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Dr. Surae Eaton
Retired Physician / AARP Volunteer
Lansing, MI

CityPULSE

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Williamston Theatre's latest show gets thumbs up



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Musician Lindsay Taylor on the album that changed her life



Cover
Art

By Nevin Speerbrecker

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THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW

THE DUMBEST TIMELINE

1. ZENO'S POLITICAL PARADOX

TO HIT THAT TARGET, THE ARROW HAS TO FIRST TRAVEL HALF THE DISTANCE--AND HALF THAT DISTANCE--AND SO ON!

OBVIOUSLY IT WILL NEVER GET THERE! IT'S JUST LOGIC!



2. THE HOT NEW INVESTMENT

I'M A MEMBER OF THE BORED FASCIST LAWMAKER CLUB COMMUNITY! HERE'S MY N.F.T.-- THE BEARDED JACKASS!

I SPENT MY LIFE SAVINGS ON A BLOCKCHAIN LINK TO THIS JPEG OF AN INSURRECTIONIST WHO IS INEXPLICABLY STILL IN CONGRESS!



3. THE NEXT SIX MONTHS OF RIGHT WING DISCOURSE, CONDENSED

JOE BIDEN IS GOING TO APPOINT A BLACK WOMAN TO THE SUPREME COURT! THIS IS REVERSE SUPREME COURT RACISM!

AS MY PERSONAL HERO MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. SO FAMOUSLY SAID, WE MUST JUDGE PEOPLE BY THE CONTENT OF THEIR CHARACTER, NOT--



4. THE KEY TO VICTORY IS SURRENDER

THE ONLY WAY TO DEFEAT COVID... IS TO BE DEFEATED BY IT!

HURRAY! WE CAN IGNORE MASKS AND VACCINES-- AND GET BACK TO NORMAL NOW!



5. WAITING FOR GODOT

I HEARD THAT TRUMP WILL BE CHARGED WITH CRIMES TODAY, DIDI.

AND IF IT DOESN'T HAPPEN TODAY, GOGO?

WE'LL COME BACK TOMORROW!

AND THEN THE DAY AFTER!

SOMEDAY IT WILL HAPPEN!



6. THE PROBLEM WITH POLITICS IS ALL THE DISAGREEMENT

FOR JOE BIDEN TO TRULY BRING UNITY TO THIS COUNTRY, HE NEEDS LIZ CHENEY AS HIS VICE PRESIDENT! OR MAYBE DICK CHENEY!

THE FIRST RULE OF BOXES IS, WHEN YOU'RE THINKING OUTSIDE THEM, YOU SHOULD BE LAVISHED WITH PRAISE AND ATTENTION!

DON'T YOU AGREE, DRIVER?

WHATEVER YOU SAY, PAL.



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PULSE

NEWS & OPINION

Lansing Legends: Art Arthur

Art Arthur, 79, is a retired GM employee and still tough as nails. He's a drag racer who might brag about a perfect driving record, a hard earner who couldn't run the risk of missing his son's basketball game. He doesn't hoard memorabilia from his past, making his recollection of the freedom and friends that fueled his life his most prized possessions.

Do you have a nickname?

To this day if someone calls me by my nickname, it means they've known me for a long time and it's S-U-G-A-R. It came from my aunt, and then everyone in the neighborhood started calling me that and it followed me all throughout school. There were people I worked with at GM who didn't know my real name until I retired. Isn't that something?

Did you make a new family while working at GM?

I keep in contact with a lot of people from Fisher Body. I worked at the plant for about 37 years over there on Verlin-den Avenue. It's a pile of dirt now.

Were you born in Lansing?

I was born on the north end of town on a street that doesn't even exist anymore. A company called Motorwheels gobbled it up and closed it off.

What kind of gatherings did you attend as a teenager?

A lot of people don't remember this, but there was a roller skating rink on East Michigan Avenue just down from



Audrey Matusz, the author of this series, is a former arts and culture editor of City Pulse who was born in Lansing and grew up in Okemos. She is a graduate of the Residential College of the Arts and Humanities at Michigan State University. She is a digital and instructional designer for the Michigan Victim Advocacy Network.

Lansing Legends

This is the first in a four-part series during Black History Month with long-time Lansing residents who witnessed a generation of Black excellence. Interviews have been edited and condensed.

Frاندor called the Palomar. The floors were marble, which was rare. Guys could actually fly. You could feel the breeze when they passed by. We hung out there once a week because they designated Monday evenings for the Blacks. It was the only night they played our music, which we liked, but I always wondered why they had to make it on a school night.

Did you know of any sundown ordinances in East Lansing?

Driving in East Lansing while Black could get you pulled over, that is a true story. At night, guys would definitely try to avoid it. I never got pulled over while driving, but I've been in the car when it happened.

Did you experience racism in Lansing schools?

During the '60s, I went to Eastern High School. Back then we didn't have backpacks, it was common to share your combination so friends could store their books. We all did it. So, I let the girlfriend of a track star keep her books in my locker.

One day I got called into the office by the assistant principal and he started the conversation with how promising my future was. He said with me running track that he could get me a college scholarship. He asked me if I was dating anyone and I told him no. Apparently teachers had reported that me and this girl would walk in the halls together, and he told me, "I don't want to see you mess yourself up." He wouldn't say it, but I knew what he was getting at: because she was white and I'm Black."

What was your plan post-high school?

I was thinking about getting a job and getting a car. I got a '52 Ford with a



Skyler Ashley/City Pulse

Art Arthur in front of the GM Grand River Plant in downtown Lansing.

bad radiator for \$75 from a guy around the corner. A little old man charged me \$15 to fix it and we were riding. When I worked at GM I had a '55 Chevy Convertible.

What is your connection to car culture?

My brother and I used to drag race in the '70s. We traveled all over the country from Texas to Montreal. We had a Chrysler Plymouth. It was very competitive and had a blue and white color scheme. I won The U.S. Nationals with it in the mid-'70s. I was told we were the first Blacks from Michigan to win a class national championship. To this day I have a '67 blue and white Chrysler Plymouth that I drag race in the summer.

How did you get into racing?

I started off as a crew chief just helping my brother. I had never raced a car. One day at Lapeer International Dragway, a friend encouraged me to race, and I won. My brother has passed, but he would freak out if he saw what it was now. So much has changed — the technology and equipment. When we were coming up, there were times when we were the only Blacks at a race.

Were you ever part of a strike at GM?

In 1970 we had a 67-day strike. Every employee got a little strike pay and food stamps were available. Back then the union was pretty strong.

Did you ever have issues with management?

I was a greenhorn, but I wasn't stupid. I had a new supervisor, and he was a big, tall man. I used to watch him in the morning bring in breakfast sandwiches and tamales — many of the workers were Mexican — and the next thing I know he has a couple of these guys with their arms twisted behind their backs. It was kind of playful, but I wouldn't have stood for it. Long story short, he started complaining about me and my partner falling behind and called a meeting with us and his boss.

I stood outside the office, and I told him I wasn't coming in until the committee man arrived. He didn't like that. During the meeting, the general supervisor started yelling and cursing. That's when I turned my head and looked out the window, and he did not like that either.

That afternoon the committee man came up to me and asked if I ever thought about joining supervision. Then in 1979 I joined supervision per diem, and I'll tell you why. One of the supervisors, a Black guy, encouraged me to take a 12-week supervision course. I resisted it at first, but I did it and I probably saw a side of the plant I would never have known existed.

— AUDREY MATUSZ

Tired of the tree trimming? It may be keeping your heat on.

BWL credits tree trimming for reduced power outages

For the last eight years, a familiar annual cycle has been constantly repeating itself in Lansing.

The sounds of chainsaws buzz through local neighborhoods while brightly vested forestry crews converge on the Capital City, hastily sawing away at outstretched tree limbs that dangle precariously above tangled meshes of electrical lines. Neighbors watch the crews with caution, protectively guarding some of the more mature trees dotting their yards and their local streets.

And without fail, the inboxes of local journalists and city officials are flooded with pictures of so-called “hack jobs,” and complaints from long-time residents who are saddened to see their trees so mangled. This year is no different for City Pulse and the Lansing Board of Water & Light. This writer has fielded at least five complaints. BWL General Manager Dick Peffley also said that at least one neighborhood complaint usually finds its way to his desk every month.

After all, the Board of Water & Light doesn't care about aesthetics, Peffley said. Those crews are out there trimming for one reason only: to guard against future power outages. And eight years after a historic ice storm knocked out power for about 40,000 residents, including some who went without electricity for nearly two weeks, Peffley said he has learned a lesson or two.

“The bottom line is, that after that ice storm, we've stayed committed to doing the work that we needed to do to

ensure that sort of thing never happens again,” Peffley said. “And I'll be honest: It has been a controversial issue because the more we take down, the more complaints we get, and it doesn't always look too great. I always say:

How long is the average power outage in Lansing?

YEAR/MINUTES

2016 — 118.2

2017 — 67.95

2018 — 70.53

2019 — 60.98

2020 — 50.70

How much does tree trimming cost BWL?

2011 — \$602,208

2012 — \$916,637

2013 — \$1.68 million

2014 — \$2.98 million

2015 — \$5.09 million

2016 — \$5.03 million

2017 — \$7.42 million

2018 — \$10.18 million

2019 — \$8.82 million

2020 — \$7.79 million

2021 — \$6.07 million

10-year total — \$56.57 million

Source:

Lansing Board of Water & Light

They're not out there to make it look good. Keep in mind that this has allowed our service area to be one of the most reliable in the state.”

About a week before Christmas 2013, a massive winter storm arrived in mid-Michigan, pounding Lansing with freezing rain and knocking down dozens of trees and power lines. It was bad enough for Shiawassee County to declare a state of emergency for unsafe travel conditions.

Local media outlets reported on exploded circuits, snapped trees and collapsed buildings. All told, more than 38,500 Greater Lansing residents reportedly lost power — a record 40% of BWL's ratepayers at the time. Most of the damage had been repaired before Christmas Eve, but some of the more complicated fixes had kept dozens of residents in the dark for up to 11 days.

Public criticism of BWL's handling of the ice storm triggered a political firestorm in the months that followed — particularly after BWL released a dismissive report that found it “could not anticipate the unprecedented damage.” Tensions reached a boiling point



Kyle Kaminski/City Pulse

A tree trimming crew contracted by the Lansing Board of Water & Light cuts branches near an electrical line in the Moores Park Neighborhood.

when local media outlets discovered that former BWL General Manager J. Peter Lark had flown off to New York City on a family vacation over the holidays, leaving the city during one of its biggest crises to date.

About six months after the ice storm, a probe from the Michigan Public Service Commission showed that BWL had failed to follow its own vegetation management policies — which, along with staffing shortages, was found to have only contributed to the length of subsequent outages.

It was a watershed moment for the publicly owned utility company, explained Peffley, who replaced Lark after he was finally canned.

“It was obvious that we would have fewer outages — and shorter restoration times — if we had less interference from the trees,” he said. “And when you don't trim for years, you have to be pretty aggressive. About three years ago, I used to get a complaint two or three times a week. That's really gone down. I do understand those concerns, but we also had some pretty heavy scrutiny on us after that ice storm and it was evident that we needed to do more with trimming.”

Records obtained through the state's Freedom of Information Act showed that BWL spent about \$3.2 million on tree trimming in the three years leading up to the 2013 ice storm. And those costs climbed exponentially in the years

that followed — culminating in an all-time high of about \$10.2 million in annual tree trimming expenses by 2018, a nearly 1,600% increase from 2011.

All told, BWL has spent a total of \$56.57 million on tree trimming operations in the last 10 years.

Peffley said 2019 was supposed to mark the end of a five-year cycle that included blanketing the city with forestry crews and trimming overhanging branches near every power line in the city. That five-year plan, however, had to be revisited midway through because BWL simply wasn't seeing enough results. The crews, instead, needed to take a much more aggressive approach — clearing every branch and limb between the power lines and the sky above it, Peffley said.

And that's when the neighborhood complaints really started to roll into Peffley's office.

More than eight years after the ice storm, however — and as a major winter storm was forecast — Peffley said he expects that every corner of BWL's service area will finally have been trimmed to industry standards this month. Routine maintenance will still be required, but residents can expect crews to be much less noticeable.

Those annual costs have also tapered in recent years, falling to only about \$6

**STATE OF MICHIGAN
PROBATE COURT
INGHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
DECEDENT'S ESTATE
CASE NO. 22-101-DE**
Estate of Anna Louise Lovett.
Date of birth: 01/29/1943.
**TO ALL CREDITORS:
NOTICE TO CREDITORS:**
The decedent, Anna L. Lovett,
died 01-05-2022. Creditors of
the decedent are notified that
all claims against the estate
will be forever barred unless
presented to Stephanie Hurley,
personal representative or to
both the probate court at 313
W. Kalamazoo St., Lansing, MI
48933 and the personal repre-
sentative within 4 months after
the date of publication of this
notice.
02/02/2022
Stephanie Hurley
7427 Ideal Ave.
Ft. Wayne, IN 46809
260-255-1873
CP#22-021

BWL

from page 6

million last year.

Most of BWL's tree trimming expenses are tied up in paying outside contractors for the work. Hiring three in-house crews in recent years has helped bring costs down — something Peffley also hopes to expand on as the company moves into “maintenance mode” in the coming years.

“Those trimming costs will stabilize with that work finished. They’ll go down. And once we get out of this cycle in March, I expect these complaints will go down too,” Peffley said.

The work has also paid its intended dividends. Over the last four years, average power outages have declined from about 118 minutes in 2016 to about 51

minutes in 2020 — giving BWL the title of the second most reliable utility provider in Michigan, second only to the city of Holland.

“This has really allowed our service area to move from one of the least reliable areas to one of the most reliable,” Peffley said. “This year, we’re going to beat out Holland. We’ll be the best.”

Outages related to fallen trees and limbs are also no longer BWL's top concern, Peffley said. Last year, the biggest cause of power outages was instead related to squirrels climbing up poles and chewing through electrical insulation — another problem that BWL hopes to address soon.

“It always used to be trees. Nowadays it’s all about squirrels. It’s a nice change of pace,” Peffley added. “We’re actually looking at putting up some squirrel guards on the poles to see if it helps.”

— KYLE KAMINSKI



Kyle Kaminski/City Pulse

Vegetation management costs have soared for the utility company since 2013, with about \$56.7 million in expenses tracked in the last 10 years.

**STATE OF MICHIGAN
PROBATE COURT
INGHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
DECEDENT'S ESTATE
CASE NO. 22-113-DE**

Estate of Michael William Barry.
Date of birth: 03/09/1955.
**TO ALL CREDITORS:
NOTICE TO CREDITORS:**
The decedent, Michael William Barry, died 01/12/2022. Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Penny Monroe, personal representative or to both the probate court at 313 W. Kalamazoo St., Lansing, MI 48933 and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.
01/28/2022
Penny Monroe
401 S Dibble Ave.
Lansing, MI 48917
j517-327-6499

CP#22-023

**COUNTY OF INGHAM
2021 / 2022 TENTATIVE RATIOS AND TENTATIVE FACTORS
PREPARED BY DEPARTMENT OF EQUALIZATION**

Unit	Real Property												Personal Property	
	Agricultural		Commercial		Industrial		Residential		Timber-Cutover		Developmental			
	Ratio	Factor	Ratio	Factor	Ratio	Factor	Ratio	Factor	Ratio	Factor	Ratio	Factor		
01 - ALAIEDON TOWNSHIP	49.21	1.0000	48.28	1.0356	49.92	1.0000	49.43	1.0000	NC	NC	NC	NC	50.00	1.0000
02 - AURELIUS TOWNSHIP	46.15	1.0834	48.67	1.0273	47.34	1.0562	46.84	1.0675	NC	NC	NC	NC	50.00	1.0000
03 - BUNKER HILL TOWNSHIP	47.71	1.0480	49.13	1.0000	50.00	1.0000	45.43	1.1006	NC	NC	NC	NC	50.00	1.0000
04 - DELHI CHARTER TOWNSHIP	49.87	1.0000	48.69	1.0269	49.15	1.0000	46.88	1.0666	NC	NC	NC	NC	50.00	1.0000
05 - INGHAM TOWNSHIP	47.27	1.0578	46.06	1.0855	NC	NC	47.55	1.0515	NC	NC	NC	NC	50.00	1.0000
06 - LANSING CHARTER TOWNSHIP	NC	NC	49.95	1.0000	40.86	1.2237	46.92	1.0657	NC	NC	NC	NC	50.00	1.0000
07 - LEROY TOWNSHIP	47.13	1.0609	46.93	1.0654	47.40	1.0549	46.76	1.0693	NC	NC	NC	NC	50.00	1.0000
08 - LESLIE TOWNSHIP	48.27	1.0358	48.75	1.0257	49.61	1.0000	45.62	1.0960	NC	NC	NC	NC	50.00	1.0000
09 - LOCKE TOWNSHIP	49.11	1.0000	46.12	1.0841	49.13	1.0000	48.79	1.0248	NC	NC	NC	NC	50.00	1.0000
10 - MERIDIAN CHARTER TOWNSHIP	NC	NC	47.27	1.0578	43.16	1.1585	47.94	1.0430	NC	NC	NC	NC	50.00	1.0000
11 - ONONDAGA TOWNSHIP	49.99	1.0000	45.93	1.0886	49.07	1.0000	49.25	1.0000	NC	NC	NC	NC	50.00	1.0000
12 - STOCKBRIDGE TOWNSHIP	46.95	1.0650	50.45	0.9911	45.74	1.0931	47.15	1.0605	NC	NC	NC	NC	50.00	1.0000
13 - VEVAY TOWNSHIP	48.00	1.0417	45.98	1.0874	49.60	1.0000	48.70	1.0267	NC	NC	NC	NC	50.00	1.0000
14 - WHEATFIELD TOWNSHIP	48.74	1.0259	50.17	0.9966	49.53	1.0000	48.50	1.0309	NC	NC	NC	NC	50.00	1.0000
15 - WHITE OAK TOWNSHIP	46.49	1.0755	47.45	1.0537	47.02	1.0634	46.67	1.0714	NC	NC	NC	NC	50.00	1.0000
16 - WILLIAMSTOWN TOWNSHIP	49.23	1.0000	49.96	1.0000	47.11	1.0614	48.50	1.0309	NC	NC	46.76	1.0693	50.00	1.0000
51 - CITY OF EAST LANSING	NC	NC	50.47	0.9907	48.13	1.0389	47.14	1.0607	NC	NC	NC	NC	50.00	1.0000
52 - CITY OF LANSING	NC	NC	46.43	1.0769	47.25	1.0581	46.44	1.0767	NC	NC	NC	NC	50.00	1.0000
55 - CITY OF LESLIE	NC	NC	48.26	1.0361	43.89	1.1392	47.37	1.0555	NC	NC	NC	NC	50.00	1.0000
53 - CITY OF MASON	NC	NC	49.54	1.0000	48.64	1.0280	47.61	1.0502	NC	NC	NC	NC	50.00	1.0000
54 - CITY OF WILLIAMSTON	NC	NC	43.38	1.1526	51.53	0.9703	47.73	1.0476	NC	NC	44.81	1.1158	50.00	1.0000

These Tentative Ratios and Estimated Factors are published in compliance with PA 165 of 1971. These figures are temporary in character and are intended to be informative in nature as of the third Monday in February. Local assessing units and board of review activities may significantly change the tentative figures. Finalized Ratios and Factors will result from the activity of the local units and through Equalization procedures. The recommended Tentative Ratios and Estimated Factors shall not prejudice the Equalization procedures of Ingham County or the State of Michigan.

William E. Fowler, Director
Ingham County Department of Equalization/Tax Mapping

CP#22-020

Nonprofit takes 'leap of faith' at old Teen Challenge Center

Activists partner with 'Discount Dave' to launch housing project

In response to a rapid increase in gun violence and homicide in Lansing, a newly formed nonprofit organization wants to open a shelter and home in the former Teen Challenge Center on Lansing's northwest side for men transitioning out of foster care, prison and homelessness.

Darren Bolinger created the nonprofit organization MI Just Cause late last year with the goal of providing housing, employment opportunities, and spiritual guidance — all under one roof.

The latest plan: Transform the former addiction-focused Teen Challenge Center at 510 W. Willow Street into a space for men to live and receive occupational training and mentorship as they transition into full-time employment and, eventually, a permanent place to call home.

Bolinger, who served as director of the men's shelter at the City Rescue Mission on Michigan Avenue, believes that local men risk turning to violence

when they lack not only safe housing, but also access to employment opportunities and mentorship, he said.

"About 40% of the guys that we saw didn't have a male role model in their life. They didn't have a father — somebody to help lead them and guide them," Bolinger explained last week. "The Bible says iron sharpens iron. Everybody needs somebody to call you out when you're out of line and to rejoice with you in times of excitement."

After months of searching for a location, Bolinger believes God brought MI Just Cause to the Teen Challenge building through its owner, "Discount Dave" Sheets. Sheets, known as Lansing's Mattress King, owns over 100 local properties, according to county records.

Sheets offered the nonprofit group a "generous discount" on a three-year land contract on the property that begins this month, Bollinger said. He declined to divulge additional details about the contractual arrangement, except to emphasize that the deal was "a good fit" for the group.

Bolinger also readily admitted that the property is much larger than he was initially seeking. With over 17,000



Melodee Mabbitt/City Pulse

Darren Bolinger looks out from inside the former Teen Challenge Center.

square feet, 48 bedrooms, a commercial kitchen and a pole barn, he estimates the starting costs of renovating the facility to be somewhere between \$2 million and \$5 million.

The group is starting off with a \$9,900 donation from 242 Church in Okemos, where Bolinger was recently employed as its logistics director, and actively looking for more donations.

"I'm the first one to admit that this is insane," Bolinger said during a brief tour. "This has been a leap of faith. I know it looks insane on paper, but I know God will provide for it."

Before it closed in 2017, the Teen Challenge Center had served for over 60 years as a place to help local teenagers find housing and recover from substance abuse. In its final years, the outfit reportedly struggled with maintenance and financing and it was sold at an auction to Sheets.

Sheets said he originally hoped to make some repairs and flip the property for a sizable profit but ultimately decided he "owed one to God" to sell the property to the group for a modest \$200,000 — a \$300,000 loss, by his math, because he values the property at about \$500,000.

In the lobby, broken windows are still dotted with bullet holes. Glass is scattered around inside. Chunks of plaster have been swept up from bedroom floors, but holes remain in the ceilings. Paint hangs in sheets off the wall, the result of a roof repair that came far too late. The freezing air smelled suspiciously like something died inside. The long, dark hallways echo the chirps of smoke detectors with batteries on the verge of dying out. Bollinger has his work cut out for him.

The building also lost its zoning status for a shelter after years of vacancy. For now, MI Just Cause can only allow six residents to stay inside unless the city

approves a rezoning request. Bolinger said he plans to submit an application that would allow up to 50 men to stay there.

In the meantime, Bolinger said MI Just Cause will select a small group of men who can start living in the building as early as next month while they double as an in-house renovation team.

Bolinger said the strength of his nonprofit organization resides in its board members. Among them: Zachary Pope, Mark Grafton, Dan Hofstra, Jason Feig and James Keyton. Bolinger said he met Keyton — a former NFL linebacker — while working at the City Rescue Mission.

Keyton also introduced Bolinger to Derrick Knox, cochairman of the Metro Lansing Poor People's Campaign and director of the employment-focused nonprofit, the Advancement Corp., which also plans to offer occupational training after residents start moving into the building.

Knox's outfit also recently bought the C. W. Otto Middle School to create a community center.

Bolinger plans to work closely with local residents and neighborhood associations as the plans start coming together. Officials with MI Just Cause also recently met with Lansing Mayor Andy Schor to explore what other rehabilitative services the nonprofit can offer at the new space.

"We're really digging in deep in this neighborhood," Bolinger said. "We're already looking into adopting the school, shoveling snow and how we can use the kitchen to provide a free diner."

Although religious guidance is a fundamental component of the plans, Bolinger emphasized that biblical counseling is entirely optional — which could enable broader access to public funding.

"This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for me, for our organization, and for the city of Lansing. We're going to do some transformative things for people and for the community," Bolinger said.

MI Just Cause is a registered 501(c)3 nonprofit organization capable of receiving tax-deductible donations. Bolinger said support from the community will be key to keeping his plans on track.

"We need everything. We need workers, people who know what they are doing. We need paint, kitchen items, household goods, beds. We are starting with nothing," Bolinger said.

— MELODEE MABBITT

CITY OF EAST LANSING, MICHIGAN

NOTICE OF ADOPTION ORDINANCE NO. 1512

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND SECTION 2-85 OF THE CITY CODE TO PROHIBIT NEPOTISM IN CITY EMPLOYMENT

The City of East Lansing ordains:

Section 1. Amendment of Section 2-85

Section 2-85 of the City Code, entitled "Code of Ethical Conduct" is amended to add a new sub-section (k) to read in its entirety as follows:

(k) *Nepotism.*

- (1) Pursuant to Section 7.12 of the City Charter, and except as otherwise provided in this subsection, no relatives of the City Manager or any Council member shall be hired by the City for any purpose during the term for which any Council member was elected, or during the tenure of the City Manager. Any person hired in violation of the provisions of this subsection shall forfeit all rights to employment with the City while the prohibited relationship exists.
- (2) This subsection does not affect the employment rights of any person already employed by the City at the time of a related Council Member's election or appointment or a related City Manager's appointment.
- (3) This subsection does not apply to employees of the City Library or employees of the District Court.
- (4) For purposes of this subsection, the term "relatives" means the spouse, brother, sister, parents, children, stepchildren, grandchildren, father-in-law, mother-in-law, sister-in-law, brother-in-law, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, and domestic partner.

Section 2. If any portion of this Ordinance is held invalid for any reason, that holding will not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this Ordinance, which will continue in full force and effect.

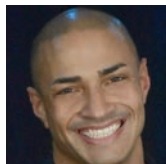
Section 3. Any ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict with this Ordinance are repealed, but only to the extent necessary to give this Ordinance full force and effect.

Jennifer Shuster
City Clerk

CP#22-022

REWIND

NEWS HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE LAST 7 DAYS



Daniels



Cavanagh



Dowd

Three compete to replace Betz

The Council was expected to decide on Tuesday night, a few hours past City Pulse's print deadline, who will serve as the appointed replacement for disgraced First Ward Councilman Brandon Betz, who resigned about halfway through his term last month to focus on "personal relationships and health." It was between three finalists — Brian Daniels, Caitlin Cavanagh and Ben Dowd — who emerged from a field of 11 applicants at a Council Committee of the Whole meeting Monday night. The appointment lasts through Dec. 31. A special election in November will determine who fills the final year of the four-year term, which expires on Dec. 31, 2023.

Lansing adoption agency free to discriminate

A settlement reached between the Department of Health and Human Services and St. Vincent Catholic Charities means the Lansing adoption agency can continue its discriminatory practices of refusing to work with LGBTQ couples, according to a press release from the local Catholic diocese. MDHHS has also agreed to send \$550,000 to the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty.

Free KN95 masks available in Michigan

Gov. Gretchen Whitmer announced plans to distribute 10 million free KN95 masks while the omicron COVID-19 variant continues to rage across the state. The free masks will be distributed by community groups — including local MDHHS offices, health departments and Area Agency on Aging offices. Visit michigan.gov/maskupmichigan to find a nearby mask pick-up location.

Frat party linked to bacterial exposure

Ingham County Health Department officials cautioned anyone who attended a Sigma Beta Rho party on Jan. 22 at Club Rush, in the basement of Harper's Restaurant and Brewpub, to receive a precautionary antibiotic treatment following a potential exposure to meningococcal meningitis, a rare but serious bacterial disease that causes swelling of the membranes surrounding the spinal cord and brain. So far, only one University of Michigan student who attended the event has tested positive for the disease. Still, even close contacts of attendees are urged to seek treatment. Call the Health Department at 517-887-4308 for more information.

Lansing loses tireless public servant

Joan Jackson Johnson, affectionately known by her nickname "Triple J," died at 73 following a lifetime of selfless service to some of Greater Lansing's most at-risk residents. Jackson Johnson served through two mayoral administrations as the director of the city's Human Relations and Community Services Department and was a relentless volunteer in combating homelessness. She retired in 2019 after she was put on leave over an investigation that later found she had conflicting interests tied to the distribution of federal grant funding. No crim-



Jackson

By KYLE KAMINSKI

inal charges were filed, though the city was forced to return nearly \$250,000 in grants to the federal government.

Bus shortage irks students at MSU

More than 1,900 people have signed a petition calling for the Capital Area Transportation Authority to restore the usual frequency of bus services at Michigan State University following a recent cut-back in several on-campus weekday routes. Buses that used to arrive every five or 10 minutes are now reportedly running on 30-minute intervals due to staffing shortages — an issue that CATA officials said won't be resolved until more bus drivers are hired to fill the gaps.

Cops nab alleged mailbox smasher

Police arrested a driver they believed to be responsible for damaging about 50 mailboxes on Monday night at Plymouth Landing in Williamston, reports the Lansing State Journal. The driver was reportedly arrested on suspicion of driving while intoxicated and other charges. No additional information about the suspect was released. Anyone who had their mailbox damaged can call in their repair cost estimate for possible court-ordered reimbursement at (517) 655-4222.

Parents sentenced in starvation case

Teaya and Kaam Stricklin, of Lansing, were sentenced to at least two years (but no more than 15 years) in prison after they were convicted of involuntary manslaughter in the death of their neglected 2-month-old son, reports the Lansing State Journal. A medical examiner reportedly called the emaciated infant's death a "textbook example" of lethal starvation and dehydration.

East Lansing kills off 79 deer

The latest round of deer culling efforts at several East Lansing parks has ended for the winter with a total of 79 deer being killed by trained sharpshooters and 2,400 pounds of venison donated to the Greater Lansing Food Bank. Parks are back open for usually scheduled hours.

Enrollment climbs at Catholic schools

Lansing area Catholic schools recorded one of their largest annual enrollment increases to date with an overall 6% increase in students this year. The biggest increase was among preschool through third grade students, a 21% rise between the Diocese of Lansing's 35 Catholic schools. Overall, 23 out of 27 elementary schools have seen increased enrollment this year — including a 31% boost at St. Martha in Okemos and a 29% enrollment increase at St. Paul in Owosso.

Lansing cops push online alerts

The Lansing Police Department has joined Atlas 1, a location-based civic engagement network that sends out cell phone alerts about city events, reported crimes and other announcements. Residents can join the network by downloading Atlas 1 on their iOS or Android phone. Notifications will be sent based on users' location to alert them when a nearby public safety issue occurs or when issues arise at places they care about — like a school, office or home. Online users will also be able to send anonymous tips and feedback to the Police Department.



2131 Pleasant View Ave., Lansing

This week's Eyesore arrives from an indirect recommendation from Lansing Mayor Andy Schor, whose administration wants to see the place quickly repaired or simply bulldozed to the ground. An order requesting exactly that was sent to the City Council late last month and referred to its Committee on Planning and Economic Development, which could soon require the owner to make repairs on the home in 30 days or otherwise demolish the vacant home once and for all.

City officials estimate the needed repairs on the house would tally about \$126,000 — more than three times the state equalized value of the building, according to city records.

Photographs in city records show that the interior electrical and plumbing work is a mess too. It's clear that a licensed electrician wasn't hired to handle the job — which is sort of ironic, because the property owner, Scott Rathbun, appears to be an electrical technician for the city of Ann Arbor. Calls to Rathbun were not returned this week. Perhaps he just abandoned the place.

In October, the city's Demolition Board ordered it to be made safe or demolished in late December.

A series of public hearings over the next several weeks will give Rathbun another opportunity to explain to the city exactly why the building shouldn't be repaired or otherwise demolished.

Note: Scott Rathbun is not related to the Rathbun family that owns the local Rathbun Insurance Agency.

— KYLE KAMINSKI

"Eyesore of the Week" is our look at some of the seedier properties in Lansing. It rotates with Eye Candy of the Week and Eye for Design. Have a suggestion? Email eye@lansingcitypulse.com or call it in at 517-999-6715.

When you wish upon a star

The decades-long quest to build a performing arts center in downtown Lansing took an enticing step forward Tuesday with Mayor Andy Schor's reveal of a thrilling but remarkably pragmatic blueprint for finally making the dream come true. The fruit of an intermittent effort to create a new downtown entertainment venue that dates back to the days of former Lansing Mayor David Hollister, the proposed venue will be called "The Ovation." Schor's plan is well deserving of one.

Of course, the announcement is music to the ears of the Greater Lansing arts community and to people of all stripes who are positively giddy at the prospect of seeing their favorite band in concert right here in Lansing, rather than having to drive to Grand Rapids or Detroit. The Ovation will put the Lansing region back on the map for a much broader slice of the national entertainment market while providing a welcoming venue for all manner of creative endeavors, from community theater to film festivals and art exhibitions.

The proposed location for the \$12 million to \$21 million facility, at the corner of Washington Avenue and Lenawee Street, gets at least four stars out of five for being right next door to the former Lake Trust Credit Union headquarters, which at this moment is fully engulfed in a top-to-bottom, \$33 million makeover that will create 55 new apartments with 18,000 square feet of ground floor retail

space, some of which is already leased to a fitness center. Immediately to the south, on the same block along Hillsdale Street, the developers are building 117 more apartments.

Add to the mix 145 units at the recently completed Metro Place apartments, just to the north on the old YMCA site, and you can begin to envision the residential density that the projects will create, and the raw energy that hundreds of new residents will bring to the downtown's southern tier. It has long been understood that residential density is the synergistic key that unlocks other development doors — retail and service businesses locate where the people are, not the other way around. Adding The Ovation to this symphony of economic development makes it a masterwork indeed. And, the concept of integrating 40 units of affordable living space for artists alongside the city's Public Media Center and a performance venue capable of hosting 2,000 people is another stroke of genius.

Schor's announcement couldn't come at a better time. After absorbing near-fatal blows during the COVID-19 pandemic, downtown Lansing desperately needs a new vision to build and sustain its future in the absence of 1,000 Cooley Law

students and without tens of thousands of state employees. The Ovation is a centerpiece of that emerging vision. It's still a long way from here to a groundbreaking ceremony — like figuring out where to get another \$10 million or so to achieve the

most ambitious version of the plan — but we're optimistic that city leaders and

the project's stakeholders will pound the doors of corporations and philanthropists across the region, asking them to step up and help write the next chapter in the history of downtown Lansing.

The proposed project isn't as grandiose as some have envisioned through the years, but it's unrealistic to expect that Lansing could raise enough capital to finance a \$60 million or \$70 million facility. And it's never been the intent to replicate the Wharton Center at MSU. Instead, The Ovation aims to fill a gap in the region's entertainment infrastructure by creating a venue capable of hosting a multitude of events that aren't compatible with the scale and relatively mainstream programming focus of the Wharton Center.

If we had one wish to grant Schor and his team, it would be an amicable agreement with the owner of the downtown liquor store to move his business

elsewhere. Located directly across the street from The Ovation's front doors, we worry that the booze outlet will foster the perception that the area is unsafe and discourage newcomers from attending events and exploring downtown Lansing. We're not a big fan of eminent domain, where the city takes the property by legal force and provides fair market compensation to the owner. We'd rather see a negotiated settlement, perhaps including a land swap for a new store location, that satisfies the needs of both parties.

In any case, we're delighted to acknowledge those who played a part in this orchestra of accomplishment, from David Hollister, who believed all those years ago that a performing arts center was central to his vision of making Lansing a world-class city; to former Mayor Virg Bernero, who secured a critical long-term funding stream that will be a major component of the project financing; to Mayor Schor, his Arts & Culture Commission and the Arts Council of Greater Lansing; and especially Dominic Cochran, the director and creative force behind Lansing's Public Media Center and the Capital City Film Festival, who, perhaps more than anyone else, held a vision and pushed methodically and relentlessly for more than a decade to keep the dream alive. To all those who shared and supported that dream along the way: Bravo!

The CP Edit

Opinion



Have something to say about a local issue or an item that appeared in our pages? Now you have two ways to sound off:

1.) Write a letter to the editor.

• E-mail: letters@lansingcitypulse.com • Snail mail: City Pulse, 1905 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing, MI 48912 • Fax: (517) 371-5800 • At lansingcitypulse.com

2.) Write a guest column. Contact Berl Schwartz for more information: publisher@lansingcitypulse.com or (517) 999-5061. (Please include your name, address and telephone number so we can reach you. Keep letters to 250 words or fewer. City Pulse reserves the right to edit letters and columns.)

‘My priorities: Education, voting rights, environment,’ says House candidate

By **LOGAN BYRNE**

(The writer is a candidate for the Democratic nomination for the new 77th District seat in the state House of Representatives.)

If you watch the news, it might seem like everything revolves around some insider game of political chess being played in Washington. Don't be fooled! The real action happens in state

Opinion



Byrne

legislatures where laws are passed shaping education, health care access, transportation, the environment, and much more. Simply put, state level legislation has a powerful effect on our daily lives. This makes it critically important to elect legislators who understand complex

Why I'm running

City Pulse is running an occasional series of opinion pieces by candidates who have filed for the Legislature in mid-Michigan. Email publisher@lansingcitypulse.com if you wish to participate.

and challenging issues, believe in the democratic process, and are willing to put partisanship aside to promote the common good.

The Covid-19 pandemic vividly demonstrated what happens when elected representatives put partisanship ahead of good governance. I was dismayed by the way Michigan's Republican-led State House and Senate politicized a public health issue, delayed disbursement of desperately needed federal aid, and actively worked against the governor to the detriment of Michi-

gan residents. This is one of the reasons why I decided to run for Michigan's 77th House District, which includes parts of Ingham, Eaton, and Clinton counties.

I am an attorney, dedicated public servant, and alumnus of both Michigan State University College of Law and Eastern Michigan University. I have dedicated my professional career to public service, including working in the areas of victim advocacy and immigration law. Likewise, I have extensive experience working in local government and currently serve on the Clinton County Zoning Board of Appeals. Growing up on a small family farm and participating in 4-H, I developed a strong work ethic, an appreciation for community, and an intimate understanding of core American values. I believe that my professional experience and strong work ethic will enable me to be a productive legislator.

I plan to continue my dedication to public interest work by providing a strong, reasonable, and proactive voice in the legislature on issues important to Michiganders, such as:

Building a stronger economy: Our collective well-being, ability to provide for our families, and strength of our community depend on the success of the economy. As such, I support a comprehensive economic plan designed to revitalize and protect our domestic manufacturing and agricultural sectors, while supporting small businesses and private enterprise.

Education: Public education is the cornerstone of Michigan's social and economic structure, and it helps guide and reinforce our moral, ethical, and cultural values. Because of this, I support universal early childhood education programs. Evidence shows that

these programs lead to robust benefits for children, setting them up for success in their educational endeavors. Additionally, to succeed in the workforce, all students deserve access to a college education and/or vocational training program.

Protecting the environment: Michigan's residents understand the importance of environmental protection and conservation. The State's natural resources must be protected to safeguard the health of Michigan's residents and to prevent permanent damage to the environment. Likewise, I understand that to Michigan's farmers, land, air, and water are more than just vacation spots or scenic beauty. They are resources essential to their businesses and, as such, require our preservation.

Protecting voting rights: Voting is the bedrock of our democracy and should be cherished and protected. Through voting, we assert our beliefs and chart the State's political course. As such, I oppose legislation designed to infringe on this basic right and instead support measures designed to ensure that every vote counts and that all eligible voters are able to make their voices heard.

I firmly believe that Michigan would benefit from leaders who care less about themselves and more about those they are elected to represent. Empathy and humility are often-overlooked characteristics of outstanding public servants. At the end of the day, politicians should be elected for their public service experience and the strength and decency of their character. As a candidate for State Representative, I promise to embody these characteristics in office and approach every issue with an open mind and a clear goal: promoting the common good.

Learn more: www.electbyrne.com

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS EAST LANSING PLANNING COMMISSION

Notice is hereby given of the following public hearings to be held by the East Lansing City Council on **Wednesday, February 23, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.** at the **East Lansing Hannah Community Center**, 819 Abbot Road, East Lansing, MI, 48823.

1. Request from 310 LLC to rezone two parcels (total of 0.72 acre) located at 218 and 224 West Lake Lansing Road from B-4 (Restricted Office Business District) to B-5 (Community Retail Sales Business District).
2. Request for consideration of a site plan and special use permit from Josie Lewis to use the Class B multiple-family dwelling at 404 E. Michigan Avenue for a fraternity. The property is zoned M-54 (University Oriented Multiple-Family Residential District).
3. Request from FPAW Michigan, LLC for a special use permit to open an adult use marihuana retail establishment at 1415 E. Michigan Avenue. The 4.6 acre property is zoned B-2 (Retail Sales Business District).

The public may attend and participate at all meetings in person. Members of the public may participate electronically in all meetings. Please contact the Planning and Zoning Administrator or visit the City's public meeting portal for electronic meeting access information:

Peter Menser – Planning and Zoning Administrator
410 Abbot Road
East Lansing, MI 48823
517.319.6861 or pmenser@cityofeastlansing.com
<https://cityofeastlansing.civicweb.net/Portal/>

For more information on the request please contact Planning and Zoning Administrator Peter Menser at the contact info above. Materials related to the request are available for viewing at the Department of Planning, Building, and Development, East Lansing City Hall, 410 Abbot Road, East Lansing, MI, 48823 between the hours of 8:00 am and 5:00 pm or on the City's website located at www.cityofeastlansing.com/currentapplications. Written comments may be sent prior to the public hearing to the Planning Commission, City of East Lansing, 410 Abbot Road, East Lansing, Michigan, 48823, or by email to coelplanningcommission@cityofeastlansing.com.

The City of East Lansing will provide reasonable auxiliary aids and services, such as interpreters for the hearing impaired and audio tapes of printed materials being considered at the meeting, to individuals with disabilities upon request received by the City seven (7) calendar days prior to the meeting. Individuals with disabilities requiring aids or services must contact the City Manager's Office, 410 Abbot Road, East Lansing, MI, 48823, (517) 319-6920 (TDD Number: 1-800-649-3777) or via email at nmostel@cityofeastlansing.com.

This notice is posted in compliance with PA 267 of 1976 as amended (Open Meetings Act) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and published in compliance with the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, 2006 P.A. 110.

Dated: January 27, 2022
East Lansing, MI 48823

Jennifer Shuster
City Clerk

CP#22-024

NOTICE OF TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

TRI-COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION (TRI-COUNTY)

NOTICE is hereby given that the public comment period on the FY 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the Greater Lansing region is February 1-15, 2022. The TIP includes all federally funded projects for four years and will invest over \$425 million in our transportation infrastructure within the tri-county region. Projects that improve our roads, highways, bridges, safety, bicycle and pedestrian pathways, public transit services, and congestion throughout Clinton, Eaton, and Ingham counties are included.

Anyone may review the draft project list at mitcrpc.org/tip and fill out an online comment form, or opt to submit comments using the interactive project map at bit.ly/TIPStoryMap. There will also be two virtual public meetings at noon and 6:00 p.m. on February 10, 2022, for those interested in speaking with staff directly and learning more about the TIP and these proposed projects. RSVP for a public meeting at mitcrpc.org/events.

As the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Greater Lansing region since 1973, Tri-County channels all federal funding for transportation projects into local municipalities. This is your time to provide input on transportation projects that are planned in your community over the next several years. Learn more about the TIP, how it's developed, and how to get involved at mitcrpc.org/tip.

Tri-County is committed to open and accessible information. Contact clerk@mitcrpc.org to request interpretation services, accommodations for persons with disabilities, and assistance with additional needs.

CP#22-017

NOTICE OF DAY OF REVIEW OF APPORTIONMENTS

Ingham County Drain Commissioner
Patrick E. Lindemann

SMITH AND OESTERLE DRAIN

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that on **Tuesday, February 15, 2022**, the apportionments for benefits to the lands comprised within the "Smith and Oesterle Drain Special Assessment District" will be subject to review for one day from 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. at the Office of the Ingham County Drain Commissioner, located at 707 Buhl, Mason, Michigan 48854, or at such time and place to which I may adjourn. At the Day of Review, I will have the tentative apportionments against parcels and municipalities within the drainage district available to review. I will consider proofs and allegations and I will carefully reconsider and review the apportionment of benefits. I will define and equalize the apportionment as is just and equitable. At said review, the computation of costs for the construction, maintenance and improvement of the Drain will also be open for inspection by remote electronic access by any interested parties, as provided in this Notice.

Comments on the apportionment of benefits may be submitted to the Drain Commissioner in writing before the Day of Review at the Office of the Ingham County Drain Commissioner, 707 Buhl, Mason, Michigan 48854 or drainoffice@ingham.org, or comments may be submitted in writing or verbally at the Day of Review. Comments submitted in advance must be received by the Drain Commissioner prior to the Day of Review to ensure consideration.

Additional information, including a map of the Drainage District and the Notice of Letting (containing the number and length of sections; the average width of each section; whether or not the drain will be closed; the amount and specifications of all tile or pipe required; the location, number, type, and size of culverts or bridges to be installed, if any; and conditions upon which the contract will be awarded) can be found at:

<http://dr.ingham.org>

Pursuant to Section 155 of the Michigan Drain Code of 1956, any owner of land within the Smith and Oesterle Drain Special Assessment District or any city, village, township, district or county feeling aggrieved by the apportionment of benefits made by the Drain Commissioner may appeal the apportionment within ten (10) days after the day of review of apportionments by making an application to the Ingham County Probate Court for the appointment of a Board of Review.

Any drain assessments against land will be collected in the same manner as property taxes. If drain assessments against land are collected by installment, the landowner may pay the assessments in full with any interest to-date at any time and thereby avoid further interest charges.

The area served by the Smith and Oesterle Drain consists of lands situated in Sections 21, 28, and 29 of Leroy Township, T3N, R2E, in Ingham County, Michigan. The following is a description of the parcels of land constituting the "Smith and Oesterle Drain Special Assessment District":

33-08-08-21-300-001	33-08-08-28-100-008	33-08-08-28-200-027
33-08-08-21-300-002	33-08-08-28-100-009	33-08-08-28-300-003
33-08-08-21-300-005	33-08-08-28-100-010	33-08-08-28-300-007
33-08-08-21-300-006	33-08-08-28-100-011	33-08-08-28-300-008
33-08-08-21-400-006	33-08-08-28-100-012	33-08-08-29-200-002
33-08-08-21-400-007	33-08-08-28-200-001	33-08-08-29-200-004
33-08-08-21-400-008	33-08-08-28-200-002	33-08-08-29-200-005
33-08-08-21-400-018	33-08-08-28-200-003	33-08-08-29-400-006
33-08-08-21-400-020	33-08-08-28-200-017	33-08-08-29-400-009
33-08-08-21-400-022	33-08-08-28-200-018	33-08-08-29-400-010
33-08-08-28-100-001	33-08-08-28-200-019	33-08-08-29-400-011
33-08-08-28-100-004	33-08-08-28-200-022	
33-08-08-28-100-005	33-08-08-28-200-023	

In addition to the parcels and tracts of land listed above, the County of Ingham, Ingham County Road Department, and Leroy Township will be specially assessed at-large for benefits in the construction, maintenance and improvement of the Drain.

NOW THEREFORE, all unknown and non-resident persons, owners and persons interested in the above described lands, and you:

Clerk of Ingham County;
Chairperson of the Ingham County Board of Commissioners;
Managing Director of the Ingham County Road Department;
Supervisor and Clerk of Leroy Township;

are hereby notified that at the time and place aforesaid, or at such other time and place thereafter to which said Day of Review may be adjourned, the apportionment for benefits within the "Smith and Oesterle Drain Special Assessment District" will be subject to review.

AND YOU AND EACH OF YOU, owners, municipalities and persons interested in the aforesaid lands are hereby cited to appear at the time and place of such reviewing of the apportionments as aforesaid, and be heard with respect to such special assessments and your interests in relation thereto, if you so desire.

This notice is pursuant to Section 154 of the Michigan Drain Code of 1956, as amended.

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

Dated: January 25, 2022

Patrick E. Lindemann
Ingham County Drain Commissioner
707 Buhl, Mason, MI 48854
(517) 676-8395

CP#22-019

State Senate likely to be less Black under new maps

The 2020 U.S. Census reported 13.7% of Michigan is Black or African American.

Overlay that proportionally over the 38-member Michigan Senate and that's five members. That's exactly how many Black senators the chamber has today.

That number is projected to go down to three and possibly two in 2023, based on an MIRS and

Target Insyght analysis of the new state Senate maps drawn by the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission (MICRC) as part of the every-10-year map-redrawing process.

And although the city of Detroit makes up 16% of the state's population, Michigan's largest city of roughly 600,000 souls is projected to go from five members living within its borders to two. We have under three months till the filing deadline and about seven months until the August primary. Things can change.

Minds can change. A strong late-comer could emerge. But if you're serious about running for the state Senate and you haven't made that known, yet, you're probably not winning.

Here's where things stand. All 38 districts have either at least one incumbent living in each district or at least one current or past House member running. The field is about set and the number of top-tier black candidates in these districts is low.

Based on demographics, voting history and the different candidates involved, only Rep. Sarah Anthony of Lansing, Sylvia Santana of Detroit and Erika Geiss of Taylor are the frontrunners.

Two current Black senators seeking reelection were put in districts that make them the underdogs.

Sen. Bettie Jean Alexander, D-Detroit, raised less than \$1,000 in 2018, but won the Democratic primary in a one-on-one race in a seat that was 50.17% Black against a white suburbanite through a strong network of Black voters in Detroit. This year, her district this year is 29% Detroit, 39% Black.

She'll need well over the \$2,817 she has in the bank. Rep. Mary Cavanagh of Redford, who filed a campaign committee to run in Alexander's district, has six times that amount sitting in her state

House account. She has the potential to raise much more.

Likewise, Sen. Marshall Bullock ran a community-focused, lower-dollar campaign to win his Senate seat in 2018. The new lines have him paired with Sen. Mallory McMorrow, who defeated a Republican incumbent in one of the state's most expensive races four years.

The district is 36% Detroit, where Bullock is from. It's 64% Oakland County, where McMorrow is from. The district is 40% Black. The seat he won in 2018 was 50% Black and 58% in the city of Detroit.

The Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission put a premium on creating districts that give Republicans and Democrats an equal shot of taking majority. Despite the state being roughly split 50/50, Senate Republicans have enjoyed majority since 1983.

To do this, the commission carved up Detroit — the Democrats largest and most condensed voting base — eight different ways. Detroit doesn't make up any more than 48% of any of these eight districts. In 2012, it had four Senate districts made up of at least 50% Detroiters. Now, it has zero.

In 2012, five of the state's 38 Senate districts had a Black voting age population of more than 50. Now, it has zero. Only two districts have a Black plurality of voters.

"They're using the Black community for political purposes. They're drawing this to achieve more purple district or Democratic districts by splitting up the Black vote," said Ed Sarpolus of Target Insyght.

Sarpolus is an expert witness in a lawsuit against this map, so he's not a neutral party. He's also been involved in redistricting in Michigan for more than 30 years and doesn't like what he sees.

The ICRC's out-of-state consultants sold the commission on this idea of creating six Black "opportunity districts" that were at least 35% Black. Two more are about a 25% black. The make-it-and-they'll-come theory isn't materializing, though.

Outside of Anthony, no Black candidates are popping up in either Metro Detroit or anywhere else.

Sarpolus is saying this dynamic violates the U.S. Voting Rights Act and wants the maps overturned. It'll be up to a court to decide if he's right.



KYLE MELINN

POLITICS

Opinion

ARTS & CULTURE

ART • BOOKS • FILM • MUSIC

Insurance paid dividends for Crunchy's comedy night host

By CHLOE ALVERSON

Did you hear the one about the rabbi, the priest and the insurance agent?

For a year and a half, Trevor Tress, 24, worked as an insurance agent, while also establishing himself as a local comedian.

"I was doing a lot of communicating with people," Tress said. "When you communicate with people constantly, all day every day, you learn how to do it more efficiently. You achieve what you're looking to achieve in a shorter period of time."

Even though the two seem like vastly unrelated jobs, Tress says comedy and insurance weren't that different for him. Four years ago, Tress began attending an open mic show at Crunchy's in East Lansing to practice his comedy. He took over as cohost of the Monday night show last spring with two of his friends.

Tress, originally from Lake Orion, lives in East Lansing. He's an alumnus of Michigan State, with a bachelor's degree in social psychology. Tress credits his former roommates for pushing him to compete in a comedy competition through the university's activity board, Last Spartan Standing. Though the competition is no more, Tress says he placed second both times he participated.

"People are mini-experts on so many things now, but so few people really hone in on doing something," he said. "I've tried and failed to get into so many things. With standup, it can be so horrible and annoying, but it's the first thing that lit that fire in my stomach. I can't stop doing it."

Tress gets his inspiration from comedic actors from the 1980s, like Steve Martin and John Candy. When he was first getting into comedy, during his early high school years, Daniel Tosh of Comedy Central's "Tosh.0" was a heavy influence on him and his comedy style. Tress says he never liked the show, but he enjoyed Tosh's comedy routines at the time.

"Everybody has different philosophies and styles," Tress said. "Personally, I'm really interested in how joke writing works. There is an art to joke writing. It's a cool way to

talk about stuff that you think is crazy. Then, you have the chore of convincing people it's crazy and worth laughing at."

Johnny Mocny, a comedian friend of Tress, met him at The Weekly Crunch in 2018. The pair ran into each other at comedy shows often, and quickly became close friends. They traveled around the state, checking out the comedy scene. Now, they host The Weekly Crunch with their friend, Nick Earl.

"Trevor has a style of comedy that's really self-aware and honest," Mocny said. "There's this paradox in how he spends so much time expounding on his insecurities in a way that's so confident and in control of the tone, that you never lose sight of the fact that you're following a yarn he's carefully spinning."

Like any comedian, Tress says it's difficult to be consistently creative. Writer's block can be caused by distractions and life, in general. Tress doesn't force himself to write jokes if they aren't coming to him. Rather than force "lazy garbage" jokes, Tress aims to make the moment more engaging and enthusiastic for his audience.

"He knows the science of comedy better than most people I know," said Mocny. "He's always had a great stage presence that reeks of having studied the pros, but he's developed in the last few years into a style that's quite distinctive."

Tress gravitates towards improving his overall stage presence when the jokes don't come to him. He notes that, as time goes on, pushing past writer's block is becoming a smoother process for him to get through.

He's performed on various stages around the state, like Mark Ridley's Comedy Castle in Royal Oak. Tress believes that comedy clubs are the best places to watch stand up. In December, Tress got the opportunity to "feature" for a weekend, which means he went on before the headliner at a comedy show.

Once a month, Tress and his roommates, who are also comedians, perform a standup comedy show in their house. It's called the Salsa Parlor.



Zachary Burcar

Trevor Tress is a comedian that leads a double life as an insurance agent.

Other local comedians are involved, as it's a good place to test out new material in front of a small audience. The crowd sits on old couches and lawn chairs in typical fashion of a house in a college town.

Going on the fly

"It's very nice to have a space where you can get rowdy," said Alaina Bamfield, a fellow comedian and friend of Tress. "There's rules, but no real rules. You can let loose, have a good time and not worry about anything. You just do comedy."

Bamfield and Tress cohosted the open mic at Ellison Brewery in East Lansing before the brewery went under construction, which is where they met. Bamfield has performed at the Salsa Parlor a handful of times. She says it's where many comedians in the Lansing area try to get in for a chance to practice their standup routines. Both Tress and Bamfield

performed there last weekend. She describes Tress as a "competent comedian" who is good at "going on the fly" with new material onstage.

"Trevor's become pretty successful and almost universally liked amongst everyone in the scene," Mocny said. "He also speaks highly of people that he finds funny, and he's been a huge part of keeping the Lansing comedy scene thriving."

The loyal groups of people in the area who check out the local comedians are what help the scene alive. His peers admire his work, as do the crowds. Tress is grateful for the experiences he's had so far, and is looking forward to what the future holds for him and his comedy career.

"I've gotten to meet all these people, travel to all these cool places," Tress said. "It's so cliché, I almost want to vomit saying it, but the experiences along the way are cool."

Two friends and their adventure in the used book industry

By SKYLER ASHLEY

A good book is often described as a ticket to another world or a personal passport to an otherworldly journey. For most of us, the quest concludes when the book is put down. But for Casey Holland and Eleanor Richards, who collect, catalog and sell countless used books as co-owners of Wayfaring Booksellers in REO Town, the adventure never ends.

Holland and Richards cut their teeth as booksellers working at Curious Book Shop and Archives, two groovy used bookstores in East Lansing that local bookworms consider a home away from home. Keeping track of

Wayfaring Booksellers

Tuesday-Thursday, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Friday-Saturday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.
REO Town Marketplace
1027 S. Washington Ave., Lansing
Facebook.com/WayfaringBooksellers

all the books that go in and out of a busy used bookstore can be dizzying, but Holland and Richards became so familiar with the process that starting up a shop of their own didn't seem like too fright-



Holland

ening of an ordeal. "Eleanor and I go talking about our dreams of one day owning a bookstore. 'One day, we can make this happen' We had this realization of, 'Why don't we do this now?' We started putting in the work, researching what licenses we needed and a few months later, we got it rolling," Holland said.

Holland said she grew up with a fascination for books and reading, but Curious and Archives, where she and Richards still work when not busy with Wayfaring Booksellers, was her introduction to the world of dealing used books. Her experience working there gave her the know-how to get her own store off the ground.

"I grew up in a really small town, which didn't have a store like Curious. I moved to East Lansing for school in 2013, found Curious and immediately

fell in love," Holland said.

Richards is also a lifelong reader, but truly developed her fascination for used and vintage books during the onset of the coronavirus pandemic in 2020. Without much else to do in quarantine, a good book made a fine companion.

"Coming from a professional background in theater, I found solace in books again during the onset of the pandemic, as the entertainment industry shut down," Richards said.

In order to make Wayfaring Booksellers a reality, Holland and Richards had to take on a ton of research. That meant sorting out the proper licenses they would need to sell new books from big publishers like Ingram, figuring out the best places to find treasure troves of rare used books and filing all of the necessary paperwork to make Wayfaring Booksellers an official business.

Holland said the goal for Wayfaring Booksellers is to offer literature written by authors from marginalized communities. And with a constantly

expanding selection as Holland and Richards get their hands on more books, genres like mystery and science fiction and other obscure selections will also have a growing presence on the shelves at Wayfaring Booksellers.

"We're working on building our queer literature and author section. We want people to find a lot of different voices in our store," Holland said.



Opening Wayfaring Booksellers has been a surreal experience," Richards said. "Our little bookshop grew suddenly from a small experiment between friends into a local business with support from our community."

Richards

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The trumpet blows for real



Downtown arts venue breaks through to daylight

By LAWRENCE COSENTINO

A simple formula helped one of Lansing's most elusive dreams chisel its way out of the icepack into the sunshine this week. Keep your eye on the sweet spot.

After 20 years of failed attempts under four mayors to build a performing arts center, and the collapse in May 2020 of plans to build a large-scale, \$60 million facility, Mayor Andy Schor announced plans Tuesday to build a downsized concert venue and arts hub aimed directly at Lansing's empty market niche of 1,530 seats, or 2,025 standing concertgoers.

The facility, called The Ovation, is expected to hit the Goldilocks mark between the 2,000-seat Wharton Center and much smaller venues and draw national rock, country, hip-hop, comedy and other attractions that now skip Lansing to play in Detroit or Grand Rapids.

The building will also be the permanent home of the Lansing Public Media Center,

and, possibly, All of the Above Hip-Hop Academy, the Capital City Film Festival and the Lansing Art Gallery. Planners envision a year-round calendar of concerts, classes, recitals, art exhibits, workshops, independent film screenings and other events.

The wild card in the project is a layer of 40 affordable "live-and-work spaces" designed to attract working artists, keep the facility busy and provide a steady source of revenue.

Schor called the facility "an incredibly exciting opportunity to bring concerts, community events, educational opportunities, speeches, comedy, and so many other live performances together in a new, state-of-the-art venue."

A consultant hired by the city predicted that the facility would bring in 190,000 visitors a year, 60,000 of them from out of town, and that arts center visitors would drop \$5.3 million a year in Lansing.

"This amazing venue will truly be trans-

formational for Lansing," Schor said.

Lansing has blown this trumpet before, followed by a cricket-filled hush from private donors, but this time, the city has most of the financial cards already in hand.

The Ovation is expected to cost from \$10 million to \$20 million, depending largely on whether the 40 apartments are included in the final design. In September, it was announced that the Lansing area would receive \$2 million in state funding to go toward the performing arts center as part of the coming year's state budget. An additional \$8 million in upfront revenue is expected from the bonding of public, educational and government access or PEG, fees, giving the city \$10 million to get the project underway. A financial consultant has identified \$3 million to \$5 million in potential private donors.

Dominic Cochran, director of the Lansing Public Media Center, co-director of



Courtesy

The surface parking lot at Washington Avenue (foreground) and Lenawee Street will be the home of The Ovation Performing Arts Center, as shown in a PowerPoint presentation last week to 20 or so “stakeholders” in the project. The building at left, which once housed the old Lansing Credit Exchange, is an important piece of the puzzle: It will house the Lansing Public Media Center and likely also the Lansing Art Gallery and the All of the Above Hip-Hop Academy, said Dominic Cochran, director of the media center.

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the Capital City Film Festival and a key player in the project, said the “goal is not to have an operating subsidy at all.”

The proposed venue would fill a hole in the heart of the city’s downtown, a vacant lot at the corner of South Washington Avenue and West Lenawee Street. Lansing-based Wieland Construction, the contractor for the proposed facility, has already staged its equipment across Capitol Avenue, where construction of a new apartment block is underway.

“We think we’ve gotten to a place where we’re ready to go,” Schor said.

“We expect to receive valuable input from the public during the City Council process as we move toward a groundbreaking later in 2022,” Cochran said.

From hubcap to hub

In the 1990s, the now-defunct BoarsHead Theatre, the Lansing Art Gallery and other arts groups turned a stuffy, former downtown auto dealership into Lansing’s first Center for the Arts. It was a point of pride and an embarrassment at the same time, a soufflé in a hubcap that said more about the pluck of local artists than community pride.

The push for a lasting performing arts center in Lansing goes back to the administration and “world class city” dreams of David Hollister, who left office in 2003.

Downtown’s last mid-sized concert venue, the Civic Center, had

been demolished four years previously, in 1999.

“We were really close to getting one,” Hollister said in a May 2021 interview with City Pulse. The facility would have been built where the Stadium District apartments now stand. “We hired a consultant who persuaded Gov. John Engler, who was not exactly my friend, to put \$500,000 in the budget to do some preliminary work,” Hollister said. “The wheels came off the buggy in the Great Recession.”

By the late 2010s, the recession was fading and big downtown dreams again seemed within reach. New housing blocks like the Stadium District, the Outfield and the Arbaugh Apartments were established, key landmarks like the Ottawa Power Station and the Knapp’s Building were renovated and several new housing developments, the Capital City Market and Courtyard Marriott hotel were on the way.

Around the country, new concert halls were changing the cityscape in places like Richmond, Louisville and Seattle, but it would take some painful adjustments to scale such a project to Lansing’s limited market and donor base.

In the pre-pandemic year of 2019, Schor’s arts and culture committee held a series of talks with national theater consultant AMS.

The acoustic and structural requirements of the prospective anchor tenant, the Lansing Symphony Orchestra, drove the costs into the discomfort zone. The consultants pegged the cost of the facility at \$45 million to \$60 million, possibly more, and projected that it would

operate at a yearly shortfall of \$640,000.

That balloon popped when Capitol Fundraising Associates released a study in May 2020 finding that a \$60 million facility was not feasible, owing to a lack of big donors in the Lansing area and “donor fatigue” among the rest.

Lansing Symphony Orchestra executive director Courtney Millbrook saw the writing on the wall.

“Without a doubt, it’s bittersweet,” Millbrook said. “I’m disappointed, but it’s going to be fantastic to see this size venue come downtown. It’s time. You’ll see how much the arts can change a place and drive the economy.”

At a stakeholder’s meeting Thursday, outgoing Wharton Center director Michael Brand said it would cost \$130 million today to duplicate the orchestra’s current home, the Wharton Center, which cost \$20 million in 1984.

“We’re super fortunate to have the Wharton Center,” Millbrook said. “It’s an amazing venue with great acoustics and would have been hard to replicate. It’s not as if we don’t have anyplace else to be.”

‘Fertile market’

After hanging on for dear life in the first year of the pandemic, arts leaders regrouped in 2021 to breathe on the embers. The feasibility study left the arts community a slim reed to hang on to: a project in the \$10 million range might be financially viable.

With the orchestral elephant out of the room, Cochran, the Lansing Art Gallery’s Barb Whitney, Ozay Moore of All-of-the-Above Hip-Hop Academy and other communi-

ty arts leaders focused on what was possible.

AMS consultant Michelle Walter told the arts commission that market surveys found “overwhelming” support (about 80 percent) for a new performing arts venue among Lansing area respondents and a strong response (about two thirds) saying current performance and entertainment options are lacking.

Walter also said several music promoters were “quite bullish” about Lansing’s market potential as a mid-sized concert venue for country music, alternative rock, cover bands and other touring acts like The Black Crowes, Ben Folds, DMX, Elvis Costello and others.

“They think it’s a really fertile market,” Walter said.

The Wharton Center’s Brand called the proposed music venue the “missing link here in town.”

“If I were you, I’d do the whole project,” he said at Thursday’s stakeholder meeting. “It’s in a nice spot and it looks like there’s plenty of parking.”

A parking study by Dymaxion Development — a local company that was announced Tuesday as the project developer — found a maximum capacity of 2,621 parking spaces within a five- to 10-minute walk of the proposed arts center, 371 of them on the streets.

The Ovation would be a few blocks away from the newest small music venue in Lansing, the planned \$900,000 redevelopment of the old gay bar then hookah lounge at 224 S. Washington Square into a music venue with a 700-to-800-person capacity.



... After

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Cochran said the city has already talked with that project's developers, Kevin Meyer and Scott Bell.

"We expect these venues to be complementary," Cochran said.

With the centerpiece of the proposed facility downscaled to a flat-floor concert venue, the financial picture brightened.

The chance for the city to capture \$8 million in PEG fees held the key. PEG fees are part of the franchise fees cable companies pay the city in exchange for running their cables in the public right-of-ways. By state law, 2 percent of the gross revenues of those companies in the city of Lansing must be used for capital investments.

"That's dedicated arts funding, which we all know is extremely rare and precious," Cochran said.

Former Lansing Mayor Virg Bernero was not known for his enthusiasm for the arts, but he successfully lobbied the state Legislature in 2006 to enable the city to capture the PEG money that not only built and equipped a top-drawer public media center, but has now put a performing arts center within the city's reach. As a former state senator and state representative, Bernero had the privilege of lobbying on the floor of the Legislature and exerted that privilege so vehemently as he fought for the PEG money that the Legislature later adopted a rule barring such lobbying, informally known as the "Bernero rule."

In September 2021, another \$2 million went into the performing arts center kitty as part of the state's \$50 billion budget, owing largely to the advocacy of state Sen. Curtis Hertel, D-East Lansing, and Rep. Sarah Anthony, D-Lansing.

"The city of Lansing doesn't have a performing arts center. We used to. This is a down payment on getting it done," Hertel said. "I was proud to stake out \$2 million, and I was proud to be part of that process."

The art of numbers

As the scaled-down plan for a performing arts venue began to coalesce, Cochran couldn't shake the consultants' exhortation to "build it, but be bold."

All the proposed variants of The Ovation have a 2,025-person (standing capacity) performing arts space, a smaller stage with a capacity of 275, offices and multi-purpose rooms, seven retail storefronts along South Washington Avenue, a second-floor balcony with a capacity of 250 seated or 400 standing, and a private party room with 125 standing capacity overlooking the main stage.

The "bold" part fell into place when Cochran recalled that the mayor's arts commission noted a lack of "live-work space" geared toward artists.

At Tuesday's stakeholder meeting, Jeff Deehan of Dymaxion Development said that such live-work spaces are a "huge hole" in the market.

"It was a light bulb moment — let's connect the two," Cochran said. He thought such an idea

might be hard to sell to the community.

"Then we realized that's exactly what they're doing two miles down the road, at the Allen Neighborhood Center," he said. "As always, Joan is ahead of the curve," referring to the center's longtime director, Joan Nelson.

Nelson met with members of the arts commission and touted the benefits of including housing units in their new facility on Kalamazoo Street to keep the space active and bring in revenue.

"The apartments are the thing that people will look back on in 20 years and be glad we did it," Cochran said.

They are also the most significant variable among the three variants Schor and city officials presented at Thursday's stakeholder meeting. A "full build," with 40 finished studio apartments, is estimated to cost \$20 million to \$21 million. A mid-range build, priced at \$15 million to \$16 million, would only include apartment shells. Both builds would have four floors. The third option, a two-floor building with no apartments, is priced at \$12 million to \$13 million. The lofts range in size from 312 square feet to 750 square feet, with a proposed monthly rental fee of \$800.

If the city goes for one of the more expensive options, it has recourse to other sources of revenue. The 2020 report by Capital Fundraising Associates found \$3 million to \$5 million in potential community investment in a performing arts center. Cochran pointed out that with apartments in the mix, developers could get a bank loan.

Bob Trezise, president and CEO of the Lansing Area Economic Partnership, or LEAP, urged the city to build the performing arts center as a public-private partnership to take advantage of brownfield tax credits.

Schor said he was open to a brownfield plan.

"We'd love to have state involvement," he said.

Nate Scramlin of the Michigan Economic Development Corp. said the arts center might be eligible for a grant of up to \$5 million through the Revitalization and Placemaking Program, a COVID relief program that distributing \$100 million in American Rescue Plan dollars.

"I think it's a terrific project and we gladly await your application," Scramlin told the group at Thursday's meeting.

Natural fit

A lot of people have fond memories of their rough and ready dorm years, but there's nothing like moving into a house.

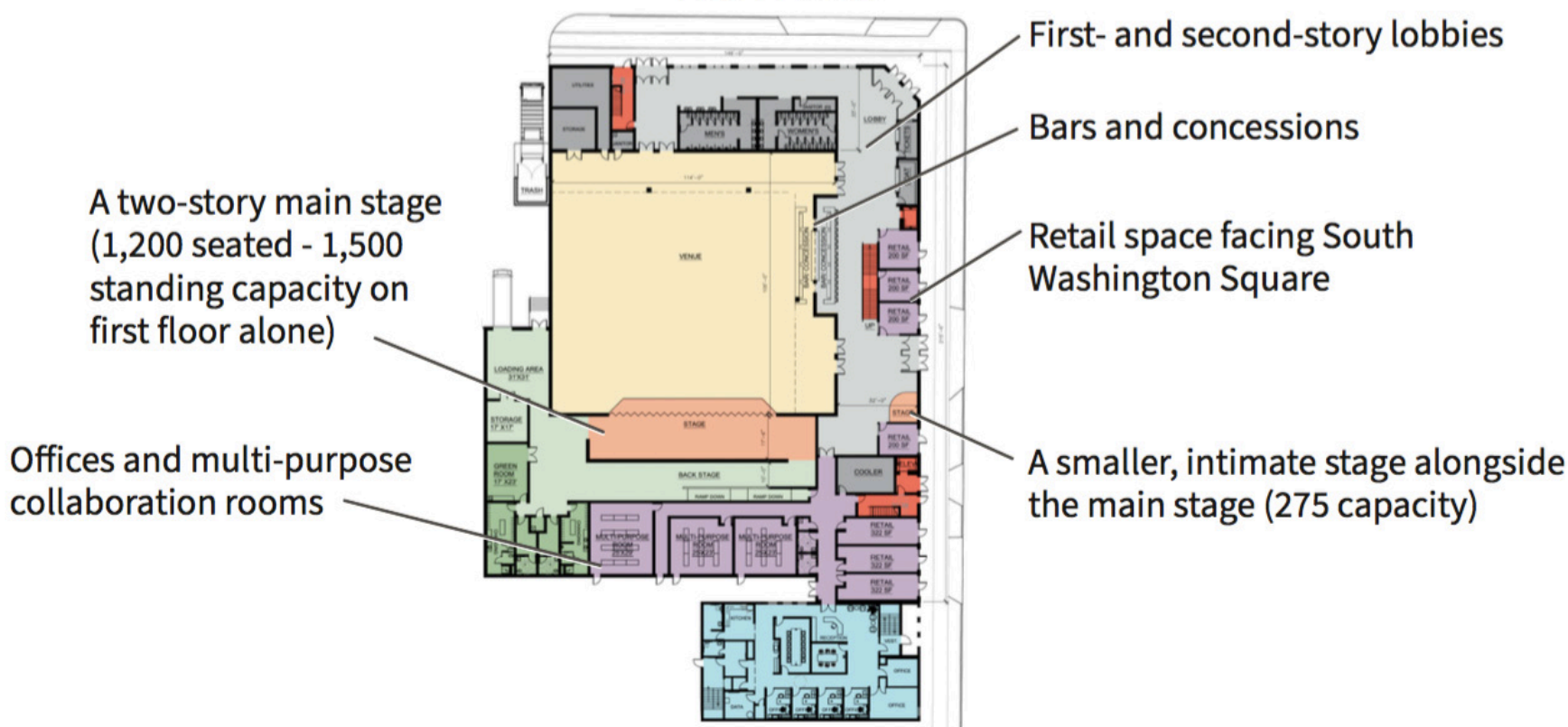
Moore, of All of the Above Hip-Hop Academy, said "Lansing is full of best kept secrets," his own organization included.

"This building is a going to be a beacon to the community," Moore said. "If you're looking for anything in the arts, music, youth development, you know where to go, and that's sweet."

Moore said the academy is "on a trajectory to grow," but many young people who would benefit from its programs don't know about it.

"What the YMCA is to recreational sports — we want to be that for hip-hop culture and urban art,"

FIRST FLOOR



A two-story main stage (1,200 seated - 1,500 standing capacity on first floor alone)

First- and second-story lobbies

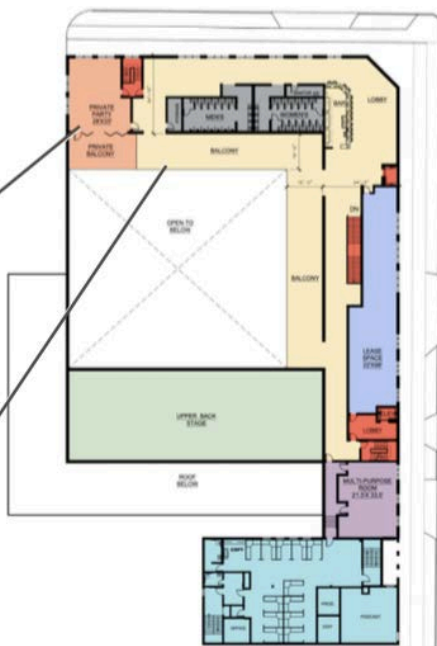
Bars and concessions

Retail space facing South Washington Square

A smaller, intimate stage alongside the main stage (275 capacity)

Offices and multi-purpose collaboration rooms

SECOND FLOOR



A private party room with a balcony overlooking the main stage (80 seated - 125 standing capacity)

A second-story balcony overlooking main stage (250 seated - 400 standing capacity)

THIRD & FOURTH FLOOR



Two community rooms

Forty artist lofts (live-work spaces) on the third and fourth floors

Courtesy

Early plans for The Ovation include a main concert hall with a balcony, an intimate smaller stage, offices for local arts nonprofits, retail space, community rooms and 40 “live and work” lofts for working artists.

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he said. “Being in a space like this, we’ll be visible to the community, a thread all the way through, from the big stage to the classrooms.”

Cochran said the Capital City Film Festival could settle into the new venue, while continuing to infiltrate other spaces around town, and even establish regular indie film screenings on nights when there is no concert. The Lansing area hasn’t seen a year-round venue for indie and foreign films since The Odeon Theatre closed in 1992.

Barb Whitney, director of the Lansing Art Gallery and Education Center, said the organization has been looking for a “forever home” for eight years.

At Tuesday’s stakeholder meeting, Cochran floated a range of ownership models for the new facility, including creative forms of shared community ownership.

Whitney said the gallery has long been interested in facility where they would have a “vested interest.” “Our board is very excited about the prospect of what a deeper relationship with the Lansing Public Media Center would look like, and that could include a shared ownership model,” Whitney said

Moore called it “a prestigious opportunity we’d love to be a part of.”

“Hip-hop culture is a good go-between,” Moore said. “There are aspects of visual art, media, music, dance. The nature of what we’re trying to do with young people, with technology, with music, and them being involved in film — it’s a natural fit.”

Cochran noted that the media

center, the Lansing Art Gallery and All of the Above have similar missions but “don’t overlap much.”

“Sometimes cities build facilities like this, and it can feel like it’s up on a hill,” Cochran said. “With these three compatible, community-driven organizations already there, people will feel comfortable in the building. It won’t feel like this unattainable, gated thing.”

That pleases Rep. Anthony, who helped secure the \$2 million in state funding for the Lansing arts center. At Thursday’s stakeholder meeting, Anthony urged a community investment model for the new facility, invoking the mantra of community organizers: “It’s nothing about us without us.”

“I would hate it if folks aren’t seeing the talent reflected on that stage should be like us — not just rock ‘n’ roll, country or hip-hop, but all the other pieces that folks want to see

and enjoy — Lansing folks enjoying a Lansing entity,” she said.

If the mix is right, The Ovation has the potential to hit more than one “sweet spot.”

“Ozay Moore and champions like him are in perfect alignment with our mission to make the arts more accessible in Lansing,” Whitney said. “They dedicate their lives to making the arts accessible and helping people feel they have a place in that work.”

Moore said the new venue could be a “beacon to the community.”

“I think it’s brilliant to get together and fire up the people of Lansing and say, ‘You didn’t know it’s here, but it’s here, come and take advantage,’” he said. “That notion, and that amount of resources, could truly change the dynamic of our city and the people and who live in it. It’s a real testament to how great it is to be here right now.”

Favorite Things Jay Kirby and his camera



Jay Kirby loves to take photographs of nature and his friends and family. He always has his trusty Nikon D3400 by his side, so it's only natural that it has become his favorite thing.

I bought this particular model, my Nikon D3400, from The Camera Shop three years ago. I started photography back in 2002, with disposable cameras. Back then, I'd take those cameras to Meijer's photo lab, they'd develop it and throw the rest away. I took a photography class at LCC back in 2004, which I believe was the last year that they were doing film before they switched everything over to digital. Since then, I've taken pictures of friends, family, nature — I carry it around with me everywhere I go. My camera bag doesn't leave my side.

I've always loved photography. I've always wanted to take beautiful pictures. When I got into it, I found that I could take pictures for people. I still have pictures I've taken on the walls of family and friends' houses. That brings me immense joy.

I was at the corner of Dunckel and Collins just last week. I took a photo there on the 22nd of this month. I was delivering for GrubHub that morning; I was delivering breakfast at 7:30 in the morning. I saw

the sunrise in the distance — I'm always up early in the morning — and sometimes you're in the perfect dawn, but you're not in a good place to take a photo of it. But when I got to the hotel, I happened to be at the right place at the right time to get a gorgeous sunrise photograph. It was absolutely amazing. That's the way good photography is, sometimes it is just being at the right place at the right time.

I like taking graduation photos, or senior photos. Most of the time when I do those photos, I'm doing it for a friend or a family member that can't afford to hire a photographer. When I do them for somebody, the happiness it brings them makes me happy. It's always outdoors and I always pick a random spot every time I do photos like that, so I never know what's going to happen or how the photos will turn out.

This is a very versatile camera. It has beautiful colors. I like Nikons, I chose them over any other. It's nice to go into nature and take only photographs. Leave footprints, but take photos.

Interview edited and condensed by Skyler Ashley. If you have a suggestion for Favorite Things, please email skyler@lansingcitypulse.com

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Here's how to make the most of your next dispensary trip

By NARMIN JARROUS

(Narmin Jarrous is an avid cannabis advocate and the chief development officer of Exclusive Brands, the state's first licensed adult-use dispensary whose cannabis products have been repeatedly awarded for their potency and quality. Jarrous said she was diagnosed with endometriosis about a decade ago, and using different cannabis wellness products has significantly improved her quality of life and helped minimize complications from the disease.)

Decisions about procuring the right cannabis can be very personal, and if you've ever purchased edibles from a dispensary, you might be familiar with



in Review:
Exclusive Brands

that feeling of wondering what's inside these tasty treats that make them so great — or, in some cases, perhaps not so great.

What is it that makes an edible good or bad? What can we do to ensure we're not choosing the lemons from our dispensaries? To help you with the best questions to ask at the budtenders counter, I've identified the following tips on how to keep edibles fresher for longer, as well as what



Courtesy

One of Exclusive Brand's cannabis crops.

sorts of quality ingredients lead to the best products. And Exclusive Brands should know. Our Kushy Punch brand has now twice been named "Best Edible" by the Detroit Metro Times.

Ensure safety and cleanliness

At Exclusive Brands, we make many different types of edibles — from gummies and cereal treats to chocolates. To make a quality edible, facilities should ensure safety and cleanliness above all else. That's why we have very specific procedures and ensure our kitchen staff is Serv-Safe certified. Accurate dosage is one of the most important parts of making a good edible. Consumers have to be able to trust that there's the correct amount of cannabinoids in every bite they take. Mold is one of the most obvious signs of a bad edible. General deformities are also concerning because they typically point to problems or unreliable conditions in which the edible was subjected. Also: Watch out for excessive oiliness and high water activity.

Verify lab testing and align with your diet.

Always make sure the edibles you're purchasing are lab-tested. You also want to look out for ingredients that align with your diet. For example, Exclusive offers Sugar Free Kushy Punch to ensure people who are on low-sugar diets have options. We also use natural flavoring.

You also want to look into whether your edibles are made with distillate or full-spectrum oil. Distillate edibles typically have less of a cannabis-like taste than full-spectrum edibles. Full-spectrum edibles contain a wider range of cannabinoids, so they

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New Lansing salon and spa wants you to feel beautiful

By **CHLOE ALVERSON**

Still not feeling relieved after a massage? Still not feeling your best leaving the salon?

Maya Joy Murchison hopes to change that with her new salon and spa, Gifted Hands of Joy, in Delta township. The business is Murchison's first of her own, but she's been working in salons since 2019. After attending both cosmetology school and massage school, she decided to open up her own salon and spa.

"Personally, I am very passionate about healthy hair and skincare," Murchison said. "It's my goal that the



people who come to me look better and feel better about themselves."

Murchison, 38, prides herself in her work because of her friendly service, the relaxing environment and the quality of the products she uses. Her specialty is hair care to promote hair growth. For now, Murchison works alone, but hopes to eventually expand her business.

Her services range from a haircut and color, to a full-day spa experience.



Murchison

Murchison uses high-quality products for all of her services, with the guarantee that her professional and all-natural

products will "help you look and feel your best."

She also makes all-natural hair and skin care products, with her own line called Maya Joy's Essential Solutions. After research, Murchison experimented with making the products for herself. The products achieve "nothing but great results." She often has clients with problems like hair loss and dry skin, and she aims to ease these problems with her services.

Murchison offers therapeutic massage services through her business as well. She intends for people to feel better physically after a massage from her. Aside from physical relief, Murchison says that massages can reduce mental stress.

"I try to give them relief that lasts longer," she said. "It's always my goal that they feel at least 70% less pain than they felt when they came in."



Gifted Hands of Joy

4601 W. Saginaw Hwy., Ste 1-2, Lansing
Monday-Friday,
10 a.m. to 8 p.m.
Saturday, appointment only
giftedhandsofjoy.com

Lansterdam

from page 20

may provide increased physiological benefits. Edibles in Michigan are also required to have an expiration date. Keep in mind that most edibles don't have preservatives, so if it wouldn't last long as a regular product in your pantry, it may not last long as an edible. Gummies typically have the longest shelf life. Look for the same thing you look for in other foods — stale texture, discoloration and foul odors.

Don't be scared to try them!

Airtight containers are crucial like any baked good. Make sure to follow package instructions that may indicate if it needs to be refrigerated after opening. All edibles in licensed dispensaries are lab tested and should be dosed properly. We're thankfully no longer in the days where your only option for edibles was a mis-dosed gummy bear that your friend Carl made in his basement.

Give them time.

Edibles break down in your stomach and the THC (and other cannabinoids) are processed by your liver before going through your bloodstream. This leads to edibles taking longer to have the desired effect in your body. It also means that they typically stick around in your system longer. People may prefer to choose smoking marijuana over taking on cannabis-infused edibles due to the much quicker onset of physiological effects, and a generally shorter duration in their system.

These tips should help you find that perfect balance between food and cannabis products to share with any dispensary-going folks who are looking out for high-quality (and potent) edibles on the market! One last tip for City Pulse readers: Keep an eye on Greater Lansing retailers for the new Kushy Punch line — Kushy Individuals — which are set to launch later this month.

Lansterdam in Review is normally written by Kyle Kaminski, City Pulse managing editor and a cannabis enthusiast who has been smoking marijuana just about every day for the last decade. Most weeks, Kaminski samples some of the best cannabis products available in Greater Lansing, gets real high and writes about them. Contact him at kyle@lansingcitypulse.com.



Karrous



Courtesy

Exclusive Brands has a variety of cannabis products, including THC gummies.

Author Jim Harrison and a life told through poetry

By **BILL CASTANIER**

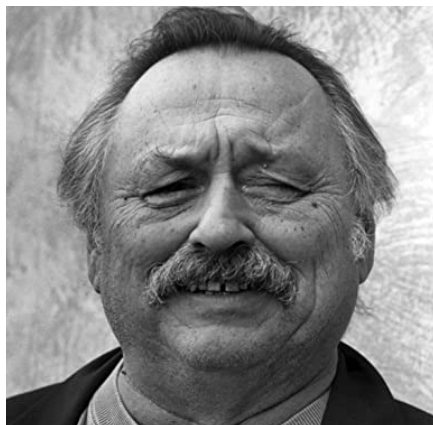
Jim Harrison once told me that I was reading poetry all wrong. He told me not to read a book of poetry in one setting, but rather to “read a poem a day,” and then think about it. At that rate, I should be able to work through his new gargantuan poetry book, “Jim Harrison: Complete Poems,” in about three years.

The new collection of Harrison’s monumental work as a poet weighs in at over three pounds, with 931 pages, not including notes and citations. The book consists of all his published poems, which he penned over a 50-year writing career. His collection called “Last Poems,” written between the publication of his last poem collection, “Dead Man’s Float,” and his death in 2016.

During his career, Harrison wrote more than 50 books, with 14 poetry books, 21 fictional books, a memoir, two non-fiction books of essays and a children’s book. Three of his works, “Revenge,” “Wolf” and “Legends of the Fall” were made into movies. He wrote scads of articles for the magazines and journals, including a wine newsletter and Esquire magazine. His poetry soared when writing about wine, food and the natural world.

Harrison grew up in Haslett, where he attended the public school before heading to Michigan State. There, he received two degrees. Harrison lived in Michigan most of his life before moving first to Montana with a summer place in Patagonia, Arizona. His poetry is filled with references to some of his favorite places, like Dick’s Pour House in Leelanau.

“Genius can appear anywhere,” said Joseph Bednarik, Harrison’s long-time editor at Copper Canyon Press. Bednarik shepherded this daunting



Harrison

project through publication.

It seems providential that Harrison died while writing a poem, his pen in hand, so it is fitting that the only art in the book is a photograph of his last uncompleted poem. The untitled poem shows Harrison’s once-perfect penmanship deteriorating line by line. The chilling last line reads, “Man shits his pants and trashed God’s body,” penned as if he knew he was about to take his last breath.

Frankly, reading a 900 plus-page collection of poetry can be daunting, while also being transformative. So where to start. Here’s what I did: After reading the editor’s note and an almost-perfect personal introduction by author Terry Tempest Williams (she recalls how Harrison read an unread manuscript of hers after rifling her underwear drawer), I opened the book at random and read snippets from poems.

For example, the poem “Ghosts” caught my eye with these telling first lines, “Friends are helping me on my slow path to the grave. Three Beat me there last summer. Matthiessen, Bowden and Torrey.” Some of the poems are funny, some are serious, and many



are bawdy, but none will disappoint a reader.

Leafing through the collection, I came across the poem “Rooster,” which begins, “Have to kill the rooster tomorrow. He’s being an asshole.” Next, my eyes caught the poem “Larson’s Holstein’s Bull,” with which I am quite familiar. With Harrison’s permission, I used the oft-quoted line “Death steals everything but our stories” for my mother’s eulogy.

I found this hit-or-miss approach fun. I’m sure Harrison would’ve approved. It also got me thinking that excerpts from his poetry could be a counterpoint to those inspirational ditties with high ideals you find painted on cheap particle board in gift shops. I could see “You’ve

had your orange, now lie in it” from the poem “Trader” tacked up in dens.

Bednarik said before the general publication of “Jim Harrison: Complete Poems,” a special three-volume boxed set with a limited edition of 750 poems was offered for \$500. It immediately sold out. Bednarik said one of the goals for this massive collection is to attract new and younger poetry readers to fill the legions of Harrison fans who are “aging out.”

“The Complete Poems” is a huge statement and a landmark book,” Bednarik said. “Jim started as a poet and as he aged, his poetry style became more informal in a story-telling style.”

St. John resident Jim “Bud” Schulz, who has known Harrison since the late 1960s, agrees.

“It’s the simpleness of his poetry,” he said. “He can take an unbelievable, complex topic, and explain it in poetry in a simple manner.”

Schulz was one of the chosen few who would periodically get faxes from Harrison containing a new, unpublished poem.

“I’ve never met a writer who had such a curiosity about his fellow humans. One of his books, “Sundog” started with a conversation in a bar,” Bednarik said. “Our goal at Copper Canyon Press is to find new readers for Jim’s work. We are very interested in finding future readers.”

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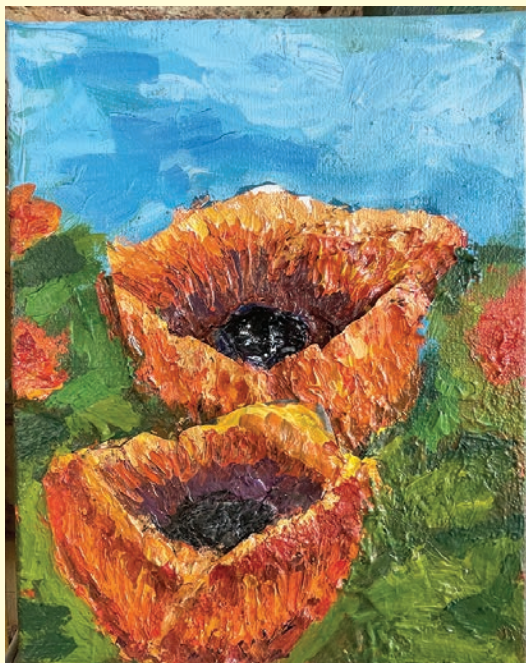
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Williamston Theatre's must-see '9 Parts of Desire'

By DAVID WINKELSTERN

Peace. Freedom. The absence of fear. A love so strong that you can't breathe. Those are some of the female yearnings revealed in "9 Parts of Desire."

In Williamston Theatre's production of the Heather Raffo play, Sarab Kamoo artfully exposes those intimate feelings and more — feelings held by nine Iraqi women affected by two Gulf Wars and the occupation that followed.

Kamoo's gripping embodiment of those women is one of many reasons Williamston's "9 Parts of Desire" deserves to be seen.

Aspiring actors should see it as an example of superb acting. With minimal costume changes, Kamoo shifts with ease from one character to another in the one-woman show. Some of the nine we see only once, while others have repeated appearances. With gesture, posture and voice shifts — and with movements of her lithe hands — Kamoo makes each storyteller significant and distinctive.

A mother who lost her family, a lust-

ful artist, a fatherless kid, a helpless doctor, an exile and others speak from their hearts though Kamoo's convincing and emotional portrayals. The varied characters can make us ache, cry, laugh and gasp.

"9 Parts of Desire"

Through Feb. 27
Tickets are available online at tickets.williamstontheatre.org, or by calling the box office at (517) 655-7469
Tuesday-Friday, noon to 6 p.m.
Proof of full vaccination and photo ID is required for admittance.
To request socially distanced seating, call the box office.
Masks are required in the theater.

abilities to keep the characters distinguishable, and from the clever ways the directors utilize the set.

Set designers should see Williamston's "9 Parts of Desire" to marvel at the crafty, five-layer set. Jennifer Maiseloff's design includes a realistic stone bank with plants, a mosaic floor, up-to-the-ceiling framework, imposing columns and an exquisite, flowing mini-river. Appropriate and detailed

Kamoo and Ed Nahhat's direction keeps the shifting stories flowing. Other directors can learn from their



Courtesy

Sarab Kamoo in Williamston Theatre's production of "9 Parts of Desire."

props by Michelle Raymond — some that can be used only once — help create the perceptions of locations that include Baghdad, London and Michigan.

Theater media designers should see the about-90-minute play to witness the striking projections created by Quinn Legge. Images of a sprawling city are coupled with landscape scenes. Sometimes only one or the other is highlighted and sometimes, the vast background is neutral.

Attention-grabbing recordings by John Lepard add realism and context. News reports, presidential speeches, phone conversations, market noises and the sound of thunderous bombing engage the audience.

But, the primary reason "9 Parts of Desire" is a must-see is because of how eye-opening it can be. The-with-Okeanos-roots Raffo spent at least 10 years researching Iraqi history and interviewing people who the characters are based on. The sometimes-shocking narratives Kamoo so skillfully delivers aren't the kind of stories Americans usually get to hear.

In "9 Parts of Desire," first-hand accounts of Saddam Husain's cruelties, es-

pecially towards women, are described in detail. A mother speaks of his horrific torture techniques. A child bemoans her restricted life and the loss of her father—a man who was taken away because he spoke casually in a manner that displeased Saddam.

In the illuminating play, a doctor laments her hopelessness treating patients, often children, with cancer and deformities caused by byproducts of war. A guide gives a tour of a gruesome tomb of civilians that include her family — a tragedy caused by experimental American bombs. An artist questions why her non-military home was shelled.

How once close and united Iraqi families had to scatter, and how a thriving middle class was destroyed because of American wars, are themes of "9 Parts of Desire." The first-hand accounts from feminine perspectives never seem political or agenda-based.

The play is a stark and authentic reminder of the consequences of war. Although "9 Parts of Desire" is not for kids or the squeamish, the compelling play is an extraordinarily presented history lesson that should not be missed.

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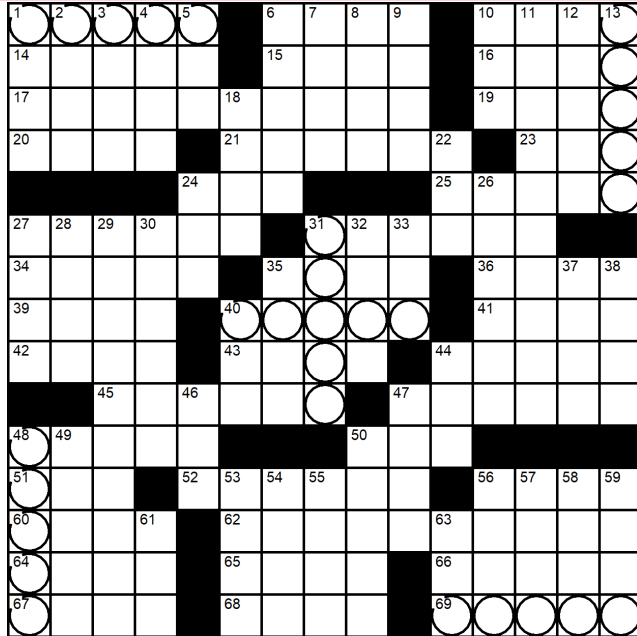
By Matt Jones

"Wordle Has It"—when everyone is posting results.

by Matt Jones

Across

- 1. West African amulets (and bad word to open a certain game with)
- 6. Smoke detector noise
- 10. Frozen waffle brand
- 14. Backspace over, maybe
- 15. Pac-12 powerhouse
- 16. "Moonraker" villain Hugo
- 17. Entry at the top of some crossword grids, or a good description of the game's dimensions?
- 19. Spice Girl who got a 2022 honor from Queen Elizabeth
- 20. Phobia
- 21. "Except ..."
- 23. Chess rating system
- 24. Make a choice
- 25. "You don't have to tell me"
- 27. "In Living Color" acting family
- 31. Malfunctions, like a printer
- 34. "Easy On Me" singer
- 35. Radiant glow
- 36. Light bulb unit
- 39. Advanced H.S. math class
- 40. Blend thoroughly (and bad word to open with)
- 41. Highlight at The Met
- 42. Norway's largest city
- 43. "Sorry, can't"
- 44. Snarly kitten, maybe
- 45. "The Gift of the Magi" writer
- 47. Goat-legged revelers
- 48. Shows signs of tiredness
- 50. Complete collection
- 51. City area, briefly
- 52. Spirited gathering?
- 56. 1% alternative



- 60. It's protected by a pad
 - 62. Representation of a synthesizer sound, or the onslaught of game solutions people are posting on social media?
 - 64. "To ___ a Mockingbird"
 - 65. Door word
 - 66. Ending with way or sea
 - 67. Cryptozoological giant
 - 68. "The Lion King" lioness
 - 69. Wood-related isomer derived from coal tar used to make tear gas and dyes (and a "terrible" word to open with)
- Down**
- 1. "Survivor" host Probst
 - 2. "Ugly Betty" actor Michael
 - 3. Morning mugful
 - 4. Operator
 - 5. Coral or Caspian, e.g.
 - 6. In the toaster for too long
 - 7. Earth sci.
 - 8. Contrarily
 - 9. "Yeah, I'm out this
 - 10. Dubstep or techno, e.g., for short
 - 11. Eco-friendly bloc also seen when you win the game?
 - 12. Ernest or Julio of winemaking
 - 13. U-shaped bend in a river (and bad word to open with)
 - 18. Baking measures
 - 22. "Pretty sneaky, ___" (Connect Four ad line)
 - 24. Free throw value
 - 26. Iraq neighbor
 - 27. Home of Baylor University
 - 28. "Law & Order" figures, for short
 - 29. Beginner's karate wear, or clump you may see when letters are in the wrong places?
 - 30. Tenor sax player who worked with Zoot Sims
 - 31. Nervous from caffeine (and bad word to open with)
 - 32. Indy champ Luyendyk
 - 33. "Mad ___: Fury Road"
 - 35. Love, in a telenovela
 - 37. Stadium section
 - 38. Road materials
 - 40. Tavern
 - 44. Mammal in a cave
 - 46. Snaky letter
 - 47. Fortune teller
 - 48. Bad-tasting (a variant spelling ... and worse word to open with because of that)
 - 49. Schwarzenegger, informally
 - 50. Milan's Teatro alla ___
 - 53. "2 Minute Drill" channel
 - 54. Bluish color
 - 55. ___ and void
 - 56. Move back and forth
 - 57. Designer Lagerfeld
 - 58. Judith of "Brighton Beach Memoirs"
 - 59. Jerry Garcia collaborator Saunders
 - 61. Peyton's brother
 - 63. Das ___ (1990s hip-hop group)

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Answers on page 28

Free Will Astrology

By Rob Breznsky

February 2-8, 2022

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Aries actor Bette Davis said that if you want to improve your work, you should "attempt the impossible." That's perfect advice for you right now. I hope to see you hone your skills as you stretch yourself into the unknown. I will celebrate your forays into the frontiers, since doing so will make you even smarter than you already are. I will cheer you on as you transcend your expectations and exceed your limits, thereby enhancing your flair for self-love. Here's your mantra: "I now have the power to turn the impossible into the possible and boost my health and fortunes in the process."

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Ancient Chinese philosopher Sun Tzu wrote, "Opportunities multiply as they are seized." You'll be wise to make that your motto during the next five months, Taurus. Life will conspire to bring you more and more benefits and invitations as you take full advantage of the benefits and invitations that life brings. The abundance gathering in your vicinity may even start to seem ridiculously extravagant. Envious people could accuse you of being greedy, when in fact, you're simply harnessing a crucial rule in the game of life. To minimize envy and generate even more benefits and invitations, be generous in sharing your plenitude.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): "Because there has been no one to stop me" has been one of the principles of my life," wrote Gemini author Joyce Carol Oates. "If I'd observed all the rules, I'd never have got anywhere," said Gemini actor Marilyn Monroe. "Play the game. Never let the game play you." So advised Gemini rapper and actor Iyaz Shukur. "Who I really am keeps surprising me," declared Gemini author Nikki Giovanni. I propose that we make the previous four quotes your wisdom teachings during the next four weeks.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Your animal symbol is usually the crab. But I propose we temporarily change it to the tardigrade. It's a tiny, eight-legged creature that's among the most stalwart on planet Earth—able to live everywhere, from mountaintops to tropical rainforests to the deepest parts of the sea. In extreme temperatures, it thrives, as well as under extreme pressures. Since it emerged as a species half a billion years ago, it has survived all five mass extinctions. I believe you will be as hardy and adaptable and resolute as a tardigrade in the coming months, Cancerian. You will specialize in grit and resilience and determination. PS: Tardigrades are regarded as a "pioneer species" because they take up residence in new and changed environments, paving the way for the arrival of other species. They help create novel ecosystems. Metaphorically speaking, you could be like that.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): I regularly ask myself how I can become more open-minded. Have I stopped being receptive in any way? What new developments and fresh ideas am I ignoring? Have my strong opinions blinded me to possibilities that don't fit my opinions? In accordance with astrological omens, Leo, I encourage you to adopt my attitude in the coming weeks. For inspiration, read these thoughts by philosopher Marc-Alain Ouaknin: "If things speak to us, it is because we are open to them, we perceive them, listen to them, and give them meaning. If things keep quiet, if they no longer speak to us, it is because we are closed."

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Like all the rest of us, Virgo, you have limitations. And it's important for you to identify them and take them into consideration. But I want to make sure you realize you also have fake limitations; you wrongly believe in the truth of some supposed limitations that are, in fact, mostly illusory or imaginary. Your job right now is to dismantle and dissolve those. For inspiration, here's advice from author Mignon McLaughlin: "Learning too soon our limitations, we never learn our powers."

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): "Develop enough courage so that you can stand up for yourself and then stand up for somebody else," counseled poet

and activist Maya Angelou. Author Toni Morrison said, "The function of freedom is to free someone else." Author and activist Nikki Giovanni wrote, "Everybody that loves freedom loves Harriet Tubman because she was determined not only to be free, but to make free as many people as she could." I hope the wisdom of these women will be among your guiding thoughts in the coming weeks. As your own power and freedom grow, you can supercharge them—render them even more potent—by using them to help others.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): "Man, sometimes it takes you a long time to sound like yourself," testified Miles Davis, one of the most unique and talented jazz trumpeters and composers who ever lived. Popular and successful author Anne Lamott expressed a similar sentiment: "I'm here to be me, which is taking a great deal longer than I had hoped." If those two geniuses found it a challenge to fully develop their special potentials, what chance do the rest of us have? I have good news in that regard, Scorpio. I believe 2022 will be a very favorable time to home in on your deepest, truest self—to ascertain and express more of your soul's code. And you're entering a phase when your instinct for making that happen will be at a peak.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): In the course of human history, three million ships have sunk to the bottom of the Earth's seas. At one extreme have been huge vessels, like the Titanic and naval cruisers, while at the other extreme are small fishing boats. Many of these have carried money, gems, jewelry, gold, and other precious items. Some people have made it their job to search for those treasures. I believe there could and should be a metaphorical resemblance between you and them in the coming weeks, Sagittarius. Now is a favorable time for you to hunt for valuable resources, ideas, memories, and yes, even treasures that may be tucked away in the depths, in hidden locations, and in dark places.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): "It is astonishing what force, purity, and wisdom it requires for a human being to keep clear of falsehoods," wrote author Margaret Fuller. That's the bad news. The good news is that your capacity for exposing and resisting falsehoods is now at a peak. Furthermore, you have a robust ability to ward off delusions, pretense, nonsense, inauthenticity, and foolishness. Don't be shy about using your superpowers, Capricorn. Everyone you know will benefit as you zero in and focus on what's true and genuine. And you will benefit the most.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): "All things are inventions of holiness," wrote poet Mary Oliver. "Some more rascally than others." I agree. And I'll add that in the coming weeks, holiness is likely to be especially rascally as it crafts its inventions in your vicinity. Here are the shades of my meaning for the word "rascally": unruly, experimental, mischievous, amusing, mercurial, buoyant, whimsical, and kaleidoscopic. But don't forget that all of this will unfold under the guidance and influence of holiness. I suspect you'll encounter some of the most amusing and entertaining outbreaks of divine intervention ever.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): The year 1905 is referred to as Albert Einstein's "Year of Miracles." The Piscean physicist, who was 26 years old, produced three scientific papers that transformed the nature of physics and the way we understand the universe. Among his revolutionary ideas were the theory of special relativity, the concept that light was composed of particles, and the iconic equation E = mc squared. With that information as a backdrop, I will make a bold prediction: that in 2022 you will experience your own personal version of a Year of Miracles. The process is already underway. Now it's time to accelerate it.

Go to RealAstrology.com to check out Rob Breznsky's EXPANDED WEEKLY AUDIO HOROSCOPES and DAILY TEXT MESSAGE HOROSCOPES. The audio horoscopes are also available by phone at 1-877-873-4888 or 1-900-950-7700.

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Beginner

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	2		9			7	4	

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 28

TURN IT DOWN!

Loud dispatches from Lansing's music scene

BY RICH TUPICA

LIFE CHANGING ALBUMS: LINDSEY TAYLOR ON
'BRIGHT FLIGHT,' BY THE SILVER JEWS



Lindsey Taylor, of local outfits Luxury Flux and La La Delivery, tells how the late David Cloud Berman's songwriter helped shape her own growing catalog of music. (courtesy images)

How a 2001 LP still influences local bands Luxury Flux and La La Delivery

There is one common face behind both Luxury Flux and La La Delivery — that's songwriter Lindsey Taylor. While the guitarist/vocalist has a knack for writing her own remarkable indie rock tunes, she is also passionate about her personal record collection. In this week's "Life Changing Albums" series, Taylor dishes on her love of a gorgeous 2001 album that fuses genuine country-rock melodies with moody, storytelling lyrics written by the band's late frontman David Berman. Here's what she had to say:

What album do you want to talk about?

Lindsey Taylor: The album is called "Bright Flight," by Silver Jews. It was probably 2010 when I discovered it, so I was 17. I scoured the Internet a lot in my adolescence, learning about new music in my free time. Music has always been my favorite thing to nerd out about. I found Silver Jews through the Pavement grapevine. They were friends and played on each other's albums.

How quickly did the album grab you?

The album made an immediate

impact on me. It cuts straight to the heart with its tender charm. The delicacy of the songs and the lyrics had me hooked during that overwhelming stage of self-discovery. It was a comfort. David Berman made this album after emerging from a dark period in his life, and you can feel that sense of renewal in the songs. People often mention that lyrics are the hardest part of writing a great song, but Berman's style opens a door for me. It helps me realize that it can be done if you are patient and driven enough. I would describe this album as if alt-country took a deep dive into poetry and indie rock. There is some hilarity and psychedelia in his writing, and some pearls of wisdom as well, like:

"Punk rock died when the first kid said, 'punks not dead'"

"Our minds can dream like soda machines"

"I have not avoided certainty; it has always just eluded me"

Do you feel it influenced your own songwriting once you picked up a guitar?

The album directly impacted my

life because it opened the door up to more musical possibilities. I recall being shocked that a band like this was out there. It felt like Silver Jews were filling a big hole in what rock music could be and I'd stumbled upon gold. I previously hadn't considered country a genre I cared about, but if you put "alternative" in front of it there's aspects to appreciate! I believe there is something to love and learn from in every genre of music.

The album brought a positive light through the era of entering adulthood. Music is just as awesome as it's ever been, but listening to it when you're young and finding your bearings on life really shapes who you are as an individual. It makes me wonder if I found my favorite albums or if my favorite albums found me.

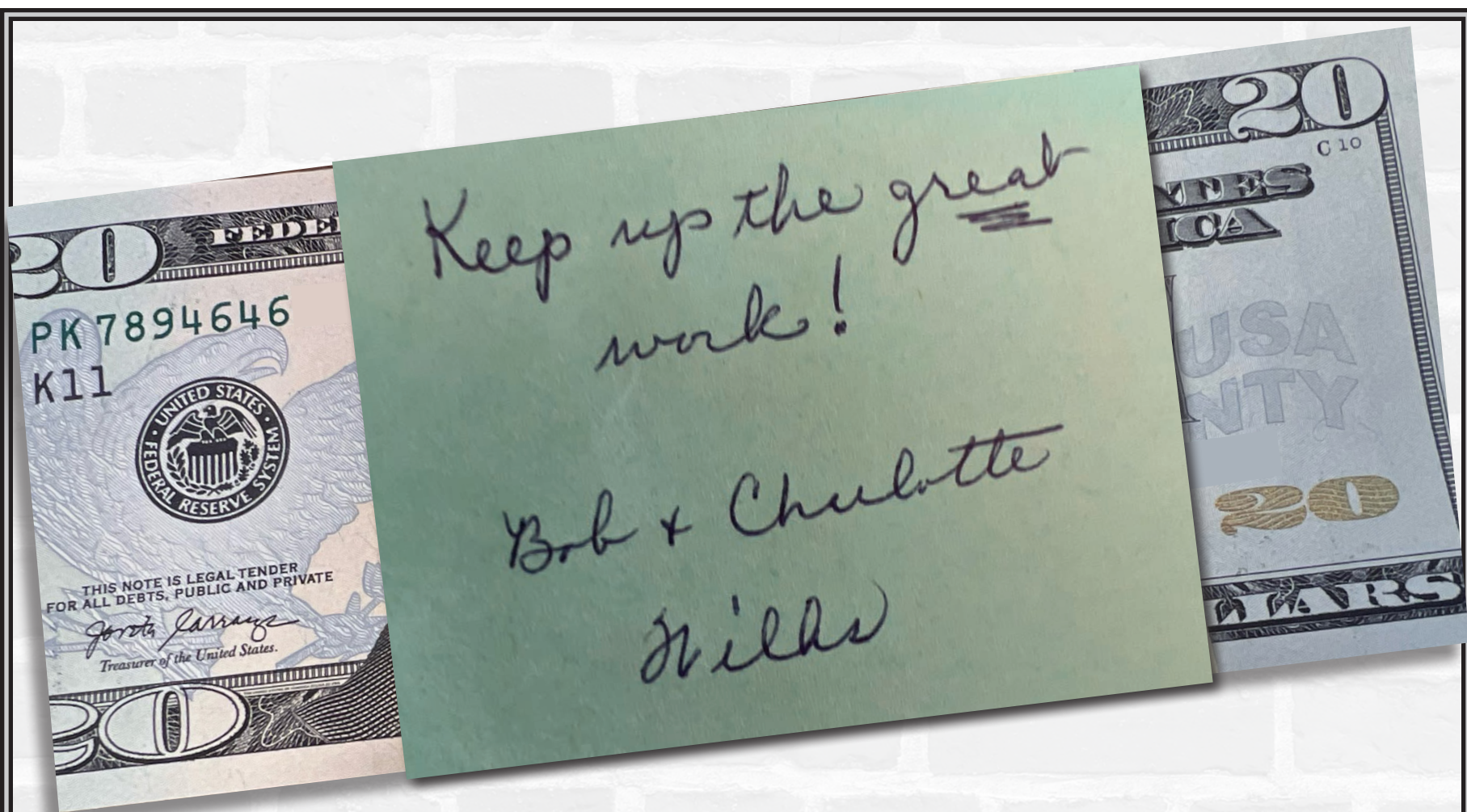
What have you been up to musically these days?

My current musical endeavors include Luxury Flux and my solo-driven music under La La Delivery. We're finalizing writing a new Luxury song that will be recorded and mixed before spring. It's been really nice

to get back in the mix of writing together after a few-years hiatus. We didn't miss a beat. I'm also recording a Guided by Voices cover song for an upcoming compilation in addition to writing original material. Little by little, progress is being made. I'm very much looking forward to sharing everything when all is said and done.

Aside from "Bright Flight" LP, what are a few other honorable mentions for a life-changing album?

I'd say 1994's "Niandra LaDes and Usually Just a T-Shirt" by John Frusciante. It was tied for first contender, but I didn't want to go too far down the rabbit hole of avant-garde and freak anyone out. It's for the true artsy weirdos out there. I'd also say Wilco's "Yankee Hotel Foxtrot." It's melodic, warm, and very inspirational in terms of acoustic pop songwriting. Lastly, "Lonesome Crowded West," by Modest Mouse — it's punky, fun, loud and weird indie rock. Did I mention I like melodically driven music? It's a huge inspiration in guitar playing.



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OUT on the TOWN

Events & Happenings in Lansing This Week

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.

LIVE + LOCAL

B&I Bar
5247 Old Lansing Rd., Lansing
Dan Laird
Thurs., Feb. 3, 7:30-10:30 p.m.

Blue Owl
1149 S Washington, Lansing
Elden Kelly and Gregg Hill
Thurs., Feb. 3, 6-8 p.m.

Classic Pub & Grill
16219 N. US 27, Lansing
Smokey Bear Band
Fri., Feb. 4, 8:30 p.m.
Hatrick Band
Sat., Feb. 5, 8:30 p.m.

Eaton Rapids Craft Co.
204 N. Main St., Eaton Rapids
Scott Seth
Fri., Feb. 4, 7-10 p.m.
Richard Holcomb
Sat. Feb. 5, 7-10 p.m.

Green Door
2005 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing
Soulstice
Fri., Feb. 4, 8:30 p.m.
Spoonful
Sat., Feb. 5, 8:30 p.m.

Lansing Brewing Company
518 E. Shiawassee St., Lansing
Dueling Pianos
Fri., Feb. 4, 7:30-10:30 p.m.

Urban Beat
1213 N. Turner St., Lansing
Olivia Van Goor
Fri., Feb. 4, 7-10 p.m.



South Lansing Mid-Winter Arts/Crafts Market

Saturday, Feb. 5, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
800 W. Barnes Ave., Lansing
[Facebook.com/SouthLansingFarmersMarket](https://www.facebook.com/SouthLansingFarmersMarket)

The South Lansing Farmers Market is gathering together for a massive mid-winter arts and craft market. There will be a grand total of 58 artisan vendors dealing a wide range of craft goods — including everything from custom jewelry, potted succulent plants, gourmet candy, homemade pasta, peppers, honey, flower arrangements, pottery and much more.

If you're looking to find a cool gift to bring back home for a friend, or you're just seeking out some homemade grub to munch on, this market is the spot to visit this weekend.

library? 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St. gladl.org

MILibraryQuest - Mystery Edition 2022 - for teens. 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St., Grand Ledge. milibraryquest.wixsite.com

Steak Night at Reo Town Pub - \$14 Dine in and \$16 Take out 5:30-8 p.m. Reo Town Pub, 1145 S. Washington Ave., Lansing.

Threads of Wisdom: Imbolc - in-person or Zoom for a discussion. 6:30-7:30 p.m. Weavers of the Web, 809 Center St., Ste 7, Lansing. 517-657-5800. weaversoftheweb.org

Tuba Euphonium Ensemble - 7:30-8:30 p.m. Fairchild Theatre, 542 Auditorium Rd, East Lansing. 517-355-1855. msu.edu

Thursday, February 3

Capital Area Audubon Society February Meeting - (virtual) 7-8:30 p.m. For Zoom link, go to capitalareaaudubon.org.

East Lansing Roller Derby Basic Skills Boot Camp - 8-10 p.m. Court One Training Center, 7868 Old M-78, East Lansing.

Stitch 'n Bitch - Come hang out with some fellow stitching witches! 5-8 p.m. Keys To Manifestation, 809 Center Street, Suite 7, Lansing. 517-974-5540. manifestlansing.com

Friday, February 4

Lansing 2600 Meeting - a monthly gathering of local hackers, phreaks, nerds, geeks, sympathizers, and others of various labelability. 6-8 p.m. The Fledge, 1300 Eureka St, Lansing. 517-230-7679.

Messy Science - 9:45 a.m. Impression 5

Science Center, 200 Museum Dr, Lansing. 517-485-8116. impression5.org

Orchestra Lecture Recital: Shostakovich's Symphony No. 10 - 8-9 p.m. Fairchild Theatre, 542 Auditorium Rd, East Lansing. 517-355-1855. msu.edu

Saturday, February 5

Art Meets Science Paint Party - Come out to Paint and learn about Nuclear Physics with us! 2-4 p.m. Reno's East, 1310 Abbot Rd, East Lansing.

Breath New Life - 6 p.m. Royal Scot Golf & Bowl, 4722 W Grand Rver Ave, Lansing.

Imbolc Ritual - in-person or Zoom as we set our intentions and goals for 2022. 4-5 p.m. Weavers of the Web, 809 Center Street, Suite 7, Lansing. weaversoftheweb.org

Messy Science - 9:45 a.m. Impression 5 Science Center, 200 Museum Dr, Lansing. 517-485-8116. impression5.org

Mid-Winter Indoor Farmers Market - 10 a.m.-2 p.m. South Lansing Community Development Association, 800 W Barnes Ave, Lansing. 517-374-5700.

Sunday, February 6

2022 Running Start Live Pitch Competition - See student entrepreneurs pitch their innovative ideas. 1-2 p.m. Hollander Hall, East Lansing. msu.edu

A Celebration of the Beautiful Voice - MSU Vocal Arts. 3-4 p.m. Fairchild Theatre, 542 Auditorium Rd, East Lansing. msu.edu

Auditions - Gee's Bend - 2-4 p.m. LCC, 411 N. Grand Ave., Gannon Building - Room 1422,

Continued on page 29

Wednesday, February 2

Allen Farmers Market - 3-6 p.m. Allen Market Place, 1611 E Kalamazoo, Lansing.

"Best Books" Tiny Art Show - Pick up your Tiny Art Kit starting Feb. 1. 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St., Grand Ledge. gladl.org

Blind Date with a Book - Adults and Teens: through Feb. 13. Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St., Grand Ledge. 517-627-7014. gladl.org

The Elements Series: Water - 11 a.m.-7 p.m. Nelson Gallery, 113 S. Washington Sq., Lansing. thenelsongallery.com

Hidden Hearts - We've lost our hearts-- can you help us find them hiding in the

CROSSWORD SOLUTION

From Pg. 25

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SUDOKU SOLUTION

From Pg. 25

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8	7	1	6	4	3	2	9	5
5	9	4	8	7	2	6	1	3
3	2	6	9	5	1	7	4	8

Events

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Lansing. 517-483-1122. lcc.edu.

East Lansing Roller Derby Basic Skills Boot Camp - 8-10 p.m. Court One Training Center, 7868 Old M-78, East Lansing.

MSU Wind Symphony: Concert Honoring Black History Month - 3-4 p.m. Detroit School of the Arts, East Lansing. msu.edu.

Together with Family and Friends - Baritone Mark Rucker and accompanist Sadie Rucker. 7-8 p.m. Fairchild Theatre, 542 Auditorium Rd, East Lansing. msu.edu.

Monday, February 7

Auditions - Gee's Bend 7-9 p.m. LCC, 411 N. Grand Ave., Gannon Building - Room 1422, Lansing. 517-483-1122. lcc.edu.

Comedy Night - 9-11:30 p.m. Crunchy's, 254 W Grand River Ave, East Lansing. 517-351-2506. crunchyseastlansing.com.

Monday Night Bingo - Adult Bingo at the Reo Town Pub. 7-9 p.m. Reo Town Pub, 1145 S. Washington Ave., Lansing.

Workshop - Purposeful Communication - 6-8:30 p.m. Foster Community Center, 200 N Foster Ave, Lansing. parksonline.lansingmi.gov.

Tuesday, February 8

Board Game Meet Up - Ages 18 & up. 6:30 - 10:30 p.m. Spare Time Bowling Alley, 3101 E Grand River, Lansing.

Make & Take Pop Up: Screen Printing Bookmark - 1-4 p.m. Main Library, East Lansing. msu.edu.

Preschool Family Storytime - 11-11:30 a.m. Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St. gladl.org.

Sporcle Live! Trivia - 7:30 & 8:30 p.m. Crunchy's, 254 W Grand River Ave, East Lansing. crunchyseastlansing.com.

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Ari LeVaux

(Above) A heart-shaped taco platter with homemade mole sauce.
(Below) Rotisserie chicken prepared with Ari LeVaux's special mole sauce.

Holy mole mi amor!

By **ARI LeVAUX**

Love is a glorious thing, but chocolate is my favorite part of Valentine's Day. Public displays of romance are awkward. And chocolate is much less complicated.

South of the border, Valentine's Day goes by the name El Dia del Amor y Amistad, which translates to "The Day of Love and Friendship." This holiday, based on a broader concept of love that doesn't fixate on romance, is a lot more palatable.

Mexican culture also has a more nuanced approach to chocolate, which it's often used in savory dishes. In the movie "Like Water for Chocolate," the heroine Tita Garza prepares a mole of chocolate and spices that seduces the guests by leaning into the bitter side of cocoa.

Tita's heart was built for romance, but Garza family tradition required her, as the youngest daughter, to care for her mother instead of getting married. And Tita's mom saw to it that Pedro, who Tita loved and who loved her back, married her sister instead. Denied the love she wanted, Tita put her passion into her cooking, and made love to whomever ate her food.

After eating her mole, one of the guests pressed Tita for the recipe. "The secret is to prepare it with love," she said.

Like chocolate and love, hot chile can really get the blood pumping. All of these ingredients trigger endorphins, adrenaline and the kind of manic energy you need to melt the snows of winter, if not the prison bars around a lonely heart.

I have my own formulation of mole, which I also prepare with love. And to give it even more of an extra push, I add instant coffee as well. I got the idea from a coffee and red chile osso bucco I once ate at Casa Vieja in Corrales, New Mexico. I remembered this lovely combination when I was formulating my mole, and it fits right in.

I also use red wine in my mole, as it also plays well with the other ingredients, and turns out to be the only sweetness that I add. After all, I think there is enough sugary chocolate in this world, and unsweetened chocolate goes



perfectly and pungently with the chile, cumin, coriander, garlic and coffee. It all comes together in my spicy chocolate love paste.

As I developed this mole recipe, I came up with a dry rub along similar lines. It takes 30 seconds to mix chile powder, chocolate powder, instant coffee, salt and garlic powder. The combination is pungent and bold and dark and mysterious.

Mole of love and friendship

Valentine's Day is not a religious holiday, but this high-octane mole will make it holy. Use mole in a manner analogous to barbecue sauce. As a condiment, or as a medium in which to cook protein. It's most commonly prepared with chicken or turkey, but it's also great with beef and beans.

I often use a store-bought rotisserie chicken, but any cooked chicken or parts will do. Deconstruct and cut the chicken into whatever size you wish, and add them to the simmering brown brew, so the mole can impregnate the meat.

- 1 tablespoon butter*
- 1 tablespoon olive oil*
- 1 clove garlic, minced*
- 1 medium sized onion, minced*
- 1 tablespoon sesame seeds*
- 2 Tablespoons pumpkin seeds*
- 2 Tablespoons whole cumin (or powder)*
- 1 tablespoon whole coriander (or powder)*
- 6 tortilla chips, crumbled*
- 2 tablespoons hot chile powder – or to taste, as the chile heat is very subjective*
- 5 tablespoons paprika*
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon*
- 1 quart stock*
- 1 tablespoon instant coffee*
- 2 tablespoon cocoa powder*

See Mole, Page 31



Ari LeVaux

Mole sauce can be used to spice up a variety of dishes, from chicken to tacos.

Mole

from page 30

- 4 cups chicken stock
- 1/2 cup red wine
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 teaspoon almond butter
- Salt to taste

In a saucepan, saute the onion and garlic in the oil and butter on medium heat until the onions are translucent. Meanwhile, set a heavy bottomed pan onto medium heat and slowly toast the sesame, coriander, cumin and pumpkin seeds until they are dark but not burnt. (Skip this step if using powdered spices)

Grind the toasted spices and corn

chips to a powder in a spice grinder or mortar. Add the ground spices to the translucent onions, along with the other spices, including the coffee and chocolate. Stir it all together, then add the stock, wine, vanilla and almond butter. Keep it on medium heat, stirring as necessary to keep from sticking. Season to taste.

High octane dry spice mix

- 1 tablespoon cocoa powder
- 2 tablespoons paprika
- 1 teaspoon instant coffee
- 2 teaspoons hot chile powder (or to taste)
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder

Mix the ingredients and use as a dry rub to season anything savory, like roasted roots.

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