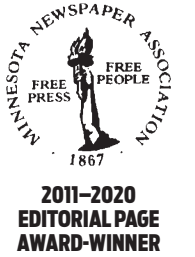


OPINION



PILOT EDITORIAL

Local legislators right in trying to rein in governor

Hats off to our local legislators for continuing to chip away at Gov. Tim Walz's dictator-like powers.

Stymied in their desire for sweeping change, local state Sens. Julie Rosen and Bill Weber and local state Reps. Rod Hamilton and Bjorn Olson refuse to give up, doing what they can to make it known they don't agree with the governor's continued abuse of power and persistent refusal to include elected legislators in the decision-making process with regard to the state's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the Senate, Rosen and Weber last week backed legislation that would empower local school districts to make the best decisions for their districts and remove a governor's ability to unilaterally keep schools closed. In the House, Hamilton and Olson have indicated support for a plan to wind down Walz's restrictions on businesses, with a goal of restoring full operations by May 1 and requiring the governor and legislative leadership to agree on any future business restrictions.

More needs to be done to rein in our out-of-control governor. Thankfully, Jackson County is served by four state legislators who are working to do just that.

J. Rosen

LAST WEEK'S ONLINE POLL

Q: What's your favorite type of chocolate?



Source: Jackson County Pilot Website

THIS WEEK'S ONLINE POLL

Q: Do you approve or disapprove of the way Joe Biden is handling his job as president?

Vote online at jacksoncountypilot.com.

James Eigenberg

james.eigenberg@co.jackson.mn.us

Phil Nasby

phil.nasby@co.jackson.mn.us

Cathy Hohenstein

cathy.hohenstein@co.jackson.mn.us

Scott McClure

scott.mcclure@co.jackson.mn.us

Don Wachal

don.wachal@co.jackson.mn.us

CONTACT YOUR COMMISSIONERS

County has done a good job on CARES, state aid

The federal and state governments have given quite a bit of money to Minnesota counties over the past year and understandably so. Economic fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic is ongoing and, while normality seems somewhere on the horizon — still too far away, in my view — it's clear small businesses needed help.

Our downtown is fragile. We lack the kind of pass-through traffic many other towns get, thanks in part to our Main Street not being part of a highway. We're also a border town, close to the Iowa Great Lakes area, which is one of the most popular resort destinations in the upper Midwest. The risk to our downtown restaurants and bars was — and remains — real.

I do think it was good the state and federal

governments gave aid to counties as they did. However, distributing funds fairly — and honestly — is difficult. Numerous stories have emerged, some from our own state, of local governments acting ineptly or irresponsibly with these funds.

The challenge is especially acute for smaller counties that lack economic development departments of their own.

Our county contracted administrative duties to Chatfield-based Community Economic Development Associates, which set up a grant program to distribute the money with clear standards and guidelines. The board approved the distribution of federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act money last year and the state aid last week. In both cases, a needed

lifeline was extended to local businesses that have suffered under the weight of lockdowns and capacity restrictions.

While many people, myself included, like to point out when government at any level fails to fulfill its obligations to the public, I think it's equally important to point out when something difficult and complex was done right.

I also think it can serve as a model for similar enterprises in the future. Contracting programs out to trusted local and regional organizations fosters accountability and allows smaller counties like ours to provide more services to residents, especially in times of crisis. It's also more fiscally responsible than creating new departments or trying to undertake a project without

specialized personnel, something that always opens opportunities for waste.

The CARES Act and subsequent round of stimulus from the state will need to be paid for in the future; of this there can be no doubt. But these are questions for different levels of government. Our local officials executed their duties admirably in a challenging context and this deserves recognition.



JUST JOSHIN'
Joshua Schuetz

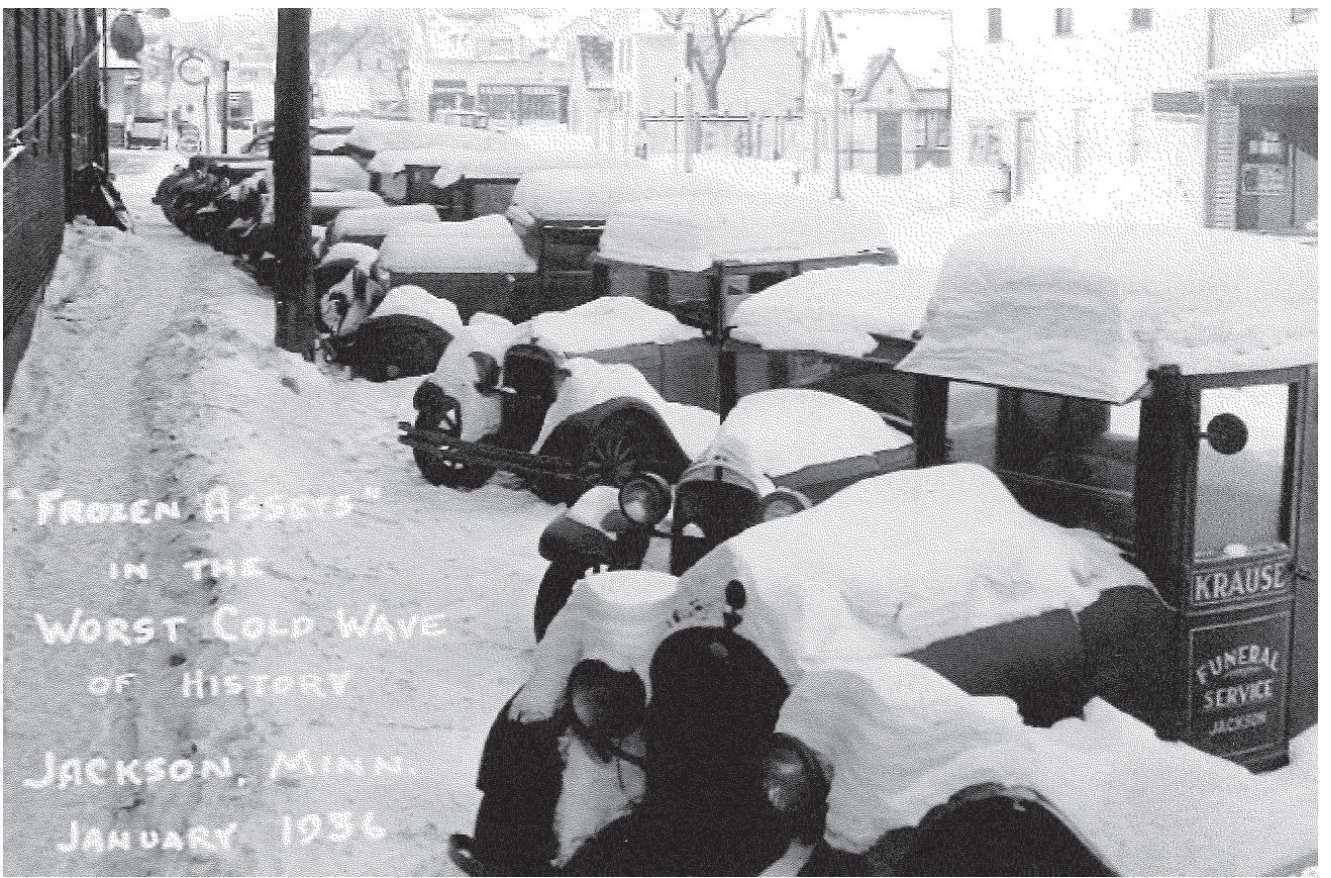


PHOTO COURTESY OF BOB SVOBODA

FROZEN ASSETS

Vehicles sit frozen in downtown Jackson during what photographer Harold Strom termed "the worst cold wave of history" back in January 1936. Present-day residents of Jackson just recently suffered through their own cold wave of historical proportions, with record-setting low temperatures recorded on two consecutive days last week.

Flashing amber lights only legal to use at certain times

Question: What is the law regarding pickup trucks with flashing amber lights? I noticed some of them traveling down the road when they are not actively plowing. Also, is there a law against plowing or blowing snow onto a public road?

Answer: Minnesota state law states a service vehicle shall not display a lighted lamp when traveling on the highway or at any other time except at the scene of a disabled vehicle or while conducting snow removal or road maintenance. Any service vehicle

may be equipped with a type of flashing amber lamp that is approved by the commissioner of public safety. Remember other traffic on the main roadway will have the right of way, so be sure to pay attention and use due care.

Activities such as plowing, blowing or shoveling snow onto public roads is prohibited. This includes the ditch and right-of-way area along the roads.

Civil penalties may apply if the placement of snow creates a hazard, such as a slippery area, frozen rut or bump that contributes to a motor

vehicle or pedestrian crash. The civil liability can extend to both the property owner and the person who placed the snow.

Please remember to help local fire departments by making a path and clearing snow around a fire hydrant when it is on or close to your property.

You can avoid a ticket — and a crash — if you simply buckle up, drive at safe speeds, pay attention and always drive sober.

If you have any questions concerning traffic-related laws or issues in Minnesota, send your questions to

Sgt. Troy Christianson, Minnesota State Patrol, at 2900 48th St. NW; Rochester, MN 55901-5848. Or reach him at Troy.Christianson@state.mn.us.



ASK A TROOPER
Sgt. Troy Christianson

EDITORIAL POLICY

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.

— OPINIONS —

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.

— LIABILITY —

The publisher shall not be liable for slight changes or typographical errors that do not lessen the value of an advertisement. The publisher's liability for other errors or omissions in connection with an advertisement is strictly limited to publication of the advertisement in any subsequent issue or the refund of any monies paid for the advertisement.

— PILOT STAFF —

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

POSTMASTER:
Send address changes to:
Jackson County Pilot
P.O. Box 208
Jackson, MN 56143
Phone (507) 847-3771

Member of



JACKSON COUNTY PILOT
310 Second Street • Jackson, MN
(507) 847-3771 • jacksoncountypilot.com
Published Weekly on Thursday
USPS 271880
Periodicals postage paid at Jackson, Minnesota

— SUBSCRIPTION RATES —
In Jackson County, \$64.00/Year. Elsewhere in the United States, \$75.00/Year. Nine-month students, \$55.00. ePilot, \$30.00/Year.

PRINTED WITH SOYINK ON RECYCLED PAPER

Printed on Recycled Paper
Read and Recycle