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Dec. 21-27 2022

CityPULSE

A newspaper for the rest of us
Locally owned

See P. 13

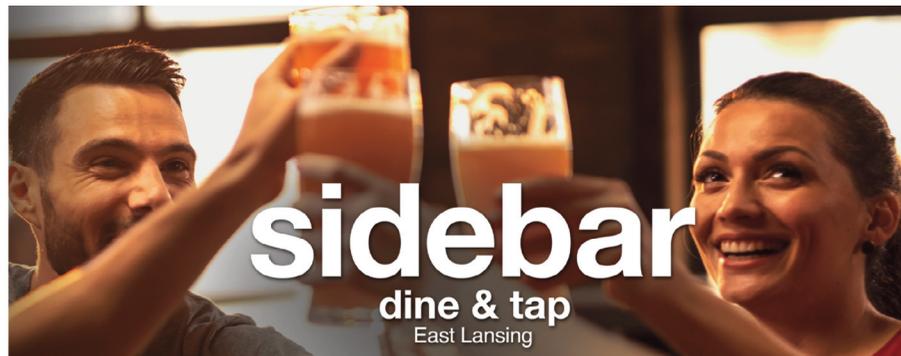
LIGHTS, CAMERA ... POETRY

The 3rd annual Poetry and Lights Issue

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sidebar

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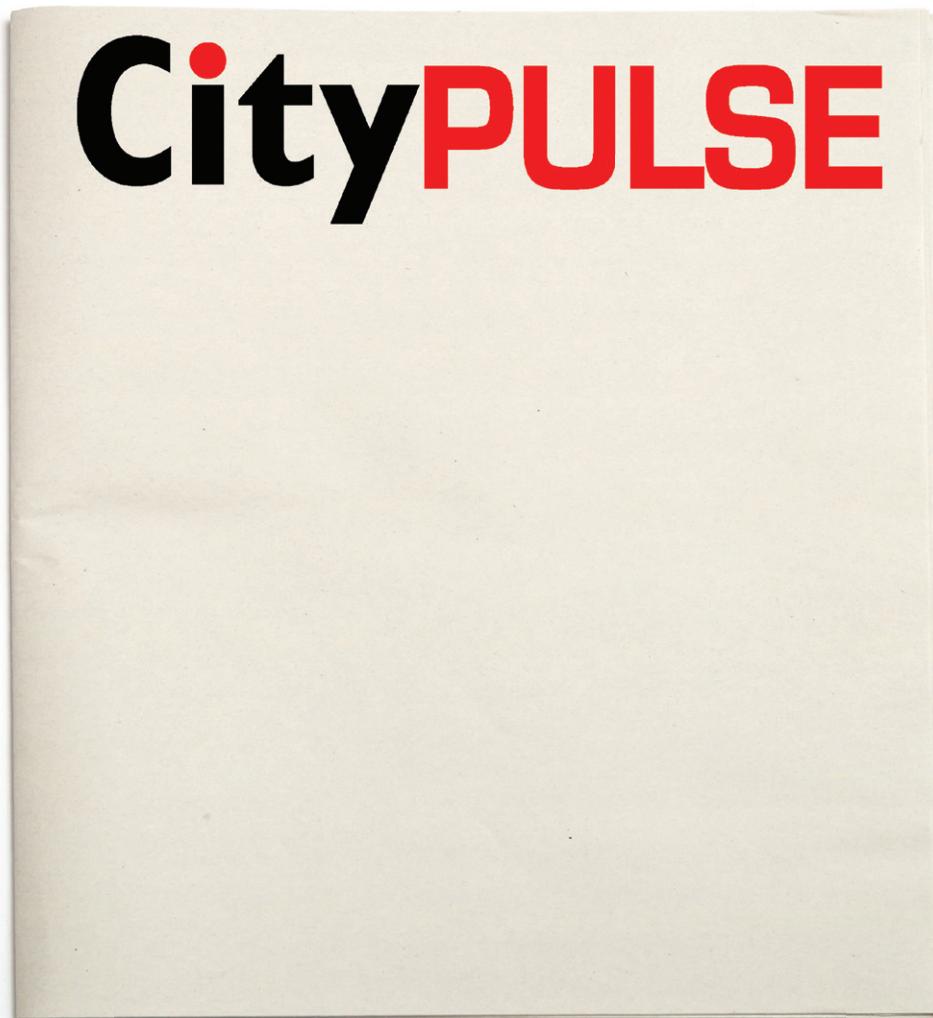
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Ingham County Animal Shelter

To adopt one of these pets, visit the ICAS at 600 Buhl St., Mason, call (517) 676-8370 to make an appt. or go to ac.ingham.org.

Sponsor a pet on the next Adoption Page for only \$35, \$6 goes to the shelter. To sponsor, call 999-5061 now!! Adopt a pet on this page and Soldan's will thank you with a \$10 gift certificate. Contact (517) 999-5061 after you adopt.



Rufus is a sweet American Bulldog mix who came to us from another shelter. He's great with dogs of all sizes, loves kids, and has lived with cats. We're hoping to find him a loving family this Christmas!



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Tyrolese is a friendly girl with a twinkle in her eye. She's quite vocal when she wants attention and absolutely delighted when she gets it! Energetic and just a touch sassy, she'll be a fun companion for an active family.

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Jovie is a sweet, shy girl who would benefit from a confident dog in the home to help her settle in. She is easily startled and would do best in a quieter, calmer home. She should be fine with gentle kids but would not enjoy, loud bouncy ones (the same goes with dogs!)

In Memory of Mimi
Sponsored by City Pulse



Tante Kringle is a sweet, chunky American bully who was found wandering in Leslie. She is a little shy around new people, but is very snuggly once she warms up! She'll be fine with gentle kids and will make some lucky family very happy.

Sponsored by Schuler Books



Culvers is a cute and friendly manx cat who came to the shelter when her owner could no longer care for her. She'll do well in a quiet home where life is pretty routine. She is tolerant of small children and other cats, but doesn't care for dogs.

In Memory of Rodica's cats

CityPULSE

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Get to know the faces behind the poems

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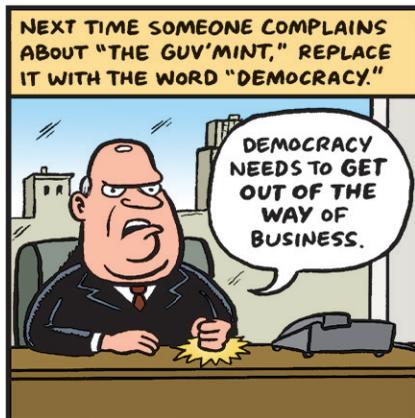
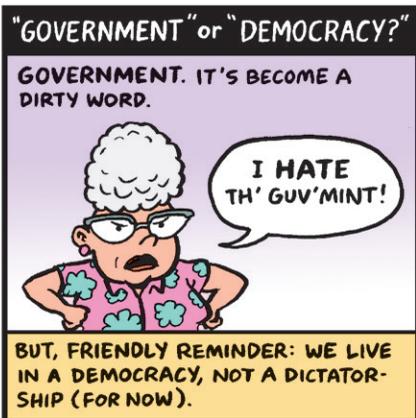
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New record shop offers rare finds, great conversation

Correction

Because of a reporting error, the Temple Lofts story (Dec. 7) gave the wrong name of the artist who painted the mural on the garage. His name is Dustin Hunt.

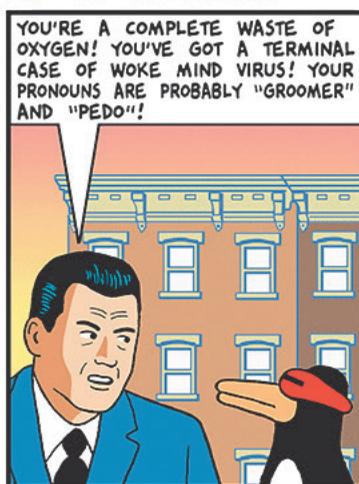
Cover photo by Raymond Holt
Christmas wreath on Washington Avenue in downtown Lansing



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THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



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PULSE

NEWS & OPINION

Nonprofits face new challenges as COVID-era tax deductions end

In the season of giving, the Grinch has asserted himself in the halls of Congress when it comes to donating to nonprofits.

Charities locally and across the country were hoping special pandemic-era deductions for charitable contributions would be extended. But those desires were dashed Tuesday when Congress and the White House announced a bipartisan budget deal that appears to have ended non-itemized charitable donations. That means that the estimated 90% of taxpayers who do not itemize will no longer receive even limited deductions for donations.

Joan Gustafson, external affairs officer for the Michigan Association of Nonprofits, said a preliminary review of a \$1.66 trillion bipartisan budget deal did not appear to include an extension of the COVID-era charitable deductions.

That means after a two-year reprieve, the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act goes back into effect.

The law changed the cap on standard deductions, effectively making charity donations tax deductible only if filers itemize their returns.

But pandemic relief laws allowed a taxpayer filing as a single individual to deduct up to \$300 and couples filing together to deduct up to \$600 in charitable in 2020 and 2021 without having to itemize. The tax policy is referred to as a Universal Charitable Donation.

The Trump-era act had an impact on charitable giving when it went into effect in 2018. The Tax Policy Center, citing a report by the Urban-Brookings Tax Policy Center, said that households claiming a charitable deduction went from 37 million to 16 million. A similar impact was felt in Michigan, said Gustafson.

“For many people, it doesn’t make sense for them to itemize,” she said. “All of the sudden, writing your charitable deductions up or using them as a tax deduction was no longer possible. That did have an impact on charitable donations from people, particularly those in the middle income and the lower income.”



Courtesy Lansing Area AIDS Network

Volunteers and staff at the Lansing Area AIDS Network prepare boxes of food for distribution to clients for the holidays.

Across the country, nonprofits received over \$300 billion in 2021 from individual donors, according to the Giving USA Foundation. Individual donations were up 4.9% over 2020, the foundation data shows.

When the tax laws went into effect in 2018 and 2019, the nation’s charities saw a drop in donations from individuals by tens of millions of dollars compared to donations in 2017. When the temporary charitable deduction was implemented in 2020 and 2021, the nation’s nonprofits saw individual donors pump their gifts back up to pre-Trump tax era giving.

At the state level, the organization is pushing for the renewal of tax credits that were eliminated by the Snyder administration 11 years ago. Those credits were for those who donated to food banks, homeless shelters and community foundations.

“They do help people who are in the lower- and middle-class section of the economy also be able to be philanthropists and not only give to their favorite

charities or community foundations, but also get a little bit of tax break for it.”

With a Democratic majority elected to both the state House and Senate and a Democratic governor, Gustafson said the organization expects bills to expand charitable giving to be introduced in the new legislative year.

While government funds and grants are important, private donations make a difference.

For example, the Lansing Area AIDS Network operates on a budget of about \$1.3 million a year, but 5% to 10% of that is from donations. The rest is from federal and state grants that have significant restrictions on how, where and if the money can be spent on certain items. That small percentage of the budget, made up from individual and corporate donors, allows the organization to fill in gaps with clients where federal or state dollars wouldn’t or couldn’t.

For example, when mpox — what major health organizations have re-named monkeypox — swept into

Michigan last spring, individuals infected with it who were HIV-positive were able to get help through federal and state resources that were unavailable to those without HIV.

That’s where a “generous” donation from Lansing-based Grewal Law came into play, Kristina Schmidgall, executive director of the Lansing Area AIDS Network, said. The law firm’s gift provided the seed money to support people diagnosed with mpox who were not infected with HIV.

The Grewal donation wasn’t needed in Ingham County, so LAAN expanded the areas covered and was able to assist several people, Schmidgall said.

“We didn’t need that money here, thank God,” she said. “But we had it if we needed it.”

Schmidgall, who started her new post as the executive director of LAAN just 18 months ago, said the economic turmoil, combined with public health concerns, means the organization is searching

for ways to make giving easier and attract a younger crowd. She said LAAN is also considering creating more, but smaller, fundraising events like drag shows or concerts in the community. They’ve added online donations, monthly options and partnerships with for-profit ventures like Amazon Smile to push for donations.

“Even when the organization buys something on Amazon, we get a donation from Amazon for it,” she said.

It also meant applying for, and obtaining, a grant to begin to offer counseling services to the LGBTQ community. By providing those services, the organization can begin to bill insurance companies for payment.

“We used to rely on a couple of large events a year — the AIDS Walk or the Red Ribbon Gala. But when COVID hit, those were not necessarily appropriate fundraising options. It really required us to rethink how we ask for donations, and how we diversify our funding.”

— TODD HEYWOOD

REWIND

NEWS HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE LAST 7 DAYS



BY NICOLE NOEHEL

Michigan State University held a private ceremony Monday to unveil the official portrait of former President Lou Anna Simon, who resigned in 2018 amid the Larry Nassar scandal. The event at the Breslin Student Events Center attracted student protesters who felt Simon should not be honored. They wrote messages in chalk on the sidewalk, including "Simon knew," "Cowards" and "505," the number of Nassar's known victims, according to The State News. Simon was accused of lying to police after stating she was unaware that Nassar was the subject of a Title IX investigation in 2014, but all charges were dropped in 2020. The portrait was part of Simon's retirement agreement, but the event surrounding it was not.



continue its pre-K program, and Reo will be used by nonprofits including Lansing Promise, Shuldiner told WKAR.

At a Dec. 16 board meeting, a Michigan State University trustee said the school will not reinstate its swimming and diving programs.

After filing a Title IX lawsuit against the school alleging unequal athletic opportunities, former female swimmers hoped MSU would bring back the programs and end the case. Earlier this year, MSU Trustee Melanie Foster said university officials would reach out to former swimmers and divers to "strategize a plan forward for the team in the next academic year." However, Foster now says the university cannot afford to build a new competition pool, which prohibits it from reinstating the programs.



The Lansing School District will merge multiple elementary schools starting in the 2023-2024 school year.

Reo Elementary students will attend Attwood Elementary, and Kendon Elementary will become part of North Elementary. In addition, Willow Elementary students will use Riddle Elementary while a new building is constructed. Lansing Superintendent Ben Shuldiner said the mergers will allow more full-time teachers, better usage of empty space and better building conditions for students. Kendon will partner with Capital Area Head Start to



Ricky Dale Jack, 37, of Lansing, was sentenced to life in prison on Dec. 14 for the death of his 4-month-old son, according to Lansing State Journal.

Jack was convicted of first-degree murder and first-degree child abuse after battering the infant and engaging in "subterfuge" to cover up the crime. The child was found dead in July 2018 with 14 fractured ribs, abdominal bruising and a broken spine. The medical examiner ruled that the trauma couldn't have occurred all at once.



NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING EAST LANSING CITY COUNCIL

Notice is hereby given of the following public hearing to be held by the East Lansing City Council on **Tuesday, January 10, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.**, at the East Lansing Hannah Community Center, 819 Abbot Road, East Lansing:

A public hearing will be held to consider a request from Green Cure Group, LLC for a special use permit to open an adult use marijuana retail establishment at 2040 Merritt Road. The 6.42-acre property is zoned B-2 (Retail Sales Business District).

The public may attend and participate at all meetings in person. Additionally, members of the public may participate electronically in all meetings. Please contact the City Clerk or visit the City's public meeting portal for electronic access information:

Jennifer Shuster – City Clerk
410 Abbot Road
East Lansing, MI 48823
jshuster@cityofeastlansing.com
<https://cityofeastlansing.civicweb.net/Portal/>

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

Dated: December 15, 2022
East Lansing, MI 48823

CP#22-296



**Joan Nelson
joins City
Pulse as a
columnist
beginning in
January.**



Built in 1878, this stately, 3,000-square-foot home sits on the corner of Sycamore and Ionia streets, near the edge of the original city limits of Lansing. The home is sturdy, well-kept and brimming with local history.

Consistent with Queen Anne style popular at the time, the building features dormers, steep roofs and delicate woodwork throughout. Decorative pediments fill the gables and top the windows and doors. The house has been well maintained by its owners of the last 15 years, Stephanie and Bill Whitbeck (the latter a retired state Appeals Court judge), whose approach to upkeep includes solving small problems before they become out of control and renting the home to people who appreciate its history and aesthetic.

A short walk from the Capitol and the Hall of Justice, the house was a prime residence for judges, lawmakers and politicians. None were as famous, though, as Michigan Supreme Court Justice Leland Carr.

After World War II, the state capital was rife with corruption. The national spotlight was on Lansing after a bribery scheme between state legislators resulted in the murder of a state senator. Justice Leland Carr was appointed as a one-man grand jury to sort out the web of crime and malfeasance. He did just that, convicting dozens of state legislators, lobbyists and even a former lieutenant governor.

This historical home is for sale and listed at \$339,285.

"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.

By MICHELLE FISH

(The Edit gives it space this week to Michelle Fish, co-founder of the coffee-centric website onebiggislandinspace.com.)

I have a closet full of Green and White. I even have a pair of diamond-studded Spartan dangling earrings that I used to wear at every Saturday home game, during the years that my husband and I had season tickets to Michigan State University football. I have cheered myself hoarse at all manner of Spartan sports games. And I have many dear friends and former East Lansing neighbors who are, or were, employees of MSU, from deans, to faculty, to members of the administration.

I am not an alum, but my husband is. In fact, until recently, he served on the alumni board of the business school.

But I have always admired MSU's scrappy spirit, and I have been truly impressed with the caliber of students I have met there.

Like everyone in the world, I was heartbroken and angry about the Nassar tragedy, and the culture that allowed it to happen. There is something so fundamentally corrupt about a system that values reputation, athletic achievement and fundraising over the safety of students. And they took that to an unconscionable extreme. Young lives in their care paid, and are still paying, the price for that kind of malignant, cynical twisting of what the real mission of an institution of higher learning should be.

But I believed MSU when they said they were going to overhaul their culture and put student well-being at the center of every decision. I have watched and applauded many of the changes that they have made. And I know, because I know many of them, that there are good people trying to do good things within the system.

So, imagine my dismay when I read in The New York Times that MSU has inked a deal with Caesar's Online Betting ("How Colleges and Sports-Betting Companies 'Caesarized' Campus Life," 11/20/22).

In exchange for what will amount to about \$8.7 million for the Athletic Department over the next five years, Caesar's has purchased many things, including the right to market directly to MSU students. Get your first \$300 of online betting for free using your special MSU student promo code!!

What could go wrong?

This is a horrible decision. Oh, sure, there is plenty of marketing on TV and on-line about special promotions for online sports books. I see those ads every night. But I think there is a difference in impact between what is just out there in the ether and what gets mainlined through the university into a student's email inbox.

If the source doesn't matter, then why stop there? Let's make a deal with R.J. Reynolds Tobacco and put cigarette vending machines on every floor of every dorm. After all, if anybody can get cigarettes at the local QD (Quality Dairy con-



The next big scandal at MSU?

venience store, if you're not from East Lansing), then what's the difference? Or, hey, how about a deal with Juul that gives students \$50 off their first vape? All proceeds to benefit the Athletic Department.

To be sure, Caesar's claims that it takes the idea of problem gambling very seriously and that it will not market to anyone younger than 21. But these kinds of partnerships are happening at other universities around the country, and plenty of freshmen have gotten these emails. And what, really, is the difference if a freshman or a senior gets the message, if it leads to a gambling problem for either of them?

Free-wheeling online sports betting is a relatively new phenomenon in our society. But there is already plenty of evidence that it is causing real harm to real people. A few simple Google searches reveal different stats, but 1% to 7% of people who engage in online betting will develop a gambling problem.

It is a certainty that some number of students will be harmed by this decision. I suppose MSU could argue that those students would come to harm anyway, given the ubiquity of the sports gambling messaging in the wider culture. But someone please explain to me how MSU's shrugging at its responsibility and cynically participating in the problem, just for the money, is being student-welfare centric.

The topper is the way MSU has put this deal together. They are using a third party to actually execute the deal. That's important because it removes the details from public scrutiny, a fact that Paul Schager, an executive associate athletic director at MSU, crows about in the NYT article:

"With the multimedia rights holder, public institutions like Michigan State no longer have to disclose all those sponsorship deals," he said in an interview. "This helps with the sponsors being able to spend what they feel is appropriate without having the public or employees or stockholders question that investment."

Is this any way for a publicly funded institution to behave? Particularly one that has so eloquently argued, in the post-Nassar era, that its path to redemption is through accountability and transparency?

I'm going to say it again: There is something so fundamentally corrupt about a system that values reputation, athletic achievement and the ability to fundraise over the safety of students. And young lives that are in their care will pay the price.

This is a horrible, horrible decision. And it's a scandal in the making. It may take a few years to unfold, but people will be hurt.

I'm putting my green and white away. Shame on you, MSU.

The CP Edit

Opinion

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

Now you have two ways to sound off:

1 Write a letter to the editor.

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

2 Write a guest column.

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



**CITY OF LANSING
SUMMARY OF
ADOPTED ORDINANCE # 1309**

Lansing City Council adopted an Ordinance of the City of Lansing, Michigan adopting the Codified Ordinances of the City of Lansing by Adding Chapter 291, Sections 291.01-291.04, to establish a conflict of interest policy and regulations for U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Programs and Funding; including, but not limited to, Continuum of Care (24 CFR 578.95); Emergency Services Grants (24 CFR 576.404); and CDBG (24 CFR 570.611, 24 CFR 578.95, 24 CFR 576.404); and to provide penalties for any violations of the provisions of this ordinance.

Effective date: Upon publication

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

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

CP#22-292



**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN, INGHAM COUNTY
LEGAL AD NOTICE: REZONING #23010
MONDAY, JANUARY 9, 2023**

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
LEGAL NOTICE
Rezoning #23010 (MW6)
Public Hearing**

Notice is hereby given that the Planning Commission of the Charter Township of Meridian will hold a public hearing on Monday, January 9 2023 at 6:30 p.m. in the Meridian Municipal Building, Town Hall Room, 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI, 48864 (phone 517-853-4560) to hear all persons interested in a rezoning request. The applicant, MW6, is requesting to rezone an approximately 0.7-acre parcel located between Lake Court and Lake Lansing Road, west of Marsh Road, from RB (Single-Family Residential) and C-1 (Neighborhood Service) to RCC (Multiple Family, High Density).

Information may be examined at the Department of Community Planning and Development, 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, Michigan 48864-1198, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday and on the Township website under Planning & Development-Documents at <https://www.meridian.mi.us/about-us/departments/community-planning-development>.

Written comments may be sent prior to the public hearing to the Planning Commission, Charter Township of Meridian, 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, Michigan, 48864, or by email to planningcommission@meridian.mi.us, or at the public hearing.

**Deborah Guthrie
Township Clerk**

CP#22-291

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**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN, INGHAM COUNTY
LEGAL AD NOTICE: MIXED USE PLANNED UNIT
DEVELOPMENT #22-024
(Okemos Pointe III, LLC)
THURSDAY, JANUARY 5, 2023**

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
LEGAL NOTICE
Mixed Use Planned Unit Development #22-024
(Okemos Pointe III, LLC)
Public Hearing**

Notice is hereby given that the Director of the Department of Community Planning and Development of the Charter Township of Meridian will hold a public hearing on Thursday, January 5, 2023 at 3:00 p.m. in the Meridian Municipal Building, Town Hall Room, 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864 (phone 517-853-4560) to hear all persons interested in a request from Okemos Pointe LLC to amend an approved mixed use planned unit development and special use permit. The approximate 37-acre project site is located on the west side of Jolly Oak Road, north of Jolly Road. The site is zoned C-2 (Commercial).

Information may be examined at the Department of Community Planning and Development, 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, Michigan 48864-1198, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday and on the Township website under Planning & Development-Documents at <https://www.meridian.mi.us/about-us/departments/community-planning-development>.

Written comments may be sent prior to the public hearing to Brian J. Shorkey, AICP, Senior Planner, Charter Township of Meridian, 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, Michigan, 48864, or by email to shorkey@meridian.mi.us.

**Deborah Guthrie
Township Clerk**

CP#22-294

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**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN, INGHAM COUNTY
LEGAL AD NOTICE: SPECIAL USE PERMIT #23011
(CONNECTOR TRAIL –
PHASE 2)**

MONDAY, JANUARY 9, 2022

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
LEGAL NOTICE
Special Use Permit #23011 (Connector Trail – Phase 2)
Notice of Application**

Notice is hereby given that the Planning Commission of the Charter Township of Meridian will hold a public hearing on Monday, January 9, 2023 at 6:30 p.m., in the Meridian Township Municipal Building, Town Hall Room, 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, to hear all persons interested in a request from Meridian Township's Engineering Department to construct Phase 2 of the MSU to Lake Lansing Connector Trail. The trail is being constructed within easements and Township owned property along the south side of the C&N Railroad corridor between Campus Hill Drive and Okemos Road.

Information may be examined at the Department of Community Planning and Development, 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, Michigan 48864-1198, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Written comments may be sent prior to the Planning Commission, Charter Township of Meridian, 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, Michigan, 48864, or by email to shorkey@meridian.mi.us, or at the public hearing.

**Deborah Guthrie
Township Clerk**

CP#22-295

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**CITY OF LANSING
SUMMARY OF
ADOPTED ORDINANCE # 1310**

Lansing City Council adopted an Ordinance of the City of Lansing, Michigan adopting the Codified Ordinances of the City of Lansing by repealing Chapter 844, Sections 844.27 through 844.99, to eliminate City permitting requirements for solicitors of charitable and religious donations.

Effective date: Upon publication

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

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

CP#22-293

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

Notice is hereby given of the following public hearings to be held by the East Lansing Historic District Commission on **Thursday, January 12, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.**, at the **East Lansing Public Library**, 950 Abbot Road, East Lansing, Michigan 48823:

- A public hearing will be held to consider a request from Maria Gisting for the property at 166 Orchard Street to replace windows.
- A public hearing will be held to consider a request from Justin Wenger for the property at 110 Oakhill Drive to replace windows.

For more information on the request please contact Darcy Schmitt at (517) 319-6941 or dschmitt@cityofeastlansing.com. 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 the Historic District Commission, City of East Lansing, 410 Abbot Road, East Lansing, Michigan, 48823, or by email to coelhistoricdistricts@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 PA 267 of 1976 as amended (Open Meetings Act) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and published in compliance with the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, 2006 P.A. 110.

Jennifer Shuster
City Clerk

**Dated: December 15, 2022
East Lansing, MI 48823**

CP#22-297

Even for big Michigan election year, this was a do-nothing Legislature

What would happen if you showed up to your \$72,000-a-year job only five days since the 4th of July?

You wouldn't have a job by now. Come the end of the year, mercifully, neither will the 101st session of this Legislature.

The futility of the state House and Senate in 2022 is, to put it generously, historic.

Unbelievably, this crew didn't report to Lansing for session more than five days since July 4. That's not hyperbole. It's a true statement.

Since the Michigan Legislature began meeting full time in 1965-'66, a Michigan legislative body has never passed fewer bills or met fewer times.

Between 1951-1964, the Legislature only met part time. They usually wrapped things up for the year in late May or early June and went home. In each of those 14 years, the part-time legislatures reported a quorum more times than this 2022 Legislature.

Count it up yourself, if you like. It was 54 days in the House and 62 days in the Senate this year. In an average year between 1951 and 2020, the Legislature would report a quorum and do something 101 days.

To find a group of lawmakers who accomplished less, my team needed to go back to 1950, a year in which the Legislature only held session because the governor called them in.

Let's talk about public acts. Gov. Gretchen Whitmer is on the verge of signing around 430 public acts this year. She may sign 450, but she could sign as few as 409. The average is 754 for a two-year cycle.

Our MIRS team couldn't find a time fewer measures were signed since Dwight Eisenhower was president.

Here are more sad facts:

In those few days the Legislature did have session, missed votes skyrocketed. In the Senate, they haven't missed this many votes since 2001. We had fewer missed votes during the height of COVID.

Also, somehow, Whitmer vetoed more bills over her first four-year term than any governor since at least 1913. The House and Senate journals didn't index this information past that date, so I

didn't check further than that.

So, here's the recap. The Legislature in 2022 hardly met. When it did meet, fewer legislators showed up. For those who did show up, fewer bills were passed. And when they did pass bills, Whitmer vetoed 13% of them.

It's a sad performance by any measure.

Tired of trying to negotiate with Whitmer, the legislative leadership teams checked out and turned their summer recess into a nearly permanent vacation.

The Senate majority leader and the House speaker were on completely different pages. Neither wanted to do the other's priorities.

The Governor's Office was vague on what it wanted. The Legislature pushed a massive tax cut that couldn't be paid for after a few years. Everything became political.

Instead of compromise, little got done. Nobody wanted to work with anybody.

The Legislature passed a budget, but the Constitution requires that. That's like getting a gold star for filing your income taxes.

They talked about creating an ethics commission, streamlining mental health services to the poor, increasing law enforcement recruitment, standardizing short-term rentals statewide, capping insulin prices, creating a water infrastructure spending plan and dozens of other things.

Nothing.

Nothing on safe gun storage. Little on school safety. Little for additional tutoring support for the kids who fell way behind during COVID. It's not as if they didn't have any money, either. They left \$6 billion on the balance sheet. Think about that.

They had money! More extra money than this town has ever seen. They still didn't want to come to town and figure out how to spend it.

This Legislature, and to some extent the governor, opted against hard bipartisan work when the route of partisan finger-pointing proved easier and politically expedient.

When it came to doing the work of the people, they gave up.

We can only hope this is an anomaly and not a sample of more to come.

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

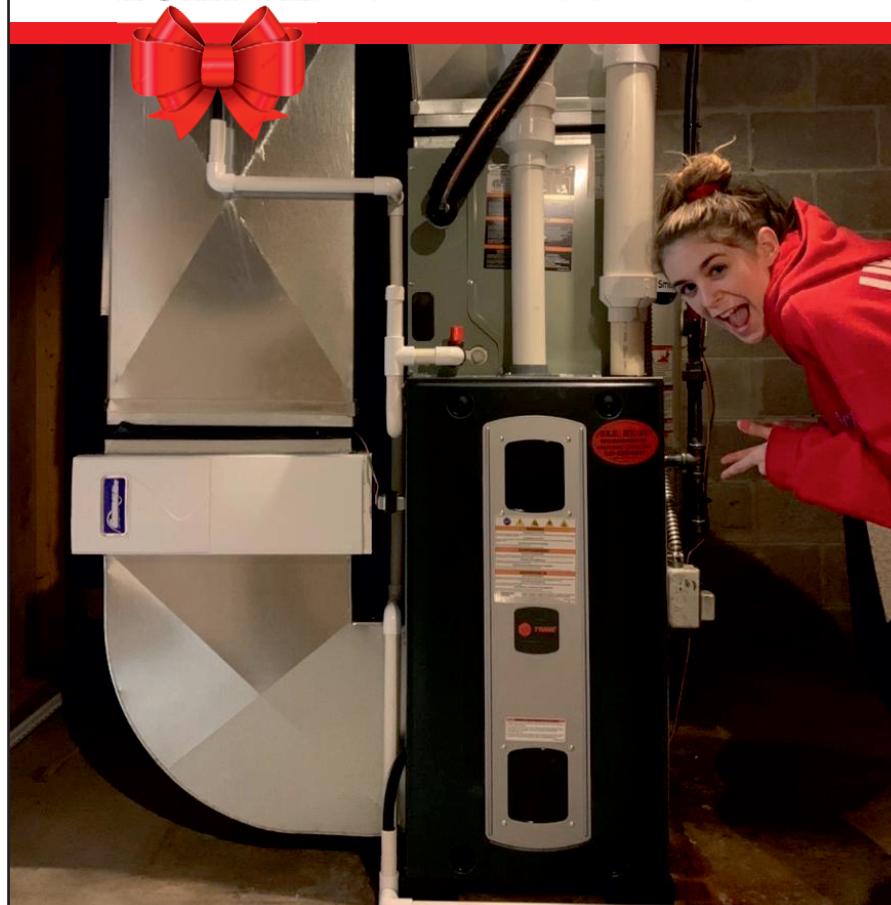


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POLITICS

Opinion

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ARTS & CULTURE

ART • BOOKS • FILM • MUSIC

Meet the writers behind this year's Poetry and Lights edition

By **NICOLE NOECHEL**

The poetry scene in Lansing is lively and welcoming with spaces for every writer, from beginners looking for tips to well-published authors looking to share expertise. Twelve writers from this ever-expanding network submitted poems for this year's 3rd annual Poetry and Lights Issue. They also shared some insight into their love of the craft and the opportunities out there for readings, discussion groups and networking, as well as the meanings and inspirations behind their submissions.

Ruelaine Stokes

Stokes earned bachelor's and master's degrees in English literature, but an attempt at poetry in her youth was "so horrid" that it kept her from pursuing the craft until later in life.



"It wasn't until I went to a poetry reading in Lansing with three young, local, women poets who were just fabulous, and I was really inspired. So, I joined a poetry workshop that Lee Upton was giving and just got really fired up by what poetry could do."

Her poem, "Letter to the Poet at the End of Time," was inspired by a conversation with another poet following the death of a mutual friend. She questions "In what way is the human plight and the human position so perilous, and in what way do we just need to celebrate what life and what beauty we have? In the face of the complexity and the awesomeness and the very real cruelty in life, what sense can we make of it?"

"My poem, in a way, is terrible, because it's really about trying to com-

prehend death and comprehend that even the Earth will someday die and yet find an impulse to celebrate the beauty nevertheless," she said.

Anita Skeen

Skeen helped found MSU's Center for Poetry in 2007, noticing a lack of opportunities for poets in Lansing.

"At the time, there was the Lansing Poetry Club and some other little groups of poets, but things have exploded," she said. "I think Lansing is a pretty great place for poets right now — a lot of readings, the Center for Poetry is bringing writers, the Lansing Poetry Club is, too. There's a lot happening."

She credits the Lansing-area poet laureate position for helping bring notoriety to poetry in the area.

"We'd been trying for years to get a state poet laureate, and we couldn't get one, so we were able to get a Lansing-area poet laureate," she said. "They have a two-year tenure before a new poet laureate is appointed, and each has a project that they want to work on during their period. They're spreading poetry into the public schools and into the community."

Rosalie Sanara Petrouske

Petrouske became interested in poetry at age 16 after her father passed away. Writing helped her deal with feelings of grief.

"Back then, I didn't really



know what I was doing, but I began reading as many poets as I could, trying to learn the craft," she said. "That's how I got started, and then I just kept writing after that and perfecting my craft. I went to workshops and worked under a lot of Michigan poets that were well-published."

She eventually started a writer's group in Grand Ledge called Writing at the Ledges to give her a "nudge" to write poetry at least once per month.

Petrouske pointed to other organizations, including the Lansing Poetry Club, The Poetry Room and MSU's Residential College of Arts and Humanities Center for Poetry, as some of the many opportunities for local poets. After a brief hiatus, she says Lansing poet laureate Masaki Takahashi will resume hosting The Poetry Room's open mics at The Robin Theatre in January.

Wayne Richard Pope

Pope wrote his first poem for City Pulse, "Confessions of a Compulsive Paparazzo," about a self-portrait he took during a snowstorm in Okemos several years ago.

"I was photographing people's Christmas lights in this winter storm, and so I held out a waterproof camera, and I used flash, and I took a picture of myself in front of my neighbor's yard," he said. "But these huge snowflakes were in the scene, and that inspired me to write the poem about being in a snowstorm, being pelted by these snowflakes and taking pictures of my neighbors' Christmas lights."



Pope recommends open mics and readings for interested poets, even if they're nervous about performing their own work.

"They can at least see other people perform and be inspired by that and make friends, make contacts, get some input on their work," he said. "They can share a couple of poems with some of the other people afterward and get some ideas on how to improve it or change the wording."

Laura Apol

Apol grew up reading poems with her father but didn't start writing poetry until adulthood.

"I had things that I needed to say that I couldn't really say any

other way, and poems allowed for that kind of exploration and expression," she said. "It's what I tell my students as well. They make a huge leap to poetry once they discover that it's a way to talk about things that they really care about and they really need to say."

Apol believes there is a "very lively and always-growing community of poetry" in Lansing.

"It really, right now, stretches across skill levels, across types of poetry, across age," she said. "There are lots of venues where poetry takes place and lots of identities that poets come with, so there are places where there are people who have done certain kinds of poetry for quite long, and then there are places that are really edgy, and people are experimenting and trying out their poems for the first time. That kind of range, I think, gives a real energy to the poetry scene in the Lansing area."

See Poetry, Page 11



Poetry

from page 10

Jay Artemis Hull

Hull recommends a daily journal practice for busy or scatterbrained writers.

“My journal is a vital practice to me as a human being but also as a poet,” they said. “When I notice a theme, two ideas that would be interesting next to each other or have something I want to expand upon, I will look back at the journal to turn the scattered impressions into a poem.”

Hull says “There is a lot happening in the poetry community” in mid-Michigan. They recommend the Facebook groups Poetry Action Network-Lansing Area and The Poetry Calendar for listings of events.

“The Coffeehouse at All Saints Church does a performance of poetry and music that I’ve only been to once but was blown away by how fun it was! Outside of Lansing proper, CADL Mason has a poetry group that reads and analyzes a different poetry book each session, and there are open mics all over the place, including a monthly one at 2 Dandelions Bookshop in Brighton.”

Mary Fox

“People often wonder why I write poetry more than anything else,” Fox said. “Poetry, for me, is like music: It can play like a symphony or a country song. It can innovate like a jazz riff or follow a form-like pop song. I write for ordinary people. I’m not an ‘opera’ poet. I want my poetry, or at least a lot of it, to be accessible and relatable to people reading or hearing it.”

Fox has always loved writing, but the tone of her poems changed after her husband and mother died within

a few weeks of each other.

“I was on my own without people who needed me to care for them. I spent more and more time writing,” she said. “I hope when you read my poem in the paper, you can relate it to the people who are no longer with you and have left your life in some way, and you get how you must mourn that loss and adjust your life as you move on, but you also understand how they are a part of your life that plays on.”

Cruz Villarreal

Villarreal contributed both a poem, “Reflection,” and a story about a memorable Christmas from his youth (“A Christmas wish”).

His poem was one that he came across while going through old documents, started but never finished. It encapsulates the changes he faces while getting older.

“The aches and pains seem to be more pronounced now that I am 70,” he said. “While getting old can be tough, I have good memories and grandchildren who interact regularly with me and make me laugh. I hope the poem will resonate with those in my demographic who can relate to the aches and pains, but how they go away when we reflect on the good things in life.”

Villarreal began writing poetry as a child, but he credits Lansing Community College for making him the writer he is today.

“I’ve always written,” he said. “I just didn’t refine it until I took creative writing classes at LCC. Then I could actually give it structure and add something worth reading.”

Cheryl Caesar

Caesar’s “Stored Energy” was inspired by something many of us use every day: a laptop charger.

“I was struck each morning by the way the magnetized charger cable of my laptop leaped to

assist me,” she said. “So many other objects, animals and circumstances seemed to follow this pattern: When you offer energy to the world, energy flows back to meet you.”

She rewrote the poem for this edition after publishing it three years ago.

“I wanted to change the ending,” she said. “The original poem concluded with an invitation to the other ‘treasure seekers’ to join me in a hunt for the cache of stored energy. Rereading the poem, I felt that this source is not far-off or hidden; that we can reach down and turn it on like the light switch at the base of the Christmas tree.”

“The poem reminds me that my light source is always there,” Caesar said. “I hope it will help others as it does me.”

Chana Kraus-Friedberg

Kraus-Friedberg is a first-timer in this year’s Poetry and Lights edition.

“I think it’s so cool, I feel like poetry’s kind of come into its own during the pandemic,” she said. “Lots of people who didn’t use to be interested are turning to it, and I think it’s great that the local paper is involved in the poetry community and supports poetry.”

Her poem, “Sowing in a Pandemic Time,” stems (no pun intended) from watching a neighbor grow tomato seedlings in her apartment window at the start of the COVID lockdown.

“I couldn’t eat, I was sick, I was so freaked out all the time,” she said. “But she was really pleased with her tomatoes, that they were doing so well, and I was thinking about how that takes a certain amount of faith, in a way, to be able to focus on something like that, even when you don’t know what the outcome will be.”

Connor Beeman

Beeman, who moved to Lansing just a year and a half ago, is “very excited” to publish poetry

in City Pulse for the first time.

“I’m only 23, and I just graduated from college about two years ago, so every time I can show my mom my name in print and be like, ‘Look, mom, the degree was worth it,’ that’s always useful to me,” they said.

Beeman wrote the poem “mercy moon” about the now-distant relationship with their grandfather.

“It came out of reflecting on how this year has been different because I haven’t had this person in my life that I was used to having,” they said. “Something we did a lot was taking the telescope out on the porch and looking up at the stars. My grandfather’s the person who taught me that when the sun sets, you can see a few planets. It’s been so long that I can see them, and I’m like, ‘I’m pretty sure that one’s Venus,’ but I can’t reach out to this person that I would have and be like, ‘Hey, is that one still Venus?’ It uses those sort of images to talk about that estrangement and distance from people that you used to be close to, which I think is a common thing, post-COVID, for people.”

Cindy Hunter Morgan

“I think the most general and most precise way of summarizing how I came to poetry begins with the world,” said Hunter Morgan. “Poetry, for me, is part of living. It’s part of being a human in this world. Poetry gives us a place — and a way — to engage with the complexity of being human, and I think when poetry is working well, it acknowledges this complexity.”

Hunter Morgan, who teaches creative writing at MSU, focused on punctuation (or, rather, lack of punctuation) for her poem, “The Eternal Return.”

“When I talk with my students about poetry, I emphasize that anything goes but not everything works, and that idea applies to how we choose to punctuate or not punctuate a poem,” she said. “I think the absence of punctuation in ‘The Eternal Return’ helps to reveal the mind thinking about something difficult. It affects the rhetoric and it opens the poem up a bit. Maybe that’s felt most deeply at the end: The absence of final punctuation keeps some impossible possibility alive for the speaker.”



Uncovering the history of MSU's 'Sacred Space'

By **BILL CASTANIER**

"Sacred Spaces," the subtitle of the new "Tales from the Archives" book published by the Michigan State University Archives and Historical Collections, may confuse some readers. The phrase has nothing to do with religion but rather refers to the open space surrounding where Beaumont Tower came to sit at MSU. It was a design concept of the 19th century: Early landscape architects and college presidents decided that the center of campuses should be preserved as open space, creating a natural, almost park-like atmosphere. It was sacred, and therefore no new construction would be allowed.

Today, that space at MSU is still pretty much preserved, allowing for a meditative, quiet place to stroll between classes and relax among towering trees. It is almost sublime in nature and continues to create pleasant memories for the hundreds of thousands of students and alumni who pass the space between classes or stop to kiss a date under Beaumont Tower. The older buildings that surround the area help define it from the rest of campus, creating a town square where no automobiles are allowed.

That's not to say the area has always been a quiet place. As early as 1907, it was used to gather students for a memorable graduation featuring an address from President Theodore Roosevelt. In the tumultuous 1960s and beyond, it was the stepping-off place for political protest.

The space was first designated as "sacred" in 1906, when O. C. Simonds, a well-known prairie school landscape architect, created plans for the construction of West Circle Road.

In his design plans, Simonds wrote,

"I should regard all the ground included in this area marked ... as a sacred space from which all buildings must be forever excluded. This area contains beautifully rolling land with a pleasing arrangement of trees, many of which have developed into fine specimens.

Students after they leave their alma mater, and I doubt if any instruction given has a greater effect upon their lives."

Since that day, the area has mostly been frozen in time. No new construction was allowed, pushing development on campus to the east, west and south.

Despite his voracious appetite for construction in the 1960s, even former MSU President John Hannah did not consider touching the space.

In 1915, the famous Olmstead design firm, known for creating New York City's Central Park, was hired to review the MSU landscape. It helped underline the importance of the sacred space and its rambling, non-linear walking paths. The recommendations would also lead to the elimination of some drives that were beginning to appear due to the growth of automobiles.

Through easy-to-read, descriptive articles, the book also informs readers about the sacred space's evolution. Morrill Hall, an early women's dormitory built in 1899, was torn down in 2013, creating even more open space. Some early academic buildings, like the original Engineering Building, Saints' Rest Dormitory, Williams Hall and the Botany Building and Greenhouses were either demolished or fell to

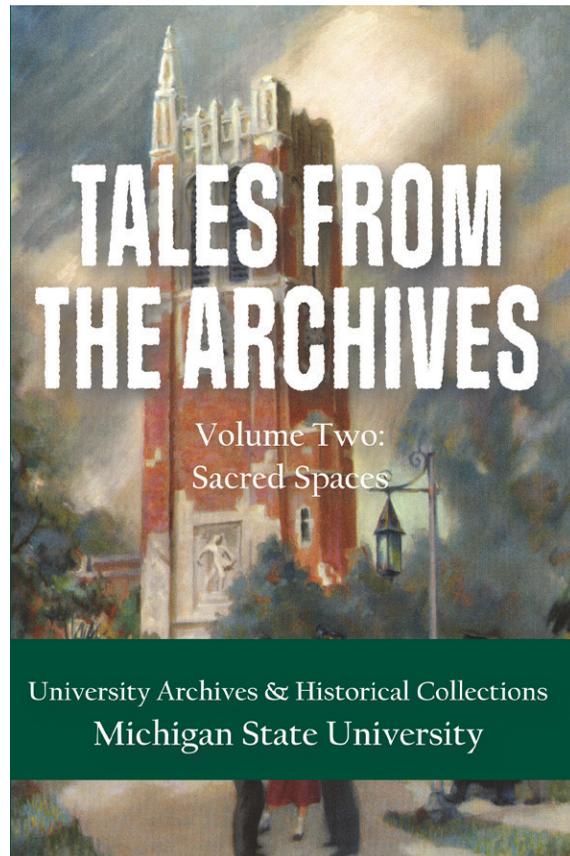
fire. Cowles House, the home of most MSU presidents, was also demolished and rebuilt. It still occupies a dominant

location that evokes the feeling that the boss lives there. Interestingly, it was an easy walk for demonstrators to gather outside the house to call for the end of segregation or war.

Readers, especially students and alumni, will find the new book to be a pleasant romp through MSU's astoundingly beautiful campus and its history. The book is peppered with details about topics ranging from floods to buildings' namesakes to rumors of ghost hauntings, which have spread across campus from its earliest days. (As an aside, I once spent a day alone inside Morrill Hall prior to its deconstruction to research an article for the MSU alumni magazine. I'm not saying I encountered ghosts, but as the day's light began to fade, it sure was eerie as I navigated the many dead-end warrens of hallways and former dormitory rooms.)

Right now, I'm patiently awaiting a harsh winter storm that will blanket MSU's campus. The day that happens, I'm going to ascend to the 10th floor of the new Graduate hotel in East Lansing to take in what I hope is a startling view of the sacred space which, for most of the year, is blanketed with a thick umbrella of trees.

Kudos to Ed Busch, Megan Badgley-Malone, Jennie Rankin, Susan O'Brien and Stacey Camp, who, alongside dedicated alumni and students, created this unusual guide to one of the most beautiful campuses in the United States.



"Tales from the Archives, Volume 2: Sacred Spaces," by MSU's University Archives and Historical Collections, tells the story of the open, tree-filled area on campus where Beaumont Tower now sits.

This area is, I am sure, that feature of the college which is most pleasantly and affectionately remembered by the stu-

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Raymond Holt for City Pulse

Visible from space? Cheryl Underwood smiles as she admits her epic Christmas display is “a little over the top.” It includes more than 150,000 lights and draws hundreds of visitors to Williamstown Township.

‘Let’s spangle’: Our 3rd annual Poetry & Lights Issue

By LAWRENCE COSENTINO

Welcome to City Pulse’s third annual Poetry and Lights issue. This tradition started in December 2020, in the shadow of a devastating pandemic, with the idea of bringing our readers a glimmer of light in a dark time.

Lansing’s thriving and talented community of poets came through with verses that not only inspired and uplifted, but also dug into the pain, loss and confusion that swept our lives in that first pandemic year.

Of course, that’s what poets do all the time. The pandemic exposed our vulnerability as human beings, along with our enduring need for connection, hope and healing. Poets knew that all along. Working the wax of words into candles that burn — sometimes painfully — and glow — often beautifully — is their thing.

The poets represented in the following pages had free rein to express whatever is on their minds, regardless of the overall theme, but most of them circled around to light in one form or another.

Sometimes the light fills a space of loss. Lighting a candle as she mourns the loss of a friend, Anita Skeen asks: “How many times do we, in grief, strike flint to wick to light the path ahead, to light our own diminished cosmos?”

A few poets seized their images of light from the heavens. Ruelaine Stokes invokes the “old fireball” in the sky, the sun, and its scary progression to a red giant. Connor Beeman recalls a grandfather who gazed at the stars and planets, but the poet’s mood is more in tune with the recent collision of a space probe with an asteroid in “a small plume of gray dust and shattered parts.”

“Forgive me for my uncertainty,” Beeman asks.

Sometimes the light comes from unexpected sources. Jay Artemis Hull dives all the way into the inexpressible mysteries, as poets miraculously do, fending off thoughts of suicide as he keeps an eye “on the blink of a cell tower, just in case.”

Other entries are more lighthearted. Wayne Richard Pope, a self-confessed “compulsive photographer,” tossed us

a brief ditty about snapping a photo of somebody’s Christmas lights while being whipped by snowflakes big enough to “deck a Clydesdale horse.”

Other poets went for straight-up inspiration. Light may be an insubstantial lifeline in a dark time, but it’s also fun.

“Let’s spangle,” poet Cheryl Caesar urges. “Flip that forgotten switch and shine, shine, shine.”

The “lights” part of this project is also part of an enduring human impulse. The simple urge to bring light to the darkness is the wellspring of many celebrations that fall in late December, the darkest time of year. From a candle in a drafty window to the gaudiest front-yard display, the impulse to flip that switch is not going away.

Raymond Holt, the photographer who captured the luminous images in these pages, got involved in photography after moving to Lansing in the early 1980s and taking a photography course at Lansing Community College, only two blocks from his house. After working the assembly line at a GM plant in his hometown of Flint, Holt was drawn

to the idea of getting behind a lens for a living. He recently retired as a media specialist for the state of Michigan, leaving him free to try his hand at lighter assignments like this.

Holt calls himself “a bit of a grouch” where holiday decorations are concerned, but the more he roamed greater Lansing, looking for interesting displays, the more he realized how much they mean to people. Many residents invited Holt into their homes and told him their decorations were handed down from parents or grandparents. He came to share his subjects’ contagious enthusiasm about holiday trimming traditions and their excitement about renewing them each year.

It might have helped to boost Holt’s enthusiasm that this year, owing to an unseasonably dry early December, he didn’t have to kneel in the slush and snow to get the shots he wanted.

So, settle into a favorite sofa, stool or stump, light a candle (LED kind if you’re wary of fire) and savor a generous gift from some very talented people who happen to live in your community.



Raymond Holt for City Pulse

“Decorating for Christmas is a tradition in my family. We’re trying to bring that same neighborhood experience to our business and Old Town,” said Whitney Sowers, co-owner of Odd Nodd Art Supply.

Why We Light the Candle

for Irene McKinney

By ANITA SKEEN

Not ten minutes after I wrote our friend Jane telling her of your passing, she wrote back a brief note: *Thanks for letting me know.*

I'm lighting a candle now. She's in Oklahoma, headlamp of the sun rolling along the plains. In Michigan, it's February, there should be snow

but the day is bright as July, not a storm in sight. Still, I strike a match to the Frasier fir candle beside my chair. The flame sputters,

chipmunk chatter. It's Christmas, the tree Daddy and I cut each December. We lugged it home, cloaked it with light

and ornament, tinsel shivering like the rain. It stood, a midnight radiance, something more than *tree*,

now *grandmother, tricycle, cinnamon.* I didn't figure how lighting this candle would return me to those West Virginia hills,

where you are now, or were before your feral self slipped loose the skin of pain.

How many times do we, in grief, strike flint to wick to light the path ahead, to light

our own diminished cosmos? Just a small snap of flame to dispel the lowering gloom,

one flicker in the catacombs of loss. Words you gave us beam like carbide lanterns: *Talbott Churchyard, bones and plots,*

how tiny what I loved was, the unknown buried in the known. A simple word, an ordinary tree.

How particulars attach, go luminous. What you leave us: the bloom of your voice, the deep vowels of the church organ, their release. 4/4/13

Anita Skeen is professor emerita in the Residential College in the Arts and Humanities at Michigan State University, where she is series editor for the Wheelbarrow Books Poetry Competition. She's been teaching and coordinating writing programs at Ghost Ranch in New Mexico for over 40 years. She serves on the board of directors for the Theodore Roethke Foundation in Saginaw, Michigan. She is the author of six volumes of poetry, including "The Unauthorized Audubon" (2014), a collection of poems about imaginary birds accompanied by the linocuts of anthropologist/visual artist Laura B. DeLind.

Sowing in a Pandemic Time

By CHANA KRAUS-FRIEDBERG

Charlotte is watering the tomato seedlings perched in her window.

"I started them over there, in *that* window." she points with her chin.

"But I realized the problem was, I guess, I don't keep those blinds open very much, so they weren't getting enough sun."

She stands back and examines the plants with a satisfied, parental air.

"They're using the water better now," she says.

When I think of the future these days, even feeding my own body seems futile, My gut clenches tight with disgust at the yank of my need. But her pleasure seems uninhibited by the uncertainty Of spring, the virus-ridden world where These plants might (*might!*) one day bear fruit. It's not hope, exactly — for the first time I see this — But it makes her courageous: The ability to cherish what is yet unformed, The will to tend to what is not now and might not ever be complete.

Chana Kraus-Friedberg has written poetry, on and off, since she was 6 years old. She is the winner of the 2020 Ritzenhein Emerging Poet Award. Her first collection of poems, "Grammars of Hope," was published in 2021 by Finishing Line Press.



Raymond Holt for City Pulse

Christmas wreaths grace the lampposts surrounding the Ingham County Court House in Mason.



Raymond Holt for City Pulse

The John T. Herrmann House, 520 N. Capitol Ave, on the campus of Lansing Community College, was built in 1893. It serves as the official residence of LCC's president.

mercy moon

BY CONNOR BEEMAN

as a child, my grandfather
taught me to trace

the path of the stars.

his old hand, skyward,
pointing to Mercury, Venus, Jupiter.

and even now, on the far
edge of a sunset, I see the planets,

(or at least, what I hope are the
planets)

and I recite, "Mercury, Venus, Jupiter."

forgive me for my uncertainty,

for the time,
for the distance.

I am a bitter-cored moon,
meteor showering my disdain.

my mother, a Libra, does not forgive,
and taught me the same.

I do not know if I want to,
only that I wish I knew how.

last month, they crashed
a satellite into an asteroid

in search of knowledge.

and when I saw the images of that
far-off destruction,
that small plume of gray dust and
shattered parts
millions of miles away,

I thought of him.

I thought of him,
and still did not call.

Connor Beeman is a queer writer and the winner of the 2021 Ritzenhein Emerging Poet Award. Their first chapbook, "concrete, rust, marrow," is out next spring from Finishing Line Press.

Stored Energy

BY CHERYL CAESAR

Every time you stooped to pet the cat
and she reared up on two legs,
fitting her head into your hand
like a ball in a cup;

And every time you went to shut the
fridge
and the door so graciously said, Allow
me,
and finished closing itself;
And each time
that magnetic charging cable leaped
into the port, like an eager cadet;

Not to mention all the green lights
you hit, and the mornings
(rarer now) when the life force
propelled you from your bed
before the voice of duty called:

Surely these have all been adding up.
Surely there's a cache of energy
somewhere. Didn't Einstein say
it's never lost? Let's go

through pockets, and turn over
sofa cushions, like kids
who hear the ice-cream bells.

Let's scoop it up like Ali Baba's
armfuls of gold, sprinkle it like dust
from Tinkerbell's wand, on every head
we meet. Let's all glitter like sequins
on a tap dancer, shimmer like tinsel
on a tree. Let's spangle. And then:

reach down to your innermost
branches. Flip that forgotten
switch. And shine, shine, shine.

(An earlier version of this poem appeared in "The Wild Word" in 2019.)

Cheryl Caesar studied comparative literature at the Sorbonne, and now teaches writing at Michigan State University. She serves as secretary for the Lansing Poetry Club, whose recent collaboration with the Poets' Club of Chicago, "Words Across the Water II" (available from Fractal Edge Press), features her poetry and artwork.



Raymond Holt for City Pulse

"Gill" is the official recycling/water mascot of Delhi Township. The 15-foot-tall mascot was a community project created entirely of recycled materials and LED lights. Gill is on display at the Delhi Township Public Services facility 1492 Aurelius Road in Holt.



Reflection

By CRUZ VILLAREAL

Life's journey can be hard,
and aging
has a way of chipping at
my stately
Tower.
Yet,
the scent
of green
country air
in the morning, the fragrance
of flowers on Mother's Day—
then, the stern lines
across my face
soften

and fade away.

I reflect on the restful sounds of lullabies
and baby laughter—

I remember my children
and my children's children,
playground swings and
fishing trips.

Even the soft sensation of soapy bubbles
against weathered hands is a pleasant feeling.
And the soft feel of puppy fur against my face
brings comfort to my weary
age-ed mind and cranky disposition,
and life is good
again.

Cruz Villarreal is a published local poet with a creative writing degree from Lansing Community College.

Raymond Holt for City Pulse

Since 1967, Lionel and Betty Gibbs have enjoyed displaying Christmas lights on their Moores River Drive home in Lansing.



In Time for Hanna

By LAURA APOL

After her death, my mother came back
as an eagle. I saw her often. You saw her too.
Once, home from college, childhood
ornaments arranged on the family tree,
you stood at the window, gazing out
at the river when —*Look*— a dark shape
flew close, turned into the wind.
When the sky went slate-empty again,
you said, *That's how I'll always see her*
And you asked, *How do you think we'll see*
Grandpa? And later,

I will see you in everything.

I knew then that when someday
I came to you, you would know me
and it made me glad—the ordinals of loss
and my sure return, forever, to you.
I never wondered how you
might return to me. *My daughter,*
now sea turtle, hummingbird, monarch;
now yellow-eyed heron at the river's
edge—rare, and relentlessly still. *Look* —
what memory, water. What memory, sky.

Laura Apol is a poet and professor at Michigan State University. An award-winning author of five full-length collections of poetry (most recently, "A Fine Yellow Dust," winner of the Midwest Book Award), she served as the Lansing-area poet laureate from 2019 to 2021.



Raymond Holt for City Pulse

Another view of the Underwoods' home in Williamstown Township.



Raymond Holt for City Pulse

The Veterans Memorial Gardens is a 5.5-acre park between Cedar Street and Aurelius Road in Holt. Each year, the gardens are decorated for the Christmas season by Delhi Township Parks and Recreation Department staff.

The eternal return

After W.S. Merwin

By **CINDY HUNTER MORGAN**

Because it is not here it is eternal
 how else to explain the absence
 of the moon in the afternoon
 the disappearance of loons
 in September the silence
 when I wake at night that time
 between the last sound
 of the last frog and the first

sound of the first ice
 where does anything go except
 into forever my grandmother
 comes to me at night is always
 waiting at the end of the hallway
 in a house that is not there
 by the heavy black-corded telephone
 in the nook by the closet
 where her jacket still hangs

Cindy Hunter Morgan is a poet, teacher and co-founder of Filmetry: A Festival of Film and Poetry. "Harborless," her book of poems informed by Great Lakes shipwrecks, was named a 2018 Michigan Notable Book and won the 2017 Moveen Award in poetry. "The Eternal Return" appears in her new book, "Far Company" (Wayne State University Press, 2022).

Waypoint

By **JAY ARTEMIS HULL**

My beloved and I share a movie in the living room. The man on the screen states "I have not lost my faith." as he prepares to die. After it ends, we talk suicide—it feels inevitable these days, to talk. But here, to be honest for once, to take it cosmic—philosophies of honoring the bead of the moment, or vast oceans, or the hypothesis that they're the same.

Safety plans made this late would be better called damage control. Slash and burn fire prevention. I know I've been cold. Turning away from care and snapping at questions. Wish I could say I wasn't aware of what I was doing. I'm sorry, I think. Just so tired in the way that turns everything off. As if closing my eyes to the light will let me sleep.

My dreams these days are fragmented and cruel. I'm in bed, my partner crying to the phone; I wake to screams outside the office door; I'm with friends who are slowly dying by hemlock; I'm in bed. I can see the cell tower blinking through the blinds. That must mean this is reality. Waking with chamomile tea instead of the usual Earl Grey

as an attempt to attain some semblance of calm in hopes my jaw will unclench enough to drink it. A walk in the morning mist, sending notes via songs added the secret playlist. There are more paintings in the crosswalks, dandelion and clover this time. Keeping an eye on the blink of the cell tower, just in case.

If I can see the skyline, I can find my way home.

Jay Artemis Hull is an occult experience consisting mostly of love, longing and library facts.



Raymond Holt for City Pulse

The John T. Herrmann House, 520 N. Capitol Ave, on the campus of Lansing Community College.



Raymond Holt for City Pulse

Decorating for Christmas is something Brian Shedd and Todd Owen have enjoyed since moving to their riverfront home on Moores River Drive 17 years ago.



Raymond Holt for City Pulse

Bradly's HG holiday window display in Old Town is a true reflection of the season. "We're crazy about Christmas. Our customers know that," says Kathy Fountain, design manager at Bradly's.

Silent Night

By ROSALIE SANARA PETROUSKE

A few lights have dimmed
on my little artificial tree—
yet in my mind
they still burn brightly.
Under their glow,
I carefully hang each ornament,
think about a Christmas past—
fragile baubles from my mother's youth—
a blue Mercury glass bell, spirals,
spheres, a crystal angel, a tiny drum.
Candlelight and hopes,
silver tinsel strung, glistening
on that fresh cut tree my father
pulled through the woods
on a sled.

*When the moon cast
shadows across the snow
that Christmas Eve, I pressed
my round child's face against
the windowpane, looking
for magic, and saw silhouettes
of three deer on the hill behind
our cabin—a buck and two does.
They watched tentatively,
turned their faces toward me.
Moonlight stroked their backs,
and though I could not see
their eyes, I felt their fear.
When I bumped against
the glass too hard with my chin,
they bounded away, pausing
for a moment to look back.*

*Everything was still beneath
the stars then, even the cottontail
rabbit, who hopped away,
with his loping strides made
no sound.*

I turn back to my own room—
another time, another place,
a much older me.
There is no moon out tonight,
everything dark and noiseless,
only the twinkling
of lights from my now
decorated tree.

I feel a wisp of breath,
a quiet touch on my arm—
perhaps, my mother telling
me it's time for bed,
but when I look, no one
is there.

And I am lost between
then and now, between
that silent night and
this one.

Rosalie Sanara Petrouske is a professor of writing at Lansing Community College, a 2012 finalist for U.P. poet laureate, and the author of "Tracking the Fox," First Place winner of the 2022 Poetry Box Chapbook Competition, judged by nationally celebrated poet James Crews. "Tracking the Fox" will be released Feb. 1 and can be pre-ordered through Dec. 31 at <https://thepoetry-box.com/bookstore/tracking-fox>

Beneath the Snow

By MARY FOX

The sun rises,
and you do not see it glint against snow.
You do not inhale its sweet clarity you loved.
I travel alone—reluctantly prepared
before you sped to the sting of a setting sun—
schooled in practicalities
of water lines and furnaces.

Somehow, I've always found a wisp of courage
and imagination to see me through.
This New Year might wind and twist.
I might envision where it leads
or question if I want even to trudge
those paths. Uncertain, I will pause

to fill my pockets with Christmas
pebbles
I'll gather from beneath the snow.
In my grieving heart, they'll jangle a song
of yesterday:
I may recall sweet bundles of candles
scented with pine
or days bubbling with Christmas cheer.
Remembrance may fill the air with
peppermint,
or rattle me those tart sachets fragranced
with your scent—
all prickly packages to prod me on.

Mary Fox, a Detroit-born poet, resides Portland, Michigan. In 2016, she published "Waiting for Rain," a poetry chapbook, with Finishing Line Press, and in 2018, she co-edited "Promptly Speaking," the fourth Writing at the Ledges anthology. Her 2019 chapbook was "Reading Lessons" (Finishing Line Press). She promotes poetry and oral presentation with several Lansing-area organizations, including The Poetry Room, The Coffeehouse at All Saints Episcopal Church and Writing at the Ledges.

A Christmas wish

By CRUZ VILLARREAL

Frosted windows, Christmas carols and children all nestled snug in their beds while visions of sugarplums danced in their heads — but me, I never celebrated Christmas as a child. I'm not sure I really celebrate it now. I have no colorful tree or neatly wrapped gifts nestled beneath green boughs. However, I am keenly aware of its significance, cordial on the subject and enamored with a season that centers on giving yet confused over the controversy it seems to generate between those who lay sole claim to its meaning and those, like me, who meld it into something of their own choosing. But there was a time when it didn't matter at all.

Then migrant life brought me to Michigan, and I entered school. Besides learning my ABCs and tying my tattered shoes, I was introduced to Christmas and the gift-giving Santa. The introduction was more of an immersion into a world of school holidays, but the holiday that stood out the most was Christmas.

I asked Mother about Christmas. She replied in a very kind voice, "We don't celebrate holidays," but I think it was more because she couldn't spend what she didn't have. Dad, on the other hand, didn't have anything to say on the subject. "It no matta," he would say, so I can only speculate that his childhood as a Mexican peon didn't offer up holiday luxuries either.

Most children are introduced to Santa shortly after their birth. In my case, I was born into migrant life — Santaless. A childhood haunted by the cage of poverty; accommodations that offered infrequent meals and inadequate clothing.

I was 5 when Dad made the decision to take us out of the fields and put us in school. He chose to stay in Michigan, with its snow drifts and howling winds. We landed in a cold hovel, very different from the warm migrant shack back in Texas, the new shelter more than a shed but less than a house. The walls were insulated with mannerless roaches that made intrusion a way of life. Most of the windows were covered in thick plastic, and in winter they accentuated its gloom. A small, fuel-oil furnace in the living room, water from the neighbor and an outhouse in the back — that's what passed for Michigan low-income housing in 1957.

School, on the other hand, turned out to be great. There were warm rooms, running water and indoor toilets, which offered up a reassuring whirl and whoosh, guaranteeing my business would be out of sight.

In December, when the snow flies, I'm visited by a Christmas ghost, and I'm a child in school again. The hallways are noisy with pictures of snowmen, Santa and Christmas trees. It's the year I learn how to make a Christmas tree from a rolled-up newspaper. It's a cheerful time, with the sugary smell of Christmas cookies, colorful cards and red stockings hung out with care, as if Old Saint Nick would soon be there. Christmas, I like listening to the stories: singable songs, tales of shining stars and Christmas wishes. But outside of school, Christmas in Michigan means this little boy's feet will be cold and wet. The worn-out, hand-me-down shoes have holes in them. It's the kind of memory that is scribed with a sharp quill dabbed in indelible ink, leaving permanent, snowy footprints for me to follow when I relive the memory.

I dread the winter break that separates me from my school — my haven. I lament any unavoidable walks in the snow, but I have a plan. On Christmas Eve, I will wait until everyone is asleep, take my Christmas tree made of print and place it in the only window barren of plastic for Santa to see. It doesn't shimmer or shine like all the other trees, but it shouldn't matter: It's Christmas.

When the moment finally arrives, I set my tree on the sill and stare out the window. The moon captures me in its light. My hopeful eyes are fixed on the heavens. I see a magic sky the color of a blackbird's wing, a dark blanket tinged in blue, speckled with shiny beams of light, each beckoning a wish.



Raymond Holt for City Pulse

My gaze finally lands on what seems to be the brightest star in heaven. My Christmas star. It glimmers with approval. I close my eyes and wish hard upon the star. "Shoes," I speak softly to myself. A pair of shoes to keep my feet warm and dry.

That's what I love about children: even in the worst of times, they cling to hope. It's Christmas Eve, and not a creature is stirring, not even the roaches. With the magic of Christmas and a wishing star, surely Santa will find his way here.

I wake the next morning. My feet hit the cold floor, and I run to the window, but nothing rests under my newspaper tree. Had my ritual gone wrong? I believed with all my heart. Maybe Santa didn't like my tree of shredded headlines from The Daily Telegraph.

With no answer in sight, it remained my secret. I asked the star for a pair of shoes, because I would never ask my parents for something they already knew I needed. The disappointment thundered down like an avalanche, crushing my Christmas spirit. Feeling betrayed by Santa, I set him aside. The holiday now became an occasion for the well-to-do. I took the impending cruelty of future seasons personally.

Then, one Christmas morning in another time and another house, I step onto the porch and am greeted by a very large box. It's filled with gifts. The presents are from Santa to us, but the box belongs to someone else. I don't recall whose symbol of kindness was on the box, but I do remember how the porch came alive with voices.

"A doll," shrieked one of my sisters. "A cowboy hat and guns!" shouted one of my brothers, but what really caught my eye is what leaned against the box: an orange, 24-inch, two-wheel bicycle with my name on it.

All those years ago, it wasn't my shabby, little tree or a wish that fell on deaf ears that kept Santa away. It was one of his helpers who must've been asleep on the job. With so many needy children in the world, Santa looks for helpers to pitch in. He whispers in their ear and tugs at their heart, relying on them to do their part to lighten his load. The helper, imbued with particular grace, is the kind of person who gives to those who cannot, or to those who may never return the kindness.

I'm still not sure if I celebrate Christmas, or even if I'm imbued with particular grace, but when Santa whispers in my ear and tugs at my heart, I remember the little boy at the window, and I too do my part — a blanket here, a coat there or maybe even a pair of shoes to a child in need.

That day, when I was greeted with an act of kindness, Santa's helpers restored faith and goodwill to a young boy's heart. Santa made up for the earlier oversight in spades when he delivered, not with a pair of shoes that would be outgrown, but with a gift that would wheel me to freedom from the confines of a poor kid's world.

Yes, the shoes were important for getting around on foot, but a bike: it was my wings. Now I could soar from my cage toward any adventure that awaited.

Cruz Villarreal is a published local poet with a creative writing degree from Lansing Community College.



Letter to the Poet at the End of Time

By RUELAIN STOKES

I know.

That old fireball will run out of hydrogen,
collapse from the weight of gravity, heating up
as it goes, cause the upper layers
to swell.

"Red giant," we say, as if our minds
could contain it.

Planetary nebula, white dwarf, black dwarf.
A few billion years.

"That's not what I'm talking about," you say,
and yet, you are. Or I am. And what difference
does it make where the words come from?

We dance on the lip of disaster.

Our skin so thin we see the blood pulse.
Our feet so tender we wrap them in
Leather, plastic, rubber.

Our bodies so fragile, they wear out.

What to do?
There is nothing to do.

Let's decorate a tree with small, bright lights
gather 'round the piano, sing
the old songs.

You tell a story, I'll recite a poem.

12/14/22

Ruelaine Stokes is a poet, spoken word performer and teacher. For decades, she has been working to nurture a growing poetry community in greater Lansing.

Confessions of a Compulsive Paparazzo

By WAYNE RICHARD POPE

Last night while you were sleeping,
Warm and safe in bed,
Nikon man photographed your holiday lights,
Of orange and blue and red.
Snowflakes pummeled him like Muhammad Ali,
Without pity or remorse,
Some big enough to deck King Kong,
Or at least a Clydesdale horse!

Wayne Richard Pope is a fervent Lansing booster and a photojournalist and a snap-happy documentarian always on the lookout for a photo opportunity. He studied photography at Lansing Community College. Putting pictures and words together is his lifelong joy.



Raymond Holt for City Pulse
Another view of the Underwoods' home in Williamstown Township.

Reviewing Pure Options' newest drop

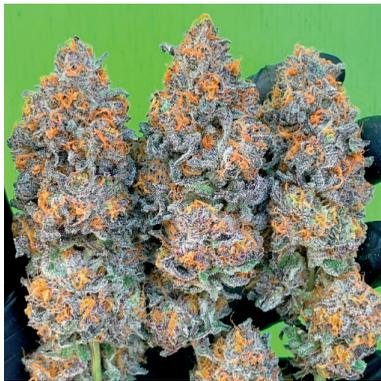
By **LUCAS HENKEL**

Deep East Oakland Farms, otherwise known as DEO, is a cannabis breeder based out of Oakland, California. DEO has come a long way since its humble beginnings in a handmade, 10-by-10-foot grow room more than a decade ago. It is now one of the hottest cannabis breeders on the market. Collaborations with California heavyweights like Doja Pack and Wizard Trees have allowed DEO to create terpy, quality cannabis. Now, Michigan smokers can get their hands on some of DEO's sought-after strains thanks to its recent collaboration with Lansing's own Pure Options/ProGro. I was more than eager to scoop up these new strains for myself, and they did not disappoint.

Zoap | Sativa hybrid | Deep East x ProGro

I have had Zoap from other cannabis breeders

and growers, but I would love the opportunity to bathe in Deep East's version. Each nug is dense and covered in gorgeous orange pistils (or "hairs," as they have been fondly called). Deep East's Zoap is created by crossing Rainbow Sherbet and Pink Guava Pheno #21. A "pheno," or phenotype, is the summary of all of the features you can detect on the outside of a cannabis plant, including color, smell and taste. After multiple harvests and growing cycles, experienced cannabis breeders



Zoap, a Sativa hybrid from DEO and ProGro, has eye-popping, orange pistils.

can isolate those features and eventually grow the best version of that strain. In short, hard work pays off and smokes even better. Zoap smells like a fresh bar of homemade soap: slightly spicy, but overall very sweet. It creates a lovely head high that made me feel focused but not jittery.

Jelly Roll | Indica | Deep East x ProGro

Switching gears from the energizing Zoap, Deep East's Jelly Roll is a sweet, slightly Indica-leaning strain. Jelly Roll is created by crossing Rainbow Sherbet and Pink Guava Pheno #19, which results in a fabulously dark-purple bud that smells like grapes. Folks who have trouble with sleep will appreciate the long-lasting body high associated with this strain. I smoked a bowl of Jelly Roll before bed and it made me feel extra cozy. Any strain that can help me sleep through the night while my three cats plan my demise is a strain I like to keep in rotation.



123 | hybrid | Avant x ProGro

Avant is the brainchild of Deep East, multimedia artist Joey Colombo and LA-based cannabis cultivator and breeder Wizard Trees. I'm a huge fan of the artwork featured on each bag from this drop, but 123's art really caught my eye, so I had to do some research on Colombo. The artist uses paper currency from countries all over the world to create intricate collages. His goal is to take an object we hold treasurable (money) and transform it into an object of art. To quote his online artist statement, "I am both reducing it



See Lanssterdam, Page 22

18-21? We have what you need. (Med Card Required)

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Mi-Rural Records: Where everybody knows your name

By LIZY FERGUSON

As much as I would love to see Chris Edmondson's Spotify Wrapped, the mere concept would likely horrify him. As owner of Mi-Rural Records in Grand Ledge, Edmondson is decidedly committed to the analog and the self-curated. A 35-year veteran of the music business, Edmondson, who previously conducted business online and at record shows around the state, fulfilled a long-held dream of operating a storefront when Mi-Rural opened its doors in October of this year.

"My inspiration was to have a shop that brings the community together through music," Edmondson said.

The store, which occupies about 500 square feet on Grand Ledge's lovely Bridge Street, boasts a diverse and ever-changing selection of vinyl, concert DVDs, band t-shirts and more. You don't have to spend too long in the shop, though, to see what really makes it special. While I familiarized myself with the shop's selection, a customer walked in, and he and Edmondson proceeded to greet each other warmly and start chatting like old friends.

After presenting the customer with a record he'd been able to locate, Edmond-



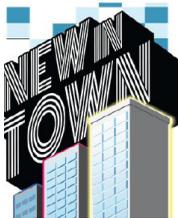
Courtesy of Chris Edmondson

Mi-Rural offers a selection of vinyl, concert DVDs, band tee shirts and other music-related items.



Courtesy of Chris Edmondson

Chris Edmondson opened his record shop, Mi-Rural Records, in October of this year. Already, customers are flocking to the store from all over the state in search of rare finds.



Mi-Rural Records

217 N. Bridge St.,
Grand Ledge
Monday-Saturday:
11:30 a.m.-6 p.m.
517-925-1974

son turned to me and, returning to a question I'd asked earlier, said, "That's what I specialize in." Explaining further, it turns out that "old friend" had wandered into the shop a mere two weeks ago. In that time, Edmondson had gotten to know his new customer's tastes and hunted down a record for him. "That's someone I call a friend now," he said with a shrug. "Every day, people stop in to dig through racks and have a chat. That is truly a large part of my life and business."

It's clear that Edmondson, seeing his

customers as friends and fellow community members, takes great care in both procuring and maintaining his inventory. He only purchases used records in good condition, puts each through a very fancy-looking cleaning device and play-tests everything.

"It's the old-fashioned sales and service you want and expect," he said.

With his history in the business, Edmondson's knowledge is encyclopedic, and it shows in the distances record hunters have traveled to see what treasures Mi-Rural might hold.

"In the two months we've been open, I've had visitors from Greenville, Chesterfield, Flint and Indiana," he said.

With the multiple stories he told me of

his efforts in tracking down rarities for his customers, it's clear Edmondson is also happy to go the distance.

Edmondson, who named The Stooges as his favorite band and Kate Bush as a current preoccupation, explained, "This is a place to come browse the racks in search of that lost classic while enjoying the album currently playing on the house system and having engaging conversations with like-minded individuals."

I would say his vision is fully realized. I was so content talking to Edmondson and his friend/customer that I was late for my next appointment. Worth it, though — I have lots of new bands to check out.

Lansterdam

from page 21

inherent and practical purposes and empowering a secondary significance and value." After I got done drooling over Colombo's artwork, I cracked open the bag and was greeted by the scent of sweet citrus. 123 is a hybrid cross of Sherb BX1 and RS11, a Deep East original that has become a hit amongst folks in California. Fans of cake and gelato strains will not be disappointed by 123.

ProGro fan favorites

The newest drop from Pure Options

is super exciting and definitely worth checking out. While you're visiting one of its four Lansing locations, consider grabbing some ProGro classics as well:

Lunar Lemon | Sativa hybrid | Pure Options/ProGro

Voted "Best Sativa Flower" in this year's Top of the Town competition, Lunar Lemon is a citrusy-sweet Sativa hybrid that is produced by crossing Lemon Peel and male Moonbow plants. Limonene, the terpene found commonly in

fruits like lemons and oranges, is very present in this strain. Some studies have shown that consuming limonene-heavy strains, like Lunar Lemon, can increase serotonin and dopamine levels in areas of the brain that are associated with anxiety, depression and OCD. Truly a strain that can keep your spirits bright this winter.

Wedding Cake | hybrid | Pure Options/ProGro

Wedding Cake is an earthy-yet-sweet

hybrid strain that is produced by crossing Triangle Kush and Animal Mints. It almost tastes like a creamy vanilla frosting and provides a physically relaxing body buzz. While relaxing, it isn't sedating — Wedding Cake makes you feel euphoric and creative. Between its sweet scent and the equally tasty high, this strain is a great choice to enjoy while baking your next batch of holiday cookies.

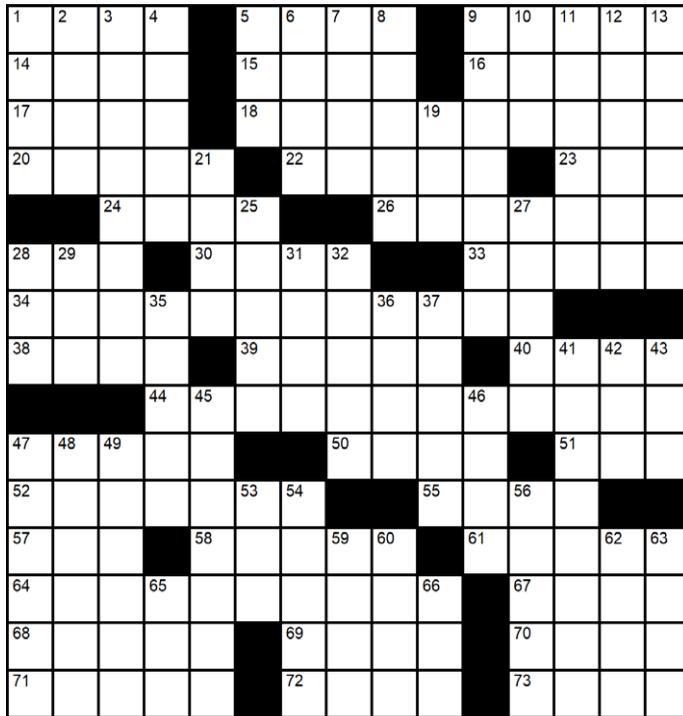
Jonesin' Crossword

By Matt Jones

"A Pair of Shorts"--they follow the pattern.
by Matt Jones
© 2022 Matt Jones

ACROSS

- 1. Job safety gp.
- 5. Open a smidge
- 9. Tiny flying pests
- 14. "Modern Family" dad
- 15. In ___ parentis
- 16. "Grey's Anatomy" extra
- 17. Bridge charge
- 18. Shrinking of a bookstore section?
- 20. Crash sites
- 22. Body of belief
- 23. Uffizi display
- 24. Dividing word
- 26. Award-winning 2015 movie whose title means "hitman"
- 28. Breakfast sandwich layer, usually
- 30. Sch. that both Dido and Shakira attended (even for a little bit)
- 33. Former presidential candidate ___ Perot
- 34. How electricity is conducted through a baguette?
- 38. Scorch
- 39. Friends in France
- 40. "That ain't good"
- 44. Extra-strength bones, like the ones used to play a skeleton like a xylophone?
- 47. Jeremy of "Entourage"
- 50. Bengaluru attire
- 51. Martini base
- 52. Stuffs with food
- 55. MacFarlane or Green of "Family Guy"
- 57. Designer monogram that's surprisingly late in the alphabet (as monograms go)
- 58. On guard



- 61. Town known for its mustard
- 64. Instruction after a power outage?
- 67. Remote button
- 68. "Taskmaster" assistant Alex
- 69. It may follow someone or something
- 70. Some lifesavers, for short
- 71. Spirited horse
- 72. Film spool
- 73. Place to park
- DOWN
- 1. Chooses
- 2. "Be off with you!"
- 3. Designer Tommy
- 4. Poe's middle name
- 5. '80s TV alien
- 6. ___ de vivre
- 7. Bank offering, for short
- 8. Some IRAs
- 9. Potato dumplings
- 10. Sister in an order
- 11. Hall of Fame jockey Eddie
- 12. Trouble, in Yiddish slang
- 13. Ruckuses
- 19. "Creed ___" (2023 boxing movie sequel)
- 21. Tuxedo shirt button
- 25. Creator of a philosophical "razor"
- 27. Pianist Rubenstein
- 28. Retreating tide
- 29. "Despicable Me" supervillain
- 31. Like cooked spaghetti
- 32. April sign
- 35. Built up the pot
- 36. Michael of "Scott Pilgrim vs. the World"
- 37. People logged in
- 41. Track and field event
- 42. Sendai sash
- 43. Competitor of QVC
- 45. Planning to marry
- 46. "Divorced, beheaded, ___" (refrain in the musical "Six")
- 47. Gives a pep talk, with "up"
- 48. Summertime complaint
- 49. Song with Italian lyrics that won the first Grammy for Song of the Year (1958)
- 53. Woolly parent
- 54. Further from harm
- 56. Multiplying word
- 59. One in a board game sheet
- 60. Nero's "to be"
- 62. ___ Octavius ("Spider-Man" villain)
- 63. Hatchling's refuge
- 65. 180 degrees from SSW
- 66. Unagi, at a sushi bar

Free Will Astrology

By Rob Breznsky

December 21-27, 2022

ARIES (March 21-April 19): "Perfectionism is the voice of the oppressor," writes Aries author Anne Lamott. "It will keep you cramped and insane." I think that's a key theme for you to embrace in 2023. Let's express the idea more positively, too. In Navajo culture, rug weavers intentionally create small imperfections in their work, like odd-colored beads or stray pieces of yarn. This rebellion against unattainable exactitude makes the art more soulful. Relieved of the unrealistic mandate to be flawless, the rug can relax into its beauty.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Here are my four decrees for you in 2023, Taurus. 1. You are cleared to be greedy if it's in service to a holy cause that fosters others' well-being as well as yours. 2. It's permissible to be stubborn if doing so nourishes versions of truth and goodness that uplift and inspire your community. 3. It's proper to be slow and gradual if that's the best way to keep collaborative projects from becoming slipshod. 4. It's righteous to be zealous in upholding high standards, even if that causes less diligent people to bail out.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): In 2023, many interesting lessons will arrive via your close relationships and collaborations. You will have the potential to learn more about the art of togetherness than you have in a long time. On occasion, these lessons may initially agitate you. But they will ultimately provide more pleasure and healing than you can imagine right now. Bonus prediction: You will have an enhanced talent for interweaving your destiny together with the fates of your allies.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Here are some projects I'd love to see you pursue in 2023: 1. Teach your allies the fine points of how to cherish you but not smother you. 2. Cultivate your natural talent for appreciating the joys of watching and helping things grow: a child, a creative project, a tree, a friendship or your bank account. 3. If you don't feel close to the family members that fate provided you with, find others you like better. 4. As you explore territories that are further out or deeper within, make sure your Cancerian shell is expandable. 5. Avoid being friends with people who are shallow or callous or way too cool. 6. Cultivate your attraction to people who share your deepest feelings and highest ideals.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Mystic teacher Terence McKenna said, "You have to take seriously the notion that understanding the universe is your responsibility, because the only understanding of the universe that will be useful to you is your own understanding." This will be key advice for you in 2023. You will be wise to craft an updated version of your personal philosophy. I suggest you read a lot of smart people's ideas about the game of life. Make it your quest to commune with interesting minds who stimulate your deep thoughts. Pluck out the parts that ring true as you create a new vision that is uniquely your own.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): How should we refer to your romantic adventures in 2023? We could be whimsical and call them "Ritual Mating Dances on the Outskirts of History." We could be melodramatic and call them "Diving into the Deep, Dark Mysteries in Search of Sexy Treasures." Or we could be hopeful and call them "A Sacred Pilgrimage to the Frontiers of Intimacy." I think there's a good chance that all three titles will turn out to be apt descriptors of the interesting stories ahead of you — especially if you're brave as you explore the possibilities.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): "Coddiwomple" is an English slang word that means to travel resolutely and dynamically toward an as-yet-unknown destination. It's not the same as wandering aimlessly. The prevailing mood is not passivity and vagueness. Rather, one who coddiwomples has a sense of purpose about what's enjoyable and meaningful. They may not have a predetermined goal, but they know what

they need and like. According to my analysis of the astrological omens, the next six months will be an excellent time for you Libras to experiment with coddiwompling.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): In the theater of ancient Greece, the term "anagnorisis" referred to a pivotal moment when a character discovered a big truth they had previously been unaware of. Another Greek word, "peripeteia," meant a reversal of circumstances: "a change by which the action veers round to its opposite." I bring these fun ideas to your attention, dear Scorpio, because I think 2023 could bring you several instances of an "anagnorisis" leading to a "peripeteia." How would you like them to unfold? Start making plans. You will have the uncanny power to determine which precise parts of your life are gifted with these blessings.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Winters are cold in Olds, a town in Alberta, Canada. Temperatures plunge as low as 24 degrees below zero Fahrenheit. But an agronomist named Dong Jianyi has built a giant greenhouse there that enables him to grow vegetables year-round. He spends no money on heat but relies on innovative insulation to keep the inside warm. In 2021, he grew 29,000 pounds of tomatoes. I propose we make him your inspirational role model for 2023, Sagittarius. My guess is, that like him, you will be a wellspring of imaginative resourcefulness. What creative new developments could you generate? How might you bring greater abundance into your life by drawing extra energy from existing sources? How could you harness nature to serve you even better?

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): In accordance with your astrological omens in 2023, I've chosen a quote from Capricorn storyteller Michael Meade. I hope you will make it one of your core meditations in the coming months. He writes, "All meaningful change requires a genuine surrender. Yet, to surrender does not simply mean to give up; more to give up one's usual self and allow something other to enter and redeem the lesser sense of self. In surrendering, we fall to the bottom of our arguments and seek to touch the origin of our lives again. Only then can we see as we were meant to see, from the depth of the psyche where the genius resides, where the seeds of wisdom and purpose were planted before we were born." (The quote is from Meade's book "Fate and Destiny, The Two Agreements of the Soul.")

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): In addition to my career as a horoscope columnist, I have written novels and other books. I have worked as a singer-songwriter in rock bands and performed a one-person show in theaters. As I survey my history, I always break into sardonic laughter as I contemplate how many businesspeople have advised me, "First, you've got to sell out. You've got to dumb down your creative efforts so as to make yourself salable. Only later, after you have become successful, can you afford to be true to your deepest artistic principles." I am very glad I never heeded that terrible counsel, because it would have made me insane and unhappy. How are you doing with this central problem of human life, Aquarius? Are you serving the gods of making money or the gods of doing what you love? The coming year will, I suspect, bring you prime opportunities to emphasize the latter goal.

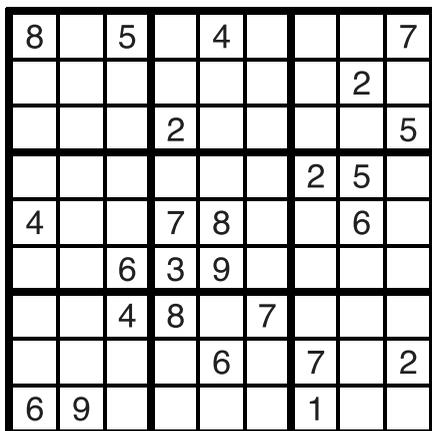
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): I've chosen a sweet taste of advice for you to keep referring back to in 2023. It's in rapt alignment with upcoming astrological omens. I suggest you copy my counsel out in longhand on a piece of paper and keep it in your wallet or under your pillow. Here it is, courtesy of author Martha Beck: "The important thing is to tell yourself a life story in which you, the hero, are primarily a problem solver rather than a helpless victim. This is well within your power, whatever fate might have dealt you."

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Answers on page 28

SUDOKU

Intermediate



Fun By The Numbers

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

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

OUT on the TOWN

Events & Happenings in Lansing This Week

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

Wednesday, Dec. 21

50 over Fitness – The Meridian 50 Plus Stretch and Flex Exercise group exercises at Meridian Township Central Park Pavilion (Old Farmers Market) 9-10 a.m. 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos. 517-853-4600. meridian50plus.com.

“A Course of Love” with Lucille Olson – 7 p.m. Zoom ID: 177 417 886. Passcode: 601744. unitylansing.org.

A Very Williamston Christmas – Hot cocoa, light parades and romance factor large in this parody of everyone’s guilty pleasure: the holiday movie. 3 and 8 p.m. Williamston Theatre, 122 S. Putnam St., Williamston. williamstontheatre.org.

Diabetes Support Group – 6:30-7:30 p.m. Delta Township District Library, 5130 Davenport Drive, Lansing. 517-220-4944.

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

Holiday Open House – All three floors of the house will be decorated for the holidays. \$5, children 12 and under free. 1-7 p.m. Turner-Dodge House, 100 E. North St., Lansing. 517-483-4220.

Holiday Wrapping Party! – Wrap your gifts and make cards! All materials needed are supplied free of cost. Intended for grades 4-6. 5 p.m. Eaton Rapids Area District Library, 220 S. Main St., Eaton Rapids. eradl.org.

“Lighthouses of the Great Lakes” – 6 a.m.-9 p.m. Public Art Gallery, Hannah Community Center, 9819 Abbot Road, East Lansing. 517-333-2580. cityofeastlansing.com/353/public-art-gallery.

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

Movie Night – Christmas Edition – Free popcorn and a beverage will be included! 5:30 p.m. Charlotte Community Library, 226 S. Bostwick St., Charlotte. 517-543-8859. charlottelibrary.org.

Potato Chip Science – \$75. 9 a.m. Impression 5 Science Center, 200 Museum Drive, Lansing. 517-485-8116. impression5.org.

William Hays Color Linocuts – View four dozen multi-color linoleum block prints. 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Saper Galleries and Custom Framing, 433 Albert Ave., East Lansing. 517-351-0815. sapergalleries.com.

Zaha Hadid Design: Untold – 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Eli & Edythe Broad Art Museum, 547 E. Circle Drive, East Lansing. broadmuseum.msu.edu.

Thursday, Dec. 22

A Very Williamston Christmas – Hot cocoa, light parades and romance factor large in this parody of everyone’s guilty pleasure: the holiday movie. 8 p.m. Williamston Theatre, 122 S. Putnam St., Williamston. williamstontheatre.org.

Christmas Candle Lighting Service – 7 p.m. Unity Spiritual Center of Lansing, 2395 Washington Road, Lansing. unitylansing.org.

Holiday Open House – All three floors of the house will be decorated for the holidays. \$5, children 12 and under free. 1-7 p.m. Turner-Dodge House, 100 E. North St., Lansing. 517-483-4220. Lansing, MI

Ladies Silver Blades Skating Club – Join other adult women for fun, exercise, friendship and skating practice. 9:30-11:20 a.m. Suburban Ice, 2810 Hannah Blvd., East Lansing. ladiessilverblades.org.

“Lighthouses of the Great Lakes” – 6 a.m.-9 p.m. Public Art Gallery, Hannah Community Center, 9819 Abbot Road, East Lansing. 517-333-2580. cityofeastlansing.com/353/public-art-gallery.

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

Water, Water, Everywhere! – \$75. 9 a.m. Impression 5 Science Center, 200 Museum Drive, Lansing. 517-485-8116. impression5.org.

William Hays Color Linocuts – View four dozen multi-color linoleum block prints. 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Saper Galleries and Custom Framing, 433 Albert Ave., East Lansing. 517-351-0815. sapergalleries.com.

Wonderland of Lights – Thousands of lights create an extraordinary holiday display! 5-8 p.m. Potter Park Zoo, 1301 S. Pennsylvania Ave., Lansing. 517-483-4222. potterparkzoo.org.

Zaha Hadid Design: Untold – 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Eli & Edythe Broad Art Museum, 547 E. Circle Drive, East Lansing. broadmuseum.msu.edu.

Friday, Dec. 23

50 over Fitness – The Meridian 50 Plus Stretch and Flex Exercise group exercises at Meridian Township Central Park Pavilion (Old Farmers Market) 9-10 a.m. 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos. 517-853-4600. meridian50plus.com.

A Very Williamston Christmas – Hot cocoa, light parades and romance factor large in this parody of everyone’s guilty pleasure: the holiday movie. 3 and 8 p.m. Williamston Theatre, 122 S. Putnam St., Williamston. williamstontheatre.org.

Dinomania – \$75. 9 a.m. Impression 5 Science Center, 200 Museum Drive, Lansing. 517-485-8116. impression5.org.

Holiday Open House

Turner-Dodge House, 100 E. North St., Lansing Through Dec. 31 Tuesday-Thursday: 1-7 p.m. Friday-Sunday: noon-5 p.m.



The 2nd annual Holiday Open House at Lansing’s historical Turner-Dodge House, sponsored by Friends of the Turner-Dodge House and Lansing Parks and Recreation, brings seasonal cheer to the Classical Revival-style home once again. Local businesses, organizations and individuals have decorated all three floors for the holidays, sure to be a dazzling visual delight.

The admittance fee is \$5 for adults and free for children 12 and under. All proceeds go toward the restoration and preservation of the mansion. The exhibit will be open on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and New Year’s Eve.

Holiday Open House – All three floors of the house will be decorated for the holidays. \$5, children 12 and under free. Noon-5 p.m. Turner-Dodge House, 100 E. North St., Lansing. 517-483-4220.

“Lighthouses of the Great Lakes” – 6 a.m.-9 p.m. Public Art Gallery, Hannah Community Center, 9819 Abbot Road, East Lansing. 517-333-2580. cityofeastlansing.com/353/public-art-gallery.

Taylor Taylor at The Peanut Barrel – 8 p.m. 521 E. Grand River Ave., East Lansing. 517-351-0608. peanutbarrel.com

UrbanBeat presents: Time 2 Play – 8 p.m. 1213 Turner Road, Lansing. 517-331-8440. urbanbeatevents.com.

William Hays Color Linocuts – View four dozen multi-color linoleum block prints. 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Saper Galleries and Custom Framing, 433 Albert Ave., East Lansing. 517-351-0815. sapergalleries.com.

Wonderland of Lights – Thousands of lights create an extraordinary holiday display! 5-8 p.m. Potter Park Zoo, 1301 S. Pennsylvania Ave., Lansing. 517-483-4222. potterparkzoo.org.

Zaha Hadid Design: Untold – 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Eli & Edythe Broad Art Museum, 547 E. Circle Drive, East Lansing. broadmuseum.msu.edu.

Saturday, Dec. 24

Holiday Open House – All three floors of the house will be decorated for the holidays. \$5, children 12 and under free. Noon-5 p.m. Turner-Dodge House, 100 E. North St., Lansing. 517-483-4220.

Sunday, Dec. 25

Christmas Celebration – Special meditation service. 10:30 a.m. Unity Spiritual Center of Lansing, 2395 Washington Road, Lansing. 517-371-3010. unitylansing.org.

Holiday Open House – All three floors of the house will be decorated for the holidays. \$5, children 12 and under free. Noon-5 p.m. Turner-Dodge House, 100 E. North St., Lansing. 517-483-4220.

Monday, Dec. 26

50 over Fitness – The Meridian 50 Plus Stretch and Flex Exercise group exercises at Meridian Township Central Park Pavilion (Old Farmers Market) 9-10 a.m. 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos. 517-853-4600. meridian50plus.com.

Downtown Development Authority Meeting – 6 p.m. Laingsburg City Hall, 114 S. Woodhull Road, Laingsburg.

Department of Public Works Meeting – 5:30 p.m. Laingsburg City Hall, 114 S. Woodhull Road, Laingsburg.

Fiber Circle at Charlotte Community Library – Social gathering for knitters, crocheters and stitchers of all ages and skill levels. 6 p.m.

Live & Local **CityPULSE**

The Avenue

2021 E. Michigan Ave.,
Lansing

Friday karaoke!

Fri., Dec. 23, 9 p.m.

The Green Door

2005 E. Michigan Ave.,
Lansing

Festivus party with Mix Pack

Fri., Dec. 23, 8:30 p.m.

The Junction

410 S. Clippert St.,
Lansing

Hippopalooza

Wed., Dec. 21, 7 p.m.

Christmas Tejano-style with Jr Aldaco and the Midwest Allstars

Fri., Dec. 23, 7 p.m.

The Peanut Barrel

521 E. Grand River Ave.,
East Lansing

Taylor Taylor

Fri., Dec. 23, 8 p.m.

UrbanBeat

1213 Turner Road,
Lansing

Time2Play

Fri., Dec. 23, 8 p.m.



TURN IT DOWN!

Loud dispatches from Lansing's music scene

BY RICH TUPECA

REMEMBERING VAN DECKER OF PLAIN BROWN WRAPPER: 1948-2022



Courtesy photos

During the 1960s and '70s, guitarist Van Decker was a member of Lansing's own The Plagues (left) and Plain Brown Wrapper (right).

Lansing native was also a member of The Plagues

The fuzzy guitar work on "I've Been Through it Before," by Lansing band The Plagues, is some of the finest, most potent riffing ever laid down on a 1960s garage-rock single. The man behind that work, Van Decker, died Dec. 6, leaving behind a long catalog of top-notch recordings.

Decker, who was also a member of Lansing's own Plain Brown Wrapper in the '70s, died in California, where he moved decades ago. The cause of death was a sudden pulmonary hemorrhage in his lung. He'd been battling stage three lung cancer since 2019.



Van Decker

On the day of his passing, Decker, a lifelong musician and music teacher, played his final solo show featuring songs from his catalog of music, including his 2020 "Songs from the Heart" LP.

Back in 1964, during the height of Beatlemania, Decker's tenure as a lead guitarist started with The Plagues. Along with Bill Malone (vocals, bass), James Hosley (rhythm guitar) and Phil Nobach (drums), the group released singles and packed teen clubs across the state. "Through this World," released on the band's own Quarantine Records imprint, charted in 1966 on WILS.

"We were basically a Beatles band to start with," recalled Malone in a 2016 interview. "We did all Beatles tunes. Then we started branching out. We also liked the Byrds and the Animals. It wasn't long after our first show at Everett High School that we played Waverly Junior High School — we nearly started a riot. It was like something out of 'Hard Day's Night.'"

After Malone left The Plagues, Decker and the remaining members shifted

their focus to building a new, more progressive outfit: Plain Brown Wrapper. From the jump, the band pushed sonic boundaries — like adding horns and jazzy elements thanks to the addition of Scott Durbin on keys, trumpet and vocals. Later additions of Chuck Sweitzer (guitar, vocals) and David Livingston (bass, trumpet, trombone, vocals) further enhanced their musical chops.

When they weren't opening shows in the Motor City for big acts like the MC5 and Bob Seger, the Wrapper grew locally as well, winning many "battle of the bands" contests and performing as the house band on "Swing Lively," a music and dance TV show on WJIM (now WLNS) in Lansing. The band's outdoor shows at Valley Court in East Lansing attracted hundreds and often doubled as Vietnam War protests.

"Many people have said Plain Brown Wrapper sounded like Phish," Livingston told City Pulse in 2014. "We definitely had some jam band elements. There were times when we sounded like the Allman Brothers. One of the things we did was an a cappella version of 'Maria' from 'West Side Story.' We'd close with 'When You Wish Upon a Star.'"

Touring around the state in their self-converted, equipment-hauling school bus wasn't so bad. The makeshift vehicle had a dressing room and a coal stove for heat. The band may have never broken through to the mainstream, but it did get a couple of record contract offers, including one from Capitol Records. Unfortunately, the only official releases are a few 45s.

Luckily, the band's long-shelved recordings are now available. Visit plainbrownwrapper.org to hear the previously unreleased songs and view a collection of old band photos and show flyers. The site, curated by Decker over the last year, is a fascinating time capsule of what a hardworking Lansing band looked like in the 1970s.

Events

from page 24

226 S. Bostwick St., Charlotte. 517-543-8859. charlottelibrary.org.

“Lighthouses of the Great Lakes” – 6 a.m.-9 p.m. Public Art Gallery, Hannah Community Center, 9819 Abbot Road, East Lansing. 517-333-2580. cityofeastlansing.com/353/public-art-gallery.

Meaningful Mondays – Gather to nourish our spiritual selves as we send out love and prayers to the world. 8-9 p.m. Zoom meeting: 838 6857 0593. Password: 182016. 517-641-6201.

“Mirari, the Way of the Marys” with Lucille Olson – 1:30 p.m. Zoom ID: 177 417 886. Password: 601744. unitylansing.org.

William Hays Color Linocuts – View four dozen multi-color linoleum block prints. 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Saper Galleries and Custom Framing, 433 Albert Ave., East Lansing. 517-351-0815. sapergalleries.com.

Tuesday, Dec. 27

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

Holiday Open House – All three floors of the house will be decorated for the holidays. \$5, children 12 and under free. 1-7 p.m. Turner-Dodge House, 100 E. North St., Lansing. 517-483-4220.

“Lighthouses of the Great Lakes” – 6 a.m.-9 p.m. Public Art Gallery, Hannah Community Center, 9819 Abbot Road, East Lansing. 517-333-2580. cityofeastlansing.com/353/public-art-gallery.

One More Chapter Book Club – Grades 2-4. Registration req. 6 p.m. Charlotte Community Library, 226 S. Bostwick St., Charlotte. 517-543-8859. charlottelibrary.org.

Preschool Family Storytime – Stories and literacy-enhancing activities for ages 1-6. 11 a.m. Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St., Grand Ledge. 517-627-7014. glacl.org.

Ruth McNally Barshaw Author Visit – Discussing her book “Ellie McDoodle: Have Pen, Will Travel” and offering an interactive story creation workshop. 6 p.m. Charlotte Community Library, 226 S. Bostwick St., Charlotte. 517-543-8859. charlottelibrary.org.

Snow Day Science – \$75. 9 a.m. Impression 5 Science Center, 200 Museum Drive, Lansing. 517-485-8116. impression5.org.

William Hays Color Linocuts – View four dozen multi-color linoleum block prints. 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Saper Galleries and Custom Framing, 433 Albert Ave., East Lansing. 517-351-0815. sapergalleries.com.

Wednesday, Dec. 28

50 over Fitness – The Meridian 50 Plus Stretch and Flex Exercise group exercises at Meridian Township Central Park Pavilion (Old Farmers Market) 9-10 a.m. 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos.

517-853-4600. meridian50plus.com.

Amazing Artists – \$75. 9 a.m. Impression 5 Science Center, 200 Museum Drive, Lansing. 517-485-8116. impression5.org.

Beginning Balloon Animals with Mr. Greg – Registration req. 11 a.m. Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St., Grand Ledge. 517-627-7014. glacl.org.

Holiday Open House – All three floors of the house will be decorated for the holidays. \$5, children 12 and under free. 1-7 p.m. Turner-Dodge House, 100 E. North St., Lansing. 517-483-4220.

“Lighthouses of the Great Lakes” – 6 a.m.-9 p.m. Public Art Gallery, Hannah Community Center, 9819 Abbot Road, East Lansing. 517-333-2580. cityofeastlansing.com/353/public-art-gallery.

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

Minecraft at Charlotte Community Library – Play on the library’s private server! Grades 3 and up. Laptops provided. Registration req. 4 p.m. 226 S. Bostwick St., Charlotte. 517-543-8859. charlottelibrary.org.

William Hays Color Linocuts – View four dozen multi-color linoleum block prints. 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Saper Galleries and Custom Framing,

433 Albert Ave., East Lansing. 517-351-0815. sapergalleries.com.

Thursday, Dec. 29

Grace Rosen – A Merry, Unhinged Cabaret - 7 p.m. UrbanBeat, 1213 Turner Road, Lansing. 517-331-8440. urbanbeatevents.com.

Holiday Open House – All three floors of the house will be decorated for the holidays. \$5, children 12 and under free. 1-7 p.m. Turner-Dodge House, 100 E. North St., Lansing. 517-483-4220.

Ladies Silver Blades Skating Club – Join other adult women for fun, exercise, friendship and skating practice. 9:30-11:20 a.m. Suburban Ice, 2810 Hannah Blvd., East Lansing. ladiesilverblades.org.

Science of Pokémon – \$75. 9 a.m. Impression 5 Science Center, 200 Museum Drive, Lansing. 517-485-8116. impression5.org.

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

William Hays Color Linocuts – View four dozen multi-color linoleum block prints. 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Saper Galleries and Custom Framing, 433 Albert Ave., East Lansing. 517-351-0815. sapergalleries.com.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING EAST LANSING PLANNING COMMISSION

Notice is hereby given of the following public hearing to be held by the East Lansing Planning Commission on **Wednesday, January 11, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.**, at the East Lansing Hannah Community Center, 819 Abbot Road, East Lansing:

Consideration of request to construct 6,800 square foot building addition to facilitate new tenant at 3410 West Road (Parcel ID #33-20-01-02-226-022). The 2.4 acre site is zoned M-1 (Manufacturing District).

The public may attend and participate at all meetings in person or electronically. Please contact the Planning and Zoning Administrator or visit the City’s public meeting portal for electronic meeting access information:

Peter Menser – Planning and Zoning Administrator
410 Abbot Road
East Lansing, MI 48823
517.319.6861 or pmenser@cityofeastlansing.com
<https://cityofeastlansing.civicweb.net/Portal/>

For more information on the request please contact Planning and Zoning Administrator Peter Menser at the contact info above. 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 the Planning Commission, City of East Lansing, 410 Abbot Road, East Lansing, Michigan, 48823, or by email to coelplanningcommission@cityofeastlansing.com.

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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

Dated: December 15, 2022
East Lansing, MI 48823

CP#22-298

CROSSWORD SOLUTION From Pg. 23

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FOOD & DRINK

DINING OUT IN GREATER LANSING

By **GABRIELLE LAWRENCE**

Growing up, my parents were very involved in providing support to Vietnamese refugees in the Lansing area. I never appreciated the uniqueness of having ham and mashed potatoes for holiday dinners alongside egg rolls, crab Rangoon and fried



Lawrence

rice. This goes to say that I have eaten a lot of Vietnamese food in my life, and it is one of the cuisines that I like best in this world.

When the owner of Capital City BBQ announced a few weeks ago that she was struggling to keep the doors open, I, along with many other people in our community, responded to her request for help. Honestly, I'm happy she said something.

It's so disappointing when restaurants close with little fanfare, especially when, if the public had known they were struggling, we might have been

able to help. Granted, I don't want to blow my entire restaurant budget in the first month of the new year, but I hope this can serve as a reminder to business owners that sometimes speaking honestly and from the heart is one of the best marketing tools there is.

CCBBQ is one of the most eclectic restaurants in our area, offering two distinct types of food: Vietnamese and traditional American barbecue. The menu is split right down the middle. We dove headfirst into the opportunity to explore CCBBQ's Vietnamese side of the menu during a recent visit, and I came home laden with chicken spring rolls (\$8.49), shrimp spring rolls (\$7.99), a pork bánh mì (\$10.99), a chicken rice plate (\$16.99) and a chicken noodle salad (\$16.99). Having just clocked a full day of running around with no lunch break, I tore into a chicken spring roll on the drive home and was blown away immediately. Springs rolls are my preferred counterpart to the egg roll, the former being a fresh, not-fried roll wrapped in rice paper. In this version was a grilled, incredibly flavorful chicken thigh. The texture that comes from the chicken being grilled adds a perfect juxtaposition to the rice noodles and fresh cucumber, herbs and lettuce.

The noodle salad featured many of the same components, and as someone who loves both chicken thighs and rice noodles, this scratched an itch. I doused the rice plate in peanut sauce left over from the spring rolls and devoured it, poking the tines of my fork into the yolk of a beautifully fried egg and watching the jasmine rice soak it up.

However, my favorite item of the night was, without any close competition, the pork bánh mì. A bánh mì is a traditional Vietnamese sandwich served on a crusty, French baguette. The pork was juicy and played nicely with the generous helping of cilantro, and everything was elevated with the sriracha mayonnaise smeared inside the perfectly baked bread.

Eclectic Capital City BBQ has something for everyone

to keep the business afloat, CCBBQ has seen it all. Lately, the public seems to have heeded the outcry for patronage. On one of my attempts to visit, every table was filled, and several folks were standing in line to order. I decided it best to return later.

There's a lot going on here, but that's been the mantra from the opening. Food and cell phones (though that part of the business is no longer), fiscal and ownership drama that played out in public forums, Vietnamese and traditional barbecue flavors in the same kitchen and often on the same plate.

Curiosity should bring you to visit, and the food will have you coming back.

What's decent

On my first visit, I ordered a bunch of food for the family. For the kids, I got the pulled turkey (\$25 per pound), which was lighter on smoked flavor than desired. You always expect a bit of dryness with turkey, but this was a little over the top. The restaurant was out of pulled chicken, which was what I really wanted in the spirit of avoiding this dry spell, but unfortunately, I didn't have a choice. With supply chain issues being what they are these days, I can't be overly critical, but it was a disappointment nonetheless. A saving

grace for this dish was the array of sauce options, Dirty South being my favorite. My little girls also got baked macaroni & cheese (\$7), which was just above average. It was baked, but no coveted, crispy topping. It was cheesy, and you can tell that real cheese is used in this dish, but I wasn't wowed by the flavor. The french fries (\$6) were better than solid, reminiscent of carnival fries, minus the much-beloved malt vinegar.

What's good

My much better half and I split both the brisket rice plate (\$17) and the Big Gobbler (\$15). The rice plate was enjoyable — the brisket had plenty of smoky flavor and was tender and juicy. The accompanying sticky rice and fresh veggies were delightful when drizzled with the tangy Vietnamese vinaigrette. The Big Gobbler is a turkey sandwich with sufficiently moist cuts of turkey (which made me wonder about the pulled turkey even more), blue cheese crumbles, thin red

onion and apple slices and a bourbon barbecue sauce. This delicious alliance of ingredients will have you joyously reaching for napkins to clean up after yourself;



Capital City BBQ

1026 W. Saginaw St.,
Lansing
Monday-Saturday:
11 a.m.-8 p.m.
517-721-1500



Beverly



Nicole Noechel/City Pulse

Though its facade has been renovated, you can still make out the remnants of the original cell phone store banner on the front of Capital City BBQ.

See She ate, Page 29

See He ate, Page 29

She ate

from page 28

I love a baguette that comes close to tearing the roof of your mouth because it is so earth-shatteringly crisp, and this bread fit the bill. I want this sandwich for lunch every day.

On another recent visit, we wreaked havoc on the barbecue side of the menu. Mr. She Ate and I shared a half slab of ribs dinner (\$28.99), a pulled chicken dinner (half a pound, \$20.99) and several sides. My favorite of the bunch was the french fries, which reminded me of the paper cups full of fries I used to get from Great Steak and Fry while I wandered around the Lansing Mall as a high school student. They were thick-cut, skin-on and benefitted from a healthy pinch of salt but were otherwise wonderful.

According to Mr. She Ate, who owns a smoker and does his research, there is a divide in the barbecue community about whether to remove the membrane from ribs before serving them. (For the record, he is team remove.) CCBBQ does not, but it made little discernible difference to me. The ribs were extremely tender but lacked texture and weren't as flavorful as I was expecting. It's possible I was less enthusiastic about the barbecue side of the menu because the Vietnamese side blew me so completely away, or it's possible I just prefer Vietnamese food over barbecue. In any event, choose whichever side of the menu you prefer. Just remember to patronize Capital City BBQ. It could help one of our best local restaurants flourish.

He ate

from page 28

the Big Gobbler is a winner.

Growing up on Lansing's north side, I've eaten plenty of homemade lumpia (fried spring rolls) from the homes of classmates and have always been a fan. CCBBQ's egg rolls (\$5.49) were deliciously reminiscent of those youthful tastes and textures. Crispy, packed with fresh veggies and minced meat, the hint of spice in the egg roll itself was taken to another level with



Lizy Ferguson/City Pulse

Capital City BBQ owner Linh Lee serves up a delicious mix of Vietnamese and traditional American barbecue dishes.

the sweet heat of the chili sauce. Yum. On a subsequent visit with a colleague, we ordered the chicken spring rolls (\$8.49). This version is a thin, almost translucent wrap with a marinated chicken strip, rice noodles, cucumber, cilantro, mint and lettuce. The ingredients shined brightest when dipped in the peanut sauce.

What's better

It's difficult to say whether CCBBQ's Vietnamese dishes or barbecue fare are the stars. Maybe there isn't supposed to be one. Case in point, the barbecue rib tips vs. the bánh mì. The rib tips (\$16) are meaty and rival many of the

award-winning barbecue spots around town in terms of flavor and tenderness. My chicken bánh mì (\$12) came in an amazing baguette with cucumber, carrots, cilantro, green onion and a spicy sauce. The chicken had hints of lemon-grass and was grilled nicely — a gem of a sandwich! I'm not afraid to admit, I smashed both with equal pleasure.

Best bite

The baked beans (\$6) are wonderful. I've never really been a fan of baked beans, but these will convert most skeptics. Smoky with chunks of yummy brisket and at least two different kinds of beans, this side is rich, hearty and plentiful. The duo of flavor influences at CCBBQ might be perplexing to some, but I think I found the answer: I'll have more, please!

Appetizers

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A million little fibers

By ARI LEVAUX

Seasonal holiday dishes tend to be heavy on sweetness and fat, which is why some of my favorite meals this time of year involve kale. It's not that I don't enjoy a good Yorkshire pudding or a bowl of buttery potatoes or a sweet, baked ham. Rather, it's that pigging out on decadent foods like these makes a fiber-rich dish like kale salad taste and feel all the better.

Polls consistently show that the most popular New Year's resolutions relate



Courtesy of Ari LeVaux

Fiber-rich kale potato salad offers a nice break from the sugary, rich dishes eaten during the holiday season.

to diet, exercise and weight loss. After weeks of binging, this makes sense. The problem is, by the time New Year's Day rolls around, the damage has already been done, and losing weight is a lot harder than keeping it off in the first place.

Foods with a lot of sugar and carbohydrates are easy for the body to digest. Some starches will begin converting to sugar in your mouth as you chew,

thanks to an enzyme in your saliva that doesn't waste any time extracting calories from carbs. Insidiously, these foods can actually increase your appetite. Fats don't give up their calories as easily as carbohydrates, because they require some finagling for your digestive system to crack, so at least fatty foods can fill you up and leave you satiated. But their calories will still thicken you up.

Fiber, meanwhile, is an anti-calorie. It takes work to digest and can sometimes force your body to burn almost as many calories in digesting it as you reap from it.

The concept of easy vs. hard calories is embodied in the glycemic index, a system that scores different foods based on how much and how quickly they elevate your blood sugar levels. Pure sugar has a glycemic index of 100, which is as high as it gets. Sweet, processed foods can score in the high-80s, bread in the high-70s and most vegetables in the 50s to 60s, whereas kale has a glycemic index of about 4, which is about the same score as your average Christmas sweater. But considerably tastier.

While fiber gives your digestive system a workout, it also takes up space, which leaves less room in your belly for cream puffs and eggnog. And those fibers will help move everything through your bowels. Altogether, the more greens you eat this time of year, the more creative you can be with your res-



olutions for next year.

If you are one of those people to whom kale tastes like a stinky form of steel wool, rest assured that it doesn't have to be that way. Kale chips, for one, are as crunchy as potato chips and legendary in their appeal to children, carnivores, sweet tooths and others who are not on the usual short list of kale enthusiasts. Kale chip recipes abound on the internet. Today, we are going to focus on something different: a potato salad recipe, transplanted and adapted from a summertime graduation party where I first encountered it.

As a stand-alone dish, it will fill your belly and leave you satisfied. As a side dish, it mixes beautifully with the heavier dishes we are seeking to balance. Underneath a slab of prime rib or a heavy casserole, it's a fibrous foundation that will absorb and expand the decadence. If that isn't the true spirit of the holidays, I don't know what is.

Kale potato salad

This isn't your typical mayo-heavy potato salad. Instead, it's dressed with a miso and mustard vinaigrette. Without the mayo, you can see the flecks of kale plastered upon the potatoes. If you want to add mayo and maybe some chopped hard-boiled eggs, that would run contrary to the austere theme of this column, but you won't regret it. The same goes for bacon bits.

This recipe is best made a day ahead of time, but if time is of the essence, don't let that stop you.

Serves 4

- 4 cups diced red potatoes (they hold together best), peeled or unpeeled
- 1 bunch of kale
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1/4 cup white vinegar
- 1/2 tablespoon mustard powder
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1/2 teaspoon celery seed
- 1 teaspoon ground or dried rosemary
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 tablespoon white miso (optional but meaty)
- 2 garlic cloves (more to taste), minced or grated
- 1/2 cup minced onion
- 1/2 cup minced celery
- 1 cup finely diced cheddar cheese, preferably sharp and aged
- More salt, to taste
- Optional: red pepper flakes

Boil the potatoes. As the water heats, strip the kale foliage from the central rib of each leaf. Mince the ribs and add them to the potatoes when they are nearly tender. The chopped ribs have the taste of broccoli when boiled.

Chop the kale and add it to a bowl large enough to accommodate the salad. Add the salt and massage the kale by gripping and releasing it repeatedly. This will tenderize the kale.

To make the dressing, combine the oil, vinegar, mustard powder, miso, herbs and garlic. If using whole, dried herbs, powder them between your fingers as you add them. Shake vigorously in a closed jar or stir very well.

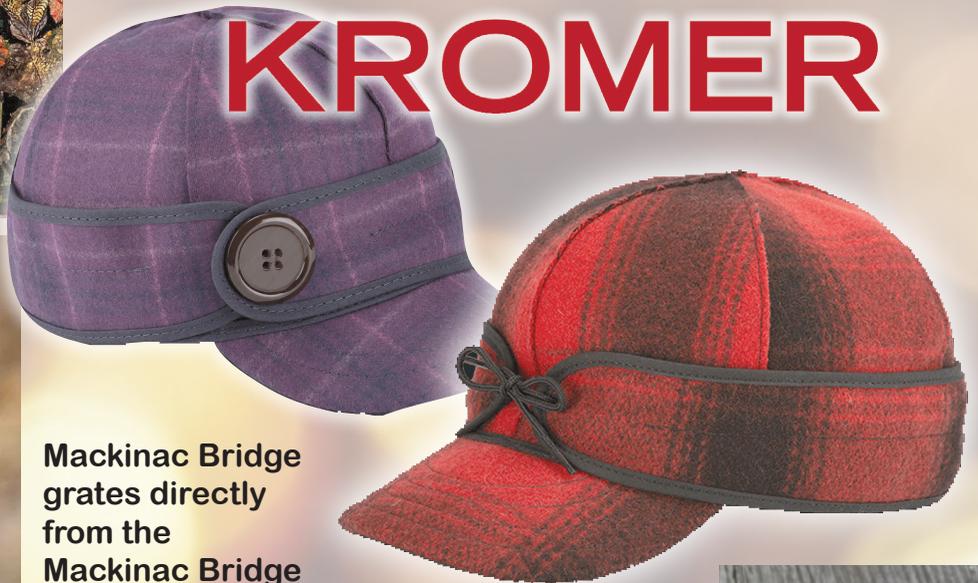
When the potatoes are nearly tender, strain and pour them into a bowl. Add the kale to the hot potatoes and stir it in with a gentle motion so as not to crush the potatoes.

Add the onion, celery, cheddar, pepper flakes (if using) and dressing and toss the salad. Add more salt and/or oil to taste.

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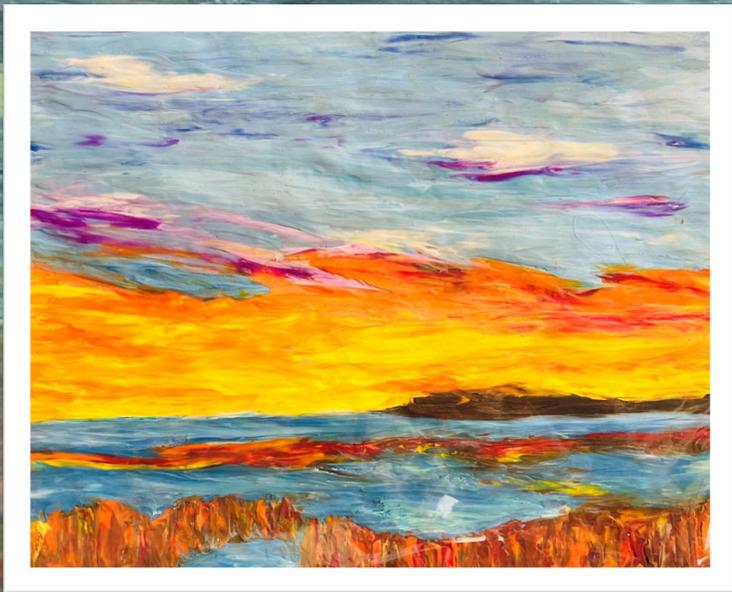
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