

CityPULSE

a newspaper for the rest of us

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Jan. 30 - Feb. 5, 2019

Joel Ferguson: No apologies

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**REGINA CARTER:
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"[Carter] is at the top of her art on this fantastic tribute."
-DownBeat Magazine


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Bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies gain popularity in Lansing



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Sing away the blues with Ten Pound Fiddle & Joshua Davis



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A sit-down with Strange Matter owner Cara Nader



Cover Art

Courtesy Michigan State University

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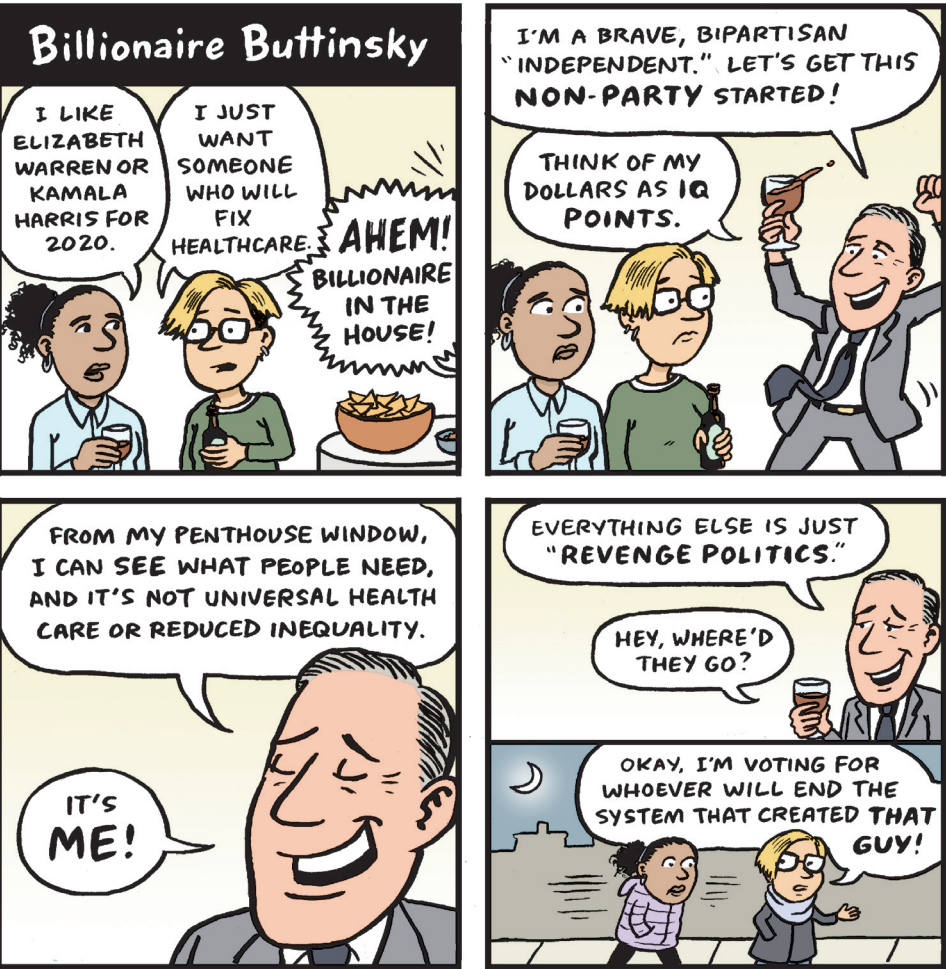
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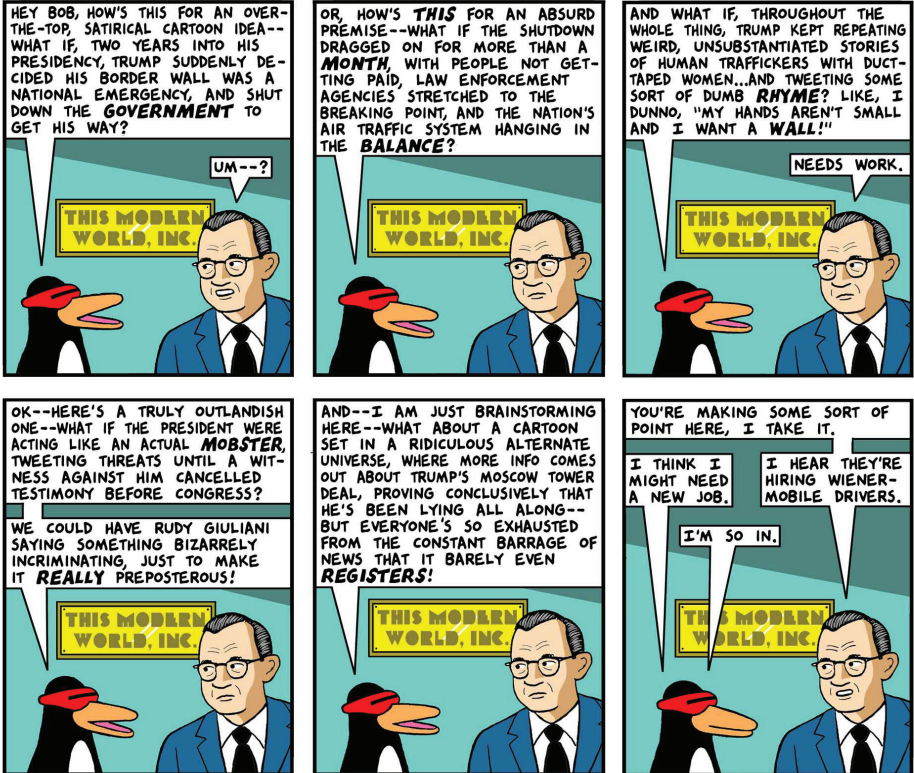
EVERYTHING ELSE IS JUST "REVENGE POLITICS."

HEY, WHERE'D THEY GO?

OKAY, I'M VOTING FOR WHOEVER WILL END THE SYSTEM THAT CREATED THAT GUY!

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



HEY BOB, HOW'S THIS FOR AN OVER-THE-TOP, SATIRICAL CARTOON IDEA--WHAT IF, TWO YEARS INTO HIS PRESIDENCY, TRUMP SUDDENLY DECIDED HIS BORDER WALL WAS A NATIONAL EMERGENCY, AND SHUT DOWN THE GOVERNMENT TO GET HIS WAY?

UM--?

OR, HOW'S THIS FOR AN ABSURD PREMISE--WHAT IF THE SHUTDOWN DRAGGED ON FOR MORE THAN A MONTH, WITH PEOPLE NOT GETTING PAID, LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES STRETCHED TO THE BREAKING POINT, AND THE NATION'S AIR TRAFFIC SYSTEM HANGING IN THE BALANCE?

NEEDS WORK.

AND WHAT IF, THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE THING, TRUMP KEPT REPEATING WEIRD, UNSUBSTANTIATED STORIES OF HUMAN TRAFFICKERS WITH DUCT-TAPED WOMEN...AND TWEETING SOME SORT OF DUMB RHYME? LIKE, I DUNNO, "MY HANDS AREN'T SMALL AND I WANT A WALL!"

OK--HERE'S A TRULY OUTLANDISH ONE--WHAT IF THE PRESIDENT WERE ACTING LIKE AN ACTUAL MOBSTER, TWEETING THREATS UNTIL A WITNESS AGAINST HIM CANCELLED TESTIMONY BEFORE CONGRESS?

WE COULD HAVE RUDY GIULIANI SAYING SOMETHING BIZARRELY INCRIMINATING, JUST TO MAKE IT REALLY PREPOSTEROUS!

AND--I AM JUST BRAINSTORMING HERE--WHAT ABOUT A CARTOON SET IN A RIDICULOUS ALTERNATE UNIVERSE, WHERE MORE INFO COMES OUT ABOUT TRUMP'S MOSCOW TOWER DEAL, PROVING CONCLUSIVELY THAT HE'S BEEN LYING ALL ALONG--BUT EVERYONE'S SO EXHAUSTED FROM THE CONSTANT BARRAGE OF NEWS THAT IT BARELY EVEN REGISTERS!

YOU'RE MAKING SOME SORT OF POINT HERE, I TAKE IT.

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PULSE

NEWS & OPINION

Ferguson: No regrets about Engler

Despite attacks, 'I'm still not quitting'

Joel Ferguson offers no remorse for what fellow Trustee Brian Mosallam labeled as John Engler's "reign of terror" at Michigan State University.

When the Board of Trustees accepted Engler's resignation two weeks ago, the other six members who were at the special meeting took time to apologize to the survivors of convicted pedophile Larry Nassar or opine about the brighter future ahead.

Not Ferguson. Instead, he sat quietly.

But last week, confronted with calls for his resignation, he broke his silence in an exclusive interview with City Pulse.

Ferguson referred to the public reaction of other trustees to Engler's departure as a "grandstanding circus."

Among the points Ferguson made in the phone interview were:

- Engler, by and large, did the job he was hired to do: Protect MSU's finances. There was no reason for trustees to apologize to anyone when they accepted his resignation. Instead, trustees were only "covering their asses" to protect the reputation of the institution amid a continued crisis, he said.

- Reports that Ferguson, a leading Democrat in Michigan who served on the Democratic National Committee, had privately flipped his initial vote from former Gov. Jim Blanchard to support former Republican Gov. Engler last year — and the criticism that came along with it — are based on inaccurate journalism by the Detroit Free Press, he contended. Ferguson always supported Engler, up until days before he left.

- His comment on Tim Staudt's radio show last year that there are "so many more things going on at this university than just this Nassar thing" was twisted in the media in an attempt to demonize him. Strangely, though, when Ferguson volunteered a transcript of the interview that he said was "verbatim," of that interview, the controversial words were omitted entirely.

- "I'm not quitting."

No apologies on Engler

The former governor was only appointed president to safeguard university finances amid a growing public relations nightmare, Ferguson said. And by all accounts, Engler had fulfilled the board's expectations. There was simply no reason that he, or anyone else on the board, owed apologies for a job well done, Ferguson explained.

"At Michigan State University, with all that noise, our job was to make a decision that was best for us and to make certain our funding and everything else stayed intact," Ferguson added, saying finances "were the whole thing. Nobody griped when he came in, because we all knew it had to happen, because that was what

our needs were."

Although the board was initially confident in its selection, a series of insensitive statements by Engler—culminating in January with saying some sexual assault victims were "enjoying the spotlight"—eventually helped turn the tide. Hundreds of students and staff had urged him to resign by the end of his tenure. The trustees agreed. "For all the reforms we're making, we keep slipping backwards," Board Chairwoman Dianne Byrum told City Pulse.

But two days before the vote Ferguson disagreed that Engler needed to go. His thinking, he told City Pulse, was that Engler was only slated to stay on board for another couple months any-



Kyle Kaminski/City Pulse

Ferguson sits at the MSU Board of Trustees meeting on Jan. 17 without comment.

way. And a replacement would've only created the optics of a disjointed and dysfunctional board, Ferguson claimed.

Referring to the vote to accept Engler's resignation, Ferguson said, "After we make the vote, then guys want to cover their asses and claim they don't like Engler."

Harkening back to his vote to appoint Engler, he said, "My decision was about what was best for MSU at the time. We were under attack by the Legislature. We had legislators grandstanding and saying shit and everything else. We were under attack and we did it unanimously."

As interim president for almost a year, Engler helped quell concerns when the Republican-controlled legislature was threatening to slash state funding for the university. He also helped negotiate a \$500 million settlement for Nassar survivors and bring some "financial closure" amid MSU's continued legal exposure, Ferguson said.

And that was all Engler was ever hired to do in the first place, Ferguson emphasized. It was never about healing. Engler's resignation letter also touted his personal list of "accomplishments" and further argued MSU was better off after a year under his

See Ferguson, Page 6



Potter House 1348 Cambridge Drive Lansing

This vast home was constructed in 1926 for Ray and Sarah Potter, its grandeur reflecting the socialite owners and the impact realized by their family in the development of the greater Lansing area. Potter Park Zoo and the City of Pottersville owe their creation, respectively, to Potter's father and grandfather. Now under the care of James McClurken and Sergei Kvitko, the home has enjoyed dedicated attention to maintenance and decor since the couple's purchase in 2008.

The home exhibits the many defining characteristics of the Tudor Revival style, including decorative half-timbering and tall groups of multi-paned windows. Steeply pitched slate roofs are arranged in cross gables and balanced asymmetries. Massive, corbelled brick chimneys anchor either end of the main volume of the home.

Designed by East Lansing architect Harold Childs, the home features a broad, wood-paneled hall running the length of the building, which creates a main spine with rooms organized on either side. Thistles, which are a repeating theme on interior fixtures, and a lion rampant over the fireplace evoke the original owners' Scottish heritage. McClurken suggests this clever detail recalls the home's style and the often-bellikose relationship between England's historic Tudor monarchs and their northern neighbors.

Daniel E. Bollman, AIA

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

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE OF FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

AND

NOTICE OF INTENT TO REQUEST RELEASE OF FUNDS

January 30, 2019

CITY OF LANSING, MICHIGAN

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING

316 N. CAPITOL AVE.

LANSING, MI 48933

(517) 483-4040

CONTACT: Donald Kulhanek, Development Manager

TO ALL INTERESTED AGENCIES, GROUPS AND PERSONS: These notices shall satisfy two separate but related procedural requirements for activities to be undertaken by the City of Lansing, MI.

REQUEST FOR RELEASE OF FUNDS

On or about February 15, 2019, the City of Lansing, MI will submit a request to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the release of HOME funds under Title II of the Cranston-Gonzalez National Affordable Housing Act, as amended, to undertake a project known as the **New Construction of four (4) single family homes, each constructed on a separate vacant lot on Glenburne Blvd in Southwest Lansing.**

This project will focus on the construction of four (4) new single family homes for sale to homebuyers and will model the energy efficiency, design and amenities that characterize the type of future new housing development that best fits Lansing’s urban neighborhood properties. Funds will be available for projects to be purchased by households with income at or below 80% of area median income. Construction will take place on previously developed lots in single-family residential areas. More specifically, this project involves the new construction of single family homes, one on each lot on Glenburne Blvd in Southwest Lansing. Each lot will contain a single-family home with 3 bedrooms and at least 1.5 baths and a full basement and will be made available to income qualified homebuyers using Down Payment Assistance through HOME funds of approximately \$225,000 per house will be invested in the project along with funds from the CHDO.

Estimated Total Expenditures: \$900,456.000

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The City of Lansing, MI has determined that the project will have no significant impact on the human environment. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) is not required. Additional project information is contained in the Environmental Review Record (ERR) on file at the City of Lansing Department of Economic Development and Planning, 316 N. Capitol, where the record is available for review and may be examined or copied M- F 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Any individual, group, or agency disagreeing with this determination or wishing to comment on the project may submit written comments to: Doris M. Witherspoon, Senior Planner, City of Lansing Department of Economic Development and Planning, 316 N. Capitol, Lansing, MI 48933, doris.witherspoon@lansingmi.gov or at City Clerk Office, 124 W. Michigan Ave, Capital Area District Library, 400.S. Capitol Ave, Lansing, MI. All comments received by 5:00 p.m., February 14, 2019 will be considered by the City of Lansing Department of Economic Development and Planning prior to authorizing submission to HUD of a request for release of funds. Comments should specify which Notice they are addressing.

RELEASE OF FUNDS

The City of Lansing certifies to U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development that Andy Schor in his capacity as Mayor, City of Lansing consents to accept the jurisdiction of the Federal Courts if an action is brought to enforce responsibilities in relation to the environmental review process and that these responsibilities have been satisfied. HUD’s approval of the certification satisfies its responsibilities under NEPA and related laws and authorities, and allows the City of Lansing to use Program funds.

OBJECTIONS TO RELEASE OF FUNDS

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development will accept objections to its release of funds and the City of Lansing, MI’s certification for a period of fifteen days following the February 15, 2019 submission date only if they are on one of the following bases: (a) the certification was not executed by the Mayor, City of Lansing; (b) the City of Lansing, MI has omitted a step or failed to make a decision or finding required by HUD regulations at 24 CFR Part 58; (c) the grant recipient has committed funds or incurred costs not authorized by 24 CFR Part 58 before approval of a

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Ferguson

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leadership. It’s a sentiment that Ferguson — despite differing opinions — still supports.

“If I had to do it again, I would do everything I could to protect the university,” Ferguson added.

In an 11-page resignation letter, Engler suggested his departure was more of a political mandate than choice. Democratic board members had enough support to oust him, without Ferguson if need be, if he didn’t leave on his own accord. And by the time the motion to accept his resignation came to the table, Ferguson said he didn’t have another choice.

“I only voted for what was in front of me at the time,” Ferguson emphasized.

‘No fucking vote’

When former President Lou Anna K. Simon resigned last January, the Board of Trustees was left to fill the gap. The Detroit Free Press reported that Ferguson ultimately served as the linchpin vote for Engler after the board initially deadlocked in closed-door negotiations between Engler and former Democratic Gov. Jim Blanchard.

Ferguson, for his part, claimed the author of that story — David Jesse — entirely fabricated the narrative. There was no consensus reached before the unanimous vote to appoint Engler, Ferguson said. And Ferguson had never offered to support anyone other than Engler for the job, he argued. Jesse didn’t return a call for clarification.

“There was never a fucking vote,” Ferguson said. “Once anonymous people start something, it takes a life. It’s not relevant. The board voted to make certain we kept out funding.” He said the former Republican governor had “rapport with the people who were making the decisions. That was what the discussion was about. It had nothing to do with (political) party.”

Some Democrats, however, were already painting a target on Ferguson’s back as a political traitor. Several elected officials (all of them Democrats) have since called on Ferguson to resign for his role in selecting Engler last January — regardless of the behind-the-scenes board mechanics that ultimately installed him as the president.

A spokesman for Progress Michigan, a progressive think-tank designed to “hold public officials accountable” and “challenge conservative propaganda,” said all remaining trustees that supported Engler should reconsider whether they’re the right people to effectively guide the university forward and rebuild wounds of the past.

“Joel Ferguson, in particular, has made comments in the past about ‘this Nassar thing’ and several other controversial statements throughout this process,” said Sam Inglot, a spokesman for Progress Michigan. “Anyone that thought John Engler was the right person here needs to reconsider their time on the board.”

Ferguson already gave it some thought. And he’s not going anywhere anytime soon.

“I’ve done my job every time,” Ferguson added. “I had enough guts and balls to represent the university and hire somebody that I didn’t vote for because he was the right fit based on who was giving out the money at the time.”

‘I didn’t apologize’

To Tim Staudt on Detroit’s WVFN-AM (730), Ferguson commented on Jan. 22, 2018, that “there are so many more things going on at the university than just this Nassar thing.” Critics were at Ferguson’s throat. He later issued a statement outlining “deep regrets” for trivializing the experiences of those who survived Nassar’s crimes.

“He recognizes the suffering of these young women and had intended to refer to it as the ‘Nassar tragedy,’” according to a statement from Ferguson provided by his spokeswoman at the time, Kelly Rossman-McKinney, now-spokeswoman for Attorney General Dana Nessel. “Mr. Ferguson deeply regrets his comment and apologizes to those he offended.”

But Ferguson put it another way in last week’s interview with City Pulse.

“I apologized for what people felt and how they perceived me. I didn’t apologize for the statement,” Ferguson said. “I guess I should’ve used a different word, but what I was trying to say was we’re going to keep running the university as we go through this Nassar stuff. Now people are running off and developing a story off a negative.”

Later in Staudt’s broadcast, Ferguson defended Simon before her resignation two days later. He also touted her work fundraising for the Breslin Center and laughed at the idea of an NCAA investigation. But Ferguson still maintains that his critics “cherry-picked” the negative aspects of that interview to “crucify” him.

“You can never use money to completely make over people’s pain and suffering, but there’s going to be something happening in their favor,” Ferguson said later in the interview. “I think that when people find out (Nassar) was on an island by himself, they’ll move on and we’ll keep the university moving with the president we have.”

Of course, Nassar’s abuse wasn’t isolated “on an island” as Ferguson had suggested. State investigators later issued a scathing report about a “culture of indifference” toward sexual assault at MSU in favor

Local governments finally getting their fair share of fire funding

Lansing, East Lansing, Meridian Township and Windsor Township in Eaton County will receive more than \$4 million more from state government next year — money, by law, it should have been receiving all along.

Fire protection grants, money the state gives 64 municipalities to cover the costs of providing fire protection to state structures, will be “fully funded” starting with Fiscal Year 2020, marking the first time in more than 40 years that has occurred.

Lost amid the many lame duck headlines, outgoing Gov. Rick Snyder signed HB 6348 of 2018, which steers \$23 million to \$25 million of leftover personal property tax replacement revenue to cover this state obligation.

“This is a big deal,” said Chris Hackbarth of the Michigan Municipal League. “This is a formula that has never been fully funded.”

The upshot for East Lansing is about \$1.5 million more for its Fire Department as it oversees the fire protection for Michigan State University. Lansing is getting another \$1.5 million for its Fire Department. Windsor Township, home of the Secondary

POLITICS



KYLE MELINN

Complex, is getting \$840,000 more and Meridian Township is getting \$350,000.

P.A. 289 of 1977 requires state government to pay for state fire services in cities, villages and townships if the state buildings in that area make up more than 1 percent of the total assessed value of that community. A formula was set up to dictate how that number would be arrived at.

It was just never funded at 100 percent. For the current Fiscal Year, the cities, townships and villages are splitting \$13.6 million, just 49 percent of what the formula sets as 100 percent funding.

The fact that this is finally happen is so uncommon, officials in Windsor Township are still skeptical that is going to happen.

“I’m cautiously optimistic,” said Fire Chief Phil Miller, adding that the money is definitely needed. The township doubles in size during the day and additional staffing is needed. Yet, he’s heard promises of “full funding” of the fire protection grants before.

“I don’t count on anything until I see it come in.”

According to the House Fiscal Agency, the \$13.6 million was a high-water mark.

In the five years prior, the total was between \$9 million and \$12.6 million. Then, Rep. Rob VerHeulen’s legislation was signed in late December.

“From Iron Mountain to Jackson, everywhere. This conversation over being reimbursed for these facilities that provide fire services is now done,” Hackbarth said.

Fire protection grants were never given a steady revenue stream that covered its costs. Its most recent stream was the “bad driver fees” that the Legislature got rid of last year, but that only covered about \$8 million of the funding. Every budget cycle, particularly during the lean 2000s, lawmakers looked under sofa cushions for a little extra in fire protection grant money, but struggled to even hit 50 percent.

When “bad driver fees” went away, VerHeulen and then-House Minority Leader Sam Singh, D-East Lansing, pushed for a different revenue stream. For Singh, whose district included East Lansing and Michigan State University, the issue was one he regularly brought up in leadership meetings with the governor and the majority caucuses.

“As a former mayor, it was upsetting to me that communities were responsible for providing life-saving fire services to state facilities, but the state had never fully funded the obligation since the inception of

the program,” Singh said. “It was rewarding to see that bill pass on our last day of session.”

Over in the Senate, local governments had an ally in then-Senate Appropriations Committee Chair Dave Hildenbrand, who helped craft the final version that moved in the closing days of lame duck, said Judy Allen of the Michigan Townships Association.

In the House, HB 6348 was among the last 40 bills that passed in the early morning hours of session’s last day.

The money is coming from the use tax collections steered to those local communities who lost revenue when the personal property tax on industrial equipment was eliminated. The state is collecting more from this revenue stream than was expected. Part of the overage will now go to the fire protection grants.

“This will be a huge boost,” said Greg Rathje, the clerk of Pentland Township in the Upper Peninsula. A little more than 82 percent of the township’s combined State Equalized Value is made up of the Newberry Correctional Facility, the local Michigan Department of Transportation office, and the abandoned psychiatric hospital building.

Kyle Melinn of the Capitol news service MIRS is at melinnky@gmail.com.

Ferguson

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of protecting its reputation. All told, at least 11 university employees had failed to report Nassar’s abuse, the report found.

Investigators called it a “failure of people, not policy” and advocated for a “top-down cultural change at MSU.” Calls for Ferguson’s resignation, after the interview hit the local airwaves, were already gaining momentum.

East Lansing Councilman Aaron Stephens, after hearing the broadcast, labeled Ferguson’s commentary “deeply offensive” and suggested he resign from the board. State Sen. Curtis Hertel Jr., D-East Lansing, said Ferguson hasn’t represented his views on the issue and he “wouldn’t be upset” should Ferguson follow Engler out the door.

“He should’ve resigned before he was even elected,” added Ingham County Commissioner Mark Grebner.

Retired State Rep. Sam Singh, an MSU grad who was mayor of East Lansing, has called for Ferguson’s head since last year, namely because of the “inappropriate and insensitive” comments toward Nassar survivors. And he still doesn’t think Ferguson has a role on the board.

“It’s clear that he never wanted to shoulder any responsibility to the university,” Singh added. “He protected Simon until the last day. He protected others until their last day. Even with Engler, he supported him to the very end. He has shown absolutely no leadership and has actually hurt this university over the last several months.”

Ferguson, for his part, still claims he misspoke during the interview and that media outlets and attorneys have since “doctored” his original statements. He said he meant to emphasize that Nassar won’t “distract” from other, equally important university business. And he laughed off questions about those who might still want him gone.

“I have no reason to resign,” Ferguson added. “I hope I don’t look too bad, but if I do, I’m still not quitting.”

“This Nassar thing” disappears

Ferguson later sent City Pulse a copy of what he labeled a “verbatim transcript” of the controversial radio interview. His reference to “things going on at the university other than just this Nassar thing,” however, was missing from the document. And Ferguson couldn’t offer much of an explanation for the omission.

“That’s not even germane to the dog-gone discussion,” Ferguson said. “The

main part is the part at the bottom where I said we got to help these young ladies and do all that. That’s the real part. I didn’t conveniently omit a goddamn thing. I don’t type. Whoever prepared it must’ve missed it. We’ll get a new one

sent over.”

A revised transcript never arrived; City Pulse instead used audio from the interview to verify the statements.

— KYLE KAMINSKI
kyle@lansingcitypulse.com

B/19/073 MT HOPE COLUMBARIUM ADDITION as per the specifications provided by the City of Lansing. The City of Lansing will accept **sealed bids** at the City of Lansing, C/O LBWL, Purchasing Office, 1110 S. Pennsylvania, Lansing, Michigan 48912 until **2:00PM** local time in effect on FEB. 12, 2019 at which time bids will be publicly opened and read. **Complete specifications and forms required to submit bids are available by calling Stephanie Robinson at (517) 702-6197 email: stephanie.robinson@lbwl.com or go to www.mitn.info** The City of Lansing encourages bids from all vendors including MBE/WBE vendors and Lansing-based businesses.

CP#19-024

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CP#19-025

FROM PAGE 6

release of funds by HUD; or (d) another Federal agency acting pursuant to 40 CFR Part 1504 has submitted a written finding that the project is unsatisfactory from the standpoint of environmental quality. Objections must be prepared and submitted in accordance with the required procedures (24 CFR Part 58) and shall be addressed to: Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Community Planning and Development, 477 Michigan Avenue, Detroit, MI 48226. Potential objectors should contact HUD at (313) 226-7900 to verify the actual last day of the objection period.

Andy Schor, Mayor, City of Lansing, MI

CP#19-023

Back from the dead

Hannah Center,
once a budget target,
eyed for improvements

Last year, East Lansing's Hannah Community Center had a target on its back. If voters did not approve a tax increase, the center was high on the cost-saving list.

"We were looking to make millions of dollars worth of cuts," said Mayor Mark Meadows. "The funds for the community center would've given us the best bang for our buck."

Droves of residents called city officials or spoke at public comment about the value the center brought to the city.

Said Meadows: "We could've closed it, but we had such a huge reaction for bringing up that idea."

So much so that the city is looking in the other direction.

The City Council hopes a soon-to-launch

advisory committee, designed solely to explore the future of the center, will guide improvements and programming for the next decade. Revenues and taxpayer-funded subsidies climb every year, but officials want to be sure they've continued to keep the community hub on the right track.

"It's not just the activities that go on inside," explained Mayor Pro-Tem Erik Altmann. "It's the architecture. It's the green space around it. With the location right in the middle of the city, just about anybody can access it. There are a lot of reasons why this community center is so important for the city. This is an opportunity."

The East Lansing City Council came up with the idea last year to help gather information on national trends and community expectations to generate plans for improvements at the community center. The work group is scheduled to meet by March 1 and submit its priorities for Council members' consideration later this year.

And officials don't expect they'll have any trouble finding support for the long-cherished, community hotspot.

Pam Weil learned to swim there when it was still the John A. Hannah Middle School. The East Lansing School District sold the building to the city in 1998 for about \$150,000. Voters at the time approved a bond millage to transform the space into the community center. It still bore Hannah's name when it opened in 2002.

"It's really quite priceless," Weil said. "It's this hub where almost everyone can walk or ride over on their bikes. That break room is like the break room for the city. People are there all the time, playing chess or just socializing. Everybody is welcomed. Nobody owns it. It's not a business. We all own it, and that what makes it what it is."

Councilwoman Shanna Draheim wants to keep the committee focused on "bigger picture" ideas that could include renovations and added programming as the Council crafts the city's revised master plan. And as general fund subsidies for the space



Skyler Ashley/City Pulse

The exercise facility at Hannah Community Center in East Lansing.

continue to climb, some city officials are also focused on financial independence.

"Some of us had a feeling that the community center was used a bit like a pawn in the income tax conversations," said Weil, who also serves on the city's Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission. "I'm hoping this will help give the community some confidence. It's a priority for East Lansing, and I'd like to see it be totally self-funded."

City Council last year allocated \$844,000 from the general fund to float the community center's annual budget. It's an investment that has steadily climbed (by about 32 percent) over the last five years. City records indicate the center has only generated enough revenue to cover about 60 percent of its expenses since 2014.

Most Council members aren't concerned about the financial support. The crowds that turn out to swim in the pools or use the fitness center help to showcase its value in the city. Space is also available there for classes such as Zumba, karate, painting, basketball, pickleball and dance. The Prime Time Senior Center also operates inside.

"It's never going to be a moneymaker," Altmann added. "It's always going to require a subsidy. We're hitting a particular niche and the community center is really valued here in East Lansing. We're never going to charge hundreds of dollars to get involved there to break even. That's not the point. That's why people pay taxes."

East Lansing's Parks, Recreation and Arts Director Tim McCaffrey said the building was constructed nearly a century ago and hasn't had a significant renovation in decades. A 2015 report recommended at least \$3.35 million in renovations, of which \$1.12 million was identified as "necessary." Nothing has since been done.

"What sort of bigger vision could we have for the space?" Draheim asked. "Is it meeting our current needs? Will it meet our future needs? Nobody would disagree that it could use some updates. But before we make those decisions, we want to make sure that we're going about things in a very intentional and thoughtful way."

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Undersheriff benefits from first-responders contract

Ingham County commissioners see no conflict in \$33,000 pact

A long-standing contract between the Ingham County Sheriff's Office and a third-party firm provides training for first responders. The only problem: The undersheriff partially owns the company that signed the deal.

Ingham County commissioners are slated Thursday to push forward a \$33,000 contract with MACNLOW Associates, which has provided annual training for the deputies and dispatchers for more than 20 years. Undersheriff Andrew Bouck and his sister, Kristen Kemp, own the company.

The contract renewal will come before commissioners this week at the county's Law and Courts Committee. It runs through the end of the year and although it's capped at \$33,000, officials emphasized the total bill will likely be much lower. Last year, for instance, MACNLOW charged less than \$20,000 for its county training services.

A memo from Sheriff Scott Wriggelsworth outlined Bouck's "small pecuniary interest" and conflicted interests, but officials still maintain that the undersheriff has adequately separated himself from his own

business dealings. And Wriggelsworth maintained MACNLOW will ultimately still provide the best bang for the county's buck.

"Although there are other options for similar training, maintaining this contract is in the best interest of the county as a whole to best serve its residents," Wriggelsworth noted in the recent memorandum to the commission. "The negative financial impact to the county, if we discontinued this contract, would be sizable."

The Sheriff's Office didn't engage a formal bidding process for the contract, Wriggelsworth noted. He called it the most affordable and convenient option available, he said, especially because the training occurs in Mason. Any others would invariably include added travel expenses.

"This would significantly affect the number of training opportunities for Ingham County employees," he added.

MACNLOW Associates, which was founded in 1977 by Murlene "Mac" McKinnon, has provided municipal training services for decades, long before the firm was sold to Bouck and his sister in 2013. The web-

site notes that Bouck, a former East Lansing police officer, has served as an instructor for the classes since at least 2003.

Wriggelsworth said Bouck also won't earn a direct paycheck through the contract. Those profits, instead, will be used to cover the debt that Bouck incurred when he first purchased the company from McKinnon.

Course offerings include active shooter training, classes on implicit bias, stress and time management, media relations, verbal de-escalation and dozens of other options. The cost per person for each of the classes ranges from \$275 to \$699, depending on the intensity of the coursework, according to county-provided documents.

Commission Vice-Chairman Ryan Sebolt said Bouck was not involved in negotiations. "He's actually held at arm's length for this contract," Sebolt said.

Sebolt added that he assumed Bouck profits from the arrangement, but "he's not involved in any action that would help this company gain any advantages."

Sebolt also estimated that Bouck's take, at the end of the day, would be negligible given the size of the contract.

Besides, any real concerns about conflicting interests are based on secrecy, Sebolt emphasized. In this case, Bouck has been

straightforward about his involvement in the company since the beginning. And, as a result, the county commission has repeatedly approved annual contracts with MACNLOW for similar services for decades.

To further separate Bouck from the upcoming contract, he also agreed not to directly or indirectly engage in any form of solicitation or negotiation of the proposed contract. Further, MACNLOW has "certified" that Bouck has provided no personal information from the Sheriff's Office to his own company. It doesn't mention profits.

Bouck and Kemp couldn't be reached for additional clarification. The committee is expected to approve the contract unanimously and send it to the full board for final approval in February. Bouck is also prohibited from personally performing any services on behalf of his company through the deal.

"For us, they have a proven track record of providing excellent training for law enforcement officers in the area," said Commission Chairman Bryan Crenshaw. "We're satisfied with the statements and the sign off that the undersheriff won't be involved in the operations or the direct profits of this contract. There's no real conflict."

— KYLE KAMINSKI
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By **DENNIS BURCK**

The flagship and founder of cryptocurrency, Bitcoin, and the cutting edge blockchain technology that powers it are at the forefront of incredible opportunity, study and controversy in Lansing.

In the dusty tiled basement of the Eastside business incubator The Fledge, owner Jerry Norris teaches the basics of blockchain technology to Lansing's youth via a very low tech method — the whiteboard.

It is part of a learning experiment The Fledge is conducting using a basic ledger, a critical component to understanding blockchain technology.

"If we can't do it on paper, we can't do it faster on computers. If we don't start on paper, we will never understand the process and the flow," Norris said.

On the board is a list of chores and tasks related to The Fledge like washing dishes in exchange for usage of the building's music studio. In theory, when members of The Fledge do dishes, other members see this person doing it and verify a studio time credit for them.

The ledger tracks credits and costs in a transparent, centralized medium, but this method isn't without flaws.

"Entropy will take over this whiteboard, whether it is dust or people running up against it or maliciously changing it or people writing down a mistake and recording it," Norris said.

Norris hopes the participants will welcome a digital ledger after seeing the shortcomings of a central ledger. Afterward, Norris will provide digital copies to every person who wanted to do business with the whiteboard.

If all those digital copies stay in sync and produce the same result, Norris and his students will have created a decentralized ledger.

However, this isn't the last step. If someone figures out a way to change the ledger digitally, that's when the ledger will reach a final step requiring the most brain and computer power: digital encryption.

Norris said the end result will be a self contained "Fledge Coin" cryptocurrency. However, these same learning principles behind The Fledge's homegrown crypto-

currency were exploited in a cyber attack two years ago.

In April 2016, the Lansing Board of Water and Light was hit by a ransomware attack in conjunction with other city facilities nationwide.

Opened via company email, the virus took over BWL's digital and cyber systems, encrypting all the files and requesting \$25,000 in Bitcoin payment to decrypt them.

With the decentralized nature of cryptocurrency and no treasury department or bank oversight, the encrypted transactions are almost untraceable to authorities —the trusted "follow the money" line of investigation simply does not apply to this realm.

According to a BWL report released in Nov. 2016, BWL paid the ransom. The \$25,000 in Bitcoin was only a drop in the bucket compared to the roughly \$2 million BWL subsequently spent to invest and rework its cyber security against future attacks. Most of the expense was covered by insurance aside from a \$100,000 deductible, according to BWL.

"Based on our discussions with

cyber-security experts, law enforcement agencies, and other organizations who have also been the targets of these types of criminals, paying the ransom was distasteful and disgusting but sadly necessary, and was the only action we could take to 'unlock' our system and free it from the ransomware," BWL CEO Dick Peffley said.

The Fledge now houses the former East Lansing Bitcoin ATM where BWL paid the \$25,000 ransom, Norris said. It is one of five in Greater Lansing.

The older model machine sits in the corner of the former church atrium with an adjacent small security camera on watch. Its default screen simply displays "Buy and sell Bitcoin here."

Norris said The Fledge tries to keep an eye on who uses it and for what reasons.

"If we start hearing about the more evil side of it, that's where we will ban them from the machines," he said.

Aside from the ledger experiment, The Fledge has the most serious on the ground framework of Bitcoin in the Lansing area. It plays host to a group of 10 cryptocur-

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Bitcoin

from page 10

rency and blockchain enthusiasts called the Lansing Blockchain Gang. All of its vendors accept cryptocurrency as payment and it was briefly home to a Bitcoin mining operation.

Mining Bitcoin or cryptocurrency in general is when a network of computers are hooked up and lend their computing power as members of the blockchain verifying transactions in exchange for a small percentage in return.

The bulk of The Fledge's mining force was made up of old gaming computers and processors out of gaming systems.

It wasn't a very lucrative option.

"We ran it as a complete academic exercise and we lost money in electricity use compared to what we gained. We are not talking significant money, but dollars," Norris said.

The Fledge plans to develop a system that will compare the price of cryptocurrencies versus the electricity cost to mine them and make decisions off this data.

Supplementing electricity use with solar arrays will also be an option, Norris added.

The applications for cryptocurrency and blockchain as an entrepreneurial tool are also being looked at from the academic perspective in Lansing.

MSU director of undergraduate entrepreneurship Neil Kane said cryptocurrency caught his eye in 2017 after Bitcoin blossomed to nearly \$19,800 per coin.

"Going into the spring of 2018, I began to hear the number of universities who are leaders in the space offered courses in blockchain," Kane said. "The New York Times did a story called 'Cryptocurrencies Come to Campus.' I saw that article, ran it by the entrepreneurship program and thought we should do it."

At the time, Kane said he had no intention of teaching the course and thought it was more about awareness. "It circulated to the deans and they responded favorably," he said.

In Fall 2018, the course MG 491 was born. It was put together in only four months and was the first of its kind in Michigan higher education.

The staying power for cryptocurrencies like Bitcoin is up in the air, but the technology that powers it is revolutionary and warrants study, Kane said.

Kane saw blockchain technology as introducing new ways to track pharmaceuticals, document real estate transactions and manage supply chain statistics.

They also had to develop a business plan using blockchain technology.

One group argued blockchain's encrypted decentralized ledger could better keep records of confidential documents under HIPAA laws more efficiently than any human system, Kane said.

"I'm told by students today that their employers say the skills in blockchain are in demand," Kane said. "For those who were interested, we can develop the com-

petency and credentials for the job market to go in that field."

MSU has not given an update on whether the course will be returning next fall.

"If we offer it again, there are tweaks and refinements to make to it. There was a learning curve. It was like a beta version. Now that we had a dress rehearsal, next time we would be a lot smarter about doing things," Kane said.

There's a Wild West aura to cryptocurrency that appeals to Norris and his entrepreneurial ilk but not to state officials. Michigan department of the Attorney General still has an active consumer alert on the dangers of "virtual currency."

According to the consumer alert, "Virtual currency is not legal tender and is not issued or backed by any central bank or governmental authority... Because it is not real currency, virtual currency should be treated like an investment. As with any investment decision, you should thoroughly research virtual currency before investing your hard-earned money."

Don't go out buying cryptocurrency thinking to be the next millionaire, Norris said.

"The big mistake people make when they are getting into this and investing is they think it is all going to be like 2017. People probably got hurt when they were buying Bitcoin at those amounts thinking they could double the amount of Christmas presents that year. It didn't turn out for them."

Bitcoin is now trading at around \$3,400 per coin, down \$16,400 from its 2017 high.

Utility and adoption are the indicators for good cryptocurrency, Norris said.

For Norris, investing in cryptocurrency is about hanging on for the ride.

"I'm trying to curl up in a ball and wait to see what happens. I do believe it is way undervalued. This is not investment advice, but I believe in the growth of it."

Norris said the real value in cryptocurrency and its blockchain technology is providing individuals with powerful ways to circumvent the power structure and judgement from big institutions.

"This is the key point: Wall Street controls how the money flows and who gets the money. The rich get richer and the poor get poorer or whatever you want to say. It is the decentralized aspect of Bitcoin that says 'Ok, we shouldn't have a single person or organization that can control this power.' It should be more driven in a pure, free market fashion."

Cryptocurrency also gives individuals deemed unbankable a way to store and exchange goods, he added.

"If I try to go to a bank and have a credit problem, they might not let me have a bank account. If a lady might not like how I look —if I'm Muslim or a certain color or whatever— there is a lot of judgement in that process, some of it legal, not legal and personal."

We have alternatives to this method, Norris said.

"If we really want to help underserved



Dennis Burck/City Pulse

(Top) Fledge owner Jerry Norris next to one of his two Bitcoin ATMs, sports a "Keep Bitcoin Shady" shirt.

(Bottom) Norris checks his cryptocurrency balances.



people, we need to get them bankable. If they can't be bankable in the traditional sense, cryptocurrency offers a way."

One of Norris' mottos is 'Keep Bitcoin shady.' This isn't an endorsement for bad activity, he said.

"I see banks and institutions having futures on the cryptocurrency exchange. As I see that getting introduced, I see all these little people I think it could help getting pushed out of the system. When I say 'keep Bitcoin shady,' what I really mean is keep big institutions out of it."

The blowback on cryptocurrency and blockchain technology is like listening to an old man lament over new progress, Norris said.

"Why it sounds so bad or evil is the bankers telling you how horrible it is, just like the Taxi drivers telling you how horrible Uber was and the hotels telling you

how horrible AirBnB was. I would ask people to look at it objectively. I remember when we were scared of the internet and scared of email."

We had no idea how big the internet was until we further experimented with it, Norris said.

"We are in that phase with cryptocurrency right now. We have no idea how this is going to change things."

For Lansing, there might be no change to the local economy if blockchain and cryptocurrency was to boom, Norris said.

"It may not be so much about what the blockchain is doing to Lansing; It might be what Lansing can do for the blockchain and effect the rest of the world. People are being enabled with this technology and we can create great things too."

For more information, visit thefledge.com

ARTS & CULTURE

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Cutting in and cutting out

Justin Bryant explores the blank spaces in African-American life

By LAWRENCE COSENTINO

A smile is almost never just a smile.

Justin Bryant's delicate and disturbing solo exhibition at the LookOut Gallery at MSU's Snyder Hall looks into some unsettling voids.

At the heart of the exhibit, viewable through Feb. 15, is an absorbing group of portraits of African-American life.

Justin Bryant
"Lingering in the Minor Key"

Through Feb. 15
LookOut Gallery
MSU Residential
College in the Arts and
Humanities
C200 Snyder Hall

There's a line-up of happy-looking kids, about to brush their teeth; a woman being carried off by police officers; a man protesting at a 1960s civil rights rally in Washington, D.C.; a group portrait of members of the Niagara Movement, an early civil rights group that met in Ontario, and several other scenes.

The wall of lithographs took Bryant months to finish.

Only he didn't finish them. Most of the people in the portraits have no eyes.

Some of the portraits sit on small shelves, like family pictures.

"All these people — I've never met then and I don't know them but they kind of feel like family to me," he said.

Bryant, a native of Stuttgart, Arkansas, wrapped up a week-long residency at MSU's Residential College in the Arts and Humanities last week.

One of the largest works in the exhibit is a portrait of author James Baldwin juxtaposed with a beautiful, starry sky. The top of Baldwin's head is a pure white circle, withholding the mysteries of his keen eye and authorial brain from the viewer.

At a discussion hosted by poet Cindy Hunter Morgan Thursday, Bryant tied some of the ideas behind his work to a devastating poem by Maya Angelou, "The Mask."

In "The Mask," Angelou gives voice to a long-suffering laborer whose automatic laughter masks an abyss of hurt, and, by extension, un masks a painful part of the

black experience in America.

The bare patches in Bryant's work have a multi-faceted relationship to the mask described by Angelou.

"It's a power relationship," Bryant said. "It was my way of being careful — thinking about the people I was drawing, honoring them. It keeps the power on their side, what the smile could mean."

Bryant uses several strategies to slip into the blank spaces of African-American life.

To create another piece in the "Minor Key" exhibit, he cut a hole in one of his art history textbooks and inserted a portrait of African-American artist Beauford Delaney, with the eyes missing.

When Bryant realized an important black artist was all but cut out of art history, he simply cut him back in — literally.

Delaney, a modernist painter associated with the Harlem Renaissance of the 1930s and 1940s, has inspired generations of artists.

Delaney's friend James Baldwin called him "living proof, for me, that a black man could be an artist."

Although Delaney's work ranged from portraits and figurative work to a headlong plunge into Abstract Expressionism, he is still underappreciated and all but unknown to the broader public.

Bryant learned that many African-American artists emigrated or stayed in Paris in the middle of the 20th century, but are nearly forgotten now.

"I became really interested in how I didn't know a lot of history that involved my own culture — and how I will never know it," he said.

A striking series of paintings Bryant made a few years ago builds on the same idea in a different way.

He perched several notable buildings that were built by free or enslaved African-Americans on top of the heads of African-American people.

One of them is the White House, nestled



Bryant



Lawrence Cosentino/City Pulse

Bryant cut out the middle of his art history book and inserted a portrait of Beauford Delaney, who was left out of the book.

in a lush Afro.

Bryant likened the buildings to "crowns." "They are painful images, but powerful," he said.

One of the most ambitious works in the "Minor Key" exhibit is a set of four books, each one etched with a combined portrait of the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Bryant himself. Both faces change expression as you look from one end of the row of books to the other.

It's a lot of visual information to take in, but Bryant is the first to admit he gets himself into some conceptual cul-de-sacs.

"I'm trying to get people to see that these ideas are multi-faceted, and that's the hard part," he said. "How do you talk about poetry, buildings, your own experience all together without it coming across as just a mess?"

His impatience with the static, "finished" look of most gallery art is already evident in

"Minor Key." Next, Bryant plans to inject more narrative into his work — "figures in a scene, or something happening." With a show coming up at the Thea Foundation in North Little Rock this fall, he's girding himself for another gestation period and a few false starts.

He just got his master's degree in fine art from Louisiana State University and he looks ready to cut a hole into it, at least figuratively. (Although, with Bryant, you never know.)

"In school, you're often encouraged to make a lot of right decisions, but I think you've got to make a lot of wrong decisions first," he said.

That, he said, pretty much describes the last five years of his life.

"I try to make mistakes daily," he said. "The crazy thing is that when you have enough confidence with it, it automatically is right."

Learning to share your own narrative with 'Write Hear 4 Queer'

Writing workshop shows young authors how to share their stories with confidence

By SKYLER ASHLEY

"Until the lion tells the story, the hunter will always be the hero."

The Salus Center, an LGBTQ youth resource center founded in 2017, is hosting its annual writing workshop, "Write Hear 4 Queer," this weekend. Co-hosted by LGBTQ activists Michelle Brennan and Mimi Gonzalez, "Write Hear 4 Queer" is an event designed to open the doors for expressing positive narratives about personal tribulations — some recurring themes include

homelessness and sexual assault — and issues including, but not limited to, gender and sexual identity.

Gonzalez, a stand-up comic who has performed in Lansing at Michigan Pride and the Women in the Arts Festival, called Write Hear 4 Queer a "community building" experience.

"It's now a part of my mission and vocation to offer writing workshops for the community," Gonzalez said. "Through writing together we create a community building experience."

"Write Hear 4 Queer" was first conceived of by Brennan, who based its concept on a similar writing workshop she attended for several years in Boston called "Right Here, Right Now." Geared toward Boston's own LGBTQ community, Brennan was inspired by its ability to provide a safe space for attendees to be open with their personal stories without judgment, no matter their

subjects or details.

Brennan introduced Gonzalez to "Right Here, Right Now," and the two attended one of the workshops together. It wasn't long before the pair decided it was the perfect format for their own writing workshop in Michigan. Brennan reached out to the then newly formed Salus Center.

"I was very excited to see that there was an LGBTQ community center opening up in Lansing," Brennan said. "It was something we desperately needed."

The Salus Center's founder, the Rev. Phiwa Langeni, was very receptive to the idea, and the first "Write Hear 4 Queer" was hosted a year ago. Langeni believes in the workshop's strength to allow LGBTQ youth to bolster positive narratives about themselves as authors, instead of allowing outside sources to reinforce negative stereotypes.

"It's actually very amazing to have some

open and guided instruction to learn how to tell our own stories," Langeni said. "I think that's very essential — especially in this day and age, where other people are telling our stories in ways that are violent."

The workshop isn't about fine tuning grammatical skills, or other potentially nitpicky aspects of the English language, Brennan added. Rather, it's about reinforcing one's ability to weave and present a personal narrative.

"This isn't necessarily about building writing skills, but building confidence in your ability to tell a narrative," Brennan said.

"Write Hear 4 Queer" sees Gonzalez and Brennan encouraging attendees to grasp a stream of consciousness approach to their writing.

"The idea is to write and keep that pen

See Workshop, Page 13

CURTAIN CALL

A car that sparkles, a show that lumbers: 'Chitty Chitty Bang Bang'

By PAUL WOZNAK

Review

"Chitty Chitty Bang Bang"

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The car is the star in "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang," the family friendly musical based on the 1968 film, which was adapted from the novel by James Bond creator Ian Fleming. Featuring songs by Richard and Robert Sherman ("Mary Poppins"), story and elements and characters by Roald Dahl ("Charlie and the Chocolate Factory") and a talented cast and crew of Riverwalk Theatre, "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang" is a technical marvel. But beyond the grand adventure promised by larger than life villains and a flying car, "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang" is an emotionally vacuous show that

never gets into gear.

Set in 1912, "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang" focuses on the Potts family; widower, father and inventor Caractacus (Ben Holzhausen), his father Grandpa Caractacus (Bob Purosky), and their two precocious yet charming kids Jeremy and Jemima (Phineas Reed and Isabella Edmonds-Hogan). In Caractacus' workshop/garage sits the hull of a former three-time Grand Prix winning car used lovingly as a giant toy by the kids.

Ultimately, Caractacus refurbishes the car after raising funds to outbid a buyer, falls in love with confectionary company heir Truly Scrumptious (Sarah Hayner) and uses the car's now magical properties to rescue his children and father from nefarious villains from the quasi-Eastern European country of Vulgaria.

Like "Mary Poppins," "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang" espouses the power of imagination and teamwork in children while peppering



Courtesy Riverwalk Theatre

Ben Holzhausen playing Caractacus Potts.

those messages with lavish song and dance numbers. Unlike "Mary Poppins," there is no clear character evolution to tie the songs and loose plot threads together. The father begins and ends as a selfless single parent who encourages creativity in his children who themselves are model pre-pubescent. Without an emotional character arc to change even one character, the plot feels random and arbitrary.

That is not to discount the strong efforts of the cast. Holzhausen and Hayner have charming chemistry together while Reed and Edmonds-Hogan as the Potts children steal the show with their natural zest and charisma.

Greg Martin and Laura J. Croff gleefully

chew the scenery as the Baron and Baroness Bomburst of Vulgaria, as do their dimwitted minions Boris and Goran played by Boris Nikolovski and Jimmy McCormick. The creepiest performance comes from Tim Edinger as the Childcatcher, a long nosed monster with a high pitched voice who skulks through the audience like a hungry cat.

The songs like "Me Ol' Bamboo," "Toot Sweets" and "Teamwork" feature playful choreography by Amanda Tollstam and are executed seamlessly by the large ensemble including an impressive group of youth actors. And the orchestra directed by Angie Constien-Schwab — although played through a single speaker and frequently overpowered by the cast — bring the classic songs like "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang" to life.

But the strongest elements in this production by far are technical, from Caractacus' Rube Goldberg styled inventions built by David Schwab, the multilevel set that folds into itself like a doll house designed and built by Aja and J.J. Jenks and Bob Nees, to the properties designed by Jean Burk and first time director Brian Farnham. The reveal of the refurbished car is a showstopper that received applause Friday night. It lights up, it swivels and turns on a dime and the lighting and fog effects designed by Ted Daniel create the illusion of flight. It's easy to see why the car is an object of love for the children and an object of lust for the villains.

More than new releases: taking advantage of Fathom Events' screenings

By SKYLER ASHLEY

Classic films of the 20th century, live broadcasts from the Metropolitan Opera in Manhattan and the latest in pop culture phenomenon from anime to "Doctor Who" — in 2019 there's actually a lot more you can do at the movie theater than just see new releases.

Tickets for the shows, distributed by Fathom Events, can be bought online or at the door. Here are some highlights from the coming months worth checking out:

Turner Classic Movies:

Kicking off with "The Wizard of Oz," (ending tonight, Jan. 30) which is celebrating its mammoth 80th anniversary this year, several all-time great films will be available to revisit in the theaters. For many, this will be their first opportunity to see these films in a proper theater setting, rather than on a small television at home.



Wednesday, Jan. 30: "The Wizard of Oz"
Feb. 17 and 20: "My Fair Lady"

Feb. 28 and March 3: "Gone with the Wind"

March 24 and March 27: "To Kill a Mockingbird"



The Metropolitan Opera Live Broadcasts:

Can't afford a trip to New York — let alone ticket prices to the renowned Metropolitan Opera? No problem. These are live HD broadcasts.

Feb. 2, 6 and 9: "Carmen"

March 2 and 6: "La Fille Du Régiment"

March 30 and April 3: "Die Walküre"

Anime:

Some of the most critically acclaimed animated films aren't from Pixar, Disney or

For a full list of show times, locations and ticket prices visit www.fathomevents.com

DreamWorks, but rather from a multitude of studios in Japan. Japanese animation, better known as anime, is often trailblazing and ahead of the curve.

Thursday, Jan. 31: "A Silent Voice"

Feb. 7 and 10: "I Want to Eat Your Pancreas"

Feb. 19: "Mobile Suit Gundam NT"

March 14: "Fate/Stay Night Heaven's Feel II: Lost Butterfly"

Other events include "Diana Ross: Her Life, Love and Legacy" March 26 and 28; "The Moses Controversy" on March 14, 16 and 19; "Bolshoi Ballet: The Sleeping Beauty" on March 10 and "Doctor Who: Logopolis" March 13.



Workshop

from page 12

moving on the paper — not stopping to edit. When you get into that consciousness — that freeform writing — you can allow stories to come out and tell themselves."

Gonzalez and Brennan still use prompts, but many of them are deliberately open-ended. Examples given by Gonzalez included phrases like "the roads we take," and "I say yes to life." Brennan said Write Hear 4 Queer forms its prompts using excerpts from poetry, focusing on a single word drawn from a hat, or passing around a physical object and having writers elaborate on their connection with it.

Once the writing is completed, Gonzalez

and Brennan host an intimate sharing session. Writers hand in what they've written and, if they chose to do so, their stories are shared anonymously with the group.

The feedback given isn't traditional criticism, but fellow writers' opinions on what resonated with them. Brennan said the sharing session is the most vital aspect of the workshop, as many attendees find comfort in learning they are not alone in their struggles.

"When we tell our personal stories, other people in the room might have thought previously that they were all alone. They thought they didn't connect with anybody, or nobody would understand them," Brennan said. "When somebody else talks about depression, sexual assault, or managing and navigating their identity — it gives people a sense of common bond."

EVERY BRILLIANT THING

a play by Duncan Macmillan

"One of the funniest plays you'll ever see about depression!"

Jan 31 - Feb 10

Tickets available at www.peppermintcreek.org

Looking for 'Green Book' stories from Lansing and across the U.S.

By BILL CASTANIER

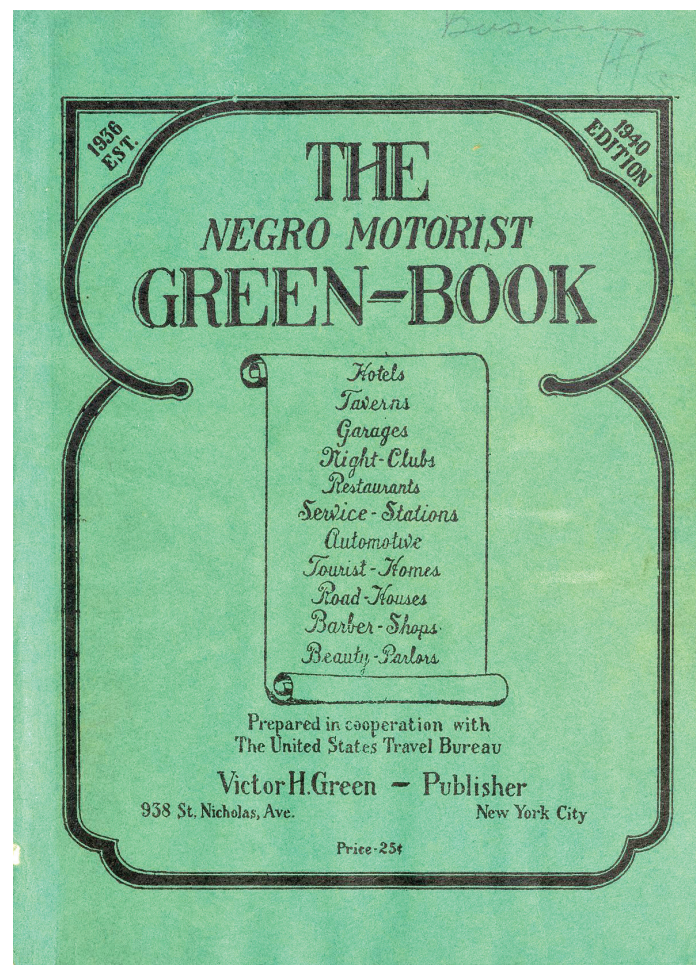
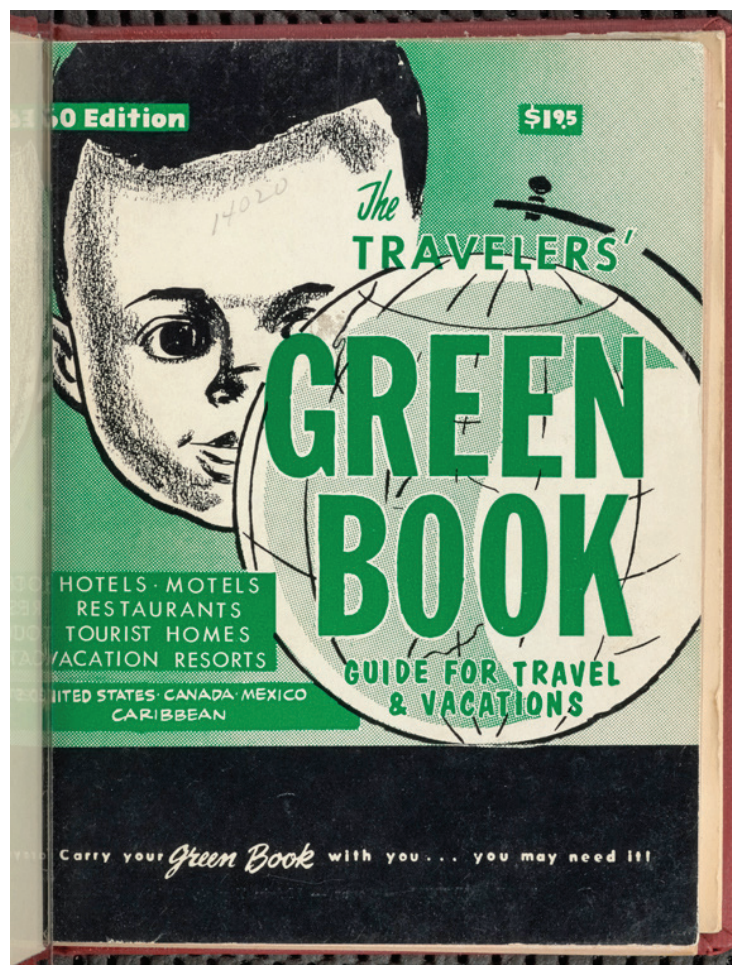
Kenny Turner remembers riding in his family's 1965 Vista Cruiser when he was 12 years old — packed in with seven other family members to visit relatives in Alabama. It was the Jim Crow era, and his mother had packed "shoebox lunches" so they could eat in the car.

They only stopped for gas and bathroom breaks and Kenny was instructed not to talk to anyone along the way.

Turner doesn't remember if his father had "The Negro Motorist Green Book," a traveler's guide designed to warn black motorists about hostile towns, gas stations, police departments and restaurants. If Turner's father had a copy, he'd have known to stop at ESSO gas stations, which were black friendly and advertised in "The Green Book." ESSO was one of the first to sell franchises to blacks and to employ black marketers.

"The Green Book," first published in 1936 and written by postman Victor Hugo Green, is getting renewed attention due to the success of a movie by the same name. The movie tracks a black entertainer as he tours the South chauffeured by a white body guard. An article in this past Sunday's New York Times included the movie in a piece on romanticizing race relations in movies.

In the movie, the chauffeur is given a "Green Book" by the record company before he heads out on the tour. "The Green Book" sold for 25 cents mostly at local churches and covered only metropolitan New York City — listing black friend-



The 1960 (left) and 1940 editions of "The Negro Motorist Green Book."

ly hotels, motels, taverns and night clubs.

Later, it expanded to nationwide listings compiled by a network of black postmen across the country.

Lansing's listings first appeared in 1938, showing three boarding homes on W. St. Joseph Street and Butler Street where black travelers could stay. The 1939 Guide had five Lansing listings for "Tourist Homes," three were on W. St. Joseph Street: M. Busher at 1212; Mrs. M. Gray at 1216 and Mrs. Cook at 1220, and the other two were Mrs. Lewis at 816 S. Butler and Mrs. J.B. Gains at 1406 Albert St. None of the homes survive today.

The final "Guide," published in 1967, had listings for Mrs. Gains, Mrs. Lewis and Sonny's Tropicana Lodge at the corner of Division and Williams Street.

Victor Green predicted his publication's demise in the introduction to his 1948 Guide, writing: "There will be a day someday in the near future when this guide will not have to be published. That is when we as a race will have equal opportunities and privileges in the United States. It will be a great day for us to suspend this publica-

tion when we can go wherever we please and without embarrassment."

Toya Levi and her husband Reuben had this in mind when they set out on a great American Road Trip from Houston to California with their two children in the summer of 2016. They planned to camp along the way, selling a line of clothing they had developed, she said.

Toya said their plans changed when the summer became known for its racial violence.

"It seemed every morning we would wake up to the shooting of a black man," she said. The African American family began staying with friends and when they reached California a friend who runs Funky Junk Farms, a prop supplier for the movie industry, loaned them a '60s RV.

"He said, 'This is just like the 'Green Book,'" Toya said.

"I never heard of it," she said.

But a germ of an idea blossomed around a business relating to the "Green Book." With funding from the Idea Fund, underwritten by the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Graphic Arts, the couple began travelling to places like Little Rock, Galveston and Memphis for presentations on the "Green Book" gathering photographs and recording stories about the book's entries which they post on thegreenbookproject.com. They also

recorded a mix tape with Little Richard, Sonny Terry, Ruth Brown, Chuck Willis and Bo Diddley that is available for free online.

The couple also presents at a "Shoebox Lunch" which features fried chicken, boiled eggs, corn bread and desserts that wouldn't spoil on a long trip.

Also two documentaries cover the book, "The Green Book Chronicles" by Calvin Alexander Ramsey and Becky Wible Searles and "100 miles to Lordsburg" follows a young couple cross country. Candacy Taylor, a cultural historian, is documenting the physical structures included in the "Green Book."

A children's book, "Ruth and the Green Book," by Calvin Alexander Ramsey, tells the story of a young girl and her family trip to Alabama through Jim Crow America.

Green would be proud his book is receiving recognition and likely would be shocked that the National Museum of African American History and culture bought an original copy at auction for \$22,500.

The Historical Society of Greater Lansing is soliciting stories about Lansing's sites as part of Pave the Way, an examination of the impact I-496 had on the city's African American neighborhood.

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OUT ON THE TOWN

Events must be entered through the calendar at lansingcitypulse.com. Deadline is 5 p.m. Wednesdays for the following week's issue. Charges may apply for paid events to appear in print. If you need assistance, please call Paul at (517) 999-6704.

Wednesday, January 30

CLASSES-AND-SEMINARS

Mindfulness Meditation. From 7 to 9 p.m. Chua Van Hanh Temple, 3015 S. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

MSU Libraries' Crash Course in Research Data Management . From 3 to 4:30 p.m. free. MSU Library, 366 W. Circle Drive East Lansing. (517) 353-8700.

MSU Libraries' Quilting Bee Wednesdays. From 12 to 1 p.m. free. MSU Library, 366 W. Circle Drive East Lansing. (517) 353-8700.

MUSIC

Camertone: International Chamber Soloists Concert Series. From 7 to 9 p.m. \$10. Urban Beat Events Center, 1213 Turner Street Lansing.

Tuba-Euphonium Ensemble. From 7:30 to 9 p.m. General admission seating: \$12 for adults, \$10 for seniors, free for students.. Fairchild Theatre, 542 Auditorium Road East Lansing. 517-353-5340.

EVENTS

Planning and Budgeting with Google. From 5:30 to 7 p.m. free. CADL Foster Library, 200 N. Foster Ave. Lansing. (517) 485-5185.

Thursday, January 31

CLASSES-AND-SEMINARS

Book Discussion-Passing Illusions by Kerry Wallach. From 12 to 2 p.m. Free to the public. Room B-342 Wells Hall.. Wells Hall, 619 Red Cedar Road East Lansing.

Google Seminar: Simple Steps to Online Safety. From 2 to 3 p.m. Free! To Register Call: (517) 483-1921. Small Business Development Center, LCC, 309 N. Washington Sq. Suite 110 Lansing.

Reiki Share. From 6 to 8 p.m. Donation. Willow Stick Ceremonies & Healing Arts, 335 Seymour Ave, Suite D Lansing. 517-402-6727.

Friday, February 1

CLASSES-AND-SEMINARS

MSU Libraries' Special Collections Pop-Ups. From 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. free. MSU Library, 366 W. Circle Drive East Lansing. (517) 353-8700.

MUSIC

Mid-Winter Singing & Folk Festival: Concert with Joshua Davis. From 7:30 to 10 p.m. \$20 Public; \$18 Fiddle Members; \$5 Students. Available online or at the box office at 6:30 PM. <http://www.tenpoundfiddle.org/event/mwsff-concert-joshua-davis/>. East Lansing Hannah Community Center, 819 Abbot Road East Lansing.

TGIF Dance Party Friday 2/1/19. From 7 p.m. to 12 a.m. \$15 includes complimentary dance lesson and buffet.. Hawk Hollow Banquet Center, 15101 S. Chandler Rd. Bath.

ARTS

Grove Gallery Clearance Sale Kickoff Party. From 5:30 to 8 p.m. Free. Grove Gallery and Studios, 325 Grove St. East Lansing. 517-333-7180.

Lecture and Multi-Media Concert Featuring Richard Illman (TrumpetT) and Hari Kern (Piano). At 5:30 p.m. Free. 1300 FRIB Laboratory, 640 South Shaw Lane East Lansing.

Saturday, February 2

CLASSES-AND-SEMINARS

Make Up Workshop. From 10 to 11:30 a.m. \$20/ members and \$25/non-members The Downeaster Theatre, 1120 N Pennsylvania Road Lansing.

Old-Time String Band Fiddle Tune Repertoire Week 4, Modal Mix. From 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. \$20. Elderly Instruments, 1100 N. Washington Ave. Lansing. (517) 372-7880.

EVENTS

February Pop Up Market. From 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. South Lansing Farmers Market, 1905 W. Mount Hope Ave. Lansing.

LoveFest 2019. From 12 to 6 p.m. \$5.00 suggested donation or bring a warm piece of clothing to get in free.. The Fledge, 325 S Clinton Street Grand Ledge. 517.230.7679.

Mid-Winter Singing & Folk Festival: Afternoon Workshops. From 12 to 4 p.m. \$20 Wristband, good for the whole afternoon. Students FREE! <http://www.tenpoundfiddle.org/event/mwsff-afternoon-workshops-2/>. East Lansing Hannah Community Center, 819 Abbot Road East Lansing.

Mid-Winter Singing & Folk Festival: Community Sing with Sally Rogers, Claudia Schmidt, Joel Mabus. From 7:30 to 10 p.m. \$20 Public; \$18 Fiddle Members; \$5 Students. Available online or at the box office at 6:30 PM. <http://www.tenpoundfiddle.org/event/mwsff-community-sing-sally-rogers-claudia-schmidt-joel-mabus/>. East Lansing Hannah Community Center, 819 Abbot Road East Lansing.

Ten Pound Fiddle: Contra and Square Dance. \$10 for members, \$12 for non-members, and \$6 for students and first time dancers. <http://www.tenpoundfiddle.org/event/contra-and-square-dance-20-2-2-2/>. Central United Methodist Church, 215 N. Capitol Ave. Lansing.



JACK AND THE BEAR AT THE ROBIN THEATRE

The folk vaudeville group from Monroe makes a stop in Lansing to bring its self described Tom Waits meets Randy Newman meets Disney soundtrack tunes. The band is comprised of three siblings and a friend, none of whom are named Jack — guitarist, vocalist Brandon James Schreiber, drummer Adam Schreiber, trumpet player Christian Schreiber-

Nelson and bassist Evan Close. The act has had its original music aired on MTV's Catfish and Teen Mom shows. The group claims modestly the show will be "The greatest thing you'll ever see, probably." Despite its success, the group is adamantly self managed and independent. Their latest release was a five track Halloween themed album last October titled "Gruesome Gruesome." In 2016, the band produced a full length 20 track LP "By the Book: Folklore by Jack and the Bear."

WEDNESDAY JAN. 30 >> READING IS FUNDAMENTAL FUNDRAISING PERFORMANCE

Join Riverwalk Theatre for a special performance of "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang" with funding going toward young adult literacy in the capital region with the organization Reading Is Fundamental or RIF. Included with admission is a pizza dinner at 6 p.m. and showtime at 7 p.m. After the performance, children will be able to select one free book from RIF.

6 to 9:30 p.m., \$25 adults/\$10 children, Riverwalk Theatre, 228 Museum Dr., Lansing (517) 482-5700, www.riverwalktheatre.com



THURSDAY JAN. 31 >> 'EVERY BRILLIANT THING' AT PEPPERMINT CREEK THEATRE



Featuring Michigan native actor Spencer Smith, this one man play focuses on the poignant yet surprisingly funny world of a coming of age boy writing down reasons to live for his mother after her attempted suicide. The play originated out of Britain's 2013 Ludlow Fringe Festival. Chad Swan-Badgero will direct.

8 to 10 p.m., \$15, Peppermint Creek Theatre Company, 6025 Curry Ln., Lansing (517) 927-3016, www.peppermintcreek.org

Jonesin' Crossword

By Matt Jones

"Free Range"---another freestyle puzzle for everyone.

Matt Jones

Across

1 Video game series where you follow the moves of onscreen characters

10 Food service giant based in Houston

15 Very soon

16 Knightley of "Atonement"

17 La Paz currency

18 Archipelago feature

19 Took the offer

20 Mystical foresight

21 Employer of Africa correspondent Ofeibia Quist-Arcton

23 Idris of "The Wire"

25 Play ____ (cause mischief)

27 Sooner than soon

28 Distributed cards

30 Ballet practice

32 Two before Thu.

33 Journal opening

35 Abbr. before a founding date

36 Musical genre for 1990s punk band Bikini Kill

38 "Scuse me"

41 Western movie hangout

44 "Chandelier" singer

45 Muscle-to-bone connector

46 Makes the scene

48 Leave behind

50 Stereotypical librarian admonition

52 Shiraz, for one

53 "Tell me ..."

55 Velvet finish?

57 Aptly titled '80s film about BMX racing

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58 RR station posting

59 It's on a continuum

62 Fulcrum for an oar

63 Character whose headwear had a tag reading "10/6"

64 Ravi Shankar's instrument

65 Completely broke

Down

1 Shied away, slangily

2 Still squeaking

3 Meme nickname of Turkish meat-seasoning chef Nusret Gokce

4 "Enough already!"

5 Peace proponent

6 They shun most technology

7 Three-part flavor

8 Tapper's home

9 English prep school

10 Steers clear of

11 Simple question type

12 Early movies

13 Soldier's hairstyle

14 Cereal grain item

22 In ____ ("on paper")

24 Smartphone setting

26 Long-eared dogs

29 Quindec- divided by five

31 Some stone finds at archaeological digs

34 Peanut butter-based Girl Scout Cookie

35 Macaroni shape

37 2020 political event in Charlotte, for short

38 John Stockton has the most in NBA history

39 Sony competitor

40 Eavesdropping range

42 "True, no?"

43 Titles differently

45 "Watchmen" director Zack

47 "Why is this night different ...?" feasts

49 Cub Scout pack leader

51 Anne of "Donnie Brasco"

54 Sch. at West Point

56 "Swell!"

60 "N'est-ce ____?"

61 Inits. for supplementary costs at a car dealership

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Answers Page 18

Free Will Astrology

By Rob Brezsny

January 30 - February 5

Aries (March 21-April 19): Here are your fortune cookie-style horoscopes for the next five months. FEBRUARY: You'll be invited to make a pivotal transition in the history of your relationship with your most important life goals. It should be both fun and daunting! MARCH: Don't waste time and energy trying to coax others to haul away the junk and the clutter. Do it yourself. APRIL: The growing pains should feel pretty good. Enjoy the uncanny stretching sensations. MAY: It'll be a favorable phase to upgrade your personal finances. Think richer thoughts. Experiment with new ideas about money. JUNE: Build two strong bridges for every rickety bridge you burn. Create two vital connections for every stale connection you leave behind.

Taurus (April 20-May 20): Here are your fortune cookie-style horoscopes for the next five months. FEBRUARY: You have access to a semi-awkward magic that will serve you well if you don't complain about its semi-awkwardness. MARCH: To increase your clout and influence, your crucial first step is to formulate a strong intention to do just that. The universe will then work in your behalf. APRIL: Are you ready to clean messes and dispose of irrelevancies left over from the past? Yes! MAY: You can have almost anything you want if you resolve to use it for the greatest good. JUNE: Maintain rigorous standards, but don't be a fanatic. Strive for excellence without getting bogged down in a counterproductive quest for perfection.

Gemini (May 21-June 20): Here are your fortune cookie-style horoscopes for the next five months. FEBRUARY: Be alert for vivid glimpses of your best possible future. The power of self-fulfilling prophecy is even stronger than usual. MARCH: High integrity and ethical rigor are crucial to your success — and so is a longing for sacred adventure. APRIL: How can you make the best use of your likability? MAY: Cheerfully dismantle an old system or structure to make way for a sparkling new system or structure. JUNE: Beginner's luck will be yours if you choose the right place to begin. What's a bit intimidating but very exciting?

Cancer (June 21-July 22): Here are your fortune cookie-style horoscopes for the next five months. FEBRUARY: Your sensual magnetism peaks at the same time as your spiritual clarity. MARCH: You want toasted ice? Succulent fire? Earthy marvels? Homey strangeness? All of that is within reach. APRIL: Sow the seeds of the most interesting success you can envision. Your fantasy of what's possible should thrill your imagination, not merely satisfy your sense of duty. MAY: Deadline time. Be as decisive and forthright as an Aries, as bold as a Sagittarius, as systematic as a Capricorn. JUNE: Go wading in the womb-temperature ocean of emotion, but be mindful of the undertow.

Leo (July 23-August 22): Here are your fortune cookie-style horoscopes for the next five months. FEBRUARY: There's a general amnesty in all matters regarding your relationships. Cultivate truces and forgiveness. MARCH: Drop fixed ideas you might have about what's possible and what's not. Be keenly open to unexpected healings. APRIL: Wander out into the frontiers. Pluck goodies that have been off-limits. Consider the value of ignoring certain taboos. MAY: Sacrifice a small comfort so as to energize your ambitions. JUNE: Take a stand in behalf of your beautiful ideals and sacred truths.

Virgo (August 23-September 22): Here are your fortune cookie-style horoscopes for the next five months. FEBRUARY: Master the Zen of constructive anger. Express your complaints in a holy cause. MARCH: You finally get a message you've been waiting to receive for a long time. Hallelujah! APRIL: Renew your most useful vows. Sign a better contract. Come to a more complete agreement. MAY: Don't let your preconceptions inhibit you from having a wildly good time. JUNE: Start your own club, band, organization, or business. Or reinvent and reinvigorate your current one. **Libra (September 23-October 22):** Here are your fortune cookie-style horoscopes for the next five months. FEBRUARY: Be open to romantic or erotic adventures that are different from how love has worked in the past. MARCH: You'll be offered interesting, productive problems. Welcome them! APRIL: Can you explore what's experimental and fraught with interesting uncertainty even as you stay well-grounded? Yes! MAY: You can increase your power by not hiding your weakness. People will trust you most if you show your vulnerability. A key to this season's model of success is the ability to calmly express profound emotion. JUNE: Wild cards and X-factors and loopholes will be more available than usual. Don't be shy about using them.

Scorpio (October 23-November 21): Here are your fortune cookie-style horoscopes for the next five months. FEBRUARY: The world may finally be ready to respond favorably to the power you've been storing up. MARCH: Everything you thought you knew about love and lust turns out to be too limited. So expand your expectations and capacities! APRIL: Extremism and obsession can be useful in moderation. MAY: Invisible means of support will become visible. Be alert for half-hidden help. JUNE: Good questions: What do other people find valuable about you? How can you enhance what's valuable about you?

Sagittarius (November 22-December 21): Here are your fortune cookie-style horoscopes for the next five months. FEBRUARY: You'll have the need and opportunity to accomplish some benevolent hocus-pocus. For best results, upgrade your magical powers. MARCH: Make sure the Turning Point happens in your power spot or on your home turf. APRIL: You should be willing to go anywhere, ask any question, and even risk your pride if necessary so as to coax your most important relationships into living up to their potentials. MAY: If at first you don't succeed, change the definition of success. JUNE: You can achieve more through negotiation and compromise than you could by pushing heedlessly ahead in service to your single-minded vision.

Capricorn (December 22-January 19): Here are your fortune cookie-style horoscopes for the next five months. FEBRUARY: A new phase of your education will begin when you acknowledge how much you have to learn. MARCH: Initiate diplomatic discussions about the Things That Never Get Talked About. APRIL: Revise your ideas about your dream home and your dream community. MAY: You have the power to find healing for your oldest lovesickness. If you do find it, intimacy will enter a new Golden Age. JUNE: Solicit an ally's ingenuity to help you improvise a partial solution to a complex problem.

Aquarius (January 20- February 18): Here are your fortune cookie-style horoscopes for the next five months. FEBRUARY: Start a new trend that will serve your noble goals for years to come. MARCH: Passion comes back into fashion with a tickle and a shiver and a whoosh. APRIL: As you expand and deepen your explorations, call on the metaphorical equivalents of both a telescope and a microscope. MAY: This is the beginning of the end of what you love to complain about. Hooray! JUNE: You'll have an abundance of good reasons to celebrate the fact that you are the least normal sign in the zodiac. Celebrate your idiosyncrasies!

Pisces (February 19-March 20): Here are your fortune cookie-style horoscopes for the next five months. FEBRUARY: You'll have a knack for enhancing the way you express yourself and present yourself. The inner you and the outer you will become more unified. MARCH: You'll discover two original new ways to get excited. APRIL: Be bold as you make yourself available for a deeper commitment that will spawn more freedom. MAY: What are the gaps in your education? Make plans to mitigate your most pressing area of ignorance. JUNE: Your body's ready to tell you secrets that your mind has not yet figured out. Listen well.

Go to RealAstrology.com to check out Rob Brezsny'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.

SUDOKU

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TO PLAY

Fill in the grid so that every row, column, and outlined 3-by-3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9 exactly once. No guessing is required. The solution is unique.

Answers on page 18

TURN IT DOWN!

A SURVEY OF LANSING'S MUSICAL LANDSCAPE

BY RICH TUPICA

MID-WINTER SINGING & FOLK FESTIVAL RETURNS TO THE TEN POUND FIDDLE

Friday, Feb. 1 & Saturday, Feb. 2

Joshua Davis headlines the 17th edition of Ten Pound Fiddle's annual winter event

Friday, Feb. 1 & Saturday, Feb. 2 @ East Lansing Hannah Community Center, 819 Abbot Rd., East Lansing. www.singingfestival.com

For 17 years, the Ten Pound Fiddle concert series has hosted its community-driven Mid-Winter Singing & Folk Festival, welcoming hundreds of locals to not only attend concerts by Michigan folk heroes, but also take part in group sing-alongs and a string of music workshops.

This weekend, the two-day event held at East Lansing's Hannah Community Center, kicks off with a Friday performance from Joshua Davis. Davis is known locally as a solo Americana artist and the guitarist/lead vocalist of Steppin' In It, but gained international attention as a 2015 finalist on NBC's "The Voice." Opening the show are special guests Jen Sygit and Laura Bates. At the event, Davis releases his latest album, "Live at The Robin" — a stripped-down solo disc recorded at sold-out Robin Theatre shows in REO Town.

"We are excited to be the first show in Josh's CD release tour around Michigan," said event host Sally Potter. "He recorded the CD at three sold-out shows at Lansing's Robin Theater in early November and turned it around in time to make the Festival the initial stop on his month-long CD release tour."

The next morning (Saturday), the fest resumes with a free, 11 a.m. Children's Concert at the Hannah Community Center. The event is presented by Sally Rogers and sponsored by the City of East Lansing. Youth of all ages are encouraged to attend and sing folk songs.

Then, from noon-4 p.m. on Saturday, the festival offers eight workshops related to community singing. "Saturday afternoon provides a rich variety of vocal workshops, plus some ukulele jams," explained Potter. "Six of the eight workshops will involve singing. It's



community singing, where everyone in the room sings all of the words to all of the songs presented. Lyrics will be found either on a screen or in handouts. Each workshop will host between 30-80 people." There is no need to pre-register for the workshops, but a \$20 workshop wristband is required. Those 18-and-under, and students, can join workshops for free.

Later that night, the massive Community Sing takes place, and will be led by festival song-leading favorites, and Michigan folk fixtures: Joel Mabus (who is also releasing a new album, "Time & Truth"), Claudia Schmidt and Sally Rogers. Lyric sheets are provided. "Saturday night is the big Community Sing—where 500 people will sing great songs together—led by three of the very best song leaders in the business," Potter said. "To have all three on one night is very special. It's an experience like no other."

For the festival's full calendar, visit singingfestival.com or tenpoundfiddle.org. "I'm amazed that this is the 17th year of the Singing Festival," Potter said. "The community has really embraced the festival and the whole concept that we can get together right in the heart of winter and tap into the warmth and joy of community singing."

LIVE AND LOCAL

UPCOMING SHOW? CONTACT PAUL@LANSINGCITYPULSE.COM

DESTINATION	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
The Avenue Café, 2021 E. Michigan Ave.		Karaba with Et ta	La La Delivery, Devilfish, Tertulia, Slow/Wolf	Black Mass DJs
Buddies, 1937 W Grand River Ave		Karaoke, 9PM		
Crunchy's, 254 W. Grand River Ave.	Wednesday Night Live	Karaoke, 9PM	Karaoke, 9PM	Karaoke, 9PM
Claddagh, 2900 Towne Center Blvd.		The Office Trivia, 7:30	Shenanigans at the Claddagh 10PM	
Classic Pub & Grill, 16219 Old US 27	DJ Trivia	Joe Wright	Jake & Shelby	Hat Trick
Coach's, 6201 Bishop Road	DJ Trivia			Double Shot 9PM
Esquire, 1250 Turner St.	Karaoke, 9 p.m.			
The Exchange, 314 E. Michigan Ave.	Good Cookies Band	Jeff Shoup & Friends	Showdown	Showdown
Green Door, 2005 E. Michigan Ave.	"Johnny D" Blues Night	Karaoke		From Big Sur 9:30PM
Lansing Brewing Co., 518 E. Shiawassee	Trivia Night W/Sporcle 9PM		Mix Pack 8PM	Flatwater 8PM
The Loft, 414 E. Michigan Ave.			Heartsick "Sleep Cycles" Album Release 5:30PM	Hitman, Bubba Klutch, DJ Klav 8PM
Macs Bar, 2700 E. Michigan Ave.	Thin Lips 7PM			
Nuthouse, 420 E Michigan Ave.		Music Bingo 8PM		
Reno's North, 16460 S. US 27			The New Rule 7PM	The New Rule 7PM
Urban Beat Event Center, 1213 Turner St	Camertone Chamber Series 7PM		Jackalope 7:30PM	

Out on the town

from page 15

Sunday, February 03

CLASSES-AND-SEMINARS

Juggling. From 2 to 4 p.m. FREE. Orchard Street Pumphouse, 368 Orchard St. East Lansing.

EVENTS

Urban Beat Wedding Open House. From 3 to 5 p.m. free. Urban Beat Events Center, 1213 Turner Street Lansing.

Monday, February 04

CLASSES-AND-SEMINARS

Guided Meditation. From 10 to 11 a.m. Donation. Willow Stick Ceremonies & Healing Arts, 335

Seymour Ave, Suite D Lansing. 517-402-6727.

EVENTS

Summer in February . From 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. free. Capital Area District Libraries Aurelius Branch, 1939 South Aurelius Road Mason. 517.628.3743.

Tuesday, February 05

CLASSES-AND-SEMINARS

Beginning Facebook for Small Business. From 10 to 11 a.m. Free! To Register Call: (517) 483-1921. Small Business Development Center, LCC, 309 N. Washington Sq. Suite 110 Lansing.

LITERATURE-AND-POETRY

Muslim Journeys Book and Film Club: Prince Among Slaves (film screening). From 7 to 9 p.m. free MSU Libraries' Green Room. MSU Library, 366 W. Circle Drive East Lansing. (517) 353-8700.

Preschool Storytime. From 11 a.m. to noon Grand Ledge Area District Library, 131 E Jefferson St. Grand Ledge.

FRIDAY FEB. 1 >> WINTER SNOWSHOE HIKE

Take a snowshoe tour of the Fenner Nature Center after dark by lantern light in this bi-monthly event. On the tour, participants will learn about winter ecology from a Fenner Nature Center guide. Call early to reserve snowshoe sizes.

6 to 8 p.m., \$8, 2020 E. Mount Hope Ave., Lansing (517) 483-4224, mynaturecenter.org



SATURDAY FEB. 2 >> LOVE FEST 2019

ARTspace and the Fledge team up to host Love Fest, a pop up market featuring local vendors and demos including screen printing, 3D printing, painting, beat making and a music studio tour. There will also be a cake walk and interactive photo booth. Vendors are cash only.

Noon to 6 p.m., \$5 suggested donation or clothing, food item, The Fledge, 1300 Eureka, Lansing (517) 230-7679, thefledge.com



SUNDAY FEB. 3 >> SUPERBOWL CELEBRATION AT CASK & CO.

See every angle of the Patriots and Rams showdown on 40 plus flat screen TVs and a 100 inch projector. Cask and Company's \$15 super bowl special includes a burger, fries and two pints of beer.

1 to 10 p.m., Cask & Company, 3415 E. Saginaw, Lansing (517) 580-3720, www.caskandcompany.com



CROSSWORD SOLUTION

From Pg. 16

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SUDOKU SOLUTION

From Pg. 16

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2	3	6	1	7	5	8	9	4

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music.msu.edu,
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FOOD & DRINK

DINING OUT IN GREATER LANSING

Back of House: Strange Matter owner Cara Nader

Strange Matter Coffee continues to win over Lansing. Since the specialty coffee shop expanded its Michigan Avenue location to a much larger space right across the street, it has added made-from-scratch doughnuts and pastries to its repertoire.

Featuring unorthodox toppings and glazes — hello Oreo and lemon lavender — the quirky baked goods make excellent companions to Strange Matter's much lauded coffee. Owner Cara Nader spoke with City Pulse by phone about brewing coffee and how she managed to throw doughnuts

into the mix.

When did you decide to start making your own doughnuts from scratch?

I have always been interested in cooking and baking. I have worked in commercial kitchens and bakeries in the past. I really wanted to have the best pastries in the area. We used to carry Zingerman's Pastries, which, in my opinion, are pretty much the best in the state. But they stopped delivering to us daily because Ann Arbor to Lansing is kind of a trek. So we had to come up with a different plan.

I spent about a year and a half working on testing and developing recipes. I was also frustrated with a lot of the bakeries in the area because they use buckets of glazes and buckets of fillings or premixed doughnut batters.

I really like to know what I'm eating and I assume that other people do too. I really wanted to make sure that we were making old-school, traditional donuts that have ingredients you can pronounce; that don't have any additives and are also made with high quality ingredients.

What makes pour over coffee special?

The basic idea is that you're brewing a cup to order, but it's a lot more complicated than that. It involves understanding the science of extraction and the science of all of the variables that go into brewing



Courtesy photo

Cara Nader, owner of Strange Matter, stands outside a door on Lansing's eastside.

a cup of coffee.

So instead of just pouring hot water on coffee grounds, the baristas at Strange Matter understand the nuance of extraction and how to really get the best quality out of the cup that the farmer has produced; that the roaster has roasted and hopefully highlighted the farmers' work.

At the very end, we're trying to take all of that into consideration — all the work that everyone's put into this and trying to really get the best out of that by controlling and understanding how variables affect the coffee brewing process, such as

time, temperature, weight ratios of coffee to water — things like that.

You make your own syrups in-house. Is that uncommon? How are they made?

There's a lot of coffee shops in the state of Michigan — and when I say a lot, I mean like maybe 10 that I can think of off the top of my head — that have a similar focus that we do, in terms of the properties of extraction and science and how all of that works, as well as the higher quality ingredients that we're using.

We don't just want to give people a sug-

Sm
STRANGE MATTER
COFFEE CO.

ary beverage to go out the door. We really want to be proud of the quality of the things that we're serving and highlight the quality of our coffee. So we make all of our syrups in-house.

To make a syrup or sauce, or any specialty drink, from scratch is not that challenging — as long as you have a base understanding of cooking. Most syrups are made from a simple syrup base, which is equal parts water and sugar. Then you work on how you want to get the flavor of whatever you're trying to produce. We use an induction cooktop sometimes to simmer things, like when we make our pumpkin sauce in the fall — that's a pretty multistep process. But we always try to use fresh spices to really bring out the flavor.

Tell us about your current roster of roasters. Why did you choose them?

We try to rotate roasters frequently — that doesn't happen as much as I think we'd like. The thing we look for with roasters is that they care about their staff and care about their community in the same way we do. They're not just out to make a buck and sell a bunch of coffee. They care about the farms that are producing their coffee and making sure that they're sourcing from small farms and building relationships with those farmers.

That's something that we really try to work on, making sure that the whole coffee chain is sustainable and not just my coffee shop. It doesn't really do me any good if the farmers aren't earning sustainable wages and things like that on their end.

And then in addition to looking for things that are just kind of community-based and things like that, we also look at quality. We cup coffees; we taste them blind. That's really important to us as well.



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Streetkitchen brunch

By **ABBY SUMBLER**

Brunch is the best. And if you wake up for brunch on Saturday and crave delicious, fresh, local gourmet food, look no further than Streetkitchen.



My selection on a cold, sunny Saturday was "The Terrible Council." A good size portion of fried chicken over smoked gouda grits, jalapeno creamed corn and fried leeks as a garnish and an egg. I'm not big on runny eggs, which is why I won't ever be a "true foodie," but my brunch companion gladly slid the egg onto their plate.

The fried chicken was moist and well battered. The crunch from the chicken offset the creaminess of the grits. When I ordered, I overlooked the creamed corn, so I was surprised to see it, but oh so happy when it added even more texture and the jalapenos gave a little heat to the dish.

As Streetkitchen continues its evolution (the build-out of their brick and mortar



Abby Sumbler/City Pulse

Streetkitchen's "The Terrible Council."

kitchen looks wonderful), there will be more opportunities for meals like this, and nothing makes me happier.

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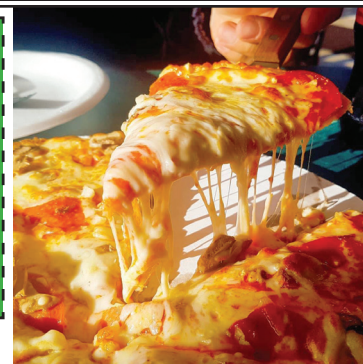


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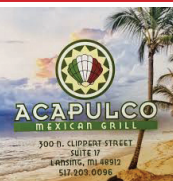
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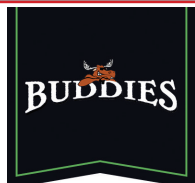
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