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March 16 - 22, 2022

CityPULSE

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A newspaper for the rest of us

Psychedelics Is Michigan ready for the trip?

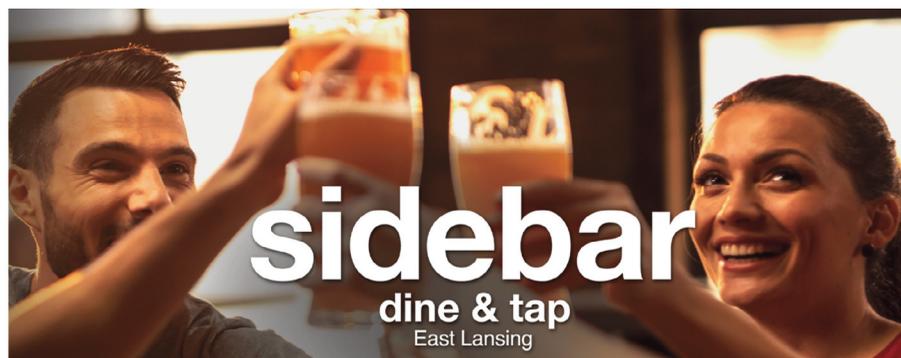
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sidebar

dine & tap
East Lansing

See what's new at Absolute!

Greeting Cards by Louise Mulgrew from the UK



Pottery from Haley Potter



Sculptures from Frith Sculpture



Jorn Mork of West Virginia's hand cut and punched metal pieces with canvas giclee prints of her original artwork.



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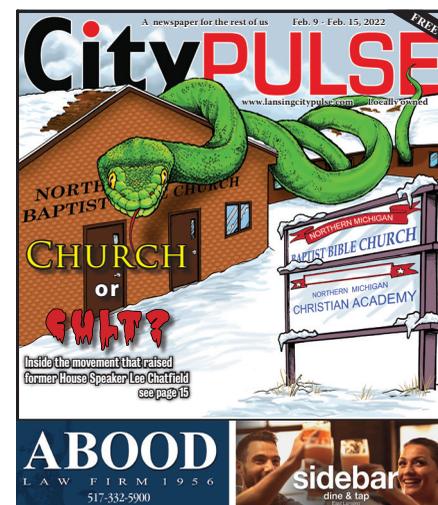
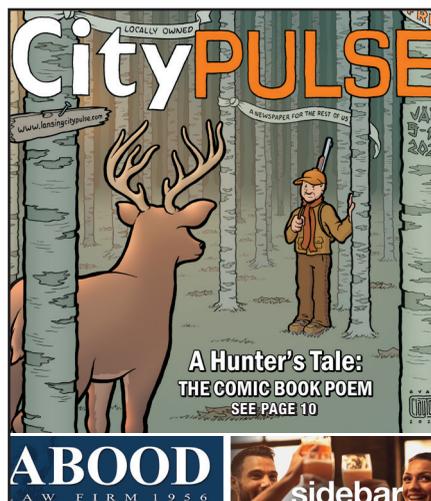
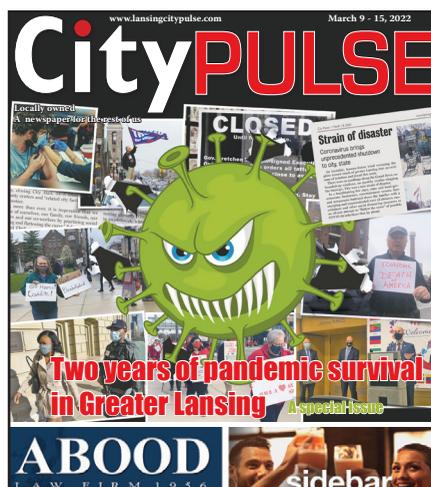


Dear Reader,

I hope you've been enjoying the uptick in local coverage that City Pulse has been providing — much of it thanks to contributions by readers like you.

In print and online, donations are making a difference. Here are some examples since the first of the year:

- “Two years of pandemic survival” — a special issue on how Greater Lansing is dealing with COVID-19.
- “The Hunter’s Tale”— a serialization of a new graphic novel by local cartoon artist Ryan Claytor.
- BWL well water pollution — Freelance environmental writer Tom Perkins broke the story and continues to follow it with exclusive coverage.
- Former House Speaker Lee Chatwell’s sister-in-law accuses him of sexual assault. Todd Heywood broke the story online, then followed up with a look at the Up North church — or cult — that produced Chatwell.
- The Broad Museum at 10. Senior staff writer Lawrence Cosentino has followed the Broad from its inception. As the Broad marks a decade, he provided a knowledgeable look back and also broke the news that the museum will bring the Kresge collection out of storage in a new gallery.



Those and other stories, including weekly staples such as Kyle Melinn’s statehouse column, Rich Tupica’s Turn It Down music feature, restaurant and theater reviews, and much more — are thanks to your gifts to City Pulse and to the City Pulse Fund for Community Journalism.

You can give two different ways:

- Directly to City Pulse. That helps us with general expenses, including salaries for our dedicated staff, printing costs (and we have had six increases in the cost of paper — our biggest expense after payroll — since the beginning of 2021), distribution, the rent and everything else it takes to keep the doors open.
- To the City Pulse Fund for Community Journalism, a 501(c)3, for those of you who itemize your taxes and will benefit from a tax deduction.

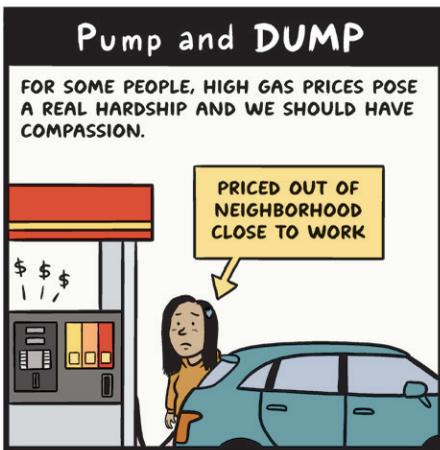
However, you give, it will help keep City Pulse strong. We are now bigger on Wednesdays than any other print publication in our community. We did this together. Let’s keep up the good work!

Sincerely,

Berl Schwartz
Editor & publisher

**Donate online at lansingcitypulse.org/support-us
or call Suzi Smith at (517) 999-6704**

**Donate by mail at City Pulse, 1905 E. Michigan Avenue, Lansing, MI 48912.
Please make checks payable to City Pulse or City Pulse Fund for Community Journalism.**



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CityPULSE

**VOL. 21
ISSUE 32**

(517) 371-5600 • Fax: (517) 999-6061 • 1905 E. Michigan Ave. • Lansing, MI 48912 • www.lansingcitypulse.com



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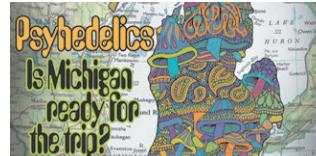


Illustration by Dennis Preston.

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ADVERTISING INQUIRIES: (517) 999-5061
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CLASSIFIEDS & OBITUARIES: (517) 999-6704

EDITOR AND PUBLISHER • Berl Schwartz
publishers@lansingcitypulse.com • (517) 999-5061

MANAGING EDITOR • Kyle Kaminski
kyle@lansingcitypulse.com • (517) 999-6710

ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR • Chloe Alverson
chloe@lansingcitypulse.com • (517) 999-5068

EVENTS EDITOR/OFFICE MANAGER • Suzi Smith
suzi@lansingcitypulse.com • (517) 999-6704

PRODUCTION • Skyler Ashley
skyler@lansingcitypulse.com
 (517) 999-5066

STAFF WRITER • Lawrence Cosentino
lawrence@lansingcitypulse.com • (517) 999-5065

SALES EXECUTIVE
Lee Purdy • lee@lansingcitypulse.com • (517) 999-5064

SALES ASSISTANT
Caleb Woloszyn-Duffy
caleb@lansingcitypulse.com • (517) 999-6707

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR
Todd Heywood
heywood.reporter@gmail.com • (517) 899-6182

Contributors: Andy Balaskovitz, Capital News Service, Bill Castanier, Ryan Claytor, Mary C. Cusack, Tom Helma, Dedria Humphries Barker, Ari LeVaux, Gabrielle Lawrence, Kyle Melinn, Tom Perkins, Dennis Preston, Carrie Sampson, Jen Sorensen, Nevin Speerbrecker, Tom Tomorrow, Rich Tupica, David Winkelstern, Paul Wozniak

Delivery drivers: Dave Fisher, Michael Gross, Garrett Clinard, Melodee Mabbitt, Curtis Lauck

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THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



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PULSE

NEWS & OPINION

Commission considers raises for elected leaders in Lansing

Early ideas call for five-figure raises — and a new car

Thicker paychecks could soon be en route to elected officials in Lansing following early discussions among the Elected Officers Compensation Commission over recent weeks — including the possibility of a five-figure raise for the mayor and a new car for the city clerk.

The seven-member commission is set next week to finalize a series of incremental salary increase proposals — perhaps as high as 18% for some. The commission is required by the City Charter to biannually review and set salaries for the mayor, clerk and the eight members of the City Council. The proposals become law unless three-fourths of the City Council rejects them.

Among the early ideas: A raise that would retroactively kick up the annual salaries of Mayor Andy Schor and Clerk Chris Swope by about \$16,000 to account for decades of ignored inflation rates; an all-expense-paid city vehicle for Swope to cruise the city; and smaller bumps for the Council that could bring Council President Adam Hussain's paycheck to more than \$31,000.

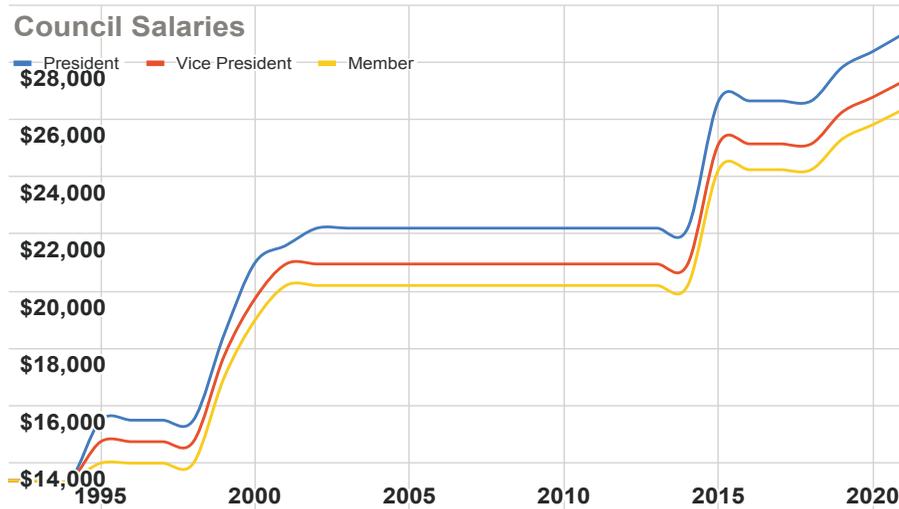
The early proposals are far from concrete, but they are slated to be finalized at the next Commission meeting on Thursday (March 24). As part of its legally required review, the commission has met five times since February, though rarely with all seven of its mayoral appointments present at once.

On Tuesday (March 15), Vice Chairman Derek Melot outlined two initial concepts to the three other members who showed up: Chairwoman Liisa Speaker, Brian Huggler and Steve Young.

What's on the table?

Melot, Speaker, Huggler and Young seemed to have formed an early straw-poll consensus on increasing salaries for all 10 officials by at least 8.5% to account for inflation since last January.

With no other changes, that concept would immediately increase Schor's



salary by about \$11,800 to about \$151,400. Swope's paycheck would climb by about \$8,000 to about \$102,700.

Accordingly, six members of the City Council would see their annual salaries climb by about \$2,200 to about \$28,600. Council President Adam Hussain and Vice President Carol Wood would also make a bit more than the others — about \$31,400 and \$29,600, respectively.

"I like the idea of catching up, bringing us up to where we should be in terms of inflation from year to year," Young said Tuesday. "I also think that we need to be competitive as a city."

Melot also pitched a "full reset" concept that could make up for decades of foregone pay raises and crank up salaries for Schor and Swope to account for rising rates of inflation since 2000. If the proposal is put in motion next week, that would equate to an 11.7% raise for the mayor and an 18.9% raise for the clerk — bringing their paychecks to \$151,400 and \$111,400, respectively.

"I think that's a constant mistake that employers make: They don't look at inflation for what it is, and that's if you're not keeping your employees current, you're imposing pay cuts on them and that is not very good for motivating performance," Melot added.

And that's just for this year's salary increase.

The commission, which has voiced plans to operate largely the same way it did the last time it doled out raises

in 2019, still has to determine potential salary increases for the next two years.

There was also some discussion on Tuesday about pushing Swope's salary even higher to account for the increased workload related to marijuana licensing — as well as leasing for him a car that would aid in navigating between City Hall and his offices on South Washington Avenue.

How does the process work?

The seven commissioners serve through appointment by the mayor and approval by the Council. Its recommendations, which would build on a series of raises from over the last three years, will take effect automatically next month unless the City Council decides to reject them.

After they've been finalized next week, the Council's Committee of the Whole will review the commission's determinations at a yet-to-be-scheduled meeting, sometime likely next month. The Council's approval isn't a necessary step, but it can choose to reject the changes within 30 days — and only with a supermajority vote by at least six of its eight members.

The last time the Commission tinkered with salaries for the city's elected officials was in 2019 — a process that then included 8% bumps for the mayor, clerk and the City Council. Before that, the Council also allowed 20% increases for all elected officials to take effect in 2015.

Despite past misgivings about the salary increases from Hussain and

Councilwoman Patricia Spitzley, neither of them introduced a resolution to kill the raises in 2019. This year, Hussain said he is still hesitant to support pay increases, particularly for the part-time City Council.

Added Councilman Peter Spadafore: "The only raises I'd be willing to support for the mayor, the city clerk or the Council are those commensurate with the ones given to our employee groups. Anything beyond that is not justifiable."

The other six members of the Council, Schor and Swope didn't respond to questions from City Pulse about their compensation. Swope also skipped out on Tuesday's Commission meeting and hasn't responded to the commission's requests for more details about his daily workload.

"None of them really have an interest," City Council Office Manager Sherrie Boak told the commission at Tuesday's meeting. "I think they all just trust that you're going to make the right determination and they don't want to come in here and sway you one way or the other, or say they need more money. They're elected officials. They're not going to say, 'Pay me more.'"

More salary needed?

Melot and other commission members contended that besides falling behind because of cost of living and inflation, the city's elected leaders deserve more in order to match salaries for elected leaders in similar cities.

Data still being compiled by the commission shows that Lansing's mayor is paid significantly less than mayors in Dearborn and Rochester Hills and city managers in East Lansing and Royal Oak, which were billed as "comparable" positions given Lansing's strong-mayor government. Data also showed Schor makes more than mayors in Warren, Grand Rapids and Lorrain, Ohio.

City Council members in Lansing made more than any other city compared for reference — except for Warren, where its Council members are paid annual salaries of about \$31,400.

"I'm probably not going to be in favor of any substantial increase in the Council salaries, just because when you look

See Raises, Page 6

**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, MARCH 1, 2022 AT 7:00 P.M.

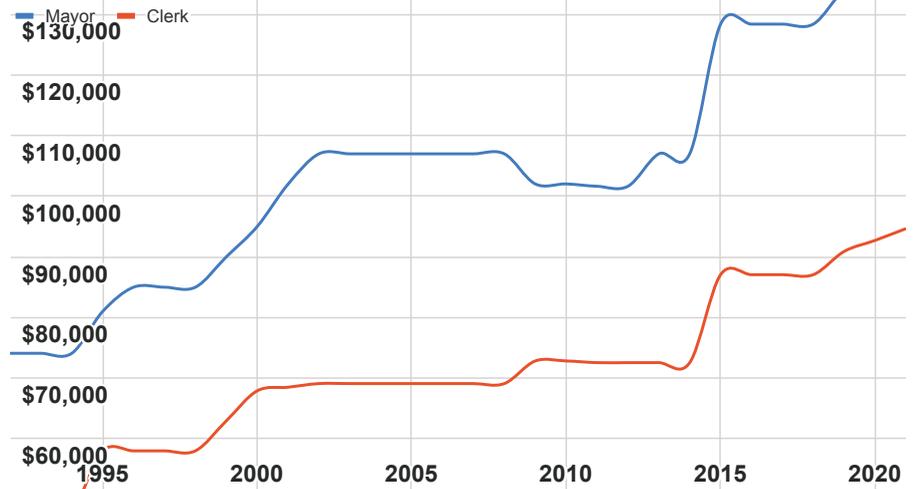
MEMBERS PRESENT: Supervisor Hayes, Clerk Sanders
Trustees: Harris, Brewer, Ruiz
MEMBERS ABSENT: Trustees: Broughton
ALSO PRESENT: Michael Gresens, Attorney

ACTION TAKEN BY THE BOARD:
Meeting called to order by Supervisor Hayes.
Minutes of the regular meeting held on February 15, 2022 approved.
Agenda approved as presented.
Approved publication of Noxious Weed Notice.
Approved Personnel Committee recommendations for non-union personnel as presented.
Approved entering into Executive Session for discussion regarding pending litigation and labor negotiations. Pending litigation: Champps One LLC v Lansing Charter Twp. – MTT Docket #21-002626 & -002702; Retail Properties of America, Inc. v Lansing Charter Twp. – MTT Docket #21-001763; and Eastwood LLC v Charter Township of Lansing, Case #21-0624-CB.
Authorized Township Attorney and Township Assessor to settle: Champps One LLC v Lansing Charter Twp. – MTT Docket #21-002626 & -002702; Retail Properties of America, Inc. v Lansing Charter Twp. – MTT Docket #21-001763 within the parameters discussed during Executive Session.
Claims approved.
Meeting adjourned.

Diontrae Hayes, Supervisor
Maggie Sanders, Clerk

CP#22-066

Mayor and Clerk Salaries



Raises

from page 5

at the comparisons, they're already up at the top of the chart," Melot added. "I think — if anything — I wouldn't support anything more than" an 8.5% pay raise.

The commission also assembled data on salary adjustments for the city's bargaining groups to, at least in theory,

help ensure that Lansing's elected leaders wouldn't see undue pay raises while the rest of the workforce is neglected. While much more consistent from year to year, none have seen an annual raise higher than 3% in at least the last 20 years — which could shape up to be a real sticking point for the Council when the issue resurfaces.

Visit lansingcitypulse.com for continued coverage as the determinations are assembled.

— KYLE KAMINSKI

CAPITAL AREA TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

PUBLIC NOTICE OF PROPOSED STATE AND FEDERAL APPLICATIONS FOR OPERATING, CAPITAL ASSISTANCE AND PUBLIC HEARING

All citizens are advised that CAPITAL AREA TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY ("CATA") has prepared an application for State of Michigan ("State") financial assistance for fiscal year 2023 as required under Act 51 of the Public Acts of 1951, as amended, and for federal assistance as required under the federal transit laws, as amended, as follows:

| | |
|---|---------------|
| State Operating Assistance | \$ 16,278,628 |
| FTA/State Urban Capital Program (Section 5307) | \$ 9,540,638 |
| State Specialized Services | \$ 40,000 |
| FTA Rural Operating Assistance (Section 5311) | \$ 813,791 |
| FTA/State Bus and Bus Facilities (Section 5339) | \$ 1,020,804 |
| FTA/State Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality | \$ 125,000 |
| FTA/State Enhanced Mobility (Section 5310) | \$ 485,697 |

TOTAL \$ 28,304,558

Operating and capital funds listed above include both urban and rural funds. Capital projects to be funded include the purchase of large and small buses, paratransit vehicles for transporting customers and support vehicles; preventive maintenance, technology systems, planning, maintenance equipment, bus replacement parts, safety and security system, customer enhancements and facility improvements. This notice meets the Federal Transit Administration 5307 public notification requirement. If there are not substantive changes or comments as a result of publishing the above draft program, then the draft program will constitute the final program.

CATA ensures that the level and quality of transportation service is provided without regard to race, color or national origin in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. For more information regarding our Title VI obligations or to file a complaint, please contact CATA's Deputy CEO/Civil Rights Officer at 4615 Tranter Street, Lansing, MI 48910 or via email to titlevi@cata.org.

The proposed application is on file at CATA, 4615 Tranter St., Lansing, MI, and may be reviewed during a 30-day period (March 13, 2022 – April 12, 2022), Monday – Friday, between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.

Written comments regarding the application and/or written requests for a public hearing to review the application must be received by 5 p.m. April 12, 2022. If a hearing is requested, notice of the scheduled date, time and location will be provided at least 10 days in advance.

Submittals should be sent to CAPITAL AREA TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY, FY 2023 Grant Application, Attn: Planning and Development Department, 4615 Tranter St., Lansing, MI 48910, or via email to marketing@cata.org.

CP#22-062

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS
EAST LANSING CITY COUNCIL**

Notice is hereby given of the following public hearings to be held by the East Lansing City Council on **Tuesday, April 5, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.** at the East Lansing Hannah Community Center, 819 Abbot Road, East Lansing, MI, 48823.

1. Request from 310 LLC to consider Ordinance 1507, an ordinance to rezone a 0.36-acre parcel located at 210 West Lake Lansing Road from RA (Residential Agricultural District) to B-4 (Restricted Office Business District).
2. Request from 310 LLC to consider Ordinance 1509, an ordinance to rezone two 0.36-acre parcels located at 218 and 224 West Lake Lansing Road from B-4 (Restricted Office Business District) to B-5 (Community Retail Sales Business District).
3. Request from Josie Lewis for Site Plan and Special Use Permit approval to establish a fraternity at 404 E. Michigan Avenue. The property is zoned RM-54 (University Oriented Multiple-Family Residential District).

The public may attend and participate at all meetings in person. Members of the public may also participate virtually via Zoom. Please contact City Clerk Jennifer Shuster at (517) 319-6914, jshuster@cityofeastlansing.com, (410 Abbot Road, East Lansing, MI 48823) for additional information. Visit the City's public meeting portal at <https://cityofeastlansing.civ-icweb.net/Portal/> for electronic access information.

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

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

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

Jennifer Shuster
City Clerk

CP#22-067

Transparency fail



When the Lansing Fire Department's first female battalion chief, Shawn Deprez, went public with accusations that she was sexually assaulted and continuously harassed while employed at the department, this newspaper filed a public records request asking the city for documents related to its investigation of her allegations. Our request was delayed for six months. Frustrated, we asked Mayor Andy Schor to intervene, which resulted in the city finally coughing up just six pages out of roughly 650 documents that fell within the scope of our request. Following the process prescribed by Michigan's Freedom of Information Act, we appealed the

decision to City Council President Adam Hussein, who last week refused to release the remaining documents. Hussein claimed their disclosure would impair the city's ability to conduct investigations and have a "chilling effect" on frank communications between city officials. But the state's sunshine law requires his decision to meet a balancing test: If the public interest in disclosing the documents outweighs the government's interest in keeping them secret, the law says the documents must be released. We think Hussein struck the wrong balance. We're not alone in believing that credible accusations of sexual assault and harassment at our city's Fire Department are worthy of the highest level of public interest, thus tipping the scales toward disclosure.

The CP Edit

Opinion

Jack and Sue Davis Center for the Performing Arts



Mayor Schor had plenty of good news to tout in his speech, from GM's \$2.5 billion investment in a new electric battery plant to building a new performing arts center in downtown Lansing. But one thing he said sticks in our craw: Schor's off-hand assertion that the new outdoor amphitheater at the Red Cedar development will be named after the late Jack Davis. Last month, in this space, we suggested that the new downtown performing arts center — tentatively dubbed The Ova-

tion — should instead carry the name of the city's legendary patron of the arts and his wife, Susan. We're going to keep beating the drum to make that honor happen. And we have a better idea for naming the Red Cedar amphitheater, a small outdoor venue tucked away in the public park behind the phalanx of new buildings along Michigan Avenue. Let's give that honor to the man whose vision and persistence over several decades finally brought to fruition the massive Red Cedar environmental protection project: Ingham County Drain Commissioner Patrick Lindemann.

Schor's secret SOTC



For the past 20 years or more, the mayor's annual State of the City address was a significant public event, staged at a prominent location in the city, promoted for weeks if not months in advance, broadcast on television, and attended by hundreds. COVID-19 changed all that. Indoor events were largely verboten during the pandemic, and understandably so. But that shouldn't have stopped Mayor Andy Schor from mak-

ing more of this year's address. Instead, for reasons known only to the mayor and his advisers, the event wasn't even announced until a surprise videotaped address was posted to YouTube in the late afternoon last week. The mayor's low-key approach to what is supposed to be his annual showcase celebrating Lansing's progress was a missed opportunity — a blunder to some — that tells us the mayor still isn't getting the thoughtful advice about how to promote his administration that both he and the city deserve.

Federal earmarks are back



After a long hiatus, earmarks are back on the agenda in the U.S. Congress. Often maligned as pork barrel spending, earmarks are a way for members of Congress to bring home the bacon for their districts by securing federal funds for local projects that would otherwise struggle to get done. Thanks to outstanding work by U.S. Sens. Debbie Stabenow and Gary Peters, and second-term U.S. Rep. Elissa Slotkin, Mid-Michigan is a major beneficiary of the revitalized earmark program, scoring more than \$24 million in federal aid for 10 public projects scattered across

the region. Slotkin's work in landing nearly half the total amount is especially impressive because she is a relative newcomer to Congress. The earmarks include \$8.2 million for an expanded cargo ramp at Capital Region International Airport, \$3.4 million to Clinton/Eaton Ingham Community Mental Health for a crisis stabilization unit, \$1.4 million to the Lansing Police Department for a crisis assessment team, and \$1 million for much-needed improvements to the Michigan Avenue Corridor. Kudos to our federal elected officials for bringing some of our tax dollars back to Greater Lansing for worthy investments that will strengthen our economy and community.

#standwithukraine



Like so many people across the globe, our hearts are breaking over the unfolding tragedy in Ukraine, where millions of innocent people are being forced to abandon their homes and flee to the safety of surrounding nations, while millions more stay behind, trapped in an escalating conflict that gets more frightening by the hour. It's frustrating to watch from afar as Putin carries

out his deranged fantasy of taking by force whatever he wants from neighboring sovereign nations, and it makes us wonder what we can do to help the Ukrainian people. We're making a donation to one of the reputable international charities providing humanitarian aid to the Ukraine and recommend that you do, too. Thanks to the miracle of global online commerce, you can donate directly to the Ukrainian Red Cross Society at redcross.org.ua/en/, among many other worthy organizations.

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.)

Michigan House candidate: 'Lansing is ready for action'

By **CARLEE KNOTT**

(The writer is a candidate for the Democratic nomination in the Aug. 2 primary for the new 74th District seat in the state House of Representatives.)

I am running to be the next state representative for the new 74th House District in the Democratic primary election on Aug. 2 because residents in south Lansing and Holt are facing urgent crises that require immediate action.

Opinion



Knott

on the table, it's obvious that action is long overdue. We need to raise the minimum wage, strengthen labor unions, make housing and healthcare affordable and make sure our social safety net programs are accessible to all.

Education: Our schools have survived many uphill challenges during the pandemic. Now it is time to recoup and rebuild. In Lansing and Holt Public Schools, graduation and attendance rates are down and performance metrics have consistently lagged behind other area school districts. We need to increase per-pupil funding and funding for school nurses and mental health professionals. By strengthening the quality of our education systems, we can strengthen our communities and encourage people to stay and raise their families here.

Climate: As our average temperature rises, Michigan experiences more frequent life-threatening heatwaves and excessive flooding from intense rainstorms, which cause algal blooms in the Great Lakes and increase the likelihood of catastrophic dam failures. As the price of oil rises, it is even more urgent that we transition away from fossil fuels and invest in local and reliable clean energy sources. Michigan must have all hands on deck to lower our greenhouse gas emissions and transform our energy systems to ensure a secure future for our planet and our economy.

With so many pressing issues that

require urgent solutions, what the residents of south Lansing and Holt need is a strong progressive leader who is willing to champion these causes in the halls of the Capitol. Unfortunately, the sitting representative whom I am facing in this primary has proven unable to pass legislation on these issues. We need to elect someone who understands the importance of policy solutions and knows what it takes to pass a bill into law.

I was born and raised in the Lansing and Holt communities, just as my dad was. I know what it's like to live and work here. Having grown up in a working-class family, I also know what it's like to struggle financially at times. With no savings or financial support from my family, I worked in customer service jobs to pay for college and still had to take out student loans. I earned a master's in public policy and a bachelor's in political science so that I could learn how to make things better for my community through effective legislating and working in government. Over the past year and a half, I worked for U.S. Sen. Gary Peters in his Lansing office serving the communities of Mid-Michigan. Through this experience, I learned what it means to be an effective legislator and how to advocate for my community within a complicated government bureaucracy.

I have the experience, knowledge, passion and grit to represent Michigan's new 74th House District. I believe that running in this new district is a risk worth taking because we deserve real action from our representatives. I am willing to work relentlessly for our communities to make the changes we need to see happen. As your representative, I will be responsive to the needs of every resident in our district, regardless of your race, nationality or party affiliation. I will continue to build relationships with our neighbors, community leaders, members of the party, and those across the aisle so that I can pass meaningful legislation to directly improve the lives of our residents.

Together we will build a brighter future for Michigan. I look forward to earning your vote in the Democratic primary election on Aug 2.

For more information, please visit our website at www.vote4carleeknott.com.

Why I'm running

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

Republicans' co-chairwoman pledges her allegiance to Trump candidates

The functional head of the Michigan Republican Party grabbed firm hold of a third rail in partisan politics this week by endorsing two statewide

candidates running in competitive races for the party's nomination.

MRP Co-Chairwoman Meshawn Maddock — former President Donald Trump's go-between in Michigan — is throwing her support behind Trump-backed secretary of state candidate Kristina Karamo and attorney general candidate Matt DePerno in the run-up to the April 23 GOP endorsement convention.

Let's say this again for emphasis.

A key leader within the MRP is publicly endorsing prior to a competitive convention fight? This, my friends, doesn't happen ... except now in the world of Trump, it does.

Maddock, a former Michigan co-chairperson for Trump's 2016 election and 2020 re-election campaigns, noted that Trump has endorsed both "of these winners" and "Trump is fixing Michigan through these powerful endorsements."

Today's move caught the rest of the Republican field dumbfounded. Party officials always stay away from endorsing in primaries except in cases of incumbency or non-competitive races, like U.S. Senate hopeful John James a couple years ago.

Ron Weiser, who chairs the state GOP, said the endorsement was for Maddock personally and is not reflective of the state party, in general. Weiser, for his part, said he's not endorsing for attorney general or secretary of state because "I don't think it's appropriate for me to do it."

But it's OK for Maddock?

She joined Karamo, DePerno and a handful of other candidates on a private jet owned by gubernatorial candidates Perry Johnson and flew to Mar-a-Lago for a DePerno fundraiser. At the event, Maddock encouraged Karamo, Johnson and the other candidates at the event to take the stage with Trump.

But Tom Leonard, Ryan Berman, Beau LaFave and Cindy Berry — the other candidates for attorney general and secretary of state — weren't invited and didn't attend.

Both DePerno and Karamo launched their campaigns on the belief that widespread voter fraud cost Donald Trump the presidency. Both have since backed away from that contention, adopting instead the company line that there's fraud in Michigan's elections that need to be weeded out.

The move left the traditional wing of the Michigan Republican Party dumbfounded. Weiser was eviscerated by the conservative grassroots when he donated money to the campaign accounts of incumbent members of Congress, like U.S. Rep. Fred Upton, earlier in the cycle.

Now, Maddock is sending around fliers with her pictures arm in arm with DePerno and Karamo.

"Maddock's people are the same ones who complain about 'establishment' favoring one candidate or the other. Hypocrisy," wrote state Rep. Gary Howell on a Facebook post. "This is the kind of thing that led to my decision to refuse to run for the state committee after 10 years of participation."

Asked to respond to this post this morning, pro-Trump state Rep. Steve Carra said, "What I think is hypocrisy is the people like Mitt Romney or John Kasich or Fred Upton who told us with John McCain ... that it was time to unite and get behind him for the General Election, which I did ..."

"But when President Trump comes along and goes against the grain as a fighter who stands up against the Washington machine, they turn their backs on President Trump."

What's going on here is Maddock working to keep her position as Trump's eyes and ears in Michigan.

She and husband, state Rep. Matt Maddock, R-Milford, are connecting their preferred House primary candidates with Trump endorsements to help them sew up a primary.

In exchange, the expectation is that Matt Maddock will earn their votes for House Republican leader if they're successful down the line.

On these particular endorsements, Maddock is not only pledging allegiance to Trump, but urging other Republicans to pledge allegiance, too.

He's not in office anymore, but these tactical maneuvers are all designed to make it clear to Republicans — and anyone else for that matter — that Trump is still in charge.

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



KYLE MELINN

POLITICS

REWIND

NEWS HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE LAST 7 DAYS



By KYLE KAMINSKI

Lansing backs off Russian investments



Schor

The city has joined the state of Michigan — and a host of other municipalities and companies — in ending its investments in Russian-based funds, including those

operated by the Employee Retirement System and the Police and Fire Pension System. Mayor Andy Schor said he recently met Kyiv Mayor Vitali Klitschko to discuss the importance of economic sanctions on Russia and has since instructed his staff to track down and divest from all Russian investments.



Schor drops LEAP for in-house team

In a move to “amplify” economic development in the city, Mayor Andy Schor announced that he will reincorporate the Lansing Economic Development Corp. as the city’s primary economic development agency — a contractual role that’s been filled by the Lansing Economic Area Partnership, which serves as a sort of middleman to subcontract with LEDC. Under the new deal, the city will contract directly with the LEDC and retain the existing staff too. The city will also remain a LEAP member and, as such, retains all the benefits that come with it.

Downtown Lansing shines for Ukraine

The Boji Tower and the Accident Fund Insurance headquarters in downtown Lansing glowed with blue and yellow light displays this week in support of Ukraine amid the Russian invasion.

Crash closes I-96 near Williamston

Eastbound I-96 was closed for about an hour near Dietz Road on early Friday (March 11) morning after the driver of a car lost control and struck a large box truck, which was then forced into a ditch and overturned, authorities said. The driver of the car was taken to a local hospital for minor injuries. Deputies also responded to a dozen other weather-related crashes Friday.

Car insurance refunds en route

The Michigan Catastrophic Claims Association has initiated the transfer of \$3 billion in surplus funds to the state’s auto insurance companies — and eligible policyholders will be sent their \$400-per-vehicle refunds by May 9, state officials announced this week. Some have been sent.

Ingham prosecutor lobbies in Texas

County Prosecuting Attorney Carol Siemon — along with 92 other criminal justice leaders from across the country — filed an amicus brief to support efforts to block the state of Texas from prosecuting and criminalizing parents seeking gender-affirming care for their transgender kids.

Lansing man faces charge in shooting

Matthew David Sutherland, 28, of Lansing, was arraigned on four felonies charges — including assault with intent to murder — after authorities said he evaded a traffic stop in East Lansing on Tuesday (March 8) evening, started shooting at officers (and missing them) as he drove west into Lansing and was eventually arrested in the 8600 block of Carlsbad Lane in Eaton County.

East Lansing: Masks off at City Hall

Following a move made in Lansing this month, the city of East Lansing has also decided to make face masks optional for employees and visitors inside city buildings — including City Hall. Unlike in Lansing where it’s no holds barred, however, East Lansing’s mask requirement will remain in place for congregate settings like Council meetings and other staff meeting rooms, as well as for a variety of other

events and programs put on by city departments. Read the signs.

Stolen gun law passes in Lansing

A new ordinance approved by the City Council requires residents who have had their firearms stolen to report the incident to the Police Department within five days otherwise risk facing a civil infraction and a fine of up to \$500. State law already requires stolen weapons be reported to the Michigan State Police. But since local cops can’t seem to access that data, thefts must now also be reported online at lansingmi.gov/168/Police-Department or by calling 517-483-4600.

Eaton Rapids man charged in crash

David Duane Brown, 57, of Eaton Rapids, was arraigned on felony charges of driving on a suspended license and failing to stop at the scene of a deadly accident after authorities said he struck and killed DeJaven Bernard Hopkins, 13, of Lansing, on West Jolly Road on Nov. 14. Brown turned himself into the Eaton County Sheriff’s Department; his court case continues this month.

Neogen founder donates \$5M to Sparrow

Jim Herbert, the founder of Neogen, and his wife Judith Herbert, donated a record-breaking \$5 million to the Sparrow Foundation — the largest gift in Sparrow Health System history — to establish a fund that advances the diagnosis and treatment of cancer through genomics. Meanwhile, Sparrow Hospital President Dr. Alan Vierling decided to “amicably separate” from the company, a Sparrow spokesman said.

New Amazon warehouse faces delays

The 1-million-square-foot Amazon fulfillment center being built off Mt. Hope Highway won’t open this year as initially planned last fall and will instead delay its launch date to sometime in 2024, according to reports in the Lansing State Journal. If it can stay on schedule, the center will reportedly be Amazon’s eighth fulfillment center in the state and the first in mid-Michigan.



This week’s Eye Candy is the Salvation Army on North Pennsylvania Avenue near Old Town. Erected in 1970, it has an earthy, timeless brick exterior. The design foregoes overhangs in favor of a flat façade, which leaves the stage open for the colorful arched stained-glass windows. You can imagine the warm, moody light pouring in from these east-facing windows on a sunny morning. Stained glass windows are typically framed by a brass, copper, lead, or zinc skeleton. A broken or replaced panel is usually the result of an imperfect skeleton causing uneven pressure on the glass. Fortunately, it looks like this building’s windows are holding up well.

If you look closely, you can see a row of bricks laid vertically about four feet from the base of the building. This is called a soldier course because the vertical bricks resemble a soldier standing at attention. Typically used over doors and windows, or purely for aesthetics, a soldier course can make an otherwise plain façade interesting. This is a perfect application of the practice. The windows are placed high on the façade, which leaves a lot of empty space below them. Installing a soldier course halfway between the windows and the ground gives the façade balance.

— James Knarian

“Eye Candy of the Week” is our look at some of the nicer properties in Lansing. It rotates with Eyesore of the Week and Eye for Design. If you have a suggestion, please e-mail eye@lansingcitypulse.com or call Berl Schwartz at 999-5061.

“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.

ARTS & CULTURE

ART • BOOKS • FILM • MUSIC

Shuffleboard club hopes to shuffle up downtown life

By CHLOE ALVERSON

Later this year, Lansing will make shuffleboard trendy. Or at least that's the plan for the former home of the Lansing City Market.

The building, behind the Lansing Center and along the Grand River, is set to become the Lansing Shuffleboard & Social Club with seven restaurants, an art gallery, a podcast studio and, of course, six shuffleboard courts. Originally, developers had planned for completion by this spring. Now, that date has been pushed to August, approximately.

Last July, City Pulse reported that the owners of Detroit Shipping Co. signed a 40-year lease agreement, which was approved by the City Council. A liquor license was also transferred to the location. Construction started on the space in February, but progress has been slow because of shortages in labor and supplies.

Three of the seven restaurants were announced this month: Browndog, Yeti Kitchen and Osteria Vegana. Browndog is a Northville-based restaurant and "barlor" — a boozy milkshake and craft ice cream joint. Yeti Kitchen is from the same chef as Detroit Shipping Co.'s Momo Cha dumpling shop. It will offer Nepali-inspired street food. The third vendor, Osteria Vegana, is a vegan Italian restaurant that comes from the mind of chef Gianmarco Roselli.

Michigan-born and Italy-raised, Roselli expressed excitement in bringing his cuisine to Lansing in a space with "limitless potential." This will be his first endeavor in Michigan outside of the Metro Detroit area.

"If you give an opportunity to people to get together, to share culture and community through these amazing things, it's beneficial," he said. "I'm happy to branch from the Metro Detroit area to Lansing. I've worked in many other places, but I'm happy to focalize and concentrate all my spirits on one thing."

Much of Roselli's food is inspired by his upbringing just outside of Rome. He emphasized the importance of fresh, healthy and eco-friendly food. Roselli said he can pack flavor and color into



Chloe Alverson/City Pulse

The Lansing Shuffleboard & Social Club will take the space of the former Lansing City Market at 325 City Market Drive.

vegan and vegetarian dishes, all while completely avoiding meat and rarely using dairy products.

"My menu is a party of the right things," Roselli said.

Four more vendors have yet to be announced — and many are hoping to see some local Lansing vendors involved with the project. Co-owners Jonathan Hartzell and Jim Therkalsen also share that hope.

Hartzell developed Detroit Shipping Co., later founding Detroit Rising Development. Therkalsen, who grew up with Hartzell, is a founding partner of Detroit Rising.

Unlike the application process for filling vendor spaces for the Detroit Shipping Co., which Therkalsen said saw "a consistent flow of people applying," it's been more difficult to generate interest

for Lansing Shuffle, even among local chefs.

"We've offered to a few," Hartzell said. "We have an agreement where we'll give a bit of a discounted rent to Lansing locals."

Therkalsen, who works full time for Facebook as a creative director, also works on the branding and marketing for Lansing Shuffle. He runs the website and social media, and he said he's seen comments regarding the tenants of Lansing Shuffle — and its current lack of Lansing-based restaurants.

"My answer is, 'Send them our way,'" Therkalsen said. "We'll meet with anybody. We're open. We're not looking to fill it exclusively with out-of-towners."

He said anybody who's interested in having a location inside Lansing Shuffle can fill out the application on the

Lansing Shuffle website, lansingshuffle.com.

Inspiration for a shuffleboard space, Hartzell said, came after he took a work trip to Orlando and spent an entire evening playing shuffleboard and drinking at the resort where he stayed.

"We were supposed to go out and do all this stuff, but we literally never left that shuffleboard court," Hartzell said. "It was just pushing pucks, drinking drinks and having a great time with all ages. I loved the experience, it was very approachable and fun."

He said that the game is easy to learn and great for all ages. And it's easy to stay connected with others while playing. He's also staying away from the idea of going out, sitting down and eating a big meal at one place. The shuffle club

See SHUFFLE, Page 11



There are plans to expand the current outdoor patio.

courtesy

WANTED: THEATER REVIEWERS

City Pulse, which covers the arts like no one else in Greater Lansing, seeks theater reviewers like no one else too. Can you write? Can you meet deadlines? Do you understand theater? Can you make an informed opinion about a play? Not just, "Oh, boy, I liked that," but why, based on all aspects of a production. We pride ourselves on informed coverage. And we pay — not much, but, hey, better, than nothing, right? We might also ask you to write other theater pieces, such as previews and profiles.

If you're interested, please email our arts editor, Chloe Alverson, at chloe@lansingcitypulse.com. Write a short explanation of why you want to do this and attach any writing samples you might have.

SHUFFLE

from page 10

will be a good stop for food, drinks and fun during a night out downtown — the website describes it as a “diverse, approachable, unique and versatile” experience.

“People now, how they go out — they’re not going to one location,” Hartzell said. “We’re stopping in for the night, we’re parking and we’re bouncing around. That’s the hope.”

Hartzell said he worked closely with the BOND consulting club, a student organization at the University of Michigan that helps businesses solve their toughest problems. Hartzell had trouble deciding on a second location for another food hall after seeing success with Detroit Shipping Co. After a semester-long study, the club narrowed down the top three choices, and Hartzell chose to move forward with development in Lansing.

Therkalsen said that he and Hartzell “always try to be ahead of the curve” in terms of what development projects may be successful. Detroit Shipping Co. was a project that acted as a bridge be-

tween Wayne State University and the downtown area, Therkalsen explained. The location of Lansing Shuffle “felt like a real opportunity” to do the same in the Capital City.

“Here, I think what intrigued me was the location on the riverfront,” he said. “It’s just an awesome location, right along the Riverwalk, Rotary Park, with the stadium and convention center. This feels like the space wasn’t being used, and development is something that could bridge all those different points of interest.”

The 15,000-square-foot entertainment space can hold 500 people. Plans for the ground level feature an open-air courtyard with food stands, a bar and a covered patio. The second level will hold the art gallery, shuffleboard courts and a second bar. There are plans to redesign the exterior patio to give patrons more room. Both Hartzell and Therkalsen said the spot will be great for groups from all over.

“You just have to build a mini melting pot where people from all over — whether it’s tourists and people in town for conventions, locals or Michigan State students. It’s the kind of place where everyone will feel welcome,” Therkalsen said.

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Slowly sucking mystery

Pianist Conrad Tao plumbs minor-key Mozart with LSO

By LAWRENCE COSENTINO

At first blush, it seems a pity that Lansing audiences will not soak up the full variety of musical experience bottled up inside 27-year-old composer and pianist Conrad Tao, the star soloist in Friday's Lansing Symphony Orchestra concert.

Tao's compositions go straight up your spine into the most undefended parts of your psyche. Check out his luminous, soul-wrenching electro-acoustic concerto for piano and iPad, "An Adjustment," commissioned by the Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia and written in the wake of a bout with depression.

Tao, who is based in Manhattan, has had five pieces premiered by the New York Philharmonic with conductor Jaap van Zweden, including "Everything Must Go," an audacious curtain-raiser designed to blend straight into Bruckner's huge Eighth Symphony.

As a pianist, he has played the biggest concertos with top orchestras around the world, most recently the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Cleveland Orchestra, the New York Philharmonic and the Boston Symphony.

He's spent hours huddled in his bedroom on idiosyncratic obsessions like remixing Björk and mashing up Britney Spears' "Everytime" with the theme from "Twin Peaks."

So, he's doing what in Lansing again? Mozart? Unroll those red eyes. If Mozart is OK with the protean genius of Tao, it should be OK with us.

"I do a million things, but I'm still a classical pianist," he said. "We're so lucky to have this enormous concerto repertoire. I'm not interested in trying

to run away from it. This concerto is such incredible music. Maybe I'm just greedy."

The moody, minor key 24th piano concerto is the centerpiece of a concert that

also includes Haydn's 90th Symphony and a suite by Francis Poulenc.

There will likely be an encore, and that could mean almost anything from Elliott Carter to synth pop. However, judging by the way Tao glows when he

talks about the Mozart concerto, we may be getting a nice cross section of his varied gifts, even without an encore.

When Tao started performing Mozart in concert a few years ago, he was inspired by a new wave of performers like Mozart specialist Robert Levin, who "very, very powerfully made the case for Mozart being flesh and blood."

"Levin talks about resisting the urge to make Mozart cute, and that really resonated with me," Tao said. In Tao's view, all of Mozart's music, however elegant and formally refined, is packed with the vivid character and dramatic interplay of opera, a genre in which Mozart soared.

"I fought against the urge to make him a sacred cow, an untouchable genius," Tao said.

More recently, he finds himself "doing as little as possible" when playing Mozart, "seeing if I can feel the shape of the piece coursing through me as I play."

"It's an emotionally ambiguous piece," he said. "There's a lot of darkness, a lot of mystery." The slowly sucking mystery at the heart of the concerto gives the pianist intriguing room for choice.

"Within the first 10 bars, he has taken you around all the 12 tones available to us in the Western tuning system, in this ambiguous, slightly frightening way, using a kind of hollow sonority," he said.



Brantley Gutierrez

Lansing Symphony soloist Conrad Tao, a world-renowned composer and pianist, wants to pull Mozart from his pedestal and make him "flesh and blood."

Tao's younger self would have dialed up the drama, but older, wiser, mid-20s Tao is not so sure.

"Do I signal all of this, or do I try to listen to the music, treat it simply and allow that mystery to emerge from the notes and carry me further?" he asked.

The trick, for Tao, is to find a balance between backing off, in deference to the score, or pushing for "immediate and spontaneous communication."

The question opens up a black box. "It's a different angle on whether or not you can hear the insistent and immediate presence of another person," Tao said.

You may chew on that Zen koan to no avail, but take comfort in knowing that when you get part of Tao, you get all of him — the pianist, the thinker and

even a snippet of the composer and improviser. In January 2021, Tao crossed a big line in a classical pianist's life and improvised his own cadenza (the solo bit just before the end) to Beethoven's Fourth Concerto in a broadcast with the Helsinki Philharmonic. He plans to do the same with Mozart in Lansing next week.

The Helsinki gig was Tao's first post-pandemic-lockdown concerto. He was cadenza-ready, having spent much of the previous year improvising at home.

"In those first few months of lockdown in 2020, the passage of time felt so strange," he said. "The days felt endless and the weeks flew by. Improvising kept me in my body."

It's a skill he plans to develop in coming concerts, even if it means matching wits with the likes of Mozart and Beethoven.

"At some point, you've got to do it," he said. "I was too scared to do it for a long time, but the lockdown period lit a fire under my ass."

Having worked with nearly every major orchestra in the country, Tao still looks forward to visiting mid-sized cities like Lansing.

"I haven't been to every single state, but I've come close, and it's really gratifying to see how many solid orchestras there are," he said.

One of Tao's happiest memories as a composer wasn't in New York or L.A., but in Florida, after writing a difficult piano concerto for the Atlantic Classical Orchestra. It was a wild beast, replete with exotic elements like Cuban percussion and a Chinese gong, but the orchestra nailed it.

"They worked super hard, and it was one of the happiest premiere experiences I've ever had," he said. "In some ways, I feel as if that wasn't because it wasn't 'just another commission' for a large orchestra."

Tao talked with City Pulse last week just a few hours before going on stage to tackle Beethoven's "Emperor" Concerto with another fine regional orchestra, the North Carolina Symphony.

"There's a different energy in the room when you're not playing together every single week," he said. "It sometimes feels more excited. There's certainly less of what I often feel is a posture of jadedness. It's a generalization, but I've noticed that people are happier to be there."

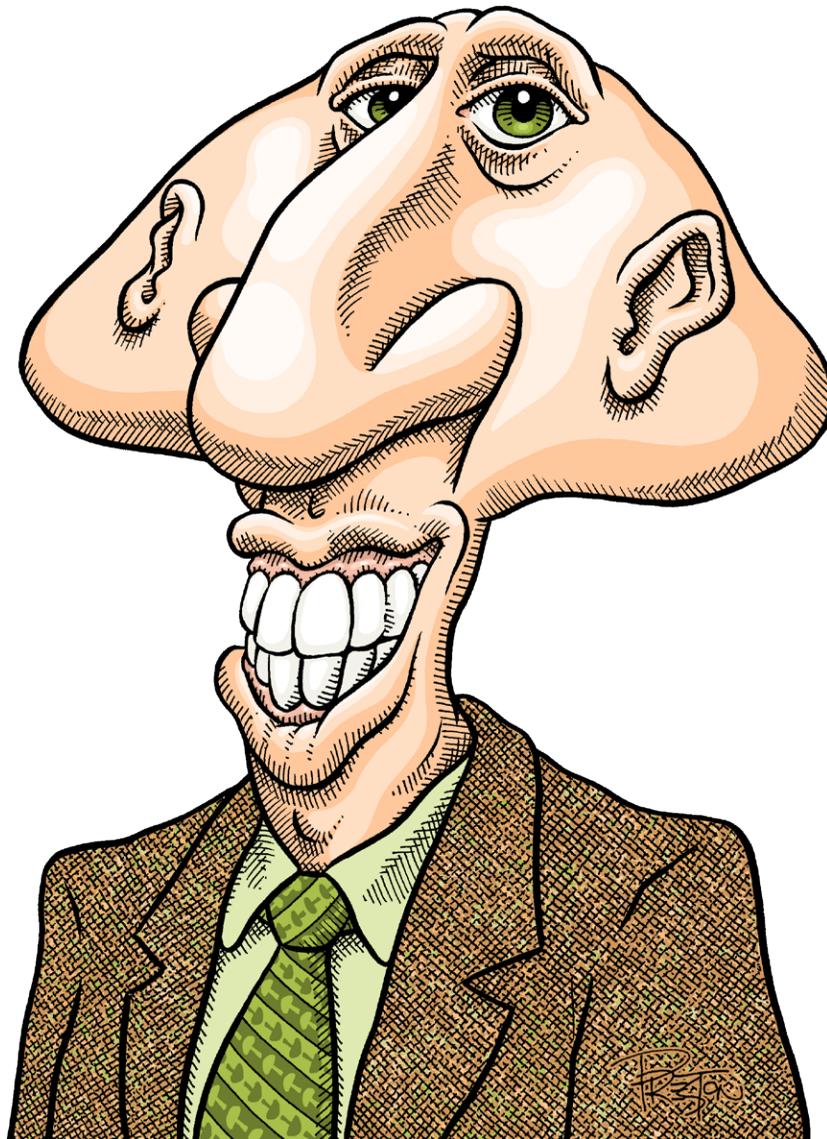
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Is Michigan ready to decriminalize psychedelic drugs?

Activists: Entheogenic plants and 'shrooms pave pathways to recovery

By **KYLE KAMINSKI**

On a muggy summer night in the tropical savanna of northern Peru, Barry Richardson and a contingent of fellow U.S. military veterans sat inside a small, dimly lit hut to prepare to enter the spiritual void — each of them on the same mission, but none quite sure what to expect next.

Richardson sat shirtless and cross legged in a circle while robed “shamans” paced about the straw-roofed hut, burning herbs and chanting an unfamiliar language. One by one, the veterans lined up to sip on small cups of a brown, bitter tasting liquid before they returned to their mats to meditate. About 30 minutes later, each of them was vomiting uncontrollably into plastic buckets positioned nearby just for that purpose. The “purge,” after all, was a key part of the evening’s big ceremony. And the herbal beverage known as ayahuasca doesn’t sit too well on the stomach.

“I wouldn’t call it nausea or vomiting. It was more like this energy inside me that had

to be released. I basically opened my mouth with this loud roar and let it all out,” Richardson recalled. “It was just pure liberation — followed by the most loving and rewarding experience of my life.”

Richardson, 46, of Vicksburg, a small village south of Kalamazoo, still has trouble finding words to describe the six-hour period that followed his vomit session — which isn’t too unusual of the typical hallucinogenic experiences usually triggered by consuming ayahuasca. Like many other psychedelic drugs, the bitter brew (made from the stem and bark of a tropical plant native to South America) is known primarily for its ability to induce profound visions and new feelings.

Those aren’t always the easiest stories to drag back into reality.

Richardson recalled lying outstretched in a trance while his mind floated to another dimension, one filled with intense new feelings of empathy, self-love and understanding. At one point, a vision of “Mother Ayahuasca” presented Richardson with an infant ver-

sion of himself. He also remembered kissing himself — a lot. Back on Earth, however, he was just lying on the ground.

The alkaloid DMT — dimethyltryptamine— is typically responsible for ayahuasca’s potent psychoactive effects, which can include intense euphoria; a profound sense of connectivity to the universe; hallucinations in the form of “visions” that often include female deities; an altered perception of space and time; and, of course, plenty of violent puking to kick off the adventure.

Richardson and his veteran friends turned to the substance in 2016 in search of new ways to heal old traumas, kick addictions and improve their mental health. Reintegration back to citizen life outside of the military was the breaking point in a life already filled with repressed trauma, Richardson explained. One of his earliest childhood memories was his father assaulting his mother; depression and “near full-blown psychosis” led to drug addiction and suicide attempts.

See Shrooms, Page 14

SHROOMS

from page 13

Studies have shown some success in ayahuasca's ability to help people to recover from alcohol and drug abuse, as well as stave off other dependence-related mental health conditions, but it's rarely a cure-all. The experience, which research also shows to be relatively safe from a toxicological standpoint, is often instead viewed as a launch point to more introspective change.

"When I started using psychedelic substances, I started to realize that I didn't want to be this aggressive person anymore. I didn't want to fight with people. I didn't want to push people away," he said. "I just couldn't piece it together, but after these experiences, I realized that."

Detailed scientific literature on psychedelics like ayahuasca is relatively limited, at least for now, because possession of the substances is punishable by felony charges and prison sentences in the United States. It's why Richardson and the veterans held their therapy sessions in Peru — an experience that later appeared as an online documentary titled "Soldiers of the Vine."

"It was a total rebirth," Richardson said. "There was a lot of self-love in that moment and for me. Ayahuasca is really only about self-love. I was able to rebuild and find a way to love myself."

Bringing it home

This week, now about six years and eight ayahuasca trips later, Richardson is set on opening new psychedelic doors for those searching for alternative remedies to their mental ailments as the co-founder of the Southwest Michigan Psychedelic Network — a community of like-minded people who discuss their experiences with psychedelic substances on Facebook and advocate alongside more politically oriented groups like Decriminalize Nature to bring about reforms.

The group has only grown since the state of Oregon and cities like Ann Arbor and Detroit have made moves to decriminalize psychoactive psychedelic drugs like ayahuasca, as well as other mind-bending natural substances like "magic mushrooms" that contain psilocin and psilocybin.

Richardson said more and more Michigan residents are turning to psychedelics to help "rewire" their brains and tackle a variety of underlying issues like PTSD, anxiety, depression and drug addiction. And with a little help from a statewide ballot initiative that is set to begin circulating for signatures as early as this month, he hopes to bring those trippy experiences to the masses.

"For me, I'm all about making sure these medicines are available for people and building a community around that," Richardson said. "You can't hide the truth that these medicines are helping people. It's decriminalization that will help build resources and support around them."

The proposal, titled the Michigan Initiative for Community Healing, is expected to be approved (now for a second time because of technicality) this week by the state's Board of Canvassers. And it aims to make Michigan the second state in the nation to steeply decriminalize the use and possession of all natural plants and mushrooms. Among

them: both ayahuasca and DMT; "magic mushrooms" that contain hallucinogenic psilocybin and psilocin; various cacti such as peyote and others that contain the dissociative mescaline; and ibogaine from the roots of the *Tabernaemontana* iboga plant.

The proposal calls for a rewrite of the state law that dictates the penalties for the use and possession of those substances, notching them all down from four-year felony charges to a misdemeanor punishable by a maximum fine of only \$100 with no possibility of jail time upon conviction. Only certified religious groups and hospitals would be able to sell and distribute them, but individuals would also be free to cultivate their own and "give away" their harvest.

The board is expected to approve the petition language on Friday (March 18), which would give organizers fewer than three months to collect the 340,000 signatures needed to get the measure on the November ballot — an admittedly steep hill that optimistic activists are ready to climb.

"We've had some delays, and that's frustrating but we're still going to push really hard to get as many signatures as possible," said Kat Ebert, a Michigan State University alumnus who founded the campus chapter of Students for Sensible Drug Policy and plans to help circulate petitions. "I'd say I'm feeling very optimistic. The hardest part is going to be getting the signatures. Once we have that, I have 1,000% faith in our ability to get this passed once it actually hits the ballot."

The 340,000-signature benchmark represents 8% of the numbers of voters in the last gubernatorial election, the legal threshold to formally amend state law. If those are gathered and deemed acceptable, the amendments could be adopted by the Legislature or make their way directly to the November ballot to be decided by the public.

"This is an initiative by the people and for the people," Ebert said. "It is all about keeping it out of corporate, capitalist hands and protecting people's rights to grow their own plants and mushrooms. Really, it's also a big step toward bodily autonomy and allowing individual choice."

A Nassar survivor's story

As a survivor of convicted child rapist and ex-MSU sports doctor Larry Nassar, Ebert said she also used an assortment of psychedelic drugs, particularly LSD, to help recover from the trauma. She said those experiences helped her



Barry Richardson meditates near his "purge" bucket before an ayahuasca ceremony in Peru.

Courtesy

regain confidence and find happiness during one of the darkest periods of her life — and end an unhealthy relationship with pharmaceutical drugs.

One particularly memorable night on LSD helped lead to a real breakthrough, she explained.

"With everything they had prescribed me, I was never happy. It was like I was this zombie. With psychedelics, I could feel something again," she said. "This trip forced me to zoom out from my own little world and my own problems and look at everything from a bigger picture perspective."

Ebert said she has since used several other psychedelics — including mushrooms, DMT and ayahuasca — as a tool to find new introspective paths to self-recovery. With each trip, she noticed her social anxiety waning, as well as the shadows of her past trauma, she explained.

"They're not all healing experiences, but I think they're all learning experiences," she said. "I was very socially anxious in high school. These made me realize: Who cares what people think? It really helped me to take the power away from other people and hold onto it. I feel most authentically and genuinely myself when I'm in an elevated state on a psychedelic drug. It's then I feel most connected to myself, my body, the people around me, the energy, the universe."

Since her first trip, Ebert said she has helped guide at least a dozen people through their first experiences with a wide array of psychedelic drugs — so many that she joked that perhaps she was a shaman in a past life. Decriminalizing the substances will only make it easier to research their potential ther-

See Shrooms, Page 15



Courtesy

Indigenous "shamans" often chanted while Barry Richardson and his friends were in the throes of one of three different ayahuasca ceremonies over a 10-day period they spent in Peru in 2016.



Courtesy

Barry Richardson and his fellow U.S. military veterans were put on a strict diet of mostly herbal medicines ahead of the three ayahuasca ceremonies during their 10-day stay in Peru in 2016.

SHROOMS

from page 14

peutic benefits and create new opportunities for treatment, she contended.

Ebert added: “I think it’s important to note that psychedelic drugs, while they can be fun, beautiful and amazing, can also be hard work. These aren’t miracle drugs. You can’t just take them and be better. They help, but if you want to actually heal, then you have to put in work.”

Myc Williams, the co-director of the Michigan chapter of Decriminalize Nature, outlined to City Pulse a 10-point plan on why voters should hop aboard the ‘shroom train this year and decriminalize psychedelic drugs. Beyond the therapeutic potential, he also cited basic American liberties and personal freedoms. Put simply: Cops have much better stuff to do than worry about all-natural plants with little to no potential for addiction or overdose, he said.

“The drug war has been an epic failure in terms of sending people to prison — often with life-changingly long sentences — for simple possession and from choices made at a younger age,” Williams said. “All that has done is take away opportunities to recover and get ahead.”

Decriminalization on the move

Denver became the first city in the country to decriminalize magic mushrooms in 2019. Since then, Seattle, Washington, D.C., and a handful of



Courtesy

Decriminalization activists Kat Ebert (right) and Myc Williams at last year’s EntheoFest in Ann Arbor.



Courtesy

Crowds gathered at the University of Michigan for EntheoFest in Ann Arbor last year.

smaller cities enacted similar measures for ‘shrooms and other psychedelics — as state of Oregon, where its voters approved a measure to legalize plants and mushrooms and decriminalize all other drugs across the state in 2020.

In Michigan, the cities of Detroit and Ann Arbor have also made some strides in decriminalizing entheogenic plants and mushrooms. Last year’s voter initiative in Detroit passed by 61%. A similar psychedelic decriminalization shift in Ann Arbor was also extended last year to all of Washtenaw County under a broad prosecutorial policy against charging for entheogenic plants.

“The sky has not fallen,” Prosecutor Eli Savitt confirmed to City Pulse.

“Our community still exists. We really have not seen any adverse consequences from these changes here. And truthfully, it has been a non-issue for law enforcement. It’s not like we had a bunch of cases, so I really don’t think it would hurt to have this be more of a standardized approach statewide.”

Data shows that psychedelic drugs are a bit of a non-issue in Ingham County too. While studies from the University of Michigan show a rising nationwide trend in the use of hallucinogens like LSD and ‘shrooms, the psychedelic caseload is virtually nonexistent in Greater Lansing.

Ingham County Prosecutor Carol Siemon’s office, for example, was only able to track down nine criminal cases that involved psilocybin mushrooms in the last seven years — none in the last four. And most also involved weapons or more dangerous drugs like methamphetamine.

“In most of these cases, police aren’t actively investigating people for using or possessing psilocybin,” according to an email from Scott Hughes, a spokesman for Siemon’s office.

Siemon said she doesn’t have a particular policy or stance on charging for those drugs, except to keep most small-time controlled substance cases focused on treatment and recovery

over punishment. She noted, however, she “wouldn’t likely oppose” psychedelic decriminalization.

Last September, State Sen. Jeff Irwin, D-Ann Arbor, co-sponsored state legislation that had attempted to accomplish many of the same goals of this year’s petition. If that bill hadn’t been abandoned in a committee by Republican lawmakers last year, it would’ve legalized the therapeutic use, possession and the non-commercial cultivation of magic mushrooms, DMT and mescaline.

“There is no value in arresting, prosecuting, or jailing people who use psychedelic plants or fungi,” Irwin reiterated in an email last week. “These substances have medicinal value, they have religious and cultural significance, and they have a very low likelihood of abuse.”

Irwin also acknowledged that his bill was dead this week — making this year’s voter initiative even more critical in bringing an overdue end to the state’s war on drugs, he explained.

Irwin added: “It is a good proposal and I support it. I look forward to signing it, and it is probably the only path to decriminalizing entheogenic plants and fungi in the short term. I also think the War on Drugs is the granddaddy of failed, big-government programs. We should end the war.”

WHAT THE BALLOT INITIATIVE WOULD DO

In addition to decriminalizing all entheogenic plants and mushrooms, the Michigan Initiative for Community Healing also seeks to amend state law to reduce the penalties for all other drugs. The amendments would shift down criminal charges involving possession of fewer than 25 grams of Schedule I and II (like LSD, cocaine, codeine, ecstasy, fentanyl, heroin and morphine) from a four-year felony charge to a misdemeanor punishable by up to 93 days in jail and a \$250 fine.

Read the full proposed ballot initiative in a link attached to this story at lansingcitypulse.com.



Courtesy

Ayahuasca vine combines with native chacruna leaf, or Psychotria viridis, to form the ayahuasca brew — which primarily relies on the formation of DMT to induce its hallucinogenic effects.

Expecting? Check out Expecting Parents Organization

By **CHELSEA PHILLIPS**

Expectant Parents Organization, or EPO, is a community-based nonprofit that has been serving Mid-Michigan families through pregnancy and beyond for over 70 years. The organization, in partnership with Sparrow Hospital, provides education about childbirth and parenting so families can feel prepared and confident in taking care of their newborns.

Director Krista Zielinski Fuerst said her goal is to “have an impact on the infant and maternal mortality rates within the Mid-Michigan area.” She believes that providing prenatal education to families will make a positive difference in birth outcomes.

Board member Melissa Ball said one way she tries to have an impact is by speaking with those who have given birth in the area and listening to their experiences.

“We need to be aware of even the little things that can impact a family’s birth,” Ball said.

Despite the collaboration with Sparrow, classes are open to anyone, regardless of where they are planning to deliver. The organization previously offered tours of Sparrow Hospital’s Labor and Delivery Birthing Center, as well as its Mother Baby Center. Since the pandemic, these in-person tours are on hold. A virtual tour of the floor is still available to view from Sparrow Health System.

EPO offers a variety of childbirth and parenting classes, including one called



the “Best Newborn Care Class Ever.” The classes educate parents and families about labor and delivery, caring for an infant and even breastfeeding.

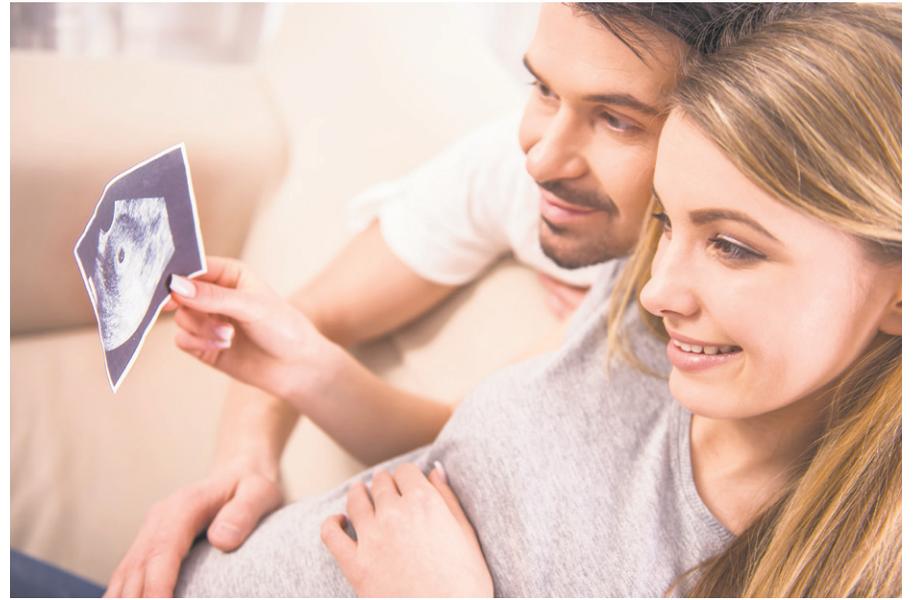
Zielinski Fuerst said that they are looking to add two classes, one for grandparents and one for big siblings. She added that EPO is considering more infant care classes, including massage and sign lan-

Expectant Parents Organization

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epobabylansing@gmail.com

guage. Most classes are in-person, though they do offer a few virtual options. The classes are priced anywhere from \$55 to \$120, which covers the cost of two participants. Some insurance agencies cover the classes, but scholarships may be available to low-income families.

The organization also offers continued support through Capital Area Baby Café — a free drop-in breastfeeding



center with internationally board-certified lactation consultants from Next Generation Lactation Service.

Ball said that EPO is just the “first stop” in making connections with resources like Capital Area Baby Café and other families in the area.

Car seat inspections are available free-of-charge through EPO. The inspections, which are done by child

passenger safety technicians, require pre-registration. Inspections are on the second Monday each month.

EPO occasionally reaches out to the public for in-kind donations of baby materials for classes, but the director said that they are always looking for donations for their scholarship program. An upcoming fundraiser through Blaze Pizza is also in the works.



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THE MICHIGAN
MOONSHOT

Memories from Michigan's 'original' Hash Bash — in Lansing



Ex-Lansing resident smiles back on lesser-known protest

Next month marks the 50th anniversary of Hash Bash, a now-famous statewide cannabis holiday that was first assembled on April 1, 1972, at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor.

But while Ann Arbor always gets (and rightfully deserves) plenty of credit for its role in advancing can-

nabis reforms in Michigan, I'm here this week to mark a lesser-known blip on the timeline and make a case for the city of Lansing as the home of the state's original Hash Bash.

Let me explain.

A few months before that iconic 1972 event in Ann Arbor, famed activist John Sinclair had been released from prison after the Michigan Supreme Court declared unconstitutional the law that was used to craft a 10-year prison sentence for offering to sell two

joints to an undercover cop.

The ruling, an obvious win for Sinclair, was also pretty sweet for the rest of the stoner public.

Because the state laws that criminalized the possession and use of marijuana were deemed unconstitutional, the whole state — if only for a few short weeks — was stuck in this strange sort of legislative limbo where it had become totally legal to both possess and smoke pot.

Hash Bash was both a celebration of

Sinclair's release as well as a protest of soon-to-be enacted replacement laws that would go on to make pot illegal again for a few more decades.

About two weeks earlier, however, was a lesser-known but no-less-important milestone in state cannabis history, what some now affectionately remember as the state's original Hash Bash — right on the front steps of the State Capitol building in downtown Lansing on March 15, 1972.

A reader who said he participated in the event, Stephen Magnotta, first brought this little slice of cannabis history to my attention last month as the 50-year anniversary of the event approached. And as much as we both love Ann Arbor, we thought Lansing deserved some credit here too.

About three dozen "young people" — including Magnotta — arrived on the Capitol steps that afternoon to smoke "what they said was marijuana," the Lansing State Journal reported. After getting stoned in the sun, they eventually meandered inside the Rotunda. Some kept puffing down pink and yellow hand-rolled joints. Magnotta remembers it being some really crappy weed.

"We're not going to overreact to it," a Michigan State Police officer told a State Journal reporter at the scene. "You and I both know there isn't enough real stuff there to stick in your eye."

Magnotta said he came to the Capitol that afternoon after hearing about the gathering from his stoner friends. There was no formal sponsor or leader, though one of Magnotta's friends wore an Uncle Sam costume and somehow became seen as the group leader as a result, he said.

"After some time outside smoking, most of the crowd moved into the Capitol Rotunda and passed around more joints, enjoying some of that era's lovely brown weed under that grand stained-glass sky, surrounded by police," Magnotta said. "It was surreal to be standing 2 feet from a row of cops while smoking pot, and then getting high under the stained-glass rotunda."

Magnotta said Lansing was in a different era back then; long-haired hip-

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| | |
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| All Cheef | Sozo Apricot |
| Lansing North | Lansing South |
| Sozo Bee Cookies | Pure Options Koko Puffs |

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coverage also didn't include pictures. It's unclear whether anyone took photos at all — making documenting this milestone a bit more challenging than Hash Bash. But before you pack up for your annual trip to Ann Arbor next month, don't forget that Lansing played a pretty interesting role in cannabis activism history too. You've just never heard about it.

Added Magnotta: "I love Ann Arbor, but one thing it shouldn't claim is the first Hash Bash. That moment in pot history happened here in the Capital City, in the belly of the beast that had just passed a reform law that still sent thousands of people to jail for simple possession of a plant."

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@lansing-citypulse.com.

LANSTERDAM

from page 17

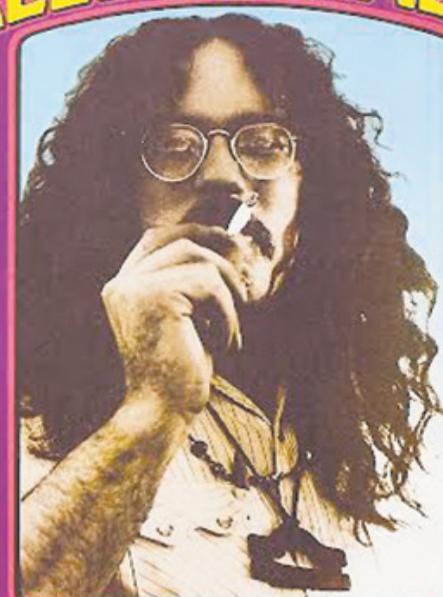
pies would get beat up for being in the wrong place at the wrong time. Culture wars often got physical, he remembered.

"Back then, you could get sucker-punched by a redneck just for having long hair," he recalled. "We wanted to publicly demonstrate to people in power how harmless marijuana was, during that legal period. So, the real first Hash Bash was actually not in Ann Arbor. It was this event — where we all stood up right in the home of the legislators who were still making cannabis illegal."

Magnotta said he and his friends, unfortunately, didn't take any photos that evening. The Lansing State Journal's

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CRISLER ARENA

A handbill advertising the John Sinclair Freedom Rally, a protest and concert that was organized in 1971 at the Crisler Arena in Ann Arbor. The event was in response to activist John Sinclair's 10-year prison sentence for possessing two joints of marijuana. John Lennon took up his cause.

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Harold is sweet older gentleman who is well behaved, likes an occasional walk, and is great with kids and cats. He's in foster so call ahead to set up an introduction.



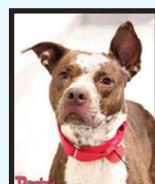
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Cizeta Cizeta is a cute little tortie! She's friendly and outgoing and is good with kids, cats, and dogs and should do well in just about any home.

In memory of Rodica's cats

Favorite Things

Ed Emmerich and his original Sega Genesis



When Ed Emmerich isn't suspended from Greater Lansing's tallest buildings doing high-rise window washing jobs, he's playing blistering guitar solos with his hardcore rock bands. But when it's time to relax, Emmerich likes to play some old school Sega Genesis games. Emmerich shared with City Pulse how he repaired his original unit and why it's his favorite thing.



A recent project of mine has been getting my old Sega Genesis working again. There's a lot of digital emulators that have come out in the past 10 years or so. But they don't quite reproduce the sound the same way as the original Genesis hardware.

One of the reasons I wanted to fix it was the nostalgia of playing for hours with my brother. It was also a gateway to many things I am passionate about — music, art and sports. When I was young, it really opened the door for me, so it was cool to get it working again.

A lot of classic Genesis games have been re-released and touched up. But the games that weren't wildly successful often don't get remastered. The only real way to play them is with cartridges on an actual old school console. My particular Genesis system is kind of weird, it's still connected to a Sega CD, which I highly doubt even works. The CDs I used to have did not survive the

past 20 years, so I haven't really messed with it.

There's been so many advances in technology since the Genesis first came out, I had to purchase an adapter that converts the original analog signal into HDMI. The games look and sound great on a modern TV. My favorite games are the Sonic series; those games' soundtracks are so sweet. That was a big introduction to music for me, beyond when you're 10 years old and you just listen to what your parents listen to. I wasn't going to record stores; I didn't know what cool people were listening to.

I also love the "Jurassic Park: Lost World Sega Genesis" game. It was one of the last games that came out on the console, so it was ahead of its time in a lot of ways. It's a really cool co-op, top-down shooter. It has more complex missions than your typical side scrolling video game. The other big ones for me were "RBI Baseball '94" and "Bill Walsh College Football."

I never owned a Nintendo system until the Gamecube. I had friends who owned the Super Nintendo and the N64, but I never bought into the fan wars between the consoles. I thought both systems were awesome and had their own sweet games. Genesis is just what I had. I guess I prefer it just because I know it better.

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

Making a community sweeter with Sweet Encounter

By CHLOE ALVERSON

When Nikki Thompson Frazier greets her customers at Sweet Encounter, she asks how she can make their day sweeter and shares a sweet smile.

Thompson Frazier started Sweet Encounter in 2015 after her daughters, Melia and Madison, were diagnosed with food allergies. The treats at Sweet Encounter, which recently moved into the Knapp's Centre in downtown Lansing, are made with allergies or preferences in mind.

"We are a gourmet, gluten free bakery, so everything we do is gluten free," Thompson Frazier said. "I like to say that we have the best gluten free eats, treats and classes — we also do classes and that's what distinguishes us, as well." Baked goods are also free of peanuts.

The classes at Sweet Encounter range from beginner cookie or cake decorating to more advanced classes, like baking macarons. Thompson Frazier said that the macaron class "always sells out."

Aside from the array of desserts — "cakes, cupcakes, cookies, brownies, you



Courtesy

Sweet Encounter Bakery & Cafe celebrated its grand opening in the Knapp's Centre this month.

In the street-level, 2,500-square-foot space, Thompson Frazier has plenty of room for classes and her customers have plenty of room to comfortably enjoy their treats. But Thompson Frazier has more plans for the space.

"Our biggest plan for the space right now is to create a big table so that people can gather together," she said. "We're going to encourage families to come, sign up. We're going to make a meal, break bread together, sit at the table and have conversations. And, hopefully, grow and develop the community."

Community has become very important to Thompson Frazier, especially since the pandemic. She wants her cafe and bakery to be a space where people can come together, have conversations and get to know each other. Her hope is that people will "realize that there's more we have in common than is different."



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Closed Sunday & Monday

name it" — Sweet Encounter also offers quiche, breakfast sandwiches, soups and, soon, salads, Thompson Frazier said.

Before moving in February, Sweet Encounter was in the Middle Village Micro Market and the Allen Neighborhood Center. Thompson Frazier won the "Lansing Built to Last" competition last year, earning her a year rent-free in Knapp's Centre space.

When Polynesian palaces captivated the Motor City

By **BILL CASTANIER**

The werewolf of London isn't the only one who loved tiki bars, as Warren Zevon crooned in his famous song of the same name.

In the 1960s Detroit was home to several tiki bars with exotic names like Hawaiian Gardens, the Tropics, Chin Tiki, Mauna Loa and — of course — Trader Vic's. And, yes, you could get a piña colada, along with other exotic drinks like the Scorpion, the Volcano and the legendary Mai Tai.

Of course, rum was a common ingredient of tiki bars, along with kitschy decorations, waterfalls, pearl divers, fake volcanoes, sarongs and lots of bamboo. Guarding the entrance to tiki bars was the tiki figurine, which took lots of artistic license from bar to bar. As you entered the faux tropical bars, you often would cross a bamboo bridge to dining room, where you would order drinks and food from lavish menus.

Today, those unique trinkets like tiki mugs, menus, swizzle sticks, menus and postcards are highly sought after by tiki collectors worldwide.

Detroit's Renee Tadey is one of those dedicated collectors. For the last five years, Tadey has been collecting tiki items to display in her home, along with other mid-century items. Tadey took her obsession one step further and recently wrote a book, "Detroit Tiki: A History of Polynesian Palaces & Tropical Cocktails."

"I have a great appreciation for Detroit history, but tiki culture is my main interest — they are legendary," she said

in a recent interview.

Tadey spent several years researching and locating photographs and artwork from local collectors and former employees and owners of Detroit tiki bars. She said it was easy to find memorabilia from collectors, but finding personal photographs from those who frequented the tiki bars are as rare as the Chin Tiki mug her husband snagged for her last Christmas.

The author divides her book into categories that give a historic view of tiki bars, then she looks at specific Detroit area tiki bars. In telling the history, she dispels the theory that tiki bars were started by returning army GIs who had spent time in the South Pacific.

The first tiki bar in the U.S. can be traced to California in 1933, the year Prohibition ended, when Donn Beach opened Don the Beachcomber in Hollywood. Shortly after, Victor Bergeron opened Trader Vic's in Oakland, California, helping fuel tiki culture with the invention of the Mai Tai in 1944.

Bar owners who had never seen anything west of California borrowed designs from the flush of new movies and television series set in exotic isles, like "Blue Hawaii," "Hawaiian Eye" and "Hawaii Five-O."

Tadey begins her journey with a look at Detroit's first tiki bar, The Tropics, which opened in 1941 in the Hotel Wolverine. Tadey quotes a newspaper article detailing the lush, tropic interior: "Giant palm tree and bamboo huts, throbbing drums and gay colors, waitresses in sarongs and Hawaiian leis ... lent

atmosphere to this club which bid fair to be the gathering place with those with the South Seas on their minds." Tadey discovered that the Tropics had a bandstand that rose three stories like an elevator. It was the definition of class in Detroit.

Tadey also details the arrival of the Hawaiian Gardens in 1960 in nearby Hollywood, a planned community that started with the massive tiki restaurant and bar. The Gardens was a product of a dreamer and inventor, Fred Barton, who relocated to Detroit to be near the auto industry after inventing the popular auto radiator leak preventer Bar's Leaks. The Gardens' entrance was marked with a gigantic wooden outrigger canoe and bar-restaurant could seat 1,200.

Not to be outdone, the Chin Tiki opened in downtown Detroit in 1966 and soon became the city's most popular

tiki nightclub. Marvin Chin, the restaurant's founder, was a plant manager at Ford Motor Co. He was also a master showman.

Visitors entered the grand entrance marked with giant tiki torches, and every square inch inside was covered with tiki art. Although Chin Tiki closed in 1980, it arose again when in 2002 it was used for several scenes in Eminem's film "8 Mile." In 2009, the property was sold to the Illich family organization, Olympia Development LLC, and demolished.

Detroit's last notable tiki bar, Mauna Loa, opened to great acclaim in 1967, underwritten to the tune of \$2.25 million by investors led by Detroit professional athletes, including Al Kaline, the book says. By 1971, according to the book, the restaurant went bankrupt. The exquisite site, marked by a large outdoor lagoon and massive thatched hut, went "aloha," as Tadey writes.

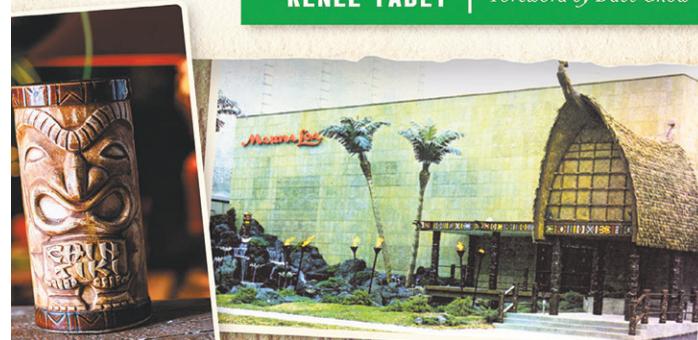
At the height of the tiki era, most major cities had some version of a tiki bar, Tadey said. Lansing's own, the Boom Boom Room, opened in 1960. Its closure some 25 years later left devotees of its signature drink, The Flaming Orgy, saddened.



DETROIT TIKI

A History of Polynesian Palaces & Tropical Cocktails

RENEE TADEY | Foreword by Dave Chow



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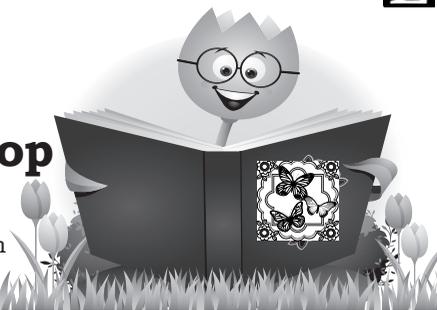
"It was one of those March days when the sun shines hot and the wind blows cold, when it is summer in the light and winter in the shade."
— Charles Dickens

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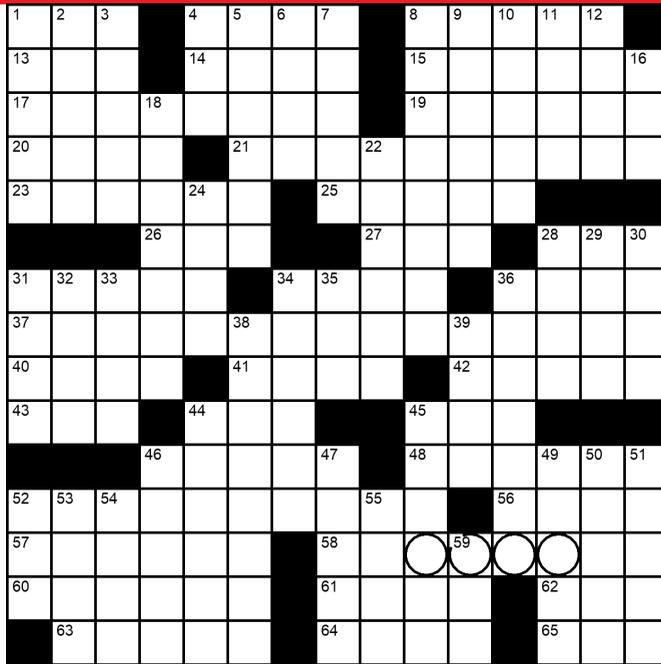
By Matt Jones

"It's In a Name"--for all across theme answers.

by Matt Jones

Across

- 1. British men's mag
- 4. Mennen shaving brand
- 8. Dangly throat bit
- 13. Future school members
- 14. Pig's feed
- 15. What "atterizar" means, at Ibiza Airport
- 17. Late Canadian wrestler and brother of Bret
- 19. When many work shifts start
- 20. Soup at sushi bars
- 21. Wesley's portrayal on "Star Trek: The Next Generation"
- 23. "___ in St. Louis" (1944 Garland film)



- 25. Battle cry against Cobra Commander
- 26. Acted as guide
- 27. Was a candidate
- 28. Dungeons & Dragons humanoid
- 31. "The Good, the Bad and the Ugly" composer Morricone
- 34. ___ Bop (child-friendly versions of hit songs)
- 36. Squished circle
- 37. Louisiana band named for the genre it played
- 40. "The Sopranos" actress Falco
- 41. Atmospheric prefix for sphere
- 42. Had all rights to
- 43. In medias ___
- 44. Disco ___ ("Simpsons" character)
- 45. Indian state formerly ruled by Portugal
- 46. Excessively

- theatrical
- 48. Like library materials
- 52. Star of multiple self-titled sitcoms
- 56. "To Sir With Love" singer
- 57. Cold sore-fighting brand
- 58. Father of Pocahontas (and example of the hidden word in the theme answers--this one just happens to be consecutive)
- 60. Fasten again
- 61. Legal appeal
- 62. "We ___ the Champions"
- 63. Country type
- 64. Himalayan monster
- 65. Big letters in gossip

- 4. Pokemon protagonist
- 5. Far from perfect
- 6. Television's Spelling
- 7. In a befitting way
- 8. Team that moved from New Orleans in 1979
- 9. Determine by ballot
- 10. Arm bones
- 11. Cafe au ___
- 12. A as in A.D.
- 16. Recliner room
- 18. Dissimilar, say
- 22. It comes before "the wise" or "your mother"
- 24. Cat call
- 28. Roast roaster
- 29. See who can go faster
- 30. Ball of dirt

- 2021's "Zola" (and granddaughter of Elvis Presley)
- 35. Actor Ziering
- 36. Juice brand bought by Coca-Cola, then discontinued in 2020
- 38. Reach the limit
- 39. "The Sun Is Also a Star" author Nicola
- 44. Fleetwood Mac singer Nicks
- 45. Stood out in the rain, say
- 46. Move stealthily
- 47. Like some small dogs
- 49. ___ sea (cruising)
- 50. It might help you get up
- 51. Oscar of "The Office"
- 52. Candy unit
- 53. Don't ignore
- 54. Czech Republic's second-largest city
- 55. Walk-on, for one
- 59. "Bali ___" (song in "South Pacific")

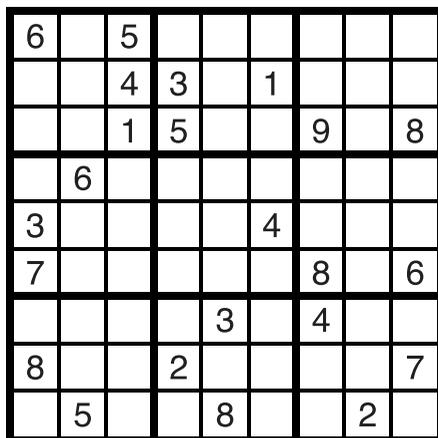
- Down**
- 1. Psychoanalyst Erich
 - 2. "Deal Or No Deal" host Mandel
 - 3. 1980s attorney general Edwin

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Answers on page 23

SUDOKU

Intermediate



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 23

Free Will Astrology

By Rob Breznsky

March 16-22, 2022

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Singer, dancer, and comedian Sammy Davis Jr. disliked the song "The Candy Man," but he recorded it anyway, heeding his advisors. He spent just a brief time in the studio, finishing his vocals in two takes. "The song is going straight to the toilet," he complained, "pulling my career down with it." Surprise! It became the best-selling tune of his career, topping the Billboard charts for three weeks. I suspect there could be a similar phenomenon (or two!) in your life during the coming months, Aries. Don't be too sure you know how or where your interesting accomplishments will arise.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): I love author Maya Angelou's definition of high accomplishment, and I recommend you take steps to make it your own in the coming weeks. She wrote, "Success is liking yourself, liking what you do, and liking how you do it." Please note that in her view, success is not primarily about being popular, prestigious, powerful, or prosperous. I'm sure she wouldn't exclude those qualities from her formula, but the key point is that they are all less crucial than self-love. Please devote quality time to refining and upgrading this aspect of your drive for success.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): "I'm not fake in any way," declared Gemini actor Courteney Cox. On the face of it, that's an amazing statement for a Gemini to make. After all, many in your tribe are masters of disguise and shapeshifting. Cox herself has won accolades for playing a wide variety of characters during her film and TV career, ranging from comedy to drama to horror. But let's consider the possibility that, yes, you Geminis can be versatile, mutable, and mercurial, yet also authentic and genuine. I think this specialty of yours could and should be extra prominent in the coming weeks.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): "Sometimes I prayed for Baby Jesus to make me good, but Baby Jesus didn't," wrote author Barbara Kingsolver about her childhood approach to self-improvement. Just because this method failed to work for her, however, doesn't mean it won't work for others. In saying that, I'm not implying you should send out appeals to Baby Jesus. But I suggest you call on your imagination to help you figure out what influences may, in fact, boost your goodness. It's an excellent time to seek help as you elevate your integrity, expand your compassion, and deepen your commitment to ethical behavior. It's not that you're deficient in those departments; just that now is your special time to do what we all need to do periodically: Make sure our actual behavior is in rapt alignment with our high ideals.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Leo classicist and author Edith Hamilton specialized in the history of ancient Greece. The poet Homer was one of the most influential voices of that world. Hamilton wrote, "An ancient writer said of Homer that he touched nothing without somehow honoring and glorifying it." I love that about his work, and I invite you to match his energy in the coming weeks. I realize that's a lot to ask. But according to my reading of the astrological omens, you will indeed have a knack for honoring and glorifying all you touch.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Starhawk, one of my favorite witches, reminds us that "sexuality is the expression of the creative life force of the universe. It is not dirty, nor is it merely 'normal'; it is sacred. And sacred can also be affectionate, joyful, pleasurable, passionate, funny, or purely animal." I hope you enjoy an abundance of such lushness in the coming weeks, Virgo. It's a favorable time in your astrological cycle for synergizing eros and spirituality. You have poetic license to express your delight about being alive with imaginative acts of sublime love.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): In 1634, English poet John Milton coined the phrase "silver lining." It has become an idiom referring to a redemptive aspect of an experience that falls short of expectations. Over 350 years later, American author Arthur

Yorinks wrote, "Too many people miss the silver lining because they're expecting gold." Now I'm relaying his message to you. Hopefully, my heads-up will ensure that you won't miss the silver lining for any reason, including the possibility that you're fixated on gold.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): "This is the most profound spiritual truth I know," declares author Anne Lamott. "That even when we're most sure that love can't conquer all, it seems to anyway. It goes down into the rat hole with us, in the guise of our friends, and there it swells and comforts. It gives us second winds, third winds, hundredth winds." Lamott's thoughts will be your wisdom to live by during the next eight weeks, Scorpio. Even if you think you already know everything there is to know about the powers of love to heal and transform, I urge you to be open to new powers that you have never before seen in action.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Witty Sagittarian author Ashleigh Brilliant has created thousands of cheerful yet often sardonic epigrams. In accordance with current astrological omens, I have chosen six that will be useful for you to treat as your own in the coming weeks. 1. "I may not be totally perfect, but parts of me are excellent." 2. "I have abandoned my search for truth and am now looking for a good fantasy." 3. "All I want is a warm bed and a kind word and unlimited power." 4. "Do your best to satisfy me—that's all I ask of everybody." 5. "I'm just moving clouds today, tomorrow I'll try mountains." 6. "A terrible thing has happened. I have lost my will to suffer."

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): "All experience is an enrichment rather than an impoverishment," wrote author Eudora Welty. That may seem like a simple and obvious statement, but in my view, it's profound and revolutionary. Too often, we are inclined to conclude that a relatively unpleasant or inconvenient event has diminished us. And while it may indeed have drained some of our vitality or caused us angst, it has almost certainly taught us a lesson or given us insight that will serve us well in the long run—if only to help us avoid similar downers in the future. According to my analysis of your current astrological omens, these thoughts are of prime importance for you right now.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): "Life swarms with innocent monsters," observed poet Charles Baudelaire. Who are the "innocent monsters"? I'll suggest a few candidates. Boring people who waste your time but who aren't inherently evil. Cute advertisements that subtly coax you to want stuff you don't really need. Social media that seem like amusing diversions except for the fact that they suck your time and drain your energy. That's the bad news, Aquarius. The good news is that the coming weeks will be a favorable time to eliminate from your life at least some of those innocent monsters. You're entering a period when you'll have a strong knack for purging "nice" influences that aren't really very nice.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): "Never underestimate the wisdom of being easily satisfied," wrote aphorist Marty Rubin. If you're open to welcoming such a challenge, Pisces, I propose that you work on being very easily satisfied during the coming weeks. See if you can figure out how to enjoy even the smallest daily events with blissful gratitude. Exult in the details that make your daily rhythm so rich. Use your ingenuity to deepen your capacity for regarding life as an ongoing miracle. If you do this right, there will be no need to pretend you're having fun. You will vividly enhance your sensitivity to the ordinary glories we all tend to take for granted.

TURN IT DOWN!

Loud dispatches from Lansing's music scene

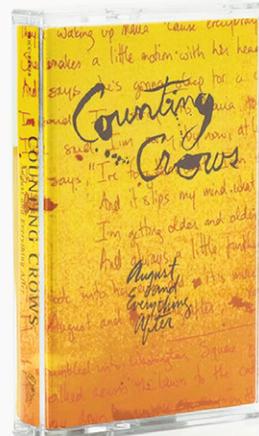
BY RICH TUPICA

LIFE CHANGING ALBUMS:

MATTHEW MILIA ON "AUGUST AND EVERYTHING AFTER"



Noah Elliott Morrison



Courtesy Images



Noah Elliott Morrison

Matthew Milia, of Frontier Ruckus, also releases side projects, like 2021's "Keego Harbor" LP. A new, "stripped down," Frontier Ruckus album is also in the works.

Frontier Ruckus songwriter talks 1993 Counting Crows LP

Frontier Ruckus songwriter talks 1993 Counting Crows LP

Matthew Milia is a critically acclaimed songwriter, best known as the lead singer and guitarist for Frontier Ruckus. He is also a solo artist, poet and visual artist. Here is what the Detroit-based troubadour had to say about the Counting Crows' "August and Everything After."

As for this particular life-changing LP, how and when did you discover it?

Matthew Milia: I was 8 or 9. My mom bought it for me and put it in my Easter basket next to an enormous chocolate bunny. I remember noting how similar the plastic grass in the basket looked like to actual cassette tape itself.

How would you describe this album to someone who has never heard it before?

Imagine having a nervous breakdown on a couch inside the platonic ideal of a '90s college town coffeehouse but you're mostly just really happy to be feeling anything at all.

It's definitely a time capsule for me. Life was simpler. My biggest worries were getting the cool brand of skateboard and not getting cut from the travel soccer team. I did. But looking back as an adult, we were just enter-

ing the Clinton years and being lulled into a cozy sense of progress, false or not. Mainstream radio was Alternative with a capital "A." The music business was unrecognizably different in that there was one. Clothing ... that's kind of come full circle. It's an autumn road trip vibe, I think.

As a child, did the album have an immediate impact on you?

I already knew every word from the singles "Mr. Jones" and "Round Here" from the radio, and those songs have a lot of words! It probably was an early influence on my eventual inclination towards the verbose, the other being Bob Dylan, who happens to be name-checked in "Mr. Jones." My first reaction to the deeper cuts on the album was that they were a bit more melancholic and subdued, though I wouldn't have used those words at the time. But, of course, you're already starting to feel something resembling the blues around age 9, and it was mind-blowing to hear it expressed musically. Say what you will about Adam Duritz's voice. I, for one, can't stand the way he abandons his own melodies live at every turn, but it is certainly emotive as all heck. That exaggerated wail of existential sensitivity, a Whitmanesque barbaric yawp for the flanneled '90s,

packed a wallop for my 8-year-old soul grappling with all those strange feelings for the first time.

What aspect of the album touches you the most and why?

The T Bone Burnett production and mostly acoustic instrumentation like mandolin and accordion definitely played into the aspects of Americana I would come to realize I was naturally drawn toward. If you took away the singing, songs like "Omaha" almost had "Big Pink" vibes. As an overly sensitive kid, there was something wistfully resigned yet ultimately hopeful that made this brand of dulcet depression feel more like my music.

In what ways has this album directly affected your life?

It definitely contributed to my love for the full-length album format as a patient and rewarding artform. And the injection of really sparse, tender moments that help punctuate the bombast to let the album breathe was definitely a tactic I'd later use in Frontier Ruckus. The super downers like "Perfect Blue Buildings" are balanced perfectly with power-poppy songs like "Rain King" or "Murder of One" that almost verges on a Jesus and Mary Chain dance beat.

I think Adam Duritz was less influenced by the '90s grunge stuff and

more by Big Star or Glaswegian bands like Teenage Fanclub — who I'd fall in love with later in life. Even "Anna Begins" is half-downer, half-melodic-gem. That shared premium on infectious melody to help get the lyrical content across is a major point of resonance. Between grunge, rap, Britpop and coffeehouse fare like this, there were so many options of masculinity flying around at the time. For a sensitive suburban pre-teen like myself who lacked the requisite Britishness for Britpop, this felt like the right fit.

Want to add anything else about the LP?

When it comes to unduly stigmatized bands, Counting Crows have to be right up there at the top of the list. Maybe it was the dreadlocks, "Shrek" soundtrack, or hyper-emotionality, but I'll say it: the quality of their songs doesn't get the respect it deserves. If they had achieved less mainstream success, I think they would have faded away gracefully with the indie cred of Red House Painters or Lemonheads. And the followup records were equally solid and showed great range.



OUT on the TOWN

Events & Happenings in Lansing This Week

Events must be entered through the calendar at lansingcitypulse.com. Deadline is 9 a.m. Monday 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
Devyn Mitchell
Thurs., March 10, 7:30-10:30 p.m.
Joe Wright
Fri., March 11, 8-11 p.m.

Blue Owl
1149 S Washington, Lansing
Elden Kelly and Gregg Hill
Thurs., March 10, 6-8 p.m.

Classic Pub & Grill
16219 N. US 27, Lansing
Lady Luck
Fri. March 11, 8:30 p.m.
Darin Larner Trio
Sat. March 12, 8:30 p.m.

Eaton Rapids Craft Co.
204 N. Main St., Eaton Rapids
Kevin Parker
Fri., March 11, 7-10 p.m.
Jake VanRavenswaay
Sat., March 12, 7-10 p.m.

Green Door
2005 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing
Bourbon Legends
Fri., March 11, 8:30 p.m.
Miranda & M-80s
Sat., March 11 26, 8:30 p.m.

One North
5001 W. Saginaw, Lansing
Tony Thompson
Fri., March 11, 6:30-10:30 p.m.

Royal Scot/Triple P Bar
4722 W. Grand River Ave., Lansing
The New Rule
Fri., March 11, 8-11 p.m.

Urban Beat
1213 N. Turner St., Lansing
Sean Miller
Thurs., March 10, 7-9 p.m.
Crossroads Resurrection
Sat., March 12, 7-10 p.m.
The Pickle Mafia
Sun., March 13, 7-10 p.m.



Get Rosie on the Riveter

Saturday, March 19

11 a.m. – 7 p.m.

REO Town

Celebrate the women of REO Town and Women's History Month by shopping at women-owned businesses in the area. In anticipation of National Rosie the Riveter Day on Monday (March 21), honor Rosie and support the many women-owned businesses in REO Town such as Clean Refillery, Record Lounge and Sweetheart Essentials. Visitors can take advantage of the social district and grab a drink while shopping. Some of the participating businesses will have special deals and limited-edition buttons available, featuring famous women from Michigan — like the real-life Rosie!

Wednesday, March 16

18th Anniversary Celebration – East Lansing Public Art Gallery is celebrating all month long with special exhibits! 6 a.m.-8 p.m. Hannah Community Center, 819 Abbot Rd, East Lansing. cityofeastlansing.com.

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

BreakerSpace – ages 10-16. Learn about using hand tools and electronics. 4 p.m. CADL-Foster, 200 N. Foster, Lansing.

Diabetes Support Group – 6:30-7:30 p.m. Delta Township District Library, 5130 Davenport Dr, Lansing. 517-321-4014.

The Elements Series: Water – Special exhibition through March 19. 11 a.m.-7 p.m. Nelson Gallery, 113 S. Washington Sq., Lansing. thenelsongallery.com.

High School Book Club – Join us for a discussion on our teen book club pick: Firekeeper's Daughter by Angeline Boulley. 4:30-5:30 p.m. Eaton Rapids Area District Library, 220 S. Main St. eradl.org.

LAFCU Listen & Learn Crazy for Cupcakes – LAFCU is crazy for cupcakes ... and it's all to encourage reading during National Reading Month. 3-3:30 p.m. LAFCU, 106 N. Marketplace, Lansing. LAFCU.com.

March is Reading Month – Daily events at GLADL. 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St., Grand Ledge. 517-627-7014.

MFA Artist Talks – with MSU Department of Art, Art History, and Design third-year graduate students. 6-8 p.m. Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum, 547 E Circle Dr, East Lansing. 517-884-4800. msu.zoom.us.

Moon Meetup – Inspiring conversations around Lunar Living. Facilitator: Laurie Matheny. 10-11 a.m. Livewell the Healing Community, 2820 Covington Court, Lansing. \$5. Pre-register at golivewell.co/

Powerful Tools for Caregivers – Workshop. 6 weeks starting March 16 via Zoom. To register, call Tri-County Office on Aging, 517-887-1465 or email histedc@tcoa.org.

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. 517-884-4800. broadmuseum.msu.edu

Thursday, March 17

2022 Lansing Home & Garden Show – March 17-20, at MSU Pavilion, 4301 Farm Lane, East Lansing. Info: lansinghomeshow.com

America at Crossroads – Discover practical answers on how to enjoy better health and maintain vitality at Crossroads Conference. 6:30-8 p.m. Lansing Church Auditorium, 5400 W. St. Joseph Hwy, Lansing. crossroads.to.

The Babysitters Book Club – Join us for a discussion on the graphic novel adaptations of the Babysitters Club books. 4:30-5:30 p.m. Eaton Rapids Area District Library, 220 S. Main St., Eaton Rapids. eradl.org.

Beginning Ukulele for the Family – 4 week series of classes. 6-7 p.m. Grand See Events, Page 24

CROSSWORD SOLUTION

From Pg. 21

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SUDOKU SOLUTION

From Pg. 21

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Events

from page 23

Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St., Grand Ledge. 517-627-7014. gladl.org

Coffee Hour with East Lansing's Mayor – 5 p.m. East Lansing Public Library, 950 Abbot Rd., East Lansing. cityofeastlansing.com.

Print & Stitch – 6-8 p.m. REACH Art Studio, 1804 S. Washington, Lansing. reachstudioart.org for information and cost.

Some Avail – Art Exhibition by Andrew Reider, through March 26. 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Lansing Art Gallery, 119 N. Washington Sq., 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, March 18

Fish Fry Friday's – Lent Fish Fry Friday's @ VFW Post 701 March 4, 2022 through April 15. 5:30-7:30 p.m. VFW Post 701, 123 N. Rosemary St., Lansing.

Full Moon Chakra Meditation – 7 p.m. Livewell the Healing Community, 2820 Covington Ct., Lansing. \$5. Register at golivewell.co/

Gee's Bend – a staged reading. Gee's Bend depicts the turbulent history of African-Americans in the 20th century. 8-9:30 p.m. LCC Black Box Theatre, Gannon Building - Room 1422, 411 N. Grand Ave., Lansing. 517-483-1122. lcc.edu

Howl at the Moon – Enjoy the full moon while taking a guided walk through the nighttime woods. Dogs must be on a leash. Meet in parking lot. 8-9 p.m. Harris Nature Center, 3998 Van Atta Road, Okemos. 517-349-3866. meridian.mi.us.

Jazz Octets with Regina Carter, violin – A Detroit native, violinist Regina Carter defies traditional musical categories and possesses a unique style all her own. 7:30 p.m. Murray Hall, 333 W. Circle Dr., East Lansing. msu.edu.

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

Saturday, March 19

America at Crossroads – Discover practical answers on how to enjoy better health and maintain vitality at Crossroads Conference. 6:30-8 p.m. Lansing Church Auditorium, 5400 W. St. Joseph Hwy, Lansing. crossroads.to.

Babysitting Workshop – Teens 12+ learn emergency procedures, diapering, pediatric CPR, rescue breathing, Heimlich maneuver, and basic first aid skills. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St., Grand Ledge. Register at gladl.org.

Children's Cultural Concert Series – Gabriel Estrada III is a mariachi singer from Kent City. 11 a.m. East Lansing Hannah Community Center, 819 Abbot Rd., Lansing. cityofeastlansing.com.

Gee's Bend – a staged reading. Gee's

Bend depicts the turbulent history of African-Americans in the 20th century. 8-9:30 p.m. LCC Black Box Theatre, Gannon Building - Room 1422, 411 N. Grand Ave., Lansing. 517-483-1122. lcc.edu

Haydn, Mozart, Poulenc – Lansing Symphony Orchestra performs pieces by some of the most prolific composers to ever grace the stage. 7:30 p.m. Info and tickets at lansingsymphony.org.

Lansing Roller Derby – Come see our first game after 2 years! 5:30-9p.m. Court One Training Center, 7868 Old M-78, East Lansing.

Mason Philharmonic – with the youth orchestra of the Mason Orchestral Society. 6:30-8:30 p.m. Martin Luther High School, 2001 E. Grand River Ave., Lansing.

REO Town Thrift Store Gala and Burlesque Extravaganza, 8 p.m. – 2 a.m. 1033 S Washington, Lansing. Info and tickets at reo.town/events

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

Singers on the Grand presents "Yesterday: the 60s in Song" – Dessert Cabaret show. 6-9 p.m. Grand Ledge Opera House, 121 S. Bridge St., Grand Ledge. gloperahouse.com.

Succulent Bar – Pick your pot, plant and components! 10 a.m. 2 p.m. Bridge + Main Market, 119 N. Bridge, DeWitt.

Sunday, March 20

Drum Circle at the Fledge – All ages, family friendly. 2-4 pm. 1300 Eureka, Lansing.

Singers on the Grand presents "Yesterday: the 60s in Song" – 2:30-5:30 p.m. Grand Ledge Opera House, 121 S. Bridge St., Grand Ledge. gloperahouse.com.

Trail Talk – Hit the trail with a naturalist for a guided walk on the HNC trails. 1-2 p.m. Harris Nature Center, 3998 Van Atta Road, Okemos. 517-349-3866. meridian.mi.us.

Woldumar Folk and Bluegrass Jam – join us or several live performances and open acoustic jam circles. 2-5 p.m. Woldumar Nature Center, 5739 Old Lansing Road, Lansing. 517-322-0030.

Monday, March 21

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

Folias Duo for Rest with Music – MSU's monthly free concert series, where live 12 p.m. Abrams Planetarium, 755 Science Rd, East Lansing.

Jump Into Reading – Join Ms. Anna for stories, songs, and activities. 11-11:30 a.m. Eaton Rapids Area District Library, 220 S Main St., Eaton Rapids. eradl.org.

LEAP into Science: Balance Family Workshop – Children and families explore the science of balance. 6:30-8 p.m. Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St., Grand Ledge. 517-627-7014. Register at gladl.org

Origami Flowers – Craft kits will be available first-come, first-serve in our vestibule. 10 a.m.-7 p.m. Eaton Rapids Area District Library, 220 S. Main St., Eaton

Rapids. eradl.org.

Storytime @ Home – Pick up a bag at the library to recreate your own storytime at home! Included in the bag will be a book and a variety of activities. 10 a.m.-7 p.m. Eaton Rapids Area District Library, 220 S. Main St., Eaton Rapids. eradl.org.

Tuesday, March 22

America at Crossroads – Discover practical answers on how to enjoy better health and maintain vitality at Crossroads Conference. 6:30-8 p.m. Lansing Church Auditorium, 5400 W. St. Joseph Hwy, Lansing. crossroads.to.

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

Gardening with Native Plants – Come to learn about making gardening easier and attracting birds and butterflies with native

plants. 7-9 p.m. Harris Nature Center, 3998 Van Atta Road, Okemos. 517-349-3866. meridian.mi.us.

Make & Take Pop Up: DIY Recipe Book – Looking for ways to diversify your diet? 2-5 p.m. Main Library, 366 E. Circle Dr., East Lansing. bookings.lib.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

Toastmasters Meeting – Want to improve your speaking skills and develop leadership abilities? 6:30-7:30 p.m. Zoom link at capitalcitytoastmasters.toastmastersclubs.org.

Yoga & Art – do yoga surrounded by art. In person or virtual. \$12. MICA Gallery, 1210 Turner, Lansing. Creativewarrior.club

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DINING OUT IN GREATER LANSING

VEG-N: Taking a walk on the vegan side

By **GABRIELLE LAWRENCE**

For as long as I can remember, I have heard people complain about what Lansing doesn't have. I refuse to participate, because I choose to live here and won't badmouth my own city and like to concentrate on the unique and cool places that we do have. VEG-N (pronounced "veggin") is one of those places. There is a lot of good vegetarian and vegan food in town — if you know where to look. Art's Pub is one of my favorites for plant-based meals. Another is VEG-N, which boasts a menu that is completely vegan, although you can add dairy cheese if you're only veg-curious.

While I do love a good steak — splitting a Porterhouse has become a thing for myself and Mr. She Ate — I also love to dabble in veganism and have been to VEG-N several times since they opened last year. The menu has become more extensive over the past few months and now includes breakfast items, although VEG-N doesn't open until 11:30 a.m. most days. Since I only care about the Super Bowl in terms of halftime shows and food, we decided to try the proffered Super Bowl menu, which included jackfruit "brisket" with chickpeas to heap on top of brioche buns. Mr. She Ate and I have had and have loved jackfruit, and while this dish was too spicy for him, we still absolutely enjoyed it. The addition of chickpeas was a genius way to add even more protein and texture.

We had macaroni and cheese on the side with vegan cheese. As hard as I have tried to like it, there is a telltale tang to vegan cheese that tips off the eater and isn't a taste that I love. Try as it might, VEG-N can't overcome this. Most of the macaroni and cheese went uneaten, but if you're avoiding dairy for dietary reasons, the texture of this version was spot-on.

The brownies were my favorite item we ordered, and they remain my favorite item that I have sampled at VEG-N. They were super dense and fudgy and absolutely decadent. I know that vegan doesn't necessarily equal healthy (sugar is vegan, lest we forget), and these brownies were completely indulgent, but



Lawrence

also made me feel like I was nourishing myself.

Recently, Mr. She Ate ordered a burger, which came with cheddar (he went with the real deal), lettuce, pickles, onion, mayo and ketchup on a brioche bun. As he noticed during our Super Bowl party for two, the brioche buns were buttery and delicious. He offered interesting insight into the vegan burger that — since the meat wasn't there to be the star of the show — he was able to taste the other components more and appreciate their flavor. The pickles, he noticed, were incredible and now compete with Saddleback for his favorite local pickle. (That's now a thing, I guess.)

I chose the Southwest Chick-N protein bowl, since I am a sucker for marketing and love all "bowls." If you don't know what I'm talking about, protein/Buddha/roasted veggie bowls have become all the rage. I am deeply into the phenomenon. This bowl had too much lettuce to be anything other than a glorified salad, but as a salad lover, I won't complain. If you're looking for something that packs a wallop of protein, however, this isn't what you're looking for.

We split the chili cheese fries. These were amazing. The chili would fool even the most devoted carnivore, but was uniquely delicious and reminded me of my college days when my room-

See She Ate, Page 27

By **BRYAN BEVERLY**

Before we get started, let it be known I am a vegan novice. Truthfully, I am a meat-atarian, which is why I can't compare the food at VEG-N to other vegan options: I have no knowledge to contrast against! Several friends are documenting their shifts to a vegan lifestyle on social media, and I have admired their courage, transparency and even a few of the recipes they have shared. So, I hope you will find that what this month's review lacks in deep culinary nuance is outshined by a newbie's excitement for new tastes and textures.

If you've been in Lansing for a long time, you know that the northeast side of

town has had its share of ups and downs, but there are some culinary gems: Olympic Broil, Handy's, Nip-N-Sip, and Cosmos, among them. The building along East Cesar E. Chavez Avenue that VEG-N occupies has been home to several eateries over the years. Here's hoping that Veg-N makes it a long-lasting

home.

That said, my first connection to VEG-N was serendipitous. I was invited to attend Michigan State University's Venture Kitchen grand opening, an event sponsored by the Burgess Institute for Entrepreneurship & Innovation that highlights Spartans launching food-based startup companies. VEG-N was a vendor and offered samples of a most delicious vegan cookie that was soft and chewy, just the way I like them. My

VEG-N journey was off to a great start.

VEG-N is set up for takeout and delivery. I ordered at the drive-thru window and waited in my car for a much shorter time than estimated. Further, the drive home smelled like some of your favorite meat-based burger spots, and I had to caution myself against speeding to take a bite.

What's OK

Maybe I'm just a rookie in this vegan game, but the "Chick-N" nuggets tasted exactly like what comes to my mind when I think of this genre. They were crispy, with a nice breaded texture, but not outstanding in terms of flavor or juiciness. Alternately, the "Impossible Chili-Cheesy Fries" were flavorful, but had a bit too much sauce on them to survive even a five-minute drive home and were soggy once I was able to dig in. The chili was tasty, but it didn't wow me enough to take my mind off of the mushy.

What's good

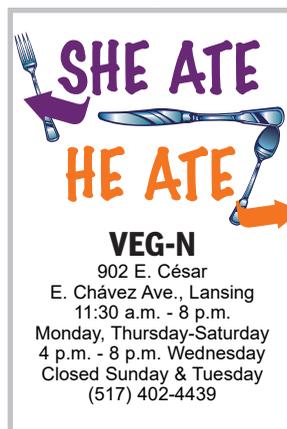
The VEG-N burger, on the other hand, far exceeded my expectations. It was surprisingly succulent and bursting with flavor. The toppings were fresh, and the house made "Veg sauce" was a nice accompaniment to the fluffy brioche bun. The Cheesy "Chick-N" sandwich and Spicy "Chick-N" sandwich both offered crispy bites, lots of taste and the right amount of heat on the spicier version. The Veg-Brisket sandwich was the best of the good (and even better when piled atop the BBQ Good-All burger). The "brisket" is sweet and smoky, with just a hint of tang; the pickled onions offer a sharp contrast in texture and are reminiscent of a solid pulled pork sandwich.

Best bite

VEG-N is seriously sitting on something special with their "Crunchy-Frito Burrito". This hand-held is good — REALLY good. I'd put their combination of Black B-N Crumble, VEG-N Cheesy sauce, Impossible chili and "Hunny mustard" up against any takeout burrito. The added crunch from the Frito strips and Veg onions set this above any of the standard late-night chain options. Give it a try and keep an open mind to some vegetarian — and vegan — options. Moving forward, I know I will.



Beverly



The VEG-Brisket sandwich, made with jackfruit and chickpea brisket, is one of the many vegan sandwich options.

Courtesy

The many identities of ramen noodles

By **ARI LeVAUX**

Instant ramen noodles have replaced cigarettes as the reserve currency of the incarcerated. They are available at most prison commissaries for about 60 cents each, providing you have money in your account. Inmates convert their dollars to ramen the way speculators pile into the latest cryptocurrency, and trade the packages of crispy noodles for clothes, drugs, bribes, favors and anything else of value. Unlike crypto, instant ramen is a real, physical thing that you can hold in your hand. It's durable, portable, divisible into units, can be neatly stacked and has intrinsic value because of its calories and flavor — both of which are scarce in most prison meals.

"You gotta have ramen," writes Gustavo Alvarez, author of "Prison Ra-



men: Recipes and Stories from Behind Bars." His instant ramen-based recipes include the likes of the Prison Burrito, Prison Tamale, Ramen Salad, Ramen Sandwich and Orange Cracklin Ramen (with pork rinds and orange Kool-Aid).

Like every other ramen chef on the planet, I, too, have my tricks and techniques for using ramen as an ingredient in something greater. We'll get there in a moment. But let's first review some ramen history, some of which rhymes with today's news.

Instant ramen noodles were invented in the wake of the second World War. Most of Japan's cities had been bombed. Its infrastructure was wasted and winter was coming. As the U.S. sent boatloads of wheat to its vanquished adversary, Japan's ministry of health struggled to encourage bread baking. That's when a Taiwanese-born Japanese citizen named Momofuku Ando began trying to invent

instant ramen. Ando finally came up with the technique of flash-frying fresh noodles in hot oil, which caused perforations in the dehydrated noodles that allowed them to rehydrate quickly. The debut of Chikin Ramen in August 1958 ushered in a new era of customizable high-calorie convenience.

"The genesis of instant noodles marked a turning point in Japan's history, mirroring its rise from a struggling nation to a modern economic powerhouse," writes Celia Hatton for the BBC. "They came of age when Japanese households were filling up with new products. Electric kettles made it easy to cook instant noodles, commercials for which were broadcast into newly middle-class homes on brand-new televisions. In 1956, only 1% of Japanese households had a TV. Four years later, almost half had one." Ramen has repeatedly been voted the nation's most successful invention, ahead of high-speed trains, laptops and LED lights, Hatton adds.

Hatton credits instant ramen with helping fuel three decades of growth in China, the world's largest market for instant ramen. Demand is highest among migrant workers who've left their homes in the countryside to work in the country's factories and cities, she writes. The economic boom ran out of steam in 2010, which coincided with peak ramen sales. Since then, ramen sales have fallen steeply, along with economic productivity and, not surprisingly, inhabitants of factory dorms. But instant ramen remains popular anywhere people are short of cash, calories, time or kitchen space.

Meanwhile, those packs of crunchy noodles and freeze-dried flavorings have proliferated around the world. The Lucky Me brand, based in the Philippines, offers the intriguing "bulalo," a.k.a. bone broth flavored ramen, and Supreme La Paz Batchoy, with pork cracklings and meat bits. And perhaps you have noticed Mexican-flavored ramen at a store near you.

Many people think they have the ramen game figured out when they learn that you can put an egg in it. But, the egg is only the first step in a long and wonderful journey. You will come to regard instant ramen soup as a canvas and as your skills develop, you will feel like Bob Ross, the magic oil painter, filling the space with happy vegetables and proteins.

With the Ukraine war raging and wheat prices rising, the cost of ramen will probably climb. For most of us, especially those under attack, it's the least of our worries. But inflation being the beast it is, the most vulnerable will feel the squeeze hardest. None worse than prison inmates earning sub-minimum



Courtesy

Like every other ramen chef on the planet, Ari LeVaux has tricks and techniques to make ramen into something greater.



Courtesy

Ari LeVaux keeps condiments like vinegar and hot sauce nearby when making his variation of ramen noodles.

wage. If we need a reminder that light will follow darkness, look no further than ramen itself. It came from Japan being bombed and nuked to near-oblivion and helped fuel its rebound. Ando, who lived to be 96, attributed his health to daily servings of Chikin Ramen. It's a viable path forward.

Lately, when making ramen, I have been channeling southeast Asian-style noodle soups like pho. These brothy soups are typically served alongside a mound of fresh herbs and vegetables, to be heaped into the soup at the last minute. I also keep condiments like vinegar, hot sauce and hoisin sauce within reach. Here are some tips you can use when preparing your own custom bowl.

Ramen tactics

Your first choice is which brand and flavor of Ramen to use. The original Top Ramen, made by Ando's Nissin corporation, is no longer the best. I believe the highest quality instant ramen these days comes from South Korea — my favorite being Nongshim brand. Of those, I like the Neoguri spicy seafood and Shin spicy beef.

Ideally I like to have the following additional ingredients on hand:

Bacon, tofu or other proteins like frozen shrimp, scallops or fake crab

Fresh veggies like spinach

An egg

Fresh herbs like cilantro and green onion

See Ramen, Page 27

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RAMEN

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Condiments like hoisin, hot sauce, vinegar and mayo

I add the flavor packet, or packets, to the cold water as soon as I turn on the heat. I add the noodles soon after — I don't see the need to wait. I'll add my proteins right off the bat, too. Ramen is pretty much the only context I can think of where soggy bacon is acceptable, as it resembles the floating slice of soft pork in a bowl of high-end "tonkatsu" ramen. Ideally, the bacon is mild flavored, so it won't take over the soup. Rather, it should be subtle and satisfying and make you happy when you chew upon it.

The egg should be soft and runny, but not gooey. I crack the egg into a bowl first, so I can then simply pour it exactly where I want it and don't have to worry about breaking the yolk. When the noodles are starting to fall apart, I add the spinach directly on top of them to form a nest of noodles and leaves to cradle the egg when I pour it into the nest. Sometimes I use a spoon to support the nest from underneath for the first few crucial moments after adding the egg, giving it a chance to grab onto the nest materials and solidify.

While the egg is cooking, add the chopped white parts of the green onion to the pot. Save the green parts to add with the cilantro. If your timing is right, the noodles and egg reach their ideal states at the same time. Serve by carefully scooping the noodles, veggies and proteins into a bowl and pouring the broth over the noodles. Next, add the cilantro and green onion leaves. Fine tune your bowl of noodles with your condiments.

SHE ATE

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mates and I would take down plates of cheese fries after nights at Rick's.

If I haven't convinced you to take a walk on the vegan side, I don't know what will. It's better for the environment, better for your bod and a great way to support a fledgling local business that we are lucky to have in our community.

There is no dine-in capability, but their website includes a link for easy online ordering, and you can proceed to the drive-thru window to pick up your order.

If I still haven't convinced you, just try a chocolate chip cookie. They are easily in the top 10 chocolate chip cookies I have had in my life. Soft, chewy and super delicious — I challenge you to find a better one in town.

Feeling stuffed after Falsetta's Casa Nova

By CHLOE ALVERSON

When I am craving carbs, I usually go to Olive Garden. No, I'm not proud of it. And no, I'm not proud of how many breadsticks I can scarf down. But it's reliable and cheap.

This time around, I tried Falsetta's Casa Nova on Waverly Road.

Falsetta's has been serving up made-from-scratch Italian food in Lansing since 1951. The menu has all things Italian and everything between — pasta, pizza, steaks, burgers and seafood. I tried an item that the menu claimed to be new: Stuffed shells. The plate comes with three shells the size of small fists stuffed with three cheeses — ricotta, mozzarella and Romano. This combination was delightfully creamy and delicious.

The shells are topped with marinara sauce and mozzarella cheese. It's a lot of cheese, and I was thankful that I am not a sufferer of lactose intolerance.

The shells come with a side of spaghetti, which is also topped with marinara sauce. I inhaled the three shells, but had to get a takeout box for the rest of my spaghetti.

The night I ate at Falsetta's was one of those evenings when I was super hungry, so I had ordered an appetizer



Chloe Alverson/City Pulse

The stuffed shells plate at Falsetta's Casa Nova on Lansing's west side.

of potato skins. The starter comes loaded with cheddar and Monterey jack, topped with bacon and green onion, and is served with a large portion of sour cream.

The simple dishes were full of flavor. I left happy, full and no longer thinking of Olive Garden.



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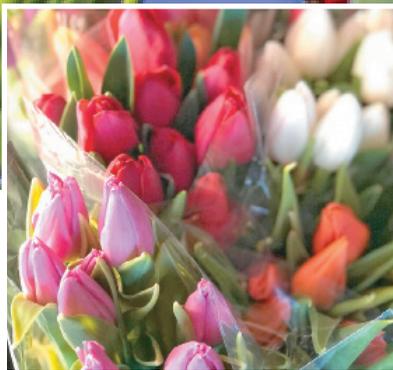
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