

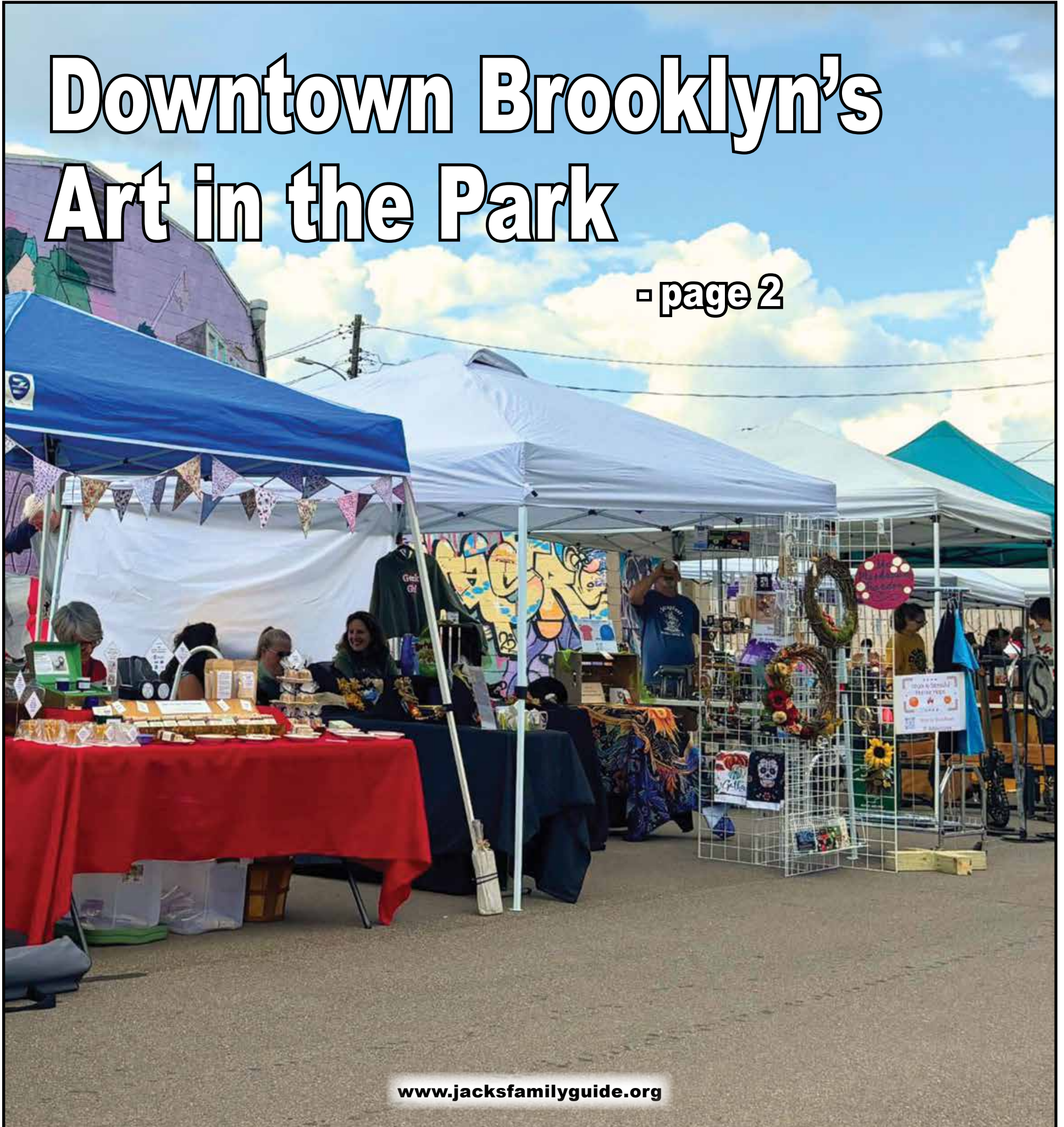
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J.A.C.K.S.O.N

JACKSON AREA COLLABORATIVE KNOWLEDGE SOURCE

Downtown Brooklyn's Art in the Park

▫ page 2



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- OCTOBER 30** TRUNK OR TREAT CHS Grounds

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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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Art in the Park Series Brings Family Fun to Downtown Brooklyn this Summer and Fall

*By Aaron Dimick,
Community and Economic Development
Director, Village of Brooklyn*



A popular event series is bringing the

best of local arts, beats and eats to Downtown Brooklyn! The Village of Brooklyn is working with community partners to present the second annual Art in the Park series in Weatherwax Park.

Everyone is welcome to attend the monthly family-friendly events, which will feature a vibrant mix of local artists, live music, farmers market, food trucks and a rotating selection of unique vendors. The events are happening the fourth Thursday of every month from 5 to 9 p.m. on the following dates:

- Thursday, June 25
- Thursday, July 23
- Thursday, Aug. 27
- Thursday, Sept. 24

Art in the Park takes place in Weatherwax Park, a new public park being devel-

oped on the east side of downtown Brooklyn, located at 115 Water St. Attendees are invited to bring lawn chairs and blankets if they'd like seating during the events.

Village Manager Matt Swartzlander is looking forward to building on last year's events and welcoming visitors to Brooklyn. "We're excited to see our neighbors at these events and host people who want to check out all that Brooklyn has to offer," Swartzlander said. "After hosting successful events last year, we're working with community partners to make the 2026 Art in the Park even better."

Art in the Park is organized by the Village of Brooklyn Corridor Improvement Authority with support from the Michigan Arts and Culture Council, True Community Credit Union, Experience Jackson, TLC Community Credit Union, Barker Weber Insurance Agency and American 1 Credit Union.

Regular updates about the events will be posted on the Village of Brooklyn Facebook page.

Hometown Eats

June 2026: PB&J's BBQ

By Val Herr

Despite what Mother Nature is feeling, our calendars tell us it's almost summer! Seniors have graduated, and kids and teachers alike are counting down those last few days of school. Summer in Michigan means time at the lakes, parks, and outdoors. It's also a time for family and friends to come together.

Nothing says summer in Michigan like great BBQ. And let's face it—great BBQ takes time and skill, and not all of us have it. There are, however, great places to get BBQ, and PB&J's BBQ is one of them.

PB&J's BBQ is located at 124 Irwin Street in the charming village of Brooklyn. This family-owned restaurant strives to provide quality food at reasonable prices. They

offer both dine-in and takeout options. We opted for takeout.

I ordered my favorite type of BBQ, a brisket sandwich with a side of cornbread. We also ordered pulled pork, mac and cheese, and pulled chicken. The food did not disappoint! My brisket sandwich was tender and juicy, and the cornbread had just the right amount of sweetness. Honestly, I didn't care for the bun. It was an oversized basic white bun that, in my opinion, took away from the sandwich. My family gave the mac and cheese two thumbs up, which is high praise from a group of mac and cheese snobs. The prices were fair for both the quality and portion sizes.

They also offer family-sized platters, which I will absolutely be taking advantage of this summer.

PB&J's BBQ earned 4.6 stars, and I highly recommend giving them a try.



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Lomar Recognized at Race to Talent Event Highlighting Apprenticeship Impact

By Becky Dorian,
Lomar Machine
and Tool Company

Lomar was proud to participate in the recent Race to Talent event hosted by Michigan Works! Southeast in partnership with Jackson College, where regional employers, educators, and workforce leaders gathered to highlight the growing impact of Registered Apprenticeship Programs.

The event, held at Jackson College, focused on strengthening local talent pipelines and addressing workforce challenges through hands-on training and development. Designed to showcase the value of apprenticeships, Race to Talent brings together industry partners to share real-world insights, celebrate success stories, and explore new opportunities for collaboration. (Jackson College)

As part of the program, Lomar joined a panel discussion alongside other local employers and apprentices to share perspectives on the role apprenticeship programs play in building a skilled and sustainable workforce. The discus-

sion emphasized the importance of “earning while learning,” providing individuals with meaningful career pathways while helping businesses develop the talent needed to grow and innovate.

“Race to Talent is about celebrating the employers who are leading the way in developing talent and creating opportunities right here in our community,” noted event organizers, highlighting the broader goal of strengthening workforce development across the region. (Jackson College)

In addition to participating in the panel, Lomar was honored to receive a Crystal Award, recognizing its commitment to workforce development and investment in apprenticeship programs. These awards are presented to employers who demonstrate leadership in supporting Registered Apprenticeship Programs and helping to expand career opportunities within their organizations and the community.

Events like Race to Talent play a critical role in connecting businesses



Photo courtesy of Lomar Machine and Tool Company

with resources and partners who can support apprenticeship initiatives. By bringing together employers, educators, and workforce organizations, the event fosters collaboration and encourages the continued growth of programs that benefit both companies and job seekers. (Michigan)

Lomar extends its sincere appreciation to Jackson College and Michigan Works! Southeast for host-

ing such a well-organized and impactful event. Their continued leadership in workforce development helps ensure that local businesses have access to the tools and talent needed to succeed.

Lomar also recognizes the efforts of all participating organizations and partners who are working to strengthen career pathways in the skilled trades. Through collaboration and

shared commitment, these efforts are creating long-term opportunities for individuals while supporting the continued growth of the regional economy.

As apprenticeship programs continue to expand across Michigan, Lomar remains committed to investing in training, supporting workforce development initiatives, and helping build the next generation of skilled professionals.

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Where Community Comes Together.

Jackson County Animal Shelter's Adoptable Pets: Miriam and Sylvia

Contributed by the Jackson County Animal Shelter

Miriam

Meet Miriam, a sweet 10-year-old Labrador Retriever mix who came to the shelter as a stray. If you're looking for a quiet, gentle companion, Miriam may be the perfect match. She is housetrained, does not bark much, and isn't a jumper. Her favorite thing is simply being near her people and soaking up affection. As a senior dog, Miriam offers all the love and loyalty of a devoted companion without the energy and chaos of a younger pup. As one of our "Golden Nuggets," she has a reduced adoption fee and is already spayed. Come meet this calm, loving girl at the Jackson County Animal Shelter.

Dog adoptions require an application: <https://www.co.jackson.mi.us/Dog-Adoption-Application>.

Availability dates reflect when dogs become JCAS

property, and medical needs may delay adoption. A meet and greet with your dog is required, and a cat room walk-through is available to test reactions. Dogs go to approved applicants. Adoption fees are \$200 for medium/large dogs and \$300 for puppies/small dogs, including vaccinations, microchip, and sterilization.



Sylvia

Sylvia is an 11-year-old mostly white longhaired cat who was surrendered when her owner experienced a change in life circumstances. Not only is she beautiful, but she has a sweet personality to match. Sylvia loves being brushed and receiving attention, and she gets along well with the other cats where she is housed. Already spayed, this calm and affectionate

girl will happily come over to greet you and spend time by your side. With her pretty green eyes, pink nose, and easygoing nature, Sylvia is the kind of companion who makes you feel welcome the moment you meet her.

Sylvia is available at the Jackson County Animal Shelter, 3370 Spring Arbor Rd., Jackson, Michigan. Cat adoption fees are \$60 for one cat or \$80 for two and include applicable tests, vaccines, and spay/neuter. Any necessary medical procedures may slightly delay adoption. Visiting in person is best, but you can also apply online: <https://www.co.jackson.mi.us/DocumentCenter/View/1894/Cat-Adoption-Application-PDF>, fax to 517-780-4750, or email animalshelter@mijackson.org. For more information, visit mijackson.org/579/Animal-Shelter, find us on Facebook, or view all pets on Petango.com.



Cascades Humane Society's Pet of the Month

Contributed by Cascades Humane Society

Sometimes the sweetest dogs are the ones who need a little time to show it. Cueball, a four-year-old mixed-breed dog at Cascades Humane Society, is one of those dogs.

This handsome black-and-white pup weighs 41 pounds and came to the shelter as a stray. While Cueball can be shy when meeting new people, shelter staff have discovered that beneath his cautious exterior is a gentle, affectionate dog who forms strong bonds with those he trusts. Once he feels comfortable, he becomes a loyal companion

who loves cuddles and staying close to his people.

Cueball also does well with other dogs, and a confident canine friend may help him continue to build confidence in a new home. He is neutered, up to date on

about Cueball or other adoptable animals, 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@chs-pets.org to learn more.



vaccinations, microchipped, and ready to join his forever family. If you're willing to give a sensitive dog the patience and reassurance he needs, Cueball will reward you with plenty of love and devotion.

For more information



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

Atlas Academy of Cosmetology: Growing Talent, Serving Community

Contributed by Atlas Academy of Cosmetology

For the past eight years, Atlas Academy of Cosmetology has been quietly building a reputation for excellence—primarily through word of mouth. Now, as the school prepares to expand into Spring Arbor, the team is excited to share more of its story with the greater Jackson community.

Atlas Academy was founded by owner Denise Geisman, who recognized a need for a local cosmetology school. With a background in working alongside trade students through Jackson College's Emergency Medical Services department, combined with a strong family foundation in business, Denise set out to create a school focused on both skill and professionalism.

A key part of that vision came together when Denise partnered with current school Director Mindi Easter. A graduate of Douglas J Aveda Institute in East Lansing and former director of The Salon Academy in Jackson, Mindi brought both experience and a shared passion for education. Together, they built a program centered on developing knowledgeable, confident, and career-ready cosmetologists.

Since opening, Atlas Academy has experienced steady growth—starting in a 1,000 square foot space off Kibby Road, expanding to a 2,000 square foot building on Spring Arbor Road in Summit township, during the challenges of COVID, and now preparing to move into a newly renovated 7,300 square foot facility at 8012 Spring Arbor Road in Spring Arbor. The school is NACCAS-accredited and continues to be recognized for producing highly skilled graduates.

Atlas Academy offers programs in cosmetology, esthetics, manicuring, and instructor training. The school also welcomes transfer students and provides continuing education opportunities for licensed professionals. Students are trained in both foundational techniques and modern services that reflect today's beauty industry.

Because hands-on experience is essential in cosmetology education, Atlas Academy operates a student salon and spa that is open to the public. Guests can receive a wide range of services—including haircuts, color, hair and lash extensions, nail care, facials, waxing, and more—all

performed by students under the close supervision of licensed instructors with years of experience in the industry.

What truly sets Atlas apart is its commitment to community service. The academy proudly offers discounted services for guests age 70 and older, complimentary haircuts and styling for children 12 and under, and free haircuts for veterans, military members, and first responders. Students and staff also regularly visit four local assisted living communities, providing complimentary manicures and mini facials every three weeks.

Atlas Academy welcomes groups of all kinds—from weddings and church groups to Girl Scout troops and after-school programs—providing both educational experiences and professional services. The school is also dedicated to early education, offering summer camps for children ages 10 and up to promote healthy skin care habits and self-confidence.

With the upcoming move, Atlas will introduce a new and highly anticipated service: a head spa, focused on scalp health, relaxation, and overall wellness.

As Atlas Academy prepares to open its new location this June, the team is excited to become part of the Spring Arbor community. A grand opening celebration will be announced once the transition is complete, in the meantime they will be representing the school with a float in the Spring Arbor Memorial Day parade.

Graduates of Atlas Academy can be found working in salons and spas across Lower Michigan, with many students traveling over an hour to attend the program—an indication of the school's strong reputation and commitment to quality education.

Atlas is a private school and does not participate in federal financial aid however there are several scholarship opportunities for trade school students available within the Jackson area and surrounding communities, helping make this career path more accessible.

To learn more about Atlas Academy of Cosmetology, explore programs, or book services, visit atlasacademymi.com, where you can access the school catalog and schedule appointments online.

Atlas Academy continues to prove that when education, experience, and community come together, the results speak for themselves.



Photo courtesy of Atlas School of Cosmetology

Managing Housing Costs in Retirement on a Fixed Income

Contributed by
TRUE Community
Credit Union

For many retirees, housing is the hardest expense to adjust on a fixed income. If you're feeling the pressure, you're not alone. Housing accounts for about 36% of annual spending for adults age 65 and older, making it the biggest budget category.

At the same time, costs continue to rise, especially for those who may need additional support later in life. Recent estimates put the median cost of assisted living at around \$6,200 per month nationally, highlighting how quickly housing expenses can escalate in retirement.

Practical ways to manage housing costs

1. Reevaluate your current home

Start with an audit of what your home costs you each month; not just your mortgage or rent, but property taxes, insurance, utilities, maintenance, and repairs. Many retirees find their "true" housing cost is hundreds more than expected.

- Review your last 3 – 6 months of expenses and total everything tied to your home.

- Identify costs that will likely increase (roof, HVAC, property taxes).

- Compare your total monthly housing costs to 30% – 35% of your in-

come. If you're above that range, consider changes like downsizing, and research smaller homes in your area to estimate realistic savings before making a move.

2. Consider relocating strategically

A move doesn't have to be drastic to be effective. Even relocating 20 – 30 miles away can lower housing costs significantly. This approach works best when you run the full financial picture, not just the home price.

- Compare property taxes and average home prices across nearby ZIP codes.

- Look for areas with lower insurance costs or utility rates.

- Factor in transportation. Saving on housing but spending more on gas or healthcare can cancel out benefits.

3. Explore shared living arrangements

If you go this route, treat it like a business arrangement: create a written agreement, define expectations, and plan for how shared expenses will be handled.

- Renting a spare bedroom can generate consistent monthly income.

- Moving in with a trusted family member can reduce expenses on both sides.

- Formal home-sharing



Photo courtesy of TRUE Community Credit Union

programs (often run by nonprofits or local agencies) can help match you with vetted roommates.

4. Tap into home equity carefully

Your home may be one of your largest financial assets, however, using that equity requires thoughtful planning. Before making a decision, map out how long you plan to stay in your home and how the option impacts your long-term financial stability.

- Downsizing to a smaller, lower-cost property can convert equity into cash while reducing ongoing costs.

- Renting out part of your home (like a basement or ADU) creates income without selling.

- A reverse mortgage may provide cash flow; however, it comes with fees and long-term implications, so it's important to understand the tradeoffs.

5. Plan ahead for senior housing options

Planning ahead prevents rushed decisions during a health or financial crisis – when options are often more limited and expensive.

- Research independent living, assisted living, and continuing care communities in your area.

- Ask for full-cost breakdowns: base rent, services, fees, and annual increases.

- Get on waitlists early if there are communities you prefer.

6. Reduce ongoing home expenses

If moving isn't the right choice, focus on tightening what you already spend. Even modest savings can add up to meaningful monthly relief.

- Request a property tax reassessment if your home value has dropped or you qualify for a senior exemption.

- Shop homeowners' insurance annually and ask about bundling discounts.

- Install simple energy-saving upgrades like LED lighting, weather stripping, or smart thermostats.

You don't have to figure this out alone

Managing housing costs in retirement isn't just math; it's about making decisions that support your long-term financial stability and peace of mind. Ask your financial institution what resources they offer.

You can also use TRUE Community Credit Union's budgeting and savings tools, and consider free, confidential counseling from our partners at GreenPath Financial Wellness for certified counselors who can walk you through your housing options and help you build a plan that fits your goals. Find our free financial wellness resources at TRUECCU.com.

Call **844-252-7268**
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miscmv.org/ReturnToLearn
to enroll today.

Return to learn.

Cascades Humane Society Expands Community Reach with New Jackson Crossing Mall Location

Contributed by the Cascades Humane Society

Cascades Humane Society is excited to announce the opening of a new storefront adoption and community engagement space inside Jackson Crossing Mall. A ribbon cutting ceremony with the Jackson Chamber of Commerce will take place on Wednesday, June 3 at 12:30 p.m., followed by an open house from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m.

The new location is situated in the Target wing of Jackson Crossing Mall, with easiest access from the parking lot near Jackson 10 Cinema.

The additional site is designed to help Cascades Humane Society connect with even more members of the community while increasing visibility for animals in need of loving homes.

"This space allows us the opportunity to share our mission with those that may not know about us," said Stefanie Riggs, Executive Director of Cascades Humane Society. "Our main location off Elm Street at 1515 Carmen Drive is a destination. Located on a private drive, it is not somewhere you would just drive by. We are excited to en-

gage in more conversations and find even more homes for animals in need."

The new storefront will feature adoptable feline friends as well as small animals including guinea pigs, rabbits, hamsters, birds, and ferrets when they are surrendered and in need of homes. A daily visiting dog or puppy will be on-site as well.

Cascades Humane Society emphasizes that the new location is not a pet store, but rather an extension of its mission as a limited-intake rescue organization dedicated to connecting animals in need with people who care.

In addition to adoptions, the space will offer Cascades Humane Society branded merchandise, with proceeds supporting the organization's lifesaving work.

Cascades Humane Society does not receive tax dollars or financial support from national humane organizations or the ASPCA. Funding comes entirely from fundraising efforts, donations, grants, events, and adoption fees.

Adoption fees help ensure every animal receives comprehensive veterinary care before going to a new home, including spay or

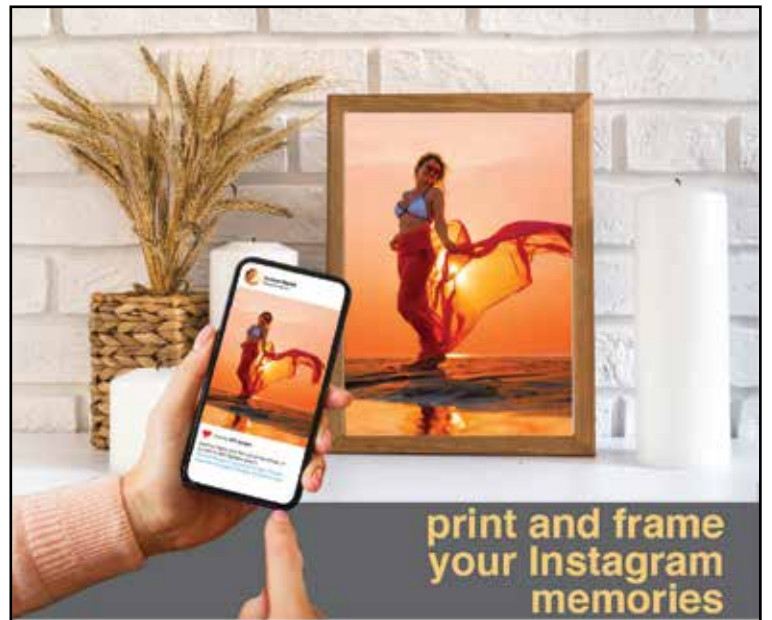
neuter surgery, vaccinations, microchipping, and additional medical care such as dental procedures when needed through the organization's on-staff veterinarian.

The organization remains committed to finding the right home for every animal, often providing food, shelter, medical care, and enrichment for months before a forever family is found.

The new storefront was made possible through the generosity of an anonymous donor to the Ann Arbor Community Foundation, along with in-kind support from several community partners including Lammer's Heating & Air, Cutting Edge Garage Solutions, M & K Jetting, GT Wraps, Scholl Electric, Steinke-Fenton Fabricators, QPC Tech, Jud LLC, and I've Been Framed.

"This space would not be possible without the incredible support of our community partners and donors," Riggs said.

Community members are invited to attend the ribbon cutting and open house to tour the space, meet adoptable animals, and learn more about the organization's mission and programs.



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College & Career Access Center, June Scholarships

Jackson Business & Professional Women's Club Rolling Scholarship

Description: The Jackson Area Business and Professional Women (JABPW) scholarship supports women in Jackson County, MI, who are non-traditional students returning to the workplace, pursuing further training, or advancing their careers. The personal financial commitment of the applicant will be taken into consideration, and scholarships are awarded as one-time awards in the amount of \$250 or \$500. The Rolling Scholarship is available throughout the year and may support needs such as taking a training class for a promotion, completing a required test, or receiving assistance with transportation, babysitting, or other barriers connected to training or education.

Eligibility:

- Must be a woman returning to the workplace and in need further training, or women who wish to advance in their chosen profession or business.
- Must have a connection to Jackson County by living, working, or going to school in Jackson County.
- NOTE: Not intended for high school graduating seniors

Award: two awards available, \$250 each

Deadline: no specific deadline

MI Future Educator Fellowship Scholarship

Description: The MI Future Educator Fellowship will offers \$10,000 scholarships to up to 2,500 future educators every year. When a student receives this award, they agree to work in Michigan classrooms.

If a student does not meet the service obligation requirement and/or does not finish the teacher certification program, the fellowship converts to a 0% interest rate loan with a repayment term of 10 years. There is no deadline for the scholarship; students may apply year-round.

Eligibility:

- Applicant must be a high school graduate.
- Must be a Michigan resident.
- Must be admitted into an eligible Educator Preparation Program in Michigan.
- Must be enrolled full-time and working towards teacher certification.
- Must have reached Junior grade level according to the institution's definition.
- Must have a minimum cumulative 3.0 GPA.

Required Items:

- Completed MI Future Educator Fellowship application.
- Completed Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).
- Signed Commitment to Teach in Michigan Agreement.

Award: \$10,000

Deadline: June 15, 2026

MOGA Energy Education for Michigan Scholarships

Description: The Michigan Oil and Gas Association (MOGA) represents all facets of Michigan's Oil and Natural Gas Industry. As an industry we are committed to education. We wish to ensure the bright young minds of today have to knowledge, experience, and tools they need to succeed and power our state. Funded in honor of industry veter-

ans Tony Howard, James Bigard, and William Roth, this scholarship aims to support students pursuing undergraduate studies related to the oil and gas industry.

Eligibility:

- Graduating high school seniors accepted at Michigan colleges or universities.
- Students pursuing a course of study related to the oil and gas industry.

Other Requirements:

- Verified eligibility criteria for the scholarship.
- Completed scholarship application form, providing all required information and documents.
- Submitted application by the specified deadline, ensuring adherence to guidelines provided by MOGA/EEM.

Award: \$500

Deadline: June 15, 2026

Automotive Women's Alliance Foundation Education Scholarship

Description: Scholarships are awarded quarterly to the women that solicit passion and drive for the automotive industry. It is our hope that with these scholarships, we can lessen the burden on students and allow them to focus on gaining knowledge and development in automotive-related fields and thus enhance their potential career path and the future of the industry.

Eligibility:

- Must be a female, North American citizens, with a passion for a career or advancement in the automotive and its related industries.
- Must be already accepted to or enrolled in an accredited collegiate

program, with a 3.0 or higher GPA.

• While AWAF members and family members are encouraged to apply, we also encourage applicants who are not affiliated with the organization to apply.

Award: \$2,500

Deadline: June 16, 2026

The Hearts for Community Service Scholarship

Description: Warrick Dunn Charities' Hearts for Community Service scholarships help to offset the financial burden of attending a post-secondary institution and support student's goals to better themselves academically by creating access to higher paying jobs, economic stability, and a better quality of life for themselves and generations to come.

Eligibility:

- Must have a minimum GPA of 2.75 on a 4.0 grading scale (equivalent GED scores accepted).
- Must be of service as a volunteer in your local community.
- Must be attending or soon to be attending a post-secondary school, including associate, undergraduate, graduate, professional, or doctoral program.

• Must be a resident of Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, New Jersey, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, or Wisconsin.

Award: \$5,000

Deadline: June 30, 2026

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

Congrats!

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