



ONE FINAL TOURNAMENT

Their final season of golf was taken away from them, but two Huskies are taking part in a new event next week. Story, B1



JACKSON COUNTY PILOT

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Active-case count plummets in Jackson County

Just a single new case of COVID-19 within past week

by JUSTIN R. LESSMAN Publisher

Jackson County has just a single active case of COVID-19 within its borders and has recorded just one new case within the last week.

It's a remarkable turnaround for a county that just two weeks ago had an active-case count numbering in the double digits and just a month ago was racking up new lab-confirmed

cases at an exponential clip. As of Tuesday, Jackson County had recorded 40 total cases of COVID-19, up one from May 24, when the last new case was reported. It's the first week since mid-April the county has reported just a single new case of the illness.

Kelsey Andrews, public health director and community health administrator with Des Moines Valley Health and Human Services, said 39 of the 40 locals who have contracted COVID-19 have recovered and are currently past their 10-day isolation period. None has required hospitalization.

One trend Andrews is monitoring concerns the age of those diagnosed with COVID-19. More than 90 percent of those diagnosed with the illness in Jackson and Cottonwood counties are people under 60 years

Inside...

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Closed to the public since late March due to the COVID-19 pandemic, libraries in Jackson County are taking another step toward normalcy.

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Local festivals latest victims of coronavirus

ROTR off, T&C Days postponed

by JUSTIN R. LESSMAN Publisher

Jackson's two major summertime festivals are the latest victims of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Jackson Area Chamber of Commerce officials announced Tuesday the postponement of Town and Country Days, just days after organizers of the Rhythm of the River announced the cancellation of their annual outdoor music festival. Town and Country Days had been scheduled for June 24-28; the Rhythm of the River was to take place July 10-11.



Corey Christopher

Rhythm of the River organizers said the decision to cancel this year's music festival was made "with a heavy heart."

"The 'Stay Safe MN' plan for reopening has no date through Phase IV to allow festivals to occur in the state," Rhythm of the River committee members said in a statement released last Thursday morning. "The safety of our performers, attendees, volunteers and vendors is highest priority for us; therefore, we will follow the safety guidelines, and look forward to plans for our 2021 festival, July 9-10 at Fort Belmont in Jackson."

Corey Christopher, director of the local chamber of commerce, said chamber officials were intentional in their decision to postpone Town and Country Days.

"We made a concerted effort not to cancel it,"

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A DRIVE-IN GRADUATION

Photos by Dan Condon



Left: Maren Larson waves to her teacher as she makes her way through last week's Riverside Elementary School drive-in graduation. Right: Olivia Taylor-Wanserski gets her picture taken with her teacher, Mindy Rowe, after giving Rowe a flower as a gift.



Above: Kindergarten graduate Selina Wieneke gets her picture taken with her teacher, Tammy Erickson (right), and paraprofessional Kaye Meneely during last week's drive-in graduation on the Riverside Elementary School blacktop. Left: Jaxsen Tirevold dons a graduation cap for his photo.



JCC planning for uncertain future

Officials looking at three different learning models

by JUSTIN R. LESSMAN Publisher

Faculty and staff at Jackson County Central schools are trying to plan for the next school year, though they have no idea what the next school year will look like.

Barry Schmidt, superintendent of schools at JCC, said planning over the last few weeks has revolved

around three models of learning — traditional in-school learning, distance learning and a hybrid of the two. He said he's unsure which of the three — if any — the Minnesota Department of Education will mandate come this fall in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Regardless, we're moving forward," Schmidt said of planning. "We're trying to figure out what each model looks like."

Each poses challenges, he said.

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Inside...

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The Jackson County Central Board of Education last week hired four new teachers for the 2020-2021 school year.

Zero challengers for county board

Two Republicans vie for Gunther's state House seat

by JUSTIN R. LESSMAN Publisher

Three open seats on the Jackson County Board of Commissioners will be uncontested this fall.

Incumbents Scott McClure, Cathy Hohenstein and James Eigenberg were the only candidates to file for the seats they currently hold on the local county board — McClure in District 1, Hohenstein

in District 3 and Eigenberg in District 5 — prior to the filing deadline Tuesday afternoon. Likewise, only incumbent supervisors of the local soil and water conservation district filed for election to open seats — David Hussong in District 1, Dennis Daberkow in District 3 and Larry G. Hansen in District 5.

Longtime local state Rep. Rod Hamilton, R-Mt. Lake, faces a challenge for his District 22B seat in the Minnesota House of Representatives from Worthington Democratic-

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PHOTO BY JUSTIN LESSMAN

PEACEFUL PROTEST

Diana Carr (right) leads a group of protestors in a second night of demonstrations at the base of the Jackson County Courthouse Monday. Carr said the group was seeking to raise awareness of the racial bigotry she said led to the May 25 death of George Floyd in Minneapolis and to demand justice for his killing.