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Make Venezuela Great Again (From Behind the Curtain)

There they were: Donald Trump, Marco Rubio and Pete Hegseth—huddled together like middle-schoolers hiding from a substitute teacher—watching world events unfold from behind what can only be described as a pipe-and-drape war room at Mar-a-Lago. Not a “Situation Room,” mind you. Not even a Holiday Inn conference suite. This was a pop-up geopolitical command center, the kind usually reserved for bridal expos and tax seminars, hastily erected next to the dessert table.

And from behind this polyester curtain, they peered out at the world, solemn and grave, as if history itself had RSVP’d “maybe.”

This, apparently, is how you Make Venezuela Great Again.

The slogan alone deserves applause for its creative plagiarism. Why stop at America when you can franchise greatness abroad? Why not slap a red hat on the Orinoco Basin and call it foreign policy? The implication is clear: Venezuela is broken, Trump knows how to fix broken things, and all it will take is a little muscle, a little oil and a little moral flexibility—the kind you can buy wholesale at Mar-a-Lago.

Because let’s be honest: this isn’t about democracy. It’s not about human rights. And it sure as hell isn’t about drug trafficking, no matter how many times Marco Rubio says it with the confidence of a man who’s never once been asked a follow-up question.

You can’t, on one hand, pardon a man accused—by your own government—of being a narco-terrorist, and on the other hand, send in the cavalry to dramatically “capture” another alleged narco-terrorist and pretend you’re waging a principled war on drugs. That’s not law enforcement. That’s professional wrestling. Heels and faces change depending on the storyline, and the audience is expected not to notice that the same guy who was the villain last season is now waving from the stage as a hero.

But these guys? They think we’re stupid.

Trump’s worldview is simple: if a country has something valuable—oil, lithium, gold—it must be mismanaged, because if he doesn’t control it, who possibly could? Venezuela’s greatest sin, in Trumpian logic, isn’t authoritarianism or corruption; it’s inefficiency. That oil should be doing something. Preferably something for him.

Enter Marco Rubio, the Senate’s longest-running audition tape for Secretary of State. Rubio plays the role of the Serious Man™—gravely explaining Latin America to an audience he assumes has never seen a map. He speaks in somber tones about freedom and socialism, as if repeating the word “Castro” three times will summon the ghost of the Cold War and absolve every bad idea that follows.

Rubio wants you to believe this is all very thoughtful. Very measured. Very strategic. Which is impressive, considering the strategy appears to have been drafted on a cocktail napkin somewhere between the shrimp tower and the coat check.

And then there’s Pete Hegseth—cosplaying as a general, a patriot and a cable-news action figure all at once. Hegseth is what happens when you confuse aggressive confidence with competence. He doesn’t analyze policy; he flexes at it. Every international crisis is just another excuse to say “strength” louder than the last guy, as if geopolitics is settled by bench press totals.

Watching these three together is like watching a reboot no one asked for: Three Men and a Coup. Trump provides the ego, Rubio supplies the syllables, and Hegseth brings the vibes—specifically, the kind of vibes

you get when someone says “boots on the ground” without having the faintest idea whose boots those will be.

And all of this unfolding from behind a literal curtain.

You couldn’t script it better. The secrecy. The theatrics. The irony. Men who claim to despise elites, governing from a gilded resort, hiding behind drapes like they’re about to reveal a gender at a baby shower. This is the aesthetic of American decline: faux seriousness staged in a ballroom that smells faintly of cologne and desperation.

They talk about Venezuela as if it’s a storage unit they’ve been meaning to clean out. Plunder the resources, install someone friendly, slap a “mission accomplished” banner on it, and move on. The people? Background noise. Collateral. Extras in a story where the only real protagonists are men who believe power is something you take, not something you justify.

And through it all, the insult isn’t just the hypocrisy—it’s the assumption that no one notices.

They think we won’t connect the dots. That we won’t see how “fighting drugs” magically aligns with who’s inconvenient at the moment; that we won’t question why democracy always seems to need a military escort when oil prices are involved; that we won’t laugh when the curtain slips and reveals not statesmen, but performers nervously checking their reflections.

Make Venezuela Great Again?

They can’t even make honesty great again. They can’t make consistency great again. They can’t make a coherent argument without a teleprompter or a draped backdrop. Even then, they leave much to be desired.

What they can do is put on a show—loud, self-important and deeply unserious—while insisting it’s destiny.

And the most dangerous part isn’t that they’re wrong.

It’s that they think we’re dumb enough to clap anyway.

I’m surprised they didn’t accidentally live-tweet it.

This is my knee-jerk reaction. I haven’t fully been able to comprehend the madness. I can only say that the seriousness of everything happening is very real—even if the people in charge treat it like a dress rehearsal, consulting oil executives for notes while Congress waits in the lobby.

Please email me at lansingallstar@gmail.com

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CityPULSE

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City Pulse was founded as an alternative weekly in 2001.

Member, AAN

Playing the Short Game

BUSH ADMINISTRATION NOT HELD ACCOUNTABLE FOR LIES LEADING TO IRAQ WAR

WE DON'T WANT TO ALIENATE MIDTERM VOTERS.

MCCONNELL BLOCKS VOTE ON OBAMA'S SUPREME COURT NOMINEE, PACKS BENCH WITH RIGHT-WING EXTREMISTS

DOING SOMETHING TO FIX THAT WOULD RUFFLE TOO MANY FEATHERS.

TRUMP AND ASSOCIATES INCITE DEADLY COUP ATTEMPT

THE PRUDENT COURSE OF ACTION IS TO BE INSTITUTIONALLY PRUDENT.

MEMBERS OF CONGRESS SUPPORT INSURRECTION, REFUSE TO CONFIRM BIDEN'S ELECTION

CONSEQUENCES? THAT WOULD MAKE TOO MANY PEOPLE ANGRY.

NONPARTISAN STATE ELECTION OFFICIALS THREATENED, REPLACED BY "BIG LIE"-SPOUTING TRUMPISTS

EH, DON'T WANT TO CAUSE A STIR.

ELECTIONS SABOTAGED, NATION BECOMES ONE-PARTY AUTOCRACY

I'M SURE WE'LL VOTE OUR WAY OUT OF THIS SOMEHOW!

Jen Sorensen • jensorensen.com

POLITICS



KYLE MELINN
2026's most substantial political uncertainties

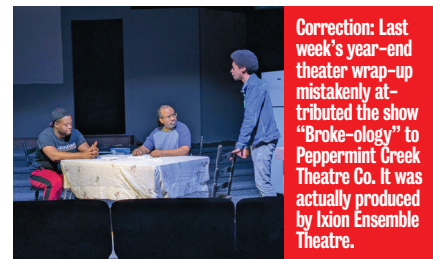
PAGE 7



PAGE 13

FATHERLAND

Behind the curtains of PCTC's "Fatherland"



Correction: Last week's year-end theater wrap-up mistakenly attributed the show "Broke-ology" to Peppermint Creek Theatre Co. It was actually produced by Ixion Ensemble Theatre.

Cover illustration by Lora Root

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THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW

2026: A LOOK AHEAD

1. TRUMP PREMIERES ONE MAN SHOW AT TRUMP-KENNEDY CENTER

PLEASE ENJOY MY EXTENDED INTERPRETIVE DANCE SPECTACULAR, SET TO THE TUNE OF YMCA AS PERFORMED BY TED NUGENT AND KID ROCK!

I SHOULD WIN A NOBEL PRIZE FOR THIS ARTISTIC ACHIEVEMENT!

2. RFK JR. DECLARES WAR ON ROUTINE PHYSICAL CHECKUPS

THINK ABOUT IT! YOU VISIT THE DOCTOR, HE RUNS SOME "TESTS"-- AND SUDDENLY YOU FIND OUT YOU'VE GOT SOME TERRIBLE DISEASE? IT'S A SCAM, SHEEPL!

DO YOUR OWN RESEARCH! AND BEWARE THE CHEMTRAILS! AND ALSO THOSE WEE FOLK YOU CAN ONLY SEE OUT OF THE CORNER OF YOUR EYE! THEY'RE A GOD-DAMN MENACE!

3. REVISED BALLROOM PLANS ARE UNVEILED

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, AND SCUMBAG MEMBERS OF THE LYING MEDIA, ALLOW ME TO PRESENT THE DONALD J. TRUMP BALLROOM AND RESORT CASINO! WHERE PAYMENT WILL ONLY BE ACCEPTED IN TRUMP CRYPTOCURRENCY!

4. OUR BENEVOLENT TECH OVERLORDS ROLL OUT THE NEXT NEXT BIG THING

THE TESLA ELECTRIC BRAIN REPLACES YOUR CHAOTIC, TROUBLE-SOME CONSCIOUSNESS WITH A.I! YOU'LL NEVER HAVE TO THINK FOR YOURSELF AGAIN!

COWS HAVE FIVE LEGS! THE MOON IS MADE OF STYROFOAM! I'M CONFIDENTLY WRONG ABOUT EVERYTHING!

5. JD VANCE CONTINUES TO BIDE HIS TIME

GOOD MORNING, SIR! I SEE YOUR HANDS AND ANKLES ARE LOOKING NORMAL AND HEALTHY AS ALWAYS!

WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? NOTHING, SIR! CAN I GET YOU A BIG MAC?

6. NEVER A DULL MOMENT

WE JUST ATTACKED A SOVEREIGN NATION AND RENDITIONED ITS LEADER--UNDER THE ESTABLISHED INTERNATIONAL LEGAL PRINCIPLE THAT DONALD TRUMP'S WORD IS LAW AND NONE MAY DEFY HIM!

AS GOD IS MY WITNESS--GREENLAND WILL BE NEXT!

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PULSE

NEWS & OPINION

Spadafore appointed Council president

A familiar hand has taken back the gavel in Lansing's city council.

Peter Spadafore, who has served on the council since 2017 and was president in 2020, was elected City Council President in a 6-2 vote last night.

There was an air of certainty when at-large councilmember Trini Pehlivanoglu nominated Spadafore, an ally of Mayor Andy Schor.

Despite support from all four of the residents who spoke during public comment period as well as Adam Hussain, the 3rd Ward council member, previous president Ryan Kost only received two council votes.

Spadafore nominated Pehlivanoglu,

who was unanimously approved as vice president.

Spadafore's leadership will likely take the council in a different direction from Kost. Spadafore is an ally of Mayor Andy Schor and less of a firebrand than Kost, who is known for his accessibility and boots-on-the-ground approach and also frequently dissents from the majority.

Kost and Hussain were the only councilmembers not present at a privately-paid-for city inauguration ceremony last week.

Spadafore's leadership style was already apparent at the first meeting of the year.

A group of Lansing Homeless

Union members mostly arrived too late to sign up for public comment at the meeting, which was unusually short at 42 minutes long. One person who spoke got into a tense back-and-forth conversation with Spadafore with issues including the speaker's use of profanity and the inability of others to speak on the record.

When some of those people rushed to the front of the room, hoping to speak, Spadafore contended that the meeting could not legally be restarted.

Khadja Erickson, executive director of the Mid-Michigan Tenant Resource Center, came alongside the homeless union members. She called



Peter Spadafore

Photos by Mike Ellis/City Pulse

the back-and-forth "petty" and said it would not have happened under Kost's leadership.

She also said it was "highly unlikely," from her experience speaking during public comment at council meetings, that Kost would have prevented the advocates from speaking.

- By LEO V. KAPLAN

The incoming Lansing City Council is half Latino, half educators

Mayor Andy Schor is staking much of his third term on Lansing's future growth as two new council members take office.

At a Jan. 1 inauguration ceremony at Impression 5 Science Center, the mayor touted \$4 billion in investment in the city in his previous eight years - "and I actually looked that up."

"You see it when the skyline changes; you see it when there are cranes in the air," he said, along with a pledge to work aggressively on housing and jobs.

There are two new council members this year: Clara Martinez and Deyanira Nevarez Martinez.

Both were sworn in at the privately funded ceremony.

Also taking the oaths at the ceremony were Jeremy Garza and Peter Spadafore, both of whom were sitting council members who shifted wards. Garza moved from a Ward 2 seat to an at-large seat. Spadafore moved from an at-large seat to the Ward 4 seat. City Clerk Chris Swope also renewed his oath.

Half Latino and half educators

With the addition of the two new members, Lansing is now the first city council in Michigan to have a majority of Latino representation, according to Cafecity Caliente, a mid-Michigan Hispanic and Latino-focused news publication. Also at the ceremony was sitting council member Trini Pehlivanoglu, who is the fourth Latino member, along with Garza, Martinez and Nevarez Martinez.



Andy Schor

Pehlivanoglu said she's excited for the different dynamics of a new council.

A different half of the eight council members are members of the Michigan Education Association.

Martinez and Adam Hussain are high school teachers at Everett and Waverly schools. At least a dozen of Martinez's students attended the ceremony, surrounding her on the small stage when she took her oath.

Spadafore is executive director of the Michigan Alliance for Student Opportunity. Nevarez Martinez is an assistant professor of urban planning at Michigan State University.

The Lansing City Council does not oversee the Lansing School District, which has a separate board. Nevarez Martinez left the school board for the city council seat and the school board is looking to replace her.



Clara Martinez

What's next

Garza, now an at-large member, said he still plans to advocate for a Ward 2 community center.

"We have a good new freshman class coming in; I think they're hungry, they're community to the city and they showed it during the campaign and I'm excited to work with them," Garza said.

Garza said he's happy to work with the mayor for another four years and see the city transform.

Spadafore said it's a diverse council that reflects the city.

"It's a big year for the city, a lot of momentum to keep up with," he said, with housing and homelessness expected to be at the forefront.

Schor said he's excited to work with the new council members.

Nevarez Martinez said she wants to dive right into issues of homelessness, turning her expertise into practical solutions.



Deyanira Nevarez Martinez



Jeremy Garza

Martinez told City Pulse that she's excited to see a variety of voices on council and plans to use her students, and the thought of their futures, to ground herself while giving youth a larger voice.

She stopped herself, mid-sentence, to talk to one of her passing students and then picked up the conversation.

Jumping back in like an experienced dance instructor who barely missed a beat, Martinez said, "How is this going to affect them five, 10, 25 years from now?"

- By MIKE ELLIS

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TOWNSHIP BOARD Synopsis of Meetings

MONDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2025 – REGULAR BOARD MEETING

Supervisor Brewer called the meeting to order at 6:00pm. Supervisor Fonda J. Brewer, Clerk Mary R. Clark, Treasurer Dennis R. Fedewa, Trustee Elizabeth S. Bowen, Trustee Andrea M. Cascarilla, Trustee Joshua I. Lyman, and Trustee Karen J. Mojica. Others Present: Manager Brian T. Reed, Captain Robert Block, Deputy Manager Erin LaPere, Assistant to the Manager/Communications Administrator Mary Worland, Parks & Recreation Administrator Lee Miller, Planning & Economic Development Director Peter Menser, Utilities Director Rick Kane

PRESENTATIONS AND PROCLAMATIONS

1. Resolution of Recognition of Elijah McMichael for Achievement of Eagle Scout
2. Resolution for the 2026 MLK Jr Day of Recognition Luncheon

PUBLIC HEARINGS

COMMUNICATIONS

PUBLIC COMMENTS

PASSAGE OF ORDINANCES

CONSENT AGENDA

3. Bills and Financial Transactions – a. \$1,431,954.72
4. Minutes – a. Monday, November 17, 2025

ITEMS OF BUSINESS

5. Rezoning #PRZ2025-0003 (Cindy Jaye) - 6139 Worthmore Avenue
6. Responsible Bidding Policy

MANAGER'S REPORT

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:03pm

MONDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2025 – REGULAR BOARD MEETING

Supervisor Brewer called the meeting to order at 6:00pm. Supervisor Fonda J. Brewer, Clerk Mary R. Clark, Treasurer Dennis R. Fedewa, Trustee Elizabeth S. Bowen, Trustee Andrea M. Cascarilla, Trustee Joshua I. Lyman, and Trustee Karen J. Mojica. Others Present:

PRESENTATIONS AND PROCLAMATIONS

PUBLIC HEARINGS

COMMUNICATIONS

1. Willow Force Main Project Update

PUBLIC COMMENTS

PASSAGE OF ORDINANCES

CONSENT AGENDA

2. Bills and Financial Transactions – a. \$ 4,183,438.93
3. Minutes – a. Monday, December 1, 2025
4. Set Public Hearing for Munters Exemption Certificate
5. Sharp Park Contract Adjustment
6. Hunter's Orchard Contract Adjustment

ITEMS OF BUSINESS

7. Microtox Purchase
8. EMSMC Contract Extension
9. Budget Amendments
10. Payment of Invoices
11. Rezoning #PRZ2025-0003 (Cindy Jaye) – 6139 Worthmore Avenue
12. Rezoning #PRZ2025-0002 (Robert and Victoria Worthy) – 8650 W. Mt. Hope Highway

MANAGER'S REPORT

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

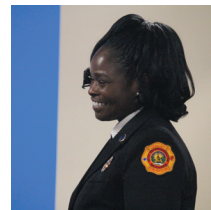
ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:23pm

CP#26-004

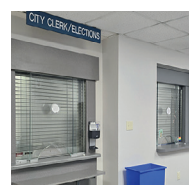
REWIND

NEWS HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE LAST 7 DAYS
 COMPILED BY STEVE UNDERWOOD
 FROM LOCAL NEWS SOURCES



Mayor Andy Schor's first public act of his third term was the endorsement of Interim Chief Carrie Edwards-Clemons to lead the city's Fire Department. Schor announced in a news release Monday that he had picked her and that he will urge the Board of Fire Commissioners to approve her as chief. She has been with the city for two years, serving as assistant chief for administration and was recently named as interim chief following the departure of Chief Brian Sturdivant, who was hired in 2022 following a string of interim chiefs. Edwards-Clemons previously served in Flint and in the private sector. In a Facebook post, the Lansing Professional Firefighters union thanked Schor for the appointment and said they are ready to work together with Edwards-Clemons.

The Greater Lansing Old Newsboys celebrated the end of its 101st year Monday with an annual victory dinner that revealed it had raised a record \$220,087 in 2025. The group is a non-profit charity whose sole purpose is to provide footwear to children in Ingham, Eaton and Clinton counties. The year-long fund drive was highlighted by its annual Sales Day - always the first Thursday in December - where dozens of volunteers hawked thousands of copies of the "Lansing Spoof Journal" around Greater Lansing. More than 6,000 children have already received vouchers for shoes and socks during the 2025-26 school year. ONB's Sales Day Chair Jill Bowen thanked the "remarkable sponsors, compassionate donors, and dedicated volunteers who made sales day a resounding success."



East Lansing's City Hall is undergoing renovations at the first floor and will lead to disruptions for several months. The City Clerk's customer service window has been moved to the second floor of City Hall and is expected to stay there until March. It will then be moved back down to a new customer service window and more functional space. The city's Treasury Department's customer service windows will be moved elsewhere on the first floor for

about a month, starting on Jan. 20. Income Tax staff will be able to meet with residents during the disruptions. The renovations are part of a \$242,281 contract approved during an East Lansing City Council meeting in December.

Michigan's top librarian, Randy Riley, has died. Riley had worked with the state library system since 1989 as reference librarian, head of Special Collections and interlibrary system coordinator. Riley was a regular in City Pulse pages, from his appointment as State Librarian in 2014 to his advocacy in 2024 of the photography of Detroit artist Norman Zadoorian. The East Lansing Public Library said, in social media posts, "Randy was an important part of our East Lansing community, and the State of Michigan as a whole. Sending our care and support to his family and the Library of Michigan team."



Michigan State's men's basketball victory over USC Monday was marred by an unusual incident as head coach Tom Izzo ejected former player Paul Davis from the alumni "Izzone" during the annual winter break celebration of the Breslin Center's famous student section. With six minutes to play, official Jeffrey Anderson stopped play after Davis had shouted something he viewed as inappropriate. The broadcast then showed Izzo appearing to yell, "what the fuck are you doing?" at Davis while the ref asked MSU event staff to remove him, and Izzo said "get the hell out of here." Davis, who played on Izzo's 2005 Final Four team, finished watching the game from a suite on the concourse level. At a post-game press conference, Izzo said he loved Davis, but "what he said, he should never say anywhere in the world."

Meridian Township is preparing for a month-long deer cull in select parks, wildlife preserves and on some private property with permission. The second phase of the annual cull, which began in 2011, will run from Jan. 13 to Feb. 16. The



See Rewind, page 8

Seven big questions heading into 2026

It's officially 2026! We're electing a new governor, U.S. senator, secretary of state and attorney general.

Since we're looking at a solid 10 months of prognostications, let's get things started with seven questions that will set the table for what we'll see going forward.

1. Who will President Donald Trump endorse in the Republican gubernatorial primary? First, we need to ask if Trump will be in a position to endorse this summer. Trump's polling numbers among Republican voters are still strong, but what happens if the Jeffrey Epstein Files solidly connect Trump to a child sex-trafficking ring? What if Trump can't deflect away from cost of living/health insurance anxiety?

Trump always seems to massage and message his way out of troubles among his die-hard followers. Let's assume he can do it again.

Trump wasn't thrilled about U.S. Rep. John James saying no to re-election in his competitive MI-10 seat, but what happens if James solidifies an insurmountable lead come July, like Tudor Dixon circa 2022?

Does he back a winner and take credit for pushing James over the top? Does he stay spiteful if the Republican field in MI-10 is floundering and take a walk? Maybe Mike Cox or Aric Nesbitt catch fire or ...

2. Does Perry Johnson, Kevin Rinke or Tudor Dixon get into the race? Johnson is a multi-billionaire who can buy name ID instantly. The guy is so strange that it's hard to imagine him winning in August. He could peel off some of James' inch-deep, mile-wide support among passive Southeast Michigan Republican voters, though.

What Rinke was hoping to find with his "Rinke For Governor Part II" flirtations last year aren't clear. The groundswell of support he needs is hidden if it exists at all. Rinke has a sliver of Johnson's money and could probably gin up about half the support Johnson could buy.

Polling has shown Dixon, the 2022 nominee, would make an immediate impact if she changed her mind and hopped into the race. She'd need money that she doesn't have to keep things moving.

3. How will labor endorse in the open U.S. Senate primary? It's hard to imagine the UAW, Michigan Education Association (MEA) and other majority labor unions won't get involved in the most competitive Democratic U.S. Senate primary in more than 30 years.

It's possible they all fall in line behind a common candidate. However, as long as Abdul El-Sayed, U.S. Rep. Haley Stevens and state Sen. Mallory McMorrow all

have a realistic shot at this nomination, it's more likely each union picks its own horse, kinda like what happened in the 2002 gubernatorial primary.

4. Can Macomb County Clerk Tony Forlini win at the state convention? Arguably, the Republicans' best chance to win a statewide seat in November is Secretary of State. The GOP has an experienced and likable candidate with Forlini, the Macomb County clerk. The Democrats' field is shifting sands.

From John Smietanka to Kristina Karamo, Republican delegates have proudly thrown General Election-ready candidates overboard for broke, unknown strident conservatives who struggle to get 45 percent in November. We'll see if they do it again.

5. Who does Mike Duggan pick as his lieutenant governor running mate? We could ask the same thing about Jocelyn Benson or possibly John James. Honestly, though, does it matter? No offense, but did Garlin Gilchrist or Shane Hernandez make any difference to the 2022 results?

From a political intrigue perspective, the Duggan pick is more captivating because it shows where he feels like he needs more help. West Michigan? Northern Michigan? Republican? Democrat? Non-partisan? Legislator? Corporate CEO? Unless the campaign is taking on water, it's doubtful we'll know much before the state's Sept. 1 deadline.

6. Does Lt. Gov. Garlin Gilchrist II stay in the Governor's race? Struggling to gain traction and running without Whitmer's endorsement, Gilchrist's cash on hand total is \$350,000. It sounds fine until you realize Duggan, James, Benson, Cox and

Nesbitt have at least \$2 million each.

The latest whisper campaign has Gilchrist shifting focus to a Secretary of State bid, but with four other candidates (including Ingham County Clerk Barb Byrum and two other African Americans from Detroit) in the race, that's not necessarily a sure thing either.

7. Will the knives come out for Matt Hall if Republicans lose control of the state House? All this back-channel talk about rank-and-file House Republicans not liking the heavy-handed Speaker could be seriously overblown. We'll find out for sure if the Hall-led Republicans blow their 58-52 advantage in November and the caucus is picking a minority leader ... which is A LOT different than picking a Speaker.

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



KYLE MELINN

POLITICS

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Rewind

from page 6

township credits the cull with reducing the number of deer-car collisions in half. It is intended to reduce the population of deer, since large numbers can more easily spread disease and compete for resources. The ven-

ison, which came from about 300 deer last year, is donated to local food banks.

The Michigan State Police reported they are assisting with an officer-involved shooting investigation that happened on Dec. 30 in Eaton Rapids. The shooting happened following a police chase

and crash, with a 30-year-old driver being killed after police said he did not obey commands and warned that he had a gun, according to the Lansing State Journal. The shooting remains under investigation.



Dec. 23 and died on Christmas Day. Flags will return to normal positions today.

A Lansing fifth-grade teacher at Pattengill Biotechnical Magnet School in Lansing was recently recognized with a \$2,000 award from the Michigan Lottery. Allison Hansen won the weekly award, given to teachers who have been nominated by peers. Hansen was nominated for her after-school attention to students as well as her creative work in the classroom, including getting students to act out Revolutionary War-era events. She has been a teacher for more than 20 years, including half that time at Pattengill.

State and federal flags in Michigan were ordered to be at half-staff on Tuesday in recognition of David Haverdink, a West Michigan fire chief who died in the line of duty in late 2025. Haverdink was the chief of the Hamilton Fire Department for nearly four decades. He was struck by a vehicle while assisting on M-40 in Allegan County on

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN 2025 ORDER TO MAINTAIN SIDEWALK SPECIAL ASSESSMENT DISTRICT #21

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

TO THE RECORD OWNERS OF, OR PARTIES IN INTEREST IN, THE FOLLOWING PROPERTY CONSTITUTING THE PROPOSED SPECIAL ASSESSMENT DISTRICT:
Bird Strawberry Farm Estates: Lot 33. **Bird Strawberry Farm Estates #2:** Lot 68. **Bird Strawberry Farm Estates #3:** Lots 79, 80, 82, 83, 87, 92, 93, 99, 103, 104, 109, 111. **690 Piper Road:** COM @ THE N 1/4 COR SEC 13 -S 89 DEG 50'39" W ON N SEC LN 1319.62 FT -S 0 DEG 17'33" W ALONG THE W LN OF E 1/2 OF NW 1/4 754.61 FT TO C/L PIPER RD -S 73 DEG 44'07" E ON C/L 390.55 FT TO THE POB -N 16 DEG 15'53" E 233 FT -S 73 DEG 44'07" E 200 FT -S 16 DEG 15'53" W 233 FT -N 73 DEG 44'07" W ON C/L RD 200 FT TO POB, SEC 13 T4NR1W 1.07 AC M/L. **Chippewa Woods:** Lots 4, 7, 27, 28. **Chippewa Woods #2:** Lots 37, 57, LOT 39, & THE SW'LY 10 FT. OF LOT 38, CHIPPEWA WOODS NO. 2 SUB. SEC. 11 T4NR1W. **Country Green:** Lot 14. **Country Place:** Lots 6, 7, 14. **Country Place #2:** Lots 40, 47. **Country Place #3:** Lot 72, LOT 54 COUNTRY PLACE SUBDIVISION #3, ALSO A PART OF LOT 53 COUNTRY PLACE SUB #2 DESC AS BEG @ THE MOST N'LY COR LOT 53 -SW'LY ON LOT LN 7 FT -NW'LY TO THE MOST N'LY LN OF LOT 53 @ A PT 50 FT NW'LY OF POB -SE'LY ON N'LY LOT LN 50 FT TO POB SEC 12 T4NR1W, LOT 65 COUNTRY PLACE SUBDIVISION #3 EXC- BEG @ THE NE COR LOT 65 -S 25 DEG 42'10"W, 183.13 FT TO SE COR LOT 65 -ON CURVE LEFT 6.33 FT HAVING A 503.23 FT RADIUS & A CHORD OF 6.33 FT BRG N 68 DEG 54'09"W, -N 25 DEG 42'10"E, 180.63 FT TO N LN LOT 65 -S 89 DEG 47'31"E, 6.99 FT TO POB SEC 12 T4NR1W. **Georgetown:** LANGDON PARK, GEORGETOWN, MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP, SEC 14 T4NR1W. BRENTWOOD PARK, GEORGETOWN, MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP, SEC 14 T4NR1W. **Georgetown #2:** (M 14-6) COPLEY PARK (PRIVATE) GEORGETOWN NO 2 SEC 14 T4NR1W. **Trails at Lake Lansing #3:** Lots 91, 92, 110, LOT 105 & W 1.0 FT OF THE S 116.19 FT OF LOT 106 TRAILS AT LAKE LANSING #3. **Wood Valley #3:** Lot 132. **Wilkshire:** Lots 1 and 2. **Wilkshire #1:** Lots 19, 21, 26, 27, 31, 32. **Wilkshire #2:** Lots 52, 54 and 58. **Wood Valley:** Lots 33, 41, 61, 74, 75, LOT 22 WOOD VALLEY SUB ALSO A PCL DESC AS COM @ THE N 1/4 COR SEC 12 -N 89 DEG 45'27"W, ON N SEC LN 407.61 FT TO C/L GREEN RD S 33 DEG 02'05"W, ON C/L 812.69 FT TO THE POB -S 90 DEG E, 224.84 FT -S32 DEG 45'37"W, 36.79 FT TO NE COR SAID LOT 22 -N 89 DEG 49'59"W, 224.63 FT TO C/L GREEN RD -N 33 DEG 02'05"E, ON C/L 36.13 FT TO THE POB SEC 12 T4NR1W. **Wood Valley #2:** Lots 85, 89, 104. **Wood Valley #3:** Lots 119, 120, 122, 132, 134, 138, 141. **Wood Valley #4:** Lot 16. **Woodside Estates:** Lots 3, 5, 8, 15. **Woodside Estates #2:** Lots 16, 19, 21, 25, 28, 29, 30. **Woodside Estates #4:** Lots 55, 59, 60, 62, 65. **Woodside Estates #5:** Lots 73, LOT 81 WOODSIDE ESTATES NO 5 ALSO TEAKWOOD COMMONS IN WOODSIDE ESTATES NO. 5 SEC 11 & 14 T4N, R1W. **Woodside Estates #6:** Lots 90, 91.

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a special assessment roll for the 2025 Order to Maintain Sidewalk Special Assessment District #21 (maintain by removal and replacement of sidewalk in various locations in the Township) has been prepared and is on file in the Office of the Township Clerk for public examination.

Said special assessment roll has been prepared for the purpose of assessing the cost of the above described public improvements to the property benefited therefrom. All questions and/or concerns should be directed to Meridian Township Department of Public Works & Engineering at (517) 853-4440.

TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that the Township Board will meet on **Tuesday, January 20, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.** at the Meridian Township Municipal Building, 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864-1198, for the purpose of reviewing said special assessment roll and hearing objections thereto.

An owner or party in interest, or his or her agent, may appear in person at the hearing to protest the special assessment, or shall be permitted to file his or her appearance or protest by letter with the Township Clerk before the close of this hearing, and his or her personal appearance is not required. The owner or any person having an interest in the real property who protests in person or in writing at the hearing may file a written appeal of the special assessment with the Michigan Tax Tribunal within 30 days after the confirmation of the special assessment roll.

Date:

Angela Demas, Township Clerk
Charter Township of Meridian

CP#26-003

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF LANSING NOTICE OF POSTED MEETING MINUTES

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that all meeting minutes for the Charter Township of Lansing are posted to and available on the Township's website at www.lansingtwpmi.gov. Meeting minutes may also be obtained by emailing clerk@lansingtwpmi.gov.

Meeting minutes are also posted in, and available for inspection at, the office of the Township Clerk (located at 3209 W. Michigan Avenue, Lansing, Michigan) during normal business hours.

Cortney Lighthouse, Clerk
Maggie Sanders, Supervisor

CP#25-289

Notice of Public Hearing to be held on January 27, 2026 at 6:30 p.m. at the Historic Mason Court House, 341 S. Jefferson, Mason MI.

Ingham County Environmental Health is proposing to update Chapter 2 of the Ingham County Sanitary Code. The current code was adopted in 1973 and last updated in 1975.

The new revisions modernize the code to reflect current standards and practices that protect public health and the environment, while also accommodating recent and future technological advances.

This update would also introduce certification requirements for certain contractors, providing the department with additional tools to safeguard consumers and ensure quality services.

A copy of the current code, draft code and summary of the key changes can be viewed on our website here: https://health.ingham.org/health/environmental_health/index.php

CP#25-419

WILLIAMSTOWN TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING FOR PROPOSED MASTER PLAN

Notice is hereby given that the Williamstown Township Planning Commission will hold a public hearing at **6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, January 28, 2026**, for the purposes of considering a new Master Plan. The public hearing will be held at the Williamstown Township Hall, 4990 Zimmer Rd., Williamston, MI 48895.

The purpose of the public hearing is to review and consider the adoption of a new Master Plan for Williamstown Township. This 115-page document begins with a vision for the future of the Township, which is accompanied by goals and policies to guide development toward this vision. Later chapters in the Plan analyze land use, demographics, housing, economics, community facilities, parks and recreation, and transportation.

The Master Plan includes a Future Land Use Map and culminates with several ideas for implementation of the Plan. A robust public engagement strategy was implemented, which gave residents several opportunities to incorporate their ideas into the Plan.

The Master Plan is available for review during regular business hours, Tuesday and Thursday 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m., and Wednesday 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m., at the Williamstown Township Hall, 4990 Zimmer Rd., Williamston, MI 48895.


Robin A. Cleveland, MiPMC
Township Clerk

Individuals needing special services to fully participate in the meeting may contact the Township Office at (517) 655-3193 at least 5 days prior to the meeting to request necessary assistance.

CP#26-002

A new year deserves a new skill!

View fun, non-credit community classes at lcc.edu/keeplearning



**LANSING
COMMUNITY
COLLEGE**

**Adult Enrichment
Program**

Here are 20 developments and projects we'll be watching in 2026



Lansing's new city hall is expected to open this year.



Photos by Mike Ellis/City Pulse

A new skyscraper in Lansing is expected to redefine the city's skyline with much of the work anticipated to be done this year, including a taller crane.

New Vision Lansing

If the crane at the Tower on Grand's build site seems high up, get ready — it'll be 200 feet higher before Lansing's tallest skyscraper is done, according to Gentilozzi Real Estate Vice President John Gentilozzi.

"You're gonna see a remarkable change in the skyline over the next year within 2026," he said.

The 28-story, 300,000-square-foot skyscraper is the tallest of five buildings the Gentilozzis are building as part of their New Vision Lansing project. The \$160 million tower will bring 287 residences, plus several amenities, to downtown Lansing.

All work scopes will be awarded in 2026, with 2.5 acres of glass curtain wall and a parking structure begun by the year's end.

The four other buildings are in various stages of development.

- 100 South Washington Square, a 10-story office-to-residential conversion, will be done by Fall of 2026 and include 60 studio, one- and two-bedroom apartments.
- The Capitol Tower at 201 North Walnut St. will be complete in early 2027, with the concrete structure being erected in 2026. The project will feature 120 studio, one- and two-bedroom apartments, as well as office space.
- The Ingham Building at 116 West Ottawa St. will be completely renovated into 25 apartments by Fall.
- A project in Old Town is still in the preliminary stages, with more plans to come in May.

The \$315 million New Vision project has received a \$40 million state grant and another \$160 million in tax incentives. At a groundbreaking ceremony in April for the Tower on Grand, Mayor Andy Schor called the project a "public-private partnership."

Economic uncertainty and President Trump's tariffs have caused their share of headaches, John Gentilozzi said, but have not jeopardized the projects.

New City Hall

The turrets and towers of Lansing's first City Hall, built in 1897, were an ode to the past. The current one, built in 1958, looked to the future with a sleek glass exterior.

Its third, which will be completed this year, fits somewhere in the middle.

A brick-and-masonry facade echoes the historic brick buildings still scattered through the city, while functional design echoes other municipalities where government buildings have gravitated toward less ornamental designs in recent decades.

Lansing's building has been on the fast track as Mayor Andy Schor hopes to finish it while the city still has a \$40 million appropriation from the state Legislature for a new City Hall in its pocket. Mayoral spokesperson Scott Bean said to expect it online this fall.

Ovation Center

Plans for a performing arts center in Lansing date back to the 1990s, when Former Mayor David Hollister first spearheaded a study for a 6,500-seat performing arts center.

Several pivots and roadblocks later, the Ovation Center for the Performing Arts, a 2,000-capacity concert venue attached to the new Lansing Public Media Center, is expected to be online in about a year.

The project is publicly funded but does not draw from the general fund, instead utilizing tools such as \$8.5 million in cable television fees from the state legislature.

The former Lansing Credit Bureau building, which is currently on the site, is being renovated into the new public media center and should be operable this quarter, Ovation founding director Dominic Cochran said. The new-build portion will kick off this year with a planned opening date sometime in the first quarter of 2027.

That portion has been stripped down from its Albert Kahn redesign after tariffs and an expensive design led the project to run over-budget, including the unique cantilever roof that had originally been planned. The concertgoer's experience will be unaffected, Cochran said.

Brick Row

Following the City Rescue Mission's departure to an expanded facility last year, the Gillespie Group is redeveloping six historic buildings along the 600 block of Michigan Ave.

The \$8 million project, dubbed "Brick Row," kicked off in December with expected completion in September 2026. It will include space for six retail businesses and 15 housing units.

The project, which is focused in tandem on historic preservation and continued revitalization of the stadium district, will continue the Gillespie Group's focus on that district. The group is also responsible for the Block600 project across the way, which includes the Capital City Market, and several other projects in the stadium district.

The Iris

Underneath the crumbling wood siding on the east end of West Saginaw's 900 block lies architecture that local preservationist Dale Schrader described as "striking."

See 20 developments, page 10

20 developments

from page 9

But for years, the block has remained derelict. Its most recent owner, Park's Furniture, was closed by the city in 2020 due to "imminent safety issues."

In 2023, local entrepreneur Re'Shane L. Lonzo purchased all five former Park's Furniture buildings after feeling an urge to preserve the sense of community the historic buildings invoked among locals.

Starting this year, those buildings will begin a transformation into The Iris, a mixed-use redevelopment planning 11 affordable housing apartments, a childcare center, and space dedicated to vocational and workforce training.

She also hopes to include a cafe or other small eatery to keep the business connected to the neighborhood, something once delivered by Paul's Pastry Shop in the 1970s.

Lansing Housing Commission

The Lansing Housing Commission is nearing completion on two building projects in downtown Lansing, each with more than 50 units and mostly at subsidized rates.

Executive Director Doug Fleming said both units already have long waitlists because more than 1,800 applications were sent in for the two buildings, which includes a great many duplicates (applicants were encouraged to try for both) and that speaks to the demand for affordable housing.

The Riverview 220 and Grand Vista Place developments are near to each other: Riverview is at Kalamazoo Street and Grand Avenue and the Grand Vista Place building is about a block south at Grand and Lenawee.

Riverside is expected to open around June 1, give or take a week or two, Fleming said. And Grand Vista is expected to open a bit beforehand.

Fleming said the Housing Commission also recently got approval for tax credits that will allow it to buy the old Washington Apartments in REO Town, as well as a separate project that will improve and expand its existing Olivet Gardens apartments.

Moore's Park Pool

Moore's Park Pool is expected to open this summer.

The century-old oblong public pool, sitting in the shadow of the city's iconic smoke stacks, hasn't been used since



The century-old Moore's Park Pool is expected to reopen this summer after years of renovations and closures.

2019.

Paused ever since due to a wide range of leaks and problems, as well as the pandemic and subsequent price tag, the pool is nearing completion.

Interior plumbing has now been finished, said Brett Kaschinske, the city's parks director, in an email. Bathroom fixtures - sinks, showers, lockers, benches and doors - will be installed soon, he said. HVAC and mechanical pool operating equipment comes afterward, with exterior work starting up in March and including grading, concrete steps and painting.

Pool decking and waterproofing should be completed by early April, with the pool being filled in May so it can be tested for a month, to make sure everything worked.

The pool, formally known as the J.H. Moore's Memorial Natatorium, opened in 1923 and was built by then-Lansing City Engineer Wesley Bintz, who would go on to build more than 100 Bintz pools nationwide. Fewer than 20 existed in 2018.

820 W. Miller

Once a City Pulse "Eyesore of the Week," the plaza at the corner of Washington and Miller Road on the south side was purchased by locals Melissa White and James Denning in 2021 at an Ingham County property tax auc-

tion.

If everything goes according to plan, what City Pulse once called "one of the seediest little shopping plazas in Lansing" will be transformed into a strip mall with food, retail and a laundromat.

The development shows off the city's efforts to support emerging developers, which Schor and the Lansing Economic Development Corporation have been focused on in recent years. More than \$1.3 million of the project's \$3.8 million price tag will eventually be covered by development tools like Brownfield tax increment financing, which are frequently used by larger developers but can be esoteric and difficult to navigate for emerging developers. White and Denning have worked with Schor and the LEDC to get the project off the ground.

Deep Green Data Center

Amid a slew of opposition to the behemoth data centers, hundreds of acres, cropping up across the U.S. to power AI technology, Deep Green wants to build something different in Lansing.

The U.K.-based data center builders have partnered with the BWL to propose a 24 megawatt, under-one-acre data center in Lansing's stadium district at Kalamazoo and S. Cedar

streets.

It's a fraction of the size and power of a 1,400 megawatt center that is causing controversy in Saline Township. It was designed by local architects. It will donate the heat it generates to the Lansing Board of Water and Light, which will use it for downtown customers.

The project was announced in November with a plan to start building in the spring, but was met with swift community backlash. About 40 people turned out to oppose the just-announced project at a Nov. 5 Lansing Planning Commission hearing, and planning commissioners later voted against a conditional rezoning that would make the parcels eligible for the project.

The final decision rests with City Council.

A constituent meeting held by the at-large councilmembers will be held Jan. 24, from 10 a.m. to noon at the Lansing Center. It will coincide with an open house held by Deep Green.

Holmes Pleasant Grove

A housing project at Holmes and Pleasant Grove roads is expected to offer 30 housing units by Spring 2027, with construction kicking off at the end of this month.

It is at the lot formerly occupied by Pleasant Grove Elementary School,

See 20 developments, page 11



The Ovation music venue is now expected to open in 2027.



Riverview 220 is one of two major Lansing Housing Commission buildings expected to be open around summertime, each with more than 50 units of subsidized housing.

20 developments

from page 10

and will include a monument to Malcolm X, who attended that school as a kindergartner.

The project has been spearheaded by Brent Forsberg through his Lansing Growth Fund project, and will include a community space with the intention of being a hub for festivals and other activities.

It is also notable for its unique community funding model, with small-time investors encouraged to contribute as little as \$50 and renters able to become part-owners of the complex.

Turner North

A \$26 million housing project that promises to bring affordable housing units for young professionals to Old Town is being spearheaded by developers Crain William and Eric Helzer.

The four-story, 76-unit building would be built along Turner St., just north of Dodge River Dr.

Rather than compete with Old Town's businesses by including retail shops on the first floor, the Turner North project would instead include community space on that level.

It was announced in April with plans to start building as early as August 2026. In July, Turner North Development LLC was awarded \$1.5 million by the Ingham County Housing Trust Fund.

Devil's Day Tattoo/The Bugpin

Devil's Day Tattoo co-owners Val Magee and Ferg Ferguson are first-time developers, but that hasn't stopped them from dreaming big.

The project Magee and Ferguson are planning for the three buildings at 323-327 S. Washington Square is a lot of things: an expansion of their business, affordable housing, room for another business, a community center and a historic preservation project.

The project will turn the former Baron's Window Coverings building into a community center called the Bugpin, which will feature events such as poetry nights. Up to five housing units will be available on the second floor of the buildings, on top of a Devil's Day expansion and another business.

Magee and Ferguson are still finalizing schematics with their architect, but expect the project to run at least \$1 million. They will likely save between \$300,000 to 500,000 over the course of 12 years via an Obsolete Property Rehabilitation Act tax abatement.

They hope to have their own shop operational in the new space by October, with more to come.

Potter Park Zoo

A \$10 million renovation of the Potter Park Zoo's feline and primate building is in limbo after a GOP-led state House committee cut \$644 million of projects approved in 2024.

"They had just started working on architectural and engineering services and had signed a contract," said Potter Park Zoological Society Executive Director Amy Morris.

Morris said the zoo will reapply for the grant, but that the process to do so is not currently clear.

"We don't know anything about what this process is going to look like, or our chances of getting these funds, because we don't know the criteria," she said.



Potter Park Zoo was expecting to renovate its century-old feline and primate building but a potential loss of state funding may have jeopardized the project for now.

"They have put out absolutely nothing about what this looks like."

The project would modernize the enclosure alongside fixing infrastructure problems for the nearly hundred-year old building.

Public Safety and District Courts Complex

Development on Lansing's new, \$175 million Public Safety and District Courts Complex kicked off in 2023, with development proceeding steadily ever since.

The sprawling complex will include the city's police station, fire headquarters and district court as well as a temporary lockup for short-term detainees.

The project is expected to be completed or nearly completed by the end of 2026, according to mayoral spokesperson Scott Bean, with people slowly moving in in late 2026 and early 2027.

The complex is funded from a millage voters approved in 2022.

Fire Stations

The millage that funded the public safety complex also funded renovations to three fire stations.

One, Fire Station 9, will be completely rebuilt from its former version. The current Fire Station 9 on Cedar Street was deteriorating in late 2022, when voters passed the millage, with water damage, mold and cramped quarters.

A new, modernized Station 9 will open as part of the public safety complex this year, mayoral spokesperson Scott Bean said.

In addition, renovations will wrap up this year on Fire Station 8, following completed renovations of Station 2 last year.

MSU projects and developments

A pair of Michigan State University projects, totaling half a billion dollars, are expected to unfold in the next few years as well as hundreds of millions in athletics upgrades.

The \$150 million Spartan Gateway District was initially set to include a hotel, restaurants, residential and retail spaces, university housing and an Olympic sports arena for wrestling, volleyball, gymnastics and other sports.

Those plans were substantially cut back in October and original developer Gillespie Group is no longer part of the project, with new developers being sought.

"Athletics is continuing to explore all options while evaluating overall facility needs, focusing on broad-based

student-athlete impact, including women's and Olympic sports, strategic return on investment and fiscal responsibility," university spokesperson Amber McCann said, in an email.

A larger university project, a \$340 million Engineering and Digital Innovation Center, was approved in October by the board. It will be at the southwest corner of Red Cedar Road and West Shaw Lane.

That development is expected to be finished in 2028.

The university also got one of the nation's largest-ever donations in 2025, totaling \$401 million from Acrisure founder Greg and Dawn Williams, which will primarily upgrade athletic facilities and fund a separate athletic arm.

Read more details at lansingcitypulse.com:

Juvenile Justice

A new \$40 million Ingham County juvenile justice center could be built in

south Lansing. The project had started but with \$12.5 million in state funding in potential jeopardy, it's worth watching.

Bass Pro Shop Outdoor World

Plans announced in 2024 called for a 2026 opening of an 85,000-square-foot destination. Peter Menser is planning and economic development director for Delta Township.

"As far as I know the project is still moving forward but I am not aware of a specific timeline for construction," he said, in an email.

ALDI grocery store

Plans for new Lansing area stores have been approved by officials in both Lansing Township and Grand Ledge. The timelines are not clear.

Sheetz

The destination gas station may open its first Michigan location outside of Metro Detroit in the Lansing area.

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Wreckers and builders

Lansing Symphony, Han Chen unleash Jared Miller's 'Shattered Night'

By LAWRENCE COSENTINO

Three towering names appear on billboards around town promoting Friday's Lansing Symphony Orchestra concert: VERDI, MILLER, BRAHMS.

LSO composer-in-residence Jared Miller is proudly planted in the middle of this meaty sandwich for good reason.

"Shattered Night," a deeply personal piano concerto evoking the rise of fascism in 1930s Germany, will offer the most dramatic showcase yet of Miller's breadth of vision and uncanny skill at pulling fresh and evocative sounds out of the familiar orchestra.

"This is a whole other side of me that Lansing audiences will be hearing for the first time," Miller said.

He started thinking about the piece in fall 2018, the 80th anniversary of Kristallnacht (or the Night of Broken Glass), the infamous pogrom carried out against German and Austrian Jews by the Nazis in November 1938.

"I'm Jewish and Eastern European, and most of my mom's family died in the Holocaust," Miller said. Of his mother's family, only his grandparents escaped, scrambling to Kazakhstan, where they nearly starved to death until the war ended.

"So, it's a very personal thing for me and my family," he said. "It expresses a stark emotional reaction to what happened."

At its heart is the foundational Jewish prayer "Shema Yisrael (Hear, O Israel)." Miller breathes the old-world warmth and romanticism of a Chopin nocturne into the music, but it doesn't stay intact for long.

"It gets shattered and derailed in various ways," he said.

The metamorphosis is barely noticeable at first.

"I wanted to represent the slow creep of fascism, how it sneaks up on a society without them even knowing," Miller said.

The idea called for a major piano part, not only because nocturnes are most often written for piano, but also because Miller feels a personal connection with the instrument. (He calls himself "a recovering pianist.")

But this isn't Chopin. To bring the drama to life, Miller needed both a mad wrecker and a



Courtesy

"Shattered Night," a deeply personal piano concerto evoking the rise of fascism in 1930s Germany, will offer the most dramatic showcase yet of LSO composer-in-residence Jared Miller's breadth of vision and uncanny skill at pulling fresh and evocative sounds out of the familiar orchestra.



Photo by Jeremy Tressler

Grammy-nominated pianist Han Chen, a longtime friend of Miller's from their days at the Juilliard School, will visit Michigan for the first time Friday to perform as soloist on "Shattered Night."

master builder, a pianist who could do it all.

Enter Grammy-nominated pianist Han Chen, a longtime friend of Miller's from their days at the Juilliard School.

Chen loves to play "the old stuff and the new stuff," in Miller's words, and excels at both.

Chen is nominated for a Grammy for his

acclaimed Naxos recording of Florence Price's very romantic piano concerto. On the pricklier side, New Yorker music critic Alex Ross picked Chen's brilliant album of études by avant-garde titan György Ligeti as one of his top classical recordings of 2023. (One of the études, "The Devil's Staircase," spectacularly lives up to its name.)

Chen called "Shattered Night" "a truly great piece of art that transcends what's in the work."

"He talks about the fear and hatred that Jewish people had to go through, but it's not just about that," Chen said. "He wants a world with-

out persecution of any community, and that's such a timely thing to talk about with so much hatred going on in the world, no matter which background you have."

Miller agreed that the piece is relevant today.

"I wish it weren't," he said.

When Chen is hip deep in Miller's music, lofty thoughts about civilization and barbarism often take a back seat to getting the notes right.

"The challenge for the piano comes not so much from speed and dynamics but how much sound he wants, the sheer amount of notes," Chen said. "There are a few parts where it's like flying around the whole keyboard, from the top to the bottom." Chen has been studying piano since the age of 4, but the electricity really kicked in around high school, when he discovered a monster album of Italian virtuoso Maurizio Pollini tearing through complex music by 20th-century fireballs like Anton Webern and Pierre Boulez.

"When it got to Webern and Boulez, my mom shouted from upstairs, 'What is that? Turn it off!'" he recalled. "She couldn't stand it, but it was so different from anything I'd ever heard. I started to look into all the avant-garde music I could get hold of."

Chen loves brand-new music and has commissioned two piano pieces from Miller in the past three years.

"I've played Jared's music a lot in the past few years," Chen said. "I'm excited to be able to give the US premiere of this concerto. You feel a little challenged, but it feels great to bring this emotional journey to life."

"I love working with him," Miller said. "I love his versatility and his commitment to contemporary music."

This is Chen's first visit to Michigan. He appreciates that there are billboards around town that say, "Verdi, Miller, Brahms."

"New music and classical are both so important to my life," he said. "I put them together a lot in my own programming. The concert we're going to do in Lansing isn't just old or new — it's the two together." (The other two works on Friday's slate are Verdi's "Nabucco" overture and Brahms' magisterial First Symphony.)

"Our musical history is important, and some of the new works are future masterworks we need to bring to life," Chen said. "My goal is to do as many of them as possible."

**Lansing Symphony
Orchestra**

Han Chen, piano

7:30 p.m. Friday, Jan. 9
Wharton Center Cobb Great Hall
750 E. Shaw Lane, East Lansing
(517) 487-5001
lansingsymphony.org

Peppermint Creek brings story of post-Jan. 6 fallout to the stage

By **NICOLE NOECHEL**

As artistic director Chad Swan-Badgero told City Pulse in September, Peppermint Creek Theatre Co.'s mission is to "address vital issues in society, raise awareness and encourage dialogue with the shows we produce." Few shows fit that bill as well as "Fatherland," beginning Jan. 23.

The play tells the true story of an 18-year-old who turned his father into the FBI for his role in the Jan. 6 Capitol insurrection. The book was written using court evidence, public statements and the official court transcript of *The United States v. Guy Wesley Reffitt*.

"This show fits very squarely into our mission. It's one in a sort of history we've had of verbatim theater — shows that are taken directly from the world, whether it be direct testimonies or, in this case, court filings and interviews," Swan-Badgero said. "We're really drawn to this type of work, as far as taking real people's words and dramatizing them."

The show tackles three major themes, he said.

"I think at its core, it's about what we mean by loyalty and what loyalty means to us, both as individuals and as a country. We've really

leaned in to that question, because while we can easily say what it means to be loyal to ourselves, what does it mean to be loyal to our family members? What does it mean to be loyal to our communities or to our country, and what happens if those things conflict?"

"The other two questions that we've sort of grappled with as a company are how polarization can fracture families and society and what can happen when democracy and truth and civic trust start to unravel," he continued. "What happens to our relationships, what happens to our country? What happens to societal norms?"

Swan-Badgero stepped up to direct the production in part because of his own questions about Jan. 6.

"I started this company because I needed a way to grapple with the ques-



tions I couldn't find the answers for, the things in the world that made me angry or confused or rageful," he said. "That's why I chose this particular play, because I have a lot of questions and confusion about the actions that

took place during the Jan. 6 storming of the Capitol and how anyone could do something like that. I think choosing this play was a way for me to try to better understand that, and I hope that's how audiences will come to the show as well — certainly not condoning the actions, but trying to understand how someone gets to that place."

The cast — Mark Gmazel as Father, Keara Hayes as Son, Rose Jangmi Cooper as the US attorney and Jonas Greenberg as the defense attorney — has been up to the challenge of tackling the heavy content.

"Rose Cooper and Jonas Greenberg, they're really thoughtful, and they're very analytical as people and as actors, so that serves them really well in their roles as attorneys," he said. "Something that we've been really rolling around in rehearsal has been how, in a courtroom, attorneys are supposed to be the opposite of dramatic, and yet we're in a dramatic situation with the play. So, how do they remain engaging and interesting? The two of them have been really expert as far as that

goes."

For their characters, Gmazel and Hayes had plenty of source material to work with.

"There is so much footage about Jackson Reffitt, the son, and his testimony in court, as well as all the interviews he did. The father who stormed the Capitol, you can see that action on TV. The daunting part has been the difference between doing a sort of caricature or impersonation of those people and then what each of them brings uniquely to the roles themselves," he said. "I think Keara has really embodied the son and the 'rock and a hard place' that he lives in. Keara is really good at showing that both physically

and emotionally on stage.

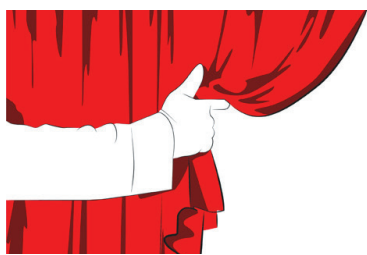
"And Mark, you know, it's hard, I think, to play a character — and to love your character like you're supposed to as an actor — who has done something that he was convicted for. That's not really up for debate. But to play him with compassion and to try to show the arc of how he gets there, Mark has been so brave and willing to show all the messy parts of that really human experience and how this character really got dragged down into a hard, sometimes sad situation."

Whether for the subject matter, the top-notch acting or the notably in-depth audio, which was created in partnership with the "Fatherland's" original

sound designer (who happens to be a Lansing native), Swan-Badgero hopes audience members from "all over the political spectrum" will see the show.

"I think it's an even-handed show as far as giving us a glimpse into these two characters that are on very different sides of the political spectrum. I think it's really humane and treats both the characters, the son and the father, with a lot of dignity," he said. "I hope that audiences will really be eager to dive into our mission statement, as far as creating dialogue, as opposed to being polarized, which is easy to do right now in our politics."

BEHIND THE CURTAIN



January and early February theater productions:

"Back to the Future: The Musical"

Jan. 13-18
7:30 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday
2 p.m. Saturday
1 and 6:30 p.m. Sunday
Wharton Center Cobb Great Hall
750 E. Shaw Lane, East Lansing
whartoncenter.com

"12 Incompetent Jurors"

Jan. 15-18 and 22-25
7 p.m. Thursday
8 p.m. Friday-Saturday
2 p.m. Sunday
Riverwalk Theatre
228 Museum Drive, Lansing
riverwalktheatre.com

"Fatherland"

Peppermint Creek Theatre Co.
Jan. 23-25 and 29-Feb. 1
7 p.m. Thursday-Saturday
3 p.m. Sunday; Jan. 31

Stage One at Sycamore Creek Eastwood
2200 Lake Lansing Road, Lansing
peppermintcreek.org

"Hadestown"

Jan. 30-Feb. 1
7:30 p.m. Friday-Saturday
2 p.m. Saturday
1 and 6:30 p.m. Sunday
Wharton Center Cobb Great Hall
750 E. Shaw Lane, East Lansing
whartoncenter.com

"Beetlejuice Jr."

All-of-Us Express Children's Theatre
Jan. 30-Feb. 1 and Feb. 6-8
7 p.m. Friday
3 p.m. Saturday-Sunday
Hannah Community Center
819 Abbot Road, East Lansing
allofusexpress.org

Jonesin' Crossword

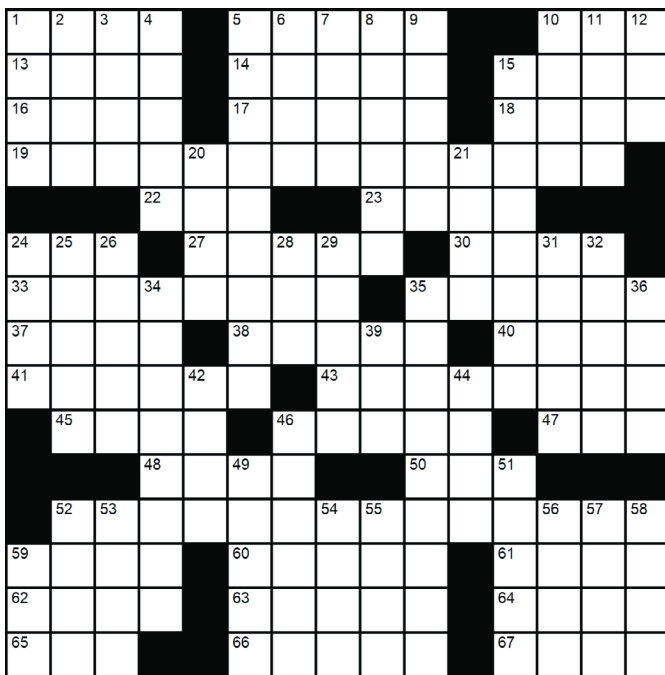
By Matt Jones

"Welcome to '26" -- with a tribute to my favorite 26!

by Matt Jones
© 2026 Matt Jones

ACROSS

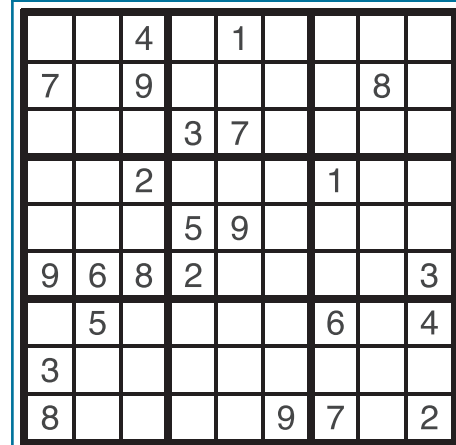
- 1. Aardvark's diet
- 5. Absorb with a piece of bread
- 10. Acne spot
- 13. Béchamel base, in a French restaurant
- 14. Compensate (for)
- 15. Cost increase
- 16. DEA agent's find
- 17. Desmond of "Sunset Boulevard"
- 18. Emotionally honest
- 19. First part of a phrase describing a special feature of this puzzle ...
- 22. Fried rice veggie
- 23. Furry barker
- 24. Galaxy hops may go into making one
- 27. Giant's N.L. West rival, for short
- 30. "Hope & Faith" actress (and talk show host) Kelly
- 33. ... in which I (this is part 2, by the way) ...
- 35. Japanese temple
- 37. Kitchenware inventor Tupper
- 38. Laid-back Brazilian samba offshoot ___ nova
- 40. Moistureless
- 41. Nearly used up, like a short pencil
- 43. ... normally don't do this, but here you get to see each one of the (part 3) ...
- 45. "Omnia vincit ___"
- 46. Popular sans-serif Windows font
- 47. Questionable, in "Among Us"
- 48. Robert of HBO's "Ari\$S"
- 50. Short winter month?



- 51. ... twenty-six represented! (4th and final part)
 - 59. Utterance from the awestruck
 - 60. Van Pelt sibling in "Peanuts"
 - 61. Wanton sort
 - 62. Xylophone material
 - 63. Yannick Noah's 2025 Laver Cup opposing captain ___ Agassi
 - 64. Yellow vehicle driver on "The Simpsons"
 - 65. "You can't judge a book by ___ cover"
 - 66. Zoo animals
 - 67. Zymurgy-related verb
- DOWN**
- 1. ___-Seltzer
 - 2. Hammering target
 - 3. Part of a cash register
 - 4. Bend down
 - 5. Holiday song made famous by Eartha Kitt
 - 6. "Alternatively," in a text
 - 7. Skin opening
 - 8. Reveal one's identity
 - 9. Quiet's companion
 - 10. Rushes along
 - 11. Mike and ___ (candies)
 - 12. X, in Roman numerals
 - 15. Rowdy soccer fan
 - 20. Government agents
 - 21. ___ avis (uncommon thing)
 - 24. Some frozen treats
 - 25. Silver, as in Montana's motto
 - 26. Gold, in Latin
 - 28. Not prone to infatuation, colloquially
 - 29. Labor organizer Chavez
 - 31. Fluffy birdlike creatures in "Star Wars: The Last Jedi"
 - 32. "Au revoir" relative
 - 34. Skater's protection
 - 35. Utopias
 - 36. Does simple math
 - 39. Start of some Indian place names
 - 42. Tyler Perry BET+ series centered around a group of male friends
 - 44. "30 Rock" star Baldwin
 - 46. Late audio engineer Steve
 - 49. Jewish : kosher :: Islamic : ___
 - 51. Chocolate substitute that doesn't taste like it
 - 52. "Cat on ___ Tin Roof"
 - 53. "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes" novelist Anita
 - 54. Medical prefix with scope
 - 55. Time to roll or draw, maybe
 - 56. Peter Jackson film franchise, initially
 - 57. Ren fair instrument
 - 58. "Ouch, that's hot!"
 - 59. "All Quiet on the Western Front" conflict

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SUDOKU Intermediate



Fun By The Numbers

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

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

Free Will Astrology

By Rob Breznsky Jan. 7-13, 2026

ARIES (March 21-April 19): The mystics drone on endlessly about letting go. But I'm here now to praise the art of holding on fiercely, tenderly, with full commitment. Some treasures deserve your passionate grip. Some people warrant your loyal devotion. Especially in the coming months, dear Aries, I invite you to devote yourself to your exciting dreams with ardent intensity. No surrender! Relentless perseverance! Uncompromising faith in the beauty and truth you love! What looks like stubbornness to outsiders will actually be fidelity to a vision others can't yet see.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): As far back as the 19th century, daredevil college students in the UK have reveled in the practice of "night climbing." They clamber up chapels, spires, towers, and bridges under the cover of darkness. Why? Mainly for adventure, mischief, and altered perspectives. In the coming months, Taurus, you may be ready for your own symbolic version of night climbing. If that sounds fun, seek out vantage points you've never accessed. Experiment with possibilities you've dismissed as off-limits or outside your range. Be safe, of course, but also be joyfully exploratory. I bet the view from the frontiers will change you in inspiring ways.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): In the coming months, I'm confident you will see and understand subtleties that most people miss. You'll be a maestro at tuning in to nuanced subtexts in conversations and hidden openings in stale situations. Everyone else may assume that familiar situations will never change, but you will have the power to tease out creative possibilities. You might even decode seemingly contradictory truths with such aplomb that you surprise yourself. Use this superpower with as much kindness as you can, Gemini. Some discoveries may tempt you toward clever mischief, but I hope that you will instead choose inspired guidance. Your expanded spectrum, if spiced with compassion, can consistently reveal your next leap.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): The honeyguide bird of Africa has a lucrative arrangement with humans. It calls out to honey hunters, leading them through brush to wild beehives built into trees. The people harvest the honey, and the bird eats the leftover wax and larvae. This cooperation is passed down over generations and benefits both species. Let's use this as a metaphor for your future in 2026. You will have extra power to notice where mutual benefit is possible, even with unexpected allies. They may be able to guide you toward resources you couldn't find alone, and you will have value to give in return. Keep an ear out for signals that say, "Come with me, and we'll both gain."

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): The cathedral of Notre-Dame in Paris took years to build. Work began in 1163 and continued until 1345. Generations of architects, masons, and artisans contributed to the project, and those who began it didn't live to see it completed. Yet they labored with devotion, trusting that the holy beauty they facilitated would endure beyond their lifetimes. I hope you're inspired by this story, Leo. It's an apt metaphor for you. In the coming months, you could and should lay stones for creations you may not see fully accomplished for months or even years. I encourage you to redefine and refine what faith means to you and summon it in abundance.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Ready to decommission your inner censor? Interested in dropping the mask, relaxing your guard, and rewinding your gorgeous but slightly inhibited self? That's what I recommend. Here are ways to fully enjoy the liberating grace period of the coming months: 1. Don't deny yourself pleasures that would be healthy to indulge. 2. Shed taboos that were smart safeguards once upon a time but are no longer. 3. Re-evaluate why you treat certain fun activities as questionable. 4. Be brightly compassionate toward aspects of yourself you regard as wounded or inferior. 5. Be receptive to rebellious urges.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): In 1839, French artist Louis Daguerre perfected the daguerreotype, an early type of photography. The images were so detailed that you could count the threads in a subject's clothing. The only downside: They required minutes of perfect stillness to capture. A slight twitch or squirm could blur the picture. People held their breath and resisted the urge to fidget, hoping to preserve the magic moment. In this spirit, Libra, let's make the *long exposure* your power metaphor during the coming months. The most useful truths will reveal themselves best if you give them time to develop. In conversations, resist filling every silence. In projects, don't rush the pace. Have patient fun lingering on the threshold as the mysteries coalesce and clarify.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): In 1907, Scorpio artist Pablo Picasso painted "Les Femmes d'Alger (O. J. R. M.)." It was a work so radically different from his earlier art and from the era's norms that even his friends were stunned. Some called it ugly, others incomprehensible. Yet the painting became a foundation of cubism and reshaped modern art. Dear Scorpio, I suspect you may be on the verge of your own "Les Femmes" phase in 2026: unveiling novel approaches and innovative changes so original that they rattle comfortable assumptions. Don't be discouraged if the initial responses don't bring you appreciation. The root-shaking breakthroughs you're consorting with may take others a while to recognize and welcome.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): You Sagittarians are often drawn to teaching. You have a predilection and a passion for sharing what you have learned from your adventures and explorations. Many of you also possess a related gift: helping people make the journey to where enlightening lessons can best occur. You have a knack for opening their minds and clearing the way so they can awaken to new ways of seeing and imagining the world. I hope you will provide both of these blessings in abundance during the coming months. Your ability to inspire and educate will be at a peak.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): The coming months are ripe for sacred audacity: boldness with a conscience and courage guided by kindness. Imagine you're a Benevolent Initiator, whose superpower is to kindle beginnings without causing disruption and unease. Practice brilliant, incremental nudges and tweaks rather than grand interventions. If you're hesitating to say what needs to be said, deliver a modest version now and a stronger one later. Make gradual momentum your ally. Homework: Identify a future scene you want to generate and take three elegantly simple steps toward it.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Safety isn't the opposite of adventure. It's the infrastructure that lets adventure be expansive. Keep that in mind in the coming months, Aquarius. You will be wise to cultivate cozy bravery. You should relax deeply and nurture your strength. Build the support system for your future boldness. Then, in the second half of 2026, you will be well prepared to launch a phase of experimental fun and exploratory learning. For best results, surround yourself with love and care. Decide who best supports you and make it attractive for them to support you.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): High in the Andes Mountains, farmers have for centuries made chuño, a freeze-dried potato that can last for years. They leave the potatoes outside overnight to let the freezing temperatures draw out the water. In the daytime, the strong sunlight and dry mountain air evaporate residual moisture. By this process, a perishable food becomes a long-lasting staple. I propose we make chuño your symbol of power, Pisces. The coming months will be an ideal time to build reserves. I hope you will turn what you have grown and developed into resources that will nourish you well into the future.

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, Jan. 7

"A Caregiver's Butterfly Garden" - 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.

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.

Battle of the Books Kickoff at DTDL - Learn more about Battle of the Books, including this year's booklist, an overview of the program, and Q&A. Adults, teens, and kids (4th grade and up) are welcome to participate. 6:30-8 p.m. Delta Township District Library, 5130 Davenport Drive, Lansing. dtdl.org.

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.

Bookend Gallery Display - We welcome Robert Ross to the gallery for the month of January. Bob describes himself as a creative explorer and seeker of adventures in art and music. Noon-4 p.m. Haslett Library, 1590 Franklin St., Haslett. cadl.org/about/our-locations/haslett.

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.

Campaign Finance Reform - Stop large corporations from controlling our politicians with big campaign contributions! Stop by to sign the Voters Not Politicians petition to get this on the ballot. 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Strange Matter Coffee, 2010 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. votersnotpoliticians.com.

Dream It, See It, Become It Night - This isn't your typical vision board night. We'll dream big and think strategically, mapping out the mindset, habits, and "grocery list" of what's truly needed to succeed in the year ahead. 6-7:30 p.m. Hooked, 3142 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. eventbrite.com/o/the-co-120708626780.

Fitness Over 50! Exercise Group - The Meridian Township Parks and Recreation Stretch and Flex Exercise group exercises at the Meridian Mall food court every Monday, Wednesday and Friday. 9-10 a.m. 1982 W. Grand River Ave., Okemos. meridian-50plus.com.

Free Community Meal - The January menu is TBD, but the meal is being generously provided by Swede's Restaurant, so it will be delicious! Dessert by Flour Child. 5:30-7 p.m. First United Methodist Church, 411 Harrison St., Grand Ledge. 517-627-3256.

Group Dance Class: Beginning Salsa - Learn the basic steps of one of the most popular Latin dances. 8 p.m. Michigan Athletic Club, 2900 Hannah Blvd., East Lansing. Register by calling 517-364-8888.

Lansing Live Open Stage Night - No cover, all ages welcome. 6-9 p.m. UrbanBeat, 1213 Turner St., Lansing. urbanbeatevents.com.

Lewie Austin Live at Dublin Square - 9 p.m.-midnight. 327 Abbot Road, East Lansing. 517-351-2222. facebook.com/dublinsquare.

Magic: The Gathering Club - We invite players of all skill levels to join us on the first Wednesday of every month for our Magic: The Gathering club. Cards not provided. 5:30-8 p.m. Charlotte Community Library, 226 S. Bostwick St., Charlotte. charlottelibrary.org.

Michigan Onsite Wastewater Conference - Learn the latest in onsite wastewater industry trends, regulatory changes, wastewater management options and technologies. 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Kellogg Hotel, 219 S. Harrison Road, East Lansing. canr.msu.edu/septic_system_education.

Mid-Michigan Photography Club Annual MMPC Photo Clinic - Mid-Michigan Photography Club holds an open house and clinic in January to attract new members. Presentations will include photography basics and off-camera flash. Please bring your camera. 6:30-8:30 p.m. First Presbyterian Church, 510 W. Ottawa St., Lansing. mmphotoclub.net.

MMAG Fall Art Show - 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Neighborhood Empowerment Center, 600 W. Maple St., Lansing. midmichiganartguild.org.

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

PEARS Crash Course - In this training, you'll learn what goes where in PEARs and where to find self-paced training materials, plus tips for data entry. 9-11:30 a.m. Virtual — register at canr.msu.edu/od/planning_evaluation_and_reporting/pears-crash-course.

PEARS Deeper Dive: Partnerships and Coalitions - Participants should have attended the PEARs Crash Course. Learn how to enter partnerships and coalitions. 1-2 p.m. Virtual — register at canr.msu.edu/od/planning_evaluation_and_reporting/pears-deeper-dives.

STEM Night - Learn about snowflakes and make your own with a marshmallow snowflake design challenge. Also, try your hand at sewing a snowflake decoration or experiment with making snow. 4-6 p.m. Aurelius Library, 1939 S. Aurelius Road, Mason. cadl.org/about/our-locations/aurelius.

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

Winter Wheat-tastic Wheat Wisdom Wednesday Webinars - With tight crop margins, how do you get the most "bang for your buck" from your wheat crop? Presented by Dennis Pennington and Jon LaPorte, MSU. 7-8 p.m. Virtual — register at canr.msu.edu/wheat.

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, Jan. 8

"A Caregiver's Butterfly Garden" - 6 a.m.-9 p.m. Hannah Community Center, 819 Abbot Road, East Lansing. dcwgardens.com.

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.

The Poetry Room open mic X MSU Department of Art, Art History, and Design: 'Celebrate'

Saturday, Jan. 10

Doors/sign-ups 7 p.m., show 7:30 p.m.
Jollof Afro-Caribbean Lounge
221 S. Washington Square, Lansing
facebook.com/The517PoetryRoom

Following City Pulse's December Holiday Poetry and Art Issue, The Poetry Room and Michigan State University's Department of Art, Art History, and Design will team up once again Saturday evening to host an open mic, with an optional theme of "celebration."

All are invited to share a song or poem, from traditional verse to spoken word, haiku and everything in between. The atmosphere of The Poetry Room's open mics is inclusive and intimate, with a welcoming and receptive audience of writers and other creatives. Non-poets are also welcome to listen along.

The event is a fundraiser for the Everett High School Alumni Association, which provides opportunities for fellowship, networking, public service and support among past students. Though admission is free, donations will be accepted.



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

Bookend Gallery Display - We welcome Robert Ross to the gallery for the month of January. Bob describes himself as a creative explorer and seeker of adventures in art and music. Noon-6 p.m. Haslett Library, 1590 Franklin St., Haslett. cadl.org/about/our-locations/haslett.

Campaign Finance Reform - Stop large corporations from controlling our politicians with big campaign contributions! Stop by to sign the Voters Not Politicians petition to get this on the ballot. 10 a.m.-noon and 1-3 p.m. Strange Matter Coffee, 2010 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. votersnotpoliticians.com.

Capital Area Audubon Meeting - Title: "Birds and Climate Change: An Update on Progress." Presenter: Susan Schneider, senior scientist for the sustainability nonprofit Root Solutions and faculty member at Western Michigan University. 7-8 p.m. Michigan Nature Association, 2310 Science Parkway, Okemos. capitalareaaudubon.org.

Chronic Pain PATH - Six-week workshop designed to help individuals with chronic pain improve their health and feel better. 12:30-3 p.m. Covington Woods Senior Apartments, 1900 Red Bud Lane, Lansing. To register, call 517-887-1465 or email histedc@toa.org.

Group Dance Class: Beginning West Coast Swing - A fun, exciting partner dance style to learn. 7 p.m. Michigan Athletic Club, 2900 Hannah Blvd., East Lansing. Register by calling 517-364-8888.

Informed Renter - This workshop from MSU Extension will equip you with valuable information about the rental process that will help you navigate technicalities and avoid costly mistakes. Noon-1 p.m. Virtual — register at canr.msu.edu/mimoney-health/index.

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.

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.

MSU Men's Basketball vs. Northwestern University - 6:30 p.m. Breslin Center, 534 Birch Road, East Lansing. msuspartans.com/sports/mens-basketball.

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. lapsq.org.

Protecting Your Identity - During this one-hour session, we'll discuss how to protect yourself from identity theft and what to do if your identity has already been stolen. Noon. Virtual — register at canr.msu.edu/mimoneyhealth.

Resolve to Organize Digital Photos with Help from SquirrelDude Photography - This program will introduce you to several photo-sharing services and how to organize, backup, and share pictures. Ages 13+. 6-7:30 p.m. Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St., Grand Ledge. gladl.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. spiritofmichigan-chorus.com.

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.

See Events, Page 16

Gene Hahn and PAS Club student performers

3 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 11
Okemos Community Church
4734 Okemos Road, Okemos
lansingmatinee musicale.org

Violinist Gene Hahn, who debuted at Carnegie Hall at the age of 13 and continued to perform there as a member of the New York Symphony, will serenade attendees of the Lansing Matinee Musicale's January program Sunday afternoon. Members of the Musicale's Performing Arts Students Club will also make an appearance.

Hahn, who has graced the stages of several other prestigious venues, including Lincoln Center's Alice Trully Hall and Philadelphia's Verizon Hall, is associate concertmaster of the West Michigan Symphony and performs with the Grand Rapids Symphony and Detroit Symphony Orchestra.

He also founded and performs in a West Michigan-based acoustic string band called ESME (Eclectic String Music Ensemble), which writes and performs its own arrangements, covers and mash-ups of popular music using classical string instruments. The group leads clinics and workshops at various high schools in the Grand Rapids area, with the goal of teaching students to apply their knowledge of pop music to their school music programs and study of classical instruments.



Events

from page 15

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

Tune In - An inclusive music showcase for performers and songwriters from Greater Lansing. You're invited to share a song (must sign up in advance) or just enjoy great music by your neighbors. 7:30 p.m. The Robin Theatre, 1105 S. Washington Ave., Lansing. tenpoundfiddle.org.

Friday, Jan. 9

"A Caregiver's Butterfly Garden" - 6 a.m.-9 p.m. Hannah Community Center, 819 Abbot Road, East Lansing. dcwgardens.com.

Ben Awrey Live at Sidebar - 7-10 p.m. 246 E. Saginaw St., East Lansing. 517-220-2131. sidebar-eastlansing.com.

Bookend Gallery Display - We welcome Robert Ross to the gallery for the month of January. Bob describes himself as a creative explorer and seeker of adventures in art and music. Noon-4 p.m. Haslett Library, 1590 Franklin St., Haslett. cadl.org/about/our-locations/haslett.

Campaign Finance Reform - Stop large corporations from controlling our politicians with big campaign contributions! Stop by to sign the Voters Not Politicians petition to get this on the ballot. 1:30-3:30 p.m. Strange Matter Coffee, 2010 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. votersnotpoliticians.com.

Date Night Dance Class for Couples - A fun, engaging experience where partners learn basic steps, build connection through rhythmic movement, and create shared memories. 7-8 p.m. Michigan Athletic Club, 2900 Hannah Blvd., East Lansing. Register by calling 517-364-8888.

Fitness Over 50! Exercise Group - The Meridian Township Parks and Recreation Stretch and Flex Exercise group exercises at the Meridian Mall food court every Monday, Wednesday and Friday. 9-10 a.m. 1982 W. Grand River Ave., Okemos. meridian-50plus.com.

Five Elements Dance & Drum - Intuitive movement and music in a supportive, sober environment. Bring a yoga mat, dancing socks/slippers and a drum or rattle if desired. 6:30 p.m. The Light House Chapel, 1501 Windsor St., Lansing. facebook.com/

lansinglighthousechapel.

Fundraiser Fish Fry - Served takeout style, with seating available. We may close early if we run out. There will also be a bake sale. 4:30-6:30 p.m. Wacousta-DeWitt Masonic Lodge, 9030 W. Herbison Road, Grand Ledge. wacousta.net.

Kindergarten Craft Club - Make a DVD art case! 4:15 p.m. Charlotte Community Library, 226 S. Bostwick St., Charlotte. charlottelibrary.org.

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

LSO MasterWorks: Verdi, Miller & Brahms - Some stories unfold in words. Others in sound. This program brings together music that speaks of struggle, resilience and joy. 7:30 p.m. Wharton Center, 750 E. Shaw Lane, East Lansing. lansingsymphony.org.

Off The Ledge Live at Mash Bar - 9:30 p.m. 212 Albert Ave., East Lansing. 517-858-2100. mashbar.net.

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.

Sensory-Friendly Night at Harris Nature Center - A special after-hours evening for families with members who have sensory processing needs. Exhibits will have reduced sounds and lighting, and a quiet room and sensory kits will be available. 5:30-7:30 p.m. 3998 Van Atta Road, Okemos. meridian.mi.us/hnc.

Sudden Impact Live at Summerlands Brewing Co. - Summerlands is thrilled to welcome the Lansing area's premier cover band for a live performance you won't want to miss. 8-11 p.m. 1957 Cedar St., Holt. facebook.com/summerlandsbrewing.

Saturday, Jan. 10

"A Caregiver's Butterfly Garden" - 8 a.m.-8 p.m. Hannah Community Center, 819 Abbot Road, East Lansing. dcwgardens.com.

Ann Bell, featuring Greg Grock Sanders & Rodney Todd - 7-10 p.m. UrbanBeat, 1213 Turner St., Lansing. urbanbeatevents.com.

Bookend Gallery Display - We welcome Robert Ross to the gallery for the month of January. Bob describes himself as a creative explorer and seeker of adventures in art and music. Noon-2 p.m. Haslett Library, 1590 Franklin St., Haslett. cadl.org/about/our-locations/haslett.

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

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.

Johnny Hamcheck - Hamcheck, an Ohio-based social media prankster known for his hilarious antics and spontaneous interactions with strangers, presents an evening of music and comedy! 7-9 p.m. The Studio at 414, 410 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. eventbrite.com/o/the-comedy-bar-at-414-12069795881.

Second Saturday Divorce Workshop - Join us for a supportive and informative workshop designed to help you navigate the complexities of divorce. 9 a.m.-noon. 2139 Commons Parkway, Ste. B, Okemos. eventbrite.com/o/kylee-mohammed-ffc-cdfa-77498789483.

WAVELENGTH 1.10 - Two floors of techno, house, and ghetotech, two birthdays, and an official WAVELENGTH compilation, plus amazing vendors like @cassmafrass. 8 p.m.-1 a.m. The Green Door, 2005 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. facebook.com/thegreendoorlive.

Sunday, Jan. 11

"A Caregiver's Butterfly Garden" - Noon-8 p.m. Hannah Community Center, 819 Abbot Road, East Lansing. dcwgardens.com.

Alignment of Christ - Peter Champoux speaks on the discovery of life of Christ events that connect Eastward to Kailash — home of Shiva, sacred place of five religions. 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. The Light House Chapel, 1501 Windsor St., Lansing. facebook.com/lansinglighthousechapel.

Campaign Finance Reform - Stop large corporations from controlling our politicians with big campaign contributions! Stop by to sign the Voters Not Politicians petition to get this on the ballot. Noon-2 p.m. Strange Matter Coffee, 2010 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. votersnotpoliticians.com.

DJ Trivia and Football at Summerlands Brewing Co. - Trivia is free to play, with prizes for the top three teams. Catch the football games while you play. 4-5:30 p.m. 1957 Cedar St., Holt. facebook.com/summerlandsbrewing.

Four More Shapes - Rock along to music of Bob Dylan, The Band, The Beatles, Grateful Dead and more. Featuring Aaron Johnson Manbeck and Mighty Medicine. 4-7 p.m. UrbanBeat, 1213 Turner St., Lansing. urbanbeatevents.com.

Ingham Festival Chorale - Rehearsals are weekly. Everyone is welcome! No auditions required. Membership fee is just \$60. Directed by Michael Huey-Jones. 2-3:30 p.m. University United Methodist Church, 1120 S. Harrison Road, East Lansing. facebook.com/inghamfestivalchoralemi.

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

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. redcedar-friends.org.

Refugee Development Center Fundraiser - Love Rose benefit concert — eclectic poetic soul with interpretive dance and audience percussive participation. Silent auction/food drive for the RDC and ceramic art/CD/poster sales. 5-8 p.m. Altu's Ethiopian Cuisine, 1312 E. Michigan Ave., East Lansing. facebook.com/altuethiopiancuisine.

Sunday Brunch at Summerlands Brewing Co. - We've updated our hours and menu to bring you the perfect Sunday experience, whether you're craving something classic, something coastal, or something hearty. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. 1957 Cedar St., Holt. facebook.com/summerlandsbrewing.

Weekly Drum Circle at Altu's - Get your groove on and de-stress with us every Sunday! This is a free, family-friendly event. All ages and experience levels are welcome. 2-4 p.m. 1312 E. Michigan Ave., East Lansing. facebook.com/GreaterLansingAreaDrummers.

Monday, Jan. 12

"A Caregiver's Butterfly Garden" - 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.

Bookend Gallery Display - We welcome Robert Ross to the gallery for the month of January. Bob describes himself as a creative explorer and seeker of adventures in art and music. Noon-4 p.m. Haslett Library, 1590 Franklin St., Haslett. cadl.org/about/our-locations/haslett.

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.

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.

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.

Euchre - 1-3 p.m. Eaton Rapids Senior Center, 201 Grand St., Eaton Rapids. facebook.com/EatonRapidsSeniorCenter.

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.

Fitness Over 50! Exercise Group - The Meridian Township Parks and Recreation Stretch and Flex Exercise group exercises at the Meridian Mall food court every Monday, Wednesday and Friday. 9-10 a.m. 1982 W. Grand River Ave., Okemos. meridian-50plus.com.

Improv Acting Class for Teens and Adults - 8:30-9:30 p.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. ruhalacenter.com.

Level I Dance Class for Kids - Ages 5-8. 4-5 p.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. ruhalacenter.com.

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.

Pokémon Party - Open to participants of the GLADL Reading Challenge. Test your knowledge with Pokémon trivia, create your own Poké-crafts, and play fun Poké-games. 6-7:30 p.m. Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St., Grand Ledge. gladl.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.

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.

See Events, Page 17

Events

from page 16

Tuesday, Jan. 13

"A Caregiver's Butterfly Garden" - 6 a.m.-9 p.m. Hannah Community Center, 819 Abbot Road, East Lansing. dcwgardens.com.

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 - 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.

"Back to the Future: the Musical" - Great Scott! "Back to the Future," the beloved cinematic classic, is now a Broadway musical! 7:30 p.m. Wharton Center, 750 E. Shaw Lane, East Lansing. wharton-center.com.

Bookend Gallery Display - We welcome Robert Ross to the gallery for the month of January. Bob describes himself as a creative explorer and seeker of adventures in art and music. Noon-4 p.m. Haslett Library, 1590 Franklin St., Haslett. cadl.org/about/our-locations/haslett.

Campaign Finance Reform - Stop large corporations from controlling our politicians with big campaign contributions! Stop by to sign the Voters Not Politicians petition to get this on the ballot. 1-3 p.m. Strange Matter Coffee, 2010 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. votersnotpoliticians.com.

Caring for the Caregiver 113 - In this workshop, we'll explore the many ways informal caregiving affects a caregiver's mental and physical health, as well as practice some strategies for self-care. 1-2 p.m. Virtual — register at canr.msu.edu/caregiving.

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.

Dark Horse Consort: The Sounds of St. Mark's - The Dark Horse Consort revives the rich brass traditions of Renaissance and early Baroque Europe, echoing the soundscapes of St. Mark's Basilica in Venice. 7:30 p.m. Fairchild Theatre, 542 Auditorium Road, East Lansing. music.msu.edu.

Dementia Caregiver Series - Three-session series intended to reduce stress for those caring for a person with dementia by providing useful tools and information. 10:30 a.m.-noon. The Courtyard at Delta, 350 S. Marketplace Blvd., Lansing. To register, call 517-887-1465 or email histedc@tcoa.org.

Game Night at Summerlands Brewing Co. - Bring your favorite board game, card game, or party game — or jump in on one of the games we already have here. 6-9 p.m. 1957 Cedar St., Holt. facebook.com/summerlandsbrewing.

Intermediate Ballet Class for Teens & Adults - Meets twice per week. 5:30-7 p.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. ruhalacenter.com.

Level II Dance class for Kids - Ages 9-12. 4-5:30 p.m. Ruhala Performing Arts Center, 1846 Haslett Road, East Lansing. ruhalacenter.com.

LRCC January Member Mixer - Join us for delicious appetizers by chef Robert, complimentary cocktails and a fun, welcoming atmosphere at the Michigan Athletic Club's Courtside Grill. 4:30-6:30 p.m. 2900 Hannah Blvd., East Lansing. facebook.com/LansingChamber.

Minecraft Mania - An evening of fun and friendly competition. We'll have our Minecraft server set up and laptops ready to go. Ages 8-12. 6-8 p.m. Grand

Ledge Area District Library, 131 E. Jefferson St., Grand Ledge. gladl.org.

MSU Men's Basketball vs. Indiana University - 8 p.m. Breslin Center, 534 Birch Road, East Lansing. msuspartans.com/sports/mens-basketball.

Online Extension Extras for Parents: How Soon is Too Soon? Teaching Your Children Money Habits - Learn how to begin teaching your children about good money habits at a young age. 7:30-9 p.m. Virtual — register at canr.msu.edu/parenting_education_classes.

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.

Tai Chi for Better Sleep - This series combines Tai Chi for Arthritis and Fall Prevention and the Sleep Education for Everyone Program (SLEEP). 9 a.m. or 7 p.m. Virtual — register at canr.msu.edu/tai-chi-for-arthritis.

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

Virtual Mindfulness for Better Sleep - This program introduces participants to the experience and practice of mindfulness. Participants will also learn techniques to improve the quality and quantity of their sleep. 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Virtual — register at canr.msu.edu/mindfulnessforbetterliving.

Walk with Ease - Walking exercise program that can reduce pain and improve overall health. Group will meet Tuesdays at Letts Community Center through Feb. 10. 1:30-2:30 p.m. 1220 W. Kalamazoo St., Lansing. To register, call 517-887-1465 or email histedc@tcoa.org.

Wednesday, Jan. 14

"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 Bingo - Join us for a fun afternoon of bingo, complete with light refreshments and prizes for the winners! 2:30-4 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. allen-neighborhoodcenter.org/allen-farmers-market.



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Dark Horse Consort: 'The Sounds of St. Mark's'

7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 13

Fairchild Theatre

542 Auditorium Road, East Lansing

music.msu.edu

Early music ensemble Dark Horse Consort works to revive late-Renaissance and early-Baroque-era brass traditions. The group's name was inspired by the bronze horse statues atop Venice, Italy's famed St. Mark's Basilica, which was known for its "rapturous kaleidoscope of sound."

The ensemble's concert Tuesday at Michigan State University will highlight 16th- and 17th-century Italian works, including canzoni by Giovanni Gabrieli and Giovanni Picchi and sonatas by Dario Castello.

Intended to recreate the splendor and innovation of sacred music-making in churches of the time, Dark Horse Consort bases its sound on, and often performs the work of, composers such as Gabrieli, Claudio Monteverdi and Heinrich Schütz.

Tickets are \$10.50 for students and youth, \$20.50 for adults and \$18.50 for seniors.

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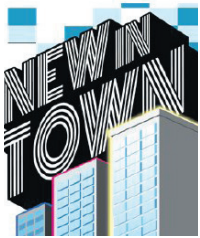
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FOOD & DRINK

DINING OUT IN GREATER LANSING

Eiffel Waffle serves up ice cream like you've never had before



Eiffel Waffle Creamery

112 Bailey St., East Lansing
(517) 721-1130
Noon-10 p.m. Sun.-Tues.
Noon-midnight Fri.-Sat.

Two years ago, after taking their kids to a family wedding in Chicago, DeWitt couple Awais Ahmad and Daniyal Nawaz decided to take their kids out for some late-night ice cream. They initially settled on an Eiffel Waffle Creamery location simply because it was open. As the family was enjoying the store's unique flavors, bubble waffle "cones" and mini pancakes, Ahmad noticed a sign on the wall about potential franchisees.

"They had an application right on the wall for someone looking to franchise in Michigan, because they recently got approved to offer franchises in Michigan, and I just filled in an application," he said.

By LEO V. KAPLAN

They initially settled on an Eiffel Waffle Creamery location simply because it was open. As the family was enjoying the store's unique flavors, bubble waffle "cones" and mini pancakes, Ahmad noticed a sign on the wall about potential franchisees.

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Eiffel Waffle Creamery opened Friday, Jan. 2 in downtown East Lansing, offering a variety of unique menu items. Its signature item is the bubble waffle sundae, featuring ice cream and toppings served in a freshly made, still-warm waffle "cone" for an experience less like a traditional cone and more like, well, eating ice cream out of a waffle.

Ahmad said many of the menu items are firsts for the area, and he's excited to introduce them to the community. On top of bubble waffle cones, the shop also offers mini pancakes with ice cream and other toppings, and Lotus Biscoff-flavored ice cream and matcha.

The ice cream is made in-house in Chicago and Ahmad said it is made with natural and organic ingredients.

The location is the Chicago-based chain's eighth, and its first in Michigan. It also has several personal touches, with interior design being spearheaded by Nawaz.

"We just make sure the general trade dress is Eiffel Waffle, but then they have a



Leo V. Kaplan/City Pulse

Husband-and-wife duo Daniyal Nawaz (left) and Awais Ahmad hold the Lotus Lover bubble cone sundae, Ahmad's favorite menu item at the new Eiffel Waffle Creamery location in East Lansing.

lot of freedom when it comes to making the place theirs," said Eiffel Waffle co-founder Omar Falaneh.

"So there's a lot of things different about the spot, and she spent a lot of time designing the interior," he said of Nawaz.

The shop is the second East Lansing ice

cream shop to open in the span of a single deep winter month, with RJ's Burgers & Ice Cream Co. opening last month.

Ahmad, a software engineer, owns the location, but Nawaz will run it. While Ahmad has entrepreneurial experience from designing applications and working as a consultant, owning a store like this is a first for both of them.

They are both excited to run a business in the area, where they have lived for 10 years.

"We love the college town feel, and our kids love it here," Ahmad said. "We have no plans to move."

The shop's intended audience is MSU students, but Ahmad said he has been surprised to see older customers coming in.

"We initially thought that this was going to be for university-going people, you know, the students and kids," he said. "But when we had a soft opening, we had so many senior citizens over here, and middle-aged people over here with families and all that. So I think it's for everybody."

RJ's is a fast-food fan's dream

By NICOLE NOEHEL

I'd consider myself something of a burger connoisseur, having grown up a picky eater who craved red meat and cheese above all else. Last year, I reviewed my favorite in the area, the Deluxe at Bangos. But just because I have a preference doesn't mean I'm not excited when I hear of another burger spot opening in town.

Case in point, RJ's Burgers & Ice Cream Co. As I was editing my colleague Leo's New in Town article on the subject, I knew a love affair was burgeoning. Not only does the menu include scrumptious-looking smash burgers but also seasoned fries, edible cookie dough and 32 flavors of ice cream? It's like this concept was created with me and only me in mind.

My first trip of what I know will be many, many more began with a realization: Co-owner Robert



RJ's double with bacon

\$9.99

Salt and vinegar fries

\$3.49

RJ's Burgers & Ice Cream Co.
1399 E. Grand River Ave., East Lansing
11 a.m.-9 p.m. Monday-Saturday
Noon-6 p.m. Sunday
(517) 481-6574
rjsburgersandicecreamco.com

seating and eccentric light fixtures, plus "The Great British Bake Off" playing on the TVs and early 2010s power ballads blasting over the PA system, I was charmed before I even tasted a bite of the food.

Wilkie wasn't lying when he told City Pulse about the "experience" RJ's offers. On a cold, gray day, I stepped out of the

gravelly snow mound-laden parking lot and into one of the most vibrant, colorful, inviting spaces I've had the pleasure of visiting. From the neon pink and aqua color scheme to the '50s diner-style

The burger-ordering process is similar to a certain chain known for its fresh-cut fries and free peanuts. (It's a process I'm very familiar with since I worked at that chain during the pandemic.) You choose the number of patties and whether you want bacon, then select your cheese, toppings and sauce(s). But my double bacon burger with American cheese, grilled onions and Moo Moo sauce (RJ's signature chipotle mayo) was above and beyond its corporate counterpart.

The patties were pressed insanely thin, allowing a crust to form over the entirety of the meat. I can see why there's no single-patty option on the menu. The melty cheese melded into the tangy, rich sauce, providing a burst of creaminess with every bite. The bacon was nice and crunchy, and the generous helping of onions was a bomb of savory flavor. Though it may not have been great for my post-holiday waistline, this burger impressed me — I only wished I'd gotten a third patty, but there's always next time.



Nicole Noechel/City Pulse

Though the ordering process is similar to a certain chain known for its fresh-cut fries and free peanuts, RJ's smash burger is above and beyond its corporate counterpart.

And then there was the main reason RJ's intrigued me so much: the salt and vinegar fries. You could put salt and vinegar seasoning on just

See Dish, Page 19

Dish

from page 18

about anything, and I'd eat it. Potato chips, popcorn, almonds, rice cakes ... the list goes on. Once I popped the first fry into my mouth, I didn't put the cup down until I was finished and rarely came up for air.

I'd compare the base potato to a Wendy's fry — thin but not too thin, crispy and delectably savory. But being coated in salt and vinegar seasoning brought them up about 10 notches. I didn't even think about using any of the ketchup packets that were given to me. These were addictive and

then some.

As I walked out of the restaurant and prepared to drive back to the office to pen my review, I found myself grinning. My faith in the local food scene had been restored after a decadent December of delectable meals in faraway places. When I got back to the office, I greeted my general manager, Steve, by stating, "That was an incredible experience. I can't wait to write about it." When I saw Leo, I hit him with a quick "RJ's is fire" as he walked out the door. If that doesn't perfectly sum up what I thought about my meal, and why I'm so ecstatic to recommend RJ's to our readers, I don't know what would.

TOP 5

DINING GUIDE

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

TOP 5 CHICKEN STRIPS/ TENDERS

Based on your votes in City Pulse's 2025 Top of the Town contest. Bon appétit!

1. Cheddar's Scratch Kitchen

Family-friendly chain serving American comfort food with a Texas twist
5719 W. Saginaw Hwy., Lansing
(517) 323-4963
cheddars.com
11 a.m.-10 p.m. Sunday-Thursday
11 a.m.-11 p.m. Friday-Saturday

2. Crack Chicken

Humble take-out spot with a menu of fried chicken, seafood and sides
4901 W. Saginaw Hwy., Lansing
(517) 579-5005

crackchicken.net
10 a.m.-11 p.m. Sunday-Thursday
10 a.m.-midnight Friday-Saturday

3. Dave's Hot Chicken

Chicken eatery offering sliders, tenders and other fare
194 Albert Ave., East Lansing
(517) 853-7077
daveshotchicken.com
10 a.m.-11:45 p.m. Sunday-Tuesday
10 a.m.-2:15 a.m.
Wednesday-Saturday

4. Olympic Broil

Casual fast-food outpost with hefty burgers, coney dogs, wraps and sandwiches
1320 N. Grand River Ave., Lansing
(517) 485-8584
olympicbroil.com
10:30 a.m.-8 p.m. Monday-Saturday

5. Raising Cane's

Fast-food chain specializing in fried chicken fingers, crinkle-cut fries and Texas toast
301 E. Grand River Ave., East Lansing
(517) 318-1420
raisingcanes.com
10 a.m.-midnight
Sunday-Wednesday
10 a.m.-2 a.m. Thursday-Saturday



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CROSSWORD SOLUTION

From Pg. 14

A	N	T	S	S	S	O	P	U	P		Z	I	T				
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SUDOKU SOLUTION

From Pg. 14

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

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