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December 17-23, 2025

CityPULSE

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Lansing's largest circulation newspaper



**Nonprofits
struggled in 2025** See page 12



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Finding Joy in the Age of Exhaustion

There are days when being politically aware feels like a full-time job, and not one with good benefits. Anyone paying attention—really paying attention—knows the weight that comes with it. The exhaustion. The heartbreak. The frustration that curls itself around your spine and whispers, “Why do you even bother?” But the truth is, that feeling of discouragement is not a sign of weakness. It’s evidence of hope. Because if you didn’t care, you wouldn’t feel anything at all. Apathy is the luxury of the comfortably detached, and frankly, the right has cornered that market. Their indifference to the suffering of others has become a defining characteristic of their political identity. We cannot afford to join them there.

However, caring doesn’t require that we drown ourselves in the daily chaos. I learned that the hard way. In June, I deleted Facebook—a platform that had slowly turned into a firehose of outrage, misinformation and endless pings demanding, “Look at this! Be angry about this! They’ve done something worse—again!” It became too much. Every notification was a tiny electric shock, reminding me that something somewhere had gone off the rails. My body stayed tense, my mind stayed vigilant and I kept doom-peeking through the blinds of the digital world, confirming what I already knew: yes, something terrible had indeed happened again.

And then, suddenly, there was silence.

It didn’t take long for that silence to become a kind of healing. Without the constant rush of panic-inducing updates, my brain finally had space to rest, to breathe, to recalibrate. I didn’t become disengaged; I simply became more healthily engaged. I found myself noticing my home again—really noticing it. The way morning light slides across the floorboards. The sound of laughter from the next room. The comfort of familiar routines, which had been drowned out by the roar of collective chaos. I remembered what it feels like to be a person first and an activist second, instead of a perpetually stressed ball of political awareness.

Please don’t misunderstand me: I’m still anxious about the state of this country. I’m deeply alarmed by the cruelty, ignorance and increasingly unhinged behavior that passes for political discourse. But for the first time in a long while, I feel grounded—even secure—because I’m paying more attention to the people who anchor me rather than the people who infuriate me.

And that matters, more than we want to admit.

The right thrives on our despair. They want us exhausted. They want us to be overwhelmed. They want us to believe the world is irredeemable so that we stop trying to redeem it. But joy—quiet, private, sometimes fragile joy—is an act of defiance. It is a way of saying, “You do not get to hollow me out.” It’s not denial. It’s survival.

One thing I’ve noticed is how powerful it is when people simply reach out. A text. A call. A “thinking of you” message that arrives at just the right moment. Whenever someone does that for me,

it’s like a weight shifts. It reminds me that we are not alone, that community isn’t just a slogan we chant at rallies—it’s a feeling we cultivate in the spaces between each other. We underestimate how much these small gestures matter. We assume people know we care, but we rarely say it. Now is the time to say it. People are stretched thin and scared in ways they don’t always admit. A moment of kindness can be the thing that keeps someone afloat.

I’m aware that my writing often leans heavy, sharp and blisteringly honest. Sometimes what I write sounds like I’m carrying an anvil around on my chest. But writing is where I process the world. It’s where the darker thoughts get aired out so they don’t ferment into something toxic. It’s personal—not a mood I walk around with all day. In real life, I’m the first person to smile, to crack a joke, to make someone else feel lighter. Misery may love company, but joy does too, and I’m trying to cultivate more of the latter.

I’m still evolving. I’m still learning how to be hopeful without being naive, vigilant without being consumed, engaged without being devoured by the endless scroll of disaster. And I think that’s something many of us on the left are learning at the same time. We’re figuring out how to hold two truths in our hands: the world is terrifying, and yet life is still worth living vibrantly. There is still music to play. Still food to savor. Still laughter to share. Still love to give. Still moments that remind us why we fight in the first place.

So if you’re feeling discouraged, let that be proof of your humanity—not your defeat. Let it show that your heart is still open enough to care. And then, just as importantly, permit yourself to turn away sometimes. To tend to your own life. To rediscover what brings you happiness and what makes you feel whole. You are stronger when you are replenished, not when you are running yourself dry.

Try. Try to find that small bright thing inside you. It’s there. It may flicker, but it’s never gone. And when we all protect our sparks—when we nurture them—they become something powerful enough to illuminate the path forward. Together.

Please email me at lansingallstar@gmail.com

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Former BWL employee files federal lawsuit

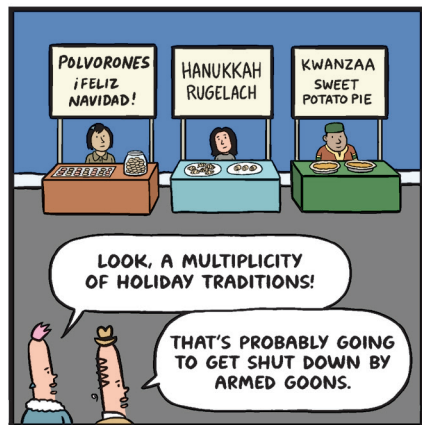


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Coffeehouse at All Saints: Free Friday night fun




Correction: Lizzy Ferguson wrote the Dec. 10 edition of *The Dish*, about Gjon's Bar & Restaurant. The review was credited to the wrong author.



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Cover illustration by Lora Root





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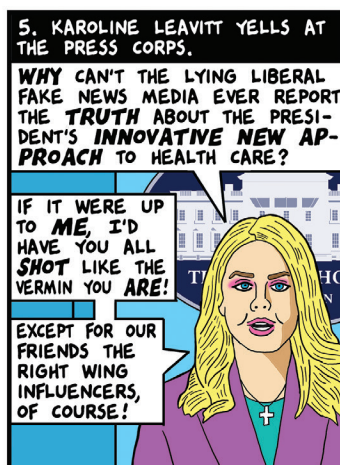
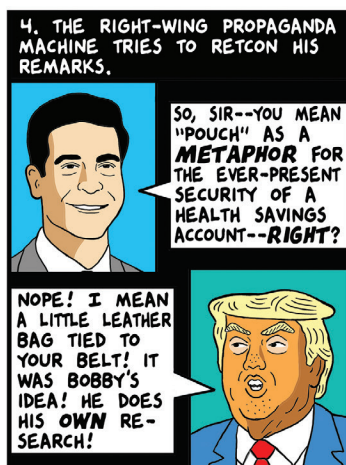
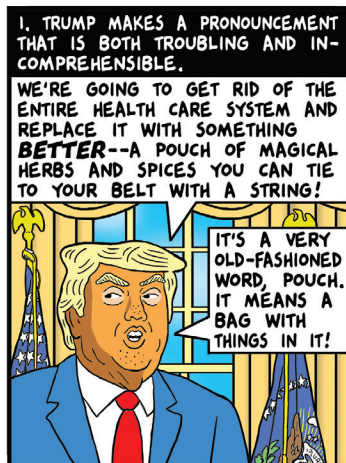
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THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



7. CYCLE REPEATS ON A DAILY, IF NOT HOURLY, BASIS.

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PULSE

NEWS & OPINION

Anti-data center Capitol protest comes amid opposition to Lansing project

Last week, the developers of a proposed \$1 billion data center in Howell Township pulled the plug on their conditional zoning request after months of community opposition.

Yesterday, Lauren Prebenda, who organized opposition to the Howell project, was one of about 200 who took to the state Capitol to protest other data center proposals statewide.

"I'm concerned about the assault on rural Michigan, on our water, our land," she said. "I'm really concerned about massive water withdrawals and the impact it's going to have on our Great Lakes and our aquifers."

Data centers have proliferated in recent years as the artificial technologies they power gain prominence. But the rows of computers lining data centers generate significant heat, create noise and can use significant amounts of water, depending on the cooling method.

Michigan has generally been supportive of data center projects. In 2024, the state extended and expanded sales and use tax exceptions for certain data centers. More recently, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer urged swift approval of a 250-acre proposed data center in Saline Township, which would be used by tech behemoths Oracle and OpenAI.

"With these projects like these data centers," said Donald Chippewa III, "in construction, there's work for people present, but after that, there's nothing."

Chippewa III was speaking about a data center proposed by UK data center builders Deep Green that could be built in the Lansing's stadium district.

The 24-megawatt project is a fraction of the 1,400-megawatt Saline Township project, and the Lansing version would use a closed-loop cooling system to minimize water use, along with donating excess heat to the Lansing Board of Water and Light.

But Chippewa III said he does not believe Deep Green's claim that the project



Photo by Leo V. Kaplan

Howell resident Lauren Prebenda came to the Capitol to oppose data centers and the AI technologies they power, concerned both about environmental impacts and workforce impacts if human workers are replaced with AI.

will bring up to 15 long-term technical jobs to Lansing and drive local tech innovation.

"That's bullshit," he said. "It's just a spot where we have the resources they want to use. They've done wonders removing our manufacturing, selling off our education, selling off everything else, and they say they're going to invest in us, but it's not investing in us. It's only for a quick gain."

The Deep Green project will be a multi-tenant facility, as opposed to the Saline project, which would be used entirely for Oracle and OpenAI.

As with other data center projects around the state, the Deep Green project encountered roadblocks with swift community backlash. On Nov. 5, the Lansing Planning Commission held a public hearing on a conditional rezoning of the four parcels of land the project would utilize. About 40 people turned out to oppose the just-announced project, and the commission tabled their plans.

Planning commissioners later voted 4-3, on Dec. 2, against the conditional

rezoning that would make the parcels eligible for the project, but the final decision rests with the city council.

Last week, the Ingham County Board of Commissioners passed a resolution urging transparency on all data center projects in the county.

The resolution is not binding and applies equally to all relevant local governments and utilities in the county, but was inspired by the Deep Green project.

The resolution was first introduced and passed by the Ingham County Environmental Affairs Commission, whose chair, County Commissioner Chris Trubac, told City Pulse he expected the project would be precedent-setting for future developments.

The resolution asks local governments and other relevant institutions to make detailed plans demonstrating how any data centers' electricity demands will not interfere with electricity costs or Michigan's clean energy goals.

The resolution was passed by the county's Human Services Committee before being adopted by the county on Dec. 9. It passed 11-3, with Commis-

sioner Todd Tennis abstaining because several of his clients are involved with data center construction in his day job at a consulting and lobbying firm.

Commissioner Mark Grebner, D-Lansing, said he believed the resolution took "the right tone," which is that such projects should not be rushed through without ample time for questions.

"It is a mistake for people to process, or even allow themselves to consider that action has to be taken quickly," he said.

Also in Ingham County, Mason residents packed City Hall Monday night to oppose Mason City Council passing an ordinance that would have created a "Technology Innovation (M-3) Zoning District" regulating data centers. The ordinance was intended to establish safeguards and ensure data centers conformed to expectations, but

council members placed a 90-day moratorium on the proposed ordinance following the opposition.

Heather Shawa, BWL assistant general manager, said at the Nov. 5 meeting that Deep Green would use about as much water as a conventional restaurant.

At the protest, Lansing resident Ramona Henry said even the sustainability-focused data center was a step in the wrong direction despite its sustainability focus.

"We're already at a loss," she said. "We can't even swim in the Grand River anymore."

Henry, who is of the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe, said officials should be working to restore Lansing's water, not greenlighting facilities that only minimize their water use.

"The water's poisoned," she said. "We're working on getting that clean, and this is just another pushback."

— LEO V. KAPLAN

Former LBWL employee alleges race discrimination, hostile work environment in federal lawsuit

By **HEATHER VANDYKE**

LANSING — A former employee of the Lansing Board of Water and Light has filed a federal lawsuit against the City of Lansing, alleging he was subjected to racial discrimination, a hostile work environment and retaliation following a sexual assault he reported, according to a complaint filed in U.S. District Court for the Western District of Michigan.

The plaintiff, Calvin McClinton, who is Black, filed the 20-page complaint on Dec. 8 claiming violations of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Michigan Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act. The lawsuit seeks economic damages, including back pay and future pay, as well as compensatory, non-economic, exemplary and punitive damages.

McClinton, who began working for the Lansing utility in May 2019 as a water production employee, alleges his treatment began after he was allegedly sexually assaulted in 2020 by a male co-worker during a company outing.

Amy Adamy, spokesperson for the Lansing Board of Water and Light, said Friday, Dec. 12, the utility couldn't comment on pending litigation, but added: "We are aware of it."

Allegations of retaliation, health concerns

According to the complaint, when McClinton reported the alleged assault, Director of Human Resources Michael Flowers allegedly told him that the male co-worker was "important to the Operations Department" and would not be moved from his position.

The complaint alleges that instead of transferring the accused employee,

McClinton was transferred to Operations.

Flowers is also alleged to have told McClinton he was "just there to make money" and "just there for the insurance" and should be "grateful for being hired."

The lawsuit details a series of subsequent transfers and work assignments that, according to the complaint, exacerbated McClinton's severe health issues, including knee and back injuries and a heart condition.

The complaint states that McClinton suffered a knee injury in 2021 that required surgery due to heavy lifting and later suffered a back injury requiring steroid shots.

Following open-heart surgery in June 2023, his heart doctor provided a letter to LBWL's Human Resources department stating that McClinton could not work around the lime and other chemicals in the water plant.

Despite this medical documentation and his health restrictions, the complaint alleges LBWL forced McClinton to work in the water plant, where he was in contact with hazardous materials like soda ash, lime, calcium and phosphates.

When he reminded management of his restrictions, the complaint alleges he was told by his supervisor, Tony Green, that he would have to go home if he did not work in the water plant.

Allegations of racial hostility, apprenticeship termination

The lawsuit also details allegations of racial harassment and a hostile work environment.

McClinton contends he "endured many racial comments, negative work

treatment based upon race," and harassment from white employees and supervisors. The complaint states white employees incorrectly reported his work, such as shoveling snow or entering a timecard, "just because of his race."

In 2023, McClinton enrolled in an apprenticeship program at Lansing Community College to advance his career at LBWL as an apprentice maintenance mechanic. However, the complaint states he was removed from the program by the Joint Apprenticeship and Licensing Committee on May 21, 2024.

He alleges he was removed due to substandard attendance and performance, a finding he disputed, noting his grade was incomplete following his knee surgery in January that year, which limited his ability to attend certain classes and perform required welds.

McClinton said his lead instructor, Scott Poe, agreed to work with him to complete the final welds needed to finish the program. Despite this, department leadership terminated his placement, according to the suit.

McClinton alleges it's all taken a toll on his physical and mental wellbeing.

"Due to LBWL's culture of racial hostility and discrimination, McClinton has suffered and continues to suffer from severe emotional distress," the complaint says. "As a direct and proximate result of the failures of LBWL and its leadership, McClinton has suffered and continues to suffer from serious injuries, including but not limited to: health ailments to his heart, knee and back; racial discrimination; sexual assault; severe emotional distress;

depression; mental pain and anxiety; past, present, and future medical treatment; and psychological harm and injury."

Legal claims, demands

The lawsuit names the City of Lansing as the defendant, arguing that the LBWL is a governmental entity within the municipality. The complaint asserts four counts:

- Count I and II: Racial discrimination under the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act and Title VII. The complaint argues the collective actions — including the handling of the sexual assault report, the director's alleged statement about McClinton being "just there for the insurance," multiple transfers without reason, forced work in the chemically hazardous water plant and termination from the apprenticeship program — constitute discriminatory treatment based on his race.

- Count III and IV: Hostile work environment under Title VII and the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act. The filing claims LBWL's actions created an "intimidating, hostile and offensive work environment" that substantially interfered with McClinton's employment.

McClinton is represented by attorney Ayanna D. Neal of Grewal Law. The complaint states McClinton timely filed charges of discrimination with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and received a right-to-sue letter on Sept. 9.

Neal said on Friday, Dec. 12, that her client just wants "justice."

"I'm just looking for justice for him," she said. "He's just trying to work and make a living and wants to be treated fairly."

State reviews standards for music teachers

By **CAMILA BELLO CASTRO**

Capital News Service

LANSING — The State Board of Education will review public comments on proposed new standards for Michigan's music education teachers, the first update in more than two decades.

Major changes include requiring educators to possess proficient levels of musicianship, which was not outlined in the 2004 standard.

Sue Carnell, the chief deputy state superintendent of public instruction, said updating the standards for teachers is "essential to ensure that students who are interested in

music can receive a high-quality, well-rounded education."

"The revision of our music education standards is part of our overall certification structure revision that has been in process since 2018," said Ken Coleman, a communications specialist for the Michigan Department of Education.

"K-12 programs were the next steps," he said.

"The 2004 standards outlined content requirements for programs, but also included program design and faculty requirements," Coleman said.

"They included limited critical music teacher skills, such as assess-

ment of literacy and working with all students, including those who have specialized learning needs."

The new requirements — which are not reflected in the 2004 standard — include musicianship, music professionalism, music development, kinesthetic development in music (the sequential acquisition and development of the motor skills needed for musical engagement in children), music pedagogy, student engagement, classroom management and program management.

Public comments were accepted through Dec. 4.

Coleman said the department will review the comments and submit a

full report on the comments and a final recommendation in the spring, with a request for approval.

Carnell said in a press release, "Preparing our educators to teach their students about music aligns with Goal 7 of Michigan's Top 10 Strategic Education Plan, to increase the number of certified teachers in areas of shortage."

Coleman said the updated standards would only apply to new teachers graduating from approved secondary programs aligned with the proposed standards. He said support will be provided to educational institutions to develop or transition their current programs.

If approved by the board, the revised standards would take effect in the 2026-27 school year.

**CITY OF LANSING
SUMMARY OF
ADOPTED ORDINANCE # 1344**

Lansing City Council adopted an Ordinance of the City of Lansing, Michigan, to amend Chapter 294 of the Lansing Codified Ordinances Section 294.02 (k) to encourage the retention of the top official of the Fire Department and Police Department by extending eligibility for retirement service credits for those officials up to 30 years, and to correct internal cross-references without any substantive revisions.

Effective date: Upon publication

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

Chris Swope, Lansing City Clerk, MMC/MiPMC
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CP#25-395

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
EAST LANSING ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS**

Notice is hereby given of the following public hearings to be held by the East Lansing Zoning Board of Appeals on **Wednesday, January 7, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.**, at the East Lansing Public Library, 950 Abbot Road, East Lansing, MI, 48823:

1. A public hearing will be held to consider an application from Gary and Cathy Baird, property owners of 239 Hillcrest Ave. The request is for a dimensional variance from the minimum 3 ft. paving setback required by Section 50-816(4) in order to expand the driveway on the property.
2. A public hearing will be held to consider an application from Matt, Brian, and Kevin Hagan on behalf of Hagan Group LLC, property owners of 235 Hillcrest Ave. The request is for a dimensional variance from the following ordinance sections for the existing home and expansion of the existing driveway:
 - Section 50-443(3)(a) to have less than the required 10,000 sf. lot area for a multiple dwelling;
 - 50-443(3)(b) to have less than the required lot width of 75 ft.;
 - 50-816 (3) to exceed the maximum permitted front yard paving of 25%;
 - 50-816(4) to have less than the required 8 ft. setback from the rear lot line required for parking spaces and driveways;
 - 50-816(4) to have less than the required 3 ft. setback from the side lot line required for parking spaces and driveways.
3. A public hearing will be held to consider an application from Bascom Capital LLC on behalf of property owner, Student Book Store Inc. of 401, 421, and 427 Grand River Ave. The request is for a dimensional variance from a maximum of 3 bedrooms in the B-3 zoning district required by Section 50-592(4) and a dimensional variance from the maximum height of 160 ft. required by section 50-806 in order to construct a mixed use development consisting of one-, two- and three-bedroom multi-family dwellings, ground floor commercial space and one level of underground parking.

A staff report (Agenda Item Report) for each public hearing will be published on the City's website the Friday before the meeting. To locate staff reports, please visit the City's public meeting portal at <https://cityofeastlansing.civicweb.net/Portal/> and select the meeting date.

Materials related to the request are available for viewing at the Department of Planning, Building, and Development, East Lansing City Hall, 410 Abbot Road, East Lansing, MI, 48823 between the hours of 8:00 am and 5:00 pm or on the City's website located at www.cityofeastlansing.com/currentapplications. Written comments may be sent prior to the public hearing to the Zoning Board of Appeals, City of East Lansing, 410 Abbot Road, East Lansing, Michigan, 48823, or by email to coelzba@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 Planning, Building, and Development Office, 410 Abbot Road, East Lansing, MI, 48823, (517) 319-6930 (TDD Number: 1-800-649-3777) or via email at gwhitney@cityofeastlansing.com.

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

Emily Gordon
City Clerk

Dated: December 11, 2025
East Lansing, MI 48823

CP#25-396

Sturdivant out as fire chief after civil rights lawsuit

Lansing's top fire official is on his way out, mayoral spokesperson Scott Bean confirmed last week.

The city of Lansing will not renew its contract with Fire Chief Brian Sturdivant, which ends this month. The decision comes after a Nov. 20 civil rights lawsuit, filed on behalf of fire department employee Cecilia Major, named Sturdivant and the city as co-defendants.

The lawsuit alleges Sturdivant violated the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act by unfairly requiring Major to wear a bra at work and requiring two male employees to check on her.

On Thursday, two days after news of the lawsuit broke, the local firefighters' union released a statement supporting Major.

The following day, Bean confirmed that Sturdivant's contract, which ends Dec. 31, would not be renewed. Assistant Chief Carrie Edwards-Clemmons will be interim fire chief until a replacement can be found.

The lawsuit mentions Edwards-Clemmons, saying she failed to provide contact information for human resources representatives upon Major's request, according to the Lansing State Journal.

That same day, IAFF Local 421 thanked advocates, saying that "Because of your voices and support, Brian Sturdivant is no longer in command of the Lansing Fire Department."

The union also thanked Schor and congratulated Edwards-Clemmons on her role.

There have been several controversies involving the fire department this year. In June, IAFF Local 421 pulled its endorsement of Mayor Andy Schor over a dispute involving retired firefighters' insurance premiums. In September, after Schor and retirees came to a solu-



Outgoing Lansing Fire Chief Brian Sturdivant

tion, IAFF re-endorsed Schor.

Also in September, the city began investigating how local musician P. B. Yanna obtained permission to film a music video at a local fire station, the release of which came as a surprise to Schor. That investigation has since concluded, but Bean declined to tell the LSJ who approved the video.

Schor banned private filming on city property with an executive order on Sept. 30.

Sturdivant joined the department as fire chief in 2022. He was previously fire chief in Battle Creek and held similar or subordinate roles in several other states before coming to Lansing.

He had been on unexplained leave for 2 1/2 months before returning in November.

By LEO V. KAPLAN

City
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The Giving season is upon us



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Thank you!



REWIND

NEWS HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE LAST 7 DAYS

COMPILED BY STEVE UNDERWOOD FROM LOCAL NEWS SOURCES



U-M head football coach Sherrone Moore was charged with felony third-degree home invasion and two misdemeanors -- stalking in a domestic relationship and breaking and entering -- after he was fired with cause by the university last Wednesday following an investigation that found evidence he was engaged in an inappropriate relationship with a staff member.

The alleged actions took place hours after the firing. Prosecutors said Moore broke into the staff member's apartment, grabbed knives and scissors, and threatened to kill himself and said his blood would be on her hands. The woman had broken up with Moore two days earlier, prompting calls and texts from him that led her to report the affair to U-M officials. Moore is married to another woman and has three children. Assistant Biff Poggi was named interim coach.

Moore was arraigned, then released Friday after he posted a \$25,000 bond and was ordered to not have any contact with the victim, wear a tether and continue mental health treatment.

His next hearing is scheduled for Jan. 22, 2026. In the wake of Moore's firing and charges, the U-M Board of Regents met with Athletic Director Warde Manuel to discuss the latest scandal in the department, which includes sign-stealing by off-field analyst Connor Stalions, recruiting violations by former head coach Jim Harbaugh and computer hacking by co-offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach Matt Weiss -- as well as those involving coaches of other sports. The university reported that the law firm of Jenner & Block, which did an initial probe into allegations against Moore months earlier but didn't discover anything, is investigating the athletic department to find out if there was a cover-up.



East Lansing police are investigating a homicide that appeared to have happened early Sunday. Officers were dispatched to Arbor Glen Apartments, near W. Lake Lansing Road

and Abbot Road, around 1:30 a.m. on Dec. 14. A male, identified as St. Johns resident Feng Lin, 37, was found dead. Peiyun Qin, a 23-year-old East Lansing resident, has been charged with open murder, armed robbery and several weapons offenses, according to a statement from Ingham County Prosecuting Attorney John Dewane. Lin has entered a not guilty plea and is scheduled for hearings later this month, according to Dewane. Police have said

the homicide did not appear to be random and there was no indication of an ongoing public safety risk.

Lansing's planned Mod Pod/NOVA community, with 50 modular housing units, may be further delayed. Officials have struggled to get a site picked for the housing units intended for homeless individuals.



After coming up with a list of five final locations, the city may be trying to identify additional potential sites. A joint committee meeting -- with the Human Relations and Community Services Advisory Board and The Mayor's Neighborhood Advisory Board -- is planned for 5:30 p.m. on Dec. 18 at the Alfreda Schmidt Community Center. A site selection process identified dozens of potential sites. Four of the five final sites announced by the city are in city parks; the fifth site is the former Shabazz school building, which is privately owned. The meeting could end up identifying new locations, according to a statement signed by Mayor Andy Schor and Kim Coleman, director of the city's Human Relations and Community Services department.



A renovation of 20 apartments in the Cherry Hill neighborhood by Okemos developer PK Companies is finishing up, with 6 already online. The apartments fall under

the state's "Missing Middle" program, which provides affordable housing for households making 60-120% of the area median income (\$42,360-\$84,720 for a one-person household in Ingham County). The apartments do not fall within the Cherry Hill local historic district, and the historic buildings were heavily remodeled. PK's marketing director, Kristen Guel, told City Pulse the remodel upset the neighborhood, but that the cost of preservation was prohibitive.



Lansing's Code Blue status has been extended for a fourth week, until at least 7 a.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 17. The city's Code Blue declarations allow local shelters to have more flexibility during extreme cold, or snow. The Letts Community Center will be open from 6:30 p.m. to 6 a.m. as an overnight warming center during Code Blue periods. Many public buildings -- including the Foster, Gier, Letts and Schmidt community centers, libraries, and the Capital Area Transportation Authority Transportation Center in downtown -- will be open during the day

as well. CATA will offer free rides to warming centers. For more information, visit LansingMI.gov/coldweatherplan or call 311 (a city information line distinct from 911).



The Lansing School District high school sports events could have emptier stands.

The district is now restricting student attendance at games and contests to Lansing students or students from the opposing school, according to reports in the Lansing State Journal and other news outlets. The district changed its athletics code of conduct last week to require identification. Younger students are allowed with a parent or guardian. School officials were quoted as saying the changes came after "minor incidents" involving people who were not Lansing students.

MSU's Board of Trustees unanimously approved the hiring of Pat Fitzgerald as new head football coach in its meeting Friday. His contract with the university



has a starting annual salary of \$4 million, with an additional \$1 million in supplemental income that rises after each contract year. His initial contract runs through January 2031. Various reports say that among the moves to fill out his staff, Fitzgerald is retaining co-defensive coordinator Joe Rossi and hiring former MSU All-American linebacker Max Bullough as another co-defensive coordinator and linebackers coach. Meanwhile, former MSU starting quarterback Aidan Chiles and star receiver Nick Marsh are among the players having entered the transfer portal.



Ingham County deputies were called to the 5200 block of Walker Road near Leslie in Onondaga Township Thursday for a reported shooting. A release from the Sheriff's Office said a husband and wife died in the shooting and that it was a targeted incident. It is investigating the incident as a "murder-suicide." Anyone with information is asked contact Det. Sg. Brandon Doerr at 517-676-8251.



Mike Ellis/City Pulse

The Honeycomb Microgallery is the first of three planned microgalleries in East Lansing, it was recently installed in the alley behind (SCENE) Metroospace in downtown East Lansing.

Colorful Honeycomb Microgallery made for dreary winter

East Lansing's newest gallery is pretty small and has a good admission price: free.

It's a colorful honeycomb, about six feet tall, tucked into the alleyway behind (SCENE) Metroospace in downtown East Lansing with 21 spaces for small pieces of art.

The gallery is a piece of sculpture itself, crafted from wood, plexiglass and house paint and intended to last and stand out in Michigan's dull, harsh winters.

The new spot will eventually show works of art but for now, the gallery is its own display.

Lauren Gerig, director of exhibitions and outreach in the College of Arts & Letters, plans to do a call for artists in conjunction with the Undergraduate Juried Exhibition.

Students will also be able to curate their own calls and exhibitions, Pearsall said.

This is the first of three planned microgalleries to be done by students.

"We hope to see a wide variety of art displayed in the Honeycomb Microgallery - from sculpture and mixed media to installations, photography and works that thoughtfully engage with space and community," Pearsall said.

The gallery was built by students working in Pearsall, Jamie Weinfureter and Rafael Villares' MSU sculpture introduction and installation courses, in collaboration with Gerig.

Typically, the introduction students work heavily with materials from the MSU Surplus Store, and they began with glass from the store, but pivoted to plexiglass for the final version, Pearsall said.

"We work closely with Surplus to source supplies for student work," Pearsall said, "which means our students get to exercise a lot of creativity and flexibility, adapting their ideas to what's available."

Public Art of the Week rotates with Eyesore of the Week. If you have an idea for either, please email eye@lansing-citypulse.com or call (517) 999-6704.

What I learned in a year of attending Lansing City Council meetings, by 'What Lansing Council' podcast host Jill Dombrowski

By JILL DOMBROWSKI

A bored, surly kid bounced in front of me during a long city council meeting, his body unable to stay still as he listened intently and nodded along in agreement with the officials.

"All of those in favor say 'aye,'" boomed a voice.

"I," said the kid, immediately shushed by an embarrassed parent.

This is my most cherished memory from attending all the council meetings this year.

I wasn't sure what I was getting into when I decided to attend all the meetings; I just knew I needed a break from focusing on national happenings. What I didn't expect was that I'd enjoy it. Maybe it's the glow of the outdated spotlights or the exquisite silk patterned suits sported by our city clerk.

Maybe it's the rush from hearing an excruciatingly petty argument by someone who should know better or the heartbreak of hearing a clear-eyed homeless youth reveal their circumstances.

I am here for it and I want to tell you about it.

I host and produce a podcast, "What Lansing Council," that aims to recapture the magic of each meeting. In every episode, I explain the meeting happenings to a guest and marvel at how they all have something interesting to add, even though they always start with: "Oh, I don't really follow local politics."

A year into this project I see the city differently.

I care more about the people here and I know what genre each security guard reads. The real charm of the meetings is the time for public comment, because of the interesting exchange of power. Council members must sit and listen to their constituents and members of the public are forced to stand under the bright lights and speak coherently.

Everyone involved is a little out of their comfort zone, and everyone involved is a person trying their best in an imperfect system.

One hopeful trend I've noticed is people supporting their friends and family. People came to speak and stand together when a friend's house was ordered to be torn down or when a friend was going to have to pay more for medical care because of an administrative oversight or when a friend felt unsafe because of bigoted violence.

I want to change your mind about local



Jill Dombrowski, contributed

taking up space - your landlord, Old Town business owners and maybe even your mom. The people who speak up are shaping the politics of this city and seeing change.

The things we focus on and think about gain value.

I invite you to tune into "What Lansing Council," wherever you get your podcasts,

every Wednesday, after the Monday council meetings. And if you come to the council meetings to be part of the action, you can let your voice be heard as part of the chorus of council members approving the consent agenda.

cal politics: it is for you.

Maybe you think the process of change is too slow, that the council members don't share your values or your voice doesn't matter. But the people who influence our lives are there,



Capital Area Transportation Authority Public Meeting Notice 2026 Listening Bus Sessions

The Capital Area Transportation Authority announces its 2026 Listening Bus sessions hosted on CATA's fixed-route buses. This program gives riders a convenient way to share constructive feedback about their experiences while traveling to and from their destinations. During each session, CATA representatives will board buses to engage with customers and document their feedback.

Riders who are unable to take part in an onboard Listening Bus session, including those who use any of CATA's paratransit services, may share feedback by completing the online form at www.cata.org/Feedback or by calling Customer Experience at 517-394-1000.

Feedback collected will be considered in new route planning, improvements to existing services and potential elimination of services that no longer meet rider needs.

The 2026 Listening Bus dates, routes and times are indicated below. Sessions will take place on the third Thursday of each month. Schedules are subject to change. For the most up-to-date departure times and boarding locations, visit www.cata.org/ListeningBus.

Thursday, Jan. 15, 2026

Route 10 – 10:10 a.m. to 10:55 a.m.
Route 22 – 1:05 p.m. to 2:15 p.m.

Thursday, Feb. 19, 2026

Route 16 – 10:10 a.m. to 11:05 a.m.
Route 7 – 1:30 p.m. to 2:55 p.m.

Thursday, March 19, 2026

Ramp 1 – 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.*
Route 20 – 1:45 p.m. to 3:10 p.m.

Thursday, April 16, 2026

Route 18 – 11:27 a.m. to 12:57 p.m.
Route 26 – 1:25 p.m. to 2:05 p.m.

Thursday, May 21, 2026

Route 13 – 9:40 a.m. to 10:35 a.m.
Route 12 – 1:40 p.m. to 2:35 p.m.

Thursday, June 18, 2026

Route 15 – 10:40 a.m. to 11:35 a.m.
Route 1 – 12:28 p.m. to 1:55 p.m.

Thursday, July 16, 2026

Route 8 – 9:40 a.m. to 11:05 a.m.
Route 2 – 12:40 p.m. to 1:35 p.m.

Thursday, Aug. 20, 2026

Route 24 – 9:35 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.
Route 23 – 2:05 p.m. to 3:10 p.m.

Thursday, Sept. 17, 2026

Route 25 – 10:40 a.m. to 11:34 a.m.
Ramp 1 – 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.*

Thursday, Oct. 15, 2026

Route 32 – 10:00 a.m. to 11:25 a.m.
Route 9 – 2:10 p.m. to 3:35 p.m.

Thursday, Nov. 19, 2026

Route 3 – 10:40 a.m. to 11:28 p.m.
Route 14 – 1:30 p.m. to 2:15 p.m.

Thursday, Dec. 17, 2026

Route 5 – 10:20 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
Route 11 – 1:10 p.m. to 2:05 p.m.

*Some Listening Bus sessions on Michigan State University's campus will take place at the MSU/CTC located at Ramp 1 due to higher ridership on campus buses.



CP#25-398



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By **NICHOLE KEWAY BIBER**

The data center proposal for downtown Lansing, just a brief walk from the Grand River, is being marketed to the public foremost as an environmental win for the heated water that will be given to BWL as a non-emitting heating source.

As I queried at the Planning Commission hearing in November, though, what source of energy is being used to supply the data center in the first place?

Is it a combustible source that causes emissions?

In which case, the alleged carbon neutrality is just a matter of magical math that zeroes out pollution on a spreadsheet, but does not erase what goes into the atmosphere and our lungs.

Or would the energy going to the proposed data center be fully from non-combustible renewables like solar or wind or geothermal?

In which case, where is the proof of that, but also, why aren't those energy sources going to serve current residential and local business customers first?

PowerPoints created by a profit-motivated company are designed to sell

us a winning narrative and sidestep answering for what occurred behind closed doors before the ad campaigns got launched.

I did go to speak with one of the Deep Green representatives in the hallway after the meeting, to raise a concern beyond these energy questions. I communicated my concern that rushing to build data centers seems designed to push us into accepting that we need AI, despite it being wholly unregulated and used to make pornographic deep fakes and even drive vulnerable people into psychosis.

I even shared that a close family member of mine experienced just such a mental break.

The man from Deep Green, who earlier repeatedly reiterated his intention to be a "good neighbor," responded by saying "I get it, you're Luddites."

To meet a community member and offer only condescension and dismissive ridicule does not inspire confidence about Lansing's proposed new neighbor.

Dr. Nichole Keway Biber
East Lansing, MI

Opinion

Rarely-used budget move puts zoo, other Lansing projects in limbo

What if Potter Park Zoo lost its accreditation because it couldn't renovate the home of the big cats and lemurs? Does Lansing's only zoo become a petting zoo?

A scenario that didn't seem possible a couple of years ago is back on the table after a state House panel denied the funding stream for dozens of projects, big and small, in the name of "waste, fraud and abuse."

Potter Park was one of about 20 Lansing-area projects that may see previously agreed-upon state money slip away after House Republicans used an arcane legal maneuver last week to slam the brakes on money approved long ago.

Unless Gov. Gretchen Whitmer cooks up a good legal reason why not to follow the House's directive, Ingham County government may lose \$10 million in state money that state Sen. Sarah Anthony (D-Lansing) scored for them last term to renovate the feline/primate building to save the Zoo's accreditation.

The zoo isn't the only entity in a lurch. As the chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee, Anthony made sure lots of Lansing projects were taken care of last term when the Democrats controlled the House, Senate and the Governor's office.

Alex Brace, the executive director of Small Talk Children's Advocacy Center in Lansing, assists young sexual abuse survivors with a variety of services. His shop was awarded a four-year, \$1.8 million grant last year. He only used \$100,000 of the grant this year, but was ramping up services next year and beyond.

Now, he said he's forced to scramble, possibly lay off staff and suspend services, which will hurt sexual abuse survivors.

Also in the balance, according to the only document we've been able to get our hands on: \$5 million in infrastructure help for CATA, \$5 million for the Board of Water and Light's Steam Conversion Project, \$5 million for the Eaton County Bank Intercounty Drain project and \$2 million the state was picking up to hook up Windsor Township to BWL.

Lansing schools are supposed to get \$2.5 million for some infrastructure projects. The Lansing Lugnuts were getting \$1 million. There's \$500,000 for the LMTS Community Center, \$320,000 for the Building 21 Teen Center and \$150,000 for Holt Schools.

The City Rescue Mission received state money, too, from 2023-24, but they received their last state payment the other day. Got in just under the wire.

House Republicans had no power to stop any of the projects approved in 2023-24 until now.

Under a 1984 law, the State Budget Office must inform the House and Senate spending committees, by mid-November, about which "work projects" are being carried over into the next fiscal year.

If either committee has a problem with the list, they have 30 days to reject all or some of the spending. The money of anything rejected goes to the state's General Fund.

To the best of anyone's knowledge, the tool was used once a few years ago. The total redirection was \$18 million. This time, House Republicans spiked \$644.9 million.

To be fair, no governor has slid money from one year to the next, like Gov. Gretchen Whitmer has. Pre-COVID, before the federal government shoved billions Michigan's way, maybe a few hundred million dollars passed through as a work project.

No big deal.

This year, it was \$2.7 billion and House Republicans said enough was enough.

"All these Taj Mahals that she planned to build in Lansing? They're all gone. And I don't feel bad about that one bit," said House Speaker Matt Hall.

Hall is using some of this spending as a negotiating tool. Projects like Potter Park and "Small Talk" should go through his Hall Ethics Accountability and Transparency (HEAT) public hearing process, he said.

Next year, Anthony could try to renegotiate at least some of them back into existence.

Meanwhile, Whitmer's team is looking into whether the 1984 law the House R's used is constitutional. They wonder if House R's followed the correct procedures in killing the money.

But if Whitmer isn't able to find a way to tie up these denials, renegotiation is the only way to save all of these projects.

(Kyle Melinn is the editor of the Capitol news service MIRS. You can email him at melinnky@gmail.com.)



POLITICS

KYLE MELINN

WILLIAMSTOWN TOWNSHIP
Board Meeting December 10, 2025
Synopsis

The Williamstown Township Board held a regular meeting on Wednesday, December 10, 2025 with Supervisor Poeth, Clerk Cleveland, Treasurer VanErp, Trustee Brinker, Trustee Creagh, and Trustee Steinberg present. The Board approved the following:

- Consent Agenda
- Farmland Preservation Application for Hamlin Farms
- Adoption of a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for 2026-2031
- Adoption of a Parks & Recreation Master Plan with Resolution #105a-2025
- Reappointment of Donna Tocarchick to the Planning Commission with term expiring in September 2028

A Strategic Planning meeting will be held on January 7, 2026 at 5:30 pm. in the Community Room of the Township Hall, 4990 Zimmer Rd., Williamston and the next regular Board meeting will be at 6:30 PM on Wednesday, January 14, 2026. Visit williamstownmi.gov for the latest agenda, documents, and updates. Phone (517) 655-3193.

Robin A. Cleveland, MiPMC
Township Clerk

CP#25-394

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE OF LIENED PROPERTY

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a PUBLIC SALE HAS BEEN SCHEDULED and will be held on bid13.com, ending Friday, December 19th, 2025 at 1:00 P.M. The location of the storage unit items to be sold is State Mini Storage, 3946 E. State Road, Bath, Michigan of Clinton County. State Mini Storage will sell units via bid13.com to satisfy the lien on the property stored at this facility by the following persons:

Name	Unit	Contents
Craig Irwin	H354C	Tools, Totes, Fishing Gear, Furniture, Household Items

Cash only accepted (Note: A credit card is required to create a bid13.com account but cannot be used to pay for the auction items). Winning bidders must pay the amount of their winning bid plus a \$100 deposit in cash when visiting our office to collect items won at auction. Deposit will be returned after the Property Manager confirms the unit has been left completely empty with no damage caused by the bidder or their associates. **No person under the age of 18 years is allowed to make bids at the sale.** Accounts will be sent to a collection service if a balance remains after the auction (to be paid by the original renter). All purchased goods are sold "as is" and must be removed no later than the Monday following the auction at 8:30 a.m. The unit is to be left completely empty in a clean and rentable condition. No usage of our site dumpster is allowed for the sale.

CP#25-388

2025 strained many nonprofits but also led to more donations

It's hard to peg down any one thing about non-profits: There are about 42,000 of them of all sizes in Michigan, covering everything from health care, homelessness and housing to arts and animals.

But if there's one thing in common, it's that 2025 was a lot to deal with.

There were federal funding scares and realities, alongside increased demand for what most nonprofits do, which only accelerates the growing strain on every nonprofit's volunteers and staff, said Kelley Kuhn, president & CEO of the Michigan Nonprofit Association.

It's been a challenging fundraising year for most nonprofits, said Laurie Strauss Baumer, president and CEO of the Capital Region Community Foundation.

"Nonprofits in general have suffered throughout the year," she said.

"We're hoping and praying that this is a strong giving season."

She said her foundation's recommendations for giving are focused more on issues like homelessness, housing, healthcare, and children, and less on areas like the arts and animals this year, because "conditions are so dire for individuals and families."

Kirk Taskila, senior case manager at Lansing Area AIDS Network, has been with the nonprofit for about 18 years and said 2025 was the most uncertain year so far. Feared cuts have not happened yet, Taskila said, but even staying flat was effectively like getting a budget cut in 2025.

"There have been no increases (in government funding) despite the increased cost of housing, electricity, and other increases that are continuing across the board for all budgets," Taskila said.

Most of Taskila's clients are at or below the poverty line.

"And when people are trying to live on \$900 a month through Social Security, it makes it really difficult to maintain housing and provide for food and your basic necessities," Taskila said.

Economic conditions often hit nonprofits more than once: The services they offer are more needed than ever, individual donors may be tightening their own belts while big-dollar federal grants shrink and the volunteers and staff at the nonprofits get stretched even further than before.

"People are feeling insecure and



All of the Above Hip Hop Academy



City Rescue Mission



Coalition Against Homelessness

worried about the conditions and when they feel insecure and afraid, they might hold tighter to their cash and that has a trickle-down effect to nonprofits," Strauss Baumer said.

How nonprofits fared in 2025

Some Head Start programs had to temporarily close early in 2025 after federal freezes, Kuhn said.

"Initially, we saw a response from philanthropy," she said, "working with grantees until those dollars came back or to help where there were delays in reimbursements."

The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation helped to set an early tone of giving by upping their giving from 5% of their holdings to 6%, an estimated \$150 million more over two years. Kuhn said that set the tone for other foundations to give more and signaled that the need, even early in 2025, was greater than ever before.

Another round of major giving happened in the fall when SNAP funding was both cut and delayed.

Those well-publicized and significant cuts and delays inspired rounds and rounds of donations to the Greater Lansing Food Bank, which supports smaller pantries and soup kitchens throughout seven counties in addition to its own efforts.

The GLFD saw a dramatic increase in donations to match the federal cuts and worries of even deeper cuts.

"We definitely have seen higher amounts of giving, both from individuals and in food being brought in," said Katlyn Cardoso, senior manager of marketing and communications for the food bank.

That's coming alongside higher demand and higher food prices, although the food bank is not in danger of running out of food, she said.

"It's important to sustain this momentum and this support work we do for the community, because the more resources we have, the more we're able to anticipate and react to what happens next," Cardoso said.

Silver linings in a tough year for nonprofits

Overall, there is some good news for nonprofits: No, their big federal dollars aren't being restored. And no, the problems they want to solve may not be getting solved at scale.

But there are more donations, at least as measured at a high level.

During the critical December giving season, many nonprofits are cautiously optimistic, Kuhn said.

Giving Tuesday, on Dec. 2 this year, brought about \$4 billion in donations to various nonprofits worldwide, according to estimates from the official GivingTuesday.com platform. Giving Tuesday began in 2012 as a hashtag and a nonprofit fundraising campaign by the 92nd Street Y in New York; it has ballooned into one of the most important donation days in the nonprofit world and Giving Tuesday became a standalone group in 2020.

The organization said Giving Tuesday 2025 showed increases in almost every area from 2024: 13% more money, 3% more people giving, 20% more people volunteering and 26% more people speaking out about their

causes.

Kuhn said she is seeing more individuals giving as well as organizations and communities stepping up for food insecurity issues, among others.

Tax changes

Some of that estimated \$4 billion from Giving Tuesday will have been donated to Michigan and local nonprofits but even outside of Giving Tuesday donations and estimates, December has proven to be a critical month for nonprofits, Kuhn said.

There's a bit of holiday spirit as well as tax reasons for seeing a spike in donations in December.

A new federal law - the Big Beautiful Bill - allows non-itemizing individuals to deduct up to \$1,000 in charitable donations or \$2,000 for a family, which could encourage lower- to middle-income people donate more this year, according to the Journal of Accountancy.

The same report found that the bill could also significantly reduce high-end giving, in some cases making the same exact donations mean less for the donor's taxes, and the changes could also mean long-term donation plans get accelerated into late 2025 to stay ahead of future changes.

The National Council of Nonprofits opposed many of the tax changes, including the high-end changes, but it supported the individual deductions.

"This provision further incentivizes charitable giving among the 90% of taxpayers who do not itemize their tax deductions, bolstering the work done in communities by charitable nonprofits," the council said, in a summer analysis of the bill's implications for nonprofits.



Raymond Holt

Laurie Strauss Baumer, president and CEO of the Capital Region Community Foundation, speaks at the October ceremony opening the Fish Ladder Music Park at Brenke Fish Ladder.



Community Foundation



Ele's Place Capital Region



Greater Lansing Food Bank



Holy Cross



Lansing Area AIDS Network



Michigan Nonprofit Association



Ronald McDonald House Mid Michigan

What's 2026 looking like?

Going into the new year, there is a lot of headwind, but there has been a lot of hope too, said Bob O'Hara, director of development for the Michigan Coalition Against Homelessness.

He said fundraising at his organization has been strong following cuts to federal programs earlier this year, in part because the crisis has inspired more people to donate and volunteer, people who may have previously believed that "somebody else is taking care of it."

More people helping means his coalition can do more training and support for the local organizations that work to combat homelessness on the ground.

O'Hara said his organization doesn't do the on-the-ground work that dozens of homelessness organizations do in places like Lansing.

Instead, his organization works to give those local groups more support and training and to advocate for state changes that would create less work for the local groups by building more houses

"You can't solve homelessness without more houses," O'Hara said.

Holy Cross closing, The Nest opening

There's a lot of work to be done to solve homelessness in Lansing and one of the city's biggest shelters is announcing that it will be closing soon.

Holy Cross, one of Lansing's largest homeless shelters, is closing its doors at the end of March.

Holy Cross Shelters is wrapping up operations after the first quarter, with some of its services being picked up by a new nonprofit: The Nest.

"New Hope will close at the end of March," said Shelbi Frayer, the interim director of Holy Cross and founder of The Nest.

Holy Cross will continue to provide shelter through the winter, which was important, Frayer said.

The Nest is currently raising money and is working with City Rescue Mission, one of Lansing's other major shelters, which is expanding ca-

capacity.

The Nest will run a separate shelter system for about 26 veterans and 12 to 15 families, who have fathers or boys over 13. Most local shelters do not accept grown men with children and there is a gap for veterans as well, Frayer said.

The Nest will also serve as a day center for people who shelter overnight at City Rescue Mission, where they typically don't spend the day.

The recent cold weather has escalated the problems for those living outside and the city of Lansing has had a Code Blue designation since before Thanksgiving.

"That pushes our staff, it means more overtime and more staff and volunteers needed," Frayer said.

Shelters, she said, generally will keep some people out for past bad behavior.

"There are lists of folks who not allowed back - maybe they assaulted staff or did something inappropriate - but during a Code Blue, everyone is welcomed in because it's a life and safety issue. That usually requires a new level of security in the building to keep everyone safe and protected."

If the entire winter remains at a Code Blue, which Frayer said seems possible if the city uses a reasonable metric of temperature falling below 25 degrees for more than two hours, that will mean extra pressure on shelters across the city and would also mean more access to warming centers for those in need.

The Nest is one of a large number of nonprofits in and around Lansing that are doing great, and sorely needed, work right now, said Strauss Baumer, of the Capital Region Community Foundation.

Frayer said the most effective way to give, whether that's to help the homeless population in Lansing or any other cause, is to support different groups and go straight to the group and ask what they need.

"One of the best ways is to donate directly to shelters," Frayer said. "Everybody has a QR code and they have lots of ways to donate."

How to give

Direct donations may be the best gift any nonprofit could get, said Kuhn, and giving directly to a nonprofit is a great way to tailor effective giving.

Unrestricted donations - money given with no conditions or requests - can allow an organization do all kinds of stuff from routine maintenance and paying staff to launching new programs.

For the Food Bank, \$1 in donations can provide three meals because the organization can use nonprofit discounts, bulk purchases, friendly agreements, and other tricks to make that \$1 in cash buy more food than anyone else could with \$1.

But direct cash donations are not the only way to give.

Almost any nonprofit would be happy with little effort and just a few bucks tossed toward something on their Amazon wish list.

Donating directly to wish lists is an effective way to give, Kuhn said. It's one of the best ways to give something that will get used, often immediately.

There's going to be both normal and offbeat things on those Amazon lists, which sometimes tell you a lot about the people helped by the nonprofit.

Consider donating travel-size

shampoo bottles for homeless shelters, for example, instead of large bottles, because they're easier to carry.

Ele's Place offers help to grieving children, teens, young adults and families.

Their Amazon wish list has stickers, hair ties, games, snacks and more.

The Ronald McDonald House Charities of Mid-Michigan needs fidget toys, laundry supplies, clock radios, shower caps and condiment packets, said Amy Stanton, development director.

Their Amazon wish lists help to cover not only stays at the Ronald McDonald House, aimed at avoiding long commutes to hospitals, but also to stock hospitality carts that roam the NICU spaces at UM Health-Sparrow Hospital.

People come in sometimes with nothing but what they had on them when a medical emergency strikes,

"Whether it's supplying necessities like snacks and personal care items on our hospitality carts and in transfer bags, a room or hot meal at Ronald McDonald House Mid-Michigan, or fuel and meal gift cards to families transferring hospitals," Stanton said, "we strive to keep each family together, providing them with a warm and caring environment where they can focus on the health of their child."

By MIKE ELLIS



Saved by Zade



The Nest

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ARTS & CULTURE ART • BOOKS • FILM • MUSIC

Coffeehouse at All Saints gives diverse artists 15 minutes of fame

By NICOLE NOECHEL

Where do poets, Ten Pound Fiddle regulars, fledgling performers and music aficionados go to congregate?

East Lansing's All Saints Episcopal Church, for the monthly Coffeehouse at All Saints.

The series has run for nearly two decades, inviting local and sometimes more remote musicians, spoken-word artists, actors and other creatives to share their talents with audiences of 40 to 50 people, on average.

Founder and longtime All Saints parishioner Steve Findley expects about double that number on Friday, at the series' annual holiday concert. Performers include spoken-word artists Janet Navarro and Mary Fox, father-son duo The Roberts Guys, singer-songwriters Lyn Sawicki and Darryl Gregory, Austin Kaufmann of "jazzy indie-folk and Americana" band The Dangling Particles, husband-and-wife duo Tom and Mary, fingerstyle guitarist Chris Rietz and string ensemble Friday Strings.

"On Friday, we'll be very busy — unusually busy. We'll have a great time," Findley said.

The Coffeehouse began in 2006 with "a little bit of strife" at the church, according to Findley.

"One thing some of us thought is that we should get together," he said. "It was us wanting to do something that might bring people together. We all like to play and sing as well. So, for us, it was no hassle. It was more fun."

At the start, the series was more of a jam-and-sing-along group.

"We started meeting, just a few of us," Findley said. "In the beginning, we weren't concerned if a lot of people didn't come; we just hoped they would."

Within a few months, word was spreading.

"What was surprising was that, like the third month, 18 people came. We only had three to four the first time," Findley said. "And then it grew, and then it grew after that, to the point where for years and years and years, there were 40 to 50 people every month. And that's a great — in that



Courtesy photo

Austin Kaufmann and Tamiko Rothhorn of The Dangling Particles perform at the Coffeehouse at All Saints on Nov. 21.

room that we perform in, that's a great size."

The roster of artists Findley handles today has also grown extensively, to around 120 and counting.

"In the beginning, it was, 'Hey, will you play Friday? No, okay, I guess I'll have to put together some songs,'" he said. "It was all on me or this other person, or two or three of us, so we started inviting people. We would email people and ask them, and they'd go, 'Yeah, I can come by.' And it quickly became a multi-person event."

The format is still very open-ended: Artists can perform whatever they'd like in the allotted time frame.

"If you're a musician, you get three songs or 15 minutes, whatever's less, because I made that mistake a few times — show people

three songs, and they choose "Stairway to Heaven" three times," he said. "And with spoken-word people, usually it's 10 minutes. So, we're pretty open. You get your 15 minutes of fame."

Some performers are regulars, attending Coffeehouses even when they're not performing. Local duo Tom Heideman and Mary Koenigsnecht, also known as Tom and Mary, have been attending the series for around five years.

"We've been playing around town

since the '90s, maybe," Heideman said. "I probably heard about the Coffeehouse for years. But with our work schedules — I worked over at the Marshall music store — quite often I would say, 'Well, I don't think we can make it to that.' But eventually I retired, Mary retired, and we said, 'Well, let's just go check it out.' And we discovered that we liked it."

The duo has a folksy, singer-songwriter style, performing tunes by artists like James Taylor, The Beatles and Simon & Garfunkel as well as Heideman's own music. At Friday's holiday show, their allotted three songs will include an original, "Singing Peace (A Christmas Song)," as well as a must-have for any concert held within a church, "Silent Night," and the "Alvin and the Chipmunks" Christmas song. Findley and Kaufmann will join in on the final number.

"I like the variety, and I like that it's kind of open to anybody. There are people who are seasoned performers, and then there are people who you can tell are just trying it out, maybe for the first time, and people are welcome to that," Heideman said. "People are very encouraging of performers, seasoned or first-timers."

Even kids can join in on the fun.

"Austin Kaufmann's daughter, Anara Pearl, she's played. A long time ago, we had the daughter of a professional actress in town. She played clarinet, and

the fact is, she wasn't very good, and she knew it, but she came and played," Findley said. "You know what she did? She went home and practiced, and she came back two months later and was pretty darn good."

"Back in the day in Lansing, there was Magdalena's Teahouse on Michigan Avenue. And Miko Fossum, who owned the place, had a daughter, Maggie Fossum. Maggie was 10 years old, and she played ukulele. She came, and she was like an old soul. And she's gone on and played festivals all over Michigan," he continued. "So we're giving young people an outlet, you know. I take zero credit. People listen. They're a very good audience. They're very supportive."

More experienced artists often find the series rewarding as well, Findley noted. Two local musicians who met at the Coffeehouse ended up recording a CD together, inviting others they met at the event to participate. Fingerstyle guitarist Monte Pride also utilized musicians he met at the Coffeehouse for one or two of his CDs.

Whether or not they're interested in performing, Findley recommended everyone give the Coffeehouse a go.

"There are three things: It's free, which is different than almost every other venture around town. People can bring a beverage, which is cool. And you can stay and go as you please. So, there's really no excuse not to try it out," he said.

When the series reaches its eventual, inevitable conclusion, Findley won't be in mourning. He's just glad for the friendships he's made and cultivated for others along the way.

"I said to my wife — my great, supportive wife — that when the energy fades, when it becomes a hassle or people don't sign up, I'm out," he said. "I think the energy comes from meeting all these people. I've met so many musicians in town, and people who come to the Coffeehouse and say, 'You know, I really like this. This is great. I have a friend visiting from out of town, and I brought him here.' I'm like, 'Good, you know? That's a good thing. It's not a necessary service, but it provides an outlet for people to both perform and to come and enjoy a couple hours on a Friday night.'"

Coffeehouse at All Saints holiday show

7:30-9:30 p.m. Friday, Dec. 19
All Saints Episcopal Church
800 Abbot Road, East Lansing
Free
facebook.com/TheCoffeehouseAtAllSaints

Jonesin' Crossword

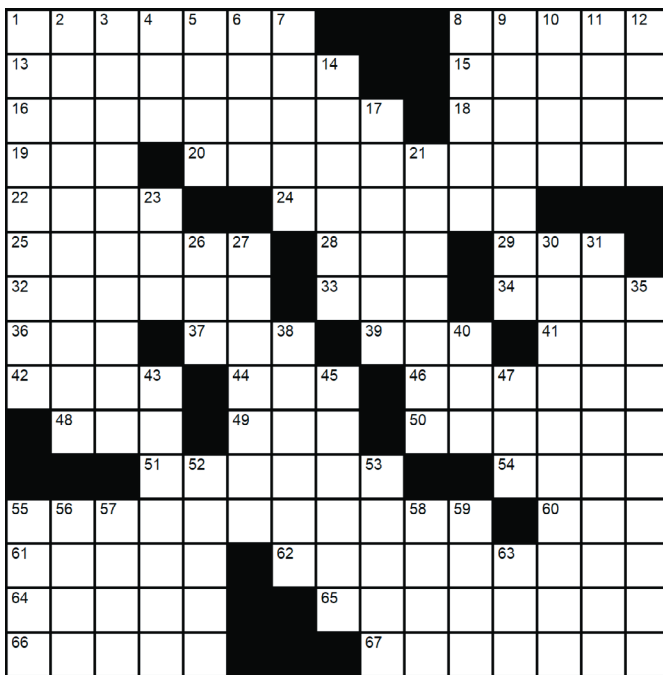
By Matt Jones

“The Freemix” -- a themeless puzzle for you.

by Matt Jones
© 2025 Matt Jones

ACROSS

- 1. It's represented by an octothorpe
- 8. “Count me out”
- 13. Slow cuisine?
- 15. Apres-ski drink
- 16. Laugh during a monologue?
- 18. “Crying in ___: A Memoir” (2021 Michelle Zauner book)
- 19. 9 of 12, for short
- 20. Printouts
- 22. It's somewhere below 2 or 3
- 24. Corrida creature
- 25. Like some key soccer shots
- 28. Vacuum-seal, as a steak, maybe
- 29. ___ Grand (David Copperfield's Vegas venue)
- 32. Quarters sharer
- 33. Is being awful online?
- 34. Fireplace residue
- 36. Old United rival
- 37. Official
- 39. What rappers rock
- 41. Pt. of some three-day weekends
- 42. Bangers
- 44. Lobbyist gp.
- 46. Harem ___ (Toronto hard rock band, not to be confused with an Elvis film)
- 48. Deep-fried general
- 49. Hamburger complaint?
- 50. Screen part
- 51. “Let's be honest”



- 54. Dr. ___ Skoda of the “Law & Order” franchise
 - 55. Go for a spare?
 - 60. “Alias” equivalent
 - 61. Fuming
 - 62. Streamline, in a way
 - 64. Billiards bounce
 - 65. Meme caption once described as “arguably the most loathed Far Side strip ever”
 - 66. Performs excellently
 - 67. Highly abbreviated sign-off
- DOWN**
- 1. Surname of three acting brothers
 - 2. Within human discovery
 - 3. Blame bearers
 - 4. “I doubt it!”
 - 5. Corner
 - 6. Title for a Turkish military leader
 - 7. Lose it
 - 8. Blood of Greek gods
 - 9. Knit hat toppers
 - 10. Palm fruit
 - 11. Miffed
 - 12. H.S. seniors' exams
 - 14. “There She Goes” band
 - 17. Sketcher's eraser
 - 21. Live in harmony
 - 23. Day, in Hebrew
 - 26. What some filters filter
 - 27. Actor who plays villainous leader McCone in 2025's “The Running Man”
 - 30. Follow the first part of an itinerary, perhaps
 - 31. With higher chances
 - 35. Photo that takes a while to capture
 - 38. Surfaces
 - 40. XLI times V
 - 43. Plushie for the little ones
 - 45. President of France, 1995-2007
 - 47. “All the Devils ___ Here” (2025 film)
 - 52. Attention-getting noises
 - 53. Vulcan on “Star Trek: Voyager”
 - 55. Camera roll contents
 - 56. ___ history
 - 57. “Trooper” prefix
 - 58. “Eye of ___ and toe of frog ...”
 - 59. “___ & Kim” (2000s Australian sitcom with a failed U.S. remake)
 - 63. World Series winners in 2004 or 2005, briefly

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Answers on page 19

SUDOKU

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

Intermediate

Fun By The Numbers

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

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

Free Will Astrology

By Rob Breznsky

Dec. 17-23, 2025

ARIES (March 21–April 19): Nine hundred years ago, Sufi philosopher Al-Ghazali provided rigorous advice that's not very popular these days. “To understand the stars,” he said, “one must polish the mirror of the soul.” Here's my interpretation: To fathom the truth about reality, you must be a strong character who treasures clarity and integrity. It's highly unlikely you can gather a profound grasp of how life works if your inner depths are a mess. Conversely, your capacity to comprehend the Great Mystery increases as you work on purifying and strengthening your character. Everything I just said is good advice for all of us all the time, but it will be especially potent and poignant for you in the coming months.

TAURUS (April 20–May 20): The sound of a whip cracking is a small sonic boom. The tip breaks the sound barrier, creating that distinctive snap. In my astrological reckoning, Taurus, life has provided you with the equivalent of a whip. During the coming months, you will have access to a simple asset that can create a breakthrough force when wielded with precision and good timing. I'm not referring to aggression or violence. Your secret superpower will be understanding how to use small treasures that can generate disproportionate impacts. What's your whip?

GEMINI (May 21–June 20): Some Japanese potters practice “yohen tenmoku.” It's a technique used to create a rare type of tea bowl with shifting, star-like iridescence on deep, dark glaze. The sublime effect results from a process that's unusually demanding, highly unpredictable and hard to control. Legend says that only one in a thousand bowls achieves the intended iridescence. The rest, according to the masters, are “lessons in humility.” I believe you can flourish by adopting this experimental mindset in the coming months. Treat your creative experiments as offerings to the unknown, as sources of wonder, whether or not your efforts yield stellar results. Be bold in trying new techniques and gentle in self-judgment. Delight in your apprenticeship to mystery. Some apparent “failures” may bring useful novelty.

CANCERIAN (June 21–July 22): A fair-weather cumulus cloud typically weighs over a million pounds and yet floats effortlessly. Let's make that one of your prime power symbols for 2026, Cancerian. It signifies that you will harbor an immense emotional cargo that's suspended with grace. You will carry complex truths, layered desires and lyrical ambitions, but you will manage it all with aplomb and even delight. For best results, don't overdramatize the heaviness; appreciate and marvel at the buoyancy.

LEO (July 23–Aug. 22): Every 11 years, the sun reverses its magnetic polarity. North becomes south, and south becomes north. The last switch was completed earlier this year. Let's use this natural phenomenon as your metaphorical omen for the coming months, Leo. Imagine that a kind of magnetic reversal will transpire in your psyche. Your inner poles will flip position. As the intriguing process unfolds, you may be surprised at how many new ideas and feelings come rumbling into your imagination. Rather than resist the cosmic acrobatics, I advise you to welcome and collaborate with them.

VIRGO (Aug. 23–Sept. 22): The sculptor Louise Bourgeois was asked why she worked so often with the image of the spider. She said it was a tribute to her mother, who was deliberate, clever, patient, soothing, helpful and useful — just like a spider. In the coming months, I invite you to embody her vision of the spider. You will have the wherewithal to weave hardy networks that could support you for years to come. Be creative and thoughtful as you craft your network of care. Your precision will be a form of devotion. Every strand, even fragile ones, will enhance your long-term resilience.

LIBRA (Sept. 23–Oct. 22): Researchers studying music theory know that dissonance — sounds that feel “wrong” or create tension — is in part culturally determined. Indonesia's gamelan music and Arabic

maqam scales are beautiful to audiences who have learned to appreciate them. But they might seem off kilter to Westerners accustomed to music filled with major thirds and triads. Let's use this as our starting point as we contemplate your future in 2026, Libra. Life may disrupt your assumptions about what constitutes balance and harmony. You will be invited to consider the possibility that what seems like discord from one perspective is attractive and valuable from another. My advice: Open your mind to other ways of evaluating what's meaningful and attractive.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23–Nov. 21): In the Sonoran Desert of the southwestern United States, Arizona bark scorpions are hard to see at night. Scientists who want to study them can find them only by searching with flashlights that emit ultraviolet light. This causes the scorpions' exoskeletons to fluoresce and glow a distinct blue-green or turquoise color, making them highly visible. Let's use this scenario as a metaphor for you. In the coming months, you may reveal your best brilliance under uncommon conditions. Circumstances that seem unusual or challenging will highlight your true beauty and power. What feels extreme may be a good teacher and helper. I urge you to trust that the right people will recognize your unique beauty.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22–Dec. 21): According to legend, the genius composer Mozart heard entire symphonies in his imagination before he wrote down any notes. That's a slight exaggeration. The full truth is that he often worked hard and made revisions. His inspiration was enhanced by effort and craft. However, it's also true that Mozart wrote at least five masterful works in rapid succession, sometimes with remarkably few corrections on the manuscript. They included his last three symphonies (Nos. 39, 40 and 41). I predict you will have a Mozart-like aptitude in the coming months: the ability to perceive whole patterns before the pieces align. Trust your big visions!

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22–Jan. 19): In Greek mythology, Proteus was a sea god famed for his ability to change his shape endlessly to evade capture. But now and then, a persistent hero was able to hold on to Proteus through all his transformations, whether he became a lion, serpent, tree or flame. Then the god would bestow the gift of prophecy on the successful daredevil. I suspect that in the coming months, you will have an exceptional power to snag and grasp Proteus-like things, Capricorn. As a result, you could claim help and revelations that seem almost magical.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20– Feb. 18): In Florence, Italy, the Accademia Gallery houses several of Michelangelo's sculptures that depict human figures partially emerging from rough blocks of marble. They seem to be caught in the process of birth or liberation. These works showcase the technique Michelangelo called “non-finito” (unfinished), in which the forms appear to struggle to escape from the stone. In the coming months, Aquarius, I foresee you undergoing a passage that initially resembles these figures. The good news is that, unlike Michelangelo's eternally trapped characters, you will eventually break free.

PISCES (Feb. 19–March 20): To prepare you for 2026, I've gathered three quotes that address your most pressing need and urgent mandate. I recommend you tape this horoscope to your bathroom mirror. 1. “We cannot live in a world interpreted for us by others. An interpreted world is not a hope. Part of the terror is to take back our listening, to use our own voice, to see our own light.” — author Elaine Belfrage. 2. “To be yourself in a world that is constantly trying to make you something else is the greatest accomplishment.” — Ralph Waldo Emerson. 3. “The ability to tell your own story, in words or images, is already a victory, already a revolt.” — Rebecca Solnit.

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

OUT on the TOWN

Events & Happenings in Lansing This Week

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

Wednesday, Dec. 17

"A Caregiver's Butterfly Garden" - This vibrant installation honors direct care workers, professionals who provide essential support for older adults and people with disabilities. 6 a.m.-9 p.m. Hannah Community Center, 819 Abbot Road, East Lansing. dcwgardens.com.

Acting & Glee Music Class for Kids - Ages 5-12. 4:30-5:30 p.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. ruhalacenter.com.

Adult Craft: Winter Pinecones & "Snow" - Gather in the daytime with other adults for coffee, conversation and to make a seasonal craft! 2:30-3:30 p.m. Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St., Grand Ledge. gladl.org.

Al-Anon Meeting - 6 p.m. Okemos Community Church, 4734 Okemos Road, Okemos. cmialanon.org.

Allen Farmers Market - 3-6:30 p.m. Allen Neighborhood Center, 1629 E. Kalamazoo St., Lansing. allenneighborhoodcenter.org/allen-farmers-market.

Bingo - Every Wednesday. Doors open at 4:30 p.m. Bingo cafe 5 p.m. Early bird 6 p.m. Eaton Rapids Senior Center, 201 Grand St., Eaton Rapids. facebook.com/EatonRapidsSeniorCenter.

Broadway Jazz Dance Class for Teens & Adults - Meets twice per week. 7-8:30 p.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. ruhalacenter.com.

Elite Club Christmas Party - Join us for an exclusive evening at our December Elite Club event! Enjoy holiday treats and be introduced to new vintages of Burgdorf wines. You'll also get 25% off all wine merchandise. 6-7:30 p.m. Burgdorf's Winery, 4212 E. Holt Road, Webberville. facebook.com/wine.burgdorfs.

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

Governing Essentials: Components of Extraordinary Governance - This session will help your board improve its governance to positively impact your community. Noon-1 p.m. Virtual — register at canr.msu.edu/government.

Group Dance Class: Beginning Hustle - The hustle originated in the 1970s, closely tied to the disco music craze of the era. 8 p.m. Michigan Athletic Club, 2900 Hannah Blvd., East Lansing. Register by calling 517-364-8888.

Karaoke at Lansing Shuffle, with Big Man Genesis - 9-11 p.m. 325 Riverfront Drive, Lansing. lansingshuffle.com.

Lansing Live Open Stage Night - Whether you're experienced or just starting out, the stage is open to all. Not a performer? Enjoy dinner, drinks and live music. No cover, all ages welcome. 6-9 p.m. UrbanBeat, 1213 Turner St., Lansing. urban-beatevents.com.

MMAG Fall Art Show - The artists of the Mid-Michigan Art Guild invite the community to visit their "Black and White" exhibition, featuring art created with just those colors. 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Neighborhood Empowerment Center, 600 W. Maple St., Lansing. midmichiganartguild.org.

Numinous Light - A solo exhibition of Michigan landscapes by Michigan artist Anthony Michael Cairo celebrates the beauty of the world around

us. 9 a.m.-4 p.m. The Peoples Church, 200 W. Grand River Ave., East Lansing. anthonymcairo.com/numinous-light.

Property Tax Foreclosure Basics - This webinar will describe the property tax timeline in Michigan and possible assistance options. Noon-1 p.m. Virtual — register at canr.msu.edu/mimoney-health/index.

Santa's Woodland Stroll - Participants will check in outside the Meridian Service Center before taking a stroll through Nancy Moore Park for a photo with Santa! 5:45-8 p.m. 2100 Gaylord C. Smith Court, Okemos. meridian.mi.us.

Tap II Class for Teens & Adults - 6-7 p.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. ruhalacenter.com.

Turner-Dodge House Festival of Trees - Holiday trees decorated by various businesses, organizations and individuals adorn all three floors of the historic mansion. Noon-5 p.m. 100 E. North St., Lansing. facebook.com/turnerdodgehouse.

Wheel of the Year: Yule & Acceptance - Join us online or in person every Wednesday for discussions, rituals, meditations and more! 6-8 p.m. Weavers of the Web, 809 Center St., Lansing. weaversoftheweb.org.

Women's Healing Circle - A space for women to share their stories, inspire each other and lift each other up. 8:30-9:30 p.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. ruhalacenter.com.

Thursday, Dec. 18

"A Caregiver's Butterfly Garden" - This vibrant installation honors direct care workers, professionals who provide essential support for older adults and people with disabilities. 6 a.m.-9 p.m. Hannah Community Center, 819 Abbot Road, East Lansing. dcwgardens.com.

"A Sherlock Carol" - Two beloved classic tales. One thrilling new mystery. 2 p.m. Williamston Theatre, 122 S. Putnam St., Williamston. williamstontheatre.org.

Acting 101 Class for Teens & Adults - Meets twice per week. 7-8 p.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. ruhalacenter.com.

Acting Ensemble Class for Teens & Adults - Meets twice per week. 8-9:30 p.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. ruhalacenter.com.

Al-Anon Meeting - 6:45 p.m. Mason Sparrow Urgent Care, 800 E. Columbia St., Mason. cmialanon.org.

Al-Anon Meeting - 8 p.m. Eastminster Presbyterian Church, 1315 Abbot Road, East Lansing. cmialanon.org.

Blood Drive - Schedule your appointment at RedCrossBlood.org (sponsor code: Service) or call 1-800-RED-CROSS. Noon-5:45 p.m. Delta Township Administrative Building, 7710 W. Saginaw Hwy., Lansing. facebook.com/deltatownship.

Crafting for a Cause - First and third Thursdays. A casual, friendly group that serves the community with handmade projects. 4-5:30 p.m. Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St., Grand Ledge. gladl.org.



Ukskatng123/Wikimedia Commons

Grinchmas walk at Nancy Moore Park

5:45-8 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 18

Check in at Meridian Service Center
2100 Gaylord C. Smith Court, Okemos

*Way out in the snow, lie the township of Meridian
Where children can celebrate with the grouch of a Grinch again.
Or more accurately, you can set the benchmark
Since this is the first-ever Grinchmas walk at Nancy Moore Park.
Sign up and bring snow boots,
There's a half-mile stroll through the woods to reach the Grinch's lair
Where a green-haired scare might take pictures. Beware!
On the way are inflatables and a tealight path
When you get there, for your mouth is a hot cocoa bath.
And the Grinch? Well, he implies he will give the kids a surprise.*

To register for your time slot, visit meridian.recdesk.com/Community/Program?category=8.

The price is \$10 per family. A shorter path is available upon request.

For more questions, contact the Meridian Parks and Recreation Department at (517) 853-4600.

Crafty Vibes - Bring your knitting, crochet or any other portable craft project and immerse yourself in an evening of creativity, conversation and community. 5 p.m. Weavers of the Web, 809 Center St., Lansing. weaversoftheweb.org.

Drum Circle at Bath Community Center - Join the Greater Lansing Area Drummers for a fun and energetic evening of rhythm and drumming. All ages and experience levels welcome. 6-8 p.m. 5959 Park Lake Road, Bath. facebook.com/GreaterLansingAreaDrummers.

Grinchmas Walk - Participants will check in outside the Meridian Service Center before taking a stroll through Nancy Moore Park for a photo with Santa! Dogs must be leashed at all times. 5:45-8 p.m. 2100 Gaylord C. Smith Court, Okemos. meridian.mi.us.

Group Dance Class: Beginning Rhumba - Learn the basic steps of this very easy Latin dance. 8 p.m. Michigan Athletic Club, 2900 Hannah Blvd., East Lansing. Register by calling 517-364-8888.

Intro to Acting/Improv Class for Kids - Ages 5-12. 4-4:45 p.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. ruhalacenter.com.

Jessey Adams at The Graduate - 8-10 p.m. 133

Evergreen Ave., East Lansing. 517-348-0900. facebook.com/GraduateByHiltonEastLansing.

Ladies' Silver Blades - Join other adult women for fun, exercise, friendship and skating practice. All skill levels welcome. 9:30-11:30 a.m. Biggby Coffee Ice Cube, 2810 Hannah Blvd., East Lansing. ladiessilverblades.org.

Mid-Michigan Art Guild's Holiday Exhibit — Small Works - In conjunction with the play "A Sherlock Carol," the Mid-Michigan Art Guild invites you to visit its holiday exhibit in the Williamston Theatre Gallery. 122 S. Putnam St., Williamston. midmichiganartguild.org.

MMAG Fall Art Show - The artists of the Mid-Michigan Art Guild invite the community to visit their "Black and White" exhibition, featuring art created with just those colors. 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Neighborhood Empowerment Center, 600 W. Maple St., Lansing. midmichiganartguild.org.

Numinous Light - A solo exhibition of Michigan landscapes by Michigan artist Anthony Michael Cairo celebrates the beauty of the world around us. 9 a.m.-4 p.m. The Peoples Church, 200 W.

Events

from page 16

Grand River Ave., East Lansing. anthonymcairo.com/numinous-light.

Open Jam! | Third Thursday of Every Month - Whether you play guitar, banjo, fiddle, mandolin, dobro, bass or another instrument, you're invited to join in — even if you know only a few songs or chords. 5-6:30 p.m. Elderly Instruments, 1100 N. Washington Ave., Lansing. elderly.com.

Parkinson's Exercise: Rock-Steady Boxing - Free exercise class for people with Parkinson's. Caregivers are welcome to participate if space permits. 1 p.m. Michigan Athletic Club, 2900 Hannah Blvd., East Lansing. To register, call 517-364-8800. lpsg.org.

Ruhala Broadway Ensemble: Performing Group for All Ages - Meets twice per week. 5:30-7 p.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. ruhalacenter.com.

Spirit of Michigan Chorus Rehearsal - We're an inclusive community of women who sing a cappella in the barbershop style. We welcome all levels of musical experience. 6:45 p.m. Church of the Nazarene, 4851 Holt Road, Holt. spiritofmichiganchorus.com.

Techy Afternoons: Hoopla - Hoopla is a platform where patrons can borrow e-books, audiobooks, movies and more on their phone or tablet. Staff will provide a basic overview and setup. 1 p.m. Charlotte Community Library, 226 S. Bostwick St., Charlotte. charlottelibrary.org.

Thursday Night Open Forge - Try your hand at blacksmithing and create your own metal masterpieces! 6-9 p.m. Artfire Michigan, 4567 Churchill Road, Leslie. artfiremichigan.com.

The Trick Is in the Cards - 5-11 p.m. Homebrew Tabletop Game Lounge, 219 1/2 N. Bridge St., Grand Ledge. homebrewgamelounge.com.

Turner-Dodge House Festival of Trees - Holiday trees decorated by various businesses, organizations and individuals adorn all three floors of the historic mansion. Noon-5 p.m. 100 E. North St., Lansing. facebook.com/turnerdodgehouse.

"Unwrapped & Unscripted": A Bare Bones Improv Holiday Special - Join us for an evening of unholy holiday chaos: a sharp comedy show raising funds for Riverwalk Theatre's community programs. 7 p.m. The Robin Theatre, 1105 S. Washington Ave., Lansing. therobintheatre.com.

Wonderland of Lights - Take a leisurely stroll through the zoo's festively illuminated pathways, where you'll be surrounded by the warm, inviting glow of twinkling lights. 5-8 p.m. Potter Park Zoo, 1301 S. Pennsylvania Ave., Lansing. potterparkzoo.org.

Friday, Dec. 19

"A Caregiver's Butterfly Garden" - This vibrant installation honors direct care workers, professionals who provide essential support for older adults and people with disabilities. 6 a.m.-9 p.m. Hannah Community Center, 819 Abbot Road, East Lansing. dcwgardens.com.

"A Sherlock Carol" - Two beloved classic tales. One thrilling new mystery. 7:30 p.m. Williamston Theatre, 122 S. Putnam St., Williamston. williamstontheatre.org.

Campaign Finance Reform - Let's stop large corporations from influencing and controlling our politicians with big campaign contributions! Stop by to sign the Voters Not Politicians petition to get this on the ballot. 1:30-3 p.m. Everybody Reads, 2019 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. facebook.com/votersnotpoliticians.

Candlelight Concerts: Coldplay & Imagine Dragons - The Kalkaska String Quartet performs the music of Coldplay and Imagine Dragons under the gentle glow of candlelight. 8:45 p.m. Central United

Methodist Church, 215 N. Capitol Ave., Lansing. feverup.com/en/lansing.

Christmas Party with The Lynx Band at Summerlands Brewing Company - Eat, drink and be merry while The Lynx Band kicks out your favorite tunes along with some Christmas classics. We'll be giving out door prizes and awarding a grand prize for the ugliest holiday sweater! 8-11 p.m. 1957 Cedar St., Holt. facebook.com/summerlands-brewing.

The Coffeeshouse at All Saints - Monthly showcase of mostly Michigan-based musical and spoken-word talent. Bring a snack/drink to share. Free. 7:30-9:30 p.m. All Saints Episcopal Church, 800 Abbot Road, East Lansing. facebook.com/TheCoffeeshouseAtAllSaints.

Country Night at Lansing Shuffle - Enjoy line dance instruction from 8-9 p.m., followed by modern country music playing until midnight! We'll have drink specials all night. No cover! 325 Riverfront Drive, Lansing. lansingshuffle.com.

Golden Gatherings: A Season of Stability - Join DAP Services & Resources for a joyful holiday brunch celebrating stability, community and hope for aging adults. Enjoy a free meal, prizes and fellowship while supporting Harbor House, DAP's transitional home for unhoused seniors. 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Lansing Center, 333 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. facebook.com/DAPServiceResources.

Holiday Nights of Lights - Experience the magic as you drive through Frances Park and delight in the beautiful holiday scenes adorned with stunning lights. 6-9 p.m. 2701 Moores River Drive, Lansing. lansingmi.gov/967/Holiday-Nights-of-Lights.

Joel Jacobs Live at the Peanut Barrel - 8-10 p.m. 521 E. Grand River Ave., East Lansing. 517-351-0608. peanutbarrel.com.

Mid-Michigan Art Guild's Holiday Exhibit — Small Works - In conjunction with the play "A Sherlock Carol," the Mid-Michigan Art Guild invites you to visit its holiday exhibit in the Williamston Theatre Gallery. 122 S. Putnam St., Williamston. midmichiganartguild.org.

Minecraft Club - Join other kids and play Minecraft on the library's private server! Laptops will be provided. 4-5 p.m. Charlotte Community Library, 226 S. Bostwick St., Charlotte. charlottelibrary.org.

MMAG Fall Art Show - The artists of the Mid-Michigan Art Guild invite the community to visit their "Black and White" exhibition, featuring art created with just those colors. 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Neighborhood Empowerment Center, 600 W. Maple St., Lansing. midmichiganartguild.org.

Numinous Light - A solo exhibition of Michigan landscapes by Michigan artist Anthony Michael Cairo celebrates the beauty of the world around us. 9 a.m.-4 p.m. The Peoples Church, 200 W. Grand River Ave., East Lansing. anthonymcairo.com/numinous-light.

Open Irish Jam! | Third Friday of Every Month - Open jam session focusing on Irish traditional music. All skill levels welcome. Bring your instruments and we'll share some tunes. 5-6:30 p.m. Elderly Instruments, 1100 N. Washington Ave., Lansing. elderly.com.

Parkinson's Exercise: Movement with Vitality - Free exercise class for people with Parkinson's. Caregivers are welcome to participate if space permits. 1 p.m. Michigan Athletic Club, 2900 Hannah Blvd., East Lansing. To register, call 517-364-8800. lpsg.org.

Riverwalk Theatre Presents: "A Winter Masquerade" - This year's cabaret features 11 voices from within our talented community of vocalists and an elegant theme to dress up your holiday season. 8-10 p.m. 228 Museum Drive, Lansing. riverwalktheatre.com.

Time2Play Holiday Show - Join us for a festive evening with Time2Play, a fan-favorite Lansing band known for its lively mix of rock, pop, blues, and country. 7-10 p.m. UrbanBeat, 1213 Turner St., Lansing. urbanbeatevents.com.

Delta Community Choir winter concert

3 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 21
Our Savior Lutheran Church
7910 W. Saint Joseph Hwy.,
Lansing



Delta Community Choir invites music lovers to its winter concert, "Welcome In," where audience members will be wowed not only by the singing but by who benefits.

This choir is performing for Finn, an impossibly cute miniature horse who sports fake antlers for the holiday season, and all of the other animals who live at Mitten Misfits Farm Sanctuary in Grand Ledge. The sanctuary is a forever home to nearly 100 rescued farm animals, including horses, goats, sheep, donkeys, pigs and cows. More than 80 volunteers help the mission.

DCC's annual winter concert will feature a repertoire of traditional carols, gospel hymns, music from the movies and even some holiday humor.

The rescue farm will benefit from 100% of the donations at the free event.

DCC is a not-for-profit adult choir that gives back through its spring and winter concerts, each time spotlighting a local nonprofit organization.

"Our choir is excited to highlight the work being done by Mitten Misfits Farm Sanctuary," music director Zach Everly said. "So much holiday imagery includes farm animals at the manger and in the fields on Christmas night. This is the perfect collaboration for our holiday concert. We welcome everyone to celebrate the season and help our friends at Mitten Misfits."

Turner-Dodge House Festival of Trees - Holiday trees decorated by various businesses, organizations and individuals adorn all three floors of the historic mansion. Noon-5 p.m. 100 E. North St., Lansing. facebook.com/turnerdodgehouse.

Wonderland of Lights - Take a leisurely stroll through the zoo's festively illuminated pathways, where you'll be surrounded by the warm, inviting glow of twinkling lights. 5-8 p.m. Potter Park Zoo, 1301 S. Pennsylvania Ave., Lansing. potterparkzoo.org.

Saturday, Dec. 20

6th annual Christmas Giveaway - Free. Christmas items available: adult and children's clothing, toys and shoes. Noon-3 p.m. Against All Odds Foundation, 5742 W. Saginaw Hwy., Lansing. againstalldoddsfoundation.com.

"A Caregiver's Butterfly Garden" - This vibrant installation honors direct care workers, professionals who provide essential support for older adults and people with disabilities. 8 a.m.-8 p.m. Hannah Community Center, 819 Abbot Road, East Lansing. dcwgardens.com.

"A Sherlock Carol" - Two beloved classic tales. One thrilling new mystery. 2 and 7:30 p.m. Williamston Theatre, 122 S. Putnam St., Williamston. williamstontheatre.org.

Alexandria McMath Live at Graham Vineyards - 6-9 p.m. 8920 W. Britton Road, Laingsburg. 517-741-0805. facebook.com/grahamvineyards.

Candy Cane Course - Join us for the annual Candy Cane Course 1-mile/5K/12K, a fun, Christmas-themed event perfect for the whole family. 9 a.m.-noon. Burchard Park, 220 E. Maple St., Lansing. runsignup.com/Race/MI/Lansing/CandyCaneCourseLansing.

Cocaine Anonymous Meeting - "We are here and we are free." 10 a.m. St. Michael's Episcopal Church, 6500 Amwood Drive, Lansing.

Contra and Square Dance - No partner needed. Come at 6:30 p.m. for a quick workshop on easy contra dance moves. Dance runs from 7-10 p.m. Caller: Maeva Devlin. Band: Pimento Mori. Central United Methodist Church, 215 N. Capitol Ave, Lansing. tenpoundfiddle.org.

The Dinner Detective - We offer an amazing murder mystery experience paired with a fantastic dinner. Anyone in the room can end up being part

of the show, including YOU! 6:30-9:30 p.m. AC Hotel, 3160 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. thedinnerdetective.com.

Frozen Film Fest: Session 1 - We're crafting icicles out of pipe cleaners and beads and watching "Frozen" (2013, PG). 1-4:30 p.m. Haslett Library, 1590 Franklin St., Haslett. cadl.org/about/our-locations/haslett.

Heather Lake Bays and Friends: A Christmas Cabaret - Bays brings her powerhouse vocals and signature cabaret style to UrbanBeat for a festive evening of holiday music alongside a talented lineup of friends. 7-10 p.m. 1213 Turner St., Lansing. urbanbeatevents.com.

Holiday Nights of Lights - Experience the magic as you drive through Frances Park and delight in the beautiful holiday scenes adorned with stunning lights. 6-9 p.m. 2701 Moores River Drive, Lansing. lansingmi.gov/967/Holiday-Nights-of-Lights.

Intermediate Ballet Class for Teens & Adults - Meets twice per week. 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. ruhalacenter.com.

Jane Austen Birthday Tea Party & Movie - This is a drop-in adult program. Dress-up is encouraged but not required. 3:30-5 p.m. Charlotte Community Library, 226 S. Bostwick St., Charlotte. charlottelibrary.org.

Meridian Township Farmers Market - 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Meridian Mall, 1982 E. Grand River Ave., Okemos. meridian.mi.us/FarmersMarket.

Mid-Michigan Art Guild's Holiday Exhibit — Small Works - In conjunction with the play "A Sherlock Carol," the Mid-Michigan Art Guild invites you to visit its holiday exhibit in the Williamston Theatre Gallery. 122 S. Putnam St., Williamston. midmichiganartguild.org.

Mixed Flavors Live at The Irish Pub - 8-11 p.m. 1910 W. Saginaw St., Lansing. 517-253-8713. irishpublansing.com.

NYC Jazz Dance Class, with Professional Dancer Thomas Ruhala - A mix of different jazz techniques with an emphasis on finding freedom, clarity and joy through movement. Students will learn choreography from some of the premier choreographers in NYC. 2:30-4:30 p.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. ruhalacenter.com.

A Winter Masquerade

8 p.m. Friday, Dec. 19-Saturday, Dec.20
Riverwalk Theatre
228 Museum Drive, Lansing



*"Beneath the moon's soft silver light,
eleven voices rise in masked delight.
Songs like snowflakes, soft and rare,
float through the cold, still winter air.
A dance of shadows, silk, and glass,
where secrets hide and moments pass.
Dress in finery, let mystery grow,
a night where masks conceal then show.
Raise your glass, the contest calls,
behind each mask, a story falls.
Join us where the music sways,
a whispered world of winter's haze."*

This year's winter cabaret at Riverwalk Theatre features 11 seasoned vocalists and a masquerade theme, promising "dark opera and a touch of mystery." Director Sabrina Dahlgren and the cast encourage attendees to join the masquerade by dressing up and donning a mask.

The cast is: Jazlyn Dingfelder, Riley Hirai, Zach Husak, Lauren Hannum, Tess Klygis, Meghan Malusek, Anthony Mandalari, Beck Murphy, Robert Mueller, Evan Norton and Tricia Rogers.

For tickets and more information, visit riverwalktheatre.com.

Events

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Riverwalk Theatre Presents: "A Winter Masquerade" - This year's cabaret features 11 voices from within our talented community of vocalists and an elegant theme to dress up your holiday season. 8-10 p.m. 228 Museum Drive, Lansing. riverwalktheatre.com.

Saturday Night Social Club - If you'd like to meet some new folks and play a few games, stop on by. \$10. 7-11 p.m. Homebrew Tabletop Game Lounge, 219 1/2 N. Bridge St., Grand Ledge. homebrewgame lounge.com.

Tiger and Dragon Kenpo Martial Arts Training - Based on a variety of martial arts systems, tiger and dragon kenpo is designed to develop self-confidence in the warrior. 1 p.m. Keys to Manifestation, 809 Center St., Lansing. weaversoftheweb.org.

Turner-Dodge House Festival of Trees - Holiday trees decorated by various businesses, organizations and individuals adorn all three floors of the historic mansion. Noon-5 p.m. 100 E. North St., Lansing. facebook.com/turnerdodgehouse.

Urban Dance Pack Holiday Party - The biggest holiday party in town is coming to Lansing! Expect high-energy music, top-level dancing, a festive buffet, and VIP red-carpet treatment for those who want to go all out. 7 p.m. The Venue by Eleven 11 Events, 5660 W. Saginaw Hwy., Lansing. venue1111.com.

Wonderland of Lights - Take a leisurely stroll through the zoo's festively illuminated pathways, where you'll be surrounded by the warm, inviting glow of twinkling lights. 5-8 p.m. Potter Park Zoo, 1301 S. Pennsylvania Ave., Lansing. potterparkzoo.org.

Yule Ritual - Celebrate the best of 2025, leave the worst behind to be transformed by the flames of

the Yule log, and get a glimpse of things to come before receiving your happy Yule gift from Santa. 4-9 p.m. Weavers of the Web, 809 Center St., Lansing. weaversoftheweb.org.

Sunday, Dec. 21

"A Caregiver's Butterfly Garden" - This vibrant installation honors direct care workers, professionals who provide essential support for older adults and people with disabilities. noon-8 p.m. Hannah Community Center, 819 Abbot Road, East Lansing. dcwgardens.com.

"A Sherlock Carol" - Two beloved classic tales. One thrilling new mystery. 2 p.m. Williamston Theatre, 122 S. Putnam St., Williamston. williamstontheatre.org.

Bottle and Can Collection for Williamston Farm & Artisan Market - We collect your Michigan-returnable bottles and cans from your trunk while you stay warm in your vehicle. 11 a.m.-1 p.m. McCormick Park, 123 High St., Williamston. williamstonfarmmarket.org.

Conversations with the Runes: Spirits, Symbols and Practice - This ongoing workshop series is designed to deepen your connection with the runes through history, storytelling, animism and hands-on practice. 3-5 p.m. Keys to Manifestation, 809 Center St., Lansing. manifestlansing.com.

Freddie Cunningham & the Johnny D. Blues Band Holiday Jam - It's a holiday-themed blues jam. Your host band will play a set, then jammers are invited up to play. 4-8 p.m. Moriarty's Pub, 802 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. facebook.com/moriartyspub.

Green Man Work Day - We'll get together and take care of some projects that need doing, either at the church building or on our property. We'll finish the day with a shared feast. Noon-5 p.m. Weavers of the Web, 809 Center St., Lansing. weaversoftheweb.org.

Holiday Nights of Lights - Experience the magic as you drive through Frances Park and delight in the beautiful holiday scenes adorned with stunning lights. 6-9 p.m. 2701 Moores River Drive, Lansing. lansingmi.gov/967/Holiday-Nights-of-Lights.

"Home for the Holidays" - Step into the season with the Lansing Symphony Orchestra! This festive concert brings holiday favorites to life with symphonic brilliance and the soaring voice of tenor Ben Gulley. 3 p.m. Wharton Center, 750 E. Shaw Lane, East Lansing. lansingsymphony.org.

Jugglers and Would-Be Jugglers - Jugglers meet at the Orchard Street Pump House at 2 p.m. Sundays. 368 Orchard St., East Lansing. mike-marhanka@gmail.com.

Mid-Michigan Art Guild's Holiday Exhibit — Small Works - In conjunction with the play "A Sherlock Carol," the Mid-Michigan Art Guild invites you to visit its holiday exhibit in the Williamston Theatre Gallery. 122 S. Putnam St., Williamston. midmichiganartguild.org.

Numinous Light - A solo exhibition of Michigan landscapes by Michigan artist Anthony Michael Cairo celebrates the beauty of the world around us. 9:30 a.m.-noon. The Peoples Church, 200 W. Grand River Ave., East Lansing. anthonymcairo.com/numinous-light.

NYC Jazz Dance Class, with Professional Dancer Thomas Ruhala - A mix of different jazz techniques with an emphasis on finding freedom, clarity and joy through movement. Students will learn choreography from some of the premier choreographers in NYC. 2:30-4:30 p.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. ruhalacenter.com.

Quaker Meeting for Worship - Rich communal silence that invites thinking deeply, developing spiritually, loving fully, speaking our truths. Children's program provided. 10:30 a.m. Red Cedar Friends Meeting House, 1400 Turner St., Lansing. redcedarfriends.org.

Turner-Dodge House Festival of Trees - Holiday trees decorated by various businesses, organizations and individuals adorn all three floors of the historic mansion. Noon-5 p.m. 100 E. North St., Lansing. facebook.com/turnerdodgehouse.

"Welcome in!" Delta Community Choir Holiday Concert - Admission is free. Donations will support the work of Mitten Misfits Farm Sanctuary, a local nonprofit where rescued farm animals find a home. 3 p.m. Our Savior Lutheran Church, 7910 St. Joseph Hwy., Lansing. deltacc.org.

Wonderland of Lights - Take a leisurely stroll through the zoo's festively illuminated pathways, where you'll be surrounded by the warm, inviting glow of twinkling lights. 5-8 p.m. Potter Park Zoo, 1301 S. Pennsylvania Ave., Lansing. potterparkzoo.org.

Monday, Dec. 22

"A Caregiver's Butterfly Garden" - This vibrant installation honors direct care workers, professionals who provide essential support for older adults and people with disabilities. 6 a.m.-9 p.m. Hannah Community Center, 819 Abbot Road, East Lansing. dcwgardens.com.

Al-Anon Meeting - 8 p.m. St. Michael's Episcopal Church, 6500 Amwood Drive, Lansing. cmialanon.org.

Brewers Meetup at Summerlands Brewing Co. - A discussion group to talk about all things brewing and winemaking. All levels of experience welcome, from pros to those considering taking up homebrewing. 6-7:30 p.m. 1957 Cedar St., Holt. facebook.com/summerlandsbrewing.

Downtown Development Authority Meeting - 6 p.m. City Hall, 259 Kent St., Portland. 517-647-5027. portland-michigan.org.

DJ Bingo at Summerlands Brewing Co. - Kick off your week with a night of music, laughs, and friendly competition! Join us Monday nights for DJ Bingo, where classic bingo meets your favorite songs. 7-8:30 p.m. 1957 Cedar St., Holt. www.facebook.com/summerlandsbrewing.

Fiber Circle - Knitters, crocheters and stitchers of all ages and skill levels welcome. Although formal instruction isn't provided, attendees assist each other with techniques and skills. 5:30-7 p.m. Charlotte Community Library, 226 S. Bostwick St., Charlotte. charlottelibrary.org.

MMAG Fall Art Show - The artists of the Mid-Michigan Art Guild invite the community to visit their "Black and White" exhibition, featuring art created with just those colors. 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Neighborhood Empowerment Center, 600 W. Maple St., Lansing. midmichiganartguild.org.

Numinous Light - A solo exhibition of Michigan landscapes by Michigan artist Anthony Michael Cairo celebrates the beauty of the world around us. 9 a.m.-4 p.m. The Peoples Church, 200 W. Grand River Ave., East Lansing. anthonymcairo.com/numinous-light.

Parkinson's Exercise: Yoga - Free exercise class for people with Parkinson's. Caregivers are welcome to participate if space allows. 1 p.m. Michigan Athletic Club, 2900 Hannah Blvd., East Lansing. To register, call 517-364-8800. lapsg.org.

The Weekly Crunch - Laugh your ass off with the best local comedians every Monday night. 8 p.m. Crunchy's, 254 W. Grand River Ave., East Lansing. crunchyseastlansing.com.

Women's AA Meeting - 6 p.m. Okemos Community Church, 4734 Okemos Road, Okemos. lansingdistrict6.org.

Tuesday, Dec. 23

"A Caregiver's Butterfly Garden" - This vibrant installation honors direct care workers, professionals who provide essential support for older adults and people with disabilities. 6 a.m.-5 p.m. Hannah Community Center, 819 Abbot Road, East Lansing. dcwgardens.com.

Al-Anon Meeting - 9 a.m. Alano Club South, 3500 S. Cedar St., Lansing. cmialanon.org.

Al-Anon Meeting - 7 p.m. St. Jude Church, 801 N. Bridge St., DeWitt. cmialanon.org.

Compulsive Eaters Anonymous-HOW Meeting - Meets in person and virtually. 5:30 p.m. St. Jude Catholic Church, 801 N. Bridge St., DeWitt. For Zoom info, call 989-620-0448 or go to ceahow.org/en/find-a-meeting.

Family Happy Hour - Join us every Tuesday for a free, all-ages playgroup in our safe and welcoming space. 4-7 p.m. Weavers of the Web, 809 Center St., Lansing. weaversoftheweb.org.

Jeff Baldori Festivus Party at UrbanBeat - Baldori is a singer, songwriter, guitarist and pianist whose musical journey began with classical, jazz and boogie studies. He expanded his passion into R&B and popular music during the Blues Underground movement of the '60s. 6-9 p.m. 1213 Turner St., Lansing. urbanbeatevents.com.

MMAG Fall Art Show - The artists of the Mid-Michigan Art Guild invite the community to visit their "Black and White" exhibition, featuring art created with just those colors. 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Neighborhood Empowerment Center, 600 W. Maple St., Lansing. midmichiganartguild.org.

Numinous Light - A solo exhibition of Michigan landscapes by Michigan artist Anthony Michael Cairo celebrates the beauty of the world around us. 9 a.m.-4 p.m. The Peoples Church, 200 W. Grand River Ave., East Lansing. anthonymcairo.com/numinous-light.

Parkinson's Exercise: Balance, Conditioning and Strength - Free exercise class for people with Parkinson's. Caregivers are welcome to participate if space allows. 1 p.m. Michigan Athletic Club, 2900 Hannah Blvd., East Lansing. To register, call 517-364-8800. lapsg.org.

See Events, Page 19

Events

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Service Industry Night at UrbanBeat - 50% off for hospitality professionals. One verified industry discount per check. Please present proof of employment. 7-11 p.m. 1213 Turner St., Lansing. urbanbeatevents.com.

Trivia at Lansing Shuffle - 7:30-9 p.m. 325 Riverfront Drive, Lansing. 517-940-4365. lansingshuffle.com.

Turner-Dodge House Festival of Trees - Holiday trees decorated by various businesses, organizations and individuals adorn all three floors of the historic mansion. Noon-5 p.m. 100 E. North St., Lansing. facebook.com/turnerdodgehouse.

Wednesday, Dec. 24

Al-Anon Meeting - 6 p.m. Okemos Community Church, 4734 Okemos Road, Okemos. cmialanon.org.

Karaoke at Lansing Shuffle, with Big Man Genesis - 9-11 p.m. 325 Riverfront Drive, Lansing. lansingshuffle.com.

Lansing Live Open Stage Night - Whether you're experienced or just starting out, the stage is open to all. Not a performer? Enjoy dinner, drinks and live music. No cover, all ages welcome. 6-9 p.m. UrbanBeat, 1213 Turner St., Lansing. urbanbeatevents.com.

Turner-Dodge House Festival of Trees - Holiday trees decorated by various businesses, organizations and individuals adorn all three floors of the historic mansion. Noon-5 p.m. 100 E. North St., Lansing. facebook.com/turnerdodgehouse.

Thursday, Dec. 25

Al-Anon Meeting - 6:45 p.m. Mason Sparrow Urgent Care, 800 E. Columbia St., Mason. cmialanon.org.

Al-Anon Meeting - 8 p.m. Eastminster Presbyterian Church, 1315 Abbot Road, East Lansing. cmialanon.org.

Thursday Night Open Forge - Try your hand at blacksmithing and create your own metal masterpieces! 6-9 p.m. Artfire Michigan, 4567 Churchill Road, Leslie. artfiremichigan.com.

The Trick Is in the Cards - 5-11 p.m. Homebrew Tabletop Game Lounge, 219 1/2 N. Bridge St., Grand Ledge. homebrewgamelounge.com.

Turner-Dodge House Festival of Trees - Holiday trees decorated by various businesses, organizations and individuals adorn all three floors of the historic mansion. Noon-5 p.m. 100 E. North St., Lansing. facebook.com/turnerdodgehouse.

Friday, Dec. 26

"A Caregiver's Butterfly Garden" - This vibrant installation honors direct care workers, professionals who provide essential support for older adults and people with disabilities. 8 a.m.-9 p.m. Hannah Community Center, 819 Abbot Road, East Lansing. dcwgardens.com.

Campaign Finance Reform - Let's stop large corporations from influencing and controlling our politicians with big campaign contributions! Stop by to sign the Voters Not Politicians petition to get this on the ballot. 1:30-3 p.m. Everybody Reads, 2019 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. facebook.com/votersnotpoliticians.

Country Night at Lansing Shuffle - Enjoy line dance instruction from 8-9 p.m., followed by modern country music playing until midnight! We'll have drink specials all night. No cover! 325 Riverfront Drive, Lansing. lansingshuffle.com.

MMAG Fall Art Show - The artists of the Mid-Michigan Art Guild invite the community to visit their "Black and White" exhibition, featuring art created with just those colors. 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Neighborhood Empowerment Center, 600 W. Maple St., Lansing. midmichiganartguild.org.

Night Owl Shopping - Shop late at the local merchants on Bridge Street. 5-9 p.m. Downtown Grand Ledge. facebook.com/GrandLedgeChamber.

Parkinson's Exercise: Movement with Vitality - Free exercise class for people with Parkinson's. Caregivers are welcome to participate if space permits. 1 p.m. Michigan Athletic Club, 2900 Hannah Blvd., East Lansing. To register, call 517-364-8800. lapsg.org.

Turner-Dodge House Festival of Trees - Holiday trees decorated by various businesses, organizations and individuals adorn all three floors of the historic mansion. Noon-5 p.m. 100 E. North St., Lansing. facebook.com/turnerdodgehouse.

THE PULSIFIEDS

Delta Dental. FT Manager, Application Development & Support. Delivery of appl. Dev. &/or support initiatives through managing activities of team. Req: Bach. or equiv. + 5 yrs. exp. Jobsite: Okemos, MI. Hybrid pos. w/ in-office req. Must live within commutable dist. of Okemos, MI & be able to work in-office as req. Apply online: www.deltadentalmi.com/careers. Sal. \$159,619 /yr. Visa spons. not avail

Dentist (East Lansing, MI) sought by Dental Group w/ exp. examining patients' teeth, gums, & related oral structures using diagnostic tools such as dental instruments & x-rays to assess oral health, diagnose abnormalities, & dvp appropriate treatment plans. Position also req. cosmetic expertise to integrate aesthetics into restorative or orthodontic treatment plans, ensuring form & function. DDS or DMD (or foreign equiv) + 1Y exp. in the job duties. Dentist License from State of Michigan req. No travel or lang. fluency req. Please send resumes postal mail only to: Raphaela Moeller, Administrative Operations Manager, Moeller PC DBA Elan Dental Group, 818 West Lake Lansing Rd, East Lansing, MI 48823.

Abandoned Vehicle auction will be held at PJs 2200 Olds Ave Lansing MI 48915 on 12/30/25 @11am

2021	Wolf RX50	L5YACBPZ0M1108641
2015	Volkswagen Jetta	3VWD07AJ5FM241007
2016	Jeep Compass	1C4NJCEA4GD763180
2006	Ford F150	1FTPW14526FB56569
2017	Dodge Journey	3C4PDDEG3HT696223
2019	Nissan Versa	3N1CN7APXKL869846
1998	Suzuki Motorcycle	5YWZ101770
2015	Chevy Equinox	2GNFLBE34F6386512
1973	International Scout	3S8S8CGD29356
2013	Buick Enclave	5GAKRCKD8DJ163562
2015	Chevy Equinox	2GNALBEK8F6315752
2008	Jeep Commander	1J8HG48N38C239552
2020	Kia Sorento	5XYPHDA58LG708018

CP#25-399

Eagle Township, Clinton County Special Joint Board Meeting Synopsis

December 10, 2025, at 6:05 pm - Present: Clerk Briggs-Dudley, Treasurer C. Hoppes, Trustee Currie, Supervisor Stroud, Trustee M. Hoppes. Planning Commission Members: Chair Rich, Vice-Chair Feldpausch, Secretary Sutherland. Zoning Board of Appeals Members: Vice-Chair/Secretary Strzalka, Alternate Dan Feldpausch and 4 citizens
Board Discussion:

- 1) Zoning related training presented by Foster Swift attorneys, Anne Seuryneck and Mackenzie Almassian.

A complete copy of the minutes is available by contacting Laurie Briggs-Dudley, Clerk. Next regular meeting of the Eagle Township Board is December 18, 2025, at 6 pm at Eagle Township Hall, 14318 Michigan St, Eagle, MI. See www.eagletownshipmi.gov for latest updates.

Prepared by: Laurie Briggs-Dudley, Eagle Township Clerk
Approved by: Troy Stroud, Eagle Township Supervisor

CP#25-397



As Seen On the Cover of CityPulse

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CROSSWORD SOLUTION

From Pg. 15

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SUDOKU SOLUTION

From Pg. 15

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PUBLIC NOTICE Williamstown Township Special Meeting - Strategic Planning

The Williamstown Township Board, committees, and staff will meet for a special meeting on **Wednesday, January 7, 2026 at 5:30 pm.** in the Community Room at the Williamstown Township Hall, 4990 Zimmer Rd., Williamston, Michigan. The purpose of the meeting is for discussion only on the Township's Strategic Plan. Contact the office at (517) 655-3193 with any questions. The public is welcome to attend.

Individuals requiring accommodations, special aids, or services to fully participate in the meeting should contact the Township Clerk at (517) 655-3193 or clerk@williamstowntownship.com to request assistance at least five (5) days ahead of the meeting.

Robin A. Cleveland, MiPMC
Williamstown Township Clerk

CP#25-393

FOOD & DRINK

DINING OUT IN GREATER LANSING



Lawrence

By **GABRIELLE LAWRENCE**

For *She Ate/He Ate* this month, we tried to think of a restaurant that would give the best December vibes. Somewhere beautiful,

cozy and festive. Somewhere you could have dinner with friends or co-workers. Somewhere to forget about the kids' school spirit week and teacher gifts and year-end assignments at work and who is making the dessert for Christmas Eve. Somewhere to relax for a little while.

The crown jewel of downtown Lansing in a previous life was Mediteran, which would be crammed with a dozen insanely decorated trees that made you never want to leave. I had the highest of hopes that Batter Up Bistro had cleared the cobwebs from its pandemic-prompted closure and would come back better than ever.

On a recent weeknight, I met two girlfriends and Mr. She Ate for dinner. There was one other table of diners, a duo at the bar having cocktails and my illustrious co-reviewer, coincidentally. We had cleared the rest of our schedule that evening, and it's a good thing we did, because we ended up spending several hours in the restaurant.

After being seated and looking over the menu, I was surprised to learn that there were only four dinner entrée options. To be clear, I love a focused menu. I don't want to dine somewhere that offers both a wet burrito and fettuccine alfredo. (I don't want to think about a wet burrito at all, actually, because I hate the name of that dish.) But I don't think I've ever been to a restaurant that offers only four choices, unless it was an extremely small place with a daily special as the only thing on offer.

There were four of us, so we attempted to make the server's life easy and asked for one of each entrée. Service throughout the entire evening was awkward and uncomfortable. It was shockingly slow and inattentive, especially given that the entire restaurant had fewer than 10 people inside, including our party of four.

I will occasionally set a stopwatch after placing a food order, which I did that evening. Entrées weren't delivered at the same time, but they arrived at the table within five minutes of each other. All told, we waited just over 39 minutes to receive our food.

I will cut to the chase: Half of the food was good. The filet (\$45) was savory and comforting in the best way. It was well prepared, although a few minutes past our requested medium rare. At this point in my 40s, I'm generally satisfied with a smaller portion of red meat than normal because I value how I know I'm going to feel the next morning, and while the filet was delicious, I was happy to have other options.

The burger (\$20) was the second best. The sliced muenster cheese was fried to a crisp, which is one of my best home-cook tricks. It was rich and juicy, although the waffle fries on the side were completely devoid of salt.

Things took a turn when I sampled the salmon (\$32). We opted for it to be grilled, not blackened, and it was topped with a thick layer of fruit gastrique. The texture of the fruit was offputting and mushy, and it

Batter Up's breakfast scores a home run

By **BRYAN BEVERLY**

The 600 block of Michigan Avenue in Lansing's Stadium District has been a hotbed of activity for the better part of the first quarter of this



Beverly

century. I've spent a lot of social time on this block, at the former Rum Runners bar and the former margarita spot 621.

Now that Meijer occupies space across the street, I spend time foraging for quality ingredients for meals I prepare at home. Gastronomically, the block has mostly been known for quick bites: first ice cream, then GoodFellas Bagel Deli (now inside the grocery store) and now the corner hot dog spot.

With the addition of a major chain hotel, the need for a quality breakfast and dinner spot has never been greater. You may recall from my July review my frustrations with the downtown food scene's walkability, particularly for breakfast and coffee. Yet if one is willing to step beyond a few blocks' radius, a quaint culinary option awaits. Batter Up Bistro is a classic French-style eatery whose name inspiration comes from the house-baked bread used in its meals rather than the baseball stadium just a block away.

What's good

This is the kind of place I generally root for: locally owned, attention to ambience and identity, a focused menu that doesn't try to do too much, and an effort to make you feel welcome.

Batter Up Bistro reminds me of several places I've visited in New Orleans, evoking memories of a jazz trio playing ragtime as I enjoyed brunch and maybe a midday hurricane cocktail. The interior is rustic-chic while still being warm and inviting.

I really enjoyed the beverages I ordered. The apple crisp latte (\$8) I had with breakfast was hot and made me feel even more cozy. Apple simple syrup was paired with the house coffee blend and oat milk with notes of cinnamon. It was very pleasing to the palette and wasn't overpowered by apple flavor.

The Baron (\$15) was a pre-dinner cocktail with whiskey, ginger beer and liqueur, almond bitters and a hickory-smoked finish. It was strong, with a well-balanced flavor profile, but not breathtaking.

What's really good

Dinner service was suitable, even if a bit slow, given only a few diners were in attendance that evening. The bartender was also waiting tables, and while he was capable and hospitable, he clearly had too much on his plate.

I started with the sea scallop appetizer (\$17). Three substantial scallops with a dill-forward dusting were seated atop a lovely, creamy parsnip puree. The puree was slightly sweet, and the microgreens, likely intended more as a garnish, offered a nice textural note. The scallops were cooked unevenly, if I'm being honest, because only one out of the three had that desirable brown crust, and the other two were gray.

Dinner went up several notches with the pan-seared salmon (\$32), which I ordered blackened. The fish was tender and flaky, and the seasoning was right on target. The salmon paired quite well with the wild rice and the roasted Brussels sprouts, which themselves had a lovely char. I



Bryan Beverly for City Pulse

Batter Up Bistro's decadent eggs Benedict and thick-cut bacon provide a respite from winter's doldrums.

She Ate

from page 20

was layered so thickly on the fish that eating it was unpleasant. The side of Brussels sprouts, purported on the menu to be “seared,” was barely cooked and unpleasantly toothy.

The vegetable mornay (\$25) was an obligatory vegetarian option. The noodles were mushy, and the flavor of the cheese was odd.

Being dedicated to my research, I asked about dessert options. We were told that there were three choices, and I asked whether they were made in house. They generally are, according

to the server, although on this particular day they were out of the desserts prepared by the pastry chef, so they were offering three items that had been prepared “at a different location.” I was completely unimpressed by that answer, so we ended the meal. I further scratched my head when I realized that Batter Up Bistro is only open for dinner Wednesday through Saturday, and this was a Thursday. Why were they already out of dessert?

Truly, I don’t savor panning local places. But this was not a good experience, and it was also not an inexpensive experience. Batter Up has a lot of room for growth.

He Ate

from page 20

also appreciated the accompanying blackberries for a touch of sweetness without compromising the earthiness.

Best bite

My first visit was a bit lonely since I was the only patron dining mid-morning on a Thursday. Perhaps the previous day’s snowfall had scared others away, but I was itching to get out and about and to find a respite from winter’s doldrums.

I ordered the eggs Benny (\$20),

served upon delightful house-baked toast that was dense enough to hold up the thinly sliced ham, perfectly poached eggs, microgreens and herbaceous hollandaise sauce. The sauce was rich and creamy, with a pleasant punch of lemon and dill.

The dish was served with garlic-and-herb red skin breakfast potatoes. They were a hit. Also a star was the side of thick-cut bacon (\$8), which was smoky and had a perfect medium cook. The chef came out to express her gratitude for my visit, which only made me wish more folks had joined me that day.

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11 a.m.-midnight Friday
10 a.m.-midnight Saturday
10 a.m.-11 p.m. Sunday

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soupspooncafe.com
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9 a.m.-10 p.m. Friday-Saturday
9 a.m.-3 p.m., 5-8 p.m. Sunday

TOP 5 DINING GUIDE
THE BEST RESTAURANTS IN GREATER LANSING AS DECIDED BY CITY PULSE READERS

TOP 5 BRUNCH

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facebook.com/goodtruckin
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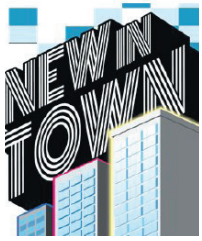
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La Cocina Cubana targets MSU students with second location



By LEO V. KAPLAN

Before he became general manager of the new East Lansing La Cocina Cubana location, Ariel Rodriguez Peña was a regular at the initial eatery in downtown Lansing.

La Cocina Cubana

219 E. Grand River Ave., East Lansing
11 a.m.-11 p.m.
Monday-Thursday
11 a.m.-1 p.m. Friday-Saturday
11 a.m.-9 p.m. Sunday
(517) 220-4941
lacocinacubana.com
restaurant.com

Peña, also senior director of middle years and academies for the Lansing School District, has been friends with co-owner and chef Iliana Almaguer Tamayo for more than two decades. Both were born in Cuba, and Peña said La Cocina Cubana was the only full-menu, authentic Cuban restaurant in town for years after it opened in late 2017.

“Iliana has been sharing with me this dream that she had about expanding her business,” he said. “Because it’s not only about the food, it’s about the way she combines food and traditions and everything that tastes like Cuba, and she loves to share that with the community.”

About six months ago, after finding a suitable location, Tamayo jumped at the opportunity and brought Peña in to help. The eatery opened Nov. 12, offer-

ing the same authentic Cuban cuisine, cooked by Tamayo herself, in a more takeout-focused environment that caters to Michigan State University students.

Tamayo has wanted to open a restaurant in East Lansing for several years — many customers at the downtown Lansing location were either MSU faculty or students seeking to broaden their gastronomic horizons.

Despite encouragement from customers, Tamayo only made the jump recently because she likes to have control over the recipes, Peña said.

“She’s the chef, with her husband, and they didn’t want to open a second location until they were completely sure that they had the capability to do so,” he said.

For now, Tamayo is running the kitchen at the East Lansing location while her husband, Tobia Uribe, stays in Lansing. Hours at the Lansing location have been dialed back to make the expansion possible.

In establishing what Peña called the first authentic Cuban restaurant in East Lansing, he and Tamayo have been able to share their cultural food with many who have never tried it. He said students especially have been very open-minded and excited.

“It’s a privilege, to be honest,” Peña said. “They have a lot of questions about the menu, and they want to learn — ‘Hey, what is this dish? What do you put



Courtesy

From left: La Cocina Cubana general manager Ariel Rodriguez Peña, a customer, employee Alex Leyva Rodriguez and co-owner and chef Iliana Almaguer Tamayo during the East Lansing store’s grand opening on Nov. 12.

on it?”

“We’re not only sharing what the dish is all about, but everybody’s like, ‘How do you say that in Spanish?’ So we’re teaching words here and there,” he added.

He recommends those new to Cuban cuisine start with the Cuban sandwich, a pressed sandwich filled with ham, Swiss cheese, pickles and mustard. He suggests customers order it with rice and beans to create a “very traditional” meal.

“We say in Cuba, ‘If you do not have

rice and beans on the table, then you cannot say that you have a full meal,” he said.

Ropa vieja, a shredded beef dish, is his own favorite. For dessert, he recommends customers try Cuban flan, a custard dish with soft caramel on top.

He noted international students seem to be particularly interested in trying the many global cuisines in East Lansing, including Cuban.

“It’s just a privilege to be a part of that whole experience,” he said.

A versatile and veggie-forward winter dish

By ARI LEVAUX

Extra festive. Extra cute.

I call it “Christmas sweater” because of the color scheme and general look of the dish, but this recipe is not tied or limited to the holidays. Earthy, sour, sweet and rich, it’s tasty in any context.

It’s true that if you bring this dish to a holiday potluck while wearing your own Christmas sweater, you will totally rule, but it also works as a hearty vegetable entrée or side. Its sweet acidity also makes it almost condiment-like. I once overheard it referred to, enthusiastically, as “that relish thing” at a gathering, a name that captures its versatile utility.



Based on how it looks, it could just as accurately be called “box of jewels.” Whatever you call it and however you use it, this is, above all else, a winter dish. A hearty dish. And, if prepared properly, a cute dish, according to the

Belarusian farmers at the winter market who gave me the recipe.

The Lemezas are beet-nicks to the core. Even when they have nothing else to sell but beets, they’re smiling because they have beets, large as softballs and dense as gold.

Mr. Lemeza’s personal favorite way to eat beets is shredded raw with Italian dressing; he pinched his fingers in front of puckered lips for emphasis.

See Flash, Page 23



Photo by Ari LeVaux

Ari LeVaux calls it “Christmas sweater” because of the color scheme and general look of the dish, but this recipe is not tied or limited to the holidays.

Flash

from page 22

sis when he shared this with me. He then leaned in conspiratorially to gift me the recipe that we all have come to know as Christmas sweater.

His callused welder fingers counted off a list of ingredients. “Beets, carrots, potatoes – cooked,” he said, looking me in the eye with intensity. “Chopped onions, pickles, salt, little bit of oil.”

“Cut small,” added Mrs. Lemeza. “So it’s cute.”

“3/8 of an inch,” he said, holding two fingers together so close you could barely see through them.

At the time, they referred to it as beet vinaigrette, which caught me off guard at first because vinaigrette normally contains, you know, vinegar. And then I realized that the vinegar in their vinaigrette comes from chopped pickles, which, like beets, are serious business back home in Olshany, Belarus. Wowed by the brilliance of using pickles as the acid in a salad, I quickly found all of the principal ingredients at the market and skipped home to play with my food.

I made the recipe a few times that week, my confidence growing with each rendition. At the following market, I brought a sample of my latest and greatest batch, Mr. Lemeza’s eyes flickering back and forth between the dish and its maker with skepticism.

“It’s too big,” he said, poking at the pieces with the spoon I’d provided. Indeed, my chunks were more like 5/8 of an inch, not the directed 3/8. I hadn’t realized it was such a big deal.

Finally, he took a bite.

“The taste is good,” he acknowledged, sounding surprised to hear himself say it.

Mrs. Lemeza took a bite and concurred. “But it has to be more cute,” she pleaded, rolling the “r” in “more.”

“It’s too ugly?” I asked.

“Yes,” she said, laughing. At least they loved the name Christmas sweater, which they still call it to this day.

When I make it at home, I must admit, my Christmas sweater is still kinda ugly. It’s just as delicious and satisfying and nourishing as it is with cute chunks, which I suppose reflects my priorities. But when I bring my Christmas sweater into mixed company, you can be sure it’s the cutest thing you have ever seen. After all, if it’s an option, why not rule the potluck?

Christmas sweater

Your go-to recipe for any deliciously awkward wintertime occasion, or a cozy night in. When I say “diced,” I mean perfectly adorable 3/8-inch cubes.

Serves four to eight as a side, two to four as a main.

- 1 pound potatoes, peeled
- 1 pound beets, peeled
- 1 pound carrots, peeled
- One medium onion
- 2 cups dill pickles, diced
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- Salt and pepper, to taste

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees, then peel and cube the veggies as perfectly as possible. Do the beets last — you will need to wash the cutting board immediately.

Whether it’s an onion, potato,

pickle, carrot or beet, start by cutting it in half, lengthwise, and lay the flat sides down (you can cut carrots down to 4-inch lengths). Slicing straight down, cut off the tops and bottoms, then turn the knife 90 degrees and make a series of parallel cuts about 1/4 of an inch apart along the top-to-bottom axes. Turn each newly sliced half 90 degrees and make another series of crisp, 1/4-inch cuts.

The next part is tricky. Try to pull apart each twice-sliced half, like “cutting” a deck of cards, and roll it sideways onto the cutting board so you have flat sides down again and can cut the long, cubic rectangles into perfect cubes.

Bake all of the cubed veggies in separate dishes, stirring occasion-

ally to check the moisture levels. Add half of the olive oil to the potatoes before cooking them so they don’t stick together. When each type of veggie is soft and dry but not browned, remove it from the oven and allow it to cool to room temperature.

Add the rest of the olive oil to the beets, which seals in the beet color and prevents it from bleeding onto the rest of the salad.

When everything is cool, cubed and cute, gently toss everything together, minus the beets and onions. Season with salt, pepper and garlic powder. Then stir in the beets and, finally, the lily-white onions, added last to keep them as unstained as possible. Taste, adjust seasonings, and serve.

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