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February 23 - March 1, 2022

CityPULSE

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What's next for City Hall?

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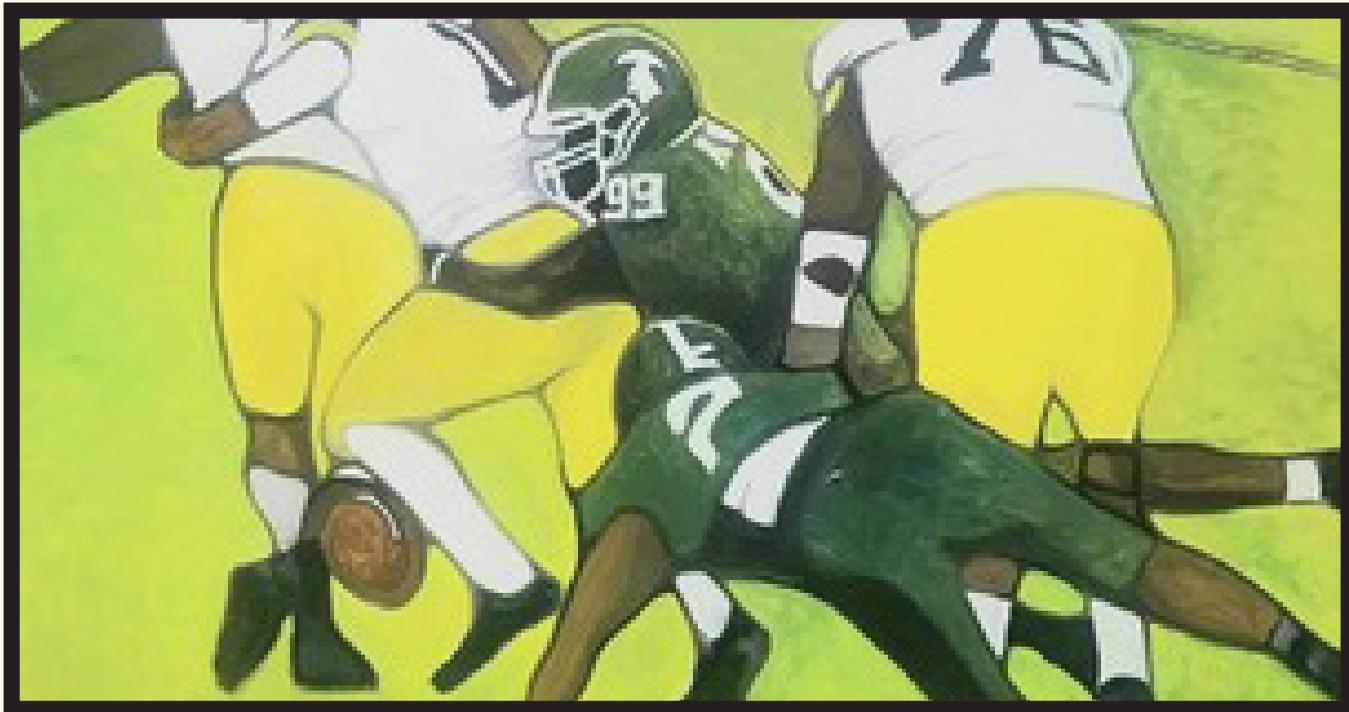


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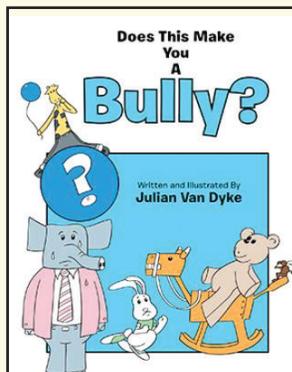
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CityPULSE

**VOL. 21
ISSUE 29**

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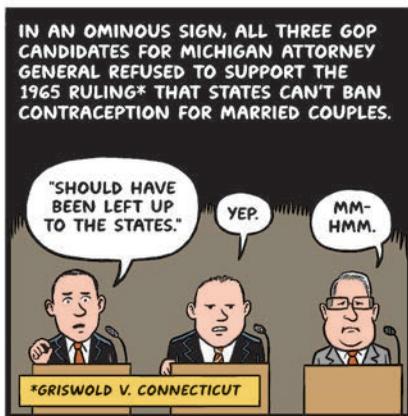
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A new LGBTQ+-focused shop comes to Old Town



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Tommy McGord talks about his favorite album



Cover Art

By Skyler Ashley and Kyle Kaminski

CITY PULSE
on the
AIR

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THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



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PULSE

NEWS & OPINION

Experts skeptical of BWL's 'naturally occurring' boron claim

Regulators order tests on 60 more wells after chemical found in six

Regulators have ordered the Lansing Board of Water & Light to test another 60 drinking water wells for boron and other contamination suspected to be stemming from the Erickson Power Station's toxic coal ash ponds.

The decision comes as BWL has begun to claim the boron may be naturally occurring in mid-Michigan's Saginaw aquifer from which the wells draw, not leaking from coal ash. It's possible that the boron is naturally occurring, experts who have reviewed test results and aquifer data said, but they said the evidence — at least so far — suggests BWL's coal ash is the source.

Though drinking water wells are being tested, public health advocates said that's insufficient.

Water samples from around the aquifer must be analyzed for chemical markers that will clearly determine the boron's source, but state regulators haven't required BWL to take that step, and the state and utility may instead base their analyses on previously published scientific literature.

That would leave the boron's source in doubt, experts said, and could allow BWL to use its theory to shield itself from any responsibility to actually clean up the water contamination.

"It could be that those claims are true, but given that we are talking about human health and people are living here, we can't leave it as an academic question. There needs to be a serious investigation that would include water quality tests," said Avner Vengosh, a Duke University geochemistry and water quality researcher who studies coal ash ponds across the country.

Meanwhile, others have also expressed concern over drinking water wells' "unhealthy" lithium levels, which are just inside the federal water quality standard, and could be naturally occurring.

Officials discovered in early February that boron suspected to have leaked from the coal ash ponds had contaminated six out of six nearby drinking

water wells that BWL has so far tested.

Significant questions about the problem's scope also remain: BWL still doesn't have a handle on the pollution plume's size or location, precisely how many drinking water wells are contaminated in the nearby vicinity or how long its neighbors have been drinking contaminated water supplies.

BWL repeatedly claimed to be "pro-actively" investigating the pollution, but the utility knew about toxins leaking from its ponds as early as April 2020 and never alerted the public or its neighbors.

It only began testing after the Environmental Protection Agency and Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy Department began enforcement action on the pollution and BWL's failure to respond. EGLE officials told City Pulse that BWL is not acting proactively; the agency is actually requiring BWL to test and provide drinking water to impacted homes and businesses as part of a draft consent order that will legally mandate the utility to take the steps it's taking.

Regulators said BWL violated a litany of state and federal clean water rules, and it faces the possibility of fines or other penalties. Among violations at the state level are a failure to prevent groundwater contamination, obtain proper licenses and keep a proper distance between the ponds and groundwater. The state also cited the utility company for a failure to install proper pond liners, which are designed to prevent pollution near the Erickson Power Station site.

Federal rules also required utilities to test water in 2017, but BWL did not do so until 2020.

"BWL's three-year delay in sampling the groundwater, in violation of the federal rule, endangered nearby residents," said Lisa Evans, an attorney with national environmental group Earthjustice, which has been monitoring the issue. "BWL's subsequent failure to comply with the federal rule's mandate to immediately determine the nature and extent of the pollution, and warn nearby residents, is at the core of the present problem."

Site tests detected boron levels between 2.48 mg/L and 4.17 mg/L. Michigan hasn't set specific health limits on the amount of boron allowed in drinking water, though groundwater limits of 0.5 mg/L are in place — but that is based on plant toxicity, not human health, officials at EGLE said.

The EPA has an unenforceable "health advisory" drinking water limit

"There needs to be a serious investigation that would include water quality tests."



— Avner Vengosh, Duke University expert on coal ash

of 6 mg/L for adults and 3 mg/L for children. Boron is linked to developmental and reproductive toxicity, low birth weight and testicular shrinkage.

Naturally occurring?

EGLE spokesman Hugh McDiarmaid wrote in an email that the agency is "not sure if the elevated boron in the residential wells is due to contamination from the Erickson site or not" because boron is also a naturally occurring element that has been detected at higher-than-normal levels in the Saginaw aquifer.

The aquifer once held salt water, which can have higher levels of boron. McDiarmaid pointed to scientific literature that found naturally occurring levels as high as 6.4 mg/L. Determining the source will require "additional investigation," he said.

"To do this, BWL is installing additional monitoring wells onsite, as well as searching for additional existing data for boron occurrence in the Saginaw aquifer, and other potential sources of boron in the area," he added.

But Duke's Vengosh said the investigations should also include water sampling that checks for salinity, isotope ratios and other markers that would clearly tell whether the boron came from ash or was naturally occurring,

"Evaluating the water quality of

wells located near and away from the coal ash site is a quite simple task and (regulators and BWL) should provide that data rather than using 'literature' to prove their point," he added.

EGLE said it's up to BWL to determine the boron's source and that EGLE will "vet" BWL's science and enforce state regulations.

Experts who reviewed the data also expressed some skepticism of BWL's theory because available evidence suggests the coal ash pond's boron is behind the contamination.

Evans said the boron may be naturally occurring in the deeper aquifer but said it's already clear that the shallow aquifer is contaminated from the ash, and she stressed that BWL and EGLE are legally obligated to "aggressively test wells until they determine the extent of the contamination."

It's also extremely rare to find naturally occurring levels of boron as high as what has been detected in the drinking water wells, Vengosh said. And though the aquifer from which the wells are drawing does have a history of high levels of naturally occurring boron, a "statistically valid" sample of water collected from around the aquifer around 20 years ago found those levels near Williamston — not near the plant, he noted.

Evans also said BWL's monitoring wells that check for the "background" levels of toxins near Lansing showed much lower levels of boron than what's in the drinking water wells. Meanwhile, monitoring wells placed between the pond and wells show elevated levels of boron, suggesting the presence of a plume.

But without the appropriate testing, the contamination's source and extent may never be known.

"The law requires them to test, so why are they going to the library when they need to be sinking wells or testing drinking water?" Evans said.

Meanwhile, BWL's spokeswoman, Amy Adams, said it will no longer answer questions from City Pulse.

(For more on this story, please visit www.lansingcitypulse.com.)

— TOM PERKINS

Lansing Legend: Barbara Davis

By AUDREY MATUSZ

After losing a husband and a daughter, Barbara Davis decided it was time to make a change. At 72, Davis is a master's student attending Siena Heights University studying clinical mental health. In this interview, Davis takes a break from writing an essay on historical trauma to shed light on her personal journey of self-acceptance, spirituality, and community mentorship.

Where did you go to school? Is it still around?

Main Street School (present-day Educational Child Care Center). West Junior is still standing, and they are about to change it into something else. I graduated from Sexton High School in '67. I was pregnant and was proposed to by my husband. Back then at Sexton, you didn't go home with anything lower than a C. The principals, assistant principals and teachers all knew your parents. I think they were more disciplinarians.

What is your student life like?

I have 12 clients I meet with regularly because my internship requirement is 600 hours. I get my hours counseling at Not Your Average Counseling Agency on Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard. And I'm done with my hours in June! Woohoo! Since the pandemic, we meet with clients over Zoom a lot. It's an interesting time — the pandemic. I think students have more clients because a lot of people like to stay in, which is good. I understand wanting to avoid crowds, but being at home



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

Lansing Legends

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

and isolated can cause a lot of depression and anxiety.

What classes are you taking?

I'm taking a course on serving diverse populations in counseling and I must write a 1,000-word paper. The assignment is called "Now that I know better." The essence of my paper is meeting people where they are at. Military, immigrants, it doesn't matter. Sometimes I want to start crying because it requires a lot of thought.

What has been your biggest takeaway about your profession?

The sad thing about this profession is that there is a lot of discrimination. There is discrimination around sex, race, religion. I mean there is a lot of confusion, because when you see people walking the streets, where it's more obvious, some professionals will tend to avoid them. All they need is help. That's why I joined this profession — to help.

Are the services you offer free?

Yes. At one point I was seeing 18 clients, that was too many.

What made you go back to school?

My daughter. I lost a daughter, and I was suicidal, but I still had a grandson and another daughter to look after. I was in the hospital, and I told myself *I still have more to live for*. Before she left, she told me, "God is going to take care of everything." And that should've given me relief, but it did not. Getting into this profession has helped. I can get my mind off the negative and turn it into a positive through my personal contributions.

What do you think is the biggest barrier for people of color seeking mental health services?

They're afraid. In the history of mental health, Blacks who were living in a white man's home or were raising their kids, if they came up as mentally ill they were put in a cave. An underground cave and kept there. So today, I probably have three to four clients who are Black or another ra-



Skylar Ashley/City Pulse

Barbara Davis at the Epicenter of Worship Church.

cial minority. It's hard because it has been instilled in them, hearing it from grandparents who heard it from their great-grandparents.

I used to be afraid of mental health because I used to think that people were, excuse this word, but *crazy*. Then I was diagnosed with OCD. I understand now that even people in high places can have mental illness and we need to talk about it.

What are some strategies for mental wellness you like to personally use?

I like to practice mindfulness. Especially when you have anxiety, and your mind starts rushing to *oh-oh-oh-oh*. For example, I like to hold a piece of ice in my hand, so the only thing I think about is *oh, my hand is cold*. Then there is always breathing. Going outside and doing something. The more you sit and look at that "bloob tube" and don't exercise — it's depressing. Every day is the same thing. Exercise is also so important for everyone. There are so many strategies, but it takes time.

In Lansing, how has the environment impacted community mental health?

Oh, my god. I grew up on Max Avenue before Oldsmobile bought us out.

It wasn't I-496, which is what many people believe. Especially in the elderly community, the displacement and loss are where the depression comes from. Whatever they offered you for the house, we had to take. There was no dicker and deal. There is one block of Max Avenue left.

How do you deal with loss?

Losing my daughter and husband was horrible. However, holding on to the love of God is what has got me through. I pray every day. You may think that when you're praying for someone that it's just going up in the air, but it's real. Prayer is real. And I'm still getting through it. I used to go to his grave — from 1990 till 2008 when my daughter passed — everyday.

Do you think that Black survivors fare better with Black counselors?

Sometimes having a counselor that is the same race is not the answer. It's all about your knowledge and how you speak to people. You can't just give out advice, you must listen and show them that you are interested. Knowing you aren't better than the person sitting across from you is how you get that relationship.

North Lansing Dam could be removed on Uncle Sam's dime

Fish Ladder need not be altered, experts say

The long-discussed removal of the aging North Lansing Dam and replacement with rock ramps and gentle rapids could be fully funded by the federal government, if the project meets requirements.

“The project could potentially be funded at 100 percent federal. We’re talking feasibility studies, design and construction,” Jim Luke, district outreach coordinator for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, told a local group studying dam removal.

After a two-year pandemic hiatus, the Dam Removal Exploratory Workshop, or DREW, resumed discussions over the possible removal of the North Lansing Dam, which is adjacent to the Brenke Fish Ladder in Old Town. The effort is being led by Lansing’s newly hired hazard mitigation coordinator, Kenneth Hall.

In response to rising concern over the safety of the nation’s tens of thousands of aging dams, and increasing frequency of historic rainfalls and floods, the federal infrastructure bill signed into law last November included about \$800 million for dam removal.

Susan Henshaw, a project planner for the Corps of Engineers, set a “very rough and preliminary estimate” of the cost of removing or modifying the North Lansing Dam at about \$12 million.

Luke and Henshaw reported that the project has already cleared the first hurdle, a federal interest determination.

“We determined that removing or modifying the North Lansing Dam would be beneficial to the nation and a feasibility study would have a positive outcome,” Henshaw said.

Hall was pleased, but not surprised, at the prospective federal windfall. “With everything that’s been happening, especially our two dam failures in Midland in 2020, and flooding across the U.S., I thought it was going to come in some form,” he said. “It put some smiles on the faces in the room.”

Aging dams across the country, including several in Michigan, are being replaced by rock barriers that “naturalize” a stretch of river, bring back native species of fish and other river life, allow kayaks to pass through the rapids and minimize the danger of drowning in the “boil” of rushing water below the dam.

Dam safety expert and DREW participant Russell Hicks said that if the



Courtesy

The North Lansing Dam flows through the Old Town neighborhood.

North Lansing Dam is removed, “local anglers will revel in the newfound increase in the number, types, health and sizes of an ever-expanding fish population, including salmon and steelhead in downtown.”

Lansing’s exploratory dam removal group stopped meeting in 2020, when the pandemic hit and the city’s former hazard mitigation coordinator, Ronda Oberlin, retired. The meeting Wednesday (Feb. 16) drew 26 stakeholders, including local, state and federal representatives, dam removal experts, environmental groups and representatives from private businesses — the most of any DREW meeting so far, Hicks said.

But the talks are still at the headwaters and could be diverted into several alternative channels in the coming months. Hall told the group the process could lead to “full removal, partial removal, maybe not anything.”

The North Lansing Dam, 20 feet high, cascades through the heart of Old Town, near the intersection of Cesar Chavez Avenue and Turner Street. The current dam, built in 1936, is the latest in a series of dams that go back to 1838.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers lists the North Lansing Dam as having a “significant” hazard potential, meaning “no probable loss of human life,” but flooding “can cause economic loss, damage, disruption of lifeline facilities, or impact other concerns.”

The state inspects the North Lansing Dam every three years, said Luke Trumble, supervisor of the state’s Dam Safety Unit, a part of the Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy, or EGLE. After a series of major fixes,

from 2011 through 2016, “that dam has been largely rehabilitated” by the dam’s owner, the Lansing Board of Water & Light, he said.

The North Lansing Dam is designed to withstand a 200-year flood, Trumble said, but 200-year and even 500-year floods are happening more often, in

See Dam, Page 8

CITY OF LANSING NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

**5411 Wise Road
SLU-2-2021, Special Land Use Permit – Electrical Substation**

The Lansing City Council will hold a second public hearing on Monday, March 14, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. in the Tony Benavides Lansing City Council Chambers, 10th Floor, Lansing City Hall, 124 W. Michigan Avenue, Lansing, Michigan to consider SLU-2-2021, a request by the Lansing Board of Water & Light for a special land use permit to construct a new electrical power substation at 5411 Wise Road.

For more information, please call Lansing City Council at 517-483-4177. If you are interested in this matter, please attend the public hearing or send a representative. Written comments will be accepted between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. on City business days if received before 5 p.m., Monday, February 14, 2022 at the City Clerk’s Office, Ninth Floor, City Hall, 124 West Michigan Ave., Lansing, MI 48933 or email city.clerk@lansingmi.gov.

Chris Swope, Lansing City Clerk
www.lansingmi.gov/Clerk
www.facebook.com/LansingClerkSwope

CP#22-052

CITY OF LANSING NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a Public Hearing will be held on Monday, February 28, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers, 10th Floor Lansing City Hall, 124 W. Michigan Ave., Lansing, MI for the purpose of considering:

An Ordinance of the City of Lansing, Michigan, amend the Lansing Codified Ordinances by adding Chapter 256, Sections 256.01 -256.03 to create the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Advisory Board; to provide for its composition and function; and to define its duties.

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

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

Chris Swope, Lansing City Clerk, MMC/MiPMC
www.lansingmi.gov/Clerk
www.facebook.com/LansingClerkSwope

CP#22-051

Dam

from page 7

Michigan and across the country.

“By removing the North Lansing

Dam, a choke point and impediment to bank-full and flood stage events is removed, as well as a drowning hazard,” Hicks said.

Hicks said low-head dams like North Lansing’s have claimed multiple lives in recent years, swallowing multiple anglers and kayakers. A kayaker drowned

going over the North Lansing Dam on Feb. 27, 2018.

Ryan Filbin, a Ph.D. geography student at the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee, studied stream flow in the Grand River five years ago as a student at Western Michigan University. In a 2017 paper, Filbin declared Lansing’s two dams, including the Moores Park dam near the Eckert Power Station, “deteriorating structures presenting a threat to the downtown Lansing area.”

In May 2020, a deluge of up to 8 inches of rain in 48 hours swelled the Tittabawassee River in eastern central Michigan, sending a surge of water that breached two dams, damaged 2,500 buildings and caused over 10,000 people to evacuate the towns of Midland and Sanford.

“Hopefully, the Midland disaster serves as a lesson for Lansing, where the potential is there as well,” Filbin said. “If you get 10 inches of rain in a 12-hour span, and that water has nowhere to go and you have a catastrophic failure — it’s going to be more catastrophic in Lansing, just based on the population density.”

Bill Rustem, a member of the Dam Safety Task Force that investigated the Midland failures and an adviser to former governors William Milliken and Rick Snyder, called the Midland dam failures “a wake-up call for the state of Michigan.”

“You see more frequent, intense rainstorms and you’re going to see more in the future,” Rustem said

However, Laurie Baumer, vice president of the Capital Region Community Foundation, said at Wednesday’s meeting that she hasn’t heard enough hard data about what will happen to the river if the dam is removed.

“We do see the benefits, particularly environmentally,” Baumer said. “We care about the environment, but this community is going to be very upset if they take out a dam. It retracts the river to a trickle, and you can’t get a boat down.”

The Community Foundation led the funding, design and construction of the highly successful, \$1.8 million Rotary Park on the downtown riverfront, just upstream from the North Lansing Dam and recently broke ground on a \$1.8 million “universally accessible” playground at Adado Riverfront Park, even closer to the dam.

“We’re investing millions in riverfront development and what happens if we’re looking at mud?” Bauer said.

Hicks countered that dozens of communities across the country and in Michigan have removed dams and re-

placed them with rock rapids “with resounding success.”

“YouTube is filled with these success stories,” Hicks said. “And not one of them ended up with a ‘river trickle.’ It’s wiser and more cost effective to be proactive to protect the investment along the downtown Grand River.”

Baumer urged the group to consider a “holistic solution” involving the possible removal of the Moores Park Dam near the Eckert Power Station as well as the North Lansing Dam.

“We don’t want to do one piece of the puzzle and then start all over, at Moores Dam, because that’s what’s next,” she said.

Luke said there is potential to add a combined double dam removal project to the federal Water Resources Development Act, now being worked out in Congress, but it would require a special appropriation and could draw the process out for 10 years or more.

“If you’re looking for the 100 percent federally funded option, we should focus on the North Lansing Dam,” Luke said. “The more complicated we make it, we may be shooting ourselves in the foot.

Removal of the North Lansing Dam calls into question the fate of the neighboring Brenke Fish Ladder, a state historical site and unique local asset. Hicks said the ladder was built in 1984 “at the height of the coho/steelhead craze.”

“It looks good, but fish don’t use it,” Hicks said. “Anecdotal salmon sightings have been four fish in five years.”

The fish ladder’s value as a “cultural asset” would be taken into account in any future feasibility study, Hemshaw said.

“We know the fish ladder’s there, and it’s a historic site, and that’s a complicating factor, but that’s not untypical with dam removals,” Luke added. “These projects aren’t new for us.”

As DREW settles back into harness, Hall said he plans to create another group “to welcome and engage community input from all residents of Lansing and the surrounding areas.”

He said a feasibility study will answer many questions about what would happen to the size and flow of the river upstream from the dam site if the dam is removed, but it’s too early to say when the study will be done.

“This is an exploratory group,” he said. “Once we have figured out whether we want a complete removal, a partial removal or modification — or we get a random unicorn out of the sky to tell us it’s best that we keep the dam — we will move accordingly. For now, we’re still exploring our options.”

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF LANSING SYNOPSIS OF PROPOSED MINUTES

A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF LANSING WAS HELD AT THE TOWNSHIP OFFICES LOCATED AT 3209 WEST MICHIGAN AVENUE, LANSING, MICHIGAN ON TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2022 AT 7:00 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Supervisor Hayes, Clerk Sanders
Trustees: Harris, Brewer
MEMBERS ABSENT: Trustees: Broughton, Ruiz
ALSO PRESENT: Michael Gresens, Attorney

ACTION TAKEN BY THE BOARD:

Meeting called to order by Supervisor Hayes.
Minutes of the regular meeting held on December 7, 2021 approved.
Agenda approved as presented.
Approved Agreement to Mediate.
Accepted Township Treasurer’s resignation.
Adopted Resolution 22-01: Resolution to Opt out of the Publicly Funded Health Insurance Contribution.
Adopted Resolution 22-02: Resolution to Adopt Poverty Exemption Income Guidelines and Asset Test.
Approved allocation of ARPA funds to pay for new Opticom System.
Approved entering into Executive Session for discussion regarding pending litigation and labor negotiations. Pending litigation: Lake Lansing Partners LLC v Lansing Charter Twp. – MTT Docket #21-001298; HP Lansing LLC v Lansing Charter Twp. – MTT Docket #21-000807; and Eastwood LLC v Charter Township of Lansing, Case #21-0624-CB.
Approved returning to Regular session.
Approved authorizing the Township Attorney and the Township Assessor to settle: Lake Lansing Partners LLC v Lansing Charter Twp – MTT Docket #21-001298 and HP Lansing LLC v Lansing Charter Twp MTT Docket #21-000807 within the parameters discussed during Executive Session.
Approved Police Non-Supervisory Division Contract.
Approved Teamsters Local #243 Contract.
Claims approved.
Meeting adjourned.

Diontrae Hayes, Supervisor
Maggie Sanders, Clerk

CP#22-054

STATE OF MICHIGAN OFFICE OF THE INGHAM COUNTY DRAIN COMMISSIONER

In the Matter of: Wilkshire Drain

NOTICE OF MEETING OF BOARD OF DETERMINATION

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN to you as a person liable for an assessment that the Board of Determination, composed of Paulette Hatchett, John Leonard, Dennis Williams, and Walt Sorg (Alternate), will meet on **Wednesday, March 9, 2022, at 6:30 p.m. at the Meridian Charter Township Hall, 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864**, to hear all interested persons and evidence and to determine whether the actions prayed for in a Petition dated December 17, 2021, for the maintenance and improvement of the Wilkshire Drain is necessary and conducive to public health, convenience, or welfare in accordance with Sections 72 and 191 of Act No. 40, PA 1956, as amended.

Proceedings conducted at this public hearing will be subject to the provisions of the Michigan Open Meetings Act. You are further notified that information regarding this meeting may be obtained from the Ingham County Drain Commissioner. Persons with disabilities needing accommodations for effective participation in the meeting should contact the Ingham County Drain Commissioner at the number noted below (voice) or through the Michigan Relay Center at 711 (TTY) at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting to request mobility, visual, hearing, or other assistance. Minutes of the meeting will be on file in the following office: Ingham County Drain Commissioner’s Office, 707 Buhl Avenue, Mason, Michigan 48854.

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that persons aggrieved by the decisions of the Board of Determination may seek judicial review in the Circuit Court for the County of Ingham within ten (10) days after the determination. If the actions prayed for in the Petition are determined to be necessary and conducive to the public health, convenience, or welfare, a special assessment may be levied against properties that benefit from the project. A landowner, or party of interest to property to be assessed, or their agent, may appear in person to comment on the necessity of the project.

Dated: February 4, 2022

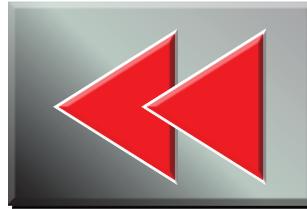
Patrick E. Lindemann
Ingham County Drain Commissioner
Phone: (517) 676-8395

CP#22-055

REWIND

NEWS HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE LAST 7 DAYS

By KYLE KAMINSKI



Nonprofit to 'Advance Peace' in Lansing

After several delays, Ingham County officials gave an early greenlight to the nonprofit People Ready Activating Youth — or PRAY — to operate a peacemaking program in Greater Lansing. The \$2 million program, called Advance Peace, is designed to curb rising levels of homicides in the city. The costs are set to be split between the county, the city of Lansing and grand funds. The full Board of Commissioners was set to approve the program on Tuesday night (Feb. 22).

MDOT resumes local highway projects

A large reconstruction project is continuing on a five-mile stretch from Airport Road to the I-96 interchange in Clinton and Eaton counties. The road work — which restarted this week and also includes a stretch of I-69 between Charlotte and Marshall — is expected to come along with intermittent lane closures while crews rebuild interchanges at Francis and Airport roads, as well as conduct preventative maintenance and repairs on at least 13 local bridges and overpasses.

Cops: Drunk trucker to face charges

Ingham County sheriff's deputies are seeking charges of operating while intoxicated with a high blood-alcohol content against a 43-year-old St. Clair Shores man following several reports of a "reckless semi-truck" traveling westbound on I-96 in Wheatfield Township on Sunday (Feb. 20). The driver was arrested and taken to a hospital for medical treatment, local authorities said.

Local nurse takes on 'Idol'

Jacob Moran, a Dansville native and East Lansing nurse, will appear on this year's season of "American Idol," which premieres at 8 p.m. Sunday (Feb. 27) on ABC, reports the Lansing State Journal. Moran auditioned for the show in 2019. This year marks a hopeful comeback.

Masks stay on at Lansing schools

The Lansing School District Board of Education voted to require its students, staff and visitors to still wear face coverings through the rest of the school year, even though caseloads have decreased and local health officials lifted emergency mandates on face masks last week. Some district officials cited relatively high hospitalization rates as reasons to maintain the mandate. East Lansing Public Schools are also still requiring face masks. They're reportedly optional for students at Williamston Community Schools, Mason Public Schools and Holt Public Schools.



Disc golf course to open in Lansing

Ingham County plans to build a new 18-hole disc golf course — in addition to the one at Burchfield Park in Holt — at Lake Lansing Park North, reports FOX 47 News. The county earmarked \$50,000 for the project, but officials hope to recoup the costs within three months.



McLaren to open new hospital

McLaren Greater Lansing announced plans to open its long-awaited replacement hospital to patients March 6. The new hospital on the southern edge of Michigan State University includes 239 acute care beds and will serve as a tertiary teaching facility for the university. It will also be home to an expanded emergency department, ICU and the Karmanos Cancer Institute.

Lansing teen killed in shooting

Allayah Marie Walker-Travis, 17, of Lansing, died after she was shot on Wednesday night (Feb. 16) near the 3500-block of Wainwright Avenue, according to the Lansing Police Department. Witnesses on the scene told cops the shooting was related to an argument. A 20-year-old man has been identified as a suspect, but no arrests have been made. Call in tips to 517-483-4600.

State issues bird flu warning

State regulators have urged owners and caretakers of chickens and other domestic birds to practice strict biosecurity when tending to their flocks following several cases of the highly pathogenic avian influenza in several nearby states, including Indiana. The virus has not been detected in Michigan, but it's known to be highly infectious among domestic poultry flocks.

Ex-speaker's wife defends husband

Former House Speaker Lee Chatfield's wife, Stephanie Chatfield, issued a statement of support for her husband, whose sister-in-law has accused him of sexually assaulting her when she was a teen. The statement calls sister-in-law Rebekah Chatfield's sexual assault allegations "false" and says that prior to her allegations, Rebekah Chatfield "began to see spirits of those who had passed away and felt that these spirits were also inside her body." *Read more from MIRS News at lansingcitypulse.com.*



Chatfield

Ex-DeWitt cop pissed over firing

Robert Stump, a former DeWitt Township police officer who was injured in a car crash two years ago, claimed he was unfairly fired after 14 years of service, according to recent reports. Stump claimed to have been awaiting hip replacement surgery after the crash, but was fired before he could actually receive the procedure in May. Township officials said Stump ran out of paid leave.



This month's Eye for Design detail is from a well-known building in downtown Lansing. Send your guess to eye@lansingcitypulse.com. The first reader to submit the right answer will win an Eye for Design mug.

Do you have an eye for design or for architectural eye candy? City Pulse wore out our last eye editor, Carrie Sampson, who delivered the goods in wonderful fashion to those many years (two, I think). Our own Lawrence Cosentino is filling in, but come warm weather he will have better things to do.

Hence, we need a volunteer.

It's not very hefty lifting. Twice a month, we need a photo and a couple of hundred words, in rotation, of your choice of an eye candy and an eye for design to alternate with Kyle Kaminski's eyesores. The "pay" is great: Your name twice a month in the newspaper for the rest of us. And our sincere appreciation for keeping a popular feature going.

If you can write descriptively but not overwrite, meet deadlines and take a decent photo with your phone, contact me at publisher@lansingcitypulse.com or give me a call at (517) 999-5061.

— BERL SCHWARTZ

"Eye for Design" is our look at some of the nicer properties in Lansing. It rotates each with Eye candy of the Week and Eyesore of the Week.

Do it for the Davises

It's no secret we're big fans of Mayor Andy Schor's plan to build a new performing arts center in downtown Lansing. In fact, we're positively giddy at the prospect, along with a regional arts community that is both thrilled and energized to see one of our long-held, shared dreams come true.

When Schor unveiled the plan last month, though, we were mildly disappointed to see that the entertainment facility already had a name: "The Ovation." We were subsequently glad to learn the name is just a place holder. The plan is to sell the name, and that's understandable, given \$10 million or so still needs to be raised for the best version of the center.

We think we have a better idea.

We propose naming it the Jack and Susan Davis Center for the Performing Arts — the Davis Center for short. We humbly and respectfully offer this alternative because it's an opportunity to honor a true Lansing giant and his spouse, who together made Greater Lansing a better place to live in countless ways, especially through their extraordinary support for the arts. It's not often that major public buildings are named after people these days, in part because they just aren't built very frequently. In 2017, Lansing City Hall was officially renamed after former Mayor David Hollister, a well-deserved honorific that recognized his transformational tenure as the capital city's chief executive. We believe the Davis's legacy is in the same league as Hollister's. If the question is, "Are they worthy?", the answer is a resounding yes.

Those who knew Jack, who passed away in 2020 at the age of 81, and Susan, his wife of more than 50 years, already understand why we think the new performing arts center should honor their immeasurable contributions to the Greater Lansing community. For the unfamiliar, Jack Davis was one of those iconic figures who come along every now and then in a city's history, someone whose impact on the trajectory of the community was so significant that he can fairly be called a legend.

A Harvard-trained attorney, Jack helped launch Lansing's Loomis Law Firm in 1966 and led the firm as a partner for the next 50+ years. A man of his caliber easily could have taken his talents elsewhere, to New York or Chicago or Los Angeles, but he remained deeply loyal to his hometown, where he attended Lansing public schools and graduated



Courtesy M3 Group (circa 2013)

Jack and Susan Davis.

from Eastern High School. His dedication to public education and uplifting Lansing's young people was an enduring hallmark of his community involvement. He served for many years on the Lansing Board of Education, twice as its president.

Perpetually kind and unfailingly a gentleman, Jack was exceptionally generous both with his time and his treasure. The official litany of his accomplishments would take far more space than

we have here, but let's hit a few of the highlights.

When General Motors threatened to leave Lansing in 1997, Jack joined forces with then-Mayor Dave Hollister, Ray Tadgerson, John Daher and others in a bold and improbable bid to persuade the giant automaker to remain here. Ten thousand jobs and billions in future investment hinged on the outcome. The campaign worked. GM stayed in Lansing and went on to build two state-of-the-art assembly plants.

donation to the Fenner Nature Center financed a new educational and events facility at Fenner, which is now known as the Susan and Jack Davis Pavilion. The couple's equally extraordinary contributions to the arts make it a no-brainer to also name the city's new performing arts center after them.

But that's the easy part. The more daunting task will be raising the additional \$10 million or so to bring the project across the finish line. During his successful reelection campaign, Mayor Schor's prodigious fundraising talents were on full display as he amassed a quarter-million-dollar war chest. We're counting on him to put those skills to work once again by leading the charge to secure the rest of the money for the performing arts center. We think naming it for the Davises will generate significant support from the legions of Lansingites who love and respect one of our city's great couples. To paraphrase a legendary movie line: "If you name it, they will give."

It's no small task to raise \$10 million in Lansing, no matter how worthy the cause. Our region simply doesn't have a DeVos family, as in Grand Rapids, or the Strykers in Kalamazoo, who can dig into their deep pockets to build just about anything their communities desire.

So, to help things along, City Pulse is putting our money where our mouth is: We will donate at least 12 full-page ads in this paper to promote the fundraising campaign, on the condition that the performing arts center is named after the Davises. We believe the simple act of naming the facility after the couple will itself ensure the success of the campaign. What better way for their legions of friends and fans to help honor them?

While we're convinced that naming the new performing arts center after Jack and Susan is an idea that deserves an ovation, we'll settle for polite applause and a generous donation to the cause.

Who's with us?

(Full disclosure: City Pulse publisher Berl Schwartz was a member of Mayor Andy Schor's Arts and Culture Commission. City Pulse contributed \$5,000 to the effort to plan a new downtown performing arts center.)

But that was just the tip of the iceberg. A wise and deeply respected counselor to mayors, CEOs and celebrities, Jack was a trusted voice at every table that mattered. He and Susan were perhaps the Lansing region's greatest patrons of the arts, helping to guide and sustain the Lansing Symphony Orchestra, the Lansing Art Gallery and the Broad Museum, among many others.

The Davises also shared an appreciation for the beauty and wonders of the natural world around us. Their generous

The CP Edit

Opinion

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

1.) Write a letter to the editor.

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

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

The learning ways of Black clergy

By **DEDRIA HUMPHRIES BARKER**
OPINION

It's the end of Black History Month, and I want to draw attention to Black clergy. Clergy have all-encompassing vocation. They can be found pretty much everywhere. They marry and bury people. They keep the Black community on stable ground. They speak from the pulpit and also in the street. They mediate when there is race-based civil conflict.



Barker

For example, the counsel of the Rev. Melvin Jones, pastor of Union Missionary Baptist Church, was sought in summer of 2020 when Lansing was in a precarious situation after the killing of George Floyd. And Jones, and the Revs. Joseph Graves Sr. and Lester Stone were key in the battle to rename one of Lansing's major north-south thoroughfares. It went from Logan Street to Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard in 1994 after an eight-year struggle.

Much of the training of clergy happens on the fly. They learn as they minister. Today I want to share how in Lansing I saw two members of this revered profession learn on the job.

The Rev. Lester Stone

I sat next to the Rev. Stone at the funeral of another legendary Lansing clergyman, Joseph Graves, pastor of Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist Church, on Ballard Street. This was a funeral like I have never been to, and I say that having reported the funeral of Soapy Williams, one of the most

beloved governors of the State of Michigan, whom Democrats and Republicans elected with pride.

The church was packed for Graves' funeral. Preacher after preacher from near and far came to the pulpit to laud and celebrate the senior member of Lansing's Black clergy. I was mesmerized. Their way of delivering words, their manner of phrasing, the timbre of their voices, the skill of a joke at the right place, of instilling humor into situations that were no joke. It was wonderful. I was mesmerized by the oratory in the tradition of Dr. King and Frederick Douglas.

I had my notebook out, taking notes for my report. Beside me, the Rev. Stone had a notebook out as well. At that time, Stone was pastor of Friendship Baptist Church, a granite beauty that sat near the corner of MLK Jr. Boulevard and I-496.

Intensity flowed off Stone as he wrote furiously. I leaned over to him to whisper, "What are you doing?"

"I'm writing down what they are saying." His tone said he was annoyed to be interrupted, but he continued. "This is great stuff. I am going to use some of it in my sermons."

It is how preachers learn to preach: by paying attention to other great preachers.

The Rev. Versey Williams

I am a Black Episcopalian, raised in Detroit in a Black Episcopal church. I was faced with a decision when I arrived in Lansing in 1985. Most Episcopal churches are majority white with a sprinkling of Black faces. I chose All Saints Episcopal in East Lansing. It had cool white people.

But during the summer, I went



back to my roots and visited Lansing's Black churches. One Sunday my daughter and I found this small, sweet church on Maple Street near Old Town. It was St. Matthews AME. At that time it was pastored by the Rev. Versey Williams. She was beautiful with perfect hair and makeup. She dressed and spoke well.

After meeting the Rev. Williams at church, I started seeing her around the community. The next winter I saw her at a community event.

She was glad to see me, but she seemed a little uneasy. Maybe because another way of saying clergy is the phrase man (or woman) of the cloth, and I had commented on her wonderfully warm-looking, full-length mink coat.

She explained she had to buy the coat. For her job. For funerals. In winter. When she officiated, and especially when she attended a colleague minister's funeral and the committal

at the grave. That cemetery ceremony could go long. And there she was dressed in heels, nylon stockings, dress, collar, and sensible cloth coat. She was freezing. So she bought a fur coat. She had learned self-care is the first step to doing a good job.

The job of clergy

Being a pastor is more challenging than most people could ever imagine. Especially people who attend only on Sunday or, increasingly, do not attend church at all. The job is not simply reading the Bible in their study. Clergy need to learn many skills and coping mechanisms that are not taught in divinity school. Mostly, the job means applying Christianity to the real world, especially for Black clergy.

The Black clergy have been key in gaining and maintaining political power by encouraging Black people to vote. They have helped with financial power by helping people to get jobs.

Since slavery, Black clergy have been key to the survival and progress of Black people in the United States. And they made history.

If you want to know more about the Black clergy and the church communities they serve in America, tune into Professor Henry Louis Gates Jr.' PBS series "The Black Church: This is Our Story. This is Our Song" at <https://www.pbs.org/show/black-church/>.

(Longtime journalist and educator Dedria Humphries Barker, of Lansing, is the author of a book about education for girls, "Mother of Orphans: The True and Curious Story of Irish Alice, A Colored Man's Widow." Her opinion column appears on the last Wednesday of each month.

NOTICE TO QUALIFIED ELECTORS OF CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF LANSING VACANCY ON BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Charter Township of Lansing is seeking a township resident to fill the vacancy of Treasurer on the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees meet every other Tuesday at 7:00 p.m. The Treasurer also serves on various committees that meet throughout the year.

Township Board will be making an appointment to serve until the next General Election in November of 2022. You will be required to follow the procedures to put your name on the ballot for the August 2022 Primary Election. You can obtain more information on the position and filing requirements from the Clerk's office.

Interested parties must be 18 years of age, a US Citizen, and an elector of the Township. Please submit your application, resume, letter of interest and references by 5:00 p.m. Wednesday, March 9, 2022 to Supervisor Dion'rae Hayes, 3209 W. Michigan Ave, Lansing, MI 48917, or dhayes@lansingtowship.org or Clerk Maggie Sanders, clerk@lansingtowship.org.

Maggie Sanders, Clerk
Charter Township of Lansing

CP#22-035

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF LANSING SYNOPSIS OF PROPOSED MINUTES

A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF LANSING WAS HELD AT THE TOWNSHIP OFFICES LOCATED AT 3209 WEST MICHIGAN AVENUE, LANSING, MICHIGAN ON TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2022 AT 7:00 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Supervisor Hayes, Clerk Sanders
Trustees: Harris, Brewer, Ruiz
MEMBERS ABSENT: Trustees: Broughton
ALSO PRESENT: Michael Gresens, Attorney

ACTION TAKEN BY THE BOARD:
Meeting called to order by Supervisor Hayes.
Minutes of the regular meeting held on February 1, 2022 approved.
Agenda approved as amended.
Adopted Resolution 22-03: Resolution Appointing Township Downtown Development Authority Governing Board.
Adopted Resolution 22-04: Re-appointment to Economic Development Corporation.
Adopted Resolution 22-05: Re-appointments to Planning Commission
Adopted Resolution 22-06: Re-appointments to Construction Board of Appeals.
Adopted Resolution 22-07: Re-appointments to Board of Appeals.
Approved Buy Back Request for unused vacation time for Payroll Clerk.
Approved increasing Township Treasurer's salary.
Claims approved.
Meeting adjourned.

Diontrae Hayes, Supervisor
Maggie Sanders, Clerk

CP#22-053

Whitmer's four-letter word is actually five: COVID

The governor showed up Monday in Sterling Heights and Detroit. She wants to exempt retirement income from the state's income tax. She was in Bay City last Friday talking about the same thing. Over the weekend, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer donned the yellow hard hat and stood alongside Interstate 69 as crews began rebuilding 30

Opinion

miles from Clinton to Calhoun

County. Last week, she was in Hemlock, talking about global manufacturing leadership and silicon at the Hemlock Semiconductor plant.



KYLE MELINN

POLITICS

One thing Whitmer hasn't been talking about? COVID-19.

This isn't a new thing. Remember the governor's State of the State address last month? The governor never uttered the following words: Mask, vaccinations, mandates, restrictions or Biden. During the whole speech, she passingly referenced COVID-19 as the reason her speech was given remotely. She mentioned that students should be back in class.

That was it.

When the governor introduced her proposal budget a couple weeks ago, she talked about all the money she wants spent on education, dental coverage for Medicaid recipients, transportation and economic development. Money for COVID? Vaccinations? Masks? All of them may be worth spending money on, but she's not leading with this. Long gone are the days of the three-times-a-week conferences when Whitmer spoke in some empty room about what we all need to do to get out of this pandemic.

Statewide masking mandates? The governor ended those last July. Since then, the rules coming from Lansing have only gotten looser, not stricter. It doesn't matter what the numbers are.

Between Veterans' Day and Groundhog's Day, an average of 9,910 Michiganders came down with COVID every single day. Before this period, the average daily infection rate was 2,210.

During that time, Whitmer didn't discourage travel. Her director of the Department of Health and Human Services didn't bring back restaurant limits.

The Breslin Center stopped selling hot dogs at Spartan basketball games, but the governor went the other direc-

tion with her policies.

After Christmas break, Flint Schools announced they were going virtual indefinitely. Whitmer didn't urge more districts to follow suit. Instead, the governor said it was time for students to return to the classrooms.

What gives? The answers are both practical and political.

Let's start with the practical. Whitmer shut down the state in 2020 before the vaccines. Back then, we stayed away from people. We stayed out of enclosed areas with lots of people. We wore mask indoors. That's how you didn't get COVID. Vaccinations changed that. Now, it's up to you. If you haven't been vaccinated by now, chances are you won't be. Nothing Whitmer says or does is changing that.

Forcing the unwilling to vaccinate or wear a mask or shut down only creates new martyrs like Karl Manke the barber or Marlena Pavlos-Hackney the Holland restaurant owner. Whitmer doesn't need that. As she heads into her 2022 reelection campaign, the less the public is reminded about COVID, the better.

There's a lot of memories from the shutdown phase of the pandemic. Few of them are positive. The pandemic from March 2020 to June 2021 sucked. Flat out.

Whitmer can argue that her restrictions saved lives. Maybe they did. But nobody wants to revisit this. Maybe in a few years, we'll reminisce about how tough we were to push through the isolation the way we did.

At this point, though, memories of the hardships are too raw. There are too many negatives dragging up the memories and not many positives. The only people bringing up this period of our history are Republican gubernatorial candidates.

Garrett Soldano has actually crafted a fairly decent campaign on the COVID shutdowns alone.

As far as Whitmer is concerned, why talk about the past when the future looks much better. Electric vehicles. More money for schools. Cutting taxes. Fixing the damn roads.

Anything. Literally, anything is better than dragging up the past. COVID triggers memories of the past. So. Whitmer isn't mentioning COVID ... probably not until after Nov. 8.

(Email Kyle Melinn of the Capitol News Service MIRS at melinnky@gmail.com.)

**CITY OF LANSING
SUMMARY OF
ADOPTED ORDINANCE # 1298**

Lansing City Council adopted an Ordinance of the City of Lansing, Michigan, to amend the Lansing Codified Ordinances (Code) by amending Chapter 1218 Sections 1218.01 through 1218.99 to conform to the requirements of MCL 324.9101, et seq, the "Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control" Act and applicable state regulations.

Effective date: Upon publication (if immediate effect was approved)

Notice: The full text of this Ordinance is available for review at the City Clerk's Office, 9th Floor, City Hall, Lansing, Michigan. A copy of the full text of this Ordinance may be obtained from the City Clerk's Office, 9th Floor, City Hall, Lansing, Michigan at a fee determined by City Council.

Chris Swope, Lansing City Clerk, MMC/MiPMC
www.lansingmi.gov/Clerk
www.facebook.com/LansingClerkSwope

CP#22-050

NOTICE

THE CITY OF LANSING BOARD OF REVIEW WILL HOLD AN ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING ON TUESDAY, MARCH 8TH AT 2:00 PM.

THE BOARD OF REVIEW OF THE CITY OF LANSING WILL MEET IN REGULAR SESSION TO HEAR APPEALS ON:
MONDAY, MARCH 14, 2022 AND TUESDAY, MARCH 15, 2022 – 9AM TO 12 PM & 1:30 PM TO 4:30 PM;
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16, 2022 – 1:30 PM - 4:00 PM AND 5:30 PM TO 8:30 PM;
THURSDAY, MARCH 17, 2022, AND FRIDAY MARCH 18TH FROM 9AM TO 12 PM & 1:30 PM TO 3:30 PM AT LANSING CITY HALL, 124 W MICHIGAN AVE, 3RD FLOOR.

IF YOU WISH TO APPEAL YOUR ASSESSMENT OR SIMPLY WANT MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CALL THE ASSESSING OFFICE AT 517 483-7624. APPOINTMENTS ARE NOT REQUIRED BUT STRONGLY RECOMMENDED TO AVOID WAIT TIMES. TAXPAYERS MAY SUBMIT AN APPEAL IN WRITING. ALL WRITTEN APPEALS MUST BE RECEIVED BY THURSDAY, MARCH 17TH, 2022. PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR FORMS AND INFORMATION AT WWW.LANSINGMI.GOV

2022 Ratios and Tentative Multipliers

Clinton County

Property Class	Tentative Ratio	Multiplier
Agricultural	46.37	1.0783
Commercial	47.47	1.0533
Industrial	47.39	1.0551
Residential	N/C	
Timber Cutover	N/C	
Developmental	N/C	

Eaton County

Property Class	Tentative Ratio	Multiplier
Agricultural	N/C	
Commercial	47.23	1.0586
Industrial	43.36	1.1531
Residential	45.54	1.0979
Timber Cutover	N/C	
Developmental	N/C	

Ingham County

Property Class	Tentative Ratio	Multiplier
Agricultural	N/C	
Commercial	46.43	1.0769
Industrial	47.25	1.0581
Residential	46.44	1.0767
Timber Cutover	N/C	
Developmental	N/C	

CP#22-056

ARTS & CULTURE

ART • BOOKS • FILM • MUSIC

Broad Museum exhibit puts public art at its heart

By CHLOE ALVERSON

Seemingly invisible works of public art become visible again in a new exhibit at the Broad Art Museum.

Public art in Greater Lansing is the focus of “Art Along the River, Grand,” which opened this month as a part of the museum’s 10-year anniversary series. The museum, designed by the late architect Zaha Hadid, is itself considered to be a work of avant-garde public art.

Steven Bridges, the museum’s senior curator, said he was interested in developing a conversation around the role of public art — an art form he finds is often forgotten about.

The exhibition features framed blueprints for “This Equals That,” by the internationally known sculptor Michael Heizer. The 1980 work was installed on the West Plaza of the State Capitol Complex under the leadership of Gov. William Millekin and drew visitors from around the world. But in 2002, Gov. John Engler ordered it removed for repair work in a garage below. Damaged in the process, it was consigned, unprotected, to a state field in Mason, then acquired by Detroit billionaire Alex Manoogian and stored in a warehouse, never to be seen again.

The blueprint frames are placed on top of a wallpaper collage of images of public creative expressions. The photographic images in the floor-to-ceiling wallpaper were captured by Bill Castanier, whose work is described as a “uniquely democratic approach” in documenting public art. It shows the ways that people have added color and texture to their environments. Visitors may recognize certain locations when looking at the wallpaper.

“Hopefully, it sparks a little bit of interest,” Bridges said about the wallpaper collage. “It’s not differentiating what is art and what is not art, or what is good or what is bad. Let’s just celebrate and take in all the incredible forms of ex-



Chloe Alverson/City Pulse

The wallpaper collage contains photographic images of public creative expressions around the Greater Lansing region. Some are easily recognizable.

pression that exist around us all the time.”

Castanier, a longtime contributor to City Pulse, is the president of the Historical Society of Greater Lansing. Public creative expressions fascinate him, and he’s been documenting public art in the area since the 1970s. He took the images over the last year.

“Lansing’s got amazing public art,” Castanier said. “I don’t think people recognize it.”

Simple store signs will catch Castanier’s eye, but more complex works will draw his attention as well. Signs like that of Old Town’s Unicorn Lounge can be found within the wallpaper.

“You can drive around town and see stuff that makes you smile, makes you frown and teaches you a lesson,” he said.

Castanier said much of the documentation is for himself and the Historical Society. Many pieces are undocumented, its creators unknown. His images may one day serve as artifacts of what public art used to look like, something that is ever-changing over time.

The exhibition encourages visitors to explore the available resources to exam-

ine local public art. One feature of the exhibit is a video showing the various works of public art on MSU’s campus, which has recently focused on installing work that promotes diversity and inclusion. Visitors can scan a QR code to view the locations in the video.

A goal of the exhibition is to highlight the historical lack of diversity and inclusion in the field of public art. Some pieces in the exhibition that showcase diversity are from the Lansing Art Gallery’s ArtPath, a two-and-a-half-mile exhibition along the Lansing River Trail.

Bridges said that the pieces look at public art “through the lens of diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility.” It’s important to display the work of marginalized artists — especially people of color and women — because they have been “historically excluded” from the public art scene, he said.

This idea was carried over into one of the museum’s lead exhibitions, “History Told Slant: Seventy-seven Years of Collecting Art at MSU,” which features the museum’s broad art collection, much of it stored out of sight. The exhibition addresses “historical blind spots or biases”

with the intent of encouraging a more diverse narrative.

Bridges described the public art exhibition as taking a more historical look at public art and acknowledging the ways that it has been an exclusionary process. While doing so, the exhibit also highlights more local and more recent initiatives that rectify some of those histories with a “decolonizing lens.”

“Public art is so wonderful and is such an important part of our landscape,” Bridges said. “It exists all around us. I think there’s also a way that it can become invisible.”

Bridges is hopeful that this exhibition will “shine a light” back on public art in the Greater Lansing area. Public art is a free experience, and it contributes to the culture of the city.

“There’s always something for everyone,” Bridges said. “And I think that’s one of the most wonderful things about public art, isn’t it?”

Though “Art Along the River, Grand” is on display only until Aug. 23, public art in the Greater Lansing region is on display all year.

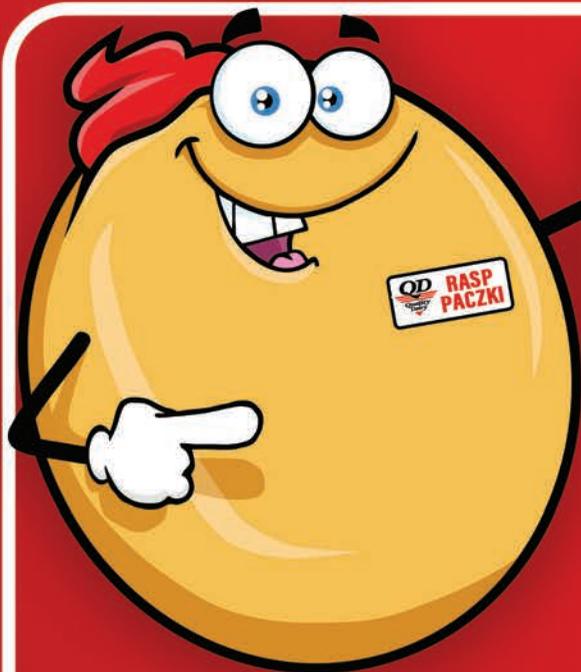
At Coontz Law, we believe the justice system can do better. We believe in holding the Government accountable. We believe in empathetic representation of the accused. We believe Black Lives Matter. We believe we can—and will—change the world, starting right here in our backyard.

We were voted Top of the Town for a reason. It's because we have a vision for a better and more just society. And it starts with the work we're doing right now.

BLACK
LIVES
MATTER



PAID FOR BY A BMF



**FAT TUESDAY
IS MARCH 1ST!**



GRAB SOME
PACZKI
BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!

PRE-ORDER
YOUR PACZKI AT
QDEXPRESS.COM
& GET FRESH NEXT DAY PICK-UP*
AT YOUR FAVORITE QD STORE!

*QDEXPRESS.COM ORDERS MUST BE PLACED BEFORE 12 NOON FOR NEXT DAY PICK-UP!

Favorite Things

Tiffany Hannay and her taxidermy opossum



Tiffany Hannay is a musician who performs as the rhythm guitarist and lead singer of the Lansing rock group Rodeo Boys. When she's not rocking the microphone or the six-string, she's working in lumber and volunteering at wildlife rescues. Her favorite thing is a taxidermy opossum that she has named "Dixie."

It was 2016, and I found this opossum on the side of the road — a car had recently struck it. My girlfriend at the time helped me load it into a bag. We took it to Nick Saade, who is a local taxidermy guy, and he mounted it for me. It's the only opossum he's ever done, he told me. It's not the grossest process ever, but it's kind of gross. I thought, "Maybe I can do it myself."

I quickly realized there was absolutely no way I was going to do that by myself. Their skin is tanned and cured and it is put over a sort of mannequin. There are only two different mannequin styles for opossums, but there are 400 different ones for deer or more popular animals. Most people don't get opossums mounted. I named mine Dixie.

It's not my first taxidermy; I've got a big mouth bass and a couple of deer heads. But it is the first I've had made for myself. I like animals a lot and I think taxidermy is cool. It's a little kitschy, and I'm into that sort

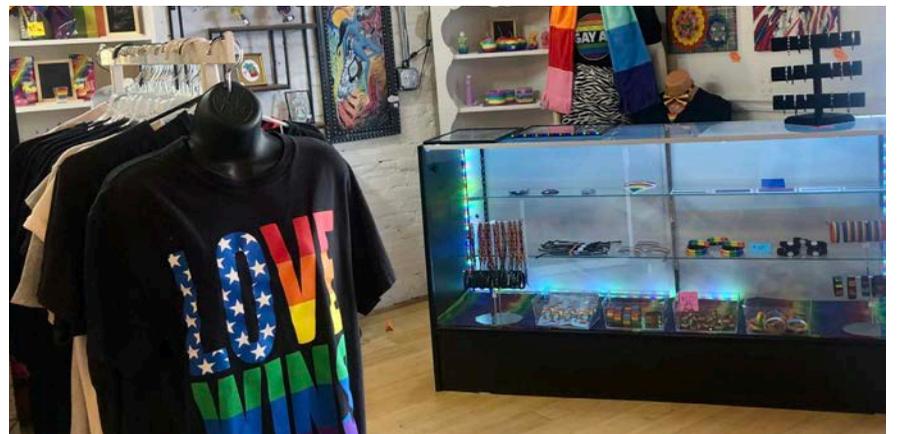
of thing. The big mouth bass is my dad's, I've inherited it and taken it to every house I've lived in throughout my 20's.

My love for opossums started when I was growing up in the country out in Leslie. I remember one time this hillbilly boy came over when I was 15 or 16; he killed one in front of me and I was really upset about it. I always thought they were cool and I learned more about them. They're actually really sweet. They are probably the most domesticated wild animals. I started volunteering at a wildlife center and really started to get to know them.

One of the opossums at the center I volunteer at is named Jasper and he got too friendly for them to release. The un-releasable opossums go onto the educational program. Before the COVID times, we would take him to schools and stuff, and he's got a leash so we can take him for walks. He's really friendly. Opossums do this thing called "slubbing," where they lick you and rub their heads on you. Some people think it's gross but I think it's sweet.

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

LGBTQ shop brings the rainbow to Old Town



Chloe Alverson/City Pulse

Rainbow Riot sells different types of LGBTQ-made pride art and attire, from shirts to candles.

By CHLOE ALVERSON

A new shop in Old Town sells gay pride treasures made by LGBTQ artists.

Rainbow Riot: Queer Art & Treasures opened last June inside of the Dark Art Market. Tiesha King opened Rainbow Riot with her friends and co-owners Ryan Cooke and Eden Behr. King owns the Dark Art Market and Thrift Witch, which is next door to the market.

Being on the queer spectrum, King knows the importance of LGBTQ representation. She said it's "always been a dream" of hers to open a gay pride store.

"We're hoping to spread pride and give people a place to go where they can feel welcome," King said.

Behr, who works at the Dark Art Market, has been able to contribute artwork to sell in the Rainbow Riot shop. Her art ranges from paintings to sewings. Behr has worked at the shop since Rainbow Riot opened last June.

"It's important, because it's a place where queer people can be visible," she said. "It's nice to have that little pocket where we'll have people coming in and shopping. You see a person go into that corner and they light up, like, 'Yeah, this is for me.'"

King still considers the shop to be "a beginner project still in the works." Eventually, she would like to include the work of more local LGBTQ artists to sell in Rainbow Riot. Behr shared a similar sentiment, and said that she would like to see queer artists throughout the state be a part of Rainbow Riot.

The walls of the shop are decked out in artwork made by queer artists. A display case holds pride stickers and jewelry. Shelves are stocked with rainbow candles of various shapes, including a

purple penis candle. There's also a rack full of pride T-shirts.

Aside from hopefully connecting with LGBTQ artists, King added that Rainbow Riot may be a good place for people to go if they're new to being LGBTQ and need camaraderie.

"Being able to buy something that represents you close to home is huge," King said.



Rainbow Riot: Queer Art & Treasures

Inside the Dark Art Market
110 E. Cesar Chavez Ave.,
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Saturday
12 p.m. - 5 p.m. Sunday
Facebook.com/Rainbow-
RiotLansing

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Stefon Harris brings the sweet science of empathy to MSU

By **LAWRENCE COSENTINO**

From the stomping swing of Lionel Hampton to the crystal silence of Gary Burton, vibraphone players have energized and enriched jazz for 100 years. But there's a good reason no vibes players have taken part in the stellar Michigan State University jazz studies residency series, now in its ninth year. Vibraphones are unwieldy contraptions, notoriously difficult to master and jazz-based mallet percussion students are rare everywhere, including MSU.

Stefon Harris, this week's artist in residence, changes that game. Total mastery of the vibes and marimba is only a point of departure for Harris, a thinker, researcher, motivator and composer whose ideas reverberate far beyond his chosen hardware.

"All these instruments are just tools," Harris said. "It's really about what you're building. What I'm trying to

MSU Jazz Orchestras

\$7-17
Stefon Harris,
guest artist in residence
6:30 and 8 p.m. Friday, Feb. 25
Murray Hall
333 W. Circle Dr., East Lansing

build in our world is a deeper understanding and appreciation of the value of empathy."

Harris and MSU jazz students will get together for master classes, rehearsals and a tour of high schools around the state this week, capped by a concert Friday at MSU's Murray Hall.

The title of one of Harris' early albums, "Black Action Figure," fits him to a T. He's a blur on the bandstand and a dynamo of a speaker. In 2017, he became director of jazz arts at the Manhattan School of Music. This week's visit to MSU is part of a lifelong mission to spread the good word about the rewards and joys of creativity in general, and collective improvisation in particular.

"I'll tell you, the most beautiful experience on the bandstand is when you play an idea, and then you stop and you just listen, and you watch that idea transform in the hands of everyone else on the bandstand," he said. "And by the time that idea comes back to you, it is so much bigger than anything you could have ever imagined."

He believes that everyone holds the key to that door, not just gifted or trained artists.

"We think that an artist is such a unique and special human being, and

we're supposed to sit and watch that artist be special," Harris said. "We're always going to have brilliant artists, but it's just as important that the average person continue to make things and appreciate the joy of creativity, because it affects how they treat other people."

By his mid-30s, Harris, 48, was at the top of his art, touring the world with a variety of bands and winning numerous prizes and polls, but it all began to feel hollow. He felt like a hot-shot surfer who craved a deeper understanding of the fathoms of ocean beneath him.

He spent over a decade analyzing thousands of chords and their psychological impact, filling dozens of notebooks with his observations.

"I approach aspects of music very much the same way a scientist would," he said. "I'm constantly looking to discover the mechanics of how music works. It's not something you can just read in a book."

He co-developed a chord generating software app called Harmony Cloud, a tool for ear training for practicing musicians.

"I use all of my studies, my understanding, to look for the logic, look for the algorithm in what I'm feeling, so then it can be codified and shared with others," he said.

In his own music, Harris is a space-walking "harmonaut," probing the mood and nuance of every chord he plays with maximum sensitivity.



Courtesy photo

This week's visiting artist at MSU jazz studies, Stefon Harris, is a musician, composer, educator, motivational speaker, software developer and, for all we know, performs heart surgery on the side.

On Harris' latest CD, "Sonic Creed," he and his band, Blackout, pay tribute to one of the great vibraphone players in jazz, Bobby Hutcherson, with a lingering, crystalline re-imagining of Hutcherson's Erik Satie-like "Now."

On the same CD, Harris and Blackout refit a soulful jazz standard by

Bobby Timmons, "Dat Dere," with agitated strata of rhythm and crackling digital-age energy.

Harris calls it a "dance with legacy." "Think about what jazz musicians do night after night," he said. "Duke Ellington and Charlie Parker did a good job of telling their stories. They don't need us to retell their stories. We can celebrate their contributions to world culture by expressing ourselves, expressing the broader community, expressing the times."

After a tough two years, Harris is more determined than ever to keep his many artistic, educational and entrepreneurial balls in the air, buoyed by the joy of getting back together with live audiences.

"I've managed to hold to most of my optimism," he said. "For me, the last two years have been more of a values check with regard to what's most important in my life — why I choose to perform, to reflect and understand what music brings to my life. When I got back to playing, I didn't realize I needed it so much."

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ANNUAL SEASON

Last call for City Hall: Will Schor finish what Bernero started?

Schor to developers:
'Put up or shut up'
on City Hall reconstruction

It's history on repeat.

When former Mayor Ralph Crego took office in 1943, he already knew that Lansing City Hall needed to be replaced. A report from the planning firm of Harland Bartholemew & Associates had recommended reconstruction of the building as early as 1938 — noting then, the interior was “slovenly” and “dingy.”

The old City Hall, designed by Lansing architect Edwyn Bowd, had become a relic with its Richardsonian Romanesque style. Its heavy rock-faced stone and round masonry arches made it look more like a castle or church than a city office building. Crego wanted to bring Lansing into the future.

But World War II threw a wrench in those plans. Crego shelved the concept and focused elsewhere. It wasn't until 15 years later that the new City Hall opened.

When Mayor Andy Schor took office in 2018, he already knew that City Hall needed to be rebuilt. Annual maintenance costs on the 10-story office building had climbed to about \$600,000. City-issued reports had found the towering downtown facility was close to “nearing the end of its useful life.”

The current City Hall, designed by Lansing architects Lee and Kenneth Black, is a 1950s' period piece with its granite and limestone curtain-wall construction. Moreover, the walls and windows are drafty. Utility systems are dated. The plaza and parking structure beneath it are quickly crumbling away. Calcified stalactites of minerals ooze from the basement walls.

But the pandemic threw a wrench in those plans. Schor shelved the concept and focused elsewhere.

It's history on repeat.

Crego's second term brought on a decade-long period of urban renewal to the Capital City in the aftermath of WWII — including the construction of a civic center; central and neighborhood fire stations; a police station; an airport terminal building; a public library; a headquarters for the Lansing Board of Water & Light; and, of course, the centerpiece of his modernist revival: a new City Hall across from the Capitol.

Construction began on the current City Hall building in 1956. It took two years to finish. And the result was an ultra-modern-looking steel, concrete and glass building — a real skyscraper



Kyle Kaminski/City Pulse

Construction began on the current Lansing City Hall building on the corner of Michigan and Capitol avenues in 1956. Annual maintenance costs on the 10-story office building have swelled to about \$600,000.

for its time — that local historians still recognize for its striking (though dated) International architectural style.

Old newspaper captions even went as far as to compare the plans for City Hall to the United Nations building in New York because of its semi-transparent green glass and stone-clad walls, according to a chapter on City Hall in historian and Michigan State University Professor Susan Bandes' book “Mid-Michigan Modern.”

About 70 later, Schor is now riding a second-term modernization movement of his own. Development is booming. Just last month, he announced plans to build a mid-sized concert venue and arts hub on Washington Avenue — a modern-day civic center. And just like Crego, he's now ready to move on to a new City Hall.

It's history on repeat.

A request for proposals reissued by the city last month seeks to contract with a developer to find a new space for City Hall — either by renovating the existing building or repurposing the facil-

ity and moving the city's offices, the Police Department and the 54-A District Court elsewhere in downtown Lansing.

The Lansing Building Authority hopes to finish collecting at least a few development proposals by late next month and solidify a “short list” of developers for Schor's review by April. Schor hopes to vet the plans and pick his favorite by late May and send over a detailed project proposal to the City Council.

If all goes according to early plans, shovels could hit the dirt on a theoretical City Hall reconstruction project within the next 18 months, Schor estimated. It's an admittedly ambitious plan that has had plenty of starts and stops in its various iterations over the last decade. And it still carries a lot of uncertainty, Schor said.

But he still thinks “Lansing's time is now” — a catchphrase that Crego would've probably adored.

“This is time to put up or shut up,” Schor told City Pulse. “There's a lot of people out there who told me they

didn't bid on this project six years ago and now they have new ideas. I'm not just going to pick one and give it to one developer. This is my chance to say: ‘All right. People say they can make this work now. Let's see how we can make it happen.’ The new request for proposals is basically saying: ‘OK, show us.’”

He added: “This was a crisis when Dave Hollister was mayor, when Tony Benavides was mayor and when Virg Bernero was mayor. It's just not a very good building. I mean, I'm here now, and I haven't fallen through the floor; we're able to do business here. But it's not a great building. It's just not as functional or forward-facing as I'd like to see for the city government. It's time to try this all again.”

A new request for proposals seeks out a nebulous sort of project that involves renovating, relocating or reconstructing City Hall — including devising a new plan for the district courtrooms, the Police Department and its attached lock-up, either all in one facility or cleaved



Courtesy

City Hall

from page 17

apart into separate locations.

And, so far, just about everything is on the table for consideration, Schor said.

Developers could propose renovating the existing building, on the corner of Michigan and Capitol avenues, into a modernized City Hall. They could also tear it all down and start fresh — either in the same place or in a different location. Schor is also willing to consider ideas that would repurpose other buildings downtown for a new City Hall while the existing building is redeveloped into something else.

Whatever the plan, it should “maximize the redevelopment opportunity” at the existing City Hall, ideally by moving city offices elsewhere and putting the building back on the tax rolls for private development, Schor said. Perhaps the loftiest aspiration built into the plan? Schor said he wants it all to “pay for itself.”

“Ideally, we’ll come up with something that is totally paid for — or something that’s a reasonable number for the city,” Schor explained. “If not, then I guess we’ll have to look at staying inside this building. It would be better to have a plan to rehabilitate this building and then be able to move City Hall somewhere else with a smaller footprint and more of a customer-service, forward-facing approach to city business.”

Schor said that he hopes to field a development deal next month that could involve renovating City Hall into another use like a hotel. In theory, tax-increment financing deals could then be used to shuttle tax revenue collected on that project toward renovations at another site picked to become the new City Hall.

The new City Hall complex could involve fresh construction or (as Schor prefers) renovations at other existing downtown buildings. The new site could also include a Police Department and 54-A District Court or developers could find new places to put them — including on other city-owned properties.

“We could theoretically have a three- or four-floor office building with a customer service center and on-site parking, a clerk’s office and a mayor’s office — the things that need to be in City Hall,” Schor said. “Some of the other departments could then be housed elsewhere. Those could move to another city-owned property and that would give us a smaller footprint needed for wherever City Hall goes.”

The city’s latest request also specifically “encourages” developers to consider projects that involve leasing or purchasing the city office spaces inside several city-owned parking ramps, including two ramps on Capitol Avenue and one on North Grand Avenue, as well as two other parking lots in downtown Lansing.

The entirety of the city office complex at 2500 S. Washington Ave. is also up for grabs if developers can make it work. The request specifically deems that location as “under-programmed” following plans to relocate the Public Media Center to the yet-to-be-built performing arts center on Washington Avenue.

The latest search plans also ask developers to consider concepts that would

simultaneously reduce occupancy, energy and maintenance costs for the city while also finding better ways to utilize office space — including the possibility of a much smaller footprint and a much more convenient style of services for local residents.

Schor added: “Not everyone needs an office with a door. There are other ways to reduce space. We have a huge amount of storage space for file cabinets and things like that. That’s digital. We don’t need all that.”

Developers have until March 22 to submit their final proposals to the Lansing Building Authority. Concepts will be reviewed primarily based on their “creative vision” for downtown redevelopment — with a little extra help from some contracted expertise.

Schor hired the East Lansing-based development firm River Caddis as the city’s first-ever “master developer” last year to help ensure the project, among several others, goes smoothly. River Caddis’ top executive, John McGraw, said his job is to “identify risks, cost savings and opportunities” to help identify the “best” options.

“We’re looking at numerous projects across the city, not just City Hall, but City Hall is a really important one,” McGraw said, noting that his firm plans to ensure that whatever proposal put in motion this year is one that efficiently fits the physical needs of the city without necessarily breaking the city’s bank to get it done.

The city’s contract with River Caddis spells out a total compensation package of up to \$150,000 for six months of work and \$100,000 for outside studies. City officials didn’t respond to questions about how much the firm has already been paid. The firm’s role as master developer precludes it from also submitting its own City Hall development proposal.

So far, no proposals have yet been submitted to the city, though representatives from several major players on the local construction market expressed at least some interest to City Pulse in the last week, including Ferguson Development, Gillespie Group, Boji Group, Urban Systems, Clark Construction and the Eyde Co.

Schor also said that he “wouldn’t be too surprised” if Chicago developer J. Paul Beitler resubmits his proposal to transform the City Hall building into a high-end hotel and restaurant — a long-running redevelopment plan that Bernero attempted to pass to Schor before leaving the mayor’s office in 2017. Schor supported it as a candidate for mayor the first time around. He was re-elected last year.

Beitler’s concept, which Schor shelved shortly after he was elected, included signing a 99-year lease on the City Hall building with plans to turn it into a ritzy hotel geared for convention crowds and renovate the former Lansing State Jour-



Schor



Theresa Rosado/City Pulse



Theresa Rosado/City Pulse



Theresa Rosado/City Pulse

(Top) The former Lansing City Hall, designed by Lansing architect Edwyn Bowd, looked more like a castle or church than a city office building with its heavy rock-faced stone and iconic, round masonry arches.

(Center left) City Hall is run largely by original 1950s’ equipment like this duct-taped water pump. (Center right) A water tank burst flooded out the top three floors of City Hall last September. (Bottom) An escalator decommissioned in 2002 sits idle in the lobby, partitioned off from the public.

2022 MARCH BOARD OF REVIEW MEETING SCHEDULE Charter Township of Lansing, Ingham County

The Lansing Charter Township Board of Review for March 2022 will be held in-person at the Lansing Charter Township Hall, 3209 W Michigan Avenue Lansing, MI 48917. Taxpayers are able to protest by letter or email, sent to: Board of Review, 3209 W Michigan Avenue, Lansing, MI 48917 Or to DeeAnnO@lansingtownship.org, provided protest is received prior to 5:00 PM, March 16, 2022.

The Lansing Charter Township March Board of Review will meet on the following dates:

- Tuesday, March 8, 2022, 11:00 a.m. - **Organizational Meeting**
- Monday, March 14, 2022, 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. - **Appeal Hearing**
- Monday, March 14, 2022, 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. - **Appeal Hearing**
- Wednesday, March 16, 2022, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. - **Appeal Hearing**
- Friday, March 18, 2022, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. - **Appeal Hearing**

The tentative ratios and the estimated multipliers for each class of real property and personal property for 2022 are as follows:

*Commercial.....	49.95%.....	1.00000
*Industrial.....	40.86%.....	1.22369
*Residential.....	46.92%.....	1.06565
*Personal Property...	50.00%.....	1.00000

Americans With Disabilities (ADA) Notice

The Township will provide necessary reasonable services to individuals with disabilities at the Board of Review meetings upon 2 day notice. Contact: Margaret Sanders, Clerk, 3209 W Michigan Avenue, Lansing, MI 48917 517-485-4063

DeeAnn Overton, Secretary of Board of Review

CP#22-028

City Hall

from page 18

nal building, on the southwest corner of Lenawee Street and Grand, into the new site of a smaller City Hall. It's still listed under the "coming soon" tab on the Beitler Real Estate Services website.

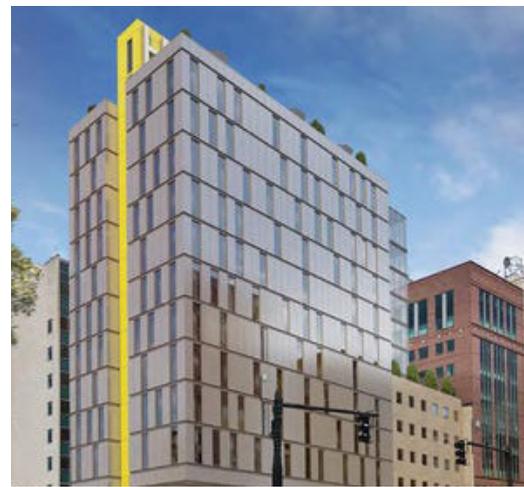
Schor said that plan collapsed because the proposed Lenawee Street redevelopment didn't include enough space for the courts and the police lockup, which are housed in City Hall. The Gillespie Group's BLOCK600 combined hotel and apartment project on Michigan Avenue may have tightened the local hospitality market, but Schor thinks there's still plenty of room for another iteration of a hotel-based project to gain some steam.

"I liked Beitler's plan very much. I liked the hotel and the restaurant that he had proposed. I liked it very much — including the way he wanted to reuse the existing building. I guess we'll see if it comes back again and if it matches with a new City Hall that can work this time around," Schor added. "I've heard a lot of claims out there, but until someone files a proposal, I just don't know what's real and what's not."

Beitler didn't return calls this week. The Eyde Co., which owns the vacant LSJ building, is willing to consider ideas that would incorporate the site into a City Hall plan, said its chief financial officer, Mark Clouse.

Developers Jeff Deehan and Brent Forsberg partnered as Urban Systems to submit another City Hall proposal in 2017. They told City Pulse that they were "considering" yet another "potential" proposal last week. Their original idea included renovating City Hall into a 205-room hotel and moving the city offices to the former Lake Trust Credit Union headquarters at 501 S. Capitol Avenue.

That plan is no longer feasible because the old Lake Trust Credit Union building is being developed into apartments, a gym and a yoga studio. But that doesn't mean there aren't other options at other buildings in the down-



Courtesy

Four redevelopment plans were reviewed by former Mayor Virg Bernero's administration in 2017 from developers J. Paul Beitler; Jeff Deehan and Brent Forsberg; Ron Boji; and Richard Karp. All of them included plans for a hotel. Some are no longer feasible. Most wanted to see City Hall rebuilt into a 12-story building. Bernero ultimately picked Beitler's plan (top left) but newly elected Mayor Andy Schor tapped the brakes on those plans when he took office in 2018.

town area that could still be considered, Deehan and Forsberg suggested. The two have partnered to develop the newly proposed performing arts center.

Boji Group had also submitted a plan to raze City Hall altogether and rebuild it as a taller, 12-story building — including a hotel, apartments and an assortment of first-floor retail space. President and CEO Ron Boji, through spokesman John Truscott, said that he's "interested" and "excited about pursuing" a "potential" proposal for a new City Hall, but otherwise declined to elaborate.

Boji didn't mention any possibility of including the former Masonic Temple building on Capitol Avenue in any

would-be City Hall plans. The Boji Group bought that historic building from WMU-Coolley Law School this summer but hasn't yet announced any redevelopment plans for it.

The fourth proposal that was considered by the Bernero administration came from Karp and Associates. It also included plans for a new, taller City Hall — again 12 stories that also included a "world-class" hotel, high-end apartments, offices and event space. CEO Richard Karp didn't return calls this week.

Beitler's initial proposal to renovate City Hall was the only one of the four submitted at the time that would have preserved much of the original building without blocking the view of what preservationists have long considered to be one of the most important examples of mid-20th-century architecture in the Lansing region.

While there are several other similar steel-frame-and-glaze office buildings in the area, they "lack the finesse of City Hall," Bades wrote in her book. Old news reports had cast the building as "the first of its type in the Midwest." Bades wrote that the choice of the site, across the street from the Capitol, was also deliberate and critical to Mayor Crego's intended message to the rest of the state: Lansing was ready for the future.

Schor said he'd prefer to see a development proposal that retains some of the historic City Hall, including the iconic sculptural representation of the city seal that's carved into the western wall of the building. But he's not necessarily committed to historic preservation in order to get the job done — and get it done for a good price too.

"I want to see what comes in. I like this building. I like the history of the

building. But I'm not going to prejudge anything right now because I want to see what sort of proposals come in," Schor explained.

Developer Joel Ferguson told City Pulse that he hasn't decided whether to submit a proposal but was still considering it this week. Pat Gillespie said last week he was "50/50" on whether he wanted to add another project to his already busy development docket.

Allen Blower, a senior vice president at Clark Construction, also said that he was "working with some people and taking a look" at a potential proposal. He expects at least three proposals to be submitted.

"They're out there, but it's kind of confidential right now. That's how developers work," Blower added.

Several developer sources also spoke this week (on deep background) to outline an overarching sense of "deal fatigue" attached to the City Hall project. Several would-be developers cited ongoing frustrations with the sluggish pace and stalled momentum tied to the city's protracted selection process. Some suggested it may lead to less inspiring concepts with a smaller economic impact than previous proposals.

Schor, however, is undeterred and back up to bat. In an interview with City Pulse last week, he optimistically recycled just about every cliché in his mayoral speech book to help carry the project over the final finish line.

It's the "end of the road" and the "final chapter." It's "where the rubber meets the road," Schor explained.

It's history on repeat. Visit lansingcitypulse.com for continued coverage on plans to reconstruct City Hall.

CITY OF LANSING NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Lansing City Council will hold a public hearing on Monday, February 28, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. in the Tony Benavides City of Lansing Council Chambers, Tenth Floor, Lansing City Hall, 124 West Michigan Ave. Lansing, MI 48933, for the purpose stated below:

To afford an opportunity for all residents, taxpayers of the City of Lansing, other interested persons and ad valorem taxing units to appear and be heard on the approval of Brownfield Plan #80 – Pleasant Grove & Holmes Mixed-Use Development Project pursuant to and in accordance with the provisions of the Brownfield Redevelopment Financing Act, Public Act 381 of 1996, as amended, for property commonly referred to as 2130 W. Holmes Road located in the City of Lansing, but more particularly described as:

COMMENCING AT THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF SECTION 29, THENCE EAST 283 FEET, NORTH 214.5 FEET, EAST 267 FEET, NORTH 247.5 FEET, WEST 550 FEET TO THE WEST SECTION LINE, SOUTH 462 FEET TO BEGINNING, SECTION 26, TOWN 4 NORTH, RANGE 2 WEST
Tax Parcel No. 33-01-01-29-305-122

Approval of this Brownfield Plan will enable the Lansing Brownfield Redevelopment Authority to capture incremental tax increases which result from the redevelopment of the property to pay for costs associated therewith. Further information regarding this issue, including maps, plats, and a description of the brownfield plan will be available for public inspection and may be obtained from Kris Klein – Director of Economic Development, Lansing Economic Area Partnership, 1000 South Washington, Suite 201, Lansing, MI 48910, (517) 702-3387.

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

Chris Swope, Lansing City Clerk
www.lansingmi.gov/Clerk
www.facebook.com/LansingClerkSwope

CP#22-039

Here's your chance to get high with City Pulse

City Pulse joins Sensi for cannabis party

By KYLE KAMINSKI

Are you tired of simply reading about me smoking really great marijuana every week? Well, thanks to my new friends over at Sensi Magazine, I now have the ability to show you instead.

Nearly 100 cannabis brands (and up to 2,000 guests) are set to converge next week at a south Lansing hotel for Sensi Magazine's and Float Presents' first onsite marijuana consumption event in Michigan. And it's expected to be the biggest stoner party to come to the Capital City since Snoop Dogg performed at Common Ground in 2015 — except this time, it's totally legal.

The Mardi Gras celebration — billed by its organizers as both a party and an exposition — will run from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. on Fat Tuesday (March 1) at the Causeway Bay Hotel, 6820 S. Cedar St. Exclusive Brands, RAIR, the Botanical Co. and the Hempire Collective will be selling a wide assortment of cannabis products. Dozens of other brands will be passing out free samples.

And here's the best part: You can stroll out to the courtyard to smoke as much pot as you'd like. The event is fully licensed by both the city and state for recreational cannabis sales and on-site consumption — making it only the second event in Lansing history to have that designation. The first was the 420 Cannabis Music Festival last summer at the Adado Riverfront Park.

City Pulse was so stoked that we reserved a table. I'll be there all night with a few other staffers. So stop in, find some great weed, chat with some leading industry professionals from across Michigan and then find me in the courtyard; I'll be out there double-fisting some prerolls.

Tickets can be purchased at the entrance or in advance at sensimag.com/mardigras2022. General admission is \$25. I can't promise there will be any VIP tickets left by the time you read



An issue of the Michigan-based, cannabis-focused Sensi Magazine.

this, but those are \$50 and come with a dank goody bag and access to some extra munchies.

The event is only for ages 21 and up. And no, you can't bring in your own weed into the party.

Sensi Magazine is a cannabis-focused lifestyle publication that made its 2016 debut in Colorado and has expanded to include a print and digital presence in California, Massachusetts, Oklahoma, Florida and, of course, Michigan. You can find its quarterly print copies at several Greater Lansing pot shops like Skymint, Pure Options, JARS, Gage and the Botanical Co.

In addition to hosting invita-

tion-only events for industry professionals, Sensi Magazine also partners with Float Presents to host community-wide events — like next week's Mardi Gras party — to educate people about the cannabis industry and introduce them to new brands.

"We're very community-focused, and the whole point of this is to consistently bring people together to help build relationships and help build this industry," said Jamie Cooper, publisher and market director of Sensi Magazine. "These consumer-facing events are to help give our industry, as a whole, some more exposure and also to help educate those who want

The more you know...

Just like for last year's 420 Cannabis Music Festival, Lansing Mayor Andy Schor had to personally sign off on this Mardi Gras event before it could be considered legal in the city. The City Council has no say on whether those mayoral permits are issued — and that's by mistake.

As the Council prepped its ordinance on recreational marijuana in 2019, it also set a clear directive to prohibit events where marijuana can be freely smoked without consequence.

Then-President Carol Wood went out of her way to remove a clause that had allowed the mayor to issue one-day licenses for onsite consumption. The ordinance — with no mention of event permits — passed through the Council by a 6-2 vote. But rather than prohibit events outright, the absence of the permit language actually resulted in the mayor having total authority over them.

Schor has now twice decided to ignore the actual intent of the former City Council by allowing the permits to be issued in Lansing and letting the good times roll. And I'm totally here for it.

to learn more about these cannabis brands and the industry."

Food trucks will be stationed on site throughout the event. Live entertainment — and snazzy mood lighting — should also help make the expo feel a bit more like a nightclub, Cooper said.

"This industry is very competitive, and our event is designed to create a space for everyone to celebrate what we have going on in Michigan," she said. "We're all going to be getting along."

Kyle Kaminski is City Pulse's managing editor and a cannabis enthusiast who has been smoking marijuana just about every day for the last decade. Editor & Publisher Magazine has also labeled him as "arguably, the state's authority on everything you need to know about cannabis." Have a suggestion for a cannabis product? Email kyle@lansingcitypulse.com.

MSU's 'Head Over Heels' is not love at first sight

By MARY C. CUSACK

The Broadway jukebox musical machine finally spawned a work seemingly perfect for the age demographic of this reviewer, who chose MSU's production of "Head Over Heels" instead of LCC's "Cabaret." Of the two musicals about changing social mores, this was the wrong choice.

"Head Over Heels" is based on a 16th century romantic farce and utilizes the songs of the seminal female rock band the Go-Go's. Similar to Shakespearean come-

dies, the plot involves a royal family, a low-station suitor, gender-swapping disguises, loves lost and found, and a deus ex machina that allows the play to end as it began, with the infectious "We Got the Beat."

The script, conceived by Jeff Whitty and adapted by James Magruder, alters the plot of Sir Philip Sidney's "The Arcadia" to incorporate themes of gender identity and sexuality. This was an admirable goal, but the execution is painfully ham-handed. A farce doesn't need to be realistic, but this one wants to deliver a deeper message. Unfortunately, some key moments of character growth are clumsily dropped on the audience like the last mail order package of the day hitting the stoop.



Despite the shortcomings of the script, MSU's Department of Theatre salvages the show from mediocrity through strong production values and

a solid cast. Zech Saenz's costumes are a rich amalgamation of classical finery and punk chic, accented further by Allison Carter's fabulous hair and makeup design.

Although the opening number felt stiff at the Saturday night performance, after the cast warmed up, the quality of director Brad Willcuts' choreography dazzled. Particularly mesmerizing is Mel Dyk's serpentine movement as the oracle Pythio.

Meleah Acuff steals the show as Mopsa, handmaid to princess Pamela (Sophie Psiakis). Acuff has the strongest voice in solo numbers, and when singing duets or ensemble numbers, her vocal skill helps elevate the voices of those around her.

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Washington's memoir praises her father — and MSU football

By **BILL CASTANIER**

Maya Washington's new book, "Through the Banks of the Red Cedar: My Father and the Team that Changed the Game," is a long overdue thank you to Charles "Bubba" Smith. He was the larger-than-life defensive end on Michigan State's 1965 and 1966 National Championship Football teams. Washington's new book is a personal memoir, but also a paean to her father, Gene Washington, and the other black members of those championship football teams.

Washington begins the book as she and her father attend memorial services for Smith in Los Angeles in 2011. Her father was close friends with Smith since their days as football players at MSU. Before that, they had been acquaintances since the two played on crosstown rival teams in the Beaumont, Texas, area.

As Smith was being recruited by MSU, he and his father, Willie Ray Smith Sr., put in a good word for Washington with football head coach Duffy Daugherty. When they arrived on campus, they didn't know that they would be part of something that was historical, significant and helped integrate football at the college level.

"I owe so much to Bubba, and I never got to thank him in person. It weighs on my heart that I never got to thank him in person," Maya Washington said. "I was so excited to learn the specifics of the Duffy Daugherty pipeline from the South."

At the time, Washington didn't know she would spend the next decade working on a documentary and a book on how Daugherty's teams of the 1960s integrated college football. Other teams of the era languished when it came to recruiting and playing

Black players.

Across the country — mostly in northern states — college teams had Black players on their rosters. Nowhere were the numbers as impressive at those at MSU, and nowhere else were they as talented. In the 1966 Game of the Century against Notre Dame, MSU boasted six Black starters. Four MSU players from that game were drafted in the first round of the 1967 NFL draft. Washington's father was selected eighth overall by the Minnesota Vikings that year.

Washington knew little about her father's sports career, since she was born after his playing days with the Vikings had ended. Gene Washington was working at 3M in Minneapolis when his daughter was growing up. Washington grew up to work as a narrative and documentary filmmaker, with the goal of telling stories about social impact that involves diversity and inclusion out of her home base in Minneapolis.

By 2012, while working on the documentary about her father and the groundbreaking MSU football team, Washington was researching individual players from the 1965 and 1966 teams. Concurrently, she enmeshed herself in fundraising, seeking out grants and using the crowdsourcing method.

"I saw this as an underdog project, and people came out of the woodwork to help me," Washington said. "It was a blessing and challenge to meet Spartans all over the country."

The documentary premiered at the 2018 Detroit Free Press Film Festival and had the same title as her book. It was picked up for showing through the nationwide network of PBS channels. While she was working on the docu-

mentary, Washington began working on a book that would help tell the rest of the story — and more about her relationship with her father.

"It's got what wouldn't fit in 60 minutes," she said.

Washington delved deeply into what it was like for Black players to be on campus during that era. It doesn't duck away from tougher topics like interracial dating. She interviewed Smith's college girlfriend, whom he met on campus, and described some situations they found themselves in relating to race. In one instance, the woman recalled a story of how uncomfortable and protective Smith was, and how he once walked five steps behind her so people wouldn't think they were together, because she was white.

In addition to telling a compelling story, Washington's memoir is also inward looking.

"It's about me trying to find my way as one of the first wave of Blacks to grow up in an integrated society and how race played out in my life," she said.

Washington knew nothing about her father's storied football career growing up and even less about the game



Courtesy

Maya Washington's memoir looks at how her father and MSU football teams shaped the integration of college football.

of football. She knew him as a career businessman who was driven and wanted his three daughters to get an education to live their own dreams. As Washington researched the storyline for her documentary, she grew closer to her father as he related his stories about his time playing MSU football and his connections with former teammates.

"In the past few years, my dad and I have spent more time together than we have since my early childhood. Instead of car rides to the hardware store or Bridgeman's Ice Cream Shoppe, we're catching flights to share the film with the next generation of athletes," she wrote in her book.

MSU Athletic Director Allan Haber recently announced that plans are underway to erect a statue in the honor of the 1966 team, which would show Daugherty standing with his five All-American players from that team: Clinton Jones, Bob Apisa, Bubba Smith, George Webster and Gene Washington. Watch for details of a book signing by Washington planned for the Lansing area in late March.

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Keep your eyes and ears open for LCC's 'Cabaret'

By DAVID WINKELSTERN

With eyes closed, you might think you're listening to a professional soundtrack recording of "Cabaret." The band and singing are that good.

Review

But you'll want to keep eyes open wide to see the dazzling aspects of Lansing Community College Performing Arts' production of the bawdy — and troubling — musical.

Jeff English directs an eight-piece band that has the force of a full orchestra. Potent voices by the entire cast penetrate even the farthest seats in the Dart Auditorium during the two-and-a-half-hour-with-intermission show.

"Cabaret"

Feb. 25-26, 8 p.m.
\$5-\$15
LCC Dart Auditorium
Masks are required for all attendees
150 pre-sale tickets will be sold online
100 tickets will be sold at the door (cash only)
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For the eyes, dramatic and fluid choreography by Lauren Mudry adds spectacle. A universal, two-level, multi-layered set designed by Michael Beyer transforms into the infamous Kit Kat Klub, boarding house and more. Costumes by Chelle Peterson are colorful, gaudy and fit a 1929 Berlin.

Conner Kelly's Emcee can be appreci-

ated for his over-the-top narrations — and his outrageous appearance. Kelly's outfits and make-up — and facial expressions and elastic movements — are decadently delightful.

Meghan Malusek has the vocal pipes, flair and star quality to fill the Sally Bowles role Lisa Minnelli occupied in the 1972 "Cabaret" movie. As Sally, Malusek sets a high bar for others to follow.

Other standouts include the scene-stealing performances of Judith Evans as Fraulein Schnieder and Doak Bloss as Herr Schultz.

For Fraulein Kost's vocal solo, Sally Hecksel shines. Her Kost reveals the sadder and darker side of prostitution — and of Germany's growing anti-Semitism.

Director Mark Colson spotlights the dark elements of the rise and evil of Nazism in his "Cabaret." Of the three Broadway adaptations, Colson chose Broadway's bleaker, 1998 version.

In his "Director's Notes," Colson mentions our current divisions and extremism — and suggests valid current parallels with Germany's rise to fascism. The musical, Colson suggest, is a warning of where our own country is heading — if we don't keep our eyes and ears open.



Kevin Fowler

In "Cabaret," Conner Kelly's Emcee (center, heels) is "decadently delightful."

Starlight Dinner Theatre spotlights singing by 'Guys' and 'Dolls'

By DAVID WINKELSTERN

A "Guys and Dolls" with no sets, few props and without theatrical lighting seems weak. But Starlight Dinner Theatre's stripped-down "Guys and Dolls" still has powerhouse vocals and a solid band.

The original musical premiered on Broadway in 1950. A Marlon Brando and Frank Sinatra movie followed in 1955. Both were big hits. Numerous revivals — including three on Broadway — proved the Frank Loesser, Joe Swerling and Abe Burrows musical has lasting appeal.

Review

"Guys and Dolls"

Feb. 25-27
First Christian Church
1001 Chester Road, Lansing
Friday-Saturday, Meal
6:30 p.m.
Show, 7:30 p.m.
Sunday, Meal 1:30 p.m.,
Show, 2 p.m.
Ticket prices and more info at
starlightdinnertheatre.com

Starlight offers a blander production of the gangsters and dames story with "Guys and Dolls, the Concert Version." About 40 patrons for an opening weekend show saw a visually min-



Courtesy Photo

The Starlight Theatre cast offers a concert version of "Guys and dolls."

imalized play with a focus on the same 19 numbers as the original.

Especially for songs not easy to sing, the 23 cast members demonstrate their vocal strengths. When all appear

for closing numbers — in appropriate 1950's outfits by Abby Villarreal — they are a mighty collection.

Standouts include Ben Cassidy as Benny, Matt Eldred as Nicely-Nice-

ly, Anthony Mandalari as Harry the Horse and Josh Martin as Nathan Detroit. Rachel Mender as Miss Adelaide and Kelly Sandula-Gruner as Sarah Brown are the show-stopping "Dolls." Frequent harmonies by all are spot-on.

The amplified bellows from the strong singers would be better suited for a massive opera house. The First Christian Church is a more intimate setting — where actor access to the performing area was awkward. That caused tedious delays between songs during the over-two-hour-with-intermission show.

The smooth-voiced Matt Ottinger filled some pauses with amusing introductions while referring to a clipboard. Actors with scripts in hand or music cheat sheets were not uncommon. After all, Starlight's "Guys and Dolls" isn't billed as anything more than a concert.

The acted-out storyline in a bleak setting is never as important as the singing — or the playing by five talented musicians directed by Kait Wilson on piano.



HOME IMPROVEMENT: A Guide for Greater Lansing Homeowners



Living through a lengthy home renovation project is rough. There's sawdust in the air, stacks of drywall at your feet and seemingly endless paint cans stashed around every corner. City Pulse feels your pain.

Depending on where you're at in

life, you could be revamping your living space simply because it's overdue — or you're just bored with your color scheme. Perhaps you're looking to sell, so your real estate agent suggested spiffing up your exterior to give it some added curb appeal.

Surviving these DIY (or contractor) endeavors are no doubt stressful, but ultimately rewarding. This special guide offers some time savers, money savers and general advice to consider before you grab the credit card.

And, since we're all battling through another frigid Michigan winter, City Pulse included some low-temp ventures that will add value to both your home and life. Read on for a laundry list of tactical tips to consider during your makeover journey.

Greater Lansing is cold. Here's how to keep warm

Outdoor entertaining in winter may be challenging, especially keeping everyone warm. Here are some solutions that can help people stay warm and have fun outside.

Invest in fire pits

Fire pits are an affordable way to heat a patio or another outdoor area. They can be great places for friends and family to gather around and enjoy special occasions. They're readily available from garden centers and home improvement retailers at a variety of price points.

Permanent fire pits can be built by a homeowner or professionally built by masonry experts.

Install an outdoor fireplace

A step up from a fire pit, outdoor fireplaces not only add warmth, but also improve the ambiance and value of an outdoor entertaining area. Set up outdoor furniture right next to an outdoor fireplace and you have a cozy alternative living room where everyone can gather.

Explore outdoor heating systems

Few things are more effective at

warming up outdoor entertaining areas than patio heaters and infrared heaters. These devices are far more effective than average fire pits or fireplaces. One or two heaters will be enough to keep a large entertaining area warm.

Keep cozy options available

Guests should dress warmly, but having a basket of throw blankets, scarves and parkas available for extra warmth while mingling is helpful. Use outdoor rugs to insulate from the cold from the ground up.

Serve hearty foods and beverages

Stews, chilis, soups and other hot foods can help guests warm themselves up from the inside out. Warmed cider, hot chocolate and mulled wines also can be served to help people stay warm.

Get moving

Incorporate activities that encourage guests to move around and stay warm. Beanbag tosses, dancing and even sports like flag football can keep guests' blood flowing.

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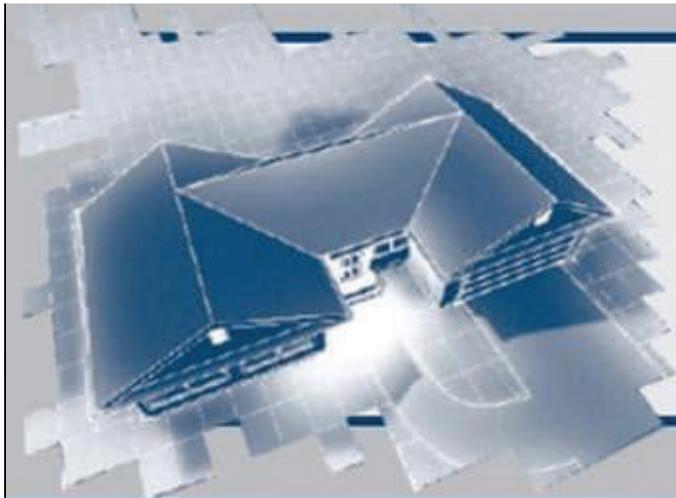
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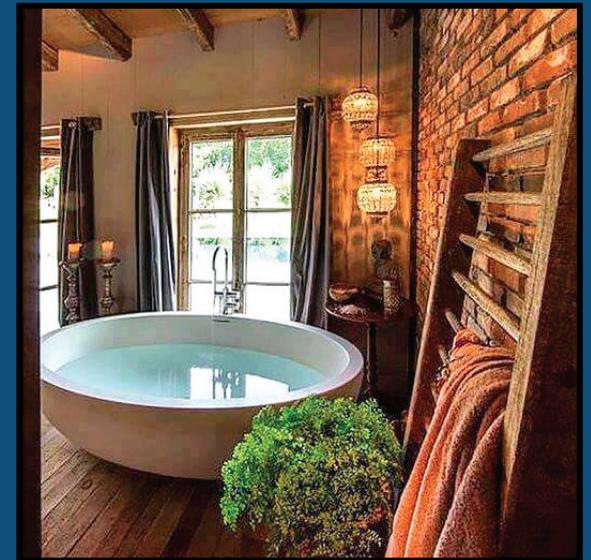
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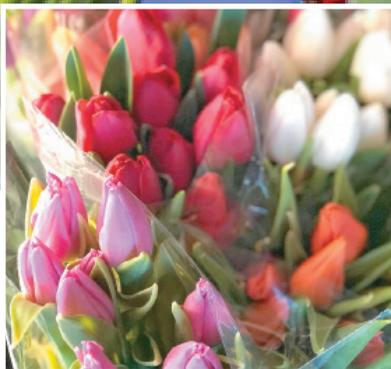


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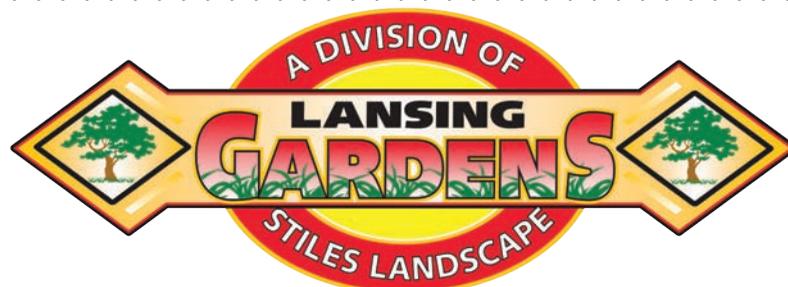


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HOME IMPROVEMENT: A Guide for Greater Lansing Homeowners

Interior design secrets from the pros

Photo spreads in home design magazines can be awe-inspiring. Quite often, homeowners wish they could lift the looks right off the pages of magazines and transform their own homes into picture-perfect retreats.

It takes an eye for design to pull a room together — even with inspiration — and make it both functional and attractive. While hiring an interior designer is one way to go, homeowners can use some of the tricks and techniques the designers employ to do a remarkably good job of improving the interiors of their homes.

Embrace texture

The colors used in a home can add impact, but designers often utilize various textures to create aesthetic appeal. A single-color scheme can be enhanced by various fabrics. Consider a leather sofa made more cozy with chenille pillows next to a rustic side table. Figure out ways to incorporate a few different textures to add depth to the room.

Be careful with color

Many high-end homes showcase neutral shades that are enhanced by pops of color. If you like a rich, royal purple, leave room for other colors as well. Add touches of purple in vases, throw pillows and other accessories.

Also, many designers work in shades of three for room colors. There may be one main color for walls, another color for larger accents, such as couches and chairs, and then a third color that pops in accessories such as flowers, pillows and collectibles. These can be any colors, but the most muted tends to be the more abundant shade.

Add a bit of bling

Glittery items and metallics can add a touch of luxury feel to any space. A shiny table lamp, mirrors, a sparkling chandelier, and the like are easy ways to produce a high-end feel. Reflective

surfaces also will cast light around the room, giving the illusion of a larger space.

Choose a big statement piece

Many homeowners make the mistake of filling a room with several small pieces of furniture that only contribute to clutter. Instead, look for a statement piece, which can be a cabinet, armoire or chaise. Mix and match large and small elements for a sense of balance.

Accessorize

Finish the room with accessories and flowers. When placing and hanging knickknacks and wall art, odd-numbered groupings often look the most cohesive and interesting. Experiment with different scales and heights for even more dimension.



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HOME IMPROVEMENT: A Guide for Greater Lansing Homeowners

Spending wisely: How to cut costs on home renovations

Home improvement projects come in all shapes and sizes — some with huge budgets and others that are more cost-conscious. Regardless of what homeowners hope to achieve with their renovations, a common goal across any price point is a desire to save as much money as possible. Home renovations can be expensive, but there are ways to cut costs.

If you're planning to sell your home soon, it may be best to focus on repairs and renovations that will generate the most substantial return on investment.

Hire a contractor. Even avid do-it-yourselfers can sometimes benefit from a contractor's expertise, particularly for complex tasks. Don't waste money by trying tough jobs yourself; rely on an experienced contractor who can get supplies for less money and will do the job right the first time. Compare bids

from several different contractors and figure out the best value.

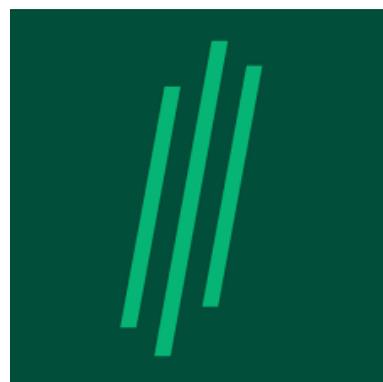
Refurbish existing features. Rather than a complete gut and rebuild, figure out where you can revitalize existing fixtures and more. For example, refinishing existing cabinets can save you up to 50 percent compared with the cost of new cabinetry, according to Angi (formerly Angie's List), a cost comparison and business review resource.

Choose midgrade materials. Certain materials may be all the rage but they come with a higher price tag. Angi reports that granite counters could be \$60 to \$100 per square foot. However, a composite or laminate that looks like granite and wears well may be \$10 to 40 per square foot. Figure out where you can choose middle-of-the-road materials for maximum value.

Avoid peak seasons. You'll pay more to install a deck or a pool right before the outdoor entertaining season. There also may be a premium to get work done right before a major holiday. Therefore, consult the calendar to find an off time for a renovation and book it then to save.

Buy a display item. Former show-

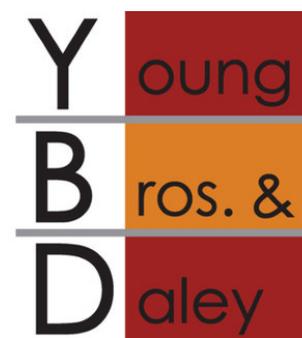
room kitchens and baths often are sourced at a fraction of their recommended retail prices, according to Real Homes, a home remodel guide based in the United Kingdom. Retailers often update their displays and you may score existing showroom items at a discount.



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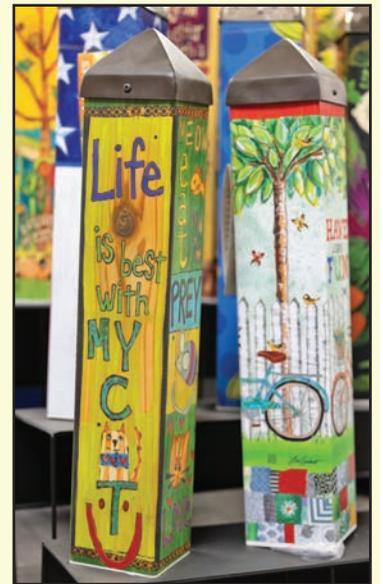
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Jonesin' Crossword

By Matt Jones

"These Go To Eleven"—and five down.

by Matt Jones

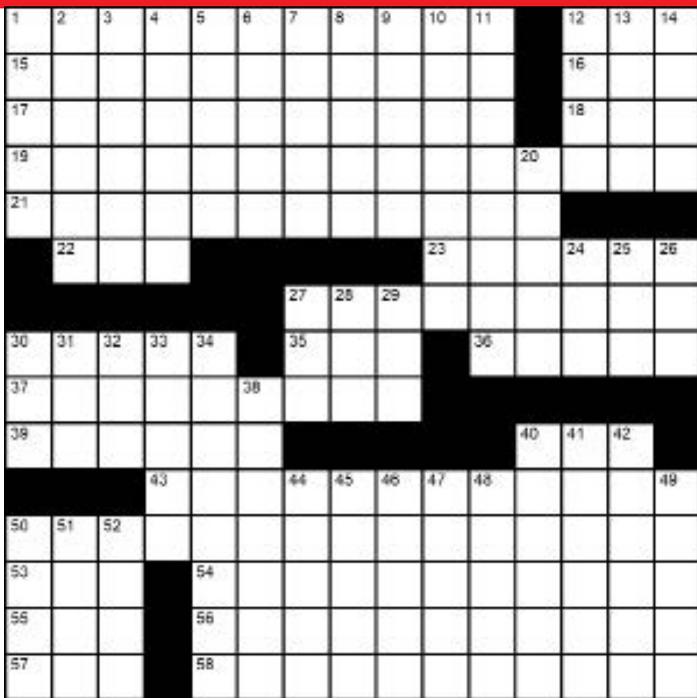
Across

- 1. Toning result
- 12. Celebrity gossip website
- 15. 1993 Mary J. Blige hit that reached #5 on the R&B Singles Chart
- 16. Elvis's longtime label
- 17. Bitter almond, as seen in French desserts
- 18. Acne wash maker
- 19. It's posed for passersby
- 21. Radcliffe's group
- 22. Dear one?
- 23. Violinist Menuhin
- 27. Throws out
- 30. Eldest von Trapp child in "The Sound of Music"
- 35. Pet Shop Boys' longtime label
- 36. Locates
- 37. Comparable
- 39. Tomei of Spider-Man movies
- 40. Where Will Shortz is the "Puzzlemaster"
- 43. Dish with grapes, walnuts, and mayo
- 50. Bookstore category that features the town's authors
- 53. Squishee purveyor on "The Simpsons"
- 54. Record the meeting, in a way
- 55. Blues guitarist Mahal
- 56. Place where it's hard to pass
- 57. "Hold On Tight" group
- 58. Words before "of smell," "of self," and "of right and wrong"

- 3. Russian infant emperor of 1740-41 (too young to be the "terrible" one)
- 4. E-mail writer
- 5. ___ a positive note
- 6. Chain that merged with AMC Theatres
- 7. Boy's name that means "God is my nation" in Hebrew (A MILE anag.)
- 8. "San ___ High School football rules!" (shouted line near the end of "Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure")
- 9. Pearl Jam bassist Jeff
- 10. Actors Reed and Meredith Baxter (when she took a husband's surname)
- 11. Pilots
- 12. Apparel that gets "dropped," facetiously
- 13. CI times XI
- 14. Former groupmate of Harry and Liam
- 16. Elvis's longtime label
- 17. Bitter almond, as seen in French desserts
- 18. Acne wash maker
- 19. It's posed for passersby
- 21. Radcliffe's group
- 22. Dear one?
- 23. Violinist Menuhin
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- 55. Blues guitarist Mahal
- 56. Place where it's hard to pass
- 57. "Hold On Tight" group
- 58. Words before "of smell," "of self," and "of right and wrong"

Down

- 1. Cat scratch sources
- 2. Friends, '90s-style



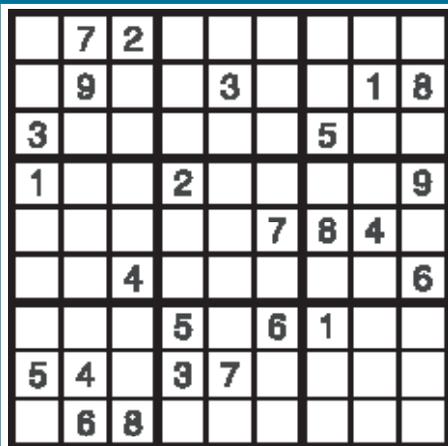
- 24. Actor Kier of "Dancer in the Dark"
- 25. Morse code component
- 26. Provisional terms
- 27. Old Prizm automaker
- 28. Australian coat of arms bird
- 29. Frank McCourt's sequel to "Angela's Ashes"
- 30. On the ___ (running)
- 31. Garten who had a 2022 moment responding to Reese Witherspoon
- 32. Canal zone?
- 33. Guardian Angel Curtis who was the Republican nominee for NYC mayor in 2021
- 34. Northern Silicon Valley city
- 38. "Highlights for Children" do-gooder
- 40. Vacuum hater?
- 41. Igneous rock that solidifies deep in the earth (like a god of the underworld)
- 42. ___ hen's teeth
- 44. Scottish builder of stone walls (not Dutch, surprisingly)
- 45. Work alongside "El rey Lear;" "La tempestad," and "Ricardo III"
- 46. Furnish a new crew
- 47. "Breaking Bad" businessman/drug lord Gus
- 48. Neurobiologist Joshua who developed the "brainbow" by mapping neurons with different colored proteins (and whose name uses letters from "synapse")
- 49. "___ un Principio: From the Beginning" (1999 Marc Anthony greatest-hits album)
- 50. In the wee hours
- 51. Birthstone that shares a first letter with its month
- 52. "... a Saint Bernard in his prime, five years old, nearly two hundred pounds in weight ..."

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Answers on page 32

SUDOKU

Beginner



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 32

Free Will Astrology

By Rob Breznsky

February 23-March 1, 2022

ARIES (March 21-April 19): "A dead thing can go with the stream, but only a living thing can go against it," wrote author G. K. Chesterton. Amen to that! Please regard his observation as the first part of your horoscope. Here's the second part: It's sometimes the right approach to move in harmony with the flow, to allow the momentum of elemental forces to carry you along. But now is not one of those times. I suggest you experiment with journeys against the flow. Go in quest of what the followers of easy options will never experience. Do it humbly, of course, and with your curiosity fully deployed.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): "You're never allowed to step on people to get ahead," said TV personality and author Star Jones, "but you can step over them if they're in your way." I suspect the coming months will be a time when you really should step over people who are in your way. There's no need to be mad at them, criticize them, or gossip about them. That would sap your energy to follow your increasingly clear dreams. Your main task is to free yourself from influences that obstruct your ability to be the Royal Sovereign of Your Own Destiny.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Gemini-born Gina Rowlands is retired now, but she had an award-winning six-decade career as an actor. At age 20, she decided what she wanted to do with her life, and her parents offered her their blessings. She testified: "I went home and I told my mom that I wanted to quit college and be an actress, and she said, 'Huh, that sounds fascinating. It's wonderful!' And I told my father, and he literally said, 'I don't care if you want to be an elephant trainer if it makes you happy.'" Dear Gemini, in the coming months, I would love for you to receive similar encouragement for your budding ideas and plans. What can you do to ensure you're surrounded by influences like Rowlands' parents? I hope you embark on a long-term project to get all the support you need.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): As you enter an astrological phase when vast, expansive ruminations will be fun and healthy for you, I will offer you some vast, expansive thoughts. Hopefully, they will inspire your own spacious musings. First, here's artist M. C. Escher: "Wonder is the salt of the earth." Next, author Salman Rushdie: "What's real and what's true aren't necessarily the same." Here's poet Allen Ginsberg: "When you notice something clearly and see it vividly, it then becomes sacred." A proverb from the Omaha people: "Ask questions from your heart, and you will be answered from the heart." G. K. Chesterton: "Let your religion be less of a theory and more of a love affair." Finally, playwright Tony Kushner: "I'm not religious, but I like God, and he likes me."

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): "Out of love, you can speak with straight fury," wrote author Eudora Welty. Here's how I interpret that in light of the current chapter of your life story: You have an opportunity to recalibrate some misaligned energy. You have the necessary insight to fix an imbalance or dissolve an illusion or correct a flow that has gone off-course. And by far the best way to do that is by wielding the power of love. It will need to be expressed with vehemence and intense clarity, however. It will require you to be both compassionate and firm. Your homework: Figure out how to express transformative truths with kindness.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Virgo political science professor Tatah Mentan was born and raised in the African country of Cameroon, which has never fully recovered from its grueling colonization by Germany, France, and England. The democratic tradition there is tenuous. When Mentan first taught at a university in the Cameroonian capital, authorities found his ideas too controversial. For the next 16 years, he attempted to be true to himself while avoiding governmental censorship, but the strain proved too stressful. Fearing for his safety, he fled to the US. I'm turning to him for advice that will serve you well in the coming weeks.

He tells us, "Peace does not mean to be in a place where there is no noise, trouble, or hard work. Peace means to be in the midst of all those things and still be calm in your heart."

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): "Anything you do from the heart enriches you, but sometimes not till years later," wrote author Mignon McLaughlin. I'm pleased to inform you, Libra, that you will soon receive your rewards for generous actions you accomplished in the past. On behalf of the cosmic rhythms, I apologize for how long it has taken. But at least it's finally here. Don't underestimate how big this is. And don't allow sadness about your earlier deprivation to inhibit your enthusiastic embrace of compensation.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): No matter how reasonable and analytical you are, Scorpio, you possess a robust attraction to magic. You yearn for the refreshing invigoration of non-rational mysteries. You nurture urges to be delighted by outbreaks of the raw, primal lust for life. According to my astrological assessment, you are especially inclined to want and need these feelings in the next few weeks. And that's good and healthy and holy! At the same time, don't abandon your powers of discernment. Keep them running in the background as you enjoy your rejuvenating communions with the enigmatic pleasures of the Great Unknown.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Author Diane Ackerman tells us, "In the absence of touching and being touched, people of all ages can sicken and grow touch starved. Touch seems to be as essential as sunlight." This is always important to remember, but it will be extra crucial for you to keep in mind during the coming weeks. I advise you to be ingenious and humble and frank as you collect as much physical contact as you can. Be polite and respectful, of course. Never force yourself on anyone. Always seek permission. With those as your guidelines, be greedy for hugs and cuddling and caresses.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): "Education, fundamentally, is the increase of the percentage of the conscious in relation to the unconscious." Author and educator Sylvia Ashton-Warner said that, and now I'm telling you—just in time for one of the most lesson-rich times of a year that will be full of rich lessons. In the next nine months, dear Capricorn, the proportion of your consciousness in relation to your unconsciousness should markedly increase. And the coming weeks will be a favorable phase to upgrade your educational ambitions.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): You're entering a phase of your cycle when your ability to boost your finances will be stronger than usual. You'll be more likely to attract good luck with money and more apt to discover useful tips on how to generate greater abundance. To inspire your efforts, I offer you this observation by author Katharine Butler Hathaway: "To me, money is alive. It is almost human. If you treat it with real sympathy and kindness and consideration, it will be a good servant and work hard for you, and stay with you and take care of you."

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Author Deb Caletti made the following observation: "You have ordinary moments and ordinary moments and more ordinary moments, and then, suddenly, there is something monumental right there. You have past and future colliding in the present, your own personal Big Bang, and nothing will ever be the same." In my vision of your destiny in 2022, Pisces, there could be several of these personal Big Bangs, and one of them seems to be imminent. To prepare—that is, to ensure that the changes are primarily uplifting and enjoyable—I suggest you chant the following mantra at least five times every day: "I love and expect good changes."

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

TURN IT DOWN!

Loud dispatches from Lansing's music scene

BY RICH TUPICA

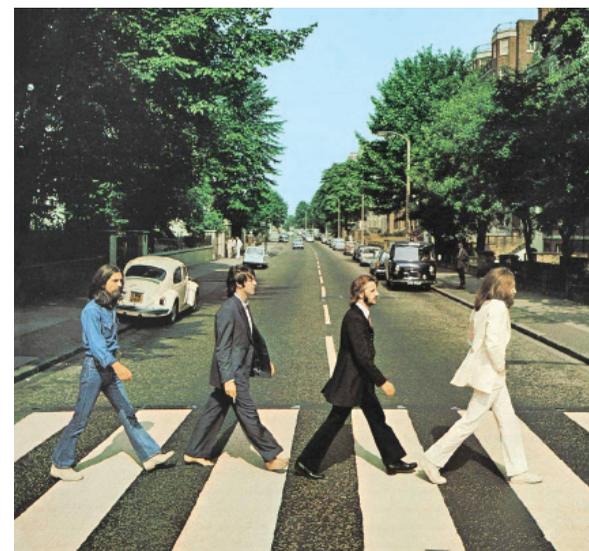
LIFE CHANGING ALBUMS: TOMMY MCCORD ON 'ABBEY ROAD'



Tommy McCord performs with The Wild Honey Collective. (photo by Charlie Marie)



McCord holds his old, scuffed CD affectionally dubbed "Shabby Road." (courtesy photo)



The Beatles "Abbey Road" was released in 1969.

GTG Records co-founder dishes on The Beatles

Tommy McCord, aka Tommy Plural, has played in a laundry list of loud, Lansing-based bands over the years. A shortlist of his sonic achievements would include credits on a stack of records with The Plurals, Drinking Mercury and The Break-Ups, to name a few. His latest outfit, The Wild Honey Collective — a genuine mixture of Byrds-style country and rock 'n roll — showcases McCord's dynamic songwriting abilities. In this week's edition of "Life Changing Albums," the local songwriter and GTG Records co-founder dishes about The Beatles' CD that helped mold him into the hard-working musician he is today. Here's what he had to say.

What album record comes to mind when you think of "life changing"? When did you discover it?

Tommy McCord: I had a lot of runner-ups in mind. The Smashing Pumpkins, The Replacements, Flying Burrito Brothers, and some others. But ultimately, I've got to look at the wider picture and hone in on The Beatles' "Abbey Road." If we're talking truly, actually life-changing, this is it. The first album that I can ever remember playing on repeat, lying in

between stereo speakers and marveling at what recorded music could be, it's "Abbey Road." I discovered it sometime around 1994 or 1995, when I was approximately 8 years old.

How did you discover this album?

To the best of my knowledge, one of my parents, on a whim, picked up the CD in what I now know was the early '90s CD reissue boom. This was likely leading up to The Beatles' "Anthology" project. I didn't necessarily grow up in a huge music fan household, but my parents had a decent stereo and a small collection of classic rock and country albums. As far back as I can remember I made mixtapes of the radio and the CDs they had.

Did the album have an immediate impact on you, or did it take time to grow on you?

This is the first album I remember having a truly immediate impact on me. The textless cover photo, the seamless flow of the songs — it all made a huge impression on me as a budding music fan.

What aspects of the album touch you the most and why? The lyrics or the instrumentation?

This album is really one of those

"sound" albums. It's the only Beatles album recorded with an eight-track solid state console, which gives it all a certain airiness. There's also fantastic applications of Leslie speakers and a Moog synthesizer in a guitar-based context. None of this mattered to me when I was 8 years old though, it just sounded great! If I had to pick a specific part of the album that moves me, it would be the eight measures of The Beatles wordlessly harmonizing that begins at 1:45 in "You Never Give Me Your Money." I could listen to that on repeat.

In what ways has this album directly affected your life?

Well, it's the first album I remember ever really absorbing. I think I owe being a music fan and musician to this one. In addition to my own musical career, I also work as a guitar teacher and I love using songs from this album, like "Come Together," to demonstrate different techniques and moments of unorthodox music theory. It's a very creative album from a recording and songwriting perspective. If you've heard any pop/rock music recorded after 1969, then you've definitely heard everything that was pioneered with this

album. That's how important it is.

Can this album change your mood? When is the best time to listen to it?

This album remains one that I like to put on so I can listen to it all the way through. It's a very peaceful album that's a constant, fixed presence. I think my favorite time to listen to it is on long car drives with my fiancé as we head up north.

What's up with your own music?

A lot of my energy lately has been devoted to The Wild Honey Collective, a more country-oriented project. We've been keeping a busy show calendar and are aiming to release our second album this summer. Much like "Abbey Road," The Plurals and GTG Records are still constants in my life and we're always writing and working on things too.

Want to add anything else about "Abbey Road"?

I don't trust or value the views of anyone that outright dismisses the Beatles!



OUT on the TOWN

Events & Happenings in Lansing This Week

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

LIVE + LOCAL

B&I Bar
5247 Old Lansing Rd., Lansing
Keith Minaya
Thurs., Feb. 24, 7:30-10:30 p.m.
Flipside
Sat., Feb. 26, 8-11 p.m. Helena

Blue Owl
1149 S Washington, Lansing
Elden Kelly and Gregg Hill
Thurs., Feb. 24, 6-8 p.m.

Classic Pub & Grill
16219 N. US 27, Lansing
Showdown
Fri. & Sat., Feb. 25-26, 8:30 p.m.

Eaton Rapids Craft Co.
204 N. Main St., Eaton Rapids
Melissa Dylan
Fri., Feb. 25, 7-10 p.m.
DownRiver Dan
Sat. Feb. 26, 7-10 p.m.

Green Door
2005 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing
Sloan
Fri., Feb 25, 8:30 p.m.
Gina Garner
Sat., Feb. 26, 8:30 p.m.

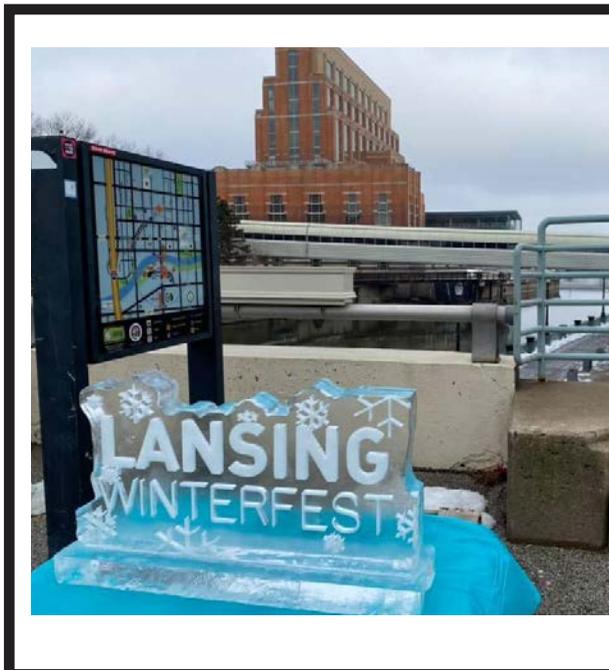
Lansing Brewing Company
518 E. Shiawassee St., Lansing
Medusa
Sat., Feb. 26, 8-10 p.m.

One North Kitchen & Bar
5001 W Saginaw, Lansing
Tony Thompson
Sat., Feb. 26, 6:30-10:30 p.m.

Urban Beat
1213 N. Turner St., Lansing
John Louis Good
Thurs., Feb. 24, 7-9 p.m.
Burning Desires - Poetry
Sat., Feb. 26, 2-4 p.m.

Wednesday, February 23

Allen Farmers Market - 3-6 p.m. Allen Market Place, 1611 E Kalamazoo, Lansing.
"Best Books" Tiny Art Show - Pick up your Tiny Art Kit 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St., Grand Ledge. 517-627-7014. gladl.org
The Elements Series: Water - Special exhibition through March 19. 11 a.m.-7 p.m.



Lansing Winterfest Saturday, Feb. 26 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Downtown Lansing

Lansing Winterfest returns on Saturday (Feb. 26). The event is a perfect opportunity to bundle up and bring the family downtown for an afternoon full of fun. Live ice carvings will happen throughout the day, along with cold butt boat races and live entertainment. A human version of Hungry Hungry Hippos will occur at City Ice Rink. There will be hot chocolate stations and sip and stroll social districts. Local vendors will be out for pop-up shopping experiences throughout the business district and along Lansing's River Trail from the Brenke Fish Ladder in Old Town to Rotary Park downtown. Washington Square and Michigan Avenue will also be good spots to participate in this family-friendly, free event!

Nelson Gallery, 113 S. Washington Sq., Lansing. thenelsongallery.com.

Hidden Hearts - We've lost our hearts-- can you help us find them hiding in the library? 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St. gladl.org

Our Beautiful World Art Show 2022 - 10 a.m.-5 p.m. through February. Framers' Edge and Gallery, 1856 West Grand River Avenue, Okemos. 517-347-7400. framersedge.net.

Studio Squad - Calling all creative kids ages 9-12! 4:30-5:30 p.m. Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum, 547 E Circle Dr, East Lansing. broadmuseum.msu.edu

Thursday, February 24

Beginning Ukulele for the Family - 4 week series of classes. 6-7 p.m. Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St., Grand Ledge. 517-627-7014. gladl.org

Concert Orchestra: Journeys in Nature from Finland, the US, and Bohemia - presented by the MSU College of Music. 7:30-8:30 p.m. Info/tickets at music.msu.edu

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

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

Friday, February 25

Cabaret - 8-10 p.m. Lansing Community College - Dart Auditorium, 419 N Capitol Ave, Lansing. 517-483-1122. lcc.edu

Jazz Orchestras with Stefon Harris, vibraphone - 6:30 and 8 p.m. Murray Hall,

MSU. Info at music.msu.edu.

Michigan Veterans Trust Fund Story - 7 p.m. Alfreda Schmidt Community Center, 5825 Wise Rd., Lansing. parksonline.lansingmi.gov.

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

TGIF Dance - at Eagle Eye. Everyone welcome! 7 p.m.- midnight. 15500 Chandler Rd., Bath. 734-604-5095. tgifdance.com

Saturday, February 26

Cabaret - 8-10 p.m. Lansing Community College - Dart Auditorium, 419 N Capitol Ave, Lansing. 517-483-1122. lcc.edu

Diggin' Dinosaurs - AM - 9 a.m., PM - 1 p.m. Impression 5 Science Center, 200 Museum Dr, Lansing. 517-485-8116. impression5.org.

Drum Circle - Bring your drums for

some rhythmic fun! Free. 5-8 p.m. Keys To Manifestation, 809 Center St., Suite 7, Lansing. 517-974-5540. manifestlansing.com.

Fasching Dinner Dance - Dine in or carry out. 5-10:30 p.m. Lansing Liederkrantz Club, 5828 S. Pennsylvania, Lansing. 517-882-6330.

Greater Lansing Orchid Society Show and Sale - 12-5 p.m. Plant and Soil Sciences Conservatory, 1066 Bogue St., East Lansing.

LEAP into Science: Puppet Workshop - 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St., Grand Ledge. 517-627-7014. Pre-register at gladl.org

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

Spring 2022 New Exhibition Openings - Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum, 547 E Circle Dr, East Lansing. 517-884-4800. broadmuseum.msu.edu

See Events on page 33

CROSSWORD SOLUTION

From Pg. 30

C	H	I	S	E	L	E	D	A	B	S		T	M	Z
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SUDOKU SOLUTION

From Pg. 30

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

Events

from page 32

Sunday, February 27

Advanced Studies Gateway at FRIB featuring Katherine Freese – The Cosmic Cocktail: Three Parts Dark Matter. 1-3 p.m. via Zoom link at frib.msu.edu.

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

Greater Lansing Orchid Society Show and Sale - 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Plant and Soil Sciences Conservatory, 1066 Bogue St., East Lansing.

Kids Day - 1-4 p.m. Absolute Gallery, 307 E Grand River Ave, Lansing. 517-482-8845. absolutegallery.net.

Spring 2022 New Exhibition Openings - at the Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum, 547 E Circle Dr, East Lansing. 517-884-4800. broadmuseum.msu.edu.

Spring Swing - The Lansing Symphony Jazz Band. 4 p.m. Info and tickets at lansingsymphony.org.

Monday, February 28

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

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

Songs for the Re-Opened World - A tribute to Marian Anderson and Paul Robeson. 7:30-8:30 p.m. Fairchild Theatre, 542 Auditorium Rd, East Lansing. msu.edu.

Tabletop Gaming Club - 6-7 p.m. Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St., Grand Ledge. gladl.org

Workshop - Exploring our ways of being. - 6-8:30 p.m. Foster Community Center, 200 N Foster Ave., Lansing. 517-483-4233.

Tuesday, March 1

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

March is Reading Month - Daily events at GLADL - 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St.

Orchestra Lecture Recital: 7:30 p.m. Fairchild Theatre, 542 Auditorium Rd, East Lansing. 517-355-1855. music.msu.edu.

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

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

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FOOD & DRINK

DINING OUT IN GREATER LANSING

That is so hot: A simple dish with a big personality

By **ARI LeVAUX**

Hot pepper and cheese bring out the best in each other. Every bite is a mouthful of drama. The impending heat sets the stage with a pungency you can smell before you bite. Then comes the pain. When all seems lost, the cheese swoops in with its creaminess — neutralizing the menace. And, just when you think the danger has passed, you take another bite, starting another cycle of tension and resolution that would make Shakespeare salivate.

This dynamic is what is behind the power of the jalapeno popper and its big brother, the chile relleno, and their New Mexican cousin, the green chile cheeseburger. This is why there is a jar of red pepper flakes on the counter of every pizzeria, and it's why someone clever invented pepper jack cheese.

I call it “hot pepper” because I can't bring myself to use “chili,” that word being a deformation of the plant's birth name, chile (“chee-lay”), which is a typo in English. Whatever we call this plant and its fiery pods, the apex of cooking



it with cheese is without a doubt *ema datshi*, the national dish of hot pepper-happy Bhutan.

Ema Datshi is a simple dish with a big personality. Little more than stir-fried peppers in a thick white gravy, it looks like a coconut curry, and is as spicy as the peppers you choose.

The pepper plant first appeared in the Andes and was domesticated in Mexico, from where it traveled the world. There are three distinct pepper species in the *Capsicum* genus, many of which are prized largely for how much pain they cause.

In addition to the chemical burns



Ari LeVaux

Food writer Ari LeVaux jokes that “Bhutanese need their *ema datshi*,” like “Russians need their vodka.”

in your mouth, capsicum species can trigger endorphins and adrenaline, raise your heart rate, make you sweat and give you a giddy buzz that's unique among food-borne sensations. Their soulful, almost smoky flavor contains bitter, pungent and sweet notes, all of which pair exceptionally well with

cheese.

Having spent nearly a month in Bhutan, I can't overstate the heat levels to be found in a typical bowl of *ema datshi*. It would be comical if it weren't so debilitating.

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Appetizers

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Flash

from page 34

But to the Bhutanese, it's neither comical nor debilitating. Ema datshi is energizing and serious business. Bhutanese need their ema datshi like Russians need their vodka.

Sometimes, it feels like every serving of food in Bhutan is some form of ema datshi. Ema datshi with radish, ema datshi with greens, ema datshi with pork, with potato, with mushrooms. Adding to the masochism, it's often served with a hot pepper sauce called izay.

While eating a particularly spicy batch of ema datshi, you sometimes perversely find yourself reaching for more in hopes that more cheese will somehow help, even though this antidote is inextricably linked to the cause of suffering. It's like a codependent relationship in your mouth.

Several test batches into the research for this story, I found myself Googling "too much ema datshi," curious if there were any pitfalls to an ema datshi diet. Instead of red flags, I found cooking videos from a land where too much ema datshi can only be a good thing.

In my favorite video, a soft-spoken chef named Dewas Rai put on a culinary masterclass while making this simple dish. After prepping the vegetables effortlessly with an oversized cleaver, Dewas went to the stove and did some kind of blessing. Without a spatula or any kind of implement, Dewas proceeded to stir-fry the vegetables in an omelet pan by flicking them into the air like hot cakes. The peppers suspended in the air before landing back in the pan with a sizzle. For a garnish, Dewas made a rose from a leftover tomato skin.

I'm not saying you need to watch this video to make a good ema datshi, because the recipe below, heavily influenced by Dewas, will do the trick just fine. It's not a difficult or complicated dish. It's just that Dewas happened to use ema datshi as a teachable moment. An excuse to do art. A public display of spirituality.

I had been making ema datshi for years and was very inconsistent. But now, I am firmly on the path, even if I still use a spatula. I have been using any and all peppers I can get my hands on, including dried red ones and fresh, plump jalapenos. I've made it with bell and Anaheim peppers for the kids, and serrano peppers for happy hour.

Ema datshi a la chef Dewas Rai

This dish is traditionally served with short grained Bhutanese red rice, but you can serve it with anything, including other types of rice, bread, roasted squash or other starchy vegetables. I've even added leftover ema datshi to a cafeteria hamburger, and I can't wait to do it again.

When making this dish, wash your hands all the time. Not just before cooking, but after. Not just after using the bathroom, but before.

Serves 2

- 2 tablespoons butter*
- 2 cloves of garlic, minced or pressed*
- 2 tablespoons cooking oil*
- 1-inch cube of ginger, peeled and sliced*
- 1 medium sized tomato, peeled and diced, with the peel turned into a rose*
- ½ pound hot peppers sliced lengthwise, seeds removed according to your heat tolerance and the heat of the peppers*
- ½ pound of feta cheese*
- Salt to taste*

To bless the stove and the meal, touch your hand to your heart, and then the stove, and then your heart again, and then the stove again. Turn the heat to medium/high, add the butter and garlic. Saute until the garlic is browned. Add the oil, ginger, tomato and onion and stir-fry for about two minutes, or until everything is cooked. Add the peppers and a ½ cup of water to keep the pan moist. Stir-fry another three to five minutes to cook the peppers. Crumble in the cheese, the salt of which will pull more water out of the peppers, making it soupy. Add more salt to taste.

Scoop the ema datshi onto a plate. Garnish with the tomato rose.

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