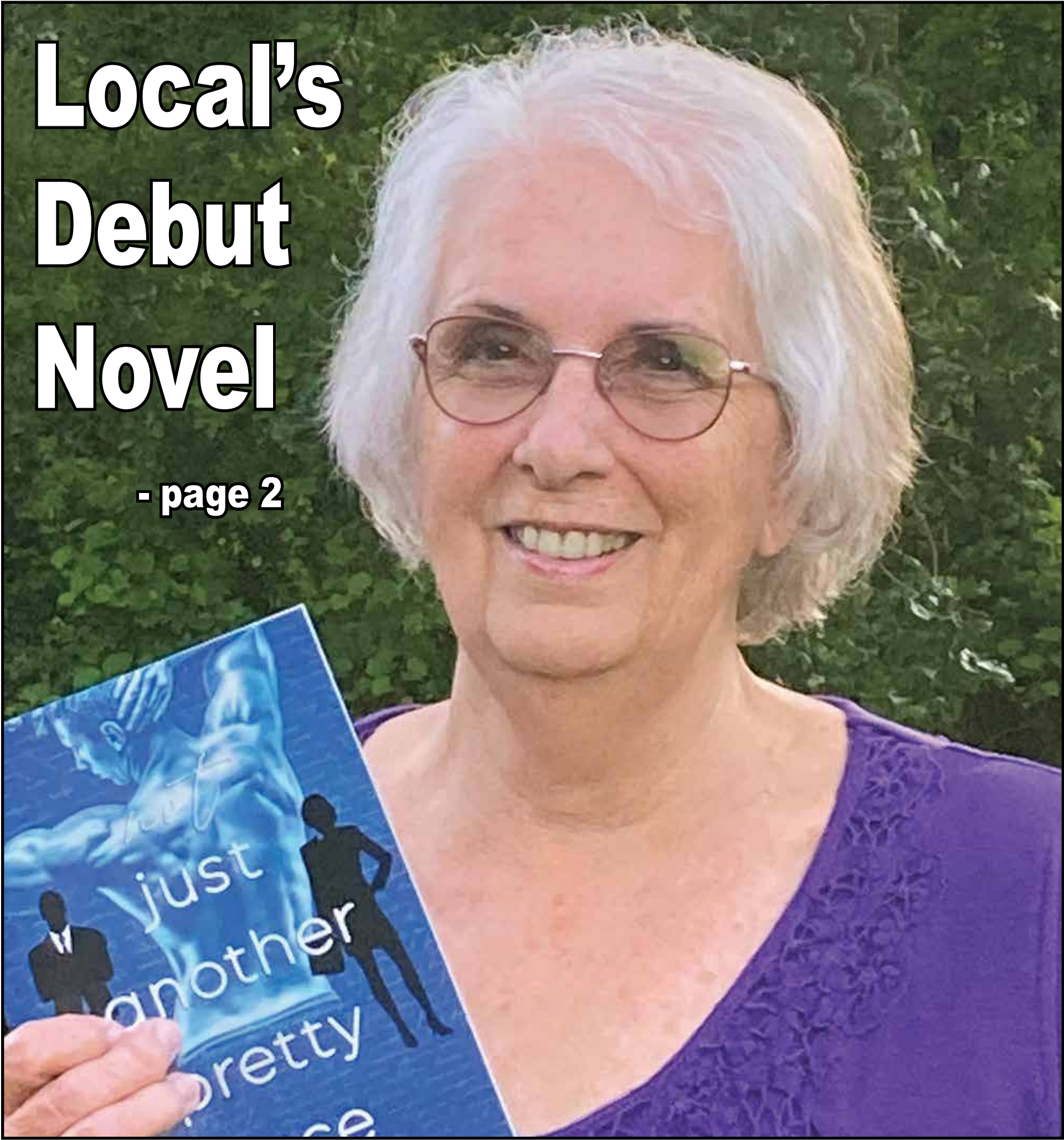


J.A.C.K.S.O.N

JACKSON AREA COLLABORATIVE KNOWLEDGE SOURCE



Local's Debut Novel

- page 2

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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.

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EST. 2015

Jackson Local Publishes Debut Novel

Not Just Another Pretty Face

What do an embittered newspaper journalist and a hunky bodybuilder have in common? Nothing. Or at least that's what JESSE NOYER thinks as she takes an assignment to cover a local bodybuilding competition. As she interviews one of the contestants, Jesse is surprised and intrigued when, expecting monosyllabic responses to probing questions, RANDY NEWKIRK counters with intelligence and humor. There's obviously more to this bodybuilder than meets the eye.

In a follow-up interview over lunch, Jesse is shocked to discover that Randy is a praying Christian and his faith is as natural to him as breathing. Bible-thumpers irritate her, and she struggles with the unwelcome attraction she feels for Randy.

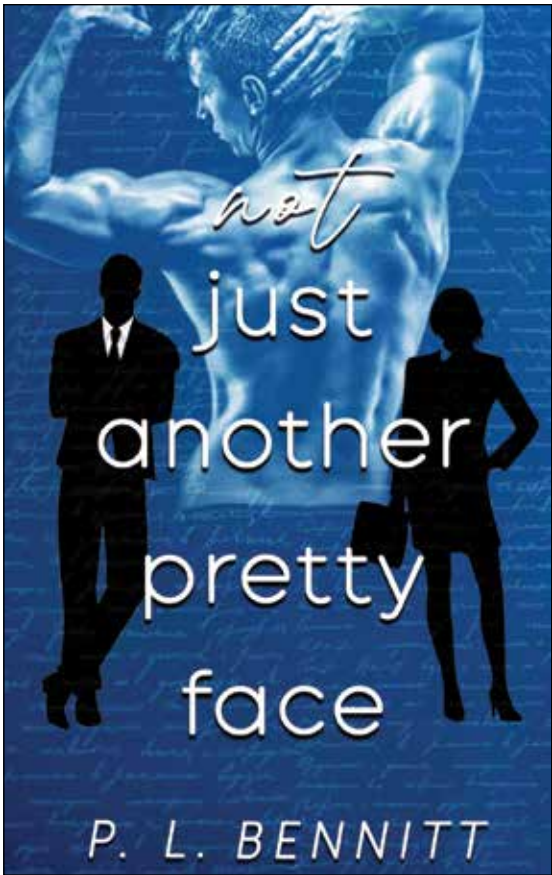
Jesse's article and pictures on bodybuilding, and

the public interest generated, result in her story becoming a series on fitness. The family involved in another of her articles, a story of the child-killing illness, Batten Disease, captures her heart at the same time. As she faces career challenges, Jesse also struggles with single-parenting her son JOSH, friendships, and her own dysfunctional childhood. And since Randy has come into her life, faith and forgiveness are now questions begging to be answered.

With her background of

failed relationships, can Jesse take a chance on another? Will Randy help her find her way back to faith, or will he avoid the complications that a relationship

with Jesse portends? Will Jesse find the love she needs or will Randy prove to be, just...Another Pretty Face?



About the Author

A Christian writer and a degreed Family Life Educator (FLE), she is also a trained Stephen Minister. She has written an advice column for a Family Magazine, Ask Aunt Peg, and book reviews for a local newspaper. Peggy (P. L.) Bennitt is currently the editor of her church's monthly newsletter and volunteers

in the church library, as well as other ministry areas when she can. She has held a variety of jobs that have given her eclectic background material for her writing. Her debut novel, Not Just Another Pretty Face, printed in June of 2024 and is based in Jackson, Michigan. She is currently working on several other novels.



Learn to Love Your Hometown

Take the Moments and Make Memories

By Val Herr



I am a to-do list kind of lady. I love a to-do list, and I absolutely adore crossing items off it. However, I can let it control me, and that is something I am working on. Chores never end, and home improvement projects appear around every bend, but letting those things dictate our lives and our schedules must not occur. I am beyond blessed that my two grown sons and daughter-in-law want to spend time with me. I am learning to put away the to-do list and ensuring I have time to take the moments and make memories with them. I've created a bucket list (I can't get away from lists) to help me focus on time with my loved ones. Whether you want to check it out with a friend or bring the entire family, here is my list that includes loving our hometown and spending time together

- Attend a downtown Jackson car show
- Visit every farmer's market in Jackson County
- Have a picnic in a park that I've never been to
- Attend an outdoor concert
- Go to a driving range
- Spend an afternoon at a local winery
- Earn my Master Angler patch from the DNR
- Try disc golf
- Pick blueberries
- Plant a mushroom garden

I hope these ideas inspire you to put away your chore list for a bit this summer and spend time with loved ones taking the moments summer in Jackson has to offer and creating memories. For additional idea visit <https://www.experiencejackson.com/>.

Jackson Young Professionals Announces TOPIA Art + Tech Festival

Contributed by Jackson Young Professionals
Jackson Young Professionals ("JxnYP"), the organization that brought you the Bright Walls Mural Festival, is excited to launch its newest festival, TOPIA Art+Tech Fest. Last year's prototype festival (previously called ETA) was an excellent primer on how to create meaningful experiences at the intersection of art and technology. The expanded, multi-day TOPIA festival will be free to attend and will feature a variety of interactive and immersive art installations, as well as live music and unique

hands-on educational opportunities for "students" of all ages. Festival goers will also enjoy the usual staples like local food trucks and the Downtown Social District. "This festival is not just an event; it's a celebration of the unconventional, a fight against the mundane. It unites creativity and innovation, fostering a space where imagination knows no bounds," said Melissa Evans, Creative Director. "TOPIA looks to highlight how we embrace the

innovative spirit that makes Jackson an attractive place for investment in manufacturing and technology edu-



cation, careers, and businesses while highlighting our love for art and creativity," said Jacqueline Austin, JxnYP Festival Chair. Jackson has long held an emphasis on public art, and with the momentum Bright Walls and other art festivals have created, TOPIA plans to continue to transform our community into a center for innovation and artistic culture by focusing on three main outcomes: Expanding Artistic Boundaries, Creating Elevated Experiences, and

Inspiring Future Innovators. More information, including artist applications and sponsorship details, is now available on www.topiafest.com. Follow TOPIA Festival on Facebook and Instagram @topiafest. **About Jackson Young Professionals**
Jackson Young Professionals is a group for the young and young at heart living and/or working in the Jackson area. As a non-profit organization, we Build Relationships, Have Fun, and Love Jackson. Follow us on Facebook and Instagram, (@JxnYP).

Recreation Millage for Jackson Area on Aug. Ballot

By Aaron Dimick,
City of Jackson
Public Information Officer

Voters in the Jackson Public Schools (JPS) District will decide a recreation millage in the Tuesday, Aug. 6, 2024 election. The millage is used to provide free and reduced cost recreation programs for children under 18 years old and adults over 50 years old in the JPS district.

The millage funds youth programs such as soccer, basketball, football, cheerleading, and special events like the Daddy Daughter Dance. It powers senior programs like luncheons, exercise classes, and pickleball. The funding also employs high school and college-age students who staff recreation programs. The district collects

millage funds and turns them over to the City's Parks and Recreation Department for programming. Voters have passed the millage every 10 years

and JPS are asking for an increase to .75 mills. Officials say the reason for the increase is to meet rising supply costs and pay staff a fair wage.

Millage charges are based on property value, which means .75 mills on a \$100,000 home would be \$75 per year to support recreation programs. Comparing that to the current cost of \$50 per year on a \$100,000 home, there's a projected \$25 annual increase if approved.

"This millage is the result of community partnerships that give kids and seniors access to affordable recreation programs not only in the City, but in the entire school district," said Parks and Recreation Director Kelli Hoover.

The millage will appear on ballots as a Jackson Public Schools recreation millage proposal. Official ballot language for the millage is available in the Elections section of the City website by visiting cityofjackson.org/267/Election-Division.



Photo courtesy of the City of Jackson

since 1960. The last time the millage was approved was in 2014 at .50 mills. In 2024, the City

Jackson County Animal Shelter's Adoptable Pets: Mango and Greta

Contributed by the
Jackson County
Animal Shelter

Mango

Mango is a one-year-old American Staffordshire mix. She is on the smaller side, weighing just 40 pounds. Mango was found abandoned in a hotel, but she is friendly, housetrained, and walks nicely on a leash. Neither a jumper nor a barker, she would make a great walking partner. Mango has a super shiny black coat, a white chest, and cute ears that stand up with the tips down. This pretty girl has been sponsored, so there is no adoption fee. Meet her today! 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 adop-

tion 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.



**Jackson County
Animal Shelter**

Greta

Greta, a two-year-old grey and white female, is a sight to behold with her unique markings and big, expressive gold eyes. She's not just a pretty face, though; Greta is super friendly and will come to greet you the second you arrive. She gets along well with all the other cats where she is housed, is always curious, and loves treats. Her

adoption fee is currently just \$25 while the Bissell event is going on. Stop by and meet this beautiful girl today at the Jackson County Animal Shelter, 3370 Spring Arbor Rd., Jackson, Michigan. Cat adoption fees are \$60 for one cat, \$80 for two, which will include applicable tests, vaccines and spay/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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Jackson YMCA Celebrates with a Topping-Out Ceremony



**“People, perserverance,
progress.”**

- Shawna Tello, CEO

*Contributed by the
Jackson YMCA*

The Jackson YMCA construction project celebrated a significant milestone June 28, as nearly 100 spectators gathered to witness the placement of the final steel beam during a Topping-Out ceremony. CEO Shawna Tello welcomed attendees this morning, marking this pivotal moment in the building's construction.

Redinger Steel Erectors has successfully completed the steel frame of the new addition, a crucial phase in the project. In construction, topping-out ceremonies are traditional celebrations of placing the final beam in a building's framing.

Today's ceremony, held across from the Y at Trinity Lutheran Church, was a proud moment for the Jackson YMCA. The final beam was adorned with a YMCA flag, an American flag, and an evergreen tree atop. Ryan Baar, Senior Project Manager at Granger Construction, explained the symbolism of the evergreen tree. While topping-out traditions have varied histories, in the United States, it is common to see an evergreen tree and

an American flag attached to the final beam. Some stories attribute the inclusion of the evergreen to Scandinavian immigrants, honoring building traditions dating back to the 700 A.D. Other stories credit Indigenous American beliefs that “no structure should be taller than a tree.” Today, this practice is considered a wish for good luck during construction and best wishes for the future occupants of the building.

To commemorate the occasion, saplings were made available for guests to take home and plant.

In the coming weeks, the new front of the building will begin to take shape, and the installation of the full glass front will commence. Inside, drywall has been hung in many areas, paving the way for ceramic tile installation to begin.

Additionally, the city has closed W. Wesley St. for water line work, and AT&T continues work on Franklin St. to prepare for fiber optic upgrades in the area.

The Jackson YMCA looks forward to the continued progress and completion of this exciting project in May 2025.



Bonnie Gretzner, Content & Digital Communications Manager for the World YMCA, signs beam.



Shawna Tello, CEO of the Jackson YMCA, gives the opening remarks for the ceremony.



Membership team pictured from left to right: Jaimie Curtis, Grayce Cook, Ashley Hohenbrink, and Hayley Golightly.

Photos courtesy of the Jackson YMCA

John R. Lewis Elementary School Welcomes Alicia Curtis as New Principal

Contributed by Jackson Public Schools
Jackson Public Schools is pleased to announce Ms. Alicia Curtis as the new Principal at John R. Lewis Elementary School. Ms. Curtis began her journey in education at Olivet College where she earned her undergraduate degree in Education. In 2020 she completed her Masters in Administration from Grand Canyon University. She is currently pursuing her

doctorate in organization- al leadership from Grand Canyon University. Ms. Curtis is a proud JHS alumni. She was an Assistant Principal at Jackson High School and taught multiple grade levels during her time at Dibble Elementary. "I am excited

for the opportunity to be back "home." My love for JPS runs deep, and I am so honored to continue to grow the excellence that is happening at John R. Lewis. I am grateful to give back to the community that has given so much to me."



"We are delighted to welcome Ms. Curtis back to Jackson Public Schools" said Julie Baker, Assistant Superintendent, Elementary Curriculum. "She has a strong vision for inclusive education which aligns well with the vision shared by the excellent staff already in place at John R. Lewis. We look forward to seeing how this very special school community will continue to grow and evolve under her leadership."





VOTE AUGUST 6, 2024 NON-HOMESTEAD MILLAGE RENEWAL



VOTE AUGUST 6, 2024
Voters in the JPS district will be asked to renew the 18 mill non-homestead millage. The passage of this millage will support the district's efforts to provide comprehensive curriculum and educational opportunities to the students of Jackson Public Schools.

Non-Homestead represents industrial, commercial and some agricultural property and "second homes." It does not include a family's primary residence.

VOTE AUGUST 6

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE UPCOMING MILLAGE RENEWAL!



What does this millage fund?

The money the district receives from the non-homestead millage supports the school district's day-to-day operations, including salaries for teachers and staff, and programs for students. It represents approximately 21.6% (or \$10 million) of the overall General Fund budget.

What if this millage is not renewed?

If this millage does not pass, the State WILL NOT replace the funding and Jackson Public Schools will be forced to reduce or cut programs to offset the loss. JPS will receive less per student than every other school district in the county.

QUESTIONS?

WWW.JPSK12.ORG/MILLAGERENEWALFAQS

VOTE ON OR BEFORE AUGUST 6, 2024

How does it effect our General Fund budget?



21.6% OF JPS OPERATING BUDGET IS AT RISK
REPRESENTING ABOUT \$10 MILLION OF THE DISTRICT'S GENERAL FUND BUDGET

By law, to obtain the Full Foundation Allowance, Jackson Public Schools must collect a local "non-homestead" millage for this portion of its budget. The State reduces its obligation to districts by this amount and only pays the balance. Therefore it is critical to continue to collect 18 mills on non-homestead property to attain full funding.

Voting Information

Election Day

Election day is Tuesday, August 6, 2024. You can find voter information and polling details on the Michigan Voter Information Center website: <https://mVIC.sos.state.mi.us/>

Polling / Early Voting

Find my polling location or check voter registration status: <https://mVIC.sos.state.mi.us/Voter/Index>
Learn about early voting: <https://www.michigan.gov/sos/elections/voting/early-in-person-voting>

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Visit Imagine Planet this Summer

By Jean McKim,
Imagine Planet

Exciting things have been afoot at Imagine Planet already this summer. Fossil Day was a great success! Our two professors were able to talk with me about improving our collections and brought a dinosaur leg-bone and a mastodon tusk to check out! Thank you so much to Pat Huebner and Horizons Planning for sponsoring this event. Please let us know what subjects you would like to see us highlight in the future.

Our animal ambassadors are gearing up for a busy summer. Times are available for groups to come in,

and we also go to events, so look for us at the Learning Fair on July 11th and 12th. We are starting a sponsor-an-animal program to help feed and care for the animals, so if you have a favorite animal here at Imagine Planet, please consider sponsoring it. Pi, Roxie, Sweet Baby, and the ferrets are just some of our animal ambassadors you can sponsor. For details, please contact us at 734-358-9893 or at info@imagineplanet.net.

Our blue iguana, Perseus, is doing very well. Though he had some health issues, he has now healed and is eating and

growing well. His favorite foods are juvenile iguana pellets, pumpkin puree, and greens. He is even growing his tail back! You can visit Perseus and our other iguana Iggy who is always up for petting. Yes, Perseus will get as big as Iggy, so he is a huge commitment.

Many of our friends are stepping up and figuring out ways to fundraise. We welcome their efforts greatly and would like to thank them!

Summer hours will be the same: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday from 12 p.m. to 5 p.m. Other hours are available for groups and parties.

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College & Career Access Center, July Scholarships

Sharon Stephens Brehm Undergraduate Psychology Scholarship

Eligibility:

- Undergraduate student majoring in Psychology at an accredited college or university.
- Minimum 3.50 cumulative GPA.
- Demonstration of financial need.

Evaluation Criteria:

Academic Excellence, Demonstrated Financial Need, and Demonstrated Interest in the Field of Psychology

Description:

Online Application and Proposal

Proposal Requirements:

- Curriculum vitae (CV) or resume - two-page maximum.
- Current transcript: Unofficial digital transcript should be submitted as a PDF to APF's online application.
- * Successful applicants must submit official transcripts before the scholarship is awarded.
- Personal essay (up to 1000 words) that describes your past, current, and future involvement in the science and application of psychology on campus and elsewhere, academic achievements, and leadership activities.
- Personal letter of recommendation from a psychology faculty member.

The following information must be provided to access demonstrated financial need:

- Most recent financial aid award letter from your college or university
- FAFSA Student Aid Report (page one only)
- Cost of attendance
- Expected family contribution (EFC)
- Amount of gifted financial aid (including Pell Grant and SEOG Grant)

Award: Seven \$5,000 scholarships are available

Deadline: July 10, 2024

Baron and Budd Attorneys Mesothelioma Cancer Victims Memorial Scholarships

Eligibility:

- Open to entering Freshman only, any major field of study, or undecided major
- Must be entering a US-based four-year university or college or a two-year

college

- Must provide two letters of recommendation
- You may submit either a written essay or video
- Written essay must be between 800-1,250 words
- Video essay must be a 2-3 minute YouTube video
- YouTube videos must link back to <https://www.baronandbudd.com/mesothelioma-lawyers/scholarships/>
- Cannot be an employee or family member of an employee of Baron and Budd

Description:

Essay and Video Topics:

How has cancer impacted your life? (cancer of any form)

Mesothelioma cancers, as well as other terminal cancers, have an impact well beyond the victim alone. How has a type of cancer of your loved one impacted your life? How did it impact you while you or your loved one was fighting their illness? What hardships did you or your family experience? How will this scholarship help you to reach your academic goals?

Award: \$2,500 Top Essay - \$2,500 Top Video

Deadline: July 10, 2024

Maple Flooring Manufacturers Association Scholarship

Eligibility:

- Recipient must be a legal resident of USA and must attend school in the USA
- Applicants must be accepted into one of the following fields of study: Architecture, Athletic Administration, Athletics, Boiler Inspection, Biological Conservation, Biomechanical Sciences, Building Construction, Civil Engineering, Coaching, Commercial Driving, Construction Sciences or Management, Dance Education, Forest Science, Forestry Studies, Engineering Technology, Environmental Resource Management, Exercise Science, Industrial Technology, Kinesiology, LEED Training or Certification, Mechanical Drafting, Machine Technologies, Natural Resources, Conservation, Physical Administration, Physical Education, Physical Rehabilitation or Therapy, Park & Recreation Administra-

tion, Small Engine Repair, Sports & Fitness Management, Surveying, Trucking, Wood Sciences.

Description:

Maple Flooring Manufacturers Association is offering five scholarships in the amount of \$1,000 each for secondary, advanced, or trade school education. Applicants will be considered based on academic achievement, field of study, and written essay responses.

Applications must include the following:

- Copy of the applicant's high school or college transcript
- 500 word typed essay on one of the topics listed on the application website
- Acceptance letter from college, university or trade school indicating specific field of study
- MFMA scholarship application

Award: 5 Awards of \$1,000

Deadline: July 12, 2024

American Legion Baseball Scholarship

Eligibility:

The player must:

- Attach a copy of his official high school transcript.
- Have graduated from high school.
- Be on a current roster (American Legion National Baseball Electronic Registration Form) with National Headquarters.
- Be part of a team affiliated with an American Legion post.
- Have three letters of testimony attached to application.

Description:

Each Department Baseball Committee may select a player from their Department to receive this scholarship. The American Legion will award several scholarships this year depending on the number of applicants and interest earned from the trust fund.

Award: \$500 - \$5,000

Deadline: July 15, 2024

Gen and Kelly Tanabe Scholarship

Eligibility:

- 9th-12th grade high school, college, or graduate students including adult students.
- Legal resident of the U.S.
- Currently in school or planning to start school within the next 12 months.

Description:

The Gen and Kelly Tanabe Scholarship is a merit-based program that helps students fulfill their dreams of a higher education. The scholarship is named for Gen and Kelly Tanabe, best-selling authors on education, whose generous donations fund this program.

Award: \$1,000

Deadline: July 31, 2024

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



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