



CHRISTOPHER THANKFUL FOR SEASON

Jackson County Central senior Cole Christopher is thankful he got a chance to play one final soccer season and was named his team's most valuable player.

Story, B1

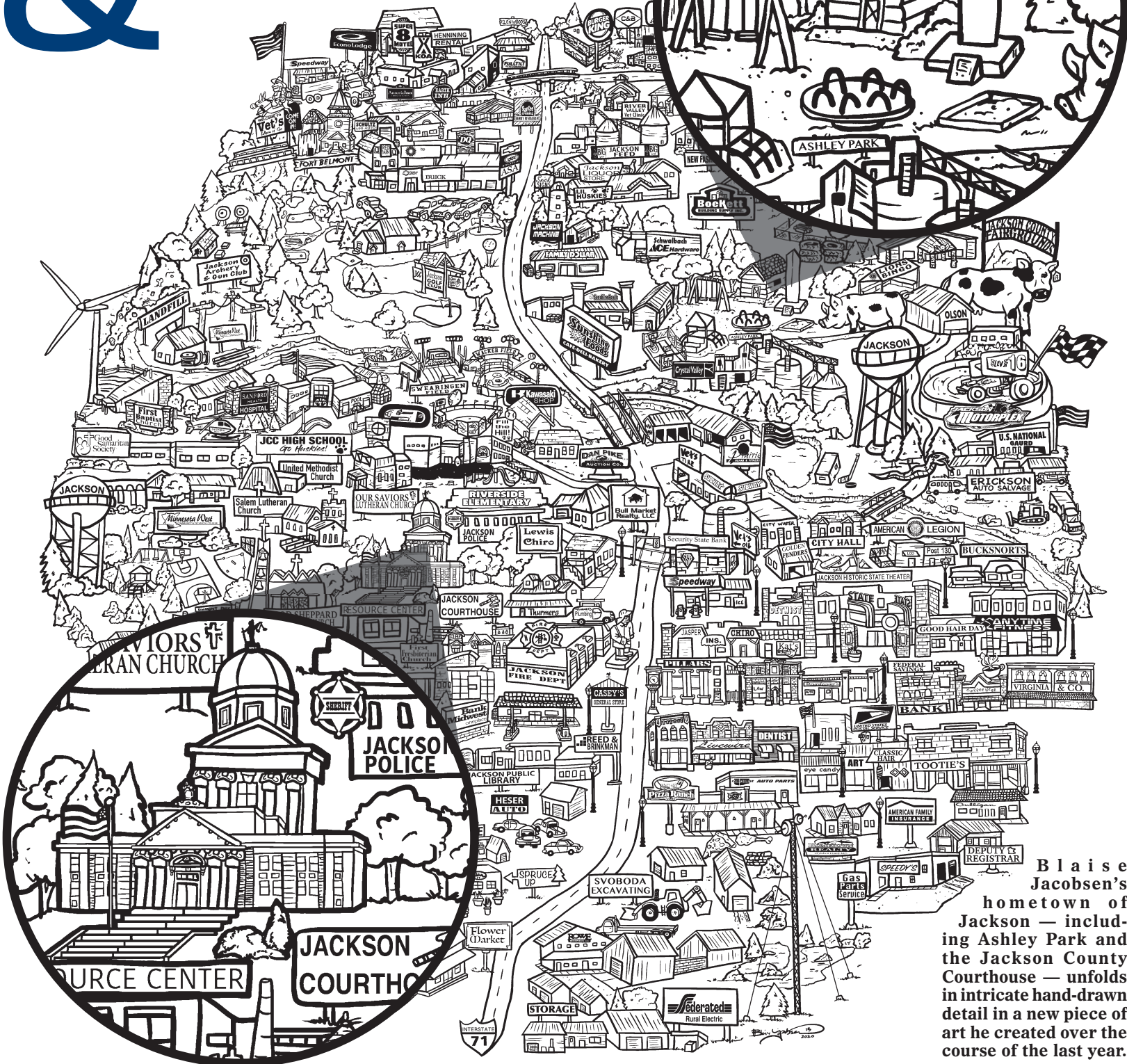


JACKSON COUNTY PILOT

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IN BLACK & WHITE



Blaise Jacobsen's hometown of Jackson — including Ashley Park and the Jackson County Courthouse — unfolds in intricate hand-drawn detail in a new piece of art he created over the course of the last year.

Good Sam looks to halt viral spread

Four infected residents die; others positive

by JOSHUA SCHUETZ
Staff Writer

The Good Samaritan Society of Jackson is implementing aggressive measures to stop the spread of COVID-19 within the local nursing home facility.

Though successfully insulated from the novel coronavirus early on in the pandemic, the local Good Sam facility is currently experiencing a spike in the number of lab-confirmed cases of the illness.

"We currently have nine of our residents and two of our staff members infected," administrator Paige Bloom said Monday.

Four residents who have tested positive for COVID-19 have died.

"While it's hard to say what exactly led to the death in each case, all of them had COVID," Bloom said. "It's been very difficult."

Bloom said the rise in number of cases at Good Sam in Jackson is part of a grim trend across the state.

"Looking at the numbers, 96 percent of Minne-

See **GOOD SAM** on **A3**



Paige Bloom

Deadly week for Jackson County

Jackson County saw its deadliest seven-day stretch of the COVID-19 pandemic this past week.

As of Tuesday, the Minnesota Department of Health had reported three COVID-19-related deaths in Jackson County, two of which were reported within the last week. The county's first COVID-19-related death — that of a 59-year-old Jackson man — was reported Aug. 28. The second — that of a resident between the ages of 85 and 89, was reported last Wednesday. The third — that of a resident between the ages of 90 and 94 — was reported this past Sunday.

The two latest fatalities come during a week in which the county added 90 new lab-confirmed cases of COVID-19, the second highest one-week increase since the onset of the pandemic this past spring. The county notched a one-week-record-101 new cases of COVID-19 the week prior.

The cumulative case-load count in Jackson County as of Tuesday was 697.

Hand-drawn montage of hometown a labor of love for local artist

by JUSTIN R. LESSMAN
Publisher

It's all there, in black and white. From the airport at the tip-top to Federated Rural Electric headquarters at the base, and from the Jackson campus of Minnesota West Community and Technical College on the left to the Jackson County Fairgrounds on the far right, Jackson — Blaise Jacobsen's hometown — unfolds in intricate hand-drawn detail on an 11-inch-by-14.5-inch sheet of paper.

Hundreds of Jackson businesses, churches, parks and other landmarks and locales — yes, even the city dump — make appearances in Jacobsen's drawing, which he said he modeled after a similar work of art done three decades ago.

"I remember seeing one done back in 1990," Jacobsen said. "It was all hand done. I remember looking and looking at that, getting lost in the detail."

The artist was Bruce Loesch, who began drawing city montages back in 1979.



PHOTO BY JUSTIN LESSMAN

A masked Blaise Jacobsen terms his new drawing "one of the products of the pandemic."

Inside...

A3 Blaise Jacobsen is making his latest work of art — a hand-drawn montage of the city of Jackson — available to the masses.

"It was really kind of a cool idea," Jacobsen said. "I just wanted to see if I could do it."

Jacobsen said he liked Loesch's stacked approach to his montage of Jackson, but he decided to put his own spin on it.

"I wanted to capture sides of town, so I decided to incorporate my drawing into a globe-type of shape," Jacobsen said. "I thought it was an interesting, different approach."

Jacobsen said he started sketching out his montage this past February. Rather than drive around town with a sketch pad, as he envisioned Loesch doing back in the '90s, Jacobsen toured the town virtually via Google Street View.

"Using that, I was able to get an idea of the structural details of the buildings I was including in the drawing and, from there, put my own spin on their appearance," he said. "I tried to keep everything to scale and in its proper position relative to the drawing."

Jacobsen, who teaches art at Jackson

See **ARTIST** on **A3**

Duncan to step down as coordinator

by JOSHUA SCHUETZ
Staff Writer

Jackson County Coordinator Steve Duncan has announced his plan to step down from his position.

Duncan intends to depart from his role in May 2021, which may change depending on county needs and his personal situation.

Duncan said he chose to announce his resignation early so as to give the county board time to decide how it wants to structure the county government moving forward.

"I'm announcing it now so the board can take steps

Inside...

B6 Evelyn Schaeffer is the new director of public health at Des Moines Valley Health and Human Services.

toward whatever organizational structure they wish to recruit for and implement," Duncan said Tuesday.

Commissioner Don Wachal thanked Duncan for that courtesy.

"I appreciate you bringing this forward early so we can react to it," Wachal said.

Commissioner Phil Nasby concurred and thanked Duncan for his work as

coordinator.

"Thank you for giving us time," Nasby said. "I don't want to see you leave, but I appreciate what you've done."

Duncan has been with the county since November 2015.

In other action from Tuesday's county board meeting:

See **COUNTY BOARD** on **A3**



PHOTO BY JOSHUA SCHUETZ

OMELETS TO GO

Brent Whitsy (right) leads a crew of fellow Jackson Knights of Columbus in cooking up made-to-order omelets for a drive-through omelet feed this past Sunday morning. Funds raised from the feed will purchase items for residents of the Good Samaritan Society of Jackson.

