

OPINION



PILOT EDITORIAL

Effort put into milestone fair doesn't touch that of this year

Members of the Jackson County Fair's board of directors thought planning the milestone 150th Jackson County Fair back in 2018 was a challenge. They had no idea it would pale in comparison to the effort required to pull off the 152nd Jackson County Fair in 2020.

In 2018, it was a milestone. In 2020, it's a pandemic.

Back then, it was how to make the 150th fair a big one. This year, it's been how to make the 152nd fair happen at all.

Back then, it was what attractions to bring in and which to leave out. This year, it's been what attractions are even available.

Back then, it was months upon months of preparation and planning. This year, it's been a sea of uncertainty, ever-changing schedules and last-second organization.

Hats off to the members of the local fair board — officers Rob Withers, Tom Holthe, Melanie Post and Terri Bargfrede; directors John Chonko, Adam Christoffers, Jeff Fiala, Kim Hohenstein, Jason Diemer, Dave Maschoff, Jessica Mulder, Scott Christopher, Cole Lusk, Landon Larsen and Sandy Phillips; and county board liaison Phil Nasby. They have worked harder and under more duress this year than perhaps any fair board before — even that celebrated board of 2018 — all to provide a glimmer of positivity and hope in a world darkened by a health and economic crisis never before seen.

Back then, all the hard work resulted in a milestone county fair never to forget. This year, because of even harder work, there's no reason not to expect more of the same.

LAST WEEK'S ONLINE POLL

Q: Should Gov. Tim Walz issue a statewide facemask mandate?



Source: Jackson County Pilot Website

THIS WEEK'S ONLINE POLL

Q: Do you approve or disapprove of President Donald Trump's handling of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Vote online at jacksoncountypilot.com.

Has the city just given up?

To the editor:
City officials in Jackson have given up. Though it's been brought to their attention that pieces of gutter litter the downtown sidewalks in front of the fitness center and old hardware store, nothing has been done about it. I noticed the clutter weeks before the June 15 photos documented on my iPhone. As of July 18, the clutter remains. Maybe Jackson is going for that charming rustic look. Do elected officials or those serving through the good grace of hard-working taxpayers ever walk or drive through the town in which they serve to determine its needs?

Dennis Pike
Jackson

In these times, community must come together

In any community, there exist groups and organizations relied on by people for certain services, programs and events.

I've often found people complain about there being nothing to do, but reject the idea of bringing new amenities in. I've also often heard people decry the decline of our community while not going to church, not volunteering for and not patronizing local organizations.

Everyone likes to talk about the importance of community institutions like the food shelf, service organizations, our churches and so on. Fewer people actually try to support them.

We expect churches and nonprofits to provide charity, but balk at the

idea of supporting them ourselves. That's a bad way to view things, and it will harm our county in the long run.

Younger people need to be more involved in the community and far too many churches have member lists that don't come close to reflecting weekly worship numbers. Charities increasingly have to do more with less.

I understand people have work, family and other considerations. I'm not immune to hypocrisy myself. But we all have to do better at supporting one another in this community.

The government is incompetent and the state government has too many problems of its own to be of much help. This is a time of crisis and will remain so for some time.

We don't know how much worse the situation will get, and we cannot be sure any of our leaders have our best interest at heart.

If we come together and support one another, as many of us have been doing, we can persevere through this. It might make us poorer for a time, but the collapsing economy is doing that anyway.

We must work together as a community to set up and maintain systems of mutual aid. That means we have to support our local nonprofits, churches and businesses as much as possible, to minimize job loss and maximize the good we can do.

If you run a community institution like a church, business or nonprofit, keep fighting the good

fight. If not, ask yourself what you can do provide support. There are plenty of local service organizations that need help. Drive for Meals on Wheels if you have the time, or volunteer at the food shelf. Buy local when you can.

If we all do something to support each other, then we will be supported in turn and get through this thing together.



JUST JOSHIN'
Joshua Schuetz

Actions speak louder than words, but ...

We have seen a lot of action lately — not a lot of it good, however, while many of us still stay or hover close to home.

Some folks have never sheltered in place even when a state government mandated it, while others have barely ventured outside their door to get the mail.

Many have come to realize life has to go on even with the threat of terrible sickness and, for some, almost certain death.

One such person was an acquaintance of ours lost to COVID-19 — a vibrant fellow, an active community member, a husband, proud father and a wise businessman.

This fellow traveled extensively, mostly for business and, although it is hard to say, most likely

became exposed to the virus while on his travels. But then, his age was against him as well.

He was active and, over his lifetime, his actions spoke volumes.

But the word going around has been he should have stayed home, hunkered down and played it safe.

That lifestyle didn't fit his persona, and I would guess it wouldn't fit many others either who are trying to make ends meet or find success in their careers and their lives while providing for their families.

Psalms 37:3 states, "Trust in the Lord and do good. Then you will live safely in the land and prosper."

There are folks out there who talk about trusting in the Lord —

trusting him to meet their needs and with their finances, as well as trusting him in all their relationships.

That kind of trust is spiritual but, as this verse states, there is some action required. And that is the "do good" part, which some folks can tend to forget. And it is that part that is the rub that gets a person to the "then you will live safely in the land and prosper" part.

Neat thing about that doing good is you don't have to go on a major mission trip to a far-off land or become a preacher to the masses to do good. Doing good can be as simple as offering an encouraging, kind word to a friend, coworker or even a stranger; tipping a waitress or a retail clerk;

or even in offering up a prayer for others and for your pastor.

God does promise to work toward your good in all situations, but first you must act.

However, as with our acquaintance who succumbed to COVID-19, God's timing is perfect — even in death, from which I believe good will still come.



OUT AND ABOUT
Mike Jordan

READERS WRITE

Local farmers market the place to go for healthy, homegrown foods

To the editor:

Four months ago, our world was flipped upside-down. We were told to stay at home with no direction regarding how long it would be until we returned to normal. It has been a time of reflection on how to take care of ourselves and our family as we navigate these uncertain times. We have had to relearn to cook for ourselves as restaurants were shut down or not running to full capacity. This has been a time to take back our health, a time to start eating healthier and doing better.

At the end of May, the Riverside Farmers Market located at Ashley Park in Jackson started up. There are a variety of vendors providing a variety of items, including:

Cabbage, which has a power punch of health benefits, such as antioxidants to boost the immune system.

Honey, which has antibacterial/anti-fungal properties, and also may aid in boosting the immune

system.

Microgreens, which are a secret weapon. Their nutrient content is concentrated, which means they often contain higher vitamin, mineral and antioxidant levels than the same quantity of mature greens.

Lettuce, which is high in vitamin C, an antioxidant that helps to boost your immune system.

Homemade items, which allows you to know where your item or food comes from.

Local vendors are looking for you to support them just as much as they support your health. If you are healthy, please come on down on Thursdays through October from 2:30 to 5:30 p.m. to support your local farmers.

Riverside Farmers Market asks you to stay home if you are sick and, when you are at the farmers market, please stay 6 feet apart. Also, practice good hygiene with handwashing and sanitizing when you are at the market.

Stay healthy when you shop at your local farmers market. We need your support

Samantha Wendt
Sherburn

Republicans will speak on Aug. 11

To the editor:

Richard Koch wrote a letter to the editor on July 1 stating retiring Rep. Bob Gunther and a "large group of local like-minded Republicans convened a virtual convention and overwhelmingly endorsed Olson."

I disagree.

Koch's statement is based on the misleading results of the online May 19 endorsing convention during which, after six rounds of voting and a rounding error that produced an unconstitutional endorsement, only 70 of the 126 originally seated delegates voted in favor of Bjorn Olson. Our district is made up of 37,800 people and divided into 86 precincts, but 26 of those precincts had no representation at the convention. The fact nearly one-third of our district had no voice in the endorsing process should greatly concern all local Republicans.

The online convention was prescribed to protect delegates from the coronavirus, but the online nature of the convention lacked the transparency, integrity,

accuracy and accessibility of an in-person convention as reflected in the alarmingly low precinct turnout.

A primary election is absolutely justified, necessary and allows the majority of voters ensure the strongest candidate will represent the Republican Party on the general election ballot on Nov. 3.

I want to thank Gunther for his great service to us through his terms. However, I wish he would have stayed open-minded for his support of the best candidate. I am an independent voter and do not endorse any party. I vote for and donate to the person who will serve "we, the people," and I believe Michael Sukalski is that person. Sukalski understands the issues in our district, has publicly shared his positions, is working hard to reach every corner of our district and is a good person. His opponent canvassed our town, and I was very disappointed in him. Sukalski has my endorsement and my vote in the primary election on Aug. 11.

Patricia Loonan
Easton

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The Jackson County Pilot welcomes letters to the editor. Letters must include the writer's name, as well as address and phone number for verification purposes. Letters should be brief, up to 300 words. The editor reserves the right to determine whether material submitted for publication shall be printed and the right to edit as needed. Submit letters in person at the Jackson County Pilot office, mail them to 310 Second St. in Jackson or email them to editor@livewireprinting.com. The deadline for letters is Monday noon. All submissions become the property of the Jackson County Pilot and may be published or otherwise used in any medium.

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— PILOT STAFF —

Justin R. Lessman	justin@livewireprinting.com	Publisher
Dan Condon	danc@livewireprinting.com	Staff Editor
Mike Jordan	mikej@livewireprinting.com	Staff Writer
Joshua Schuetz	joshuas@livewireprinting.com	Staff Writer



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