

See BWL General Manager J. Peter Lark on "City Pulse Newsmakers" 9 a.m. Sunday on my 18

CityPULSE

a newspaper for the rest of us www.lansingcitypulse.com January 2-7, 2014

FREE

POWERLESS

— OUTAGES & OUTRAGE —

beginning on page 2

CityPULSE
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..... SPECIAL PULL-OUT SECTION | SEE PAGE 11



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"ABSURDLY FUNNY" ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY

ABOUT THIS ISSUE

Believe me when I tell you we had entirely something else planned for this week's paper. I don't want to spoil the surprise (since we will bring it to you soon), but let me just say it was the very opposite of what is perhaps the most serious issue we have ever produced.

This week, you'll find just two of our standing sections: The Pulse page and the events listings. Between them are stories and pictures of the crippling ice storm. And even the Pulse page is a departure: a rare editorial.

I extend a grateful thank you to staff members and contributors for all they did despite personal hardship. And to readers who responded to our request for their stories and pictures.

It's been said that City Pulse does the big story well. We hope you will find this is one of those times.

Berl Schwartz
Editor & publisher

WHAT WILL BE YOUR ENDURING MEMORY OF THE ICE STORM?

Readers shared their thoughts on City Pulse's Facebook page over the past week. Here's what they had to say:

How Virg and Rick haven't made a peep. That's what I'll remember. Six days in before counties are calling state of emergencies, and our government leaders are nowhere to be seen. Carol Wood is the ONLY person that has done anything, and she's doing it from the same boat we're all in. She has been out of power this whole time, but updates her Facebook page CONSTANTLY to let us know what's going on. I wouldn't have known much about the warming shelters, outage maps or where crews were headed without her posts.

— **Rheanon Sarah Leah**

I think it will be hard to beat the very helpful "letter" from the East Lansing city manager, George Lahanas, kindly explaining to me that our power company is doing a smash-up job, and that they have restored power to his house. I'll definitely be able to sleep better in my cold house tonight, now that I understand what a great power company we have. Thank you George Lahanas for the schooling. I really needed that so much more than I need electricity in this cold snowy December. Your warm words for Lansing Board of Water and light will heat my soul.

— **Alan Prather**

My most memorable memories will be how unprepared I was. That our dog cut her foot on the ice on Christmas eve as we were trying to drain the water out of our pipes to avoid freezing and rushing her into the vet to get a \$380 stitch. The workers who have been working through their holiday to get our power back on. But mostly how our friends and family that helped us and were there for us no matter what and that helped us give my 3-year-old a somewhat stable holiday.

— **Amanda Miller**

Generator-stealing thugs!
— **Dan Hagfors**

Without cable, the generator enabled me to watch all my favorite Dakota Fanning flicks. "Dreamer" is underrated. I also frequented theater and tuned into radio.

— **Stephen Mitchell**

After two days in my apartment with no power or heat, I went to the Best Western Plus in South Lansing. I was amazed to see a very crowded lobby including a number of people walking around with dogs on leashes. I thought it was a dog show. It turns out the hotel wanted to accept guests who needed a place to put their pets — with their owners! It was quite a sight, dogs getting to know each other. I thought this was a pretty cool thing for the hotel to do!

— **Rich Wiggins**

The key is having a reliable system in place BEFORE it is needed in a crisis like the current one. If BWL can't manage its finances better to provide both basic services AND structural upgrades, then customers should be free to choose other providers who can.

— **Brenda Cummings Resch**

Skip the frivolous Chili Cook Offs and Christmas parade floats and put more money and effort into an online outage map.

— **John Stone**

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

1.) Write a letter to the editor.

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

2.) Write a guest column:

Contact Berl Schwartz for more information:
publisher@lansingcitypulse.com
or (517) 999-5061

(Please include your name, address and telephone number so we can reach you. Keep letters to 250 words or fewer. City Pulse reserves the right to edit letters and columns.)

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City Pulse on the Air will return January 8th!



Editor & Publisher
Berl Schwartz

7 p.m. Wednesdays

IMPACT 89FM

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW

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PULSE

NEWS & OPINION

EDITORIAL: BWL
RECONSIDERED

Independent panel needed
on response and future

People of Lansing and other communities served by the Board of Water and Light deserve vastly better service than they received in the aftermath of the December ice storm. They should demand an outside investigation of the utility's wretched performance and its mandate to provide reliable service to the community.

Its lack of a communication plan for emergencies is shocking. That alone is the reason to call into question the competency of the leadership of BWL.

The utility's failure to handle power outages raises fundamental questions about the competence and viability of Lansing's city-owned utility.

Does it have the technical and management expertise to respond to a crisis?

Its actions this week and last suggest it doesn't.

Is there a commitment to customer service for a commodity as vital as electricity?

Certainly for those without power for more than a week and unable to get answers to the most basic questions, the answer is no.

Are BWL rates — comparatively lower than those from investor-owned utilities — sufficient to ensure reliable service? And should the city consider the recommendations of its Financial Health Team and sell BWL, raising much needed capital and perhaps ensuring a more reliable power provider?

These, and other questions, must be addressed.

While the city and BWL will no doubt engage in a serious post-storm review, the rate-paying public needs a more objective analysis of what went wrong, why and whether the structure of a city-owned utility is still viable.

Lansing Mayor Virg Bernero and East Lansing Mayor Nathan Triplett, facing hostile constituents on Saturday, supported a comprehensive review of BWL's handling of the power outages. What else could they do?

Yet we also saw Lansing's mayor — and BWL General Manager J. Peter Lark — defensive and combative with those frustrated residents. In most cas-



Photo courtesy of Amanda Minstead

The intersection of Grand River and Seymour avenues looking south on Friday, six days after the storm hit.

es, Bernero uses his personality to his advantage, cutting to the chase to get the job done. This time, it was childish. You'd be hard-pressed to find a time in Bernero's eight years in office when he's been more unpopular.

To truly address the issues, Lansing must empower an independent panel of experts, elected officials and residents to look hard at BWL's culture, structure and finances. And it needs to do this free from union pressure, political posturing and a sentimental attachment to the city's utility. Should Lansing even be in the utility business? It's unusual; most cities aren't. Consult with Consumers Energy customers and ask yourself: What am I really getting that they aren't?

As declining revenues force governments to trim staff and services, is providing electric service an appropriate mission for a city like Lansing? Might it not be better for the city to focus on core services like public safety and education, especially when there are workable alternatives to operations like BWL. A commission should address this question. Lansing cannot afford a utility that doesn't support its 21st-century ambitions. BWL's performance tarnishes a hard-won image of progress and possibility. Not a fatal flaw at this point. But the stakes are high and competition is fierce for development. A world-class city needs a world-class utility.

These are the big questions, second-

ary right now to the rocky restoration of power to local neighborhoods. One of the questions a commission must tackle is the state of the utility's emergency planning. A week ago, City Pulse requested a copy of BWL's emergency plan. Surprisingly, during Saturday's press conference, Lark seemed befuddled by questions about the utility's emergency plan. He didn't seem to know whether there was one. After several others pressured, BWL posted it online Tuesday.

And then there is customer service. Comparing BWL's restoration efforts with that of Consumers Energy's is difficult and perhaps unfair. But we do know that Consumers professionally handled its communications with customers in marked contrast to BWL. Consumers alerted customers days before the power went out that a severe storm was coming. BWL didn't. Consumers' first update on outage numbers — tentative as they were — were comprehensive. BWL's first contact with the public was a mere four sentences. For at least a week, some BWL customers couldn't even tell whether the utility knew if they were out of power. At times it seemed that BWL only learned of power outages when it heard from irate customers. How can that be?

Lark declared last week that he'd heard customers "loud and clear" about the need for better communication and that BWL would bump that up to a higher priority. Of course, that needs to

be done — but it needed to be done well before this storm. This is not about hindsight being 20/20; this is about making clear a major managerial failure to invest in new technology sooner rather than later. We're proud of Lark and his board for embracing natural gas at BWL's new plant in REO Town. We're deeply disappointed in them for not doing the same with communications in the era of the Internet and social media.

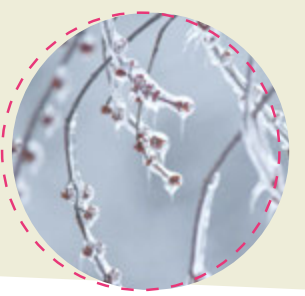
A fundamental question for BWL is its disbursement of crews and its agreements for emergency help from other utilities and contractors. Consumers worked with tree-trimming companies as well as other power companies to coordinate its recovery efforts. Large, damaging storms require a massive and costly response. Did BWL do enough quickly enough? We need to know.

Finally, there is the issue of oversight. BWL serves customers outside of Lansing, communities with no meaningful representation in the governance of the utility. Perhaps this worked at one time, but with angry constituents without power for days on end, communities tied to BWL should have a voice.

The December ice storm and BWL's response represent a pivotal moment for the utility and customers. Clearly, BWL could have done better and should have. But there are larger issues, structural issues that need immediate attention. It is why we need a commission.

9 DAYS

A DAILY RECAP OF WINTER STORM GEMINI



SUNDAY, DEC. 22

At 6 a.m., BWL announces **19,000 customers are without electricity**. "Crews are working to restore power. There is no estimate of power restoration at this time" are two of four sentences in a press release. By 11 a.m., the estimate climbs to **25,000 outages, more than 200 reported downed wires** and BWL says it's bringing in crews from other utilities. **By 7 p.m., outages are estimated at 34,800.** Consumers Energy reports more than **150,000 customers statewide without power**, with 12,607 in Ingham County.

TUESDAY, DEC. 24

By 5 a.m., BWL lowers the number of customers without power to 13,600. By 9 p.m., it says **outages are down to 7,500.** Consumers reports that the storm caused **more than 318,000 outages, or more than 17 percent of its 1.8 million electric customers** — Consumers' largest Christmas-week storm in its 126-year history and the largest ice storm in 10 years. By 5 p.m., **15,728 of its Ingham County customers are without power.** Clinton County resident Stephen R. Bladowski, 58, dies of carbon-monoxide poisoning.

THURSDAY, DEC. 26

About 4,400 BWL customers struggle through Christmas without power, and repairs are offset by more outages. For the first time the utility suggests that fewer than 1,000 customers may be offline by the end of Sunday. The utility also enrages many of its customers by telling them it's their responsibility to hire an electrician to fix "masts" attached to homes. **By 10 p.m., about 3,000 BWL customers are still without power.** By 9:30 p.m., a majority of Consumers customers in Ingham County have power restored although **4,131 still are in the dark.**



FRIDAY, DEC. 27

City, BWL officials hold a press conference on Lansing's East Side. Dozens of residents still without power attend, interrupting Lark and Lansing Mayor Virg Bernero out of frustration. Bernero, clearly agitated, threatens ending the press conference if they don't stop. **BWL announces that it is adding line crews** by spreading out its own employees and that it is bringing in crews who are freed up by repairs they've finished elsewhere in the state. **About 3,000 customers are still without power, an increase from the day before.** But by 8 p.m. the number grows to 4,500 due to the warm weather and thawing, as limbs snap back, breaking lines. Consumers reports a total of 413,000 outages from the storm, or nearly 23 percent of its electric customers. Just under 1,500 in Ingham County are without power.

SUNDAY, DEC. 29

Overnight, the number of BWL outages declines to 3,292. However, the utility is blasted in a statement by Sen. Gretchen Whitmer of East Lansing for the number of residents still without power and its unresponsiveness and inaccuracy in handling the crisis: "... when the public cannot even reach someone to report a downed power line in their yard or receive accurate information about when they can expect their electricity restored, it isn't simply poor customer service, it's a significant public safety issue that remains unaddressed." **The utility announces that it will open three customer-service centers in East Lansing and Lansing** to help people determine whether their area is on the list for repairs. It also expands hours of its meter department for contractors to receive certain free parts. **The AP reports that of 666,000 Michigan residents who lost power in the storm, all but about 3,900 have had power restored** — 3,300 of which were BWL customers. DTE and Consumers had nearly all of their customers restored.



DEC 22

DEC 23

DEC 24

DEC 25

DEC 26

DEC 27

DEC 28

DEC 29

DEC 30

MONDAY, DEC. 23

Overnight, BWL reduces the number of outages to about 30,000. By 9 p.m., the number of customers with no power drops to 19,000. **The number of Consumers customers in Ingham County without power increases to 16,094.**



WEDNESDAY, DEC. 25

On Christmas morning, BWL announces the same number of outages as the night before — 7,500. "BWL continues to anticipate that a substantial portion of remaining customers without power will be restored by the end of today," a press release says, but adds that numbers are subject to change. The utility says it is "aware of its outage areas," and begins announcing where crews are out working. **By 9 p.m., 5,700 BWL customers are still without power.** Any mention of anticipated repairs is removed from press announcements. Consumers reduces the number of Ingham County customers without power by more than 2,500 by to about 13,200.

FRIDAY, DEC. 27

By dawn, the number of BWL **customers without electricity is down to 2,600.** Clinton, Eaton, Shiawassee and Barry counties — along with Delta and Meridian townships — have declared states of emergency. Lansing, East Lansing and Ingham County decline to do so, saying it wouldn't make a difference. Meanwhile, East Lansing resident Jeff Siarto takes matters into his own hands when he creates a Google map of BWL customer outages that the public can contribute to. BWL is criticized for not having one of its own, while General Manager J. Peter Lark downplays the importance of one. Consumers has had a region-wide outage map since the start of the ice storm.



Lansing Board of Water & Light General Manager J. Peter Lark, center, and Mayor Virg Bernero at a press conference Saturday, fielding questions and comments from angry residents.

MONDAY, DEC. 30

Another mid-Michigan senator, Republican Rick Jones of Grand Ledge, calls for legislation that would give the Michigan Public Service Commission oversight of the BWL. Public comment at a special Lansing City Council meeting **lasts three hours as nearly 60 speakers rail against BWL's restoration and outreach efforts.** It's followed by a presentation from Lark, who apologizes and promises next steps (see page 5). **As of 9 p.m., 700 BWL customers were without power.**

LOOKING AHEAD

Ice storm 2013: Anger, an apology and a promise to determine what went so wrong

By ANDY BALASKOVITZ

Frustrated, angered and disheartened Board of Water and Light customers had their three minutes Monday night to face those responsible for the utility's handling of a nine-day old ice storm that left some of them still without power.

For three hours, speaker after speaker demanded accountability for the way BWL power line repairmen were dispatched and for the ineffective way it communicated problems with residents. Why weren't more sent out to make repairs? Why didn't they know whether BWL knew if their power was out? More than one speaker called for the resignation of General Manager J. Peter Lark.

When Lark had his chance to speak shortly before 10 p.m. Monday, he was apologetic. The utility was overwhelmed by the sheer number of outages, he said, struggling to put the recovery effort into context.

"No utility in Michigan has ever lost 40 percent of its customers" at one time, Lark said. "Every square mile of our utility was affected."

The repair crews dispatched by the utility included spotters and

tree-trimmers. These work alongside linemen who actually repair the electrical circuits that restore light and heat to properties.

Lark said initial media reports of five line crews (with three people to a crew) were incorrect, though the State Journal defended initial crew numbers it reported, saying it was what the utility provided them. On Monday, Lark said 25 crews were dispatched early on to assess damage and remove down power lines.

"If it came out of our office and was not correct, I apologize for that as well," Lark said. In the final days of repairs, he said 32 crews were accompanied by 32 support crews in the field.

Lark said he was "assured" by his operations staff that BWL had an "optimum level of crews on the ground to complete the restoration as timely as possible."

"We are going to have to do a self-assessment, we are going to have to look at this. We are not doing that now. We are doing that as soon as we get all the power restored," he said. Lark promised

See Recap, Page 34

A WEEK LATER, STILL NO POWER

By LAWRENCE COSENTINO

The big freeze of 2013 began with a cannonade of falling limbs and orange flashes. A softer music filled the streets the following Saturday, as bits of melting ice tinkled from tree limbs to the ground. Power was back in many neighborhoods, but many single houses and pockets of houses were still out.

At about 3 p.m., Tim Terry took advantage of the slight thaw to check in on his house at 1227 Climax St., at the east edge of a patch of about a dozen houses that were still in the cold. He was sure his short stretch of Climax would be the last to get power back.

"They're fixing the power on the main streets," Terry said, pointing to Holmes Road a block away. "Their power went on all along there today. They're going to neglect us every kind of way."

Terry was staying with relatives, but he checked the house a few times a day for signs of break-ins.

"I'm a survivor," he said. "I can go to the North Pole and make it happen, but my sister, Natalie, can't take it. She's 70 years old and needs a machine to breathe."

His sister was staying with a niece, but he was still worried about her. Her breathing device was hooked up at the niece's house, but every day away from her home medical alert system was a risk.

The streets and yards along Climax and Malcolm X Street, a block north, were strewn with downed wires and splintered branches. There were no signs of BWL

trucks.

"I've been driving all over and I didn't see any trucks nowhere," Terry said. "Are they on vacation?"

But private contractors were out in force.

Dodging a 60-foot mass of tree brush, two trucks almost ran into each other on icy Malcolm X Street. One crew was fixing a power stack that that ripped away from a house. Across the street, another crew hooked up a generator for a homeowner who was at the hospital with a sick child.

Holding an icepack to her jaw — she had just been to the dentist — Amber Esser of Home Pros ran a cord through the plastic sheeting covering an unfinished porch on the north side of Climax. She and her father, Albert, were almost finished rehabbing the house and had started on the porch when the storm hit.

Albert Esser said the power had only just come back to his own home in Mason that day.

"It's shocking that we've been out of power seven days," Esser said. "It's just unheard of. It's Amish."

He watched the generator as it shuddered to life.

"It costs 20 dollars a day to run these things," Albert said. "Low-income people can't afford that, or eating out every day."

About a mile west, another pocket of about a dozen houses were still without power, centering on Alsdorf Street near Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. Some had generators; others stayed elsewhere.

Garrett Clinard didn't want to leave



Lawrence Cosentino/
City Pulse

Tim Terry checked on his still-powerless house on Climax Street Saturday.

his Alsdorf Street house for fear the pipes would burst. He had an epiphany while adjusting the fierce heat blowing from the dashboard of his Dodge Caravan.

He bought two lengths of duct with rectangular footboxes from Home Depot and taped them together. He fitted one footbox to his dashboard and taped the other to the side window of his house, just above the couch where he slept. The unholy marriage of automobile and domicile kept the heat at 45 degrees.

Across the street, Clinard's neighbor, Cindy Andress, was sticking it out with a generator. While fiddling with his ducts, Clinard spotted Andress and walked over.

"What have you heard?" Andress shouted over the generator.

"They haven't scheduled the lines for repair," Clinard told her.

"What do you mean, they haven't sched-

uled?" she cried. She looked at the ground.

"The anxiety level is so high," she said. "We had no Christmas. We just sat here and didn't want to do nothing. You can't spend extra money. It's a nightmare."

The frustration was extra sharp Saturday as people without power watched their neighbors resume life as usual. Two blocks east from Clinard and Andress on Alsdorf, Alice and Curtis Wilson and their son Stephen were unpacking their van after spending the week in Cheboygan with her mother.

"We lived through an ice storm 20 times worse than this in Kentucky in 2009," She said. "Five or six inches thick. The whole state was out of power." They shlepped several bags of clothes, food, toilet paper and a two-liter jug of A&W Root Beer into the house and settled in. A block east, the basso chorus of generators went on humming.

CITY PULSE READERS
SHARE THEIR STORIES
ABOUT THE STORM

Keep the conversation going!

Send your stories to
andy@lansingcitypulse.com

MY STORY: LISA STUECHER

Age: 27 • Shepard Street • Lansing

A positive story: It was a silver lining for my boyfriend's restaurant. The records showed it would be dead slow during those days but since no one had power and everyone came for breakfast. We were so busy. It was truly a blessing for us. Truly. Those surprise busy days of extra revenue really helped out with the surprise expenses of starting a new business.

MY STORY: MICKEY HIRTEN

Age: 64 • Lagoon Drive • Okemos

At 1 a.m. Christmas morning I was in my front yard refilling the gas tank on my generator. It was cold, dark and, for the moment, silent. Very solitary. Low in the eastern sky a shooting star blazed across the horizon, exploded, and shattered into short-lived streamers — a Christmas star, Biblical, even. I looked for more, hoping for a meteor shower. There were none. But for early Christmas morning, one was enough.

LOOK FOR MORE LOCAL STORIES THROUGHOUT THE PAPER. Have a story to share? You can also post on our Facebook page.

MY STORY: STEFANIE SPIRO POHL

Age: 28 • Mistywood Drive • Okemos

The generator powered up in the middle of the night Saturday during the ice storm and ran for a week until our power was restored. It's a heavy duty generator and was able to run everything in the house, so we were fortunately able to still host Christmas. Even though it was pitch black in our neighborhood, our lights were on, including our Christmas lights outside. At first we thought neighbors might think we were rubbing it in that we had power, but if people weren't going to be able to enjoy all of the Christmas lights outside last week, we felt like at least there was a little Christmas spirit with our house.

'AND I GREW UP IN KANSAS'

After the ice storm, WLNS meteorologist Jake Dunne rethinks where they rank among natural disasters

By ANDY BALASKOVITZ

WLNS-TV meteorologist Jake Dunne is not being hyperbolic when he says the ice storm has caused him to rethink aspects of his career.

"I've been doing this for 15 years," he said in an interview Thursday, pointing out jobs in the South where he dealt with category three or four hurricanes. "While hurricanes and tornadoes make all the headlines, I'm starting to rethink where ice storms rank on that list, given the amount of damage. The pictures are unbelievable. The domino affect of homes that didn't have any heat source all down the line — I'm starting to rethink where ice storms fit on that list."

Dunne and his family lost power for five days at their Windsor Township home. Another enduring memory?

"For me, it was just the community banding together. The hope that I was offered — from immediate people that never met me, to people in the hotel that let us in, to neighbors who brought stuff over — just the sacrifice in difficult times," he said.

The band of heavy precipitation that came in from the southwest was paired with a layer of warm air in the atmosphere and below-freezing temperatures at the surface. That spanned from Kalamazoo to Lansing to greater Flint, "give or take 25 miles," Dunne said. Farther south, the surface temperatures were warmer, creat-

ing rain.

"If we were 2 degrees warmer in Lansing at the surface, none of this would have happened," he said. "We would have been wet and brown on Sunday morning."



Dunne

Moreover, he said the affected areas — where roughly 300,000 people lost power — are relatively small considering the size of the state.

"Just think if this was 100 miles wider," he said. "That's not much. Then we're talking maybe a million people without power."

Such storms are rare, he said, and more devastating than wintertime blizzards.

"This is the worst weather disaster I've personally been through," he said. "And I grew up in Kansas."

FAST FROZEN

'Gemini' not too different from past damaging ice storms

By ALLAN I. ROSS

For the better part of a week, Winter Storm Gemini made mid-Michigan look like a set piece in the hit Disney film "Frozen," leaving between one-fourth of an inch and three-fourths of an inch of heavy ice crust across the landscape. It also snapped the limbs off trees and knocked the power out of approximately 40,000 Lansing Board of Water and Light customers and 620,000 other utility customers statewide. Full damage totals won't be known for a while yet, but what is known is that this isn't the most severe ice storm to hit Lansing — and you only have to look back 10 years for something comparable.

"Typically, ice storms melt off within one day, but cold temperatures made (the effects) of this storm a lot more significant," said Brandon Hoving, meteorologist for the National Weather Service. "It stuck around awhile."

Hoving said last month's storm is on par with two other storms that caused widespread damage in the Lansing area: one that happened in 1985, another in 2003.

In April 2003, Hoving said there were reports of up to 1 inch of ice accumulation that knocked out 450,000 customers statewide, including 50,000 in mid-Michigan who lost power for a full week.

"There were high winds and thunderstorms accompanying that one," Hoving said. "It was a very messy situation. It was comparable to what we're experiencing now."

Well, except for the deep freeze that set in afterward, which made this storm so much more dangerous. Hoving said five local deaths have been attributed to



Photo by Ariniko O'Meara

Tree damage on Coleman Road in East Lansing, between Newton and Marsh roads, on Dec. 22.

Gemini. The last time a true winter ice storm happened was Jan. 1, 1985, which also created a layer of ice up to 1 inch thick throughout southern and mid-Michigan. Hoving said that storm caused three deaths, eight injuries and left 430,000 without power.

"Some were out up to 10 days," Hoving said. "The total damage was \$50 million."

Looking back a little further, on March 3, 1976, a major ice storm ravaged the Midwest, with Wisconsin and Michigan being the heaviest hit. Hoving said it left more than an inch of ice accumulation.

"That was extreme," he said, adding that over 500,000 were left without power, some for days. He said 16 people were killed and several counties were declared disaster areas.

MY STORY: KYLIE JOHNSON

Age: 34 • Cheltenham Boulevard • Lansing

We were fortunate enough to still have gas, so our fireplace and hot water heaters still worked. My mom, dad and I sat around the fire freezing for a while.

I decided to find a game we could play. We have the original edition of Trivial Pursuit from 1981, and we bonded over answering questions and discussing how much the world has changed since 1981.

We were without power for 55 hours. By the second morning my dad was getting worried about the pipes bursting. I put a message on Facebook about where to locate a generator. A friend I haven't seen since high school answered my post and helped us get a small generator. We finally had some real heat and my dad found a new appreciation for social media.

The sump pump also got some power so dad was able to take a rest from bailing water out of it (around 4,000 gallons total). Throughout the short powerless time I was struck by peoples' willingness to help and a strong sense that it was supposed to happen. It bolstered my Christmas spirit and gave my family quality time together.

Part of the reason ice storms are so dangerous is because they're so rare. Hoving said you need very specific conditions and temperatures to achieve the damaging effects caused by a storm like Gemini.

"There's a very fine line between rain, snow and freezing rain," Hoving said. "It's not uncommon for freezing rain to glaze things up, but to get a quarter inch to three-quarters of an inch is quite rare. We don't get many ice storms, but when we do, they do a lot of damage."

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LESSON LEARNED

Confronting our society's lack of self-sufficiency

By **ANDY BALASKOVITZ**

It hit me late Thursday night as I was lying on my friend's couch, about to fall asleep in his Foster Avenue home. I was reading Steven R. Reed's report in the State Journal about frustrated residents without power. Lansing Township resident Dave Behnke told Reed that his street felt like a "forgotten zone."

I was planning to stay in a hotel before my friend graciously offered up his living room. The three nights before, I slept in my parents' living room in Whitehall. The Saturday and Sunday before that, on another friend's couch. All of whom had power. Mine came back Sunday night. It was the first time I slept there in over a week.



Collington

But I write this with a strong sense of guilt, perhaps even shame. I'm an able-bodied, literate male in my mid-20s, yet I've lacked the self-sufficiency (mostly due to laziness) to withstand a week on my own without power, which, in the grand scheme of things, is quite luxurious. I'm not alone.

"Yes, our culture has drifted away from that kind of self-sufficiency," said Peter Carrington, assistant curator of the W.J. Beal Botanical Garden at Michigan State University. He has taught a wilderness survival course at Lansing Community College since 1977.

If there's been a lasting memory of the great ice storm of 2013 (or whatever you want to call it), for me, it's the reflection on how far we've drifted as a society away from self-sufficiency.

There are many who are not as fortunate as I, who do not have the means to get around. They deserve all the help they can get in times like this.

While many are criticizing the Lansing Board of Water and Light's response to the episode, I wonder how much of that frustration is simply borne out of the fact that they don't have power. In a way, most of us were just as unprepared as BWL is accused of being.

"Once the power's back on, we commiserate, 'Wasn't that terrible?' We tend to forget that we're lacking in a certain survival mode there," Carrington said.

The ability to start a fire in the wintertime, with our bodies susceptible to hypothermia, is "clearly essential," he said. Modern amenities, like a lighter, can make all the difference.

"It isn't whether you can devise a way to make a spark, but making that into a fire with a proper tinder bundle. Starting a fire, even though it's essential, is not something many practice," he said.

There have been at least four reported carbon monoxide poisonings since Sunday,

including the death of a 58-year-old Clinton County man. Another issue, Carrington says, that is often overlooked.

He figures many others will be looking inward after the events of the past week.

"Anybody who was without heat for the last week is definitely looking at some solutions that are a little more local for them," he said. "Certainly a little bit of hardship inspires people to think about that stuff."

That includes me.



Photo courtesy of Nicole Rico

When Joe and Nancy Robinson bought their home on Beard Road in Shaftsbury, they made sure this tree — planted roughly 180 years ago — was on it. It was essentially destroyed in the ice storm.

SHIAWASSEE COUNTY 'CRIPPLED'

Generator shortages just one of the problems experienced outside of Tri-County region

By **RICH TUPIKA**

A towering, Sleepy Hollow-esque oak in Joe and Nancy Robinson's front yard has hung over Beard Road in Shaftsbury as long as anyone can recall. Planted roughly 180 years ago, during the Andrew Jackson administration, the tree has weathered all types of severe storms until this one.

It now is cracked, essentially destroyed, its ancient branches down and rudely cleared from the roadway.

"People have been going by with their chainsaws and have been cutting it back. You couldn't get by at first," Nancy Robinson said over the hum of a nearby generator. "It was our favorite tree," her husband, Joe, added. "When we bought this house we made sure the tree was included on our property."

The Robinsons' loss of power and property damage isn't unusual in their neighborhood. Shaftsbury (also known as Woodhull Township) in Shiawassee County, was one of the areas hardest hit by the Dec. 21 ice storm, according to Thomas "TJ" Clark, director of Shiawassee County's Emergency Management Homeland Security.

"At one time 64 percent of Shiawassee County was without power," Clark said, calling the county crippled. "Consumers will say they have 11,000 without power, but those are meters, those aren't individuals. One meter could service an apartment complex or a quad that the landlord pays. We look at the impact of the population density — not on how many non-spinning meters Consumers is reporting as out of service. So at one time we were looking at over 43,000 people that were without power."

There were warming centers across the county set up for those in need — from Perry to Corunna and Bancroft. Shiawassee County also used its "Code Red" emergency alert system, which updates residents via cell phone, home phone and email, according to Clark. He also said a few deaths may be related to the storm, including a fire and carbon monoxide poisoning, but the cases are still under investigation. Meanwhile, out-of-state tree and power-line workers, including Asplundh and T&D Solutions, spread out in the cities and surrounding rural areas restoring much of the power grid over the weekend.

Up the street from the Robinsons, near the Shaftsbury Village Market, lives Landan Dibble, 25, who lost power on Christmas night. How has he kept

warm? "Right now, by chopping wood — stacking it up," he said the day after Christmas, holding his axe near a pile of freshly cut logs. "We just use stove heat." Dibble said his area is a wreck in all directions. "It dropped a bunch of lines down Beard and Shaftsbury Road. If you take any of these connecting roads to Haslett there are a lot of lines down to the ground. When you drive around, every second you see another tree that's dropped. Even today, I'm out here chopping and I still hear them dropping."

Those without stoves and fireplaces were forced to fire up the generator — or rush out and snag one. Rob Jones, the freight supervisor at the Home Depot in Owosso, said they had dozens of cold residents waiting in line.

"We got 96 generators in a little after 8 p.m. on Monday night," said Jones, a 17-year employee. "We had people lined up back to the receiving department, they started coming in at 4 p.m. — we stayed open an hour late, until 10 p.m., selling them — the next morning there were only 20 or so left. They were gone right away. I've never seen generator sales like this. The only time it was close was back in 2002 or 2003 during that black-out."

Some area businesses were affected but managed to cope. Julie Sloan, 19, an employee at Brent's Pizza in Perry, said the store closed temporarily due to the outage.

"On Christmas eve we had a generator, so we reopened," Sloan said. "But we definitely lost money because we didn't have the store open for two days and a lot of our supplies got ruined. We had to have someone come in and re-wire the oven so the generator could power it — the lights were flickering a lot. We got it back Christmas morning, about 10 a.m."

Jim Sebrell, 57, lives on the border of Shaftsbury and Laingsburg. His power went out at the onset of the storm. He said he and his neighbors have been helping each other out throughout the ordeal.

"We're keeping warm with a generator, spending \$20 or \$30 a day on gas — but we have everything except hot water," he said. "I've been helping anyone I know who needs help, clearing their driveways. When everything clears and we get power we'll start cleaning up yards in the neighborhoods. I've never seen anything like this and I'm 57 and have been in Michigan all but one of those years."

CUPCAKES AND COMFORTERS

Trinity Church Red Cross shelter sweetens a sour deal

By LAWRENCE COSENTINO

A live chorus of “Happy Birthday” drowned out the “Entertainment Tonight” theme in the TV lounge at Lansing’s Trinity Church on Dunckel Road last Thursday, five days after an ice storm and widespread power failures turned the church into a Red Cross shelter.

The night before, about 70 people were scattered in five spacious rooms at the church, reading, sleeping on couches, chatting at tables, watching the flat screen TV. About 40 cots were set up in a nearby music room turned sleeping area.

The shelter’s busiest night was Christmas Eve, with about 180 guests, according to a Bob Lovell, a Red Cross volunteer.

By Thursday, the traffic was slowing. About three families arrived that day and

two left. A few people came to the shelter after being released from Sparrow Hospital, where they were treated with hypothermia and released.

Not-so-random acts of kindness, from donated blankets and food to a stealth armada of sweets, helped the time pass.

Kye Lockhart, a Lansing rapper and music producer, and two Red Cross volunteers handed out two trays of festive cupcakes to mark the 59th birthday of Chrystal Black, who beamed benignly at the scene from her wheelchair. Lockhart and Black met while staying at the shelter. “They’re from Sam’s Club. Quality Dairy didn’t have enough,” Lockhart explained.

Earlier that day, Lockhart overheard Black mention that it was her birthday and snuck away to arrange the surprise, which he paid for out of pocket.

The rooms were decorated with Christmas trees and heaped with bottled water, snacks, fruit and soda. The sleeping area was piled with dozens of brand new blankets, still wrapped in plastic, and hand knitted scarves and gloves, donated by retailers and individuals.

“People have been very appreciative, and they seem to help one another,” Marie, a Red Cross volunteer, said. “I’ve seen cases where a baby needs to be cuddled, but the mother had her hands full with other children, and somebody steps in and loves them up.”

When the rain of cupcake crumbs ceased, Sandy Buckland of Spring Arbor, who works for Consumers Energy, vacuumed the floor. Volunteers from the community, includ-



Lawrence Cosentino/City Pulse

Chrystal Black and her brother Doug Kablietz, both of Lansing, enjoyed birthday cupcakes at the Red Cross shelter at Lansing’s Trinity Church Thursday.

ing many from the Trinity congregation and about 30 Consumers Energy employees, emptied trash, cleaned showers and bathrooms, and swept floors at the shelter.

“We’ve had a good time getting to know the guests,” Buckland said.

Birthday celebrant Black was staying at the shelter with her brothers, Doug and Ted Kablietz. The scene wasn’t always quite so serene, according to Ted Kablietz.

“It was pretty crowded for a while here,” he said. “We had a little trouble, but they dealt with it. Some people were a little riled up from being in such close quarters, so they spread them out.”

Security officer Kim Gordon agreed that it was a bit crazy for a while. “The kids were really rambunctious, climbing over the pool tables and running around,” she said. Unused to the protocol, new arrivals walked into the sleeping area and boomed out greetings to friends, waking up everyone in the room.

“It made for an interesting evening,” Ted Kableitz said.

“It’s been calm today,” Gordon said.

“No fights.”

Lockhart and his wheelchair-bound mother, Retha, came to Trinity as a last resort, but made the best of it. “We went to every hotel from west Lansing to Okemos and they were all sold out,” Tye Lockhart said. “My mother doesn’t have the best of health. Her blood pressure was dropping and it was time to get out.”

Lockhart had a lead on a generator and hoped to get her out of the shelter that night.

“But being here has been a good experience, meeting people and helping them out,” Lockhart said. “The best meal was tonight. Chicken, rice, corn — yeah, it was good.”

Back at the check-in desk, Lovell kept an eye on new arrivals. He lavished praise on the volunteers from the Trinity congregation and Consumers Energy. “Everything we needed, they make it work,” he said.

Lovell broke off the conversation to respond to a signal from his mobile phone. Diabetic test strips were needed for a guest. He started poking the keyboard, looking for the nearest pharmacy.

MY STORY: ANDY OWEN

Age: 31 • Hulett Road • Okemos

The outage was the first time I ever talked to that many people at the gas station that many times in a row, because we all had one big thing in common: We were filling up gas cans instead of our cars. There was a kind of sense of camaraderie.

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'GODDAMN HERO'

Out in the field with BWL linemen on day six

By ANDY BALASKOVITZ

Austen Helvey started working for the Lansing Board of Water and Light as a journeyman lineman three weeks ago. Six days after the ice storm hit Lansing, he and three other crew members had “turned” four major circuits in the area, restoring power to approximately 4,000 people.

The 16-hour shifts were piling up, and he couldn’t help comparing his experience with other disaster-stricken areas where he’s worked. That includes cleanup after hurricanes Sandy of 2012 and Ike and Gustav of 2008.

“It’s comparable, if not more damage,” Helvey, 27, said in comparison to Sandy, the devastating superstorm that reaped havoc on the East Coast. “Ice is probably the worst for power lines.”

Helvey was near the intersection of West Willow Highway and Elmwood Road early Friday afternoon restoring power with fellow



Helvey

BWL employees. BWL General Manager J. Peter Lark was giving interviews nearby with local media, explaining how the restoration process works.

Helvey said the crews’ biggest challenge are downed lines in residents’

backyards. Sometimes they visit the same site three or four times, depending on the damage. Helvey said he lost power at his Magnolia Avenue home for two days.

Helvey, was working Friday with fellow BWL lineman Archie Emmons, who still didn’t have power at his home near Mt. Hope Avenue and Aurelius Road. Emmons, 40, was lamenting missing his son’s 6th birthday that day, as well as Christmas.

“You wake up cold, work 16 hours, go back to sleep, do it over again,” said Emmons, who has been with the utility since 2000. The crews refer to each other as “goddamn hero,” which Emmons and Helvey smile is an inside joke based off a YouTube video.

“We’re upbeat, happy we’re getting everyone back on,” Emmons said when asked

about his attitude. “At the beginning it was a little daunting.”

Helvey said that by day six, the line crews had set into a routine: “We see the light at the end of the tunnel.”

The line crews, unlike city and utility officials, have been unanimously praised for their efforts to restore power back to 40 percent of BWL’s customers. Some have reported rounds of applause when they enter restaurants. But they are also not tone deaf to the chorus of complaints about BWL’s response to the storm, which fall largely on BWL and city administrators.

“I understand people are frustrated,” Helvey said. “We are doing everything we can.”

MY STORY: BONNIE TRACY-FARAONE

Age: 50 • Moores River Drive • Lansing

(We learned a) lesson: We don’t need to keep the heat as high as we typically do. We always turn it down over night and after freezing for five and a half days, it feels damn need tropical in here at 60 degrees. We need to stop consuming so much and use only what we need.



Lawrence Cosentino/City Pulse

Customers wait at BWL customer service center, Friday, Dec. 27.

IN THE DARK

Customers converge to demand answers at BWL

By LAWRENCE COSENTINO

The parade of citizens at the Lansing Board of Water and Light's customer service center Friday afternoon was beyond even Norman Rockwell's power to paint. They came in pajama bottoms, business suits, Obama T-shirts, fedoras, overalls, berets, red holiday coats with gold jingle bells and threadbare flannel under yellowish beards. With 40 or more people packed in the service window area and frequent spurts of overflow lining up outside the door, this impromptu town meeting had only one topic. After almost a week without power, what the hell is going on?

Southside resident Pat Hartwick has cancer and heart trouble and lives on a Social security allowance under \$900 a month. She and her three cats have been keeping warm by running a space heater off an extension cord from a neighbor's house.

A branch tore the utility "stack" off the house onto the ground. That day, BWL staffers explained to hundreds of people, including Hartwick, that it's the homeowner's responsibility to get a contractor to fix it.

"How am I going to do it?" Hartwick said, her voice shaking. "I've got \$1.25 in the bank. I've got a \$500 deductible on the insurance policy for my house."

Many homeowners had already cleared the messes on their property and demanded further information.

"The phone system sucks," westside resident Mary Avery said. "They could have been better informing us of when we can get service. It's been the same message for days.

I'd just like to know when we can go home."

Avery was ready to put a strange Christmas behind her. Her kids converged from Grand Rapids, Buffalo and the Upper Peninsula for Christmas, ending up in a Red Roof Inn.

On the night of the ice storm, Avery, a volunteer for the Lansing Symphony Orchestra, drove from Detroit Metro Airport to escort a guest singer for the symphony pops concert. After three white-knuckle hours, she made it to her driveway in Lansing just as the lights went out.

"It was cold. I was underneath the blanket and my cell phone was going dead. The only number I knew was 1-800-Red-Roof."

Travis, from the Potter Walsh neighborhood, had a lot of questions. "How many crews do they usually have and how many do they have now?" he asked. "And how come my neighborhood got prioritized last? It's Friday."

Travis stayed in his house for two days, then took his three kids (2, 7 and 10 years old) to stay with his in-laws in Charlotte.

"I paid a company to take the tree off. Can you at least come down and hook the line back up? They don't answer the phone. The person I talked to in there threw her hands up in the air. It's pretty pathetic."

Mary Crow of Lansing lives on Brighton Drive near Waverly and Holmes roads.

"My husband and I are at our wits' end. It looks like a war zone. It's really bad over there because there are so many big older trees. We had to get an electrician to do the house. I can't get them on the phone so here I am."

Pearl Decker, who lives near Coolidge Road and Stonewood Drive, near Frandor, reported a "doughnut hole" of several dark houses in her area, but didn't find out when her power would come back. Her family has been staying at the Kellogg Center and just extended their stay until Monday.

"We went Chinese on Christmas," she said. "We just keep going home, checking

See BWL, Page 10

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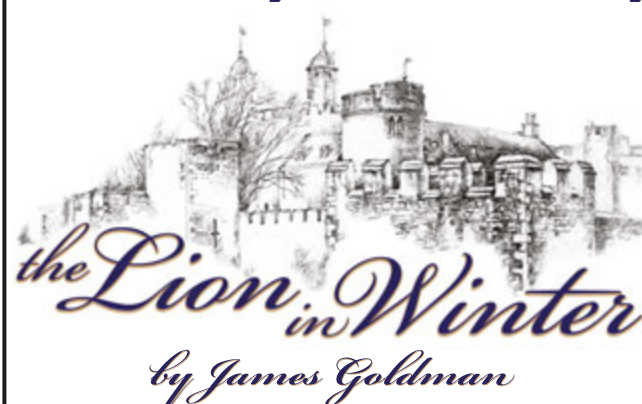
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PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS
EAST LANSING CITY COUNCIL

Notice is hereby given of the following public hearings to be held by the East Lansing City Council on **January 21, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.**, in the 54-B District Court, Courtroom 2, 101 Linden Street, East Lansing:

- 1. A public hearing will be held to consider an application from Altu's Ethiopian Cuisine for a Special Use Permit for a Class C liquor license (with Sunday sales) to sell beer, wine and spirits in the Altu's Ethiopian Cuisine restaurant at 1312 Michigan Avenue. The property is zoned B-2, Retail Sales Business District.
- 2. A public hearing will be held to consider an application from 246 Equities, LLC for a modified Site Plan and Special Use Permit for the property at 246 East Saginaw Street. The proposed application would modify the restaurant and apartment layout that was previously approved and provide space for outdoor dining for the restaurant. The property is zoned in the B-2, Retail Sales Business District.

The City of East Lansing will provide reasonable accommodations, such as interpreters for the hearing impaired and audio tapes of printed materials being considered at this meeting, upon notice to the City of East Lansing, prior to the meeting. Individuals with disabilities requiring reasonable accommodations or services should write or call the City Manager's Office, 410 Abbot Road, East Lansing, MI 48823 (517) 319-6920, TDD 1-800-649-377.

Marie E. Wicks
City Clerk

CP#003



PUBLIC NOTICE

Regular meetings of the Lansing Board of Water and Light Commissioners of the City of Lansing, Michigan, are scheduled to be held at 5:30 p.m., at the Board of Water and Light's Headquarters, REO Town Depot, located at 1201 S. Washington Ave., Lansing, MI 48910, Michigan on the following dates:

2014
Board of Water and Light Commissioners
Regular Board Meeting Schedule

| | |
|---------|--------------|
| Tuesday | January 28 |
| Tuesday | March 25 |
| Tuesday | May 27 |
| Tuesday | July 22 |
| Tuesday | September 23 |
| Tuesday | November 18 |

In the event a special meeting or rescheduled meeting is held, a notice will be posted at the Board of Water and Light Headquarters, 1201 S. Washington Ave., Lansing, Michigan, 48910, at least 18 hours prior to the time of the meeting.

Posted by order of the Board of Water and Light Commissioners in conformity with Act 267, PA 1976.
BOARD OF WATER AND LIGHT

M. Denise Griffin, Corporate Secretary
(517) 702-6033

CP#002

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS
EAST LANSING PLANNING COMMISSION

Notice is hereby given of the following public hearings to be held by the East Lansing Planning Commission on **Wednesday, January 22, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.**, in the 54-B District Court, Courtroom 2, 101 Linden Street, East Lansing:

- 1. A public hearing will be held to consider Ordinance 1322, a City-initiated ordinance to amend Section 50-53 of Division 3 – Article VI – Business, Office and Industrial District of Chapter 50 – Zoning – of the Zoning Code of the City of East Lansing to amend the height allowed subject to a special use permit in the B-2.
- 2. A public hearing will be held to consider Ordinance 1323, a City-initiated ordinance to amend Section 50-80 of Chapter 50 – Zoning of the Code of the City of East Lansing to define residentially zoned property.

Call (517) 319-6930, the Department of Planning, Building and Development, East Lansing City Hall, 410 Abbot Road, East Lansing, for additional information. All interested persons will be given an opportunity to be heard. These matters will be on the agenda for the next Planning Commission meeting after the public hearing is held, at which time the Commission may vote on them. The Planning Commission's recommendations are then placed on the agenda of the next City Council meeting. The City Council will make the final decision on these applications.

The City of East Lansing will provide reasonable auxiliary aids and services, such as interpreters for the hearing impaired and audio tapes of printed materials being considered at the meeting, to individuals with disabilities upon request received by the City seven (7) calendar days prior to the meeting. Individuals with disabilities requiring aids or services should write or call the Planning Department, 410 Abbot Road, East Lansing, MI 48823. Phone: (517) 319-6930. TDD Number: 1-800-649-3777.

Marie E. Wicks
City Clerk

CP#004

BWL

from page 9

to see if the wreath is on the door." She was unable to get any information on the phone. "There needs to be better communication."

Dick Jensen of Lansing lives near Everett High School.

"I was getting ready to go to bed Saturday night, heard a bang, the lights went out, I looked at my cell phone and it was 10:06. Nothing but misery since."

He started running a generator after two days.

"Gas isn't cheap," he said. He hoped for some information. A BWL staffer told him they were doing their best.

His fatalism bordered on cheerfulness. "I wasn't going to complain. Plenty of people complain and it doesn't do any good."

A man poked his head in the door at the service center, looked at the line, said "Oh my God," and walked out.

A pickup truck idled in the parking lot. A gray-bearded man with a pair of crutches resting on the passenger seat wanted to know when his power would be back, but he hesitated about going in. "Someone said the line in there is pretty long," he said. He turned the truck around and left.

MY STORY: JESSICA COWLES

Age: 29 • Clemens Avenue • Lansing

The first night, I bundled up, started a fire, brought my goose-down comforter downstairs and toughed it out. I slept on the floor in front of the fireplace. The next day, it was 39 degrees. Lansing Board of Water and Light wasn't answering the phone and I was getting extremely angry. The whole street, up until about six houses south of mine, had power. My section of the street was eerily dark.

As the temperature in my house continued to fall to near freezing, I got a call from a friend of mine who said he wouldn't mind a house sitter. I packed a blanket and pillow, a change of clothes and all the Christmas gifts I still had to wrap. Christmas Day came and went, complete with Christmas dinner at a Chinese restaurant because no one had power to cook. BWL had promised power by the end of the day of Christmas, but that hope was smashed. I went to bed not knowing where I would sleep the next night.

I was awakened the next day by a text message from a friend: "I see a light on in your house." I've never been so happy to have a 52-degree house. I know there are still people out there who are still making it by like I did with the generosity of friends and strangers. It's a pretty neat thing to witness.

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WHAT NOT *to* serve at a wedding

A common concern when planning a wedding reception is what to serve — and rightfully so. Reception costs can be a majority of the budget. When spending \$100 (or more) per guest, you want to ensure you're getting what you paid for and that guests enjoy what they're eating.

Exotic cuisine: You may be a risk-taker when it comes to cuisine, but others may not share your zeal for exotic foods. Now is not the time to introduce guests to the wild and wacky. If you've seen an exotic dish on the Food Network or the Travel Channel, give it a try another time.

Anything on fire: Why risk an accident for a spectacle? Baked Alaska, cherries jubilee, apples flambé ... these are foods that might provide a show, but the cost of that show may not be worth it in the end.

Raw food: Clams on the half shell or sushi-grade tuna may seem like good ideas, but keep in mind that it is hard to ensure quality when feeding 200 people at the same time. Foods that require special refrigeration or immediate service for freshness are best left for other occasions. Don't risk food poisoning on a room full of people unless you want your wedding to be remembered for stomach cramps.

A long, sit-down meal: Two or three courses is fine, but if guests have to sit through a never-ending parade of courses, it limits their ability to mingle and have a good time.

Anything too elaborate: The faster servers can get food out to guests the better. If they have to pipe mashed potato roses on dishes or assemble intricate canapes, the delay might not be worth the presentation. And remember, the more bells and whistles, the higher the price tag.

Fast food: This is your wedding, and you want the food to fit with the scale of the day. A formal wedding generally includes a formal meal. Although it may be all right to include some fast food inspired dishes at the cocktail buffet, steer clear of burgers and fries for the main meal.

Themed food: Don't dye that baked potato purple because you want the wedding to be a plum-colored affair. Also, it's best to avoid themed food, unless it is part of a cultural wedding or can be pulled off with class. It's much easier to pass off crepes and croissants for a Parisian wedding than giant turkey legs and tankards of ale for a Renaissance-themed one.

No food at all: Whether your wedding is small or grand in scale, guests will expect some sort of food. Be sure to have some butler-passed hors d'oeuvres or some well-placed pickings for guests to grab while mingling. After all, they will need something to provide the energy to mingle and dance, and food can help buffer the effects of too many cocktails.



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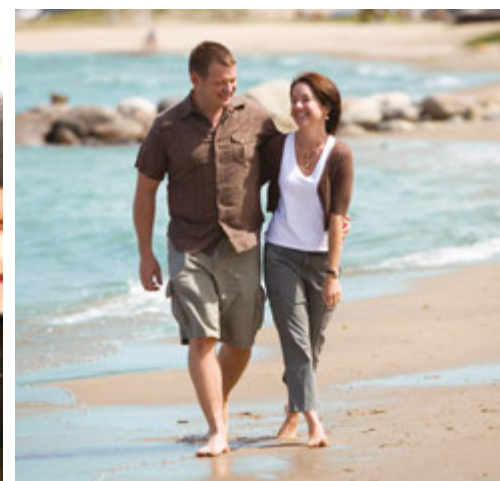
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Engagement photos don't have to be posed portraits. Experiment with looks that fit your personalities for memorable photos.



ENGAGEMENT PHOTO TIPS

Many couples choose to capture their engagement in photos that they can cherish. Often, one of these photos is used as an announcement to family and friends and might even be published in the newspaper.

Engagement photos may be part of a package negotiated with the photographer who will be covering the wedding day. Some couples enlist the help of a friend or a budding photographer to capture an engagement shot. The average cost of engagement photos can range from \$200 to \$500. Some couples opt to use a photographer who might specialize in other areas but may want to break into the wedding biz because of how

lucrative it can be. Costs may be negotiated as a result.

When shopping around for a photographer, there are certain things couples should keep in mind. The most important is selecting a photographer you can relate to. If you don't feel a connection with the photographer, he will have trouble coaxing the shots that will produce the best results. He should be a professional and have some experience working with posing couples. This way the photos don't look stiff or contrived.

Here are some other tips that can lead to great photos:

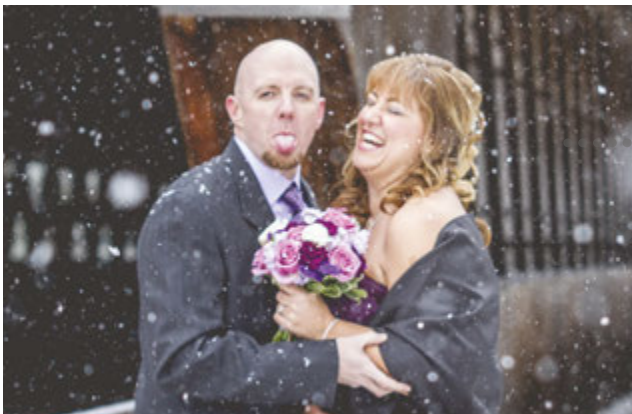
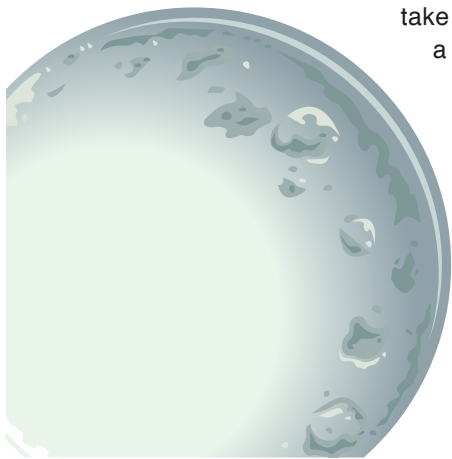
- Find a photographer who fits your style. If you're a quirky couple, go with a quirky photographer. If you're more conservative, select a more traditional photographer. Some photographers forget this is your moment and want to impart their idea of what you want; make sure he takes your ideas into consideration.
- Select a photographer who is open to different shoot locations and brainstorming. Some of the best photos occur in natural settings, where things aren't entirely planned. If a photographer simply works out of a studio, you may want to select one who has free reign with different locales.
- Choose your location wisely. Certain locations will stand out in your minds because they are visually stunning or are special places where you have spent moments as a couple. By choosing a place that offers a personal connection, there's a good chance you'll appreciate the photos in the long run. Also, be open to the fact that unplanned stops may offer a great background for the image. Be open to the unexpected.
- Try random poses and some candid shots. Although you might have a vision of the perfect photo in your mind,

experimenting with different ideas can sometimes lead to a great photo you really love. Expect to take your share of kissing, nose-touching and portrait shots. But some fun poses, such as running or jumping (or rolling around on a beach full of waves) can produce candid shots that are truly masterpieces. Remember, sometimes photographers will pose you in positions that seem a bit awkward, but this is to get the best lines of the body and flattering images.

- Choose clothing that fits the mood. If time and budget allow, have several different wardrobe changes so that you can see which outfits work and which ones don't. A formal outfit, comfortable street clothes, something beachy or clothing that fits with your interests (such as polo or baseball) can make for interesting engagement photos. Avoid clothing that is too trendy or busy, which may take away from the actual images in the long run. Plus, you don't want to look back at these photos in the future and say, "What was I thinking?" Avoid "matchy-matchy," though; if you are dressed alike, you may appear to be trying too hard. It's the individual personalities you want to shine through.

Origins of the term 'honeymoon'

It has become tradition for married couples to go on a post-wedding vacation. The conventional honeymoon is a way for the bride and groom to enjoy quiet time together and start their married life on an intimate level. Although the word "honeymoon" has happy connotations today, the original meanings of the word may not be so blissful. There are varying accounts of the evolution of the word "honeymoon," but many believe it to be a Norse tradition deriving from the word "hjunottsmanathr." Northern European history describes women being abducted from their families and forced into marriage with a man from a neighboring village. This husband would take his new bride into hiding and stay there for a while until it was certain the bride's family had given up the hunt and retreated. It was also tradition for Scandinavian couples to drink mead, a sweet, honey-infused wine, for a month after getting married. This may be where the "honey," for the mead, and the "moon," for the one-month period of time, originated. Others say "honeymoon" refers to a sarcastic quip that a marriage starts out sweet as honey, but then wanes much as the moon will each cycle.



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IS A WEDDING LOAN FOR YOU?



Although a wedding loan may enable you to have the wedding of your dreams, it comes with a steep cost — starting out your new life together with a considerable amount of debt.

It used to be tradition for the bride's parents to pay for the wedding, but in recent years the responsibility for funding has largely fallen into the hands of the prospective bride and groom. To meet the financial demands of the modern wedding, some individuals turn to loans for financing either a portion of the wedding or the whole thing. You may question whether this is a good idea.

As with any situation, there are pros and cons. The following are some factors you will need to consider before taking out a loan.

One of the most important things to realize is that a wedding loan will need to be paid back and interest fees will be included. By the end of the payback period, you may have spent several thousand dollars more on the loans than the principal amount. If you're taking out a loan because you've already gone above budget on wedding expenses, a loan may push that budget even further into the red.

There are some instances where a loan may be an option that works for a couple. For example, couples who anticipate considerable monetary gifts from guests attending the wedding can offset the cost of the loan with those gifts. Some couples might begin their professional careers after their wedding, which will increase their salary enough to repay the loan quickly. Others may actually have the money for the wedding, but want to use a loan as a way to establish strong joint credit as a new couple.

However, many couples take out loans because they simply cannot afford their dream wedding. In a world where many people already live beyond their means — financing cars, homes, retail

purchases — a wedding loan may just be another shovelful of soil on a financial grave. The consensus among financial experts is that it is better to scale back the wedding or postpone it until you can save money the old-fashioned way instead of taking out a loan.

But if a loan seems the only option, here are some tips:

- Shop around. Find the best rates and terms before settling on a lender.
- Decide how much you can afford to pay back within two or three years and how much the monthly payment will be.
- Figure out which portions of the wedding can be scaled back to make the finances work.
- See if options like refinancing a home or borrowing from family would be better than taking out a loan.
- Look at banks, credit unions and even programs sponsored through your employer to compare rates on loans.

Wedding loans may be secured or unsecured. A home or car can serve as a form of security in a secured loan. Unsecured wedding loans do not require a form of security.

Personal loans generally have low annual percentage rates. It may be worth it to take out the loan rather than using a credit card for financing because the card's interest rates could be double.

Keep in mind that a wedding loan — even if it comes at a low interest rate — means you're starting out your new life together with a large amount of debt for an event that lasts one day. Think about whether the wedding of your dreams is worth using that joint checking account to pay off months of wedding debt.



Make-your-own WEDDING INVITATIONS

Cost-conscious couples today seek different ways they can reduce expenses on their weddings. Do-it-yourself weddings have grown in popularity, and creating personalized wedding invitations is one way to save money and offer something special.

Wedding invitations can range in prices depending on the service used. Many brick-and-mortar printing companies have gone by the wayside, and online printing sources have replaced them. The reduced overhead means that many online retailers can produce wedding invitations at a lower cost. That doesn't mean they are cheap, however. Couples can expect to pay anywhere from \$150 to \$500 on invitations, depending on style and quantity, according to estimates from many printing company websites. Expect to pay around \$90 for postage if mailing 100 standard invitations that do not require extra postage and include stamped response cards.

In order to avoid overpaying for wedding invitations, or simply to create a personalized invitation, many couples are opting to go the do-it-yourself route. DIY invitations are even more common thanks to the popularity of scrapbooking and paper crafting. Although people may have different standards in terms of quality for their invitations, it's important to realize the invitation is the first thing guests often see concerning the wedding, and they will help set the tone of the upcoming nuptials.

Today there are many options when it comes to making invitations oneself. Couples can be as hands-on or hands-off as they like. Here are some choices to consider.

- Design it yourself, but hire a printer. Couples can visit websites that enable them to choose paper type, ink color, a certain template, wording, color scheme, embellishments, dye cutting, and many other different options. Then the couple sits back and

waits for the invites to come in the mail where they are put together before being sent out. These may be the most expensive of the DIY invites because a printer is still doing much of the work.

- Use wedding invitation kits. Many stationery shops, craft stores and office supply retailers offer all-in-one kits that can be purchased. These feature a standard design with the accoutrements of that particular design. Most will come with envelopes and small response cards. The couple can use the template provided to create text from their computer and the invite can be run through a home printer.

- Mix and match components. Couples who want to be a little more hands-on can purchase card stock and envelopes separately and design their own invitations according to color scheme. Clip art included with some word processing or design software can embellish invites that are then printed on a home printer. Ribbon can be added by punching holes into the invite and threading it through.

- Do it all yourself. The truly crafty couple can make their invitations from scratch. This involves drawing out a template, cutting the card stock to fit, selecting envelopes, creating and executing response cards and decorating the invitations as they see fit. This will require some tools, including scrapbooking or paper crafting supplies. A paper trimmer will help ensure straight cuts, and decorative-edged scissors can help hide any small mistakes in the edges. While this may be a cheaper option if couples get good prices on all the paper components, it also entails the most work and the greatest margin of error.

Saving money on wedding components has become essential for many couples in this economy. Choosing to take on some aspects of invitation creation can help reduce costs and personalize the event even more.



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do-it-yourself WEDDING



Those thinking about tying the knot may be discouraged by how expensive weddings can be. But with a little ingenuity and a hands-on approach, couples can have a wedding that is inexpensive and memorable.

According to costofwedding.com, on average, U.S. couples spend \$26,542 for their weddings. In Ingham County, for someone who has already purchased a wedding ring, that cost is lower than the national average: almost half of local couples spend less than \$10,000.

With such a high price tag, some couples may wonder if they can afford their dream wedding or if there are ways to cut costs. Having a backyard, do-it-yourself wedding can be the answer.

Although some may envision a backyard wedding with picnic benches and Dad at the grill, it can be a much classier affair than that. Smart couples are realizing that the money they would normally spend on a big wedding at an outside venue can be put to better use, either through buying a new home or fixing up one they may already own.

getting started

A DIY wedding is one that will take much more work than simply hiring vendors and leaving the details to them. But the money saved can be substantial. A well-planned wedding is the best start.

Grab a notebook and start making lists of all the things you will need, including:

- Invitations
- Location
- Officiant
- Attire
- Food
- Cake or dessert
- Flowers
- Centerpieces and other decor
- Photography
- Tables and chairs
- Linens
- Silverware and glassware
- Music
- Lighting



work in advance

Many items necessary for a wedding can be bought in advance. Some couples find that purchasing low-cost items at discount stores turns out to be less expensive than renting. For example, inexpensive glasses and silverware can be bought at dollar stores or chains like Ikea. Afterward, these items can be kept, sold or possibly donated to shelters.

Consider a non-traditional tablecloth; it may be less expensive to purchase pieces of fabric from a fabric store and dressing a table yourself. Candles can be stockpiled relatively easy and provide an affordable means of ambient light. Plan out centerpiece ideas and figure out which components can be bought and stored. Then items can be assembled at leisure. Wedding stationery is one thing that will have to be bought in advance so

there will be enough time to print save-the-dates, invitations and response cards, as well as mail them.

An informal wedding may mean couples can wear simple attire. Buying off the rack may mean a smaller price for gowns. Men may be able to fare with sport coats and slacks. Purchase wardrobe essentials several months in advance to be sure there will be time for alterations, if necessary.

Enlist the help of family and friends to get many of the tasks completed. Many couples find there are members of the family who have skills in certain areas, which can be tapped for the wedding. There may be a gourmet chef, a DJ, a photographer or even someone who can officiate the vows. Having these people on board means a great reduction in costs.



readying the venue

Because couples will do the work themselves, it's best to start several days in advance of the wedding (weather permitting).

- Be sure the grounds are well groomed and landscaped. Make sure there are no tripping hazards and that there is a sturdy surface for placing tables or creating a dance floor.

- Ask an electrician, if you know one, to help string some lights to better illuminate the area.

- Set up the tables and chairs to finalize placement the day before. Figure out where the ceremony will take place. A small arbor can mark the area and make a nice photo backdrop. Dress the tables with linens and settings the morning of the wedding.

- One splurge couples may want to make is hiring waitstaff to help set up food service areas, serve as bartenders and clear dishes. This way the bride and groom can mingle with guests.



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WEDDING *themes* CAN ADD UP TO EXTRA FUN

Every couple wants their wedding to be memorable. The goal of planning a wedding is to create an experience that everyone will remember for years to come. For some couples, a theme wedding is the best way to accomplish that.

The day the wedding takes place may suggest a natural theme. For example, if it happens around the end of October, a Halloween theme is an easy choice. Many other couples choose a theme that highlights a specific interest or hobby or something that is dear to them. Here are some popular wedding theme ideas.

- **Christmas:** The Christmas season lends itself well to wedding planning. The colors — red, green and gold — are already established and most churches and buildings are already decked out in holiday finery, cutting down on the amount of flowers and embellishments couples need. Because the holiday season is so busy and a popular time for socializing, couples who want to tie the knot during this time of year should send save-the-date cards well in advance. Another option is to have a “Christmas in July” wedding, featuring the same holiday themes but without the hectic nature of December.

- **Las Vegas:** Couples who want to tie the knot in Las Vegas but want all their loved ones to be there can recreate the magic of Vegas wherever they may be. Casino-inspired games and big buffet meals can make guests feel like they have stepped into a casino on the strip. An Elvis impersonator is essential.

- **TV show:** Some couples elevate



A masquerade theme might be entertaining for a couple's nuptials.

certain television shows to cult status. Whether it's “Friends” or “Star Trek,” popular television shows have been transformed into festive wedding themes. Whether the idea is to go daring and exchange vows in costume or simply name reception tables according to characters or show locations, couples can include a little television fun into the event.

- **Fairytale:** Many couples envision a fairytale wedding, complete with horse-drawn carriage. This is what makes Disney properties as well as the various castles around the world popular backdrops for wedding events. Those planning a fairytale wedding need only look to favorite stories or movies for their inspiration.

- **Interest or passion:** Love to climb mountains? Avid about scuba diving? Couples who share a particular interest can include elements of this sport or hobby into their wedding. Invitations and décor can hint at the theme, and then special activities can further enhance it. Fish bowls as centerpieces may call to mind underwater adventures, while surfboard-shaped invites may set the scene for a beachside party.

Theme weddings can add an extra spice to the festivities and incorporate couples' interests into the event, making it even more special.

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PACKING FOR YOUR *honeymoon*



When basking in the afterglow of a wedding, most couples would rather think about anything else than packing. But it's something that must be done, and with ever-changing restrictions on what and how much a person can bring along on airlines and other modes of travel, it can get quite complicated.

According to a recent poll, 81 percent of newly married couples

take a honeymoon. The top honeymoon destination for those in North America is the Caribbean, where the average couple will spend \$3,500.

Some people are good at packing and can execute the task easily. Others are left with a bulging suitcase that won't pass muster at security clearance or meet size and weight guidelines imposed by airlines. Nevertheless, anyone can become a packing pro with a few guidelines.

- If you don't already have a suitcase, choose a design with a hard case. This way it won't expand and there's no chance it will ever exceed the size limits.

- Rolling clothes limits wrinkling.
- Use a layering technique to fit a multitude of items and protect against displacement during transit.
 - Fill the bottom of the suitcase with the heavier items: shoes, jeans, jackets, and any gear or tech items.
 - Next, layer dresses and slacks so they lay lengthwise on top of the first layer of items. It's OK if the ends extend over the edge of the suitcase.

- Shirts can be rolled and then layered next. Use any overhanging slacks and dresses to fold over them and keep them in place.

- Lightweight items, like lingerie and undergarments, can be placed on top. Also, include toiletries that are sealed in leak-proof bags.

- Be sure to know airline requirements in advance. While some restrictions have been lifted, the Traffic Safety Administration and the airlines themselves may have rules regarding how much liquid or sharp items you can bring along.

- Keep important documents, such as tickets, reservation numbers and emergency contacts, with you in a travel bag. Any prescriptions you need should be carried as well.

- Place an emergency outfit in your carry-on in the event your luggage is lost or temporarily detained.

- Consider packing lightly and buying some necessities at your

destination.

- Sometimes it is less expensive to ship items instead of paying airline baggage fees. Investigate these options, especially on the return trip.

- Take advantage of laundry service on honeymoons so you won't return with a bag full of dirty items. Also, doing laundry on your trip limits the number of things you need to pack because you can wash and re-wear.

- Make the most of the honeymoon by packing early. On your travel day, you can simply hop in the car and look forward to the vacation ahead.

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Unique RECEPTION TOUCHES



Over the course of their lifetimes, many people will be wedding guests on several occasions. During the height of wedding season, weddings can run into one another, as the format and the festivities are similar at various ceremonies. Couples interested in setting their nuptials apart may want to enhance the wedding reception with a few unique ideas.

Who hasn't attended a wedding reception that seems formulaic? The couple enters, they do their spotlight dance, there's food, a bouquet toss and then the cake cutting. Guests may actually be able to predict what's coming next. While it is easy to follow tradition, that doesn't mean you can't offer a few creative ideas to make your event stand out.

Here are several ideas you can introduce into your wedding to add something special to the reception.

- Skip the big entrance. Those who attended the ceremony have already been introduced to the newly married couple. Instead of spending the cocktail hour in the isolation of the wedding suite, mingle with your guests from start to finish. So much time is spent posing for pictures or being out of touch with guests, the cocktail hour can be a great time to sit and chat. Being with guests during the cocktail

hour means you don't have to make that big entrance from behind closed doors. Guests will have all eyes on you when you step on the dance floor for your first dance together.

- Dance to an upbeat number. Guests are expecting a slow, sappy tune. What they may not expect is an upbeat song that shows you are willing to have a little fun. If you haven't mastered the waltz but enjoy a little quick step now and again, feel free to choose a tune that shows your excitement and love for each other.

- Encourage couples to dance together. It's often customary for the bridal party to join the bride and groom on the dance floor midway through the first dance. However, that leaves spouses or significant others waiting in the wings while their dates tango with groomsmen or bridesmaids. Instead, don't have assigned partners. Rather, encourage your bridal party members to dance with whomever they choose.

- Swap the garter/bouquet toss for something more meaningful. There are other ways to create special moments in your celebration that don't call out single people. Use this time to present a small gift or token of your affection to someone on the guest list who has served as a mentor or source of inspiration.

- Choose one special component as an extra goodie for guests. Some couples feel the more they offer, the better guests will view their wedding. Spending more money doesn't necessarily mean guests will have a better time. If you want to go above and beyond the ordinary, find one thing that you absolutely love and offer that at the party. It could be a flambé presentation, a chocolate, candy or dessert bar, a carving station with your all-time favorite food or a carnival-inspired automatic photo booth.

- Hire a live performer. Although it's hard to beat the performance quality of your wedding song being performed by the original artist, unless you're cousins with Celine Dion, chances are she won't be available to sing "My Heart Will Go On" at your reception. However, a live band adds a certain level of excitement that a DJ may not be able to provide. Those who are adding a cultural or ethnic component to their wedding may want to hire a dance troupe or another type of performer, such as a bagpiper.

- Let them eat ... cookies? Some people just don't like cake. Therefore, why should a couple have to cut a seven-tiered white confection? Towers of different types of treats can be created from just about anything and serve as the perfect backdrop for that classic cake-cutting photo. A pyramid of cream puffs, stacks of brownies, a cookie castle or cereal-cake concoctions can work. Some bakeries will decorate a "dummy" Styrofoam cake, and then you can serve apple pie a la mode, if you desire.

- Stage a costume switch. Dancing all night in a long gown takes some stamina. As the bride, have a more comfortable cocktail dress available to switch into for the latter part of the reception. It will also add some variety to your wedding photos.



SONG IDEAS

If Michael Bublé or Nat King Cole aren't on your playlists, chances are you may be looking for a first-dance song that's a little less traditional for your wedding reception.

Couples considering a song that's a little different and speaks to them but won't necessarily offend the wedding purists in attendance might want to consider the following tunes:

- "All I Want is You" (U2)
- "You & Me" (Dave Matthews Band)
- "Crazy for You" (Adele)
- "Faster" (Matt Nathanson)
- "For You I Will" (Monica)
- "Kiss Me" (Sixpence None the Richer)
- "I'll Stand by You" (The Pretenders)
- "Love Song" (The Cure)
- "No One" (Alicia Keys)
- "The Origin of Love" ("Hedwig and the Angry Inch" soundtrack)
- "Suga Suga" (Baby Bash)
- "Without You" ("Rent" soundtrack)
- "You Want to Make a Memory" (Bon Jovi)

Things to consider

WHEN A BRIDESMAID IS PREGNANT

Brides-to-be thinking of asking a pregnant friend or family member to be in the bridal party should know such a request is common. Recent findings indicate that around half of all weddings now have at least one member of the bridal party showing off a baby bump — sometimes it's even the bride herself.

Barring a medical condition, there is no reason a pregnant woman can't be in the wedding and fulfill her obligations, so feel free to invite that special someone to be in the wedding. There are just a few things to consider that can help make it easier on everyone involved.

• **Gowns:** One of the things brides and bridesmaids often fret about is the gown they will be wearing. While non-pregnant members of the bridal party won't fluctuate much in weight from the day of their first fittings to the wedding day, it's difficult to guess how much a pregnant woman could grow. This will have to be taken into consideration. Some maternity designers create bridesmaid dresses for pregnant

women, but they may not exactly match the other gowns in mind. Ask the bridal store if alterations can be made to a standard gown, including ordering a larger size, adding elastic panels or another way to ensure the gown will stretch over a growing belly. Also, be considerate and choose a gown in an empire waist style so that it is flattering for the pregnant bridesmaid.

• **Shoes:** Some pregnant women's feet swell. Having strict restrictions on footwear can make a pregnant woman uncomfortable. Low heels or ballerina slippers can be comfortable and fashionable. The other members of the bridal party may also thank you for choosing a sensible shoe.

• **Breaks:** Many activities during the wedding are bound to be tiring. But someone who is pregnant may feel it more than others. Ensure your mother-to-be has ample time to sit and rest. Also, try to have planning meetings near a restroom where she will be comfortable.

• **Nonalcoholic drinks:** From bachelorette parties to the wedding itself,

be sure there are plenty of nonalcoholic and decaffeinated drinks she can enjoy. Pregnant women need to have a lot of water to meet the physical demand of pregnancy.

• **Travel:** In the latter months of the pregnancy, many doctors advise against air travel. Spending long hours in a car may be uncomfortable as well. If you were thinking about having the wedding far away, these are things that must be taken into consideration. You may want to revise your plans.

• **Ceremony:** It can be tiring for a pregnant woman, especially one in the last trimester, to stand for a long period of time. If you are having a long, religious ceremony, see if a seat can be arranged so your bridesmaid can sit down when she needs a rest.

• **Declined invitation:** Some pregnant women will jump at the chance to be in the wedding, while others may realize their limitations and prefer to attend only as a guest. Have another person in mind in case your bridesmaid invitation is declined, and do not hold it against the person if she feels she won't be able to commit during her pregnancy.

• **Patience:** Although all eyes are generally on the bride on her special day, having a pregnant bridesmaid may garner a share of attention for her as well. It's a humble bride who can share her spotlight for a while. And remember, the "something new" at your wedding may be that new baby who is on the way.



Having a pregnant friend or family member as a bridesmaid just takes a little extra planning.

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Origins of bridal customs

Many elements of modern weddings are traditions that date back centuries. The bride's veil, the court of attendants, the birdseed, rice or flower petals that are tossed. Many of these are wedding ceremony givens, but have you ever wondered where these started?



Father accompanying the bride: This tradition symbolizes that the bride's father endorses the choice in husbands and is presenting his daughter as a pure bride to that man.



Kissing the bride: In older times, a kiss symbolized a legal bond. Therefore, the bride and groom kissed to seal the deal on their betrothal.



Throwing rice: Today it has become de rigueur to blow bubbles, toss birdseed or release doves when the bride and groom leave the house of worship newly betrothed. That's because savvy individuals found that raw rice can pose a hazard to birds pecking in the area. However, rice throwing is an old custom that dates back to the Middle Ages, when wheat or rice were thrown to symbolize fertility for the couple.



Bouquet: Nowadays, the bride carries a beautiful bouquet of flowers. But the purpose of the bouquet held different meanings in the past. Saracen brides carried orange blossoms for fertility. Others carried a combination of herbs and flowers to ward off evil spirits with their aroma. Bouquets of dill were often carried, again for fertility reasons, and after the ceremony, the dill was eaten to encourage lust.



Bridesmaids: There may be arguments over dresses and how many bridesmaids to have in a wedding party now, but in ancient times it was "the more the merrier." That's because bridesmaids were another measure to keep the bride safe against evil spirits. Essentially the bridesmaids were decoys for the spirits — dressing like the bride to confuse the spirits or maybe help deter them to leave the bride be.

Wedding cake: The traditional wedding cake evolved from Roman times when the cake was originally made from wheat. It was broken over the bride's head to ensure fertility. All of the guests eat a piece for good luck. Single women used to place a piece of wedding cake under their pillows in the hopes of finding their own husbands.



Wedding rings: Wearing of wedding rings dates back to ancient Egypt. The round shape of a ring symbolizes eternal love. The ring is worn on the fourth finger of the left hand because it is believed this finger has a blood vessel that goes directly to the heart.

There are many traditions surrounding a wedding that people simply accept. But understanding their origins can make the ceremony more meaningful.



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FEED ON THESE WEDDING *favor ideas*

Do you have a shelf or cabinet that's filled to the brim with wedding favors, such as engraved ice cream scoopers, cake servers, cheese spreaders or tea light candleholders? If you do, you're not alone. As couples pore over guest favor options, many select trinkets or knickknacks that, while thoughtful, end up collecting dust in someone's home. Edible gifts also can be thoughtful — and flavorful.

Guests may look forward to an edible favor because it's a memento of the special occasion and it won't become a permanent fixture in their homes. There are many edible favors from which to choose. They can also be customized according to the theme of the wedding.

Chocolate

Rich and inviting, chocolate has long been given as a symbol of love and devotion. Chocolate candies and baked goods can work well for wedding favors. Ideas for chocolate favors include individually packaged truffles, gourmet brownie bites, candy-covered chocolates with an inscription, chocolate covered apples and chocolate coins. Chocolate molded designs (much like chocolate Easter bunnies) are another idea.



Edible wedding favors may include decorative baskets featuring gourmet cookies from a couple's favorite bakery.

Cookies

Cookies also make good edible favors. Butter cookies are a favorite because they are sturdy enough to cut into different shapes. Professionally iced, these cookies can be a masterpiece to behold. Some couples opt for customized fortune cookies that express personalized sentiments to guests.

Make-your-own

Sometimes it's less expensive to give guests kits that they can take home to create their own edible treasures. Options abound and can include everything from personalized packets of hot chocolate to tea bags. Other couples choose among mixes for making cookies or cakes.

Candies

It has become popular to have a self-serve candy bar at many weddings. Guests are invited to step up to the display and serve themselves from a series of different confections. Autumn weddings could have Halloween-inspired candies or those in fall hues.

It's easy to follow a color theme when you have a bevy of different candies at your disposal.

Many discount stores sell inexpensive jars and candy dishes to house the candy. Designer Chinese takeout-type containers are available from craft stores and can be the perfect way for guests to make that candy portable.

Other edibles

From cupcakes to maple syrup to personalized bottles of barbecue sauce, couples have so many options for guest favors at their disposal.



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It has often been said that what people remember most about wedding receptions is the food. Therefore, couples may want to pay more attention to selecting their reception menus.

Although certain foods are wedding staples, it could pay for couples to think with their stomachs instead of their heads when selecting wedding day fare. Having a selection of foods that taste as good as they look is a

wise idea over having certain foods simply because they are trendy.

Whether you are cooking yourself, having a family member serve as chef or relying on the menu of the reception hall, think about foods that will please guests and select those items, regardless of their fanciness.

Here are some other tips.

You want foods to be filling but not so much so that guests have to waddle

to the dance floor. If you're planning on several courses, keep portion sizes small to offer a taste of the different items offered.

Classic foods can work well as wedding fare. Roasts, barbecued meats and favorite pasta dishes can make guests feel like they're dining at someone's home and not at a wedding.

Choose items people have heard of. Instead of tornadoes of beef, select a hearty prime rib. Just because a dish sounds fancy doesn't make it taste better. If a guest doesn't know what she is eating, it can be uncomfortable. Now is not the time to experiment with exotic foods, either. Otherwise, some picky eaters may be left hungry.

Think about the foods you love and see if they can be incorporated at the wedding. Although a breakfast bar at

an evening event may seem funny, waffles and omelets may appeal to a greater number of guests than a gourmet fish creation.

Don't make vegetarians an afterthought. Too often, vegetarians must eat whatever the kitchen can pull together, which is usually a compilation of the vegetable garnishes from the meat dishes. Make an effort to have a true vegetarian dish that is intricate and delicious.

Mashed potatoes are a crowd pleaser. Serve little portions of mashed potatoes in cocktail glasses and enable guests to top as they see fit with bacon bits, cheese or chives.

Serving any type of food in a hors d'oeuvre style can make it acceptable at a formal affair, whether it's pizza or caviar-topped crackers.

If you have a favorite restaurant that serves delicious food, find out if they will cater your wedding.

Just because it isn't on the menu doesn't mean it cannot be prepared. Talk to the catering manager and let her know your preferences. Provided you're willing to pay a little more, there's a good chance you can have items that aren't on the standard catering menu.

Think outside the box for your cocktail hour "bars." A bread bar, a dipping station, milk and cookies service or vegetable bar are options that go against the standard cheese and pasta stations.

Although it's your wedding, ultimately the goal is to please the guests. By choosing foods they will love and rave about, you're guaranteed positive remarks on your wedding.



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Secrets TO A LONG & HAPPY MARRIAGE



Some couples have been together for 50, 60 years and say they're still as much in love as they were the day they spoke their "I dos." What do they know that others do not?

"We all need to be flexible and to compromise in marriage, but you've got to be true to your core traits and characteristics, what I call your authentic self," said Phil McGraw (of TV's "Dr. Phil"). Some couples enter a relationship projecting a persona they believe the other person wants — one that really isn't what they're all about. This could be a woman trying to fill the role of her husband's nurturing mom or a guy playing the protector to his wife. In reality, marriage is more of a partnership, and truth and trust are often at the basis of good marriages.

There are many other secrets that marriage experts will offer to couples seeking the magic formula. Whether you're pondering marriage or have already tied the knot, consider the following advice to make a marriage endure for the long haul.

- There's no such thing as the perfect marriage. Some couples create an image of what they think marriage is supposed to be, and that image that often goes "poof" once reality sets in. Even soul mates are bound to frustrate or irritate one another from time to time.



- Couples should express their frustrations. Bottling up frustrations can eat at a person and eventually destroy a marriage. Talking about the things that are bothering you with your partner opens up a discussion and can help you work through things.

- Divorce should not be seen as a viable option. Couples who want to bail on the marriage at every turn could be directing their energy toward divorce as the only solution instead of discovering ways to remove the cause of strife. Divorce can sometimes be the easy way out when you think about the work that goes into keeping a marriage working. Experts say that there are a few issues, like adultery, abuse and drug/alcohol addiction, that may be reasonable catalysts for divorce if personal safety and sanity is being compromised.

- Make time for romance. Too often married couples forget what it was like to date when all of their attention was spent on each other instead of the house, kids and work. Today there seems to be even more distractions, from emails to texts to pressure and obligations at the office. Happy couples find the time to spend quality time with their spouses — even if that's only 10 minutes of alone time a day.

- Put "we" first. Many people operate on a "me" mentality. When you're part of a couple, give more to your spouse than you take. If he or she is doing the same, you're working collectively for the benefit of the marriage instead of yourselves.

- Respect each other. Often couples having troubles realize they treat strangers better than they treat each other. Would use the insults or unflattering terms that you sometimes throw at your spouse with a complete stranger? Probably not. Good marriages are based on a foundation of respect and love. It's easy to lose feelings of love if the respect is gone.

Couples can realize that there are some thorns that come with the roses of marriage, and staying happy together does take work for it to all be worth it.

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ADVANTAGES TO A *Wedding Video*



In a financial climate where people are pinching pennies, it comes as no surprise that many engaged couples seek ways to cut costs. Some couples are undecided whether certain components of their wedding are necessary.

The decision to hire a videographer is one area couples debate over. After all, with a photographer snapping pictures, having a video may seem like an unnecessary luxury. However, people often find that having a wedding video to cherish long after the day has passed is worth the price.

There are several advantages to hiring a professional videographer to capture the day. A professionally produced wedding video is not the same as Uncle Fred carrying around his archaic camcorder and catching embarrassing dance moves during the reception. A professional video will showcase all moments of the wedding from perspectives not easily captured by photography. In addition to showcasing the images of the wedding, the video will also share the sounds and emotions of the day. Here are some things to think about.

- Choose a videographer who will work in conjunction with the wedding mood and parameters. You probably don't want a videographer who uses bright lights that can be distracting. Nor do you want a videographer who pushes the camera in guests' faces for a less-than-candid interview. Today's professionals are inconspicuous and simply record the events as they unfold.

- The videographer often works in tandem with the photographer. Some photographers have a videographer on staff. But it is fine to bring in your own if you like the quality of the photographer's photos but not the videographer's work.

- A wedding video can serve as a family memento. What other time, apart from the holidays, do you have

all of your friends and loved ones together in one place?

- Sound is a portion of the wedding that photos simply cannot capture. To relive the music and the words of the day, a videographer is a necessity.

A videographer will capture the things you may have missed during the busy day. His purpose: To serve as additional eyes and ears.

Professionals who use wireless microphones will produce a video with the best sound quality.

- You can work with a good videographer so it's not simply a video with close-up shots of your face or unflattering perspectives. Talk about your preferences and fears about being filmed (some people don't like watching themselves on TV), and the videographer can no doubt find solutions that will accommodate your needs.

- There are many things that you will not see at the wedding but may have liked to, such as the reactions of guests walking into the reception room or the tears on the face of an aunt who was sitting in one of the rear church pews. This is where a wedding video can prove invaluable.

- Modern videographers offer high-resolution, edited movies. In some instance, these can be delivered via Blu-ray, ensuring the best quality for your package.

Although brides and grooms may be cutting costs with regard to their wedding, they may not want to pass on the wedding video.

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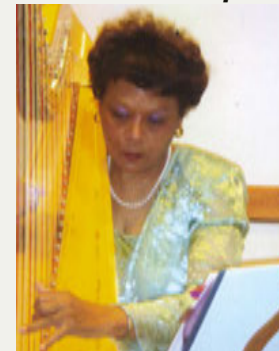
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honeymoon

HOW-TO

After the thrill of wedding festivities dies down, couples often jet off to a honeymoon retreat and begin an entirely different adventure. The honeymoon may create mixed feelings, some concerning the chance to spend time alone after months of planning and a few feelings of anxiety over spending the first night together as a married couple. Such significance can put pressure on a happy and natural experience.

Wedding jitters are normal, as are honeymoon and wedding night jitters. But just as wedding trends have changed through the years, so, too, have beliefs about the wedding night. Knowing about shifting trends can alleviate some of the nervousness.

According to a recent survey, one in three brides plans to get into bed on the wedding night and ... sleep. After all of the hoopla of planning and enjoying the wedding, most people are exhausted. Others say they plan to stay up and relive moments of the day. Only about half of all couples think they will consummate the marriage on their wedding night.

Taking the pressure off of the wedding night means that the rest of the honeymoon may be filled with opportunities to be amorous. But couples may still be filled with expectations for the perfect romantic retreat. Here are some things to think about:

- Accept that some wedding nights and honeymoons aren't exactly what's pictured in the movies. Don't try to live up to a Hollywood-inspired ideal or you may be let down when things don't go your way.

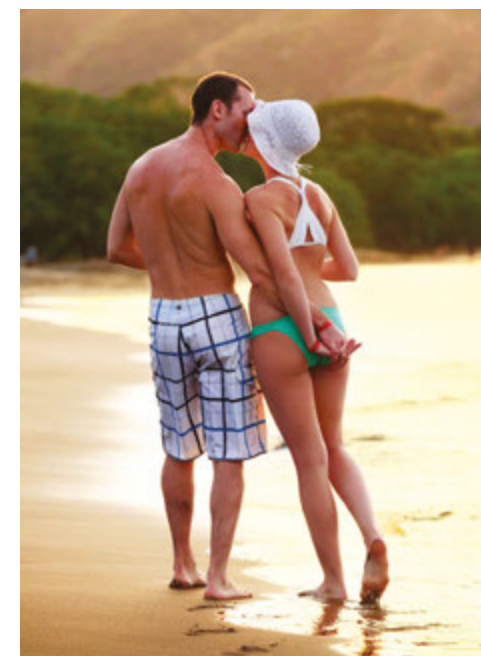
- A wedding requires a lot of work. Many people find themselves to be physically exhausted afterward. Others find they are so wound up that they cannot relax. When

the mind or body is on adrenaline overload or completely wiped out, it's not the ideal situation for romantic endeavors.

- Try to make the honeymoon stand apart from other nights by packing nice lingerie or nighttime attire so that the memories will be special.

- Pack some candles and mood music, or ask the resort to handle these details for you. These items can help set the scene.

- Make sure your packing list includes special toiletries, including birth control; the brands you prefer may be hard to acquire at some locations.



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A LENS ON GEMINI

A look at the storm through a collection of photos submitted by community members



PHOTO BY AMANDA MILSTEAD



PHOTO BY JOHN DOUGLAS



PHOTO BY JENA MCSHANE

On the morning of Sunday, Dec. 22, mid-Michigan awoke cold and frozen over.

A rare ice storm caused by a band of warm air in the atmosphere coupled with below-freezing surface temperatures left tens of thousands without electricity. The following week set off a series of stories that will long be remembered, including a widespread drop in trust in the Lansing Board of Water and Light and how strangers helped each other through trying times. Indeed, the 2013 ice storm known as Gemini will go down as a holiday season not soon forgotten.





PHOTO BY JESSICA D. COWLES

An abandoned building on Kalamazoo Street on Lansing’s East Side was repurposed as a community art project earlier this year. Passersby are free to contribute their thoughts on what the building — or, more philosophically, the community — can be. In the aftermath of the ice storm, residents expressed their disenfranchisement.

Leslie Arnell lives on Sheldon Street in Lansing. Sunday night was her eighth night without power.



PHOTO BY JESSICA D. COWLES

Birch trees bend under the weight of ice in the neighborhood east of Cornell Road in Meridian Township.



PHOTO BY AMANDA MILSTEAD



PHOTO BY SEAN HIRTEN



PHOTO BY BILL CASTANIER

Two kids exploring a neighborhood in Old Town the day after the storm. The street behind them remained closed for a week.

Recap

from page 5

that would happen by the stroke of midnight on New Year's Eve, 10 days following the ice event.

While it may take some time to understand whether BWL had enough line crews working to restore power, there's a virtually unanimous opinion that it botched its communication efforts from day one. "On that point, it is clear we disappointed our customers," Lark said.

BWL claimed early on in press releases that it was "aware of its outage areas," but even as late as Sunday some locations had not been logged in its system. That's because, as Lark said on Monday, the utility's "outage management system" is not "fully operational." BWL has been working on it for years, he said. While it has worked just fine till now for smaller outages, it wasn't prepared for the relatively large volume on Dec. 22.

"Yes, our system is in need of upgrades, particularly as it relates to information technology," Lark said. The utility took three steps to improve that — posting streets with outages, opening three customer-service centers and extending hours for the department that gives certain free tools to contractors — but did so a week after the storm hit. Why? Because much of it wouldn't have been feasible in the chaotic early days of the storm, Lark said.

BWL plans to unroll portions of a smart-grid system in the fiscal year that starts July 1.

Yet Lark's presentation seemed to raise a fundamental question about the BWL's stature as a utility. He cited an award-winning tree-trimming program and other accolades since he was hired in 2007, but then said the utility's lack of technological advancement was because the BWL is small and can't afford to risk leading the way in front of larger, private utilities.

"It is important for us at BWL to not always be on the cutting edge of this technology," he said.

A question raised during the outages and again during Monday's meeting was the nature of BWL's operations plan. Last week, the utility did not respond to requests from City Pulse to release the plan.

However, after questioning from

Council members, Lark promised it would be posted to the BWL website on Tuesday. (It was posted around noon Tuesday.)

He also said he's not aware of BWL having an emergency communications plan. Councilwoman A'Lynne Boles, who commended Lansing's fire chief Monday night for employing one, wondered why BWL didn't have the same thing.

By 8 a.m. Tuesday, BWL still had 650 customers without power but promised to have it fully restored to its service area by midnight.

Altogether, 57 people — from dejected residents still without power to area elected officials — spoke up Monday, almost unanimously to criticize the board and its management. Their comments reflected a growing disenchantment with Lansing's utility and its management.

Just one person, Joy Gleason, posed any defense of BWL, other than for the work of its crews. She contended its recent performance was atypical and warned customers that rates would undoubtedly be higher with a non-publicly owned utility.

She didn't speak publicly, but state



Andy Balaskovitz/City Pulse

An overflow at Monday night's Lansing City Council meeting caused attendees to watch from the first-floor lobby. Nearly 60 spoke, nearly all of whom criticized the Board of Water and Light's response to the ice storm.

Sen. Gretchen Whitmer, D-East Lansing, was in the crowd Monday night. On Sunday, her office issued a press release saying it was "totally unacceptable" for BWL customers to still be without power. And its communications was not only "poor customer service, it's a significant public safety issue that remains unaddressed."

State Sen. Rick Jones, R-Grand Ledge, issued his own press release Monday, calling for Michigan Public Service Commission oversight of BWL. He was the first to address the Council on Monday: "It's time we have an outside entity do a full inves-

tigation and make sure there is a plan in place for the next emergency."

Lark said once power is restored, the next three steps will be to hold public meetings, prioritize an upgraded communications system and review the utility's response efforts.

It sounds like the first steps in mending a broken relationship. For, as outgoing At-Large Councilman Brian Jeffries said Monday during his last meeting: "I'm hearing from people about the loss of confidence in the Board of Water and Light and its operations."

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OUT ON THE TOWN

Events must be entered through the calendar at www.lansingcitypulse.com. Deadline is 5 p.m. Thursdays for the following week's issue. Charges may apply for paid events to appear in print. If you need assistance, please call Jonathan at (517) 999-5069.

Thursday, January 2

CLASSES AND SEMINARS

Take Off Pounds Sensibly. The group meets on Thursdays (except holidays). 5:15 p.m. \$5 monthly. New Hope Church, 1340 Haslett Road, Haslett. (517) 339-9000. newhopehaslett.com.

Take Off Pounds Sensibly. Weigh in, 6 p.m. Meeting, 6:30 p.m. FREE to visit. St. David's Episcopal Church, 1519 Elmwood Road, Lansing. (517) 882-9080. stdavidslansing.org.

Family Storytime. Ages up to 6. Stories, rhymes and activities. 10:30 a.m. FREE. CADL Downtown Lansing Library, 401 S. Capitol Ave., Lansing. (517) 367-6363. cadl.org.

Meditation. For beginners and experienced on Thursdays. 7-8:30 p.m. FREE. Quan Am Temple, 1840 N. College Ave., Mason. (517) 853-1675. quanamtemple.org.

Tarot Study Group. With Dawne Botke. 7 p.m. FREE. Triple Goddess New Age Bookstore, 2019 E. Michigan Ave. Lansing. (517) 883-3619. triplegoddessbookstore.net.

EVENTS

Spanish Conversation Group. Both English and Spanish spoken. 7-8 p.m. FREE. East Lansing Public Library, 950 Abbot Road, East Lansing. (517) 351-2420.

Euchre. Come play Euchre and meet new people. No partner needed. 6-9 p.m. \$1.50. Delta Township Enrichment Center, 4538 Elizabeth Road, Lansing. (517) 484-5600.

Karaoke. With Atomic D. 9 p.m. LeRoy's Classic Bar & Grill, 1526 S. Cedar St., Lansing. (517) 482-0184.

Ladies Silver Blades Figure Skating Club. Lessons, exercise and practice for adult women. All skill levels welcome. 9:30-11:30 a.m. Suburban Ice, 2810 Hannah Blvd., East Lansing. (517) 574-4380.

MUSIC

Kathy Ford Band. 7:30 p.m. Free. Grand Cafe/Sir Pizza, 201 E. Grand River Ave., Lansing. (517) 484-4825. sirpizza-mi.com.

Friday, January 3

CLASSES AND SEMINARS

Alcoholics Anonymous. A closed women's

FRIDAY, JAN. 3 >> FOLK-A-PUNK-O-LYPSE



Rock louder, dirtier and faster at The Loft. Four Michigan bands will cover a variety of rock genres, including Celtic, Americana, punk and folk. Headlining the show is Bill Grogan's Goats, a band of five Detroit locals who fuse their personal musical styles together to put a new spin on Celtic rock. Opening the show are The Lash, Hex Bombs and Crooked Little Reasons, a metamorphosed version of Dirt Road Logic, a defunct local roots-rock band. The Lash mixes classic folk instruments with bass and drums; it describes its style as "Celtic mayhem." Hex Bombs is a punk band from Kalamazoo that sings about the life of working folks. Crowd participation is, of course, encouraged. 8 p.m. doors, 18-up. \$10 advance/\$12 door.

meeting. 7:30 p.m. St. Michael's Episcopal Church, 6500 Amwood Drive, Lansing. (517) 882-9733.
Oil Painting. For all levels with Patricia Singer. Preregistration required. 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. \$60 for four weeks. Gallery 1212 Old Town, 1212 Turner St., Lansing. (517) 999-1212. gallery1212.com.

MUSIC

Children/Youth Choir Auditions. Call CMS to schedule an appointment. 4-6 p.m. FREE. MSU Community Music School, 4930 S. Hagadorn Road, East Lansing. (517) 355-7661. cms.msu.edu.

Karaoke with Joanie Daniels. 7 p.m. FREE. Grand Cafe/Sir Pizza, 201 E. Grand River Ave., Lansing. (517) 484-4825. sirpizza-mi.com.

Grand River Band Concert. Live folk and bluegrass music. 6 p.m. FREE. Fay's Evelyn Bay Coffee, 134 S. Cochran Road, Charlotte. (517) 505-2809. grandriverband.net.

Saturday, January 4

CLASSES AND SEMINARS

Domestic Violence Support Group. Noon-1:30 p.m. FREE. Women's Center of Greater Lansing, 1710 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. (517) 372-9163. womenscenterofgreaterlansing.org.

EVENTS

Karaoke. With Atomic D. 9 p.m. LeRoy's Classic Bar & Grill, 1526 S. Cedar St., Lansing. (517) 482-0184.

SATURDAY, JAN. 4 >> PUMP HOUSE CONCERTS

Three Michigan singer/songwriters — Matt Dmits, Josh Rose and Drew Howard — will share their music in the round. Dmits, a member of the Detroit band Inside Outlaws, is part of Detroit's root rock scene. Rose is a folk/pop singer songwriter, while Howard plays a variety of instruments: pedal and lap steel guitar, drobo, Telecaster, Stratocaster, mandolin, banjo and electric bass. He also received the Detroit Music Award for Outstanding Country Instrumentalist in 2010. Suggested donation: \$15. 7 p.m. The Pump House, 368 Orchard St., East Lansing.

SATURDAY, JAN. 4 >> 'DOWNTON ABBEY' PARTY

The Delta Township District Library hosts a viewing of the season 3 finale. There will be door prizes, complimentary high tea, snacks, a trivia contest and more. Dress up with a "Downton Abbey" flair and have your picture taken with masks that will be provided by the library. Delta Township District Library, 5130 Davenport Drive, Lansing. Noon-2 p.m. 18-up. (517) 321-4014.

Downton Abbey Party. Watch Season 3 finale. Prizes, trivia, high tea. 12-2 p.m. FREE. Delta Township District Library, 5130 Davenport Drive, Lansing. (517) 321-4014 ext. 4. dtdl.org.

MUSIC

Children/Youth Choir Auditions. Call CMS to schedule an appointment. Noon-2 p.m. FREE. MSU Community Music School, 4930 S. Hagadorn Road, East Lansing. (517) 355-7661. cms.msu.edu.

Ladies Night with DJ Fudgie. Ladies Night with DJ Fudgie. 8 p.m. Free. Grand Cafe/Sir Pizza, 201 E. Grand River Ave., Lansing. (517) 484-4825. sirpizza-mi.com.

LITERATURE AND POETRY

Story Circle. Ages 2-5. Free for adults. 11 a.m. \$5. Michigan Historical Museum, 702 W. Kalamazoo St., Lansing. (517) 373-3559. michigan.gov/museum.

Sunday, January 5

CLASSES AND SEMINARS

Progressive Christian Study. Conversation and book discussion. 5:30-7 p.m. FREE. Central United Methodist Church, 215 N. Capitol Ave., Lansing. (517) 323-2445.

Lansing Area Codependents Anonymous. Third-floor meeting room. 2-3 p.m. CADL Downtown Lansing Library, 401 S. Capitol Ave., Lansing. (517) 367-6300. cadl.org.

Juggling. Learn how to juggle. 2-4 p.m. FREE. Orchard Street Pumphouse, 368 Orchard St., East

Lansing. (517) 485-9190.

Spiritual Talk, Pure Meditation and Silent Prayer. 7 p.m. FREE. Self Realization Meditation Healing Centre, 7187 Drumheller Road, Bath. (517) 641-6201. SelfRealizationCentreMichigan.org.

EVENTS

Lansing Area Sunday Swing Dance. Cash bar with restrictions. 6-10 p.m. \$8. Fraternal Order of Eagles, 4700 N. Grand River, Ave., Lansing. (517) 490-7838.

Monday, January 6

CLASSES AND SEMINARS

Learn to Meditate. Taught by Bob Teachout. Enter at rear of building. 8:15-9 p.m. Donations. C. Weaver Physical Therapy Exercise Studio, 1720 Abbey Road, East Lansing. (517) 272-9379.

Adult Rape Survivor Support Group. Pre-registration preferred. 6-7:30 p.m. FREE. Women's Center of Greater Lansing, 1710 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. (517) 372-9163.

Job Seekers Support Group. Find the right job or career. 10 a.m.-Noon, FREE. Women's Center of Greater Lansing, 1710 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. (517) 372-9163. womenscenterofgreaterlansing.org.

Support Group. For the divorced, separated and widowed. Room 9. 7:30 p.m. St. David's Episcopal Church, 1519 Elmwood Road, Lansing. (517) 323-2272. stdavidslansing.org.

EVENTS

Monday Morning Movie. Popcorn and a movie. 10:30 a.m. FREE. Delta Township District Library, 5130 Davenport Drive, Lansing. (517) 321-4014 ext. 4. dtdl.org.

Social Bridge. Come play Bridge and meet new people. No partner needed. 1-4 p.m. \$1.50. Delta Township Enrichment Center, 4538 Elizabeth Road, Lansing. (517) 484-5600.

Mac's Monday Comedy Night. Hosted by Mark Roebuck and Dan Currie. 9:30 p.m. FREE. Mac's Bar, 2700 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. (517) 484-6795. macsbar.com.

Club Shakespeare. Donations. 6-8:45 p.m. CADL Downtown Lansing Library, 401 S. Capitol Ave., Lansing. (517) 367-6300. cadl.org.

MUSIC

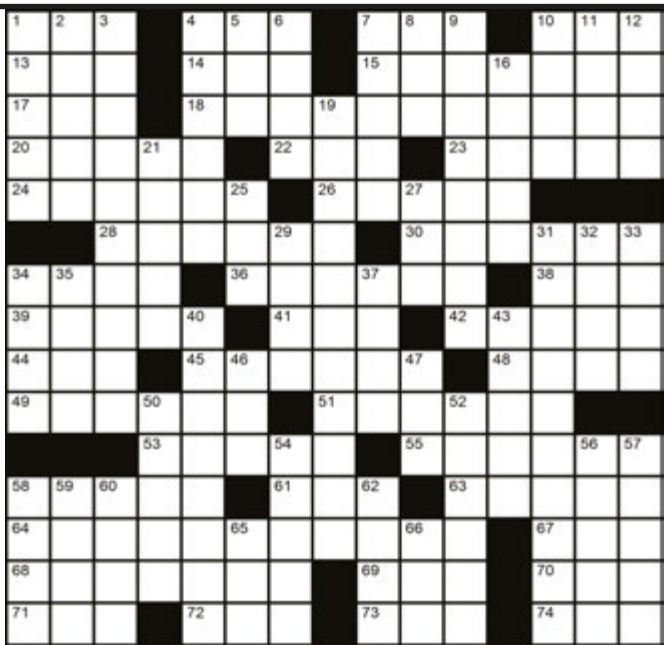
Open-Mic Blues Mondays. Solo, duo, band and spoken-word acts welcome. 6:30-10:30 p.m. FREE. Midtown Beer Co., 402 S. Washington Square, Lansing. (517) 977-1349.

Jonesin' Crossword

By Matt Jones

"Upstarts"--watch that first step.
Matt Jones

- Across**
1 NASDAQ purchase
4 Thanksgiving turkey carver, maybe
7 ____-M-Aid (candy renamed Fun Dip)
10 Before
13 "Tic ____ Dough" (game show)
14 Last-minute shopper's day
15 Let loose
17 "The greatest" boxer
18 Cinematographer's concern
20 "The Twelve Days of Christmas" musician
22 Enjoy Mt. Hood, say
23 Animal on Wyoming's flag
24 Get a move on
26 Roll with the punches
28 Aries, astrologically
30 Unreliable people
34 Garfield's foil
36 College town north of San Francisco
38 Computer key
39 "Filthy" dough
41 Jailbird
42 Hockey great Cam
44 Subject of Indiana Jones's quest
45 Big guy in Molokai
48 First Nations tribe
49 Seven Sisters college
51 Major stress factor, it's said
53 Send a short message
55 Opticians' products
58 "I, Robot" author
Asimov



- 61 Confound
63 Wild West "justice"
64 Person who believes
Haile Selassie was the
Messiah
67 Org. where Edward
Snowden once did
contracting
68 Stranded, in a way
69 "Bill ____ the Science
Guy"
70 Chick
71 Jamaican music
72 Spider-Man creator
Stan
73 Home of Kraftwerk
and bratwurst: abbr.
74 Part of PBS
- Down**
1 Bacterial infection, for
short
2 "Rocky" actress Shire
3 Game that's sort of an
ancestor of Jenga
4 Court order
5 Sinatra ex Gardner
6 GOP's opposition
7 Like tabloid headlines
8 Needle ____ haystack
9 What to try if things
aren't working
10 Halloween vandal's
projectiles
11 Change of address, to
a realtor
12 Forbidden fruit locale
16 "Sweet Love" singer
Baker
19 Place to buy a few
compacts
21 Old knockout fumes
25 Carrier's org.
27 To the back of a boat
29 Foot curve
31 Beyonce's "Irreplace-
able" and Hall & Oates's
"She's Gone," for two
32 "Allure" shelfmate
33 Eye problem
34 Royal Norwegian
name
35 ____ mater (brain
covering)
37 Rice from Louisiana
40 Reality check
43 ____ Lodge
46 "____ you for real?"
47 Hole-poking tool
50 Singles, RBI and
triple-doubles
52 Bruce who keeps up
with the Kardashians
54 Keep away from
56 Piece of Bacon?
57 Navy commandos
58 States of anger
59 Did well at Battleship
60 Massive landmass
62 "PED ____" (street
sign)
65 Charge card charge
66 "All in favor" word

©2011 Jonesin' Crosswords • For answers to this puzzle, call: 1-900-226-2800, 99 cents per minute. Must be 18+. Or to bill to your credit card, call: 1-800-655-6548. **Answers Page 38**




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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 9 | | | | | | 3 | |
| | | | | 2 | | | 1 |
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| | | 5 | 6 | 4 | | | |
| 7 | | | | | | | 1 |
| 4 | | | | | 9 | 1 | |
| | | | | | 3 | | 5 |
| | 1 | | | 5 | | | |

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.

To avoid erasing, pencil in your possible answers in the scratchpad space beneath the short line in each vacant square.

Answers on page 38

| LIVE & LOCAL | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|---|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| The Avenue Café, 2021 E. Michigan Ave. | Service Industry Night, 8 p.m. | Fat Boy & Jive Turkey, 8 p.m. | The Stick Arounds, 8 p.m. | |
| Connxtions Comedy Club, 2900 E. N. East St. | | Landry, 8 p.m. | Landry, 8 p.m. | Landry, 8 p.m. |
| Grand Café/Sir Pizza, 201 E. Grand River Ave. | | Kathy Ford Band, 7:30 p.m. | Karaoke, 7 p.m. | Ladies Night w/DJ Fudgie. 8:30 p.m. |
| Green Door, 2005 E. Michigan Ave. | | Hidden Agenda, 8:30 p.m. | Glamhammer, 9:30 p.m. | Still Rain, 9 p.m. |
| Harem, 414 E. Michigan Ave. | | DJ THOR, 9 p.m. | DJ SKITZO, 9 p.m. | DJ Elemnt, 9 p.m. |
| The Loft, 414 E. Michigan Ave. | | | Bill Grogan's Goat, 8 p.m. | The Spektators, 8 p.m. |
| Moriarty's Pub, 802 E. Michigan Ave. | | Lincoln County Process, 10 p.m. | Pat Zelenk Project, 9:30 p.m. | The Jet Beats, 9:30 p.m. |
| Reno's East, 1310 Abbot Road | | Soul Shake, 7 p.m. | Mark Sala, 7 p.m. | |
| Reno's West, 5001 W. Saginaw Hwy. | | Nate Hollie, 7 p.m. | Dan MacLaughlin, 7 p.m. | |
| Spiral, 1247 Center St. | | Twisted Thursday, 9 p.m. | College Night, 9 p.m. | Unzipped Saturdays, 9 p.m. |
| Unicorn Tavern, 327 E. Grand River Ave. | | Frog & the Beeftones, 8:30 p.m. | Frog & the Beef 8:30 p.m. | Frog & the Beeftones, 8:30 p.m. |
| Waterfront Bar & Grill, 325 City Market Drive | | Steve Cowles, 6 p.m. | Joe Wright, 6 p.m. | |
| Whiskey Barrel Saloon, 410 S. Clippert St. | | College Night, 9 p.m. | DJ, 9 p.m. | Ryan Broshear, 9 p.m. |

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WHAT TO DO: Submit information by the Friday before publication (City Pulse comes out every Wednesday.) Be sure to tell us the name of the performer and the day, date and time of the performance. Only submit information for the following week's paper.

Out on the town

from page 35

Tuesday, January 7

CLASSES AND SEMINARS

Take Off Pounds Sensibly. Have a support system, lose weight. 7 p.m. FREE to visit. Eaton

Hopeful Hearts Grief Group. Learn, grow and heal together. 10-11 a.m. FREE. The Marquette Activity room, 5968 Park Lake Road, East Lansing. (517) 381 4866.

Water-media class. All skill levels, with Rebecca Stafford. Pre-registration required. 6-8:30 p.m. \$60 for four weeks. Gallery 1212 Old Town, 1212 Turner St., Lansing. (517) 999-1212. gallery1212.com.

Capital City Toastmasters Meeting. Learn public speaking and leadership skills. 7 p.m. FREE.

in daily events. 6 p.m. Midtown Beer Co., 402 S. Washington Square, Lansing. (517) 482-0600. bibleandbeer@ccclansing.org.

Wednesday, January 8

CLASSES AND SEMINARS

Free Photography Open House. Free seminars for aspiring photographers. 6-9 p.m. FREE. First

Saginaw Highway, Grand Ledge. (517) 256-6954. fcgl.org.

Drop-in Figure Drawing. Easels and drawing boards provided. 7-9:30 p.m. \$7, \$5 students. Kresge Art Center, located at Physics and Auditorium roads, MSU Campus, East Lansing. (517) 337-1170.

Family Storytime. Ages up to 6. Stories, rhymes and activities. 10:30 a.m. FREE. CADL South Lansing Library, 3500 S. Cedar St., Lansing. (517) 367-6363.

Meditation. For beginners and experienced. 7-9 p.m. FREE. Vietnamese Buddhist Temple, 3015 S. Washington Ave., Lansing. (517) 351-5866.

Drawing Class. All skill levels, with Penny Collins. Pre-registration required. 6-8:30 p.m. \$60 for four weeks. Gallery 1212 Old Town, 1212 Turner St., Lansing. (517) 999-1212. gallery1212.com.

EVENTS

Practice Your English. 7-8 p.m. FREE. East Lansing Public Library, 950 Abbot Road, East Lansing. (517) 351-2420.

MUSIC

Marshall Music Open Jam. Local musicians of all levels and ages welcome. 6 p.m. FREE. Marshall Music, 3240 E. Saginaw St., Lansing. (517) 337-9700. marshallmusic.com.

MONDAY, JAN. 6 & WEDNESDAY, JAN. 8 >> MSU COLLEGE OF MUSIC



On Monday, faculty member Richard Fracker will perform at the Fairchild Theatre in the MSU Auditorium. Before becoming an associate professor at MSU, Fracker's tenor voice reverberated through opera houses and concert halls across the world. Then on Wednesday, faculty members Richard Sherman and Ralph Votapek will perform at the Cook Recital Hall in MSU's Music Building. Sherman will play the flute with Votapek on piano. Both shows: 7:30 p.m. \$10/\$8 seniors/FREE for students and under 18. Fairchild Theatre, 542 Auditorium Road, MSU Campus, East Lansing. Cook Recital Hall, 333 W. Circle Drive, MSU Campus, East Lansing. music.msu.edu/event-listing.

THURSDAY, JAN. 9 >> MOSCOW FESTIVAL BALLET'S 'THE SLEEPING BEAUTY'



Never again will you be so careless with your fingertips around spindles. If there's a lesson to be learned in "The Sleeping Beauty," performed by the Moscow Festival Ballet, it's "store your sewing machine wisely." If you know your Tchaikovsky (or at least your Disney movies), you know the story: Princess is cursed to die on her 16th birthday, but a slight tweaking of the curse puts her in a deep sleep where she must wait for a magic kiss to wake her. Obviously, there didn't used to be a lot of overlap between classical music and women's lib. 7:30 p.m., Cobb Great Hall, Wharton Center, 750 W. Shaw Lane, MSU campus, East Lansing. \$42-\$15. (800) WHARTON, whartoncenter.com

Rapids Medical Center, 1500 S. Main St., Eaton Rapids. (517) 543-0786.

Lansing Area Codependents Anonymous. 5:45-6:45 p.m. Everybody Reads Books and Stuff, 2019 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. (517) 346-9900. becauseeverybodyreads.com.

Healing Hearts. For those who have lost a loved one. 4-5:30 p.m. Women's Center of Greater Lansing, 1710 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. (517) 372-9163. womenscenterofgreaterlansing.org.

Not So Happy Endings Support Group. For women ending relationships. 5:30-7:30 p.m. FREE. Women's Center of Greater Lansing, 1710 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing. (517) 896-3311.

CADL Downtown Lansing Library, 401 S. Capitol Ave., Lansing. (517) 367-6300. cadl.org.

Speakeasies Toastmasters. Improve listening, analysis, leadership and presentation skills. 12:05-1 p.m. FREE. Ingham County Human Services Building, 5303 S. Cedar St., Lansing. (616) 841-5176.

Transgender Support Group. Discussion for parents and guardians. 7:15 p.m. FREE. MSU LGBT Resource Center, 556 E. Circle Drive, East Lansing. (517) 353-9520. lgbtcr.msu.edu.

EVENTS

Bible and Beer. Discussion of Scripture's power

Presbyterian Church, 510 W. Ottawa St., Lansing. (517) 482-0668. mmphoto.com.

Natural Relief for Pain. Workshop on methods of pain relief. 11 a.m. FREE. Meridian Senior Center, 4406 Okemos Road, Okemos. (517) 706-5045.

Overeaters Anonymous. 7 p.m. FREE. First Congregational United Church of Christ, 210 W.



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Free Will Astrology By Rob Breznsy

Jan 2-7

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Deep bronzes and smoky cinnamons and dark chocolates will be your lucky colors in 2014. Mellow mahoganies and resonant russets will work well for you, too. They will all be part of life's conspiracy to get you to slow down, deepen your perspective, and slip into the sweetest groove ever. In this spirit, I urge you to nestle and cuddle and caress more than usual in the coming months. If you aren't totally clear on where home is, either in the external world or inside your heart, devote yourself to finding it. Hone your emotional intelligence. Explore your roots. On a regular basis, remember your reasons for loving life. Stay in close touch with the sources that feed your wild soul.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): For years, French painter Édouard Manet and French poet Stéphane Mallarmé hung out with each other every day. Mallarmé referred to their relationship as "the most complete friendship." They influenced each other to become better artists and human beings. I'm guessing that in the coming months, Taurus, you'll thrive on that kind of stimulating companionship. Having such regular contact with a like-minded ally might even be an important factor in ripening your intelligence. At the very least, I predict that soulful friendship will be a crucial theme in 2014. You will attract blessings and generate luck for yourself by deepening your ability to cultivate synergistic bonds.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): St. Peter's Basilica is a very old church in Vatican City. It contains a life-size bronze statue of St. Peter that is at least 700 years old. Over the centuries, countless visitors have paid their respects by kissing and touching the feet of the idol. The metal composing the right foot has been so thoroughly worn down by these gestures that the individual toes have disappeared, leaving a smooth surface. You will have a similar kind of power in 2014, Gemini. Little by little, with your steady affection and relentless devotion, you can transform what's rigid and hard.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Big rivers don't travel in straight lines. Their paths are curvy and complicated, with periodic turns and bends. In some places they flow faster and in others they're slower. Their depth and width may vary along the way, too. Your own destiny is like one of those big rivers, Cancerian. In some years, it meanders for long stretches, slowing down as it wanders along a crooked course. It may even get shallower and narrower for a while. But I expect that in 2014, you will be moving more rapidly than usual. You will be traveling a more direct route, and you will be both wide and deep.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): "In games there are rules," writes science fiction author Kim Stanley Robinson, "but in life the rules keep changing." This is always true, of course, but I think it will be an especially poignant truth for you between now and your next birthday. During the coming months, you may sometimes feel as if every last law and formula and corollary is mutating. In some cases, the new rules coming into play will be so different from the old rules you've been used to, they may at first be hard to figure out. But now here's the happy ending: It may take a while, but you will eventually see that these new rules have an unexpected logic and beauty that will serve your future well.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): I predict that you will commit no major acts of self-sabotage in 2014. Congrats! I also foresee that you will be exceptionally careful not to hurt or damage yourself. Hooray! More good news: You won't be as critical of yourself as you have sometimes been in the past. The judgmental little voice in the back of your head won't be nearly as active. Yay! Even your negative emotions will diminish in frequency and intensity. Hallelujah! Whoopie! Abracadabra!

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): The citizens of Iceland love literature, but many are not content to simply read. One out of every ten Icelanders writes and publishes

a book at sometime in his or her life. I know it's unrealistic, but I would love to see at least one in ten of all my Libra readers do the same in 2014. I think you're ready to make a big statement -- to express yourself in a more complete and dramatic way than ever before. If you're not ready to write a book, I hope you will attempt an equivalent accomplishment.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): I'm hoping you will find a new teacher or two in 2014, maybe even a mentor. Not a guru who tells you what to do. Not an exploitative "expert" who claims to know what's right for you or a charismatic narcissist who collects adoration. What I wish for you, Scorpio, is that you will connect with wise and humble sources of inspiration . . . with life-long learners who listen well and stimulate you to ask good questions . . . with curious guides who open your eyes to resources you don't realize you need. In the coming months, you are primed to launch a quest that will keep you busy and excited for years; I'd love to see you get excellent help in framing that quest.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): In 2014, it's possible you will be given a cabbage farm or a petting zoo or some bequest that's not exactly in close alignment with your life's purpose. But it's more likely that the legacies and dispensations you receive will be quite useful. The general trend is that allies will make available to you a steady flow of useful things. Your ability to attract what you need will be high. In the coming months, I may even have good reason to name you an honorary Scorpio. You might match those Great Manipulators' proficiency at extracting the essence of what you want from every situation.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Would you be interested in a motto that will help set the tone for you in 2014? I've got a suggestion that's in alignment with the astrological omens. It's from a poem by Margaret Atwood. Try saying this and see if it works for you: "Last year I abstained / this year I devour / without guilt / which is also an art." If you choose to make this affirmation your own, be sure you don't forget about the fact that devouring without guilt is an *art* -- a skill that requires craft and sensitivity. You can't afford to get blindly instinctual and greedy in 2014; you shouldn't compulsively overcompensate for 2013's deprivations. Be cagey and discerning as you satisfy your voracious hunger.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): The coming months will be a good time to meditate on the concepts of happy accidents and benevolent trouble. Go ahead and throw constructive mischief into the mix, too, and maybe even a dose of graceful chaos. Are you game for playing around with so much paradox? Are you willing to entertain the possibility that fate has generous plans for you that are too unexpected to anticipate? There's only one requirement that you have to meet in order to receive your odd gifts in the spirit in which they'll be offered: You've got to be open-minded, eager to learn, and flexible.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): I think we humans need some new emotions. It's true that old standards like sadness, anger, jealousy, and fear are as popular as ever. But I would personally love to be able to choose from a greater variety, especially if at least 51 percent of the new crop of emotions were positive or inspiring. Now it so happens that in 2014 you Pisceans will be primed to be pioneers. Your emotional intelligence should be operating at peak levels. Your imagination will be even more fertile than usual. So how about it? Are you ready to generate revolutionary innovations in the art of feeling unique and interesting feelings? To get started, consider these: 1. amused reverence; 2. poignant excitement; 3. tricky sincerity; 4. boisterous empathy.



Courtesy Photo

"Tunnels," a woodblock print by artist Linda Beeman, is part of the Lansing Art Galleries' January exhibit.

1st Sunday gallery walk & other exhibitions

New Exhibits

EagleMonk Pub and Brewery

"Employee Artist Display," featuring works by Colin Bright, Nick Cummins, Sami Spedoske and Becky Yencich. **Reception: 3-5 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 5.** Hours: 3-10 p.m. Tuesday-Thursday; noon-11 p.m. Friday-Saturday; noon-8 p.m. Sunday. 4906 W. Mt. Hope Highway, Lansing. (517) 708-7350.

East Lansing Public Art Gallery

"Natural Beauty: The Great Lakes Region,"

by local photographer Dylan Lees.

Reception: 1-2 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 5. Hours: 6 a.m.-10 p.m. Monday-Friday; 8 a.m.-8 p.m. Saturday; noon-8 p.m. Sunday.

Hannah Community Center, 819 Abbot Road, East Lansing. (517) 894-2166.

Gallery 1212 Old Town

Various works by Old Town Artists.

Reception: Noon-5 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 5. Hours: 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday;

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SUDOKU SOLUTION

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CROSSWORD SOLUTION

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First Sunday

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noon-5 p.m. Sunday. 1212 Turner St., Lansing. (517) 999-1212.

Grove Gallery and Studios

Contemporary art quilts. Hours: Noon-6 p.m. Thursday-Friday; noon-4 p.m. Saturday; noon-5p.m. Sunday. 325 Grove St., East Lansing. (517) 333-7180.

Lansing Art Gallery

"Japan Meditations: The Soul of a Moment," by Owosso artist Linda Beeman.

Reception: 7-9 p.m. Friday, Jan.

10. Hours: 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Tuesday-Friday; 1-4 p.m. Saturday and First Sunday. 119 N. Washington Square, Lansing. (517) 374-6400.

MICA Gallery

"Transfiguration," by Barb Whitney.

Reception: Noon-4 p.m. Sunday,

Jan. 5. Hours: Noon-5 p.m. Tuesday-Friday; noon-3 p.m. Saturday-Sunday. 1210 Turner St., Lansing. (517) 371-4600.

(SCENE) MetroSpace

"Presence: A Michigan State University MFA Showcase," featuring various artists.

Reception: 6-9 p.m. Friday, Jan. 10.

Hours: 2-5 p.m. Thursday; 2-6 p.m. Friday-Saturday; noon-4 p.m. Sunday. 110 Charles St., East Lansing. (517) 319-6832.

Shiawassee Arts Center

Various works by artists Mary E. Andersen, Bob Crawford and James Eaton.

Reception: 2-4 p.m. Sunday, Jan.

19. Hours: 1-5 p.m. Tuesday-Sunday. 206 Curwood Castle Drive, Owosso. (989) 723-8354. shiawasseearts.org

Ongoing

Anselmo Gallery (inside Meridian Mall)

"Armature Animals" by Mason Taylor. Hours:

10 a.m.-9p.m. Monday-Saturday; noon-6 p.m. Sunday. 1982 W. Grand River Ave., Okemos. (517) 332-7777.

Belen Gallery (inside the Michigan Women's Historical Center & Hall of Fame)

"Kateland," works by artist Kate Paul. Hours: Noon-4 p.m. Wednesday-Saturday; 2 p.m.-4 p.m. Sunday. 213 W. Malcolm X St., Lansing. (517) 484-1880.

Decker's Coffee

Variety of work by local artists. Hours: 7 a.m.-8 p.m. Monday-Friday; 8 a.m.-8 p.m. Saturday-Sunday. 220 S. Washington Square, Lansing. (517) 913-1400.

Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum

Works by conceptual architect Lebbeus Woods and "The Genres: Still Life," featuring Jessica Jackson Hutchins. Hours: 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Tuesday-Thursday & Saturday-Sunday; noon- 9 p.m. Friday; closed Monday. 556 E. Circle Drive, MSU campus, East Lansing. (517) 884-3900.

Great Lakes Artworks

Diverse works by featured artists. Hours: 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Tuesday-Wednesday; 11 a.m.-7 p.m. Thursday-Saturday; noon-4 p.m. Sunday; 11 a.m.-9 p.m. First Friday. 306 E. Grand River Ave., Lansing. (517) 372-4293.

Ledge Craft Lane

Hand-made arts and crafts. Hours: 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Wednesday-Saturday. 120 S. Bridge St., Grand Ledge. (517) 627-9843.

Mackerel Sky

Ceramic tiles and Michigan landscape paintings by Kris love. Hours: 10 a.m.-7 p.m. Tuesday-Friday; 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Saturday; noon-4 p.m. Sunday. 211 M.A.C. Ave., East Lansing. (517) 351-2211.



Courtesy Photo

"Metamorphosis 2" from artist Barb Whitney's January show, "Transfiguration," at the MICA Gallery in Old Town.

MSU Museum

"Detroit Resurgent" and "An Extraordinary Document of our World." Hours: 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday; 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday; 1 p.m.-5 p.m. Sunday. 409 W. Circle Drive, MSU campus, East Lansing. (517) 355-2370.

Neighborhood Empowerment Center

Various works by local artists including Joyce Willets Macrorie and Bruce Thayer. Hours: 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday. 600 W. Maple St., Lansing. (517) 372-5980.

Riverwalk Theatre

Paintings by Michigan artist Carolyn Damstra. Hours: 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday and during performances. 228 Museum Drive, Lansing. (517) 482-9812.

Saper Galleries

Displaying 1,500 works by 150 artists from 150 countries. Hours: 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Monday-Saturday; 1 p.m.- 4 p.m. First Sunday. 433 Albert Ave., East Lansing. (517) 351-0815.

Gallery 1212 OLD TOWN

Gallery 1212 Old Town is celebrating the art and music of those who live and/or work in Old Town. We will present for our January **First Sunday Gallery Walk** a variety of art from "our" talented neighbors. Join us from **12-5 on January 5th**. Enjoy food, live music and special local art — meet the artists and enjoy some down time.

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These locally owned businesses, organizations and individuals have joined Capital Area Local First. We hope you will join them.

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Bake n' Cakes
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Capitol Macintosh
Charter Township of Meridian
City Pulse
Cravings Popcorn
Dreamscape Multimedia
Earthy Delights
East Lansing Food Co-op
Gillespie Group
Gladstone Printing
Good Fruit Video
H.C. Berger Company
Herbruck Poultry Ranch
Ingham County Land Bank
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