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May 27-June 2, 2015



LANSSING

GETS

KINKY

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VOCAL RECALL

JOSHUA DAVIS REFLECTS ON 'THE VOICE' • P. 9



TOP OF THE TOWN WINNERS PARTY

VIP TENT AT SECOND ANNUAL FISH RODEO

RIVERFRONT PARK • FRIDAY, JUNE 12 5 P.M. TO CLOSE

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In brief

Free eye care clinic scheduled for Monday

Lansing's Care Free Eye Clinic is taking appointments for free eye exams and free eyewear, both available on Monday, at 3333 S. Pennsylvania Ave., between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m.

There are 150 examinations slots available for uninsured patients with family income of no more than 200 percent of the federal poverty level. Appointments can be scheduled by calling 517-349-8888.

Patients will receive exams from a team of 12 local optometrists who are donating their time. Eyeglasses will be provided by VSP Vision Care at no charge. On site will be VPS's 45-foot, fully stocked mobile eye exam bus. It will supplement the four examinations rooms at the Care Free's South Lansing clinic.

"We will not turn anyone away," said Dr. Leonard Silverman, Care Free's director of optometry services. The examinations will also screen for other health issues. "If people have medical conditions, we will follow up," he said.

Silverman encourages people to make appointments. "We will try to accommodate everyone, but we can get overwhelmed."

Have something to say about a local issue or an item that appeared in our pages?

Now you have two ways to sound off:

- 1.) Write a letter to the editor:
 • E-mail: letters@lansingcitypulse.com
 • Snail mail: City Pulse, 1905 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing, MI 48912
 • Fax: (517) 371-5800
- 2.) Write a guest column:
 Contact Berl Schwartz for more information:
publisher@lansingcitypulse.com
 or (517) 999-5061

(Please include your name, address and telephone number so we can reach you. Keep letters to 250 words or fewer. City Pulse reserves the right to edit letters and columns.)

Correction

Due to an editing error, the name of Mac's Bar bartender Craig Doepker was misspelled in last week's list of Top of the Town winners.

Due to an editing error, a paragraph was omitted from "Laughing at death" in May 13's Curtain Call section. The second paragraph should be as follows:

Patriarch Ben Lyons (Michael Schacherbauer) is in the final stages of cancer, so mother Rita (Carol Ferris) has summoned their adult children to the hospital to say goodbye. Lisa (Erin Hoffman) is a frantic, sloppy hot mess. The single mom struggles with sobriety, self-image and destructive relationships. Curtis (Steve Ledyard) seems to be the more stable sibling, despite being resented and rejected by his father for being homosexual.

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Prevailing wage fight pits unions against conservatives



PAGE 10

Summer Solstice Jazz Festival announces packed lineup



PAGE 22

Nola Bistro brings flavors of New Orleans and Vietnam to Lansing



"KINKY BOOTS" DESIGN BY ANGUS McNAIR, COURTESY PHOTOS

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THIS WEEK



Editor & Publisher
Berl Schwartz

7 p.m. Wednesdays

on

IMPACT
89 FM

State Sen. Curtis Hertel Jr.
 State Sen. Rick Jones
 Singer-songwriter Joshua Davis



PUBLIC NOTICES

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
 LEGAL NOTICE
 Vegetation Ordinance Amendment
 Ordinance No. 2015-03**

Date passed: May 19, 2015
 Nature of the ordinance: Amendments to Section 82-26 and 82-27 contained in Chapter 82, Article II of the Code of Ordinances of the Charter Township of Meridian to change the height restriction of vegetation (grasses, weeds, brush) from 12 inches to 8 inches within 75 feet of a structure and reduce the time period to correct a violation from seven days to three business days.
 Full text available at: Meridian Township Municipal Building, 5151 Marsh Road Meridian Township Service Center, 2100 Gaylord C. Smith Ct. Haslett Branch Library, 5670 School Street Harris Nature Center, 3998 Van Atta Road Snell Towar Recreation Center, 6146 Porter Avenue The Township Website www.meridian.mi.us

ELIZABETH LEGOFF
 SUPERVISOR

BRETT DREYFUS, CMMC
 TOWNSHIP CLERK

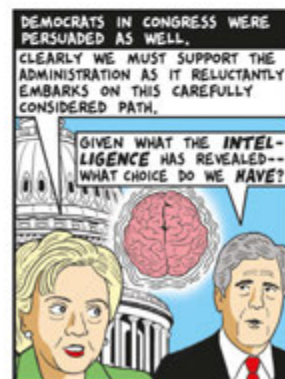
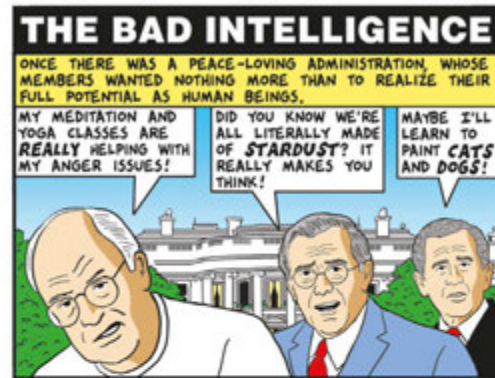
CP#15_122

B/15/091 GENERATOR FOR MAINT AND ALARM as per the specifications provided by the City of Lansing. The City of Lansing will accept sealed bids at the **CITY OF LANSING C/O LANSING BOARD OF WATER AND LIGHT, PURCHASING OFFICE, 1232 HACO DR., LANSING, MICHIGAN 48912** until 3:00 PM local time in effect on **MAY 28, 2015** at which time the bids will be opened and read aloud. Complete specifications and forms required to submit bids are available by calling Stephanie Robinson, CPPB at (517) 702-6197, or email: slr@lbwl.com, or for content and purpose of this bid contact William Oberst at (517) 882-6418 go to www.mitn.info. The City of Lansing encourages bids from all vendors including MBE/WBE vendors and Lansing-based businesses.

CP#15_124

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



TOM TOMORROW © 2015

PULSE

NEWS & OPINION

Bernero: Time to look at BWL sale

Lansing Mayor Virg Bernero's adamant opposition to even considering the sale of the Board of Water & Light has softened to the point that he is calling on his Financial Health Team to study the potential implications of such a sale.

"It's time to look at it," Bernero told City Pulse.

Former Mayor David Hollister, who heads the mayor's Financial Health Team, said Tuesday that Bernero "has approached us for doing this," but hasn't spelled out details on how he wants it done.

The Financial Health Team recommended more than two years ago that the sale be studied, which Bernero swiftly shot down. "Not on my watch," he declared in his 2013 State of the City Address.

But in an interview at the City Market on Thursday, Bernero confirmed growing rumors that he has reconsidered.

On Tuesday, he issued a statement to City Pulse:

"The BWL is one of the city's key assets and has served the region well for many years. The Financial Health Team is carefully reviewing all assets and liabilities facing the city of Lansing to help chart a viable path forward. That review includes considering the costs and benefits of potential changes in the ownership structure of the BWL as a way to address our long-term liabilities for pensions and retiree health care and possibly to provide a source of funding for major infrastructure investments like fixing roads. Any decision on the long-term disposition of the BWL would be premature at this point."

In his City Market interview, Bernero said he was influenced by a meeting on April 23 with Kevyn Orr, the emergency manager who oversaw Detroit's bankruptcy. The meeting occurred after Orr spoke at a Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce event.

Hollister, appearing on the "City Pulse Newsmakers" TV show, said he had attended the meeting, which he described as "private."

Referring to Orr, Hollister said, "He said you know in a federal bankruptcy proceeding, a federal judge can seize your assets and sell them. "He said Orr told them that any effort to stop such a forced sale "doesn't stand a chance."

"I think that had an impact on the mayor because up until that point, he wasn't even willing to consider it, but when he heard that a judge could come in and make such a sweeping decision," Bernero realized that "maybe we ought to at least look at what it's worth and make a judgment."

Hollister said a "thoughtful 18-month to two-year study" — a "depoliticized deep dive" — would be in order. He said as mayor in the 1990s, he looked into the sale of the public utility after the city was approached by an investor. Ultimately, he decided it wasn't necessary at the time.

In an interview Tuesday, Hollister said the study will look at "any option." For example, he said, it will consider selling some of BWL's assets short of ceding majority control.

He said the study needs to look well down the road. "Thirty years from now, water may be more valuable."

He said the city valued the BWL at \$350 million when he looked at the sale in the '90s. Now it "could be half a billion, could be a billion — who knows," Hollister said about the current value.

The price paid for BWL would be a consideration in deciding whether to sell it to private investors. Other factors would be the effect on rates and on jobs, Bernero said.

The main reason to sell would be to pay off or at least sharply reduce the so-called structural deficit, which covers pension and benefit costs for past and current employees. One estimate places the cost at more than \$600 million, which is a figure Hollister has cited.

About \$45 million of the city's overall \$196 million a year budget is earmarked for the employee pension and benefit costs that contribute to the structural deficit, administration spokesman Randy Hannan said.

Bernero said the size of the structural deficit remains a threat to the city, even though its coffers have improved for the second year in a row after the 2008 recession. Bernero described the city as "in line" to go bankrupt — "not first in line, maybe 15th or 17th," referring to other communities in Michigan.

See Bernero, Page 6

Right step

Selling BWL would resolve many problems

That Lansing Mayor Virg Bernero will consider selling the city's electric utility is encouraging, if somewhat wrong footed.

Bernero finally acknowledges that BWL is a valuable and vulnerable asset. If the city were to face bankruptcy — implausible, but hardly impossible — a court could order it sold to pay off Lansing's creditors. Shedding BWL could be a sound defensive strategy, but there is a more pressing and by now obvious reason to sell.

Lansing isn't able to manage a business as complex as an electric utility. It doesn't have the oversight expertise, and the mixing of politics and electric power — which is the real reason the utility's commissioners fired BWL General Manager J. Peter Lark — is bad for ratepayers and the city.



MICKEY HIRTEN

It's tempting to cast BWL's commissioners as inept. In January, a majority of them voted to fire Lark "for cause," which entailed a modest severance package of six months' salary — \$129,251.

Instead they agreed to a \$650,000 out-of-court settlement announced last week, just \$250,000 shy of the \$900,000 maximum contract obligation. Clearly, the "for cause" artifice crumbled during severance negotiations.

Had the dispute gone to court, BWL would have had to provide Lark with a detailed list of grievances. BWL Chairman David Price said that settling the matter privately eliminated the need to prepare this bill of particulars for Lark or offer the rationale for the decision to the board members — Sandra Zerkle, Tracy Thomas and Vice Chairwoman Margaret Bossenbery — who refused to support the firing.

The decision to dismiss Lark was a rushed affair lacking foundation. But firing a chief executive for cause — or anyone, for that matter — is a taxing and often exhausting process. For most big businesses there are guidelines, steps that managers follow to make their case and avoid costly payouts. There are

See Hirtten, Page 6



Property: Liberty Hyde Bailey School
Location: East Lansing

This building, like the neighborhood surrounding it, takes its name from horticulturalist Liberty Hyde Bailey. Born in South Haven, Bailey graduated from the Michigan Agricultural College in 1882 and later contributed to the founding of agricultural extension services and the 4-H movement.

The building's exterior is clad with red brick, arranged in a common bond with Flemish headers, where the end of the brick (header) alternates with the typically exposed long edge (stretcher). Additionally, string courses of vertical brick bands (soldiers) wrap the building above the main level and third floor windows. Subtly pointed stone Gothic arches grace the main entrances, which are further embellished with brick pilasters and carved stone accents. A modern wing was added to the building later and, despite its incongruous appearance, it does not detract from the grand main block.

It is speculated that Bailey helped design the nation's first Horticulture Laboratory at Michigan Agricultural College. The building, now called Eustace-Cole Hall, can be found along West Circle Drive and is an Eye Candy in its own right.

Bailey attended the dedication of the Bailey School building in June 1923. Operations in the building were recently halted and the building was closed. Its future remains in question.

—Daniel E. Bollman, AIA

"Eye candy of the Week" is our weekly look at some of the nicer properties in Lansing. It rotates each with Eyesore of the Week. If you have a suggestion, please e-mail eye@lansingcitypulse.com or call Berl Schwartz at 999-5061.

PUBLIC NOTICES

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN NOTICE OF POSTING OF TOWNSHIP BOARD MINUTES

On May 20, 2015, the following minutes of the proceedings of the Meridian Township Board were sent for posting in the following locations:

Meridian Township Municipal Building, 5151 Marsh Road
Meridian Township Service Center, 2100 Gaylord C. Smith Court
Hope Borbas Okemos Branch Library, 4321 Okemos Road
Haslett Branch Library, 1590 Franklin Street
Harris Nature Center, 3998 Van Atta Road
Snell Towar Recreation Center, 6146 Porter Ave.
and the Township Web Site www.meridian.mi.us.

May 7, 2015 Regular Meeting

ELIZABETH LEGOFF
SUPERVISOR

BRETT DREYFUS
TOWNSHIP CLERK

CP#15_119

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN LEGAL NOTICE Rezoning #15010

Date introduced: May 19, 2015
Nature of the ordinance: A request to rezone approximately 33.73 acres located north of Jolly Road, west and north of Jolly Oak Road and north of Farrins Parkway from I (Industrial), PO (Professional and Office), RR (Rural Residential) and C-2 (Commercial) to C-2 (Commercial)
Full text available at: Meridian Township Municipal Building, 5151 Marsh Road
Meridian Township Service Center, 2100 Gaylord C. Smith Ct.
Haslett Branch Library, 5670 School Street
Harris Nature Center, 3998 Van Atta Road
Snell Towar Recreation Center, 6146 Porter Avenue
The Township Website www.meridian.mi.us

ELIZABETH LEGOFF
SUPERVISOR

BRETT DREYFUS, CMMC
TOWNSHIP CLERK

CP#15_120

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN LEGAL NOTICE Vendors Ordinance Amendment Ordinance No. 2015-04

Date passed: May 19, 2015
Nature of the ordinance: Amendments to Section 38-121, 38-122, 38-123, 38-124, 38-125, 38-126, 38-151, 38-155, 38-156 and 38-158 of the Code of Ordinances of the Charter Township of Meridian to provide time limitations for vending (defined as selling goods and/or services) ending at 8:00 PM from April 1st through October 31st and ending at 6:00 P.M. from November 1st through March 31st. Minor amendments include vending be setback a minimum of 20 feet from any right-of-way line and property line.
Full text available at: Meridian Township Municipal Building, 5151 Marsh Road
Meridian Township Service Center, 2100 Gaylord C. Smith Ct.
Haslett Branch Library, 5670 School Street
Harris Nature Center, 3998 Van Atta Road
Snell Towar Recreation Center, 6146 Porter Avenue
The Township Website www.meridian.mi.us

ELIZABETH LEGOFF
SUPERVISOR

BRETT DREYFUS, CMMC
TOWNSHIP CLERK

CP#15_121

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN LEGAL NOTICE Rezoning #15020 Ordinance No. 2015-02

Date passed: May 19, 2015
Nature of the ordinance: A request to rezone three parcels totaling 8.66 acres located north of Grand River Avenue (1614 and 1622 Grand River Avenue) and east of Central Park Drive (undeveloped parcel) from PO (Professional and Office) and RA (Single Family, Medium Density) to C-2 (Commercial).
Full text available at: Meridian Township Municipal Building, 5151 Marsh Road
Meridian Township Service Center, 2100 Gaylord C. Smith Ct.
Haslett Branch Library, 5670 School Street
Harris Nature Center, 3998 Van Atta Road
Snell Towar Recreation Center, 6146 Porter Avenue
The Township Website www.meridian.mi.us

ELIZABETH LEGOFF
SUPERVISOR

BRETT DREYFUS, CMMC
TOWNSHIP CLERK

CP#15_123

Bernero

from page 5

Bernero also questioned whether he or any mayor can exercise his responsibility under the City Charter for overseeing the BWL, given all its complexities. He wants the City Charter amended to provide the mayor with an inspector general with a background in utilities to report to him on BWL. The Council rejected his funding proposal for such a position and seems unlikely to agree to put such a proposal on the ballot. Instead, the Council approved \$200,000 for an independent audit of BWL in the coming fiscal year. Bernero hasn't decided if he will undertake such an audit.

Asked about a study, state Sen. Curtis Hertel Jr., D-East Lansing, said, "We can study it all we want. The real concern people would have if we were actually going to sell the Board of Water & Light is what would it do to

Hirten

from page 5

meetings, written warnings, personal improvements plans, maybe even suspensions.

It's unlikely that big power company like CMS Energy, supported by board members like William D. Harvey, retired chairman and CEO of Alliant Energy Corp.; Deborah H. Butler, executive vice president of planning and chief information officer of Norfolk Southern Corp.; or Stephen E. Ewing, former vice chairman of DTE Energy, would act so precipitously. They are seasoned business leaders and are very well compensated with stipends and stock for their board service.

To oversee BWL, the city seeks out volunteers who willingly invest their time and energy to serve their community. They should be commended for their service. But they are amateurs in a game that requires professionals.

Announcing the Lark settlement, BWL rather breezily asserted that insurance would cover most of the payout and its attorney fees. But that doesn't mean the BWL won't pay. Price said there was no discussion in board meetings about how this latest claim could affect insurance premiums. Having fired the last three general managers, a carrier would be negligent not to raise BWL's rates.

More to the point, shouldn't the issue be raised by at least one of the board members? Drivers with multiple accidents will sometimes pay repairs out-of-pocket to avoid years of higher premiums. This settlement isn't free.

Here is the question for Lansing ratepayers. It has cost your utility \$650,000 to pay off Lark. How are you better off?

Price said that BWL's interim general manager, Dick Peffley, brings stability to the organization and is respected by the utility's

ratepayers, can we get a fair price on the current market and will the same environmental concerns that are frankly still there now get worse under a private company?"

BWL is still burning coal, although it has reduced how much with the addition of its first natural gas-burning electric cogeneration plant.

Lansing's other state senator, Republican Rick Jones from Grand Ledge, said, "Everything has to be on the table, but I don't know why they'd want to sell their cash cow."

Revenues from BWL, which as a non-profit doesn't pay taxes, accounts for roughly 1/6th of the city's nearly \$120 million General Fund budget. The city is expecting to collect about \$21 million from BWL in the current year. A privately owned utility would pay significant taxes, perhaps offsetting BWL's transfer payments.

— Berl Schwartz



employees. "We have a person in charge who spent 38 years in the company. He knows how to turn on the lights and water."

But while Peffley bring to his leadership role a new openness, style alone doesn't change the utility. Except for the top two jobs, the BWL is staffed by the same people in the same jobs as they had during the ice storm crisis. It too easy to blame the failed response entirely on Lark.

BWL faces significant and costly power generation and transmission line issues. The downtown Eckert facility is near the end of its useful life. BWL spent \$186 million on its new REO Town natural gas-fired plant, which produces about a third of the power that utility coaxes from the Eckert plant. It must either build big or buy. Either is expensive. BWL is in the process of upgrading its transmission system, which it told the Lansing State Journal would cost about \$101 million to implement over the next six years. More money.

Does it make sense for ratepayers — that is, the people of Lansing — to undertake all of these expenses? The difference in electric bills for BWL and commercial utilities like Consumers is shrinking.

And finally, does Lansing really want its power provider closely aligned with city government? Bernero wants more accountability — an inspector general to inform him about utility operations — and more share responsibility from BWL for costly city services.

Despite appointing all of the voting board members and orchestrating the purge of Lark, Bernero still isn't satisfied that the city has a handle on BWL's activities. But should it? Providing power to its residents isn't a core function of city government, especially as finances tighten and challenges grow.

It's time to move on. Sell BWL, invest the proceeds to cover unfunded pension liabilities and invest in assets that make Lansing a better city.

Prevailing wage ban

Measure advancing; Snyder will decide

The war between the state GOP and organized labor is being fought in Lansing again. After their success with so-called Right to Work legislation, Republicans in Lansing have set their sights on prevailing wage laws.

Those laws require government-funded projects to pay skilled workers wages that are indexed to union pay rates.

The difference can be significant. Nationally, the average hourly rate of carpenter is \$19, according to payscale.com. But the second quarter 2015 prevailing wage estimate from the state of Michigan Licensing and Regulatory Affairs wage hour program places the required payment in Ingham for a prevailing wage contract at \$41.17 an hour. A 2007 report from the free-market Mackinac Center found prevailing wage requirements increased hourly rates by nearly 40 percent.

While the legislation is expected to pass both chambers of the Legislature, Republican Gov. Rick Snyder has made it clear he opposes the change. He has not expressly threatened a veto, as he did with the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, but he is considered likely to reject the bill if it lands on his desk.

To counter a likely veto from Snyder, supporters have submitted — and the State Board of Canvassers on Tuesday approved — ballot language for a citizen initiative.

The initiative is being pushed by Protect Michigan Taxpayers, the coalition that championed the “Right to Work” legislation in 2012. It will have 180 days to collect over 250,000 valid signatures from registered Michigan voters. Once that happens, the state Legislature will have the option to approve the initiated law — and Snyder would not have an option to veto it. If the Legislature rejects the initiative, it will go the ballot and Michigan voters will have their say.

Right to Life used the initiative process several years ago to circumvent Snyder’s veto on controversial abortion insurance requirements. Rather than allowing the initiative to go to a vote of the people, the Republican-controlled Legislature approved the law. That mandate was labeled rape insurance by opponents since it would have prohibited an insurance company from paying for abortion services unless a person had purchased a special insurance rider to cover such services.

Unlike the Right to Life initiative, Protect Michigan Taxpayers late on Tuesday added an appropriation of \$75,000 to the language. With enough signatures and legislative approval, under the Michigan Constitution it still may not be eligible for a referendum because of the appropriation.

“This appropriation is the height of political cowardice,” Sen. Curtis Hertel, D-East Lansing, said during the floor debate last week. “You’re afraid of what the voters will do. You’re afraid they will go to the ballot and vote this down.”

Supporters of repeal, like Sen. Rick Jones, R-Grand Ledge, said the prevailing wage law artificially inflates the cost for taxpayer-funded building projects. A repeal, he said, would lessen the costs to taxpayers.

“All indications are that it will create more jobs,” Jones said in a phone interview. “Maybe a city will spend less money on a new city hall or courthouse or police department, and can do more with roads.”

Jones said citizens don’t want to pay more for government construction projects and are angry about it. He said he would support encouraging able-bodied persons on welfare to train and take the skilled jobs necessary for construction.

“Skilled workers will have no problem under a change from prevailing wage,” Jones said. “Skilled trades like pipe fitters, crane operators, and electricians will have no problem. The unskilled labor worker would not be paid as much.”

Jon Byrd of the Michigan Laborers’ Council disagrees with Jones and offers this twist on the measure. He said repealing the law will allow out-of-state contractors to underbid Michigan companies and employees for Michigan tax-funded projects.

As a word of warning, he notes a situation that occurred in 2010, during the cleanup operations of Enbridge Inc.’s massive pipeline oil spill in Marshall. Hallmark Industrial, a Texas company, was hired as a subcontractor for Enbridge’s cleanup operations, which were overseen by Garner Environmental Services of Texas. Byrd argued that because there were no prevailing-wage requirements, Hallmark was able to transport dozens of Central American immigrants who were in the country illegally to the state. There they toiled on the river for 12 to 14 hours a day being paid about half what other workers were being paid. The situation was revealed after an investigation by Michigan Messenger.

“[Prevailing Wage] was originally passed as a disincentive to out-of-state contractors from undercutting in-state and local contractors,” Byrd said. “If it is repealed, what happened there could happen all over the state.”

Former Rep. Mark Schauer, the Democratic candidate for governor last year, concurred with Byrd. If prevailing wage laws are repealed, he said, “You get untrained, unqualified workers doing work wrong and dangerously.” He said companies that pay a prevailing wage are more likely to invest in safety training.

On the other side of the issue, the Associated Builders and Contractors of Michigan has hailed the repeal move.

“A repeal of the outdated law will mean school and university budgets, as well as all state government, will not be forced to overspend on construction, saving taxpayer-

ers as much as \$250 million annually in the educational construction sector alone,” said association President Chris Fisher. “The fact that the bills are the first introduced in the 2015 session indicates the importance of prevailing wage reform to easing the strain on state and education budgets.”

Byrd, however, said the association is not interested in workers, but rather in the contractors who hire them.

“ABC advances an agenda for the economy where they can pay the least and get the shoddiest job done, the fastest,” Byrd alleges. He also notes that while the group claims it is about American workers, nationally the group is advocating to import more foreign-born workers under guest-worker visas designed to allow foreign nationals with needed skills for the U.S. economy to immigrate and work in the states legally.

Prevailing wage controversies are not new to Lansing. In 2013, the builders and

contractors association sued the city over its local ordinance requiring prevailing wages for city supported projects. Circuit Court Judge Clinton Canady III struck the law down, but the state Appeals Court reversed that ruling. The association argued the law was a violation of Michigan’s Home Rule law because the municipality usurped the state’s control and influence.

In a union city like Lansing, prevailing-wage requirements are popular, and Mayor Virg Bernero is an advocate.

The association “has filed an appeal to the MI Supreme Court, and we are hopeful that the state’s high court will sustain the appellate court decision,” said Bernero spokesman Randy Hannan via email. “Mayor Bernero arrived at his position on this issue as the son of a working class family and as a public official who is deeply concerned about economic issues that im-

See Wage ban, Page 8

CityPULSE

NEWSMAKERS



HOSTED BY BERL SCHWARTZ

THIS WEEK:
 WMU-COOLEY
 LAW SCHOOL
 INNOCENCE
 PROJECT





MARLA MITCHELL-CICHON
WMU-COOLEY LAW SCHOOL INNOCENCE PROJECT DIRECTOR

On Thursday, May 7, five individuals who were wrongfully convicted, along with their families and attorneys, joined Michigan State Senator Steve Bieda as he introduced legislation that provides compensation to Michigan citizens who have been wrongfully convicted. Pictured (left-right) Michigan exonerees Raymond Highers, Donya Davis, Thomas Highers, Julie Baumer, and Kenneth Wyrniemko.



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7:30 P.M. EVERY FRIDAY

A new tool for MSU educators

Student snoozing through a boring lecture might be a thing of the past in classes offered by Michigan State University's College of Arts and Letters.

PopBoardz is an innovative, interactive new app that gives educators and students alike a new presentation tool — but this isn't your typical slideshow. Created by budding software developer Moonbeach Inc., the app allows users to create a single-page presentation comprising 16 "tiles." Each tile can hold a piece of media, from PDFs to webpages, to image slideshows and videos. Think PowerPoint meets Pinterest.

The best part of the software for MSU's College of Arts and Letters, however, might be its price. The department recently received 4,000 donated software licenses for the complete version of the iOS/OS X app.

The gift from Stougaard, a former MSU alum and PopBoardz developer, came up to about \$100,000. In a phone interview, Stougaard said the app has grown to be a popular teaching tool.

"Teachers love it because they make 'presentations,' but they don't make a beautiful PowerPoint or those kinds of presentations," he said. "They have a little lesson plan and they wish they had some examples, and they're able to jump around."

The app is initially free to download off the app store, but requires in-app purchases for a complete experience. The college's marketing director, Ryan Kilcoyne, said the full version that faculty and students will soon use typically runs about \$24.99.

The College of Arts and Letters, which Stougaard graduated from in 1981, includes majors ranging from philosophy and studio art to a variety of foreign languages. Matt Handelman, an assistant German professor, has tested earlier versions of the app in his classes.

"It really worked to decentralize the classroom, and took me out of a teaching role and into a helping role and enabled the students to be the own arbiters of their education," he said, "which was

really exciting."

The app allows educators at the university or primary school level alike to step outside the typical lecture of talking with a PowerPoint slide in the background. Teachers can add in easy-to-access videos and image slideshows to give students a visual on a particular topic,



Courtesy of Mike Jenkins

LEFT: PopBoardz developer Peter Stougaard explains some specifics of his app to a student while on MSU's campus.

BELOW LEFT: Assistant Professor Matt Handelman (left) discusses some of the PopBoardz app's features with another College of Arts and Letters professor.



and include website pages so students following along can access more information on a subject during class.

Handelman, who previously tested

a beta version in classrooms, said that despite early bugs, he thought the app worked well in the classroom.

"It's a less confusing way of rethinking the PowerPoint model, which is standard in a lot of foreign language classes in terms of presenting materials, images, texts," he said. "It had this richer func-

the past as well.

"It's been fun to stay in touch, and as much as they're getting something from me, I get plenty from giving back as well."

Since leaving 20th Century Fox in 2011, Stougaard has worked on his innovative video startup ActivateTV, and also as a developer with Moonbeach Inc., where he developed PopBoardz.

While he is very happy with his app, Stougaard said educators were never the target audience he had in mind when developing PopBoardz.

"I just made this app for me, because I wanted it, and I couldn't find anything out there that did it."

Stougaard thinks his app is so popular with educators because it gives them a blank slate, something easy to use and free-form that can be filled with custom content. He said that many teaching apps in comparison try to help teachers create a curriculum — something many teachers have told him they already have.

"Teachers discovered us more than we discovered them," he said. "They know what they're going to teach these kids, they don't need you to break these down into different lessons that are already out there, they want to make their own, and have it be personalized, and updated as often as you want."

MSU, along with many other institutes throughout the world, has tested beta versions of the app in the past. Stougaard said his app has been in use in schools around the world, with pilot programs in Texas and even Australia.

"It's pretty spectacular and I'm pretty proud, and [their use] says more than I can possibly say about it," he said.

The version MSU will receive will include tools for developers to track usage, data that will help further improve PopBoardz as a teaching tool in the future.

Stougaard said this most recent version of PopBoardz should make it to the university by the end of this week, following a bit of maintenance and some bug fixes.

"I certainly didn't want to send that to Michigan State with things that become bugs," he said. "The last thing I need is 4,000 haters, right?"

— Brooke Kansier



— Todd Heywood



Wage ban

from page 7

pact the middle class. He believes that the prevailing wage is important because it spreads the benefits of economic development to working families across the metro Lansing region and across the state."

Hannan said Bernero shares the con-

cerns of organizers like Byrd.

"He believes that all government jurisdictions should make their best efforts to hire local workers and companies," Hannan said. "When this is not possible, workers and companies from within the state should be preferred over those from out-of-state, provided that they deliver comparable value to taxpayers at a comparable cost. There will be times when a product or service can only be obtained from outside a

locality or the state, but even in those cases our prevailing wage requirements should still apply."

PUBLIC NOTICES

Ingham County seeks proposals from architectural and engineering consultants for the design and construction of a new exposition center at the Fairgrounds. Info: <http://pu.ingham.org>, under Current Bids link, Pkt 70-15.

CP#15_125

ARTS & CULTURE

ART • BOOKS • FILM • MUSIC • THEATER

By TY FORQUER

Joshua Davis' improbable run on "The Voice" ended on May 19's season finale, with the former Lansing resident and Steppin' In It front-man finishing in third place behind champion Sawyer Fredericks, a 16-year-old folk singer from upstate New York, and country singer Meghan Linsey.

His run on the reality TV singing competition began three months ago, with Davis' performance of Bob Dylan's "I Shall Be Released" in a blind audition on the show's Feb. 23 debut. Davis narrowly escaped elimination on April 21's results show, but he safely sailed through the next three rounds en route to the show's final round.

City Pulse caught up with the singer at his Traverse City home Thursday afternoon, just two days after the final episode. He discussed his experiences on "The Voice," his friendship with Fredericks, his relationship with celebrity coach Adam Levine and his future plans.

You posted on Facebook earlier today that it feels like you are waking up from a dream. Was there any one point during your time on "The Voice" that was particularly unbelievable?

Really, the whole thing. And it kept getting weirder and weirder as the whole thing went on. But then again, just being there for so long, it got to be like, "This is what we're doing." Now you're going to sing a duet with Sheryl Crow. OK, cool. But it's still amazing. The whole thing was so bizarre that I still can't believe that it happened. And I think it takes me a little while to process things — I'm kind of slow in that way — so it will be interesting to see how this all catches up with me. It's such a crazy experience. Non-stop. To be able to step back now and have a little perspective from it, it's going to be interesting to see how it all comes together.

It seems like you developed a great friendship with Fredericks. How did that develop?

When I went out (to Los Angeles) and met him for the first time, we immediately hit it off. And then shortly after he came to me and asked, "Are you the Joshua Davis that plays on Seth Bernard and May Erlewine's records?" And I said, "Yeah. How do you know those guys?" He had known them from a friend of a friend who had lived in Michigan and brought some of their albums out (to New York), and he was a huge fan of theirs. You know, he would fit in really well

CATCHING HIS BREATH

JOSHUA DAVIS REFLECTS ON 'THE VOICE,' LOOKS TO THE FUTURE



Photo by Jessica Cowles

Traverse City-based singer Joshua Davis finished in third place on the eighth season of "The Voice."

with the Earthwork Music crowd. They live on a farm, they have the same kind of ethics we do — very community based, all about having positive messages in their music. He's a very sweet kid, and I still feel very protective of him. I wasn't seeing my kids that much, so to be around him, and fulfill a little bit of that dad role that I have, it was great to get to know him.

You and Levine come from very different genres of music, but you seemed to have a good working relationship. What was it like working with him?

It was interesting. We do play very different kinds of music. He's very involved in the mainstream pop realm, and I'm not, but we both love very similar kinds of music.

He grew up on the same stuff that I grew up on. He loves roots music, he loves folk rock, he loves the songwriters of the '60s and '70s. We share a common love, so connecting with him was really easy. He's really curious about music. If he likes something, he wants to know why he likes it, he wants to know where that artist came from, who their influences are. And that's me 100 percent. I'm a person that digs in, in a big way. So we connected over that.

And he's got this relentless energy. He's constantly pushing, constantly working, constantly looking for the next thing. He's a fun person to be around, and he's kind of wild to be around. But we connected very easily, it was fun to work with him.

We only get a glimpse into the behind the scenes work that goes into "The Voice." What is your daily schedule like?

The last couple weeks, I was pulling 18-hour days. I was more exhausted than I've ever been, and I have two kids. It was incredible, but it was really crazy. There would be days when I'd gotten three hours of sleep, and I'm pulling an 18-hour day, and then I get four hours of sleep ... I pulled a 26-hour day at one point. It's totally wild.

We had two minors in the final four, so they had regulations where they could only work a certain amount of time. They have to have certain days off, and they have to have a lot of breaks. We had to work around that, so we always got stuck with the really strange hours, the all-night shifts. It was intense, but it was good. Once I get a couple days of sleep, I'm going to look back on it with a lot of fond memories.

Is there any one thing about your time on the show that you are particularly proud of?

One of the things I'm really thankful about is that they allowed me to do one of my songs on the show. I think that's something they have never done before, and I had to fight really hard to get them to agree to it. I pushed it and pushed it until, at the last minute, they caved. It was a battle, and I feel like it really paid off. And hopefully it will be really good for the show — and good for me. It's something that I'm really proud of. That's a big win for me.

"The Voice" just ended a few days ago, but have you started to think about your next steps?

I'm going to cook some dinner here at the house. Have a couple beers, maybe. Take a nap at some point. (laughs)

We're planning some big shows for Michigan for the summer. And then I'm working on putting together a team, a booking agency at least, because I'm inundated with offers — which is lovely, but kind of overwhelming.

There's a lot writing that I need to do that's kind of on the tip of my tongue, a lot of stuff I've written over the course of this. There will be new songs coming out, and a new album, eventually. I'm really excited for what the future holds, and I'm also really excited to use this exposure to shine a light on what we have going on here in the Michigan music scene. I don't know what the future is going to hold, and that's exciting.

A lot of that jazz

East Lansing's Summer Solstice Jazz Festival announces diverse lineup

By LAWRENCE COSENTINO

From gutbucket thumps to gossamer tones, guitar chords to vocal cords, straight-ahead to way-out-there, the 19th annual East Lansing Summer Solstice Jazz Festival has announced its most diverse, high-caliber lineup yet for June 20-21.

"Our goal is, in an incremental way, to make it one of the premier festivals of the Midwest," said Rodney Whitaker, the festival's artistic director and MSU jazz studies chief. "We have people from all over the world calling us, wanting to be a part."

Latin, big band, traditional, avant-garde, blues and unclassifiable happenings are all in the mix — about 14 hours of live music in all — from local, regional and national artists on two stages.

The festival is blossoming into a regional event under Whitaker, a world-renowned bassist and educator with connections to just about everyone in jazz, and with the backing of Wharton Center director Michael Brand, the MSU provost's office and a coalition of other university entities.

"We have a very motivated board," said Benjamin Hall, festival coordinator. "MSU's increased involvement has the most to do with the festival expanding."

Whitaker and Hall have pushed the festival to diversify its lineup.



Photo by Tom Concordia

Young trumpeter Bria Skonberg is one of the highlights in this year's jazz festival lineup.

"People will get here and realize they like a genre of music they didn't even consider before," Hall said.

"We don't want all the same sort of music," Whitaker agreed.

A top priority for Whitaker was to see all kinds of faces on stage.

"This is our national music," he said. "It shouldn't be all black folks or white folks, and women should be represented."

Canadian trumpeter/vocalist Bria Skonberg, headlining Friday at 7:30, is the latest in a series of rising young jazz stars sponsored by a big festival partner, the Wharton Center.

Skonberg will follow up her festival gig with an appearance at the Wharton Center April 16. The festival-to-Wharton pairing has scored big already, with gigs by superstar

bassist Esperanza Spalding and vocalists Cécile McLorin Salvant and Cyrille Aimée.

Whitaker was impressed with Skonberg when they played together at Centrum Jazz Festival in Port Townsend, Wash.

"She plays traditional jazz, and she's good," Whitaker said. "Her heroes are Louis Armstrong, New Orleans musicians."

On stage and in the classroom, Whitaker wants to make jazz more attractive to women. He hopes to get a female instrumentalist on MSU's jazz faculty soon.

"Go to an orchestra concert and 40, 50 percent of the orchestra is female," Whitaker said. "Go to a jazz group and they're still 99 percent male. We're just behind."

Another festival highlight is Saturday's headliner, a "guitar summit" with MSU's Randy Napoleon, New York guitarist Dave

Stryker and one of the top musicians in jazz, Peter Bernstein. Bernstein, also based in New York, came to MSU as a guest artist in March and recently did a stint with saxophone colossus Sonny Rollins.

"He's an amazing player and a giving spirit," Whitaker said.

For something completely different, Chicago vibraphonist Jason Adasiewicz will make his East Lansing debut at the second annual Kozmic Picnic. The 1 p.m. event at the Broad Art Museum kicks off Saturday's slate of music.

Adasiewicz's avant-garde sound, a diffuse twinkling that sounds like dancing ants with bells around their necks, will suit the surroundings of a contemporary art museum perfectly.

At 2:30 p.m., the festival will shift to party mode as the New Orleans Swamp Donkeys leads a classic Second Line parade, complete with beads and costumes, from the Broad Museum to the festival site in downtown East Lansing.

(The Swamp Donkeys have a familiar name in the lineup: sousaphonist Wessell Anderson IV, or "Quad," son of former MSU saxophone professor and alto saxman Wessell "Warmdaddy" Anderson.)

Last year's inaugural Kozmic Picnic and parade were mobbed and turned into instant traditions. Hall said this year's will be "even bigger and crazier," with costumed participants from the Renaissance Festival in the mix, just for extra color. (Sing the blues, Sir

See Jazz, Page 11

Bringing it home

'Kinky Boots' dance captain has Lansing roots

By TY FORQUER

For most Broadway performers, a national tour means many nights on the road, sleeping in unfamiliar cities. For one member of the "Kinky Boots" touring cast, however, the musical's stop in East Lansing brings him back home.

Dance captain Stephen Carrasco was raised just minutes away from the Wharton Center stage. An Okemos native, the New York-based dancer graduated from Okemos High School in 2002.

While Carrasco, 30, has been in four Broadway shows (including the Broadway run of "Kinky Boots") and a few national touring shows, this musical is a special achievement for him.

"Kinky Boots,' for me, marks a whole bunch of dreams I had and never fully accomplished," he said. "I performed on the Tony awards with 'Kinky Boots.' I was on the cover of the New York Times' arts section with 'Kinky Boots.' So to be able to bring that piece back to my hometown — I've never been so proud of something in my whole life. And I'm thrilled I get to share it with the people I grew up with."

The story of "Kinky Boots" centers around Charlie Price, heir to a failing shoe factory. The straight-laced Charlie forms an unlikely partnership with Lola, a drag queen, and the two of them hatch a plan to save the flagging business. In the process, they discover that they have more in common than either first suspected. The transformative power of this message, said Carrasco, is what makes this show so special to him.

"There's always that one man in the front row, who has clearly been taken to the show by his wife. And that man, the second all of the drag queens come out, he's terrified. He's absolutely petrified to be in the audience," said Carrasco. "But by the end of the show, that same man has a huge smile on his face. He's leaping to his feet, clapping along. That's the coolest thing ever."

While Carrasco has enjoyed a great run on Broadway, pursuing this career wasn't a given for the dancer. When he graduated from high school, he faced a tough decision. He was accepted into the musical theater program at Syracuse University, but he was also accepted at the University of Michigan where he could pursue a more traditional career.

"Am I going to go, spend all of this money, to major in something that makes me happy, or am I going to spend maybe less money, and major in something that I don't really care about? And, thank goodness, at the age of 18, I was wise enough to follow my

heart," Carrasco said. "And I'm really grateful that I did that. Your job is not who you are, certainly, but it is what you do and that's such a huge part of your life. And I'm very proud to say that I don't feel like I've worked a day in my life."

A dance captain is a crucial part of touring shows, overseeing the dancers and making sure the show stays true to the original choreography. In addition to being dance captain for this production, Carrasco is also what known in Broadway as a "swing." He doesn't have an assigned role each night, but he understudies the male dance ensemble and a few of the featured male roles. That way, he is able to step in quickly to fill one of the dancer's roles, or tracks, in case of injury or illness.

"I don't have to do the same thing every night, which is very fun for me," he said. "I think I've done 11 of the 12 male tracks in our show. I love the variety in that."

Despite performing the same show eight times a week for months at a time, Carrasco doesn't find it hard to stay focused.

"It's easy to do over and over again because, no matter how many times I've done it, there's a person watching it for the first time," he said. "As long as you can remember that, it's very easy."

Carrasco also finds motivation in the transformative power of the musical's message.

"This is a musical that tells a story that



Courtesy photo

Stephen Carrasco, dance captain for the touring production of "Kinky Boots," was raised in Okemos.

relates to every single person's life. All of us, no matter how open-minded we are, have looked at something or someone in our lives and judged them. Without knowing them and without understanding them," he said. "Kinky Boots' can really take you on a journey, and show you that you can change the world when you change your mind. And there's nothing more powerful than that."

Jazz

from page 10

Lancelot. Gratuitous anachronism is never amiss at a Kozmic Picnik.)

Festival highlights include veteran drummer Jeff “The Hammer” Hamilton and his trio (6 p.m. Saturday) and Whitaker’s ebullient current group, Soul-R-Energy (6 p.m. Friday), both on the Main Stage.

Latin music will be represented by the Afro-Caribbean ensemble Grupo Aye (9:15 p.m. Friday) and Orquesta Ritmo (9:15 p.m. Saturday), both on the Main Stage. A festival favorite, Detroit blues legend Thornetta Davis will return at 8:30 p.m. Friday.

With all that talent filling two stages, who are the sleepers?

“Check out Ari Teitel,” Whitaker said. “He’s bad.”

Teitel, a blistering guitarist and third-year student at MSU, is already making a mark in jazz, both as a leader and sideman. Local organist Jim Alfredson will join him 7 p.m. Friday on the MSU Educational Stage.

Whitaker also thinks people will be surprised by New Orleans vocalist Cindy Scott, appearing 7:30 p.m. Friday on the MSU Educational Stage.

Like a jazz musician absorbed in a solo, big-city jazz festivals have a way of ignoring

the clock and taking a few extra choruses. East Lansing’s festival measures up in that department as well.

Last year, late-night “afterglow” performances at Peppino’s Sports Grille, headlined by saxophonist Diego Rivera and trombonist Micheal Dease, turned into wild jam sessions.

“For me, the club stuff was the highlight last year,” Whitaker said. “Both nights, all the festival guests came and sat in. That’s when it all comes together.”

This year, festival organizers aren’t even bothering to say “afterglow.”

“It’s just part of the festival,” Hall said.

Expect anyone under the sun to show up and crash gigs at Peppino’s by trumpeter Etienne Charles Friday and Organissimo Saturday.

Next year, the festival’s 20th anniversary, will be even bigger, Hall said. Whitaker is already planning a “Chicago night” with powerhouse sax player John Wojciechowski and other Windy City stalwarts such as bassist Kelly Sill, whom East Lansing audiences haven’t heard yet.

To crown all, Whitaker said he is working on his old boss from Jazz at Lincoln Center, trumpeter Wynton Marsalis, to bring a quintet, if not the whole Lincoln Center band, to East Lansing.

“We’d have to get a bigger tent,” Whitaker said.

New face in Old Town

Austin Ashley named Old Town Commercial Association executive director

By TY FORQUER

Austin Ashley, who most recently served as marketing manager at Astera Credit Union, begins Monday as the new executive director of the Old Town Commercial Association.

“I’m excited to get started,” said Ashley. Ashley, a 25-year-old resident of Lansing’s Westside neighborhood, has a history with the Old Town Commercial Association. He worked as an intern for the organization in 2011, and has continued to stay involved with Old Town by serving on festival committees, volunteering at events and maintaining friendships with business owners. He is looking forward to returning to the neighborhood in his new role.

“I’m excited to spend every day in Old Town,” said Ashley. “It’s such an energetic place.”

Karen Stefl, partner at Old Town-based media company Such Video, is excited to have Ashley back at the Old Town Commercial Association.

“He has an energy and enthusiasm that are contagious,” she said. “It’s a perfect fit.”

Stefl is also president of the Old Town Commercial Association board of directors and was on the hiring committee that selected Ashley. She sees his business experience as a major asset as the neighborhood tries to diversify its fundraising and become more financially self-sufficient.

“His understanding of our patrons and



Photo by McShane Photography

Austin Ashley has been named executive director of the Old Town Commercial Association.

supporters will really help that effort,” Stefl said.

Ashley said another issue he is hoping to tackle is the lack of parking options, especially when popular festivals such as Lansing JazzFest and Michigan BluesFest draw thousands of extra visitors to the neighborhood.

“It’s a great problem to have,” said Ashley.

Many of those festivals also take up the parking spaces in Lot 56/Cesar Chavez Plaza. Ashley looking for sustainable parking solutions, including partnering with CATA to offer festival shuttles and better utilizing the adjacent Lansing River Trail.

Ashley is replacing Megan Barrett, who had held the position since September. Barrett left to accept a position as marketing manager with CASE Credit Union.

Even with the change in leadership, Stefl doesn’t expect a drop-off in the association’s efforts.

“We have some great momentum from last year,” she said. “Austin is going to pick up that ball and keep running with it.”

CURTAIN CALL

It’s gotta be the shoes

‘Kinky Boots’ packs a powerful punch

By TY FORQUER

When the musical is named “Kinky Boots,” one shouldn’t be surprised when it kicks off with a tribute to footwear. After the opening “Price & Son Theme,” the full ensemble launches into a high-energy rendition of “The Most Beautiful Thing in the World.” (Spoiler alert: The most beautiful thing in the world is a shoe.)

The shoes and boots, of course, are metaphors. For Charlie Price (Steven Booth), heir to the failing Price & Sons shoe business, the sturdy, unfashionable shoes made at the factory represent the dying of an era, as reliability is cast aside in favor of cheap thrills and disposable fashion.

His fiancée, Nicola (Grace Stockdale), pines for a pair of high-fashion heels. For her, the shoes represent an escape from smalltown life and elevation into society’s upper echelon.

For drag queen Lola (Kyle Taylor Parker), his stiletto heels represent his real self. Not a transvestite and not, as far as the play lets on, a homosexual, Lola is nonetheless most himself in the trappings of women’s clothing.

The story gets rolling when Charlie is knocked out during a run-in with some street thugs and awakens to find himself recovering in Lola’s dressing room.

Realizing that Lola is performing in women’s shoes that aren’t built to support a man’s weight, Charlie hatches a plan to save his failing factory. By combining his knowledge of shoe construction with Lola’s fashion sense, he can create a product that serves an untapped niche in the shoe market. Reliability meets fashion, old becomes new.

While Booth gets most of the meaty vocal parts — and executes them in impressive manner — Parker is the real star of the show. In his opening number, “Land of Lola,” Parker exudes confidence and sexuality, evoking some mix of Diana Ross and vintage Donna Summer.

In fact, Parker is almost too good. His least convincing moments are when he uses his “natural” voice, like when he reveals his gender to unsuspecting factory worker Don (Joe Coots).

Lindsay Nicole Chambers plays Lauren, a worker at the factory who falls for Charlie

despite his engagement to Nicola. Chambers only gets one solo number, but she milks the ‘80s-soaked “The History of Wrong Guys” for maximum comedic appeal.

Lola does get a show-stopper, and he makes the audience wait for it. But the payoff is worth the wait. The final notes of “Hold Me in Your Heart,” the show’s penultimate number, practically shook the brick walls of the Great Cobb Hall. And, without revealing too much, suffice to say that the brief scene that follows packs a strong emotional punch.

The show’s sound and production were solid, and the dancing was crisp and clean — even the backflips executed in 6-inch heels. Clever set design allowed the stagehands to transform a shoe factory to a cabaret in a matter of seconds. The only time the curtain comes down is to transform the set into a



Photo by Matthew Murphy

Kyle Taylor Parker steals the show as drag queen Lola in “Kinky Boots.”

mod-influenced Milanese fashion show for the musical’s finale.

“Kinky Boots” is a joyful romp that transforms into a powerful story of empathy and friendship. It’s a rock ‘n’ roll sermon on self-acceptance, delivered by a priest in leather boots — or, as Lola would call them, “Two and a half feet of irresistible, tubular sex.”

Short and sweet

One-act plays shine at Ixion Theatre

By TOM HELMA

They are like tapas, a variety of appetizers. Three short plays, tasty, unrelated — and yet somehow connected. Ixion Theatre, a

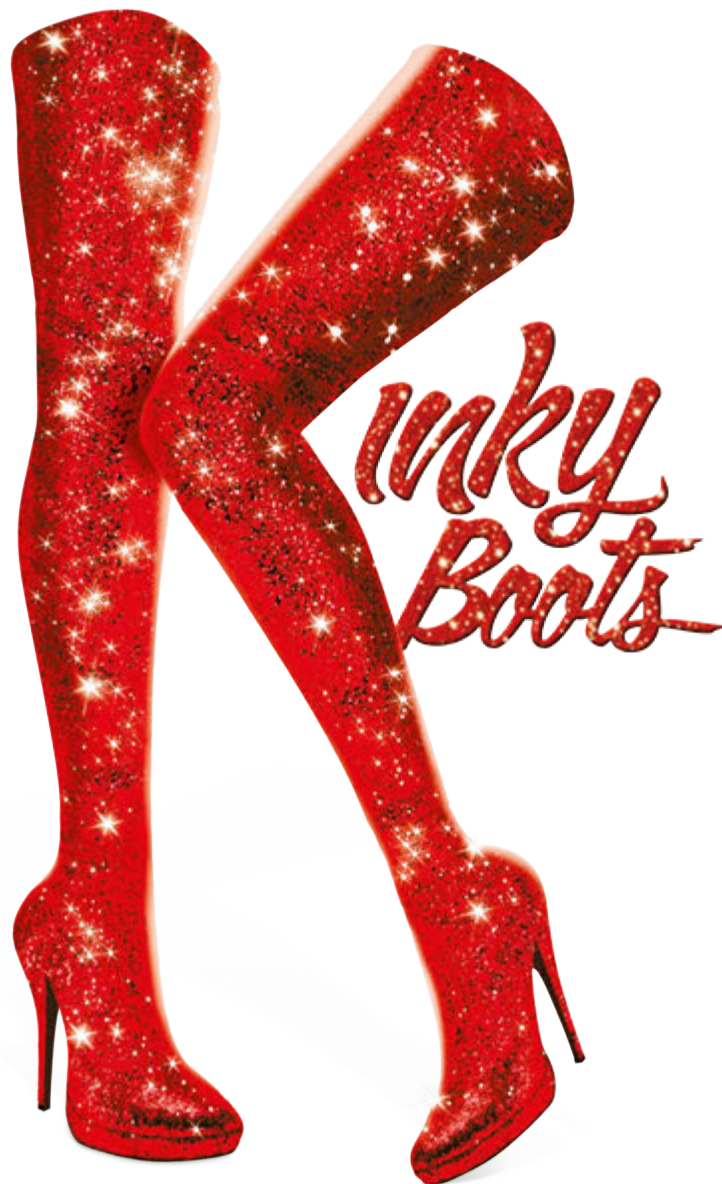
young theater company full of surprises, invited local writers to submit scripts and selected the most promising of them to present to audiences for their consideration.

“Enough is Enough” written by Terry Palczewski, focuses on helicopter parent Agatha (SaDonna Croff). Agatha is given the “gift” of a heart pain by the goddess Phoebe (Rikki Perez) to stop her from obsessing about her daughter’s life and take a minute to consider her own. Phoebe, invisible to

Review

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Curtain Call

from page 11

Agatha, works through the Oracle of Delphi (Erica Beck) to convey her messages.

Beck does a great job as the intermediary in this transaction, and has some of Palczewski's best lines. Perez is also good as an agitated, impatient goddess who clearly has more on her mind than the trivialities of a tourist looking for life's answers in all the wrong places. Costuming plays a large part in this three person scenario. The Oracle and Phoebe are dressed in appropriate psychic garb, while Croff wears the perfect thrown-together, mismatched outfit of a lonely mother on vacation.

Next is "Generations," written by Andrew Head, in which grandmother Sandy (Sue Chmurynsky) seems to attract tornados — nine of them in a lifetime — perhaps hoping to be swept off to Oz, but only seeing her dreary life go from one destroyed house to another. Chmurynsky, who stepped into the role late to cover

for another actor, delivers a droll, deadpan delivery that suggests an unconscious hopelessness. Meanwhile, 8-year-old granddaughter Elie (Isabella Croff), is unfazed and excited by the adventure that occurs in the aftermath of a tornado. Croff displays a sense of theatrical timing unusual for a child, perhaps the result of growing up in one of Lansing's premiere theatrical families. Rachel Wilder, as Elie's mother, steps into the middle of this triangle, adding the frustration of a woman who cannot understand the bad luck that follows her mother's visits.

Winding it all up, "Family Traditions" is a delightful dessert, the tastiest of the three treats. Writer O.G. Ueberreth gives us a Latin American tale exploring how a mother determines whether a man is the correct mate for her daughter. The writing sizzles here, especially as mother Abuela (Oralya Garza) delivers her well-written lines. Jacob Crosby plays the soon-to-be-tested Anglo named Morgan, and he gives a strong performance of a young man from a very straight-laced culture.

Give credit to director Jeff Croff for good stage direction in these three short plays. Working with a small set and few props, he manages to convey a sense of time and place. Brief, but entertaining, these plays reveal a new dimension in Lansing's theater options.

Listen to **Tim Barron** 7 a.m. to 10 a.m. weekdays at timbarronsradiomichigan.com.

And tune in at 9 a.m. on Wednesdays to hear **Berl Schwartz** of City Pulse call him an ignorant slut... or worse.

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Baseball by the numbers

'Numbers Don't Lie' looks at the numbers behind Detroit Tigers baseball

By BILL CASTANIER

ERA, RBIs and OPS have always been a big deal in baseball. The numbers don't lie,

Danny Knobler Talks Tigers Stats

Author talk
7 p.m. Thursday, June 4
Schuler Books (Meridian Mall)
1982 W Grand River Ave,
Okemos
(517) 349-8840,
schulerbooks.com

and these numbers allow fans to continue evaluating the past and predicting the future of baseball. That's one of the conclusions readers will come to after devouring baseball writer Danny Knobler's

new book "Numbers Don't Lie: The Biggest Numbers in Detroit Tigers History."

Knobler, now based in New York, has covered professional baseball for most of his adult life, including 18 years as a sportswriter for Booth Newspapers. He knows what he is talking about when he says, "Baseball has always been about numbers. From the start of the game, people have always looked at the numbers."

What's different now is what he calls "access."

"When I started, I carried around a lot of stuff to look up stats. Each team had huge bags filled with a collection of old media guides they called 'the franchise' to consult," he said. "Today all you need is Wi-Fi. You can now look at any game in Tigers history and search for statistics within seconds."

To prove the point, Knobler looked up — in less than a minute — the number of times that Tigers great Al Kaline faced certain pitchers, such as Baltimore Orioles pitcher Jim Palmer, in his career.

If the online statistics are nearly inexhaustible, I asked Knobler, why would someone need his book?

"It's really a simple answer," he said. "You wouldn't know what to look up."

For example, how many people know that statistics are kept for each player's batting averages in day games versus night games?

Bloggers, he said, who are using statistics to analyze everything from bat speed to spray charts, have made Major League Baseball look at the game in a different way.



Courtesy Photo

'Numbers Don't Lie' explores some of the most interesting statistics in Detroit Tigers history.

As an example, he cited the relatively new term called "pitch framing," which essentially rates a catcher on how well he helps the umpire get a good look at the pitch.

"There was really no way of quantifying that skill," he said. "That was before cameras were put in every major league park to evaluate the pitcher. Not only did the video show the pitcher, it showed how the catcher received the pitch, and some bloggers discovered that some catchers were better at it than others."

"Numbers have not only made the game better, but also more enjoyable for fans at the stadium," said Knobler, who in his heyday attended and wrote about 130 games a year.

If you are a baseball fan, you've likely seen or heard many of these numbers. Every time the Tigers' Miguel Cabrera comes to bat, fans both at home and in the stadium are inundated with numbers, from how he hits against right hand versus left hand pitchers, down to

his average against a specific pitcher.

Knobler says his book can be broken into eras, and some fans are lucky enough (and old enough) to have watched three distinct eras: the 1968 World Series, the 1984 World Series and the recent Cabrera-Verlander era.

There is no surfeit of number in Knobler's book, and readers can turn to any page and easily find decipherable statistics, from Ty Cobb's lifetime batting average (.367) to the numbers on Al Kaline, who has been with the Tigers organization for 62 years and won the American League batting title at 20.

Not all of the stats are worthy of celebration. Some, like when Aloysius Travers allowed 24 runs in a 1912 game, will make you cringe.

Knobler started covering the Tigers in 1990, during one of their ebbs, but he said there were some amazing statistics that year, including Cecil Fielder hitting 51 home runs.

"Cecil had come from Japan, and there were tons of Japanese writers. It was almost as if he was going for the record (of Maris' 61 home runs)," he said. "In May, Cecil hit three home runs in a game and one month later he hit another three home runs in a game. At that point it became a big deal."

The 1990 season, he said, started differently, since it was the year of the spring training lockout.

"I went to Lakeland (where the Tigers hold spring training) and there were no players and no replacement players," he said. "Spring training started late, waiting for the lockout to end. The players had no idea who I was and I didn't know who they were."

Today, Knobler has trimmed back the number of games he watches in person to about 40, mostly in New York. He can watch teams from both leagues play at home.

For the avid Detroit Tiger fan — and even the casual fan — "Numbers Don't Lie" will sharpen how they watch the game while also providing strong dose of nostalgia.

Knobler still believes, even with the public's unprecedented access to numbers, reporters have a leg up on the average fan or blogger.

"We have the experience and knowledge to find the statistics, along with access behind the game to discover what happened," he said.

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**MIKE
BRAND**
EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR,
WHARTON
CENTER

FLASHY FOOTWEAR

Last year, shortly after the Wharton Center announced that “Kinky Boots” would close its 2014-15 season, the producers sent a pair of the musical’s iconic shoes to Lansing. The boots traveled all across town, adorning the feet of Lansing area fixtures such as radio hosts Tim Barron and Parker (of WLMI’s “Parker in the Mornings”), TV news anchor Chivon Kloefer and even the Wharton Center’s executive director, Mike Brand.

The musical only sent one set of boots, however, and Barron found the one-size-fits all approach to be not so fitting.

“Being the wearer of the kinky boots requires smaller feet than I possess,” he said. “If you look closely at the photo, I’m barely in the boots.”

Despite the ill-fitting footwear, Barron found the experience transformative.

“The moment I put the boots on, I began to hum showtunes and pine for Liza Minnelli,” he said.

WILX meteorologist Andy Provenzano had a much different experience. His moment with the “keeper of the boots” was a “Cinderella”-esque moment.

He said he was told, “You’re the first person that the boots fit

perfectly.”

“What a compliment,” said Provenzano, with a touch of sarcasm.

But even with the perfect fit, Provenzano still found the boots difficult to move around in.

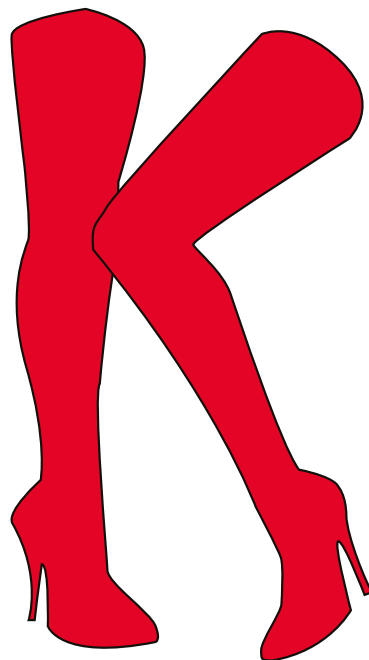
“They were very hard to wear,” he said. “I think the ones in the play are better built.”

Most of our footwear models agreed that the experience gave them a new appreciation of the Broadway performers who dance and sing their way through several performances a day in the sequined shoes.

Berl Schwartz, City Pulse publisher and editor, found the boots so difficult to work with that he needed to be rolled out to the sign in front of the City Pulse building in an office chair for his photo.

“There was no earthly way I could walk in those things,” he said. “How people perform in them is beyond me.”

For more on “Kinky Boots,” see our interview with dance captain and Okemos native Stephen Carrasco on page 10 and our review of the touring production on page 11.





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FOX 47 NEWS



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OUT ON THE TOWN

Events must be entered through the calendar at lansingcitypulse.com. Deadline is 5 p.m. Thursdays for the following week's issue. Charges may apply for paid events to appear in print. If you need assistance, please call Jonathan at (517) 999-5069.

Wednesday, May 27

CLASSES AND SEMINARS

Family Storytime. Ages up to 6. Stories, rhymes and activities. 10:30 a.m. FREE. CADL South Lansing Library, 3500 S. Cedar St., Lansing. (517) 367-6363.

Meditation. For beginners and experienced. 7-9 p.m. FREE. Vietnamese Buddhist Temple, 3015 S. Washington Square, Lansing. (517) 351-5866.

Story Art Time. Make art inspired by storybooks. Ages 2-5. 10-11 a.m. \$5/adults FREE. Reach Studio Art Center, 1804 S. Washington Ave., Lansing. (517) 999-3643, reachstudioart.org/events/storytime.

Alcoholics Anonymous. A closed step meeting. 6 p.m. Donations. Pennsylvania Ave. Church of God, 3500 S. Pennsylvania Ave., Lansing. (517) 899-3215.

Walk-In Wednesdays. Drop-In Art Class. All ages. 4-5:30 p.m. FREE (\$5 suggested donation). Reach Studio Art Center, 1804 S. Washington Ave., Lansing. (517) 999-3643, reachstudioart.org.

Knit & Knot So Much. Knitting and Crochet Group. 10 a.m.-noon. FREE, donations accepted. Reach Studio Art Center, 1804 S. Washington Ave., Lansing. (517) 999-3643, reachstudioart.org.

EVENTS

Allen Market Street Farmers Market.

Locally grown, baked and prepared foods. 2:30-7 p.m. FREE. Allen Street Farmers Market, 1619 E. Kalamazoo St., Lansing. (517) 999-3911.

Open Workshop. Bike repair, bike safety and biking as healthy exercise. 6-8 p.m. FREE. Kids Repair Program, 5815 Wise Road, Lansing. (517) 755-4174.

Practice Your English. Practice listening to and speaking English. 7-8:30 p.m. FREE. East Lansing Public Library, 950 Abbot Road, East Lansing. (517) 351-2420, elpl.org.

Senior Discovery @ ANC. Coffee and presentation with guest speaker. 10 a.m.-noon. FREE. Allen Neighborhood Center, 1619 E. Kalamazoo St. Lansing. (517) 367-2468.

Teen Crafternoon: DIY Comics. Teens create their own comic books. Grades 6-12. 3-5:30 p.m. FREE. East Lansing Public Library, 950 Abbot Road, East Lansing. (517) 351-2420, elpl.org.

Knitting and Crochet Group. All ages and levels welcome. Now at the library. 5:30-7:30 p.m.

See Out on the Town, Page 22

Lansing staycation



Saturday, May 30

Remember that restaurant you have been meaning to try? What about that museum you have always meant to visit? The Greater Lansing Convention & Visitors Bureau is giving Greater Lansing residents a chance to re-discover their hometown with its 21st annual Be a Tourist In Your Own Town event. Popular Lansing businesses and destinations will offer free admission, tours, special events and more to curious explorers.

This is how it all works: Participants purchase a \$1 passport, which also includes event details and locations, that will grant free access to over 90 local attractions, including Absolute Gallery, Fenner Nature Center, MSU Bug House, R.E. Olds Transportation Museum and Lansing Public Media Center.

Tracy Padot, vice president of marketing for the Greater Lansing Convention and Visitors Bureau, has watched the festival grow from a small, Lansing-focused event to a thriving regional event.

"The event started 21 years

ago with just 18 attractions and concentrated on just downtown Lansing," she said. "Over those years we have grown and expanded to our 21st annual event, which will have over 90 attractions participating spread throughout the Greater Lansing region."

Historically, crowd favorites include Impression 5 Science Center, Potter Park Zoo and the State Capitol, said Padot, but quite a few new attractions have joined the roster this year. Be A Tourist is family friendly, but there will be attractions for all ages — even some for those 21 and older.

"American Fifth Spirits, which is a new distillery here in downtown Lansing, has joined the tour," Padot said. "The Runway at the Knapp's building will be open, and Forest Akers Golf Course is joining us for the first time this year, so we have lots of stuff for various interests."

You can visit your favorite locations or seek out new favorites, and you can even enter a prize drawing. Each participating location

will stamp your passport, and if you collect at least 10 stamps you can submit your passport for the drawing.

"Those prizes range from overnight stays at our local hotels, to gift cards for local restaurants and other great prizes," Padot said.

Kids will have a chance to learn about the election process this year at special polling stations coordinated by the Lansing City Clerk's office. Participants can cast their vote for most popular mascot in Lansing (Sparty or Big Lug) using real voting equipment and ballots. Voting "precincts" will be located at REACH Studio Art Center, Michigan Historical Museum and Capitol Area District Library's downtown branch.

Be A Tourist In Your Own Town

Saturday, May 30
(Various times and locations, see web for details)

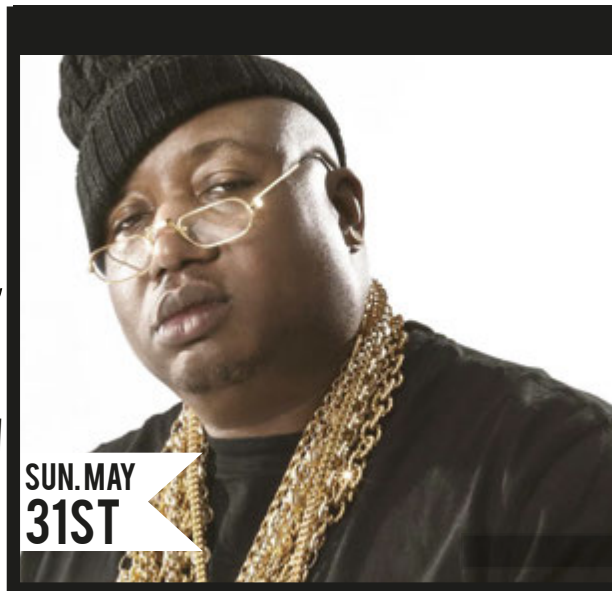
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lansing.org/events/batytot

—MICHELAI A. GRAHAM

Turn it Down

A SURVEY OF LANSING'S MUSICAL LANDSCAPE

BY RICH TUPICA



SUN. MAY 31ST

E-40 AT FAHRENHEIT ULTRA LOUNGE

Fahrenheit Ultra Lounge, 6810 S. Cedar St., Lansing. 18+, \$20, \$30 VIP, 5 p.m., Sunday, May 31

Bay Area rap legend E-40 headlines Sunday at Fahrenheit Ultra Lounge, with Stevie Stone opening the show. E-40, who comes to Lansing on his "Choices Tour 2015," debuted in 1990 when his group, the Click, released the "Let's Slide" EP on E-40's Sick Wid It Records. By 1994, the group had earned a national following and signed to major label Jive Records. In 1993, E-40 dropped his first solo LP, "Federal," which reached #80 on Billboard's Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums chart. "In a Major Way," his follow-up solo disc, was released in 1995 and features a cameo by 2Pac. The album hit #2 on Billboard's Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums Chart and reached #13 on the Hot 200. E-40's output hasn't slowed over the years. Earlier this year he released the fourth installment of his latest project, the "Sharp on All 4 Corners" album series.

UKE-HUNT AT THE AVENUE CAFE



SAT. MAY 30TH

The Avenue Café, 2021 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. All ages, \$10, \$8 adv., 8 p.m., Saturday, May 30

Fat Wreck Chords-signed band Uke-Hunt, a ukulele-centric punk band, performs an all-ages show Saturday at the Avenue Café. The outfit is somewhat of a super group; it is led by ukulele/vocalist Spike Slawson (of Me First and the Gimme Gimmes) and features percussionist Biff O'Hara (of Biff Bam Boom), saxophonist Jamin Barton (of the Titan Ups), upright bassist Joe Raposo (of Lagwagon and the Real McKenzies) and Doug Hilsinger (of Bomb) on bass and backing vocals. Uke-Hunt plays "outsider pop tunes, country standards, '80s new wave hits and tender love ballads." Opening the show are the Whoopi Goldblum Xperience, a Lansing-based alt-rock band, and local punks the Hunky Newcomers. Last year, the Hunky Newcomers released its ultra-hooky LP, "The Secret of the Booze," on 500 slabs of vinyl.

TURKUAZ AT THE LOFT



WED. JUNE 3RD

the Loft, 414 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. 18+, \$13, \$10 adv. 8 p.m., Wednesday, June 3

Brooklyn-based nine-piece band Turkuaz plays a modernized version of soulful funk, incorporating a wall of horns and four vocalists. The band's stimuli range from legends like Sly & the Family Stone and Rick James to the Beatles and Talking Heads. June 3 the band headlines at the Loft, opening are Dave Menzo and the Cave of Wonders and Sweet Earth. Turkuaz, a self-described "dance band," has become known for its powerhouse rhythm section. The band's tight compositions feature soaring guitar and horn solos and, according to the band's bio, they "leave no room for noodling." For over three years, the band has toured from coast to coast while releasing a string of albums. Last month the band dropped its "Stereochrome" EP. The disc was recorded with vintage/analog equipment and released on Techne Records.

UPCOMING SHOW? CONTACT RICH TUPICA AT RICH@LANSINGCITYPULSE.COM >>> TO BE LISTED IN LIVE & LOCAL E-MAIL LIVEANDLOCAL@LANSINGCITYPULSE.COM

LIVE & LOCAL

	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
The Avenue Café, 2021 E. Michigan Ave.	Service Industry Night, 3 p.m.	Mindguards, 8 p.m.	Sounds of Passion, 9 p.m.	Uke-Hunt, 8 p.m. Chip Christy, 9 p.m.
Black Cat Bistro, 115 Albert Ave.				
The Black Rose, 206 S. Washington Sq.			Mark Sala, 9 p.m.	Steve Cowles, 7 p.m.
Blue Gill Grill, 1391 Lake Lansing Rd.			The Tenants, 7 p.m.	Bob Schultz, 8:30 p.m.
Capital Prime, 2324 Showtime Dr.			Paulie O, 8:30 p.m.	DJ, 9 p.m.
Coach's Pub & Grill, 6201 Bishop Rd.	DJ Trivia, 9 p.m.			
Colonial Bar, 3425 S. MLK Blvd.		Open Mic w/Pat Zelenka, 9 p.m.		
Copper, 2874 E. Lake Lansing Rd.		Darin Larner, 6 p.m.		
Dublin Square, 327 Abbot Rd.			Rob K., 5 p.m.	Rob K., 10 p.m.
The Exchange, 314 E. Michigan Ave.	Good Cookies, 9:30 p.m.	Skoryoke live band karaoke, 9:30 p.m.	Showdown, 9:30 p.m.	Showdown, 9:30 p.m.
Grand Café/Sir Pizza, 201 E. Grand River Ave.			Karaoke w/Joanie Daniels, 7 p.m.	
Green Door, 2005 E. Michigan Ave.	Johnny D Jam, 9 p.m.	Karaoke Kraze, 9 p.m.	Global Village, 9 p.m.	Soulstice, 9 p.m.
Gus's Bar, 2321 W. Michigan Ave.			Karaoke	
Henry's on the Square, 229 S. Washington Sq.				Steve Cowles, 8:30 p.m.
The Loft, 414 E. Michigan Ave.			Faultered Step, 6:30 p.m.	Kyle Kinane, 8 p.m.
Log Jam, 110 W. Jefferson St.				Darin Larner Band, 9 p.m.
Mac's Bar, 2700 E. Michigan Ave.	You, Me, and Everyone We Know, 6:30 p.m.		Ribcage, 8 p.m.	Iay Rhodes, 8 p.m.
Moriarty's Pub, 802 E. Michigan Ave.		Hopening Quartet, 9 p.m.	Greg Nagy, 9 p.m.	Acme Jam, 9 p.m.
Peppino's, 213 Ann St.	Reggae Lou, 5 p.m.			
R-Club, 6409 Centurion Dr.			Hot Mess, 8:30 p.m.	Hot Mess, 8:30 p.m.
Reno's North, 16460 Old US 27	Kathy Ford Band Karaoke, 7:30 p.m.	Reggae Lou, 7 p.m.	The New Rule, 6 p.m.	Root Doctor, 6 p.m.
Reno's East, 1310 Abbot Rd.	Don Middlebrook & Rush Clement, 6:30 p.m.	Chris Lasko, 6 p.m.	Tell Yo Mama, 6 p.m.	Well Enough Alone, 6 p.m.
Reno's West, 501 W. Saginaw Hwy.	Greg Smith, 6 p.m.	Steve Cowles, 6 p.m.	Kathy Ford Band, 6 p.m.	Bobby Standal, 6 p.m.
Tin Can West, 644 Migaldi Ln.	Waterpong, 11 p.m.			
Unicorn Tavern, 327 E. Grand River Ave.		Frog's Open Blues Jam, 8:30 p.m.	Untamed, 8:30 p.m.	Untamed, 8:30 p.m.
Waterfront Bar & Grill, 325 City Market Dr.			Joe Wright, 7 p.m.	
Watershed, 5965 Marsh Rd.	Steve Cowles, 7 p.m.	Dan McLachlan, 8 p.m.	Capital City DJs, 10 p.m.	Capital City DJs, 10 p.m.
Whiskey Barrel Saloon, 410 S. Clippert St.			DJ, 9 p.m.	DJ, 9 p.m.

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Out on the town

from page 18

FREE. East Lansing Public Library, 950 Abbot Road, East Lansing. (517) 351-2420, elpl.org.

Mid-Michigan Genealogical Society. Family history: sharing your research online. 7 p.m. FREE. Plymouth Congregational Church, 2001 E. Grand River Ave., Lansing. mmgs.wordpress.com.

MUSIC

Fusion Shows presents. Live music. 21-up. 10 p.m. FREE. Crunchy's, 254 W. Grand River Ave., East Lansing. (517) 351-2506, crunchyseastlansing.com

Ukulele Play-Along. Learn how to play chords and songs on the ukulele. 6 p.m. FREE. Marshall Music, 3240 E. Saginaw St. Lansing. (517) 337-9700, marshallmusic.com.

You, Me, and Everyone We Know. With guests Future Crooks and Daisyhead. 6:30 p.m. Tickets start at \$10. Mac's Bar, 2700 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. (517) 484-6795. fusionshows.com.

LITERATURE AND POETRY

Books to Love Reprise. Titles that amuse, inform and inspire. 6-7 p.m. FREE. Pilgrim Congregational United Church of Christ, 125 S. Pennsylvania Ave., Lansing. (517) 484-7434, pilgrimmucc.com.

Thursday, May 28

CLASSES AND SEMINARS

Container Gardening. Learn tips from master gardener Sylvia Colles. 6:30-7:30 p.m. FREE. Delta Township District Library, 5130 Davenport Drive, Lansing.

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					5		7	1

TO PLAY

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

Answers on page 25

(517) 321-4014 ext. 3, dtld.org.

Take Off Pounds Sensibly. 5:15 p.m. \$5. New Hope Church, 1340 Haslett Road, Haslett. (517) 349-9183, newhopehaslett.com.

Take Off Pounds Sensibly. Weigh-in 6 p.m., meeting 6:30 p.m. FREE. St. David's Episcopal Church, 1519 Elmwood Road, Lansing. (517) 882-9080, stdavidslansing.org.

SBA 3 C's Presentation. SBA explains services. 6-

7:30 p.m. FREE. Small Business Development Center, LCC, Suite 110, 309 N. Washinton Square, Lansing. (517) 483-1921, sbdcMichigan.org.

Lansing Area Codependents Anonymous. 7-8 p.m. FREE. Community Mental Health Building, room 214G, 812 E. Jolly Road, Lansing. (517) 515-5559, coda.org.

Family Storytime. Ages up to 6. Stories, rhymes and

See Out on the Town, Page 22

THURSDAY, MAY 28-31 & JUNE 4-7 >> 'BEST FRIENDS' AT RIVERWALK



Riverwalk's Theatre's production of "Best Friends" takes a comedic look at the steady decay of a once promising relationship. The play features two married couples who get along swimmingly — until a mishap occurs at a dinner gathering. What ensues is a domino effect of malicious actions as the two couples compete at severing the friendship for good. "Best Friends" is written by actor Jeff Daniels, who recently starred in the HBO drama "The Newsroom" and is the founder of Chelsea's Purple Rose Theatre. 7 p.m. Thursday; 8 p.m. Fri-Sat; 2 p.m. Sunday. \$15/\$12 students and seniors. Riverwalk Theatre, 228 Museum Dr., Lansing. (517) 482-5700, riverwalktheatre.com.

Jonesin' Crossword

By Matt Jones

"What If?"--oh, that if.

Matt Jones

Across

- 1 Baymax's friend in a Disney movie
- 5 Art Spiegelman graphic novel
- 9 Dress like
- 13 More put-together
- 14 Convention center event
- 15 Banish from office
- 16 Members of the peer-age who stay that way forever?
- 18 "Close My Eyes Forever" singer ___ Ford
- 19 Test that's all talk
- 20 "Jaws" sighting
- 21 Irregular way to get paid
- 23 Come calling
- 25 Singer Josh
- 26 Aid in finding the Titanic
- 27 Go door to door, perhaps
- 28 2, 3, or 4, usually, in miniature golf
- 29 Robot comedian's scanning command?
- 34 Wear down
- 36 Clumsy bumpkin
- 37 "Raw" pigment
- 38 Places that are lush to the max?
- 41 Walgreens alternative
- 42 Marketplace in ancient Greece
- 43 Blockheaded
- 45 Gold measures
- 47 Journalist Joseph

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60										61				62	

- 48 Actress Tomei
- 49 1040 expert
- 50 "Game of Thrones" actress Chaplin
- 53 "Little Things" singer India. ___
- 54 Device for processing flour in the distant future?
- 57 Caliph's title
- 58 Racing pace
- 59 Vegas table option
- 60 Bull, for one
- 61 "Happy Motoring" company of yore
- 62 ___-majestÉ
- 5 Badge justification
- 6 Impulse transmitter
- 7 "Buffy the Vampire Slayer" station
- 8 "My apologies!"
- 9 "Jurassic Park" actor
- 10 Board for fortune-seekers
- 11 ___ Martin (Bond's car)
- 12 Semi-educated guess
- 13 ___-mo
- 17 "Hearts ___" ('90s TV series)
- 22 Numskulls
- 24 Demonstrates fuel efficiency
- 25 Blunder
- 26 Indian woman's attire
- 27 R&B singer of "Oh" and "Promise"
- 28 "As ___ instructions"
- 30 Pride sounds
- 31 Ainer of the Triple Crown and the Summer Olympics
- 32 "Scream" actress Campbell
- 33 '01 and '10, e.g.
- 35 "Heavens to Betsy!"
- 39 As desired, in recipes
- 40 1960s U.N. ambassador Stevenson
- 44 Prank performed on someone in a headlock
- 45 Word in a Lennon title
- 46 Common font variety
- 47 Probably will, after "is"
- 48 Mangle
- 49 Companies' money execs
- 51 Handle
- 52 Pro vote
- 55 Auditing gp.
- 56 Lightning org.

Out on the town

from page 21

activities. 10:30 a.m. FREE. CADL Downtown Lansing Library, 401 S. Capitol Ave., Lansing. (517) 367-6363, cadl.org.

Tarot Study Group. With Dawne Botke. 7 p.m. FREE. Triple Goddess New Age Bookstore, 2019 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. (517) 883-3619, triplegoddessbookstore.net.

Meditation. For beginners and experienced. 7-8:30 p.m. FREE. Quan Am Temple, 1840 N. College Ave., Mason. (517) 853-1675, quanamtemple.org.

SATURDAY, MAY 30 >> REO EATS

Lansing's mobile eateries will convene in REO Town for the last Saturday of each month this summer in the new REO Eats events. The first installment of the outdoor party will feature such food trucks as Good Truckin' Food, Good Bites, Saddleback barbeque, MI Pops and more. There will also be an open air bar featuring brews from Sleepwalker Spirits and Ale. To help with digestion, there will be an art activity where guests can paint monsters onto thrift store paintings, or you can kick back and listen to a live performance by the Lansing Unionized Vaudeville Spectacle. The party lasts until the food and drink run dry. 3 p.m. 1115 S. Washington Ave., Lansing. reotown.org/reoeats.

SUNDAY, MAY 31 >> QUAKER DASH

Get ready to beat feet to raise money for education at the inaugural Quaker Dash 5K run/walk. The event will begin with a kid's half-mile fun run, followed by the 5K run/walk through the neighborhood surrounding Lansing Eastern High School. Proceeds from the event will go towards purchasing classroom materials and funding teacher grants. Kid's race 9:30 a.m., adult 5K 10 a.m. \$25 5K/\$15 kid's race. Lansing Eastern High School, 220 Pennsylvania Ave., Lansing. runsignup.com/Race/MI/Lansing/QuakerDash5k.

SUNDAY, MAY 31 >> BOOK SIGNING/POETRY READING

A pair of multi-award winning poets pay a visit to Everybody Reads bookstore for an afternoon of readings. First up is local poet Dennis Hinrichsen. Hinrichsen's recent releases include his collection of poems, "Skin Music," co-winner of the 2014 Michael Waters Poetry Prize from Southern Indiana Review Press, and "Electrocution: A Partial History," winner of the Rachel Wetzsteon Chapbook Prize from Map Literary. Hinrichsen will be joined by poet David James. James recently released his third full-length book of poetry, "My Torn Dance Card." James' 2010 release, "She Dances like Mussolini," won him the 2010 Next Generation Indie Book Award for poetry. FREE. 2 p.m. Everybody Reads, 2019 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. (517) 346-9900, facebook.com/everybodyreads.

Branding Toolkit for Business. 9:30 a.m.-noon, FREE. Small Business Development Center, LCC, Suite 110, 309 N. Washington Square, Lansing. (517) 483-1921, sbdcmichigan.org.

H.E.R.O.: Easy Screen Repair. Home improvement class. Email bruce@ghc.org. 6-8 p.m. FREE. Neighborhood Empowerment Center, 600 W. Maple St., Lansing. (517) 372-5980, ghc.org.

Celebrate Recovery. For all types of habits, hurts and hang-ups. 6:30 p.m. FREE. Trinity Church (Lansing), 3355 Duncel Road, Lansing. (517) 492-1866.

EVENTS

Free Help for Adults. Drop in to get help with letters, job apps, etc. 1:30-4:30 p.m. FREE. CADL Downtown Lansing Library, 401 S. Capitol Ave., Lansing. (517) 367-6300, cadl.org.

Spanish Conversation. Practice listening to and speaking Spanish. 7-8 p.m. FREE. East Lansing Public Library, 950 Abbot Road, East Lansing. (517) 351-2420, elpl.org.

Euchre. No partner needed. 6-9 p.m. \$1.50. Delta Township Enrichment Center, 4538 Elizabeth Road, Lansing. (517) 484-5600.

Karaoke. With Atomic D. 9 p.m. LeRoy's Classic Bar & Grill, 1526 S. Cedar St., Lansing. (517) 482-0184.

8-Ball Tournament. Bring your pool game to the Avenue. Call to confirm because it is cancelled occasionally. 7 p.m. \$10. The Avenue Cafe, 2021 Michigan Ave., Lansing. (517) 492-7403.

Capital Area Crisis Men's Rugby Practice. Weather permitting. All experience levels welcome. 6-8 p.m. FREE. St. Joseph Park, 2151 W. Hillsdale, Lansing.

Teen Game Haven. Play a variety of games; board, card and video. 3-5:30 p.m. FREE. East Lansing



By ALLAN I. ROSS

I can't imagine there's a huge crossover between New Orleans cooking and Asian cuisine. Sure, there are probably lots of folks out there who appreciate a nice bowl of gumbo and/or a bánh mì sandwich, but to have both on the same menu could be overwhelming. Well, as they

say in N'awlins, "Laissez les bon temps roulez!"

Nola Bistro Pho & Po-Boys, which opened earlier this month on Lansing's west side, has a menu that flip-flops between Vietnamese and Creole dishes. The restaurant's name says it all.

"For some reason, we just thought they'd go well together," says Ann Nguyen, who co-owns Nola Bistro with Sarah Pham. "And we knew these were two (food options) that local diners were missing. Lansing needed something like this."

The two owners met through their husbands, who have been best friends since childhood and were in the military together in Louisiana. Nguyen and her husband moved up to the Lansing area, and when she decided to open the **Sugar Berry** frozen yogurt store by Frandor in 2010, she invited Pham to be her partner. The two went on

NOLA BISTRO PHO & PO-BOYS

Allan I. Ross/City Pulse
Nola Bistro Pho & Po-Boys opened near the corner of Waverly Road and Saginaw Highway earlier this month. It features authentic cuisine from New Orleans and Vietnam.

to open two more Sugar Berry locations — in Okemos and across from the Lansing Mall — but a real sit-down place was always simmering in the back of Pham's mind.

"This was Sarah's dream to own a restaurant, so we decided to stick to the cuisine we know best," Nguyen said. "I've never even worked in a restaurant, but I trusted her that this would work."

Despite a quiet opening, word of mouth has already yielded an ever-growing set of diners. And with a prime location near the corner of Saginaw Highway and Waverly Road, she's counting on business continuing to build.

"You talk to most people in Lansing, and they don't know what a po-boy is," Nguyen says. "Where I'm from, it's on every corner."

She may be underestimating local palates for New Orleans' signature sandwich — for the record, it's battered and fried fish/shrimp/sausage piled on a baguette with lettuce, pickles, tomatoes and a special spicy mayo spread — but it's likely diners are less familiar with the menu's other featured player: pho. The traditional Vietnamese dish (pronounced "fuh") consists of a beef broth that's simmered for at least 10 hours with beef bones, then flavored with cilantro and other seasonings, with fresh meat added

just before serving. You can choose between brisket, sausage, meatballs or round steak, or go with the Pho Dac Biet, which includes all of the above.

The Vietnamese side of the menu also has authentic noodle dishes, dumplings and spring rolls — items with which fans of Asian cuisine are probably familiar. The bánh mì may not sound familiar, but it's basically an Asian version of the po-boy, complete with its own special house spread.

The women spent over \$350,000 in infrastructure costs to transform two former strip mall suites into the restaurant. Then came the interior decoration: brand new tables, chairs emblazoned with the restaurant logo and an elegant color scheme and tile work. Still to come are a full menu (they're keeping it simple for now with a streamlined version), a patio and possible crawfish boils. They'd also like to get a liquor license eventually.

"There's nothing like a beer with a po-boy," Pham said. "It's time Lansing learned that."

Nola Bistro Pho & Po-Boys
603 N. Waverly Road,
Lansing
11 a.m.-10 p.m. Monday-Saturday; 11:30 a.m.-9 p.m. Sunday
(517) 327-4771

Aux Petits Soins. French immersion class for babies. 9:30 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. \$12/\$15 drop-in. Willow Tree Family Center, 3333 S. Pennsylvania Ave., Lansing. (517) 643-8059, facebook.com/auxpetitsoinsllc.

EVENTS

SCCMUA Open House. Facility tours, information booths and more. 5-8 p.m. FREE. SCCMUA, 3671 W. Herbison Road, DeWitt. (517) 669-8311, sccmua.com.

Teen Tech Time. Teens have access to a cluster of laptops. 3-5 p.m. FREE. East Lansing Public Library, 950 Abbot Road, East Lansing. (517) 351-2420, elpl.org.

Game Night. Euchre and Dominoes. Snacks and soft drinks. 6:30 p.m. \$3. Mayflower Congregational Church, 2901 W. Mount Hope Ave., Lansing. (517) 484-3139, mayflowerchurch.com.

MUSIC

Ari Hest. Affinity Singer/Songwriter Series, 7:30 p.m. \$25/\$20 adv. The Wax, 215 W. Michigan Ave., Jackson. (517) 782-3221, jacksonsymphony.org.

Sounds of Passion R&B Showcase. Performances by Ben Frank, Amami Crush and more, 9 p.m.-2 a.m. \$10. The Avenue Cafe, 2021 Michigan Ave, Lansing. (517) 492-7403, avenue Lansing.com.

THEATER

"Best of Friends." (For details see May 28.) 8 p.m. \$15/\$12 seniors. Riverwalk Theatre, 228 Museum Drive, Lansing. (517) 482-5700, riverwalktheatre.

LITERATURE AND POETRY

Thursday Morning Storytime. Three stories and a craft. 10 a.m. FREE. Barnes and Noble (Lansing), 5132 W. Saginaw Highway, Lansing. (517) 327-0437, bn.com.

Public Library, 950 Abbot Road, East Lansing. (517) 351-2420, elpl.org.

Beer & Girl Scout Cookie. Brews from Rockford Brewing Co. paired with Girl Scout cookies. 7 p.m. \$25. REO Town Pub, 1145 S. Washington Ave., Lansing. imabeerhound.com.

THEATER

TASC Artistic Exchange. Meet-and-greet with cast members of "Invierno." 6:30 p.m. \$20. MICA Gallery, 1210 N. Turner St., Lansing. (415) 336-6989, tickets.americanshakespearecollective.com.

"Best of Friends." Drama involving two middle-aged married couples. 7 p.m. \$15/\$12 seniors. Riverwalk Theatre, 228 Museum Drive, Lansing. (517) 482-5700, riverwalktheatre.

Friday, May 29 CLASSES AND SEMINARS

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Out on the town

from page 22

Saturday, May 30

CLASSES AND SEMINARS

Tai Chi in the Park. For beginning and experienced tai chi players. Instruction in Qigong, meditation and Yang style tai chi forms. 9-10 a.m. FREE. Hunter Park, 1400 E. Kalamazoo St., Lansing. (517) 272-9379.

Domestic Violence Support Group. Noon-1:30 p.m. FREE. Women's Center of Greater Lansing, 1710 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. (517) 372-9163, womenscenterofgreaterlansing.org.

Be A Tourist In Your Own Town. Explore Greater Lansing for just \$1. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. \$1. Call for locations. (517) 487-0077, lansing.org/events/batytot.

EVENTS

Country Antique Sale. Vendors, antiques, furniture, food and more. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. FREE. Centennial Farms Antiques, 4410 W. Howe Road, DeWitt. (517) 669-5096, ow.ly/NimOZ.

Karaoke. With Atomic D. 9 p.m. LeRoy's Classic Bar & Grill, 1526 S. Cedar St., Lansing. (517) 482-0184.

Superhero Summer Reading Party. Games, crafts and activities. 1 p.m. FREE. Barnes and Noble (Lansing), 5132 W. Saginaw Highway, Lansing. (517) 327-0437, bn.com.

Rock Cactus Gardens. Create a rock cactus. Bring your own pot. Ages 5 and up. 2-4 p.m. FREE. ELPL 2.0 Maker Studio, 300 MAC Ave. East Lansing. (517) 351-2420, elpl.org.

Kyle Kinane. With special guest Robert Jenkins. 8 p.m. Tickets start at \$14. The Loft, 414 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. fusionshows.com/event/05-30-15/kyle-kinane-loft-lansing-mi.

Garden Day Project. 9 a.m.-noon. FREE. North Elementary School, 333 E. Miller Road, Lansing. (517) 896-3463.

REO Eats! Food Truck Court. The area's finest food trucks and an open air bar. 3 p.m.-late. FREE. REO Town, 1100 block of S. Washington Ave., Lansing. (517) 487-1910, reoeats.com.

MUSIC

Deacon Earl. Live blues, reggae, Americana and more. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. FREE. Hunter Park Community GardenHouse, 1400 E. Kalamazoo St., Lansing. allenneighborhoodcenter.org/gardenhouse.

THEATER

World Premiere: "Mothers Nature." 3 original one act plays by local writers. 8 p.m. \$15. 1133 S. Washington Ave., Reo Town, Lansing. (517) 775-4246, ixiontheatre.com.

"Best of Friends." (For details see May 28.) 8 p.m. \$15/\$12 seniors. Riverwalk Theatre, 228 Museum Drive, Lansing. (517) 482-5700, riverwalktheatre.com.

LITERATURE AND POETRY

Peanut Butter & Cupcake. Storytime and craft. 11 a.m. FREE. Barnes and Noble (Lansing), 5132 W. Saginaw Highway, Lansing. (517) 327-0437, bn.com.

Sunday, May 31

CLASSES AND SEMINARS

Rick & Joe's Comics Crash Course For Kids. Learn to draw comic books. 3-5 p.m. FREE. Everybody Reads Books and Stuff, 2019 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. (517) 346-9900, becauseeverybodyreads.com.

Lansing Area Codependents Anonymous. Third floor meeting room. 2-3 p.m. FREE. CADL Downtown

Lansing Library, 401 S. Capitol Ave., Lansing. (517) 515-5559, coda.org.

Juggling. Learn how to juggle. 2-4 p.m. FREE. Orchard Street PumpHouse, 368 Orchard St., East Lansing. (517) 371-5119, ruetenik@gmail.com.

Pokemon/Magic the Gathering Card Games.

Tutorials for kids. Starter decks provided. 12:30 p.m. FREE. Everybody Reads Books and Stuff, 2019 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. (517) 346-9900, becauseeverybodyreads.com.

Spiritual Talk, Pure Meditation and Silent Prayer. 7 p.m. FREE. Self Realization Meditation Healing Centre, 7187 Drumheller Road, Bath. (517) 641-6201, selfrealizationcentremichigan.org.

Parents of LGBTQ kids. Weekly support group. All faiths are welcome. 3-4:30 p.m. FREE. Diversity Psychological Services, 1310 Turner St., Lansing. (720) 401-4214.

EVENTS

Lansing Area Sunday Swing Dance. Lessons 6-6:30 p.m., dance 7-10 p.m. \$8 dance/\$10 dance & lesson/FREE for students. The Lansing Eagles, 4700 N. Grand River Ave., Lansing. (517) 490-7838.

Country Antique Sale. Vendors, antiques, furniture, food and more. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. FREE. Centennial Farms Antiques, 4410 W. Howe Road, DeWitt. (517) 669-5096, ow.ly/NimOZ.

Bird Watching Walk. Bird Watching walk led by Capital Area Audubon. 8 a.m. FREE. North Meridian Road Park, 5191 North Meridian Road, Okemos. (517) 349-3866, meridian.mi.us.

Contemporary Dance Performance. Live performance by DANCE Lansing. 1-2 p.m. FREE. MICA Gallery, 1210 N. Turner St., Lansing. (517) 371-4600, micagallery.org.

Refugee Day Celebration. A celebration of refugees and their cultures. 4-7 p.m. FREE. Spartan Village Community Center, 1460 Middlevale Road, East Lansing. (517) 507-0160, gluna.org.

Atheists and Humanists Meeting. Atheist perspective on essence of life. 5 p.m. FREE, \$10.20 buffet optional. Old Great Wall Restaurant, 4832 W. Saginaw Highway, Lansing. (517) 914-2278, atheists.meetup.com/453.

Swiss Steak Dinner. 11:30 a.m.-2 p.m. \$10/\$4 children 12 and under. Lansing Liederkrantz Club, 5828 S. Pennsylvania Ave., Lansing. (517) 882-6330, liederkrantzclub.org.

MUSIC

E-40/Stevie Stone Choices Tour. Live performance. 7 p.m. \$20/\$30 VIP/\$250 table. Fahrenheit Ultra Lounge, 6810 S. Cedar St., Lansing. (517) 694-0700, ceppresents.com.

THEATRE

"Best of Friends." (For details see May 28.) 3 p.m. \$15/\$12 seniors. Riverwalk Theatre, 228 Museum Drive, Lansing. (517) 482-5700, riverwalktheatre.com.

World Premiere: "Mother's Nature." (See May 30 for details.) 7 p.m. \$15. 1133 S. Washington Ave., REO Town, Lansing. (517) 775-4246, ixiontheatre.com.

LITERATURE AND POETRY

Poetry Reading & Book Signing. With Dennis Hinrichsen and David James. 2 p.m. FREE. Everybody Reads Books and Stuff, 2019 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. (517) 346-9900, becauseeverybodyreads.com.

Monday, June 1

CLASSES AND SEMINARS

Adult Rape Survivor Support Group. Registration preferred. 6-7:30 p.m. FREE. Women's Center of Greater Lansing, 1710 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. (517) 372-9163.

Job Seekers Support Group. Finding the right

THURSDAY JUNE 4-7 >> 'INVIERNO' AT LCC



The American Shakespeare Collective presents another original play inspired by the works of the "Bard of Avon" with its production of "Invierno." The play, which is a take on Shakespeare's "The Winter Tale," follows two half-sisters in modern day California who tumble back in time to the 19th century. There they experience a California in the midst of a massive cultural clash between the native Chumash, the Spanish, the Russians and the Finns. The play features several languages and offers a historical look at California before it became part of the United States. On Thursday, at 6:30 p.m., Old Town's Mica Gallery is hosting a meet-and-greet with the cast of "Invierno," which includes visiting artist Kristo Salminen of the National Theatre of Finland. In addition to working in theater, Salminen has starred in a number of Finnish sitcoms and films. Not only will the \$20 admission to the event grant you an evening of wine, cheese and insight into the production of "Invierno," but it also gets you one admission ticket to the play itself. 7 p.m. Thursday; 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday; 2 p.m. Sunday. \$20/\$15 seniors/\$12 students. Dart Auditorium, Lansing Community College, 500 N. Capital Ave., Lansing. (517) 483-1488, tickets.americanshakespearecollective.com.

THURSDAY, JUNE 4 >> IT'S ALL GREEK TO ME SOUVLAKI DRIVE-THRU

Not only can you get an entire meal featuring foods you might have a hard time pronouncing correctly, but you can also get quick drive-thru service at the "It's All Greek to Me Souvlaki Drive-Thru" event. For \$14, you can get an authentic Greek meal that includes chicken kabobs, tzatziki, spanikopita and more. All meals need to be ordered in advance and can be purchased online. The event is hosted by Lansing's Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church. 11 a.m.-7 p.m. \$14. Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church, 1701 E. Saginaw St., Lansing. (517) 482-7341, holytrinity-lansing.org.

career. 10 a.m.-noon. FREE. Women's Center of Greater Lansing, 1710 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. (517) 372-9163, womenscenterofgreaterlansing.org.

Support Group. For the divorced, separated and widowed. Room 9. 7:30 p.m. FREE. St. David's Episcopal Church, 1519 Elmwood Road, Lansing. (517) 323-2272, stdavidslansing.org.

French Club. Practice listening to and speaking French. 7-8 p.m. FREE. East Lansing Public Library, 950 Abbot Road, East Lansing. (517) 351-2420, elpl.org.

Roebuck and Dan Currie. 9:30 p.m. FREE. Mac's Bar, 2700 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. (517) 484-6795, macsbar.com.

Social Bridge. No partner needed. 1-4 p.m. \$15. Delta Township Enrichment Center, 4538 Elizabeth Road, Lansing. (517) 484-5600.

Monday Movie Matinee. Movies intended for an adult audience. 1 p.m. FREE. East Lansing Public Library, 950 Abbot Road, East Lansing. (517) 351-2420, elpl.org.

Better Living Book Club. "Don't Sweat the Small Stuff." Richard Carlson, PhD. 7 p.m.-8:30 p.m. FREE. East Lansing Public Library, 950 Abbot Road, East Lansing. (517) 351-2420, elpl.org.

EVENTS

Mac's Monday Comedy Night. Hosted by Mark

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Tuesday, June 2

CLASSES AND SEMINARS

Lansing Area Codependents Anonymous. 5:45-

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Serving Greater Lansing's LGBT Community

Lansing Association for Human Rights

L A H R • LGBT News • Coming Out Group • Prizm Awards •
Breakfast Club • Downtown Lunch • Cafe Night

An advocate by and for
lesbian, gay, bisexual and
transgender people and
their allies in the greater
Lansing community since 1979.

www.LAHRonline.org

Out on the town

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6:45 p.m. FREE. EVERYbody Reads Books and Stuff, 2019 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. (517) 515-5559, coda.org.

Speakeasies Toastmasters. Improve listening, analysis, leadership and presentation skills. 12:05-1 p.m. FREE. Ingham County Human Services Building, 5303 S. Cedar St., Lansing. (616) 841-5176.

Transgender Support Group. Discussion for parents, guardians, siblings and extended family. 7:15-9 p.m. FREE. Call for location. (517) 927-8260.

Take Off Pounds Sensibly. Have a support system, lose weight. 7 p.m. FREE to visit. Eaton Rapids Medical Center, 1500 S. Main St., Eaton Rapids. (517) 543-0786.

Not So Happy Endings Support Group. For women ending relationships. 5:30-7:30 p.m. FREE. Women's Center of Greater Lansing, 1710 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. (517) 896-3311.

Hopeful Hearts Grief Group. Learn, grow and heal together. 10-11 a.m. FREE. The Marquette Activity Room, 5968 Park Lake Road, East Lansing. (517) 381-4866.

Capital City Toastmasters Meeting. Learn public speaking and leadership skills. 7 p.m. FREE. CADL Downtown Lansing, 401 S. Capitol Ave., Lansing. (517) 367-6300, cadl.org.

Aux Petits Soins. French immersion class for babies. 4:15 p.m. & 5:15 p.m. \$12/\$15 drop-in. Willow Tree Family Center, 3333 S. Pennsylvania Ave., Lansing. (517) 643-8059, facebook.com/auxpetitssoinsllc.

Ovreaters Anonymous. To support you in your weight loss efforts. 7 p.m. FREE. Okemos Presbyterian Church, 2258 Bennett Road, Okemos. (517) 290-5163.

EVENTS

Bible and Beer. Discussion of scripture in everyday settings. 6 p.m. FREE. Midtown Brewing Co., 402 S. Washington Square, Lansing. (517) 482-0600, bibleandbeer@ccclansing.org.

TimeBank Orientation & Potluck. Changing communities one hour at a time. 6-9 p.m. FREE. Foster Community Center, 200 N. Foster Ave., Lansing. (517) 258-2242, midmichigantimebank.org.

Sporcle Live! Trivia. Win Crunchy's gift certificates. 7 p.m. FREE. Crunchy's Pizza & Burgers, 254 W. Grand River Ave., East Lansing. (517) 351-2506, crunchyseastlansing.com.

Weekday Wildflower Walk. Look at spring wildflowers with a naturalist guide. 10:30-11:30 a.m. \$3. Harris Nature Center, 3998 Van Atta Road, Okemos. (517) 349-3866, meridian.mi.us.

Capital Area Crisis Men's Rugby Practice. Weather permitting. All experience levels welcome. 6-8 p.m. FREE. St. Joseph Park, 2151 W. Hillsdale, Lansing.

Family Storytime. Ages up to 6. Stories, rhymes and activities. 10:30 a.m. FREE. CADL South Lansing Library, 3500 S. Cedar St., Lansing. (517) 367-6363.

Meditation. For beginners and experienced. 7-9 p.m. FREE. Vietnamese Buddhist Temple, 3015 S. Washington Square, Lansing. (517) 351-5866.

Ask a Business Librarian. Learn market research and more. 9-11 a.m. FREE. Small Business Development Center, LCC, Suite 110, 309 N. Washinton Square, Lansing. (517) 483-1921. sbdcnichigan.org.

Story Art Time. Make art inspired by storybooks. Ages 2-5. 10-11 a.m. \$5/adults FREE. Reach Studio Art Center, 1804 S. Washington Ave., Lansing. (517) 999-3643, reachstudioart.org/events/storytime.

Alcoholics Anonymous. A closed step meeting. 6 p.m. Donations. Pennsylvania Ave. Church of God, 3500 S. Pennsylvania Ave., Lansing. (517) 899-3215.

Walk-In Wednesdays. Drop-In Art Class. All ages. 4-5:30 p.m. FREE (\$5 suggested donation). Reach Studio Art Center, 1804 S. Washington Ave., Lansing. (517) 999-3643, reachstudioart.org.

Knit & Knot So Much. Knitting and Crochet Group. 10 a.m.-noon. FREE, donations accepted. Reach Studio Art Center, 1804 S. Washington Ave., Lansing. (517) 999-3643, reachstudioart.org.

EVENTS

Allen Market Street Farmers Market. Locally grown, baked and prepared foods. 2:30-7 p.m. FREE. Allen Street Farmers Market, 1619 E. Kalamazoo St., Lansing. (517) 999-3911.

Practice Your English. Practice listening to and speaking English. 7-8:30 p.m. FREE. East Lansing Public Library, 950 Abbot Road, East Lansing. (517) 351-2420, elpl.org.

Open Workshop. Bike repair, bike safety and biking as healthy exercise. 6-8 p.m. FREE. Kids Repair Program, 5815 Wise Road, Lansing. (517) 755-4174

Senior Discovery @ ANC. Coffee and presentation with guest speaker. 10 a.m.-noon, FREE. Allen Neighborhood Center, 1619 E. Kalamazoo St., Lansing. (517) 367-2468.

Community Conversation. Rufus Isaacs, MSU Prof, discusses What's buzzing with bees, 7-8:30 p.m. FREE. Okemos Library, 4321 Okemos Road, Okemos. (517) 347-2021, ow.ly/NiaZy.

MUSIC

Fusion Shows presents. Live music. 21-up. 10 p.m. FREE. Crunchy's, 254 W. Grand River Ave., East Lansing. (517) 351-2506, crunchyseastlansing.com.

Marshall Music Open Jam. Join other local musicians and get heard. 6 p.m. FREE. Marshall Music, 3240 E. Saginaw St., Lansing. (517) 337-9700, marshallmusic.com.

Free Will Astrology

By Rob Breznsny

May 27-June 2

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Keith Moon played drums for the rock band the Who. He was once voted the second-greatest drummer in history. But his erratic behavior, often provoked by drugs or alcohol, sometimes interfered with his abilities. In 1973, the Who was doing a live concert near San Francisco when the horse tranquilizer that Moon had taken earlier caused him to pass out. The band appealed to the audience for help. "Can anybody play the drums?" asked guitarist Pete Townshend. "I mean somebody good?" A 19-year-old amateur drummer named Scot Halpin volunteered. He played well enough to finish the show. I suspect that sometime soon, Aries, you may also get an unexpected opportunity to play the role of a substitute. Be ready!

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): The weta is a very large insect whose habitat is New Zealand. It looks like a robotic grasshopper, with giant black eyes on a long red face, enlarged hind legs bearing spikes, and floppy, oversized antennae. The native Maori people call it "the god of the ugly things." Please note that this is a term of respect. The weta's title is not "the most monstrous of the ugly things," or "the worst" or "the scariest" or "the most worthless of the ugly things." Rather, the Maori say it's the *god*-- the highest, the best, the most glorious. I suspect that in the coming days, Taurus, you will have a close encounter with your own version of a "god of ugly things." Doesn't it deserve your love and welcome?

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): You have successfully made the transition from brooding caterpillar to social butterfly. Soon you will be in your full, fluttery glory, never lingering too long with one thought, one friend, or one identity. Some heavy-duty, level-headed stalwarts might wish you would be more earthy and anchored, but I don't share their concern. At least for now, having a long attention span is overrated. You have entered the fidgety, inquisitive part of your cycle, when flitting and flirting and flickering make perfect sense.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Only one fear is worthy of you. Only one fear is real enough and important enough to awaken and activate the numb part of your intelligence. So for now, I suggest that you retire all lesser fears. Stuff them in a garbage bag and hide them in a closet. Then put on your brave champion face, gather the allies and resources you need, and go forth into glorious battle. Wrestle with your one fear. Reason with it. If necessary, use guile and trickery to gain an advantage. Call on divine inspiration and be a wickedly good truth-teller. And this is crucial: Use your fear to awaken and activate the numb part of your intelligence.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): In the coming nights, try to see your shadow as it's cast on the pete by the moon. Not by the sun, mind you. Look for the shadow that's made by the light of the moon. It might sound farfetched, but I suspect this experience will have a potent impact on your subconscious mind. It may jostle loose secrets that you have been hiding from yourself. I bet it will give you access to emotions and intuitions you have been repressing. It could also help you realize that some of the deep, dark stuff you wrestle with is not bad and scary, but rather fertile and fascinating.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): The ancient Greek statesman Demosthenes was regarded as a supremely skilled orator. His speeches were so powerful that he was compared to a "blazing thunderbolt." And yet as a youngster he spoke awkwardly. His voice was weak and his enunciation weird. To transform himself, he took drastic measures. He put pebbles in his mouth to force himself to formulate his words with great care. He recited poems as he ran up and down hills. At the beach, he learned to shout the pounding surf. Take inspiration from him, Virgo. Now would be an excellent time for you to plan and launch strenuous efforts that will enable you to eventually accomplish one of your long-range goals.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Long-distance flirtations may soon be just around the corner or across the

street. Remote possibilities are taking short cuts as they head your way. I swear the far horizon and the lucky stars seem closer than usual. Is it all a mirage? Some of it may be, but at least a part of it is very real. If you want to be ready to seize the surprising opportunities that show up in your vicinity, I suggest you make yourself as innocent and expansive as possible. Drop any jaded attitudes you may be harboring. Let the future know that you are prepared to receive a flood of beauty, truth, and help.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): I suspect that marriages of convenience will begin to wither away unless they evolve into bonds of affection. Connections that have been fed primarily on fun and games must acquire more ballast. In fact, I recommend that you re-evaluate all your contracts and agreements. How are they working for you? Do they still serve the purpose you want them to? Is it time to acknowledge that they have transformed and need to be reconfigured? As you take inventory, be both tough-minded and compassionate.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Petrarch was an influential 14th-century Italian poet whose main work was *Song Book*. It's a collection of 366 poems, most of which are dedicated to Laura, the woman he loved. For 40 years he churned out testaments of longing and appreciation for her, despite the fact that he and she never spent time together. She was married to another man, and was wrapped up in raising her eleven children. Should we judge Petrarch harshly for choosing a muse who was so unavailable? I don't. Muse-choosing is a mysterious and sacred process that transcends logic. I'm bringing the subject to your attention because you're entering a new phase in your relationship with muses. It's either time to choose a new one (or two?) or else adjust your bonds with your current muses.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): "The soul moves in circles," said the ancient Greek philosopher Plotinus. Modern psychologist James Hillmans agreed, and added this thought: "Hence our lives are not moving straight ahead; instead, hovering, wavering, returning, renewing, repeating." I bring this to your attention, Capricorn, because you're now in an extra-intense phase of winding and rambling. This is a good thing! You are spiraling back to get another look at interesting teachings you didn't master the first time around. You are building on past efforts that weren't strong enough. Your words of power are *crooked, gyrate, curvy, labyrinthine, and corkscrew*.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): It's no coincidence that your libido and your mojo are booming at the same time. Your libido is in the midst of a deep, hearty awakening, which is generating a surplus of potent, super-fine mojo. And your surplus of potent, super-fine mojo is in turn inciting your libido's even deeper, heartier awakening. There may be times in the coming week when you feel like you are living with a wild animal. As long as you keep the creature well-fed and well-stroked, it should provide you with lots of vigorous, even boisterous fun.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): "I always arrive late at the office, but I make up for it by leaving early," quipped 19th-century English author Charles Lamb. I invite you to adopt that breezy, lazy attitude in the coming weeks. It's high time for you to slip into a very comfortable, laidback mood . . . to give yourself a lot of slack, explore the mysteries of dreamy indolence, and quiet down the chirpy voices in your head. Even if you can't literally call in sick to your job and spend a few days wandering free, do everything you can to claim as much low-pressure, unhurried spaciousness as possible.

Wednesday, June 3 CLASSES AND SEMINARS

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HE ATE

SHE ATE



Meat me in Old Town

A carnivore's haven

By **MARK NIXON**

The plant eaters had won, or so we thought. Even our family was riven by the war. My son convinced our granddaughter that eating meat was a crime, and unhealthy. Another granddaughter took to Facebook to declare that vegetarians live longer than flesh eaters. I despaired. Perhaps it was best to slink into my cave, cuddle with a mastodon bone and dream of roadkill.

And yet ... there was talk in the heartland of a counter-revolution, whispers of a little place, a haven, where meat was openly and wildly celebrated, where even the mere mention of spinach was cause for banishment ...

— The Carnivore Chronicles

Yeah, OK, that little ditty is as close as I can get to “The Hunger Games.” But as described above, several in our clan have flirted with or embraced vegetarianism. Me? I am an unrepentant, protein-addicted carnivore.

Now I know another place to get my fix: Meat.

It is, indeed, a little place in Old Town that celebrates the remains of four- and two-legged critters. And it does so with devilish humor. “Lettuce is forbidden,” the menu scolds. Near the restrooms is a photo of panic-stricken green peppers with the warning, “Every day, thousands of innocent plants are killed by vegetarians. Help end the violence.”

Does Meat lay claim to the best smoked pork or beef brisket I’ve ever tasted? No, that honor goes to an outdoor barbecue joint tucked in a swamp in southern Mississippi.

But I am convinced that Meat gets several things right, and the things it gets wrong are correctable.

The signature dishes at Meat are based around meats that have been slow-smoked for up to 18 hours using various wood combinations. The result is what you’d expect from folks who know their way around a smoker: a charred, crisp exterior, a delicate “smoke ring” beneath the surface and a juicy, pink interior (yes, it’s fully cooked).

On our first visit, I had the Meat Plate (\$13.95) of pulled pork with an add-on of sliced beef brisket for an extra \$4.50. The thinly sliced brisket was a standout, a perfect trio of smoke, juice and tenderness.

Judy opted for a dozen smoked chicken wings (\$12), which are brined, coated with a spice rub and smoked. For the finishing touch, they flash fry the wings. I don’t really get the frying bit, but the result was good. Not great, but good.

A week later, on a return visit, I had the full slab of spare ribs (\$24). Jackpot! The ribs (not baby back) were, as billed, big and meaty. They were tender but not approaching mushy — unlike the overcooked “fall off the bone” kind some restaurants serve. The bonus is Meat’s house-made sauces. More on those in a minute.

Judy’s Chin-Gorilla Meatwich, (\$12) was a medley of pulled pork, grilled pineapple, bacon and house-made pimento cheese spread on a grilled kaiser roll. We loved the taste combinations — and would have loved it more if crisp grilled onions were added, as the menu promised.

I appreciate how you can customize the various Meatwiches with a meat foundation of your choice — pork, beef brisket, turkey or hamburger.

Now, let’s hand Meat a to-do list:

1. For Pete’s sake, label the different scratch-made sauces. It’s a time-waster for servers to recipe them, and I don’t dine out to take a memory quiz. Paste some labels on the squeeze bottles, or hand me a Sharpie and I’ll do it for you. The sauces themselves, incidentally, are delicious.

Give in to the meat

By **GABRIELLE JOHNSON**

If I had my druthers, I’d eat a massive portion of vegetables for at least two meals per day. I am constantly trying to present green things to the boyfriend in a way that he enjoys, but I frequently hear that “salads all the time” don’t fill him up, and we are always on the prowl to find a restaurant that balances our two styles of eating — mine: clean, fresh and healthy, and his: Oreos and sandwiches.

Meat is not that restaurant. As the name suggests, the menu at Meat is crafted with the most carnivorous of us in mind and heavily features pulled pork, beef brisket, and smoked turkey. Before Meat’s recent expansion, the boyfriend and I would enjoy the occasional rack of ribs and his favorite: the now-extinct Cartman burger. The burger was, for all intents and purposes, a normal bacon cheeseburger, until you looked at the bun. Instead of bread, it was a Little Debbie Honey Bun. Let that sink in. Meat isn’t the place if you’re trying to shed your winter weight.

Since the boyfriend and I take our eating seriously, we threw caution — and self-control — to the wind and headed to Old Town for dinner one night. We were surprised to find Meat packed to the gills with a motley crew of eaters: college students with their parents, young professionals, and bros sitting at the bar enjoying beers and bro time. Friends offered us the two empty seats at their four-seat table, which we gladly accepted in lieu of waiting 30 minutes for our own table. The renovation has doubled the size of Meat, but it looks like the popularity of the place has doubled as well.

The man and I started with the Buffalo Fries (\$7), a basket of French fries topped with blue cheese crumbles, blue cheese dressing and buffalo sauce. The thick-cut fries demonstrate a huge improvement over the milquetoast shoestring variety that Meat used to serve. We liked them, but if you don’t like Buffalo wing sauce, skip this version and try one of the other smothered French fry offerings on the menu. A different kind of restaurant might call them variants of “poutine,” but then again, that restaurant probably wouldn’t have a framed photo of ‘90s heartthrob Gavin Rossdale, taken during his visit to the restaurant, hanging on the wall.

The boyfriend set out on a path into meat sweatdom and ordered a full rack of ribs (\$24). Per the menu, he thought he was going to get pork ribs. What actually came to the table were beef ribs. Well spiced but quite dry, he doctored them with a variety of the house-made sauces sitting on the table. When she delivered our orders, the server gave us a rundown of the sauces held in a little bin on our table. The first was a traditional Kansas City BBQ, but as the presentation continued my brain turned off until she

said the words “hot garlic.” I know it ain’t ladylike, but this lady loves garlic and loves spicy. This sauce, while flavorful and welcome in limited increments, was seriously flirting with the line between “pleasantly spicy” and “too spicy for you to enjoy what you’re eating because you are concerned that sweat has permeated your shirt and nobody is ever going to want to kiss you again because you’re an animal.” Be warned.

I ordered the Classic Chopped Brisket Meatwich (\$11.25, including an upcharge for a premium side), which came out so dry that I essentially doused the thing in the hot garlic sauce. The boyfriend and I slept in separate beds that night (as we do every night, in case Grandma She Ate is reading this). My jalapeño cilantro slaw, surprisingly, offered little in the way of spice, but the welcoming coolness was a perfect contrast to the spicy sandwich.

Meat Southern Bbq & Carnivore Cuisine

1224 E. Turner St., Lansing.

11 a.m.–10 p.m. Tuesday–Thursday; 11 a.m.–midnight Friday and Saturday; closed Monday.

(517) 580-4400, meatbbq.com



Gabrielle Johnson/City Pulse

Meat’s collection of “Meatwiches” includes the Wolcott, which features a fried egg and cheeses on your choice of meat.

He Ate

from page 26

2. Work on warmth. During both visits, several of the “hot” items were not. The great combo of garlic and parmesan cheese on fries was dulled by the fact this dish was decidedly un-hot.

3. The cornbread needs a “skin” on top to hold it together. Meat’s cornbread begins to crumble if you look at it wrong.

4. The bacon and bleu cheese potato salad was a hit, but Meat should reconsider other side dishes. The baked beans need more zest (I use dashes of liquid smoke, Tabasco and Worcestershire sauces). The basic coleslaw is boredom in a bowl (though the jalapeno coleslaw is good). There are several places in town that make better mac-n-cheese. Experiment.

We had some service issues on one visit — shredded brisket instead of sliced, a lack of silverware — but in fairness, that was our server’s first day. And, Meat-goers be warned: The joint fills up quickly. On both visits, we arrived around 5 p.m. and seating was already limited.

If you’re waiting for a table, soak in the meat-oriented decor or have a drink — Meat has added a bar. Or just people watch. The place seems to revel in a cool mix of families, hipsters and men in suits. Vegetarians, walk on by.

She Ate

from page 26

I returned for lunch a few days later with my friend Joe, who always asks me why I don’t give him a special mention in my articles when we dine together. He had a burger (\$9.50), which I completely forgot to snag a bite of since we were too busy discussing his brand-new relationship. I do remember that he liked the burger, but that it pales in comparison to his new leading lady.

I had the Wolcott sandwich (\$9.50), because I’m a sucker for a fried egg-topped anything. Oh how I love to poke a fork — or, in this case, a French fry — into the yolk and watch it ooze down the side of the bun, leaving a trail of glossy, cholesterol-y deliciousness in its wake. I devoured this sandwich. If Joe and I hadn’t agreed to be totally platonic friends years ago, my performance at the lunch table would have been the final nail in that coffin. I was layering fries on top of the brisket and practically shooting hot garlic sauce directly into my mouth from the bottle. It wasn’t pretty. But the next time you need a two-hand sandwich, the kind that will make you want to go home and shower before taking a nap, head to Meat. Just get there early, because the slow-smoked food supply is never guaranteed. RIP, Cartman Burger.

The buds are back

‘Best Buds’ returns with quality products, good service

Best Buds is back, with the same buds and a new location. Instead of finding them on South Washington Avenue — where you may have visited them in 2011 — they are now located on Michigan Avenue, just west of U.S. 127.

The small parking lot is located in the back of the building. As I walked up to the front door, I noticed a camera on the building, which made me feel safe knowing the cars and surrounding area were being monitored by staff. I arrived at the door and was buzzed into the front. Just inside was a large, well-designed waiting area with a fresh, clean look and smell. Everything appeared new, from the floors to the gold tin tile ceiling that had me mesmerized. I walked up to the check-in window and handed them my patient card and identification. Another

Best Buds
2617 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing (517) 580-3923, best-buds.net

buzzer clicked, and I was allowed entry to a back room that featured that same captivating gold ceiling and a variety of wall art.

The flower display counter had top-shelf varieties priced at \$15/gram, the middle shelf was marked \$10/gram, and the lower-shelf strains were \$8/gram. Even the buds on the bottom tier were aromatic and appeared to be good quality medicine. Each shelf had about nine different strains to choose from. I selected the Banana OG variety from the \$10 shelf and the San Fernando Valley (SFV) OG from the top shelf.

I moved on to the extract display. They had everything from CO2 oil to stable clear shatter (\$40 per gram). At the center of the display was a rare treat: caviar — top shelf bud rolled in oil then in kief (cannabis resin). In the next case there were candies, including gummies, and suckers. I was

THE GREEN REPORT



STEVE GREEN

grinning ear to ear like a kid in a candy store — or a grown-up in a marijuana store. The staff was very helpful and knowledgeable about the products. It was nice that I didn’t feel like I was being manipulated with upsells to buy things I didn’t need.

Once back in my cave, I was able to grind up and roll my SFV OG. I gave it two twists in the grinder, and already I was sure I had made a good choice. It had an earthy, organic smell with hints of lemon and diesel fuel. I twisted and lit the joint. The burn was clean, with white ash indicating a good flush. One of my favorite things about this strain is that it has dense smoke that expands in the lungs, though it causes many to cough intensely. Using a vaporizer for

this strain would be a great way to reduce that effect. On the inhale, I tasted a smooth, floral pine, while the exhales tasted of citrus resembling a tangerine aftertaste.

Within just a few puffs, this strain had loosened my back spasms and relieved some of my back pain. My mood was also much improved, though I’m unsure if it was a direct effect of the smoke or because I was in less pain. The effect it provided was well-balanced. I’m happy with the professional staff and good medicine at Best Buds. It’s good to have them back.

Steve Green, who writes this column every two weeks, uses marijuana to prevent seizures. He has no business ties to any dispensaries or products.

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