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November 29-December 5, 2023

CityPULSE

A newspaper for the rest of us
Locally owned

DAN DAN LAIRD: LANSING'S MOST PASSIONATE MUSIC BOOKER

See Page 11



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Sponsored Content

It is 5 a.m. on Monday, November 27, 2023. For the past several weeks, this is when I have been writing my "sponsored content" columns for City Pulse. The deadline is this afternoon, so you could say that I procrastinated, but the truth is, I have not been feeling like writing. I think I need a change of some sort, or maybe to go talk to a therapist.

Up until a month or so ago, I used to at least put some thought into what I was going to write about, doing some reading on the topic, and waking up Saturday morning to enthusiastically punch the words into my keyboard. I would then have time to edit it, and even revise it if needed. I wish I had more enthusiasm, but for now, I just hope what I am writing is worth reading. I've never considered if I'm a good writer technically; in fact, I feel like I am usually all over the map. But I also felt that the content was good enough that people would still read it and get something out of it. We'll see how this one turns out, so here goes...

It seems to me that nearly every single subject these days is clouded, foggy, muddied. etc. Some of it has to do with the fact that there seems to be more news than ever, and some it has to do with the opposition organizing and funding against anything we do. Topics that are meant to combat injustices are no longer being viewed the same and have lost momentum.

My first real involvement in any movement was in support of Colin Kaepernick. I had spent a few years, prior to his kneeling, seeing things differently than I had during my entire life previously. From Trayvon Martin's killing, to Mike Brown, Alton Sterling, and Tamir Rice, I started to listen to voices that shouted "Black Lives Matter," and those voices encouraged me to read some history. It wasn't long before I started to see how what's happened in the past has impacted so many lives today. I could then start to see instances from my early adult years where I missed the message and ultimately realized that much of my logic for not being outraged was due to conditioning.

I was blind to injustices growing up because I was conditioned to accept them as part of a social contract. If police tell you to do something, you are supposed to do it, or accept the consequences. I am just one of the masses of people who have experienced this. Some people probably see through it right away and some take longer, like me. But some never see it and ultimately these are the ones who we see online every day pushing back against it.

That is just one example of many. The queer community has never been able to genuinely feel safe enough to be their authentic selves. I can see why they would want to insulate themselves in neighborhoods where they can be among like-minded people. Others have been hard at work, both in ancient and modern times, to condemn them or convert them. Those people have done everything to convince you that any form of queer is a sickness, which is at its core a shaming response. Pride has everything to do with shame. When someone is living in shame, and all too often met with violence, how could you possibly have pride in yourself?

So many cultures are rooted in pride, and yet somehow the queer community is supposed to hide and assimilate into the world as if they don't exist. GTFO! Talk about a double standard. The worst part is that while I think I put that into a perspective that anyone should be able to understand, such

words often fall on deaf ears because too many people just don't care, and they will double down by defaulting to their chosen religion as a safe space to practice their bigotry.

We can't agree that global warming is worth addressing, we can't agree that inflation is caused by greed and not by politicians, and we can't agree that teaching factual history to kids is a good thing. The companies that have cornered the market in energy and manufacturing are the ones who control the economy. They are making record profits every single year, and they are also the ones which strain our infrastructure the most and pay less than desirable wages. Yet they spend a ton of money fighting against policies that would waste less and promote sustainable or reusable energy sources which would benefit every single person. Their agenda is to prevent things like critical race theory because they know that an educated populace is a populace that will eventually rise up and demand the change we need.

Everyone chooses a side on any topic that is reported on, especially if it is close to home. Sometimes we are forced to look at situations that are halfway around the world. Far too many people have opinions on something they really don't know enough about. My opinion is that war just sucks, no matter who is involved, and I think the soldiers on any side are not dying for the causes they think they are fighting for. While we witness mostly women and children being exchanged in a hostage/prisoner swap, there are already thousands of innocent people who have died and probably very few among them who have actually committed war crimes. America is not the moral authority of the world and we have not done enough to promote peace, not at home and not abroad.

America is an infant in the world of nations. We are in the midst of a shouting match, and one of the kids is holding a gun. The conversation always goes sideways because of the threat of violence, or at least the possibility of it. The rhetoric of a leader has an impact, and when that trickles down, we see a senator challenge a witness at a congressional hearing to a fight. There were people who refused to condemn this type of behavior. These are our leaders? Don't get me wrong, some things are worth fighting for, but this? Seriously?

If these people are so quick to violence, as representatives of the people they serve, then what does that say? Is this what the people they serve want? I hope not.

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PULSE

NEWS & OPINION

In time for winter, Lansing to launch a westside warming center

Barb Bynum and her husband, like a growing number of senior citizens, are newly homeless after they lost their home this year.

Now, Bynum spends much of her days near the corner of Michigan Avenue and Howard Street in Lansing, where she looks to good Samaritans to help them stay afloat as winter sets in.

“We’re staying with my friend right now, but it’s only temporary because they’ve already got a full house,” Bynum said. “After that, we’re just not sure.”

Bynum, who has used warming centers before, said there is a clear need in Lansing for additional facilities to serve those who would otherwise freeze in the cold this winter.

“I walk downtown a lot, and I see people sleeping up against buildings, sleeping in alleys. A lot of them are out there because they choose to be, but many of them have no choice,” Bynum said.

For these individuals, a new warming and cooling center at the Letts Community Center, 1220 W. Kalamazoo St., is on its way, the city has announced.

This will be the only city-operated warming center, city spokesperson Scott Bean said. There are four others, but they are all privately operated, he said.

Initially, the center, which will be managed by the Detroit Rescue Mission Ministries, was to accept families with children — with a provision that seniors and disabled individuals would also be welcomed, but only during “code blue” scenarios, when the temperature drops to 32 degrees or below, including wind-chill.

On Monday, the day the center was slated to open, Mayor Andy Schor’s office sent out a press release saying that the center would pivot its focus from families to just adult individuals. Now set to open Monday (Dec. 4), the center will offer warmth and shelter, but not beds, for about 75 people per night, seven days a week, from 9 p.m. to 7 a.m. This season, it’s set to remain in operation through April 30.

These changes were made after City Council members and residents expressed concerns at the Nov. 13 Council that the center was focused only on



Tyler Schneider/City Pulse

Letts Community Center, 1220 W. Kalamazoo St. will host the Lansing’s first warming and cooling center when it opens Monday (Dec. 4).

families. “The majority of people on the street right now aren’t families. I just don’t see them, and I see homeless people on the streets almost daily,” said Luna Brown, a resident.

Council members were worried that, by excluding a large subset of the homeless population from the center, the city could be opening itself up for potential legal concerns. Council member Patricia Spitzley also saw a potential issue with the Detroit Rescue Mission Ministries’ status as a faith-based organization.

“We’ve heard that some people are uncomfortable with going to that type of situation, and so we did not hear our residents when they asked to have options, another place to go that wasn’t faith-based,” Spitzley said.

Council President Carol Wood wanted to know more about funding and the arrangements made in the contract with the Detroit Rescue Mission Ministries.

Kim Coleman, director of the Human Relations and Community Services Department, explained that the city hasn’t received an \$800,000 appropriation from the state yet that is supposed to fund the center, but her department was going to “move forward with this plan using the \$103,000 that



Tyler Schneider/City Pulse

After Barb Bynum and her husband lost their home earlier this year, Bynum has spent much of her days asking for help near the intersection of Michigan Avenue and Howard Street. She said that even with the new warming center, there is still a need for more of them in the community.

was budgeted in our budget, along with the \$151,000 provided to us by Council from the mayor’s budget.”

Another matter that has raised some eyebrows is the city’s own acknowledgement of a “lack of appropriate fire suppression systems” at the Letts Community Center, an issue which also went on to play a role in the decision to not allow children at the center after all.

Mike Karl, a formerly homeless man who has since become a leading regional advocate as the founder of Cardboard Profits, cited this as the biggest problem with the new center.

“I’ve had multiple hotels in the city, and the city wouldn’t let me shelter

anybody if the fire suppression system wasn’t working,” he said, referring to the time he spent operating homeless hotels at the Magnuson Hotel and Burkewood Inn between 2014 to 2017. “It blows my mind that we’re going after other organizations to make sure they’re up to code, but it’s OK for us to turn a blind eye when the city is doing it.”

Without the proper systems in place, the city had to designate Letts as a warming and cooling center, rather than a shelter, even though it will be operating overnight. In its original format, children would have been offered cots, but not adults.

“We thought maybe kids could sleep if the adults were awake,” Bean said. “But we can’t allow people to lay down and sleep under the law. No beds or cots. We are only allowed chairs.”

“The city is sending a message that it’s OK to burn up our adults, but the children can’t be in here,” Karl said.

Karl noted that he is pleased to see another option for those in need, but he said the \$800,000 in state funding could have been used to do more. One idea he had is to purchase the former Shabazz Public School Academy and rehabilitate it.

“I ran a hotel with 124 rooms, all the power, all of that for \$90,000 per year from the community. Why couldn’t we invest \$400,000 into Shabazz? We could then use the other \$400,000 for the next four years, at \$100,000 a year, to maintain a shelter. From there, we could find long-term fixes instead of just paying someone to manage our problem,” Karl said.

Still, the new warming center is good news to homeless residents.

Sitting on a steam vent at Reutter Park on Tuesday morning, one homeless man who identified himself only as Roy said he used to go to Letts to stay warm, “but they stopped it.” He wasn’t aware of the new plans.

Will he use it when it opens?

“Oh yeah, without question,” he said. “I’m waiting on my Section 8 papers, and so every day I can get off the streets for a while is another step closer for me.”

— TYLER SCHNEIDER

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Broadway hit "Hairspray" comes to the Wharton Center

PAGE 8

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New cigar lounge and bistro opens in south Lansing

PAGE 14



Put some pomegranate in your next salad

PAGE 22

Cover photo courtesy of Dan Dan Laird

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THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW

INVISIBLE-HAND-OF-THE-FREE-MARKET MAN SENSES A BREWING CRISIS! YOU INNOCENTLY AGREED WITH AN EXPLICITLY ANTI-SEMITIC POST-- AND PEOPLE GOT UPSET?

IT'S OUTRAGEOUS! WE WERE JUST DOING FREE SPEECH, THE THING I ADORE!

I LIKE CHEESE!

(LINDA YACCA-RINO)

AND THEN THOSE FRAUDSTERS AT MEDIA MATTERS CLAIMED THAT ADVERTISEMENTS ON "X" CAN APPEAR NEXT TO PRO-NAZI POSTS--BY DECEPTIVELY SHOWING SCREENSHOTS OF THAT HAPPENING!

THE GRIFTERS! BUT I SHALL HAVE MY REVENGE!

SOCKS KEEP YOUR FEET WARM!

AS A FREE SPEECH ABSOLUTIST, I WILL CRUSH THEM IN A THERMONUCLEAR LAWSUIT--WHICH I AM FILING IN TEXAS, WHERE I HOPE I CAN RELY ON A MORE SYMPATHETIC JUDICIARY!

YOUR BRILLIANCE NEVER CEASES TO AMAZE, SIR!

ESCALATORS ARE STAIRS THAT MOVE!

ADDITIONALLY, THERE ARE FAR-RIGHT ATTORNEYS GENERAL IN TEXAS AND MISSOURI LOOKING INTO PROSECUTING THE CASE SOMEHOW!

I HOPE THEY SHUT THEM UP FOREVER--IN THE NAME OF FREE SPEECH!

NOTHING'S AS COZY AS A BIG COMFY CHAIR!

ONCE I HAVE DESTROYED THESE CON ARTISTS, BIG ADVERTISERS WILL COME FLOCKING BACK--AND I SHALL STAND TRIUMPHANT!

WITH YOUR ADORING PUBLIC CHEERING YOU ON, SIR!

DOGS OR CATS--WHAT DO YOU GUYS THINK?

WELL, YOU CLEARLY DON'T NEED MY HELP, SIR! YOUR VICTORY IS ALL BUT GUARANTEED!

OBVIOUSLY! NOW IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME, I NEED TO CATCH UP ON @NAZI80IFOURTEEN88'S LATEST INSIGHTFUL POSTS!

ICE CREAM IS MY FAVORITE DESSERT!

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Tom Helma, a longtime theater contributor to City Pulse, dies at 84

Tom Helma, whose hundreds of local theater reviews in City Pulse over two decades offered insights into characters and plots that were influenced by his training and experience as a psychotherapist, died Nov. 21. He was 84.

His reviews could be withering. Long-time local actor Tod Humphrey recalled Helma's 2005 review of "Macbeth," staged by Sunsets with Shakespeare, as "blistering, funny and earned."

In it, Helma wrote, "Tod Humphrey is Macbeth and did a decent job despite looking like Tom Izzo on a bad hair day and wearing a suit two sizes too big that Izzo wouldn't be caught dead in."

Jane Zussman, another well-known local theatrical figure, recalled Helma as "a true people-person... inquiring mind and dedicated reviewer/Pulsar judge, local theatre supporter."

Joseph Dickson, a local actor, director and founder of the now-defunct Over the Ledge Theatre Co., remembered Helma's "polite curiosity."

"We didn't always agree, but I never doubted that he listened, heard, and understood my view," Dickson wrote on Facebook. "Tom enjoyed true dialogue, and my world will definitely be a bit less

bright without him in it."

Helma and his wife, Kathy, who survives him, served as judges for the Pulsars, City Pulse's theater awards. They were married 47 years.

Helma is also survived by a son, Gabriel, and his partner, Chelsie, and daughters Faith Helma and her partner, Jonathan Walters, and Sarah Moore and her partner, Brian. The Helmas' grandchildren are Braylon and Easton Kemp; Waylon and River Helma-Walters; and Indila and Ariana Moore.

Helma was born in 1939 in Hackensack, N.J. He moved to Lansing for graduate studies on a scholarship to Michigan State University. He earned his undergraduate degree from Bob Jones University. Helma joked to friends what an outlier he was at the conservative Christian school in Greenville, South Carolina, given he was raised in a Catholic family in northern New Jersey. But he said he needed the full scholarship.

Besides reviews, he occasionally wrote in a more personal vein. One such 2011 piece was on "Jersey Boys," the musical based on the singing group the Four Seasons, in which he reminisced about

being a teenager in New Jersey. At 18, he went looking for the club where Frank Sinatra first sang, then the next year, he recalled, "as music transitioned, crossing the Hudson in my convertible, over the GW — the George Washington Bridge — finding the Apollo Theatre in Harlem, standing on my seat, dancing in the aisle, experiencing my first major immersion in doo-wop rock 'n' roll."

Referring to the role music played in racially and ethnically diverse New Jersey, he went on: "We all did sing: some in three and fours, often on street corners, under evening lamplights. We sang at Knights of Columbus and Labor Day picnics. I talked my dad and brother once into doing a doo-wop trio of 'In the Still of the Night,' decades before karaoke. I sang in junior high in a multi-racial quartet, I sang in that Catholic high school — both as an altar boy and in the choir — and, come to think of it, every day of my life since."

Helma's family has planned a memorial service on Dec. 8 at Palmer Bush & Jensen Delta Chapel. A viewing is set for 3 p.m., followed by a memorial service at 4 p.m., then a reception and "soapbox" from 5 to 7 p.m.



Tom Helma

The soapbox is a reference to Helma's efforts as the coordinator of "Soap Box Speeches," a feature of Lansing's old Renegade Theatre Festival. "We will have Tom's soapbox and mic set up in

See Helma, Page 6

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REWIND

NEWS HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE LAST 7 DAYS

BY TYLER SCHNEIDER



Jonathan Smith was named MSU's new head football coach Saturday, following a search of nearly three months.

Smith, 44, becomes the 26th head coach in the program's history, after six years at the helm at Oregon State. In a seven-year, \$7.25-million-a-year deal, he succeeds Mel Tucker, who was fired for alleged sexual misconduct in September. Smith has coached seven All-American players at alma mater OSU, including six in the past two seasons. Eight of his players have been selected in the NFL draft. He was named the Pac-12 co-coach of the year in 2022 and led Oregon State to an 8-4 record this season, rising as high as 11th in the College Football Playoff weekly rankings. Smith is bringing five assistant coaches with him to East Lansing.

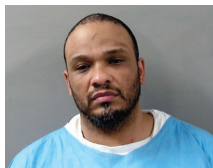


An accreditor will review accusations that MSU Board of Trustee Chairperson Rema Vassar violated codes of conduct. A statement released Nov. 21 indicated the review would be done by the Higher Learning Commission, an accreditation organization serving the

Midwest. The process began when MSU Faculty Senate Chair Jack Lipton filed a complaint against the university last month in response to a seven-page letter Trustee Brianna Scott sent to the board raising accusations against Vassar. The Faculty Senate cited three specific examples of Vassar's alleged misconduct: appearing in an advertisement for a wealth management firm founded by former Trustee Brian Mosallam, traveling to watch an MSU basketball game at Madison Square Garden in New York in a donor-owned private jet, and allegedly discussing university operations with Lansing Mayor Andy Schor without the knowledge of MSU Interim President Teresa Woodruff.

The U.S. Attorney's Office has filed federal charges against the parents of a Lansing toddler who is alleged to have shot and killed himself with loaded gun inside a vehicle on Oct. 24.

While the child's father, Avis Damone Coward, 44, left the vehicle to go inside a Sonoco gas station on Dunkel Road at around 3 p.m. that day, the child's mother, Emma Huver, 26, was still in the car when the child apparently got ahold of the gun. Security footage showed a bullet hole appearing in the front passenger window, followed by Huver exiting the vehicle a minute later while the gun fell onto the ground. She handed the child to Coward, who then handed



him to a bystander who attempted to provide medical care. Coward then picked up the gun and put it back in the car, closed the door and smashed the window before driving away. A week after the incident, police found the vehicle burned out in a field in Lansing. Huver was arraigned Monday in the 54A District court Monday on seven felony counts, including involuntary manslaughter, second-degree child abuse and various weapons charges, and issued a \$75,000 cash bond. Coward was charged last week with being a convicted felon in possession of a firearm, having previously been convicted six times between 1998 and 2021.



An East Lansing woman has been charged in the freezing death of an 82-year-old woman at an assisted care facility last year. Colleen Kelly O'Connor, 58, was charged with second-degree vulnerable adult abuse after Lois Kathryn Cary, a resident in her care at Vista Springs Imperial Park at Timber Ridge, walked outside during a snowstorm on Dec. 23, 2022, without proper clothing and fell in the parking lot, later dying at Sparrow Hospital. O'Connor was arraigned in the Clinton County District Court on Nov. 20 and issued a \$5,000 cash bond. The charges against her allege that she failed to act to prevent the women from going outside, where sub-zero wind chills, wind gusts approaching 50 miles per hour and snow drifts were present. A hearing to determine whether O'Connor should stand trial was set for Dec. 7.



Lansing City Clerk Chris Swope submitted a plan Monday to eliminate eight precincts in future elections. The number of voting precincts would drop from 40 to 32 under the proposal, but only 9,000 out of 88,919 registered voters would have a different polling place on election day, while 4,000 would be assigned a new precinct number. Swope said the changes would save tax dollars and that he has emphasized a pivot away from polling places at schools, because they can be "disruptive" during elections while classes are still in session.

PUBLIC SAFETY:

A 30-year-old man was killed Monday in a shooting outside the Capital Area District Library branch on South Cedar Street. ... A 16-year-old who was shot just before 2 a.m. Sunday, near the 1200 block of Mary Avenue in Lansing, is expected to recover. ... One adult and one juvenile were arrested in East Lansing in connection with a home invasion and armed robbery at a home near Center Street on Nov. 21.

Helma

from page 5

hopes that others will share stories, poems, songs or other in Tom's honor," an announcement said.

Helma died after a brief hospital stay following a heart attack, which he wrote

about on Facebook.

"Of a mind to report," he said on Nov. 15. "I am in the emergency room after having suffered a heart attack on Tuesday. Tests are complete, and it looks like a catheterization of a blocked artery is scheduled for tomorrow. Whoo-hoo! Kathy says I am handling this well. Ha! What is the alternative? Life goes on, hopefully. Namaste."

The next day, he added, "... and now we wait, having been in an ER room for a day, we are now in a regular room. Surgery will commence soon. About hospitals? 23 nurses attended to us the past two days, all good. As to blankets? Been here since the Civil War, clean and soft. And old. Namaste."

He died five days later.

— BERL SCHWARTZ



3301 N. Turner St., Lansing

Built in 1880, this 1,320 square-foot, red-tagged structure changed hands in July, and the city hadn't successfully contacted the new owner, Covic Milivoje, until he showed up for a hearing at the Nov. 13 City Council meeting to determine if work to bring it up to code was being done. Milivoje brought photographs and documents as evidence that the work was being done and said a city inspector came to see the property in September. "We completely removed and replaced the kitchen and dining room, and we already have permits for the furnace and the siding. I don't know why the inspector didn't tell somebody," Milivoje said. Council member Adam Hussain addressed the miscommunication: "At some point during the process, ownership changed, and we failed to notify them. We have no evidence within the code shop that we actually posted the dwelling with a show cause hearing," Hussain explained, referring to the process that could lead to demolition. As a result, Milivoje, who purchased the house from David and Kimberly Hallett for \$21,000 on July 25, will have to wait until a Dec. 5 Committee on Public Safety meeting before his case can move forward. The property still requires a lot of work, including window repairs, roofing and fixing several holes in the walls and siding, but Milivoje said he can get it done if he's allowed more time.

— TYLER SCHNEIDER

"Eyesore of the Week" is our weekly 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 to (517) 999-5063.

The BWL is not doing enough to meet its clean energy goals

By **BRIANT T. JACKSON**

(The writer represents the 4th Ward on the Lansing City Council.)

In 2023, we realized that climate change is NOT a hoax. The seven warmest years on record occurred within the last decade, and 2023 is set to be the warmest ever. Among the usual symptoms of climate change, like drought and heat waves, 2023 also gave us new phenomena: Canadian wildfire smoke that was hazardous to breathe and rapidly intensifying storms that developed quicker than ever and turned deadly without warning.

The International Panel on Climate Change has determined that human activities, primarily through greenhouse gas emissions (i.e., burning coal and natural gas) have caused global temperatures to rise, which caused adverse impacts, fatalities and billions in economic damages. The IPCC has said that to avert the worst effects of climate change, we must reduce greenhouse gas emissions 45% from 2010 levels by 2030 and have no net emissions of greenhouse gases by 2050.

The Lansing Board Water & Light is our hometown power company, but it's also a part of the global emissions problem. It could be part of the solution, but recent statements and actions do not inspire confidence. BWL GM Dick Peffley proudly tells anyone who will listen that the BWL will reach its goals of 50% clean energy by 2030 and carbon neutrality by 2040. Yet in October, when Peffley appeared at a joint meeting of the BWL and the Lansing City Council and I asked him how the BWL would meet these goals, he could not explain.

It wasn't the only unsubstantiated or confusing statement that the BWL has made about its climate and environmental goals. According to the information on its website, 87% of its energy is derived from dirty fossil fuels and only 13% from clean energy, namely wind and solar. Yet the BWL recently told its Board of Commissioners that it had met its goal of 30% clean energy in 2020. How could both statements be true?

Based on the BWL's heavy reliance on coal and gas, the BWL should be doing everything possible to move away from fossil fuels. In 2020, the BWL's strategic plan was developed and envisioned no new gas plants. Instead, this October, it announced a plan that it would install a



Opinion

new, 110-megawatt gas plant using Reciprocating Internal Combustion Engines — RICE — and it might install a second one. The plan also calls for investment in clean energy. However, to date, only the RICE plant plan is moving forward. Problematically, there was no public comment process regarding the new projects and very little input from the Board of Commissioners despite the fact that the new projects likely represent the largest expansion of electricity generation in the BWL's history.

Natural gas emits about half the carbon dioxide of coal when it's burned, but according to a study published in 2018 in the journal *Science*, greenhouse gas emissions are doubled by releases of unburned methane, the major component of natural gas, during drilling, fracking and transmission of natural gas through pipelines. In total, the greenhouse emissions of gas are similar to those of coal. According to the American Lung Association, burning gas at power plants also emits pollution that contributes to ground-level ozone that is linked to asthma and premature death.

The RICE that the BWL plans to install burns dirtier than the combined-cycle gas plants found at BWL's Delta Energy Park and co-generation facility in REO Town. But the BWL's Board of Commissioners recently approved a bond to pay for the new electricity generation that referred to natural gas as "clean." When I asked Peffley about the RICE plant at our October meeting, he admitted that gas is not clean and said he hasn't researched the increased environmental and health hazards of these facilities.

Peffley told the Board of Commissioners that the RICE plant was necessary to supply electricity for the new Ultium electric car battery plant in Delta Township. General Motors, one of the partners in the Ultium joint venture, has told its shareholders, "We recently announced the finalization of energy sourcing agreements required to secure 100% of the energy needed to power all our U.S. facilities with renewable energy by 2025.... We are on target to meet the remaining needs of our global operations with 100% renewable energy by 2035." In light of these goals, can't the BWL and General Motors work together to avoid the use of new gas?

The BWL should be a leader on climate and environmental issues. This leadership requires more transparency, more engagement with the public, and greater effort to move away from fossil fuels.

Perfect time to expand FOIA is now, during the newly split Legislature

Michigan House Democrats will return to Lansing in January without a majority until probably late April, when special elections in Dem-heavy Westland and Warren are conducted.

Until then, Democrats can't pass a Paid Family Leave Act, a drug affordability board or any other progressive policy, for that matter.

Never fear! The temporary split-control situation creates a perfect chance to address the issue Lansing loves to talk about to score political points, but only acts on under severe pressure: transparency.

Transparency in government used to be the issue only journalists and people on "the outside" cared about. That attitude seems to be shifting.

Last month, Progress Michigan found that a 25% plurality ranked government transparency and lobbying reform as their top issue to close out the 2023 legislative session, ahead of affordable housing (16%), "holding utilities accountable" (16%) and abortion reform (15%).

As it turns out, the Legislature did something on the transparency front, but only because Proposal 1 of 2022 forced them to do it.

Come next year, the Legislature, governor, secretary of state, attorney general and those running for those positions must publicly reveal where they get their income.

Nobody needs to cough up tax returns. Nobody needs to bear their financial soul to the world. Spouses and dependents don't need to report whence they get their money, unless it's lobbying.

Whether a legislative candidate makes \$1 million a year as a CEO or \$25,000 cleaning toilets, they're checking the same box: that they made \$1,000 or more a year from (fill in the blank).

This isn't the gold standard of financial disclosure, but it follows the Constitution. So, it's something, I guess.

With the House at a 54-54 split, both parties have something to lose or gain. It's time for Democrats and Republicans to hold hands and take the plunge on something greater: expanding the Freedom of Information Act to themselves and disclosing all business-related travel.

This isn't bringing back "FOIA Lite"

that the so-called Speaker Lee Chatfield & Friends passed three sessions in a row, the one where the House and Senate follows its own hole-riddled disclosure law. This is about lawmakers following the same FOIA law that local governments, school boards and the state bureaucracy must follow.

Same with the governor.

We can all appreciate the governor's tight security after having her life threatened. Still, if the public isn't making sure she is following the Constitution when she relinquishes her powers to the lieutenant governor when she's outside of Michigan, who will?

Documents related to her past out-of-state travel must be fair game for disclosure.

Likewise, all business-related travel for lawmakers must be publicly disclosed, even if it's a week or two after the fact.

With groups like the Jewish Federation of Metro Detroit, National Popular Vote and the Beer & Wine Wholesalers traditionally welcoming legislators for lightly disclosed learning events in tropical locations, constituents deserve to know who has influence and who does not.

The bill Gov. Gretchen Whitmer is expected to sign soon calls for only the disclosure of lobbyist-paid travel. Groups routinely get around this by saying that nobody is being directly lobbied to do this, that or the other thing.

Ok. Why was the Senate majority leader in Brazil? How many legislators toured Israel this year?

Without public disclosure, this information is only discovered second or third hand. If this type of reform isn't disclosed during a split, 54-54 House, who is going to make sure it happens?

The majority will not. They benefit from the secret pots of money and influence that help them keep a majority, regardless of whether we're talking Republicans or Democrats. House Republicans only passed open records laws in the prior three sessions when they knew the Senate would kill them.

They got the PR pop without having to live with the policy.

Now, with a House that has no majority until April, everybody is equally impacted by an open records law. It's the perfect time for sunshine.

(Email Kyle Melinn of the Capitol news service MIRS at melinnky@gmail.com.)



KYLE MELINN

Opinion

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'A generational show'

Original choreographer and director return for North American 'Hairspray' tour

By DAVID WINKELSTERN

Since director John Waters' "Hairspray" movie was released in 1988, a slew of versions have followed.

The "Hairspray" musical has appeared on Broadway, coast-to-coast across the United States and far beyond — including on Royal Caribbean cruises. It was broadcast live on NBC in 2016. High schools regularly perform its school adaptation. Riverwalk Theatre produced the musical in June 2019.

So, why should you see yet another "Hairspray" tour when the musical comes to the Wharton Center's Cobb Great Hall Wednesday (Nov. 29) through Sunday (Dec. 3)?

"I think it's sensational," choreographer Jerry Mitchell said. "After all these years, it's still quite sensational."

Mitchell choreographed the Tony Award-winning Broadway production of the show that opened in 2002. He continues to be an enthusiastic cheerleader for the original stage version, about a "pleasantly plump" teen who yearns to be on a local TV dance program — and helps to integrate it.

"Something happens when you create something from scratch," Mitchell said from his home overlooking Manhattan's south side. "There's a magic that happens that's hard to replace. You don't know it when you're doing it. You're doing your work and hoping for the best, but sometimes that special thing happens, and it defines a show for many, many years."

Mitchell said this has happened with a couple of shows he's worked on, but "Hairspray" was "certainly the first."

"It's become a generational show," he said.

When the show first opened on Broadway, Mitchell noticed that a lot of parents were taking their youngsters to see it.

"Those young people are now parents themselves, and they're bringing their kids back to see 'Hairspray' again because their memories of the

show were so sensational," he said.

To him, the story about integration makes the musical, set in 1962, still relevant today.

"Unfortunately, integration is still such a big issue in our country and in our world," he said. "Hairspray's" messages about accepting others and making space for everyone mean a great deal to him. He created — and for many years, directed — the annual Broadway Bares burlesque fundraiser for Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS. Mitchell said that "giving back" is what he'd most like to be remembered for.

Not much in the version of "Hairspray" coming to East Lansing has been changed from the original Broadway production, directed by Jack O'Brien, who's also returning for this tour. The show still features music by Marc Shaiman, lyrics by Shaiman and Scott Wittman and book by Mark O'Donnell and Thomas Meehan.

"We have changed a few lines to make it more inclusive," Mitchell said. "We've tried to update some things and give a little more power to a few of the Black characters who are creating their own moves in the show. They're small adjustments, but they've made a big impact on the company and the tours."

Before "Hairspray," Mitchell choreographed Broadway productions of "You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown," "The Full Monty" and "The Rocky Horror Show."

He went on to choreograph the Broadway production of "Legally Blonde" and Las Vegas' "Peepshow" as well as films such as "Camp," "In & Out" and "Drop Dead Gorgeous." He's won Tony Awards for his choreography in "La Cage aux Folles" and "Kinky Boots," also earning a Best Direction of a Musical nomination for the latter.

Even though it's quite a lot of work, Mitchell enjoys both choreographing and directing.

In 2011, he directed and choreographed a three-night, star-studded "Hairspray" production at the Hollywood Bowl amphitheater in Los Angeles. He also assumed the dual role for the original Broadway production of "Pretty Woman," which had a six-day run at the Wharton Center last December.

Mitchell was born and raised in Paw Paw. He credits the training he got there and nearby for his Broadway success.

"I went to Hope Summer Repertory Theatre in Holland, which was incredible," he said.

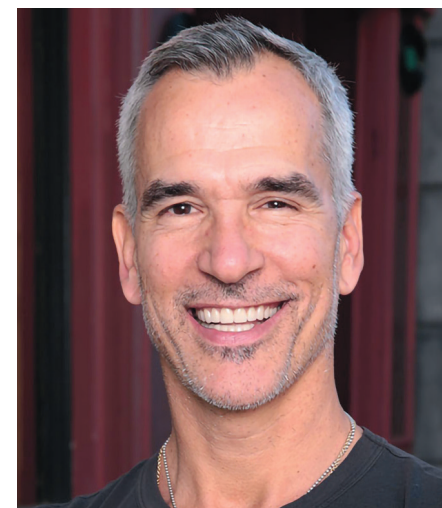
At 18, he moved from Michigan to St. Louis to attend Webster University's Sargent Conservatory of Theatre Arts. After two years, he visited New York City for spring break and auditioned with the late dancer and choreographer Agnes de Mille. He landed a dancing part in Broadway's 1980 revival of "Brigadoon."

Mitchell's athletic and energetic dance style was influenced by de Mille and later by mentors like the late choreographers Michael Bennett, Bob Avian and Jerome Robbins. When watching Mitchell's choreography, "I hope you would notice I like to have fun," he said.

"Michael and Jerome taught me to tell the story with choreography," he said. "Working as a choreographer, you're doing exactly the same work a writer is doing. The difference is, you're doing it physically. You have to write the language for the character physically, and no two characters are alike. That's what I love most about choreography — finding that."

He mentioned that finding the right cast members is getting harder for him — and not for the reason you may think.

"It's mind-blowing how talented the people are who come to audition for shows," he said. "I always say I could



Courtesy photo

"I think it's sensational," choreographer Jerry Mitchell said of "Hairspray," running at the Wharton Center through Dec. 3. "After all these years, it's still quite sensational."

cast a show five times with the people who walk into the room. The trick is finding the person who, when they sing the songs and read the scene, you believe is telling you something for the very first time. You don't believe anyone wrote it. You believe they're just talking to you."

Having the privilege of picking casts, choreographing and directing might not have happened for Mitchell if two of the first friends he made in New York weren't Shaiman and Wittman.

"We worked on little off-Broadway shows and in the clubs, and we all wanted to be on Broadway," Mitchell said. "Cut to 23 years later — 'Hairspray' opened on Broadway, and they wanted me to choreograph it!"

Mitchell had worked with O'Brien on "The Full Monty," and his friends asked if Mitchell could get him to direct "Hairspray."

"I'm sure I can get him," he told them. Mitchell and O'Brien, who was born in Saginaw, continued to work together for a decade on musicals like "Catch Me if You Can" and "Dirty Rotten Scoundrels."

"It was the perfect storm," Mitchell said.

"Hairspray"

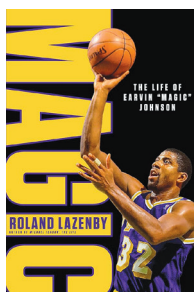
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This year's top reads to give as holiday gifts

By **BILL CASTANIER**

The holiday season is upon us, and it's time to start prepping gifts for friends, family, coworkers and beyond. For avid readers, there are a few standout books in a range of genres that have been published this year that recipients will likely crack open as soon as the gift exchange is over — if they can wait that long. Some of the books are pretty long, however, so just don't try to stuff them in a stocking.

"Magic: The Life of Earvin 'Magic' Johnson"



\$40, hardcover

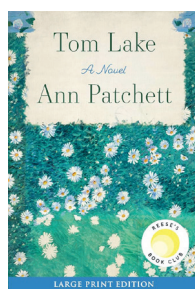
I'm not positive that we need another 800-page biography of Earvin "Magic" Johnson, who parlayed his basketball career with the Los Angeles Lakers into a billion-dollar enterprise, but why not.

The new book by Roland Lazenby, who has written several books on the Lakers and one tome on Michael Jordan, delves into this superstar player who could see the floor better than anyone who ever played the game. Fortunately, folks in the Lansing area got to watch this wonder grow up playing some amazing games. Faceoffs with his cross-town rivals were legendary — people still talk about watching him play at Jenison Field House against Eastern High School's Jay Vincent.

"Tom Lake"

\$30, hardcover

"Tom Lake," by Ann Patchett, has been on The New York Times' best-sellers' list for months, and her fans can't get enough of her melodious writing.

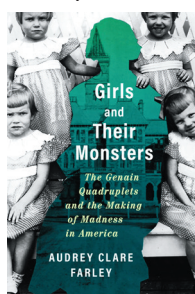


What locals will like about her new book is that it's set in Michigan during the COVID-19 pandemic. The protagonist was once an amateur summer-stock performer who spent a summerlong tryst with a young actor

who went on to become a megastar. She eventually settled down and married a cherry grower in the Traverse City area. Her three children are sheltering in place with her during COVID, and she decides to tell them the amazing story of the summer love affair. There are some surprises that will keep you guessing right through to the end.

"Girls and Their Monsters: The Genuine Quadruplets and the Making of Madness in America"

\$29, hardcover



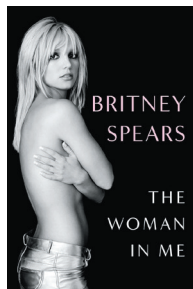
"Girls and Their Monsters," by Audrey Farley, is a very bleak book, but it deserves to be read — especially by Lansing residents, who may have heard about the book's subject, the Morlok quadruplets.

The girls dominated the news and life in Lansing from the '30s to the '50s. Farley's book reveals that the quadruplets lived in an abusive household, were sexually assaulted and were all diagnosed with schizophrenia. Most of these problems were hidden from the public eye.

"The Woman in Me"

\$32.99, hardcover

"The Woman in Me" is the tell-all memoir of Britney Spears, who was a dominant



force in pop music in the late '90s and early 2000s. There are numerous cringeworthy moments — especially when she details the conservatorship run by her abusive father. Much of the book's content has been covered in gossip, movie and music magazines, but just in case you've forgotten, it's now all in one place. For those who are relatively clueless about Spears, some of her antics will leave you shaking your head. That said, her book has been at the top of The New York Times' best-sellers' list for a few weeks.

"The All-American"

\$16.99, paperback

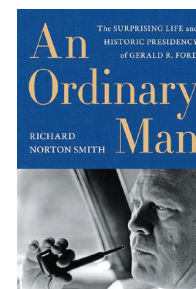
In "The All American," former Lansing resident Susie Finkbeiner tells a wonderful tall tale of women's baseball, apple pie, soda-shop dates and Sen. Joseph McCarthy's Red Scare of the 1950s. The author has hit it out of the park with her fictional account of a confusing era in American history.

The book revolves around the four members of the Harding family, who appear to be living the American Dream. Bertha wants to play for the Sweet Peas, a professional women's baseball team. Her sister, Flossie, is an avid reader with a bright future. Their dad is a famous writer, and their mother holds down the home front, but it all comes crashing down around them when their father is accused of being a Communist.

"An Ordinary Man: The Surprising Life and Historic Presidency of Gerald R. Ford"

\$50, hardcover

"An Ordinary Man," by Richard Nor-

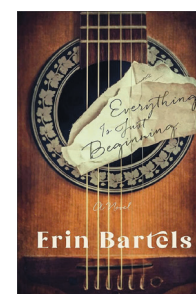


ton Smith — another 850-page behemoth — is the most complete biography of Gerald R. Ford, the only United States president to hail from Michigan. It makes for interesting

political reading — especially nowadays, when social media bombards us every minute with bombastic political stories. Without question, Ford led the country during some interesting times, and it's still debated whether pardoning Nixon and draft dodgers cost him the 1976 presidential election.

"Everything Is Just Beginning"

\$17.99, paperback



Lansing author Erin Bartels' sixth book, "Everything Is Just Beginning," tugs at the heart in all the right places.

It's a rags-to-riches, rise-to-fame plot as Michael, a young man who lives in a trailer with his estranged father's twin brother, finds his soulmate, Natalie, when he stumbles into a New Year's Eve party in a nearby gated community.

But the book isn't just a fluffy love story; it confronts death and dying and a complicated father-son relationship. It also explores the challenges of making it in the music industry and exactly what that means to Michael and Natalie's relationship.

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Lake Life Farms prioritizes care, passion and quality



Nicole Noechel/City Pulse

Lake Life Farms' new provisioning center on East Michigan Avenue.

By **CHRIS SILVA**

Lansing's former Best Buds provisioning center was one of my all-time favorite cannabis institutions in Michigan. I have fond memories of my time as a patient and later as a vendor at the East Michigan Avenue dispensary, which was run by a unique group of caregivers with a deep connection to the cannabis community and an authentic passion for the plant. I first became acquainted with the store while working as the campaign manager for the ill-fated MI Legalize campaign to legalize recreational cannabis. The operators were ardent supporters of legalization and cannabis rights in Michigan. The

store exemplified the strong ethos and community around medical cannabis that radiated from the capital city and its many cannabis retail locations.

Shortly after the Lansing City Council reformed medical cannabis and created a licensing system, the location was shuttered and fell subject to the administrative drudge that is Lansing city government. Over the years, operators have come and gone in the turbulent legal cannabis industry. But after years of uncertainty, the location at 2617 E. Michigan Ave. has opened with a new operator, Lake Life Farms. The company is family-owned and operated, with staff who have been active in the canna-

bis scene since the caregiver and legacy market era. The business also operates a cultivation and processing facility that specializes in top-shelf hash and other solventless products. Its consumer-facing brands, Ice Cream Hash Co. and Saucey, have quickly become known throughout the industry for offering quality products at accessible prices.

In my opinion, the thing that makes Lake Life Farms unique is how knowledgeable and passionate its staff is about cannabis. It would be easy for this group to use its industry knowledge and rock-solid standard operating procedures to crank out high-THC, terpene-rich mids. But these operators are committed to cultivating a brand that's sustainable and profitable and known for quality and consistency, as opposed to a few real estate guys who made a killing holding market space for their corporate overlords.

Lake Life Farms' commitment to quality is evident in its product offerings from its own brands as well as the brands carried in its stores. The Lansing store has launched with some of the most widely known and respected names in Michigan cannabis, many hailing from Lansing and almost all having caregiver and legacy market roots. Director of Operations Kendra Godette is a Lansing native who gained a lot of experience in the Lansing caregiver and legacy markets. We talked fondly of the time when almost 90 gray-market trap stores dominated the city's cannabis trade and the spirit of community was much more prevalent.



This spirit is what Lake Like Farms is trying to recapture and grow in its Lansing store.

The retail location, nestled between Michigan State University and downtown Lansing, will serve as a space for consumers and patients to access and find information about some of the only legal solventless products that truly compete with the offerings available through the legacy market. In addition, though its own vertically integrated brands, it's able to bring unique top-shelf offerings to consumers at a truly accessible price. The dispensary is looking to become the premier retailer of old-school hash like full-melt, temple balls, live rosin and live-rosin-infused pre-rolls. Godette also told me that the business is close to introducing aged hash and will sell it deli-style in the store from a huge block, a throwback to the old Lansing trap stores.

Godette and the other operators and owners of Lake Life Farms have a very authentic and intricate understanding of the cannabis industry, both on the retail and wholesale sides. I believe this location will quickly become the flagship store for the former caregiver group that has three other retail locations in Cedar Springs, Big Rapids and Stanton. Lansing consumers have a great palate for hash and other fine cannabis products. I think this location will offer some of the most accessible and best-quality hash that people will be able to find in the legal market. I also believe these folks know enough about the industry and consumer trends to make this retail location thrive.

It's important that we use our dollars to vote for the industry and cannabis community we all want to see. There are many people in Lansing who miss the community and feeling of opportunity that permeated the old medical community in the times before full regulation. I implore these folks to give Lake Life Farms a chance. I think they'll find the care, passion and quality that seemed so much more present before all the Chads showed up and turned everything into a THC and price arms race. Together, we can lift up good operators and take back our culture from the profiteering carpetbaggers dragging it toward commodification.

CITY OF EAST LANSING

2024 CITY COUNCIL MEETING SCHEDULE

Regular Meetings
Hannah Community Center, Banquet Hall, 7:00 p.m.

Discussion Only Meetings
Hannah Community Center, Banquet Hall, 7:00 p.m.

| | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. January 9 | 12. April 16 | 23. September 17 |
| 2. January 16 | 13. May 7 | 24. October 1 |
| 3. January 23 | 14. May 14 | 25. October 8 |
| 4. February 6 | 15. May 21 | 26. October 15 |
| 5. February 13 | 16. June 4 | 27. November 19 |
| 6. February 20 | 17. June 11 | 28. December 3 |
| 7. March 5 | 18. June 18 | 29. December 10 |
| 8. March 12 | 19. July 9 | |
| 9. March 19 | 20. August 13 | |
| 10. April 2 | 21. September 3 | |
| 11. April 9 | 22. September 10 | |

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Mad, Mad Dan Dan Laird

Angry Talent Entertainment grows from deep roots in the local music scene



Courtesy of Dan Dan Laird

Dan Dan Laird, a longtime Lansing local, musician and founder/operator of Lansing-area music booking agency Angry Talent Entertainment, plays a solo acoustic set in East Lansing.

By CHELSEA LAKE ROBERTS

Dan Dan Laird goes by Dan twice, a throwback to an inside joke between college friends. A longtime Lansing local and former half of the music duo the Swift Brothers, Laird has recently turned his passion for music and the relationships he's built over the years into a new booking agency called Angry Talent Entertainment.

Laird is fair with bright blue eyes. He's quick to smile and very polite. Folks in the industry speak about him with great warmth and admiration. So, what's he so mad about?

"I tried coming up with generic-sounding agency names like 'Top Notch Talent' and things like that. But I'd just watched an episode of 'Last Week Tonight' about artificial intelligence and art, so I started putting ideas for a talent agency name into an online generator. I don't know where the word 'angry' came from, but I really liked the image that it spit out. I showed it to my wife and was like, 'Does this work?' We liked the name paired with the image."

I pressed him a little. Is this frowning man a sort of alter ego?

"Maybe a little," he said. "For a long time, there's been just one booking agent with a monopoly on the venues in the Lansing area. His only concern is making money off the hard work of others. I have enough stories to fill a book. So, yeah, maybe there's a little anger there."

But if Laird is mad, he doesn't show it. His new talent agency is all about living well, paying artists well and pushing back against poor practices in the local music scene.

"We live in a crazy world where everybody thinks everybody's against each other all the time. I think if we can change that mindset in the Lansing area, we can all team up and make something successful," he said.

Like most artists in our community, Laird's life was turned upside down during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"A silver lining of COVID was that we had a lot of family time," he said. "But when things started to open back up, the pendulum started to swing the other way. The Swift Brothers were booking 10 to 12 months in advance." Laird had a regular solo gig at the Peanut Barrel on Friday nights, but when other shows started to pick back up, he had to find

a replacement. That's how the booking started. Then, in early 2023, the Swift Brothers decided to disband.

"My kids are at that age now where it's their time to shine. We've got a full-time after-school activity schedule — and there's no such thing as last-minute family plans," he said.

While balancing his day job and family, Angry Talent is a new avenue for Laird to uplift the local music scene through the three pillars he's focused on: musicians, venues and community.

"It's not like we made a ton of profit this year, but I'm going to make a contribution back to the local music community," he said. On Nov. 21, he made a \$500 donation to the Michigan State University Community Music School's financial assistance program.

Musicians and venue owners report an appreciation for Laird's approach. JP Peters of local band JP & The Energy said, "Dan is my go-to Lansing guy. Coming into 2024, he's going to be my right-hand man."

Although Peters works with multiple talent agents to book shows across Michigan, he said, "Dan is at the top of my list. Lansing lost so many venues



Courtesy of Dan Dan Laird

The Angry Talent Entertainment logo, which Dan Dan Laird created using artificial intelligence.

during the pandemic, but people like him are starting to bring that live entertainment back. It's great to see him doing his thing."

Mike Krueger, who purchased the Peanut Barrel last year with business partner John Mosholder and has run the East Lansing bar and burger joint

See Angry Talent, Page 12

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Get to know some of the musicians on Angry Talent's roster

By NICOLE NOECHEL

Angry Talent Entertainment would be nothing without local musicians and bands to play the shows it books. These artists put their hearts and souls into the music, playing a range of genres, from country, rock, pop and R&B covers to handwritten originals. Whether performing as acoustic solo acts or full bands, the musicians bring energy and drive to the stage and keep audiences coming back for more. A few of them shared with City Pulse how they got involved with music, how they began working with Dan Dan Laird of Angry Talent and more.

Mark Collins



Courtesy of Mark Collins

Mark Collins of Lansing has an unusual live music setup.

"I do a lot of live looping. For those who aren't familiar, I typically mention Ed Sheeran since he's a big name and does many of his shows as just him and the looper," he said. "Basically, there are no pre-recorded studio tracks. I play and capture a few measures of guitar, then the same for bass, drums, etc., and then sing. At the end of the song, I erase and start over. It keeps me on my toes."

Collins has some original tracks that he plays every once in a while, but he said, "Covers are what people really want to hear. Plus, there's an art to taking a song someone else has

written and produced and making it your own."

He began performing in elementary school and was later involved in choir, theater and a band with his friends when he reached high school.

"It's just continued from there," he said. "Music always felt natural, like a language that works for all occasions or emotions. It fosters a sense of connection. There's an expressive part that is different for each musician, and I love that. Taking a song that people know and doing something completely new and unexpected with it is a lot of fun."

See Musicians, Page 13



Courtesy of Dan Dan Laird

Two members of the Dangling Particles, a Lansing-based "jazzy indie-folk band," play an acoustic set at the Peanut Barrel, booked by Angry Talent Entertainment.

Angry Talent

from page 11

Crunchy's with Mosholder since 2015, has experience as both a restaurateur and a musician. He worked at the Small Planet, a storied East Lansing venue that closed for good in 2009, as well as the Temple Club before it was converted to the Temple Lofts apartments. He also used to own a record store called Vinyl Addicts. He said that for a restaurant owner, working with a talent agent can be a major benefit.

"There are a million different things to attend to on a daily basis. When I've got people looking to play here, I can send them on to him. He's very responsive to texts and phone calls — that's what really sets him apart from a lot of talent agents that I've dealt with," Krueger said of Laird.

Laird's first memorable brush with the music business occurred when he was just 19 years old and opening for "a real band" at the Small Planet. The headliners were guys in their mid-30s.

"They seemed ancient to us," he recalled with a smile. But at the end of the night, the headliners turned to Laird and his friends to ask for help.

"They had signed a deal with someone that was supposed to manage them.

Whatever gigs the manager booked, he got a cut, and whatever gigs they booked on their own, the manager got a cut of that, too," Laird said. "Well, the manager stopped booking gigs, so these guys were just stuck out on a limb and giving him money for nothing."

For Laird, that early lesson was sobering.

"It seemed wrong. These guys who seemed like they knew everything were asking for our help," he said. "At that time, we were really excited about the idea of working with agents, but that made us more cautious."

Booking music could be described as both an art and a science. Everyone benefits when the booker understands the technology, the acoustics in the space and the nuanced category of "vibes."

"The Peanut Barrel is very small," Krueger said. "Whoever Dan books has to be somebody who can keep it chill and not take over the restaurant as a venue, per se, but they understand what they're doing and can add to the ambiance of a Friday night."

Laird added, "When we first set up the space at the Peanut Barrel, we were right in front of the dart boards. When someone first shows up, they might be thinking, 'They're going to be throwing at me.' But since then, Mike's invested in a house PA and mounted speakers up high. Carving out the space in the venue



Courtesy of Dan Dan Laird

A trio of members from the Wild Honey Collective, a Lansing-based folk and roots group, perform at the Old Bag of Nails Pub, booked by Angry Talent Entertainment.

like that is good. The artist can just plug right in."

Laird laughed as he remembered a place in Howell where his band used to have to wait for customers to finish eating.

"They never moved the table where we were supposed to play, so the venue would just pay us to sit at the bar and do nothing for an hour," he said.

Krueger said the bottom line for the restaurant is a little harder to quantify.

"I don't know if we make more money when you factor in paying the artists, but it's more about creating a space where we have that vibe on a weekly basis. If people want to come out and see live music, we are here to support that," he said. "The local talent has brought family and friends and people who otherwise wouldn't have popped in. Hopefully we can give them a great experience while they're here, and they'll want to come back again."

Krueger and Laird agree that it's important to do it right when it comes to compensating musicians. Although some artists might be tempted to play for free just to get exposure, Laird encourages them to think twice.

"Musicians have that same struggle that photographers have. Anybody can pick up a camera, anybody can pick up a guitar, and so everybody thinks that it must be easy. You love it, so you

don't need to make a lot of money doing it. But that's not true. We've all played for 50 bucks and a pitcher of beer. But I hope new musicians coming in will think of their music community as well. When you agree to a raw deal, that perpetuates a raw deal for everyone else," he said.

While Laird works directly with artists to find them spaces to play at, he also partners directly with venues that understand the value of bringing musicians into their space.

"When Toscana opened up, I worked my way through their email chain to say, 'I can help you, what do you want to do?' They wanted jazz, which is different than what I normally do, but I figured out which doors to knock on. I found them a solo artist one night and a trio the other," he said.

Working with venues as a client can be fun, and I could tell that Laird sees their requests as a kind of adventure — maybe even a quest.

"One venue asked me, 'Can you find a group that plays classical stringed instruments, but instead of classical songs, they're modern pop songs?'" he said.

We laughed. Does Michigan have its own Brooklyn Duo?

"I found them a group out of Ann Arbor," he said. "I'm hanging my hat on being able to pull rabbits out of it."



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Musicians

from page 12

Before embarking on his solo venture, Collins played in the now-defunct Lansing bands Palexia Went to England and the Swift Brothers, both with Laird, whom he met in college.

"We worked together at Pizza Hut. There were like seven of them in the Lansing area at that point. I was actually his boss for a while," Collins said. "We were roommates after that. He officiated my wedding, and I played for his. We were in bands together for the better part of almost two decades."

Collins' favorite venues to play in the Lansing area are Harrison Roadhouse, which he says is full of nostalgia since he used to play there weekly with Laird, and the Beer Garden at Horrocks Farm Market.

"It's truly a unique venue. Where else can you play a show in a giant greenhouse while people enjoy beer and pizza?" he said.

To hear Collins' music and view a list of his upcoming shows, visit macsimusmusic.com.

Darin Lerner Jr.



Courtesy of Darin Lerner Jr.

Lansing native Darin Lerner Jr. has been performing in front of audiences since he was 9 years old.

"It started at the Temple Club when my dad would play solo acoustic shows there. He would always have me up there to perform a couple of tunes," Lerner said. "I got my first guitar at the age of 8 and wrote my first original song at the age of 9. I just knew it would be my passion, and I stuck with it."

Lerner is the lead guitarist and vocalist for the Darin Lerner Band as well as his dad's band, Hidden Agenda. He also recently joined the cover band Geech. On top of all this, he plays occasional acoustic solo gigs, where he performs a mix of covers and originals.

"I always enjoy writing my own music and being able to showcase it when I play out," he said. "I play all sorts of styles. I usually bring a jam-band vibe when performing rock, blues and funk songs, and even hip-hop and Motown."

He enjoys playing at Lansing Brewing

Co. and The Green Door with full bands and the Peanut Barrel when he's solo.

"The crowd is always friendly, and the staff is incredible. They really respect all the musicians that play there," he said of the Peanut Barrel. "But that being said, I've had nothing but great experiences playing at all the other venues Dan has booked me for."

Lerner began working with Angry Talent Entertainment a little over a year ago, when it was founded. He appreciates the gigs Laird has booked for him around town.

"The guy really looks out for us, and you can tell he cares," Lerner said.

Follow Lerner's upcoming performances at darinlernerjr.com, [facebook.com/darinlernerjrmusic](https://www.facebook.com/darinlernerjrmusic) and [facebook.com/darinlernerband](https://www.facebook.com/darinlernerband).

Tommy McCord



Photo by Charlie Marie

Tommy McCord of Lansing began performing in 2001, at the age of 14.

"I grew up in Ionia, so I split my early show years between Lansing and Grand Rapids, but since I formed The Plurals in 2004, I've been primarily a Lansing-area musician," he said. "The music scene drew me in as a teenager, Michigan State University brought me to live directly in the area, and the general community — music, art, culture — has now kept me here for over half my life! My most active gigging band at the moment is the Wild Honey Collective, which performs a unique spin on folk and country music in various lineups."

Like a lot of musicians, he said, he's "only ever known a world where I was fascinated by music and drawn to the sound of studio production."

"I was fortunate to have older cousins that played instruments, so I got started early. It remains the center of my life and is my main source of expression, socialization and livelihood," he said.

While McCord was teaching at School of Rock East Lansing, he met and connected with Laird.

"We quickly hashed out all the common folks of our social circle, and once he knew I was active in the folk/country/roots scene, he offered a small lineup of Wild Honey some performances at the Peanut Barrel in East Lansing at the beginning of 2023," McCord said. "I enjoy working with Dan because

he's also a musician, so I know he and I share a lot of the same values with performing and treating artists fairly — it can be a rare thing in this industry."

He enjoys playing punk and rock shows at The Avenue Cafe, where he's also the events coordinator, but said the Wild Honey Collective thrives in "more intimate spaces" like Horrocks Farm Market and Moriarty's Pub.

"As a graduate of MSU, I particularly enjoy when Dan books our duo/trio at the Peanut Barrel — it's one of East Lansing's few cultural mainstays," he added.

Stay up to date with the Wild Honey Collective at gtgrecords.net/thewildhoneycollective.

Carl Pawluk



Courtesy of Carl Pawluk

Carl Pawluk regularly travels from St. Johns to Lansing to cover country hits, '80s and '90s radio classics and some newer pop songs. He's been performing live for two years and has yet to join a band, but he said he would be interested in forming a duo if the right opportunity were to arise.

"I've loved music since I could speak," he said. "My father was a musician. He's gone now but is still probably my favorite. Music is a wonderful outlet for me. And the extra income is always nice."

Pawluk came into contact with Angry Talent as he was beginning to perform live.

"When I was starting out, I reached out to Angry Talent because I saw a Facebook post about live music at the Peanut Barrel. I was trying to get booked wherever I could," he said. "There's a lot of talent around and not that many live music venues. We're well into our second year of working together, and I'm grateful."

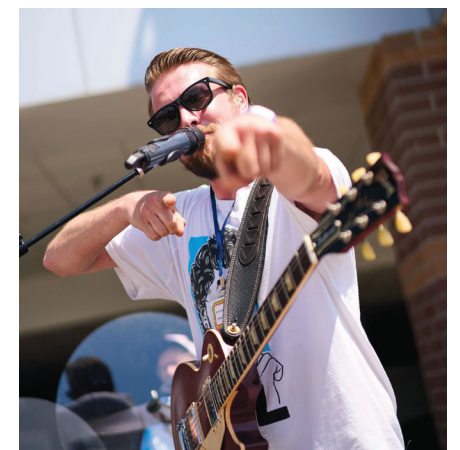
In terms of favorite venues, he said his favorite place to play is "anywhere the crowd is engaged."

"Aside from that, I appreciate venues that appreciate the value of entertainment. Dan and Angry Talent have been great at communicating that message on behalf of local talent. And to that end, places like the Peanut Barrel and Harrison Roadhouse have been a pleasure to work with."

Check out Pawluk's list of cov-

ers and upcoming performances at carlpawlukmusic.com.

JP Peters



Courtesy of JP Peters

John Patrick Peters of Lansing, known more simply as JP, was drawn to music by older family members.

"My father and grandfather played guitar, and it just seemed like what the cool kids did," he said. "Over the years, it's grown to have a much deeper meaning."

He began playing guitar and singing when he was a teenager, performing in a variety of bands, ranging from pop and country to R&B and jazz. He later moved to the Lansing area to study jazz guitar at MSU under Professor Randy Napoleon. He now plays in a band called JP & The Energy, which has performed at a slew of Lansing festivals and beyond. The group plays Top 40 covers from the early 2000s to today as well as originals.

"In my own writing, I tend to touch on things I normally wouldn't speak about in an artist way that may let me further express my idea by setting the vibe and atmosphere through the music," he said. "As far as being a performer, it is most definitely a high you get playing for people and seeing the joy and outbursts of emotion that you're helping to make happen. Music is the language of the world."

Peters began working with Angry Talent after noticing Laird's name and the name of the booking agency "were starting to appear everywhere."

"From the second we first talked, I could tell he had something special. A drive and positive character not present in most local talent reps in the area," Peters said. "We have been working together for about a year now and have some big plans coming up for 2024 involving JP & The Energy!"

Peters is excited about the new horizons that Angry Talent brings to the Lansing-area music scene.

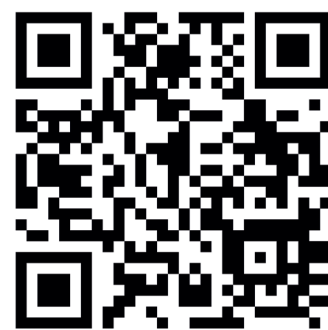
"Hot take, but Lansing has had too much of the same stuff for the past 10-plus years, and I'm a firm believer that reinvigorating our local music scene with fresh new artists and venues is dire to having a growing scene and culture in our community," he said.

Follow JP & The Energy at [facebook.com/JPandTheEnergy](https://www.facebook.com/JPandTheEnergy).

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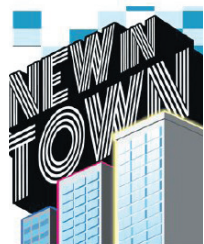


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Relax, unwind and fill your belly at The Comfort Zone

By TYLER SCHNEIDER



The Comfort Zone Cigar Lounge & Bistro

600 S. Pennsylvania Ave., Lansing
11 a.m.-11 p.m.
Tuesday-Thursday
11 a.m.-midnight
Friday
Noon-midnight
Saturday
Noon-8 p.m. Sunday
517-882-7500
theczlounge.com

I could hear the excitement in Re'Shane Lonzo's voice as she discussed The Comfort Zone Cigar Lounge & Bistro, a new Black-owned space that opened last month in the building that formerly housed Leo's Outpost.

"When we saw that Leo's had closed and was on the market, we thought it would be a great building to revitalize and keep alive, to kind of carry some kind of mantle," she said.

Lonzo and her husband, Steve, bought the 4,230-square-foot space at 600 S. Pennsylvania Ave. in January. They thought it was the perfect spot for a concept they'd been considering for several years. Both avid travelers, the duo often finds their way into the many wayward cigar shops where Steve, "a cigar connoisseur," likes to make pilgrimages.

"When we travel and go to different

places, I'm always looking for the other benefits of that place. So, if it's a cigar lounge, I want to make sure that it has good food or drinks because I might not always be in the mood to smoke a cigar. But, if I can accompany him, it makes it an enjoyable space for both of us to have date night and spend time together," Lonzo said.

"We spent the last couple of years thinking about how cool it would be to have something like this in Lansing," she added.

They did some research on dedicated cigar lounges in the Lansing area and found that there weren't any that also offered meals and alcoholic beverages. By opening The Comfort Zone, the pair also became the proprietors of the only Black-owned cigar lounge in the Lansing area.

The business held a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Nov. 16. Now staffed with 15 employees and hiring more by the week, The Comfort Zone rosters more than 350 brands of cigars — a number that is also constantly growing. It also has "seven or eight" vendors that visit each month for tastings and events.

"We have traveled around the country to establish new relationships with vendors that now have cigars in our humidior," Lonzo said. "Each month, we've been able to negotiate with these vendors we do business with and get them to come to our city, sit down, do a

cut-and-light and tell us about the history of their cigars."

Wednesday (Nov. 29) from 4 to 8 p.m., the business will host a representative from the Nicaragua-based company My Father Cigars. Lonzo said it's the first time the brand has held a tasting in Lansing. Oliva Cigar Co., also based in Nicaragua, is set to make its first trip to Michigan in January. Padron Family Reserve, which typically has a three-year waiting list, has also signed a contract with The Comfort Zone.

Additional offerings include a full drink menu with specialty cocktails and food options like pasta, flatbread pizzas, steak, scallops and salads. Another highlight is an expansive brunch menu.

In the future, the pair would like to work with charity organizations to give back to the community. One idea they've floated is to host a classic car and cigar show and donate the proceeds to a local nonprofit.

"This is where we live and play. We believe in this community, and that's why we invest in this community," Lonzo said. "That's why we wanted to do something that was so unique and different, something that has the potential to cross those lines in the sand and bring us all together in a different way. That's what we have found here."



Courtesy photo

Steve (left) and Re'Shane Lonzo, owners of The Comfort Zone Cigar Lounge & Bistro, which opened last month at the former location of Leo's Outpost on South Pennsylvania Avenue.



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'Murder for Two' back by popular demand, with a seasonal twist

By **DANA DEMINK**

On a fateful Christmas Eve in an isolated New England mansion, shots are fired at the surprise birthday party of great American novelist Arthur Whitney. When it's discovered that the writer has been fatally wounded and the nearest detective is more



Review

"Murder for Two: Holiday Edition"

Through Dec. 23
8 p.m. Thursday-Saturday;
Dec. 20
2 p.m. Saturday-Sunday;
Dec. 13 and 20
Williamston Theatre
122 S. Putnam St.,
Williamston
williamstontheatre.org

than an hour away, small-town police officer Marcus Moscowicz is called in. Moscowicz dreams of one day hitting the big time and making detective, so he endeavors to showcase his sleuthing skills with the help of his silent partner, Lou. But who did it? Was it Dahlia Whitney, the author's offbeat widow? Barrette Lewis, the prima ballerina? Dr. Griff, the overly solicitous psychiatrist? Or was it the Christmas boys' choir?

Williamston Theatre's 2017 production of "Murder for Two" was the biggest ticket seller in its history. This joyful reunion of original actors Andrea Wollenberg and Mark

Schenfisch highlights the partnership between these two seasoned professionals. Schenfisch has acted in more than 120 performances of "Murder for Two" in regional theaters across the country, and this is Wollenberg's third run of playing all 10 suspects. The duo is an extremely well-oiled two-man band, guided by returning director Rob Roznowski.

While this reunion of actors, director and venue is a comedy triumph, the show also showcases the partnership between theater and audience. Actors regularly break the fourth wall and procure assistance from

audience members, with mirthful results. For those lucky enough to be seated in the first row, Schenfisch may invite you to hold up his detective manual while he sings "Protocol Says." Wollenberg may invite you on stage to play one of the dead suspects, and she may even winking-ly berate you about your cell phone



Photo by Chris Purchis

Andrea Wollenberg (left) as suspect Dahlia Whitney and Mark Schenfisch as police officer Marcus Moscowicz in Williamston Theatre's production of "Murder for Two: Holiday Edition."

ringing during one of her nimble and constantly transitioning character rants, thanks to John Lepard's sound design. It's clear that the actors revel in the improvisational nature of these interactions.

It's the final four-handed pia-

no duet, "Finale Ultimo (A Friend Like You)," that gets the audience on its feet. Complete with mistletoe launched from the theater rafters, this Holiday Edition of "Murder for Two" is the perfect way to capture the madcap joy of this time of year.

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Jonesin' Crossword

By Matt Jones

"De-Famed" -- is this name recognition?
by Matt Jones
© 2023 Matt Jones

ACROSS

- 1. Bottom-of-the-drink add-ins
- 5. Color Me ___ (1990s R&B group)
- 9. "Harold & ___ Go to White Castle"
- 14. M.B.A. class subj.
- 15. Dog voiced by Harvey Guill n in 2024's "The Garfield Movie"
- 16. Absurd
- 17. Element in diner signs
- 18. Pass out hands
- 19. Farmland measures
- 20. 1990s singer who's foolish, per hip-hop lingo of the time?
- 23. Bone of the forearm
- 24. "Diners, Drive-___ and Dives"
- 25. Hockey milieu
- 26. Late English presenter Paul whose drag persona was Lily Savage
- 28. Paddock parent
- 30. Rotate like a baton
- 32. Trophy or medal
- 34. Come up
- 35. Everyone seems to be following it now
- 38. Mopey designer who says "Thanks for noticing the new look"?
- 41. Tater ___ casserole
- 42. Gorme who sang "Blame It on the Bossa Nova"
- 43. Cozy spots
- 44. Discourage
- 45. Poker variety
- 46. A-ten-tion span?
- 49. Took a lunch break
- 50. General of menus
- 53. "Top Gun" org.

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| 62 | | | | | 63 | | | | 64 | | | |
| 65 | | | | | 66 | | | | 67 | | | |

- 15. 1950s-'60s singer trying to get himself to the front of the alphabet?
- 18. "___ Game: The Challenge"
- 20. Tennant of the Pet Shop Boys
- 21. Air conditioning conduit
- 22. Elephant's long teeth
- 23. Whipped up
- 24. State the same way
- 25. "Now you ___, now you don't"
- 26. Just manages, with "out"
- 27. Ad option that might take a while in the free version
- 28. Good Charlotte guitarist Madden
- 29. Arctic, for one
- 30. Well-read but not experienced, perhaps
- 31. The A in A.D.
- 32. Laced Victorian garment
- 33. Her albums are named for ages
- 34. Watch face
- 35. Sandwich shop
- 36. Sportage automaker
- 37. Relax, as one's toes
- 38. Actress Gibbs of "The Jeffersons"
- 39. Come to ___ (finish up)
- 40. State the same way
- 41. Stuff thrown from a park bench, maybe
- 42. Distractions
- 43. High-antioxidant drink
- 44. Actress Graynor
- 45. Hiking path
- 46. Content of some cellars
- 47. Talent show talent
- 48. Question starter
- 49. Assistant
- 50. Source of a movable feast?
- 51. Noah's vessel
- 52. Start of a U.S. capital
- 53. Laid-back, personality-wise
- 54. "Baba is ___" (puzzle game)
- 55. Mandrill in "The Lion King"
- 56. "Watermelon Sugar" singer Harry
- 57. Does some cleaning
- 58. Ending like "-like"
- 59. Reason why
- 60. Tolerate
- 61. 2014 Winter Games host city
- 62. In first place
- 63. "My treat"
- 64. Woodpecker's tool
- 65. Citrus refreshers
- 66. "Spring ahead" letters

DOWN

- 1. Good Charlotte
- 2. Arctic, for one
- 3. Well-read but not

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Answers on page 20

SUDOKU

Advanced

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | 7 | | 6 |
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Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Here's How It Works:
Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

Free Will Astrology

By Rob Breznsky November 29-December 5, 2023

ARIES (March 21-April 19): I will cheer you on as you tenderly push yourself to be extra exploratory in the coming weeks. It's exciting that you are contemplating adventures that might lead you to wild frontiers and half-forbidden zones. The chances are good that you will provoke uncanny inspirations and attract generous lessons. Go higher and deeper and further, dear Aries. Track down secret treasures and lyrical unpredictability. Experiment with the concept of holy rebellion.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): In January, I will tempt you to be a spirited adventurer who undertakes smart risks. I will invite you to consider venturing into unknown territory and expanding the scope of your education. But right now, I advise you to address your precious needs for stability and security. I encourage you to take extra good care of your comfort zone and even add cozy new features to it. Here's a suggestion: Grab a pen and paper or open a new file on your favorite device, then compose a list of everything you can do to feel exceedingly safe and supported.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Booker T. Washington (1856-1915) was a Black American leader who advocated a gradual, incremental approach to fighting the effects of racism. Hard work and good education were the cornerstones of his policies. Then there was W.E.B. Du Bois (1868-1963). He was a Black American leader who encouraged a more aggressive plan of action. Protest, agitation, pressure and relentless demands for equal rights were core principles of his philosophy. In the coming months, I recommend a blend of these attitudes for you. You've got two big jobs: to improve the world you live in and get all the benefits you need and deserve from it.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): I periodically get a big jolt of feeling how much I don't know. I am overwhelmed with the understanding of how meager my understanding of life really is. On the one hand, this is deflating to my ego. On the other hand, it's wildly refreshing. I feel a liberating rush of relief in acknowledging that I am so far from being perfect and complete that there's no need for me to worry about trying to be perfect or complete. I heartily recommend this meditation to you, fellow Cancerian. From an astrological perspective, now is a favorable time to thrive on fertile emptiness.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Have you reached your full height? If there were ever a time during your adult life when you would literally get taller, it might be in the coming weeks. And that's not the only kind of growth spurt that may occur. Your hair and fingernails may lengthen faster than usual. I wouldn't be shocked if your breasts or penis got bigger. But even more importantly, I suspect your healthy brain cells will multiply at a brisk pace. Your ability to understand how the world really works will flourish. You will have an increased flair for thinking creatively.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): I like Virgo author Cheryl Strayed's thoughts about genuine togetherness. She says, "True intimacy isn't a clusterfuck or a psychodrama. It isn't the highest highs and lowest lows. It's a tiny bit of those things on occasion, with a whole lot of everything else in between. It's communion and mellow compatibility. It's friendship and mutual respect." I also like Virgo author Sam Keen's views on togetherness. He says, "At the heart of sex is something intrinsically spiritual, the desire for a union so primal it can be called divine." Let's make those two perspectives your guideposts in the coming weeks, Virgo.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): According to my interpretation of your astrological prospects, you now have the capacity to accelerate quickly and slow down smoothly; to exult in idealistic visions and hunker down in pragmatic action; to balance exuberant generosity with careful discernment — and vice versa. In general, Libra, you have an extraordinary ability to shift moods and modes with graceful effectiveness — as well

as a finely honed sense of when each mood and mode is exactly right for the situation you're in. I won't be surprised if you accomplish well-balanced miracles.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Dear Goddess — Thank you a trillion times for never fulfilling those prayers I sent your way all those years ago. Remember? When I begged and pleaded with you to get me into a sexy love relationship with You Know Who? I am so lucky, so glad, that you rejected my prayers. Though I didn't see it then, I now realize that being in an intimate weave with her would have turned out badly for both her and me. You were so wise to deny me that misguided quest for "pleasure." Now, dear Goddess, I am asking you to perform a similar service for any Scorpio readers who may be beseeching you to provide them with experiences they will ultimately be better off without.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Among our most impressive superpowers is the potency to transform ourselves in alignment with our conscious intentions. For example, suppose you feel awkward because you made an insensitive comment to a friend. In that case, you can take action to assuage any hurt feelings you caused and thereby dissolve your awkwardness. Or let's say you no longer want to be closely connected to people who believe their freedom is more important than everyone else's freedom. With a clear vision and a bolt of willpower, you can do what it takes to create that shift. These are acts of true magic — as wizardly as any occult ritual. I believe you will have extra access to this superpower in the coming weeks. Homework: Identify three situations or feelings that you will use your magic to change.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): The eminent Capricorn philosopher William James (1842-1910) is referred to as the father of American psychology. He was a brilliant thinker who excelled in the arts of logic and reason. Yet he had a fundamental understanding that reason and logic were not the only valid kinds of intelligence. He wrote, "Rational consciousness is but one special type of consciousness, whilst all about it, parted from it by the filmiest of screens, there lie potential forms of consciousness entirely different." This quote appears in his book "The Varieties of Religious Experience." In accordance with astrological omens, I invite you to investigate those other types of consciousness in the coming months. You don't need drugs to do so. Simply state your intention that you want to. Other spurs: dreamwork, soulful sex, dancing, meditation, nature walks, deep conversations.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Are people sometimes jealous or judgmental toward you for being so adept at multi-tasking? Are you weary of dawdlers urging you not to move, talk and mutate so quickly? Do you fantasize about having more cohorts who could join you in your darting, daring leaps of logic? If you answered yes to these questions, I expect you will soon experience an enjoyable pivot. Your quick-change skills will be appreciated and rewarded more than usual. You will thrive while invoking the spiritual power of unpredictability.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Romantic relationships take work if you want them to remain vigorous and authentic. So do friendships. The factors that brought you together in the first place may not be enough to keep you bonded forever. Both of you change and grow, and there's no guarantee your souls will continue to love being interwoven. If disappointment creeps into your alliance, it's usually wise to address the issues head-on as you try to reconfigure your connection. It's not always feasible or desirable, though. I still feel sad about the friend I banished when I discovered he was racist and had hidden it from me. I hope these ruminations inspire you to give your friendships a lot of quality attention in 2024. It will be an excellent time to lift the best ones up to a higher octave.

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.

OUT on the TOWN

Events & Happenings in Lansing This Week

Events must be entered through the calendar at lansingcitypulse.com. Deadline is 4 p.m. Wednesday for the upcoming Wednesday edition. Charges may apply for paid events to appear in print. If you need assistance, please call Nicole at (517) 999-5066.

Wednesday, Nov. 29

27th Annual Delhi Community Tree Lighting - Carols, tree lighting, hot chocolate and visits with Santa. 6:30 p.m. Veterans Memorial Gardens, 2074 Aurelius Road, Holt. delhitownshipmi.gov.

"A Course of Love" Book Study, Facilitated by Lucille Olson & Bill Dietrich - 7 p.m. Zoom ID: 177 417 886. Passcode: 601744. unitylansing.org.

Acting & Glee Music Class for Kids - Ages 5-12. 4:30 p.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. 517-337-0464. ruhalacenter.com.

Allen Farmers Market - 3-6:30 p.m. 1629 E. Kalamazoo St., Lansing. 517-999-3911. allenneighborhoodcenter.org/market.

The Dangling Particles Duo at the Graduate Rock Bar - 8 p.m. 133 Evergreen Ave., East Lansing. 517-348-0900. facebook.com/graduaterockbar.

Eating for Balanced Blood Sugar: Joint Health and Mobility - Listen, learn and participate with ALIVE's registered dietitian and exercise physiologist. 3 p.m. Charlotte Community Library, 226 S. Bostwick St., Charlotte. 517-543-8859. charlottelibrary.org.

"Fitness Over 50" Senior Exercise Group - The Meridian Township Parks and Recreation Stretch and Flex Exercise group exercises at Central Park Pavilion. 9-10 a.m. 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos. meridian50plus.com.

"Hairspray" - 7:30 p.m. Wharton Center Cobb Great Hall, 750 E. Shaw Lane, East Lansing. 517-432-2000. whartoncenter.com.

"Home Alone" Trivia at LBC - Call us at 517-371-2600 to reserve a spot for your team. 7-10 p.m. Lansing Brewing Co., 518 E. Shiawassee St., Lansing. lansingbrewingcompany.com.

Improv Acting Class - 8:30 p.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. 517-337-0464. ruhalacenter.com.

Jazz Dance Class - 7 p.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. 517-337-0464. ruhalacenter.com.

Mid-Michigan Art Guild FALL MEMBER ART SHOW - 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Neighborhood Empowerment Center, 600 W. Maple St., Lansing. midmichiganartguild.org.

Mindfulness Meditation in the Thich Nhat Hanh tradition - All are welcome to join our weekly practice! 7-9 p.m. Van Hanh Temple, 3015 S. MLK Jr. Blvd., Lansing. lancm.info.

"Mixed Media Medley," by Bobbie Margolis - 9 a.m.-8 p.m. CADL - Okemos Library, 4321 Okemos Road, Okemos. Call 517-347-2021 beforehand to ensure gallery space is open. facebook.com/MidMichiganArtGuild.

Nature photography display, by Joyce Felzke - Hours subject to change as the Bookend Gallery is staffed by volunteers. Noon-4 p.m. CADL - Haslett Library, 1590 Franklin St., Haslett. 517-339-2324. cadl.org/about/our-locations/haslett.

Overbooked Book Club - "Romantic Comedy," by Curtis Sittenfeld. Intended for adults. 5 p.m. Eaton Rapids Area District Library, 220 S. Main St., Eaton Rapids. 517-663-0950. eradl.org.

Tap II Class - 6 p.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. 517-337-0464. ruhalacenter.com.

Weaving the Web: Life After Death - Join us online or in person for discussions, rituals, meditations and

more! 6 p.m. Keys to Manifestation, 809 Center St., Suite 7, Lansing. 517-657-5800. weaversoftheweb.org.

Wine Tasting at Fabiano's Grand Ledge - Enjoy wine samples from Burgdorf's Winery and pick up a pizza or other amazing food! 4-5 p.m. Fabiano's Pizza & Deli, 8949 W. Grand River Hwy., Grand Ledge. 517-655-2883. burgdorfwinery.com.

Thursday, Nov. 30

"A Course in Miracles," Facilitated by Lisa Schmidt - 7 p.m. Zoom ID: 177 417 886. Passcode: 601744. unitylansing.org.

Acting 101 Class - 7 p.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. 517-337-0464. ruhalacenter.com.

Acting Ensemble Class - 8 p.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. 517-337-0464. ruhalacenter.com.

Eloquents Toastmasters Weekly Meeting - Safe and positive environment to practice public speaking and leadership skills. 6:30 p.m. Okemos Presbyterian Church, 2258 Bennett Road, Okemos. eloquents.toastmastersclubs.org.

Five-Course Seafood Dinner Pairing - Five flight-glass pours of select craft beers that have been paired with chef Moyer's 5-course seafood menu. Tickets req. 7:30-9 p.m. Looking Glass Brewing Co, 115 N. Bridge St., DeWitt. 517-668-6004. lookingglassbrewingcompany.com.

"Hairspray" - 7:30 p.m. Wharton Center Cobb Great Hall, 750 E. Shaw Lane, East Lansing. 517-432-2000. whartoncenter.com.

Jazz/Hip Hop II class - Ages 9-13. 4 p.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. 517-337-0464. ruhalacenter.com.

Karaoke Thursday - 8 p.m.-midnight. The Green Door Bar & Grill, 2005 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. 517-325-9897. greendoorlive.com.

Ladies Silver Blades Skating Club - Join other adult women for fun, exercise, friendship and skating practice. 9:30-11:30 a.m. Suburban Ice, 2810 Hannah Blvd., East Lansing. ladiessilverblades.org.

Laingsburg Farmers Market - 5-8 p.m. First Congregational Church of Laingsburg, 401 E. Grand River Road, Laingsburg. 517-295-8128. laingsburg-business.org/farmers-market-1.

Links & Drinks with Lakuna Links Permanent Jewelry - Sip on a cocktail and choose from a variety of bracelets, necklaces and rings to have linked for a custom fit. 4-8 p.m. Lansing Brewing Co., 518 E. Shiawassee St., Lansing. 517-371-2600. lansingbrewingcompany.com.

Mid-Michigan Art Guild FALL MEMBER ART SHOW - 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Neighborhood Empowerment Center, 600 W. Maple St., Lansing. midmichiganartguild.org.

"Mixed Media Medley," by Bobbie Margolis - 9 a.m.-8 p.m. CADL - Okemos Library, 4321 Okemos Road, Okemos. Call 517-347-2021 beforehand to ensure gallery space is open. facebook.com/MidMichiganArtGuild.

"Murder for Two: Holiday Edition" - 8 p.m. Williamston Theatre, 122 S. Putnam St., Williamston. 517-655-7469. williamstontheatre.org.

Nature photography display, by Joyce Felzke - Hours subject to change as the Bookend Gallery is staffed by volunteers. Noon-6 p.m. CADL - Haslett Library, 1590 Franklin St., Haslett. 517-339-2324. cadl.org/about/our-locations/haslett.

Under the Checkered Flag: Stories from the World of Car Racing

Thursday, Nov. 30
7 p.m.

R.E. Olds Transportation Museum
240 Museum Drive, Lansing



For a sport that can trace its roots to out-running federal revenue agents, car racing has come a long way in the 100 years that drivers have been chasing each other around an oval track, fueled by high-octane gasoline and seemingly unlimited adrenaline.

Lansing-area residents have the chance to sit down and hear professional drivers talk about their careers 7 p.m. Thursday (Nov. 30) at R.E. Olds Transportation Museum. The panelists include Michigan-based racers Paul Gentilozzi, Marc Miller, Katie Hettinger and Christine Kirbitz. They will be joined by David Ferguson, a local racing safety and training expert and associate professor of kinesiology at Michigan State University.

Gentilozzi, also a local real estate developer, is closing in on nearly 50 years of racing. He founded the now-defunct Rocketsports Racing team in 1985, which competed in the Trans-Am Series, the Champ Car World Series and beyond. He has won five drivers' championships and nine manufacturers' championships, and he holds the Trans-Am Series record for most wins, poles, top three finishes and prize money won. He has 31 Trans-Am wins under his belt, the most in the series' history.

Miller, from Holland, Michigan, has been racing since he was 11 and has won numerous sportscar championships. Hollinger, from Dryden, despite being only 16, is a full-bodied stock-car racer who is competing at the highest level. Kirbitz, from Grand Blanc, is an engineer for General Motors but likes to push motor cars to 170 miles per hour on dragways.

The lecture is free and open to the public. For more information, visit reoldsmuseum.org/events.

R.E. Olds Lecture Series: Under the Checkered Flag

- Panelists include professional drivers Paul Gentilozzi, Katie Hettinger, Christine Kirbitz and Marc Miller along with racing safety and training expert David Ferguson. Free and open to the public. 7 p.m. R.E. Olds Transportation Museum, 240 Museum Drive, Lansing. 517-372-0529. reoldsmuseum.org.

Ruhala Broadway Ensemble - Learn to excel equally in singing, acting and dance. 5:30 p.m. 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. 517-337-0464. ruhalacenter.com.

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

Take Off Pounds Sensibly - Weight-loss support group. Weigh-in 5:30 p.m., meeting 6-7 p.m. Haslett Middle School, 1536 Franklin St., Haslett. 800-932-8677. facebook.com/HaslettTops.

Walter Blanding: "Fantasy in Blue" - This Jazz saxophonist and clarinetist has been bringing the joy of music to people across the globe for more than 30 years. Doors at 5 p.m., show at 7:30 p.m. UrbanBeat, 1213 Turner St., Lansing. 517-331-8440. urbanbeatevents.com.

Friday, Dec. 1

Clayworks Pottery Winter Holiday Show - Clayworks artists will have their handmade, festive ceramics available for sale. 11 a.m.-7 p.m. 13121 Wacousta Road, Grand Ledge. 517-626-1160. clayworkspottery.net.

Climate Change Theatre Action: All Good Things Must Begin

- Program includes six climate-change-themed plays, followed by a group discussion, plus information tables and poster and poetry displays. Free. 7:30 p.m. LCC Black Box Theatre, 411 N. Grand Ave., Lansing. lcc.edu/showinfo.

"Fitness Over 50" Senior Exercise Group - The Meridian Township Parks and Recreation Stretch and Flex Exercise group exercises at Central Park Pavilion. 9-10 a.m. 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos. meridian50plus.com.

"Hairspray" - 8 p.m. Wharton Center Cobb Great Hall, 750 E. Shaw Lane, East Lansing. 517-432-2000. whartoncenter.com.

Homeschool Fridays - Area homeschool families receive a discount on regular admission prices. Noon-3 p.m. Launch Trampoline Park, 1982 W. Grand River Ave., Okemos. launchtrampolinepark.com/lansing.

Mid-Michigan Art Guild FALL MEMBER ART SHOW - 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Neighborhood Empowerment Center, 600 W. Maple St., Lansing. midmichiganartguild.org.

"Mixed Media Medley," by Bobbie Margolis - 9 a.m.-8 p.m. CADL - Okemos Library, 4321 Okemos Road, Okemos. Call 517-347-2021 beforehand to ensure gallery space is open. facebook.com/MidMichiganArtGuild.

Events

from page 17

"Murder for Two: Holiday Edition" - 8 p.m. Williamston Theatre, 122 S. Putnam St., Williamston. 517-655-7469. williamstontheatre.org.

Nature photography display, by Joyce Felzke - Hours subject to change as the Bookend Gallery is staffed by volunteers. Noon-4 p.m. CADL - Haslett Library, 1590 Franklin St., Haslett. 517-339-2324. cadl.org/about/our-locations/haslett.

Night Lights Christmas Parade & Festivities - Visits with Santa, caroling, chili cookoff, tree lighting, Christmas parade and more. For full schedule and locations, visit grandledgechamber.com/night_lights_christmas_parade.php.

Night Out in Nature for Kids - No need to book a sitter. We will explore the trails, enjoy nature activities and meet live animals. Pizza included. Registration req. 5:30 p.m. Harris Nature Center, 3998 Van Atta Road, Okemos. 517-349-3866. meridian.mi.us/hnc.

REACH: Teen Incubator Opening Reception - Art exhibition by REACH's Teen Incubator class at Hooked bookstore. Meet the artists and enjoy refresh-

ments. 6:30 p.m. 3142 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. 517-999-3643. reachstudioart.org.

River Walk Trash Cleanup - Pick up the trash on the Lansing River Trail and around our building. We'll walk for about 30 minutes. 11 a.m. Keys to Manifestation, 809 Center St., Suite 7, Lansing. 517-974-5540. manifestlansing.com.

Toy Inventor - Children ages 2-4 and their caregivers can explore science through hands-on, inquisitive learning in a responsive, playful, exploratory environment. 10 a.m. Impression 5 Science Center, 200 Museum Drive, Lansing. 517-485-8116. impression5.org.

World AIDS Day Coffee Klatsch - Join us as we start the day with good company and better conversation. Free/confidential HIV testing available. Coffee, tea and snacks provided. 10 a.m.-noon. Salus Center, 408 S. Washington Square, Lansing. saluscenter.org.

Saturday, Dec. 2

Clayworks Pottery Winter Holiday Show - Clayworks artists will have their handmade, festive ceramics available for sale. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. 13121 Wacousta Road, Grand Ledge. 517-626-1160. clayworkspottery.net.

Climate Change Theatre Action: All Good Things Must Begin - Program includes six climate-change-themed plays, followed by a group discussion, plus information tables and poster and poetry displays. Free. 7:30 p.m. LGC Black Box Theatre, 411 N. Grand Ave., Lansing. lcc.edu/showinfo.

Contra & Square Dance - All dances taught. No partner needed. Come at 6:30 for a quick workshop on easy contra dance moves. 7 p.m. Central United Methodist Church, 215 N. Capitol Ave., Lansing. 517-614-5858. tenpoundfiddle.org.

Family Day: HOME - Make creative connections with our exhibitions through hands-on, interactive family fun throughout the museum. All ages welcome. Registration encouraged. 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Broad Art Museum, 547 E. Circle Drive, East Lansing. 517-884-4800. broadmuseum.msu.edu.

"Hairspray" - 2 and 8 p.m. Wharton Center Cobb Great Hall, 750 E. Shaw Lane, East Lansing. 517-432-2000. whartoncenter.com.

Holiday Market at the Shuffle - Get into the holiday spirit by shopping small! 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Lansing Shuffle, 325 Riverfront Drive, Lansing. 517-940-4619. lansingshuffle.com.

Holiday Open House - Children 10 and under can visit with Santa and receive a small gift. Cocoa, cookies, popcorn and hot cider provided. 1-4 p.m. American Legion, 1485 Haslett Road, Haslett. 517-339-9018. haslettpost269.org.

Intermediate Ballet class - 11 a.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. 517-337-0464. ruhalacenter.com.

Introduction to Zentangles with Dorothy Engelman - Each participant will create 2 "tiles" and have the tools to continue their Zentangle journey. 15+. 10 a.m. Lansing Art Gallery, 300 S. Washington Square, Suite 100, Lansing. 517-574-4521. lansingartgallery.org.

MIARNG Aviation Retirement Dinner 2023 - 6 p.m. Royal Scot, 4722 W. Grand River Ave., Lansing. grandledgeguard.ticketleap.com.

"Mixed Media Medley," by Bobbie Margolis - 9 a.m.-7 p.m. CADL - Okemos Library, 4321 Okemos Road, Okemos. Call 517-347-2021 beforehand to ensure gallery space is open. facebook.com/Mid-MichiganArtGuild.

"Murder for Two: Holiday Edition" - 2 and 8 p.m. Williamston Theatre, 122 S. Putnam St., Williamston. 517-655-7469. williamstontheatre.org.

Nature photography display, by Joyce Felzke - Hours subject to change as the Bookend Gallery is staffed by volunteers. Noon-4 p.m. CADL - Haslett Library, 1590 Franklin St., Haslett. 517-339-2324. cadl.org/about/our-locations/haslett.

Scrooge Scramble - 5K run/walk to benefit the Old

Town Commercial Association. Holiday costume contest, coffee, hot cocoa and visits with Santa. All walkers and runners welcome. 9:30 a.m. 1232 Turner St., Lansing. runsignup.com/Race/MI/Lansing/ScroogeScramble.

Winterfest Downtown Celebration - Visits with Santa and Mrs. Claus, light parade, winter market, kids' games, pancake-eating contest and more. Visit lainsburgbusiness.org/winterfest for full schedule. 4-8 p.m. Downtown Laingsburg.

Yuletide Caroling with Weavers of the Web - Dress warmly and feel free to bring any instruments, songbooks or festive accouterments. Afterward, we'll return to the church to warm up and enjoy hot beverages. 7 p.m. 809 Center St., Suite 7, Lansing. 517-657-5800. weaversoftheweb.org.

Sunday, Dec. 3

"A Course in Miracles," facilitated by Dan and Carol Maynard - Noon. Unity Spiritual Center of Lansing, 2395 Washington Road, Lansing. 269-762-3189. unitylansing.org

Bottle and Can Collection for Eastern Ingham Farmers Market - 11 a.m.-1 p.m. McCormick Park, 123 High St., Williamston. 517-618-1630. easterninghamfarmersmarket.org.

GLAD Drum Circle - All ages and experience levels welcome. 2-4 p.m. Keys to Manifestation, 809 Center St., Suite 7, Lansing. 517-803-2392. facebook.com/GreaterLansingAreaDrummers.

"Hairspray" - 1 and 6:30 p.m. Wharton Center Cobb Great Hall, 750 E. Shaw Lane, East Lansing. 517-432-2000. whartoncenter.com.

JUGGLERS AND WOULD-BE JUGGLERS - Jugglers meet at the Orchard Street Pump House at 2 p.m. Sundays. 368 Orchard St., East Lansing. mikemarahanka@gmail.com.

LSO Family Series: John Robinson (Trombone) - Interactive series that connects families and their children with music, art and literature. 1 p.m. Delta Township District Library, 5130 Davenport Drive, Lansing. lansingsymphony.org.

"Mixed Media Medley," by Bobbie Margolis - Noon-6 p.m. CADL - Okemos Library, 4321 Okemos Road, Okemos. Call 517-347-2021 beforehand to ensure gallery space is open. facebook.com/Mid-MichiganArtGuild.

"Murder for Two: Holiday Edition" - 2 p.m. Williamston Theatre, 122 S. Putnam St., Williamston. 517-655-7469. williamstontheatre.org.

Red Cedar Quaker Friends Worship - 10:30 a.m. 1400 Turner St., Lansing. redcedarfriends.org/join-us-for-worship.

See Events, Page 19

MSU Federal Credit Union
showcase series

Holiday Cheer

WITH MSU SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA AND CHOIRS

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2023, 8 P.M.
COBB GREAT HALL, WHARTON CENTER

More than 300 members from MSU's Symphony Orchestra and Choirs bring the joy and spirit of the season to life in this holiday music tradition. A concert for the entire family, a variety of holiday favorites are included, from Tchaikovsky's *The Nutcracker* and Handel's *Messiah*, to Anderson's *Sleigh Ride* and an audience singalong. Jonathan Reed, Sandra Snow, and Octavio Más-Arocas, conductors.

RESERVED-SEAT TICKETS
WHARTONCENTER.COM
(517) 432-2000

College of Music
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Alpha Kappa Alpha Chi Epsilon Omega Chapter Jazz Brunch

Saturday, Dec. 2
10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center
219 S. Harrison Road, East Lansing

Michigan State University's Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority chapter will host its annual Jazz Brunch fundraiser 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday (Dec. 2) at the Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center in East Lansing. The Alina Morr Trio, led by one of the founders of the Grammy-nominated women's jazz group Straight Ahead, will play contemporary and traditional jazz music, with dancing encouraged. Guests can also enjoy brunch, a gift card auction and a 50/50 raffle.

Proceeds will primarily support three \$1,000 scholarships for graduating high school seniors, community service projects in Greater East Lansing and partnerships with East Lansing's Haven House shelter and Lansing's Building Child and Family Initiatives.

Tickets are \$75 and can be purchased at 2023jazzbrunch.eventbrite.com. The sorority is a nonprofit organization, so tickets are tax deductible. Those buying tickets should fill in Sandra Seaton's name when prompted during checkout.



Events

from page 18

Sunday Brunch - Visit lookingglassbrewingcompany.com for menu. Noon-5 p.m. Looking Glass Brewing Co., 115 N. Bridge St., Dewitt. 517-668-6004.

This is not a tour: "Resistance Training" - Take an unconventional look at "Resistance Training: Arts, Sports, and Civil Rights" with this interactive tour. Registration encouraged. 1 p.m. Broad Art Museum, 547 E. Circle Drive, East Lansing. 517-884-4800. broad-museum.msu.edu.

Tyler Kivel Pops Concert - Kivel is a Chicago-based pianist and collaborator. 3 p.m. Central United Methodist Church, 215 N. Capitol Ave., Lansing. 517-485-9477. lansingcentralumc.net.

Monday, Dec. 4

20th Annual Not So Silent Night Online Auction - Visit reachstudioart.org/a-not-so-silent-night or stop by the studio noon-5 p.m. Monday-Friday to view items and place bids. Bidding ends at 8:45 p.m. on Dec. 9. REACH Studio Art Center, 1804 S. Washington Ave., Lansing.

Ballet II for kids - Ages 9-13. 4 p.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. 517-337-0464. ruhalacenter.com.

Beginning Ukulele for the Family (six-week class) - Taught by Michigan's ukulele ambassador, Ben Hassenger. Registration req. 6 p.m. Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St., Grand Ledge. 517-627-7014. gladl.org.

Book Arts: Fiction Writing and Alternative Book Bindings - Dawn Burns, creative writer, and Alice Brinkman, textile artist, team up to guide fiction writing and constructing books with alternative bindings. 6 p.m. REACH Studio Art Center, 1804 S. Washington Ave., Lansing. reachstudioart.org.

Burger Night - Choice of hamburger, cheeseburger or olive burger, plus fries. Dine in or take out. \$8. 5-7 p.m. Columbus Hall, 5300 N. Grand River Ave., Lansing. 517-321-2209.

Crafty Story Time - Fun activities, stories and a craft. For preschool-aged children with a caregiver. 11 a.m. Charlotte Community Library, 226 S. Bostwick St., Charlotte. 517-543-8859. charlottelibrary.org.

"Fitness Over 50" Senior Exercise Group - The Meridian Township Parks and Recreation Stretch and Flex Exercise group exercises at Central Park Pavilion. 9-10 a.m. 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos. meridian50plus.com.

Gloss Mondays Open Floor - Aspiring drag performers showcase their talent. 8 p.m. UrbanBeat, 1213 Turner St., Lansing. 517-331-8440. urbanbeatevents.com.

Improv Acting Class - 8:30 p.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. 517-337-0464. ruhalacenter.com.

Jazz Dance Class - 7 p.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. 517-337-0464. ruhalacenter.com.

Jump Into Reading - Join Ms. Erin for stories, songs, activities and therapy dogs. Ages 0-5 with caregivers. 11 a.m. Eaton Rapids Area District Library, 220 S. Main St., Eaton Rapids. 517-663-0950. eradl.org.

"Letting Go," by David Hawkins: Book Study with Lucille Olson - 1:30 p.m. Zoom ID: 177 417 886. Passcode: 601744. unitylansing.org.

Mid-Michigan Art Guild FALL MEMBER ART SHOW - 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Neighborhood Empowerment Center, 600 W. Maple St., Lansing. midmichiganartguild.org.

"Mixed Media Medley," by Bobbie Margolis - 9 a.m.-8 p.m. CADL - Okemos Library, 4321 Okemos Road, Okemos. Call 517-347-2021 beforehand to ensure gallery space is open. facebook.com/Mid-MichiganArtGuild.

Nature photography display, by Joyce Felzke - Hours subject to change as the Bookend Gallery is staffed by volunteers. Noon-4 p.m. CADL - Haslett

Library, 1590 Franklin St., Haslett. 517-339-2324. cadl.org/about/our-locations/haslett.

Ruhala Broadway Ensemble - Learn to excel equally in singing, acting and dance. 5:30 p.m. 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. 517-337-0464. ruhalacenter.com.

Tuesday, Dec. 5

20th Annual Not So Silent Night for REACH - Featured Artist talk with Renae Selmeyer, Sandra Reinhardt & Samantha Burgett of the "A Not So Silent Night" exhibition. 7 p.m. REACH Studio Art Center, 1804 S. Washington Ave., Lansing. reachstudioart.org.

Acting 101 Class - 7 p.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. 517-337-0464. ruhalacenter.com.

Acting Ensemble Class - 8 p.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. 517-337-0464. ruhalacenter.com.

Improv Showcase - This capstone showcase features student performers applying all the skills they've learned during the semester. Free, fun and full of laughs! 6 p.m. LCC Black Box Theatre, 411 N. Grand Ave., Lansing. lcc.edu/showinfo.

Intro to Acting/Improv for Kids - Ages 5-12. 4 p.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. 517-337-0464. ruhalacenter.com.

LAGE Game Night East - 6:30-11 p.m. The Junction, 410 S. Clippert St., Lansing. meetup.com/lansing/events.

LAGE Game Night West - 6:30-11 p.m. Frank's Press Box, 7216 W. Saginaw Hwy., Lansing. meetup.com/lansing/events.

Level I Dance Class - Introduction to theater dance using ballet, tap and jazz. Ages 5-8. 4:45 p.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. 517-337-0464. ruhalacenter.com.

Mid-Michigan Art Guild FALL MEMBER ART SHOW - 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Neighborhood Empowerment Center, 600 W. Maple St., Lansing. midmichiganartguild.org.

"Mixed Media Medley," by Bobbie Margolis - 9 a.m.-8 p.m. CADL - Okemos Library, 4321 Okemos Road, Okemos. Call 517-347-2021 beforehand to ensure gallery space is open. facebook.com/Mid-MichiganArtGuild.

Nature photography display, by Joyce Felzke - Hours subject to change as the Bookend Gallery is staffed by volunteers. Noon-4 p.m. CADL - Haslett Library, 1590 Franklin St., Haslett. 517-339-2324. cadl.org/about/our-locations/haslett.

Preschool Family Storytime - Join us for stories and literacy-enhancing activities, including songs and rhymes. Ages 1-6. 11 a.m. Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St., Grand Ledge. 517-627-7014. gladl.org.

Preteen Reads Book Club - Chat, eat snacks and have book-related fun. Grades 4-6. Registration req. 6 p.m. Charlotte Community Library, 226 S. Bostwick St., Charlotte. 517-543-8859. charlottelibrary.org.

StressBusters: Positive Mental Health for Kids - 3 p.m. session for ages 3-6 and caregivers, 4 p.m. sessions for ages 7-10 and 11-14. Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St., Grand Ledge. 517-346-8094. gladl.org.

Trivia at Lansing Shuffle with DJ Trivia - 7:30-9 p.m. 325 Riverfront Drive, Lansing. 517-940-4619. lansingshuffle.com.

Virtual QPR Gatekeeper Training for Suicide Prevention - As a QPR-trained Gatekeeper, you will learn to recognize the warning signs of suicide and find out how to get help and save a life. 10 a.m. Register at qprtraining-12-05-23.eventbrite.com.

Wednesday, Dec. 6

"A Course of Love" Book Study, Facilitated by Lucille Olson & Bill Dietrich - 7 p.m. Zoom ID: 177 417 886. Passcode: 601744. unitylansing.org.

Acting & Glee Music Class for Kids - Ages 5-12. 4:30 p.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. 517-337-0464. ruhalacenter.com.

Allen Farmers Market - 3-6:30 p.m. 1629 E. Kalamazoo St., Lansing. 517-999-3911. allenneighborhood-center.org/market.

"Fitness Over 50" Senior Exercise Group - The Meridian Township Parks and Recreation Stretch and Flex Exercise group exercises at Central Park Pavilion. 9-10 a.m. 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos. meridian50plus.com.

"The Hip Hop Nutcracker" - A remixed and

reimagined version of classic hip-hop dance and Tchaikovsky's timeless music. 7:30 p.m. Wharton Center Cobb Great Hall, 750 E. Shaw Lane, East Lansing. 517-432-2000. whartoncenter.com.

Hot Cocoa Present-Making - Grades 4-12. 4 p.m. Eaton Rapids Area District Library, 220 S. Main St., Eaton Rapids. 517-663-0950. eradl.org.

Improv Acting Class - 8:30 p.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. 517-337-0464. ruhalacenter.com.

Jazz Dance Class - 7 p.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. 517-337-0464. ruhalacenter.com.

LBCA Meeting - 7:30 a.m. Pine Hills Golf Course, 6603 Woodbury Road, Laingsburg.

Michigan Young Birders Network Virtual Meeting - Free virtual networking group for individuals ages 13-18 interested in birding. 7 p.m. Meeting ID: 946 4329 0865. Password: Chickadee.

Mid-Michigan Art Guild FALL MEMBER ART SHOW - 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Neighborhood Empowerment Center, 600 W. Maple St., Lansing. midmichiganartguild.org.

Mindfulness Meditation in the Thich Nhat Hanh tradition - All are welcome to join our weekly practice! 7-9 p.m. Van Hanh Temple, 3015 S. MLK Jr. Blvd., Lansing. lamc.info.

"Mixed Media Medley," by Bobbie Margolis - 9 a.m.-8 p.m. CADL - Okemos Library, 4321 Okemos Road, Okemos. Call 517-347-2021 beforehand to ensure gallery space is open. facebook.com/Mid-MichiganArtGuild.

Nature photography display, by Joyce Felzke - Hours subject to change as the Bookend Gallery is staffed by volunteers. Noon-4 p.m. CADL - Haslett Library, 1590 Franklin St., Haslett. 517-339-2324. cadl.org/about/our-locations/haslett.

Scratchboard Drawing with Matt Mulford - Join us as we draw a fun, holiday-themed subject. 10 a.m. Lansing Art Gallery, 300 S. Washington Square, Suite 100, Lansing. 517-574-4521. lansingartgallery.org.

Tap II Class - 6 p.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. 517-337-0464. ruhalacenter.com.


Weaving the Web: Astrology - Join us online or in person for discussions, rituals, meditations and more! 6 p.m. Keys to Manifestation, 809 Center St., Suite 7, Lansing. 517-657-5800. weaversoftheweb.org.

See Events, Page 20



Need help setting boundaries this holiday season

Let's Talk
517-394-3560
to schedule your mental health appointment today



Climate Change Theatre Action
Dec. 1-2
7:30 p.m.
LCC Black Box Theatre
411 N. Grand Ave., Lansing

Lansing Community College is participating in the biennial Climate Change Theatre Action festival, which coincides with the United Nations' Conference of the Parties climate meetings and invites global playwrights to submit five-minute acts centered around a certain theme. This year's theme is "All Good Things Must Begin," inspired by a journal entry written by science-fiction author Octavia Butler.

LCC will present five short plays written for the festival: "Thunderbird," by Jo MacDonald of Canada; "A Hummingbird's Ululation," by Aleya Kassam of Kenya; "That's the Late Night Show," by Vitor Jatobá of Brazil; "Magical Fungi in Times Square," by Chantal Bilodeau of Canada and New York; and "The Polar Bears," by Nicholas Billon of Canada. There will also be a performance of the short play "Snails," by Janet Colson of Detroit. The performances will be followed by a group discussion.

In addition, local environmental organizations and the Michigan Coalition of Science on the Ballot will have information tables, and there will be a display of climate-themed posters and poetry created by LCC students.

Admission is free, but donations will be accepted for LCC Theatre's scholarship funds. For more information, visit artsconnect.openlcc.net.

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 Clean Comedy in Lansing

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Brian Atkinson
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 Friday - Dec. 1st - 7:00

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 CityPULSE FOX 47 NEWS

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 121 Pearl Street, PO Box 235,
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 John Montgomery, Manager/Director
 Darin R. Vickers, Owner/Director

www.vickersfuneralhomes.com

Events

from page 19

Thursday, Dec. 7

20th Annual Not So Silent Night for REACH - Featured Artist talk with David Torgoff and Eric Staib of the "A Not So Silent Night" exhibition. 7 p.m. REACH Studio Art Center, 1804 S. Washington Ave., Lansing. reachstudioart.org.

"A Course in Miracles," Facilitated by Lisa Schmidt - 7 p.m. Zoom ID: 177 417 886. Passcode: 601744. unitylansing.org.

Acting 101 Class - 7 p.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. 517-337-0464. ruhalacenter.com.

Acting Ensemble Class - 8 p.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. 517-337-0464. ruhalacenter.com.

"Christmas Belles" - 7 p.m. Riverwalk Theatre, 228 Museum Drive, Lansing. 517-482-5700. riverwalk-theatre.com.

Eloquents Toastmasters Weekly Meeting - Safe and positive environment to practice public speaking and leadership skills. 6:30 p.m. Okemos Presbyterian Church, 2258 Bennett Road, Okemos. eloquents.toastmastersclubs.org.

Jazz/Hip Hop II class - Ages 9-13. 4 p.m. Ruhala

Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. 517-337-0464. ruhalacenter.com.

Karaoke Thursday - 8 p.m.-midnight. The Green Door Bar & Grill, 2005 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. 517-325-9897. greendoorlive.com.

Ladies Silver Blades Skating Club - Join other adult women for fun, exercise, friendship and skating practice. 9:30-11:30 a.m. Suburban Ice, 2810 Hannah Blvd., East Lansing. ladiessilverblades.org.

Laingsburg Farmers Market - 5-8 p.m. First Congregational Church of Laingsburg, 401 E. Grand River Road, Laingsburg. 517-295-8128. laingsburg-business.org/farmers-market-1.

Mid-Michigan Art Guild FALL MEMBER ART SHOW - 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Neighborhood Empowerment Center, 600 W. Maple St., Lansing. midmichiganartguild.org.

"Mixed Media Medley," by Bobbie Margolis - 9 a.m.-8 p.m. CADL - Okemos Library, 4321 Okemos Road, Okemos. Call 517-347-2021 beforehand to ensure gallery space is open. facebook.com/MidMichiganArtGuild.

"Murder for Two: Holiday Edition" - 8 p.m. Williamston Theatre, 122 S. Putnam St., Williamston. 517-655-7469. williamstontheatre.org.

Musical Theatre Performances - Students enrolled in the Musical Theatre Performance class perform a variety of songs and duets from new and popular musicals of every genre. 8 p.m. LCC Black Box Theatre, 411 N. Grand Ave., Lansing. lcc.edu/showinfo.

CROSSWORD SOLUTION
 From Pg. 16

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SUDOKU SOLUTION
 From Pg. 16

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CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN, INGHAM COUNTY
MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP
 LEGAL AD NOTICE: PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT #23038 (THE GREENS)
 THURSDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2023

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
LEGAL NOTICE
PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT #23038 (THE GREENS)
PUBLIC HEARING

Notice is hereby given that the Director of Community Development and Planning of the Charter Township of Meridian will hold a public hearing on Thursday, December 14, 2023 at 2:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Room, located at 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, to hear all persons interested in a Planned Unit Development (PUD) minor amendment request from ACD II, Inc. The request is for a minor amendment to the Greens at Walnut Hills planned unit development (PUD #86014) to combine lots 86 and 87. The subject site is zoned RAA (Single Family-Low Density).

Information may be examined at the Department of Community Planning and Development, 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, Michigan 48864-1198 (phone 517-853-4560), between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Written comments may be sent prior to the public hearing to Keith Chapman, Assistant Planner, Charter Township of Meridian, 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, Michigan, 48864, or by email to chapman@meridian.mi.us.

Deborah Guthrie
 Township Clerk

CP#23-310
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FOOD & DRINK DINING OUT IN GREATER LANSING

Branching out beyond pizza at Toarmina's

By **NICOLE NOECHEL**

The Toarmina's Pizza location on East Michigan Avenue is beloved by the City Pulse staff. When we need a fast lunch, the restaurant's premade slices of pizza are just a two-minute walk away, and when we have occasional staff meals together, we typically order a few pies that are quickly devoured.

Recently, I've been wondering if Toarmina's other



Bone-In Wings (5 pc.)

\$6.99

Bacon & Cheese Tots

\$9.99

Toarmina's Pizza

2011 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing
11 a.m.-11 p.m. Monday-Thursday
11 a.m.-midnight Friday-Saturday

11 a.m.-10 p.m. Sunday
517-374-1022
toarminas.co

offerings, like subs, grinders, calzones, wings and desserts, can hold a candle to its pizzas. So, I braved the snowy weather and made my way to the restaurant on foot and ordered five Bone-In Wings and the Bacon & Cheese Tots.

I'll start with the tots, which were loaded with both liquid cheese sauce and shredded cheddar as well as bacon. As I've mentioned before, I love cheese more than almost any other food, and each potato puff

was absolutely covered in savory, creamy, stringy goodness. The whole dish was baked, so the shredded cheese on top was perfectly golden-brown, and the plentiful bacon bits added a crunch that paired well with the gooey cheese sauce beneath. Everything was a bit salty altogether, but that was remedied by the sour cream that came with the dish.



Nicole Noechel/City Pulse

Toarmina's Pizza's Bone-In Wings and Bacon & Cheese Tots are just a couple of examples of the restaurant's delicious and affordable non-pizza offerings.

See Dish, Page 22

Appetizers

**WANT YOUR RESTAURANT LISTED?
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TOP 5

DINING GUIDE

THE BEST RESTAURANTS IN GREATER LANSING AS DECIDED BY CITY PULSE READERS

TOP 5 BAGELS

Based on your votes in City Pulse's 2023 Top of the Town contest. Bon appétit!

- 1. Flour Child Bakery**
Family-owned, made-from-scratch bakery
323 S. Bridge St., Grand Ledge
517-622-4772
flourchildbakeryandcafe.com
6 a.m.-6 p.m. Monday-Friday
6 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday-Sunday
- 2. Big Apple Bagels**
Fresh, made-from-scratch bagels, sandwiches and cream cheese
248 E. Saginaw St., East Lansing
517-324-4400
bigapplebagels.com
6-11 a.m. Monday
6 a.m.-2 p.m. Tuesday-Friday
7 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday-Sunday
- 3. GoodFellas Bagel Deli – both locations**
Mob-themed bagel joints with affordable food and fast service
Visit goodfellasbageldeli.com for locations, hours and phone numbers
- 4. Bruegger's Bagels**
Cafe/bakery chain preparing small-batch, New York-style bagels, plus breakfast and lunch sandwiches
505 E. Grand River Ave., East Lansing
517-332-9940
brueggers.com
8 a.m.-2 p.m. Monday-Sunday
- 5. New Daily Bagel**
Friendly, casual eatery with scratch-made bagels and New York-style deli sandwiches
309 S. Washington Square, Lansing
517-487-8201
thenewdailybagel.com
6 a.m.-2 p.m. Monday-Friday



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The winter wonders of pomegranate



Photo by David Hagerman

Sun Dried Tomato and Pomegranate Salad, courtesy of food writer Robyn Eckhardt's cookbook, "Istanbul & Beyond: Exploring the Diverse Cuisines of Turkey."

By **ARI LEVAUX**

As holiday talk builds to a festive pitch and the cold darkness moves to embrace you, don't sleep on pomegranate season. It's ready to sneak back into your life.

With a fresh pomegranate in your palm, you have magic at your fingertips. Just wave your hand and food becomes more beautiful, more delicious and more exciting. Toss those juicy rubies on salad, soup, steak, pasta, Brazilian black-bean soup, granola or yogurt. The flavor added by the fleshy seed packages, called arils, matches the color: sharp and sweet.

The arils can also be used as the substance of a meal, the same way one would use rice or pasta: a plate of fried arils with eggs on top, for example, or a bowl of arils and salad.

To the uninitiated, it won't be ob-

vious how to extract the arils. There are many ways, and some are messier than others. Treating the globes like softball-sized pinatas might not seem like the cleanest option, but if you slice them in half and tap gently enough, the seeds rush out like Black Friday shoppers storming the gates of Walmart.

This technique comes from Turkey, where one fall day, a food writer named Robyn Eckhardt sat down with a group of women, 100 kilograms of fresh pomegranates and some pieces of plastic pipe. They spent the day liberating the arils inside.

Here is Eckhardt's technique that she recently emailed from Italy:



FLASH
in the pan

"Gently squeeze one pomegranate half, cut-side down, over a wide, deep bowl to loosen the seeds. Place it cut-side down in your nondominant

hand. Spread your fingers to create a 'sieve' through which the seeds can fall. With the handle of a wooden spoon or spatula, tap the pomegranate all over. Dislodged seeds will fall, with the juices, into the bowl, and the bits of bitter, white membrane will remain in your hand. Continue

tapping, turning the pomegranate in your hand, until most of the seeds are dislodged. If any white membrane has fallen into the bowl, pick it out. Strain the seeds from the juice. You can reserve the juice for another use."

The first time I tried this method, my open hand was powerless to stop the flow of arils, but I at least had a bowl to catch them.

That day, Eckhardt and her friends were preparing nar eksisi, or Turkish pomegranate molasses. When made with 100% pomegranate juice and no additives, she said, it has as delicate and eye-opening of a flavor as a fine balsamic vinegar. Among brands that an American could easily order online, Eckhardt's favorite is Mymoune, produced by a women's

agricultural cooperative in Lebanon.

Pure pomegranate syrup is worth paying good money for, Eckhardt said. It keeps forever and is versatile far beyond salad dressings. If you can't get the good stuff, though, you might want to skip it.

There is a recipe in Eckhardt's book, "Istanbul & Beyond: Exploring the Diverse Cuisines of Turkey," that calls for both the arils and the syrup. Sun Dried Tomato and Pomegranate Salad comes from a restaurant in Turkey owned by Eckhardt's friend Shiraz Demir, a pomegranate and olive farmer.

The salad is an exciting ride, with many strong personalities balancing one another in spectacular fashion. Each bite is a different drama, with spice, fat, herbs and salty chunks of cheese, all splashed with tangy pomegranate juice. It will brighten any table at any time of year.

Sun Dried Tomato and Pomegranate Salad

Eckhardt lays out this salad in a layered, eye-catching way. For simplicity, I prefer to mix the ingredients in a bowl. She was gracious enough to let me make a few minor tweaks, which I've made as parenthetical suggestions. The salad is forgiving, and you can alter the proportions widely to suit your taste.

Serves six to eight as a meze or four as a side dish

- 20 sun-dried tomatoes
- 1 medium pomegranate, cut in half horizontally
- 1 spicy green chili, such as jalapeno or Anaheim, sliced (In winter, I prefer chili flakes, such as Aleppo)
- 1/4 cup fresh mint or flat-leaf parsley, chopped finely
- 1/4 cup

lightly salty white cheese, such as Bulgarian feta

- 1/4 cup fruity olive oil
- 1 tablespoon pomegranate molasses (If you can get the pure stuff. Otherwise, use lemon juice)

Soak the sun-dried tomatoes in warm water until soft and pliable, about 10 to 20 minutes.

While the tomatoes are soaking, seed the pomegranate.

Drain the sun-dried tomatoes and pat them dry, then slice them into quarter-inch-wide strips.

Arrange the tomato strips on a small plate and top with pepper slices (or chili flakes). Sprinkle the mint or parsley over the plate, then the crumbled cheese and pomegranate seeds. Finish with a drizzle of olive oil and pomegranate molasses and serve immediately.

Dish

from page 21

The chicken wings were crunchy on the outside but juicy and tender on the inside, the perfect consistency, in my opinion. They were tossed in Buffalo sauce, which I would have preferred to be a bit more creamy, but overall, the tangy and slightly spicy coating was more than enough to satisfy my palate. The restaurant included an even mix of flats and drums, which I also appreciated.

I don't know that I needed to order all that food — the size of the tots alone was enough to fill me up — but the dishes paired nicely together, and I was able to confirm that Toarmina's non-pizza offerings are, in fact, just as

good as its pies.

I also want to mention the Sweet Heat Hot Honey Pizza, which is available for a limited time. I'd never had hot honey on a pizza prior to last week, but it really amplified the experience. Both sweet and savory, with a punch of heat, the pizza almost didn't need the pepperoni and Parmesan cheese that it was also topped with. As an Italian meat lover, however, I'll never say no to more pepperoni.

I'll probably keep ordering the pre-made pizza slices since they're quick and cheap, but if you have some time to spare, I'd recommend branching out and trying the other Italian-American dishes that Toarmina's offers. They're a comparable price to fast-food pizza chains like Domino's or Pizza Hut, but they're far superior in terms of quality and taste.

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Antojitos Mexicanos

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Moving Sale! Items include antiques & collectibles, furniture, books, clothing, jewelry, kitchenware & dishes, garden tools & outdoor furniture. Dates/time: Fri-Sat, Dec. 2-3, 9am-5 pm. 4326 Manitou Dr, Okemos, MI 48864. Cash preferred.

Two burial plots are available for sale at Deepdale Memorial Park. The current retail price is \$6,998, but they are being sold for \$5,998. To purchase or for more information, please call 517-490-2903.



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