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Mid-Michigan schools 'reopen'

SEE PAGE 12

-NEVIN '20

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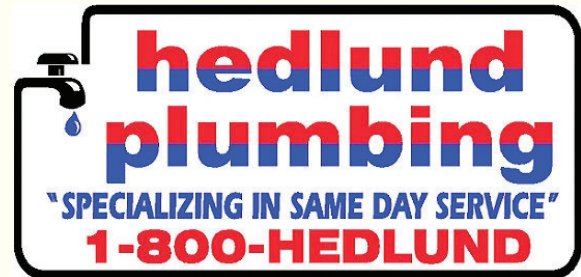
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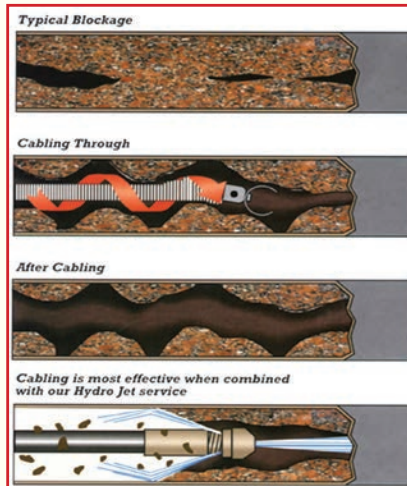
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Gutted postal service disrupting mail-in voting, small businesses



Republicans block funding for USPS

Helltimes Herald

REPORT: TRUMP CAMPAIGN SOUGHT AND RECEIVED HELP FROM RUSSIA IN 2016



NAVALNY POISONED

Why is U.S. President allied with hostile foreign nation?

Tragic Trumpeter

U.S. DEMOCRACY IN CRISIS

Unprecedented voter suppression efforts

Permanent dictatorship ahead?




GOP lies about "voter fraud"

THEN THERE'S THE ACTUAL COVERAGE...

Blasé Bugle

Partisan Gridlock

DeJoy Says He Will Stop USPS Cuts



Senate Intelligence Report Doesn't Hurt Trump in Polls

Why is America So Divided?

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Catch up on the latest news highlights



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Threadbare Mitten Film Festival goes virtual



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Georgio's Gourmet Pizzeria reopens in East Lansing



Cover Art

Art by Nevin Speerbrecker

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CITY PULSE

on the

AIR

NOW AT 10:00 A.M. SUNDAYS on

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88.9FM

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW

TONIGHT ON OUR BROADCAST--MORE NEWS THAN THE HUMAN MIND IS CAPABLE OF PROCESSING!

IT'S LIKE BEING BLASTED IN THE FACE WITH A FIREHOSE ALL THE TIME! THERE'S NO WAY FOR ANY MORTAL BEING TO KEEP UP WITH IT ALL WITHOUT GOING COMPLETELY MAD!



AMN

ACCORDING TO THE SENATE INTELLIGENCE COMMITTEE, PAUL MANAFORT COLLABORATED WITH A RUSSIAN INTELLIGENCE ASSET!

IT'S STUNNING! AND WE'LL HAVE FORGOTTEN ALL ABOUT IT BY NEXT WEEK!

I'M ALREADY HAVING TROUBLE REMEMBERING!



AMN

MEANWHILE STEVE BANNON HAS BEEN ARRESTED FOR ALLEGEDLY DEFRAUDING MAGA DONORS IN A BORDER WALL FUNDRAISING SCHEME!

I DON'T EVEN KNOW HOW MANY TRUMP ASSOCIATES HAVE BEEN CHARGED WITH CRIMES AT THIS POINT!

IT'S LIKE THERE'S A PATTERN HERE--BUT I'M NO LONGER CAPABLE OF SUSTAINING A COHERENT THOUGHT LONG ENOUGH TO FIGURE IT OUT!




AMN

IN OTHER NEWS, MAIL DELIVERY IS STILL BEING SABOTAGED BY THE NEW POSTMASTER GENERAL, AS THE PRESIDENT DENOUNCES MAIL-IN VOTING AS INHERENTLY FRAUDULENT!

WHAT EVEN HAPPENS IF HE MANAGES TO UNDERMINE THE LEGITIMACY OF THE NEXT ELECTION?

ONLY ONE WAY TO FIND OUT! WHEEEEE!



AMN

FINALLY, REPUBLICANS PROFESSED SHOCK AT PRESIDENT OBAMA'S CRITICISM OF HIS SUCCESSOR DURING THE DEMOCRATIC CONVENTION!

THEY SAY HE HAS NO RESPECT FOR THE NORMS AND TRADITIONS OF OUR DEMOCRACY!

I JUST STABBED MYSELF IN THE LEG WITH A PENCIL TO KEEP FROM LAUGHING OUT LOUD!



AMN

COMING UP NEXT--THE PANDEMIC! AND WHATEVER CRAZY-ASS STORY BREAKS DURING THE NEXT THREE MINUTES!

I DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU, BUT MY BRAIN IS TURNING TO JELLO AS WE SPEAK!

WE'LL BE BACK AFTER THESE MESSAGES--OR WILL WE? HAHAAHAHAHA HAHAAHAHAHA!



AMN

Tom Tomorrow © 2020

C is for COVID

School bells are beginning to ring across mid-Michigan, but not in a way we've ever heard before. With no small amount of trepidation on the part of students, parents and educators, and with the coronavirus potentially lurking behind every sniffle, many area schools have wisely opted to begin the year in all-virtual mode.

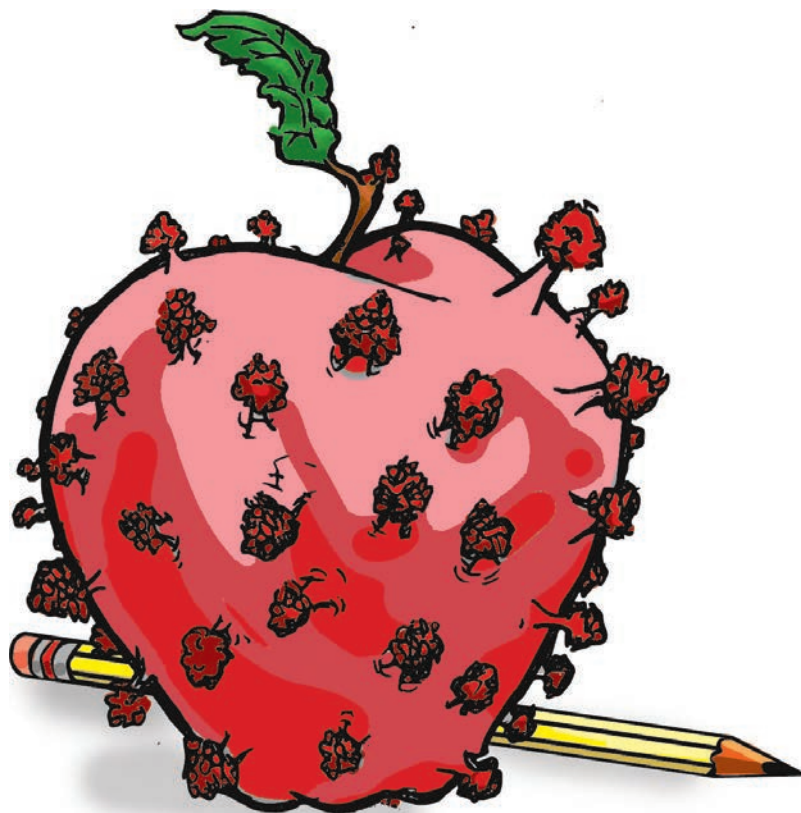
A number of area schools have adopted a hybrid approach, which allows students to choose between in-person instruction and distance learning. Others, like Lansing Catholic High School, brought students back to the classroom this week for full face-to-face instruction. The school says its decision is based on guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and the American Association of Pediatrics, both of which issued statements supporting in-person instruction so long as appropriate safeguards are in place to protect the health of students and staff.

Keeping kids at home is the surest path to avoiding COVID outbreaks among students, teachers and other school personnel. Even though school-age children are not especially vulnerable to the coronavirus, we know almost nothing about the long-term effects on their health. It is all but certain that the virus will also find its way home to parents, grandparents and siblings, with potentially devastating consequences.

That's why teachers in many school districts across the nation are pushing back. Numerous lawsuits have been filed to stop in-school instruction due to the perceived health risks. In Florida, where the governor ordered schools to reopen for in-person instruction and threatened financial penalties for failure to comply, teachers successfully sued to halt the plan. The case is now pending on appeal.

The prospect of reopening schools for in-person instruction while the coronavirus still rages presents an enormous challenge for educators. It's a bold experiment not only in managing a public health crisis, but in the viability and efficacy of virtual instruction itself. Will it work? We're about to find out.

We're most impressed with the Lansing School District's return-to-school strategy. Under the leadership of Superintendent Sam Sinicropi and LSD Board President Gabrielle Lawrence, the district has developed a well-crafted, comprehensive plan for



The CP Edit

Opinion

virtual learning that will protect children, their families and school staff. Teachers will be in their classrooms as usual, but students will engage virtually with their instructors for part of the day and complete self-paced assignments at other times.

The district also partnered with community organizations like the Boys and Girls Club, Impression 5 Science Center and Woldumar Nature Center to establish "learning labs," where students can safely partake in a variety of in-person educational activities under adult supervision. The labs are designed to provide

support for working parents who may not be able to stay home during the day to supervise their children. Current enrollment capacity is just 600 out of the district's 11,000 students, but LSD is looking for additional partners to expand the program.

For an urban district where the vast majority of students qualify for federally subsidized lunches due to poverty, technology-based education presents a unique set of hurdles that must also be overcome. Economically challenged families are less likely to have computers or Internet access — the essential tools of online learning. LSD is working hard to overcome the digital divide by providing Chromebooks to every student who needs one at no cost, and working with families and broadband providers to ensure the availability of broadband service in the home.

Critics argue that even the most carefully crafted plan for virtual education is inferior to in-person instruction. They argue that children's social development and mental health will suffer greatly from the lack of face-to-face interaction with their instructors and peers. These concerns are not unfounded, but most young people we know don't seem to have any trouble watching a screen all day, as long as it involves playing a game or watching Tik

Tok videos. Formal instruction is likely to be far less engaging and teachers certainly have their work cut out for them to keep kids' attention. But school-age children are more adaptable and resilient than we often give them credit for, so we're confident that distance learning will be a success. School leaders need to be vigilant, though, to ensure that virtual education doesn't widen the achievement gap for students from economically disadvantaged families.

Taken together, this year's back-to-school strategies strike us as a massive science experiment, with children, teachers and their families as the test subjects. On balance, we strongly favor distance learning, at least for now, to mitigate the health risks for everyone involved in the education enterprise. Better to be safe than to learn the hard way that C stands for COVID.

Send letters to the editor on this editorial or any other topic to letters@lansingcitypulse.com.

Please limit them to 250 words

Make an American slavery course a requirement

By **DEDRIA H. BARKER**

(The writer is the author of "Mother of Orphans: The True and Curious Story of Irish Alice, a Colored Man's Widow." She lives in East Lansing.)

Harvard University President Derek Bok wrote in his 2017 book, *The Struggle to Reform our Colleges*,

"It's the need to make progress toward both objectives simultaneously that presents the greatest challenge to America's colleges." Bok's objectives were educating more Americans, and to do so better.

Bok was talking about multi-tasking. COVID-19 and Black Lives Matter present another opportunity.

As college and university administrators finalize plans for fall 2020 for continuing student education amid the reality and consequences of COVID-19, they need to simultaneously address Black Lives Matter and structural racism. They can do this by making a class on American slavery mandatory.

It's needed. Systemic racism is not being addressed in most American schools. Even students not in college in know that it's "not the thing you learn in school." Race is the chief motivating bias of more than 40 percent of hate crimes on American college campuses, according to "Indicators of School Crime and Safety," a report issued by the National Center for Education Statistics in July.

In every way, the treatment in our country of Black Americans is immoral. To make that point, protesters in Portland, Oregon, put up a Wall of Moms against President Trump's storm troopers.

The basic moral conundrum is that white Americans continue now to reap the benefits of the "peculiar institution" while knowing little about how it relates to system of racism, including police killings, that African Americans encounter today, and most white Americans prefer to keep it that way through willful ignorance.

Manisha Sinha, an Indian-American professor of African American History, wrote in *The New York Times*: "After graduation, I interviewed across the country for positions in early American history. I was asked over and over again why, as an Indian woman, I chose to study the history of slavery and the Civil War The one interview where no one asked



Barker

me that question was for a position in African American Studies."

American leaders can ignore systemic racism as long as they think slavery is peripheral to the U.S. The reality is that slavery is central to our country. They can think treatment of Black Americans is a problem Black Americans cause themselves through individual behavior, or, alternatively, through bad luck. A mandatory class connecting slavery to today will prompt college degree holders, our future leaders, to thinking about slavery and its connection to systemic racism.

Mandatory classes are not new to American colleges and universities. "Perceived social and cultural need" has kept composition in place at all types and sizes of schools for 134 years, David Fleming wrote in his book "From Form to Meaning." I was required to take mandatory classes to earn my bachelor's and my master's degrees in English, and I taught the mandatory course for 18 years at Lansing Community College. Everyone who earned a college degree passes freshman composition before walking across the stage.

In response to Black Lives Matter protests, Femi Brinson, African American Master of Business Administration Association co-president, was reported as saying on the Wharton School of Business website, "There's a need for us to educate people. There's a need for us to have some of these tough conversations because we expect that our classmates are going to graduate and become leaders. They're going to lead diverse teams. They're going to need to be pounding

the table for people who don't look like them, and they're going to need to understand some of the cultural nuances of the things that we go through. Even though we're in the same spaces when we walk into an elevator to go to work or in a meeting, we might have different experiences based on our history and based on how we're treated"

Today's college student destined to be tomorrow's leader needs to study slavery and grapple with its meaning and the fruit it produced so they are equipped to help build an America that lifts African Americans and the entire country towards the values of our Constitution, and Declaration of Independence.

Those values fuel immigration. When Steve Harvey addressed the issue of racism on his television show, an audience member whose parents were immigrants protested that Black Americans today can fix their situation with hard work. But in the YouTube comments section, viewer Rodriguez S. wrote, "It's one thing to come to the country with nothing, and quite another to come as nothing."

A mandatory Black American college course will say that the Black American cultural experience is important, as important as European or white American culture. For instance, a Stanford University course whose content is Wordsworth, Austen, Bronte and Dickens is described as "a critical and historical examination of our culture's obsession" with happiness. Among American literature, a college student can spend a whole semester studying American southern Gothic culture through William Faulkner's work where Black people are depicted exclusively, and romantically, as servants/slaves.

Generally, the closest focus on Black cultural experience arrives in survey courses, such as an English class on the Harlem Renaissance, the golden Black literary period with a constellation of stars such as Langston Hughes, Alain Locke and Zora Neale Hurston. Such courses are offered infrequently, because, as Professor Sinha discovered, a prevailing thought is that only Black students should have an interest.

Some students already chose Black



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classes. The first and only time I taught African American literature, the class was nearly full, it, but in a fit of honesty, I told them that I was a writing professor. And, actually, the class was the second-semester writing course. Two days later, the second class meeting was socially distanced. This was pre-COVID.

I found one student who had disappeared in the cafeteria. He told me, "Honestly, I just didn't want to work that hard." Of the half-dozen left, two wanted to leave every class 15 minutes early to drive to their next class on the other campus five miles away. Making an African American slavery class mandatory will help change the image of Black courses from easy-A classes to valuable, idea-rich classes deserving of serious thought.

With only one-third of today's 20 million college students the first-generation in their family to attend, it is clear that Americans believe college has proven to be a valuable experience for young adults. Black students who bask in their parents' triumph over post-secondary institutional racism, may not realize how slavery is their concern, so that when it strikes them, they think it's their individual fault.

White students are more than happy to live their college lives in the image of Black culture — playing rap music as loud as any urban Black guy, or styling their hair in African-American style braids and locks. Once they get their degree, they can soften their music, cut their hair, get their good job and start living their lives, making their way up. Sometimes they don't even have to do that. Dad hires them hoping for the best. If only it was so easy for African Americans.

Knowledge that slavery and systemic racism now can prevent Black students from mental and emotional problems. A mandatory course can impart integrity to those white students' lives. For those who don't care about slavery and the American

REWIND

NEWS HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE LAST 7 DAYS



BLM

from page 6

By KYLE KAMINSKI



Lime scooters have returned to Lansing

Electric scooters are back on the streets of Lansing. Lime deployed a fleet of scooters in downtown Lansing last year, and isn't letting a pandemic slow down business this summer. Dozens of scooters were dropped off across downtown Friday. Those responsible for charging scooters overnight have been asked to take additional COVID-19 sanitation measures.

Overnight parking hearing delayed a week

A city ordinance that bans local residents from parking overnight on city streets without a paid permit could be erased as the Lansing City Council pushes forward plans to dismantle a paid permit system launched this year and reopen local streets for free parking from 2 to 5 a.m.

The existing parking ordinance, which passed, 7-1, late last year with Councilman Brian Jackson opposed, offers residents a \$125 annual permit in exchange for the ability to park on the street from 2-5 a.m. Fines for violations are \$25 (or \$35 in a snow emergency). The latest ordinance proposal from Council members Brandon Betz and Kathie Dunbar would eliminate that system. A public hearing for the changes was set for this week, but it has been rescheduled to Aug. 31.



Dems abandon Ferguson for MSU board

Michigan Democrats will vote this week for two nominees for the Michigan State University Board of Trustees, and Joel Ferguson will not be among the choices. Facing the likely loss of the endorsement, the 81-year-old, four-time incumbent and former board chairman announced last week that he will not seek another term.

Ferguson, a wealthy developer, philanthropist and Democratic donor, has been a predominant power-broker at MSU. His connections with Jesse Jackson, Hillary Clinton and other prominent Democrats have made him a powerful figure within Democratic circles for multiple decades.

But Ferguson's perceived public callousness toward the sexual assault victims of Larry Nassar and his behind-the-scenes maneuvering to bring in former Republican

Gov. John Engler turned off education unions, the UAW and progressive groups. Even the Black caucus was angered by his actions, despite his background as the first Black person elected to the Lansing City Council. His departure was welcomed news for many who have long sought his resignation from the board at MSU.



Ingham County Prosecutor Carol Siemon won't take police union contributions

As Ingham County Prosecutor Carol Siemon vies for reelection in November, there's at least one segment of the community that she won't tap for endorsements or donations: The police. Siemon vowed this week (alongside dozens of other prosecutors nationwide) to not accept any campaign contributions or endorsements from police unions — a move designed to distance herself from perceived conflicts of interests as well as from the views of the police labor unions. Siemon recently received a formal nomination from the Ingham County Democratic Party and will face off against Republic George Platsis in the General Election in November. Her views on plea bargains and stance against sentences of life in prison without parole have caused some controversy in recent weeks, but it isn't expected to jeopardize her chances for another term.



Assessments for the Red Cedar project are en route to winter tax bills

The Lansing City Council moved a step closer this week to issuing assessments to residents that would help to cover about two-thirds of the costs to reconstruct the Montgomery Drain.

The city's portion of the project would tally to more than \$41 million, according to city calculations, when paid back with interest over 30 years. While still subject to change as the tax rolls are set, that means the average taxpaying property owner would pay an added .26 mills on their winter property taxes — or about \$13 for a home with a taxable value of about \$50,000. Property owners in the immediate vicinity of the project could



pay much more: \$377 annually for residences and \$11,831 for commercial, in addition to the city tax, early city projections showed.

Lansing Mayor Andy Schor said he tried and failed to convince Drain Commissioner Pat Lindemann to tap the brakes on the decades-long plans to reconstruct the drain, which runs from Frandor to the Red Cedar River, in order to cut water pollution. Under the drain code, city officials have said they're powerless to stop the project and can only decide how to pay the bill.

system that holds Black people down literally and figuratively, a mandatory class will require an intelligent, reasoned argument. Their college degree will depend on how good a job they do on that.

Derek Bok put little faith in accrediting agencies for achieving his objectives, but these agencies have already starting working on mine. Accreditation agencies' general education requirements pave the way for a mandatory American slavery class.

For instance, The Higher Learning Commission, a regional accrediting agency for schools in 19 Midwest states, judges schools by "their encouragement of curricular or cocurricular activities that prepare students for informed citizenship and workplace success." Professional school accreditation criteria such as those revised by The College Commission on Nursing Education in 2018 call for students to be "exposed to individuals with diverse life experience, perspectives and background." The point is to "broaden student perspectives." College faculty and administrators can make recognition of how slavery impacts Americans now a requirement for an educated person. This would be a specific class, not a selection from a smorgasbord of electives with tenuous ties to American slavery and how African Americans live and work today.

Connect the dots. African Americans have and continue to contribute to every aspect of American culture, and that means slavery is in every aspect of our culture.

The only way to change America is to educate our future leaders. Stuart Stevens, author of "It Was All a Lie: How the Republican Party Became Donald Trump," said in an interview that any time you attack education you are on a path to decline. The corollary is, any time you hold up education you are moving forward. This Black Lives Matter moment can be extended when American college students finally study American slavery and systemic racism now as a matter of their general education. Colleges and universities must move now to make such a course a mandatory requirement for graduation.

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF LANSING
LEGAL NOTICE
 Michigan Regulation and Taxation of Marihuana Act
 Application Enrollment Period

Notice is hereby given that the Charter Township of Lansing will accept applications during a 30 day period beginning September 4, 2020 and ending on October 3, 2020 for the following licenses:

- 1 Class A Grower
- 1 Class B Grower
- 2 Marihuana Processors
- 2 Safety Compliance Facilities
- 1 Marihuana Secure Transporter

Application forms are available at www.lansingtowship.org, or by calling the Clerk's office at 517-485-4063.

Susan L. Aten, Clerk
 Charter Township of Lansing

#20-195

**NOTICE OF DAY OF REVIEW OF DRAINAGE DISTRICT BOUNDARIES
 AND DAY OF REVIEW OF APPORTIONMENTS**
 (In accordance with P.A. 40, of 1956, as amended)

Notice is Hereby Given that a Day of Review will be held on **Tuesday, September 8, 2020**, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Please take notice that the meeting will be conducted following the guidelines of Michigan Governor's Executive Order 154, and all other Executive Orders that may be applicable at the time of the meeting. Due to the requirements in the Executive Orders, the meeting will not be held in person, but instead will be held by remote electronic access. For those seeking to participate through online video conferencing, participants can access the electronic meeting through the following Zoom link:

Join Zoom Meeting
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86177153144>

Or Dial: +1 312 626 6799
 Meeting ID: 861 7715 3144

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86177153144>

In lieu of using the remote electronic access, any interested person may also participate in the meeting by calling the Drain Office at (517) 676-8395 on **September 8, 2020**, at any time from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

At that date and Zoom location, the Ingham County Drain Commissioner will hear the proofs and allegations and carefully reconsider and review the description of lands within Ingham County comprising the Drainage Districts for the Drains listed below, and will determine whether the addition or deletion of lands will more accurately define the boundaries of the land benefitted by the Drains and is just and equitable pursuant to Section 197 of 1956 PA 40, as amended. The Drain Commissioner will also review the apportionment of benefits for assessment purposes. The Drains are located and established in the following municipalities, and a general description of the lands proposed to be added or deleted, in whole or in part, include the following:

DRAIN NO.	DRAIN NAME	MUNICIPALITY	SECTION NUMBERS
B 01-00	BANK INTERCOUNTY DRAIN	LANSING TOWNSHIP	7, 18, 19
B 18-00	BRIGGS EXTENSION INTERCOUNTY DRAIN	LANSING TOWNSHIP	7, 18, 19

Maps of the proposed Drainage District boundary revisions may be found on the Ingham County Drain Commissioner's website (dr.ingham.org).

The Ingham County Drain Commissioner will have the tentative apportionments against parcels and municipalities within the Drainage Districts available to review. Drain assessments will be collected in the same manner as property taxes. If Drain assessments are to be collected in installments, they may be paid in full with any interest to date at any time to avoid further interest charges. The entities to be assessed at large are the municipalities listed above, as well as Ingham County for benefit to county roads, and the State of Michigan Department of Transportation for those Drainage Districts that include state highways. The lands to be assessed are those generally described as being within the Sections set forth above.

Persons with disabilities needing accommodations for effective participation in the meeting should contact the Ingham County Drain Commissioner at (517) 676-8395, or the Michigan Relay Center at 711 (TTY) at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting to request mobility, visual, hearing, or other assistance.

You are Further Notified that persons aggrieved by the decision to add or delete property to or from a Drainage District may seek judicial review in the Ingham County Circuit Court within ten (10) days of the decision, and persons aggrieved by the decision with regard to the apportionment of benefits for assessment purposes may appeal to the Ingham County Probate Court within ten (10) days of the Day of Review.

Patrick E. Lindemann
 Ingham County Drain Commissioner

August 13, 2020

#20-197

Ex-judge hopes 'implicit bias' claims are heard with fresh ears in 2020

It's been 12 years since the state Supreme Court tossed Beverly Nettles off the Ingham County bench during her lunch break. The locks to her office were changed immediately. Her personal belongings were dropped off on her front lawn.

In those 12 years, the judge formerly known as Beverly Nettles-Nickerson hasn't stopped fighting the loss of her livelihood and her law license. She felt then what she feels now: Implicit racial bias created trumped up charges that railroaded her to an overly severe punishment.

It took George Floyd's death at the knee of Minneapolis police officer to make "implicit bias" a subject white folks can fully appreciate. It took COVID-19 to make state disciplinary hearings easily accessible through Zoom calls.

And that's why Nettles said she feels that, after 12 years, the public will finally hear what she's been trying to say.

"Systemic racism, sexism and culture in Michigan's legal sanctioning bodies attributed to my removal and denial of reinstatement," she said.

Next Thursday, Sept. 3, Nettles will be before the Michigan Attorney Discipline Board in a public Zoom video conference to debunk any of the 10 Judicial Tenure Commission counts that ultimately led to her demise.

When it's all over, she wants to be able to practice law again. But beyond that, she wants vindication that kicking her, an African-American woman, off the bench in 2008 was a much more severe punishment than any white judge would have received for the same alleged offenses.

Here's a recap on some of Nettles' offenses from 2007:

— She filed for divorce in Kent County as opposed to Ingham County, where she and her husband last lived together, allegedly to publicly shield the filing. But Nettles notes that her husband did live in Kent County at the time and the venue was proper.

— She helped a friend and co-worker get her boyfriend off of probation early. The alleged friend, Gwen Dupard, is prepared to testify that Nettles did have

a personal relationship and that if her then-boyfriend, Deshawn Anderson, was let off early it was because the judge was not given all of the necessary information. An assistant attorney general concluded in 2004 that "it does not appear that any crimes were committed" in the matter.

— Her allegedly frequent absences from court. Nettles said she did work from home when there was no business in front of her court. She sees nothing wrong with that.

Nettles cited other Michigan cases where attorneys actually broke a law and received more lenient punishment. For example, she pulled the case of an attorney who pleaded no contest to felonious assault and another who pleaded guilty to three separate drunk driving offenses. Both were suspended for 179 days.

Nettles was put in the same category of other defrocked judges like Theresa Brennan of Livingston County, who was sentenced to six months in jail for felony perjury.

Or Jackson County's James Justin, who dismissed his own parking tickets. Or Inkster's Sylvia James who misused money meant for crime victims. Or Wayne County's Wade McCree, who sent a shirtless photo to a court employee and then told a news reporter, "There's no shame to my game."

She blew the whistle on what she saw as policies and administrative actions that seemed to be aimed only toward the few African-American women who worked in the court system at the time, for which she doesn't apologize.

She filed a civil rights complaint against the chief judge at the time, William Collette, in 2005. From that point and before she said she felt like she was subjected to a difference in treatment and undue scrutiny. That's despite the Department of Civil Rights at the time publicly urged judiciary officials to not discipline her for "exercising her right to file" the complaint.

"Would what happened to me have happened to a white judge?" Nettles asked. She doesn't think so.

Now she's hoping that in 2020, more people will hear her argument with an open mind.

(*Kyle Melinn of the Capital news service MIRSis at melinnky@gmail.com.)*



KYLE MELINN

POLITICS

Transparency an issue for new citizens' panel on race

Schor mandates confidentiality pact for justice and equity advisory board

Lansing Mayor Andy Schor is vowing to turn community feedback into action plans after a three-part “input series” on racial justice and police divestment wrapped up last week. But some residents are voicing concerns over a lack of transparency that could affect the process.

Over the next few months, Schor will turn his focus to the Racial Justice and Equity Alliance — his handpicked team of about 40 mostly Black community leaders — to chart a course for a more inclusive and equitable path forward in the capital city.

The alliance will utilize feedback collected at three separate virtual forums over the last few weeks, divide into work groups focused on broad categories (like housing and public safety) and turn over a series of policy recommendations next year for Schor to turn into meaningful action.

“Racial justice and equity require action now, and a plan for the future,” Schor told City Pulse on Tuesday. “We need to continue to take action, and to plan for even bolder action every day.”

That bold action, however, will require the alliance to be sworn to secrecy.

Apparently not all residents will be allowed to speak. Two people who are suing the city for alleged discrimination were not recognized when they sought

Betz. “I think the mayor is blind to racial equity issues. I haven’t seen any real promises for change. Everything has just been symbolic.”

Schor confirmed last week that members of his alliance will be asked to sign a “confidentiality” contract (essentially a non-disclosure agreement) that mandates all members of the alliance keep the content of their closed-door discussions just that — behind closed doors.

None have yet been asked to sign the agreement, but they were briefed on the concept at their first meeting last week. Members of the public — and the media — are not allowed to attend, but members described the initial meeting as largely organizational and about setting goals.

“I want people to have the ability to have a free flow of thoughts and ideas,” Schor explained. “We’re starting out with confidentiality and moving to recommendations that will be public. That’s a pretty common process when people are working on something leading up to a final product.”

Randy Watkins, who also serves on the mayor’s Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Council, said he hasn’t had to sign a similar agreement for his other appointments. He said he would only sign the contract if it was justified, perhaps if officials are sharing confidential

“Racial justice and equity require action now, and a plan for the future. We need to continue to take action, and to plan for even bolder action every day.”



— Andy Schor

but he had hoped that the alliance work groups would operate with continued public dialogue.

He also said he left the alliance because the advisory role clashed with his role as Councilman. If he stayed, Hussain would essentially be crafting recommendations for himself, he explained.

“My hope is this body gets to work independent of elected official influence,” Hussain added.

Alliance member Susan Cancro said she’d have to review any agreement before signing it, but recognized the importance of being able to facilitate an open dialogue without fear of suggestions — including the bad ones — being made public and amplified as real proposals.

“We’ve got to choose the moments that we want to share with the community,” said Human Relations and Community Services Director Kim Coleman. “It shouldn’t just be about gossip.”

“If you want to look at where the issues, have people speak openly and honestly, and begin to peel it all back and look at where the issues are, well, they can’t speak openly and honestly if it’s just going out there into the community,” Coleman added. “They should have that opportunity.”

The alliance is led, in part, by Teresa Bingman, a Lansing attorney who is being paid \$63,000 to help guide racial equity reforms in Lansing. She also moonlights as a consultant at Vanguard Public Affairs, a PR firm that promotes the city and has ties to the Schor’s 2017 campaign.

As part of the planning process, a series of sometimes poorly attended virtual meetings have gathered public feedback over the last few weeks. Many of the comments are familiar echoes of the Black Lives Matter movement to defund law enforcement and reinvest in social services.

Others — predominantly from the older, whiter crowd in Lansing — have voiced concerns over whether crime rates would increase as a result of reimagining public safety services. Officials have also been on call to answer questions from residents and outline budgetary procedures.

Two blocked from speaking

In the latest session last week, fired mayoral staffer Natasha Atkinson and Administrative Fire Chief Dave Odom — two of eight people suing Schor and the city for racial discrimination — also contend they were ignored during several rounds of public comment and feedback gathering.

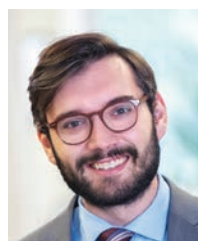
Coleman, who facilitated the meeting, repeatedly skipped past both Odom and Atkinson, instead allowing other speakers to voice their opinions — sometimes two or three times. Coleman referred questions to City Attorney Jim Smiertka. Schor also declined to comment. Smiertka hasn’t returned calls.

“The fact is, if you want this input, claim you’re all about transparency and claim you want to listen to the community, then you should actually be listening to the community,” Atkinson said.

Betz also asserts the meetings have been more about influencing opinions than soliciting them.

Police Chief Daryl Green used the second input sessions as an opportunity to blast the concept of police divestment. He contended that crime would invariably increase if more officers were cut from the department’s already leaned-down staff. Besides, his department doesn’t have much room for cuts. Millions of dollars are tied up in retiree pensions, he emphasized.

The results of police divestment would create a “drastic and lasting impact on the safety of all people that



“The mayor is blind to racial equity issues. I haven’t seen any real promises for change. Everything has just been symbolic.”

— Brandon Betz

to speak at the alliance’s third and last public input-gathering video conference.

And now some are questioning whether the true focus is on actual reforms or damage control.

“I didn’t see the mayor’s input sessions but I understand they were not well attended and it was kind of a sham, as expected,” said Councilman Brandon

personnel details.

Schor later clarified: That type of personnel information will not be shared with the alliance.

Councilman Adam Hussain, who was appointed to the alliance but quit before it met last week, said confidentiality could make it difficult for members of the alliance to engage with the public,

A cross unites Black and white churchgoers in south Lansing

When Joe Prevo Jr. started his Eagle Scout project at 16 years old, he hardly could have imagined that his work would one day bring a community together. It was a simple landscaping project, a flower bed built around a large and stoic, wooden cross. Over the years, it became overgrown and dilapidated.

But years later, a predominantly white church and a predominantly Black church joined hands to restore his project and bring the community together.

In 2016, a predominantly Black congregation bought Christ United Methodist Church, 517 W. Jolly Road, and turned it into the Epicenter of Worship. While making renovations, they discovered Prevo's project.

"We were just cleaning out weeds, and then we found that cross," said Jacqueline Humphrey, one of the organizers behind the renovation and a member of the Epicenter of Worship. "We talked to the right person, and they said they would like to be involved and that the gentleman who built the cross would like to build it again."

Humphrey said that she wanted the



Skylar Ashley/City Pulse

Members of the Epicenter of Worship and volunteers from the former Christ United Methodist Church build a new cross.

cross to be restored because it seemed significant. After her congregation made so many renovations to the old Methodist Church, it only seemed right to restore the cross to its former glory.

"It was a really pretty sight," she said. "You could see it from the street if you

passed down Jolly Road."

Pastor Sean Holland from Epicenter of Worship said that rebuilding the cross and restoring the garden is a community effort towards solidarity. "Poor, rich. Black or white. We find ways to divide. But here, we are working together to address the

issues that divide us."

Prevo promised to help with the project. Along with him came a group of white folks who had former connections to the old Methodist Church. In a time when

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Panel

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visit, work and reside in the city of Lansing," Green said. He also maintains even modest reductions would lead to a rise in sexual assault, human trafficking and homicides.

Schor (and the Lansing branch of the NAACP) later said that a significant portion of the city's population would also have concerns about public safety in the absence of uniformed cops. Schor further added that he would have "tremendous concerns" related to police divestment.

Betz and other activists have since disputed Green's take, insisting that cops don't prevent crime, only investigate it. Many also believe that reforms must simultaneously coincide with police divestment in order to meaningfully reimagine public safety services in the city of Lansing.

"And why is the police chief even involved in these conversations? He can butt out," Betz added. "He doesn't even live in Lansing, for one, so I really don't care about his perspective."

Betz' and Councilwoman Kathie

Dunbar's proposal to launch a committee and slowly transfer funds from the Lansing Police Department into other social services is currently stuck in the City Council's newly formed Committee on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion awaiting a formal referral to the Committee of the Whole before it can eventually go before a vote of the full City Council.

The mayor's alliance, Betz added, also likely won't be too helpful as those plans are assembled. His focus, for now, will instead be on motivating other council members — namely Equity Committee Chairwoman Patricia Spitzley — to move quickly on the divestment proposal.

Spitzley, for her part, has emphasized the importance of doing research before taking action. Conversations surrounding the proposal are expected to continue at its next meeting this month.

"They're slow rolling this, and it's frustrating," Betz said. "That just means we're probably going to have to jump-start some external research outside of the City Council structure. We need to get some of this figured out, and I need to find a way to light a fire under some of our asses."

— KYLE KAMINSKI

CITY OF LANSING NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a Public Hearing will be held on Monday, August 31, 2020 at 7 p.m. during the regularly scheduled City Council Meeting, via ZOOM Conferencing, Meeting ID 840 5989 1689 for the purpose of considering:

An Ordinance of the City of Lansing, Michigan, to amend the Lansing Codified Ordinances by amending Chapter 404 of the Lansing Codified Ordinances by adding Section 404.12 to provide for the declaration of snow emergencies during and after weather events that will require salting and/or plowing of roadways; to provide for how notice shall be given for snow emergencies; to prohibit parking in roadways during declared snow emergencies; and to provide for penalties for persons parking on the roadways during declared snow emergencies.

Governor Whitmer declared a statewide State of Emergency due to the spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). To mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and to provide essential protections to vulnerable Michiganders and this State's health care system and other critical infrastructure, it is crucial that all Michiganders take steps to limit in-person contact, particularly in the context of large groups. Therefore, the public hearing will be conducted via audio/video conference.

The public hearing will be electronically in accordance with the Open Meetings Act in an effort to protect the health and safety of the public. A Michigan Executive Order provides temporary authorization of remote participation in public meetings and hearings. Members of the public wishing to participate in the meeting may do so by logging into or calling into the meetings using the website or phone number and Meeting ID provided on the August 31, 2020 meeting agenda. (Note: this option requires downloading Zoom software. If you have not already installed the software, this may take a few minutes)

Persons with disabilities who need an accommodation to fully participate in these meetings should contact the City Council Office at 517-483-4177 (TDD (517) 483-4479) 24 hour notice may be needed for certain accommodations. An attempt will be made to grant all reasonable accommodation requests.

For more information, please call 517-483-4177. If you are interested in this matter, please attend the public hearing or send a representative. Written comments will be accepted between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. on City business days if received before 5 p.m., on the day of the Public Hearing at the City Clerk's Office, Ninth Floor, City Hall, 124 West Michigan Ave., Lansing, MI 48933 or email city.clerk@lansingmi.gov.

Chris Swope, Lansing City Clerk, MMC/CMMC
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Church

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race relations are dominating the news, it was an inspiring sight.

“What we have is a church that’s predominantly white coming to help our church that is predominantly Black,” said Humphrey. “We’re excited for the churches to come together.”

Humphries said that white people in the neighborhood have visited Epicenter of Worship and came to listen to a sermon once in a while.

“If we could deliver any message in these times, it’s that God’s people can come together in a way that’s rich and a way that’s helping to show the relationship we can have with another,” said Humphrey. “We’re happy to have them involved.”

Joe Prevo, the father of Prevo Jr., has been involved with the church since 1970. Prevo attended the church when it was known as Christ United Methodist Church. He was there when the original cross was built. It used to reside in what is now the parking lot of Epicenter. The church used to bring it inside during Easter and use it for their holy week services. But then the bottom started to rot out.

“Then my son needed an Eagle project, so he approached the church about build-

ing this memorial garden,” said Prevo. “We pulled the cross out of retirement. But it’s been out there for all those years, and it’s in sad shape now.”

Prevo was excited to see his old project restored. Looking out at all the volunteers weeding the garden and rebuilding the cross, he felt nostalgic and appreciative. “The Epicenter has been very generous about recognizing the past history and contributions of the Christ United Methodist Church,” said Prevo. “They want to preserve some of that history.”

When Epicenter first moved into the old Christ United Methodist Church, Humphrey said that the surrounding community — mainly white people — were grateful that people were willing to take care of a church that meant so much to them. Many of the former congregants

from Christ United Methodist Church lived right in the neighborhood and were eager to see what was happening to their former church.

“They came over and welcomed us,” said Humphrey. “Sometimes people take churches and make them into clubs. They were so glad a church was still going to be here.”

Humphrey emphasized that Epicenter wants to honor the legacy of Christ United Methodist Church and pay respect to its storied history. Not to transform it or neglect the past. The Epicenter congregation put a new roof on the church and made some renovations. Humphrey said that members of the old church were just glad that someone was taking care of it. “They let us know that they’re so grateful,” said Humphrey. “We didn’t come here

to knock down any walls, just to see the beauty in it, to enjoy it. We didn’t want to make it anything other than what it is.”

Humphrey was excited to see the community come together to work on this project. To her, it symbolized harmony within the Lansing church community. Seeing a mainly white congregation come out to support her predominantly Black church gave her hope that people can see beyond skin color.

“We’re here for a common purpose,” said Humphrey. “We want the community to see what’s happening with these churches.”

— COLE TUNNINGLEY

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF LANSING
LEGAL NOTICE
SPECIAL USE PERMIT

Notice is hereby given that the Charter Township of Lansing Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on Wednesday, September 16, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. at the Township Offices located at 3209 West Michigan Avenue, Lansing, Michigan, for the purpose of recommending approval or denial of the following request:

Special Use Permit SP-20-08, to allow a 12,000 gallon above ground fuel storage tank for fueling Transdev Services, Inc. fleet of vehicles at 1415 Lake Lansing Road.

Tentative text and other information may be examined at the Office of the Clerk, 3209 West Michigan Avenue, Lansing, Michigan.

Susan L. Aten, Clerk
Charter Township of Lansing
#20-196



EQUAL RIGHTS.
EQUAL PROTECTION.
EQUAL ACCESS.
EQUAL JUSTICE.

These are the principles I stand for.
Stand with me.

ELECT
LANDIS LAIN
For Ingham County Circuit Judge

Paid for by the Committee to Elect Landis Lain
PO Box 10002, Lansing, MI 48901

CITY OF LANSING
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a Public Hearing will be held on Monday, Monday, August 31, 2020 at 7 p.m. during the regularly schedule City Council Meeting, via ZOOM Conferencing, Meeting ID 840 5989 1689 for the purpose of considering:

An Ordinance of the City of Lansing, Michigan, to amend the Lansing Codified Ordinances by a repealing Chapter 404, Section 404.01(j), to eliminate the prohibition on street parking between 2:00 am and 5:00 a.m. on any day.

Governor Whitmer declared a statewide State of Emergency due to the spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). To mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and to provide essential protections to vulnerable Michiganders and this State’s health care system and other critical infrastructure, it is crucial that all Michiganders take steps to-limit in-person contact, particularly in the context of large groups. Therefore, the public hearing will be conducted via audio/video conference.

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Chris Swope, Lansing City Clerk, MMC/CMMC
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#20-200

CITY OF LANSING
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

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An Ordinance of the City of Lansing, Michigan, to amend the Lansing Codified Ordinances by a repealing Chapter 404, Section 404.13, to eliminate annual and temporary permits for overnight street parking.

Governor Whitmer declared a statewide State of Emergency due to the spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). To mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and to provide essential protections to vulnerable Michiganders and this State’s health care system and other critical infrastructure, it is crucial that all Michiganders take steps to-limit in-person contact, particularly in the context of large groups. Therefore, the public hearing will be conducted via audio/video conference.

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Chris Swope, Lansing City Clerk, MMC/CMMC
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#20-199

Greater Lansing heads back to class

Public school districts across mid-Michigan grapple with unprecedented fall semester

Jason Mellema knows there's no real replacement for time spent in the classroom.

As an assistant superintendent at the Ingham Intermediate School District, Mellema is tasked with providing guidance to a dozen public school districts across Greater Lansing as they attempt to rewire curricula for students during the new Pandemic Age.

In an ideal world, Mellema would have every student back in the classroom, but he knows that COVID-19 still poses a very real threat across Michigan. And he also knows there's no one-size-fits-all solution when it comes to how students should head back to school.

"When this pandemic struck schools, we were all thrown into a tailspin quickly," Mellema said last week to the Lansing Economic Club. "We were able to lean into each other and think of ideas and solutions that could be applicable both here and at other districts."

Fear of the coronavirus has pushed many local districts to close their doors as students start off the fall semester entirely online. Other districts, especially those in more rural areas, are physically reopening for the first time since the spring.

Different townships and cities are tracking different levels of viral community spread and face varying challenges with transportation and internet access, Mellema said. Lansing School District's 10,800 students, for instance, needed a different return-to-learn plan than what was needed for the 550 students at Webberville Community Schools.

The uncertainty has bred a hodgepodge of lesson plans in mid-Michigan as districts balance feedback from parents and staff and data from their local health departments — while also weighing the social-emotional impact of a largely computer-based education.

"This is a moving target," Mellema said. "What we think we need today may not necessarily meet the challenges of what we'll need in a few months. We need to stay open-minded and continue to be flexible. We'll continue to need some creative solutions."

A few weeks after Michigan detected its first COVID-19 cases in March, Gov.

Gretchen Whitmer ordered public and private school buildings closed to curb the spread of the virus. But it wasn't an early vacation for educators left scrambling to shift to a virtual world.

Online lesson plans and printed packets were assembled for students to wrap up the remainder of their short-lived spring semesters, and teachers and administrators went into overdrive to ensure more concrete plans were in place for classes to resume this fall.

More than a million meals were distributed across the Ingham ISD this summer, including 600,000 meals for students at the Lansing School District and 10,000 meals distributed weekly for East Lansing Public Schools students, said ELPS Superintendent Dori Leyko.

District officials also monitored Health Department data while simultaneously surveying parents, students and staff about plans to get classes back up and running by August. Schools now have a choice to physically reopen, but only with masks, social distancing and cleaning protocols in place. And in Michigan, that created a variety of learning plans.

Peter Spadafore, in addition to serving as president of the Lansing City Council, works as a deputy director at the Michigan Association of Superintendents and Administrators. He said the last few pandemic-filled months have been uncharted territory for public schools statewide.

"We're seeing an unprecedented amount of collaboration and teamwork to make this work," Spadafore said. "Of course, it's our preference as educators to have students in the classroom, to be face-to-face with them, not just for the academic component of education but also the social and emotional learning taking place. But right now, in some cases, it's just not possible."

Whitmer signed a series of bills last week that provide flexibility for K-12 schools, waiving physical attendance and minimum instruction requirements to allow for remote classes. She also announced that she would allocate nearly \$65 million in federal funding to school districts, colleges and other education-related entities most significantly impacted by the pandemic.



Shauna Stoken/City Pulse

Dansville Schools students board school buses at the end of the day.

Lansing School District, even before the changes, was among the first to shift to an entirely virtual curriculum. Interim Sam Sinicropi said student safety was a priority, and the logistics of socially distancing 10,000 kids made reopening impossible.

Not all students could attend on the same days. There wasn't enough space. More distance between students also means more buses needed to bring them to class. And Sinicropi said Lansing alone would've needed more than 100 more buses to make it work — not necessarily a financial reality in a school district that is already strapped for cash.

"We did look at surveys and choices of parents," Sinicropi added. "We also spent a lot of time looking at the science. My number one concern is to keep

students and staff healthy. It seemed as cases went up, the prudent thing was to start out with an online education. We're going to analyze the first nine weeks and determine when it's safe to return."

Several local districts — including those in East Lansing, Grand Ledge, Dewitt, Haslett, and Okemos — have also opted to begin the fall semester entirely online. Other districts are giving students an option to decide between virtual or physical class, or a mix of both.

"We're all trying to make it work in the best ways we possibly can," Spadafore added. "If education wasn't this vital to the economy, we'd probably be having a different conversation."

Education

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We're really trying to evaluate all the statistics, all of the facts to learn how to deliver something that's never been done before — and that's a complete flipping of how we deliver education."

In Webberville, for instance, an entirely virtual curriculum wasn't considered, officials said. Busing a few hundred students in a socially distant fashion is more manageable in a smaller, rural district. And with fewer than 30 cases confirmed in the village, surveys showed that parents were comparatively eager to take the risk of in-person classes.

As part of a working solution, most Webberville students will be split into two separate cohorts and attend in-person classes for two days each week. Daycare and daily "home room" options are available, but school buildings will otherwise be closed on Wednesday.

A district spokeswoman said up to 90% of Webberville parents preferred in-person lessons. Despite some initial hesitation from teachers and staff over the summer, that parental insistence weighed heavily on the district's eventual reopening plans, she added.

Online classes — which include a mix of face-to-face synchronous instruction and pre-recorded asynchronous lessons — are still available for parents and students that want it. It's a model mirrored at several rural school districts across the Lansing region.

At Maple Valley Schools in Vermontville, about 35% of students have opted to take online classes this semester and about 65% of the student body will return for in-person lessons. A lack of stable internet access in the region also pushed that district to reopen this fall.

"We're following science in terms of how to do things safely," said Superintendent Kathy Bertolini. "I'd also make a request that all people are patient with schools. We're working with more radical changes than we've seen in the last 100 years, and we're extremely committed to safety and welfare and continual reflection and improvement. We're asking for some patience."

In line with parental preferences, districts have also weighed the social and emotional benefits that only in-person

instruction can offer students — and the consequences of too much isolation without it. Webberville is still offering daycare and homeroom options for kids to get out of the house. Lansing is setting up "learning labs" to give up to 400 students a physical space to learn.

Mellema advises districts to have teachers offer plenty of face-to-face instruction and one-on-one time with students, even from a virtual distance. It can be easy to lose a sense of engagement through a computer screen over extended periods of time, officials explained.

"Nothing replaces face-to-face contact. This is the time when our educators need to wrap their arms and minds arounds students the closest because of the trauma they've experienced through COVID-19 in general, but they can only do it through a screen," Spadafore added.

Leyko, of the East Lansing schools, said paraprofessionals will visit some virtual classrooms in East Lansing using a "mood meter" to gauge how students are connecting with the material from afar. From there, teachers can quickly identify which kids might need some extra attention or help with a particular lesson.

Special education students with highly customized education plans have also required more logistical work for school districts. Local schools are largely handling those plans on a case-by-case basis and bringing students back to class even in districts otherwise closed.

"Those students can receive hands-on instruction with physical or occupational therapies that are difficult to replicate in the virtual format," Mellema added. "It's about balancing the fidelity of services with safety. Equity is different from equality, so it won't be the same for everybody."

The Michigan High School Athletic Association has postponed all school sports to spring except for cross-country, golf and swimming. Some districts have allowed band and choir programs to continue with social distancing protocols or canceled them altogether. In Okemos, for example, those co-curricular classes are shut down through October while future planning continues.

"In Okemos, we really looked at what we could provide safely and consistently," said Superintendent John Hood. "Also, in looking at the size of our classrooms and student body, we realized we just couldn't safely reopen

How Mid-Michigan schools are dealing with reopening in a pandemic

The pandemic has forced local schools to make tough decisions on reopening. Here is a list of what each district is doing and how many cases of COVID-19 there are in their communities.

COVID-19 cases tracked for districts in Ingham County are represented by the total number of confirmed cases relative to the zip code(s) in which the district is most centrally located. Cases for districts in Eaton and Clinton counties are simply the total number of cases in those counties.

Bath Community Schools

Start Date: Aug. 24

Student Population: 1,123

COVID-19 Cases: 373

In-Person Instruction: Yes — but only for special education students to start.

Virtual Instruction: Yes.

Bellevue Community Schools

Start Date: Aug. 17

Student Population: 600

COVID-19 Cases: 433

In-Person Instruction: Yes.

Virtual Instruction: Yes — but only as an entirely online alternative to in-person classes.

Charlotte Public Schools

Start Date: Aug. 24

Student Population: 2,530

COVID-19 Cases: 433

In-Person Instruction: Yes.

Virtual Instruction: Yes — but only as an entirely online alternative to in-person classes.

Dansville Schools

Start Date: Aug. 24

Student Population: 747

COVID-19 Cases: 1-10

In-Person Instruction: Yes — but only a hybrid model paired with virtual learning.

Virtual Instruction: Yes — both a hybrid model and an entirely online alternative.

Dewitt Public Schools

Start Date: Aug. 24

Student Population: 3,196

COVID-19 Cases: 373

In-Person Instruction: Yes — but only for special education students to start.

Virtual Instruction: Yes — with a phased-in approach to in-person instruction in September.

East Lansing Public Schools

Start Date: Aug. 25

Student Population: 3,711

COVID-19 Cases: 484-520

In-Person Instruction: Yes — but only for special education students to start.

Virtual Instruction: Yes.

Eaton Rapids Public Schools

Start Date: Aug. 31

Student Population: 2,266

COVID-19 Cases: 433

In-Person Instruction: Yes — but only a hybrid model paired with virtual learning.

Virtual Instruction: Yes — both a hybrid model and an entirely online alternative.

Grand Ledge Public Schools

Start Date: Sept. 8

Student Population: 5,375

COVID-19 Cases: 433

In-Person Instruction: Yes — but only for special education students to start.

Virtual Instruction: Yes.

Haslett Public Schools

Start Date: Aug. 31

Student Population: 2,742

COVID-19 Cases: 41-50

In-Person Instruction: Yes — but only for special education students to start.

Virtual Instruction: Yes.

Holt Public Schools

Start Date: Aug. 31

Student Population: 5,440

COVID-19 Cases: 91-110

In-Person Instruction: Yes — but only for special education students to start.

Virtual Instruction: Yes.

Lansing School District

Start Date: Aug. 31

Student Population: 10,661

COVID-19 Cases: 756-810

In-Person Instruction: Yes — but only for special education students to start.

Virtual Instruction: Yes.

Leslie Public Schools

Start Date: Aug. 25

Student Population: 1,212

COVID-19 Cases: 11-20

In-Person Instruction: Yes.

Virtual Instruction: Yes — but only as an entirely online alternative to in-person classes.

Maple Valley Schools

Start Date: Aug. 24

Student Population: 970

COVID-19 Cases: 433

In-Person Instruction: Yes — but only a hybrid model paired with virtual learning.

Virtual Instruction: Yes — both a hybrid model and an entirely online alternative.

Mason Public Schools

Start Date: Aug. 26

Student Population: 3,259

COVID-19 Cases: 91-110

See Schools, Page 16

and social distance, even with half of our student body."

Districts that have reopened for in-person instruction are also preparing for the possibility of a sudden shift back to a virtual environment should COVID-19 cases swell as students return. The overarching concern: Uncertainty amid continued uncertainty in a year filled with uncertainties.

Spadafore said districts with a virtu-

al framework in place now will be better suited for the possibility of a virtual state mandate later this year. It's always easier to send kids back off to school later than to send them back home for virtual classes in the middle of the year, he said.

"There's no playbook or map. We're all just trying to make the best choices," Spadafore added.

— KYLE KAMINSKI

Our one-room schoolhouse: Education from home

By **SHAUNA STOCKEN**

(The writer is a Lansing resident whose stepdaughter is enrolled in Bath Community Schools.)

What will happen to snow days, field trips and sharing secrets with your BFF at recess? These are the types of questions my stepdaughter, Summer, age 9, has about a virtual school year during a pandemic. As a parent entering the unknown world of homeschooling, my questions do not seem as silly or as easy to answer.

I met my fiancé's daughter, Summer, when she was 4 years old. By age 5 and a half, she began living with us full time. A month later, I was returning to college courses in the fall of 2016, and she prepared for kindergarten at a new school.

The reputation of the Bath community, test scores, teacher-to-student ratio, online reviews and nearby family members made the decision a no brainer. Moving to our dream home in Lansing, following the sec-

ond grade, didn't stop us from staying with the district. After three years of memories, friends and the personalized academic support gained at Bath, we had a difficult time finding another school to which we'd wish to relocate.

We felt Bath was the best learning institution with the most value for our child, both academically and developmentally. The community offered yearly dance classes for her age group, including a Halloween themed performance at the school trunk-or-treating event and holiday parades we participated in throughout the years. In addition to Girl Scouts, Art & Literacy Nights, and other school functions, our family spent a lot of time interacting with Summer in her learning environment. The environment where behind its walls, she learned how to be a successful student, a kind friend

See Home, Page 16



Shauna Stocken/City Pulse

Home school student Summer with her bookshelf and learning supplies.

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By Barbara Schmidt

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and can have your friends and family attend as well.

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Due to COVID issues, we require masks at all times in our building for everyone's safety. We are also only taking appointments — no walk in help will be available. We are now taking appointments for September 1 and beyond! We hope to see you soon!

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Home

from page 14

and a leader.

Due to the long commute and busy schedules, our family's per-pandemic routine was necessary to keep us all on track. Now, as Summer begins the fourth grade, a new routine is underway and our schedule will have to fit around one another's in an all-new way.

In years past, Summer would spend roughly seven hours a day, five days a week in school. At the same time, her father worked 40 hours a week or more. I juggled college at Lansing Community College and senior-level business courses at Ferris State University while working for the LCC independent student Newspaper "The Lookout."

Like many families, ours depends on K-12 education to be responsible for our child and their learning throughout the day. School gives parents time to work, time for house chores, aiding younger siblings and personal errands.

Since graduating from FSU last winter and changes in our work schedule due to the pandemic, our family has received a gift in disguise; we received the unique opportunity to dive headfirst into homeschooling with Summer this fall.

After six months of not partaking in school from the classroom, it's time to return to virtual learning. Homeschooling will require parents and caretakers to oversee a child's education for 35 hours a week. In addition to that time, I will help Summer with her homework, any makeup work, and reading before bed.

For me, overseeing 35 hours a week leaves me questioning what my life will look like as we move forward. The uncertainty surrounding COVID-19 also dictates what I will do for a career and whether I will be ready for Summer to return to hybrid or in-person learning any time soon.

When I started college, I began studying elementary education at LCC and thought I would transfer to pursue a career as a second-grade teacher. Over time, my interests developed, and I found myself studying business administration.

I feel lucky to have had even a little experience in elementary education to hopefully ease this virtual learning process and keep Summer on track. For parents with other siblings, demanding careers, a dependent to care for or other time-consuming endeavors amid a pandemic, I don't know how active parents will be at overseeing a child's education.

How effective is online learning if public and private schools seem to be the norm over homeschooling children? I suppose only time will tell.

For Summer, virtual learning is a positive event that she looks forward to from the comfort of her own one-room schoolhouse — designed in the spare room of our home once used for storage and the pets.

I covered the walls with maps, posters, and included educational supplies, hoping the space would encourage and motivate learning. No toys, no distractions, an upgrade from virtual learning at the kitchen table.

Summer is a social butterfly, a class clown and a warrior. She will be just fine with online learning and limited face-to-face interactions.

This experience has given her father and I more time to encourage new ways of learning. From raising

Summer takes a break on the swingset at a local playground.



Shauna Stocken/City Pulse

chickens, ducks and a turkey, painting, learning to cook and landscaping, Summer's experiences have vastly changed. Homeschooling is a

new opportunity to bond. We will all adapt in time as we continue to teach one another from home.

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Learning on the run

COVID makes for challenging first year for Lansing schools' board president

By **DEDRIA HUMPHREYS BARKER**

Gabrielle Lawrence is navigating a steep learning curve. In January, she was elected president of the Lansing School District Board of Education, and just two months later she was cramming to help the district get past COVID-19.

"I remember sitting in a board meeting on the evening of Thursday March, I think it was the 12th, because we were conducting a first round of interviews to hire our new superintendent. And I remember I was sitting next to Sampson Sinicropi, who was our current superintendent, and he wrote a note that said, 'Detroit's closing.' And I thought, wow, this is so crazy. What's going on? This is so crazy. And by Monday, schools were closed statewide. It happened so quickly."

Schools closed March 16 by order of the governor reopened later in spring with remote learning. Remote learning is still modus-operandi, but for Lansing's fall semester it's called "Lansing Schools Reimagined."

In this plan, when the more than 10,000 students report on Monday (Aug. 31,) students will see their teachers livestreaming from their classrooms via a device made available by the school district. "Lansing Schools Reimagined" is explained in a video posted on the district's website (lansingschools.net).

Last week, the district announced that several community organizations have pitched in to establish learning labs. Up to 600 students will be able to spend the school day with adult supervision. Because each student has a device of their own, paid for by the district, the learning labs will be able to accommodate students who are in different schools, and in different classes.

While the plan leaves the vast majority of students sitting at home with their parents, it does provide child care for some. Parents must show proof of employment so their child can apply to be in a learning lab.

Lawrence recognizes the dual role her academic institution plays.

"Ideally, we would have childcare provided for each student in the district if they need it, and ideally we would have a one-on-one tutor that's working with each child in the district all day long. Wouldn't that be incredible?"

The child care piece is essential, said Lawrence, 38, an attorney with a 9-month-old and a 2-and-a-half-year-old.

"I know each family grapples with this. So we as a district are going to try to help our families navigate this."

The district's learning labs partners are longtime collaborators on programming, Lawrence said. Some were already operating in school buildings, and will continue to do so.

Lansing schools' student body is about 70 percent students of color, according to the state Department of Education. Community volunteers help in the schools, but in wake of the Black Lives Matter movement, the impact of some volunteer groups could be an

issue.

"Frankly, one of the reasons that I'm no longer an active member of the Junior League is I didn't feel it was representative of our community," said Lawrence, who herself is a white woman who looks paler because of her auburn hair. "There was kind of this white savior situation that was going on, or the appearance of one."

Junior League of Lansing is a primarily white women's organization.

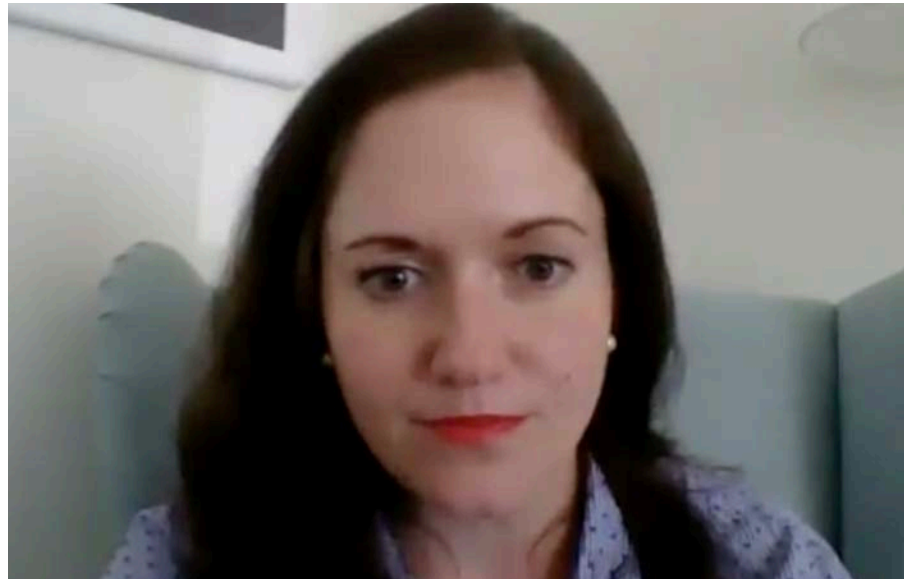
Lawrence was appointed to the Board of Education in 2015, and then in the 2016 school election, she won her seat. That was a self-actualizing moment for Lawrence, who is a "very proud and vocal graduate" of Sexton High School, on the west side. Sexton's mascot is Big Red. Lansing's other two high schools are Eastern and Everett.

"There are two Big Reds on the Board of Education, and whenever there's anybody from Sexton in the audience, or we're talking about anything that ever went on at Sexton, you better believe that we're going to stop the meeting just to say, 'should have been a Big Red.'"

That's a school taunt. It's flung most fiercely at Lansing Everett High School.

Lawrence is one of the people educated in Lansing Schools who have emerged to help lead through the two crises. An ever-present frustration of waiting on the state legislature is alleviated by Lawrence's good working relationship with the state representative for House District 68, Sarah Anthony.

The House of Representatives "had a vote on the legislation that was coming regarding back-to-school and I appreciate so much that she reached out to me to talk about how she was going to vote,



City Pulse

Watch a Zoom interview with Gabrielle Lawrence at lansingcitypulse.com/radio-tv

and to get my thoughts on it. We're so lucky to have her, even though she went to Everett. I'm just going to count her as an honorary Big Red because I love her."

To accommodate the switch to at-home instruction, the district has provided some necessities for students, including food. Meal Pickup signs on Lansing street corners point, not at Meijer or Kroger, but to school buildings.

Post-Covid, some of the \$11 million schools' transportation budget, and the personnel paid from it, have been used to deliver food to homes.

At her own home, Gabrielle Lawrence pays close attention to food. She is a food critic, the author of the popular City Pulse column "She Ate," which, with its companion column "He Ate," is on hiatus. Like most people, Lawrence is cooking more at home, and being more creative.

"This past week, because of the Democratic National Convention, we had a themed menu," Lawrence said. "We had



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Blue State, Blue Cheese Hamburgers one night. We had AOC seafood pasta, which was the brain child of Mr. She Ate (her husband, Mark Lawrence, the city's citizen's advocate.). I try to keep it fun. We've done vegetarian week. We just try to do things different. I always try to be seasonal, so we've had a lot of corn, a lot of seasonal produce, just trying to keep ourselves fed and sane and healthy."

What is she cooking for the GOP convention? "Nothing. Nothing, not a thing," Lawrence said. "I could think of something sinister, couldn't I?"

Who's to say no? The Lansing Board of Education is nonpartisan.

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Schools

from page 13

In-Person Instruction: Yes — but only for special education students to start.
Virtual Instruction: Yes.

Okemos Public Schools

Start Date: Aug. 26
Student Population: 4,616
COVID-19 Cases: 121-130
In-Person Instruction: Yes — but only for special education students.
Virtual Instruction: Yes.

Olivet Community Schools

Start Date: Sept. 8
Student Population: 1,413
COVID-19 Cases: 433

In-Person Instruction: Yes — but only a hybrid

model paired with virtual learning.
Virtual Instruction: Yes — both a hybrid model and an entirely online alternative.

Ovid-Elsie Area Schools

Start Date: Sept. 8
Student Population: 1,489
COVID-19 Cases: 373
In-Person Instruction: Yes — but only a hybrid model paired with virtual learning.

Virtual Instruction: Yes — both a hybrid model and an entirely online alternative.

Pewamo-Westphalia Community Schools

Start Date: Aug. 24
Student Population: 647
COVID-19 Cases: 373
In-Person Instruction: Yes.
Virtual Instruction: Yes — but only as an entirely online alternative to in-person classes.

Potterville Public Schools

Start Date: Aug. 26
Student Population: 804

COVID-19 Cases: 433
In-Person Instruction: Yes — but only for special education students to start.
Virtual Instruction: Yes.

St. Johns Public Schools

Start Date: Sept. 8
Student Population: 2,796
COVID-19 Cases: 373
In-Person Instruction: Yes.

Virtual Instruction: Yes — but only as an entirely online alternative to in-person classes.

Stockbridge Community Schools

Start Date: Aug. 24
Student Population: 1,249
COVID-19 Cases: 11-20
In-Person Instruction: Yes — but only for special education students to start.

Virtual Instruction: Yes — with a phased-in approach to in-person instruction in September.

Waverly Community Schools

Start Date: Aug. 31
Student Population: 2,992
COVID-19 Cases: 21-30

In-Person Instruction: Yes — but only for special education students to start.
Virtual Instruction: Yes.

Webberville Community Schools

Start Date: Aug. 24
Student Population: 502
COVID-19 Cases: 21-30
In-Person Instruction: Yes — but only a hybrid model paired with virtual learning.
Virtual Instruction: Yes — both a hybrid model and an entirely online alternative.

Williamston Community Schools

Start Date: Aug. 31
Student Population: 1,893
COVID-19 Cases: 41-50
In-Person Instruction: Yes — but only for special education students to start.
Virtual Instruction: Yes.

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REO Town's Threadbare Mitten Film Festival goes virtual

By COLE TUNNINGLEY

Threadbare Mitten Film Festival founder Dan Kofoed Kofoed has adjusted to volatile times in order to keep his indie film festival alive. Falling victim to the coronavirus, the festival will be held entirely online. It's a drastic change, which gives way to the subtitle of the festival's fourth year: "A Year of TransFOURmations."

To successfully host the festival online, Kofoed tracked down a Holland-based company that could provide an online space to host the festival that meets industry standards. "We wanted to stay local, so it was perfect that we found a company from Michigan that could do that for us," Kofoed said.

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or a limited ticket that will allow you to name your own price and pick five programs to stream on-de-

mand over the weekend at your convenience. After that, all you have to do is sit back and stream the films from the comfort of your home. "This is just the nature of what we have to do right now," Kofoed said. While he acknowledged it may not compare to the movie theater experience, there's simply no other way he could have possibly held the festival this year.

There are 80 movies showing at the festival from Michigan and around the world. A judging panel led by Kofoed combed through a few hundred submissions to decide which films should make the cut.

"We're looking at the quality of the films," Kofoed said. "But we're also looking at films that are similar that we can program together." Threadbare is divided into themed programs, such as horror, comedy, documentaries and short films. The festival organizers carefully curate each program to create the perfect film fest experience.

"Someone told me that it sounds like



Courtesy Photo

Threadbare Mitten Film Festival — a showcase of eccentric genre films — is going virtual this September.

we're putting together the tracks of an album," Kofoed said. "Every film in a program is a step in telling a larger story. The advantage of that is, as an audience member, you know what you're going to get."

That way, he explained, if you buy a ticket for a certain program, you won't be unpleasantly surprised. There won't be a horror movie popping up in the middle of your comedy program, or an adult drama popping up in the middle of the kids' program.

Kofoed said that he's not excited about one certain film at the festival; he's excited for them all. Otherwise, he said, he wouldn't have included them in the first place.

One of the films playing this year at Threadbare is Michael Fausti's "Exit," a debut feature film from the United Kingdom. Kofoed described it as a psychosexual horror film with slight political, Brexit-inspired undertones. "It's very visually rich," he said. "That one is a lot of fun."

Also showing at the fest are three feature-length, Michigan-made documentaries. "One of them is this one about rock and roll van culture from the '70s," Kofoed said, emphasizing that the film has a great throwback soundtrack.

"Another one is about the sport of synchronized ice skating," Kofoed said. "It's a really inspiring and beautiful film." When Kofoed talks about the films playing at the festival, he was unceasingly enthusiastic. His passion for film — especially locally produced, DIY films — is immediately apparent.

While Threadbare was lucky enough to find a home online, Kofoed acknowledged that the state of the film industry is fairly bleak right now. Barely any theaters are open, films are being postponed and festivals are being canceled. Ann Arbor Film Fest went online, the Detroit Trinity Film Festival went online. "Other than that," Kofoed said, "There hasn't been anything available for Michigan filmmakers and fans of independent cinema."

Kofoed said that the coronavirus has had a widespread effect on the film industry and a nation of moviegoers. What's the point of summertime if you can't go sit in a dark, air-conditioned room and watch a nice movie on the big screen? "There's a pent-up demand for this stuff right now," Kofoed said.

The last movie Kofoed saw in theaters was Josh and Benny Safdie's "Uncut Gems," a film about a reckless, relentless gambler who can't stop getting himself in trouble. Just like "Uncut Gems," 2020 has been anxiety-inducing and chock full of unexpected twists and turns of events.

Now, with the virtual edition of Threadbare Mitten Film Festival, he hopes to satiate cinephiles who long for the days of going to the cinema. Watching movies on a TV or computer may not be ideal, but that's just the way it is. To stay safe, we have to stay inside.

Or, as Kofoed put it: "No crowds, no death plague."

Favorite Things

Neo-soul singer Vee Soul and her partner's teal bike



My favorite thing is currently my partner's bike. I ride it more than she does. She's a blessing. It's a teal, Diamondback mountain bike. I first started riding it around 2018. I started riding it because I was having a hard time, and I didn't have many coping mechanisms.

This bike has changed my life. My partner likes to rollerblade with me. We ride the trails together. It's pretty cool. I've never had a partner that I would do stuff like that with.

I was ending a relationship when I first got the bike, and I had to move in with some friends. I wasn't in a great place mentally and I didn't have a therapist at the time. There were a lot of things that I didn't have back then that I do have now. I feel better.

When I first started out riding that bike, I would just ride and think about my life. Thinking about what I could do to grow and figure out what it is that I wanted to be. Because I wasn't in a good place. I was thinking: Should I stay in Lansing, or go back to Detroit? What should I do with my music career?

But now, in 2020, when I ride this bike, I don't have to think those difficult thoughts. It's more peaceful now. I've learned how to take it up

and downhill. Not knowing when to change gears, then learning how to change gears. It's something I've become attached to. I never had a bike like this. The other bike I had got stolen.

I just like to ride my bike to get the breeze and enjoy the nature. I also like to intentionally make myself sore. Part of biking is about exercise, but I also just want to feel the wind and enjoy the outdoors. It's also my outlet, my coping mechanism.

Usually, I ride around the city or the Lansing River Trail. I like to sit by the river and listen to the water flow. I sit by the water and write my music. I try to incorporate the river into my music. I let the water flow into my energy.

Under the tunnel by Lansing Market, I used to sing over there. That's my favorite spot. I like the acoustics over there. I used to go there and write my music. Now I like to ride over there because it's filled with good memories.

(This interview was edited and condensed by Cole Tunningley. If you have a recommendation for "Favorite Things," please email skyler@lansingcitypulse.com.)

The cleanest and easiest way to get (very) high in Lansing

By KYLE KAMINSKI

Over the last few weeks, cannabis concentrates have found a special place in my heart. With THC percentages well above 60%, they're usually an incredibly efficient way to smoke. Just a few dabs will usually do the trick. My only complaint: It takes too much effort to use a blow torch.

Enter the vape. These things have come a long way in recent years, from bulky table-top machines to a series of sleeker, handheld pens. Among the newest on the local marijuana scene is the Claw VFIRE Mini — and my new personal favorite way to consume cannabis.

Claw Cannabis, a Michigan-based company, makes a mission out of providing the cleanest, safest products possible to both patients and recreational consumers. They also strive to be "on the cusp of innovation," according to its website, ensuring that every concentrate cartridge is consistently clean and smooth while



Lansterdam in Review: HomeGrown Cannabis Co.
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staying true to the natural flavor and effects of each strain.

The upfront costs here are tied into the disposable cartridge pods. The battery itself only costs about \$25, but each oil-filled cartridge retails for about \$50 — or \$52 (plus tax) at Homegrown.

The directions are simple: Use a USB cord to charge the pen, stick in a cartridge, press a button and puff away. For reference, the pen is thicker than a Juul but feels much sturdier in the hand. And with plenty of airflow, it's among the smoother models I've had the pleasure of toking on.

It's also great for our back-to-school

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Lansterdam

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edition because, well, it's discreet and works in bathrooms.

Claw Cartridge — Strawnana

Price — \$52/1g

THC content — 67.5%

Like most concentrate cartridges, expect a high THC percentage with the Claw. But also know that it's not the only thing that matters for an enjoyable cannabis experience. You'll get just as ripped from a 50% THC cartridge as you would a 67.5% cartridge like Strawnana. The bigger distinction here is in the terpene profiles, which allow smokers to find the high that hits just right.

Terpenes, for the uninitiated, are organic compounds responsible for giving each cannabis strain its unique smell, taste and effects. Some, for example, may taste like citrus and work well for anxiety or inflammation. Others might carry a sweeter, herbier sort of spice and help with sleep.

The Strawnana, like one might expect, has a rich, creamy sort of flavor with just enough of a fruity taste to fully trick the brain into thinking it's flavored like a strawberry banana milkshake. It took a while to adjust to vapor after doing nothing but smoke for several months, but it's smooth.

The predominant terpenes in this blend are limonene, B-caryophyllene, myrcene, ocimene, humulene, pinene and bisabolol. The combination balances a light citrus taste with a spicy,



Courtesy Photo

Flavored THC cartridges that are used with the Claw VFire Mini handheld vape.

almost clove-like, backdrop that cleared out a week's worth of mental static and led to a wave of creativity that, since ignored, led to a deep and lengthy conversation about the meaning of life.

Unlike joints and bongs, vape pens tend to give me a much more clear-headed type of high. General euphoria was instant. The subsequent calm wave of focus arrived a few minutes later. Just be warned: The great taste made it way too easy to puff way more than was necessary.

The cartridge itself also lasted longer than expected; I had some leftover on Monday morning after three

straight days of relatively heavy weekend use. Concentrates are typically in a higher price range than bud, but with cartridges that last this long, it might actually be a better value. I

picked up two cartridges but simply didn't have time to crack into the second one. Stay tuned.

Lansterdam in Review is a new column written by Kyle Kaminski, a City Pulse staff writer and cannabis enthusiast who has been smoking marijuana just about every day for the last decade. Kaminski samples some of the best bud in Greater Lansing, gets real high and writes about it.

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How Woodland Park became a Black haven during Jim Crow

By **BILL CASTANIER**

Soon another summer of sun-drenched days and cool nights loaded with laughter, card games and barbecues will be behind the cottagers of Idlewild and Woodland Park. These pleasant summer memories are part of a deeper historic lineage. Both parks were safe havens for African American vacationers during the Jim Crow era.

There are several books about the more-glitzy Idlewild, including "Idlewild," by Ronald J. Stephens and "Black Eden," by Lewis Walker and Ben C. Wilson, but third-generation Woodland cottager Dianna Cross Toran has added to the oeuvre with her

new book, "Woodland Echoes," about the lesser-known African American resort Woodland Park, which is 18 miles south of Idlewild.

Both resorts were populated by members of the Great Migration, which brought hundreds of thousands of African Americans to the Midwest for jobs between 1916 and 1970. Toran's grandfather, Ollie, made his way to Lansing in the early part of the last century. After a short detour to Munising, where he worked in the lumber industry, he returned to Lansing and moved his family to Filley Street.

Toran has fond memories of the mostly white neighborhood. She attended Otto and Pattengill before relocating to Cincinnati in 1969.

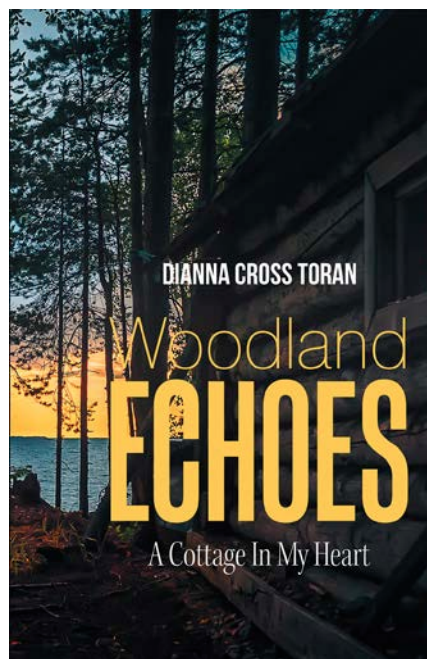
Her grandfather became attracted to the more rustic life of Woodland Park, with its pristine lake, and built a cottage there in 1947. He would soon use the skills he gained in the timber industry.

"He built the cottage on the wrong property and had to move it two lots over," Toran said.

A photo in the book shows a woman in the cottage looking out a window while it is being moved. "The women were inside cooking," she said. "Growing up and continuing today, I was so excited to come to the cottage. There's something healing up here."

Toran, who did scores of interviews for the book, mentioned, "I heard almost the same thing over and over again — that all cares and worries just disappear."

Part of the enchantment revolved around African Americans' being safe at Idlewild and Woodland Park. Many



of the prospective cottagers and visitors recall seeing Black faces having fun and wanted to join the bucolic atmosphere.

Woodland Park was the brainchild of Marion and Ella Auther from Chicago. Marion had been a super salesman for cottage property at Idlewild, but when that park sold out of spaces he and Ella decided that an additional African American summer resort could flourish as well.

One family that Toran highlights in her book is the Bates. The Lansing family's five boys were well known for their antics on waterskis.

Mark Bates is a third-generation cottage owner, thanks to a grandmother who was a member of the Colored Women's Democratic Campaign Committee. Idlewild was one of the few places their family could stay since white hotels were off-limits until the

Civil Rights Act of 1964.

"Idlewild was sold out and Woodland Park was a spillover. My mom thought it would be a good safe place to take her five boys. She wanted us to get away from the city," Bates said. "On the last day of school, mom would have the station wagon packed and ready to drive up to Woodland Lake. When we arrived, we would make a mad dash to the lake with mom yelling, 'You have to unload the car first!'"

Bates' father used the cash he made from repairing and selling a damaged firetruck to pay for a boat.

Soon, the Bates boys would learn how to waterski and their antics would become known as the Cypress Gardens' show of Woodland Park. Their flashy boat had cottagers rushing to the beach to watch them ride.

They mastered all kinds of tricks, including skiing barefoot, using five ropes and riding the "bronco," or a half barrel.

"This place holds a really special place in my heart and soul," Bates said.

Woodland Park made a good business decision to focus on a more laid-back lifestyle, contrasted with the more uptown atmosphere of Idlewild's nightclubs. But that's not to say important African American figures didn't seek out the quiet of Woodland Park.

Famous guests to the park included Joe Louis and his Spouse, Marva, internationally recognized elocutionist Hallie Winn Brown and W.E.B. Du Bois, the great African American orator and civil rights activist. It appears from the numerous citations in Toran's book that the Authers and Du Bois were good friends and corresponded with each other often.

As you might expect when writing about cottage life, Toran's book is filled with delightful oral histories. Toran said she initially started working on the book to write about her family's experience but expanded its scope after hearing tremendous tales during her interviews. Toran is planning a second book that focuses exclusively on Woodland Park.

This year, Toran has visited her cottage six times, despite it being a seven-hour drive from Cincinnati.

"That's how badly I want to be up here," she said.

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VIRTUAL EVENTS

Author Talks, Book Clubs, Storytimes · Attend an event without leaving home!

SPEAKING OF HORROR

Virtual Author Panel
August 26 · 6pm

The Subtle Use of Horror Across Genres: a virtual discussion featuring Richard Kadrey, W.M. Akers, Nicky Drayden, Premea Mohamed and Caitlin Starling. How do you define horror? Join the spirited discussion!

EVERYDAY AYURVEDA GUIDE TO SELF-CARE

with Kate O'Donnell
August 27 · 7pm

Turmeric Macchiato? Yes, please! Kate discusses her new book *The Everyday Ayurveda Guide To Self-care* and shows us how to make her turmeric macchiato.

NOT YOUR NORMAL #LOVESTORY

Virtual Author Panel
September 1 · 7pm

These hilarious young adult novels bring comparisons to #planebae, *Gilmore Girls*, and *The Devil Wears Prada*. Authors, Sonia Hartl, *Not Your #Lovestory* and Becky Wallace, *Far From Normal* stop in to share their new novels!

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Jonesin' Crossword

By Matt Jones

"For the Birds"-- multi-tasking for the "modern Stone Age family."

[#34, Feb. 2002]

By Matt Jones

Across

- 1 Drains, as energy
- 5 R&B singer Cantrell
- 8 Cause counterpart
- 14 Jog like a horse
- 15 Presidential monogram during the 1960s
- 16 "Starlight Express" director Nunn
- 17 Gigantic bird with a stone passenger cabin
- 19 Item with an image-chiseling bird
- 20 Suffix for McCarthy
- 21 With a tilde, "year"; without, something nastier
- 22 Darkness and obscurity
- 23 Musical item using a pointy-beaked bird
- 28 Eye color location
- 29 Birds on a ranch Down Under
- 30 Word after tight or rear
- 33 "Ad ___ per aspera" (Kansas state motto)
- 35 PBS kids' show that taught Ubbly-Dubby
- 36 Fortune 500 member, most likely
- 37 Signaling item, when the bird's tail is pulled
- 39 Motorist's signal, when the bird is squeezed
- 42 Parisian street
- 43 Annoying "Sesame Street" muppet
- 45 "Biography" network
- 46 "Abso-friggin-lutely!"
- 47 Mother of all, in Greek mythology
- 48 Other, to Osvaldo
- 49 Garden tool, when the bird's legs are squeezed

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	53	54					55			56		
57					58		59			60		
61							62			63		
64							65			66		

- 53 "The Heat ___" alphabet song
 - 55 Dig in 7 Article written by Voltaire?
 - 56 Pension plan alternative 8 List-ending abbr.
 - 57 Writing implement using a bird's beak 9 Web design option that's obsolete
 - 59 Talking bird flying back and forth between stone boxes 10 Thighbone
 - 61 Cover for a platter 11 "The Greatest Story ___ Told"
 - 62 "Little piggy," really 12 Stopper for the bubbly
 - 63 "___ but known ..." 13 Singing syllable
 - 64 Tousles, like a puppy 18 Cowboy's rope
 - 65 AMA members 24 Hockey great Bobby and family
 - 66 Corrida cheers 25 Summer sign
- Down**
- 1 It's made to step on 27 Arizona City, today
 - 2 Obey Viagra? 30 Cost-friendly
 - 3 San Francisco and New Orleans, for two 31 Bookish type
 - 4 Frequent NASCAR sponsor 32 Cooked to perfection
 - 5 Uses an iron, maybe 33 Off-kilter
 - 6 Quick stretch in the 34 Elisabeth of "Leaving Las Vegas"
 - 35 Woody Allen "regular
 - 36 ___ guy in famous situations" movie
 - 38 Old paint additive
 - 40 Ostrich or kiwi, e.g.
 - 41 "First Do No ___" (Meryl Streep TV film)
 - 44 Sallie ___ (student loan provider)
 - 47 Site of a 1949 European "Convention"
 - 48 Takes to the soapbox
 - 49 Wishes
 - 50 Carreras, Domingo, or Pavarotti
 - 51 Etch away
 - 52 Harold of "Ghostbusters"
 - 53 "To Live and Die ___"
 - 54 Twist, as statistics
 - 57 AOL or MSN, e.g., once ...
 - 58 ... and where to find them
 - 59 "___ be my pleasure!"
 - 60 Sorority letter

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Answers Page 26

SUDOKU

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Intermediate

TO PLAY

Fill in the grid so that every row, column, and outlined 3-by-3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9 exactly once. No guessing is required. The solution is unique.

Answers on page 26

Free Will Astrology

By Rob Breznsky

August 26-September 2, 2020

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Aries author Kareem Abdul-Jabbar writes, "Some stuff can be fixed, some stuff can't be. Deciding which is which is part of maturing." I offer this meditation as your assignment in the coming weeks, Aries. You are in a phase when you'll be wise to make various corrections and adjustments. But you should keep in mind that you don't have unlimited time and energy to do so. And that's OK, because some glitches can't be repaired and others aren't fully worthy of your passionate intensity. You really should choose to focus on the few specific acts of mending and healing that will serve you best in the long run.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): "There are all kinds of love in the world, but never the same love twice," wrote author F. Scott Fitzgerald. This is true even between the same two people in an intimate alliance with each other. The love that you and your spouse or friend or close relative or collaborator exchanged a month ago isn't the same as it is now. It "can't" be identical, because then it wouldn't be vibrant, robust love, which needs to ceaselessly transform in order to be vibrant and robust. This is always true, of course, but will be an especially potent meditation for you during the next four weeks.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): As a professional writer, novelist Thomas Wolfe trained himself to have keen perceptions that enabled him to penetrate below surface appearances. And yet he wrote, "I have to see a thing a thousand times before I see it once." In other words, it was hard even for him, a highly trained observer, to get a deep and accurate read of what was going on. It required a long time and many attempts—and rarely occurred for him on the first look. Even if you're not a writer, Gemini, I recommend his approach for you in the coming weeks. You will attune yourself to current cosmic rhythms—and thus be more likely to receive their full help and blessings—if you deepen and refine the way you use your senses.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): It's sometimes tempting for you to seek stability and safety by remaining just the way you are. When life pushes you to jump in and enjoy its wild ride, you may imagine it's wise to refrain—to retreat to your sanctuary and cultivate the strength that comes from being staunch and steadfast and solid. Sometimes that approach does indeed work for you. I'm not implying it's wrong or bad. But in the coming weeks, I think your strategy should be different. The advice I'll offer you comes from Cancerian author and aviator Anne Morrow Lindbergh: "Only in growth, reform, and change, paradoxically enough, is true security to be found."

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): "To be successful, the first thing to do is fall in love with your work," says author Sister Mary Lauretta. Have you been making progress in accomplishing that goal, Leo? According to my astrological analysis, fate has been offering and will continue to offer you the chance to either find work that you'll love better than the work you're doing, or else discover how to feel more love and excitement for your existing work. Why not intensify your efforts to cooperate with fate?

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): "Self-love is also remembering to let others love you. Come out of hiding." Poet Irisa Yardenah wrote that advice, and now I'm passing it on to you, just in time for a phase when you will benefit from it most. I mean, it's always good counsel for you to Virgos to heed. But it will be especially crucial in the coming weeks, when you'll have extra potential to bloom in response to love. And one of the best ways to ensure this extra potential is fulfilled is to make yourself thoroughly available to be appreciated, understood, and cared for.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Libran poet Wallace Stevens wrote that if you want to be original, you must "have the courage to be an amateur." I agree! And that's an important theme for you right now,

since you're entering a phase when your original ideas will be crucial to your growth. So listen up, Libra: If you want to stimulate your creativity to the max, adopt the fresh-eyed attitude of a rookie or a novice. Forget what you think you know about everything. Make yourself as innocently curious and eager as possible. Your imaginative insights and innovations will flow in abundance to the degree that you free yourself from the obligation to be serious and sober and professional. And keep in mind that Stevens said you need courage to act this way.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): "As idiotic as optimism can sometimes seem, it has a weird habit of paying off," writes author Michael Lewis. According to my analysis, the coming weeks will provide you with ample evidence that proves his hypothesis—on one condition, that is: You will have to cultivate and express a "thoughtful" kind of optimism. Is that possible? Do you have the audacity to maintain intelligent buoyancy and discerning positivity, even in the face of those who might try to gaslight you into feeling stupid for being buoyant and positive? I think you do.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Author Rebecca Solnit writes, "The things we want are transformative, and we don't know or only think we know what is on the other side of that transformation." Her statement is especially apropos for you right now. The experiences you're yearning for will indeed change you significantly if you get them—even though those changes will be different from what your conscious mind thinks they'll be. But don't worry. Your higher self—the eternal part of you that knows just what you need—is fully aware of the beneficial transformations that will come your way when you get what you yearn for.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): At age 22, future pioneer of science Isaac Newton got his college degree just as the Great Plague peaked in 1665. As a safety precaution, he proceeded to quarantine himself for many months. During that time of being sealed away, he made spectacular discoveries about optics, gravity, and calculus—in dramatic contrast to his years as a student, when his work had been relatively undistinguished. I'm not predicting that your experience of the 2020 pandemic will prove to be as fruitful as those of your fellow Capricorn, Isaac Newton. But of all the signs in the zodiac, I do think your output could be most Newton-like. And the coming weeks will be a good time for you to redouble your efforts to generate redemption amidst the chaos.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): The rapper named Viper has released over 1,000 albums. In 2014 alone, he created 347. His most popular work is "You'll Cowards Don't Even Smoke Crack", which has received over three million views on Youtube. According to "The Chicago Reader", one of Viper's most appealing features is his "blatant disregard for grammar." I should also mention that he regards himself as the second Christ, and uses the nickname "Black Jesus." So what does any of this have to do with you? Well, I'm recommending that you be as prolific, in your own field, as he is in his. I'm also inviting you to experiment with having a fun-loving disregard for grammar and other non-critical rules. And I would love to see you temporarily adopt some of his over-the-top braggadocio.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): "If you don't ask the right question, every answer seems wrong," says singer-songwriter Ani DiFranco. I suspect you may have experienced a version of that predicament in recent weeks, Pisces. That's the bad news. The good news is that I expect you will finally formulate the right questions very soon. They will most likely be quite different from the wrong and irrelevant questions you've been posing. In fact, the best way to find the revelatory questions will be to renounce and dismiss all the questions you have been asking up until now.

TURN IT DOWN!

BY RICH TUPICA

TURN IT DOWN: FROM BIG SUR 'INFINITE MORNING' REVIEW



"Infinite Morning" front cover.



"Infinite Morning" back sleeve.



From Big Sur formed in Lansing in 2009. (Courtesy photo.)

A track-by-track breakdown of the latest LP from Lansing's From Big Sur

Having a band with multiple songwriters can be a double-edged sword. While having a surplus of material is a generally a positive thing, sometimes having too many ideas on the table leads to a meandering mashup on record. From Big Sur, a Lansing outfit, have long managed to rein in all of their lyrics and riffs into one cohesive blend that touches on various genres while maintaining their own distinct spirit.

Since 2009, the band has issued five albums of originals. The band — which comprises Kevin Ream (guitar, piano, banjo, vocals), Wesley Tkaczyk (bass, guitar, vocals), Shawn Doolittle (drums, percussion) and Mark King (keys, sitar, mandolin, guitar, vocals) — all lend a hand in creating its colossal sound.

Pressed on wax and CD over the summer, "Infinite Morning" shows the band in all of its authentic glory. Lots of instrumentation. Lots of vocals. But, at the same time, they know when to dial it back and let silence seep into the mix.

Opening the album, "Surrounded

By Your Love" dishes up huge '60s-AM radio vibes, but also splices in some scorching guitar solos that swerves the track into progressive alt-rock territory. "Hold Me" has throwback Motown attitude — a nice-an-mellow soulful rock 'n' roll tune. "Ear to the Ground" kicks in with some stripped down, well-crafted verses before sonically erupting on the choruses — all parts accented by tasteful blasts of guitar licks and percussion.

At the start of it, "Waiting for Me" comes off like it might be a basic, scuzzy blues rocker, but in typical From Big Sur-fashion, it abruptly transcends beyond that with genre-bending, majestic hooks.

"Bad Milk" poetically closes out Side A of the vinyl with a ballad that sounds like it perhaps Bob Dylan being backed-up by a '90s alt-rock supergroup — an unusual concoction that somehow works on wax. This also fully documents From Big Sur's amazing dynamics and ability to layer soaring vocal harmonies alongside guitar-driven melodies.

Opening Side 2 of "Infinite Morning" is "Heart Away," a rus-

tic, storytelling country-rock tune echoing the likes of Townes Van Sant and Neil Young. "What Were You Thinking" then shifts the disc back into more contemporary territory. The haunting ballad doesn't rush to get where it's going. From Big Sur isn't afraid to let its songs breathe, and on this one, the track moves along slowly and soulfully — sonically hitting both low valleys and towering vocal peaks. After that emotional refrain, "Leaving" boosts up the ambiance with a Byrds-esque folk-rocker that could be a shelved cut mistakenly left off "Sweetheart of the Rodeo." Roger McGuinn and the ghost of Gram Parsons would no doubt appreciate it.

The biggest earworm on the album is hands down "Who I Am." This one tells me that the songwriter likely grew up on both The Beatles and Fountains of Wayne. Penned by Tkaczyk, it's a perfectly executed pop song. Remember "120 Minutes" on MTV? This would've been in constant rotation. Personally, I was surprised it was buried near the bottom of

the record. Closing out the LP is "Boblo," a carefree track about traveling and escaping to an island.

These days, who can't relate with that notion?

CITY PULSE MITTEN MUSIC QUIZ:

1. Founded in 1914, this is Michigan's premier orchestra and performs at Orchestra Hall in Detroit.
2. This Southfield native released his debut album, "31 Minutes to Takeoff" in August 2010.
3. This Detroit native wrote and recorded "The Twist" a year before Chubby Checker.
4. In 1967, (this future member of The Eagles) formed The Mushrooms, a garage band.
5. Nate Young founded this experimental Michigan-based noise group in 1996.

Answers on page 26

OUT ON THE TOWN

Events must be entered through the calendar at lansingcitypulse.com. Deadline is 5 p.m. Wednesdays for the following week's issue. Charges may apply for paid events to appear in print. If you need assistance, please call Suzi at (517) 999-6704.

Wednesday, August 26

2020 East Lansing Kiwanis "Virtual BBQ" - 11:30 a.m.-10 p.m. For info and tickets: elkiwanis.org.

Allen Farmers Market - 2:30-7 p.m. Allen Farmers Market 2020, 2100 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing.

ARTpath | Public Art on the Lansing River Trail - 8 a.m.-9 p.m., ongoing, along the Lansing River Trail. 517-374-6400. lansingartgallery.org.

Building Early Emotional Skills for Parents Webinar Series - Parenting stress? Learn how to help your young child manage their strong emotions! 8-9:30 p.m. msu.edu

Farmers' Market Wednesdays - 3 p.m. Meridian Township Farmers' Market, 5151 Marsh Rd, Okemos.

LCC Transfer-in Advising Seminars - 6 p.m.-10 a.m. Lansing Community College. lcc.edu

Virtual Diabetes Prevention Program Information Session - 11 a.m.-12 p.m. readyssetprevent.org.

Thursday, August 27

Bath Township Farmers Market - 3-7 p.m. James Couzens Memorial Park, 13751

Main St., Bath. shopbfm.org.
Curious GLADL - Create a LAVA lamp. Join us via Zoom for something fun, something curious, something science or STEAM! 3-4 p.m. gladl.org for link.

Dimondale Farmers' Market - 3-7 p.m. Village Square, 136 N Bridge St, Dimondale. 517-646-0230. villageofdimondale.org.

Kidney Disease - free online health series - 10 a.m.-12 p.m. 734-645-4215. nkfm.org.

Refuge Recovery Lansing (Virtual) - 6-7 p.m. facebook.com/refugerecoverylansing

South Lansing Farmers Market - 3-7 p.m. Casimir Catholic Church, 800 W Barnes Ave, Lansing. 517-374-5700.

Friday, August 28

Community Open Call: Women of Color Writing Workshop - Are you a Woman of Color (WOC) looking for a safe space to forge relationships with other WOC graduate students? 10 a.m.-12 p.m. broadmuseum.msu.edu for Zoom link.

Live Music on the Patio with Greg Allen - 6-9 p.m. Coachs Pub and Grill, 6201 Bishop Rd, Lansing. 517-882-2013.

Refuge Recovery Lansing (Virtual) - 7:30-8:30 p.m. facebook.com/refugerecoverylansing

Saturday, August 29

Back to School/Home School Drive-thru Festival - For parents in need of assistance with school supplies. You must pre-register. 5 p.m. Frances Park Pavilion, 2701 Moores River Dr., Lansing. againstandoddsfoundation.com.

Meridian Township Farmers' Market - 8 a.m. Meridian Township Farmers' Market, 5151 Marsh Rd, Okemos.

Polish MANIA Warsaw Cuisine Food Truck - 1pm-7pm! 1-7 p.m. Ellison Brewery + Spirits, 4903 Dawn Ave, East Lansing.

Red Cedar River Cleanup - Join us for a community clean up of the Red Cedar River! 9 a.m.-1 p.m. McCormick Park, 123 High Street, Williamston.

Refuge Recovery Lansing (Virtual) - 7:30-8:30 p.m. facebook.com/refugerecoverylansing

Sunday, August 30

East Lansing Farmers Market - 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Valley Court Park, 300 Valley Court, East Lansing. cityofeastlansing.com.

Monday, August 31

Refuge Recovery Lansing (Virtual) - 6-7 p.m. facebook.com/refugerecoverylansing

Virtual Diabetes Prevention Program Information Session - 5:30-6:30 p.m. readyssetprevent.org.

Tuesday, September 1

The Fluid Frontier Revisited - The Michigan Underground Railroad Heritage Gathering as a month-long virtual conference! 3:30-5 p.m. Michigan History Center, 702 W Kalamazoo St, Lansing.facebook.com/

MichiganHistoryCenter/



My name is **Robin Lea Laurain** and I am asking you to **Vote Green** for Michigan's Education Slate.



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MITTEN MUSIC QUIZ ANSWERS

1. The Detroit Symphony Orchestra
2. Mike Posner
3. Hank Ballard
4. Glenn Frey
5. Wolf Eyes

SUDOKU SOLUTION
From Pg. 24

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CROSSWORD SOLUTION
From Pg. 24

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FOOD & DRINK DINING OUT IN GREATER LANSING

East Lansing pizzeria opens new location at The Hub

By **COLE TUNNINGLEY**

Beloved East Lansing pizzeria Georgio's is back. With the reopening of its Charles Street location, and the grand opening of its brand new spot inside of Michigan State University's on-campus housing structure The Hub, ownership feels the classic pizza joint is better than ever.

The new look has Georgio's sporting higher ceilings and modern industrial decorations.

"Finally, after the worst of COVID has passed, we were able to reopen," said Georgio's owner Vackis Nicolaou. "We have been around East Lansing for 25 years, so people are excited to come back."

Nicolaou said that he's excited to serve classic Georgio's pizza to new customers. Georgio's offers nearly 40 unique slices of jumbo, gourmet

Georgio's Gourmet Pizzeria

120 Charles St.
East Lansing, MI 48823
(517) 333-9990
Open 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. all week
918 E. Grand River, East Lansing
(517) 351-1000
Monday-Friday, 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.
Saturday, 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.

pizza. Its selections include spinach pizza, stuffed meat lovers,

Mediterranean. Georgio's also offers gluten free pizza with a cauliflower crust.

Customers are invited to come in and create their own eight-pack special with any variety of pizza slices that they would like.

"It was challenging to see the old building demolished," said Nicolaou. "But we knew we were getting a new unit with a modern, new look."

With Georgio's new setup, custom-

ers have the option of parking on the ground level or parking in a covered section behind the building. All parking is free.

When Georgio's reopened, Nicolaou said that his loyal customers were jumping at the opportunity to have a slice of his pizza. "Right when we opened, we had lines of customers outside," he said. "We're really excited that they are back."

Nicolaou said that he was initially concerned that the COVID-19 outbreak would negatively affect his business. But after reopening, his concerns suddenly seemed less dire. Georgio's customers were loyal enough to keep him afloat.

"We'll be fine," Nicolaou laughed. "I think we'll be serving pizza for another 25 years."

Still, without a flood of students coming back to MSU for the fall semester, Nicolaou acknowledged that business won't be the same. College students just love pizza. Without them, he loses a large customer base. But Nicolaou has his eyes set on the future, and he's optimistic.

"We are looking forward to 2021," said Nicolaou. "When all those 50,000 students come back."



Courtesy Photo

Platters of pizza waiting to be devoured at Georgio's Gourmet Pizzeria.



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The hearing in this matter will be live-streamed on YouTube on Thursday, Sept. 3, 2020, commencing at 10:00 a.m., before the Livingston County Hearing Panel #1 of the Attorney Discipline Board.

Link: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCL_oGjtuWkm3sfxLwVIYJaw/videos

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