

Tribune Jasper County

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ASSESSED VALUATIONS HAVE PEOPLE TALKING

Jasper County Assessor's Office is seeing more inquiries from citizens asking about their increased property values

Christopher Braunschweig
Staff Writer

There is a large uptick in phone calls, walk-ins and emails at the Jasper County Assessors Office, and it's all because of the increased property valuations.

Residents have also probably noticed the uptick in their property valuations after receiving their updated assessments in the mail. In years past, such increases

have caused residents to worry their taxes might go up, too, and the governing bodies receiving these complaints have always pointed to the assessor.

Jasper County Assessor Stacey Von Dielingen said most folks are asking why their assessments have increased so much and what their options are if they want to contest it. Most taxpayers, she said, are just not overly familiar with

the process the county assessors must follow in the state of Iowa.

"My role as county assessor is to place a fair and equitable market value on property, within the confines of Iowa Code and what the current market is doing," Von Dielingen said. "Normal assessment years are odd numbered years, although valuations can change in even numbered years due to various factors."

Even with the high volume of inquiries the assessor's office has been receiving, Von Dielingen encourages taxpayers to contact her and her staff with any questions. They are more than willing to explain the changes and assure them that just be-



Christopher Braunschweig/Jasper County Tribune

In-person traffic to the Jasper County Assessor's Office was strangely light on Friday, April 7, but staff say they have been extremely busy taking calls and responding to emails from citizens concerned about their property valuations.

cause valuations go up, their taxes may not.

Property tax, assessments and valuations are

complex issues. For instance, there is a difference between assessed value and taxable value.

The taxable value is determined by the assessed

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Jasper County enters into agreement to receive more opioid settlement money

Funds will be dispersed by committee, whose first round of application deadlines is April 30



Christopher Braunschweig/Jasper County Tribune

Jasper County Attorney Scott Nicholson speaks to the board of supervisors about the opioid settlement money that will be coming into the county, which will be dispersed by a committee.

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Jasper County is going to be receiving even more settlement money from companies who were sued for their role in the opioid crisis.

Jasper County Attorney Scott Nicholson said the county has already started receiving funds from the three major pharmaceutical companies that entered into settlement agreements. The county board of supervisors initially hired lawyers in 2018 to sue the companies.

However, the lawyers have also begun to sue and reach settlements with retail outlets, specifically Teva, Allergan, Walgreens, Walmart and CVS. Nicholson sought a formal resolution from the board of supervisors to enter into these settlements and start receiving even more funding.

"It's going to be another significant amount of money from what I can tell," Nicholson said.

"...This means more money for the Opioid Settlement Committee to disperse in Jasper County. I'm not sure exactly how much money we're going to be receiving. But, I mean, these are five of the larger retailers in America."

In February, the board of supervisors established the Jasper County Opioid Settlement Committee, which is made up of Nicholson, deputy auditor of financials Teresa Arrowood, county auditor Jenna Jennings, health department administrator Becky Pryor and county supervisor Denny Stevenson.

According to an article published by The Associated Press in November 2022, a number of United States pharmacy chains agreed to pay billions of dollars' worth of settlements over the toll of the opioid crisis. Governments and pharmacies filled prescriptions they should have flagged as inappropriate, the

SETTLEMENT — See Page 3



Hop to it

Fun Easter activities took over Colfax April 8

Jamee A. Pierson
Editor

Rows of kids stood in anticipation to hear "GO!" at the Colfax Easter egg hunt April 8. When it was finally time, their little legs ran as fast as they could to pick up as many eggs as they could fit into their basket during the holiday celebration.

Sponsored by Colfax Main Street, more than 1,000 eggs dotted the Woman's Club Park ready for little hands to grab them up and secure their treats. Fun prizes, including toys were also hidden among the eggs for an extra special surprise.

"We hope everyone had fun at the Eggstravaganza in downtown Colfax. Colfax

Main Street and Colfax-Mingo Community School District's Generation On Club volunteers set out more than 1,000 eggs and prizes for Colfax kids to find," Colfax Main Street Director Stuart Patterson said. "We also want to give a special thanks to the Easter Bunny for coming to Colfax today."

It didn't take long after the kids were let go for every egg and prize to be snatched up. First the littles, ages up to four, got their chance, followed by the older kids, who had to climb the mountain of the hill to gather all of their eggs.

Tied for the most fun part of the event, kids could then crack open each egg and see what goodie was hid-

den inside. Families were also treated to a free hot dog lunch from the First Baptist Church, as a part of the Eggstravaganza celebration.

After the park was clean, families were invited to downtown Colfax to continue the celebration. The local businesses got into the holiday spirit, as well, with the Golden Egg contest that resulted in the discount on a purchase if found. The Easter Bunny also made a second special appearance in the downtown to greet shoppers and take pictures with eager guests.

The event was the perfect kick-off for the holiday weekend and a great way to celebrate the community of Colfax.

An 'Eggcellent' Easter Egg hunt

Baxter kids fill their baskets at the annual event April 8



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