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March 20-26 2024

CityPULSE

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**'SPRING HAS SPRUNG
... THE GRASS IS RIZ'**

See Page 12



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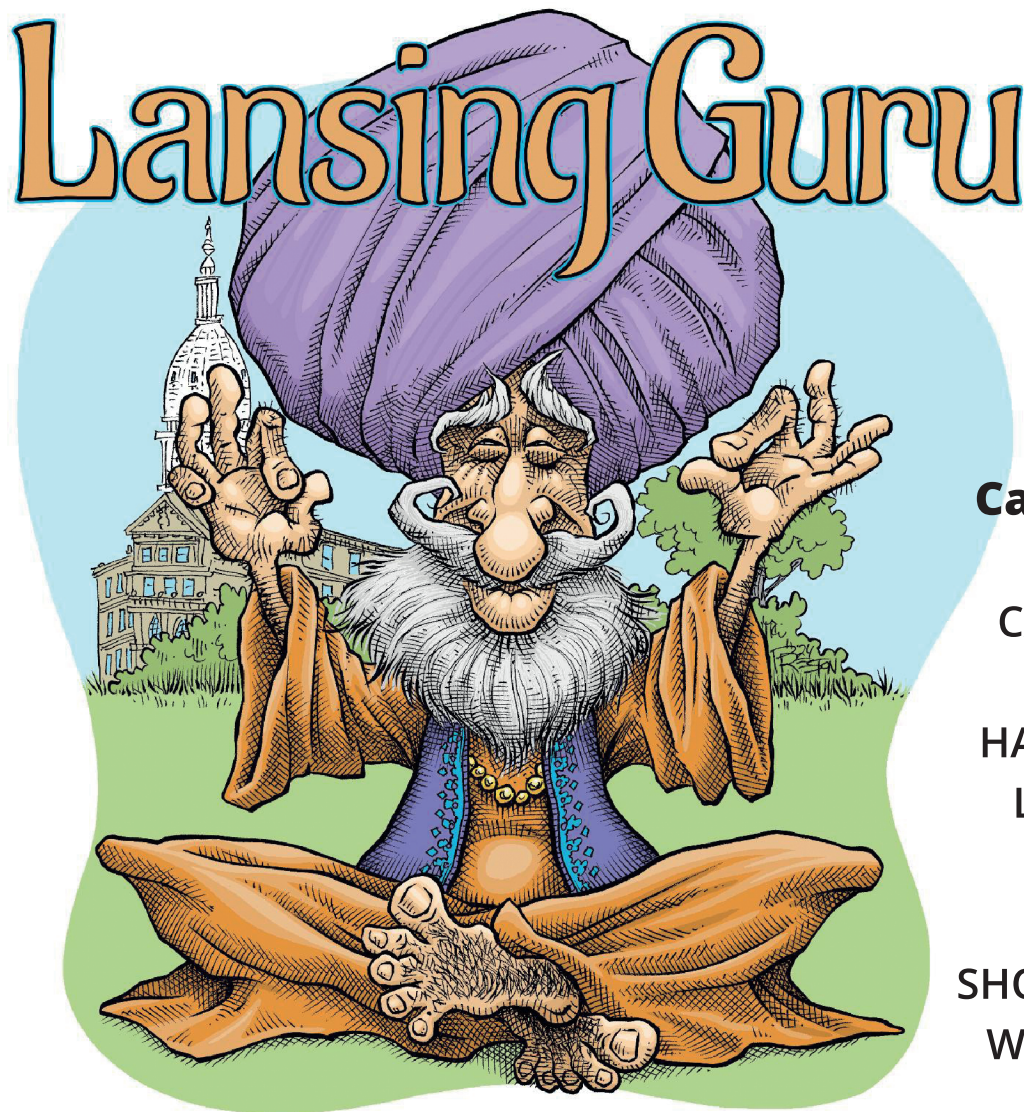


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Category Group	Rollout Date
BAR	WEDNESDAY, March 20
CANNABIS	THURSDAY, March 21
DINING	FRIDAY, March 22
HANGOUTS	SATURDAY, March 23
LOCAL ARTS	SUNDAY, March 24
PEOPLE	MONDAY, March 25
SERVICES	TUESDAY, March 26
SHOPPING	WEDNESDAY, March 27
WHATEVER	THURSDAY, March 28

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CityPULSE

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Lansing role-playing group fosters community and fun

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Soda shop relocates from Eastwood to East Lansing

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Dine like the upper crust at the Comfort Zone

PAGE 22

Cover art by Carolyn Damstra: "April Morning, Tollgate Wetland," acrylic.

What Did We Learn From Covid?

IT'S THE ANNIVERSARY OF A GREAT TRAGEDY.

I KNOW, OVER A MILLION AMERICANS HAVE DIED.

I MEAN HAVING TO WEAR MASKS IN PUBLIC.

REMEMBER HOW THEY WERE JUST OVERFLOWING INTO THE STREETS?

THE MORGUES?

THE LINES FOR TOILET PAPER.

THANK GOODNESS FOR OUR HEROES.

THE HEALTHCARE WORKERS WHO RISKED THEIR LIVES?

THE PEOPLE WHO DEFIED ORDINANCES AND PACKED INDOOR SPACES!

AND YEARS LATER, PEOPLE ARE STILL SUFFERING.

FROM LONG COVID?


THE LANDLORDS WHOSE OFFICE BUILDINGS ARE EMPTY BECAUSE PEOPLE WORK FROM HOME!

WELL, I SAY NEVER AGAIN!

BE UNPREPARED FOR A GLOBAL PANDEMIC?

DO ANYTHING AS A SOCIETY TO CONTAIN A DISEASE!


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THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW

ELON MUSK INTRODUCES ANOTHER PARADIGM-SHIFTING **INNOVATION!** CRIME IS RAMPANT--BECAUSE OF **WOKE!** BUT I'VE CREATED AN OUTSIDE-THE-BOX **SOLUTION!** BEHOLD THE DELUXE AUTONOMOUS LAW ENFORCEMENT KILLBOT--

--A.K.A. THE TESLA DALEK!

EXTER-MINATE!

MUSK'S HARDCORE FANS ARE PREDICTABLY ENTHUSIASTIC. ELON'S DONE IT AGAIN! THE HELL-HOLE CITIES I HAVE SEEN ON FOX NEWS WILL BE **MUCH SAFER NOW!**

HE HAS SINGLE-HANDEDLY SOLVED **CRIME IN AMERICA!**

WHAT WILL THIS RESTLESS GENIUS THINK OF **NEXT?**

LAW-AND-ORDER POLITICIANS EMBRACE THE VISIONARY CONCEPT. WE'VE ORDERED AN ENTIRE **FLEET** OF DALEKS TO PATROL NEW YORK CITY! WE'LL PAY FOR IT BY CLOSING THE LIBRARIES **ENTIRELY!**

WHAT ABOUT THE POLICE BUDGET?

WHAT ABOUT IT?

OF COURSE, THERE ARE A FEW **MINOR** GLITCHES DURING BETA TESTING. THE DALEKS VAPORIZED AN ENTIRE PLAYGROUND FULL OF **CHILDREN!**

SURE, BUT IT WAS THEIR OWN FAULT FOR BEHAVING IN A LOUD AND IRRATIONAL MANNER!

YOU CAN'T RUN AROUND MAKING ALL THAT NOISE IN FRONT OF A **DALEK!** WHAT DID THEY **EXPECT?**

SOME LIBERAL HANDWRINGERS OBJECT TO THE PROGRAM--BUT NOBODY CARES WHAT **THEY** THINK! **CITIZEN!** JAYWALKING IS ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOR PREDICTIVE OF FURTHER CRIMINALITY!

WOW! THE FREE MARKET IS **MUCH** MORE EFFICIENT THAN OUR **TRADITIONAL** JUSTICE SYSTEM!

URK!

ZZZAP!

BUT **THEN--** CITIZEN! YOU HAVE A KNOWN HISTORY OF MARKET MANIPULATION, REGULATORY NON-COMPLIANCE, CONSUMER FRAUD AND ILLICIT DRUG USE!

UH OH.

LAWS DON'T APPLY TO **ME**, DALEK! CHECK YOUR **DATABASE!**

CONFIRMED! APOLOGIES FOR ANY IN-CONVENIENCE!

TOM TOMORROW © 2024-03-18... JOIN SPARKY'S LIST: thismodernworld.com/subscriptions

PULSE

NEWS & OPINION

Have the tables been turned on Mayor Schor's city hall dreams?

An agreement to buy the Masonic Temple building downtown and turn it into Lansing's next city hall looked poised to pass last week when City Council members met as the Committee of the Whole.

But a short time later at the Council meeting itself, it lost on a 4-4 vote after three members who supporters expected to back it didn't.

Sources said the outcome caught the plan's backers off guard, from Lansing Mayor Andy Schor and developer Ron Boji to union leaders and Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce executives.

The purchase is part of a bigger picture that would allow the Schor administration to move ahead with plans for a Chicago developer to turn the current City Hall, across the street from the state Capitol, into an upscale hotel.

In tandem, the two plans would save two historic buildings: the current City Hall, which is an architecturally important example of mid-century design, and the 100-year-old Masonic Temple two blocks away on Capital Avenue, which has been empty for years.

Before the vote, only Ryan Kost of the 1st Ward had said he would oppose the proposal.

"I thought I was going to be voting alone, or that maybe one or two other people might vote with me. I was surprised at what happened after that," he said afterward.

Councilmembers Jeffrey Brown, Tamera Carter and Trini Lopez Pehlivanoglu joined Kost in rejecting the administration's plan to buy the building at 217 S. Capital Ave. from the Boji Goup for \$3.65 million.

"Boji's jaw dropped," said one source who was eyeing the developer during the meeting. He added that Boji, who treated Brown to lunch recently in Birmingham, thought he had Brown's support. Neither Boji nor Brown responded to requests for comment.

During the Committee of the Whole meeting, Lopez Pehlivanoglu supported the plan.

"Two weeks ago, I was in a different space where I really wasn't sure if I was comfortable with this or not. I'm grateful that we had more time than we did previously to ask questions and have

those questions answered," she said, referring to a two-week delay on the vote. "I will say that I do support the project."

Brown called the plan "an amazing opportunity for us to have a new home for the citizens of Lansing to get the service they need." But he added that he had some concerns.

"While this is a great thing, I'm disappointed at the process. I feel we need to be more transparent for our constituents and our community, as well as for me as a councilperson," he said.

In Carter's case, she said she "wasn't 100% sure on" the sale, but she thanked the Boji Group for making themselves available to answer questions. She added that she was "looking forward" to seeing what would happen with the current city hall, 124 W. Michigan Ave., were the purchase approved later that evening.

When that moment finally came — and as Brown, Carter and Pehlivanoglu's positions became clear — each prefaced their opposition by indicating a need for greater transparency in the process.

While Kost was firm in his opposition, the other three said they weren't necessarily against the plan but instead wanted to take more time to deliberate, since the city has until September 2027 to spend a \$40 million state grant to purchase or build a new city hall. The Council voted 7-1, with Kost opposed, to accept the \$40 million for that purpose.

"We're talking about three years," Lopez Pehlivanoglu said. "I do want to see a project going forward. I do believe that will happen. But I would feel more comfortable taking more time and making sure that we are going step by step in a transparent process."

But any delay could be costly if Chicago developer Paul Beitler finds reason to walk away from his proposal to turn the current City Hall into a hotel. Beitler has been waiting since 2017 for action on his plan. Efforts to



Tyler Schneider/City Pulse

A plan for the city of Lansing to purchase the old Masonic Temple, 217 S. Capital Ave., to convert it into a new city hall was defeated on a 4-4 vote.

reach him for comment were unsuccessful.

The 4-4 decision was a setback for Schor on the eve of his seventh State of the City speech last week.

When asked about the vote after his speech that night, Schor said he "had an idea" that it would pass but added that he didn't have commitments from Councilmembers going into the vote.

"One member said he wanted a smaller project, and I respectfully disagree," Schor said, referring to Kost. "The other members said they wanted to hear more. We'll provide that and then see if we can move forward on it. If we can't, we'll look at alternatives."

"We've got some time, but not a lot. The longer you wait, the more costs go up," he added, also noting that the \$40 million allocation alleviates any burden the project could otherwise

place on taxpayers.

Boji's downtown efforts took another hit Monday when members voted 6-2 against his plan to purchase a city-owned, surface-level parking lot at 425 S. Grand Ave. to develop into housing with over 100 residential units.

Councilmembers Brian Jackson and Peter Spadafore voted to sell the lot — which the city purchased in 2008 for \$960,000 — to Boji for \$760,000. But Hussain, Brown and Kost thought the lot could garner better offers, citing the eventual arrival of New Vision Lansing, a three-building, \$227 million downtown housing plan and other projects.

Schor and other proponents of the two Boji plans must now head back to the drawing board to drum up the support they'll need.

On Monday, Schor's office launched a webpage (www.lansingmi.gov/1219/New-City-Hall) outlining the Masonic Temple building project plans in greater detail. Meanwhile, the Boji Group has partnered with Preservation Lansing to schedule a

building tour from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Wednesday (March 27).

To turn things around, the administration needs to sway at least one of the three members not named Kost.

Brown and Carter declined to talk to City Pulse about their motives this week.

Lopez Pehlivanoglu said, "I don't make these decisions lightly."

"As a newer Council member, it can be a bit overwhelming when you're faced with tens of millions of dollars going toward each project, because you're trying to decide what the right thing to do is without rushing anything. When that vote came and some of my fellow Council members started speaking up, it really spoke to me that we do have an opportunity to take more time on this."

— TYLER SCHNEIDER

Ingham County funds program to relieve local medical debt

When Ingham County Commissioner Myles Johnson learned last summer that the state of Michigan had budgeted matching funds to help residents erase their medical debt with assistance from a national nonprofit, he knew he had to get the ball rolling as soon as possible.

Johnson contacted RIP Medical Debt, a 10-year-old nonprofit in New York, to find out more. “So how many people can we impact here in Ingham County?” he asked a representative.

“And he did some rough math numbers — it was around 20,000,” Johnson said. “When he explained to me the impact that it will make on our county residents, I was like, ‘That’s worth every penny.’ And so, from that point, it was just about getting it in front of the right people — staff and fellow commissioners — to get it through.”



Gabrielle Lawrence



Myles Johnson

As a result, the Board of Commissioners appropriated \$250,000 last week to participate in the program that works to abolish medical debt nationwide. With the matching state funding from a \$4.5 million pool, the nonprofit will have \$500,000 to assist county residents in settling medical debts for more than 22,000 county residents.

That means a \$5 million reduction in local medical debt because the national charity “acquires patients’ medical debt from medical providers for about one penny on the dollar — and then absolves it,” the county said in a news release.

“RIP Medical Debt has acquired and abolished over \$10.4 billion in medical debt for 7.1 million people nationwide,” the release added.

Johnson said RIP Medical Debt recruits hospitals and medical pro-

viders on a confidential basis to request data files and identify patients or guarantors who meet program eligibility.

“They reach out to the hospitals and make their own negotiations,” he said.

Patients qualify if they have household incomes of up to 400% of the federal poverty guidelines and medical debt of at least 5% or more of their income. Those eligible will receive a letter stating their medical debt has been eliminated. RIP Medical Debt keeps their identities confidential, even to the government.

Commissioner Gabrielle Lawrence said she was familiar with RIP Medical Debt before receiving the proposal and was on board with implementing it in Ingham County.

“I know what they do, I know who they help and how they work, and I thought that this was just such an amazing opportunity for the county, to help county residents who are some of the most vulnerable county residents that we have,” Lawrence said. “These are people who — through no fault of their own — got sick and have medical debt.”

The county’s participation in RIP Medical Debt helps prevent residents from having to file for bankruptcy due to medical debt.

“We know that the way the medical system is structured in this country,

it’s really difficult — unless you have really good insurance — to make sure that all of your bills are going to be paid,” Lawrence said. “And a lot of people don’t have really good insurance. Insurance is really expensive, and that really hinders a lot of people who need medical attention.”

Although the board voted to participate in the program, Lawrence said the contract with RIP Medical Debt “is still a work in progress.”

“There has not been a formal agreement signed, yet,” Lawrence said. “The action that the board of commissioners took on Tuesday night just was the approval to go forward with this, but I imagine that in the imminent future, that agreement will be signed.”

Johnson has been serving as a commissioner since January 2023, representing District 5 in Southwest Lansing. Lawrence, who took office last year, represents District 10 in Northeast Lansing.

Johnson “is our youngest commissioner, he’s in his mid-20s, this is his first term, and I could not be prouder of him for spearheading this effort,” Lawrence said.

Johnson said the work RIP Medical Debt does is “phenomenal.”

“I hope that we can continue doing it,” Johnson said, “not just this year but moving forward.”

— MADELINE WARREN

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STATE OF MICHIGAN PROBATE COURT, INGHAM COUNTY, NOTICE TO CREDITORS, Decedent's Estate, Case No. 24-238-DE-P33 - Estate of George Howard Clifford – Date of Birth: 03-27-73. NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The decedent, George Howard Clifford, died 12-02-2023. Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Patricia Bols, personal representative, or to both the probate court at 313 West Kalamazoo Ave., Lansing, MI 48933, 517-483-6300, and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice, 03/20/2024. Personal representative: Patricia Bols, 1512 Birchwood Dr., Okemos, MI 48864. CP#24-445

STATE OF MICHIGAN PROBATE COURT, CLINTON COUNTY, NOTICE TO CREDITORS, Decedent's Estate, Case No. 24-32062-DE - Estate of Jean Helen Collins – Date of Birth: 05/15/1945. NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The decedent, Jean Helen Collins, died 12/09/2023. Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Kevin Collins, personal representative, or to both the probate court at 100 E. State, St. Johns, MI 48879, 989-224-5193, and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice, 03/20/2024. Attorney: Kimberly L. Savage, 1483 Haslett Road, Haslett, MI 48840, 517-515-5000. Personal representative: Kevin Collins, 7527 S. Dewitt Road, Dewitt, MI 48820, 517-899-3981. CP#24-440

STATE OF MICHIGAN PROBATE COURT, INGHAM COUNTY, NOTICE TO CREDITORS, Decedent's Estate, Case No. 24-240-DE - Estate of Gerald Thomas Stein – Date of Birth: 01/10/1933. NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The decedent, Gerald Thomas Stein, died 01/21/2024. Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Susan Stein-Roggenbuck, personal representative, or to both the probate court at 313 West Kalamazoo Ave., Lansing, MI 48933, 517-483-6300, and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice, 03/20/2024. Personal representative: Susan Stein-Roggenbuck, 4220 W. St. Joseph Hwy., Lansing, MI 48917, 517-512-0848. CP#24-439

REWIND

NEWS HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE LAST 7 DAYS

COMPILED BY STEVE UNDERWOOD FROM LOCAL NEWS SOURCES



McLaren Greater Lansing announced Tuesday it will construct a \$40 million ambulatory care campus in Grand Ledge. The 33,680-square-foot facility, on Saginaw Highway west of Nixon Road, will include a free-standing emergency department and medical office building. It will offer diagnostic imaging and lab services, family medicine, and various specialty services. Construction will begin this summer with a fall 2025 opening anticipated.



Former state Sen. Curtis Hertel Jr. announced Tuesday that he had filed the required 2,000 signatures with the Secretary of State's Office to qualify as a candidate for the 7th Congressional District nomination in the August Democratic primary. Hertel is seeking to replace U.S Rep. Elissa Slotkin, who is running for the Democratic nomination for the U.S. Senate. Former state Sen. Tom Barrett of Charlotte is expected to be the GOP nominee.

James Herbert, who co-founded Neo-gen Corp. in Lansing, died Saturday at 83. He and his wife, Judi, came to Lansing in 1982, where he helped launch the biotech company. The couple, along with James and Susan Herman, also donated \$2.5 million to help open Sparrow's Herbert-Herman Cancer Center. He also donated \$5 million to the Sparrow Foundation and sat on the hospital's board of directors until his death. Herbert's alma mater, the University of Tennessee, announced his death Monday.



The Lansing Board of Education announced Monday it named Joshua Crim and Daniel Nowiski to fill the seats held

by Dr. Farhan Bhatti and Missy Lilje. Crim is a project engineer for GE Progressive, a contractor company providing services to DTE Energy, while Nowiski is the Michigan Mission Center president for Community of Christ. Seventeen applicants were considered to complete the nine-member board.

The TAS Asset Holdings marijuana business in Lansing, known the Noble Road Co., has lost its medical and adult-use licenses due to mixing legal and illicit products for the retail market. The Michigan Cannabis Regulatory Agency announced Thursday it signed a consent order and stipulation with the company. TAS has been closed since February 2023, when the CRA issued complaints and suspensions of its medical and adult-use licenses. Video surveillance footage showed TAS employees bringing additional unregulated product into the business from their vehicles, CRA said.



Retired Catholic priest David Bruce Rosenberg was sentenced to four to 20 years in prison Monday for embezzling up to \$830,000 from other retired priests at the Diocese of Lansing's St. Francis Retreat Center in DeWitt. He was convicted on eight felony counts, including three counts of embezzlement from a vulnerable adult, following a February jury trial. The crime took place between 2018 and '20, while he was the center's director. The money went to FaithFirst, a charitable foundation previously known as the Rosenberg Family Corp.

Schuler Books announced Monday that it will move its Meridian Mall store in Okemos into the mall's former Bed Bath and Beyond location. The move will allow the company to expand its cafe and create a nevent space, similar to its Grand Rapids store. Construction and the move itself is expected to be completed this year.



Peckham Inc., a Lansing nonprofit, announced Tuesday it will use a \$150,000 grant to make sure nearly 200 local veterans don't wind up homeless. The grant funds will be used to help veterans pay rent and utility bills and make down payments, said Veteran Services Specialist Matthew Urhammer, as well as providing resources like financial classes, debt management and consulting. Peckham is one of 13 organizations that received \$150,000 grants from the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency.

The city of East Lansing has posted a 46-page investigative report on its website that contradicts a statement in November that claimed an inquiry into widespread misconduct was without merit. The inquiry concerned an anonymous complaint that former Mayor Ron Bacon, Council members and city staff engaged in unethical behavior and City Charter violations. The city had cited attorney-client privilege in not releasing the report. The report also identified a charter violation by officials for meddling in the city's Public Art Gallery management.



PUBLIC SAFETY:



Lansing firefighters responded Tuesday to a house fire on Chickory Lane near Cavanaugh and Aurelius roads. No injuries were reported. ... On the Spot Engraving on Cedar Street in Lansing, was heavily damaged by a fire Saturday night. The building was unoccupied. ... Dane Garfield Kemp, 54, was charged Saturday in a Lansing stabbing on Pleasant View Avenue that hospitalized a 45-year-old woman. ... Units from Mason, Leslie and Onondaga extinguished a house fire Monday in Vevay Township on Barnes Road between Mason and Leslie. No one was injured.



Stained glass

A stained-glass art piece affectionately called "the egg" was installed at the Unitarian Universalist Church in East Lansing in the early 1970s. Since then, it has been well traveled.

The gift by a church member was made by local artist Edith Hazard White. When the church added a meeting hall in 1983, it was stored in the basement behind the furnace.

In the late 1980s, church member Al Christian, a local craftsman, learned about the "the egg" and built a stand for it in the church's Memorial Garden.

It remained there for several years until the church moved to South Pennsylvania Avenue in Lansing. It was stored until 2021, when Christian decided it needed to be shown. He built a pipe stand for it and it was dedicated.

Since it was first perfected in Europe in the 7th century, stained glass has made the world's architecture more stunning.

The Historical Society of Greater Lansing recently received a stained-glass window from Holy Cross Catholic Church and another rescued from Plymouth Congregational Church in 1971 after it burned down. It is in a crate and will be opened this summer. It is not known whether it is a decorative window or a simpler pane window.

— BILL CASTANIER

Public Art of the Week is a new feature that rotates with Eyesore of the Week. If you have an idea for either, please email eye@lansingcitypulse.com or call (517) 999-6704.

**WILLIAMSTOWN TOWNSHIP
BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE
2024-2025**

Regular Board Meetings			Special Meetings		
7:00 PM			7:00 PM		
April	10	2024	April		2024
May	8	2024	May		2024
June	12	2024	June		2024
July	10	2024	July		2024
August	14	2024	August		2024
September	11	2024	September		2024
October	9	2024	October	16 @ 6 pm (workshop)	2024
November	13	2024	November		2024
December	11	2024	December		2024
January	8	2025	January		2025
February	12	2025	February		2025
March	12	2025	March	5 Budget PH	2025

If Additional Meetings Are Needed, They Will Be Posted on The Township Website.

**Williamstown Township Hall
4990 Zimmer Road
Williamston, MI 48895
(517) 655-3193
www.williamstownmi.gov**

This notice is posted in compliance with Public Act 267 of 1976, as amended, the Open Meetings Act, MCL 41.72a(2)(3)), and the Americans with Disabilities Act. The Williamstown Township Board will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services, such as signers for the hearing-impaired and audio recordings of printed materials being considered to individuals with disabilities at the meeting or public hearing upon five days' notice to the Williamstown Township Board by writing or calling: Robin Cleveland, Township Clerk, 4990 Zimmer Rd., Williamston, MI 48895 or (517) 655-3193.

CP#24-442

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS
EAST LANSING HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**

Notice is hereby given of the following public hearings to be held by the East Lansing Historic District Commission on **Thursday, April 11, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.**, at the East Lansing Hannah Community Center, 819 Abbot Road, East Lansing, Michigan 48823:

1. A public hearing will be held to consider a Notice to Proceed request from Bob Martinez on behalf of DTN Management for new handrails for exterior stairways at 314 & 316 Oakhill Avenue.
2. A public hearing will be held to consider a Notice to Proceed request from Julie Stevenson on behalf of Beta Xi House Corp of Delta Gamma for the replacement of a circular third floor vent at 365 N. Harrison with an egress window.

A staff report (Agenda Item Report) for each public hearing will be published on the City's website the Friday before the meeting. To locate staff reports, please visit the City's public meeting portal at <https://cityofeastlansing.civicweb.net/Portal/> and select the meeting date. Written comments may be sent prior to the public hearing to coelhistoricdistricts@cityofeastlansing.com, or by mail to: East Lansing Historic District Commission, 410 Abbot Road, East Lansing, Michigan, 48823.

For more information on any agenda items listed above, please contact:

Landon Bartley, Principal Planner
517.319.6930 or lbartley@cityofeastlansing.com
<https://cityofeastlansing.civicweb.net/Portal/>

Materials related to the requests are available to review at the Department of Planning, Building, and Development, East Lansing City Hall, 410 Abbot Road, East Lansing, MI, 48823 between the hours of 8:00 am and 5:00 pm, or online at www.cityofeastlansing.com/currentapplications.

The City of East Lansing will provide reasonable auxiliary aids and services, such as interpreters for the hearing impaired and audio tapes of printed materials being considered at the meeting, to individuals with disabilities upon request received by the City seven (7) calendar days prior to the meeting. Individuals with disabilities requiring aids or services must contact the Planning, Building, and Development Department, 410 Abbot Road, East Lansing, MI, 48823, (517) 319-6930 (TDD Number: 1-800-649-3777) or via email at rurdial@cityofeastlansing.com.

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

Marie E. Wicks
City Clerk

CP#24-443

Sadly watching the sun set on transparency, again

Sunshine Week has mercifully set over the state Capitol. For the next 51 weeks, the media are spared from being reminded how lawmakers enticingly toy with expanding the state's open record law ... only for nothing to change.

Since 2016, the House majority has advanced expanded open records laws, only to watch them disappear in the Senate.

This year, the Democratic-led Senate took the lead. Its proposed Freedom of Information Act expansion, sent to the Senate floor last week, would make an open records law apply to the governor and the Legislature.

The public could finally ask the governor for any record in her possession ... EXCEPT anything written prior to the bill becoming law, anybody's notes, or anything related to appointments, suspensions, removal proceedings, commutations or budget recommendations.

We also wouldn't be able to get anything protected by executive privilege or that could broadly impact the governor's security or internal investigations.

Any civil action against the governor? Couldn't touch that.

Any document fewer than 30 days old is a no-go. Advice, opinions and public policy recommendations would also stay off limits. That's called "work product."

Basically, anything that isn't a letter from a lobbyist or a public calendar over a month old could still not be disclosed.

Soooo ... it's like Christmas without Christ, Santa, presents, Christmas trees, carols, cards, lights or, really, anything.

But the governor could fulfill a campaign pledge by opening herself to FOIA if it passes. Hooray.

For the Legislature under these bills, it's much the same. For some reason, we still couldn't get letters from constituents. Remember "work product?" That's off limits, too.

Citizens could get House financial records, but the House and Senate rules already allow us copies.

As we slow-clap the Senate Oversight Committee action, a few House Democrats rolled out some new ideas.

Any travel, tickets or gifts a legislator received but didn't pay for would need to be disclosed. Who gave the Senate majority leader tickets behind home plate for a Tigers' playoff game? Who did the Jewish Federation of Metro Detroit host

in Israel this year?

We'd also know which public official has 501(c)4 and 527 dark money accounts. The state couldn't mandate the release of these forms, which the IRS governs. But at least we'd all know what is out there.

Under this bill, many outstanding questions over influence would be answered ... if they're allowed to move.

I'm not holding my breath.

Outside of admitting to being jaded from year after year of disappointment, there is the hard, cold reality that transparency in government isn't exactly a burning issue right now.

Sure, if you ask about it, voters are for it.

But when put against immigration, the economy, abortion, education, health care, transportation, the environment and all the rest, a more open government isn't a radar blip.

With no Watergate-like scandal to coalesce the public into bipartisan disgust, there's no outcry for more public disclosure.

Your Average Joe cares what the governor and the Legislature are doing long enough to utter the words "they're all corrupt" and moves on.

The media enjoy the game of finding compelling content and digging into the inner workings of state government, but that's their job.

Meanwhile, those public agencies that must follow FOIA are finding their own ways around complying, partly due to public indifference and partly because government officials would prefer to disclose as little as possible.

Pages of redactions. Ridiculous invoices in the thousands of dollars. Months of delays. Uneven compliance. In some cases, challenging people to take them to court.

Only the minority, whoever it is, cares enough to raise the flag for more transparency. Since they're not in any decision-making position, of course they want to know what's going on.

The majority would prefer everyone who doesn't need to know be kept in the dark. Why ruffle feathers? Why stir the pot?

If there are no repercussions for keeping things secret, secret is what we'll continue to get.

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



KYLE MELINN

Opinion

POLITICS

What makes a winning team during March Madness?

Whether your team is an underdog or a favorite, **it takes a diverse group of contributors** to survive and advance during **March Madness**. The same is true at City Pulse. It's not just the managers, editors and senior writers that make it go, it's also new writers, savvy freelancers and crack sales execs who enable us, **with your help**, to excel in modern publishing, such as:



Lee Purdy, Sales Executive: *"After 35+ years in the dairy industry, joining City Pulse five years ago was a dramatic change of pace. It's been very rewarding helping businesses get their message out into the community."*



Tyler Schneider, Staff Writer: *"Delving into the stories that make Lansing what it is, whether it's the latest challenges facing our governments or the newest businesses trying to make their mark, has been fascinating for this newcomer from Chicagoland by way of Missouri."*



Chelsea Lake Roberts, Contributor: *"It doesn't get better than locally owned, independent journalism. It's a privilege to interview incredible artists, dig into a delicious Dish, peek Behind the Curtain, and explore Lansing's fascinating subcultures."*



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Yours truly,

The City Pulse team

ARTS & CULTURE

ART • BOOKS • FILM • MUSIC

Live, Laugh, LARP: catching up with the Duchy of Ashen Hills

By **CHELSEA LAKE ROBERTS**

Every Sunday, members of the Duchy of Ashen Hills take to the battlegrounds of Patriarche Park, dressed in medieval attire and carrying homemade weapons.

“You cannot miss us. If you show up to Patriarche Park at noon on a Sunday, you cannot miss the group of nerds LARPing in the park,” said Lauren Warshaw, nicknamed “Alpaca” for the animal that adorns her homemade shield.

As the champion of Ashen Hills, Warshaw helps lead the Lansing chapter of Amtgard, an international organization that promotes live-action role playing, or LARPing, specifically medieval fantasy and combat sports.

“My job is to promote violence,” she said, laughing. “I create games, check weapons for safety and organize tournaments. It’s my main social group. These nerds are my best friends.”

Although she only joined the chapter in 2022, Warshaw said she’s known the “core group” of Ashen Hills for a long time.

“After I went through some difficult life things, my partner encouraged me to come out and socialize. If you’re unfamiliar with it, it can be a little cringey, but once you jump in and play, it’s really just a competitive sport with a nerdy twist to it,” she said.

Amtgard is considered a boffer sport, meaning players use foam swords and arrows to conduct their competitions. For Lansing LARPer, the Duchy of Ashen Hills is a place to find friendship and share tangential interests like leather working and blacksmithing.

“Everything we wear and all the weapons, everything is all homemade. There’s no place where you can just go buy things for Amtgard,” Warshaw said.

While LARPing is often thought of as questing, creating elaborate characters and interacting with the environment, Amtgard is much closer to a competitive sport.

“Every week, we have a new game. It can be capture the flag, storm the castle, gather the hoard of gold, protect the gold. We get creative with the objectives and thematics,” Warshaw said.

On Sundays, the group runs four to five battle games that last 15 to 30 minutes each. The head and neck aren’t legal targets, but some people still wear safety equipment like helmets or face masks.

“We’ll take breaks in between and keep



Chelsea Roberts for City Pulse

Isabel, 15, a member of Lansing’s Amtgard chapter, the Duchy of Ashen Hills, smiles before heading into battle at Patriarche Park last Sunday (March 17).

going from there. I don’t think we’ve played the same game twice,” Warshaw said.

For those who want to take in the experience without the combative element, there are plenty of roles off the field.

“We’ll find a spot for you counting score, keeping track of the rules or being a non-player character. If you want to role play with us, we want you there,” Warshaw said.

Players must be 14 or older and willing to have fun, get a little dirty and sign a waiver. Minors require parental supervision, and when I showed up to a game last Sunday (March 17), I saw one parent waiting in a warm car, watching over a small group of teens at the pavilion.

Most everyone I spoke to gave me me their character name instead of their legal name. Isabel, 15, said her older brother got her involved in the group.

“I get to let out my energy, and it’s fun to play with other people,” she said.

Enoki, 15, quipped, “I just like hitting people with swords.” They laughed, then said, “There’s a headline! Local East Lansing teen loves hitting people with swords!”

When I asked what they enjoy about the group, Enoki said, “It’s a nice release to let things out. It’s just really nice to be accepted. We’re always looking for new people, and it’s low key.”

Emrys, 71, has been with Lansing’s Amtgard chapter since 2001, and he first participated in the Society for Creative



Courtesy of Elizabeth Michalek

A masked Ashen Hills player strikes during a midwinter game.

Anachronism, an international living history organization, in 1966. With more than 50 years of fantasy play under his belt, he said this group keeps him young.

“My name means ‘child of light.’ I’m a Taurus, a bull. I push the outside of the envelope,” he said. “The way I see it, I can either sit at home in a rocking chair and wait for death, or I can hang around here and absorb their youth. I know death is coming, but I’d rather make him chase me down on the field.”

When Emrys first tried medieval role playing in the 1960s, he felt like he had been doing it all his life.

“Even in my past lives, if you believe in that sort of thing,” he said.

Throughout his career, he traveled as a software consultant and found Amtgard groups around the country. He said that unlike the Society for Creative Anachronism, which he described as “a major commitment,” Amtgard is more accessible.

“Come out and pick up a sword, it’s fun!” he exclaimed.

As he’s grown older, Emrys said he’s experienced a few heart attacks and has begun having trouble walking, so he’s switched his weapon of choice from a sword to a bow and arrow.

“It’s like having a 20-foot spear,” he said with a smile.

Cody Yordy, aka Dyrdrion Baltori, is the monarch of Ashen Hills.

“I oversee the day-to-day activities, making certain that rules are followed, addressing safety concerns and being a front face toward the community to be a welcoming presence for people,” he ex-

plained.

Yordy is also responsible for growing talent, refining plans, questing and different battle game scenarios. When I visited, the group was running a competition where the players created their own games. Each player had time to explain the game, then the group played it. Finally, everyone scored each game with a rubric.

Yordy has been a member of the group for about a year, and he commutes most weekends from Petoskey to participate. He’s originally from Alaska, where he participated in an Amtgard chapter for about two years in Anchorage.

“We have an entirely separate kingdom,” he said. “Once I made my way to Michigan, I was looking to join a group, and Ashen Hills is the closest.”

Originally, Yordy fell into LARPing through mutual friends and family members. Even though the two groups are thousands of miles apart, he said they’re not very different.

“The Anchorage group is fairly equal in size, maybe about 35 people in the summer. Both are incredibly accepting. I have never felt more welcomed,” he said.

One difference he has noticed is that Ashen Hills is “more experimental” and “there’s always something new.”

“The community itself is awesome — having a friendly band of misfits, being able to spar with people, it’s good exercise,” he said. “I enjoy what we have, and I’ve made a lot of good friends in Lansing. The people are the reason I keep coming back out.”



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Find good vibes, good prices and even better selection at the Cake House

By CHRIS SILVA

As Michigan's cannabis industry matures, operators are shuffling around their retail and production assets to better deal with market saturation or, in many cases, the realities of their own capacities and levels of expertise. This offers opportunities for new businesses to secure retail licenses and establish themselves in the shadow of some first-generation legal-market retailers. I stopped by a dispensary that recently opened, the Cake House in south Lansing, to see what we should expect from this new generation of operators.

The retailer is based in Southern California but has moved into the Michigan market in the last year and a half, opening locations in Battle Creek, Lansing, Ann Arbor and Pleasant Ridge. The company is self-described as women- and minority-led and places a heavy emphasis on spreading knowledge and carrying a wide variety of products at various price points.

The South Cedar Street location was home to a gray-market retailer back in the caregiver days, and it's cool to see the storefront come full circle. Before I even stepped into the store, I was already impressed with the variety of products. From high-THC, low-cost flower to distillate carts, gummies and much more, it offers all the products customers demand.

The kicker is that it also carries a large assortment of flower from cultivators that aren't represented in many other retail locations — many of them selling their quality flower at a super competitive price point, if not below market pricing. This has allowed the Cake House to offer a lot of strain variety for every budget and palate.

My knowledgeable and friendly bud-tender, Anthony, suggested some LA Kush Cake from Oregon-based cultivator Belushi's Farm. I've covered this outfit before, and I have to say, it really hit it out of the park with this strain. The earthy vanilla flavor makes this indica one of my favorites, and the cultivators really have the genetics dialed in on this version. I've enjoyed this strain at the end of long days since I picked it up.

Concentrates are an area where I think the Cake House can hang its hat. The Lansing location offers a great variety, from \$60 quarter-ounces of live resin to a range of top-shelf hash options from Ice Kream Hash Co.,



Nicole Noechel/City Pulse

The Cake House, based in Southern California, opened its south Lansing retail facility late last year. The women- and minority-led company places a heavy emphasis on spreading knowledge and carrying a wide variety of products at various price points.

Peachy Hash & Co., Known, 710 Labs, 710 Savant and Hypha. The store's attention to quality is obvious, from how it stores the concentrates in a cooler to the manner in which the employees describe the terpene profiles, effects and their fairly sophisticated understanding of hash production.

The staff was able to help me find a couple of top-notch concentrate options: a budget live resin from Freshy Fine and a 2-gram bucket of Ice Cream Runtz live rosin from Hypha, processed by longtime industry powerhouse 42 Degrees.

I was familiar with Hypha from carrying its flower when I ran dispensaries. The company grows its plants in living soil, which contains microorganisms that help break down organic matter and provide important nutrients for the cannabis plant. Many, myself included, believe this growing method gives the plants a richer and more vibrant terpene profile. This, in turn, makes cannabis grown in living soil especially great for producing solventless hash.

Hypha and 42 Degrees really threw down on this concentrate. The coloring and consistency align with much more expensive varieties of live rosin, and the taste has sweet undertones,



reminding me of Wedding Cake. The Runtz strain in the mix adds to the sweetness and gives the draw a more textured feel and a bolder flavor. I have thoroughly enjoyed this pick and already regret not buying more.

The Cake House seems to have the right variety of products and price points to make it in our competitive market. Its values are obviously steeped in cannabis counterculture, and it shows in the store's inventory, vibe and customer service. The company understands our market and consumers, and for what it's worth, it also seems to understand retail. If the Cake House can ensure the customer experience stays the same across its retail chains, I expect to see it around for a long time.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING EAST LANSING CITY COUNCIL

Notice is hereby given of the following public hearing to be held by the East Lansing City Council on **Tuesday, April 9, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.** at the East Lansing Hannah Community Center, 819 Abbot Road, East Lansing, MI, 48823.

A public hearing will be held to consider Ordinance 1528, a request from residents within the Glencairn neighborhood to establish an R-O-1 rental restriction overlay district. An R-O-1 overlay district, if adopted, would disallow the issuance of any new initial rental licenses within the subject area. The area currently proposed for the overlay is bounded by: Roxburgh Ave. on the west, Saginaw St. and Clarendon Rd. on the north, Oxford Rd., Sunset Ln., and Forest St. on the east, and Southlawn Ave. on the south. **There has been discussion about expanding these boundaries to include properties between Clarendon and Saginaw, as well as properties between Sunset and Abbot. The Council may choose to approve this request as presented, approve it with changes to the overlay area, or deny altogether.**

A staff report (Agenda Item Report) for each public hearing will be published on the City's website the Friday before the meeting. To locate staff reports, please visit the City's public meeting portal at <https://cityofeastlansing.civicweb.net/Portal/> and select the meeting date.

The public may attend and participate at all meetings in person. Members of the public may also participate virtually via Zoom. Please contact City Clerk Marie E. Wicks at 517.319.6914, mwicks@cityofeastlansing.com, (410 Abbot Road, East Lansing, MI 48823) for additional information. Visit the City's public meeting portal at <https://cityofeastlansing.civicweb.net/Portal/> for electronic access information.

Materials related to the request are available for viewing at the Department of Planning, Building, and Development, East Lansing City Hall, 410 Abbot Road, East Lansing, MI, 48823 between the hours of 8:00 am and 5:00 pm or on the City's website located at www.cityofeastlansing.com/currentapplications. Written comments may be sent prior to the public hearing to City Council, City of East Lansing, 410 Abbot Road, East Lansing, Michigan, 48823, or by email to council@cityofeastlansing.com

The City of East Lansing will provide reasonable auxiliary aids and services, such as interpreters for the hearing impaired and audio tapes of printed materials being considered at the meeting, to individuals with disabilities upon request received by the City seven (7) calendar days prior to the meeting. Individuals with disabilities requiring aids or services must contact the City Council's Office, 410 Abbot Road, East Lansing, MI, 48823, (517) 319-6869 (TDD Number: 1-800-649-3777) or via email at tverche@cityofeastlansing.com.

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

Marie E. Wicks
City Clerk

B/24/122 FIREARM SAFES as per the specifications provided by the City of Lansing. The City of Lansing will accept bids at The City of Lansing, Purchasing Office, 124 W. Michigan Ave. 3rd Floor, Lansing, Michigan 48933 or electronically submitted thru MITN Site (www.Mitn.Info) until 2PM local time in effect on MARCH 26, 2024. Complete specifications and forms required to submit bids are available by contacting Marilyn Chick at (517) 483-4282, or Marilyn.chick@lansingmi.gov or go to www.mitn.info. The City of Lansing encourages bids from All Vendors Including MBE/WBE Vendors and Lansing-Based Businesses.



Courtesy of Apryl Pooley

Apryl Pooley maintains a vibrant front-yard garden at her home in Lansing's Westside Neighborhood.

Lessons in landscaping from Greater Lansing gardeners

By TYLER SCHNEIDER

As Michiganders welcome the spring season and begin to plot their gardens and home landscapes, local experts like Kathy Valentine, owner of the Plant Professionals, and Kait Bibb, co-owner of Sparrow Bloom, have already seen the impact of an irregularly warm winter season.

"This year is particularly confusing because we only had one really hard freeze period, which was brutal but very short," Valentine said. "Because of this, the ground didn't freeze and adapt like it normally would. So, in mid-Michigan, we're now at least two or three weeks ahead of our norm in terms of when plants like daffodils, hyacinths and tulips start coming up."

Bibb said, "We'll often joke that our springs are getting longer or that our winters are getting shorter, but that's truly what it is: Your first frost is getting later, and your last frost is coming earlier. Some plants that we used to have to dig up and store every winter, we're just not having to do that anymore."

According to the National Weather Service, this past winter was the warmest on record for mid-Michigan. With that in mind, do gardeners need to approach planting season any differently this spring?

The answer largely depends on what's being grown. There are now several online gardening apps that can inform growers of the best time to plant a certain species in the area where they live, which is particularly important for plants that require more care and con-

sideration to keep alive.

For more commonly grown plants, however, Egypt Krohn, director of the Allen Neighborhood Center's Hunter Park GardenHouse, said the climate hasn't yet shifted to a point where drastic changes to the seasonal planting cycle are necessary.

"We're seeing those late April and early May warm spells where everyone starts to get excited and plants their tomatoes. But we've also still been getting some later frosts in mid-May where their tomatoes will all die. So, it's still important that we're not getting lulled by those early spring warmups," Krohn said.

For cold-sensitive crops, she suggested "sticking to those last frost days" and avoiding the temptation to plant too early. Hardier crops like greens, onions, peas, peppers and cucumbers can start as early as mid-April.

Krohn agreed that climate change will continue to force gardeners to adapt more and more with each passing year. In the meantime, however, fundamentals like soil quality, exposure to sunlight and adequate watering remain the largest factors of botanical success.

"We can only be as healthy as the soil we use," she said. "Because Lansing tends to have heavy-clay soils, folks will really want to work on adding some good organic materials to the soil. A high-quality compost can

work wonders."

Effective weeding and mulching are also important factors, Valentine said.

"Any time an outdoor gardener is in a position

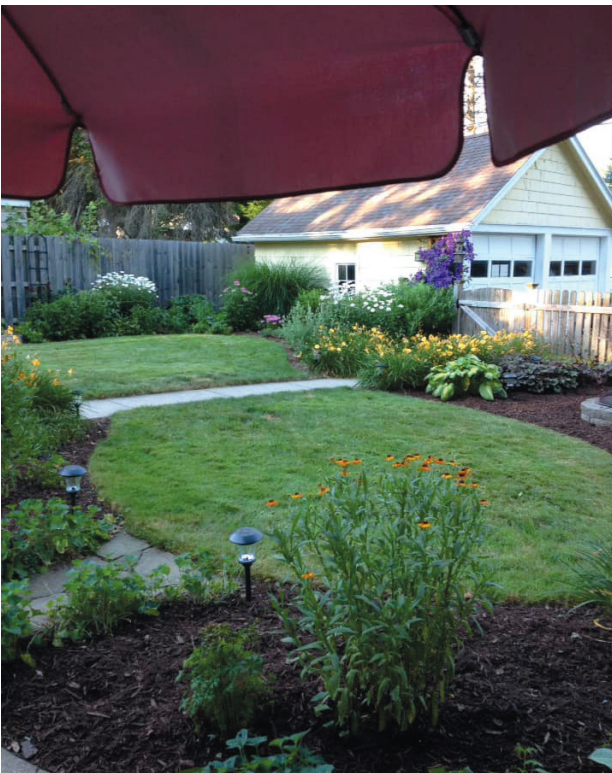
where they can get their beds well-weeded and then get some nice organic mulch with about 2 inches of depth, that makes weeding so much easier," she said. "It holds the moisture in the soil and moderates temperature, so if it gets cold, it doesn't get cold as fast at the roots. And in the summer, when it gets



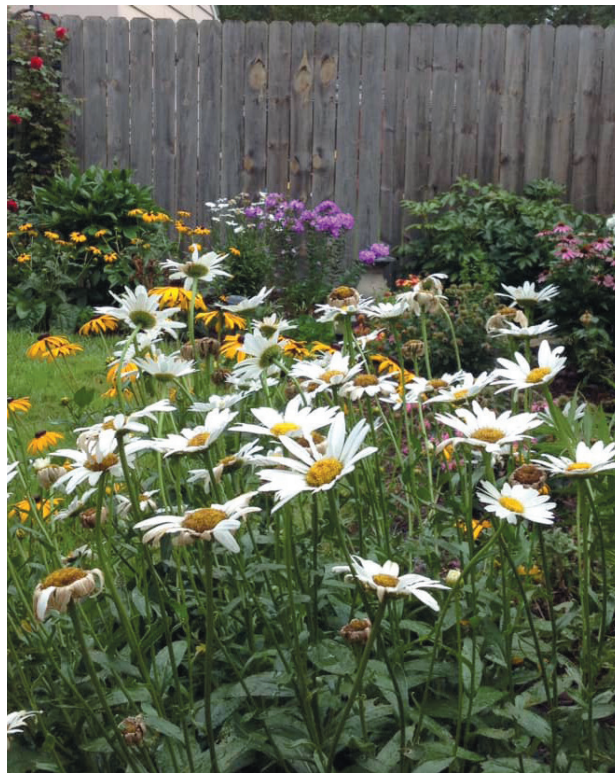
At Lansing's historic Darius B. and Ellen Sprague Moon House, (right).

COVER ARTIST

Okemos resident Carolyn Damstra is a painter of the landscapes and lakeshores of Michigan. She holds a bachelor's degree in drawing and painting and a master's degree in art history, both from Michigan State University. Find her artwork at the Lansing Art Gallery or online at carolyndamstra.com and [@carolyndamstraart](https://www.instagram.com/carolyndamstraart).



Courtesy of Melissa Bankroff



Courtesy of Melissa Bankroff



Painting by Carolyn Damstra

Melissa Bankroff's southside yard blossoms with an array of colorful cultivars each spring and summer.

super hot, those roots don't get as hot or as dry. It makes a world of difference and probably reduces your weeding by about 70%, which makes gardening more fun."

Gardens are much more than just plant life, however. To promote a diverse ecosystem of insects that are beneficial for a garden, Valentine advised not to throw away old vegetation too early when hobbyists get back to their plots this spring to ensure they're not disposing of insect eggs.

"If you have a place you can set those plants aside and keep them on your property for a bit longer, you should. If you throw them away, the eggs aren't going to be on the property to hatch and become butterflies and other helpful insects," she said.

One landscaping trend that Valentine, Krohn and Bibb have all seen flourish in recent years is a resurgence in the popularity of native plant species.

"People are coming back around to the idea that our landscaping doesn't need to be just trimmed hedges and shrubbery. They're wanting more of those native plants that are not only beautiful but also help make the world a better place," Bibb said.

Valentine added, "When native species bloom and set seed, those seeds, fruits and berries are going to be things that your native birds and animals want to eat and find nutritious, which is another huge plus for people."

In addition to the variety of wild onion and chive species native to the region, Krohn cited common milkweed as another widely available native plant that's easy to grow and cook.

"It's actually a really tasty vegetable. You can cook almost any tender green part of common milkweed and incorporate it into a dish," she said.

Another benefit of growing native plants is that they're "more likely to make it through the first couple of winters," Valentine said.

"Typically, after about two seasons, the plant has rooted out well past its original soil mass and is probably going to do fine for years or decades to come," she said.

For people who live in an apartment or don't have access to their own outdoor garden space, Valentine said there are many plants that can be grown inside or on a balcony.

"Lots of varieties of plants, like tomatoes and squashes, have been bred to be more compact. Some species are great for a small pot on the balcony, while others need worlds of space," she said.

For beginners, Krohn suggested starting with a home herb garden.

"It's something that you can pick up a little bit on here and there because it's really easy to grow. It can also be a really good financial reward for the input because herbs are so expensive to buy fresh, and

Local artist Carolyn Damstra celebrates the bounty of spring through her paintings. Above is "Mom's Shells," 14-by-11 inches, acrylic, and below is "Early Spring," 16-by-12 inches, acrylic.



Painting by Carolyn Damstra



Courtesy of Tom Stanton



Courtesy of Tom Stanton

Carol Skillings and her husband, Tom Stanton, grow an assortment of tulip varieties, like fringed tulips (left) and parrot tulips

home-grown tastes a lot better," she said.

Whether one wants to become a master of all things botanical or just bolster their home pantry, Bibb's biggest tip for growers this spring is to "just start."

"I would definitely suggest that people master no more than three species before moving on to the next," she said. "You don't need to have a garden with 15 varieties right away because you may end up struggling to maintain it."

She said gazanias and cosmos are some of her personal favorites.

"You can direct-seed those, too. I like to joke that I'll just give my kids some seed packets and let them go to town," she said with a laugh.

Valentine, who has been with the Plant Professionals since 1980, said the key to maximizing one's home garden is to continue trying new things.

"People are constantly thirsting for more variety as they try to figure out what their style is, what they enjoy and what lives for them," she said. "When something doesn't work out, try not to get too discouraged. If you do, you may never find out how rewarding it can be when you finally get everything just right."



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CityPULSE

Step into spring with area festivals and events

By NICOLE NOECHEL

Though it may not look like it quite yet, spring has arrived, bringing with it a fresh batch of exciting events. City Pulse has rounded up a list of the biggest happenings around Greater Lansing to fill your calendars through Memorial Day, so read on to discover what vernal delights this season has in store.

Maple Syrup Festival

Saturday, March 23
11 a.m.-5 p.m.
Fenner Nature Center
2020 E. Mount Hope Ave., Lansing
mynaturecenter.org

Learn all about maple syrup production with interactive demonstrations and activities, explore maple syrup displays at the Visitor Center and browse the Explore Store for maple-themed gifts and souvenirs. An additional all-you-can-eat pancake breakfast, running 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., is \$10 for ages 5 and up and \$6 for ages 4 and under.

MSU Science Festival

April 1-30
sciencefestival.msu.edu

This free, monthlong festival offers demonstrations, performances, lectures, hands-on activities and more to teach attendees about a range of STEAM-related topics, from film, poetry and music to chemistry, biology and astronomy.

Crosstown Showdown

April 3
Lansing Lugnuts home opener
April 9
6:05 p.m.
Jackson Field
505 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing
milb.com/lansing

The Lansing Lugnuts face the Michigan State University baseball team April 3 in the 16th Crosstown Showdown, then host their first official home game April 9 against the Great Lakes Loons.

Brrs, Beards and Brews: A Lumberjack Festival!

April 6
Noon-5 p.m.
Turner Street, Old Town
iloveoldtown.org/lumberjack-festival

Enjoy a feats of strength competition, a beard and mustache competition, a bevy of alcoholic and nonalcoholic beverages, games, vendors, food and music at this 21+ event.

Capital City Film Festival

April 10-20
capitalcityfilmfest.com
This year's Capital City Film Festival, at venues throughout the city, features screenings of more than 100 independent films from across the globe, plus live music, art, a poetry showcase and even a couple of parties.

Beerfest at the Ballpark

April 20
3-8 p.m.
Jackson Field
505 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing
beerfestattheballpark.com

Apart from the more than 300 craft

beers from more than 50 breweries, this festival also offers the chance to sample a variety of ciders, hard seltzers, meads, spirits and wines.

Stoopfest

May 10-11
Eastside Neighborhood, Lansing
stoopfest.org

This annual DIY music, comedy and art festival takes place in parks, backyards, garages and bars in Lansing's Eastside Neighborhood. Headliners include Jhariah, R.A.P Ferreira, Weakened Friends, Direct Hit! and a trio performance by Jahshua Smith, James Gardin and Yellokake.

Mighty Uke Day Festival

May 10-12
University United Methodist Church
1120 S. Harrison Road, East Lansing
mightyukeday.com

The 14th Mighty Uke Day Festival features concerts, workshops, group strums, open mics and more, all centered around the mighty ukulele.

517 Days

11 a.m.-11 p.m. May 17
Lansing Shuffle
325 Riverfront Drive, Lansing
11 a.m.-7 p.m. May 18
The Capitol
100 N. Capitol Ave., Lansing
517day.com

Celebrate 517 Day (May 17) with art, food and live music at Lansing Shuffle, then head to the Capitol the following day for the Best of Lansing Festival, featuring more than 100 local vendors, food trucks and restaurants, plus inflatables, games and live music.

Rock Lansing

May 18
2-11 p.m.
Adado Riverfront Park
201 E. Shiawassee St., Lansing
rocklansing.live

The inaugural Rock Lansing music festival features two stages of national and regional rock acts, including Taproot, Nonpoint, Of Virtue, Eva Under Fire, Any Given Sin and more.

MSU Spring Arts and Crafts Show

9 a.m.-6 p.m. May 18
10 a.m.-5 p.m. May 19
MSU Union
49 Abbot Road, East Lansing
uabevents.com/AnnualArtsCrafts

Find one-of-a-kind, handmade items made by local artists and small businesses at this two-day arts and crafts show.

East Lansing Art Festival

10 a.m.-6 p.m. May 18
10 a.m.-5 p.m. May 19
Downtown East Lansing
elartfest.com

The 61st East Lansing Art Festival showcases artists from across the United States, who will exhibit and sell their work. The festival also includes two days of live performances, an interactive artist demonstration area, an outdoor food court and more.

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www.uumc.church



'Sick and fascinating at the same time'

Harry Dolan makes a foray into darker territory with serial killer mystery 'Don't Turn Around'

'Don't Turn Around'

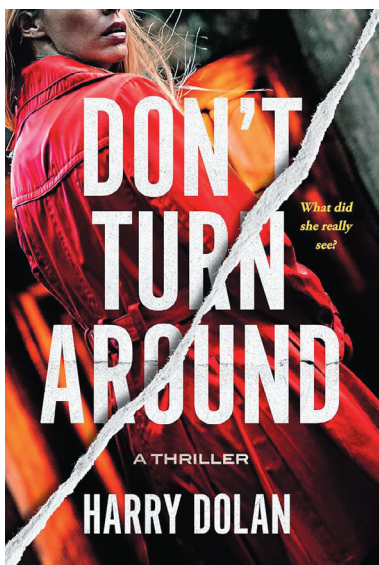
By Harry Dolan
Atlantic Monthly Press, 384 pages,
\$27 (hardcover), releasing April 2

By **BILL CASTANIER**

Ann Arbor-based mystery writer Harry Dolan takes his sixth book in a different direction than his previous novels, which were quirky, traditional mysteries more in the vein of the golden days of the genre, when the late Agatha Christie, Rex Stout and Dorothy L. Sayers were active.

"Don't Turn Around," releasing April 2, is still a confounding mystery, but Dolan has added a ruthless serial killer known as Mercurio who has just murdered his 12th victim at the small college of Seagate, the scene of his first ghastly killing.

The latest murder awakens a nightmare of memories for Kate Summerlin, who as an 11-year-old girl went for a midnight walk near her home in the small college town and stumbled upon the body of Mercurio's first victim, a former student of her college professor father. Mercurio, who was still at the scene, pressed a gun to the young girl's head and told her, "Don't turn around."



Eighteen years later, Summerlin returns to her hometown and her estranged father and is compelled to confront the evil past. The book takes some unwieldy turns as Summerlin, a well-schooled true-crime writer who's somewhat reminiscent of the late author Ann Rule, reconnects with the killer, leading to some overwhelming tension.

That tension is exactly what Dolan wants you to feel as the story unfolds and the amateur detective not only confronts her murky past with the killer but also works to stop the him from striking again.

Just when you think you know where the book is going, Dolan takes a hard right turn, racing to an unexpected denouement. Summerlin slowly reveals a previously unknown piece of information about that fateful night 18 years ago that only her and the killer share.

Like most serial killer novels, there are times you'll find yourself thinking, "Wait a minute," as one of Dolan's plot lines diverge, but buffs will understand that's part of the genre.

"Serial crime fiction is so shocking, it's hard to imagine," Dolan said. "It's sick and fascinating at the same time."

The author, whose previous works include a three-novel series following Ann Arbor-based amateur detective

David Loogan ("Bad Things Happen," "Very Bad Men" and "The Last Dead Girl") and two standalone mystery novels, said he was inspired to write a serial killer story during a walk in the woods near his home in Ann Arbor. He had already thought up the name Mercurio several years before.

He has written this serial killer thriller in the shadow of greats like Thomas Harris, made famous by his Hannibal Lecter series, and Jeffery Deaver, author of "The Bone Collector." Dolan tips his hat to Harris by starting "Don't Turn Around" with a long conversation between the police chief and Summerlin, which is similar to the opening of Harris' horror classic "Red Dragon."

This is the first time Dolan has written a novel with a female protagonist, which he said was his biggest challenge. He had a hard time "getting into her headspace" and thinking about how the murder would affect her. However, he did a great job with the character, and there's no question in my mind that he could craft an entire series with the likeable but emotionally challenged Summerlin.

Dolan said that if this book takes off, he would consider writing a se-



Courtesy photo

Ann Arbor-based mystery writer Harry Dolan has branched out from quirky, traditional mysteries in the vein of Agatha Christie and Rex Stout to a harrowing serial killer thriller with his new book, "Don't Turn Around," releasing April 2.

ries based on the true-crime author. "It would be a perfect way for a true-crime writer to get involved in a cold-case serial murder," he noted.

In the meantime, he's started work on a new book that's a modern update of the legendary Trojan War, where a woman runs away with a young man, and her husband goes after them.

ART BY NEVIN

As Seen On the Cover of CityPulse

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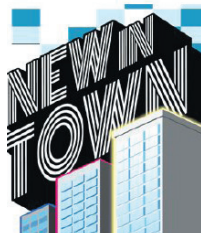
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Rocket Fizz pops up in new East Lansing storefront

By TYLER SCHNEIDER



Rocket Fizz

217 E. Grand River Ave., East Lansing
11 a.m.-9 p.m. Monday-Thursday
11 a.m.-10 p.m. Friday-Saturday
11 a.m.-6 p.m. Sunday
(517) 318-6975
rocketfizz.com

With more than 550 specialty sodas in their inventory, plus more than 1,000 varieties of taffy and candy, the owners of the Rocket Fizz franchise formerly located in the Eastwood Towne Center knew they needed more space.

On Feb. 7, Mike and Jodi Pitsch and their employees made the move from their former 1,100-square-foot shop to a 1,900-square-foot storefront near the corner of Grand River and M.A.C. avenues in East Lansing. They celebrated the move with a grand-opening event last Friday (March 15).

The Greater Lansing location is the couple's second Rocket Fizz franchise. They opened their first in Grand Rapids in 2017 after being inspired by a 2015 episode of the reality TV show "Undercover Boss" that featured Rocket Fizz co-founder and president Robert Powells.

At the time, the Pitsches had been

running their Grandville gaming and pop-culture shop, the Gaming Warehouse, for seven years.

"I was looking for something else to expand into. I saw the show and thought a soda and candy shop looked like something that would be fun to do," Mike Pitsch said.

A year later, in 2018, the couple opened their second Rocket Fizz location in Lansing.

"We always knew we wanted to do multiple stores. That was always one of the goals for us, and it was simply a no-brainer to come here," Pitsch said.

Aside from the two franchises the couple owns, additional Michigan Rocket Fizz stores have cropped up in Traverse City, Byron Center, Kalamazoo, Shelby Township and Ann Arbor.

The new East Lansing digs offer plenty of room for wall-to-wall product displays. In addition to the hundreds of specialty soda flavors, the shop also sells novelty items, concert posters, tin signs and more.

"The college students are decorating their apartments and dorms with them," Pitsch said, "so they've been a big sell so far, and we've seen a huge increase in sales on those versus the last location."

Still, the biggest draw is the sweets. "Rocket Fizz has a whole line of its own sodas. A lot of them are really crazy. They'll have weird flavors

or funny labels. We also have licensed sodas, including Farrah Fawcett and "The Wizard of Oz" soda, Three Stooges root beer, all kinds of stuff like that. That's probably only about a quarter of our soda offerings that we have here, though," Pitsch said.

Some of the drinks are especially ridiculous, like Rocket Fizz's notorious barf-flavored soda.

"Barf's actually not that bad. The flavor is kind of fruity," Pitsch said with a laugh. "We also have flavors like mustard and black olive. Those aren't great, I'm not going to lie."

Being so close to Michigan State University, Pitsch said another draw, especially for foreign students looking for a taste of home, is the selection of imported Japanese and European candies.

"Those are also very popular because you just don't see them anywhere else," he said.

Pitsch, who lives in Grand Rapids with his wife, said he's been in East Lansing about five days a week since the new storefront opened for busi-



Tyler Schneider/City Pulse

From left: shift manager Lori Glencer; East Lansing Mayor George Brookover; co-owner Mike Pitsch; and Pitsch's son, Caden, celebrated Rocket Fizz's move to East Lansing with a ribbon cutting at the grand-opening event last Friday (March 15).

ness. Once things start to settle, he'll turn the keys over to his five employees and plans on visiting about twice a week to check in.

"Making the move after our lease ran out at Eastwood has already made a huge difference in sales for us," he said. "The customers and businesses around us have been fantastic, and it's just a really great move for everyone involved."



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Thanks to pet adoption advertisers, City Pulse donated \$306 to the Ingham County Animal Shelter in 2023 and many thousands more over the last 23 years. Ads are just \$35, and \$6 of that is donated. Please help City Pulse help the animals find homes. Ads appear in the third issue of each month. The next deadline is April 12th.



Please call Berl Schwartz at (517) 999-5061 or email him at publisher@lansingcitypulse.com.



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In Memory of Rodica's Cats

Rembrandt

is a handsome young bulldog mix who came to us from another shelter. He can pull quite a bit on the leash when he first gets out (he has places to go and people to see!), but settles down. He is just about perfect in play group. He loves other dogs but is very respectful if they don't want to play. He's an awesome dog and is going to be a great addition to some lucky family!

Jackson

came to the shelter with several other cats because his owner had too many cats. He's a little confused about how he ended up here but he's a very sweet guy when he feels safe. He would probably do best in a calmer home with at least one other cat friend to help him settle in. Some cats that are used to being allowed outside when they choose can adjust to life as an indoor only cat. Potential adopters wishing to make one of them an indoor pet, will need to be patient and to keep in mind that there could be potential behavior issues and that some cats never lose their desire to roam.

Yavanna

came to the shelter with several of her siblings. They were born to a community cat but a kind person took them in. It's taken a while but she is finally comfortable enough with us to come up for attention instead of running for cover. She will need a patient family who will give her time to settle in. Some cats that are used to being allowed outside when they choose can adjust to life as an indoor only cat. Potential adopters wishing to make one of them an indoor pet, will need to be patient and to keep in mind that there could be potential behavior issues and that some cats never lose their desire to roam



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Winslow

is a sweet lab/anatolian looking guy who has been through a lot in his short life. He was brought up from a rescue in Tennessee to a shelter here in Michigan. He was adopted out but unfortunately instead of becoming a beloved family member he lived outside in a doghouse. When he was returned, he was heart worm positive and covered in fly strikes. His heart worm has been treated and he is the sweetest boy ever so the shelter is hoping that there is a special family out there with room in their hearts (and on their couch!) for a chunky friend! He loves other dogs but would prefer gentler ones who love to play chase with gentle bursts of bitey face. He is not a fan of full body wrestling. (He tried to hide under the play structure to avoid the little pit bull who wanted to wrestle with him!)

Olga

is a sweet tortie with the softest fur! She was found as a stray so we aren't sure whether she was an indoor/outdoor cat or a community cat but she has been living inside with her finder and doing fine. (She was not a fan of the resident dog!). We have every reason to believe that she will do just fine as an indoor cat but some cats that are used to being allowed outside when they choose cannot adjust to life as an indoor only cat. Potential adopters wishing to make one of them an indoor pet, will need to be patient and to keep in mind that there could be potential behavior issues and that some cats never lose their desire to roam.

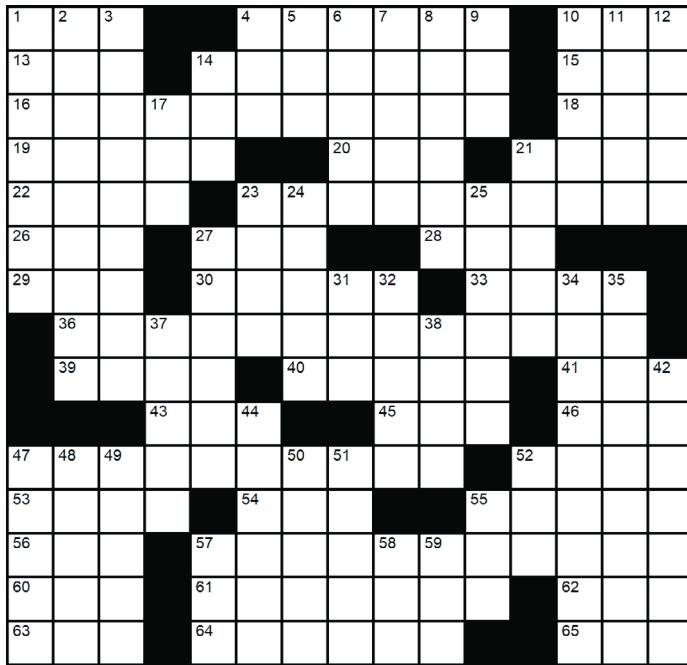
Jonesin' Crossword

By Matt Jones

"One, Please" -- no room for any more.
by Matt Jones
© 2024 Matt Jones

ACROSS

- 1. Jestling sort
- 4. China, long ago (as seen in an airline name)
- 10. "Blueberries for ___" (award-winning kids' book)
- 13. Chicken ___ king
- 14. Max for tax calculation
- 15. Bird that's not native to Tasmania
- 16. Radio personality who's good at archery?
- 18. With "The," 1970s musical Oz remake
- 19. Scorched
- 20. Notable time period
- 21. Bionicles maker
- 22. "Return of the Jedi" princess
- 23. Actor who's good at pressing clothes?
- 26. July in Marseille
- 27. Pilot-licensing org.
- 28. Show grief
- 29. Cardinals' cap initials
- 30. ___ nous (confidentially)
- 33. Ceremony performed by a mohel
- 36. Actress/TV host who's good at economics?
- 39. "SNL" alum Horatio
- 40. Search site with an exclamation point
- 41. N, S, E, or W
- 43. Talk trash about
- 45. Write-___ (some nominees)
- 46. Number of three-letter chemical elements
- 47. Blues rocker who's good at hauling stuff?
- 52. Prefix for drama



- 53. "Roots" author Haley
 - 54. "Anchorman" anchorman Burgundy
 - 55. Colts' fathers
 - 56. Big wheel
 - 57. Rapper/actor who's good at holding together documents?
 - 60. Vow words
 - 61. Curse-inducing stare
 - 62. Graceful shade tree
 - 63. ___ Moines, Iowa
 - 64. Picks up for another year
 - 65. "The Waste Land" author's monogram
- DOWN
- 1. Sings like a bird
 - 2. Montreal CFLers
 - 3. English actress Wilde of "Carrie" and "Wonder Woman 1984"
 - 4. ___ au vin (French dish)
 - 5. Kwik-E-Mart owner
 - 6. Director Lars von ___
 - 7. Le ___ (French seaport)
 - 8. Starting lineups
 - 9. The Beatles' "___ Blues"
 - 10. "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles" setting
 - 11. Fernando's friend
 - 12. Largest island of the Philippines
 - 14. It's a blast
 - 17. ___ minute
 - 21. Scales of the zodiac
 - 23. 1998 Wimbledon champ Novotna
 - 24. Food package date, informally
 - 25. Yokels, in Australian slang
 - 27. Andre the Giant's role in "The Princess Bride"
 - 31. Irish actor Stephen
 - 32. Body of morals
 - 34. Companion that's great for apartments
 - 35. They're found in the epidermis
 - 37. Alphabetical listing
 - 38. Sound the horn
 - 42. Phrase on tote bags and plastic containers
 - 44. Try hard
 - 47. Michelangelo masterpiece
 - 48. Bypass a vowel
 - 49. Auctioned autos, often
 - 50. "Rise of the ___" (PlayStation game coming out on March 22)
 - 51. Mom's brother
 - 52. ___ de los Muertos
 - 55. ___-Therese, Quebec
 - 57. To see, in Tijuana
 - 58. "That's disgusting"
 - 59. Pt. of CBS

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Answers on page 21

SUDOKU

Beginner

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

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

March 20-26, 2024

ARIES (March 21-April 19): I suspect you will soon have far more beginner's luck than you ever thought possible. For best results — to generate even more wildly abundant torrents of good luck — you could adopt what Zen Buddhists call "beginner's mind." That means gazing upon everyone and everything as if encountering it for the first time. Here are other qualities I expect to be flowing freely through you in the coming weeks: spontaneity, curiosity, innocence, candor and unpredictability. To the degree that you cultivate these states, you will invite even more beginner's luck into your life.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Taurus artist Salvador Dali was prone to exaggerate for dramatic effect. We should remember that as we read his quote: "Mistakes are almost always of a sacred nature. Never try to correct them. On the contrary: rationalize them, understand them thoroughly." While that eccentric advice may not always be 100% accurate or useful, I think it will be true and helpful for you in the coming weeks. Have maximum fun making sacred mistakes, Taurus! Learn all you can from them. Use them to improve your life.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): The professional fun advisors here at Free Will Astrology International Headquarters have concluded that your Party Hardy Potential Rating for the coming weeks is 9.8 (out of 10). In fact, this may be the Party Hardy Phase of the Year for you. You could gather the benefits of maximum revelry and conviviality with minimal side effects. Here's a meditation to get you in the right mood: Imagine mixing business and pleasure with such panache that they blend into a gleeful, fruitful synergy.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Cancerian author and psychotherapist Virginia Satir (1916-1988) was renowned as the "mother of family therapy." Her research led her to conclude, "We need four hugs a day for survival. We need eight hugs a day for maintenance. We need 12 hugs a day for growth." That 12-hug recommendation seems daunting to achieve, but I hope you will strive for it in the coming weeks. You are in a phase when maximum growth is possible — and pushing to the frontiers of hugging will help you activate the full potential. (PS: Don't force anyone to hug you. Make sure it's consensual.)

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Have you been genuinely amazed anytime recently? Have you done something truly amazing? If not, it's time to play catch-up. According to my analysis of the astrological omens, you need and deserve exciting adventures that boggle your soul in all the best ways. You should be wandering out on the frontiers and tracking down provocative mysteries. You could grow even smarter than you already are if you expose yourself to challenges that will amaze you and inspire you to be amazing.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): I invite you to perform a magic spell that will help prepare you for the rich, slippery soul work you have ahead of you. I'll offer a suggestion, but feel free to compose your own ritual. First, go outside when it's raining or misting, or find a waterfall. Stand with your legs apart and arms spread out as you turn your face up toward the falling moisture. As you drink it in, tell yourself you will be extra fluid and flowing in the coming weeks. Promise yourself you will stimulate and treasure succulent feelings. You will cultivate the sensation that everything you need is streaming in your direction.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): You are gliding into the climax of your re-education about togetherness, intimacy and collaboration. The lessons you've been learning have deepened your reservoir of wisdom about the nature of love. And in the coming weeks, even further teachings will arrive; even more openings and invitations will be available. You will be offered the chance to earn what could, in effect, be a master's degree

in relationships. It'll be challenging work, but rewarding and interesting. Do as best as you can. Don't demand perfection from yourself or anyone else.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Now is not a favorable phase to gamble on unknown entities. Nor should you allow seemingly well-meaning people to transgress your boundaries. Another Big No: Don't heed the advice of fearmongers or nagging scolds, whether they're inside or outside your head. On the other hand, dear Scorpio, the coming weeks will be an excellent time for the following actions. 1. Phase out attachments to alliances and love interests that have exhausted their possibilities. 2. Seek the necessary resources to transform or outgrow a frustrating fact about your life. 3. Name truths that other people seem intent on ignoring and avoiding. 4. Conjure simple, small, slow, practical magic to make simple, small, slow, practical progress.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Falling in love is fun! It's also exciting, enriching, inspiring, transformative, world-shaking and educational. Wouldn't it be fabulous if we could keep falling in love anew three or four times a year for as long as we live? We might always be our best selves, showing our most creative and generous sides, continually expanding our power to express our soulful intelligence. Alas, it's not practical or realistic to always be falling in love with another new person. Here's a possible alternative: What if we enlarged our understanding of what we could fall in love with? Maybe we would become perpetually infatuated with brilliant teachings, magical places, high adventures and great art and music. The coming weeks will be an excellent time for you to cultivate this skill.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): I'm perplexed by spiritual teachers who fanatically preach the doctrine that we should BE HERE NOW as much as possible. Living with full enjoyment in the present moment is a valuable practice, but dismissing or demeaning the past is shortsighted. Our lives are forged from our histories. We should revere the stories we are made of, visit them regularly and keep learning from them. Keep this in mind, Capricorn. It's an excellent time to heal your memories and to be healed by them. Cultivate deep gratitude for your past as you give the old days all your love. Enjoy this quote from novelist Gregory Maguire: "Memory is part of the present. It builds us up inside; it knits our bones to our muscles and keeps our heart pumping. It is memory that reminds our bodies to work, and memory that reminds our spirits to work, too: It keeps us who we are."

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Controversial author William S. Burroughs was a rough, tough troublemaker. But he had some wisdom that will soon be extra useful for you. He said that love is the best natural painkiller available. I bring this to your attention not because I believe you will experience more pain than the rest of us in the coming months. Rather, I am predicting you will have extra power to alleviate your pain — especially when you raise your capacity to give and receive love.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): The planet Saturn entered Pisces in March 2023 and won't depart for good until February 2026. Is that a bad thing or a good thing for you Pisceans? Some astrologers might say you are in a challenging time when you must make cutbacks and take on increased responsibility. I have a different perspective. I believe this is a phase when you can get closer than ever before to knowing exactly what you want and how to accomplish what you want. In my view, you are being called to shed secondary wishes that distract you from your life's central goals. I see this period as a homecoming — your invitation to glide into robust alignment with your soul's code.

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, March 20

2024 Art, Art History, and Design Faculty Triennial exhibition - An inclusive survey of work produced by MSU faculty. 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Broad Art Museum, 547 E. Circle Drive, East Lansing. 517-884-4800. broadmuseum.msu.edu.

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

Artist Talk: 2024 Master of Fine Arts Exhibition - Join Department of Art, Art History, and Design MFA candidates as they discuss their work included in the exhibition. 6-8 p.m. Broad Art Museum, 547 E. Circle Drive, East Lansing. 517-884-4800. broadmuseum.msu.edu.

"A Windfall of Linocuts" Art Show - The Lansing Area Printmakers' Collective is a group of artists who use the linocut as a common point of departure. 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Framer's Edge, 1856 W. Grand River Ave., Okemos. framersedge.net.

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.

Darin Lerner Jr. at the Graduate Rock Bar - 8 p.m. 133 Evergreen Ave., East Lansing. 517-348-0900. facebook.com/graduaterockbar.

Does Nuclear Arms Control with Russia and China Have a Future? - 6 p.m. FRIB Laboratory Room 1300, 640 S. Shaw Lane, East Lansing. 517-908-7573. frib.msu.edu.

Emergency Services - 6 p.m. LSW Emergency Services, 7425 Woodbury Road, Laingsburg. laingsburg.us.

Euchre Night - 6-8 p.m. Snell Towar Recreation Center, 6146 Porter Ave., East Lansing. 517-853-4600. meridian.mi.us.

"Fitness Over 50" Senior Exercise Group - The Meridian Township Parks and Recreation Stretch and Flex Exercise group exercises at the Meridian Mall Food Court. 9-10 a.m. 1982 W. Grand River Ave., Okemos. meridian50plus.com.

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

Jake Shulman-Ment and Laurel Premo - These artists share a certain ruminant, compositional style, each drawing from deep roots in folk music and stories of their ancestors. 7:30 p.m. The Robin Theatre, 1105 S. Washington Ave., Lansing. tenpoundfiddle.org.

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

Junior Roller Derby Basic Skills Boot Camp - Ten-week program. Ages 7-12. 6-8 p.m. Court One Training Center, 7868 Old M-78, East Lansing. lansingrollerderby.com.

Karaoke at Lansing Shuffle - 9 p.m. 325 Riverfront Drive, Lansing. 517-940-4619. lansingshuffle.com.

Lansing Women's Art Collective mixed-media art display - 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.

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.

Mozart's "Don Giovanni" - This opera, based on the escapades of libertine Don Juan, is considered by many to be one of the greatest of all time. 7 p.m. Fairchild Theatre, 542 Auditorium Road, East Lansing. 517-353-5340. music.msu.edu.

Open Mic, Hosted by Rick Hansel - Family-friendly, welcomes singers and musicians. No cover, all ages welcome. 6 p.m. UrbanBeat, 1213 Turner St., Lansing. 517-331-8440. urbanbeatevents.com.

Squeegee Painting - Intended for grades 4-12. 4 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.

Wheel of the Year: Ostara and Balance - Join us online or in person for discussions, rituals, meditations and more! 6 p.m. Weavers of the Web, 809 Center St., Suite 7, Lansing. 517-657-5800. weaversoftheweb.org.

Thursday, March 21

2024 Art, Art History, and Design Faculty Triennial exhibition - An inclusive survey of work produced by MSU faculty. 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Broad Art Museum, 547 E. Circle Drive, East Lansing. 517-884-4800. broadmuseum.msu.edu.

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

"Amadeus" - A fictional account of the lives of composers Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Antonio Salieri. 7 p.m. Riverwalk Theatre, 228 Museum Drive, Lansing. 517-482-5700. riverwalktheatre.com.

"A Windfall of Linocuts" Art Show - The Lansing Area Printmakers' Collective is a group of artists who use the linocut as a common point of departure. 10 a.m.-7 p.m. Framer's Edge, 1856 W. Grand River Ave., Okemos. framersedge.net.

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.

Beginning Cha-Cha Group Dance Class - A lively and energetic ballroom dance. Seven-week class. Registration req. 8 p.m. Michigan Athletic Club, 2900 Hannah Blvd., East Lansing. 517-364-8888. sparrow.org/our-hospitals-services/michigan-athletic-club.

Beginning West Coast Swing Group Dance Class - Partner dance with roots in Lindy Hop. Seven-week class. Registration req. 7 p.m.

Lansing Symphony Orchestra

Bella Hristova, violin

Saturday, March 23

7:30 p.m.

Wharton Center Cobb Great Hall
750 E. Shaw Lane, East Lansing



On the day the U.S. Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*, Los Angeles-based composer Sarah Gibson saw "The Mountain," by French sculptor Aristide Maillol, at the Norton Simon Museum in Pasadena, California. The mighty sculpture of a troubled, strong, determined woman made Gibson think of a poem by Rupi Kaur: "I stand/ on the sacrifices/ of a million women before me/ thinking/ what can I do/ to make this mountain taller/ so the women after me/ can see farther."

She was inspired to write "to make this mountain taller," a luminous and lyrical work that tops an ambitious Lansing Symphony Orchestra concert Saturday evening (March 23). Ludwig van Beethoven's brilliant Violin Concerto, bursting with high energy and sweet serenity, is the evening's centerpiece, with Bulgarian-American violinist Bella Hristova, a dynamic performer and stalwart of New York's Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, as guest soloist. Two more works on Saturday's slate trace the stormy, boisterous *mojo* of Beethoven as it rippled through two Richards: Wagner (music from "Tristan und Isolde") and Strauss ("Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks").

Michigan Athletic Club, 2900 Hannah Blvd., East Lansing. 517-364-8888. sparrow.org/our-hospitals-services/michigan-athletic-club.

Crafty Vibes - Bring your knitting, crochet or any other portable craft project and immerse yourself in an evening of creativity, conversation and community. 5 p.m. Weavers of the Web, 809 Center St., Suite 7, Lansing. 517-657-5800. weaversoftheweb.org.

Violin Masterclass with Bella Hristova - Hristova will work with MSU students and have an interactive conversation with Dmitri Berlinsky, MSU professor of violin. 5 p.m. Large Rehearsal Hall, 333 W. Circle Drive, East Lansing. 517-353-5340. music.msu.edu.

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. laingsburgbusiness.org/farmers-market-1.

Lansing Women's Art Collective mixed-media art display - 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.

Lecture Series: Women of GM - Women who've worked in today's automotive industry share

their experiences and thoughts on being a woman at General Motors. 7 p.m. R.E. Olds Transportation Museum, 240 Museum Drive, Lansing. 517-372-0529. reoldsmuseum.org.

Music Theory Lecture with Yonatan Malin - Malin presents an overview of his work on klezmer music, Jewish instrumental music from Eastern Europe. 12:45 p.m. Music Practice Building Room 103, 345 W. Circle Drive, East Lansing. 517-353-5340. music.msu.edu.

Next Steps Ukulele Workshop - Monthly sessions designed to teach a variety of techniques that will expand your skills and make you a better player. Registration req. 6 p.m. Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St., Grand Ledge. 517-627-7014. gladl.org.

Ralph Votapek, solo piano - Ralph Votapek, MSU professor emeritus of piano, presents a variety of solo piano works composed by Mozart, Brahms, Faure and Albeniz. 7:30 p.m. Cook Recital Hall, 333 W. Circle Drive, East Lansing. 517-353-5340. music.msu.edu.

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.

"Small Island Big Song" - A musical journey combining song, spoken word and cinematic visuals filmed over a multi-year voyage across 16 island nations. 7:30 p.m. Wharton Center Cobb Great Hall, 750 E. Shaw Lane, East Lansing. 517-432-2000. whartoncenter.com.

Foundations in Faith Christian Church Thursday Night Prophetic Prayer Gathering - 6 p.m. Foster Community Center, 200 N. Foster Ave., Lansing. 517-292-4093. foundationsinfaith.church.

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'Amadeus' a moving portrayal of revenge, jealousy and religious devotion gone awry

By DANA DEMINK

Darkness. Low whispers are barely perceivable. The whispers (or are they hissing snakes?) undulate and grow. The stage lights come up, and an old man in a nightshirt and cap sits in an antiquated wheelchair. It's Vienna, 1823, and we're invited into the uneasy confessions of the self-described "patron saint of mediocrity," a man disdained by God, Antonio Salieri. On this last night of his life, Salieri, played by longtime Lansing theater veteran Jeff Magnuson, gasps for the forgiveness of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, the famed composer whom he purports to have killed some 30 years before.

As Salieri retells his de-bauched tale of spiteful jealousy, we travel back to the 1780s. Magnuson sheds his hospital clothes and seems to grow in stature as he becomes a young man making a deal with God. In exchange for a life of virtue, he bids God to make him a famous composer.

But as court composer and imperial kapellmeister to Austrian Emperor Joseph II, Salieri is immediately usurped by the crass, impertinent but divine genius of Mozart.

Riverwalk Theatre's intimate, minimalist backdrop appropriately never upstages Kris Maier and her team's opulent costuming. From the white baroque wigs to the colorful, sumptuous fabrics, the actors, with their courtly manners, personify 18th-century fashion and decorum.

The production enjoys some standout performances by Taylor Haslett as the innocent yet shrewd Constanze Weber, Mozart's wife, and the salacious Venticelli (which translates as "little winds") duo, Laura Croff and Lauren Spadafora, as the chorus. These hired dandies feed Salieri's insatiable hunger for slanderous gossip about Mozart. Traditionally played by men, the two women share a devious, foppish energy that alleviates the gravitas of the narrative. Also noteworthy is Michael

Palmer as Cook, whose shocked yet comical scream appropriately conveys the dramatic intensity of Salieri's suicide attempt.

With a disproportionate number of monologues, however, this play belongs to Magnuson. Although his initial diction issues may have owed to opening-night jitters, when he relaxes and breathes, Magnuson settles into the role with moments of spontaneous excellence, railing against God with spittle and ire. His face morphs from privately embittered to publicly obsequious and then shifts to jaded and prideful, as he confesses to ruining Mozart's life. He's at one moment sweaty and grotesque in his excesses and in the next pleasing and urbane.

While I wish Lewis Elson's Mozart were played with more savant than ninny, his pacing and comic timing break up the ominous energy of the play. As written by Peter Shaffer, the role can be one-dimensional. Wolfgang Amadeus (Latin for "loved by God") Mozart, as a stage character, is incomplete without his trilling, thunderous, rich music to complete him. Unfortunately, the sound design does not help Elson with this. The music in



Review

"Amadeus"

March 21-24
7 p.m. Thursday
8 p.m. Friday-Saturday
2 p.m. Sunday
Riverwalk Theatre
228 Museum Drive,
Lansing
517-482-5700
riverwalktheatre.com



Photo by Ariniko Artistry

Laura Croff (left) and Lauren Spadafora as the salacious Venticelli duo and Jeff Magnuson as leading man Antonio Salieri in Riverwalk Theatre's production of "Amadeus."

the production is muffled and minimal. The business of *opera* is conducted in the wings. It's almost as if a vital character was left out of the play.

Still, "Amadeus" should not be missed. The rich dialogue, resplendent costuming and moving portrayal of revenge, lust, jealousy and religious devotion gone awry are guaranteed to enchant theater enthusiasts.

Events

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Take Off Pounds Sensibly - Weight-loss support group. Weigh-in 5:30 p.m., meeting 6-7 p.m. Haslett Middle School, 1535 Franklin St., Haslett. 800-932-8677. facebook.com/HaslettTops.

Friday, March 22

2024 Art, Art History, and Design Faculty Triennial exhibition - An inclusive survey of work produced by MSU faculty. 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Broad Art Museum, 547 E. Circle Drive, East Lansing. 517-884-4800. broadmuseum.msu.edu.

Aaron Johnson at Mash Bar - 7 p.m. 212 Albert Ave., East Lansing. 517-858-2100. mashbar.net.

"Amadeus" - A fictional account of the lives of composers Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Antonio Salieri. 8 p.m. Riverwalk Theatre, 228 Museum Drive, Lansing. 517-482-5700. riverwalktheatre.com.

"A Windfall of Linocuts" Art Show - The Lansing Area Printmakers' Collective is a group of artists who use the linocut as a common point of departure. 10 a.m.-7 p.m. Framer's Edge, 1856 W. Grand River Ave., Okemos. framersedge.net.

Capo the Second at the Peanut Barrel - 8 p.m. 521 E. Grand River Ave., East Lansing. 517-351-0608. peanutbarrel.com.

Chinese Inventions - We'll learn all about ancient Chinese inventions and the science behind kites by making our own, navigating with our own compasses and more! 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Impression 5 Science Center, 200 Museum Drive, Lansing. 517-485-8116. impression5.org.

Cristo Rey Church Fish Fry - Fried cod, fries, mac and cheese, coleslaw and a roll. 50/50

raffle. All-you-can-eat \$20, 3-piece meal \$15, kids' 2-piece meal \$8, toddler 1-piece meal free. 5-7 p.m. 201 W. Miller Road, Lansing. 517-394-4639. cristoreychurch.org.

Electronic Music Workshop: Explorations in Improvisation - Improvisation-based ensemble that performs non-traditional scores written by contemporary composers. 5:30 p.m. FRIB Laboratory, Room 1300, 640 S. Shaw Lane, East Lansing. 517-908-7573. frib.msu.edu.

"Fitness Over 50" Senior Exercise Group - The Meridian Township Parks and Recreation Stretch and Flex Exercise group exercises at the Meridian Mall Food Court. 9-10 a.m. 1982 W. Grand River Ave., Okemos. meridian50plus.com.

Historical Village Volunteer Open House - The Friends of Historic Meridian will hold an open house for those interested in becoming a Village volunteer. 10 a.m. 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos. 517-347-7300. meridianhistoricalvillage.org.

Knights of Columbus Fish Fry - Three pieces of fried cod (limited baked cod available), steak fries, mac and cheese and coleslaw. Dine in or take out. \$15, kids 14 and under \$10. 4:30-7 p.m. Columbus Hall, 5300 N. Grand River Ave., Lansing. 517-321-2209.

Lansing Women's Art Collective mixed-media art display - 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.

Mark Grinnell at Harrison Roadhouse - 6 p.m. 720 E. Michigan Ave., East Lansing. 517-337-0200. harrisonroadhouse.com.

Mozart's "Don Giovanni" - This opera, based on the escapades of libertine Don Juan, is considered by many to be one of the greatest of all time. 7 p.m. Fairchild Theatre, 542 Auditorium Road, East Lansing. 517-353-5340. music.msu.edu.

Night Out in Nature for Kids - We'll explore the trails, enjoy nature activities and meet live animals. Pizza dinner included. Registration req. 5:30 p.m. Harris Nature Center, 3998 Van Atta Road, Okemos. 517-349-3866. meridian.mi.us/hnc.

Nitro Jen at Mash Bar - 10 p.m. 212 Albert Ave., East Lansing. 517-858-2100. mashbar.net.

"Refuge Recovery," A Buddhist Path to Recovering from Addiction - Peer-led group meeting with a 20-minute meditation and a reading from the book "Refuge Recovery." 6:30 p.m. Unity Spiritual Center of Lansing, 2395 Washington Road, Lansing. 517-371-3010. unitylansing.org.

Travelogue: Helsinki, Estonia and Barcelona - We start our journey with visits to Helsinki and Tallinn, Estonia, then head south to the warmth of Barcelona to enjoy Monserrat and other sights. 7 p.m. Foster Community Center, Room 213, 200 N. Foster Ave., Lansing. 517-483-4233.

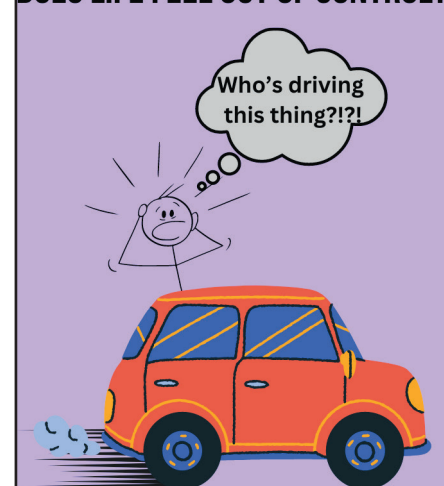
VFW Post 671 Fish Fry - Fried pollock, fries, coleslaw and a dinner roll. All-you-can-eat \$15, children under 5 free. 4-7 p.m. 12250 Old US 27, DeWitt. 517-669-9251. vfw671.org.

Saturday, March 23

2024 Art, Art History, and Design Faculty Triennial exhibition - An inclusive survey of work produced by MSU faculty. 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Broad Art Museum, 547 E. Circle Drive, East Lansing. 517-884-4800. broadmuseum.msu.edu.

2024 Ostara Ritual - Join us as we welcome in spring. Learn the secrets of rebirth and immortality and hunt for clues to what this year has in store with our egg hunt. 4-9 p.m. Weavers of the Web, 809 Center St., Suite 7, Lansing. 517-657-5800. weaversoftheweb.org.

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AND SUPPORTIVE OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE HIV.

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'Don Giovanni'

March 20 and 22-24
7 p.m. Wednesday, Friday-Saturday
3 p.m. Sunday
Fairchild Theatre
542 Auditorium Road, East Lansing

Michigan State University Opera Theatre wraps up its season with Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's "Don Giovanni," running 7 p.m. Wednesday (March 20), Friday (March 22) and Saturday (March 23) and 3 p.m. Sunday (March 24) at the school's Fairchild Theatre. The show, with music performed by members of MSU's Symphony Orchestra, follows the escapades of fictional Spanish libertine Don Giovanni, "an arrogant and sexually promiscuous nobleman who commits murder and dupes nearly every character in the cast," MSU wrote in a press release.

"We are thrilled to present 'Don Giovanni' as part of our Opera Theatre season," said Melanie Helton, Opera Theatre director. "This opera is a timeless classic, and our talented cast and crew have worked tirelessly to bring Mozart's masterpiece to life. Our patrons can expect an unforgettable experience filled with drama, passion and exquisite music."

Helton will give a special preview lecture 45 minutes before the start of each performance.

Tickets are \$22 for adults, \$20 for seniors and \$7 for students and children under 18. They can be purchased at music.msu.edu/events or by calling (517) 353-5340.

Events

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"Amadeus" - A fictional account of the lives of composers Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Antonio Salieri. 8 p.m. Riverwalk Theatre, 228 Museum Drive, Lansing. 517-482-5700. riverwalk-theatre.com.

"A Windfall of Linocuts" Art Show - The Lansing Area Printmakers' Collective is a group of artists who use the linocut as a common point of departure. 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Framers' Edge, 1856 W. Grand River Ave., Okemos. framersedge.net.

Beginner Bluegrass and Folk Mandolin Workshop with Brian Oberlin - Workshop will focus on technique, reading tablature, rhythm, chords, melody and necessary tools for folk, bluegrass and swing music. 11 a.m. Elderly Instruments, 1100 N. Washington Ave., Lansing. elderly.com.

Brian Oberlin Mandolin Workshop: Swing, Bluegrass, Improvisation & Technique - Students attain newfound knowledge on chord movement, theory, musicianship and improvisation for swing and bluegrass. 1:30 p.m. Elderly Instruments, 1100 N. Washington Ave., Lansing. elderly.com.

Bug Day - Enjoy bug-themed arts and crafts, take a commemorative picture at our photo booth and meet some real insects and other arthropods visiting from the MSU Bug House. 11 a.m.-1 p.m. East Lansing Public Library, 950 Abbot Road, East Lansing. elpl.org.

Comedy at the Creek 11 - Ten comedians will dish out the laughs. There will be drink specials, and Looney Tunes Catering will have food available.

Doors 6 p.m., show 8 p.m. Country Creek Reception Hall, 5859 N. Michigan Road, Dimondale. countrycreekreceptionhall.com.

Grand Reopening Celebration St. Johns ReStore - Ribbon cutting, refreshments, 20% off storewide and more. 10 a.m.-3 p.m. 2352 N. Old US 27, St. Johns. habitatcr.org/event/grand-reopening.

Guided Forest Bathing Walk - Guided walk designed to open your senses to the natural world and be in the present moment. We'll meet at the parking lot near the playground. 9-10:30 a.m. Lake Lansing Park North, 6260 E. Lake Drive, Haslett. connect-with-nature.com.

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

Introduction to Mushroom Cultivation - Join Chris, chief fungal officer at Mycophile's Garden, for an introduction to growing edible mushrooms in your yard, garden or home. 10 a.m. Hunter Park GardenHouse, 500 Clifford St., Lansing. alleneighborhoodcenter.org/gardenhouse/.

Lansing Women's Art Collective mixed-media art display - Hours subject to change as the Bookend Gallery is staffed by volunteers. Noon-2 p.m. CADL - Haslett Library, 1590 Franklin St., Haslett. 517-339-2324. cadl.org/about/our-locations/haslett.

Lotions, Potions and Magic Bullets - Join veterinarian and fiction author R.J. Erskine as he reflects on animal healing arts among the Amish and other therapeutic oddities. Book signing to follow. 1 p.m. The Robin Theatre, 1105 S. Washington Ave., Lansing. therobintheatre.com.

MasterWorks 4: Beethoven Violin Concerto - Concert opens with a premiere by Los Angeles

composer Sarah Gibson and ends with Richard Strauss' "Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks." 7:30 p.m. Wharton Center Cobb Great Hall, 750 E. Shaw Lane, East Lansing. lansingsymphony.org.

Mozart's "Don Giovanni" - This opera, based on the escapades of libertine Don Juan, is considered by many to be one of the greatest of all time. 7 p.m. Fairchild Theatre, 542 Auditorium Road, East Lansing. 517-353-5340. music.msu.edu.

Odds & Ends Sale - Come see vendors who are getting rid of unloved art, art supplies and craft materials! 11 a.m.-4 p.m. The Artisan Alcove, 100 E. Grand River Ave., Suite 213, Williamston. 517-485-6277. retreadart.xyz.

Writing Prose Workshop: Conversations & Backstories - Learn how to weave conversation into a scene and how to use backstory to intensify dramatic tension. Registration req. 2 p.m. Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St., Grand Ledge. 517-627-7014. gladl.org.

Sunday, March 24

2024 Art, Art History, and Design Faculty Triennial exhibition - An inclusive survey of work produced by MSU faculty. 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Broad Art Museum, 547 E. Circle Drive, East Lansing. 517-884-4800. broadmuseum.msu.edu.

"Amadeus" - A fictional account of the lives of composers Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Antonio Salieri. 2 p.m. Riverwalk Theatre, 228 Museum Drive, Lansing. 517-482-5700. riverwalk-theatre.com

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.

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

Mommy & Me Easter Tea - Join us for a special Easter tea party for moms and their little ones to enjoy together! 11 a.m. Laylin Park, 619 E. Maple St., Mason. 810-844-1706. facebook.com/N2Nook.

Mozart's "Don Giovanni" - This opera, based on the escapades of libertine Don Juan, is considered by many to be one of the greatest of all time. 3 p.m. Fairchild Theatre, 542 Auditorium Road, East Lansing. 517-353-5340. music.msu.edu.

Museum Tour: Deep-Rooted with Beal Botanical Garden - An immersive tour unearthing the historical, social and political narratives growing within works of art from the museum's collection. 1 p.m. Broad Art Museum, 547 E. Circle Drive, East Lansing. 517-884-4800. broad-museum.msu.edu.

NOT YOUR BASIC B* (&C) CURLS - Look-and-learn class designed to help you teach your clients how to start loving their curls. 10 a.m. Midwest Hair Lounge, 715 Curtis St., Suite C, Mason. 517-294-3544. facebook.com/midwesthairlounge.

"Personal Symbolism in My Drawings," with Doug Eagle - Doug will explain the symbolism that goes into his drawings. If there's time, he'll advise on drawing your own symbols. 9:30 a.m. Unity Spiritual Center, 2395 Washington Road, Lansing. 517-371-3010. unitylansing.org.

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

Monday, March 25

"A Windfall of Linocuts" Art Show - The Lansing Area Printmakers' Collective is a group of artists who use the linocut as a common point of departure. Noon-5:30 p.m. Framers' Edge, 1856 W. Grand River Ave., Okemos. framersedge.net.

Ancient Egypt - Wrap stones in metal to create your own accessories and learn about the science of mummification as we explore this ancient culture! 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Impression 5

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

Downtown Development Authority Meeting - 7 p.m. Portland City Hall, 259 Kent St., Portland. portland-michigan.org.

Downtown Development Authority meeting - 6 p.m. Laingsburg City Hall, 114 S. Woodhull Road, Laingsburg. laingsburg.us.

Department of Public Works meeting - 5:30 p.m. Laingsburg City Hall, 114 S. Woodhull Road, Laingsburg. laingsburg.us.

EggStrava-ganza! Easter Egg Decorating - Decorate Easter eggs to take home and enjoy a snack and Easter story time for little ones. 6 p.m. Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St., Grand Ledge. 517-627-7014. gladl.org.

"Fitness Over 50" Senior Exercise Group - The Meridian Township Parks and Recreation Stretch and Flex Exercise group exercises at the Meridian Mall Food Court. 9-10 a.m. 1982 W. Grand River Ave., Okemos. meridian50plus.com.

Guy Yehuda, clarinet; Jimmy Briere, piano - Presenting "Americana," a variety of works for clarinet and piano by American composers Copland, Gershwin, Harberg and more. 7:30 p.m. Cook Recital Hall, 333 W. Circle Drive, East Lansing. 517-353-5340. music.msu.edu.

Journey into Manga: The Works of Tezuka Osamu - Presentation by David Humphrey, director of Japanese Studies at MSU. Osamu is recognized in Japan as one of the founders of modern manga. 1 p.m. Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St., Grand Ledge. 517-627-7014. gladl.org.

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. eradi.org.

"Letting Go: The Pathway of Surrender" Book Study - A guide to helping to remove the obstacles that keep us from living a more conscious life. 1:30 p.m. Unity Spiritual Center of Lansing, 2395 Washington Road, Lansing. 517-371-3010. unitylansing.org.

Lansing Women's Art Collective mixed-media art display - 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.

MSU Health Fair - Health screenings, fitness assessments, nutrition and preventative health information, a mindfulness and meditation station and stress reduction resources. Free. 1-4 p.m. MSU Union Ballroom, 49 Abbot Road, East Lansing. uhw.msu.edu.

"The Quest: A Journey of Spiritual Rediscovery" Book Study, with Jeff Benoit - 7 p.m. Zoom ID: 177 417 886. Passcode: 601744. unitylansing.org.

Session 1 Lecture with Dr. Tammy Kernodle: "I've Got a Story to Tell: Mary Lou Williams and the Re-Imagining of Jazz's History" - 3 p.m. Music Practice Building Room 419, 345 W. Circle Drive, East Lansing. 517-353-5340. music.msu.edu.

Session 2 Lecture with Dr. Tammy Kernodle: "All Rhythm, but None of the Blues: Black Music, Black Women and the De-Mythologizing of Post-Racial America" - 8 p.m. Murray Hall, 333 W. Circle Drive, East Lansing. 517-353-5340. music.msu.edu.

Spring Break: Art and Drawing - A morning full of drawing and art! Kids will experiment with different art styles, mediums and techniques. 9 a.m.-noon. TinkrLAB, 2650 E. Grand River Ave., East Lansing. 517-500-8687. tinkrlab.com.

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Events

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Spring Break: Splatter Booth - Have fun in our Splatter Booth! Kids will create their own splatter art, so be sure to dress for a mess! 1-4 p.m. TinkrLAB, 2650 E. Grand River Ave., East Lansing. 517-500-8687. tinkrlab.com.

Tuesday, March 26

"A Windfall of Linocuts" Art Show - The Lansing Area Printmakers' Collective is a group of artists who use the linocut as a common point of departure. 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Framers Edge, 1856 W. Grand River Ave., Okemos. framersedge.net.

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.

Lansing Women's Art Collective mixed-media art display - 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.

March 2024 Grand River Connection: Midtown Brewing Co. - Network and connect with other young professionals. 5:01-7 p.m. 402 S. Washington Square, Lansing. lansing501.com.

Michigan Science - Learn about Michigan nature and local ecology. Conduct fizzy experiments with Vernors and discover technologies that were innovated in our home state! 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Impression 5 Science Center, 200 Museum Drive, Lansing. 517-485-8116. impression5.org.

One More Chapter Book Club - Chat, eat snacks and have book-related fun. Grades 2-4. Registration req. 6 p.m. Charlotte Community Library, 226 S. Bostwick St., Charlotte. 517-543-8859. charlottelibrary.org.

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.

"The Quest: A Journey of Spiritual Rediscovery" Book Study, with Rev. Sharon Ketchum - 1:30 p.m. Unity Spiritual Center of Lansing, 2395 Washington Road, Lansing. 517-371-3010. unitylansing.org.

Session 3 Lecture with Dr. Tammy Kernodle: "My Song is My Weapon: Women, Social Movements and the Act of Freedom Singing" - 10:20 a.m. Murray Hall, 333 W. Circle Drive, East Lansing. 517-353-5340. music.msu.edu.

Spring Break: Be a Jedi - Kids will make their own lightsabers and learn what it takes to be a Jedi. 1-4 p.m. TinkrLAB, 2650 E. Grand River Ave., East Lansing. 517-500-8687. tinkrlab.com.

Spring Break: Slime Time - A morning full of making slime! Kids will experiment with different slime recipes and even make edible slime! 9 a.m.-noon. TinkrLAB, 2650 E. Grand River Ave., East Lansing. 517-500-8687. tinkrlab.com.

Spring Break Scavenger Hunt at R.E. Olds Transportation Museum - We'll have an easy version and one for hardcore hunters! Once complete, hand in your card for a treat. Regular admission prices apply. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. 240 Museum Drive, Lansing. reoldsmuseum.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.

Wednesday, March 27

2024 Art, Art History, and Design Faculty Triennial exhibition - An inclusive survey of work produced by MSU faculty. 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Broad Art Museum, 547 E. Circle Drive, East Lansing. 517-884-4800. broadmuseum.msu.edu.

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

"A Windfall of Linocuts" Art Show - The Lansing Area Printmakers' Collective is a group of artists who use the linocut as a common point of departure. 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Framers Edge, 1856 W. Grand River Ave., Okemos. framersedge.net.

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

Carl Pawluk at the Graduate Hotel - 8 p.m. 133 Evergreen Ave., East Lansing. 517-348-0900. facebook.com/graduaterockbar.

Celtic Woman - This group will delight audiences with its blend of traditional and contemporary Irish music. 7 p.m. Wharton Center Cobb Great Hall, 750 E. Shaw Lane, East Lansing. 517-432-2000. whartoncenter.com.

CharLit Adult Book Club - A monthly adult book club. 6:30 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 the Meridian Mall Food Court. 9-10 a.m. 1982 W. Grand River Ave., Okemos. meridian50plus.com.

Maple Syrup Festival

Saturday, March 23

11 a.m.-5 p.m.

Fenner Nature Center

2020 E. Mount Hope Ave., Lansing

Fenner Nature Center will host its 49th annual Maple Syrup Festival 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday (March 23), featuring "a day full of exciting activities, demonstrations and tasty treats," according to a press release.

Guests can fuel up with all-you-can-eat pancakes at the Flapjacks for Fenner fundraiser breakfast, running 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Plates are \$10 per person for ages 5 and up and \$6 per person for ages 4 and under. Each plate is served with sausage, butter, orange juice and a sample of locally sourced maple syrup.

There will be various demonstrations, like tree tapping and sap boiling, plus hands-on activities such as making natural spiles to take home, identifying trees ready for tapping and learning about sapsuckers, a type of woodpecker.

Additionally, the Visitor Center will feature maple syrup displays, and the Explore Store will be open to the public, selling maple-themed gifts and souvenirs.

The event is free, with a \$5 requested parking donation. All proceeds support Fenner Conservancy, the nonprofit that manages the nature center in collaboration with the city of Lansing.

For more information, visit mynaturecenter.org or call (517) 483-4224.



Junior Roller Derby Basic Skills Boot Camp - Ten-week program. Ages 7-12. 6-8 p.m. Court One Training Center, 7868 Old M-78, East Lansing. lansingrollerderby.com.

Karaoke at Lansing Shuffle - 9 p.m. 325 Riverfront Drive, Lansing. 517-940-4619. lansingshuffle.com.

The Land Down Under - Experience the island continent of Australia! Learn about how marsupials are different from other mammals and explore the delicate ecosystem of the Great Barrier Reef. 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Impression 5 Science Center, 200 Museum Drive, Lansing. 517-485-8116. impression5.org.

Lansing Women's Art Collective mixed-media art display - 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.

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.

Open Mic, Hosted by Rick Hansel - Family-friendly, welcomes singers and musicians.

No cover, all ages welcome. 6 p.m. UrbanBeat, 1213 Turner St., Lansing. 517-331-8440. urbanbeatevents.com.

Spring Break: LEGO Masters - Enjoy fun building challenges with LEGO bricks! Does your child have what it takes to be a LEGO master? 9 a.m.-noon. TinkrLAB, 2650 E. Grand River Ave., East Lansing. 517-500-8687. tinkrlab.com.

Spring Break: tinkrTABLE - Kids will create their own inventions to take home and participate in various fun challenges. 1-4 p.m. TinkrLAB, 2650 E. Grand River Ave., East Lansing. 517-500-8687. tinkrlab.com.

Spring Break Scavenger Hunt at R.E. Olds Transportation Museum - We'll have an easy version and one for hardcore hunters! Once complete, hand in your card for a treat. Regular admission prices apply. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. 240 Museum Drive, Lansing. reoldsmuseum.org.

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



CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN,
INGHAM COUNTY
LEGAL AD NOTICE: TOWNSHIP BOARD
SPECIAL MEETING MARCH 26, 2024

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN LEGAL NOTICE

TOWNSHIP BOARD JOINT BOARD AND COMMISSION MEETING MARCH 26, 2024

The Charter Township of Meridian Township Board will be holding an annual Joint Board and Commission Meeting at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 26, 2024 at the Municipal Building Town Hall Room at 5151 Marsh Rd., Okemos, MI. The meeting agenda, packet and/or virtual meeting credentials will be posted on the Township webpage at www.meridian.mi.us

Deborah Guthrie
Township Clerk

CP#24-372

Providing a safe and welcoming, sustainable, prime community.

A PRIME COMMUNITY
meridian.mi.us

CROSSWORD SOLUTION

From Pg. 17

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SUDOKU SOLUTION

From Pg. 17

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FOOD & DRINK

DINING OUT IN GREATER LANSING



Lawrence

By **GABRIELLE LAWRENCE**

Shortly after I became a member of the Lansing School Board, I had the opportunity to tour Willow Elementary School. I hadn't been in that

building before, and during the tour, I was completely blown away by the enthusiasm and love that poured out of the principal, Steve Lonzo.

When I learned last year that Lonzo was retiring, I was incredibly sad for the district. While I, too, don't want to work forever, there are some people who I wish could, and Lonzo is one of them. But then I learned that he and his equally impressive wife, Re'Shane Lonzo, were purchasing the old Leo's Outpost on South Pennsylvania Avenue and converting it into a restaurant and cigar lounge. Even better, the Comfort Zone is located in my county commission district, which matters to literally nobody but me.

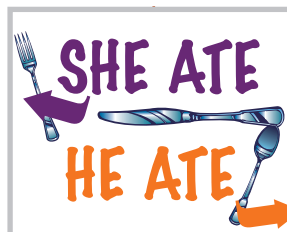
To be frank, I was apprehensive about the amount of smoke that we would inevitably encounter while eating dinner in a cigar lounge. But while I did have to wash my hair that night and hang my coat outside, behaviors that reminded me of my undergraduate days, the smokiness inside the building was much less than I anticipated. The ventilation system is top of the line, and the smell of smoke was virtually unnoticeable by the time we sat down.

The Comfort Zone is a far cry from Leo's Outpost. It's draped in purple, with textures and lighting that make you want to hire a babysitter and find a corner to sit in with your husband. If a building can be sexy, this one is. It has been absolutely beautifully renovated and was very clearly a labor of love for the Lonzos.

Mr. She Ate and I love a crab cake, and we were excited to try the Comfort Zone's version. The appetizer was expensive, \$32 for two large crab cakes, and our server didn't bring smaller plates for us to use while we ate. Not a problem for myself and my spouse, but this could be extremely awkward if you were with a colleague with whom you didn't want to share a plate. The crab cakes were above average, very large and drizzled with romesco sauce. However, for that price, I expected much more lump crab meat.

For my entrée, I chose the hand-cut New York strip steak (\$55), which the menu claimed would come with mashed potatoes and fresh broccolini. What was actually on my plate was broccoli, which I still love, but there's something about those long broccolini stems. When I placed my order, our server didn't ask me how I wanted the steak prepared, which gave me pause, but to his credit, he came back a few minutes later to inquire.

The Comfort Zone provides an all-around upscale experience



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



Gabrielle Lawrence for City Pulse

The Comfort Zone's hand-cut New York strip steak is perfectly cooked to the orderer's preference and topped with a generous amount of herby compound butter, which complements every bite, according to Gabrielle Lawrence.

See She Ate, Page 23



Beverly

By **BRYAN BEVERLY**

Opened last fall by a pair of educators turned entrepreneurs, the Comfort Zone Cigar Lounge & Bistro took over the former site of Leo's Outpost (and before that, De-

Marco's) and transformed the interior into a modern, luxurious space with cozy couches, plenty of TV screens, private celebration rooms and topflight libations. It's also positioning itself as a hangout for Lansing's upper crust with tiered memberships offering various VIP opportunities.

Couple that with the philanthropic nature of its proprietors, Re'Shane and Steve Lonzo, who have spent decades supporting Lansing-area causes. They've committed 10% of monthly food sales to nonprofit organizations around Greater Lansing. Eating, drinking and puffing, all for a good cause.

What's comfy

This is a cigar lounge that serves higher-end food. As such, when you enter, the smell of cigars is palpable. My much better half and I ventured out on a Saturday evening to celebrate another trip around the sun for her. We were greeted most graciously by Katreva Bisbee, another friendly educator, who was occupying the role of hostess for the evening. On our way to the table, we ran into Mrs. and Mr. She Ate, who were also enjoying an evening away from rambunctious little ones.

Once seated, our kind waitress highlighted the evening's specials and patiently waited as we made up our minds. We don't get out much alone, so we were initially enjoying both the ambience and each other's company rather than focusing on the menu. While we waited for our drinks, I noticed the gentleman seated directly next to us, not 3 feet away, was smoking a cigar. However, the ventilation system is top-notch, and we were never inundated by smoke, though we both smelled of smoke when we walked out.

What about the bistro?

The food itself was a series of ups and downs. The crab cake appetizer (\$32) featured two large, flat patties with some crab meat, but there was far too much filler for the price. I was expecting a chunkier crab cake with much more crab meat. Also, the romesco sauce was only on the top cake, and there wasn't enough to slather on the bottom layer.

The birthday girl enjoyed her lobster tail dinner (\$55), served with butter, lemon-herb risotto and Brussels sprouts (her favorite). The tails were smaller than anticipated and cooked in the shell rather than on top as one would typically expect



Bryan Beverly for City Pulse

Bryan Beverly enjoyed the Comfort Zone's sweet and sour Key lime tart, noting the "divine" creaminess of the lime filling and whipped topping.

See He Ate, Page 23

The ultimate protein drink

By ARI LEVAUX

If we needed more evidence that American society is in decline, consider how little respect we give lentils. Pound for pound, these legumes quietly deliver more nutrition to more people than anything else growing on Earth. One serving of these lightweight beans contains twice as many antioxidants as blueberries; about half your daily fiber needs; loads of folate, iron and other minerals; and more protein than any plant that isn't soy. Being legumes, they can grow in marginal soil, and they improve the soil with each planting.

The trick to cooking lentils is to treat them more like pasta than rice. Don't try to get them to absorb all the liquid. Instead, cook them in plenty of liquid and then strain them. But save the liquid. It may be the most important part. More on that soon.

Indian farmers produce at least 50 varieties of lentils. It's probably not a coincidence that India is also one of the

few places I've visited where vegetarian options are usually more appealing than their meat-based counterparts, thanks, in part, to that hot lentil action. If you're down with animal proteins but don't have a ton at your disposal, you can always add a ham hock or stew meat to lentil soup.

In North America, most lentils are grown in the Upper Columbia River Basin. But production is migrating east, over the continental divide and onto the northern Plains, where grain farmers are planting rotations of lentils, if not focusing exclusively on them. Being so good for the soil, the lentils themselves are almost a bonus, a byproduct of a healthy cropland system.

While lentil cheerleaders will sometimes gush about how easy it is to cook lentils, it's not necessarily as easy to make them tasty. A thick, bland gruel that may also be too crunchy? No problem. But making lentils taste good with a palatable texture takes more finesse. Again, don't forget that water. For some, like my friend Norman, that water is more important than the lentils them-



Photo by Rosmarie Voegtli

Pound for pound, lentils quietly deliver more nutrition to more people than anything else growing on Earth.

selves.

I met Norman years ago under a massive tamarind tree in Kailua-Kona, Hawaii. I was there because a mutual friend had told me about Norman's proprietary spice mix. Norman generously told me how to make his spice mix and explained how he uses it to flavor a lentil-based dish called rasam (pronounced like awesome). In giving me this recipe, Norman taught me a lot about lentil cookery.

Norman is an Indologist, aka an expert on all things India, and the method by which rasam is prepared pertains to the reason India consumes half the world's lentils. That reason is dahl, the simple yet satisfying Indian lentil soup. Rasam is made with the water used to precook lentils before they're cooked into dahl. It's flavored with Norman spices, tamarind and tomato.

It all comes together into a thin, reddish-brown soup that's full of tang and spice, balanced against the savory undertones of that rich lentil water.

Rasam is so satisfying that the lentils themselves are basically a byproduct. It's up to the chef to figure out what to do with them, and there are many options. You could use the lentils to make dahl, of course. Or lentil hummus. Or add

them to tabouli or a salad.

The last time I made rasam, as it happens, I was also boiling some meaty soup bones for a stew. So, I added the lentils to my stew, along with the usual carrots, onions and celery. As I had some of the Norman spices on my hands, I used them to flavor my meaty lentil stew.

Norman's spice mix

1 tablespoon cumin
1 tablespoon coriander
1 tablespoon mustard seeds
1 teaspoon black pepper
Just a few pieces of fenugreek

In a heavy-bottomed pan, toast the seeds on medium heat, stirring often, until browned but not burnt. With a mortar and pestle or spice grinder, grind the toasted spice seeds into a powder. Store in an airtight container.

Rasam

Makes four servings
1 cup red or yellow lentils
8 cups water

2 tablespoons oil or butter
1/2 cup minced onions
2 tablespoons rasam powder
1 can diced tomatoes
1 tablespoon tamarind paste or Knorr-brand tamarind soup

Boil the lentils until they're completely soft. Turn off the heat and allow to cool.

Meanwhile, sauté the onions in the oil until they're translucent. Add the rasam powder, tamarind and diced tomatoes, including all of the juice in the can, and allow everything to simmer together. Finally, pour the lentil water into the pan of onions, tomatoes and spices. Season with salt and serve.

She Ate

from page 22

The steak was wonderfully medium rare, as I requested. The sear on the outside was crisp, while the texture inside was smooth. It was topped with a generous amount of herby compound butter, which complemented every bite. I would definitely order this again.

Mr. She Ate chose the chicken alfredo (\$25), which he reported as being unoffensive but not particularly memorable. What was memorable was that when we stood up to leave, who should walk in but my co-reviewer and his fabulous better half? We sat right back down with them and proceeded to talk each other's ears off until their entrees were delivered to the table.

He Ate

from page 22

at a fancier restaurant. The risotto was basically room temperature, but the sprouts were deliciously charred and seasoned.

For dessert, we both enjoyed the Key lime tart (\$8), which was sweet and sour in the best of ways. The creaminess of the lime filling and whipped topping was divine.

Best bite

I ordered the sea scallops (\$34), and they were exquisite. Pan-seared to golden-brown perfection, the four scallops were flavorful

and a great size. The scallops and grilled asparagus were a lovely distraction from the same lukewarm risotto. If the side dish would have been spot-on, this would have been my favorite dish of 2024 so far.

At the end of our meal, our waitress was keen to hear our impressions to share with the chef, who was curious about our thoughts since most visitors see the Comfort Zone's prices and opt for the \$15 fried chicken wings. I can't help but wonder if the Lansing market can continue to keep the Comfort Zone alive. Particularly given current economic conditions, I, for one, am rooting for it.



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WARNING: USE BY PREGNANT OR BREASTFEEDING WOMEN, OR BY WOMEN PLANNING TO BECOME PREGNANT, MAY RESULT IN FETAL INJURY, PRETERM BIRTH, LOW BIRTH WEIGHT, OR DEVELOPMENTAL PROBLEMS FOR THE CHILD.