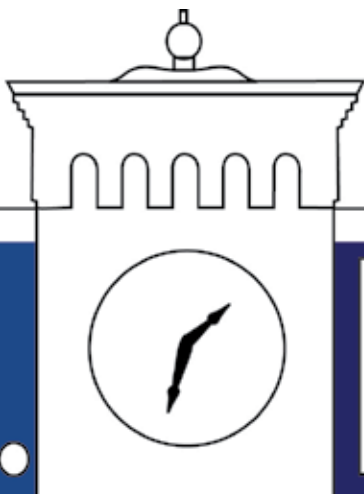
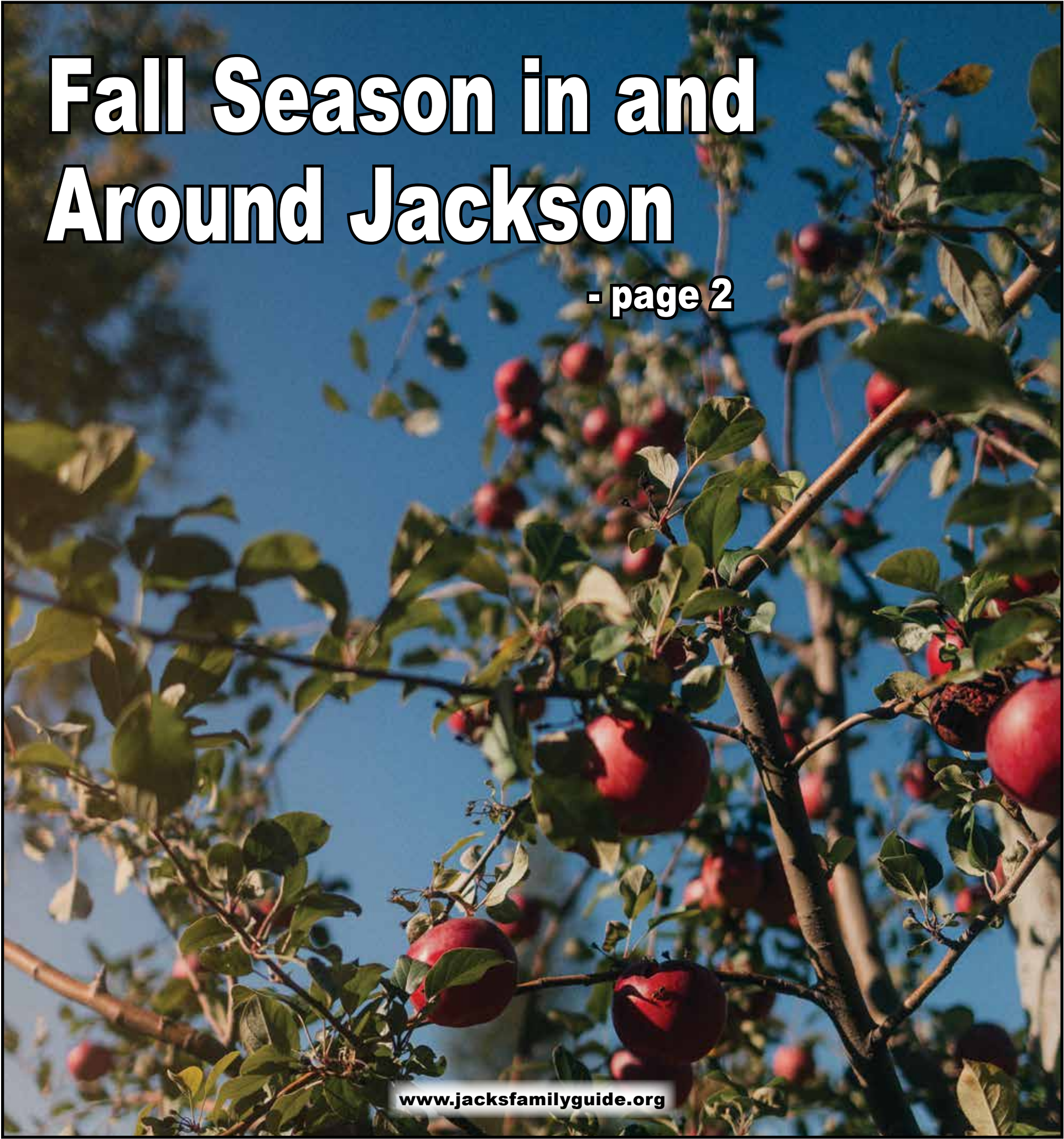




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Fall Season in and Around Jackson

- page 2

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Fun Fall Around Jackson

By Morgan Riggs

As the air cools and the leaves begin to turn, Jackson County takes on a different pace. Cider and donuts return, trails fill with color and farms and community events offer plenty of reasons to get out and experience fall close to home.

A Michigan fall would not be complete without a trip to a local orchard or farm. Meckley's Flavor Fruit Farm is a longtime destination for fresh cider, donuts, apples and other seasonal treats. Pregitzer Farm Market, Lowry's Little Flock Farm and Red Egg Farm are also must-visits, with seasonal produce, farm-fresh goods and all the makings of a crisp afternoon in the country.

As the colors deepen, Jackson County's parks and trails are well worth exploring. Dahlem En-

vironmental Education Center has miles of trails winding through forests, wetlands and other natural areas, while the Falling Waters Trail offers a scenic route for a walk, run or bike ride. Near Grass Lake, the Phyllis Haehnle Memorial Sanctuary is especially memorable from late October through mid-November, when thousands of sandhill cranes gather during their annual migration.

For a different view of the changing landscape, take the long way home. The roads around Waterloo Recreation Area, Grass Lake and Jackson County's smaller communities wind past colorful woods, open fields and farmland, turning an ordinary drive into a fall outing of its own.

The calendar fills up this time of year, too. Downtown Jackson's Fall Art Walk takes place Sept. 5, fol-

lowed by Summerween at The Cascades on Sept. 12. Sandhill Crane Vineyards hosts its Raspberry Festival on Sept. 18, with more events planned throughout October. On Oct. 3, Grass Lake hosts Oktoberfest, while Ella Sharp Museum celebrates its Fall Harvest Festival. Later in the month, Dahlem's popular Goblin Walks return Oct. 23 and 24.

Not every fall day needs an itinerary. Spend an afternoon at a local park, stop for a warm drink at a coffee shop, wander through a farmers market or simply head out for an evening drive as the light fades over the changing trees.

Fall never seems to last quite long enough in Michigan. While it is here, Jackson County gives us plenty of reasons to slow down, get outside and take it in.

Your Home Is More Than an Investment: Planning for the Next Chapter

By Jenna Chmielewski,
SRES®, ERA Reardon Realty

For most of us, "home" isn't a line item, it's the porch where the grandkids learned to ride bikes, the lake view you fought traffic all week to get back to, the kitchen where thirty years of holidays happened. So when age or health starts changing the picture, the conversation about the house is never just about real estate. It's about family, dignity, and what the next chapter looks like.

I spent 13 years in senior living and healthcare before becoming a Realtor, and I currently help care for my in-laws while raising my own family, a stretch a lot of Gen X folks around here know well. I've also tagged along on plenty of home inspections over the years, standing alongside adult children quietly doing the math on whether Mom could really manage those basement stairs another winter. The lesson has always been the same: the earlier a family starts talking about this, the more choices they have. The later they wait, the more a crisis ends up making the decision for them.

There's no single "right" answer

Staying put is realistic more often than people think, a grab bar, a stair lift, better lighting, a walk-in shower. Aging in place doesn't always mean a full remodel; some-

times it's a handful of thoughtful changes made before they're urgently needed.

Downsizing trades square footage for freedom: fewer stairs, less yard, and often overlooked, less "stuff" to manage and worry about.

Moving closer to support means choosing the house that's five minutes from a daughter instead of forty-five. I see this often with lake-home owners weighing the place they love against wanting to be closer to grandkids or a trusted doctor.

Planning before the crisis is the one I'd underline twice. A fall, a diagnosis, a hospital stay, these don't wait for a convenient time. Families who've already talked through the "what if" get to make a calm, informed choice instead of a rushed one.

Accessibility, simplified

You don't need to overhaul a house to make it work for aging in place. Lever-style door handles, a zero-step entry, a main-floor bedroom and bath, better stair lighting, non-slip flooring, often the useful list is shorter and cheaper than families expect. A certified aging-in-place specialist or occupational therapist can walk through and tell you what matters in your situation.

You don't have to figure this out alone

Right here in our community,

WellWise Services, our local Area Agency on Aging, is one of the best first calls a family can make. They help with everything from in-home care options and caregiver support to navigating benefits and connecting you to other local resources, often before you even know what questions to ask. Pairing that kind of guidance with a Realtor who holds the Seniors Real Estate Specialist® designation means someone is helping you think through timing and downsizing logistics while someone else is helping you think through care and support, together, not in separate silos.

If your family is somewhere in this conversation, whether you're the one aging in place, or the adult child trying to figure out how to bring it up gently, you don't need it all figured out before you start talking about it. Starting early is what protects your options later.

Jenna Chmielewski is a Realtor with ERA Reardon Realty in the Irish Hills, holds the Seniors Real Estate Specialist® (SRES®) designation, and specializes in luxury and lake properties throughout Jackson, Hillsdale, and Lenawee counties. Reach her at 517-937-5232 or RealtorJennaCares@gmail.com.

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Hometown Eats

September 2026: Blackbird Cafe & Baking Company

By Val Herr

Just 20 minutes outside of Jackson, tucked away in the picturesque town of Manitou Beach's Devils Lake Village, you will find Blackbird Cafe & Baking Company. Judging by the never-ending line out the door, this is clearly the place to be on a Saturday morning. From tweens to grandparents, this place has something for everyone.

While many popped in for a coffee, latte or other beverage to go, others

tucked into cute tables, grabbed a board game and spent a lovely morning playing games and eating amazing food. The owners sold their long-time home to build this cafe, with a focus on great food from around the world made from scratch, good customer service and a relaxed atmosphere where you can take your time enjoying your food and indulging in good conversation.

While they are known for their baked goods, including fresh sourdough breads and flaky croissants, my family and I decided to try their breakfast sandwiches. I ordered the McBlackbird, which features black pepper focaccia with Ameri-

can cheese, garlic mayo and a scrambled egg. I added sausage. This \$12 sandwich was enough for my son and me to split.

My guys ordered the Parker Special, a slice of sourdough toast with butter, two pieces of house Black Forest bacon and a scrambled egg. At only \$7, this was a heck of a deal.

This quaint restaurant is 100% worth the drive. They are closed on Tuesdays but open the rest of the week, and they also offer catering.

Please take the short drive and visit them at 135 Devils Lake Hwy. in Manitou Beach.

They earned 4.5 stars.



Brooklyn's Weatherwax Park, Future Site of Improved Community Events and Family Fun, Receives more Funding for Redevelopment

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



A community gathering place in Brooklyn is one step closer to being re-developed thanks to funding secured by State Senator Sue Shink. \$500,000 from the Fiscal Year 2027 State Budget has been allocated to the Weatherwax Park redevelopment project.

Located on the east side of Downtown Brooklyn at 115 Water St., Weatherwax Park currently holds green space, parking and public bathrooms. It is the site of community events like the ongoing Art in the Park series.

The \$500,000 in State funding will be used for a redevelopment project that will bring an amphitheater, parking lot for downtown businesses, walkways, landscaping, decorative lighting, and improved public bathrooms with a concession stand. Village leaders plan on using the enhanced space for more community events like outdoor movies, concerts and festivals.

Village Manager Matt Swartzlander is looking for-

ward to seeing the park's redesign move forward. "Creating a more welcoming space at Weatherwax Park will boost quality of life for our residents and bring more people to Brooklyn," Swartzlander said. "We thank Senator Shink for this critical funding to make our dream into a reality."

Senator Shink represents Senate District 14, which includes the Village of Brooklyn. Senator Shink says she sought funding for an improved Weatherwax Park after hearing from local families wanting to spend more time at the park. "I'll be excited to see this park develop into an inviting, accessible park where residents and visitors can gather for fun events while also supporting Brooklyn's amazing downtown business district," said Senator Shink.

Construction on the \$1 million project is expected to start next year. The Village of Brooklyn is contributing \$200,000 to the park redevelopment. The \$500,000 in State funding brings current project funds to \$700,000. The Village is awaiting possible funding from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR), which would potentially add \$300,000 in funding to the project, closing the final funding gap.



Photos courtesy of the Village of Brooklyn

Jackson County Animal Shelter's Adoptable Pets: Hazel and Mr. Binks

Contributed by the Jackson County Animal Shelter

Hazel

This big puppy is Hazel, a 10-month-old mixed breed who weighs about 52 pounds. Hazel comes out of her kennel with her tail wagging, excited to spend time with you. She is not much of a jumper or barker, but she is an enthusiastic body wiggler who is always happy to see you.

Hazel is housetrained and gets along with most other dogs. She is still learning commands, but she is eager to please and ready to keep learning. Hazel would make a great walking partner and would be just as happy cuddling with you on the couch. Come meet this sweet girl at the Jackson County Animal Shelter. She is spayed and ready for adoption.

Dog adoptions require an approved application. A meet and greet with your dog is mandatory, and a cat room walk-through is avail-

able to test their reaction to cats. Adoption fees are \$200 for medium/large dogs and \$300 for puppies/small dogs and include vaccinations and a microchip. Necessary medical procedures may delay an adoption.

Mr. Binks

Mr. Binks is a five-year-old grey cat with subtle tiger markings and big green

eyes. He was surrendered when his owner became incarcerated and is now looking for a new home. Binks is quiet and shy and can usually be found curled up comfortably in a cat bed.

Binks has a solid slate-grey coat with soft tiger markings on his face and captivating green eyes lined with white fur. He gets along well with the other cats where he is currently housed, but he would prefer to be the only animal in his new home. Binks may take some time to warm up to you, but once he does, he is a very loving companion. Come meet this handsome boy at the Jackson County Animal Shelter, 3370 Spring Arbor Road in Jackson. Cat adoption fees are \$60 for one cat or \$80 for two and include applicable tests and vaccines. Adopters will also pay a \$25 refundable deposit to ensure pets are spayed or neutered, and the shelter can provide a list of low-cost options. Any other necessary medical procedures may slightly delay an adoption.

The best way to meet this guy is by visiting the shelter. You can also complete an online adoption application at <https://www.co.jackson.mi.us/DocumentCenter/View/1894/Cat-Adoption-Application-PDF>, or learn more at mijackson.org/579/Animal-Shelter. You can also find the shelter on Facebook or view available pets on Petango.



Cascades Humane Society's Pet of the Month

Contributed by Cascades Humane Society

Meet Ozark! Ozark is a handsome 1½-year-old Pit Bull mix with a beautiful all-brown coat and an even bigger heart. This lovable young dog has a hilarious personality that is sure to keep you smiling. Whether he's making you laugh with his goofy antics or leaning in for affection, Ozark is always ready to brighten your day.

Ozark loves spending time with his people and soaking up all the attention he can get. His fun-loving spirit and affectionate nature make him a wonderful fit for someone looking for a

loyal best friend. With plenty of love to give and a playful outlook on life, Ozark is ready to settle in and become a cherished member of a lucky family.

Ozark has been neutered, is up to date on his

vaccinations, and is micro-chipped. His adoption fee is \$360. For more information about Ozark or to meet this sweet, goofy boy, visit Cascades Humane Society at 1515 Carmen Drive or call 517-787-7387. Ozark is

ready to find a forever home where he can share a lifetime of love, laughter, and companionship. 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

Michigan Copper

By Jean McKim,
Imagine Planet

Michigan's geology is fascinating and rich in materials humans use. One of those materials is copper. Copper in Michigan is found in the western portion of the Upper Peninsula, including Keweenaw, Houghton, Baraga, and Ontonagon counties, as well as part of Marquette County. Copper is found in two forms: native copper and copper as an ingredient in other minerals.

The story of Michigan's copper starts 1.1 billion years ago, when what we now call North America tried to split in half and form a new ocean. That attempt failed but left behind lava flows similar to what is currently found in Iceland or the Rift Valley in Africa. These

lava flows are found under Lake Superior, with the rift being the reason Lake Superior is so deep.

Native Americans were the first to mine and work the copper of Lake Superior and the Keweenaw Peninsula of northern Michigan between 5000 BCE and 1200 BCE.

Native copper, or pure copper right out of the earth, was the first to be mined by Europeans in Michigan. Fissures, or cracks in the rock, left room for hot water carrying dissolved copper to pass through, filling the cracks with native copper. Lava rock (basalt) often has gas bubbles that leave behind holes in the solid rock, which can also be filled with other material, such as copper. The Keweenaw se-

ries of lava is at least 15,000 feet thick and consists of several hundred flood basalt flows. The first six years of mining exploited the fissure deposits, then gave way to the bubble, or amygdaloidal, deposits.

Although native copper was the dominant ore mineral, chalcocite (copper sulfide) was sometimes present, as were, especially in the Mohawk Mine, copper arsenide minerals such as mohawkite and domeykite. Gangue, or waste minerals, included calcite, quartz, epidote, chlorite, and various zeolites. A number of copper mines also contained a notable amount of silver, both in native form and naturally alloyed with the copper. Halfbreed is the term for an ore sample that con-



tains pure copper and pure silver in the same piece of rock; it is only found in the native copper deposits of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Nuggets of copper that have eroded out of the lava flows can be

found, but they are becoming rarer as the years go by. As technology advances, ores that were considered too expensive to process may become profitable once again. Copper, a true Michigan native!

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Where Community Comes Together.

Keeping Industry Moving: Lomar Expands Gear Services to Support Critical Equipment Needs

By Becky Dorian,
Lomar Machine & Tool

When a production line goes down because of a worn or broken gear, the impact is immediate. Downtime can halt operations, delay deliveries, and create costly disruptions across entire supply chains. For manufacturers across Michigan and beyond, having a reliable partner for gear repair and replacement is essential.

At Lomar Machine & Tool Co., that need has led to the expansion of its gear manufacturing and service capabilities, offering customers a more complete solution from engineering through final inspection.

The company now provides in-house engineering and design support to help ensure each gear is matched to its application and performance require-

ments. Whether it is a replacement component or a fully custom system, the focus is on reducing downtime, improving efficiency, and keeping production moving.

Lomar's expanded capabilities include gear cutting, heat treating, and full quality assurance processes. The company also provides spline cutting for both internal and external applications, with capacities up to 16 inches on the hob, as well as helical gear production up to 18 inches on shaper operations.

Beyond standard components, Lomar produces a wide range of gear types including spur gears, worm gears, planetary gears, and sprockets. Custom configurations for tooth size, pitch, and pressure angle allow solutions to be tailored for specialized equipment and

demanding applications.

These services support a broad range of industries including automotive, aerospace, agriculture, defense, steel, marine, rail, pulp and paper, power generation, oil and gas, and food and beverage manufacturing.

In practice, these gears are found in conveyor systems, mill drives, crane drives, pumps, mixers, winches, crushers, kilns, fans, blowers, and a wide variety of gearbox applications that keep manufacturing and infrastructure operating every day.

As demand grows for more responsive and flexible manufacturing support, Lomar's expanded gear services reflect a continued focus on solving real-world production challenges for customers who depend on uptime.



Photo courtesy of Lomar Machine & Tool

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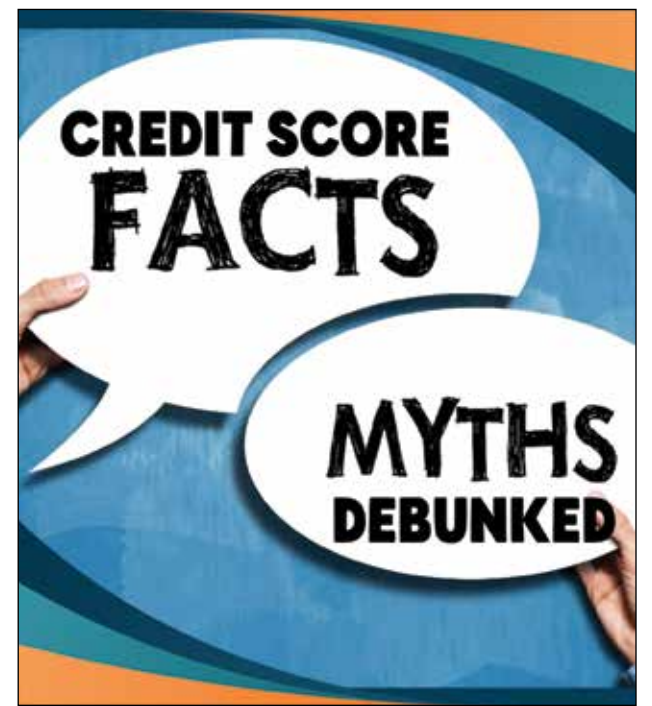
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Credit Union***

There are several ways to boost your credit score, and the more strategies you understand, the better positioned you'll be. But there's also a lot of misinformation out there. Let's clear up some of the most common credit score myths.

- Pay down balances as much as possible.

- You should feel comfortable checking your credit regularly—it's a smart habit. You can check your score and report for free on Savvy-Money through Digital Banking.



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Laugh, Dine & Make a Difference at Punchlines for Paws

Jackson's most affordable night on the town might just be the one that helps save a life

*Contributed by
Cascades Humane Society*

Dinner, drinks, dessert and live comedy, all while helping animals in need. Punchlines for Paws returns for its third year on Saturday, Oct. 10, 2026, bringing together good food, big laughs and a generous community for Cascades Humane Society's largest fundraiser of the year.

At \$80 per person or \$150 for two, tickets include a full chef-prepared dinner, a decadent dessert bar, beer and wine, and an evening of live entertainment. Bring your spouse, grab a few friends or turn it into a girls' or guys' night out. However you fill your table, come hungry and ready to laugh.

After dinner, comedian Dan Diebert will take the stage for the evening's comedy show. Local radio personality Marc Daly will serve as master of ceremonies, keeping the evening moving and the crowd entertained along the way.

There will be plenty happening offstage, too. Guests can browse the silent auction, try their luck with raffles and a 50/50 drawing, or join the excitement of a live auction led by local favorite Tim Bos. With plenty of prizes up for grabs, you might head home with something

special while helping an animal find something even better: a second chance.

A Night That Makes a Difference

Behind the dinner, drinks and laughter is a serious purpose. Every day, Cascades Humane Society provides animals in need with food, shelter, veterinary care, vaccinations, spay and neuter services, enrichment and plenty of attention while they wait for loving homes.

That work depends on the community. CHS receives no tax dollars or government funding for its operations, nor does it receive funding from national organizations such as the Humane Society of the United States or the ASPCA. Instead, local donors, adopters, volunteers, sponsors and supporters make its work possible.

Every Punchlines for Paws ticket, auction bid, raffle entry and sponsorship helps provide that care right here in our community. It helps keep animals safe and comfortable, provides the medical attention they need and gives them time to find the families they have been waiting for.

Last year showed just how much one evening can accomplish. More than 200 guests

attended Punchlines for Paws in 2025, raising nearly \$50,000 to support CHS and its lifesaving programs. This October, the community has a chance to come together and do it again.

Local businesses can make an even bigger impact through corporate table sponsorships, available for \$850. It is a great way to treat employees, clients or friends to a memorable evening while supporting an organization that serves animals and families throughout the Jackson community.

So, gather your favorite people, come hungry and bring your sense of humor. With dinner, dessert, drinks, comedy, auctions and raffles packed into one evening, there will be plenty to enjoy. And when the last laugh of the night is over, the impact will continue through every animal given the care and second chance it deserves.

Punchlines for Paws proves that a great night out can do a lot of good.

Ready to join the fun? Tickets can be purchased online at <https://www.chspets.com/annual-event-looking>. With more than 200 people attending last year, don't wait too long to reserve your spot. We hope to see you at this unforgettable event.

College & Career Access Center, September Scholarships

Joyce Grant Fund

Description: The Joyce Grant Fund provides up to \$5,000 in one-time awards to support Black women in midlife pursuing education or training. Rooted in empowerment, self-determination, and lifelong learning, the Fund helps women in Michigan and Massachusetts take bold steps toward what's next.

Eligibility:

- Must identify as a person of color: African American, Caribbean or Sub-Saharan African heritage.
- Must currently live in either Michigan or Massachusetts.
- Must be a female over 30 years of age.
- Must have a goal of developing a new skill, ability or understanding which could lead to new work or community activities.
- Must have identified a specific training or education program you would like to attend.
- Must demonstrate financial need/ have difficulty attending the training or education program without some scholarship funding.
- Must already have some experience that supports your interest in pursuing more education or training in a specific area.
- If requested, you must be willing to provide documentation of your past edu-

cational experience, work experience, or financial status.

Award: Up to \$5,000

Deadline: September 1, 2026

Cochlear Scholarships

Description: Cochlear offers several prestigious scholarships in honor of the amazing innovators who developed our hearing solutions.

Eligibility:

- Applicants must be a Cochlear Nucleus, Baha, or Osia recipient.
- Applicants must be a citizen of the United States or Canada.
- Available to graduated students that have applied to or will be enrolled in a technical, vocational or trade school.
- Vocational Scholarship applicants must demonstrate progress within their current program to maintain the scholarship.
- Cochlear employees or their family members are not eligible to apply.

Note: Each winner can only receive the scholarship one time.

Award: \$8,000

Deadline: September 30, 2026

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



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