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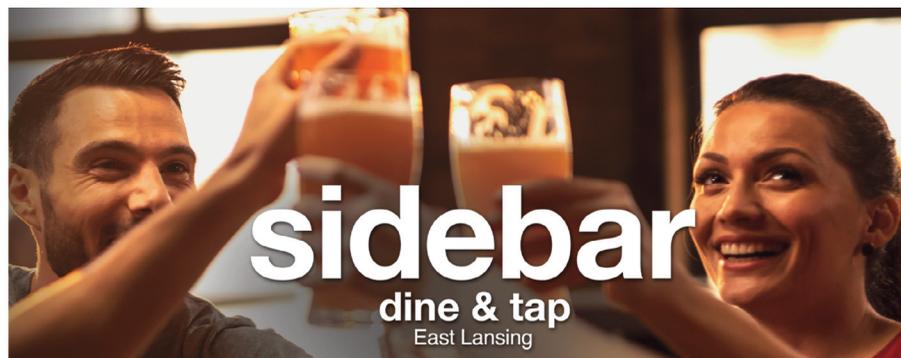
How AI created this 'painting' of the Accident Fund building from words ... and what it means

See Page 10

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PULSE

NEWS &amp; OPINION

# Independent no more

## The loss of weeklies in Greater Lansing part of national trend

A decades-long Sunday morning tradition ended this month as The Grand Ledge Independent printed and delivered its last weekly edition after being published in some form since 1938.

“Every Sunday it was there, at the end of the driveway,” said Grand Ledge Councilmember Brett Gillespie. “It was a constant, although the local focus had slowly been lost over the last years.”

The paper was among the last of the Lansing Community Newspapers to cease operations since Gannett, the largest newspaper company in America and owner of the Lansing State Journal, purchased them nearly two decades ago. LCN comprised a dozen weeklies: Lansing Community News, Delta Waverly Community News, Dewitt Bath Preview, Charlotte Shopping Guide, Williamston Enterprise, The Towne Courier in East Lansing, Eaton Rapids Community News, Grand Ledge Independent, Portland Review, Holt Community News, Clinton County News and Ingham County News. At one time, they delivered hyper-local reporting on local government, the school board, local sports, entertainment and more.

John Ellsworth has been communications director for the Grand Ledge Schools for a decade. Before that, he was social studies teacher in the district for 20 years. For 10 of those years, he was a football coach.

“When I first came to the community, the paper was very much a cheerleader for the community,” he said. “They knew the players, the coaches, the community. They were in school board meetings and talking to the community. They were part of the community. They were always key to telling our stories.”

But after Gannett purchased the paper, the commitment to staffing dwindled. Ellsworth and Gillespie watched as the hyperlocal focus slipped further and further away, ending up as a wrap-

around of news that had already been published in the LSJ days or weeks before.

The slow dissolve was one Ellsworth watched while he was still in the classroom. As a social studies teacher, he used publication-provided subscription discounts to provide newspapers in his classrooms.

“Current events are an important part of social studies,” he said. “But those went away. It was a huge mistake by the newspaper industry at the time. Pepsi and Coca-Cola are fighting for who can have their vending machines in the schools. They’re not even selling soda, but they want that brand in there. The newspapers lost that opportunity and it hurt them.”

The Michigan Press Association said that since 2019, 42 weekly newspapers have closed in the state. Another five were merged with another publication and lost their brand identities as part of the merger process. There are 47 weekly newspapers operating in the state today.

Mike Blinder, publisher of the journalism trade publication Editor & Publisher, traces the decline of print newspapers to their failure to embrace the internet until it was too late.

“We had the websites, we were just too lazy to build the Craigslist, the cars dot coms or the dot coms of the future,” he said.

As a result, many classified advertisements, which were a key revenue stream, ended up free to consumers on multiple platforms that were supported by advertising. Papers took another blow when the 2008 Great Recession prompted real estate agents and employers to switch to the internet as well.

In the last few years, grocery stores, big box stores and others have abandoned printing weekly circulars to be inserted in Sunday newspapers and weeklies in favor of the internet. Kro-



Courtesy Freddie Henretty

A copy of the last edition of the Grand Ledge Independent, one of a dozen weeklies in and around Lansing that Gannett purchased 19 years ago — all of which have ceased publication. The Independent, which traced its history to 1869, had been published weekly since 1938.

ger, the nation’s biggest supermarket chain, is the latest to move to digital.

“We were a distribution method for decades for coupons, offers and deals,” Blinder said. “When that eventually moved to a digital world, we didn’t own that business.”

Finally, readers can find local content online for free because Facebook and other social media platforms “exploit” the work of local media without appropriate compensation, Blinder said. Blinder contended that those platforms should pay for the use of journalism content in the same manner as musicians are compensated through royalties for their work by radio stations and clubs.

Until that happens, however, the money for supporting journalism is being siphoned off and not being re-invested. That, he noted, has led to a dramatic sell-off by legacy owners of news outlets in the last two decades. Some sold to Gannett, which began

with one family-owned newspaper in 1923. Others sold to other newspaper companies. But in the last two decades, investors with no longtime ties to journalism have become owners of hundreds of papers. In 2019, New Media Investment Group purchased Gannett and merged it into Gatehouse Media under the name Gannett.

The company is focused on being a profit center, Blinder said. It “has no interest in maintaining the journalistic integrity of those titles, but rather just exploiting whatever value they can of the real estate property and advertising potential. They’re day trading.”

This dissolution of local media has Blinder and others worried about the future of American democracy.

“When there is a news desert, research shows that there’s no final check on power,” Blinder said. “The city starts to have corruption.”

That, he said, leads to a thirst to understand what is happening in a community. “Then the people become thirsty for news and they’ll drink from any hopes they can get, which becomes social media and blogging and garbage,” he said.

What will move to fill the vacuum for hyperlocal news may be an independent news website, such as EastLansingInfo.org which is a nonprofit, grant-funded model, or the government providing more direct-to-consumer information, as Grand Ledge Schools are doing.

Dirk Milliman grew up in the newspaper industry. His family owned small weekly newspapers throughout Michigan, including the now-defunct Towne Courier, Ingham County News and Williamston Enterprise. He sees the death of the weeklies as a threat as well.

Said Milliman, “It’s really a dangerous place for citizens when there’s nobody reporting on the activities of their governments.”

— TODD HEYWOOD

# CityPULSE

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WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH 2041

IS IT JUST ME, OR DOES THE PRESENT FEEL AN AWFUL LOT LIKE THE PAST?

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Behind the scenes of Williamston Theatre's "Mrs. Harrison"

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**CLASSIFIEDS & OBITUARIES:** (517) 999-6704

**EDITOR AND PUBLISHER** • Berl Schwartz  
[publisher@lansingcitypulse.com](mailto:publisher@lansingcitypulse.com) • (517) 999-5061

**ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR** •  
[arts@lansingcitypulse.com](mailto:arts@lansingcitypulse.com) • (517) 999-5066

**OFFICE MANAGER** • Kamara Drane  
[kamara@lansingcitypulse.com](mailto:kamara@lansingcitypulse.com) • (517) 999-6704

**EVENTS EDITOR** • Nicole Noechel  
[nicole@lansingcitypulse.com](mailto:nicole@lansingcitypulse.com) • (517) 999-5066

**NEWS REPORTER** • Todd Heywood  
[heywood.reporter@gmail.com](mailto:heywood.reporter@gmail.com) • (517) 899-6182

**STAFF WRITER** • Lawrence Cosentino  
[lawrence@lansingcitypulse.com](mailto:lawrence@lansingcitypulse.com) • (517) 999-5065

**SALES EXECUTIVE** • Lee Purdy  
[lee@lansingcitypulse.com](mailto:lee@lansingcitypulse.com) • (517) 999-5064

**Contributors:** Dedria Humphries Barker, Bryan Beverly, Taylor Blair, Rob Brezny, Capital News Service, Bill Castanier, Ryan Claytor, Mary C. Cusack, Lizzy Ferguson, Roxanne Frith, Lucas Henkel, Trevor Hubert, Ari LeVaux, Gabrielle Lawrence, Audrey Matusz, Kyle Melinn, Joan Nelson, Tom Perkins, Dennis Preston, Chelsea Lake Roberts, Jen Sorensen, Nevin Speerbrecker, Rich Tupica

**Delivery drivers:** Cindy Heistand, Curt Lauck, Andrew Laxton, Sara Moore



Canadian singer-songwriter brings expertise to The Robin Theatre

**PAGE 22**



High time to visit Ann Arbor  
Cover illustration by DALL-E 2 and Berl Schwartz

**PAGE 25**

## THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW

DOES IT BOTHER YOU IN THE LEAST THAT THE FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES IS ATTEMPTING TO INCITE VIOLENCE IN A PATHETIC ATTEMPT TO FORESTALL MULTIPLE INDICTMENTS?

HE'S BEING PERSECUTED! IF THEY CAN GO AFTER TRUMP, THEY CAN GO AFTER ANYONE!

SURE, WHO AMONG US HAS NEVER TRIED TO OVERTHROW AN ELECTION, OR LIED ABOUT PAYING HUSH MONEY TO A PORN STAR?

DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND? INDICTING PRESIDENT TRUMP WILL SET A TERRIBLE PRECEDENT!

A SLIPPERY SLOPE WHERE PEOPLE WHO COMMIT CRIMES ARE HELD ACCOUNTABLE FOR THEM. WHATEVER WILL HAPPEN TO OUR SOCIETY THEN?

HE'S AN INNOCENT MAN! THEY'RE TRYING TO PUT HIM IN PRISON BECAUSE THEY DISAGREE WITH HIS POLITICS!

YOUR NEWFOUND CONCERN ABOUT PROSECUTORIAL OVER-REACH IS ADMIRABLE, BUT DIDN'T YOU JUST SPEND YEARS CHANTING "LOCK HER UP" AT TRUMP RALLIES?

WHATEVER! ALL I KNOW IS, THIS IS A SOROS-FUNDED WITCH HUNT! THE HATERS DON'T WANT AMERICA TO BE GREAT AGAIN! AGAIN.

GAH! WHAT IS IT ABOUT THIS DERANGED BUFFOON THAT CONTINUES TO INSPIRE SUCH BLIND, UNWAVERING DEVOTION?

HE PISSES OFF THE LIBTARDS, FOR ONE THING.

OF COURSE. THE FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLE OF YOUR DEEPLY CONSIDERED POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY.

WELP! SEE YOU NEXT TIME, FOR ANOTHER FASCINATING DEBATE.

I HATE MY JOB.

TOM TOMORROW © 2023-03-27 ... JOIN SPARKY'S LIST: [thismodernworld.com/subscription](http://thismodernworld.com/subscription)



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# City sues red-tagged Holmes Apartment owners over safety issues

City officials are asking Ingham County Circuit Judge James Jamo to order the owners of the Holmes Apartments to complete repairs of all building safety and housing code violations within 45 days.

The move comes after city housing officials red-tagged a 29-unit apartment building at 2222 W. Holmes Road for being unsafe for occupancy. Spurred by complaints from residents, a city inspection found a leaking roof had caused substantial damage to the building and posed a fire risk. The result was 15 residents were evicted from the property.

The city also wants Jamo to order the owners to provide displaced residents “safe and habitable” housing until the repairs are approved and to require the locks to be changed to prevent unauthorized access.

The suit was filed Monday against Richard and Brad Simtob; Holmes Apartments LLC; The Good Life Apartments LLC and Simtob Management & Investment LLC.

“The basic concept is that the building code violations cause a nuisance,” said City Attorney Jim Smiertka.

The suit argues that the defendants failed to get the necessary permits to

work on the complex. As a result of a roof leak, the city argued, the property was at a significant risk for fire because of exposure of wiring to outside weather conditions.

Property owners moved the displaced tenants to Pacific Apartments, 1317 E. Kalamazoo St., last week, but that complex was pink-tagged. A red tag means a property is potentially hazardous and cannot be resided in. A pink tag means a property is not registered as a rental and is unavailable for rent.

City spokesman Scott Bean said the city is now footing the bill for hotels and motels for the displaced residents. The money is usually used for homeless residents, not red-tag eviction victims, Bean said.

The two limited liability companies named in the suit and the Simtobs are part of an interconnected chain of 12 LLCs that own 21 properties in the city. The companies share office space, mailing addresses, managing members and resident agents, Deputy City Attorney Amanda O’Boyle said.

The 21 multi-family properties account for 666 individual apartments. One LLC also owns property in Kalamazoo. Since late 2020, the companies have invested \$17,687,920 in purchas-



Courtesy Lansing City Council

A photo of ceiling damage at Holmes Apartments, which has been red-tagged, forcing 15 residents to move.

ing various apartment complexes in the city.

Eight of the 12 properties are for sale, including Holmes Apartments. The red-tagged status of the property was

not disclosed in a sales portfolio posted by Global Real Estate Advisors, which has offices in West Bloomfield.

See Red-tagged, Page 6

### NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING EAST LANSING CITY COUNCIL

Notice is hereby given of the following public hearing to be held by the East Lansing City Council on **Tuesday, April 18, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.** at the **East Lansing Hannah Community Center**, 819 Abbot Road, East Lansing, MI, 48823.

Consideration of a Site Plan application from FP Investors, LLC for the property commonly known as Falcon Pointe (Parcel ID #19-20-50-36-200-029), to construct four, three-unit dwellings on the east side of Thoroughbred Lane, west of Halter Lane. The subject property is zoned R-2 (Medium Density Single-family Residential).

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

Materials related to the request are available for viewing at the Department of Planning, Building, and Development, East Lansing City Hall, 410 Abbot Road, East Lansing, MI, 48823 between the hours of 8:00 am and 5:00 pm or on the City’s website located at [www.cityofeastlansing.com/currentapplications](http://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](mailto: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](mailto: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.

Marie E. Wicks  
City Clerk

CP#23-067

### Vehicle Auction

- |                   |                    |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| 2014 Cruze 458426 | 18 Compass 342723  |
| 14 Charger 257222 | 16 Civic 201553    |
| 10 Outback 324243 | 12 Fusion 433700   |
| 06 Stratus 118206 | 13 Explorer B67391 |

Auction to be held 4/7@12pm 7721 Lanac St Lansing MI 48917  
No phone calls please

CP#23-068



### CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN, INGHAM COUNTY

LEGAL AD NOTICE: Variance Request 23-04

Johnson Sign Co.

WEDNESDAY, April 19, 2023

### CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN

LEGAL NOTICE

Variance Request 23-04

4660 S. Hagadorn Rd.

Public Hearing

Notice is hereby given that the Zoning Board of Appeals of the Charter Township of Meridian will hold a public hearing on Wednesday, April 19, 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 variance request for a wall sign. Johnson Sign Co. is proposing an additional wall sign in excess of the allowed square footage permitted by ordinance located at 4660 South Hagadorn Road. The subject 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. Written comments may be sent prior to the public hearing to the Zoning Board of Appeals, Charter Township of Meridian, 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, Michigan, 48864, or by email to [chapman@meridian.mi.us](mailto:chapman@meridian.mi.us), or at the public hearing.

Deborah Guthrie  
Township Clerk

CP#23-066

# REWIND

## NEWS HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE LAST 7 DAYS

BY NICOLE NOECHEL



**Michigan State University had two secure-in-place drills in the three years before the Feb. 13 mass shooting, the Detroit Free Press reported.** The first was in March 2020 for Breslin Center staff, and the other was in October 2021 at the Facility for Rare Isotope Beams to test secure-in-place locations within the new building. The night of the shooting, the school sent out alerts to students, staff and faculty advising them to secure in place, but many of those on campus had likely never undergone a secure-in-place drill. University police held at least 43 optional active violence trainings from January 2020 through December 2022, which included discussions about securing in place and other responses to mass shootings. The school announced March 1 that active violence intruder training will be mandatory for all students, faculty and staff beginning in fall 2023.

### In other related news:

The fourth of five MSU students wounded in the shooting was released from Sparrow Hospital. Guadalupe Huapilla-Perez was formerly listed in fair condition. She shared her gratitude on Facebook for the donations she received through her GoFundMe and the care she received at the hospital. One student, John Hao, remains at Sparrow in critical condition.



**A man was arrested after being found with a knife near the MSU campus and later taken to a hospital.** He was involved in an altercation with a local business when he brandished the knife, then left the scene and walked across Grand River Avenue to campus. East Lansing police found him at another store in downtown East Lansing and took him into custody. No one was injured. MSU police issued an emergency alert notifying students that someone with a knife was seen on campus and they should secure in place. Later, they

sent an update that an assault had happened off campus and the secure-in-place order had been lifted. The man has not yet been charged, and it is unknown why he was hospitalized.



### Five parents are suing Holt Public Schools, alleging the district should have made an earlier effort to stop a former teacher from molesting students, the Lansing State Journal reported.



Patrick Daley was charged in fall 2018 and convicted of 18 counts of second-degree criminal sexual conduct in 2019 after molesting multiple boys at Washington Woods Elementary School, where he worked for five years. His sentence could last up to 11 more years, but he has a parole hearing in 2026. The Sinas Dramis Law Firm filed the lawsuit in the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Michigan. The parents are listed as John and Jane Does to protect the children's identities. The parents claim there were opportunities for the school to intervene earlier, including after a staff member emailed the district in January 2018 to report inappropriate touching by Daley in his classroom. The lawsuit alleged the district didn't fully investigate the report, though Daley met with human resources officials in February 2018, who described him as having "excessive contact" with students.

**East Lansing City Council moved to repeal an ordinance that requires landlords to provide new tenants with voter application forms and registration information.** The Thomas More Society, a conservative nonprofit law firm, filed a lawsuit earlier this month on behalf of East Lansing-based Hagan Realty Inc., alleging the ordinance violates landlords' First Amendment rights. City Attorney Tony Chubb stated that the ordinance is not actively enforced anyway, and voter outreach has largely moved online. He also said the ordinance is "further unnecessary due to changes in state law allowing for same-day voting." City Council unanimously approved a moratorium, effective immediately, and asked Chubb to draft a resolution repealing the ordinance. The resolution will be read at City Council's next meeting on Tuesday (April 4).



## Red-tagged

from page 5

Bradley Simtob did not respond to voicemail and a text message seeking comment.

The offer to sell the properties does not impact the lawsuit, Bean said.

Meanwhile, the Council scheduled a special meeting at 5:30 p.m. next Monday (April 3) to review concerns about red tagging.

"This is a failure to those displaced but also to the residents of this city for a failure to do our jobs. I will accept my responsibility," said Council member Patricia Spitzley, who sought the special session of the Committee of the Whole.

Council has asked that representatives from the Economic Development and Planning Department, as well as the Human Relations and Community Services Department, participate. "We know that these houses didn't become tagged overnight. These were properties that got worse," Council President Carol Wood said. "They weren't followed up by code. Some of those do fall back on this department. There needs to be some accountability. OK, we're here, how are we going to get out of this?"

Bean said that the administration "is aware of the lack of follow-up in some red tag monitoring situations and will be looking at all our options to reform the Code Enforcement office. Going forward, we intend to enact a system to ensure red-tag monitoring is more strictly enforced."

Meanwhile, emails released by Wood show that Code Enforcement Office manager Scott Sanford, who retired unexpectedly March 17, had been barred from communicating with City Council. He allegedly failed to correct an employee he supervised for threatening harm to Council members.

Sanford said in an interview Tuesday that the threat was a "joke" by a 72-year-old employee. He was, he said, given a written reprimand for calling then-candidate Ryan Kost an "ass."

"They asked me, "Did you say this guy was acting like an ass?" Sanford said. "Yes, I did. Write me up, do whatever you wanna do. That was the extent of my conversation."

Sanford was the subject of an investigation and "appropriate action," according to an email from Mayor Andy Schor last month.

— TODD HEYWOOD

On Feb. 25, 2022, one day after Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine, the country’s president, Volodymyr Zelensky, released a cell phone video, vowing that his government would stay in the capital of Kyiv: “We’re all here. Our military is here. Citizens in society are here. We’re all here defending our independence, our country, and it will stay this way.” This is not what Russian President Vladimir Putin expected. He had repeatedly denied the existence of Ukraine in the lead-up to his brazen act of aggression, claiming that the state was an artificial creation of his Communist predecessors. He presumed that the use of naked military force would compel a weak Kyiv to submit to Russia’s will and Ukrainians would come out in the streets to welcome a liberating army. The sham of Ukraine would be exposed. A vilified, generic West of Putin’s construction would protest and impose sanctions but would ultimately have to accept a *fait accompli*.

This is not what occurred. Ukrainian citizens of varied ethnic, religious and linguistic backgrounds rallied to defend their homeland. Although Putin and his apologists are fond of presenting Russia as the victim of American hegemonic aspirations, Russia’s war against Ukraine is in fact an imperialist grab. Putin seeks to subject a former colonial possession of the Russian Empire. In his view and that of many of his compatriots, ethnic Ukrainians and Russians are “one people.” Despite Putin’s claims of a NATO threat to its security, Russia did not act because of fear of prospective Ukrainian membership in the alliance — NATO countries have bordered the Russian Federation for over two decades without consequence. Russia intends to terrorize, control and subsume Ukrainians.

As part of an absurdly false campaign of “de-Nazification,” the Russian government is pursuing an ostensibly genocidal policy in Ukraine. One of Putin’s closest advisers has advocated “de-Ukrainization,” the physical elimination and re-education of those who refuse to submit. Russian occupying authorities have kidnapped thousands of Ukrainian children for forced indoctrination, a war crime that the International Criminal Court recognized as the basis for its recent indictment of Putin. The Russian army has targeted Ukrainian cultural institutions for destruction, and Moscow-appointed authorities have removed Ukrainian-language literature from libraries and schools in occupied portions of Ukraine.

Ukrainians are united on the question of their country’s defense and sovereignty. According to a recent poll by the widely respected Kyiv Interna-

tional Institute of Sociology, the overwhelming majority (87%) of Ukrainians are opposed to any territorial concessions to Russia. They understand what they are fighting for and the cost of failure. Russia first began its war on Ukraine in 2014 in response to a democratic revolution — organized and led by hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians — that succeeded in ousting a corrupt, pro-Russian president. Russia annexed the Crimean Peninsula and sponsored a separatist campaign in the Donbas. Since then, Ukraine’s commitment to pluralistic democracy has been tested and further honed. Most Ukrainians perceive their country to be the opposite of Putin’s autocratic and kleptocratic state. The Putin government has ruthlessly suppressed LGBTQ+ rights, restricted independent labor union activity and silenced dissent. This is the system that Russian rule promises Ukraine.

And as evidence of heinous atrocities committed by Russian troops has emerged in the formerly occupied cities of Irpin, Bucha, Izyum and Kherson, Ukrainian resolve has only stiffened. Putin claimed he was acting in defense of “Russian” Ukrainians who cried for his help. Instead, his soldiers have killed, raped and tortured countless such citizens and faced the guns of Russian-speaking and ethnic Russian fighters in the Ukrainian Armed Forces. Contrary to the blunder of Florida’s governor, Ron DeSantis, Moscow’s aggression against the country is not a “territorial dispute.” It is also not the “proxy war” that some on the American left have claimed. The war resulted from a direct Russian attack on a sovereign state, whose defenders are collectively and independently committed to victory over the invader.

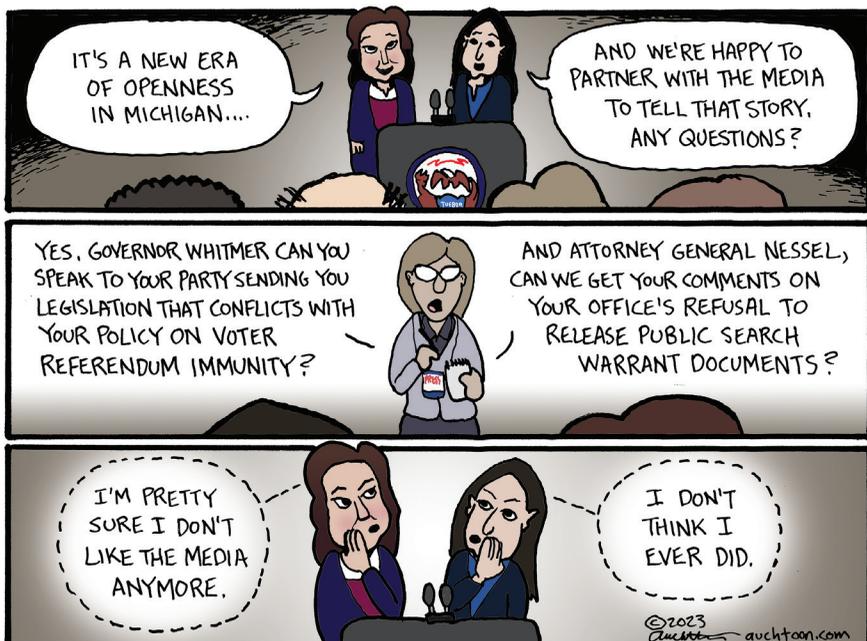
This determination is worthy of sustained American support, despite the expense of providing military and humanitarian aid. It is a price that pales in comparison to that borne by Ukrainian citizens. Russian victory in this war would be catastrophic for the United States and the world. It would mean the definitive end of a rules-based international order, which promises the best chance for sustained peace, however imperfect. And a Russian occupation of Ukraine would further threaten global stability and commerce. Above all, Ukrainians would suffer. This is not time for a return to American

isolationism, a foreign policy orientation with roots in 1930s Michigan. Charles Coughlin, a Roman Catholic priest based in Royal Oak, openly promoted isolationism in addition to spouting anti-Semitic, fascist views. One of his favored political slogans, “less care for internationalism and more concern for national prosperity,” is disturbingly echoed today in the rhetoric of U.S. skeptics of multilateralism and support for Ukraine.

The Capital Area has already responded to Ukraine’s urgent need. The Greater Lansing Jewish Federation, Urban Beat, Rotary clubs and other local foundations and private businesses have donated desperately needed supplies to Ukrainian hospitals and hosted successful fundraisers. The U.S. government needs to stay the course and ensure that America remains “here,” on Zelensky’s side and that of the Ukrainian people, in their fight for freedom and for the well-being of us all.

# Continue to support Ukraine

## 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](mailto:letters@lansingcitypulse.com)
- Snail mail: City Pulse, 1905 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing, MI 48912
- At [lansingcitypulse.com](http://lansingcitypulse.com)

#### 2 Write a guest column.

Contact Berl Schwartz for more information: [publisher@lansingcitypulse.com](mailto: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.)

Progress Michigan and Engage Michigan

PRESENT

# STAND UP FOR PROGRESS

FEATURING

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Caitlin Peluffo

buy tickets here



The Venue

5660 W Saginaw Hwy

Lansing, April 14 | 7:30 PM

## Michigan voters would lose their voice if state joins popular-vote compact

BY ANN BOLLIN  
Bridge Michigan

*(State Rep. Ann Bollin, a Republican, represents portions of Livingston and western Oakland counties. She is the former Brighton Township clerk.)*

In Michigan, Democrat legislators are pushing forward with legislation, House Bill 4156, that would enter our state into the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact.

If Michigan decides to enter the compact, and legislation is adopted by enough other states agreeing to do the same, this effort will disenfranchise Michigan voters by forcing our electoral votes to whichever presidential candidate earns the most votes nationally, not the most votes in the state of Michigan.

That's right. If Candidate A wins the popular vote nationwide, ALL of Michigan's electoral votes would be given to Candidate A — even if Michigan voters supported Candidate B by a wide margin. This would drown out the voices of both our urban cities and rural farming communities.

So far, 15 states and the District of Columbia have adopted National Popular Vote legislation. With 195 electoral votes in hand, the backers of this questionable movement to bypass the U.S. Constitution only need an additional 75 votes to reach the 270-vote presidential threshold. This is a dangerous threat to our republic that must be stopped.

Our Founding Fathers created the Electoral College to ensure the interests of all states and regions are considered when electing the president — not just big cities and population centers like New York and California. Our largest cities in Michigan are much smaller than those in other states.

The system they developed — the

one our country has used for more than 230 years — gives smaller states a say in the election, preventing larger states from dominating the process. This ensures the president represents a broad range of interests and has a motive to govern the entire country, not just the most populous areas.

The Electoral College incentivizes presidential candidates to campaign in a diverse range of

states, not just those with the highest population centers. Candidates must appeal to voters across the country and address a variety of issues that are important to different regions. Michigan is the epicenter of the Midwest and our voices — urban, suburban and rural — should be heard. The current system prevents the neglect of certain areas in favor of others.

The National Popular Vote Interstate Compact threatens to upend this delicate balance

and throw presidential elections into disarray. It will likely require states to prematurely accept the election results other states are reporting, even if those results are known to be incomplete due to other problematic policies like priority voting or ranked-choice voting.

In the event of a very close election, a National Popular Vote would require a full recount in every state — a monumental task that would be next-to-impossible, given the fact that every state has different standards on when and how it conducts recounts. Without a governing body or other procedures in place to resolve differences, National Popular Vote member states would have no choice but to turn to the courts to settle disputes. We do not want to relive the hanging chad debacle of 2000 or the post-election trauma of 2020.

The National Popular Vote movement is bad for Michigan and bad for America. It's unfair to voters outside of large population centers, bucks the Constitution and serves to further erode confidence in our elections. Michigan legislators should soundly reject this misguided proposal.

*(Kyle Melinn is on vacation. His column will return next week.)*



Opinion

# Women's History Month: Was Alice Walker supposed to do more?

By **DEDRIA HUMPHRIES BARKER**

In my creative writing class, my students and I encountered a word and concept neither of us knew. It was the word *espaliere*, which means to grow flat. It was in the third stanza of Alice Walker's poem "a woman is not a potted plant." Here is the stanza:

a woman is not  
a potted plant  
her branches  
espaliere  
against the fences  
of her race  
her country  
her mother  
her man

It is odd that I taught Walker's poem. For more than two decades after her novel "The Color Purple" was published, I forgot about Alice Walker and her work. Why?



Because Alice Walker left me on the sidewalk.

It was not a lover's quarrel; I am not secretly the folk singer Tracy Chapman. Walker did not leave me in the cold. It was August.

But what happened was, in 1983 I was training with the Summer Program for Minority Journalists on the University of California-Berkeley campus and my editors assigned me to report on Alice Walker speaking in San Francisco, across the bay.

I was happy for the assignment. Her novel had won every major prize, and in April 1983 she was the first African

American woman to win the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction. I used the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) mass transit system to travel to SF and walked up to the hall to find this sign out front: "Alice Walker Sold-Out." But the sponsors, the Women's Party for Survival, admitted me, the media.

They sat me right next to Walker.

In Walker's journals about this time of her life, collected in "Gathering Blossoms Under Fire: The Journals of Alice Walker 1960-2000," she wrote as early as April 1983 that she was "very tired." And "worn-out."

She was still tired as we sat side-by-side in August 1983. She told me, no interview. We sat there, side-by-side, like quarreling lovers, not talking. It was so icy. I watched her greet admirers and sign books, "Peace/Alice Walker." It's all in my published story except this next part, which was personal.

The event was over. I needed to get back to the BART station fast. I had gotten to the hall fine, but it was dark now. I didn't know San Francisco well, and I was walking. What would I do if I missed the last train to Berkeley?

## Opinion

Alice Walker was the reason I was at that hall. She was the only person I knew. I asked her for a ride. She said, no.

Now I had to hurry. I was at the corner when a car approached from behind. Then it was beside me. Alice Walker was seated on the side of the car near to me. I saw her. I hoped she saw me, though I knew she was blind in her right eye from a childhood BB-gun accident. I wanted her to change her mind, offer me a ride, but her car kept on going. She never even turned her head.

I didn't keep up with Alice Walker's

career after she left me on the sidewalk, but that sidewalk never left me. Not that it mattered to her.

She went on to publish goo-gobs of books: 13 books of fiction, 10 of poetry, and 11 of essays. One of the most prolific published writers in America, she interpreted women's lives in a way that cut to the bone. She gained phenomenal success with "The Color Purple," a story about Celie, a downtrodden woman writing letters to her lost sister.

For a long time, I did not talk about this close encounter. For some reason, it embarrassed and shamed me to be refused help. To be rejected. And that stopped cold my love for Walker and her work. Since then, as a journalist — or as an "auntie" in the case of Kim Kardashian — I have met famous people, but I never again asked a single one of them for a personal favor. I don't know them like that. We aren't friends, no matter how much a publicity machine tries to make it seem so. Yes, we were both Black women, but Walker didn't know me from boo. All I wanted was a piece of her.

I don't think any of us regular people can really know what it's like to be a person making history. Whose work catches God's lightning rod finger and flames into the sky like katniss, for all to see. Looking up, we regulars think we know them. We don't. Celebrity worship has brought our country such woes. I am glad I learned early to stop. Alice Walker taught me.

Alice Walker was born in 1944 in Eatonton, Georgia, the youngest of eight children. Her parents were sharecroppers, but she attended Spelman College and graduated from Sarah Lawrence College. Coming of age in the 1960s, Walker was a civil rights activist. She



Courtesy Creative Commons

Alice Walker

defied southern American mores by marrying a Jewish man, Melvyn Leventhal, and living with him in Mississippi. They had one child, Rebecca Leventhal.

Alice Walker rejected the traditional idea of motherhood and, once divorced, mothered her daughter in a one-year-on, one-year-off custody arrangement with her child's father.

With people like Gloria Steinem, co-founder of Ms. Magazine, Walker's passion for African American women's rights helped forge a new vision of and for all women and cut new sight paths on cultural awareness. On women's lives, their burdens and contributions. That's something to live by every day and, especially during Women's History Month, to honor and celebrate.

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

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Wednesday of every  
month.**

**CityPULSE**

# MSU Museum plugs into artificial intelligence

By **LAWRENCE COSENTINO**

Not many academic panel discussions worm their way into your dreams.

Thursday afternoon at the MSU Museum, writing Professor Bill Hart-Davidson struggled to describe how new and powerful forms of artificial intelligence generate essays, poems and images that are impossible to distinguish from work done by humans.

He explained that the new generative models are trained on such vast amounts of data, and process that data across so many dimensions, that “it is not even possible to think about it in human terms.”

“We can’t even visualize or imagine the space that it’s working in,” he said.

Give the generative AI model DALLE-E2 a simple, brief text prompt like “five platypuses playing poker, in the style of Norman Rockwell” and you get a finished work of art that fits that description in less than half a minute. Ask ChatGPT if that platypus picture really is a work of art and you’ll get a cogent summary of the philosophical and aesthetic principles involved in roughly the same amount of time.

Generative AI — a type of artificial intelligence technology that can produce text, imagery, audio and synthetic data, among other content — has already created magazine covers, passed the bar exam and co-authored an article in a medical journal, and faster, more powerful models are on the way.

(This week’s cover of City Pulse was created by a generative AI model called DALL-E2 by entering the words “Modernistic painting of the Accident Fund

building overlooking the Grand River in Lansing, MI.)

The rollout in late 2022 of Chat-GPT3 and other generative models put hopes and fears about AI at the forefront of public discourse, most of it running to extremes.

“Soon we will find ourselves living inside the hallucinations of non-human intelligence,” warned a March 24 guest essay in The New York Times by Yuval Harari, Tristan Harris and Aza Raskin. “By gaining mastery of language, A.I. is seizing the master key to civilization.”

Others downplayed the new AI models as the white-collar equivalent of a Roomba — “trivial” in comparison with the human mind,

linguist Noam Chomsky and two colleagues wrote in the Times on March 8. “Such programs are stuck in a pre-human or non-human phase of cognitive evolution,” Chomsky and his colleagues pooh-poohed. “We can only laugh or cry at their popularity.”

The discussion at the MSU Museum Thursday mirrored the debate in society at large.

## Call for transparency

There were a few gasps in the audience at Thursday’s AI panel as Bill Hart-Davidson blandly declared that when a student hands in a written assignment, it can no longer be assumed that it is “their practice.”

But the problem is not new, he said. When pocket calculators became widely available in the 1970s, math teachers required students to show their work. He suggested that something similar will be needed in any classes that rely on written assignments.

“Show me how you got this result, talking through it,” Hart-Davidson said, acting out a one-on-one conference with a student.

“You didn’t write this? What did the robot do there that you might do differently?” Now we’re back in a better conversation about writing and thinking.”

The panel members agreed that transparency will be key, not just in the classroom, but in every corner of the creative sphere and the knowledge economy.

“We quickly need conventions of disclosure,” Hart-Davidson said. “We need ethical and clear ways of saying, ‘Here’s how I used AI. Here’s what it did and didn’t do.’”

“Some sort of digital watermarking would be important, definitely,” panelist Anjana Susarla agreed.

Susarla bears the 21st-century title of Professor of Responsible AI at MSU’s Eli Broad College of Business.

She expressed deep concern about the rush to bring generative AI to the market and, eventually, embed it into widely used platforms like Microsoft Excel and Gmail, before ethical guardrails and transparency rules are in place.

“I was more optimistic a year ago,” she said. “But since November,



Courtesy Mark Sullivan

Photographer Mark Sullivan created the above surrealistic image, called “Time Dwindles Mother Earth,” from a so-called generative artificial intelligence model called Midjourney. To do so, he had to carefully fine-tune the verbal prompts and spend about an hour modifying the image to suit his vision. Sullivan said AI’s potential to throw artists out of work is overstated, at least for now. “It can help create draft material, but it can’t revise,” he said. “It doesn’t really produce finished, polished work.”

## MSU Museum

from page 10

I'm more worried. The scale at which these things — these large language models are operating now, and the amount of data they've been trained on, makes me skeptical that we can reverse it."

A man in the audience asked if art created by AI will ever be truly indistinguishable from art created by humans. Panel moderator Mark Sullivan, a composer and photographer and director of the MSU Museum's cutting-edge CoLab, answered quickly: "I already think we're there."

At a recent meeting of a photographers' group Sullivan belongs to, one member revealed that all the black and white portraits he'd made in the previous two years, and the stories of the people in the portraits, were generated by AI.

"These were all high-level professional photographers," Sullivan said. "None of them noticed until he said it."

Sullivan suggested that a national governing body, such as the recording industry's ASCAP or BMI, could be set up to oversee the distribution of royalties to creators whose works are filtered through AI to create new works.

Hart-Davidson was skeptical. He compared the training data fed to the AI model to dots or lines in a much bigger picture.

"If it were a song, any one text really contributes only one or two notes — not even a chord progression," he said.

"It's a nightmare for the legal world," Sullivan agreed, not without relish. He appeared to be enjoying the current disruptive moment.

"A lot of graphic designers are simply adding this to their toolkit," he said. "They can use it to generate drafts fast and then evaluate them."

In the June 2022 issue of *Cosmopolitan* magazine, writer Gloria Liu described generative AI's understanding of relationships as "keen and contextual."

That month, *Cosmo* published what it heralded as the first AI-generated magazine cover, a low-slung image of a stylish woman astronaut making confident, fashion-runway

strides along the purple sand ripples of an alien planet.

"Type 'Darth Vader on a *Cosmopolitan* magazine cover' and DALL-E doesn't just cut and paste a photo of Darth," Liu wrote. "It dresses him in a gown and gives him hot-pink lipstick."

"Keen and contextual" as they are, generative AI models often replicate, or even magnify, the cultural biases that pervade the training texts and images.

Sullivan told the group Thursday that he gave the image generator Midjourney a simple prompt: "a person walks down the street."

"After generating 20 or 30 persons, walking down the street, I'd be like, 'Isn't there a single person of color in this program?'" he said. "When I said, 'an Indian woman,' it gives me a woman in a headdress. What do I have to do to get someone from India?"

"On many of these AI platforms, if you prompt it to show a couple, it will invariably be white," Susarla agreed. "Unless you prompt 'poor,' then it will invariably be people of color, because people of color are poor, right?"

Susarla said the most interesting development in AI tech the previous week offered little comfort that ethical guardrails were forthcoming.

In March, Microsoft laid off its entire Ethics & Society department, gutting the division that was responsible for evaluating the risks of integrating OpenAI's tech into its products.

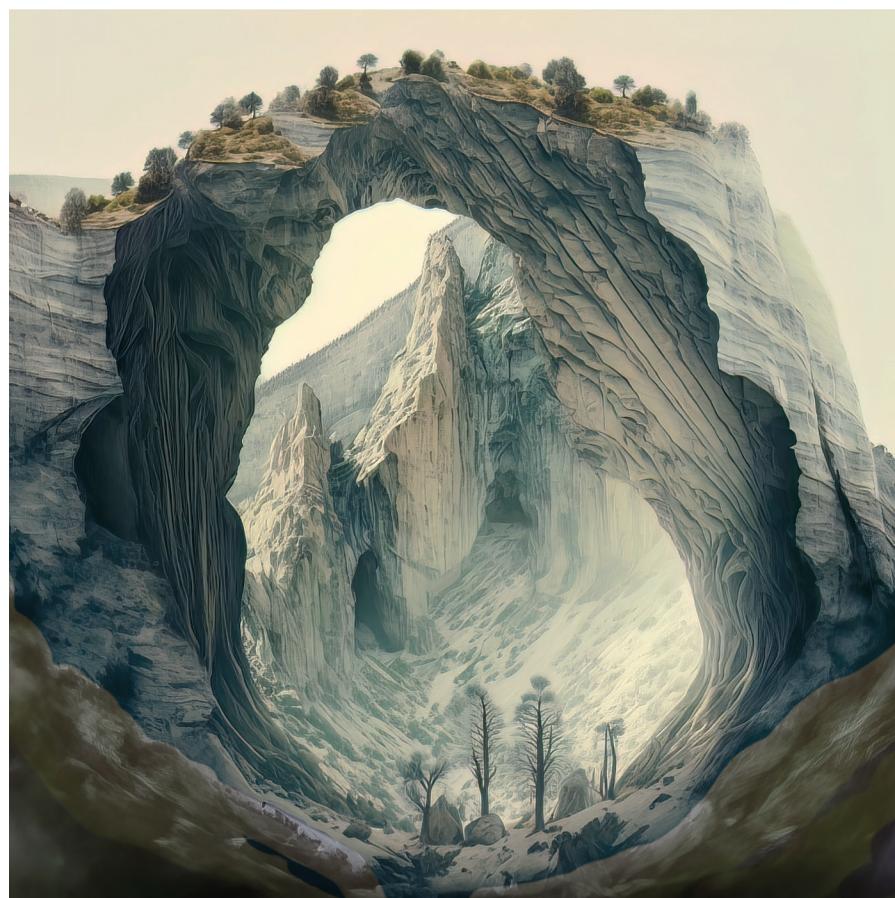
The layoffs took place just when AI tech such as accelerating into new and uncharted waters. Susarla sharply questioned Microsoft's rush to bring AI to the market.

"It not like we're trying to cure cancer here, or do something to save the planet from imminent climate catastrophe," she said. "Why wouldn't they want the checks and balances you need to bring a car to the market? We have a National Highway

Safety Commission that evaluates everything very carefully. We don't have the equivalent of that in AI."

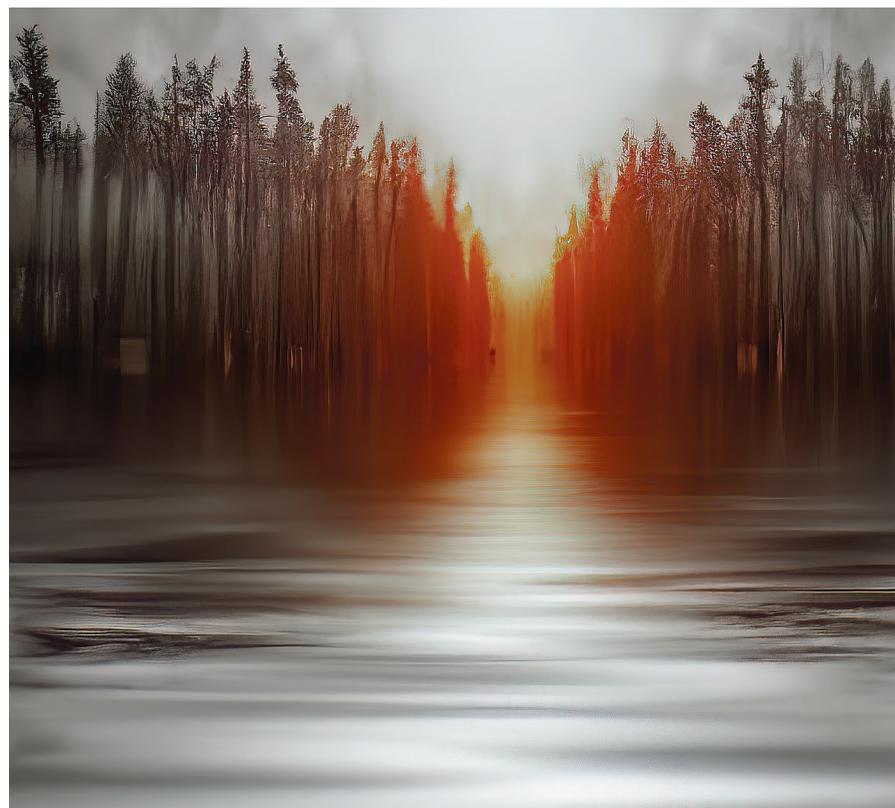
Hart-Davidson responded to an audience question about Internet privacy as if the horse had left the barn long ago.

"I don't like to be a technology fatalist," he said. "But there is so much training data out there, that is not owned by us already, that is up to the



Courtesy Mark Sullivan

Photographer Mark Sullivan wanted to test the ability of the generative AI model Midjourney to create images related to architecture and landforms. One result was "Imaginary Landscape1." "I was surprised at the quality of light," Sullivan said. Friends told him the work reminded them of the romantic, brooding images of 19th-century German painter Caspar David Friedrich. "I didn't know you did work like that," they told him. His reply: "I don't."



Courtesy Mark Sullivan

"Fire and Flood" was generated by the AI model Midjourney. Mark Sullivan provided the prompts and modified the image to suit his vision.

### Prompt Response: Exploring Generative Artificial Intelligence

Through April 20, 2023  
MSU Museum, lower level

AI Sonic Art Workshop  
1-3 p.m. Sunday, April 2  
Digital Scholarship Lab  
MSU Library, 2nd floor

Share your AI-generated images  
with the MSU Museum and  
monitors across campus by  
emailing them to  
Msumuseum.ai@gmail.com

See MSU Museum, Page 12

## MSU Museum

from page 11

discretion of companies like Google to just sell and re-use, that they don't really need any more. Withholding your own information is like recycling one plastic bottle and stopping climate change."

### Falling concrete

The MSU Museum's "Prompt Response" exhibit is as simple as they come — a dark little room where one station is equipped with DALL-E2 and another with ChatGPT.

But the swift rollout of the exhibit and its largely virtual field of action reflect the sharp pivot in the museum's mission.

A large wall screen projects generative AI images produced by students at home or in the classroom.

The user-created images are beamed, via Brightsign technology, to similar displays in several buildings across campus.

It usually takes many months, and sometimes years, to plan and develop an exhibit, but museum director Devon Akmon said last fall's wave of powerful AI tech called for something quicker.

"Suddenly, boom! This generative AI was everywhere," Akmon said.

In the spirit of recent exhibits on the surveillance state and climate change, Akmon saw a perfect opportunity to fulfill the museum's mission to serve, not just as an exhibit space, but a hub for understanding and discussing critical emerging issues in science and technology.

The project focuses on the MSU community, but Akmon expects it to become "porous" and include greater Lansing.

"We understand that this is going to spread, and if someone submits some stuff, we're going to be inclined to include it," Akmon said.

The discussion isn't limited to words and images. On Sunday (see box on P. 11), Sullivan will host a sonic art workshop where participants will mess around with generative AI models, like Riffusion and Mubert, that can dish up a mash-up of Mozart and Mos Def or anything else you ask it for.

Sullivan is not your stereotypical college professor. As a musician, photographer and director of CoLab, the MSU Museum's collaborative research laboratory, he eats new tech for breakfast. When Akmon first got the idea to do an exhibit on generative AI, his first move was to say, "Mark, look into this."

If this were a 1950s sci-fi movie, Sul-



Courtesy Mark Sullivan

Generative AI models like Midjourney can help artists realize impossible visions like "From the Book of Mythologies." Photographer Mark Sullivan joked he was delighted to "depict fire people without having to set models on fire."



Courtesy Mark Sullivan

Cultural bias is one of the ethical issues raised at a panel discussion on AI at the MSU Museum last week. Photographer Mark Sullivan said he wanted to create an image with an Afro-Futurist feel, but it took persistent, repeated prompts to get the model to produce an image of a person of color.

livan would be the wide-eyed scientist who wants to communicate with the aliens instead of opening fire, or the prof who waits until the dean goes home to lock himself into the lab and activate the atomic ray or inject the growth serum.

He's been working with various forms of AI for over 35 years, mostly in connection with generating sounds, but more recently in generating stunning images that extend his innovative work as a photographer.

"I never thought AI would come to desktops, much less editing and writing," he said. "It's gone way beyond anything I imagined possible 30 years ago, even in the crazy late-night symposiums after conferences where people really stretched out."

Sullivan has his fingers crossed that MusicLM, Google's new AI sound generator, will be available by Sunday's workshop. He was already composing verbal prompts in his head.

"A huge piece of steel being torn in half, followed by 20 tons of concrete falling on the street in the city," he said with glee. "Type in the prompt and it constructs a sound that fits. I want to try this!"

MusicLM isn't available yet, but tech giants are tumbling over each other to roll out new AI models, and updated versions of old ones.

"Things are coming out every day," Sullivan said. "I'm trying, but things are coming out so fast and furious I can't keep up."

From poker-playing platypuses to 20 tons of falling concrete, it's no wonder my day at the museum got into my dreams. My neural network, like the processes generative AI use to produce text and images, is a black box to my conscious mind, but it spent the night working like mad.

In the part of the dream that I remember, I jumped off a half-scale, Detroit Zoo-sized train, tossing my bag off the side first, and found myself in Old Town. Was it the past or the future? There were cigar factories, a sawmill and horses clomping around, but computer stations and headsets were discreetly tucked into the alleyways.

People were square dancing in a beautiful hall decorated with bunting. A soothing Baptist hymn filled the air, but there were no choristers around. The music came from tiny speakers embedded in the ground. Suddenly, a man with a white shock of hair and intense eyes, who closely resembled Mark Sullivan, was standing next to me.

"I'm not who you think I am, but it doesn't make any difference," he said. He was smiling. The dream felt very real.



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# How Taste the Local Difference is making a difference across Michigan

If you want to buy local food products wherever you might be in Michigan, grab a copy of the annual guide published by Taste the Local Difference, a Traverse City-based marketing and consulting firm that represents clients throughout the state. Consult [tastedifference.org](http://tastedifference.org) to learn how to obtain a copy. Christina Marbury, marketing director for Taste a Local Difference, recently talked to Berl Schwartz about her firm's origins and operations. (This interview has been edited for clarity and concision.)

## Tell me about Taste a Local Difference.

When we began in 2004, we were simply a project of a nonprofit called the Groundwork Center for Resilient Communities here in Traverse City. We've since become our own forprofit business. Now we cover the whole state of Michigan as well.

## Are you similar to buy-local organizations?

We have a little bit of the same goal to encourage more people to support local, but we definitely focus simply on local food and the food system.

## What difference are you making in helping businesses that are producing locally?

We put out an annual print magazine that is a state guide to all sorts of local food businesses. We also have a robust online directory and newsletter, as well as blog posts. We are spreading the word about local food — telling the stories of individual businesses, talking about local food, sharing seasonal recipes and giving ideas for how to store things. Really, everything that somebody might need in order to start making a lot of their diet come from local food. We have about 900 partner businesses statewide. Then people who are not formal partners of ours can also list in our directory. There are thousands of businesses that are in our online directory.

## Whom do you work with in Lansing?

Some of our partners in Lansing are the Allen Neighborhood Center, Capital City Market, Giving Tree Farm, Cravings Gourmet Popcorn, the East Side Lansing Food Co-op, Fur Real Dog Snacks, Hot Pepper Karenni Farm, Looking Glass Sheep and Wool, Peckham Farms, Reese Farms, Smokeshow Barbecue and the Social Sloth Café — which has a recipe that will be in our guide that we put out this year

## Why buy locally? What differences does it make where my jam or jelly comes from?

One of the big things is trying to keep more of your purchasing power in the local community. It's really a great way to help build the economy right in Lansing.

Also, when you're supporting local farms, the produce that you're buying is going to be fresher and it's going to be harvested when it's actually ripe, when it has the most flavor and the highest nutrient quantity.

Then, also, it doesn't have to be shipped



Courtesy

Christina Marbury is the marketing director for Taste the Local Difference, a Traverse City-based marketing and consulting firm for local food businesses throughout Michigan.

very far, so it's better for our environment. So much comes from California, Arizona, Florida. if you want to buy an apple in the winter and you're not buying a Michigan apple that's been stored throughout the winter, you're likely buying an apple that comes from Argentina. Really, really, really far away. Then finally, it's just a great experience to purchase locally, especially if you are able to go to a farmers market or purchase from a farm stand or from a store that has their own storefront. You can get to know the people who own or work for that business directly.

That's something that I think just brings a lot of joy to the eating experience.

## Let's say someone is convinced they bake the best chocolate chip cookie ever and want to make a living at this. How do they get started?

Michigan has the Cottage Food Law, which says that you can make a variety of food products in your own home as long as you're selling them directly to somebody else — at a farmers market or people call you and place an order and pick it up at your house, or you deliver. You actually can start a food business really small. There are some limitations, but the list of products is really wide. That's something many people will do.

Then go to the farmers market or build a website and start building an online presence to try and get the word out. From there, it's really a matter of growing your presence. That's something we do at Taste the Local Difference. People have a lot of success who do some promotion with maybe a restaurant if they're a farm and they're growing a product and they're selling it to a restaurant or somebody who has a decent presence already and is known within the community. A really beautiful thing about local business is that it's much easier to do that on a local scale than it is on a national scale, because you can have personal rela-

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- Michigan grows more potatoes that become potato chips than any other state (including Idaho). One of every four bags of potato chips produced in the U.S. are filled with Michigan-grown potatoes.
- More than 3,000 Michigan jobs are tied to potato production and processing.



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**PLANT-BASED PROTEIN**

**VITAMINS AND MINERALS**

Nutrition Facts	
1 serving per potato	
Serving size 1 potato (148g/5.3oz)	
Amount per serving	<b>Calories 110</b>
	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 0mg	0%
Total Carbohydrate 26g	9%
Dietary Fiber 2g	7%
Total Sugars 1g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
<b>Protein 3g</b>	
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 20mg	2%
Iron 1.1mg	6%
Potassium 620mg	15%
Vitamin C 27mg	30%
Vitamin B <sub>6</sub> 0.2mg	10%

\* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

- Potatoes are vegetables. They are sources of key vitamins and nutrients, including vitamin C, potassium, vitamin B6, fiber and plant-based protein.



Chile Lime Chicken & Potato Tacos



All-American Potato Salad



Air Fryer Bang Bang Chili Potatoes

For these great recipes and many more, as well as nutritional information, how to choose, store and handle potatoes, visit [www.mipotato.com](http://www.mipotato.com), or simply scan the QR code to the right.



# MADE IN MICHIGAN



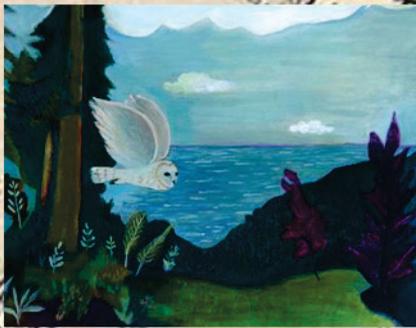
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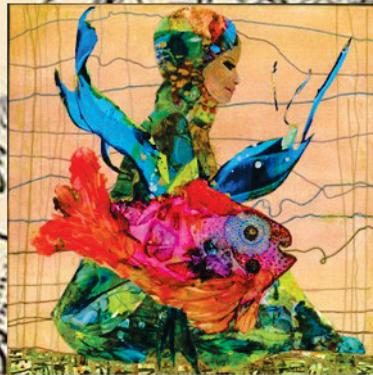
**Ann Willey —  
Comstock Park**



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Harbor Springs**



**Michael Sincic —  
Williamsburg**



**Stephanie Gregg —  
Eaton Rapids**



**Big Mitten  
Linocuts—  
Royal Oak**



**John Gregg—Eaton Rapids**



**Jeff Johnson —  
Jackson**

# MADE IN MICHIGAN



## Taste

from page 14

tionships with the other business owners in your community. Something that we really strive to do is connect people with one another. If you are a blueberry farmer and we know that there's a jam producer who wants to source their blueberries locally, we can help to make that connection, and that can be really successful for folks who are trying to grow a business.

I will also give a shout-out to both the MSU Extension product center. They're a great organization for helping food businesses who are developing a product, getting them the kind of consulting and advice that they need. Also, the Small Business Development Center has offices all over the state and their team offers free consulting as well for people who are looking to get their business up and off the ground.

### What role are local incubators playing?

Incubators and other forms of shared kitchen space are so valuable. When you're starting really small, there are some things you can do at home, but as soon as you want to resell your product and have it in a grocery store, have somebody else helping you sell it, or if you want to produce more than you can produce on a very, very small

scale, you really need to be in a professional kitchen space.

There are really great incubator spaces across the state. I know Allen Neighborhood Center is pretty innovative in what they've been offering, and they've been offering that incubator space for quite a long time. Other people also will try and work together with folks. If they know of a restaurant that is only open a certain number of days a week, maybe they can partner to use their kitchen on those off days and things like that.

### The rule of thumb is most new businesses don't survive five years. How do you beat the odds?

The most important thing when you're starting a new business is knowing how to communicate what differentiates you from other businesses. Maybe it's that you fill a product need that's not available locally in your community, maybe that you are sourcing some ingredient that makes what you're producing really special. Or if you're a farm, maybe you have unique growing practices or you're growing varieties or different products that not a lot of other people locally are growing, or there's something really unique about your story and how you came to open this business.

On top of that, putting the energy into marketing your business is really important. That's something that's challenging

for a lot of small business owners. Having that awareness of your business and exposure is really important in those first few years — making sure that people know who you are and what you do and why they should be supporting you.

### What's an inspirational story of a business that you've seen go from ground zero to turn into something?

I did some work recently with a business called Hot Pepper Karenni Farm, located just outside of Lansing. They're Burmese refugees. They've been in Lansing since 2009. When they came to the area, they didn't have very good access to the type of traditional Asian produce that they were used to consuming and cooking with. They started really small. They started in a community garden

plot growing things that are not typical to the American diet, certain Thai chilies and unique Thai eggplants and African eggplants, Asian long beans. There are a lot of Karenni people who live in the Lansing area, so they were able to really create a market for their product quite quickly, just through the group of people that they knew in the area, who were looking for these things to cook with, and filled that need for those people.

They're still a relatively small business. They have a few acres that they grow on outside of Lansing, but I think that's really inspirational to me, the way that they were able to bring their culture with them and also provide this service to those people in the area who wanted to consume those more traditional foods.

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# ARTS & CULTURE

ART • BOOKS • FILM • MUSIC

## Williamston Theatre explores the enigmatic ‘Mrs. Harrison’

By **TODD HEYWOOD**

As the stars of “Mrs. Harrison” at the Williamston Theatre, Janai Lashon and Alysia Kolasz have some of the most enviable jobs in local theater right now.

But explaining the show may be more difficult than anyone can truly admit. No one wants to spill the beans about the slowly unfurling dialogue between the two women, revealing their past and present realities.

“It’s a chess game,” said Lashon, 35. “You feel it from the moment the two characters see each other — something interesting is happening here.”

Kolasz, 38, said the “two-hander” — theater slang for a two-person show — drew her attention because of its well-written, complicated characters.

“These two women are kind of going at each other and learning things about each other, and they’re both interesting but flawed and human,” she said. “I love the script.”

The story takes place during a 10-year college reunion. Lashon’s character, Aisha, is a successful playwright, while Kolasz’s character, Holly, is a middling stand-up comic. The two come together in a basement bathroom. A well-appointed bathroom, but a bathroom nonetheless. This setting allows the characters to block each other from exiting, forcing conflict and confrontations.

“I think (Holly) has less awareness than you would hope to see in those situations. She’s looking at it through her experiences and beliefs, and she has those blind spots and isn’t able to see past them,” Kolasz said. “I think there’s some of that with Aisha as well. They both have their truth, and those truths conflict, but there’s some fact in there. Each person is right and wrong, but they’re fighting for their own truth and may be unable or unwilling, at times, to take a step back and see it from the other person’s perspective, maybe to the detriment of them both.”

To a man, setting the show in a



Courtesy of Chris Purchis

In Williamston Theatre’s production of “Mrs. Harrison,” Aisha (left), played by Janai Lashon, and Holly, played by Alysia Kolasz, find themselves trapped in a restroom together during a 10-year college reunion. A “chess game” of conflict and confrontation slowly unfolds.

restroom seemed odd. There are unspoken rules in the men’s room. You don’t talk to each other, and you rarely look at each other.

Both women said that’s not the case in women’s restrooms.

“There’s an inherent vulnerability when you’re in a bathroom — your guard is down to a certain extent,” Kolasz said. “It’s a personal space, and some of the conversations and the things that come out and the places they go emotionally do get very vulnerable.”

“In my experience of using the lady’s room, there can be a lot of intimate conversation,” Lashon said. “I mean, from the bar, I’ve met new friends by helping somebody hold their hair, consoling someone who’s crying or overhearing a private conversation. So, I think our playwright is just a genius.”

The intimate setting sent Lashon’s mind swirling, considering other snippets of life she might be missing.

“It’s like, ‘Oh, there’s drama that happens there,’ and it makes you start to examine some of those flyaway

moments in our lives,” she said. “Like working at a gas station. I feel like someone who works at a gas station probably sees so many different people. There are so many stories that are happening there.”

Lashon still labels herself a recent graduate of Ohio University’s master of fine arts program for performance. She concluded her training in 2021, at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, when theaters were closed to the public. But she was still able to watch others create and perform, despite social distancing requirements.

She said it was affirming “to know that the world was breathing and artists were crafting in new, innovative ways, and, really, we were hitting a new stage of a renaissance.”

Her start in professional theater coincided with a national focus on the Black Lives Matter movement and a reckoning over sex and sexualization in the local theater community. Women and artists of color stood up and pushed back against a system that had ignored

sexism, sexual harassment and racism for decades.

Lashon said she was part of that activism long before the Black Lives Matter movement hit its stride, and it began to influence a large cultural conversation about racial equity in theater and the performing arts in general. While it was exciting to see the conversations she and many other Black actors had been engaging in for years finally be welcomed by other performers, it was a process.

“We hit this other phase, or this other notch, on the roller coaster, where we had to do some surgery,” she said. “You had to talk about accountability. You had to talk about performative allyship.”

That included challenging theaters to hire more Black actors and technical staff and select shows that feature and honor Black lives.

“We tell stories about humanity,” Lashon said. “So, it’s great that theater is realizing that there’s room to grow within its humanity as it relates to practitioners and the process.”

### “Mrs. Harrison”

Through April 23  
8 p.m. Thursday–  
Saturday

3 p.m. Saturday  
2 p.m. Sunday

Williamston  
Theatre  
122 S. Putnam St.,  
Williamston  
517-655-7469  
williamstontheatre.  
org

# A morel-themed mystery

By **BILL CASTANIER**

East Lansing author Charles Cutter's five Burr Lafayette legal thrillers all start with malicious murders and keep readers hooked with twists and turns to the very end. His most recent mystery, "Under the Ashes," has an unusual murder weapon — poisonous mushrooms. Or so it seems.

In the book, Cutter — a pseudonym for Charles McLravy, which he said no one could spell — returns to his favorite locale, northwest Michigan. Readers will find familiarity in the restaurants and venues Lafayette frequents. For instance, when he's not at his office in East Lansing's old Masonic Temple, he can be found hanging out at El Azteco and Beggar's Banquet, where he enjoys the five-alarm chili and several Labatt Blues on tap.

At the start of the novel, a popular radio DJ, Nick Fagan, dies mysteriously after eating his favorite dish, veal morel. The book's title is derived from where morels are most often found: under ash trees.

"I try and make my books very local and unique to this part of the world," Cutter said. "The morel has a special cache in Michigan. It's scarce, hard to find and just delicious."

It's that scarcity that brings Fagan to pick his own morels to eat at the restaurant that fateful night.

Since Fagan's spouse, Molly, was last seen in the restaurant's kitchen fooling around with her husband's main course, she's the most likely suspect and is charged with murder. Her charges are dismissed after the first court hearing finds a lack of evidence,

but when she seeks to collect her late husband's \$1 million life insurance policy, she's put on trial again. Everyone believes she did it, including her attorney, Lafayette, at varying times. Everything points to Molly, but it's up to Lafayette to find the real killer.

Readers will marvel at how Cutter, a retired attorney, is able to ramp up

just right. He even turned to a retired mycologist in Harbor Springs, who also has a fictional role in the book. Without going into grand detail, as he does in the novel, the reader learns the false morel is not the real killer.

Cutter has also written a few salacious moments into the novel, such as Lafayette and his on-again-off-again paramour taking to the high seas for a "sailing lesson."

"I was getting more requests to get more sex in my books," he said. Check that off the list.

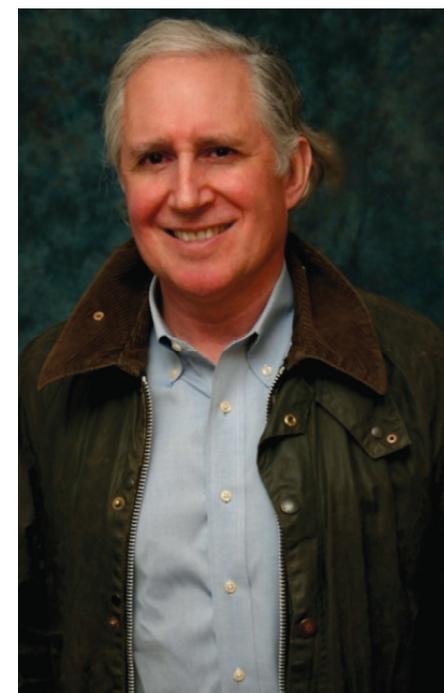
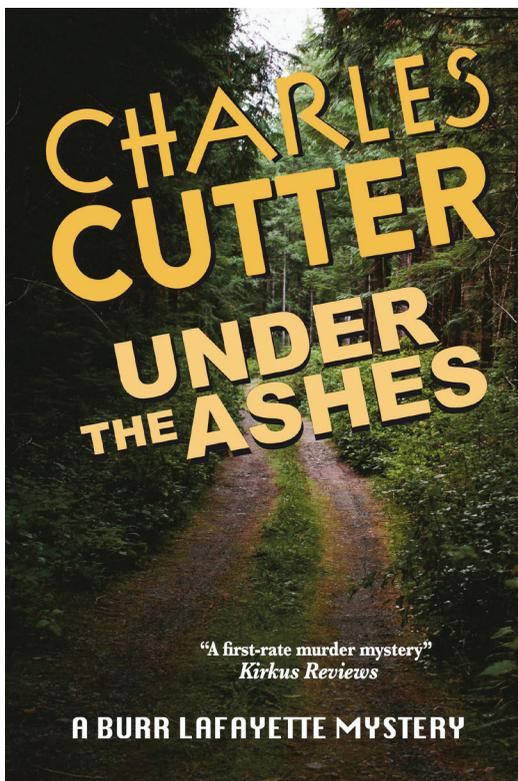
He also saw fit to make Lafayette a more flawed character than he already was. He ramped up Lafayette's propensity to drink, leaving the character well on his way to confirming his alcoholism.

Cutter said the hardest part about publishing his fifth novel was rewriting.

"I was happy with my first draft, but I wasn't getting a lot of positive feedback, and my publisher sent me a 12-page evaluation," he said. "It was really deflating and had a lot of criticism. I got it right before the Fourth of July and stewed about it for two months before getting to work."

The old saying "write what you know" comes into play, since Cutter, in his other life, owned radio stations in Michigan during what he calls their heyday — a time when you could buy them for cheap and turn them into powerhouses by moving towers closer to big markets.

"I got out of it altogether with the advent of the internet," he said. "Prior to the internet, radio was part of the social fabric, and it was the way popu-



Courtesy of Charles Cutter

East Lansing author Charles Cutter is back with his fifth Burr Lafayette legal thriller, "Under the Ashes." Lafayette is called in to help the wife of a deceased radio DJ collect a life insurance payout, but things take a turn when she's charged with murder.

lar culture was discovered and spread."

His next legal thriller is tentatively titled "The Lady's Slipper," inspired by the gorgeous, endangered Michigan orchid. It revolves around a murder and a rapacious land developer who wants to build where the slippers grow. The book will also see Lafayette coming to grips with his drinking problem and his romantic relationship.

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the drama to a spectacular courtroom finale, continuing in the tradition of TV criminal defense lawyer Perry Mason.

Cutter spent an extraordinary amount of time researching poisonous mushrooms to get the science

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# Jonesin' Crossword

By Matt Jones

"We Made It to the Finish Line" -- just you and me.

by Matt Jones  
© 2023 Matt Jones

### ACROSS

- 1. Absorbed
- 5. Emu or ostrich, e.g.
- 11. "The Ultimate Driving Machine"
- 14. \_\_\_ error
- 15. Bluegrass artist Krauss
- 16. Late July birth sign
- 17. Scientific group that includes limes and kumquats
- 19. Musician Yoko
- 20. Locale of a notable zoo
- 21. Icelandic electronic group with albums "Polydistortion" and "Lies Are More Flexible"
- 23. Put a stop to
- 24. "Beg pardon"
- 25. Aquarium buildup
- 28. "Best in Show" org.
- 30. Add, as a vocal track
- 34. Repeated marks after "F" that jokingly denote a really bad grade
- 37. \_\_\_ Chico (beverage brand)
- 38. "I love," in Latin
- 39. Aware of, with "to"
- 40. "Who Are You" was its opening theme
- 41. Video game humanoids since 1989
- 43. 1993 Halloween film with a 2022 sequel
- 46. Prepare, as mussels
- 48. Islands instrument
- 49. Opponent in Risk
- 50. It may be checked at the door
- 52. Special someone, slangily
- 53. Version of a North African semolina dish in

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14				15						16		
17			18							19		
20							21		22			
23						24						
25	26	27			28	29			30	31	32	33
34				35				36		37		
38				39						40		
41			42		43				44	45		
46				47		48				49		
50				51				52				
53	54	55				56	57			58	59	60
61				62		63						
64				65						66		
67				68						69		

- Turkish cuisine (it sounds the same)
- 56. "Say hello to my little friend" movie
- 61. Landing guess at LAX
- 62. Hit HBO show (adapted from a video game) that illustrates the six theme answers
- 64. Thanksgiving starch
- 65. Gasoline hydrocarbon with six carbon atoms
- 66. Mineral sources
- 67. "\_\_\_ sells seashells ..."
- 68. Came down softly?
- 69. Errands list heading
- DOWN
- 1. Floor coverings
- 2. Sailing on the ocean
- 3. Teller's partner
- 4. Canadian Prime Minister Justin
- 5. Sped along
- 6. Character before Borat
- 7. One-fifth of the Jackson 5
- 8. Neighbor of Syr.
- 9. Not easy to crack
- 10. Happened next
- 11. Online journal
- 12. Item in a restaurant takeout bag
- 13. Courts
- 18. Certain trig functions
- 22. Blue material
- 24. Contact lens brand
- 25. Accumulate
- 26. "The \_\_\_ does not exist" ("Mean Girls" line)
- 27. Bearded garden figurine
- 28. Dry on a line, perhaps
- 29. New York NBA player
- 31. Lawn bowling game
- 32. Lorem \_\_\_ (placeholder text)
- 33. Raucous
- 35. Abbr. on a speeding ticket
- 36. Part of DOS
- 42. Bag for potatoes
- 44. Legendary Rush drummer Neil
- 45. Twelve inches
- 47. Ends of rivers
- 51. Pale with fear
- 52. "\_\_\_ on a true story"
- 53. Piano row
- 54. Arches National Park state
- 55. Unvarying
- 56. BBQ side dish
- 57. Mr. Peanut prop
- 58. Style with a pick
- 59. Prompted in a play
- 60. Gas brand still found in Canada
- 63. Prefix with skeleton

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Answers on page 25

# SUDOKU

# Beginner

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

## Fun By The Numbers

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

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

# Free Will Astrology

By Rob Breznsky

March 29-April 4, 2023

**ARIES (March 21-April 19):** Aries-born René Descartes (1596–1650) was instrumental in the development of modern science and philosophy. His famous motto, "I think, therefore I am" is an assertion that the analytical component of intelligence is primary and foremost. And yet, few history books mention the supernatural intervention that was pivotal in his evolution as a supreme rationalist. On the night of November 10, 1619, he had three mystical dreams that changed his life, revealing the contours of the quest to discern the "miraculous science" that would occupy him for the next 30 years. I suspect you are in store for a comparable experience or two, Aries. Brilliant ideas and marvelous solutions to your dilemmas will visit you as you bask in unusual and magical states of awareness.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20):** The dirty work is becoming milder and easier. It's still a bit dirty but is growing progressively less grungy and more rewarding. The command to "adjust, adjust and adjust some more, you beast of burden" is giving way to "refine, refine and refine some more, you beautiful animal." At this pivotal moment, it's crucial to remain consummately conscientious. If you stay in close touch with your shadowy side, it will never commandeer more than 10% of your total personality. In other words, a bit of healthy distrust for your own motives will keep you trustworthy. (PS: Groaning and grouching, if done in righteous and constructive causes, will continue to be good therapy for now.)

**GEMINI (May 21-June 20):** "'Tis the good reader that makes the good book," wrote Gemini philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson. "In every book, he finds passages which seem confidences or asides hidden from all else and unmistakably meant for his ear." In the coming weeks, a similar principle will apply to everything you encounter, Gemini — not just books. You will find rich meaning and entertainment wherever you go. From seemingly ordinary experiences, you'll notice and pluck clues that will be wildly useful for you personally. For inspiration, read this quote from author Sam Keen: "Enter each day with the expectation that the happenings of the day may contain a clandestine message addressed to you personally. Expect omens, epiphanies, casual blessings and teachers who unknowingly speak to your condition."

**CANCER (June 21-July 22):** Traditional astrologers don't regard the planet Mars as being a natural ally of you Crabs. But I suspect you will enjoy an invigorating relationship with the red planet during the next six weeks. For best results, tap into its rigorous vigor in the following ways: 1. Gather new wisdom about how to fight tenderly and fiercely for what's yours. 2. Refine and energize your ambitions so they become more ingenious and beautiful. 3. Find out more about how to provide your physical body with exactly what it needs to be strong and lively on an ongoing basis. 4. Mediate on how to activate a boost in your willpower.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22):** I won't ask you to start heading back toward your comfort zone yet, Leo. I'd love to see you keep wandering out in the frontiers for a while longer. It's healthy and wise to be extra fanciful, improvisatory and imaginative. The more rigorous and daring your experiments, the better. Possible bonus: If you are willing to question at least some of your fixed opinions and dogmatic beliefs, you could very well outgrow the part of the old you that has finished its mission.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22):** The supreme deity with the most power may not be Jehovah or Allah or Brahman or Jesus's dad. There's a good chance it's actually Mammon, the god of money. The devoted worship that humans offer to Mammon far surpasses the loyalty offered to all the other gods combined. His values and commandments rule civilization. I bring this to your attention, Virgo, because now is an excellent time for you to deliver extra intense prayers to Mammon. From what I can determine, this formidable lord of lords is far more likely to favor you than usual. (PS: I'm

only half-kidding. I really do believe your financial luck will reach a peak in the coming weeks.)

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22):** It's an excellent time to give up depleted, used-up obsessions so you have plenty of room and energy to embrace fresh, succulent passions. I hope you will take advantage of the cosmic help that's available as you try this fun experiment. You will get in touch with previously untapped resources as you wind down your attachments to old pleasures that have dissipated. You will activate dormant reserves of energy as you phase out connections that take more than they give.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21):** "The best revenge is not to be like your enemy," said ancient Roman philosopher Marcus Aurelius. I'm tempted to advise every Scorpio to get a tattoo of that motto. That way, you will forever keep in mind this excellent advice. As fun as it may initially feel to retaliate against those who have crossed you, it rarely generates redemptive grace or glorious rebirth, which are key Scorpio birthrights. I believe these thoughts should be prime meditations for you in the coming weeks.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21):** Sometimes love can be boring. We may become overly accustomed to feeling affection and tenderness for a special person or animal. What blazed like a fiery fountain in the early stages of our attraction might have subsided into a routine sensation of mild fondness. But here's the good news, Sagittarius: Even if you have been ensconced in bland sweetness, I suspect you will soon transition into a phase of enhanced zeal. Are you ready to be immersed in a luscious, lusty bloom of heartfelt yearning and adventure?

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19):** What shall we call this latest chapter of your life story? How about "Stealthy Triumph over Lonely Fear" or "Creating Rapport with the Holy Darkness"? Other choices might be "As Far Down into the Wild Rich Depths That I Dare to Go" or "My Roots Are Stronger and Deeper Than I Ever Imagined." Congratulations on this quiet but amazing work you've been attending to. Some other possible descriptors: "I Didn't Have to Slay the Dragon Because I Figured Out How to Harness It" or "The Unexpected Wealth I Discovered Amidst the Confusing Chaos."

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18):** It's sway-swirl-swivel time for you, Aquarius — a phase when you will be wise to gyrate and rollick and zigzag. This is a bouncy, shimmering interlude that will hopefully clean and clear your mind as it provides you with an abundance of reasons to utter "wheel!" and "yahoo!" and "hooray!" My advice: Don't expect the straight-and-narrow version of anything. Be sure you get more than minimal doses of twirling and swooping and cavorting. Your brain needs to be teased and tickled, and your heart requires regular encounters with improvised fun.

**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20):** When I was growing up in suburban America, way back in the 20th century, many adults told me that I was wrong to grow my hair really long. Really! It's hard to believe now, but I endured ongoing assaults of criticism, ridicule and threats because of how I shaped my physical appearance. Teachers, relatives, baseball coaches, neighbors, strangers in the grocery store — literally hundreds of people — warned me that sporting a big head of hair would cause the whole world to be prejudiced against me and sabotage my success. Decades later, I can safely say that all those critics were resoundingly wrong. My hair is still long, and my ability to live the life I love has not been obstructed by it in the least. Telling you this story is my way of encouraging you to keep being who you really are, even in the face of people telling you that's not who you really are. The astrological omens say it's time for you to take a stand.

# OUT on the TOWN

## Events & Happenings in Lansing This Week

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

### Wednesday, March 29

**"A Course of Love" with Lucille Olson** - 7 p.m. Zoom ID: 177 417 886. Passcode: 601744. [unity-lansing.org](http://unity-lansing.org).

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

**"Blind Spot," "DIEGEST," "The Nightly News," MFA Exhibition** - 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Eli & Edythe Broad Art Museum, 547 E. Circle Drive, East Lansing. 517-884-4800. [broadmuseum.msu.edu](http://broadmuseum.msu.edu).

**Bookend Gallery Display by Lansing Women's Artist Collective** - Noon-4 p.m. CADL - Haslett Library, 1590 Franklin St., Haslett. 517-339-2324. [cadl.org/about/our-locations/haslett](http://cadl.org/about/our-locations/haslett).

**Broad Underground Film Series** - Experimental and avant-garde film screening presented alongside the exhibition "DIEGEST." 7 p.m. Eli & Edythe Broad Art Museum, 547 E. Circle Drive, East Lansing. 517-884-4800. [broadmuseum.msu.edu](http://broadmuseum.msu.edu).

**Code Club!** - Learn to make websites, apps, animations and more! No coding experience necessary. Grades 3+. Register at [hq.girlswhocode.com](http://hq.girlswhocode.com) using club code MI45609. 6 p.m. Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St., Grand Ledge. 517-627-7014. [gladl.org](http://gladl.org).

**DC Heroes and Villains** - Day camp. 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Impression 5 Science Center, 200 Museum Drive, Lansing. 517-485-8116. [impression5.org](http://impression5.org).

**Fitness Over 50** - The Meridian Township Parks and Recreation Stretch and Flex Exercise group exercises at Meridian Mall Food Court. 9-10 a.m. 1982 W. Grand River Ave., Okemos. [meridian-50plus.com](http://meridian-50plus.com).

**International Chamber Soloists, led by Dmitri Berlinsky** - 7:30 p.m. Fairchild Theatre, 542 Auditorium Road, East Lansing. 517-353-5340. [music.msu.edu](http://music.msu.edu).

**Live Music at the Monk** - Bart Moore. 7 p.m. EagleMonk Pub and Brewery, 4906 W. Mt. Hope Hwy., Lansing. 517-708-7350. [eaglemonkbrewing.com](http://eaglemonkbrewing.com).

**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](http://lamc.info).

**Open Mic Hosted by Rick Hansel** - Family-friendly, welcomes singers and musicians. No cover! 6 p.m. UrbanBeat, 1213 Turner St., Lansing. 517-331-8440. [urbanbeatevents.com](http://urbanbeatevents.com).

**Spring "Brake" Scavenger Hunt** - Pick up a card at our admission desk and head out onto the museum floor to explore. We'll have an easy version and one for hardcore hunters! Once complete, hand in the card for a little treat. Regular admission prices apply. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. R.E. Olds Transportation Museum, 240 Museum Drive, Lansing. 517-372-0529. [reoldsmuseum.org](http://reoldsmuseum.org).

**Spring Break at Higher Ground** - Plenty of fun games, computer use and maybe even some food! Call to reserve a spot for your child. Noon-5 p.m. Higher Ground Community Development Center, 3637 W. Jolly Road, Lansing. 517-894-1633.

**Wheelbarrow Books Presents: Marion Starling Boyer and Carol V. Davis** - The authors will read from their books, followed by a conversation with Wheelbarrow Books Series Editor Anita

Skeen. Reception and book signing will follow in the LookOut Gallery. 7:30 p.m. RCAH Theater, 362 Bogue St., East Lansing. 517-355-0210. [poetry.rcah.msu.edu](http://poetry.rcah.msu.edu).

### Thursday, March 30

**"A Course in Miracles," a Group Discussion on ZOOM** - 7 p.m. Meeting ID: 177 417 886 Passcode: 601744. [unitylansing.org](http://unitylansing.org).

**A2 Magic's Learn Magic Workshop** - Instructions and take-home materials included! Ages 6-12. Registration req. 11 a.m. Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St., Grand Ledge. 517-627-7014. [gladl.org](http://gladl.org).

**"Blind Spot," "DIEGEST," "The Nightly News," MFA Exhibition** - 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Eli & Edythe Broad Art Museum, 547 E. Circle Drive, East Lansing. 517-884-4800. [broadmuseum.msu.edu](http://broadmuseum.msu.edu).

**Bookend Gallery Display by Lansing Women's Artist Collective** - Noon-6 p.m. CADL - Haslett Library, 1590 Franklin St., Haslett. 517-339-2324. [cadl.org/about/our-locations/haslett](http://cadl.org/about/our-locations/haslett).

**Cars - Science of Speed** - Day camp. 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Impression 5 Science Center, 200 Museum Drive, Lansing. 517-485-8116. [impression5.org](http://impression5.org).

**Cyrille Aimée** - 7:30 p.m. Pasant Theatre, 750 E. Shaw Lane, East Lansing. 517-432-2000. [wharton-center.com](http://wharton-center.com).

**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](http://ladiessilverblades.org).

**Movers & Readers Storytime** - Lively activities and stories for young children and their caregivers. 10:30 a.m. CADL - Mason Library, 145 W. Ash St., Mason. 517-676-9088. [cadl.org/about/our-locations/mason](http://cadl.org/about/our-locations/mason).

**"Mrs. Harrison"** - Contains adult content and language. Please check our website for a note about trigger warnings. 8 p.m. Williamston Theatre, 122 S. Putnam St., Williamston. 517-655-7469. [williamstontheatre.org](http://williamstontheatre.org).

**Spring "Brake" Scavenger Hunt** - Pick up a card at our admission desk and head out onto the museum floor to explore. We'll have an easy version and one for hardcore hunters! Once complete, hand in the card for a little treat. Regular admission prices apply. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. R.E. Olds Transportation Museum, 240 Museum Drive, Lansing. 517-372-0529. [reoldsmuseum.org](http://reoldsmuseum.org).

**Spring Break at Higher Ground** - Plenty of fun games, computer use and maybe even some food! Call to reserve a spot for your child. Noon-5 p.m. Higher Ground Community Development Center, 3637 W. Jolly Road, Lansing. 517-894-1633.

**The Unoriginal Artist Party** - With Aura the Brave and friends. 7 p.m. Mac's Bar, 2700 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. 517-484-6795. [macsbar.com](http://macsbar.com).

**Upbeat Thursdays with Anthony Taylor Trio** - 7 p.m. UrbanBeat, 1213 Turner St., Lansing. 517-331-8440. [urbanbeatevents.com](http://urbanbeatevents.com).

### Friday, March 31

**Beginning West Coast Swing Group Dance Class** - Wear casual clothing and smooth-soled shoes.

### Barbara Wagner Chamber Music Competition Showcase

Saturday, April 1

6 p.m.

Fairchild Theatre

542 Auditorium Road, East Lansing



Top instrumentalists from the Michigan State University College of Music will compete for scholarships, performance opportunities and more at the 3rd annual Barbara Wagner Chamber Music Competition Showcase Saturday (April 1).

Four groups will perform: the Novak Trio, a string and piano trio; Grand River Brass, a brass quintet; Clap 7, a saxophone quartet; and Aereus, a trumpet ensemble.

After the final performance, judges Tim McAllister, a professor of music at the University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre and Dance; Seth Orgel, a professor of horn at Louisiana State University; and Ruggero Allifranchini, concertmaster for the Mostly Mozart Festival, will deliberate to decide the first, second and third-place winners. The audience will also select a People's Choice Award winner. Recipients will be announced at the end of the evening.

The event is \$12 for adults, \$10 for seniors (ages 60 and older) and free for students and attendees under 18. For tickets and access to the digital livestream, visit [music.msu.edu](http://music.msu.edu).

Singles or couples welcome. Seven-week class. 7 p.m. Michigan Athletic Club, 2900 Hannah Blvd., East Lansing. 517-364-8888. [sparrow.org](http://sparrow.org).

**"Blind Spot," "DIEGEST," "The Nightly News," MFA Exhibition** - 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Eli & Edythe Broad Art Museum, 547 E. Circle Drive, East Lansing. 517-884-4800. [broadmuseum.msu.edu](http://broadmuseum.msu.edu).

**Fitness Over 50** - The Meridian Township Parks and Recreation Stretch and Flex Exercise group exercises at Meridian Mall Food Court. 9-10 a.m. 1982 W. Grand River Ave., Okemos. [meridian-50plus.com](http://meridian-50plus.com).

**Friday Fish Fry** - Fried fish (3 pieces), fries, coleslaw and a dinner roll. 4:30-7:30 p.m. VFW Post 701, 123 N. Rosemary St., Lansing. 517-485-1656. [vfw701.org](http://vfw701.org).

**Hairball** - Covers of Van Halen, Mötley Crüe, Queen, Journey and more. 8 p.m. Lansing Center, 333 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. 517-483-7400. [hairballonline.com](http://hairballonline.com).

**Happy Birthday, Bach: The Cello Solo Suites** - Cellist Suren Bagratuni brings to life Johann Sebastian Bach's six Cello Suites. 6:30 p.m. Alumni Memorial Chapel, 636 Auditorium Road, East Lansing. 517-353-5340. [music.msu.edu](http://music.msu.edu).

**Jake Blount, Nic Gareiss & Laurel Premo + Fiddle's Annual Membership Meeting** - Meeting 6-7 p.m. Concert at 7:30. University United Methodist Church, 1120 S. Harrison Road, East Lansing. 517-337-7744. [tenpoundfiddle.org](http://tenpoundfiddle.org).

**LAFCU Write to Educate Essay Contest Deadline** - All submissions due by 5 p.m. [lafcu.com/write-to-educate](http://lafcu.com/write-to-educate).

**Learn to Curl!** - Get out on the ice and learn the basics before our season begins. \$35 per person, ages 13 and up. Registration req. 7-9 p.m.

Suburban Ice, 2810 Hannah Blvd., East Lansing. [lansingcurls.org](http://lansingcurls.org)

**The LEGO Movie** - Day camp. 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Impression 5 Science Center, 200 Museum Drive, Lansing. 517-485-8116. [impression5.org](http://impression5.org).

**Mason Knights of Columbus Dine-in Fish Fry** - Three fried or baked pieces of cod, shrimp, fries or baked potato, mac and cheese, coleslaw, green beans, dinner roll and a dessert. Takeout available. 4:30-7 p.m. 1010 S. Lansing St., Mason. [masonknights.org](http://masonknights.org).

**MI Paint Party at CSAC** - Learn how to paint a beautiful, pre-traced portrait of Michigan step by step. Bring your own food and drinks. 6:30 p.m. Cedar Street Art Collective, 1701 S. Cedar St., Lansing. 517-220-0058. [paintyourpoison.com](http://paintyourpoison.com).

**"Mrs. Harrison"** - Contains adult content and language. Please check our website for a note about trigger warnings. 8 p.m. Williamston Theatre, 122 S. Putnam St., Williamston. 517-655-7469. [williamstontheatre.org](http://williamstontheatre.org).

**San Juan Diego Council #15417 Knights of Columbus Fish Fry** - Fried cod, steak fries, coleslaw, baked potato, mac and cheese, roll and butter, coffee. Desserts and beverages for purchase. 5-7 p.m. Cristo Rey Church, 201 W. Miller Road, Lansing. 517-394-4639. [cristorey-church.org](http://cristorey-church.org).

**Spring "Brake" Scavenger Hunt** - Pick up a card at our admission desk and head out onto the museum floor to explore. We'll have an easy version and one for hardcore hunters! Once complete, hand in the card for a little treat. Regular admission prices apply. 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

# Live & Local CityPULSE

## The Avenue

2021 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing  
**Oigs Fest 6: Throne, Hate Unbound, The Glorious Dead & more**  
 Sat., April 1, 3 p.m.

## Classic Pub & Grill

16219 Old U.S. 27, Lansing  
**The New Rule**  
 Fri., March 31, and Sat., April 1, 8 p.m.

## Eaton Rapids Craft Co.

204 N. Main St., Eaton Rapids  
**Jake VanRavenswaay**  
 Fri., March 31, 7 p.m.

## DJ E-Nyce

Sat., April 1, 7 p.m.

## EagleMunk Pub and Brewery

4906 W. Mt. Hope Hwy., Lansing  
**Bart Moore**  
 Wed., March 29, 7 p.m.

## Ellison Brewery & Spirits

4903 Dawn Ave., East Lansing  
**Tony Thompson**  
 Fri., March 31, 7 p.m.

## The Exchange

314 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing  
**Off The Ledge**  
 Fri., March 31, and Sat., April 1, 9 p.m.

## The Green Door

2005 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing  
**Miranda & the M80s**  
 Fri., March 31, 8:30 p.m.

## The Further Adventures of FatBoy and JiveTurkey

Sat., April 1, 8:30 p.m.

## Lansing Brewing Co.

518 E. Shiawassee St., Lansing  
**Medusa**  
 Sat., April 1, 7 p.m.

## Mac's Bar

2700 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing  
**The Unoriginal Artist Party with Aura the Brave & friends**

Thurs., March 30, 7 p.m.

## Xotrey, Kwaj, Big Sherm, Valentina

Fri., March 31, 8 p.m.

## Pajamas, Jenny Kush

Sat., April 1, 8 p.m.

## The Peanut Barrel

521 E. Grand River Ave., East Lansing  
**Eric Ripper**  
 Fri., March 31, 8 p.m.

## University United Methodist Church

1120 S. Harrison Road, East Lansing  
**Jake Blount, Nic Gareiss & Laurel Premo**  
 Fri., March 31, 7:30 p.m.

## UrbanBeat

1213 Turner Road, Lansing  
**Anthony Taylor Trio**  
 Thurs., March 30, 7 p.m.

## DJ John Beltran

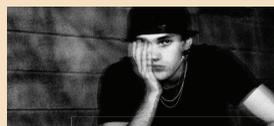
Fri., March 31, 8 p.m.

## Salsa Verde

Sat., April 1, 8:30 p.m.

## Williamston Roadhouse

3700 E. Grand River Ave., Williamston  
**Justin Burton**  
 Wed., March 29, 7 p.m.  
**Jessey Adams**  
 Sat., April 1, 7 p.m.



# TURN IT DOWN!

Loud dispatches from Lansing's music scene

BY RICH TUPICA

## TEN POUND FIDDLE HOSTS PRE-CONCERT MUSICIAN'S WORKSHOP



Courtesy photos

Ten Pound Fiddle will host a performance by award-winning Canadian singer-songwriter James Keelaghan April 6 at The Robin Theatre. The day prior (April 5), he'll host a musician's workshop from 6 to 9 p.m.

### James Keelaghan divulges pro tips, performs folk set

Local musicians who want to start gigging professionally or step up their game should take note of Ten Pound Fiddle's calendar next week. The long-running folk concert series will host a special three-hour workshop April 5 at The Robin Theatre, and host James Keelaghan will cover a lot of ground.

Keelaghan, an award-winning Canadian singer-songwriter, will discuss effective strategies for presenting music to an audience. According to Ten Pound Fiddle organizers, he'll "give a workshop on ways to become the best presenter you can be."

Described by AllMusic as "one of Canada's international stars," Keelaghan melds classic Americana with elements of modern folk and roots rock. That rustic sound has garnered him followings across Europe, Australia and North America. Over the years, his time spent studying history at the University of Calgary has fueled many of his original songs.

Within his catalog of music, including 2022's "Second Hand," his lyrics also offer up stories about real-life situations, from hardships and attitudes to the events that shape our day-to-day lives. In short, classic, well-executed folk songs.

Outside of touring and recording, Keelaghan is also the artistic director for the Summerfolk Music and Crafts Festival in Owen Sound, Ontario, where he curates dynamic lineups. All of this experience will inform his workshop.

The following evening (April 6), the troubadour will put those strategies into practice at an intimate concert at The

Robin Theatre. Sally Potter, Ten Pound Fiddle's booking manager, is excited about both events.

"About eight years ago, James Keelaghan gave the best workshop I have ever attended," Potter recalled. "As part of the Folk Alliance International Conference, I watched him explain his strategies as a performer. Simultaneously, he entered the room and got ready for and performed a mini-concert."

"We watched him enter the workshop space, set up what he needed, coordinate with the sound personnel, arrange his performance space, check the lighting, set up his merchandise area and more," she added. "While in motion, he explained to us the reasons for everything he does, including where he positions his guitar, chair and body; what he says between songs; his length of sets; what type of tuner he uses; and so on."

She compared his professionalism to that of the late folk singer Pete Seeger — a genuine compliment coming from a folk expert and educator such as Potter. She also complimented his ability to clearly communicate these messages to an audience.

"These strategies are similar to those used by successful directors, managers, teachers, administrators, public servants, politicians, entrepreneurs and parents," she said. "As a high school teacher, I took several ideas and immediately implemented them in my classroom. As a performing musician and song leader, I use many of his suggestions to this day."

### "Performer's Workshop," presented by James Keelaghan

April 5  
 The Robin Theatre  
 1105 S. Washington Ave., Lansing  
 6-9 p.m.  
 \$20, \$18 Fiddle members, \$5 students

### James Keelaghan — in concert

April 6  
 The Robin Theatre  
 1105 S. Washington Ave., Lansing  
 7:30 p.m.  
 \$20, \$18 Fiddle members, \$5 students

## Events

from page 21

R.E. Olds Transportation Museum, 240 Museum Drive, Lansing. 517-372-0529. reoldsmuseum.org.

**Spring Break at Higher Ground** - Plenty of fun games, computer use and maybe even some food! Call to reserve a spot for your child. Noon-5 p.m. Higher Ground Community Development Center, 3637 W. Jolly Road, Lansing. 517-894-1633.

**XOTREY** - 8 p.m. Mac's Bar, 2700 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. 517-484-6795. macsbar.com.

### Saturday, April 1

**The 12 Teachings of Earth School with the Rev. Jim White** - Four-week class. 10:30 a.m. Meeting ID: 177 417 886 Passcode: 601744. unitylansing.org.

**Barbara Wagner Chamber Music Competition** - Performers and composers from the MSU College of Music selected by a distinguished panel of external jurors. Winners announced at the conclusion. 6 p.m. Fairchild Theatre, 542 Auditorium Road, East Lansing. 517-353-5340. music.msu.edu.

**"Blind Spot," "DIEGEST," "The Nightly News," MFA Exhibition** - 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Eli & Edythe Broad Art Museum, 547 E. Circle Drive, East Lansing. 517-884-4800. broadmuseum.msu.edu.

**Board Game Saturdays** - Free fun for the whole family! 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Eaton Rapids Area District Library, 220 S. Main St., Eaton Rapids. 517-663-0950. eradl.org.

**Collaborative Art Workshop** - Help make a community art piece inspired by religious sounds from the "Sounds of Religion" exhibition. No experience necessary. All materials provided. 1 p.m. MSU Museum, 409 W. Circle Drive, East Lansing. 517-355-2370. museum.msu.edu.

**Contra & Square Dance** - All dances taught - no partner needed. Come at 6:30 for a quick workshop on easy contra dance moves. 7 p.m. Central United Methodist Church, 215 N. Capitol Ave., Lansing. 517-614-5858. tenpoundfiddle.org.

**Fiddle Scouts Meeting: Youngman & Oldman feat. Peter Madcat Ruth** - Ages 3-13 and their families. Refreshments provided. 10 a.m. University United Methodist Church, 1120 S. Harrison Road, East Lansing. 517-337-7744. tenpoundfiddle.org.

**Film screening: "Mama Irene: Healer of the Andes"** - 84-year-old woman shaman from Peru who draws upon indigenous knowledge and traditions in danger of being lost forever. 4 p.m. Unity Spiritual Center of Lansing, 2395 Washington Road, Lansing. 517-371-3010. unitylansing.org.

**"Mrs. Harrison"** - Contains adult content and language. Please check our website for a note about trigger warnings. 3 and 8 p.m. Williamston Theatre, 122 S. Putnam St., Williamston. 517-655-7469. williamstontheatre.org.

**MSU Science Festival: Print your own butterfly postcard** - Print a butterfly postcard with a woodcut illustration from Special Collections! Then go around the corner for a pop-up exhibit of rare entomology books. Learn more about migratory insects, trace their routes around the globe and color some insects of your own! 2 p.m. MSU Main Library, 366 W. Circle Drive, East Lansing. 517-884-0901. lib.msu.edu.

**Oigs Fest 6 with Throne, Hate Unbound, The Glorious Dead and more** - Ages 21+. Doors at 3 p.m. The Avenue, 2021 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. 517-999-7549. avenuecafelansing.com.

**Pajamas** - 8 p.m. Mac's Bar, 2700 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. 517-484-6795. macsbar.com.

**Pet Easter Egg Hunt** - 10 a.m. Soldan's Pet Supplies, 12286 Old U.S. 27, DeWitt. 517-669-8824. soldanspet.com.

**"Printmaking in Full Color"** - Artist Sarah Dershem uses monotype and linocut printmaking to explore a lifelong admiration of the natural world. 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Framer's Edge, 1856 W. Grand River Ave., Okemos. 517-347-7400. framersedge.net.

**Salsa Verde** - 8:30 p.m. UrbanBeat, 1213 Turner St., Lansing. 517-331-8440. urbanbeatevents.com.

**Spring "Brake" Scavenger Hunt** - Pick up a card at our admission desk and head out onto the museum floor to explore. We'll have an easy version and one for hardcore hunters! Once complete, hand in the card for a little treat. Regular admission prices apply. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. R.E. Olds Transportation Museum, 240 Museum Drive, Lansing. 517-372-0529. reoldsmuseum.org.

**STEAM Expo Days at the MSU Science Festival** - More than 100 FREE programs and events exploring the STEAM disciplines. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. For a list of events, visit sciencefestival.msu.edu.

### Sunday, April 2

**"A Course in Miracles" with Dan and Carol Maynard** - Noon. Unity Spiritual Center of Lansing, 2395 Washington Road, Lansing. 517-371-3010. unitylansing.org.

**"Blind Spot," "DIEGEST," "The Nightly News," MFA Exhibition** - 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Eli & Edythe Broad Art Museum, 547 E. Circle Drive, East Lansing. 517-884-4800. broadmuseum.msu.edu.

**Bottle and Can Collection for Eastern Ingham Farmers Market** - 11 a.m.-1 p.m. McCormick Park, 123 High St., Williamston. 517-618-1630. easterninghamfarmersmarket.org.

**Drum Circle with Greater Lansing Area Drummers (GLAD)** - 1 p.m. Keys to Manifestation, 809 Center St., Suite 7, Lansing. 517-974-5540. manifestlansing.com.

**Introduction to Beaded Jewelry with James Jonah Zoll** - Learn the basics and create a finished piece of beaded jewelry to take home. 3 p.m. Keys to Manifestation, 809 Center St., Suite 7, Lansing. 517-974-5540. manifestlansing.com.

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

**"Mrs. Harrison"** - Contains adult content and language. Please check our website for a note about trigger warnings. 2 p.m. Williamston Theatre, 122 S. Putnam St., Williamston. 517-655-7469. williamstontheatre.org.

**"Printmaking in Full Color"** - Artist Sarah Dershem uses monotype and linocut printmaking to explore a lifelong admiration of the natural world. Noon-4 p.m. Framer's Edge, 1856 W. Grand River Ave., Okemos. 517-347-7400. framersedge.net.

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**STEAM Expo Days at the MSU Science Festival** - More than 100 FREE programs and events exploring the STEAM disciplines. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. For a list of events, visit sciencefestival.msu.edu.

**University Chorale and State Singers** - Featuring Bach's Cantata No. 4, "Christ lag in Todesbanden," selections from Brahms' Liebeslieder Waltzes and contemporary works. 7 p.m. Fairchild Theatre, 542 Auditorium Road, East Lansing. 517-353-5340. music.msu.edu.

**Worship Expressions: Palm/Passion Sunday** - Nurture alternative worship styles and creative expressions of music and worship. 10 a.m. University Lutheran Church, 1020 S. Harrison Road, East Lansing. 517-332-2559. ulcel.org.

### Learn to Curl

Friday, March 31, 7-9 p.m.

Friday, April 7, 8-10 p.m.

Friday, April 14, 7-9 p.m.

Suburban Ice

2810 Hannah Blvd., East Lansing

The Lansing Curling Club is hosting a series of two-hour classes with instructors trained by USA Curling for those interested in learning the basics of the sport.

All skill levels are welcome, and there will be adaptive gear for those who are less flexible. Participants should wear warm, comfortable clothing and bring clean sneakers.

After the class, attendees are invited to join a league or drop in at one of the club's games.

Space is limited to ensure participants have plenty of practice time on the ice, so reserve your ticket as soon as possible at [lansingcurls.org](http://lansingcurls.org). Classes are \$30 for students with a school-issued ID and \$35 for non-students.



### Monday, April 3

**After-School Enrichment Time** - Kids can get their homework done, use the computers, eat snacks and have a great, safe time. 3:30-5:30 p.m. Higher Ground Community Development Center, 3637 W. Jolly Road, Lansing. 517-894-1633.

**"All American," West Circle Series** - Explore the tremendous diversity and joy of music by American composers. 7:30 p.m. Fairchild Theatre, 542 Auditorium Road, East Lansing. 517-353-5340. music.msu.edu.

**Book Discussion Group - "A Most Beautiful Thing," by Arshay Cooper** - 1 p.m. Mason City Hall, 201 W. Ash St., Mason. 517-676-9088. cadl.org/about/our-locations/mason.

**Egg-"Strava-ganza" Easter Egg Decorating** - Bring hard-boiled eggs to decorate with our dye, paint, glitter, feathers and more. Registration req. 6 p.m. Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St., Grand Ledge. 517-627-7014. gladl.org.

**Finance Committee** - 6 p.m. Laingsburg City Hall, 114 Woodhull St., Laingsburg. laingsburg.us.

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

**Jump Into Reading** - Stories, songs, activities and therapy dogs. Intended for children ages 0-5 and their caregivers. 11 a.m. Eaton Rapids Area District Library, 220 S. Main St., Eaton Rapids. 517-663-0950. eradl.org.

**"Printmaking in Full Color"** - Artist Sarah Dershem uses monotype and linocut printmaking to explore a lifelong admiration of the natural world. Noon-5:30 p.m. Framer's Edge, 1856 W. Grand River Ave., Okemos. 517-347-7400. framersedge.net.

### Tuesday, April 4

**Dusty's Easter Dinner (pre-order and take home)** - Pre-order by noon on April 4 and pick up on April 8. Dinner includes spiral ham (1 pound per person), green bean casserole, scalloped potatoes and dinner rolls. 517-349-5150. dustyscellar.com.

**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. gladl.org.

**Preschool Storytime** - Engaging stories, songs

and activities to help build early literacy skills. 10:30 a.m. CADL - Mason Library, 145 W. Ash St., Mason. 517-676-9088. cadl.org/about/our-locations/mason.

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

**"Printmaking in Full Color"** - Artist Sarah Dershem uses monotype and linocut printmaking to explore a lifelong admiration of the natural world. 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Framer's Edge, 1856 W. Grand River Ave., Okemos. 517-347-7400. framersedge.net.

### Wednesday, April 5

**"A Course of Love" with Lucille Olson** - 7 p.m. Zoom ID: 177 417 886. Passcode: 601744. unitylansing.org.

**After-School Enrichment Time** - Kids can get their homework done, use the computers, eat snacks and have a great, safe time. 3:30-5:30 p.m. Higher Ground Community Development Center, 3637 W. Jolly Road, Lansing. 517-894-1633.

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

**"Blind Spot," "DIEGEST," "The Nightly News," MFA Exhibition** - 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Eli & Edythe Broad Art Museum, 547 E. Circle Drive, East Lansing. 517-884-4800. broadmuseum.msu.edu.

**Capital City Film Festival** - Showcases an eclectic mix of independent films, live music, interactive media and more in Michigan's capital city. 6:30 p.m. Frandor Sears Building, 3131 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. Visit [ccff.co](http://ccff.co) for a full schedule of events.

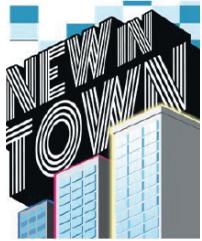
**Code Club!** - Learn to make websites, apps, animations and more! No coding experience necessary. Grades 3+. Register at [hq.girlswhocode.com](http://hq.girlswhocode.com) using club code MI45609. 6 p.m. Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St., Grand Ledge. 517-627-7014. gladl.org.

**Financial Decisions for Young Adults** - Learn about the options available to you after high school and things to consider about managing your money long-term. Registration req. 5:30 p.m. Eaton Rapids Area District Library, 220 S. Main St., Eaton Rapids. 517-663-0950. eradl.org.

See Events, Page 24

# Drinks, games and camaraderie

By TAYLOR BLAIR



## Homebrew Tabletop Game Lounge

221 1/2 N. Bridge St., Grand Ledge

7 a.m.-midnight  
Monday-Saturday  
Noon-8 p.m. Sunday  
517-775-4246

homebrewgamelounge.com

Soon, a space perfect for friends who love to game or those looking to make new acquaintances over drinks and friendly competition will open in Grand Ledge. Jeff Croff, an entrepreneur and active member of Lansing's theater community, and his wife, SaDonna, don't have an exact opening date for Homebrew Tabletop Game Lounge, but when it's ready, they hope guests will enjoy perusing the selections as much as they do.

"We decided to open up Homebrew

because we're both gamers," Jeff Croff said. The couple came up with the idea after attending a gaming convention.

While they didn't initially consider Grand Ledge as a potential spot for the venture, the storefront they found was too good to pass up.

"The space was so perfect," Croff said. "It's accessible and has a good amount of parking. So, for us, it ended up ticking off a lot of the boxes."

The lounge will offer classics like chess, checkers and playing cards, but if that doesn't interest you, you can enjoy more niche games like Settlers of Catan or bring your own favorites. The only rule is no Monopoly.

"We have a variety of the latest and greatest (games) that are just off Kickstarter. To purchase them would cost you \$150 or more," Croff said. "But you can actually play them here and sort of kick the tires before you buy them yourself."

All rentals are free with the purchase

of drinks or packaged snacks, so you can enjoy tea, coffee, mocktails or spir-its and get comfortable at your table for a game or two.

Even before starting work on the new business, Croff has always kept busy.

"Most of my life has been in communications, marketing and public relations while also starting and maintaining two nonprofit theater ensembles in the Lansing area. In contrast to large cities where I'd be a barista by day and acting or directing at night, I managed to create (the now-defunct) Icarus Falling and the Ixion Ensemble," he said. "So, for me, it's not much of a switch to go and have a different day job."

He said the venture is "all about the people." Novice and experienced players alike can join games or tournaments with community members who share a common interest and have simple, old-school fun.

"It's the energy and the dynamism that you feel when people are being



Courtesy of Jeff Croff

Homebrew Tabletop Game Lounge in Grand Ledge will offer a range of board games for guests to choose from as they sip alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages and enjoy pre-packaged snacks or have meals delivered.

creative, when they're actually engaging in laughter and exploration," that Croff is most excited to experience when the space opens, he said.

## Events

from page 23

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

**LBCA Meeting** - 7:30 a.m. Pine Hills Golf Course, 6603 Woodbury Road, Laingsburg.

**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.

**Michigan Young Birders Network Virtual Meeting** - Free, virtual networking group for individuals ages 13-18 interested in birds. 7 p.m. Meeting ID: 946 4329 0865. Password: Chickadee.

**Percussion Ensemble** - 7:30 p.m. Fairchild Theatre, 542 Auditorium Road, East Lansing. 517-353-5340. music.msu.edu.

**"Performer's Workshop," presented by James Keelaghan** - Review every element needed to sculpt a marvelous performance. 6-9 p.m. The Robin Theatre, 1105 S. Washington Ave., Lansing. 517-337-7744. tenpoundfiddle.org.

**"Printmaking in Full Color"** - Artist Sarah Dershem uses monotype and linocut printmaking to explore a lifelong admiration of the natural world. 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Framers Edge, 1856 W. Grand River Ave., Okemos. 517-347-7400. framersedge.net.

**Real Estate Career Night** - Learn more about the exciting industry of real estate and the unique opportunity through EXIT to generate residual income that lasts! 5:30 p.m. EXIT Realty at Home, 1427 W. Saginaw St., Suite 110, East Lansing. 517-489-2550.

**Spring Frame Show** - Huge selection of glasses frames for men, women and petites. Door prizes and giveaways. 2-7 p.m. EYES Optometry Boutique, 221 S. Bridge St., Grand Ledge. 517-236-7090. eyesoptometryboutique.com.

## Thursday, April 6

**All About My Body** - Ages 2-4. 10 a.m. Impression 5 Science Center, 200 Museum Drive, Lansing. 517-485-8116. impression5.org.

**Biology on Tap** - Two professors, researchers or biologists discuss their favorite things about the natural world around them. Trivia, raffles and prizes! 21+. 7 p.m. Michigan Wildlife Conservancy Wildlife Pub, 6380 Drumheller Road, Bath. facebook.com/bioontap.

**"Blind Spot," "DIEGEST," "The Nightly News," MFA Exhibition** - 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Eli & Edythe Broad Art Museum, 547 E. Circle Drive, East Lansing. 517-884-4800. broadmuseum.msu.edu.

**Capital Area Audubon Society April Meeting** - Vice President Patricia Deventer will present highlights of her recent travel and birdwatching in Antarctica. 7 p.m. Foster Community Center room 213, 200 N. Foster Ave., Lansing. capitalareaaudubon.org.

**Capital City Film Festival** - Showcases an eclectic mix of independent films, live music, interactive media and more in Michigan's capital city. 6 p.m. Frandor Sears Building, 3131 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. Visit cccff.co for a full schedule of events.

**Glow-in-the-Dark Egg Hunt** - Find up to three eggs per child, then trade them in for a treat. 6 p.m. Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St., Grand Ledge. 517-627-7014. gladl.org.

**James Keelaghan** - 7:30 p.m. The Robin Theatre, 1105 S. Washington Ave., Lansing. 517-337-7744. tenpoundfiddle.org.

**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.

**Movers & Readers Storytime** - Lively activities and stories for children ages 0-3 and their caregivers. 10:30 a.m. CADL - Mason Library, 145 W. Ash St., Mason. 517-676-9088. cadl.org/about/our-locations/mason.

**"Mrs. Harrison"** - Contains adult content and

## STEAM Expo Days

Saturday, April 1, and Sunday, April 2

10 a.m.-4 p.m.

### Various locations

The 2023 Michigan State University Science Festival kicks off this weekend with more than 100 free events exploring science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics. From tours of the school's Bird Sanctuary and Bug House to bath bomb baking, an AI Sonic Art Workshop and robot bowling, there's something for everyone.

For a full list of events, including times and locations, visit sciencefestival.msu.edu. Some events have limited capacity, so make sure to register before space fills up.

The festival will continue through April 30 with even more free events, workshops and demonstrations, including an educational concert with the Falling Tree Collaborative on Wednesday (April 8), a Statewide Earth Day Celebration on April 22 and a Statewide Astronomy Night on April 29. Check out the website to see all that's in store.



language. Please check our website for a note about trigger warnings. 8 p.m. Williamston Theatre, 122 S. Putnam St., Williamston. 517-655-7469. williamstontheatre.org.

**Paint Party at Ledge Craft Lane** - Paint with us step by step! Grab a little sunshine with this painting of cheery yellow flowers. 6:30 p.m. 120 S. Bridge St., Grand Ledge. paintyourpoison.com.

**"Printmaking in Full Color"** - Artist Sarah Dershem uses monotype and linocut printmaking to explore a lifelong admiration of the natural world. 10 a.m.-7 p.m. Framers Edge, 1856 W. Grand River Ave., Okemos. 517-347-7400. framersedge.net.

**Protect Your Peeps** - See how many Peeps your

raft can hold without sinking or Peeps falling into the water! Intended for grades K-3. 5 p.m. Eaton Rapids Area District Library, 220 S. Main St., Eaton Rapids. 517-663-0950. eradl.org.

## Friday, April 7

**After-School Enrichment Time** - Kids can get their homework done, use the computers, eat snacks and have a great, safe time. 3:30-5:30 p.m. Higher Ground Community Development Center, 3637 W. Jolly Road, Lansing. 517-894-1633.

See Events, Page 25

# Ann Arbor's Hash Bash is back

By LUCAS HENKEL

Michigan stoners will flock to the streets of Ann Arbor Saturday (April 1) for the 52nd annual Hash Bash and 21st annual Monroe Street Fair. The day's events will run from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., featuring live music, vendors, food and giveaways.

Since 1972, folks from across the state have gathered at the center of the University of Michigan's campus, known as The Diag, on the first Saturday in April to light up and celebrate cannabis. This year, Hash Bash will kick off with a Wake and Bake smoke session at 11 a.m., followed by speeches about cannabis legalization, expungement and other topics from noon to 2 p.m. Afterward, attendees can head over to Monroe Street (just a five-minute walk from campus) and check out dozens of vendors selling a variety of cannabis products and accessories.

The fair will feature booths from some of the biggest names in the cannabis industry, including Herbology Cannabis Co., Gage Cannabis, Arbor-Side, Ooze, Winewood Organics, Pure Roots, House of Dank, High Grade, Broken Buddha's House, Muha Meds and many others. Michigan Weedsters, a grassroots expungement network, and nonprofits like The Redemption Foundation will also have booths at the event.

Leni Sinclair, a Detroit-based photographer and activist, will be available for meet and greets and conversations



Courtesy photo

Each year, on the first Saturday in April, Michigan stoners flock to the streets of Ann Arbor for the annual Hash Bash and Monroe Street Fair, featuring speeches, live music, booths from some of the biggest names in the cannabis industry and, of course, opportunities to light up with friends.

### 52nd annual Hash Bash

Saturday, April 1  
11 a.m.-2 p.m.  
The Diag  
913 S. University Ave., Ann Arbor

### 21st annual Monroe Street Fair

Saturday, April 1  
11 a.m.-6 p.m.  
Monroe Street, Ann Arbor  
monroestreetfair.com

about her work. She has photographed rock and jazz musicians since the early 1960s and was one of the founders of the White Panther Party, an anti-racist political group created in 1968 to support the Blank Panther Party.

With so much happening, parking is expected to be difficult. Jenn Cornell, a member of Ann Arbor City

Council, said much of the street parking around the events will be blocked off for emergency vehicles. The city has contacted towing companies ahead of time so any illegally parked vehicles can be towed immediately. If you do attend the

event, be wary of where you park.

Some attendees may wish to uphold the age-old tradition of sharing joints and bowls with old and new friends at this year's Hash Bash. If you're looking to join a smoke circle but are concerned about recent COVID-19 surges, this week's review may be especially interesting.

### MouthPeace brings peace of mind

When passing joints or bongs between friends, the focus should be on smoking good bud and building connections, not worrying about sharing germs. Thankfully, Moose Labs has you covered with its handy MouthPeace, MouthPeace Mini and MouthPeace Filters.

Founded by brothers Dan and Jay Rush in 2014, Moose Labs created the first MouthPeace after 16 months of research and development. Smokers can



place the device over the mouthpiece of their favorite bong or rig and light up without worrying about inhaling any harsh resin or tar, thanks to the replaceable triple-layer carbon filter, which is made from biodegradable and recycled materials and results in a smoother and tastier hit.

The MouthPeace Mini has the same filter technology, but it's the perfect size to fit on the end of a joint or blunt. I love using the mini version when it's my turn in the blunt rotation because it helps filter out some of the harsh tobacco taste from the wrap. Instead of coughing my lungs out after one hit, I can savor it for just a little bit longer.

The MouthPeace and MouthPeace Mini are available in various fun colors and designs, and both retail for only \$10 on Moose Labs' website, mooselabs.us. Customers can also set up a subscription to receive new packs of filters every month.



## Events

from page 24

**All About My Body** - Ages 2-4. 10 a.m. Impression 5 Science Center, 200 Museum Drive, Lansing. 517-485-8116. impression5.org.

**Beginning West Coast Swing Group Dance Class** - Wear casual clothing and smooth-soled shoes. Singles or couples welcome. Seven-week class. 7 p.m. Michigan Athletic Club, 2900 Hannah Blvd., East Lansing. 517-364-8888. sparrow.org.

**"Blind Spot," "DIGEST," "The Nightly News," MFA Exhibition** - 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Eli & Edythe Broad Art Museum, 547 E. Circle Drive, East Lansing. 517-884-4800. broadmuseum.msu.edu.

**Capital City Film Festival** - Showcases an eclectic mix of independent films, live music, interactive media and more in Michigan's capital city. 6 p.m. Multiple locations. Visit ccff.co for a full schedule

of events.

**First Fridays for College Students - Neon Fashion Night** - Dress up in neon clothing, learn about the element and listen to Impact 89FM DJs. Fashion show, poetry slam and neon-themed activities. 7 p.m. MSU Museum, 409 W. Circle Drive, East Lansing. 517-355-2370. museum.msu.edu.

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

**Friday Fish Fry** - Fried fish (3 pieces), fries, coleslaw and a dinner roll. 4:30-7:30 p.m. VFW Post 701, 123 N. Rosemary St., Lansing. 517-485-1656. vfw701.org.

**Learn to Curl** - Get out on the ice and learn the basics before our season begins. \$35 per person, ages 13 and up. Registration req. 7-9 p.m. Suburban Ice, 2810 Hannah Blvd., East Lansing. lansingcurls.org

## CROSSWORD SOLUTION

From Pg. 20

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## SUDOKU SOLUTION

From Pg. 20

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

# FOOD & DRINK

## DINING OUT IN GREATER LANSING

# Meatloaf motivation

By **LIZY FERGUSON**

I found myself in Williamston again last week for a preview of “Mrs. Harrison” at the Williamston Theatre. After a long day toiling in the salt mines — more accurately, my job at a coffee shop — I was ravenous and unsure I would be able to sit through a play when streaming content, my couch and my dog were calling to me to me. (To be fair, they always are.)

Thankfully, the menu at Tavern 109, where we went for our pre-show dinner, is full of comfort food options

to fortify a weary soul, including pizza and burgers (gluten-free crust and buns available), fish and chips, shrimp and grits and a host of tantalizing desserts. The Meatloaf Tower, however, became the only conceivable option the moment my eyes fell upon it. Not only is a Meatloaf Tower a hilarious thing to imagine and an amusing item to request out loud from a server, but I’ve also



### Meatloaf Tower

\$19

Tavern 109

115 E. Grand River Ave.,  
Williamston

Noon-9 p.m. daily

517-655-2100

tavern109.com

never met a meatloaf I didn’t like.

Tavern 109’s was no exception — I received a huge slab of the stuff, wrapped with bacon and slathered in a spicy tomato-based steak sauce. A healthy scoop of garlic mashed potatoes and crispy French onions rested on top of the mound. To balance out all this heartiness, there was a side of lightly sautéed zucchini and summer squash.

I appreciated the “tower” aspect, acknowledg-

ing as it does that each bite of meatloaf should include a bite of mashed potatoes, and the crispy, salty onions and bacon added a decadent touch you wouldn’t think to add at home. Each entrée comes with your choice of slaw, soup or salad, and I thoroughly enjoyed my salad, which was drizzled with the restaurant’s house-made blue cheese dressing.



Lizy Ferguson/City Pulse

The Meatloaf Tower at Williamston’s Tavern 109 — a heaping stack of bacon-wrapped meatloaf, garlic mashed potatoes and crispy French onions — is hearty and decadent.

I think a less hungry person would have leftovers to take home, but I managed to scale and conquer the Meatloaf Tower, though I was left dizzy from the heights. That’s an exaggeration, but it definitely soothed my frayed nerves after a day of customer service and made me glad I kept my plans to go out.

The atmosphere at Tavern 109 is nota-

bly warm, relaxing and pleasant — Williamston restaurants seem to have this in common — and I found my meal equally restorative, which I needed more than I could’ve known. “Mrs. Harrison” was riveting, tense and brilliantly acted, and I highly recommend checking it out. I’m not saying you need a Meatloaf Tower to enjoy the theater, but it certainly doesn’t hurt.

## TOP 5 DINING GUIDE

THE BEST RESTAURANTS IN  
GREATER LANSING AS DECIDED  
BY CITY PULSE READERS

Based on your votes in City Pulse’s 2022  
Top of the Town contest. Bon appétit!

### TOP 5 DELIS

#### 1. Stateside Deli & Restaurant

Breakfast and lunch spot specializing in corned beef and pastrami sandwiches  
3552 Meridian Crossing Drive, Okemos  
517-853-1100  
statesidedeli.com  
8 a.m.-4 p.m. daily

#### 2. McAlister’s Deli

Easygoing counter-service chain known for its sandwiches, stuffed baked potatoes and sweet tea

2901 Preyde Blvd., Lansing

517-482-3354

mcalistersdeli.com

10:30 a.m.-9 p.m. daily

#### 3. New Daily Bagel

Friendly, casual eatery with scratch-made bagels and New York-style deli sandwiches  
309 S. Washington Square, Lansing  
517-487-8201

newdailybagel.com

6 a.m.-2 p.m. Monday-Friday

#### 4. GoodFellas Bagel Deli (Lansing)

Mob-themed bagel joint with affordable food and fast service

600 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing

517-580-8611

goodfellasbageldeli.com

7 a.m.-4 p.m. daily

#### 5. Sidestreets Deli & Bakery

New York-style deli and bakery with fresh-made bread, bagels, desserts and more  
517-543-7243

sidestreetsdeli.com

9 a.m.-8 p.m. Monday-Saturday

10 a.m.-4 p.m. Sunday

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**BBQ Food Signature Dish Wings**

**Caterer/Catering Service**

**Meat**  
SOUTHERN B.B.Q. & CARNIVORE CUISINE

# Easy squeezy lemon cheesy

By **ARI LEVAUX**

I've often wondered what, exactly, Little Miss Muffet was eating when she sat on her tuffet.

Curds and whey are what milk becomes when you heat it to a boil and add acid. It's the first step in cheesemaking, and for paneer makers, it's nearly the finish line. Simply strain the curds through a cheesecloth, let them hang for a few minutes to drain, then let them sit for a few hours under a heavy object to press out the last of the whey. Voila, you've made cheese.

I made my first batch of curds and whey by accident. I was enjoying a cup of tea with milk and decided to add a squeeze of lemon. Immediately, my cup filled with curds. I guess I'm no Little Miss Muffet because I made another cup of tea rather than sipping my way through that lumpy mess.

The acid you choose to curdle the milk will impact the flavor. I've used fresh tangerine juice, and both the curds and whey came out tasting like a Creamsicle. Meyer lemon, which is sweeter than regular lemons, makes a sweet, lemony curd and deliciously drinkable whey.

Citrus and yogurt whey are great for making oats. You can also add them to pancake batter, smoothies or drink them straight. Vinegar produces sharp, clean-tasting paneer, but the whey isn't as drinkable. Yogurt makes the mildest, creamiest paneer.



Courtesy of Ari LeVaux

The combination of earthy, spicy veggies and meaty chunks of creamy cheese in saag paneer make for a satisfying and complete vegetarian meal.

Last week, I had some old milk in my fridge that was stressing me out. At any moment, the kids would reject it. Before that happened, I had to use it.

I found my answer at the winter farmers market, thanks to a bag of new spinach. I decided to make saag paneer, an Indian dish consisting of spinach and cheese.

My plan was to go home and make paneer from my old milk. I would cut the cheese into cubes, pan-fry them and add them to a pan of liquified, seasoned spinach. I also grabbed a bag of arugula, as proper saag paneer contains mustard leaves of some sort.

As planned, the combination of earthy, spicy veggies and meaty chunks of creamy cheese made for a satisfying and complete meal. Once you know how to make easy cheese, you'll never have an excuse to let milk go sour again. Little Miss Muffet would be proud.



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Lansing  
(517) 580-4400  
meatbbq.com

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## Paneer

- 1 gallon full-fat, non-skim milk
- 1 cup yogurt or 6 tablespoons citrus or white vinegar
- 2 cups water
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- Cheesecloth

Pour the milk into a thick-bottomed pot. Heat on medium, frequently scouring the bottom, ideally with a rubber spatula, to prevent buildup. When the milk is foaming and about to boil (about 20 minutes), turn off the heat and allow it to cool to room temperature. As it cools, it will separate.

While the milk is cooling, lay two pieces of cheesecloth over a colander, crossed at the bottom to make a plus sign. Set the colander over a pot or bowl.

Mix your acid with two cups of water over medium heat. When the water starts to foam, turn the heat off. Wait ten minutes. Then, while gently stirring the milk, slowly add the acid and let it separate.

Carefully pour the mixture through the cheesecloth, filtering the curds and catching the whey below. Pull the corners of the cheesecloth together and hang the curds.

If using yogurt or citrus as your acid, set the whey aside for oatmeal or other uses. It's full of protein and tastes really good. If using vinegar, the taste is more acquired, but you can still drink it.

After an hour, unhang the curds. Pull the cheesecloth tight and shape the cheese into a puck-shaped disk. Find a way, with the gear in your

kitchen, to put weight on the cheese. I put it in a deep bowl with a gallon jug of vinegar on top.

After about two hours, unwrap your cheese and cut the disc into cubes. Fry the cubes in a thick-bottomed pan with a tablespoon of olive oil or ghee, turning occasionally until brown on a couple of sides.

## Saag

- 5 tablespoons olive oil or ghee
- 1 onion, minced
- 2 serrano or jalapeno peppers, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, chopped
- 2 tablespoons ginger, chopped
- 2 teaspoons cumin
- 2 teaspoons coriander
- 1 teaspoon mustard seeds
- 2 teaspoons garam masala
- 1 pound fresh spinach

In a dry, heavy-bottomed pan, toast the mustard seeds, cumin and coriander over medium heat for about four minutes. Add 3 tablespoons of olive oil or ghee and the garam masala, onions, garlic, ginger and serrano pepper. Cook until the onions are translucent, then turn off the heat.

When the water boils, blanch the spinach and arugula for three minutes. Immediately move them to a bowl of ice water. When cold, drain the leaves and squeeze out the water. Put the leaves in a blender, along with the onion mixture, and liquefy. Season with salt, add water if it's too thick and blend again.

To make saag paneer, add the spinach mixture to the pan of browned cheese. Heat to a simmer. Serve with rice and Indian-style condiments.

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**Drag Story Hour may be a flashpoint topic, but I want to give it the perspective it deserves. Drag Queens are NOT demanding audiences with children. The only demands are coming from socially conservative people who don't accept that Drag can have a positive impact on society. There are children and adults who've had to live their life in secrecy, and Drag gives them an outlet to express themselves. It is art. Drag has been around since the dawn of civilization, but too many have shamed anyone who doesn't fit into societal norms.**

**Here's the truth. The majority of Drag Queens are just looking for acceptance because, just like me, they just want to live their lives freely. Too many want to dehumanize them just because it makes them uncomfortable.**

**The truth is that you can choose to take your kids to Drag Story Hour or not. In this atmosphere, children get to see someone dressed in Drag and read a story, most likely with parents watching, and all it does is show children that there are many different forms of expression, and it humanizes them. Nobody is forcing them to participate, but I would argue that the children who experience this will be better off for the experience.**

**Children are not in danger. Drag Queens are not predators.**

**Of course there are always going to be versions that are not age appropriate. Children don't need to be exposed to sexually explicit acts. It would be a rare occurrence, and obviously not acceptable. I wouldn't take my child to a strip club, so you always get to decide what is appropriate for your child. Don't believe the narrative that Drag Queens are trying to "groom" your children. They are merely giving your kids the gift of inclusion. Like any other art form, there are different styles, and it's as old as time, and we all can learn to be more accepting. We are not all born the same, and just because you don't understand something doesn't mean they deserve to be erased. By denying it, you make them feel invisible. I can't imagine living in a society that denies my existence.**

**None of this is new. We make progress by being honest about these injustices, and the argument about Drag Story Hour is completely disingenuous. Everyone who is part of the Drag Community has already had to endure society's side eye of discrimination, including from their own families, because those in places of power have criminalized them. That's the truth. Lives hang in the balance of acceptance. #CheckYourHomophobia**