



## HUSKIES IMPROVE TO 5-1

After losing to ACGC in a battle of state-ranked teams, the JCC wrestling team won three straight duals to improve to 5-1. Story, B1



# JACKSON COUNTY PILOT

THURSDAY, JANUARY 28, 2021

131ST YEAR/ISSUE 4



## SUPER SLEDDING

Photos by Dan Condon



Left: Although he can't see where he's going, Johnathan Hesseltine seems to enjoy his swift slide down the hill at Ashley Park Sunday afternoon. Right: Haden Kummrow (left) and Heston Kummrow enjoy a trip down the hill during a fun day of sledding hosted by the Jackson Cub Scouts.



Above: Jaycee Fricke (left) and James Bachenberg enjoy a wild ride down the hill at Ashley Park as part of a fun day of sledding hosted by the local Cub Scouts troop Sunday. Left: Dylan McNea smiles while spinning down the hill.



### Inside ...

**A10** Locals took advantage of some fresh powder to hit the slopes just east of Sanford Jackson Medical Center with their sleds Sunday.

### COVID-19 PANDEMIC

## A 'majority' of nursing home staff, residents are vaccinated

Good Samaritan in Jackson free of COVID-19 cases

by JOSHUA SCHUETZ  
Staff Writer

Local nursing homes are well on their way to winning the battle against COVID-19.

That's the word from administrators at the Good Samaritan Society of Jackson and Colonial Manor nursing

home in Lakefield.

Both nursing homes have been able to vaccinate their staffs and are in the process of doing the same for their residents.

"We were able to get vaccines for our staff early, so most have had their second vaccinations," said Good Sam administrator Paige Bloom. "Our residents and assisted-living tenants have had their first vaccinations."

Staff received the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine, while residents are receiving the Moderna vaccine, both of which have an extremely high effectiveness rate.

Bloom said more than 90

percent of residents have agreed to be vaccinated and a majority of staff have consented as well.

"We've done a lot of education about the safety and effectiveness of the vaccines," Bloom said.

Staff and assisted-living tenants were able to go to Sanford Jackson Medical Center for their vaccinations, while Walgreens staff members came into the nursing home to provide vaccinations for residents.

The residents should receive their second round of vaccinations by the second week of February.

"There's been a direct correlation between the vaccinations and county positivity rates going down," Bloom said Monday.

Accordingly, Good Sam in Jackson is planning to reopen to visitors.

Visitation policy will be similar to earlier last year. People will be screened, and will have to mask, sanitize and social distance. Visitations will occur in the nursing home's chapel.

Bloom said throughout the pandemic, the nursing home has had 21 employees test positive and recover, 14 residents recover and five residents die from

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Paige Bloom

## More vaccinated, fewer new cases

New weekly case count is lowest in last three months

by JUSTIN R. LESSMAN  
Publisher

The number of people vaccinated for COVID-19 in Jackson County continues to increase, as the number of new weekly cases of the disease decreases.

As of this past Sunday, 494 locals had received at least one dose of COV-

ID-19 vaccine, up 121 from the week prior. Of those 494, 146 — 1.4 percent of the county's population of just more than 10,000 — have received both shots required for maximum efficacy, what the Minnesota Department of Health terms a "completed vaccine series."

Meanwhile, the weekly tally of new cases of COVID-19 in Jackson County fell to the lowest level in three months. The county

See **CASES** on **A3**

### Inside ...

**B5** Officials with Jackson County Central schools are reporting a welcome sense of normalcy now that all students are back in school for full in-person learning.

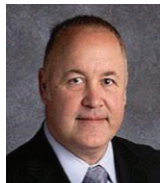
## JCC looking to expand building project scope

Freed-up funds to flow to preschool, new career/tech education space

by JUSTIN R. LESSMAN  
Publisher

Favorable bids on core improvements to Jackson County Central school buildings and low interest rates have freed up funds district officials plan to use to make additional facility enhancements.

Barry Schmidt, superintendent of schools at JCC,



Barry Schmidt

said bids on the addition of new middle school space at Pleasantview Elementary School in Lakefield and various improvements at Riverside Elementary School in Jackson have generally come in below engineer estimates. Couple that with historically low interest rates on borrowed dollars, and the district finds its proposed facility improvement project about \$4.5 million under budget.

Since that money has already been approved by voters to be used to improve and enhance district facilities, Schmidt said district officials are in a position to expand the scope of facility improvements.

"This provides a unique opportunity for the district to enhance our facilities for

years to come," he said. "It gives us the ability to look at doing more things for the betterment of our students."

Additional areas being targeted for improvement include the preschool areas at Riverside and Pleasantview and the agriculture and industrial arts area of the high school in Jackson.

Schmidt said the district is looking to add about 3,000 square feet of preschool and before- and after-school care space to the north end of Riverside and remaster and enhancing preschool space at Pleasantview in order to make offering before- and after-school care at the Lakefield elementary school more practical.

At the high school, the plan is to add around 6,000

See **JCC** on **A3**

## PANDEMIC PRESERVATION



PHOTO BY JUSTIN LESSMAN

Jackson County Historical Society Director Mike Kirchmeier pores over old copies of local newspapers for information about the Spanish flu pandemic of 1918 with limited success. The society's recently launched Living through History Pandemic Survey seeks to preserve the local historical record of the current COVID-19 pandemic for future generations.

### Inside ...

**A3** The business of the Jackson County Historical Society goes on, despite the cancelation of its annual meeting.

Thin local record on last one drives push to preserve record of this one

by JOSHUA SCHUETZ  
Staff Writer

The local historical record concerning the last global pandemic is thin; Mike Kirchmeier, director of the Jackson County Historical Society, doesn't want that to be the case with the current one.

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic last year, Kirchmeier said he has been pelted with requests for information about what life was like in Jackson County during the last pandemic — the Spanish flu pandemic of 1918, which killed millions of people across the globe. However,

See **PRESERVATION** on **A3**